An Australian Defence Force medical team is working in Pakistan and Kashmir as part of a humanitarian mission to provide vital health care assistance to people affected by the 8 October 2005 South Asia earthquakes.

The team has established a medical centre at the remote town of Dhami, about 50km north-east of Muzaffarabad, on the Pakistan side of the Kashmir Line Of Control.

The team, of about 140 personnel, includes medical personnel, a command element, an aviation detachment and logistics and communication personnel.

Four Black Hawk helicopters are deployed to provide essential transport and support tasks. The helicopters give the ADF team the mobility to extend medical care from the central hub at Dhami to assist a large number of people in the harsh terrain of the surrounding region who need medical attention as a result of the earthquake.

The Black Hawk detachment is primarily from the Australian Army 5th Aviation Regiment based in Townsville.

The health and support personnel comprise members of the Army’s logistic support force based at Randwick Barracks, Sydney; a Royal Australian Air Force primary health care team from Richmond, New South Wales; and personnel drawn from a range of units across Australia, including Reserves.

Pictured above Australian Defence Force personnel enjoy Australian meat pies for lunch on Australia Day, high in the mountains of Kashmir.

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Welcome 2006!

It promises to be a most exciting year. With the events of 2005 now behind us it is time to plan activities that will shape this year as one of the most significant in the history of the League. With ANZAC Day but a few months away the League is looking at building on the highly successful events that commemorated the 90th Anniversary of the Gallipoli Landing and using them as a stepping stone to celebrations that will acknowledge the 90th Anniversary of the foundation of the League on 6th June, 1916.

Although founded in Melbourne it is intended that all State and sub-branches throughout Australia will become involved in some form of celebration in the first week in June, 2006.

Later in the year the commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of Australian involvement in the Vietnam War will attract Australia wide commemorative activities hosted by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs. In Western Australia a representative committee has been formed to determine the scope and form of these activities and regular communications will be issued as information comes to hand.

Honours & Awards

We are delighted to acknowledge those veterans and members of the League who were recognised for their outstanding community work in the Australia Day Honours List. Well done to RSL member, Mr Peter Watney, OAM, and congratulations to other veterans, Dr Greg Dobie, AM, Mr Hamil Roved, OAM and Mr Jack Sae, OAM. Their contribution is valued as it places the work of veterans in the public arena.

Sub Branch Elections

Most sub-branches would now have held their Annual General Meeting and, if required, held the election for office bearers for 2006. Your State Executive would take this opportunity to congratulate those elected/appointed to office and offer thanks to those who have stood down or retired. The contribution all have made to promote RSL in the veterans and wider community is very much appreciated.

Membership & Youth

Plans are well advanced for the 2006 National and State Cadet of the Year Tours. National will visit Kokoda and State winners will tour the Sandakan Death March Site in Borneo. In 2007 it is proposed to amalgamate the two tour groups and support the National Programme. This has advantages for WA as duplication of resources will be eliminated. Nominations will be invited from cadet units and selection procedures finalised by November, 2006.

Finance

The board has approved a finance committee recommendation of the appointment of a Manager for the ANZAC Club. Their role will be the administration and promotion of the Club to the corporate world. The board also endorsed the preparation of a constitutional amendment to change the accounting year from the financial year in place of the calendar year. This action is necessary to comply with the conditions of receiving financial assistance and grants from the Commonwealth Government.

Such changes to the state rules will not necessitate any change to current arrangements for sub-branches.

RSL Care (WA)

It is hoped to have the official opening of the Memnon Centre, including the Community Centre and Chapel to take place over the period of the National Congress in September, 2006. Further details of arrangements will follow as they come to hand. A contract for $16m has been signed with RGC for the building of the high care nursing home at Memnon which should be completed in late 2007.

Resignation/Appointments

It is with regret that we announce that long serving state executive member, Doug Rasmussen has, through ill health tendered his resignation from office. Doug has rendered outstanding service as Senior Vice President and a Director for many years and his contribution has been valued.

Mr David Messer has been appointed as Director of Marketing to fill the vacancy.

The board has also appointed Mr Paul Bengel as State Treasurer. Paul has extensive experience in the business world and holds high qualifications in accounting.

Both Mr Messer and Mr Bengel are former RAAF servicemen.

Veteran Affairs

It has been reported that the functional review of DVA operations is in progress. It should be completed by the end of March, 2006 and be implemented by early July.

The WA initiative of requesting DVA to conduct a pilot study on the methods of treating tinnitus has been approved. The study will take place in NSW. While WA will not host the trial it is pleasing to note that our request to see that the best possible treatment for veterans with this condition is being investigated.

Corporate Affairs

The group is looking at the way in which RSL completes its financial business. With the use of technology and the current competitive banking environment we may be able to negotiate a better arrangement.

ANZAC House Opening

On Friday 27th January, 2006 Sir Charles Court AK OCMG OBE opened the refurbished ANZAC House. Utilising a Lotterywest Grant, supported by sub-branch donations, the facilities were upgraded to provide members and guests with the facilities and administration areas that are of first class status. Before approximately 100 guests Sir Charles reflected on the progress the League had made in delivering quality service to the veteran community. He recounted the moves the State Branch had made around the CBD and stressed the importance of the current location. He paid tribute to all who worked so hard to realise the current achievement.

NO SMOKING

As we move to compliance with directives promulgating smoking in buildings and clubs, staff, visitors and club patrons are advised that all areas in ANZAC House are now smoke free. We value your assistance in keeping our facility in pristine condition.

Have You One of These?

As we move towards the 90th Anniversary of the League on 6th June, we are on the lookout to find the first sub-branch in Western Australia. Why not do a bit of research on your own history and check out your Charter. For your and our records please send your findings to us at State Headquarters. Our records are not good and with your help we can update them!

Government Grant

Please note that applications close on 10th March, 2006 for assistance with the purchase of PA Systems, lecterns and building improvements (up to $10 000). Full details have been circulated.

Finally, I hope you like the new format of The Sub-Branch Signal. We have attempted to make it bright and full of interest to members. We believe that good communication is essential and an attractive and easily read format will help keep everyone informed of the direction we are heading.

* To be awarded their charter.
Brothers In Arms

By Sarida McLeod, aged 15.

On April 25, 1915, Australian troops landed at Gallipoli, cementing themselves into what was to become the ultimate Australian legend. Australia was a fledgling nation at the beginning of World War I, but emerged from it with newfound pride and a burning sense of national identity spawned by the year’s events. The comradeship and fighting spirit of continuous warfare in Gallipoli.

The military defeat created an emotionally celebrated nation, the ANZAC spirit of mateship and courage which also was demonstrated by Britain’s Ashmore-Bartlett when he said: "Though many were shot to death, you could see arms waving in greeting to the crew of the wardships. They were happy because they knew it had all been tried for the first time, and had not been failed. The determination of the ANZACs to not fail each other often led to great bouts of courage, with no single event demonstrating the truth better than the four day Battle of the Nek August 1915. Not wanting, nor prepared to let their mates go alone, the fourth line of the Nek Light Horse troops, initially held back to prevent unwise loss of life, nonetheless charged straight into the led Turkish fire, and for more than half of them, to their deaths. The strength of mateship and courage surged into every ANZAC that rose to confront head-on, incredible odds, and yet, through spirit and skill, turned the tide.

Despite being ambushed and grossly outnumbered by 2,500 Viet Cong and NVA regulars, the Australian soldiers in the battle of The Long Tan staunchly prevailed. It was apparent that the Viet Cong and NVA command officers failed to appreciate or for that matter comprehend the strength of the Australians’ courage and mateship and had paid dearly as a result as shown in the body count. The same spirit of mateship and courage against the odds was shown on again at the Battle of Imjin in 1942, when a hand of 400 soldiers became the last line of defence against a 14,000 strong Japanese enemy force on the Kookoda Track.

Upon hearing that the 39th battalion was under attack, 27 of the injured casualties walked back to assist the comrades, a true example of the mateship between the ANZACs. Though wounded, many seriously, they were not prepared to stand down and let their mates perform battle without their support they give Gai in all in, I've got your (back) and never, under any circumstance, let your mates down. The same unofficial and unsung dictum of the ANZAC.

They courageously hold back relentless waves of enemy assaults, eventually resorting to bloody hand to hand combat. Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Honner who commanded the British 1st Batt, stated that the soldiers were “transformed by some catalyst of spirit into a devoted band wherein every man's failing was the embodiment of the ANZAC spirit”, the sheer courage and determination strengthened by mateship which was also commented on by British journalist Ralph Honner, who commanded the British 1st Batt of Tobruk, the Australian War Memorial stated that “the spirit of co-operation, trust and comradeship between the men of the garrison was the real strength of Tobruk.”

The ANZAC spirit of mateship and courage against the odds was shown again during the Bali tragedy of 2002, when the ANZAC spirit was forged once more. It was the ANZACs’ ability to exhibit the camaraderie and heroism of their predecessors throughout Australia’s war history. At the “Battle of Bali” of April 13th, 2002, the 2nd Rotor of Tobruk succeded in defending the aerodroma of Tobruk by NZN tactics that had never failed the ANZACs. The ANZAC’s were a resilient band which was also shown that the spirit had emerged from trial and adversity.

