RSL Australia Day Awards

From Left: Cadet Sergeant Ashley Duckling - Australian Air Force Cadets. Cadet Petty Officer David Thaxter - Australian Navy Cadets. Cadet Under Officer Hannah Walker - Australian Army Cadets

The Victoria Cross Library at ANZAC House
Page 8

STOP PRESS
Trooper Donaldson VC Marching in Perth ANZAC Day 2009
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Ceremony at Kanchanaburi
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9287 3707 0412 009 191
Snr Advocate: Jim Boland 8.00am-4.00pm Mon-Fri
9287 3708
Restaurant/Bar: Nigel Von Berghem Hours 9am to 4pm 9287 3714
Finance Service Officer: 9.00am-3.00pm Mon-Wed 9287 3703

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THE LISTENING POST February 2009
Welcome to 2009! I trust you were able to enjoy the festive season and are now looking forward to what will be a very challenging year. It was certainly a great start with Western Australian based SAS Trooper Mark Donaldson VC being named a member of an Australian Victoria Cross for distinguishing himself on the battlefield in Afghanistan. The RSL has offered congratulation and extended an invitation to him to lead the 2009 ANZAC Day March in Perth if he is available.

We believe this is an appropriate honour and will enable the citizens of Perth to express their appreciation of his outstanding contributions. The NSW State Branch is also pleased to advise that Trooper Donaldson is a member of the RSL at the Dorrigo Sub Branch.

Welfare Matters

On the home front it would certainly be a tough year as Australia is heading for tough economic times. With the current global financial situation it is obvious we will not be able to escape the fall-out that will impose much hardship on the population. As a veteran community we need to plan now for the future and prepare to support those who require assistance or are in necessities circumstances.

Sub Branches are generally well prepared to meet the demands with their Amelioration Funds and State Branch is able to offer support through The Aged Fund. There is also an alert to all our members to be fully aware of the deeming rate and be prepared to support those who require assistance or are in necessities circumstances.

Membership Renewals

We are delighted at the prompt response by members to the renewal of their membership for 2009. We are also pleased at the positive response to the Discount Booklet and assure you that we are currently sourcing new sponsors for the 10 renewal discount cycle. Council and Branches are particularly encouraged to provide this headquarters with the names of business people in their location who may be interested in supporting the RSL...

Tell us who they are and we will do the rest.

Reminder: Please renew your membership through State Headquarters. It’s faster than the Sub Branch Secretary of another administrative task!!!

ANZAC Day 2009

Planning for 2009 ANZAC Day Services in Perth is well advanced and details are in the process of being released to Unit & Kindred Organisations. Already sub branches requiring infrastructure support for their local services have been identified that is available.

Gunnifle Breakfast funding to Sub Branch and local community groups conducting Services will be allocated in early March. With the increase in interest and support for ANZAC Commemorative Services we are determined to see well conducted and resourceful Services are presented.

Deeming Rates Lowered

Many veterans with investment income will benefit from a lower income test. Deeming rates will apply from 27 January 2009. The reduction in the rate reflects the ongoing reductions in interest rates and the impact of the global financial crisis on investments. It is anticipated around 40,000 DVA pensioners will benefit when the deeming rate is reduced from five to four per cent for financial investments over $41,000 for a single pensioner and $68,200 for a couple. The deeming rate for the first $41,000 of a single pensioner's financial investments ($68,200 for a couple) will remain unchanged at three per cent - this rate was lowered in November 2008. The higher deeming rate will be four per cent for the balance of financial investments over these amounts. These changes are effective from 27 January 2009 and will be included in payments made from 12 February, 2009.

Lowering the deeming rate means that those part-retirees pensioned under the income test who have financial investments such as term deposits, shares or managed investments may receive an increase in their pension payments to reflect the reduction in their assessable income. Income support pensioners who are already paid at the maximum rate and those with financial investments below $41,000 (if single) or $68,200 (if a member of a couple) will have no change to their pension payments. Pensions paid under the assets test will also not be affected. This move acknowledges that many pensioners who partially rely on own-source income have been adversely affected by the global financial crisis, leading to lower returns on financial assets. DVA pensioners who would like to discuss their rate of payment should contact the Department on 133 254.

Insurance Matters

It has been drawn to our attention that our Volunteer Workers Insurance covered members undertaking voluntary work for the RSL up to the age of 80. We are pleased to advise that following negotiations with our insurers we have been able to put into effect an increase to the age limitation to 85 years at no extra cost. There are, however, Sub Branches that may require an extension of that 85 year limitation to a further period of perhaps up to 100 years. We are currently in discussions with our insurers to provide us with a range of options for Sub Branches who may require this facility. As soon as we have some details we will advise the membership and the Sub Branches of the terms that may apply and additional costs that may apply.

Australia Day Awards

RSL is pleased to announce the following Organisations and individuals as recipients of Australia Day Medallions.

Purslowe Funerals

Invocare Pty Ltd trading as Purslowe Funerals has provided funeral services to families of RSL members for many years. In recent times they have become a major supporter of the League and offer a dignified and quality service that takes into account the special nature of the requirements of the ex-service community.

Bicton Palmyra Sub Branch

The Sub Branch has, through its dedicated pension officers, consistently offered a prompt and efficient pension and advocacy service to veterans lodging claims with DVA. The quality of the service is reflected in the success of the primary claims and the satisfaction of the clients.

Mr Ross O'Conner JP

Ross O’Conner has been State Psychologist to the Pension and Advocacy Service offered to veterans lodging claims through the RSL Headquarters. He has been instrumental in dealing with difficult and complicated claims and personally following them through to their conclusion. He has led the way in pension officer training and willingly acts as a mentor to new and aspiring pension officers not only from the RSL but also from other ESOS.

New Sub Branch

We are pleased to announce the presentation of a Sub Branch Charter to the Turkish Sub Branch. Having finished its probationary period the group has demonstrated strong growth with a potential to expand its operations. The Sub Branch will meet in the East Victoria Park RSL. Hall after completion of satisfactory tenancy arrangements.
For most conspicuous acts of gallantry in action in a circumstance of great peril in Afghanistan as part of the Special Operations Task Group during Operation SLIPPER, Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan.

Trooper Mark Gregor Donaldson enlisted into the Australian Army on 18 June 2002. After completing Recruit and Initial and Employment Training he was posted to 13th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. Having successfully completed the Special Air Service Selection Course in April 2004, Trooper Donaldson was posted to Special Air Service Regiment in May 2004.

On 2 September 2008, during the conduct of a fighting patrol, Trooper Donaldson was travelling in a combined Afghan, US and Australian vehicle convoy that was engaged by a numerically superior, entrenched and coordinated enemy ambush. The ambush was initiated by a high volume of sustained machine gun fire coupled with the effective use of rocket propelled grenades. Such was the effect of the initiative that the combined patrol suffered numerous casualties, completely lost the initiative and became immediately suppressed. It was over two hours before the convoy was able to establish a clean break and move to an area free of enemy fire.

In the early stages of the ambush, Trooper Donaldson reacted spontaneously to regain the initiative. He moved rapidly between alternate positions of cover engaging the enemy with 66mm and 84mm anti-armour weapons as well as his M4 rifle. During an early stage of the enemy ambush, he deliberately exposed himself to enemy fire in order to draw attention to himself and thus away from wounded soldiers. This selfless act alone bought enough time for those wounded to be moved to a safe area.

As the enemy had employed the tactic of a rolling ambush, the patrol was forced to conduct numerous vehicle manoeuvres, under intense enemy fire, over a distance of approximately four kilometres to extract the convoy from the engagement area. Compounding the extraction was the fact that casualties had consumed all available space within the vehicles. Those who had not been wounded, including Trooper Donaldson, were left with no option but to run beside the vehicles throughout. During the conduct of this vehicle manoeuvre to extract the convoy from the engagement area, a severely wounded coalition force interpreter was inadvertently left behind. Of his own volition and displaying complete disregard for his own safety, Trooper Donaldson moved alone, on foot, across approximately 80 metres of exposed ground to recover the wounded interpreter. His movement, once identified by the enemy, drew intense and accurate machine gun fire from entrenched positions. Upon reaching the wounded coalition force interpreter, Trooper Donaldson picked him up and carried him back to the relative safety of the vehicles then provided immediate first aid before returning to the fight.

On subsequent occasions during the battle, Trooper Donaldson administered medical care to other wounded soldiers, whilst continually engaging the enemy. Trooper Donaldson’s acts of exceptional gallantry in the face of accurate and sustained enemy fire ultimately saved the life of a coalition force interpreter and ensured the safety of the other members of the combined Afghan, US and Australian force. Trooper Donaldson’s actions on this day displayed exceptional courage in circumstances of great peril. His actions are of the highest accord and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Special Operations Command, the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.

Personal biography of Trooper Mark Gregor Strang Donaldson, VC

Mark Donaldson was born in Warabah, Newcastle, NSW on 2 April 1979. He spent his formative years in northern NSW where he graduated from high school in 1996.

Trooper Donaldson enlisted into the Australian Army on 18 June 2002 and entered recruit training at the Army Recruit Training Centre, Kapooka, NSW. He demonstrated an early aptitude for soldiering and was awarded the prizes for best shot and best at physical training in his platoon. Subsequently he was allocated to the Royal Australian infantry corps and posted to the school of infantry at Singleton, NSW, where he excelled in his initial employment training. At the completion of this training he was again awarded best shot and best at physical training, as well as the award for the most outstanding soldier in his platoon.

He was posted to 1st battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, Townsville, QLD in November 2002. It was during this time that Trooper Donaldson decided to pursue his ambition to join the Special Air Service Regiment. In February 2004, he successfully completed the Special Air Service Regiment selection course and was posted to the regiment in May 2004. He was then posted to 1 Troop, 3 Special Air Service Squadron. Since that time he has been deployed on operations to East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq.

On 12 August 2008, Trooper Donaldson was wounded in action whilst conducting nightime operations in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan. He recovered from his minor wounds and continued on the deployment. Trooper Donaldson was involved in an ambush on 2 September 2008 in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan that resulted in him being awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia. He was invested by her Excellency the Governor-General of Australia at Government House, Canberra on 16 January 2009. Trooper Donaldson remains posted to the Special Air Service Regiment in Perth, WA.

On the 22nd January 2009, Trooper Donaldson VC loaned his Victoria Cross Medal to ‘The Australian War Memorial’ Canberra to be placed on display along with other Victoria Cross Medals in the ‘Hall of Valour’ Gallery for approximately 5 years.

Trooper Donaldson is married to Emma and has a daughter Kaylee. His parents are deceased.

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Discounts for RSL members and their spouses

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<tr>
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<td>SOUTH FREMANTLE</td>
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<td>Cnr Buckingham Drive and Wanneroo Rd</td>
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From the Bunker
with Denis Connelly

Portraits of Australian Heroes

I was wondering aloud to Mr Gary Sutherland who next to include in our 'Australian Heroes' and he suggested the 'I have a look at Aussie Osborn'.

When I started to gather my material of Warrant Officer Class Two Leslie Daniel Osborn MM, I was truly amazed at this soldier’s Military History in the Australian Army.

Leslie Daniel Osborn was born at Herne Hill, Englefield, in 1921. He attended Rosalie Primary School. When he was two years of age, he and his family, father Thomas and mother Violet Mary, older brother William and younger brother Reginald migrated to Western Australia.

Father Thomas (Tom) who had served in France during World War 1, and was entitled to take up an offer of free farm land in a Group Settlement Scheme near Karrakatta South Western Australia. Life on the farm was very tough.

In 1929 the Osborn family moved to Perth, the younger members of the Osborn clan attended Rosalie Primary School. As employment was hard to find the Osborn family moved to the Mt. Magnet Area, again life was very hard living with cooking from camp ovens, no ice boxes.

1930 saw the young Osborn family again back in Perth, living in South Perth and attending Forest State School.

The young Leslie left school before his fourteenth birthday working in a car repair workshop for Mr Fred Feakes. Although Mr Feakes worked hard and long hours the business still failed.

After the mechanical workshop failure the young Osborn went to work for Michedies the tobacco and cigarette manufacturers.

