

Mt Evelyn RSL News

Volume 4, Issue 1, Autumn 2014 A Sub-Branch of the Returned and Services League of Australia



2014 Meeting Dates

Mar 21st, 2014
April 18th, 2014
May 16th, 2014
June 20th, 2014
July 18th, 2014
Aug 15th, 2014
Sept 19th, 2014

*The Mt Evelyn RSL
Meetings are held on
the third Friday of
each month at
7.30pm at the:*

Mt Evelyn RSL
Clubrooms
Behind: Hardy House
49 Birmingham Rd
Mt Evelyn Vic 3796

Ph: 9737 0767
Email:
mtevrsl@gmail.com

Postal Address:
PO Box 182
Mt Evelyn Vic 3796

Website:
<http://moutevelyn.vic.au/moutevelyn-rsl>



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OUR LATEST BOOK LAUNCHED

On Sunday February 9th, 2014 a large ceremony was held at the Lillydale Lake to commemorate the centenary of a military camp for 3000 soldiers under the command of Sir John Monash that was held at the site in February 1914. (*see report inside*).

As part of the Mt Evelyn RSL's contribution to this important local military commemoration, the club successfully applied for funding under the Public Records Office 'Local History Grants' to have a book published on the history of the camp.

The book, written by our Secretary Anthony McAleer, details the story of the camp, how it affected this community, its importance in Australian military history and the unique and important characters involved with the camp, especially Sir John Monash who commanded the camp. It contains a fascinating foreword by one of our members, Brigadier (retired) Michael Phelps AM, and our president, Roger Boness, has written the preface.

The book was launched after the ceremony at the 'Lillydale Lake Community Room' by Michael Bennett, the great grandson of Sir John Monash. At the launch Michael praised the Mt Evelyn RSL for its efforts in producing this book and for highlighting an event that was the most important in the pre-war military career of his great grandfather.



Above: Dave Howell from the 'Australian Great War Association', Tony Smith MP the Federal member for Casey, Michael Bennett the great grandson of Sir John Monash and former Premier Ted Baillieu, chair of the 'Victorian Anzac Centenary Committee', with our book 'Monash's Militia Camp'.

Important Dates
Coming Up:

**MT EVELYN
RSL**

ANZAC DAY
*April 25th,
2014*

**DAWN
SERVICE**
6.00am

This year because the Sunday before Anzac Day falls on Easter Sunday we have decided to only have one service this year – the Anzac Day Dawn Service – and combine elements of both services into the one.

That means we will have our traditional service at 6.00am at the War Memorial Park and then have a march of veterans and community members back to the RSL Hall for our annual community breakfast.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2013 proved to be an extremely busy year for the committee and members of the Mt Evelyn RSL Sub-branch as we strove to meet all community expectations as well as completing several projects and continuing to progress others, i.e: landscaping in the communities memorial garden and installation of air conditioning and other improvements to Hardy House.

Our tireless secretary and historian Anthony McAleer raised the sub-branches profile with his research and launching of two local military history books, 'The Last Light Horseman' and 'Monash's Militia Camp'. The Militia Camp generated two additional ceremonies for the sub-branch as we worked alongside the Rotary Club of Lilydale to unveil a plaque and story board at the camp site in Lilydale and a story board sign at Coldstream, the site of a mock battle by civilian soldiers in 1914 prior to the Great War in the same year.

RSL members and friends enjoyed two outings during the year, one to the Light Horse Museum in Nar Nar Goon, stopping for lunch at Belgrave/Upwey RSL to view their military museum, and a trip to Seymour to visit the Vietnam Veteran's Walk and the Puckapunyal armoured tank museum.

Sincere thanks to our elected Federal, State and Local representatives for their ongoing support, The Mt Evelyn Bendigo Bank, our other community voluntary organisations, local schools, businesses, community members that attended our commemorative services who all contributed to the successful completion of 2013 RSL responsibilities. Finally our dedicated committee and members for their support.

Thanks must go to Sandra FitzGerald who served as Treasurer last year under tiring circumstances and to John Allwood who has stepped up this year as treasurer.

LEST WE FORGET

- Roger Boness

Membership Subs for 2014- *NOW DUE*

Full Members – open to ex-service personnel who were in the uniformed services for a period of six months or more. **\$25 a year**

Affiliated Members – open to those who have served with the emergency services or whose relatives were service personnel. **\$25 a year**

Tell us if you are over 80 years old

– you no longer have to pay your subs!