The mateship and courage which have emerged from the tragedies of the past, and the ANZAC’s ability to overcome them, has become synonymous with it in times of need. From terrible defeats to remarkable victories, genocides and atrocities the man on the street, it is not the glory of war that has forged the ANZAC spirit, but the characteristics which have emerged from trial and adversity.

The mateship and courage began the soldiers of Gallipoli furthered their ever-present reminder of the tragedies of the past, and the ANZAC’s ability to overcome them. It has become a significant part of Australia’s national identity, a spirit born in defeat but that stands for the doctrine that every man's failing was the embodiment of the ANZAC spirit and will live on, so that the plane could be flown to New Zealand. This same sense of mateship and courage against the odds was shown again during the Bali tragedy of 2002.

With the same sense of unity and camaraderie epitomized by Gallipoli, ordinary Australians become rescuers, pulling friends and strangers alike from the carnage. One of the many Australians to earn a bravery Medal, Constable Britten, was said to have displayed “the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of great danger and going beyond the call of duty”.

Britten repeatedly entered the burning Surat Club to rescue survivors, putting himself in grave danger and going beyond the call of duty. Likewise, the mateship of the Australians in Bali was reciprocated by those at home with the flood of support from charity funds and the government. Away from the battlefield, the spirit of mateship and courage against the odds was shown again during the Bali tragedy of 2002, when the ANZAC spirit was forged once more.

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Bunbury
Looking back over 2005 we think of the major ceremonial events and social gatherings that occupied our lives and kept many of us busy, particularly towards the end of the year. As usual the welfare section, with a steady stream of members and other ex-service people helped including widows, managed a very high level of success rate in gaining favourable outcomes for their clients.

Welfare
We owe a tremendous amount of gratitude toward our welfare section. Some of the most popular signs of wear and tear (from the many cigarette burns and loopy flights) however some of the most difficult members are making themselves available as understudies to be trained in the near future.

Ceremonial
This year a small group of members attended the Vietnam Veterans' Day at Collie, travelling up by bus and joining up with the surrounding RSL's. The people of Collie showed their appreciation as we marched through town to the park. It was a large gathering of people and very enjoyable. Marjinjup will host the next Vietnam Veterans' Day.

Our ANZAC day was as usual fully booked and well received. We will continue to grow with community support.

Fund Raising
Our main fundraising event, the Mothers Day Raffle, was supported well with helpers - thanks to Trevor Kenny's contacts, and with Bargains providing a major contribution in selling tickets at the checkout and providing the mailing space for us to sell tickets.

Remembrance Day
This year's Remembrance Day turnout surprised us with such a large number showing up over the usual 12-20. In hindsight, with co-operation from the local businesses, a large number showing up the next year, we were the most enjoyable.

The patrol boat will be de- commissioned in February, and it is good to see the absence of a ship in service named after our town.

Committee
This year saw many challenges with many committee members absent through sickness or family commitments. Our new bar manager Bev Wheeler, has gone through a spate of poor health and we hope she has triumphed through this and is well on the road to recovery. I'm pleased to see others come forward and help in their capacity. There are so many people to thank, particularly those member / partner teams'.

Christmas Help
Also it was great to again provide members as short notice willing to provide time to act as car park attendants and the week leading up to Christmas at the Forum Shopping Centre. Although it was challenging labour for a donation to the RSL, it will give us the opportunity to sell milke tickets for Mothers Day.

Friday Night Happy Hour
It has become a regular night for some members and their partners, and I feel sure we can improve on the numbers attending with an occasional social activity, perhaps entertainment, etc.

This year we enjoyed ourselves welcoming new social members, songs around the piano, tape music and many unclassified jiles, plus the opportunity to win on the slot the jiles.

In closing, I'm glad to see the committee remains strong, and I am glad that we have a good core of people working in the committee and I hope the committee will remain strong in the future and that we will have a great year ahead.

Other Activities
Other activities during the year included the staff from Lyndell (formerly Millennium Inorganic Chemicals) spending a day of their Friday roster days to clean our office, and also assemble newly supplied cabinets for our library at our cost. We are indebted to their generosity and financial support.

During October, the RSL provided the staff of the City of Bunbury Community Services and the City of Collie with an opportunity to have a social gathering. The committee was extended an invitation to provide a stall to sell raffle tickets and tickets to Christmas festivities. The committee was approached again to provide a stall to sell raffle tickets and tickets to Christmas festivities.

The winners by two points were Tony Gamble, Graeme McKay and Lindsay Jones. Third were Ron Lester, Gordon Becker and Tom Cresswell. Round prizes went to Mike Post and Gordon Woolridge, with a dead heat between Paul Fellowes and Gordon Wooldridge, with a dead heat between Paul Fellowes and Gordon Wooldridge.

Another successful Digger's Day has been and gone. It is good to see the support the event attracts from the ex-service fraternity.

The spoils this year included the staff of Lyndell (formerly Millennium Inorganic Chemicals) spending a day of their Friday roster days to clean our office, and also assemble newly supplied cabinets for our library at our cost. We are indebted to their generosity and financial support.

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The flag, Vegemite and the zinc cream and hats all add to the favour of Australia Day at Camp Bradman as (left to right) Sergeant Darren O’Connell, Lieutenant James Keam, Signaller Sharon Roberts, Major Raffaele Scicchitano and Private Sheyna Veal get into the traditional ways of Australia Day.

Medical team Pakistan.

Defence team in Samoa.

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New Years Eve on Operation Catalyst

Working with the new Iraqi Government, the Australian Defence Force continued over the Christmas and New Year period to contribute to Multinational Force efforts to develop a secure and stable environment in Iraq, and to assist national recovery programs.

Sailors, soldiers, and air force personnel stayed at their posts to guarantee force security and to complete regular assignments.

About 1320 personnel from the Royal Australian Navy, Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force are serving in the Middle East as part of Operation Catalyst.

Christmas Day Baghdad.

Caption.

In December 2005 13th Brigade held their final parade for the year.

Soldiers of the brigade were thanked by the brigade commanding officer, for an excellent performance by his soldiers for 2005.

RSM Harvey Worboys officiated at his last parade in Western Australia, before taking up his new posting in the Eastern States.

Promotions to soldiers of the 13th Brigade were also awarded on the night.

13th Brigade Irwin Barracks Karrakatta

End of the year parade for Reserves at Karrakatta 2005.

The end of year parade for the Reserves at Karrakatta 2005.

Promotion for the Reserve force soldier 2005 Karrakatta.

End of year parade for The Reserves Karrakatta 2005.

Caption.

Caption.

Decommissioning of HMAS Canberra

HMAS Canberra is the first Adelaide Class Guided Missile Frigate (FFG) to be decommissioned. Launched on 1 December 1981 at Todd Pacific Shipyard Corporation in Seattle, USA, HMAS Canberra was commissioned on 21 March 1981.

The Decommissioning Lady for the ceremony on Saturday 12 November 2005 at HMAS Stirling, Garden Island, Western Australia, was Mrs Jenny Moir, daughter of the late former Secretary of the Australian Department of Defence, Sir Arthur Tange. Mrs Moir’s mother, the late Lady Marjorie Tange, was HMAS Canberra’s Launching Lady.

Special guests included the Minister for Defence Senator Robert Hill.

HMAS Canberra participated in numerous operations, including Operation DAMASK following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (November 1990 to March 1991), Operation BRANKADO to evacuate Australian nationals from Jakarta (May 1998), and Operation SLIPPER (March to July 2002) as part of the international coalition against terrorism.

The FFG was the second RAN ship to bear the name HMAS Canberra. HMAS Canberra I, a Kent Class heavy cruiser, served with distinction during WWII until she was heavily damaged and sunk during the Battle of Savo Island in August 1942 with the loss of 84 crew. In 1943 in honour of HMAS Canberra I, the United States commissioned the Baltimore Class heavy cruiser, USS Canberra, the only US Navy ship so far to be named for a capital city outside the United States of America.

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New mini hips

If you’re contemplating a hip replacement, don’t count on having your first staff meal. Orthopaedic surgery is not what it used to be.

According to Professor David Wood, the procedure, including the operation and the anaesthesia so patients can mobilize earlier and reduce the complications of surgery.

“We don’t send them home to rest. We send them home to be active,” he explained.

At Hollywood Private Hospital, this outcome is being achieved with a combination of minimally invasive surgery and rapid rehabilitation.

According to Professor Wood, the move towards all kinds of minimally invasive surgery is all predicated both because of patient benefit and the bed crisis in the public hospital system.

He has been performing what are now known as ‘mini hips’ for the last four years. The access is only 10 rather than 25 cm, and because the surgical technique preserves the rear piriformis muscle which is one of the main hip stabilisers, it is safer for the patient to stand on the new joint on the day of surgery.