Early in 1939 Leslie joined the CMF (Citizen Military Forces) along with elder brother Bill and father Tom, who was promoted to Platoon Sergeant because of his past British Army Service. When war was declared on the 3rd September 1939 Leslie volunteered to join the 2AIF (Second Australian Imperial Force) regimental No WX46, Leslie Osborn joined the 2AIF on the 8th January 1940, regimental number WX1640. January saw Pte, Osborn at Northam Army Camp. After two weeks at Northam, Pte Osborn was shipped by rail to Ingleburn NSW as reinforcements for 2/11 Battalion. In early March 1940 Pte Osborn returned to Perth for further training in the Rockingham Area.

On the 20th April 1940, Pte Osborn unit the S.S. Nevassa. It was when the SS Nevassa arrived in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) that Pte Osborn discovered that their father was also on board but there was no contact as the Commanding Officer insisted that there was to be no contact between members of other units.

Upon arrival at El Kantara Suez Canal after further training in Egypt Pte Osborn’s Brigade, the 19th remained in reserve after the 16th and 17th Brigades spear headed into attack. It was not until the morning of 5th January 1941, that his brigade was called into action.

It was during this time in Egypt that Pte Osborn was wounded in the right knee from a hand grenade and was taken Prisoner Of War (P.O.W). It was the 25th May that Private Daniel Osborn was evacuated to mainland Greece, as his wound was not serious, he was one of the last to leave for Greece.

After being classified as fit he was boarded the S.S. Nevesa was off for a few days. It was during this time that Pte Osborn escaped only to be captured hours later. This time the German’s weren’t quite so forgiving. Now classified as a trouble maker his papers were marked as such.

The next train trip was through the Balkans into Ober-Silesia which is near to the Polish Border. Pte Osborn was sent to work in a Quarry, it was during this time that Osborn experienced the compassion of the German Guards and as Osborn himself quotes “that all Germans were not so bad”. But this was to come to end with the alteration with a civilian guard, he was once again returned to the main camp, Stalag SB, where he was sent to Solitary Confinement. After having served his punishment he was sent to a Strafe Camp, a serious punishment camp for serial offenders, he was set to work on the railways. It was at this time that Leslie was re-united with his brother Bill.

Pte Leslie Osborn, his brother, Gunner Bill Osborn and his father, Sergeant Thomas Osborn regained their freedom on the 24th April 1945.

After celebrating V.E. Day (Victory in Europe) in England and recuperating after his P.O.W experiences, newly uniformed Pte Osborn returned to Australia aboard ‘Acquitania’.

After the war, Osborn was demobilized and he worked as a Postman over the Christmas mail, and was offered continuing employment after the Christmas Break. Later joining the Public Service, at this time Leslie Osborn joined Como Sub-Branch RSL.

Korean War

In 1950 Osborn had received news that there was trouble about to break out in Korea. Osborn asked his younger brother to ring his boss at GPO and tell him that “I could not get in today”, with the day “off” Osborn headed for Francis St. Barracks, which was then Army Headquarters in WA and applied to enlist ‘Special Force for Korea’. He was then sent for a medical and X-Ray and was told “that he was sort of broke that the Army was looking for.” Osborn was told to report back the next day. It was the 8th August 1950.

After some training Osborn flew to Japan at the Australian Base at Hiro and joined the 3rd Battalion RAR, and was allocated ‘D’ Company. After further training Pte Osborn was shipped to Pusan South Korea, after a short train trip to a place called ‘Tague’, it was at this location that ‘D’ Company had its first Korean action.

Later action Pte Osborn was wounded in the shoulder, luckily there was no serious damage and in a few days Pte Osborn had rejoined his Platoon but as his shoulder had not healed properly due to his haste to rejoin his mates, he was evacuated to Japan for further treatment at the Australian Hospital at Kure.

After his shoulder improved Pte Osborn was again sent back to his Platoon, he didn’t have to wait long for his battalion to be back in action.

It was at this time the Chinese Army entered the war, and after the Australians had pushed all the way to the Yala River, the Chinese pushed the United Nations force, including the Australians back down the Korean Border. Pte Osborn was again hospitalised due to frostbite from the severe cold, as it was Christmas in Korea. As a result of his frostbite injuries Pte Osborn returned to Australia aboard ‘Acquitania’.

After about four months in hospital, Pte Osborn was finally medically fit and returned to his battalion, but this did not last long as the ‘frost bite’ returned and he was again sent home, class 4 medically fit, Pte Osborn was bitten about not being able to serve in an Infantry Battalion.

Once home Pte Osborn was declared fit for ‘Home Duties’ and transferred to Ordinance Corp and posted to No 5 Base Ordnance Depot (SBOD), Headquarters at Midland Junction. From here Pte Osborn was detached to Narrangin W.A.

While Staff Sergeant Osborn was with the 10th Battalion he assumed different suites from Secretaries of Sergeants Mess, member of Cricket team and Badminton teams between the local Fire Brigade and Police teams.

After extended leave, a result of leave accrued from a Tropical Posting, Staff Sergeant arrived at his new posting of Townsville.

Early in 1964 Staff Sergeant Osborn was sent to Ingleburn NSW, to do a Warrant Officer Course. This W.O Course was very demanding, being under scrutiny from Lectures and Officers at all times, where attitude to fellow students, staff, members of mess the usually “free” Osborn found this scrutiny rather difficult, of the 50 members who started the 17 week course, 30 members were
WO Osborne's first tour was almost over, he briefed his replacement WO2 Paddy McCellinias also a West Australian on July 1965.

After past embarkation leave, Osborne reported to HQ Western Command where he received movement orders for his next posting, 5 Training Battalion Singleton, NSW, then WO Osborne was again transferred as RSM ‘E’ Company Infantry Training Corp.

In 1966, Osborne was again agitating to return to Vietnam, but was told he had to be in Australia for at least twelve months before he could be considered for service in Vietnam. Veteran Search Result

Name: WO Osborn
Service No: 3134600
Date Of Birth: 20/06/1944
Rank: Pay Warrant Officer
Place Of Birth: Darwin NT
Corps: National Service
Summary of Unit Name(s) Start Date End Date
Australian Army Training Team Vietnam 25/08/1964 24/07/1965
Headquarters, 1st Australian Logistic Support Group 08/10/1966 13/05/1967
Australian Army Training Team Vietnam 08/10/1966 16/07/1971

Warrant Officer Class 2 LD Osborne MM was posted to 5 tours to South Vietnam: 3 with the AATTV, one with Civil Affairs Unit and one with Logistic Support a total of 1573 days in country.

Warrant Officer Osborn served in the Australian Army for 30 years, served in 2 wars, was a POW in Germany for nearly 4 years and was wounded twice in Korea where he suffered from two attacks of ‘frost bite’. As one of his colleagues from the AATTV said recently, “Ossie Osborn was a real professional soldier and a true warrior of the Australian Army”.

WO Osborn was a member of Bunbury RSL. Sadly, Leslie Daniel Osborn MM passed away on the 14th August 1999 at Perth, Western Australia.

References:
1. ‘As I Saw it’ Ossie Osborne as dictated to his daughter in-law Leach
2. AWM Canberra Act
3. ‘The Team’ Australian Army Advisors in Vietnam, author: Ian McNeil, Published by the Australian War Memorial Canberra ACT.

The Victoria Cross Library

Whilst attending a recent luncheon at the Armadale RSL Sub-Branch Mrs Nan Griffiths found that her late husbands 1948/1949 Presidential service had not been recognised on the sub branch honour board. On further inquiry Nan found the records for his period of time had been destroyed. But with true grit and determination she came to the Victoria Cross Library at ANZAC House, where a search was made of The Listening Post of the era. A record of the late Mr Griffiths service was found. This incident highlights the importance of maintaining records and keeping them in a safe environment.

The Victoria Cross Library has a collection of approximately fifteen hundred books and is growing. A number of donations have been made to the library which adds to the extensive collection of Historical Military publications. Each of the donated books will be acknowledged by a presentation certificated placed on the inside cover of the book. The library is in the process of having its books, information and memorabilia, accessioned and preserved. Advice has been sort from a number of experts as to the best way of preserving this invaluable and precious collection. A policy is in the development stage which will govern the best procedures for monitoring, preservation and security of the collection, when completed the collection will be available for members.

I would appreciate you giving this tour something to Earth Sea Sky Tours will donate to The MVAC Trust to support their work in aiding land mine survivors. Alternatively contact Earth Sea Sky (ESS Tours) and discuss other travel opportunities that may coordinate with this tour.

ESS are the only tour company that enters the now infamous “Mine Incident - July 1969” area and is lead by one of the Sappers that aided the clearance and evacuation of the wounded.

As well ESS personnel can talk at length on the Infamous ‘Mienfield’ and its consequences. ESS can also assist you to alter/modify your tour to suit your personal needs.

Contact ESS at: Ph 61 3 9663 5065 Fax 61 3 8625 0066 E: david@earthseasky.com.au W: www.earthseasky.com.au The MVAC Trust are currently working in Laos with our Patron Colonel Sandy MacGregor MC RAE (Rtd) seeking assistance in the BOD/UXO clearance of some 90 Ha of arable land. This clearance will be done in conjunction with Phoenix Clearance who have previously completed a partial surface clearance. In addition monies raised will be used to construct water supplies and schools in the Southern most Laotian province in conjunction with Japanese NGO.

For those asking about Vietnam work, we are planning a road reconstruction and drainage task in Kon Tum Province and negotiations on this are still proceeding, with Government and local bodies. For more information contact me via email at mivacnsw@gmail.com and I can suggest other aspects that you may wish to see that can fit into all or a part of the ESS tour itinerary. Should you wish to make a donation please go to www.mivactrust.org and follow the donation link.

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- Visa, Departure tax and basic personal travel insurance.
- Customised itinerary with flexible tailored options, including unlimited consultations with ESS Director David Armstrong during planning.
- Any and all research and planning undertaken by ESS to locate personal sites of interest not included in the existing itinerary.
- Special ESS Gunfire Breakfast and drinks at Nui Dat on Anzac Day.
- Earth Sea Sky departure pack containing trek shirt and hat for each participant to keep.
- Sunscreen, cold towels, insect repellent, bottled water and shade umbrellas provided daily.
- Tour DVD.
- ESS Newsletter containing tour updates and correspondence in the lead up to departure.

Correction

The Decorations/Post Nominals that were shown to both Major Leonard Opie and to Warrant Officer Edward Morrison where incorrect and should have read:-

Major Opie DCM, RFD, ED (RL) & WO Morrison DCM & BAR, MID

Denis Connelly
RSL Care WA is constantly looking at ways to improve and develop their services in an effort to make the organisation more accessible and relevant to progressive, modern day seniors – this approach has made them one of the most innovative Aged Care providers in Australia and the newest addition in the laundry has other Aged Care facilities watching on in anticipation.

Following on from the recent completion of the Aged Care Facility at Menora Gardens, in which innovative and new technology was used in the nurse call and emergency system, comes the inclusion of the revolutionary “Ozone Laundry Systems”. So what could possibly be so great about a laundry system – I can hear you all asking now… I said the same thing, but it really is another great benefit to being a part of the community at Menora Gardens (and quite interesting also!).

In this day and age, we have all heard much talk about ozone and while the naturally occurring effects of ozone can most typically be felt following a thunderstorm in the “smell of fresh air”, it can also be produced by man made means for industrial purposes. Although I could go into detail about the chemistry of ozone, I think the above description is probably a little easier to follow than the jargon of science and on a level that the majority of us can actually understand!

Dating back to the early 1900’s, the most common use - in a commercial sense - of ozone has been in the purification of drinking water and as the primary disinfecting agent in the bottling process. Following on from the success of the bottled water industry, ozone systems were originally introduced to commercial laundries in the United States in early 1990.

In these harsher economic times, companies are more than ever looking at ways to position themselves more effectively against rising costs - not only for their own economies of scale but also to keep their clients happy with better results. Therefore on further inspection of this system and following extensive research by the executives of RSL Care WA, it was decided this was the system to best suit everybody at Menora Gardens.

