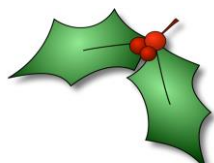


Mt Evelyn RSL News



Volume 6, Issue 6, Xmas 2015

A Sub-Branch of the Returned and Services League of Australia



MERRY XMAS



COMMUNITY GROUP OF THE YEAR - 2016

2016

Meeting Dates

Nov 18th, 2016

Dec 16th, 2016

2017

Meeting Dates

January, 2015

- No meeting

Sunday Feb 19th,

2017 – AGM

March 17th, 2017

April 21st, 2017

May 20th, 2017

June 16th, 2017

July 21st, 2017

August 18th, 2017

September 15th, 2017

*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



Above: Leanne Vaytauer (Treasurer of the Mt Evelyn Chamber of Commerce), Anthony McAleer (Secretary Mt Evelyn RSL), Kathie Freeman (President of the Mt Evelyn Chamber of Commerce) and Les Kennedy (Mt Evelyn RSL's representative on the Chamber) with the Community Group of the Year Award.

At the recent Mt Evelyn Chamber of Commerce end of year awards night, held at the Eastern Golf Course at Yering, the members of the Mt Evelyn RSL were pleasantly surprised when the chamber awarded the Sub-branch 'Community Group of the Year'.

In presenting the award President of the Chamber of Commerce, Kathie Freeman, highlighted the work the RSL has done for the welfare of ex-service people, our support of community groups and events as well our commitment to the heritage of the area, especially through our popular Anzac Day Dawn Service.

Important Dates

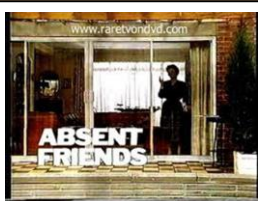
Coming Up:

Athenaeum Theatre, Lilydale

Members of the club
enjoy our quarterly
excursions to the ATC.

We will be doing the same
in 2016 so come along and
see:

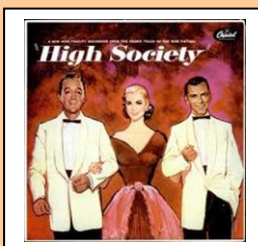
Absent Friends
Sunday March 6th
@ 2.00pm



**One Flew Over the
Cuckoo's Nest**
Sunday May 29th
@ 2.00pm



High Society
Sunday August 21st
@ 2.00pm



**Six Dance Lesson in Six
Weeks**
Sunday November 13th
@ 2.00pm

Tickets only \$10
for members
Contact Roger on
9737 0830

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The announcement last week of the club being awarded 'Community Group of the Year' for 2016 has certainly topped off an amazing year for the Mt Evelyn RSL and its members.

We have had an increase in our club's membership, our Anzac Day & Remembrance Day services were very well attended and we have achieved records with our Anzac token & poppy appeals. Our work with the schools has been particularly pleasing, especially the visit from Birmingham Primary School and the special WWI play 'For Home & Empire' put on by Yarra Hills Secondary College.

We have been involved with the Vietnam gravesite service, the Vietnam Veterans Day at Knox, the unveiling of the Silvan War Memorial and the Major Scurry plaque. We have held centenary services at local war memorials to mark the 1916 deaths in WWI of local soldiers, the centenary of the leaving of the HMT Wandilla & the start of the Somme campaign and have hosted trainers from HMAS Cerberus. We have also given support to the Mooroolbark, Wandin & Seville war memorials. We have remained committed to our community, supporting local groups, causes and events such as the Benvenuti Festival at Seville. Our hall is also well used by numerous community groups during the week and we continued to make improvements to the hall for their benefit.

We have launched another book entitled 'The Vagabond in the Yarra Valley' about the history of this district in the 19th century and unveiled a special poppy frame in our hall. Our welfare work continues to be an important part of our work and our Thursday afternoon social has attracted good numbers has created a joyful outing.

I would like to also extend my thanks to everyone who has supported myself and my family during the recent passing of my wife Julie, it is much appreciated.