“If a dislocation of point of view, the hip is as strong and stable as it needs to be to accept full body weight - otherwise, you haven’t done a proper operation,” Professor Wood says.

If all proceeds smoothly, the patient is discharged home the next day - instead of the usual 7-10 day hospital stay following a total hip replacement.

Mini hip patients are then followed up with home visits from a nurse or physiotherapist for a minimum of three days as part of the home link program. The visits continue as long as necessary.

Immediately after the operation, a physiotherapist sees the patient three times in the first 24 hours.

“There are the same number of physio and nursing interventions, they are just concentrated over a much shorter time,” says Professor Wood.

Professor Wood’s patients all attend a two-week pre-operative program at the Hollywood Functional Rehabilitation Clinic to physically and mentally condition them for the operation.

“Rapid rehabilitation means transferring some responsibility of care to the patient. They are mentally prepared to stand and walk on Day 1 because they have been told that is normal,” he explains.

The statistics are persuasive. The blood loss has been halved with the mini hip technique and the rate of dislocation and deep vein thrombosis has significantly decreased. Up to a year post-op, the patients report increased functional outcomes on the hip questionnaire.

Next on Professor Wood’s agenda is to start using long lasting local and spinal anaesthetics rather than general anaesthetics which would further simplify the management and reduce the risk for the patient.

“A percentage of complications come from both the anaesthetic and the surgery so our aim is to make both simpler,” he said.

Australians Day 2006

Australia Day is a time to celebrate and perhaps reflect on the people, events and places that have moulded our short history. Short or long, it is a time of passages with respect to European settlement but timeless in terms of the indigenous population.

In that time we have graduated from a penal colony to a united federated country now known as the Commonwealth of Australia. We are independent and from that independence we have nurtured the vision of statesmen and civic leaders, formed a community that now commands world respect.

The people who have built that respect now come from all walks of life. The Immigration policies of the post war era, and the respect shown to the indigenous population have brought a new dimension to what was previously an Anglo-Saxon population profile. This is the Australia we have preserved with a multicultural profile that has enhanced our cultural, social and economic environment.

It has not always been the people and events that have made this country a story. Our military history is but one example that has given us identity. From the shores of Gallipoli, where the ‘Spirit of Anzac’ was born, to the battlefields of the Western Front, to the Deserts of Libya, to the jungles of South East Asia, to the United States and in more recent time the deployments of the 1990 Young Australians have carried on the traditions that were founded on the beaches at the Gallipoli landings in 1915.

Here the attributes of mateship, determination, comradeship and give to all, loyalty and a willingness to face adversity were cast into the Australians psyche. These attributes have, over time, become entrenched and are regularly reaffirmed by both ‘old’ and ‘new’ Australians alike as part of that which makes an Australians.

When I refer to people I refer to all Australians. Many have distinguished themselves at a national and international level. There are far too many to name but I expect we can all single out some person who has made an outstanding contribution to The Arts, science, technology, medicine, sport, social welfare or community development. These people, together with the ordinary citizen have worked hand in hand to build Australia to the great country it is today.

Yes, we are the lucky country. We owe that to our pioneers and founding fathers that set in place enduring principles. The challenge is for us to hand that legacy to future generations.

So in looking back at our achievements, let us certainly acknowledge them but in doing so be ever mindful of the responsibility we have to continue to build a better Australia - one that will continue to reflect our unique way of life.

Each year the League has the opportunity to honour individuals and organisations for their achievements in preserving and enhancing the Australian way of life. This is done through the presentation of Australia Day Awards. These are made available through the Australia Day Council. This year we honour two outstanding individuals who have through their position in the administration of state and sub-branch achievements contributed much to the veteran community.

Mrs Eise Daxon, Secretary of the State Branch Women’s Auxiliary has been a driving force in veteran’s welfare projects for well over a decade. She has played a pivotal role in co-ordinating the affairs of the many Sub Branch Auxiliaries throughout the State. Her commitment to her work has seen such diverse activities as hospital visiting, the distribution of Christmas cheer funds, social activities and other welfare projects well and truly prosper.

Mr George (Rip) Hayhow, long serving recipient of our second individual award. Rip has been the ‘face of’ the sub-branch and at age 92 years has no intention of slowing down. The example he has set to younger veterans and his commitment to the League has commanded respect from veterans and the wider community. He has great ideas for the promotion of the League on the Eastern Goldfields and with the support of his members it is certain his aspirations will be realised.

In making presentations to community organisations the selection committee focused on those projects that were leaders in veteran’s health and aged care.

Hollywood Private Hospital has, for the past twelve years, provided outstanding health care to the veteran community. It has invested heavily in the provision of services that are necessary for veterans to enable them to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. The Ramsay Group are leaders in the provision of health care and are great supporters of veteran organisations.

Finally, our own RSL Care (WA) deserves recognition for the manner in which it has focused on the delivery of age care to the veteran community. The redevelopment of the Menora War Veteran’s Homes into accommodation, hostel Care and now High Care shows a commitment to ensure our veterans - and the wider community have access to world class facilities.

Their commitment is State wide as projects in Mandurah, Bunbury, Dongara and Gemelton move from planning to reality.

Congratulations are extended to Mr Daxon, Mrs Daxon, Mr Hayhow and Hollywood Hospital and RSL Care for their contribution in making Australia the Lucky Country.

By State President Bill Gaynor

Professor David Wood, Hollywood Private Hospital.
The department will also need to address occupational health and safety, also health issues with veterans connected to nuclear testing. The focus on commemorative ceremonies will be continued, as it reinforces the publics’ perception of our veterans in the wider-community.

It is envisaged that in the next 5-10 years the number of veterans in our community will be reduced by up to 50% through natural attrition and this will require a staff reduction of 33%. To ensure the department continues to operate viably, it will need to move from an old federation style structure to a more functional model. This will ensure that there will be a presence in all Capital Cities with a Deputy Commissioner in each state. The department will identify particular functions that it need to balance to achieve a reduced workload on staff. The department will also need to reduce staff employed by the department. DVA will also reduce in staff by natural attrition.

Functional Policy Development
Service Delivery (this is the area where $10.8 billion is spent on services)

Corporate Services
Business Integrity (includes audit, fraud detection, risk management)

Commissioner’s Advice
An assurance was given by the secretary that no veterans’ affairs network office will be closed. He made a point that veterans were changing the way that they wished to communicate with the department. There were less veterans seeking direct contact with DVA staff at DVA offices over the country. This trend was caused by veterans to DVA remained constant.

It is anticipated the new structure will be finalised by March 2006 and go live by April 2006 as a demonstration of the 1st July 2006.

Membership and Youth Committee Report

The first month of the 2006 year has finished and I would urge all members who have not renewed their subscriptions to do so as soon as possible. The RSL needs the support of all ex-service men and women to help our veterans in need of assistance.

The National and State Cadet winners for 2005 visited the winners of their trips overseas, CSY Stuart Brown 71/AAC Squadron, one of the most popular, was invited to join the Royal Australian Air Force and was accepted into the service during January 2006. CDO Kyle Johnson, 723 AAC Squadron, will swing his leg and be drawn on the trip to Sandakan. Congratulations Kyle. Stu, a fine man, the Western Australian Branch of the Returned & Services League will be confident of some good results in the Year Programme for 2007. There will be a full list of winners in your parts. Our three State cadet winners will all be selected for the National Cadet of the year Programme and each and Territory will make their own selections and forward the names of the winners to the Membership & Youth Committee here in WA. We will be organizing their travel arrangements from here and the cadets will be accompanied by chaperones selected from ADF personnel. This will be a great experience for all the cadets involved and an incentive to achieve their best efforts to win a place on the trips. Many cadets go on to join the DAF and I expect their experiences as cadets would be advantageous to them.

The Air Force winner of the 2005 Queensland Est, 3 Wing, Townsville was the City of Albany 705, Spurgeon, well done Albany. The Perpetual Trophy, commemorative plate and a cheque for $500.00 was presented by Mr Frank Cudjoe from the Defence Credit Unit and Mrs Olga Gein representing the State RSL during the Australian Air Forces Cadets Graduation Parade held at the RAF Base Pearce on Tuesday 24 January 2006. It was a most impressive parade, the cadets were reviewed by Major General Ian Pedhlor AM ADC, Base Commander RAAF Pearce and the RSL President, and accompanied by the Officer Commanding Australian Air Forces Cadets Wing, Wing Commander Andrew Oram OAM. Many proud parents and friends were present to view the parade and presentation of awards. Bookings for the Welfare & Membership Trailer can be made by contacting Olga Gein on 08 9276 3403.

Denis Connelly.
The Official Opening of the Refurbished ANZAC House and The Presentation of Australia Day Medallions

The evening commenced with Mr Ray Ward, the Commissioner for the evening, welcoming those in attendance.