The uniqueness of the system starts with the design aspect. Dirty clothes come into a room and are then loaded into one of the three machines. Once the wash cycle is finished, the clothes are taken out of the machine at the exit point on the other side of a central wall in another room. This means that all soiled laundry and any bacteria is kept in only one area and away from the clean, which reduces the possibility of infection occurring and spreading.

Ozone has a proven ability as the most superior disinfectant commercially available in today’s world. It kills both bacteria and viruses at the most powerful rate while dramatically pushing down operation costs. The power and cost savings alone are two of the biggest advantages of this system.

Power savings are made because the wash water temperature can be significantly reduced from a typical 150°F down to around 90°F, while all other cycles can be run entirely with cold water. This also means that the conditions that employees are working in is a lot more pleasant, particularly this time of year!

Another important benefit worth a mention is the fact that the use of harsh chemicals is reduced. Many of these chemicals are known to be contributing cause of bedsores or pressure ulcers. There are many, many benefits to this system above and beyond those outlined above and simply put also include; a reduction of drying time, improved fabric quality, extended life of linen and better environment for employees. It is particularly reassuring to know that executives at RSL Care WA are constantly looking for and researching new and more efficient technologies and are prepared to be innovators so that their facilities are state of the art and excellent value for our hard earned dollar.

For further information regarding Menora Gardens Aged Care Facility, please contact Suzy Tillotson on 9436 2152.
How the years are flying by – I’ve just realised how long I’ve been writing this column. Thanks to those who give me valuable feedback and suggestions for topics of interest.

Welfare Seminar coming up:
On 19 February, there will be a Seminar and “workshop” at ANZAC house for all Sub-Branch Welfare Officers. Most past seminars have concentrated primarily on pensions matters, especially with respect to the Department of Veterans’ Affairs. This time it is intended to focus totally on the challenges that are encountered by those occupying the position of “Welfare Officer” and ensure that we share a common understanding of what sorts of help are available, especially practical assistance for those poorer members of our veteran and RSL community, who are often struggling financially.

Without pre-empting the sorts of topics that I plan to cover - because I don’t think “Listening Post” will be published before 19 February anyway – I believe it is important that every Welfare Officer is better briefed on the sorts of practical financial assistance we in the RSL can draw on. I am also hoping people will contribute their own ideas and experience of “best practice”.

In the meantime, several Pensions-related matters need an airing.

Demise of the proposed ACCESS Card:
Some issues ago, I wrote of the then-government move to introduce an electronic “smart card” to replace all government-issued Health Care cards (including DVA White and Gold Cards). This was to be a technically superior card – encasing a micro-chip capable of containing not only various ID details, but also a person’s health history problems, Medicare numbers etc. It was also partially designed to be more secure than what is currently in use, and prevent Centrelink fraud.

With the change in government however, all plans to introduce the ACCESS Card appear to have dissolved. Whether or not it will be resurrected later awaits to be seen; but it has certainly been shelved for the time being.

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We seek a volunteer Pensions Officer/Advocate at ANZAC House for THURSDAYS:
Currently, a valiant, reliable team of six volunteers (plus one “under training” – headed by the marvellous Ross O’Connor as co-ordinator, reports each day of the week (except Thursdays), to assist veterans, some widows, currently serving ADF personnel and ex-personnel in preparing claims for the Department of Veterans Affairs and/or the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Schemes. They do a wonderful job. Most go home after lunch-time.

Some prefer to work in pairs – feeling more confident if they have a colleague to confer with. Others are happy and prepared to work alone. Experience, together with high standards – have taught us that the most robust way to learn this quite complicated job is for a more experienced advocate to “mentor” a learner and show-them-the-ropes, as an adjunct to TIP training courses. It’s a little like the “Father-and-Son” system the Army used to use for officer cadets at OCS Portsea. The wonderful Norm Johnston (the sole RSL Advocate from 1984 to 1996) and Margaret Ponta (1993 – 1996) certainly took me under their wings and helped me greatly in my early days (as did Ken Littlejohn, who I am enormously proud of my protégé: Jim has turned out to be one helluva smart advocate! Jim tends to have appeals before the VRB and AAT, although is available to consult, guide and advise.

However, even the best get “burnt out” if burdened with too many demands and cases, and if would be hugely appreciated if one or two would step up to the crease and be prepared to take on the Thursday slot – currently vacant. If you have completed a TIP Pensions Course, and feel you could offer four hours on a Thursday morning – please ring Ross (9287 7310) or Jim (9287 3708) or me (9287 3707). It isn’t all hard yakka – we share a lot of laughs and there is a healthy camaraderie. Think about it, wouldja??

Until next time, keep on keeping on.

Margot Harness
Former Senior Advocate
The Bush Wireless

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Until next time, keep on keeping on.
Street Name Honours Digger's Contribution

Recently the Shire of Dardanup named a street in honour of one of our fallen soldiers from the Vietnam War.

On Monday the 19th of January 2009, (40 years to the day he fell), the RSL Bunbury Sub-Branch conducted a short commemorative service in Burekup to unveil a plaque dedicating Sykes Avenue to the memory 55431 Private A.R. (Richard) Sykes 9 RAR who was killed in action in South Vietnam on the 19th of January 1969.

The Plaque was unveiled by the Australian National Flag that was presented to the family by the Australian Government and paraded in Sydney during the Welcome Home Parade.

The service was held at 1100 Hrs on the corner of Sykes Avenue and Gardiner Street in Burekup. In attendance was Mrs Wendy Edwards (Richard’s Sister) and family members, our State President Mr Bill Gaynor OAM RFD, Mr Kevin Davidson MVO OAM, Mrs Nola Marino MHR, Mr Mick Murray MLA, Mrs Betty Murfit representing the Shire of Dardanup, Mr David Smith Mayor of Bunbury, RSL Members, Members of the Diggers Club of WA, Ex Service Personnel and local residents.

The assembled crowd of about 60, stood fast as a contingent of 9 RAR Assoc. marched up Sykes Ave under their Banner and halted in front of the veiled plaque and half masted flag.

After a welcome from RSL Bunbury Sub-Branch President Trevor Kenny, Mrs Betty Murfit gave a short address on the background leading up to the day, before dedicating the street to Richard’s memory.

9 RAR then unveiled the plaque and wreaths were laid in his honour.

Last Post, Ode, Reveille and raising of the flag to the masthead added to the poignancy of the occasion and completed the service.

Light refreshments were then enjoyed at the Diggers Club on Southwest Highway in Waterloo where a few speeches capped of a wonderful tribute in the true sense of “Lest We Forget”

Jeff Smith
Treasurer, Bunbury RSL

National Peacekeeping Memorial Design Unveiled

The winner of a design competition for a national memorial honouring more than 30,000 Australian peacekeepers was announced today. The memorial, to be built on Anzac Parade in Canberra, has been designed by Super Colossal, a Sydney based architect firm led by Marcus Trimpale.

The Australian Peacekeeping Memorial will pay tribute to Australian peacekeepers and their roles in more than 50 peace operations around the world since 1947. Australia has contributed to peace operations in a number of countries including Namibia, Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, East Timor, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands.

Australian peacekeepers have built a reputation for outstanding service in helping to restore order in dangerous environments and coming to the aid of victims of conflict.

We currently have nearly 1000 personnel engaged in nine peace operations overseas. Australians involved in peacekeeping operations come from the Australian Defence Force, federal and state police forces, and Australian Government agencies. It is important we acknowledge contribution our peacekeepers make to security in our region, and the world. This memorial will be a tangible reminder of what our peacekeepers have achieved, particularly those who have lost their lives while peacekeeping.

Now the winning design is selected, the memorial committee will focus on raising enough money to get the project underway.

The Australian Government has committed $200,000 but more is still needed.

The memorial will cost $3.5 million and we encourage Australians to give generously to ensure the efforts of our peacekeepers are honoured through this memorial.

For details on how to make a donation visit www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au/donations.php
The Duke: A Hero's Hero at Sandakan – Captain Lionel Matthews C, MC

A book on one of Australia’s greatest World War II war heroes is to be launched in Adelaide on April 10th by His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC, CSC, RANR, Governor of South Australia.

The Duke is the biography of Captain Lionel Matthews GC, MC, a South Australian who was executed by the Japanese in 1944 for his leadership of the underground movement in Borneo’s infamous Sandakan prison camp. The foreword to the book has been written by General Peter Cosgrove, AC MC (Retd).

The author, David Matthews, a newspaper journalist for 48 years, said yesterday the biography of his father had taken him three-and-a-half years to research and write.

“At times it was a very difficult task, especially the chapter which deals with the brutal treatment handed out to my father by his Japanese captors in Sandakan and Kuching.”

Captain Matthews was tortured daily for eight months before he was executed on March 2, 1944, along with eight natives who were members of the underground movement in July, 1943.

For his brave conduct and resistance to the Japanese while under torture, Matthews was posthumously awarded the George Cross in 1947. He had already won the Military Cross for bravery at Gemas and on Singapore Island during the ill-fated Malayan campaign.

Matthews is the only Australian serviceman to have won both of these decorations.

Two of Matthews’s original members of his 8th Division Signals section will be present at the launch. Cecil ‘Snow’ Marsh and Max Robinson are travelling from Cairns and Melbourne respectively as a mark of respect for their former section commander. They are the last remaining members of Matthews’s E section.

Along with the rest of the Australian 8th Division, they were captured at the fall of Singapore and interned in Changi Prison. Marsh was later sent to Japan, and Robinson became one of those hapless Australians who slaved on the Thai-Burma Railway.

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The Duke is for sale at Dymocks and Angus & Robertson (Adelaide) or through the author on (08) 8278 1882 or by email at shedave@bigpond.net.au. It can be bought for $35 plus $3.45 postage, (card facilities are available through the publisher Seaview Press at 8242 0666 or fax 8242 0333). A special price of $25 (plus postage) is being offered to any former POWs.
Australia Day Awards at ANZAC House

On Friday 23rd January 2009, RSL (WA) held its annual Australia Day awards evening at ANZAC House, Gallipoli Room, Perth.

This year the Presentation of Australia Day Medallions held in conjunction with Semester 1 of the Year Awards, a RSL Charter Presentation and a Book Launch.

Mr Richard Carter opened the Ceremony by welcoming dignitaries, Cadets and members throughout the Sub Branches.

The President of RSL (WA) Mr William Gaynor OAM RDF, welcomed all to the ‘ANZAC House’ and to the Award Evening.

Mr Gaynor spoke briefly of how fortunate we are to be an Australian and living in this part of Australia at this time. Mr Gaynor spoke of “how through hard work, sacrifice and commitment to their country, Australian veterans have been one of the most progressive countries in an ever changing world”, Mr Gaynor also spoke of our influence in the world, “our influence on the world stage is spread throughout the nations of the world”.

Mr Gaynor also laid praise on our heroes, our volunteers, our quiet achievers “and many Australians who give their time and energy to make our home what it is today”.

Mr Gaynor spoke of the great Australian quality of mateship with the example of Trooper Donaldson VC, who recently placed himself at high risk to save a fellow human being from certain death.”

Mr Gaynor spoke of how Australians should be proud of Australians achievements from the fields of Athletics, Medical research, environmental research and technology where “Australia’s initiatives have paved the way for the development of a lifestyle that will result in a quality of life that will benefit everyone”. Mr Gaynor said that “with harsh economic times ahead, what better time to support each other in building a society that will be the envy of the rest of the world.”

Finally Mr Gaynor asked the audience to reflect on the Australian National Anthem, to understand and hear the words.

Headquarters. He has been instrumental by the presentation of Australia Day Medallions, where Mr Gaynor presentedawards to:

Purslowe Funeral Invoices Pty Ltd trading as Purslowe Funeral Services has provided funeral services to families of RSL members for many years. In recent times they have become a major supporter of the League and offer a dignified and quality service that takes into account the special nature of the requirements of the ex-service community.

Binton Palmyra Sub Branch - The Sub Branch has, through its dedicated pension officers, consistently offered a prompt and efficient pension and advocacy service to veteran lodgers claims with DVA. The quality of the service is reflected in the success of the primary claims and the satisfaction of the clients.