Send a cheque or money order to –

Mt Evelyn RSL, PO Box 182, Mt Evelyn

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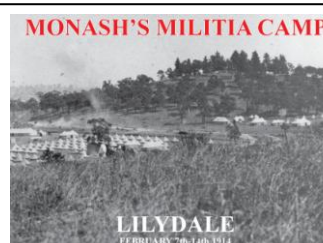
All current members who pay their subs (\$25) by March 30th, 2014 will receive a **free copy** of our new book 'Monash's Militia Camp'!!

This year you can pay your subs online through Internet banking – just make sure to key in your name!

Bendigo Bank

Title – RSL Mt Evelyn – General Account

BSB – 633-000 A/C NUMBER – 117020883





BETTY'S JOKE PAGE



Bill was driving down the street in a sweat because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place. Looking up to heaven he said, *'Lord take pity on me. If you find me a parking place I will go to Mass every Sunday for the rest of my life and give up beer!'* Miraculously, a parking place appeared. Bill looked up again and said, *'Never mind, I found one.'*

A priest walks into a pub and asks the first man he meets, *'Do you want to go to heaven?'* The man said, *'I do, Father.'* The priest said, *'Then stand over there against the wall.'* Then the priest asked the second man, *'Do you want to go to heaven?'* *'Certainly, Father,'* the man replied. *'Then stand over there against the wall,'* said the priest. Then the priest walked up to Bill and asked, *'Do you want to go to heaven?'* Bill said, *'No, I don't Father.'* The priest said, *'I don't believe this. You mean to tell me that when you die you don't want to go to heaven?'* Bill said, *'Oh, when I die, yes. I thought you were getting a group together to go right now.'*

Bill was patiently waiting and watching the traffic cop on Flinders Street. The cop stopped the flow of traffic and shouted, *'Okay, pedestrians.'* Then he'd allow the traffic to pass. He did this several times, and Bill still stood on the sidewalk. After the cop had shouted, *'Pedestrians!'* for the tenth time, Bill went over to him and said, *'Is it not about time you let the Catholics across?'*

Bill opened the morning newspaper and was dumbfounded to read in the obituary column that he had died. He quickly phoned his best friend, Laurie. *'Did you see the paper?'* asked Bill. *'They say I died!!'* *'Yes, I saw it!'* replied Laurie. *'So tell me - where are you callin' from?'*

A priest is driving down to Healesville and gets stopped for speeding. The policeman smells alcohol on his breath and then sees an empty wine bottle on the floor of the car.

'Sir, have you been drinking?', he asks.

'Just water,' says the priest.

The Officer says, 'Then why do I smell wine?'

The priest looks at the bottle and says, 'Good Lord! He's done it again!'

Walking into the bar, Bill said to Russell the bartender, *'Pour me a stiff one - just had another fight with the little woman.'* *'Oh yeah?'* said Russell, *'And how did this one end?'*

'When it was over,' Mike replied, *'She came to me on her hands and knees.'*

'Really,' said Charles, *'Now that's a switch! What did she say?'*

She said, *'Come out from under the bed, you little chicken.'*

Bill staggered home very late after another evening with his drinking buddy, Alan. He took off his shoes to avoid waking his wife, Kathleen.

He tiptoed as quietly as he could toward the stairs leading to their upstairs bedroom, but misjudged the bottom step.

As he caught himself by grabbing the banister, his body swung around and he landed heavily on his rump. A whiskey bottle in each back pocket broke and made the landing especially painful.

Managing not to yell, Bill sprung up, pulled down his pants, and looked in the hall mirror to see that his butt cheeks were cut and bleeding. He managed to quietly find a full box of Band-Aids and began putting a Band-Aid as best he could on each place he saw blood. He then hid the now almost empty Band-Aid box and shuffled and stumbled his way to bed.

In the morning, Bill woke up with searing pain in both his head and butt and Kathleen staring at him from across the room.