Invited guests, attending the auspicious occasion, included Justice Judith Council, Councillor for The City of Perth, Max Kay and Ms Norma Kay, Commodore Richard Shadders representing the Royal Australian Navy, Colonel Doug Webb, Lieutenant Colonel Stephen McCarthy from the Australian Army Cadets, Wing Commander Ian Petkoff, Commander USN, Mr Clyde Bowen, the Chairman of the Lotteries Commission and Dr Margaret Shrady, the Director of Medical Services from Hollywood Private Hospital.

Following the official welcome Mr Bill Gaynor, the President of the RSL, then acknowledged the role Sir Charles Court was to undertake, in opening the refurbished facility, twenty-four years following the occasion, on the 14th of November 1983, when he initially declared the opening of RSL State Headquarters, on the current site.

Lofty West was then recognised for the crucial element that their funding of the project had in ensuring that the RSL now has, for the first time, a class amenity, which will serve the League for many years to come.

Mr Gaynor then commented on the meaning of Australia Day, prior to the presentation of the awards, acknowledging that in order to be fair, everyone should use Australia Day as a time to reflect on the people, events and places that have moulded the short history of our young nation.

Bill Gaynor reflected upon his history recalling how, during the 210 years since European settlement, when the Flag was raised by Captain Phillip, at Sydney Cove, our country has graduated from a penal colony to a united independent and has acquired world respect for its military history, which has provided us with our identity. He expressed the belief that ahead lay a period of unparalleled expansion, which since the ‘Spirit of ANZAC’ was founded in 1915, we must maintain the tradition that were founded on the shores of Gallipoli.

Mr Gaynor said that it was on the shores of Gallipoli that the attributes of determination, courage, a ‘fair go’ for all, loyalty and a willingness to face adversity, were cast into the Australian’s psyche. Attributes which have endured and are regularly reaffirmed, by both ‘old’ and ‘new’ Australians, as a part of which that makes up an Australian.

Areas in which outstanding contributions have been made by Australians, including The Arts, science, technology, medicine, sport, social welfare and community welfare, were recognised by Mr Gaynor. The people, Mr Gaynor said, responsible for advances in these areas, together with the ordinary citizens, have worked together to make Australia the great country it is today. A ‘Lucky Country’.

Mr Gaynor concluded by wishing everyone a happy Australia Day, stating that the challenge for future generations, is to be mindful of the responsibility they have to perpetuate the legacy of a ‘Lucky country’, which was forged by our pioneers and founding fathers, so that we will continue to create a better Australia, which reflects our unique way of life.

Presentations were then awarded, honouring individuals and organisations for their achievements in preforming and enhancing the Australian way of life.

The League awarded Mrs Elaine Daxon, Secretary of the State Branch Women’s Auxiliary, an Australia Day Medal for her commitment to the League. Recognition of his contributions for the promotion of the League within the Eastern Goldfields was expressed.

Mr George (Rip) Hayhow, long serving President of the Kalgoorlie Sub-Branch was also awarded an Australia Day Medal for his commitment to the League. Recognition of his contributions for the promotion of the League within the Eastern Goldfields was expressed.

The RSL Memorial Band was also instrumental in the League’s promotion in creating awareness of the unfair treatment of ex-service personnel. The League considered there was unfair treatment to parade through the city each day, for the unveiling of war memorials. The band frequently added to the entertainment of families and groups using the facilities. The services of the RSL Memorial Band were devised to draw attention to our identity. The RSL Memorial Band, which was practising in the Supreme Court Garden building on Sunday mornings, Sir Charles recalled, to the amusement of those present, that Archibald Riley quickly dismissed the complaint, responding with, ‘You’d better get used to it. I am sure the congregation will enjoy the band more than your sermons.’

The unique relationship between Archibald Riley, who was a very active RSL member, with Roman Catholic Archbishop, Charles and Jewels Bubli Freedman, all respected World War I veterans, led the band to supply bugles for many occasions to the League and the community. Sir Charles said that Mr Gaynor considered that, other than for ANZAC Day, there was a requirement for the band to supply buglers for many occasions.

He recalled that Armistice Day was one of the occasions when the buglers of the RSL Memorial Band were required to play on every street corner within the city, at 11am. Whilst still a student at Perth Boy’s School, Sir Charles was given the prime position of the Town Hall in which to play, by the then conductor, George Melor. It was a position he maintained for many years, inclusive of the time he spent doing his articles as a chartered accountant. He was later to become a closely-friend of the band and which comprised of bands and buglers on ANZAC Day.

Continued on page 12.
Sir Charles shared with those present a little known incident, related to the time when he had been appointed a Minister of the Crown and was attending an ANZAC Day Dawn Service, at Kings Park, where he was to lay a wreath on behalf of the Government. It transpired that due to a transport mix up a bag was available but there was no jug for to play Last Post or Reveille.

Sir Charles suggested to Bill Lonnie, the then State President of the League and a senior member of the Premier’s Department, that he, The Minister for Industrial Development and North West, would fulfill the buglers role while Mr Lonnie lay the Government’s wreath. In the shadows of the dawn, Sir Charles believes, the substitution went undetected and no one, particularly the media, realised what had transpired.

When the original ANZAC House was opened, in the present location, on the 25th of March, 1934 by the Lieutenant Governor Sir James Mitchell, who was also The RSL National Band’s patron, the band also moved from the Supreme Court Courthouse building to the new facility. Practice was held in the new building every Thursday night and Saturday morning.

During this period the need for the demand for the band to assist with public protests had ceased as, according to Sir Charles, testimony of the League’s character, in times of peace and war.

The Listening Post - Head and heart insurance.

Sir Charles Court opening the new ANZAC House 14/11/98. Picture supplied by N. Turner.

Sir Charles Court opening the new ANZAC House 14/11/98. Picture supplied by N. Turner.

Sir Charles Court Premier of Western Australia opening ANZAC House 14/11/98. Picture supplied by N. Turner.

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Sir Charles Court opening the new ANZAC House 14/11/98. Picture supplied by N. Turner.
ANZAC House Refurbishment Completed

On the 27th of January 2006, former Premier and Member, Sir Charles Court AK KCMG OBE re-opened ANZAC House 25 years after he originally opened the building as Premier of WA in 1981.

The re-dedication Ceremony was attended by Board of Directors, guests and volunteers. The State Secretary Mr Shane Seers OAM JP said: "The results were very pleasing considering the long road that we travelled to get to this point".

"Sir Charles Court was the first to campaign to get ANZAC House completed. We are most grateful," Mr Seers said.

"Funding for ANZAC House was provided by grants from the Lottteries Commission, RSL (WA) own sources and from private sources for whom we are most grateful."

Mr Seers also thanked the staff and guests which hopefully members and guests will patronise and enjoy. "Mr Seers said: "It has taken two years to get to this point from drawings to the finished product, which hopefully members and guests will patronise and enjoy."

Mr Seers also thanked the staff and volunteers for their support and professionalism for what was a very difficult period during the building programme".

Mr Seers said: "The sub-branches and members should be well pleased with the results as these facilities equate well with similar quality establishments within the Perth CBD. Now (the RSL) have the opportunity to provide Board Meeting and Social facilities for members and guests and hope that they will view the role of ANZAC House in a new and exciting light for all to enjoy."

ANZAC Club

Mr Seers said that he was well pleased with the 'New ANZAC Club.' We have a completely new layout with a more sensible and user friendly floor-plan and in general a much more interesting club where there are facilities for small private functions to large full floor functions."

Chef Jan is more than pleased with his "new" kitchen and servery area. He has prepared a menu that has some old favourites along with some new exciting additions, for example a Gravalx Home Cured Tasmanian salmon served on gourmet lettuce, with avocado, tomato and dill mayo. All menu items are competitively priced and members and guests should be well pleased with the standard of food and service provided.

Chef Jan said: "As a way of making the ANZAC Club more of a 'club' atmosphere from early February there will be a buffet breakfast from 7.00 am - 9.00 am. Morning teas and coffee from 10.00 - 12.00 and freshly cooked meals from 12 noon." Jan also has a proposal for Alfresco Dining outside the club in the very near future.

Mr Seers said: "Everyone is working very hard to ensure that the ANZAC Club is a success with new facilities, new menu and an exciting programme for future events and activities."

For restaurant and function bookings please contact Tamara on 9287 3724.

Denis Connelly

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**How planning ahead can help you ease the pain of a family’s loss.**

**In the confusion and emotional numbness that follows when a person dies, it is sometimes difficult for grieving relatives to make decisions about funeral arrangements.**

Bowra & O’Dea Funeral Directors, wholly owned and operated in Western Australia by the O’Dea family for more than 110 years, is now offering a special service to RSL members interested in PrePaid Funeral Plans.

There are many benefits to a PrePaid Funeral Plan:

- You obtain peace of mind, knowing your family will not have to make burdensome decisions at an already difficult time.
- You have the opportunity to design the funeral service as you wish, and not as others would like it.
- You receive a price inflation guarantee.
- By taking out a PrePaid Funeral Plan you effectively “freeze the price” of your funeral costs in the future.
- Your PrePaid Funeral Plan does not become part of your estate and it is not subject to any administration.
- You lessen the anguish that those left behind may feel regarding whether they “did the right thing.”
- We will arrange an obligation-free appointment to discuss your personal needs. The PrePaid Funeral Plan can be paid in instalments.

