



THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA HIGHGATE SUB BRANCH

www.highgate-rsl.org.au

President: Geoff Simpson OAM Secretary Greg Wilson
Mobile 0412 095 201 Email: gregfw@iinet.net.au
All correspondence to PO Box 66 Duncraig East 6023



Highgate Happenings MARCH 2023

A Tale of Wadjemup

This month our guest speaker is **Professor Dr Alexandra Ludewig**, Head of the School of Humanities at The University of Western Australia. She is a scholar of German and European Studies. Professor Ludewig was due to be our guest speaker in July 2022, but withdrew at the last minute due to COVID. Her replacement was author and historian Mr Ernie Polis, who had recently published a book "A Cage in the Bush", a history of the Marrinup POW Camp and the story of German and Italian POWs in Western Australia from 1941 to 1946. All attendees at that lunch received a copy of Ernie's book, courtesy of our Honorary Member Dr Gabrielle Maluga.



Professor Ludewig's teaching and research focus on issues of identity and 'Heimat*' and she has published extensively in both German and English on these topics. Among her recent publications are three monographs: *Screening Nostalgia. 100 Years of German Heimat Film*, published by Transcript Verlag in 2011, *Born German. Re-Born in Western Australia* by UWA Publishing in 2016, and *War Time on Wadjemup. A Social History of the Rottnest Island Internment Camp* by UWAP 2019. Her Festschrift, *More than Gold and Honey*, by UWAP 2021, was launched in early 2022 by WA's Premier, Hon. Mark McGowan.

*(a German word translating to "home" or "homeland". The word has connotations specific to German culture, German society.)

Professor Dr Ludewig will relaunch her book "War Time on Wadjemup – a Social History of the Rottnest Island Internment Camp" and share with us the 150-year history of Rottnest Island with insights of the unique communities that have lived on the island, in particular the internees during WW 1.

The next lunch is at the Anzac Club on Monday 20 March, 1200 for 1230. Cost \$40, \$5 raffle ticket. Dress jacket and tie, ladies equivalent. Guests most welcome.

The links for the March luncheon are:

a. Booking Form: <https://forms.gle/hUK2Tdyk9CDYsXDJ9>

b. Response Sheet: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1uMjVz7s_lim1alpKS1z5O6kH75Kwi2UMaxBoPkCttAM/edit?usp=sharing

Bookings close at close of business Wednesday 15 March to meet Anzac Club requirements. No late bookings accepted.

What's Happening

Monday 20 March 23 - Professor Dr Alexandra Ludewig, Head of School of Humanities UWA (re-scheduled from July 22.)

Tuesday 25 April – Anzac Day Gunfire Breakfast, Weld Club.

Guest speaker CMDRE Brett Dowsing

0700 for 0730, cost TBA. Limited to maximum 80 guests.

Booking link out at end of March

Monday 15 May 23 - Dr Karen Filbee-Dexter; Marine Ecologist, School of Biological Sciences, UWA

Monday 19 June 23 - Hon Mia Davies MLA Former WA Leader of the Opposition *to be confirmed

17/7/23 - Ashley Morrison, international sports commentator, author, and documentary film maker.

Vale:

Jamie Holloway (passed away 9 December 2022)

Phillip Clover (passed away 10 January 23.)

John Angelini (not a Highgate member but known to many members)

Lest We Forget

LUNCH BOOKINGS

At our February lunch we had 70 confirmed attendees at close of bookings the preceding Thursday. We actually sat 82 members and guests. This put some strain on the kitchen and function staff at Anzac House with the chef having to provide a different meal to that planned to some members and additional tables set up. The Anzac Club has now introduced a number of restrictions for groups booking functions. As applied when we were meeting at the Karrakatta Club, we must now notify our final number of attendees by the Thursday prior to our lunch. Unfortunately, we can no longer accommodate late bookings or drop-ins. Cut-off for bookings will be COB the Wednesday before the meeting.