She said, *'You were drunk again last night weren't you?'*

Bill said, *'Why you say such a mean thing?'*

'Well,' Kathleen said, *'it could be the open front door, it could be the broken glass at the bottom of the stairs, it could be the drops of blood trailing through the house, it could be your bloodshot eyes, but mostly, it's all those Band-Aids stuck on the hall mirror'.*



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Crackdown on hall hire

By REBECCA BILLS

MOUNT Evelyn RSL is no longer hiring the Hardy House hall to one-off users after two years of constant damage issues.

At the December club meeting, members voted unanimously to no longer hire the hall out after the one-off users were not following bond agreements over an 18-month period.

Mount Evelyn RSL Secretary Anthony McAleer said after a 60th birthday party toilet handles were found smashed and after an engagement party the RSL's wheelchair was found broken - these just two occurrences on a long list of issues.

Mr McAleer said although these groups pay bonds to cover the club in the event of damage, each time it happened it required volunteering members to do the extra work to rectify.

"It is a sad decision to make because the RSL, as a community service, has wanted to offer the hall as

a cheaper venue facility to the general public," he said.

"However, because of the carelessness of our previous one-off hirers it is no longer worth it for the RSL to do this anymore.

"It's really sad it has come to this but it really isn't worth our while anymore."

President Roger Boness said the RSL had paid out more than \$20,000 over the last few years to improve the hall with new air-conditioning units and kitchen installed to upgrade facilities. He said although the RSL did rely on private hirers, now the eight community groups that use the hall throughout the week keep the hall afloat.

"We know we can trust the community groups to always make sure the hall is left in a clean and tidy state," he said.

Mr McAleer said the Mount Evelyn Scouts had also had similar issues with the hiring of their hall but they were unable to comment by the time the Mail went to print.



RSL President Roger Boness with members Gary Freeman, Deanne Webb and Bill Smart fed up with the disrespect shown by one-off hall users. 113577
Picture: REBECCA BILLS

Left:

Mt Evelyn Mail
24/1/2014

The sad story concerning the club being forced to make a decision about its one-off party hires and to no longer allow these functions to take place in our hall any more.

RIP LORRAINE ALLAN

The Mt Evelyn RSL is sad to report the passing of Lorraine Allan, an affiliate member and former member of the Women's Auxiliary.

Lorraine is the wife of Arthur Allan, one of our few World War Two veterans left at the club.

Both have been living at the Heritage Retirement Village in Bayswater for the past three years.

We pass on our condolences to Arthur and family.

Roger Boness

MOUNT EVELYN Returned Services League (RSL) president Roger Boness has worked tirelessly all year planning events for the town.

Mr Boness, who served in the Royal

Below: Mt Evelyn Mail 17/1/14 - Roger Boness named one of the notable people of 2013

Australia Artillery as a forward observer during the Vietnam War, recognises that it is important that the community of Mount Evelyn understands the significant contribution that all local soldiers have played in various wars.

The well known community figure has worked hard to acquire a decommissioned cannon for the town, a new memorial garden for the town along with many other projects to keep the RSL an active part of the local community.

Continuing to partner with local schools, Mr Boness has a strong community focus that relays in all the projects that are completed through the Mount Evelyn RSL.

Mr Boness is always out and about, be it talking at schools or other events in the local community and around the state.

FAMOUS AUSTRALIAN FILM DIRECTOR GIVES OUR BOOK THE THUMBS UP!