I wish all Sub-Branch members & their families, and friends of the RSL Sub-Branch a very Merry Christmas, Safe and Happy New Year. – *Roger Boness*

APPEAL OFFICER'S REPORT

I am very pleased to announce that 2016's Poppy Appeal was another **record**. This year we raised just over **\$6500!!** As a result I would like to thank the Mt Evelyn & Mooroolbark communities for all their support, all of the volunteer sellers, Rob Webb for counting & banking, Birmingham Primary School who raised \$545 and IGA Mt Evelyn and Coles Mooroolbark for all their support.

– John Allwood

Membership Subs for 2017

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**

Now available – 3 year membership – only \$60.00

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

**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



The boss walked into the office one morning not knowing his zipper was down and his fly area wide open.

His assistant walked up to him and said, 'This morning when you left your house, did you close your garage door?'

The boss told her he knew he'd closed the garage door, and walked into his office puzzled by the question.

As he finished his paperwork, he suddenly noticed his fly was open, and zipped it up. He then understood his assistant's question about his 'garage door.'

He headed out for a cup of coffee and paused by her desk to ask, 'When my garage door was open, did you see my.. ah... Jaguar parked in there?'

She smiled and said, 'No, I didn't. All I saw was an old minivan with two flat tires...'

A senior citizen said to his eighty-year old buddy: "So I hear you're getting married?"

"Yep!"

"Do I know her?"

"Nope!"

"This woman, is she good looking?"

"Not really."

"Is she a good cook?"

"Naw, she can't cook too well."

"Does she have lots of money?"

"Nope! Poor as a church mouse."

"Well then, is she good in bed?"

"I don't know."

"Why in the world do you want to marry her then?"

"Because she can still drive a car!"

A man was telling his neighbour -
"I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me four thousand dollars, but its state of the art. It's perfect."
"Really," answered the neighbour. "What kind is it?"
"Twelve thirty."

Morris, an 82 year-old man, went to the doctor to get a physical. A few days later, the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young woman on his arm.

A couple of days later, the doctor spoke to Morris and said, "You're really doing great, aren't you?" Morris replied, "Just doing what you said, Doc: 'Get a hot mamma and be cheerful.'"

The doctor said, "I didn't say that. I said, 'You've got a heart murmur; be careful.'"

She wanted to serve her guests mushroom-smothered steak, but she had no mushrooms - and no time to buy them.

Her husband suggested, "Why don't you go pick some of the mushrooms that are growing wild down by the stream?"

"No, some wild mushrooms are poisonous."

"Well I see squirrels eating them and they're OK."

So she picked a few and washed, sliced and sautéed them for her dinner. Then she went out on the back porch and gave Spot, their dog, a double handful.

Spot ate every bite.

All morning long, she watched the dog. The wild mushrooms hadn't affected him after a few hours, so she decided to use them. The meal was a great success. After everyone had finished, her daughter came in and whispered in her ear, "Mum, Spot is dead." Trying to keep her head about her, she left the room as quickly as possible, called the doctor and told him what had happened. The doctor said, "That's bad, but I think we can take care of it.. I'll call for an ambulance and I'll be there as quickly as I can. We'll give everyone enemas and we'll pump out their stomachs and everything will be fine. Just keep them calm."

Before long they started to hear the sirens as the ambulance tore down the road. The Paramedics and the doctor had their suitcases, syringes and a stomach pump. One by one, they took each person into the bathroom, gave them the enema and pumped out their stomachs.

It was well after midnight when the last was done, the hosts and the guests were all sitting around the living room when the daughter came in and said to her mum.....

"I can't believe that guy!"

"What guy?"

"You know, that bastard who ran over Spot; He never even slowed down."



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‘The Last Post’ –

An Australian’s Tour of the Battlefields - *Tom Steele*

Our bugler and good friend, Tom Steele, recently visited the Australian WWI battlefields in Europe where he put his talents to good use in remembering the fallen from a century ago. The following is his story....