Mr Ross O’Conner JP - Ross O’Conner has been a longtime member of the Pension and Advocacy Service offered to veterans lodging their claims through the RSL Headquarters. He has been instrumental in dealing with difficult and complicated claims and personally following them through to their conclusion. He has led the way in pension officer training and willingly acts as a mentor to new and aspiring pension officers not only from the RSL but also from other DVA’s.

Also being presented at this function was The Charter to our most recent Sub-Branch in WA, where Mr Gaynor said, “I am pleased to announce the presentation of a Sub Branch Charter to the Turkish Sub Branch. Having finished its probationary period the group has demonstrated strong growth with a potential to expand its operations. The Sub Branch will meet in the East Victoria Park RSL Hall after completion of satisfactory tenancy arrangements.”

501 Army Cadet Unit presented the Charter on behalf of Turkish Sub-Branch members.

Mr Richard Carter then introduced the next item which was the Presentation of Awards to successful Service Cadets by Mr Oliver Lawler, Chair Membership and Youth Affairs.

Mr Lovelle introduced the following deserving winners.

**CADET UNDER OFFICER HANNAH WALKER**

**Australian Army Cadets**

Cadet Under Officer Hannah Walker joined 501 Army Cadet Unit in Como in 2003 and completed the Junior NCO’s Course in 2005. She was promoted to CPL later in that year and in 2006 following the successful completion of the SNCO’s Course was promoted to SGT.

In January 2007 she attended and completed the Cadet Under Officers Course and in March of that year was appointed as Company Commander of 501 Army Cadet Unit Como.

She has exhibited outstanding leadership skills and throughout the various courses undertaken in the Cadet Under Officer Course. As a mentor to junior cadets she has served with distinction as Platoon Commander and Instructor. She takes her responsibilities seriously and works tirelessly with cadets to achieve outstanding results. She is highly motivated and has aspirations to achieve a personal goal of being the Regional CUO for the Western Australian Army Cadet Brigade and able to give back to a system that has given her so many wonderful opportunities and life experiences.

**CADET SERGEANT ASHLEY DUCKLING**

**Australian Air Force Cadets**

Cadet Sergeant Ashley Duckling joined the Australian Air Force Cadets in 2004 and is currently the Senior Cadet and Cadet of the Year and Most Efficient Cadet. He is totally committed to the Naval Cadet movement and has been an active participant in many leadership and training activities.

Following success in his basic training he excelled in the area if leadership and acquired skills that he put to good use. He came to notice during his participation in the Senior Cadets Course and was eventually promoted to Cadet Petty Officer in April, 2008.

During his career he has been selected for a full range of cadet training activities. He was involved in a Cadet exchange trip to Darwin which included a sea trip on HMAS ALBANY.

Cadet Petty Officer is proficient in First Aid and has qualifications in many seamanship skills. These have placed him well in his leadership role.

His achievements at TS CANNING include Cadet of the Year and Most Efficient Cadet. He was nominated for RSL Cadet of the Year in 2005, 2006, 2007 and now 2008. In addition he was the TS CANNING Navy League Leadership Award Winner in 2006.

**Other Cadets with outstanding results:**

Air Force

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Alexander Hawkins</td>
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<td>Alexander Torres</td>
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Cased Efficiency Trophy.

The 2008 Awards have been finalized and the following groups have been awarded the Annual and Five Years Service Trophy and a cash prize of $1000 jointly donated by RSL and Australian Defence Credit.

Navy: TS VANCOUVER

Army: Christ Church Grammar School

Air Force: 723 SQN Joondalup

Mr Lovelle concluded his address by saying “For those with this year’s still keeping trying, someone has to win next year”.

Finally the President Mr Gaynor welcomed Associate Professor Mr John Stephens BA Arch (Hons.), PhD R.A.I.A from Curtin University to announce the Book Launch of the book “The Importance and Care Of Western Australian War Memorials”. Professor Stephens, thanked Mr Gaynor for the opportunity to Launch this book at this forum, and spoke that the book “was a result of collaboration between Curtain University and the Returned and Services League in Western Australia”. Professor Stephens spoke how important it is to protect and maintain existing War Memorials, create new ones as these memorials are a important part of the Australian Heritage.

As Professor Stephens states on the rear page of his book “The Importance and Care of War Memorials” War memorials are an important part of our landscape, history and heritage. They are physical reminders of the service and sacrifice of men and women in times of war and in helping to maintain world peace and stability. Whether war memorials are old or new they help us to understand who we are as a nation and what Australian cultural values may chose to project to the world at large. They are the focus of sorrow and grief for those that suffered and died, as much as frustration and anger at the waste and futility of wars. As such, they deserve our respect as significant Australian Heritage. This book explains the history and place of war memorials in Western Australia and provides guidance for their research and protection.

The Remembering the Wars project at Curtin University of Technology aims to raise awareness of the importance of war memorials in Western Australia and promote their protection and care. The project is supported by the Returned and Services League of Australia WA Branch Inc., The Australian Research Council and Curtin University of Technology.

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The LISTENING POST February 2009

THE PRESENTATION OF AUSTRALIA DAY MEDALLIONS, CADET OF THE YEAR AWARDS, BOOK LAUNCH & PRESENTATION OF TURKISH SUB-BRANCH CHARTER.
AUSTRALIA DAY MEDALLIONS, CADET OF THE YEAR AWARDS, BOOK LAUNCH & PRESENTATION OF TURKISH SUB-BRANCH CHARTER
**2/3 Machine Gun Battalion**

Here is a copy of what I am told is the original photograph of all but one of the surviving Western Australian members of the 2nd/3rd Machine Gun Battalion. Apparently taken in late 1945, at or about the end of The World War and shortly after their time(s) as Prisoners of War of the Imperial Japanese Army.

Although several of these wonderful men are still alive (one, who is 98 this year, still regularly attends his local church), regrettably the late Keith Flanagan OAM, who was a unique and well known West Aussie is not in the photo.

A significant majority of RSLWA Members may have never seen this photograph. May I respectfully commend it to you for inclusion in an issue of The Listening Post? Perhaps after Christmas we may each pause again, even for a moment, and show our respect for a special breed of men.

Most sincerely,
Roger Tingley

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**RAAF MIA - Canberra Bomber Incident 3rd Nov 1970**

Information is being sought from Maj Jack Thurgar - Defence (Army) into the RAAF MIA as detailed below. Any details can be passed to Jack Thurgar on email: jack.thurgar@defence.gov.au

Of interest, it should be noted that Jim Bourke AATT and Operation Aussies Home were the real instrument into locating three of the four Army MIA.

It was only after their successes that the Department of Defence really got involved and located the last MIA.

Hopefully, sometime in the future, the two airmen will be located and brought back home. This information has also been sent to our US of A allies.

Take care and Persevere, Rick Australia had four soldiers and two airmen listed as MIA from the Vietnam War. Army has repatriated its four soldiers and brought them home.

Air Force has now asked the Army investigative team to help them find their two man crew from a Canberra Bomber aircraft (a/c) very similar to a B-57, which was lost in Nam Giang District, Quang Nam Province (approx. 65km south-west of Da Nang) on the night of 3 Nov 1970. (2022 hours local).

The Last Known Position (LKP) of the a/c was about 17km due West of now Thanh My town (formerly known as My Hiap). The a/c had completed its bomb run, received voice confirmation of the target details from the Milky operator located at Phu Bai (near Da Nang) and had turned for home when all contact and radar trace of the a/c was lost. The Milky operator stated that the bombing mission had been in support of 1 ARVN. (voice tape transcript)

I need to establish if the Milky operator meant 1 ARVN Division or 1 ARVN Regiment. There is a big difference. It appears from records kept that 1 ARVN Division was North of the 16th parallel and this mission was flown just South of the 16th parallel as at Nov 1970. Additionally, can anyone comment on whether the 2 ARVN Division was located below the 16th parallel on the 3 Nov 1970? I also believe the 1st US Marine Division operated in Quang Nam province in Nov 1970. Can anyone give me feedback on that.

Given that the area of the LKP of the a/c was in the West of Quang Nam province, in a remote mountainous region, it seems more likely that the target which was reportedly a ‘known enemy position’ may have been called in by LRRP, CIDG or SF team. In this case I need to determine who called in the mission.

I would really like to talk to by email or telephone to any of your members who served in Quang Nam Province who may know something of the target acquisition, crash, or of the finding of parts of a crashed a/c, or even of the reported finding of bodies, in the jungle from 1970 onwards. (there is always scuttlebutt after the event).

If you should learn of anyone who can help, can you please have them contact me either by email (Best Option) Email address is: jack.thurgar@defence.gov.au or by telephone on +61 439 610 913. I will return their call if they give me their contact phone number.

Thank you very much.
Regards Jack Thurgar

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Kalgoorlie - ANZAC Day Dawn Service

Lyn and I attended the War Memorial at Kalgoorlie along with thousands of others who braved the cold morning to show our respects for our fallen war heroes.

It was dark and quiet and almost eerie. We couldn’t see much, least of all the cenotaph and the proud statue it holds aloft.

The pipes played in the distance and the parade arrived.

The RSL President walked up to the microphone, spoke, but unfortunately the PA had failed. Everyone came to his rescue but the PA wouldn’t budge. Bugger!
He raised his voice but the crowd was too large for the voice of one man.

Then the trumpet played The Last Post and Reveille, and we retired to the RSL Club for the traditional gunshot breakfast.

On the way home, I said to Lyn that that would be the last time that the ANZAC Dawn service would be like that. In fact, I was quite angry since the “with and all” of PA systems is within the capacity of my radio, and it is of thousands of others stood there on ANZAC day and had to endure the pain of that demeaning failure.

I met with the RSL President the next day. We agreed that we need a mains powered PA system that would reach the thousands that gather at the memorial.

It took months of work, planning and meetings by all the appropriate experts, and power reached the memorial a few weeks before ANZAC Day 2007.

In the ensuing months, I hired a large PA system locally and tested it at the memorial a week to the power was turned on. Also at the same time, various lights were loaned and given by RSL and others with the idea of lighting the memorial.

ANZAC Day 2007 featured a professional PA system and temporary lighting illuminating the memorial for the first time in its history. The thousands who gathered could hear the speeches and see the memorial that glowed in the cold early morning light. The overall effect was astounding. Clearly, this was our future.

In fact it was so effective that the crowd formed a large circle around the memorial that covered Forrest Street. This had never happened before. Prior to that, the gathering assembled on the railway station car park area between the footbridge and the old goods sheds.

Between ANZAC Day 2007 and 2008, I continued testing various lights. Then we received one light that was completely different to everything else. Its light envelope lit the cenotaph like no other light that we tested. Unfortunately we had the only one of these lights in Australia and we needed four. The three remaining lights were 5 months away, and I received them a week before ANZAC Day 2008. The temptation to cut up the grassed area around the cenotaph to install these lights ready for ANZAC Day was very tempting, but common sense prevailed and this happened a few days after.

On Tuesday, 23 September at dusk, a short ceremony was conducted by the RSL at the War Memorial for the official turning on of the War Memorial lights. There was be a few short speeches and refreshments for our guests.

On behalf of the RSL, I sincerely thank everyone who have contributed intelligence, goods and services to what has eventuated as a very valuable and worthwhile RSL and community project.

We are aware of a recent Federal Government initiative to strike a national register of national monuments. We would like to know more about this.

Prior to this project, I was not a member of the RSL even though I have done military service. I now serve on what ever projects they are doing.

My F-1-L saw overseas service and we always made a big fuss of him on ANZAC Day.

Thanks for taking an interest in our branch and our memorial.

You can publish a bit of the above if it is useful content to support the picture.

Murray Joyce

SANDAKAN MEMORIAL TOUR of BORNEO August 2009

I was fortunate to have taken part in the Sandakan Memorial Day on 15 August 2008. At the event I had a chat with the Hon. Alexander Downer, one of the key presenters on the day, who expressed that he found the ceremony very moving particularly in memory of his father who unknown to many of us had been a Prisoner of War in Changi, Singapore.