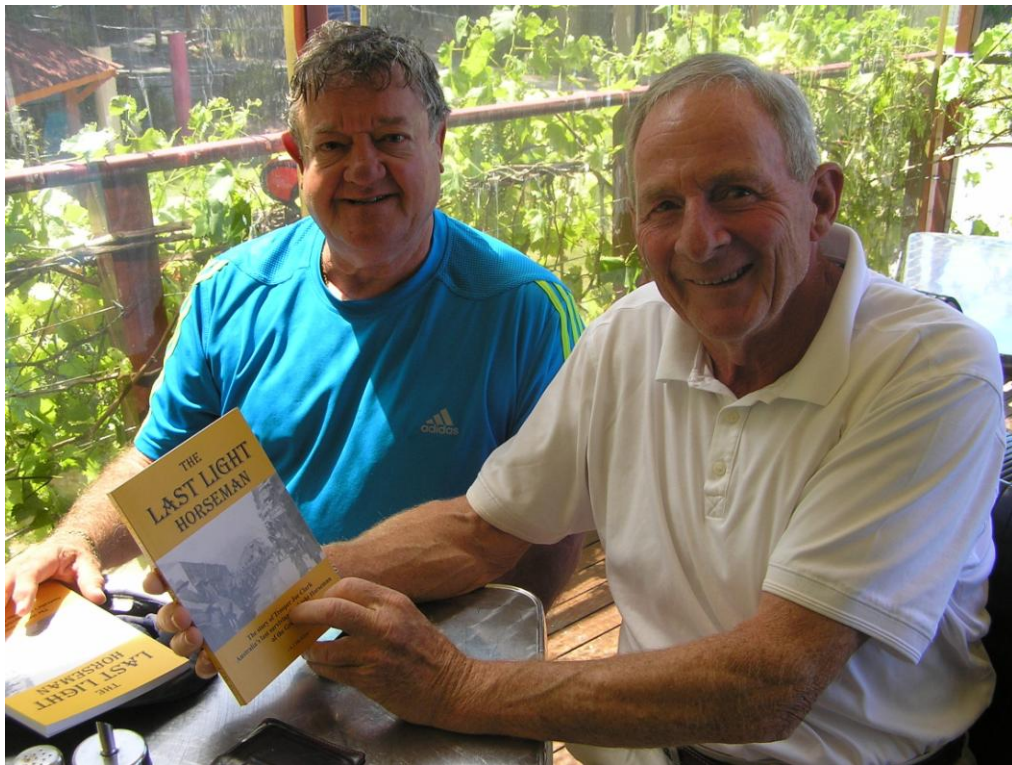
Recently members of the Mt Evelyn RSL & the Lilydale RSL had the chance to meet up with the famous Australian film director, Simon Wincer (*see right*).

Simon has directed some of Australia's more well known films including 'Phar Lap', 'The Cup', 'Lightning Jack' & 'Crocodile Dundee in Los Angeles'. He has also directed a number of Hollywood films including 'Free Willy', 'Lonesome Dove' and 'The Young Black Stallion'.

To the RSL he is best remembered as the director of that great Australian film, 'The Light Horsemen', a film that did great justice to the role played by the Australian Light Horse during World War One. Simon also has a keen interest in the history of the Light Horse and was very interested in our book on Joe Clark – 'The Last Light Horseman'.

Simon praised the Mt Evelyn RSL for producing the book and was pleased that the club had helped to spur interest in the lives of our gallant Light Horsemen by publishing Joe's story.

Copies are still available at \$20 and you can purchase it through the club or at the Mt Evelyn Post Office.



Above: Don Parsons, Lilydale RSL stalwart, and famous Australian director, Simon Wincer, with a copy of our book 'The Last Light Horseman'.

Below: The Mt Evelyn Mail 15/1/2014



Mount Evelyn shopkeepers Jenny McAleer, Retail Manager at Mount Evelyn Chemmart Robyn Fyander with Appeals Officer Dot Ervine happy with this year's results. 112443

Picture: REBECCA BILLS

Poppy sales bloom for veterans

By REBECCA BILLS

MOUNT EVELYN shopkeepers have had another record year of poppy sales in conjunction with the Mount Evelyn Returned Services League (RSL).

Mount Evelyn RSL Appeals Officer Dot Ervine said although they do not have all the trays back, the current tally looks like another record with more than \$3080 already raised.

"This is a fantastic effort seeing

that all our sales come from the one source - the Mount Evelyn community," she said.

"Thanks also to Robyn from the chemist, Jenny and Sandra who sold them at work and to our great band of workers who manned our table over those weeks."

Retail manager at Mount Evelyn Chemmart Robyn Fyander said the Red Poppy Appeal has extra special meaning to the pharmacy after pharmacists Chris Farquhar's son spent

time serving in Afghanistan.

"We care for the RSL and we really love supporting this appeal," she said.

"At Mount Evelyn Chemmart we are very community minded and I have already discussed with Dot that next year we are going to break records again.

"I'll be covered in poppies and ready to sell, sell, sell."

The Poppy Appeal runs each year in the lead up to Remembrance

Day to honour those who fell in times of war.

The Red Poppy, an emblem symbolic of those who have fallen in time of war, were among the first plants to bloom in the devastated battlefields of northern France and Belgium during World War I.

Money raised through the appeal goes directly to assist both current and former serving members of the Australian and Allied defence forces and their dependants when needed.