“The Last Post – An Australian’s Tour of the Battlefields”, is how David White, the husband of my cousin Christine, described my visit to the World War 1 battlefields and cemeteries when he put together a YouTube presentation of his recordings of me sounding the Last Post at the cemeteries we visited in June this year.

When Wendy and I, along with my sister Penny and her husband Jim, started planning our England and France trip, both Jim and I insisted we would like to visit the battlefields and cemeteries of WW1. Apart from my involvement in ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day Services, we had both read several books on various aspects of that terrible war, that such a visit had to be part of our tour. And so it was agreed but when I contacted my cousin Christine in England, with whom we were going to visit whilst there, her husband David said, “Right, OK, we’ve been there before so we’ll meet you over there and I’ll take you on a tour. Oh by the way, try and book yourselves into the B&B at Varlet Farm near Ypres”. Done.

On June 25th, a bit over three weeks into our trip, we arrived at Varlet Farm in a little town called Poelkapelle in Belgium and not far from Ypres. David and Christine were already there, so after being greeted by our host, Barbara, and shown our room, we headed off to a slightly bigger town called Zonnebeke. Here, near the site where a railway station once stood, we commenced a walk along the path now called “The road to Passchendaele. Australian Walk 4th October 1917”.



This path commenced in the town and followed the old railway line used by both the Germans and later the Canadians, as a supply route. Now, on either side are new housing estates which quickly become lush green farm land. It was so hard to imagine this land in such a war torn state as it was 100 years ago. Along the path though, are story boards with photos to remind you of exactly what did happen there. One such story board was beside the remains of a German bunker on the edge of “Thames”, this bunker became an Allied Field Hospital. The farm itself was destroyed but rebuilt after the war. It was still hard to imagine.

At the end of the approximately 2km walk we came to Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest WW1 cemetery in Belgium and in the middle of what is now, lush green farmland. As you walk through the entrance in the large semi-circular wall, you are immediately awestruck at the number of headstones, the size of the monument and as you look at the inside of the wall, the number of names on that wall.

Whilst I was “gazing” I saw my cousin Christine produce a bugle from a cotton bag she was carrying and give it to David who in turn gave it to me and asked me to sound the Last Post. I had no idea this was going to happen. I had left my bugle at home and had not played any instrument since Anzac Day so was concerned as to what it would sound like. As most people who have heard me before would know, I always manage a ‘squeaked’ note somewhere but I did not want to let anyone down as we were there to pay our respects to all those buried in that cemetery.

Left: Tom Playing at the Toronto Rd Cemetery

Above: At VC Corner Cemetery



As usual, I did 'squeak' a few notes but no-one was disappointed. In fact, it made the occasion more special for the others, and gave me a sense of honour and privilege to sound the Last Post and Reveille at that very special cemetery.

The next morning, after a magnificent breakfast at Varlet farm, David took us to the little town of Bullecourt France and we visited the well maintained Australian Memorial Park where the statue of the "Bullecourt Digger" stands:- *"Sacred to the memory of the 10,000 members of the Australian Imperial Force who were killed or wounded in the two battles of Bullecourt, April – May 1917, and to the Australian dead and their comrades-in-arms who lie here forever in the soil of France. 'Lest We Forget'"*.

This memorial park is also located in another area of lush green farmland and if you didn't know it was there, a visitor could almost miss it.

Once again it was an honour and a privilege to sound the Last Post and Reveille beside the statue. Whilst there, I learned two very poignant pieces of information about the statue itself and the location. Firstly, Peter Corlett, who designed and created the statue, found out during his preliminary research that his father, Private Kenneth Corlett, 4th Field Ambulance, actually fought at Bullecourt, so he 'modelled' the face of the digger from a photograph he had of his father. Secondly, on a more personal basis, I learned that the 22nd Battalion, which was raised in Gippsland, was one of the Battalions involved in the battles. In the early 1970's, as a CMF soldier, I was a member of the re-raised 22nd Battalion Royal Victoria Regiment.