The very professionally conducted ceremony was attended by both young and old local Borneo people who celebrated their current freedom due to the Australian and British who stood by their side in 1945. I also met a local man who survived the Death Marches.

Jeff Rainsford, Managing Director, SPECIALISED TRAVEL

My company has designed a tour to Sandakan for 2009 to celebrate:

SANDAKAN MEMORIAL DAY on 15 AUGUST 2009

Download a brochure from our web site www.specialisedtravel.com.au, or phone to have one posted or emailed to you. This 10 day tour enables you to take part in the Ceremony, and see Borneo at leisure plus a shop-over in Kuala Lumpur with an escort.

The tours include: International airfares, airport transfers, deluxe accommodation, daily breakfasts, three lunches and four dinners, and fully escorted tours.

$2,890 per person / twin share basis, plus taxes of $420 (as of January 2009)
Departs 9th August from ADELAIDE, PERTH, BRISBANE, MELBOURNE and SYDNEY.

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250 Anzac Highway, Plympton, SA 5038
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Phone: (08) 8371 5540
mail@specialisedtravel.com.au
Lucky Treasure ....

Even if you don’t have pets you will really like this.

Mary and her husband Jim had a dog named ‘Lucky’. Lucky was a real character. Whenever Mary and Jim had company come for a weekend visit they would warn their friends to not leave their luggage open because Lucky would help himself to whatever struck his fancy. Inevitably, someone would forget and something would come up missing.

Mary or Jim would go to Lucky’s toy box in the basement and there the treasure would be, amid all of Lucky’s other favorite toys. Lucky always stashed his finds in his toy box and he was very particular that his toys stay in the box.

It happened that Mary found out she had breast cancer. Something told her she was going to die of this disease....in fact, she was just sure it was fatal.

She scheduled the double mastectomy, fear riding her shoulders. The night before she was to go to the hospital she cuddled with Lucky. A thought struck her...what would happen to Lucky? Although the three-year-old dog liked Jim, he was Mary’s dog through and through. If I die, Lucky will be abandoned, Mary thought. He won’t understand that I didn’t want to leave him. The thought made her sadder than thinking of her own death.

The double mastectomy was harder on Mary than her doctors had anticipated and Mary was hospitalized for over two weeks. Jim took Lucky for his evening walk faithfully, but the little dog just drooped, whining and miserable.

Finally the day came for Mary to leave the hospital. When she arrived home, Mary was so exhausted she couldn’t even make it up the steps to her bedroom. Jim made his wife comfortable on the couch and left her to nap. Lucky stood watching Mary but he didn’t come to her when she called. It made Mary sad but sleep soon overcame her and she dozed.

When Mary woke for a second she couldn’t understand what was wrong. She couldn’t move her head and her body felt heavy and hot. But panic soon gave way to laughter when Mary realized the problem. She was covered, literally blanketed, with every treasure Lucky owned! While she had slept, the sorrowing dog had made trip after trip to the basement bringing his beloved mistress all his favourite things in life. He had covered her with his love.

Mary forgot about dying. Instead she and Lucky began living again, walking further and further together every day. It’s been 12 years now and Mary is still cancer-free. Lucky? He still steals treasures and stashes them in his toy box but Mary remains his greatest treasure.

Remember...live every day to the fullest. Each minute is a blessing from God. And never forget...the people who make a difference in our lives are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones that care for us. If you see someone without a smile today give them one of yours! Live simply. Love seriously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. In memory of anyone you know that has been struck down by cancer or is still living with it.

All you are asked to do is keep this circulating. Even if it’s to one more person.

Natalie James

MUSEUM CURATOR & HERITAGE OFFICER
Shire of Toodyay
P O Box 96
TOODYAY WA 6566
P: (08) 9574 2158
F: (08) 9574 2158
E: museum@toodyay.wa.gov.au
W: www.toodyay.wa.gov.au

Quairading Youth Centre Invites RSL Members to Afternoon Tea

The Quairading Youth Centre invited the Quairading RSL Sub Branch to afternoon tea as a way of the young people thanking the branch for the RSL Hall.

The Shire of Quairading signed a lease of agreement on the 18th August 2000 with the RSL for the hall to be used for the purpose of Youth and Community Activities. Since that time the hall has been upgraded the Quairading Youth Centre.

With the appointment this year of the Youth Coordinator, Anthea Cousins, the young people who attend have been educated on the history of the hall and the importance of the RSL partnership to the community.

“The Youth are now custodians of the Hall” Anthea said, “and we invited the RSL Members to join in afternoon tea to show them the upgraded Centre and how much we appreciate the Youth Space”.

The RSL Members enjoyed playing mini golf, table tennis and pool with the children. It was a great success and will be an annual event” Anthea concluded.

Kind Regards, Apryl Longford
Quairading Community Development
65 Heal Street QUAIRADING WA 6383
T: 96450127 F:96450908 M: 0427450127
E: quairadingcdo@bbnet.com.au
W: www.quairading.wa.gov.au

Cottesloe Sub-Branch Poppy Day Collection

Cottesloe Sub-branch counting the money from the best branch collection on record.

Thanks to the people of Cottesloe and Swanbourne.

Minister to Join WWII Vets in Burnei to Dedicate New Memorial

The Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin, today announced he will travel with six Australian veterans to unveil a memorial in Brunei honouring Australia’s efforts to end the Japanese occupation in the region during the Second World War.

Mr Griffin said he is pleased to join the veterans on this commemorative mission as Australia’s involvement in the campaigns in Borneo is little known to most Australians.

“I never cease to be amazed by the achievements of our fighting men and women, from those who served in the two World Wars to those deployed in today’s forces,” Mr Griffin said.

“The Australian efforts in Brunei and North Borneo are an example of how little we know about details of our wartime history.

“Australians may have heard of the campaigns in Borneo, but few are aware of the details of the operations. The campaign formed part of the largest amphibious assault undertaken by Australians during the Second World War, was among the most complex operations carried out by Australians in the war against Japan and more than 20,000 Australians were involved.

“It is important to honour our wartime history, especially in the presence of veterans who served our nation so proudly during the operations,” Mr Griffin said.

Mr Griffin and veterans of the campaign will officially unveil the new memorial on Saturday 13 December.

The veteran mission party includes:

• Mr William Corey from Rostrevor in South Australia;
• Mr Stephen Gooch from Arana Hills in Queensland;
• Mr Ronald Hatch from Lesmurdie in Western Australia; (Member Narrogin RSL, Life Member RSL WA);
• Mr Rex Kavelnacher from Shellharbour in New South Wales;
• Mr Rex Smith of Ulverstone in Tasmania; and
• Mr Gordon Verney from Burleigh Waters in Queensland.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

Editor’s note: The commemorative mission party will depart from Brisbane on Wednesday 10 December.
Ceremony at Kanchanaburi


Poetry

Duncan Butler
2/12th Field Ambulance

I’ve travelled down some lonely roads
Both crooked tracks and straight
An I’ve learned life’s noblest creed
Summed up in one word “Mate”

I’m thinking back across the years,
(A thing I do o times)
An’ this word sticks between my ears
You’ve got to have a mate

Someone who’ll take you as you are.
Regardless of your state
An’ stand as firm as Ayers Rock
Because “e” is your mate

Me mind goes back to 43,
To slavery an’ hate,
When man’s one chance to stay alive
Depended on ‘is mate

With bamboo for a billie-can
An’ bamboo for a plate,
A bamboo paradise for bugs,
Was bed for me and me mate.

A POW wrote these lines
You’d slip and slither through the mud
An’ curse your rotten fate
But then you’d hear a quiet word:
“Don’t drop your bundle mate.”

An’ though it’s all so long ago
This truth I ave to state:
A man don’t know what loneliness
Til’ e as lost is mate

If there’s a life that follows this
If there’s a “Golden Gate”
The welcome that I want to hear
Is just: “Good on y mate”

An so to all who ask us why
We keep these special Dates
Like Anzac day, I answer: “Why”
“We’re thinking of our mates”

An when I’ve left the drivers seat
An handed in my plate,
I’l tell old Peter at the door:
“I’ve come to join me MATES”

This year our Quiet Lion annual pilgrimage party of 100 people includes 43 Juniors/Students bringing to 338 the number of young people we have partly subsidised and brought to Thailand over the past 11 years. It is to them that I dedicate this address. These young Australians, mainly from country towns, who have worked extremely hard to win selection, are typical, though just a few years younger, than many of those who slaved and died on the railway after capture as teen agers by the Japanese.

Although only 110 kilometres of the 415 kilometre line is in Burma, prisoners in the Anderson Williams Mobile Force, after working on cuttings and embankments, laid the sleepers and rails through to Kanchanaburi in Thailand in the twelve months after our arrival in Burma. This distance covered represents one third of the railway length.

Of the 60,000 POWs who worked on the railway nearly 12,000 worked from the Burma end, made up of about 10,000 in No 3 Group under Brigadier Varley and 1800 in No 5 Group under U.S. Lt Colonel Thorp. The Burma Force contained about 5000 Australians, 5500 Dutch, 650 Australians and 482 British. The Burma POWs were brought up by sea in Hell ships. William’s and Black Force from Java endured shocking conditions battened down in the holds for three separate voyages in three Hell Ships on their 3 week journey in October 1942.

Along with Green and Anderson Force, Williams and Black Force were the first Australians to start work on the railway. Number 3 Group came under the control of Colonel Nagatoma, an arrogant tyrant, later executed as a war criminal. Fortunately for us prisoners he saw the advantage of using Brigadier Varley to control the prisoner’s work force.

Number 5 Group, including most of the Americans, experienced much worse conditions and their death rate was higher as they were kept apart from Varley’s administration. Varley was able to influence Nagatoma in many ways, as well as controlling the movements of the medical staff and senior officers and to rotate the sick. Varley also used his influence on Nagatoma to obtain some concessions for the prisoners and in some instances having extreme cruelty by Korean guards punished.

Unlike Thailand, in Burma we had no river for transportation of supplies, no roads existed in this mainly dense jungle area and the tracks during the winter became almost impassable so supplies, always in short supply, became critical.

In April 1943 large numbers of Burmese coolies were brought on to the railway to augment the work force, their leaderless camps were unhygienic and breeding places for disease, especially during the Cholera outbreaks where their dead were often left unburied.

We in the Williams/Anderson Force were fortunate to have Captain Rowley Richards as our medico; he went out on a limb time and time again to protect the sick. Through Varley’s good relations with Nagatoma, Rowley obtained supplies of the scarce anti-Cholera vaccine and we were twice inoculated before the onset of the cholera epidemic in mid 1943.

With Dunlop Force at Hintok, many lives were lost before they created the miracle of a distillation plant that saved hundreds of cholera victims whilst we in our group in Burma benefited from Rowley’s prevention program. Of the 450 Pioneers in William’s Force in Burma not one life was lost through Cholera. Apart from the injections, the strict hygiene applied in our camps helped in achieving this result.

At the end of 1943 Burma prisoners were evacuated from their jungle camps. Most came here to Kanchanaburi. I spent 6 months at the Tamarkan camp close to the bridge while waiting transport to Japan.

13,000 Australians worked on the railway. Of these, 2800 died during and immediately after the construction of the railway. About half of these are buried in Thanbyuzayat and half in Tamarkan. These numbers tend to mislead and do not represent a true comparison between the two area, Burma & Thailand.

-2-

When the commonwealth War graves Commission recovered the remains of the prisoners from the many camp cemeteries a line was drawn at Nikki. All those found there and north of Nikki were interred at Thanbyuzayat, those south of Nikki were interred here and Chungkai. The deaths did not end after the prisoners left the Railway area. Many of the survivors moved to Changi and sent to Japan continued to die due to the railway experience.

No prisoner on the railway survived who did not have a mate. Mateship probably saved more lives than any single factor. I can best illustrate that special mateship between Australian POWs by once again reciting a poem written by an Australian POW some years after the war. Duncan Butler, born in 1906 at Horsham, Victoria, enlisted in Wagga, NSW, as a member of the 2/12th Field Ambulance. He was 39 years old when the war ended.
20

The October 2008 edition of THE LISTENING POST on Page 8, had an article about the War in South Africa (1899–1902).