If you book and are a later apology, we will still be charged and you will have to pay. A small waiting list will be established to fill vacant slots caused by late withdrawals, but if you haven't booked, don't count on getting a seat.

Greg W, Secretary

HONOUR AVENUE GROUP

The next service to be conducted by our Group will be held on Saturday 13th May 2023, where eight Honour Plaques will be dedicated.

The service will be held at May Circle, Kings Park, commencing at 10.00am. All members are invited to attend.

Kind regards,

Ken Jones, Secretary



Just Joking: *I asked old Maud how she lost her husband. She told me her sad story:*

" Well, he needed a blood transfusion, but his blood type was not on record, so the doctors asked me if I knew what it was, as they urgently needed to know, in order to save my Norman's life.

Tragically, I've never known his blood type, so I only had time to sit and say goodbye.

I'll never forget how supportive my Norman was. Even as he was fading away, he kept on whispering to me, "Be positive, be positive!"

"That was my Norman! Always thinking of others."

Happy Birthday to Our March Babies –

Geoff Simpson, Tony Wills, Rod Halcombe, Robert Mitchell, Fred Brown, Bob Arnold, Henry Lodge, Geoff Stooke, John Arco, Bill Richie, Harvey Pearce, Ben Blake, Michael Bradford, Richard Adams, Tony McKay, Ian McGuckin, Doug Webb, Shane Edmonds, Barry Nunn, Robert Mees, Norm Coleman, Ronnie Lee, John Farrell, John Maltas.

Apologies if a member has been off the list. Please advise the Secretary of the omission.

SERVICE MEMBER DUES

As members are aware an EGM was held at Anzac House on 2 February to consider amendments to the RSLWA Constitution. Sub-Branches were advised of the number of delegates each was entitled to, based on those service members who were financial for 2023 (and beyond) as at 31 December 2022. Highgate had expected its usual three delegates, but found, given the number of members financial at that date, were only entitled to two. We were not the only sub-branch who lost a delegate. This was important as the amendments only passed by a few votes. The amended Constitution is now available at <https://www.rslwa.org.au/media/attachments/2023/02/08/001-constitution-rules---as-at-2.2.23.pdf>.

Currently, according to RSLWA records, Highgate has 165 Life, Platinum and financial Service members. There are 29 Service members paid to end of 2022, 6 unfinancial from end 2021, 3 unfinancial from 2020 and two from 2019. If those unfinancial wish to retain RSLWA membership and associated benefits, it is requested that memberships be paid by the end of March. Payment can be made online at <https://www.rslwa.org.au/members/renew-membership> or in person to RSLWA HQ.

Anyone in financial arrears for more than two years will be removed from Sub-Branch membership records after that time.

NEW HUB FOR VETERANS ONE STEP CLOSER IN PERTH'S SOUTH

Defence personnel, veterans and families in Perth's Southern Suburbs are set to receive better access to support through the establishment of a new Veterans' and Families' Hub, following consultation with the local community.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Matt Keogh and the Federal Member for Brand, Resources Minister and Minister for Northern Australia Madeleine King, met with representatives of the local community, veteran support organisations and key stakeholders to discuss how the \$5 million Hub would best meet the needs of Defence personnel, veterans and families.

"Every community is different and we want to ensure the Hub in Brand meets the needs of local Defence personnel, veterans and families for generations to come," Minister Keogh said.

"Brand is home to the nation's biggest Navy base, HMAS Stirling, and there are more than 8,000 Defence personnel and veterans who live in the electorate with their families."

"We need to provide them with the most appropriate services and supports to suit them."

Minister King said her community has a proud military history and it was crucial the Hub was designed with input from Defence personnel, veterans and families.

"Rockingham and the electorate of Brand have a very special relationship with Defence and the veterans' community and we want to make sure this Hub will meet their needs," Minister King said.

"This consultation process will ensure the new Hub is fit for purpose and provides access to services and support for the veteran community close to home." Minister King said.