RIP - RALPH PROCTOR (1915-2013)

Childhood

Ralph Groube Proctor was born February 20th, 1915 in Hay, NSW.

He spent his early years growing up in Hay where he was a keen sportsman, a one stage holding the Under 16 junior high jump record for over twenty years. In his teens his family moved to a farming block in Monbulk.

When Ralph was 16 years old he moved to Queensland where he got a job as a jackaroo on a number of outback properties. He worked here for 10 years until the war started then he moved back to his parents home, who were now living in Queens Rd, Wandin.

World War Two

In 1941 he enlisted to serve in the Royal Australian Air Force, his brother Max had already enlisted the year before.

He began his training at Victor Harbour (SA) and Essendon before being sent to Canada under the 'Empire Air Training Scheme'. He completed his training in Canada and arrived in England in early 1943. After operational training here he was posted to No 295 Squadron under 'Transport Command', promoted to Flying Officer and put in charge of a crew of six.

During this period he was involved in a number of operations including flights over occupied France to drop supplies to the Marquis resistance and flights over occupied Norway to drop supplies to the resistance there. He was 'Mentioned in Despatches for Distinguished Service' for his involvement in these sorties.

His most important operation was on June 6th, 1944 when he successfully towed a glider full of British paratroopers to Normandy as part of the D-Day invasion. In September he also flew a number of dangerous missions over Arnhem in Holland to help supply the besieged Allied forces there.

He completed 28 operations in just under seventeen months.

In January 1945 he finished his tour of service and returned to Australia and was discharged from the RAAF in July 1945. His and his brother Max's names are listed on the Wandin War Memorial and on the Shire of Lilydale World War Two Honour Board.

Career post-war

Returning home to Wandin, Ralph eventually married and bought a property in McKillop Rd, Mt Evelyn and raised seven children, including two sets of twins. He turned his property into a berry and fruit farm and built their house there. He later worked around the area as a field officer for the Department of Agriculture.

Mt Evelyn Community

During his time in Mt Evelyn he contributed much to the community. He was on the Mt Evelyn Primary School Committee (in fact many of the trees around the oval were planted by Ralph), was an active member of the Silvan Fruit Growers Association, was the first male to serve on the 'Birmingham Rd Kindergarten Committee', was on the Mt Evelyn Scout Committee, was a long time member of the 'Mt Evelyn Progress Association' and was a lieutenant in the local 'Red Cross Door Knock Appeal'.

The Lilydale Bowls Club

In 1957 Ralph joined the 'Lilydale Bowls Club' and for decades played pennant and social games with and for the club and even undertook coaching. He served as president of the club from 1978 to 1980 and was involved in all the other committees at the club. He was made a 'Life Member' of the 'Lilydale Bowls Club' in 1989.

RSL

Ralph joined the Mt Evelyn RSL in the late 1960's and has been a member ever since. For over fifty years Ralph has been a familiar sight at the sub-branches commemorative services when he wears his original World War Two RAAF officer's uniform and medals. He recently attended the Governor's Anzac Luncheon in the city where he took time to talk with the youth present on the day.

Later years

In the 1970's Ralph moved to Coldstream and then in the 1990's to a retirement village in Lilydale. During his retirement he worked as a 'Lollypop Person' in both Coldstream and Lilydale up until his 90th birthday.

Ralph has also been active in telling the story of his service to local students. He has given talks at both primary & secondary schools and has been interviewed by students for projects. Even this year, at the age of 97, he spoke to a group of students.

In 2003 Ralph donated his entire collection of wartime memorabilia, including medals and uniforms, to the 'Mont De Lancey Historical Museum' in Wandin. It serves as a permanent collection there today.

In 2004 he returned to Holland as an Australian representative for the 60th anniversary of the Arnhem campaign.

In 2005 he published his autobiography – 'Aim High – Proc's Journey'.



Above: Ralph in his days before the war as a jackaroo in Queensland.

Below: Ralph behind the controls of his Albermarle in England 1943.



Above: Ralph and his wife Helen, at the time they met, just before he heading overseas with the RAAF

Below: Ralph with his Stirling & crew – No 295 Squadron.