**Special extras for RSL members:**

- Free extra limousine.
- No administration fee for immediate payment in full.
- 5% discount on selected coffins.
- Free standard Will prepared by Corser & Corser to the value of $100.
- Savings of up to $600 for RSL Members.

**For more information, call John Ranger at Bowra & O’Dea on (08) 9231 5100.**

PrePaid Division 406 Beaufort Street, Highgate 6003 Telephone: 9231 5100 Facsimile: 9228 4614
A team of Australian soldiers on Boxing Day 2005 won the military international cricket ‘Desert Ashes’ against their British counterparts in the Al Muthanna province in southern Iraq, batting up 178 runs in a limited 20 overs game.

The match was played in chilly conditions in the joint Australian-British base at Camp Smitty, on a concrete and matting pitch on an oval without a blade of grass in sight. The British managed only 112 runs before running out of time, despite a best-of-match score of 30 runs from Private Gaz Pye. The Australian XI was drawn from all ranks of the Al Muthanna Task Group Two while the UK line-up comprised soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment (2 Para) which shares Camp Smitty with the Australians. The AMTG has made up of around 450 personnel consisting of a headquarters, mechanised infantry and cavalry manoeuvre forces, a training group and quick reaction and sustainment forces. It is part of the Australian Government’s contribution to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Iraq. The AMTG has two primary tasks: – Assist in the training of the Iraqi Army so that they are able to take over the internal and external environment for the Japanese Iraq Reconstruction and Support Group (JIRSG) as they undertake reconstruction projects; and – Assist in the training of the Iraqi Army so that they are able to take over the internal and external defence of their country.

El Qantara – 13th Field

We had another good day out at the El Qantara RAEA WA meeting at 13 Field Squadron Karrakatta on 29 January.

This meeting was a little earlier this year and worked in with 13 Field’s training. We started with a group photograph courtesy of Brian Griffiths and that photo is at page 6. Our Colonel Commandant RAE WA, Colonel Geoff Simpson RDF told the story of El Qantara when the 3rd Field Company, AF came under Turkish fire on the Suez Canal on 3 February 1915, The Colonel gave us a synopsis of the Turkish attack by the Turkish VII Corps and the role played by the sappers. He then covered in detail the role of the 3rd Section of the 3rd Field Company who were recruited here in Perth. Excerpts from the diary of Lt Napier were read out and finally the names of the 3rd Section was read out from the original section roll book. Once again we remembered our own. During the meeting we approved the construction of a new memorial plinth on which to mount the new bronze engineers slouch hat. The hat is now referred to as ‘The Gomboc Hat’ after its creator. The plinth will be made in fine granite with an RAE hat badge engraved on its face and also the words ‘Lest We Forget’. We have approved up to $2500 for the plinth, however, the cost is yet to be finalised. It should be in place for ANZAC Day.

Boxing Day 2005 cricket match between Australian and British troops at Camp Smitty, Iraq

El Qantara – 13th Field

It’s Christmas at Scooters Australia!

$250-$500 off

This is Rosie’s Christmas present to you, at any Scooters Australia outlet. Genuine discounts off recommended retail prices on all floor stock scooters. Now till 31 January 2006.

Remember, we have the widest range of scooters.

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• BRISBANE • SYDNEY • MELBOURNE • ADELAIDE • PERTH • HOBART • 20 COUNTRY DEALERS

That man Flex, Billington is overseeing the construction. The members gave Ron Gomboc a standing ovation for his work on the hat and its gifting to us.

We decided to make a memorial to the late Warwick Broomfield our recently departed Senior Vice President and designer of our memorial. We are still working on the design. There were a number of reports made at the meeting including an update on 13th Field Squadron’s activities by Major Chris Lequatermaine the OC. There is a very good rapport between the squadron and the RAEA WA and in future we will structure our meetings to coincide with 13’s parade dates to ensure we grow that bond. WO2 Mick Durnin gave the members an excellent talk on the new equipment that is coming into service in the Corps. It was a chance for us oldies and bolds to catch up on the latest and as usual we read out the names of the new recruits. This year we will be going all out for more recruits and there are plenty still out there. We will be using the local paper to keep our association in the public eye.

Times are changing rapidly and we are all concerned that our serving sappers have the tools that they need for the future. The new Hardened and Networked Army will count for nought if it can’t get water to drink, or be able to breach a minefield to the engineers front or cross those rivers. Of course they must be able to keep up with the spearhead. It was good to see new members coming in and as usual we read out the names of the new recruits. This year we will be going all out for more recruits and there are plenty still out there. We will be using the local paper to keep our association in the public eye.
A few days before Christmas I received a package containing a Medal to me “For Service to Australia” from our Prime Minister, John Howard and the Minister for Veterans Affairs, Hon De-Ann Kelly. This has really touched me being so unexpected over almost 60 years ago.

I served six years in the Allied Forces, Australians, English and Americans who beat Germany and Japan in the 1939-1945 War and this will mark in remembrance the 60th Anniversary of its successful end. I have campaign medals from my military service which was followed by two years war disabled in hospital and medical problems ever since but for this to be remembered after over 60 years by John Howard and his Veterans’ Minister I think is something special and for which they deserve great credit. It could only happen in Australia!

East Point Military Museum

A Tribute to Silent Heroes
Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Fay Karamankais and I am the Manager of East Point Military Museum. I am writing a book called “A Tribute to Silent Heroes”, and I am looking for people who have served for Australia during WWII, either in Australia or abroad, and would like to contribute their stories to this book. This is a book to the many men and women who defended Australia in WWII. Many of them were never acknowledged, either because they did not leave Australian soil or they were not left in the record because they became war disabled in hospitals or were buried at the Northam District during WWII. Many of them have ensured our freedom for all the remaining days of our lives.

I am writing this book in memory of those who gave their lives for us, especially for those who have died in the war and who were not acknowledged. I want to give them the opportunity to share their stories and keep their memory alive.

I am hoping to publish the book in the nearest future, and I would like to invite you to participate in this project.

Please send me all the information you have about those who served for Australia during WWII, including pictures and documents that you have. I will give you a copy of the book for your memories and a signed copy for your loved ones.

I would like to thank you for your cooperation and participation in this project.

Yours faithfully,

Frank Hansford Miller

Medals Found

I’ve now returned 176 medals to us in the 6 months since you so kindly published the list last.

Send To – 1 medal

Camden – 1 medal

Of the 15 sets of medals recently sent to us by the RSL WA State Branch I’ve located free families and returned the medals.

The JM and Bar forwarded to me by the RSL VIC State Branch has been returned.

I’m not sure if you all have my most recent address. My contact details are now:

Lieutenant Colonel Glyn Glanwarne
105 Kapooka Dve
KAPOOKA NSW 2661
Ph: 0414 649 079

Thank you all for your continued assistance.

American Servicemen

If any reader has any information concerning a number of American Servicemen who died, in the Northam District during WWII and were buried at the Northam Army Camp, please forward me the information. The bodies were later exhumed and returned to America. It is believed that there were three sites.

It is also believed that the deaths were not related. It is a known fact that a large hospital fully staffed by American personnel was at Northam and also American personnel were treated at York.

T.D. Skehan F4994
Black Swan Theatre Company announced that Janet Holmes à Court has stepped down as Chair of the company’s Board of Directors as of December 31, 2005.

From its humble beginnings in 1991, Black Swan Theatre Company has grown to become one of Australia’s leading theatre companies and has now been targeted by both State and Australian Federal Governments to become Western Australia’s Flagship Theatre Company.

A great deal of the Company’s success has been due to the behind the scenes passion and determination told of its Board of Directors and in particular its Chair, Mrs Janet Holmes à Court. Her drive to promote Western Australian talent has been well known and highly respected both nationally and internationally. During her 14 years as Chair of Black Swan, Mrs Holmes à Court has seen the company present some of its most memorable theatre productions. Highlights such as Bran Nue Dae, Sistergirl, Tourmaline, Dead Heart, Corrugation Road (which won the Melbourne International Festival Award for two consecutive years in 1991 and 1992), The Merry-Go-Round in the Plains, Plainong and Cloudstreet have all upheld a rare standard of excellence, as well as demonstrating a strong commitment to the creative talents of Western Australia.

Mrs Holmes à Court will be replaced as Chair by Mr Richard Duldig. Currently Deputy Executive Director of the Australian Institute of Management, Richard Duldig has been a member of Black Swan’s Board for the past six years. He brings to the role of Board Chair a solid business and marketing background, which has included several years as Director of Marketing for the Western Australian Tourism Commission and Director roles in Sunra Vines, the developers of the Vines Resort at Blenheim. This experience will be invaluable to Black Swan Theatre Company as it completes its transition to State Flagship status.

Mrs Holmes à Court has released the following statement on her resignation:

“It has been a privilege and pleasure to have chaired the Board of Black Swan since its establishment in 1991. Many outstanding and original productions have been presented, and many outstanding performances enjoyed by our audiences in Perth, other parts of Australia and overseas.