The Hub is being rolled out as part of the Government's \$46.7 million commitment to more than double the size of the Veterans' and Families' Hub network across the nation.

The Hubs will provide tailored services, including supports for transition to civilian life, advocacy and mental health services, and a range of community activities, including volunteer and sporting opportunities.

For more information on the expansion of the Veterans' and Families' Hub network, visit the DVA website. (DVA 4 Feb 23)

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY HISTORY IN MARCH *(Courtesy AWM)*

1 March 1901. Naval and military forces of the States transferred to Commonwealth control. With Federation state and federal authorities began planning for the establishment of federal military forces.

1 March 1942 HMAS Perth sunk in Sunda Strait. Having survived the battle of the Java Sea HMAS Perth and the United States Cruiser Houston were sunk in a battle against overwhelming Japanese forces off the western tip of Java. 353 of Perth's 680 crew were killed in the battle.

3 March 1943 Battle of the Bismark Sea begins. A Japanese convoy of eight transport ships and eight escorting destroyers was almost annihilated by Allied air attacks as they attempted to reinforce the garrison at Lae. Of the 6,000 Japanese troops bound for Lae only 2,890 survived.

3 March 1942 Broome and Wyndham bombed. The Japanese air raid on Broome came when the port was crowded with refugees fleeing the Japanese invasion of the Netherlands East Indies. About 70 people, including many civilians are thought to have been killed in the raid. Japanese Attacks on Wyndham focused on the town's aerodrome.

4 March 1942 HMAS Yarra sunk south of Java. Yarra was escorting a convoy of three ships from the fighting in the Netherlands East Indies to Java to Fremantle when they were attacked by three Japanese heavy cruisers and two destroyers. All four ships were sunk and only 13 of Yarra's 151 crew survived.

8 March 1942. Japanese land at Lae and Salamaua. Lae and Salamaua were occupied by the Japanese to provide defensive depth for their important air and sea base at Rabaul. A few days later the Japanese also landed at Finschhafen. The Japanese needed to capture towns such as Finschhafen and Salamaua to also protect their forward air base at Lae.

13 March 1943. Japanese reconnaissance flight over Darwin. The first bombing occurred on 15 March. In addition to the 64 air raids on Darwin the Japanese made numerous reconnaissance flights over northern Australia.

14 March 1942. Japanese bomb Horn Island, Torres Strait. Horn Island was the main tactical base for Allied air operations in the Torres Strait. The island was subject to nine Japanese air raids during the Second World War.

16 March 1940. First two women from the Voluntary Aid Detachments organisation enlist in the AIF. Most Voluntary Aids transferred after August 1942 into the new Australian Army Women's Medical Service. Over 200 Voluntary Aids served in the Middle East and Ceylon during the Second World War.

17 March 1942. General MacArthur flies to Darwin. Having left the Philippines after the Japanese invasion, General MacArthur was appointed to command the newly created South West Pacific Area. Australia became the base from which he would launch offensive action against the Japanese in the Pacific.

18 March 1915. Allied fleet attempts to force the Dardanelles. This was the second allied attempt to force a naval breakthrough of the Turkish defences in the Dardanelles.

20 March 1916. ANZAC Corps land in France. With Gallipoli behind them the bulk of Australia's forces were now sent to France where the terrible fighting on the Western Front awaited.

20 March 2003. Iraq War. Australian military forces, as part of the US-led coalition, commence operations as part of the invasion of Iraq.

27 March 1953. Last engagement between Meteors and MIGs in the Korean War. Meteors had been found to be inferior to MIGs in air to air combat in Korea and were transferred to ground attack duties.



LEGACY THE CENTENARY TORCH RELAY

Background.

Legacy in Australia celebrates 100 years of service during 2023 and currently provide care and advice to forty-three thousand beneficiaries under their care. Legacy spent \$16M on beneficiaries in 2020 and the volunteering hours were valued at \$19.3M.