Our next destination was the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont Hamel. This memorial park was a complete revelation to me as I do not recall in any books I have read, the fact the Newfoundland sent troops to fight in WW1. A Battalion from the Royal Newfoundland Regiment which, along with the British they were supporting, suffered very heavy casualties in this area on the 1st July 1916.

The memorial Park itself is huge with the remains of the trenches still very clearly defined from how they were left at the end of the war and it contains memorials not only to the Newfoundlanders but to the British, French and Germans. The humble caribou is the emblem of the Newfoundland Regiment and a large bronze statue of a caribou stands in the park atop a large mound of earth and rocks. I sounded the Last Post and Reveille out across that former battlefield from that mound just below the statue.

An interesting sidelight to this memorial park, is that it, and the accompanying museum, are manned by students from Canadian universities who for 3 months at a time, provide information and guidance to visitors.

Lunch was had in the rebuilt town of Pozieres at a restaurant called Le Tommy, named as such because that was the name the British soldiers were called during the war. Apart from a good cheap feed, the restaurant contains photographs and relics from the war, particularly the large back room which is dedicated to Australian photographs and memorabilia. Most interesting and moving.

After lunch we went to the Memorial for the 1st Australian Division in Pozieres, and stands opposite a relatively recently discovered bunker and is separate from the cemetery itself. We paid our respects as was now becoming the norm, and then attended at the Windmill Memorial, a relatively short distance away, where 100 years ago, a windmill stood and the area saw some of the fiercest fighting to take the small rise in the landscape.

It was here that the now Lieutenant Albert Jacka V.C. earned himself a Military Medal as well. Some historians say he should have received another V.C. When I sounded the Last Post and Reveille we were joined by another Australian couple from Glen Waverly who were very appreciative of our little service. Also at this location and across the road is the memorial to the British Tank Corps and it was very thought provoking.

Next we visited the Lochnagar Crater, near la-Boiselle, which the largest crater caused by tunnellers placing a huge amount of explosives underneath the German positions. Here there is now a peace memorial sitting atop this huge crater with the remains of countless German soldiers lying below. Whilst standing there looking down and around, I could not help feel some sadness for those who were buried alive in that explosion.

Below: Lochnagar Crater



From Lochnagar you can see several cemeteries scattered around and the biggest of them all, was ThiepVal. Unfortunately access to ThiepVal cemetery was denied and in lockdown whilst preparations were being made for the upcoming commemorative service on 1st July being the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme. We were able though to have a quick look at the Museum.

The next morning, Monday the 27th, we drove to Fromelles, France, where we visited the Australian Memorial Park at VC Corner. In the park is another statue created by Peter Corlett simply named “Cobbers” and depicts Sergeant Simon Fraser of the 58th Battalion, carrying a wounded soldier (cobber) on his back. The statue is erected between the remains of German bunkers in the park. The story behind this statue depicts the heroism of some soldiers to save their wounded cobbers. We performed our simple service again at this statue then went a very short distance to the actual VC Corner cemetery where the remains of many soldiers killed in the battle of Fromelles, lay buried. Once again, the cemetery and the memorial lay in lush green farmland and it was hard to comprehend the horror that took place there 100 years ago.

Whilst at the memorial, an English cyclist stopped by and in conversation mentioned Pheasant Wood Cemetery. I immediately pricked my ears and sought directions as David did not know of its existence. I did, because this is the cemetery where the remains of 250 British and Australian soldiers now lie after their originally unknown mass grave was discovered in 2009 on the edge of Pheasant Wood, Fromelles. I was particularly keen to visit it because I had read a book by Tim Lycett and Sandra Playle called “Fromelles – The Final Chapters”. I have to mention and talk briefly about the book as it is important to this part of the story.

Below: Tom playing next to the ‘Cobbers Statue’.



Above: Tom playing next to the 1st Division AIF memorial

I received the book as a Christmas present and when I started reading it, I couldn't put it down. It spoke of a man, Lambis Englezos AM*, an Australian WW1 historical enthusiast, who passionately believed, after checking all the records, there had to be another mass grave somewhere near Fromelles. Despite his efforts and evidence, the Australian Government was not convinced, so he continued to literally “dig” further. With the help of others he did manage to find further evidence, but when this looked like not impressing anyone in Government, in stepped Sydney lawyer, Chris Bryett who, after much frustration with bureaucracy commenced to put together his own team of experts to carry out a full “Dig” at Pheasant Wood.