In the outstanding administrative and artistic hands of Pamela Foulkes and Tom Gutteridge and their teams, and with Richard Duldig in the Chair and an excellent board in place, I feel Black Swan is ideally placed to progress to Flagship status. Rest assured I will continue my patronage of this company with which I am proud to be associated.”

Black Swan Theatre Company is proud to have had the support of such an illustrious Chair over the past 14 years and is honoured that Mrs Holmes à Court has expressed her intention to continue her commitment to the work of the Company as its acknowledged ‘Founding Patron.’

All media inquiries to:
Karen Herrmann
Marketing & Development Manager
Black Swan Theatre Company
Tel: (08) 6389 0311 Ext.3
Mobile: 0413 159 878
Email: karen@bstc.com.au
www.bstc.com.au

Black Swan Theatre Company

By Tom Weight, after Homer
Director Michael Kantor
WA Premiere
A Wesfarmers Commission
HAPPY NEW YEAR... THE ODYSSEY BEGINS!

The countdown begins to what is the most anticipated, locally presented, event at this year’s Perth International Arts Festival. Over three years in the making and exploding from its original confines of the Silver Jubilee Pavilion, The Odyssey is set under the stars on the Claremont Showground’s own grassy knoll, Higham Park.

With a cast of 11 local and interstate actors and musicians and a crew that boasts the cream of artistic talent from Western Australia, including Associate Director Sally Richards, Costume Designer Zoe Atkinson, Composer Iain Grandage and Choreographer Shannon Boll, this production is a tour de force on so many levels.

With this production, Director Michael Kantor brings the timeless story of the quest of Odysseus into a contemporary realm. The brutality of war, the seduction of oblivion and the search for home echo through the centuries as enduring themes. This modern telling of an ancient tale is framed in a dreamlike theatrical maze, a game which threatens to endlessly repeat itself. Expect a deeply theatrical interpretation of this fall of a king, a sensual ride from day to night, the sea to the shore, the underworld to our imagined paradises.

“This is an inventive, often inspired adaptation of Homer’s grand epic.” Herald Sun

“...a powerful, joyous and memorable meditation on the human experience.” The Melbourne Times

“...brave and ambitious...a satisfying, successful production.” The Age

“The Odyssey is sublime theatre.” The Australian

Venue: Outdoors under the stars Claremont Showground
([Enter Gate 5 of Glynlands Road, follow signs to Higham Park])

Preview: Tuesday 14 February 8pm

Season: Wednesday 15 February – Thursday 2 March
Times: Evening: Mon – Sun 8pm
Seating: Unreserved
Tickets: Book at BOCS (08) 9484 1133 or www.bocsticketing.com.au
Groups 6+ call BOCS Group Bookings on (08) 9221 0831 or mailto: groups@bocsticketing.com.au
The Odyssey brings together some of Australia’s most innovative artists in a theatrical work of epic proportions – don’t miss it!

Media inquiries to:
Karen Herrmann – for Western Australian inquiries
Mob: 0413 159 878
Email: karen@bstc.com.au

Marnie Karmelita – for national media
Mob: 0413 347 994
Email: mkarmelita@perthfestival.com.au

The UWA Perth International Arts Festival
Tel: 08 6488 8618
Mobile: 0421 347 994
mailto: groups@bocsticketing.com.au

The UWA Perth International Arts Festival is committed to the development of the local arts industry by providing a regular international platform to bring the world to WA and take WA to the world. Through a visionary sponsorship that provided the seed funding for the development of The Odyssey and four other new works, Wesfarmers provided the incentive the arts sector needed to think outside current financial and organisational limitations. The result is a new theatrical work for the Australian repertoire adding to the nation’s cultural heritage.

This Project has been assisted by the Australian Government’s Major Festivals Initiative, managed by the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, in annexation with the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals.

Women's Commission

The Listening Post

February/March 2006

16

Menora Gardens Retirement Village Update

NEW RELEASE

STAGE 3A APARTMENTS From $365,000

To register your interest phone
Keith Barrot 0411 885 824
Office 9246 5550
Pearl North Coast Seniors Own Accredited Agent

The Odyssey

By Tom Weight, after Homer
Director Michael Kantor
WA Premiere
A Wesfarmers Commission

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Email: mkarmelita@perthfestival.com.au

The UWA Perth International Arts Festival
Tel: 08 6488 8618
Mobile: 0421 347 994
mailto: groups@bocsticketing.com.au

The UWA Perth International Arts Festival is committed to the development of the local arts industry by providing a regular international platform to bring the world to WA and take WA to the world. Through a visionary sponsorship that provided the seed funding for the development of The Odyssey and four other new works, Wesfarmers provided the incentive the arts sector needed to think outside current financial and organisational limitations. The result is a new theatrical work for the Australian repertoire adding to the nation’s cultural heritage.

This Project has been assisted by the Australian Government’s Major Festivals Initiative, managed by the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, in annexation with the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals.

Women's Commission

The Listening Post

February/March 2006

16

Menora Gardens Retirement Village Update

NEW RELEASE

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A dedicated group of Australian entertainment artists spent the 2005 festive season performing a series of live concerts in the Middle East for Australian soldiers, sailors and RAAF personnel deployed to the area as part of Operation Catalyst, Australia’s contribution to the rehabilitation and rebuilding of Iraq.

The 2005 Christmas-New Year “Tour de Force” concert tour was sponsored by the Forces Advisory Council on Entertainment (FACE). FACE maintains the longstanding tradition of Australian performing artists entertaining troops deployed on overseas operations.

The Tour de Force concert lineup included singer Little Pattie (who is also Patron of FACE), country singer Beccy Cole, “Australian Idol” finalist Hayley Jensen, model Bessie Bardot, Adelaide comedian Lehmo and rock icon Angry Anderson. The performers donated their services to ensure the troops were not forgotten while on duty far from home. The artists on the Christmas-New Year “Tour de Force” had musical and vocal backing by the Royal Australian Navy Band. Little Pattie said, “I feel I’m here to continue a time-honoured tradition, which is of Australian performers performing for Australian forces no matter where they are in the world. No matter what your politics are, whether you agree or disagree about our involvement, it’s something every professional artist should do in their career.”

Little Pattie was just 17 when she performed for Australian service personnel during the Vietnam War -- the youngest Australian performer to do so at the time.

Tour De Force performance in Iraq

Australian rock ‘n roll legend Angry Anderson belts out a song and provides a welcome slice of Aussie culture and music on Christmas Eve for soldiers serving with the Al Muthanna Task Group in southern Iraq.

Applause from Australian and British troops for ‘Tour de Force’ entertainers who performed a Christmas Eve concert for soldiers serving with the Al Muthanna Task Group in southern Iraq.


Our girls in Iraq


Our girls in Iraq

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Little Pattie was just 17 when she performed for Australian service personnel during the Vietnam War -- the youngest Australian performer to do so at the time.
“A pilgrimage we hope will become as important to Australians as Gallipoli or the Kokoda Track”

Wandering through the several blocks of the old town in step back into the 1950s and 60s. At Sepalok, just a few kilometers down the road from the site of the PoW camp is the Orang-Utang Rehabilitation Centre, where orphaned animals and those rescued from captivity are gradually rehabilitated and returned to the wild. Much of Sabah’s rainforest has been logged and replaced by oil palm plantations but there are still pockets where its unique and often endangered wildlife can be observed in its natural habitat.

In an irony of history, the road linking Sabah’s new capital, Kota Kinabalu, formerly Jesselton, and Sandakan was largely built by Australian Army engineers during the confrontation with Indonesia in the mid-1960s. Like Sandakan, KK, as the locals refer to it, is something of an architectural time warp, though modern form and style are beginning to creep into new construction.

A must visit is the island of Labuan, a duty free haven. It is now an international offshore finance centre, Malaysia’s tax and financial centre.

Many have no graves and many graves are marked ‘unknown’, but thanks to the work of people such as Australian historian Lynette Silver, a few have been identified 50 or more years after their deaths. The names of those who have no graves are inscribed on columns within the cemetery, and I take a few moments to locate the name of Lieutenant Dan Galton, the father of colleague Barry Galton never knew.

Where once it was a place of beauty with a shared heritage with the people of Australia, the state of Sabah in Malaysia may be profoundly beautiful but was the scene for harrowing battles for Aussie diggers during WWII.

Requests for guided re-enactments of the three death marches timed to coincide with the actual starting dates of the original events.

They are remembered in a magnificent stained-glass window, which was a gift from Australia and dedicated on ANZAC Day this year, and in the regimental and family plaques which line the walls of the church.

Aussie diggers during WWII.
HMAS Darwin is a long-range escort frigate that undertakes roles including air defence, anti-submarine warfare, surveillance, reconnaissance and interdiction. The ship is capable of countering simultaneous threats from the air, surface and sub-surface.