May I advise you that a relative of mine served in the Boer War and you might be interested in the details: Major James Rose (8th August 1862 ‘Parkfield’ Austrailnd WA - 30th August 1943 Subiaco buried in Karrakatta Cemetery)

He was appointed to lead the WA Contingent of the Imperial Bushman’s Corps (4th Western Australian Mounted Infantry) and became the first Western Australian officer to lead Australian troops into battle in the Boer War.

Just thought that you might be interested in this piece of Western Australian history and that you might like to use it in the THE LISTENING POST.

On another matter, I am pleased to see that they are still trying to get ANZAC registered as capital letters. This has been a pet subject of mine for many years and City of Mandurah Sub-Branch put up the Motion a number of years ago to have this gazetted as an accepted acronym.

Yours sincerely, Kevin Fowler
PO Box 314 MANDURAH WA 6210
Email: kifowler@tasar.net.au
55225 Sgt K. L. Fowler Service Vietnam 1967/68

1 RAR – Can you help?
The Editor,
I know that this is a long bow but maybe some of you know an army mate from some of the Associations you are members of or associate with on Anzac Day or you know an army mate from some of the Associations I know that this is a long bow but maybe some of you know an army mate from some of the Associations you are members of or associate with on Anzac Day or you know an army mate from some of the Associations I know that this is a long bow but maybe some of you know an army mate from some of the Associations you are members of or associate with on Anzac Day or you know an army mate from some of.

To-day I came across perhaps one of the most horrific cases of neglect of a Veteran who has slipped through the cracks of all Ex Service Organizations, DVA and of his mates whom he served with. Michael was born on 27 May 1968 served with us, 1 Platoon Charlie Coy 1 RAR in Somalia.

Michael lives in a geriatric nursing home in Herston Brisbane, which his carer calls a hell hole, his life is in the control of the Adult Guardian and the Public Trustee looks after his finances for the rest of his life. He virtually has no one in life except his carer, an exceptional Scottish elderly man. How this has happened is unbelievable. I am trying to ascertain members who may have served with Michael, contacts that is, so I can obtain information regards to Michael’s service in Somalia.

Michael has Huntington’s Disease and it is extremely difficult for him to communicate and so I can find someone who served with him to talk too, I can help Michael make the relevant claims to the Dept of Veterans’ Affairs. Michael has a 15 year old daughter who I have spoken to as well and is also desperate to find help for her father.

He can receive messages but his brain cannot transmit information back and that is the nature of the disease I believe. His carer, who brought Michael to see us in an off chance that we may be able to help, is Michael’s life line for communication. This is a terrible case for a young man of 40 years old, who has also served in East Timor.

My request: I would like to be able to contact any members of Charlie Company 1 RAR who served in Somalia to gather more information that can support Michael make the relevant claims to the Dept of Veterans’ Affairs. Michael has a 15 year old daughter who I have spoken to as well and is also desperate to find help for her father.

Thank you in anticipation, any help or suggestion would be gratefully received.

Greg Russell Ph: 07 3855 8078 or e-mail pamgreg@bigpond.net.au

Another Kokoda Vet Gone
Hi Mick,

Just a quick note to let you know of the passing of Pte Steven Thomas Pashby 4th Division Transport Corps, 1’st AIF WWI medals including Gallipoli medal of No 1775 18/1/1915 – 1/6/1918. Sold to dealer in 1993 and is sadly regretted.

Phone Douglas on 9434 5176.

The Vendetta Veterans’ Association
is holding an
ALL CREWS REUNION
in Brisbane
from 24th to 26th April 2009
For further information please contact
Bill Krause
Phone - 07.3288.1702 (home) 0417.700.531 (mobile)
or send an email to: MKRAUSE@bigpond.net.au

RAN BATTLE CLASS SOCIAL CLUB
ANNUAL NATIONAL REUNION ‘COOLANGATTA 2009’
Open Invitation to all ex naval personnel & family

WHEN: September 10-13, 2009
WHERE: Coolangatta, QLD
VENUE: Greens point Resort, Eton Avenue, Coolangatta
COST: $115.00 per double including full buffet breakfast for two

PROGRAM
Additional costs for events other than Saturday night dinner

Thursday 10th September: Meet and Greet with buffet meal at night
Friday 11th September: Day Bus Trip
Saturday 12th September: Free day - Dinner Dance at night
Sunday 13th September: Lunch Cruise Farewell Drinks and finger food at night

For Further Information on Membership or Reunion:
Geoff (Wiggy) Bennett
7 Villa Crescent, Highton Vic 3190
Tel: (03) 9532 3672 Fax: (03) 9532 3672
Email: bennett@bigpond.net.au
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**Notices**

**WHEELCHAIRS FOR KIDS INC.**

Established in 1998, this wholly volunteer project manufacture wheelchair and donates them away free to poor and disabled children in developing countries. Over 15,000 wheelchairs have been distributed into 60 countries. The project relies on donations to buy the materials for the wheelchairs. Under the auspices of the Rotary Club of Scarborough and with the support of The Christian Brothers, the project involves 100 retired volunteers each week to produce hardy wheelchairs for $100 each. Donations of $2 or more are tax deductible and can be sent to “Wheelchairs for Kids”, PO Box, 1175, Wangara, WA 6947. Cheques to be made payable to “Wheelchairs for Kids”.

Donated money is only used to build wheelchairs. Donations are tax deductible. All work including administration and promotion is voluntary.

**Bob Sheridan**

**Workshop Co-Ordinator**

**3rd Australian Tunnelling Company, 1st AIF**

I am an amateur historian researching the 3rd Australian Tunnelling Company, 1st AIF that served on the Western Front from 1916-1919. I’m seeking information from any descendants or relatives of men who served with this unit. I am particularly interested in any personal recollections/stories, war diaries, photographs or any other information that may assist in putting a unit history together.

**My contact details are**

Mr Chris Donnelly
Phone: (08) 9310 7589
Email: chrisdonnelly@iinet.net.au

**COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE**

**ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEK CHARGE AT GALLOPOLI ON 7/8/1915**

Date: Sunday 9th August 2009.
Time: Commences at 10.00pm in the Chapel.

Venue: Parkerville Children & Youth Care Centre, Beacon Road, Parkerville.

(Follow the signs).

Guest Speaker Captain Wayne Gardiner, ex 10th Light Horse, Curator WA Army Museum. A large Light Horse Display & Medal Display is also on display in the Hall. Afternoon tea will be available in the Hall.

**Phil Sullivan**

**Phone: 0417 182 998 or email: philmaur@bigpond.com**

**Army Newspaper**

The Editor ‘The Listening Post’

My name is Dave Morley. I’m an Army Reserve sergeant working temporarily at Army Newspaper in the Russell Offices at Canberra.

Next year is the 50th anniversary of Army Newspaper and I have been tasked with tracking down members who featured in the first few editions of the paper.

Vol 1 No 1 edition of Army Newspaper which came out on 10 SEP 59 shows a picture of a Private Norma Mills, 20, of Maylands with a group of CMF girls playing softball.

Another picture shows Privates Les Martin and Max Kierman of 17th National Service Training Company, after a relay run on hot bitumen near Trigg Island.

I would very much appreciate it if you could assist by helping me locate these former members so I could interview them for a future edition of Army Newspaper.

I will be on this e-mail call sign until Fri 28 Nov 08. After that I will be on e-mail call sign dave.morley2@defence.gov.au

I am a current member of Finley RSL Sub Branch in southern NSW.

Many thanks for your anticipated assistance.

Cheers,

Sgt Dave Morley
Reporter Army Newspaper
Building R8-LG
Russell Offices Canberra.
Ph: (02) 6266-7608.

**Victorian Meeting**

At Dandenong RSL Monday 16th February 2009 at 10.30 am

Ex crew of HMS Bataan are invited to join our Association. Contact: the National Secretary

John F. Laughston JP, 36 Tamarisk Rd Narre Warren Vic 3805. Ph. 03 9704 7799 or Mob. 0417 336 423.

Email: johnf@iapt.net.au or jlaughton@swiftdsl.com.au

**HMAS Bataan Veterans Association National Reunion 2000**

Will be held at Caloundra Queensland on Thursday 3rd, Friday 4th, Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th September 2009.

Our National President Joe Flaherty invites all our Bataan Members. Further details on the itinerary & accommodation are available.

**RAN Radio Mechanics Association**

Victorian Meeting at Dandenong RSL Wednesday 18th August 2009 at 11.30 am

Ex RAN Radio & Radar Mechanics are invited to join our Association, our next Reunion will be in 2010.

John F. Laughston JP, 36 Tamarisk Rd Narre Warren Vic 3805. Ph. 03 9704 7799 or Mob. 0417 336 423

Email: johnf@iapt.net.au or jlaughton@swiftdsl.com.au

**2RAR Thanks Donors**

My thanks and appreciation to all the donors that gave money for the raising of the new West Australian 2RAR Banner.

Special thanks to The RAR Assn (W.A. Branch) for their generous donation.

The majority of the money was raised by West Aussies. A special thanks to the 2nd Battalion stationed in Townsville for their offer. Fortunately we had reached the amount required.

Bazza Burling
2RAR Assn, (W.A. State Rep)

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**Decision to Review Gulf War Syndrome Welcomed**

The decision by the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) to re-examine Gulf War Syndrome has been welcomed by the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin. A recent review into Gulf War Syndrome in American veterans has prompted the RMA’s investigation.

“It is important that we carefully investigate any information that may affect Australian veterans, particularly in regard to their medical conditions or treatment. I look forward to the results of the RMA’s investigation,” Mr Griffin said.

1873 Australians served in the Gulf War, the majority of which were Naval personnel.

Currently, despite the lack of an acknowledged “syndrome”, Australian Gulf War veterans suffering ill effects from their service, including symptoms associated with Gulf War Syndrome, have access to compensation and health care through the Repatriation system.

The RMA is an independent statutory authority and its investigation will be conducted separate to the Government. The RMA has invited interested people and organisations to make submissions on this matter after obtaining a copy of the RMA Submission Guidelines from www.rma.gov.au. Submissions close 29 May 2009.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

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**Gallipoli road works**

Resurfacing of the Second Ridge Road started in late August. The Turkish authorities informed the Australian Government of this work, which was completed according to plan.

However, following the resurfacing work, further work on the roadside verge appears to have caused some damage.

As soon as the Australian Government learnt of this damage, we requested that work be stopped, which the Turkish authorities immediately agreed to. This matter is being investigated further.

We have reiterated to the Turkish authorities the importance of conducting these works in a sensitive and careful manner, which of course they understand and appreciate.

We understand that the further works on the road verge have uncovered human remains. We are awaiting further information from Turkish authorities regarding this.

The Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin, said today that he is concerned that there is again a problem with a road in the Gallipoli area following the problems with the Anzac Cove road in 2005.

“I have questioned the process currently in place for notifying the Australian Government of road works and believe they may not be sufficient. I will investigate if more formal protocols are required,” said Mr Griffin.

The Second Ridge Road is located in the Gallipoli Historic National Park along no mans land between Lone Pine and Quinn’s Post. The road runs off Anzac Cove Road and provides access to the Lone Pine Cemetery, Turkish 57th Regiment Memorial, Chunuk Bair and Ataturk memorials.

The Australian lines were on one side of the road and the Turkish lines were on the other. Following the disastrous casualties suffered by the Turkish forces on 19 May, an armistice was held on 24 May to bury the dead. After the Australians evacuated the peninsula or after the war a track later upgraded to the present road was constructed. The road is clearly marked on the 1919 era map in Charles Bean’s Gallipoli Mission.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

The VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service can be contacted 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 1800 011 046.
Demonstrations to Benefit Veterans

A new campaign launched today by the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin, targets the estimated 51,000 veterans, and the hundreds of thousands of other Australians who don’t use their puffers properly. The launch built on World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Day yesterday.