The Government apparently heard of this and stepped in and announced it would engage a team of experts to conduct the search. Lo and behold, in 2009 what did that team find, the remains of 250 Australian and British troops. Lambis Englezos was right.

After conducting our important little service at VC Corner, we made our way to the well-kept, Pheasant Wood Fromelles Cemetery which, together with a museum was constructed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The first of the soldiers was interred in this cemetery on 29 January 2010 and the last in July 2010. Also visiting this cemetery, was a group of Australians travelling on a coach tour. The members of the group were quite moved when I said the Ode and sounded the Last Post and Reveille. It meant quite a lot to me on that occasion.

The museum was dedicated to the recovery and identification of the soldiers, and knowing what I knew from reading the book, it was a great disappointment to me to find there appeared to be no reference at all to the work done by Lambis

Englezos AM in the first instance nor to the authors of the book who played an important initial role in the identification of the soldiers. **For those of you who buy and read Anthony McAleer's books, you will find that Lambis Englezos AM, wrote the introduction to Anthony's book "Seventeen Year Old Soldier"*

After leaving Pheasant Wood Fromelles Cemetery, we drove back into Belgium to Ploegsteert Wood. Just on the edge of the Wood and down below the gravel road level, there is a very small cemetery, it seems to me to be very appropriately called, Mud Corner. In it lies about 86 Australians and New Zealanders and two unknowns.

We performed a little service there and then took a walk into Ploegsteert Wood until we came to the small Toronto Road Cemetery. This cemetery was dedicated to members of the 33rd, 35th and 36th Battalions of the Australian Army. It was not like the other cemeteries we had visited, in open farmland. This one was enclosed by the woods and my wife Wendy made the comment after I sounded the Last Post and Reveille that she felt an eerie feeling we were being watched from the trees by the soldiers. To me it felt like a special thing to do at that cemetery as it was one that could be very easily missed or overlooked by visitors.

The last Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery we visited was the 1st Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry Cemetery. The Bluff 1915 which was also situated in a wooded area but not so closed in. It was near the little town of Zillebeke. This cemetery was special to David as his Grandfather served in that Regiment so we performed our little service there as well.

That evening we went into Ypres where we attended the service at the Menin Gate. This service happens daily at 8pm local time and is attended by several thousand people. The three buglers who sounded the Last Post, are members, I believe, of the local fire service and have been performing this task for quite some time. A British Army band provided the music, an Australian read the Ode and many people laid wreaths. It was quite moving to be a listener for a change.

Our tour of the battlefields ended the next morning. We said goodbye to Varlet Farm after another fabulous breakfast and made our way to Langemark near Ypres where we visited, as a contrast, the large German military cemetery. 25,000 German soldiers (and two Englishmen) are buried there. It is nothing like any of the Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries so not a lot of time was spent there. It was interesting to see the difference and I believe, after 100 years, things are happening to make the cemetery more pleasant.

Right: The Bullecourt monument & Tom playing at The Windmill site

From there we travelled to Poperinge, A large town in Belgium where we visited Talbot House and its associated museum. During WW1 it was a place where British soldiers went for some R & R and is where the famous "Toc H" international Christian organisation had its beginnings. It was actually interesting to visit a building used by soldiers in WW1 that hadn't been destroyed by the war itself. Although it did suffer some damage, it was repaired and in the time since that war has had an interesting history.

Visiting these cemeteries and battlefields was at times very emotional particularly when it came to reciting the Ode to the Fallen. It was not my intention to do anything other than visit, but it was an absolute privilege to sound the Last Post and Reveille, and I thank David White for scrounging a bugle to take to France for me to play.

If anyone has the chance to visit these cemeteries, it's a must and if you go to Belgium I can highly recommend Varlet Farm as a place to stay.