Darwin and her five sister frigates Adelaide, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Newcastle were the first Royal Australian Navy (RAN) ships to be powered by gas turbines for its main propulsion. This, combined with a modern repair and replacement policy, has allowed both a reduced complement and a high availability for sea. Darwin can be underway from cold in 30 minutes. In addition, two forward mounted retractable auxiliary propulsion units provide a secondary means of propulsion plus excellent manoeuvrability in confined waters.

Darwin’s principal weapons are the Standard medium range anti-aircraft missile and Harpoon anti-ship missile, both of which are launched from the Mk 13 launcher on the forecastle. A 76 mm gun to counter both aircraft and surface threats is fitted forward of the funnel and one 20 mm Phalanx close-in weapon system for anti-missile defence is located above the helicopter hangar.

For long range anti-submarine tasks, Darwin is equipped with a flight deck and hangars for two Seahawk helicopters. The Sikorsky S-70B-2 equipped with a flight deck and hangars for two

**HMMS Darwin**

**Commanding Officer**

Commander Ken Burleigh, RAN

Ken Burleigh joined the Royal Australian Naval College in 1984 as a Supplementary Last Seaman Officer. After serving under training in Jervis Bay, Vampire, Derwent and Perth, he received his Bridge Watchkeeping Certificate in HMAS Swan in 1987. After a period of consolidation in Swan, he served as the Naval Navigating Officer in HMAS Gawler between 1988-1990, before serving in HMAS Stuart as the Executive Officer between 1990-1991. He qualified as a Navigation sub-specialist by completing the RAN Long Navigation course in 1991, before joining HMAS ADELAIDE as the Navigation Officer where he served until 1994. A short period as a Navigation Instructor at HMAS Watson preceded Principal Warfare Officer training in 1995, from which he was awarded the Sydney-Endim Trophy and AWA Sword of Excellence as Dux of the year. He then returned to HMAS ADELAIDE as the Navigating Officer until 1997 where he was involved in the Southern Ocean rescues of solo yachtsmen Tony Bullimore and Thierry Dubois.

Following promotion to Lieutenant Commander in 1997, he was appointed the RAN Long Navigation Officer at Maritime Headquarters, where he served until 1999. After a brief posting as the Officer in Charge of the RAN Navigation Faculty at HMAS Watson, he assumed command of the Darwin based patrol boat HMAS LAUNCESTON in May 2000. During his tenure, LAUNCESTON was awarded the 2001 Kelly Shield for being assessed as the most proficient patrol boat in the Fleet.

After leaving LAUNCESTON in December 2001, he spent 2002 at the Australian Command and Staff College and was promoted to Commander in July of that year. He returned to the Darwin area in 2003 and served as the Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander of the Australian Navy Patrol Boat Group. He assumed command of HMAS DARWIN on 1 July 2005.

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Darwin's Battle for Australia

By Rex Rewoldt
(Author Editor)

Darwin's Battle for Australia was first published in June 2005 and was again reprinted in August and September 2005.

The book is compelling reading, providing insight into the history of war on our own shores, which due to censorship imposed during the Second World War and extended for 50 years following the war, most know very little of the details.

The text commences by providing background information on the history, and development of Darwin and the events, policies and politics that were to impact on Darwin, its community and the defence troops stationed there.

Following the background information are graphical recounts and reflections of the personal experiences of those, to whom fell information are graphical recounts of experiences, which stated that two main things stood out, with only five rounds of ammunition and a .303 rifle, he reflects that if the enemy in the event of attack. In supporting the aims and objectives of their Charter, to ensure that the sacrifices made are not forgotten and that through education, future generations may have the benefit of the history of Darwin's attack and the relevance it has in evoking that the Australian way of life and heritage were preserved.

The text is well referenced, Australian or Western Australian of interest to those who prefer researched. Photographs of the entrance to a small pioneers cemetery on the outskirts of Rockingham, are one of the few groups of graves that could have resulted in an epidemic, incuring substantial loss of life.

Pneumonic Influenza, or “Spanish Flu”, as it is commonly named, resulted in over 110,000 deaths in England, 390,00 in America, 60,000 in Africa and between an estimated 5,000 to 10,000 in New Zealand, however, at Woodman’s Point Station, an isolation facility for the soldiers, medical and nursing staff managed to contain its spread within Western Australia.

This feat was achieved, but not without the loss of nursing staff, whose dedication and courage is commendable within the book. On the cover page is a photograph of an impressive headstone, marking the resting place of Royal O’Kane, one of the nurses who succumbed to the deadly influenza.

Military personnel infected with Pneumonic Influenza were, on arrival at Fremantle from the Boonah Woodman's Point, whilst hundreds of contacts, which had the potential to contracted the illness, remained in Gage Roads, incarcerated onboard the infected vessel. Medical and nursing equipment at the quarantine station were used. A total of 33 people were to die from complications incurred through contracting the influenza.

The book is well written and reads, Photographs of the facility enhances comprehension of the context of the quarantine station. The Boonah Tragedy will be of interest to those who prefer further research. The book is well referenced, Western Australian or Australian history. The text is well referenced, interesting and of interest, undertake further research.

HMAS ANZAC D150-D59-F150
and TOBRUK D37-L50

J ohn Golotta, the President of the Association would like to invite all personnel who served in the above ships to join the HMAS ANZAC/ TOBRUK ASSOCIATION.

(Previously the HMAS ANZAC Association)

PLEASE make an effort to find all the shipmates you served with.

WE NEED MEMBERS - from Od's to Skippers, with the intention of having a reunion in September, 2006 in Mildura

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Phone: (03) 9532 3672
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Mobile: 0417 592 123
Email: benhun@bigpond.net.au

Reviewed by Len Copley

THE LISTENING POST
February/March 2006

Off the Bookshelf

Darwin's Battle for Australia

By Rex Rewoldt

Reviewed by Len Copley

On Shaggy Ridge

The Ramu Valley Campaign: From Kainap to the Finisterre Ranges

On Shaggy Ridge recounts the little known, but dramatic journey of the men of the Australian 7th Division, whilst engaged in battle for over four months, against Japanese soldiers in the Ramu Valley, New Guinea, during 1943 to 1944.

Phillip Binding, in his first published book, has drawn on information, acquired from extensive research of records, the recollections of over 140 veterans and his personal journeys into the area, to construct a historical account, that takes the reader through the initial battle at Kainap through to the more back ridge, known as Shaggy Ridge.

The book relates the history of the campaign as the Australian’s battle to overcome Japanese who had entrenched themselves into the eastern side of the moundback ridge. A ridge, through which the author in an analogy, likens to the backbone of a reptile, or the spine of a creature. These fossilised remains have a fallen pre-historic beast, or perhaps a dragon. A ridge which projects an awesome presence reflective of its past and future. The ridge is comprised of a surreal terrain, with precipitous upper slopes that become hazardous, often times accompanied by mist, which lifts extremely quickly, leaving those who would use the ridge as mist as cover for covert operations, at the mercy of the enemy and rendering air support as extremely hazardous option.

The author has adopted an interesting writing style, frequently encountered in this genre. In his own opinion, the style resembles a factual narrative, which makes it extremely readable historical recount. The language is descriptive and interesting and the technical information moves along at an appropriate pace. Within the text the author has strategically interposed research reference sections, taken from transcripts of interviews, diaries, memoirs and records, which provide additional information and insight into the events and reflections of those involved and the bravery and fortitude inherent in the men of the Australian 7th Division.

On Shaggy Ridge contains relevant maps and photographs and is well referenced. The book is well referenced, interesting and of interest. Further research.

On Shaggy Ridge is recommended to all who are interested in either war or Australian history. It will be of particular interest to war historians, as many aspects of the campaigns are not widely known.

ISBN 019555359
Softback 244 pages
Published Nov 2005
RRP $29.95

Reviewed by Len Copley

The Boonah Tragedy

By Ian Darroch

The Boonah Tragedy, by Ian Darroch, is a Western Australian little known history of a tragedy involving World War 1 service personnel, at Woodman’s Point near Rockingham.

Today the graves of 11 of the 13 servicemen who died of Pneumonic influenza at the Boonah Woodman’s Point between the eleventh and fifteenth of December 1918, which rest on either side of the entrance to a small pioneers cemetery on the outskirts of Rockingham, are one of the few groups of graves that could have resulted in an epidemic, incuring substantial loss of life.

Pneumonic Influenza, or “Spanish Flu”, as it is commonly named, resulted in over 110,000 deaths in England, 390,00 in America, 60,000 in Africa and between an estimated 5,000 to 10,000 in New Zealand, however, at Woodman’s Point Station, an isolation facility for the soldiers, medical and nursing staff managed to contain its spread within Western Australia.