Below: Ralph at the Anzac Day 2012 service at Mt Evelyn



Mail

Mount Evelyn

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Tuesday, 17 December, 2013 A Mail Newspaper Group publication Phone: 9751 9300 Trades and Classifieds: 1300 666 808

D-day veteran dies at 98, but his... Legacy lives on

By REBECCA BILLS

AT 98 years of age, Mount Evelyn Returned Services League (RSL) member Ralph Grosche Proctor sadly passed away last week.

The well-known community figure, born on 20 February, 1915, passed away peacefully in Lilydale on Sunday 8 December.

A keen member of the Mount Evelyn community, Mr Proctor built a life for his beloved wife Helen and their children in the town.

Mr Proctor was on the Mount Evelyn Primary School Committee, planting many of the trees surrounding the school oval.

He was also an active member of the Silver Fruit Growers' Association and the first man to serve on the Birmingham Road Kindergarten Committee.

Mr Proctor also served on the Mount Evelyn Scout Committee, was a long-time member of the Mount Evelyn Progress Association and a lieutenant in the local Red Cross door knock appeal.

In Mr Proctor's autobiography, "Aim High - Proctor's Journey", he said that when the war broke out in Europe in 1939, he joined the Royal Australian Air Force and participated in World War II.

"I watched a lot of my mates lose their lives," he said.

"I was one of the fortunate ones to have survived."

Mr Proctor relived his humble beginnings in Hay, New South Wales and moving to Monbulk in his teens to a live on a farming block with his family. "The last 90 years have not all been easy - there has been great joy and sorrow," he said.

"I have always aimed high at everything I undertook - to do the best I could under each circumstance."

"It is now up to each and every one of my children, all of whom I am extremely proud, to carry on the tradition of aiming high in their journeys through life."

Mr Proctor was a 285 Squadron RAAF Veteran of D-Day and Anzlem Member of the Mount Evelyn RSL.

President Roger Boness described



Ralph Proctor at the recent unveiling of the Mount Evelyn Honour Roll Plaque - still able to where his original uniform. 112247 Picture: CONTRIBUTED

him as a loving and proud family man, an esteemed member and a true gentleman.

"Ralph was a huge member in the RSL and flew in Bomber Command in Europe," he said.

"He is also the only member from the Mount Evelyn RSL that still fits his original uniform."

Mr Boness said Mr Proctor was a very engaging person who was able to talk about a lot of topics.

"He really was a distinguished person

all round who was very proud of his family and his war contributions."

In 2001, Mr Proctor donated his entire collection of wartime memorabilia to the Mount De Lancy War Museum and where it serves as a permanent collection.

Mr Proctor was the father of seven and adored grandfather to 17 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

A service to celebrate Mr Proctor's life was held on Monday 16 December at William Mathews Funeral Home.



Ralph Proctor with fellow Mount Evelyn RSL members. 112247 Picture: CONTRIBUTED



Ralph Proctor behind the controls of his Albermarle plane, England 1943. 112247 Picture: CONTRIBUTED

THE MONASH CAMP CENTENARY

Last year the Rotary Club of Lilydale successfully applied for funding under the Casey 'Centenary of Anzac Grants' to put up a number of memorials in this district that recognised the centenary of the militia camp that was held in February 1914 where the Lillydale Lake is today. This was both an important local and military event and was worthy of commemorating, especially as it had a great influence on the military career of Australia's greatest soldier, Sir John Monash.

Rotary then formed an organising committee made up of community representatives to get the projects completed. Involved were: Anthony McAleer, Iain Townsley, Brigadier (retired) Michael Phelps AM & Les Kennedy (all from the Mt Evelyn RSL), Helen McDonald, Margi Sank & Ian Darvell (from the Rotary Club of Lilydale), Bob Gannaway (Healesville RSL), Don Parsons (Lilydale RSL), Graham Warren (former Mayor of the Shire of Yarra Ranges) and Blake Hadlow.

What they ended up creating was a commemorative plaque and storyboard sign at the Lillydale Lake & a story board sign out along Maroondah Hwy, Coldstream. On top of this they also organised two detailed and fascinating unveiling ceremonies.





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Leader: Sue Harding 0421 225 827 or 97370106

Weight Recorder: Lesley McKenna 0425624043 or 97391642

Right: Our Vice-President Iain Townsley, piping at a recent service in memory of the three Commandos who died in 1960 at The Rip while on exercises.