RIP - JULIE BONESS



Members of the Mt Evelyn community were very sad to hear of the recent passing of affiliate member Julie Boness, wife of our president Roger Boness, after a long illness.

Julie was born in Elwood and spent her early years in Brighton before her family moved to Mt Evelyn. She attended the Lilydale High School and went on to become a teacher of art.

She met Roger just before he went overseas to serve in Vietnam and after he returned they got together and married, having two children, Alice and Stuart. They first lived in Brighton and then moved to Mt Evelyn where they lived for nearly fifty years and were long time members of the Mt Evelyn Tennis Club.

Julie went on to become an art teacher at Fitzroy High School and then spent over thirty years teaching at Maroondah High School. She also enjoyed their beach house down at Venus Bay. In their retirement Roger and Julie enjoyed travelling, all over Australia and on a number of occasions overseas.

Julie's bright nature, warm sense of humour and intelligent conversation made her a popular member of the sub-branch.

She passed away at home surrounded by her family.

REMEMBRANCE DAY - 2016

We had another great turn out for our annual Remembrance Day. Again our local schools did us proud by performing the readings, providing the choir and laying wreaths. Many local community groups helped out, especially the CFA, and guest speaker was Roger Boness who spoke on the 1916 centenary.



Veterans Wellness Programs

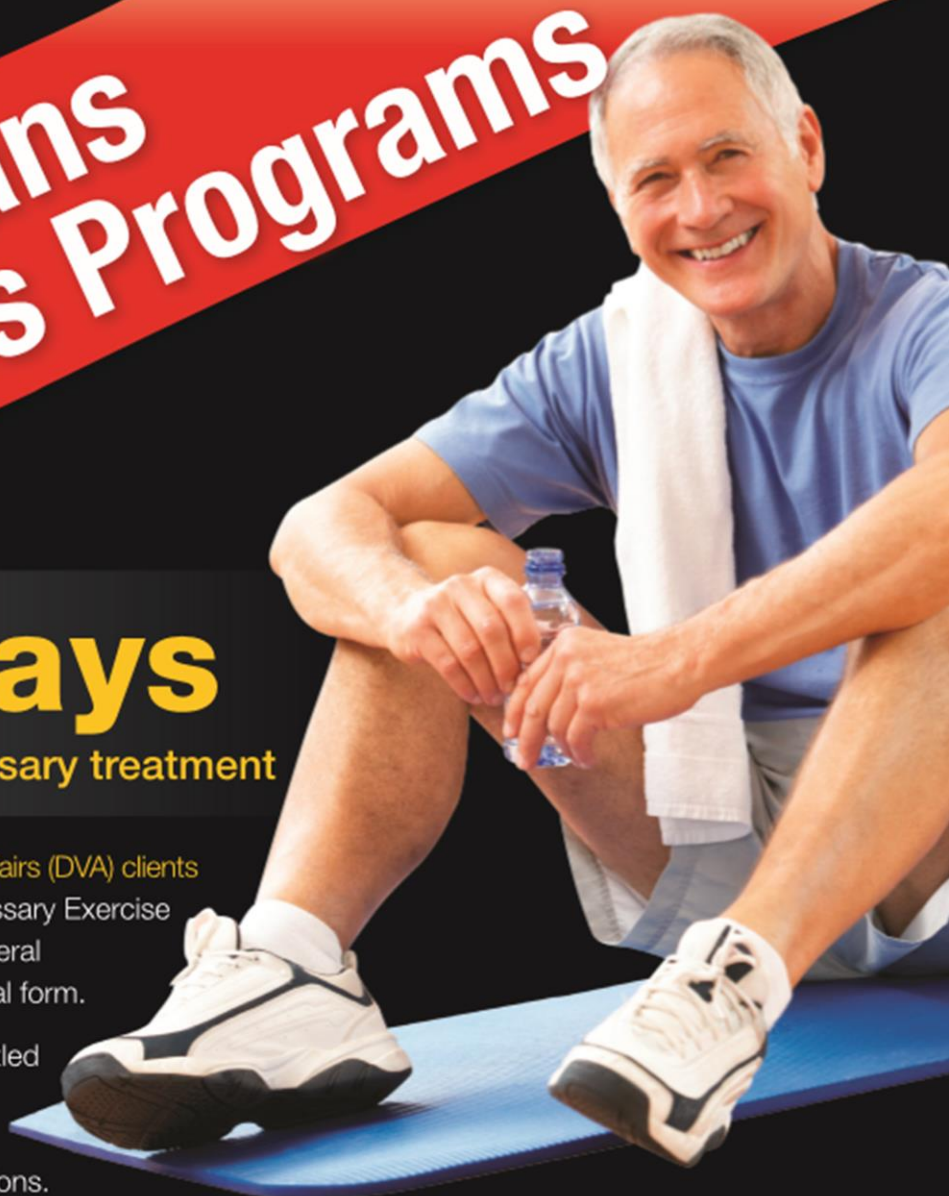
DVA Pays

for the clinically necessary treatment

Entitled Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) clients may be referred for clinically necessary Exercise Physiology treatment by their General Practitioner on a valid D904 referral form.

Gold Card Holders are entitled to clinically necessary treatment covered by DVA's health care arrangements for all health conditions.

White Card Holders are entitled to clinically necessary treatment for an accepted disability ie: an injury or disease accepted by DVA as service related.