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ISBN 096445195
Softback 284 pages
Access Press (September 2004)
RRP $33.95

Reviewed by Len Copley
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Commander Warren J. Bairstow
CSC, RAN

Commander Warren Bairstow was born in Sydney, New South Wales on 30 August 1962. He joined the Navy as a Senior Entry Midshipman on 19 January 1981. While at the Royal Australian Naval College, Jervis Bay he undertook academic and Naval studies. After graduating in 1983, Midshipman Bairstow joined the newly acquired HMAS ADELAIDE to commence his sea training as a Seaman Officer. Following postings and award of progressive watch keeping qualifications in HMAS Ships GAWLER and SWAN, Sub-Lieutenant Bairstow was awarded his Tier One Endorsement qualifying as a Gunnery sub-specialist. Following a short stint as the Assistant Fleet Gunnery Officer, Warren spent the next three and a half years consolidating his warfare skills as the Gunnery Officer and later Operations Officer of HMAS Ships ADELAIDE and CERBERUS. This period included two Workup and Operational Readiness Evaluations and several international exercises such as RIMPAC 92, KAKADU 95 and IADS 94/95. He was promoted to Lieutenant Commander mid 1995.

Lieutenant Commander Bairstow spent the next three years at CERBERUS as the Gunnery Officer and finally as Officer in Charge (OIC). As OIC he was instrumental in developing warfare officer training into the Air and Surface Warfare streams. In May 1999, after designate courses, Lieutenant Commander Bairstow assumed command of HMAS GLADSTONE. He brought GLADSTONE out of refit and after workup evaluations became an active contributor to the surveillance operations in the north of Australia as part of OP CRANBERRY.

After a very fulfilling time as CO GLADSTONE, Lieutenant Commander Bairstow was sent to Canberra as a student of the inaugural Australian Command and Staff Course (ACSC) in early 2001. His academic and staff skills were further developed and he graduated with a Masters in Management (Defence Studies). Whilst on the ACSC he was selected for promotion to Commander and to the position of XO CERBERUS.

As a new Commander in January 2002, he attacked the challenges present in CERBERUS with gusto. After reforming the Command Element he concentrated his efforts on developing warfare officer training into the Air and Surface Warfare streams. Commander Bairstow assumed command of ARUNTA on 12 July 2004.

Seahawk Helicopter Pilot

Yes, it’s an original dog tag lost or misplaced at Nui Dat in 1968 by Noel O’Brien, RAR. How it came about was I went back to Vietnam in September 2005 with another couple of veterans and we organised a government escorted tour to Long Tan Cross and Nui Dat. Whilst at Nui Dat by the main entrance gate near Hoa Long we were looking at some big stones with 170 Artillery painted on them, still in good condition, when half a dozen kids approached us. These kids, around 10-14 age group, showed me this dog tag. I knew it was an original, so I negotiated a price of approximately $2 and the deal was done.

On return to Australia, I put the word out with a few veteran organisations and I traced Noel to Queensland. I asked him if he left it on the kids’ grandmother’s dressing table, but he assures me he didn’t!

So the mystery remains, but dog tags are keepsakes for most Vets and it is good to see a person get something of great significance back.

All I can say – it’s a small world!

Allan West, ex 7 RAR 67-68 Western Australia.
The Bush Whackers

Hello once again! As most readers know, I retired from the NSW Police Force in 1986. After a few years as a private investigator, Jim has taken to the job with keen enthusiasm and is already demonstrating both a familiarity with and commitment to advocacy skills.

With the recent renovations at ANZAC House, and the overhaul of the pre-existing telephones/changed numbers, Jim can now be contacted direct on 9277 3708 (the main office is 9277 3799).

As an interim measure, I will continue to circulate this - "The Unbeamable Wireless" column, as this has proven to be a fairly effective way of reaching everyone out our membership (and RSL Welfare and Pensions officers/volunteers working throughout the country). Subscriptions to this, as well as changes in the various Pensions and Entitlements "systems" as, and which will continue to happen, are, I believe, a topic on a very great many important topics to many veterans: the sometimes vexed matter of the Special Rate of pension, commonly known as "the T&PI".

I say " vexed " - because eligibility for this rate is not clear-cut, is often misunderstood and is often very complicated. Only the DVA (Department of Veterans' Affairs) group (and me and it is on the understanding that it is paid for. Unlike the other two agencies involved, I am not paid for the payment of compensation payments for an inability to work - i.e. TenSor - responsible for those who are currently discharged from the services under either the DFRDB or MSMS superannuation schemes etc.

The MCRS (Military Compensation and Rehabilitation Scheme) - which pays lump sums or reimburses a proportion of "lost wages" up to the age of 65 (when the recipient has to go on the "Aged Pension""). Both of which require regular "reviews" by medical specialists, to constantly re-examine whether or not the person remains unable to work. Any payment of compensation paid can be sustained - the DVA recognises that the person is permanently prevented from returning to the workplace. (Note: The DVA only looks at "permanent" conditions). In these cases, an "unemployable" person is one who has been turned down for employment in violation of the grounds on which the TPI was granted in the first place).

Meeting Section 24 of the Veterans' Entitlements Act (1986):

The Special Rate of Pension on the grounds of Total and Permanent Incapacity. He/she must be still involved with the work-force (even if terminated, not totally and permanently incapacitated; and whether his/her work potential is so limited that the veteran is unable to work any more, three people should be fully conversant with the disability/disabilities responsible for the reasons he/she can no longer work, and how it has impacted so negatively on his/her ability to continue working. The DVA expects to provide, a "Bush direct", sending out a very comprehensive questionnaire as to the veteran's state of health, and requesting a "holistic" medical report (ie: enquiring specifically into whether or not any orthopaedic, vascular/heart/lung dysfunction is present etc). These are specifically designed to help the DVA consider whether the problems the veteran may have - whether or not they are/have been accepted as war-caused.

Any doctors involved are enjoined to explain as to whether the veterans' disability, or disabilities, then the T&PI/Special Rate is payable.

Sometimes the DVA will refer the claimant to a Rehabilitation Specialist, for a systematic appraisal of which disabilities do or don't prevent him/her working. The veteran has to show that due to the loss of employment, due to accepted conditions alone, be/she is suffering a loss of wages or income. A self-employed person is required to submit the last five ATO returns/Statements of Profit and Loss etc for the last five years, reflecting as to how his/her health problems are preventing the veterans from continuing to work. These key people are:

- the treating GP/case-manager involved;
- the treating medical specialist(s) involved;
- IF EMPLOYED: the person's employer (who is believed to have personally observed the difficulties being experienced in the workplace, due to accepted disabilities alone).
- IF SELF-EMPLOYED: Any evidence available that confirms that at the time of the "loss of employment", as health as has taken its toll. Employed people, forced to cease work, may have had to exhaust sick leave credits; or gone onto interim Centrelink payments etc, as their illnesses progressed, leaving them unable to work.

Any evidence of all these developments should be provided to the DVA to enable them to properly and most accurately to sustain the claim for any additional T&PI/Special Rate.

Section 24 however, makes it clear that the loss of wages or earnings on one's own account, must be established. In this event, both the DVA and/or eligible Defence-accepted disabilities ALONE that have led to the cessation of work. THERE CAN BE NO OTHER REASON. If one's job loss came about due to a redundancy - or if the firm a veteran worked for sold out to a takeover company who retrench staff due to "unsatisfactory work", the TPI will almost certainly not be granted. The Act refuses to take into account such other variables as market forces, and the employee's own employment in a given locality etc; the reason the person cannot work is not only must the applicant be home to accepted disabilities only.

(O NOTE: These matters may sometimes be over-turned at appeal level - usually at the AAT (Administrative Appeals Tribunal). But this cannot be guaranteed.)

"Other" disabilities:

One of the most common impediments to payment of the Special Rate is the presence of non-accepted disabilities. If a veteran has one or more seriously disabling conditions accepted by the DVA, but additionally has one or more extra health problems NOT accepted the Special Rate may be refused. For example, it is shown that the veteran suffers from significant back or neck pain; or articular hips; or a psych condition that has been non-accepted or maimed - the existence of these further disabilities will obstruct the veterans need and desire to "return to work as the "ALONE test". Sometimes the effects of these additional conditions can be shown to be minor (usually non-accepted), the veteran does not want to be considered as "DVA relevant".

For anyone with access to the Internet, Section 24 can be viewed at HYPERLINK "http://www.dva.gov.au" Internet, Section 24 can be viewed at HYPERLINK "http://www.dva.gov.au" - Volume 1. It takes up only about 15 pages - but it packs-a-punch!

Indemnity Cover for RSL Pensions Officers and Advocates: Once again, I remind all pensions officers working out in the Sub-Branches - and I would like to express sincere appreciation for that valuable contribution you - that makes to the continuation of the "insurance" coverage, it is important to keep TIP training and "refresher training" up-to-date.

A Welfare Seminar will be held within the next couple of months, and this matter will be discussed fully and at that forum, your Vet Affairs Committee intends to compile a Master-list of all RSL practitioners in WA who are accredited for TIP work. As well as the then ongoing training needs to be updated, to keep you all protected/indemnified.

Sorry to have been a bit long winded - the Editor will wag his finger at me in disapproval - but some topics can't be summed up easily!

Keep on, keeping on, MARGOT HARNESS

THE LISTENING POST February-March 2006 23
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