The Event – Legacy Torch Relay.

A “Flagship Event” was needed to celebrate the “Centenary of the Legacy Promise” in 2023. The concept of the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023 has been identified as a once in a life-time opportunity for the Legacy movement and for all 45 clubs across Australia, as Legacy celebrates its centenary year.

The flagship event consists of the following:

- The relay was launched to the public on Wednesday 20th April 2022.
- The relay itself would begin in Pozieres on ANZAC Day 2023, travel to London then make its way around Australia, travelling for 6 months and ending in Melbourne for the Centenary Conference on 15 October.
- Centenary Torch Bearers (1500) have been identified to carry the Torch, travelling 55,000 km. (This distance includes travel from UK).
- Key members of the community as well as high profile individuals will also be invited to be a Centenary Torch Bearers/ Ambassadors

The Torch in WA

The Torch will arrive in WA on 2 May and begin the relay from Albany WA via Legacy Busselton Camp. There is to be a large family day and concert on 6 May for the arrival of the Torch before it travels to South Australia.

PURPOSE AND INTENTION:

Thank you to the past,
We’re still here in the present, and,
We need you in the future.

AIM:

Celebrating 100 years of Legacy to raise over \$10M to keep the Torch alight for the future.
Increasing awareness of the Legacy brand.
Connecting with and educating the youth of today about Legacy.
Reconnecting with widows and beneficiaries, and,
Building new relationships and gaining ongoing support for the future of Legacy.

WWI PIGEON – CHER AMI



In October 1918, during the bloody final weeks of World War I, New York’s 77th Infantry Division became stranded behind enemy lines in France, suffering heavy losses from the advancing German Army. More than half the troops in the unit, known as the “Lost Battalion”, were killed or captured in the ensuing battle of Argonne while the nearly 200 men that remained struggled to alert headquarters for assistance beneath a barrage of artillery. To make matters worse, their location was misreported as an enemy position, exposing them to friendly fire as well.

When other attempts at communication failed, the battalion tried relaying word via homing Pigeon. A bird was released carrying the message, "Many wounded. We cannot evacuate." It was cut down by enemy fire moments later. Another pigeon was sent with the message, "Men are suffering. Can support be sent?" but it was shot as well.

As munitions and food dwindled with both friendly and enemy fire continuing to rain down, the imperilled unit turned to their one remaining pigeon, named Cher Ami, in a last-ditch effort to get the word out. Troops watched as that bird too dropped from the sky struck by a bullet, then incredibly take flight once again — successfully completing the 25-mile journey to headquarters even after being shot in the chest, blinded by shrapnel, and losing a leg, delivering the desperate message.

"Our artillery is dropping a barrage on us. For heaven's sake, stop it!"

Thanks to the pigeon's dedication in the face of danger, the 194 surviving soldiers of the 77th were saved.

For his show of valour, Cher Ami was awarded the Croix de Guerre, a decoration awarded to foreign troops by the French Army, as well as other honours by the United States. But despite receiving world-class medical attention — including a prosthetic leg — the heroic pigeon died from complications a year later.



Cher Ami's body was later put on display at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC.

But Cher Ami was not the only heroic bird to save lives. More than 30 pigeons employed during World War I have been hailed for their service, receiving the Dickens Medal — an honour bestowed upon animals that exhibit "conspicuous gallantry" during times of war. *(Courtesy Veteran Web)*



Honouring the Fallen on the Eve of Anzac Day

Monday 24 April 2023 | 6.00pm
St Matthew's, Armadale

Come and join us on the eve of Anzac Day for a service of praise, prayer and proclamation

This will include traditional hymns, the Last Post and Rouse, a Sermon and the Ode followed by a complimentary BBQ dinner of burgers, salad, and dessert

Many past and current parishioners of St Matthew's have served this nation, and several have paid the ultimate sacrifice

Come and join us as we remember them

Lest We Forget