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- ✓ Reduce and manage age related illness
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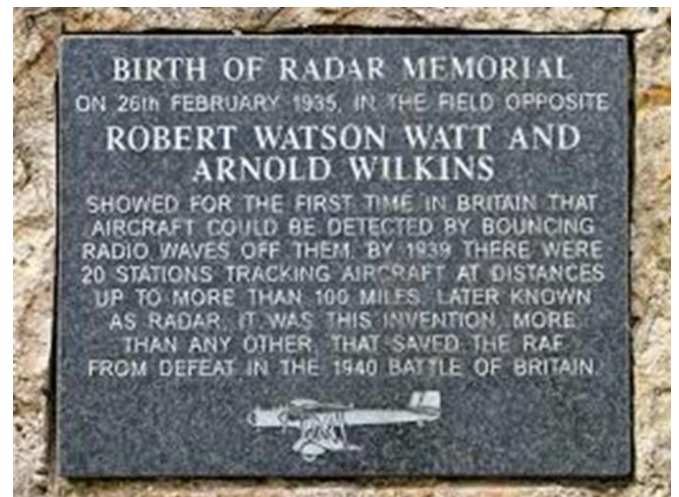
An Eye in the Sky – *by Max Lamb*

On the 26th of February 1935 two events took place in secret, one in Berlin and the other in a farmer's field in Northamptonshire England. These two unrelated events changed the course of history. The Berlin event was Adolf Hitler signing the documentation authorising the establishment of a new German air force in defiance of the WWI peace treaty. The second event was a RAF Heyford bomber flying at 6000ft, being spotted as a little green dot on a screen of an oscilloscope that was in the back of a Morris van sitting in the middle of a cow paddock. This strange experiment was the start of what we now call Radar.

With the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party in Germany in the early 1930's, several British scientists familiar with aeronautical matters were becoming concerned that Britain was not in a position to defend itself against enemy bombers.

One of these scientists, Professor Frederick Linderman, wrote a letter to the Times newspaper, challenging the scientific community of Britain to come up with a way of identifying approaching enemy aircraft before they could be seen visually. At the Air Ministry in Whitehall, civil servant Rowe was also concerned; he had studied all the papers he could find about the air defence of Britain. He concluded that science had not contributed to the development of technology of aerial defence. Rowe wrote a report to his superior officer, the director of the Air Ministry's scientific research section, Henry Wimperis, pointing out that the next war would be lost if advancement was not made in aerial defence. Henry Tizard, chairman of the Aeronautical Research Committee was also concerned about the possible ability of enemy bombers making devastating attacks.