Academy of Human Development

On a Monday morning a group of philosophers meet at the 'RSL Hall' to discuss life's big questions:

* Why am I here?

* Who am I?

* Is there more to life?

Anyone interested in joining should contact:

Natalie on **0 488 662 719**

Group sessions begin at 10am and finish at 12 midday.

Morning tea is provided.



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PLEASE NOTE

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'THE LAST LIGHT HORSEMAN'

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Mt Evelyn RSL

or at the

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CROYDON KILSYTH MONTROSE MT EVELYN LILYDALE DISPLAY SEVILLE

LILYDALE WEIGHT CLUB

We meet at the Mt Evelyn
RSL Hall every Tuesday
5.45pm-6.45pm

Everyone welcome!



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is the RSL's representative on the
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RALPH PROCTOR DISPLAY

Make sure you check out the Ralph Proctor RAAF display at the 'Mont de Lancey Museum' at Wandin. Ralph has been a long time member at the Mt Evelyn RSL & served with the RAAF in Europe during World War Two. He has loaned his wartime memorabilia to the museum and it is a fascinating collection. Includes items to do with his experiences at D-Day & Arnhem.



Mont de Lancey Museum & Homestead
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Open: Wed-Sun 10.30-4.30pm

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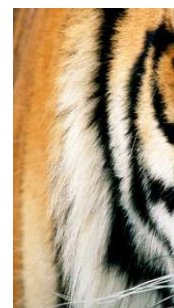
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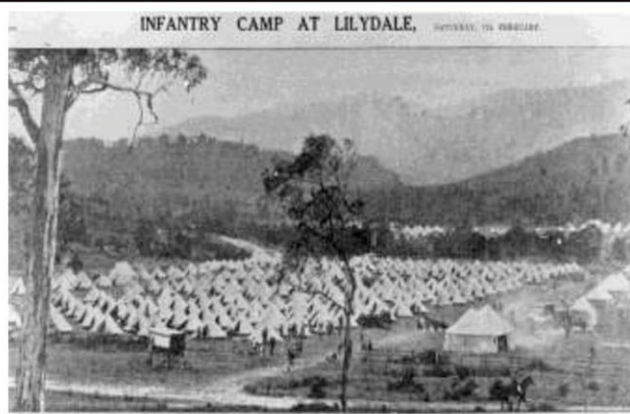


MONASH'S MILITIA CAMP

LILYDALE – FEBRUARY 1914

100 years ago John Monash and 3000 citizen soldiers descended on Lilydale and camped for week where the Lillydale Lake is today.

While they were there they were visited by General Sir Ian Hamilton & Richard Williams of RAAF fame and held a huge 'mock battle' near Melba's home in Coldstream.



Why were they there, what did they do, why was the event the most important in Monash's pre-war military career?

To mark the centenary of this remarkable event the Mt Evelyn RSL has published a book that details in words and images the fascinating story of 'Monash's Militia Camp'.

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BILL HARRISON'S STORY – pt 4

This is the story of one of our past members, Bill Harrison. Bill served with the 1st Independent Company during World War Two and was a member of the Mt Evelyn RSL for a short time in the 1990's. In 1999 Anthony McAleer sat down with him and interviewed him about his memories of the war. What follows is Bill's story.....

Last issue: Bill makes a jungle trek to get to Wau

How long did it take you to reach Wau?

That was quite a few weeks hard slog. When we got there all of the civilians had been cleared out and all that remained were some of the 'New Guinea Volunteer Riflemen', a volunteer unit mostly made up of blokes from the First World War. We were the only unit that walked across the mountains, everyone else from 'Kanga Force' was flown in, and in fact they were the first Allied force to be flown into a battle during the war. For us it was a different story.

What was Wau like?

Wau was almost a complete island in the middle of the mountains and it existed solely for the alluvial gold. In the 1920's they discovered gold there and the 'Bulolo Gold Dredging Company', Bulolo was about seven miles from Wau and one of the main dredging fields, had set up the town and built the airstrip there. There wasn't any motor connection between Wau and the coast, only foot tracks, it had all been by plane. Between 1933 and 1935 Fokkers flew all the dredges in, all cut up, in fact everything was flown in; glass, windows, building materials and such. In the end Wau was quite a substantial town, guessing I would say there'd be about three hundred houses there, all for the Europeans, and banks and schools and so on. It was all completely installed and completely supplied by the air; Australia was so far ahead of the rest of the world when it came to the use of aeroplanes. There were however a couple hundred miles of motor roads that ran out from Wau to places like Edi Creek, which was another gold field. The airstrip was unusual though, it was on a 45 degree angle. Planes would take off down hill and land up hill. It wasn't very long but because of the slopes on it, it could handle the heaviest aircraft.