Speaking at the launch of the Prevent Puffer Problems campaign, Minister Griffin said as many as 80 per cent of veterans didn’t use their inhaled medicines properly. “Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases affect more than half a million Australians, including more than 50,000 veterans,” Mr Griffin said.

“This is a widespread chronic condition, causing many to suffer reduced quality of life as they struggle for breath with day-to-day tasks.

“While there is no cure, many of the symptoms are readily treatable with medication inhaled through puffers. It was alarming to discover that many people, veterans included, fail to use their medication properly.

“In researching the condition, my Department found that many busy health professionals weren’t easily able to demonstrate the latest correct techniques to their patients, or assumed that their patients knew how to use the devices properly.

“The Prevent Puffer Problems campaign encourages veterans to check their technique with a local pharmacist.

“The campaign will provide information raising and educational materials for all GPs and pharmacists, and focus on diagnoses, treatment and management. A website has also been created for busy health professionals where they can access specialised information and watch a demonstration of correct techniques in a couple of minutes on the web,” Mr Griffin said.

The campaign was developed in partnership with the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, the Australian Lung Foundation, the National Asthma Council of Australia, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Australian General Practice Network.

“Preventing Puffer Problems is especially important for veterans with long-standing respiratory illnesses.

“Our aim is to reduce hospital admissions and improve quality of life and enjoyment for tens of thousands of members of the veteran community,” Mr Griffin said.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

For the past few years, the FINDING SYDNEY FOUNDATION web site, has included this magnificent painting of HMAS Sydney II by renowned Australian marine artist Mr. Ross Sharldow, titled FIRST SALVO. The painting, commissioned by Wesley Olson for the cover of his book Bitter Victory: Death of the HMAS Sydney, was printed in 2000.

The painting of the FIRST SALVO portrays the opening salvo from the HMAS SYDNEY II in the battle that was to become Australia’s greatest naval tragedy.

Since the discovery of HMAS Sydney in March this year, the artist has decided to permit prints of FIRST SALVO to commemorate the discovery. A portion of the profit from the sale of each print will be donated towards the construction of a final element to the existing memorial to the HMAS SYDNEY II in Geraldton WA. The final element is a “pool of remembrance” which will commemorate the final resting place of the HMAS Sydney II and her crew.

With each print sold from the 1300 363 204 phone number or via the Finding Sydney web site (go to video footage), FIVE DOLLARS will be donated to the Rotary Club of Geraldton who are facilitating the construction of the final element, an extension of the HMAS Sydney memorial in Geraldton. The total building funds required for the construction are $430,000. For further information about the proposed final memorial element, please contact the president of the Rotary Club of Geraldton, Glenn Feltham, email himsaacynneymemorial@westnet.com.au or visit the website www.hmassydneymemorial.com.au.

These magnificent poster size prints (750mm x 530mm) come printed on high quality 250gsm stock, and are supplied ready for framing.

FIRST SALVO prints can be obtained by phoning 1300 363 204—operators are ready to take your call 24/7—or online by visiting the Finding Sydney Foundation web site: www.hmassydneymemorial-firstsalvo.com.au. The cost of these magnificent prints is only $49.50 plus $7.50 p/h. Please allow 14 days delivery.

1300 363 204 or hmassydneymemorial-firstsalvo.com.au
Finding Sydney Foundation

Could you please circulate to your network the news that the Finding Sydney Foundation (FSF) and the Naval Association of Australia (NAA) have launched a Virtual Memorial on the internet to commemorate the 645 men lost with HMAS Sydney II on 19 November 1941? For those with a Website, could you establish a link please?

We are providing a unique experience accessible globally for those wanting to learn more about the human loss of HMAS Sydney II and honour the memory of the individual sailors through shared stories and images. The FSF is very grateful to the NAA for accepting the task of carrying the ‘Sydney’ banner into the future.

The website located at http://www.sydneymemorial.com features an Honour Roll with individual pages of information for each of the 645 sailors lost. Families are invited to submit stories, images and other related content to feature on each sailor’s pages.

The website also houses HMAS Sydney II historical information and an extensive set of archival photographs courtesy of the Royal Australian Navy and the Australian War Memorial. Video footage can also be viewed. It includes previous commemorations; the search for the wreck; scenes of the ship and crew in Egypt (Jul 1940) after the successful engagement with the Italian cruiser Bartolomeo Colleoni; the triumphant ceremonial welcome home march in Sydney (Feb 1941) and scenes aboard the ship taken during the months before her loss.

Thanks, Bob
Commodore Bob Trotter RAN (Ret’d)
Director, Finding Sydney Foundation
08 9385 2687; Fax 08 9385 2287; Mob 0418 487 158

Soldier Musician Monument

The Soldier Musician Monument was unveiled by Major General John帕克 – Commander of Training Command – Army and Bob Keatch on the 28th November in a small ceremony at the Defence Force School of Music.

Due to the inclement weather the unveiling was followed by formal procedures inside Newman Hall where Army Band Melbourne formed the backdrop and performed magnificent musical support. Their four-part singing of The Minstrel Boy during the wreath laying and some others who served as buglers, drummers, stretcher-bearer musicians – as well as pipers and instrumental musicians in formed bands who have died on active service, is captivating.

It serves as a sacred and honoured place for all soldier musicians who laid down their life for our country and will continue to serve as a place of commemoration should there be casualties in the future, as our personnel continue to serve their Nation in troubled and dangerous times.

Names of soldier/musicians who died on active service since World War 2 are inscribed on a bronze plaque in the foyer of the School of Music.

The monument is designed to commemorate and pay tribute to all stretcher-bearer musicians as well as others who served as buglers, drummers, pipers and instrumental musicians in 40th year. Without that injection of funds and the support of course from an approach to DVA by Mr Pat Steer, the Association Vice President, we might still be at the discussion stage. We are also grateful to Mr Bill Charleton, who donated the proceeds from the sale of over 100 copies of his poetry books towards our monument. It was his poetry which inspired Mr Austen to instantly make such a generous contribution. Bill has written some excellent poetry on army-life and a few of his works pay special tribute to a couple of Soldier Musicians Killed in Action in Vietnam. His books are available for sale through John Seagg, with total proceeds going towards a shortfall for our monument.

Bob Keatch President
Australian Army Band Corps Association

No.467 RAAF Lancaster Heavy Bombers Squadron

The 7th November 2002 saw the 60th anniversary of the formation in England in 1942 of No.467 RAAF Squadron one of Australia’s once famous and now forgotten Lancaster squadrons.

Starting with a handful of mixed Australian, British, New Zealand and Canadian aircrew and mainly British ground crew it soon moved to a war time airfield at Bottesford in the old county of Rutland where on 2 January 1943 five squadron aircraft made the first of twelve strikes against the enemy that month losing fifteen killed in action.

The squadron’s Australian content increased as aircrew reinforcements arrived, crew by crew, although the flight engineers, some gunners, a few other aircrew and the ground engineers remained substantially British. A unique mix of personnel from different parts of the Commonwealth countries it worked in both on the ground and in combat. If anything it enhanced unit spirit, morale and effectiveness although giving some minor administrative problems.

In its second month the squadron maintained the bombing offensive it began in January and was able to build up its strength to twelve operational aircraft and crews. As 1943 progressed the Allied air attacks began seriously to hurt the enemy. The German home based fighter squadrons were re-equipped and increased to reach their peak of effectiveness.

Backed by advanced early warning and gun directing radar plus multiple anti aircraft gun batteries it became the most deadly home defense force ever created.

The Squadron then began a series of the bloodiest sustained campaigns Australian forces have ever experienced.

Striking the enemy on seventy two raids over the next six months, while struggling to build up strength, with reinforcements just exceeding losses. The operations took it deep into and across Germany striking rail and electrical factories, ship yards and navy bases, to the coast of the Baltic Sea, Czechoslovakia and Italy.

But the cost was high. With an average strength of only about 110 operational aircrew 114 were shot down with 101 killed and 13 taken prisoner Early records do not show those wounded in aircraft damaged by enemy fire and which struggled back to base. This total casualty rate, exceeding 100% of average strength, never slackened and the squadron was only able to continue the attacks due to the fortune of surviving crews and the stream of reinforcements from the operational training schools and aircraft factories to replace losses.

Laurie Woods
www.467squadronraaf.com
Poetry

Australia Day

Australians are a funny lot, you'll often hear one curse, How things have started badly, and they'll probably get worse, The weather's dry, the sun's so hot it's stolen all the water, The Government has never done the things we think they oughta'.

But if you hear a tourist say his home is much more grand, They had better be prepared to make a very solid stand. For although we Aussies may complain at what's become our lot, When someone knocks this country, we defend with all we've got.

We may criticise some teenage brat, may even wish them failure, But we stand behind them cheering when they're playing for Australia. Because, if this is home to you, the country of your birth, Then you back the native player to beat anyone on Earth.

When the cricket bats are swinging or when someone scores a try, When a home grown horse has won the cup and made the owner cry, When some paralympic athlete hits the front and sets the pace, You'll hear "Aussie Aussie Aussie" as the crowd goes off their face.

And although we like to take a break in overseas locations, If you take the time to question this nomadic population, They will tell you without blinking that wherever they may roam, The best part of the journey was the last bit...coming home.

For the sun was never brighter on the beach at Waikiki, Than it is on all the sandy shores Australia has to see, The water never purer nor the air as fresh and clear, The people never friendlier than those that we have here.

If you venture to the outback where grass is scarce as snow, As you swelter you may wonder what it was that made you go, But just look at the locals who have lived there since their birth, And I know you will not find a better class of folk on earth.

Young men full of hopes and dreams, mostly how they were, Seared plain within our sun burnt Aussie mind, And is the reason to a distant shore that they were lured, In leaving home and families behind.

All across this wide brown country from the Cape to Hobart town, There are people who will help you when you find the chips are down, And if someone should abuse you, and does it just because, Then that person's not Australian, and that person never was.

So when you feel disgruntled just remember this rendition, And never blame the country for the acts of politicians, Look up and count your blessings when you see our flag unfurled, And be grateful that you live in the best country in the world.

"Old Blokes"

Something kind a’ bothers me as ANZAC Day draws near And I thought it better gotten of my chest
The thought of what awaits as the old blokes disappear And our memories are subject to the test.

Do we really understand the heartache they endured in leaving home and families behind, And is the reason to a distant shore that they were lured scarce plain within our sun burnt Aussie mind.

Young men full of hopes and dreams, mostly how they were, Not like the blokes around today, The call of queen and country deep within their hearts did stir, With pomp and fanfare sailed of to the fray.

Now I’m no bloody expert but I know how people are And I realize that times were different then But no-one in this present day would dare to go as far To wish they’d fought along side these men.

Mud and Blood and fever reigned as shells fell overhead The fear of gas was always on their mind Getting “knocked” was every present by a piece of lead The thought of what awaits us when the old blokes disappear And I thought it better gotten of my chest

"Old Blokes"

By Warren Dukin

Grandma’s Birth Control Pills

A doctor that had been seeing an 80 year old woman for most of her life finally retired. At her next check-up the new doctor told her to bring a list of all the medications that had been prescribed for her. As the young doctor was looking through, his eyes grew wide as he realized she had a prescription for birth control pills.

"Mrs Smith, do you realise these are BIRTH CONTROL pills?"

“Yes, dear, I know that. But every morning I grind one up and mix it in the glass of orange juice that I drink!"

"Mrs Smith, I assure you there is absolutely NOTHING in these that could possibly help you to sleep!"

“Yes, they help me sleep at night."

“Mrs Smith, I assure you there is absolutely NOTHING in these that could possibly help you to sleep!”

She reached out and patted the young doctor’s knee.

“Yes, dear, I know that. But every morning I grind one up and mix it in the glass of orange juice that my 16 year old granddaughter drinks. And believe me, it helps me sleep at night.”
The Kundasang Memorial Gardens in Sabah, Malaysia, will receive $70,000 to support its work honouring the prisoners of war (POWs) who died on the Sandakan to Ranau death marches in 1945, and the local people who were killed for offering help.

The Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin, announced the funding during his visit to the Gardens. Mr Griffin also laid a wreath to remember the more than 2,400 POWs who died and the people of Sabah who tried to assist them.