What was your role in Wau?

By the time we arrived there the Japanese had landed on the north coast at Lae and Salamaua, two main tracks that ran north from Wau and were only about a four minute flight away. The Japanese had bombed Wau several times so that a third of the houses had been destroyed, in the end all the civilians were evacuated and flown out. Once the Japs occupied Lae and Salamaua they tried to advance inland. At this point Wau only really acted as our headquarters, mainly because it had the only air strip that was opened. Our job was to go into the jungle and harass the Japanese around Lae and Salamaua.

How did you do that?

We just prowled around and kept on the move all the time. Then whenever the Japanese tried to move out of Lae or Salamaua we'd ambush them. To give you an idea, we moved around in groups of two or three and the Nips never went anywhere under two or three hundred, so we couldn't make a stand against them. But that wasn't our role; our role was to keep moving. You just fire half a dozen bursts and then away you'd go, there'd only be two or three of us but they wouldn't know that. We also had booby traps on all the tracks for any time the Jap poked his head out.

Next issue: Bill's guerrilla war behind the lines in New Guinea

Right: Bill Harrison in 1999

MT EVELYN FURPHYS

• **Welcome to new members –**

John Sumner, George Anderson, June Benham, Ronald Jones, Graham Townsend, Maureen Townsend, Janine Knox, Stephen McGowan, William Smart, Jim Armstrong, Ian Darvell, Bill & Marilyn Parlet, Leanne Vaytaufer

• Rumour has it that club stalwarts, Russell Kirby & Sandra FitzGerald, are looking to move back to Mt Evelyn after their sabbatical in Wallan.

• Thanks to Jan Simmons for all her help to the RSL while CEO at Morrison's.

• Thanks also to Sandra FitzGerald for all her efforts as Treasurer last year, especially as she had to shift home half way through.

• Farewell to Mitch Tanner who worked for Christine Fyffe MLA and was a familiar face at our ceremonies. Mitch is moving to Canberra and will be working for Tony Smith MP.

• Should you require any assistance or advice - Deanne Webb (the Sub-branch's Welfare Officer).

Ph: **0402 783 849**

Or the Rev Richard

Schoenmaker

Ph: **9736 1087**



If undeliverable return to:

The Mt Evelyn RSL Sub-Branch
PO Box 182
Mt Evelyn Vic 3796

The Digger's Café

The social club operates the club rooms
every

***Thursday afternoon
from 1.00pm to 4.30pm.***

If you're looking for something to do of a
Thursday afternoon in Mt Evelyn
why not call in for a chat or
a game of pool or indoor bowls.

Club Opening Hours

***Every Friday Night
7.00pm – 10.30pm***

Celebrate the end of the week with a visit to
the clubrooms.

Andy has a well stocked fridge and there is
always someone on hand to make a brew if
you so desire.

Friday night football/cricket will be playing
on our big screen TV and don't forget we
also have a pool table.

Editor: Anthony McAleer

Ph: 9736 4384

Email: antmca@bigpond.com

*Send me an email me if you want to receive the
newsletter faster via email – it also saves the club
on postage costs!*

RSL Hall Hire

As you would have seen from recent publicity, the
membership of the Mt Evelyn RSL have voted to no
longer hire out our hall to one-off users for functions,
mainly because of the issues we've had with them
have made them more trouble than it's worth.

However we will still hire the hall out to members
for functions and at a discounted rate.

Contact the Secretary at:
mtevrsl@gmail.com

Mt Evelyn RSL Committee

President –

Roger Boness Ph: 9737 0830

Vice Presidents–

Jim Hurley Ph: 9876 3750

Iain Townsley Ph: 9777 1276

Secretary –

Anthony McAleer Ph: 9736 4384

Treasurer –

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Chamber representative –

Russ Kirby Ph: 0499475784

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Kim Parry Ph: 0418334416

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Betty Crittenden, Sandra FitzGerald, Bill Smart