“During my visit I have been particularly moved by the stories of the many locals who helped the Allies, often at great personal risk. At least 50 Malaysians were arrested by the Japanese, and eight executed, as punishment for assisting Australian POWs,” Mr Griffin said.

“This $70,000 will help the Gardens preserve interpretive material and display it in the Australian Memorial Hall - a gallery and audio visual centre.

“The Gardens are visited by locals and by the many tourists who visit Kota Kinabalu and Mt Kinabalu in Sabah each year. They are located at the Ranau end of the death march route, and complement the official Australian memorial at site of the Sandakan POW camp.”

The Gardens are made up of the Australia Garden, the English Garden, the Borneo Garden and the Contemplation Garden and Pool.

The memorial was established in 1962 by New Zealander, Major Toby Carter, but had run down until restoration by Mr Sevee Charuruks began in 2004.

The individual POWs from Sandakan who died in Sabah are officially commemorated at the Labuan Memorial and War Cemetery. Mr Griffin visited the cemetery on Friday, 12 December with Second World War veterans. The veterans and Mr Griffin are in the region for the dedication of the Brunei-Australia Memorial on Saturday, 13 December at Muara Beach, Brunei Darussalam.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109
In July I was with a tour group passing the Cobber Memorial at Fromelles, where we had earlier visited, when we saw a group at the site. On stopping we found that a local service was about to be held commemorating the 90th anniversary of the battle.

John Ballard’s wife (from the Fromelles Museum) was asked to recite The Ode as in the service program. She did not know what “Rouse” meant and asked us to clarify it. I had not come across it before but suggested that it meant Reveille. I didn’t think any more of it until our Nasho service the other day when Rouse was again stated in the service program. She did not know what it meant.

ROUSE:

Signal to waken soldiers or sailors for the day’s duties.

REVEILLE:

Signal to waken soldiers or sailors for the day’s duties.

Can you explain why Rouse is used instead of wake to it every morning in camp.

Mr Griffin said the total grant allocation of $1,034,281 would benefit more than 29,000 veterans, and demonstrates the Rudd Government’s commitment to supporting organisations dedicated to caring for veterans and their dependants.

“The Veteran & Community Grants program provides funding to local and community organisations for projects that are directly supporting local veteran communities,” Mr Griffin said.

“It is important that veterans have access to a range of programs that teach them skills to help them remain independent and active, particularly for the elderly living by themselves. Today’s funding supports a range of projects to encourage veterans to learn new life skills including Cooking for One or Two programs, healthy living and computer skills courses.”

“The Veteran & Community Grants also help fund local initiatives that improve access to community care services and encourage social interaction through Day Clubs, Men’s Sheds and social excursions,” the Minister said.

Mr Griffin said during 2008 hundreds of local and community organisations had benefited from more than $3.9 million in funding distributed through the grants program.

Mr Griffin encouraged local and community organisations interested in applying for 2009 funding to visit www.dva.gov.au/health/grants or contact their nearest Department of Veterans’ Affairs office on 133 254 (for metropolitan callers) or 1800 555 254 (for non-metropolitan callers).

Media inquiries:
Lauri Ryan 0437 863 109

**Meaning of Reveille & Rouse**

My dictionary’s meaning of the two words is similar. I have always regarded Reveille as being the “wake up” call ever since we used to wake to it every morning in camp. Can you explain why Rouse is used instead of Reveille in the programs please?

REVEILLE:

Signal to waken soldiers or sailors for the day’s duties.

ROUSE:

Rousing, Roused, to bring or come out of state of sleep, unconsciousness, inactivity, etc.

References: The Macquarie Dictionary & Thesaurus, Published by Herron Publication Pty Ltd. QLA. Australia. Last published in 1985

**LAST POST**

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning. We will remember them. Lest we forget.

The deaths of the following RSL members (WA Branch) were recorded at ANZAC House.

**Air Force**

441542 Baute, Jim-Harvey
84074 Chalkley, Frederick-City of Rockingham
A75355 Hogans, Hamil-Bellevue
A100696 Joll, William-Cambridge
5/25655 Sierren, Merilyn-Ocean Reef
54682 Thompson, Peter-Cobourne
A8575 Whiddon, William-Balga
56658 Willis, Donald-Eastern Hills

**Army**

W40730 Alberton, J.A.-Donarybrook
S225188 Bess, B.W-City of Perth
W26685 Boroosz, Edwin-Highgate
W116455 Bibby, James-Bunbury
W163767 Drabble, Erna-Returned Ex-Service Women
W269822 Doodsworth, A.R.-Narrogin
W107809 Edwards, N.M-Nedlands
W28280 Ellis, William-Nollamara
W116994 Evans, D.G.-Darling Range
W28269 Faulkner, R.M.-City of Sabaco
5411591 Fitzgerald, Ternence-Bexton-Palmyra
W00 Fitelharlinges, J.B.-Highgate
5771584 Fitzpatrick, Desmond-Baselow
W383515 Froome, Walter-Narrogin
94494 Hapsworth, Dorothy-Cobourne
510030 Hapsworth, Raymond-Belmont
W3839 How, Anthony-Bexton-Palmyra
W28268 Higham, M.M-Cottesloe
W35885 Houlahan, P.-Highgate
W389016 Kenworthy, J.K.-Baselow
971005 Martyn, Edgar-Central
W20825 Montgomery, A.-Cardigan City
W13288 Murray, Dowonan-City of Mandurah
W31885 O’Neill, John-Riversvale-Cartliile
W26539 Pearse, Normam-North Beach
W319354 Pillam, Allan-Bexton-Palmyra
5705594 Sarr, John-Toine-Joondanna
W27902 St Quintin, Richard-City of South Perth
S78898 Summers, Bryan-Gore
W31778 Trigg, S.B-Bellevue
W116515 Valery, Ronald-Central
74430 Vianna, Timothy-Kwinana
W683 Walton, David-Toodyay
W52457 Williams (nee Wickham) M.I-Returned Ex-Service Women
W983 Walton, David-Toodyay
W37791 Trigg, S.B-Bellevue
W04515 Valery, Ronald-Central
74430 Vianna, Timothy-Kwinana
W683 Walton, David-Toodyay
W52457 Williams (nee Wickham) M.I-Returned Ex-Service Women
W983 Walton, David-Toodyay

**Navy**

R27386 Burns, George-Eastern Regional
F5009 Denham, Charles- Osborne Park
30793 Lindsay, Lewis-City of Rockingham
21524 McGregor, Laurence-Eastern Regional
DX2298956 Robinson, George-Serpentine-Jarrahdale
P7139092 Robinson, Reginald-Eastern Regional
1098NS Williams, Colin-Kwinana

**$1 Million Community Support for Veterans**

Christmas celebrations may be a little louder for ninety-one community groups who will share in more than $1 million in grants announced today by the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin. Groups will receive on average more than $10,000 each to improve veteran health and independence.

Mr Griffin said the total grant allocation of $1,034,281 would benefit more than 29,000 veterans, and demonstrates the Rudd Government’s commitment to supporting organisations dedicated to caring for veterans and their dependants.

“The Veteran & Community Grants program provides funding to local and community organisations for projects that are directly supporting local veteran communities,” Mr Griffin said.

“It is important that veterans have access to a range of programs that teach them skills to help them remain independent and active, particularly for the elderly living by themselves.

“Today’s funding supports a range of projects to encourage veterans to learn new life skills including Cooking for One or Two programs, healthy living and computer skills courses.”

“The Veteran & Community Grants also help fund local initiatives that improve access to community care services and encourage social interaction through Day Clubs, Men’s Sheds and social excursions,” the Minister said.

Mr Griffin said during 2008 hundreds of local and community organisations had benefited from more than $3.9 million in funding distributed through the grants program.

Mr Griffin encouraged local and community organisations interested in applying for 2009 funding to visit www.dva.gov.au/health/grants or contact their nearest Department of Veterans’ Affairs office on 133 254 (for metropolitan callers) or 1800 555 254 (for non-metropolitan callers).

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- ANGLO PURR ROLO
- GCOFS GRE TOLL
- ABS TWIN FUELED
- EAR N EGG
- SHODDY MICHAEL
- M EDA LIA WONT VIB
- UNIT SARC AMINO
- GNU UTAH DOTE D
- AMNESTY BROAD S
- AXEL FLIT
- FLAUT A BETA MUD
- LONE BEAU TRONE
- LOUD TIONIC
- POET ENDS COTTA

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Ph: 9344 8399
Gunfire Breakfast 7am - 9am

Veterans & members of the public are invited to share the ANZAC Spirit at our community Gunfire Breakfast Stirling Gardens Cnr St Georges Tce & Barrack St, Perth.

THE RETURNED AND SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA (NEW SOUTH WALES)

DR ROD BAIN
VICE PRESIDENT NSW - SOUTHERN COUNTRY

Suited 1876 William Street, Woolloomooloo NSW 2011
Telephone: (02) 9319 5950 (W) (02) 9330 8574
Email: rodrick.bain@gmail.com

VVFS ESO article reminder

Now Recruiting – Family Intergenerational Study.

The Vietnam Veterans’ Family Study (VVFS) is now recruiting participants.

The study will provide a better understanding of the impact of war service on the health and wellbeing of veterans’ families. What is learnt from the study will benefit future generations of service families and provide the Department with the opportunity to build on programmes currently offered to veterans and their families.

There are two main study groups:

- Randomly selected Vietnam-era personnel who didn’t serve in Vietnam, and their families, including their partners, ex-partners, children and step-children.
- Randomly selected Vietnam-era personnel who served in Vietnam, and their families, including their partners, ex-partners, children and step-children.

These two groups provide a comparison based on randomly selected families where the main difference is a parent’s military service in Vietnam.

Around 20,000 registration kits have been mailed to the two main study groups. Each registration kit includes additional registration forms for veterans to pass on to their family members.

Participation of families is critical to the Family Study. If you served during the Vietnam era you can help. If you know someone who served during the Vietnam war, whether they went or not, talk to them, see if they’ve been invited and get them involved.

‘Healthy’ veterans and their families are just as important as those who are unwell – others can learn from their experience. The study will examine why some families may have suffered less ill effects and identify the characteristics which help build resilience in families.

Two independent groups will support the study – a consultative forum representing all target groups being studied and a scientific advisory committee.

There are a lot of myths flying around about the Family Study. Read the Myth Busters on the website to find out the real story.


Rodrick Bain
Consultative Forum Member for VVFS

Old Timer Sex

This is too funny to be dirty - enjoy!

The husband leans over and asks his wife, 'Do you remember the first time we had sex together over fifty years ago? We went behind the village tavern where you leaned against the back fence and I made love to you.'

Yes, she says, 'I remember it well. OK, he says, 'How about taking a stroll around there again and we can do it for old time's sake?'

Oh Jim, you old devil, that sounds like a crazy, but good idea!'

A police officer sitting in the next booth overheard their conversation and, having a chuckle to himself, he thinks to himself, I've got to see these two old-timers having sex against a fence. I'll just keep an eye on them so there's no trouble. So he follows them.

The elderly couple walks haltingly along, leaning on each other for support. Ached by walking sticks. Finally, they get to the back of the tavern and make their way to the fence. The old lady lifts her skirt and the old man drops his trousers. As she leans against the fence, the old man moves in...

Then suddenly they erupt into the most furious sex that the policeman has ever seen.

This goes on for about ten minutes while both are making loud noises and moaning and screaming. Finally, they both collapse, panting on the ground. The policeman is amazed. He thinks he has learned something about life and old age that he didn't know.

After about half an hour of lying on the ground recovering the old couple struggle to their feet and put their clothes back on. The policeman, is still watching and thinks to himself, this is truly amazing, I've got to ask them what their secret is.

So, as the couple passes, he says to them, Excuse me, but that was something else. You must've had a fantastic sex life together. Is there some sort of secret to that?

Shaking, the old man is barely able to reply, Fifty years ago that wasn't an electric fence.
AMAZING HEROES

Serving our Veterans for over 60 years and still number one in veteran care.