Below: An Artist's impression of the 1935 experiment



Above: Memorial to the birth of Radar at the site in Northamptonshire

He came to the conclusion that an early warning system was needed. Tizard met with Wimperis to discuss the matter, Wimperis who had already read Rowe's report, decided to form a committee to investigate how science could be used to improve air defences. Robert Watson-Watt who ran the Radio Research Station and had extensive experience of using radio waves to detect thunderstorms that were of danger to aircraft, was asked about ideas. Watson-Watt had heard about reports that aircraft flying near radio transmitters caused interference in receivers.

He thought that this may be worth investigating to see if radio waves could be used to detect aircraft. On the 26th of February 1935, he proved it to be so. Over the next five years, Watson-Watt and his team developed the system into what many military personnel during WW2 referred to as an 'eye in the sky'. By 1941, the development of this new system had progressed to the stage where reliable information about position and number of enemy aircraft approaching the coast of England could be ascertained. This information was passed onto the RAF command control centre.

The pilots of the fighter Squadrons scrambled their Hurricanes and Spitfires into the air to combat the German Luftwaffe, before they could be visually seen from the ground. This new invention of Radar, enabled the RAF to eventually defeat Germany's Air Marshall Goring's Nazi Airforce in the skies over rural England, in what has become known as the '*Battle of Britain*'. By the RAF winning this encounter, Hitler postponed and eventually abandoned his plans to invade England.

Later in life, Watson-Watt reportedly was pulled over for speeding by the police using a radar gun. His remark was, *"Had I known what you were going to do with it I would never have invented it!"*

Sir Robert Watson-Watt was knighted in 1942. He died in 1973 aged 82.

Below:

Sir Robert Watson-Watt and a statue of him in Brechin, England



POPPY SALES

We have just finished up another successful period for poppy sales (see appeals officer's report). Thanks to everyone in the community for their support, especially IGA, and thanks to all our volunteers who assisted on the stall.

Below: Ted Fairweather on duty selling poppies. (courtesy Iain Townsley)



THANKS MARIA

Many thanks to our former councillor Maria McCarthy who for the past four years has been a great supporter of the Mt Evelyn RSL and everything that we've done. We appreciate all that you have achieved on our behalf and the support and friendship you have given to our membership.

Below: Maria presenting Roger with his Mayoral Lifetime achievement award.



Sandy, war horse and his soldier groom *by Kim Fawkes*

Among the many thousands of horses that served with the Australian Imperial Force in the Great War, one stands proudly among the horses that served with distinction. Sandy, a bay gelding (he stood 16 hands (163cm) at the withers), once the mount of Major General Sir William Throsby Bridges, OC 1st Australian Division, was the only horse from the 136,000 that left these shores to return to Australia.

Bridges was killed by a Turkish sniper at Gallipoli in May 1915. *The Australian Dictionary of Biography* records both artery and femoral vein in his right thigh were severed. Evacuated to the hospital ship *Gascon* his wound became gangrenous and he died en route to hospital in Egypt on 18 May. His remains were interred at Alexandria but in June 1915 his body was returned to Australia for burial. After a memorial service in St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, on 2 September, and a funeral procession through the city, his body was transferred to Canberra and reburied overlooking the Royal Military College.

One of 6,100 horses embarked for Gallipoli, Sandy was not landed with Bridges so did not share his fate, being sent to Alexandria from where he went by rail to Cairo. History records that Sandy was born in 1907 in the Murray River village of Tallangatta. Owned by the O'Donnell Brothers who operated a brick making business, Sandy was donated by them to the war effort in 1914. After Bridges was killed Sandy was attached to the Australian Veterinary Corps Hospital at Calais, France. Because of his link with Bridges, the Australian Defence Minister, Senator George Pearce, wanted Sandy returned to Australia. Accompanied by his soldier-groom, Sandy was taken from France to England in May 1918 to

ship back to Australia in September.

Sandy's groom for the voyage back to Australia was Private Archibald Thomas Jordon. Originally from Bourke in New South Wales, he later moved to Victoria, settling in Elizabeth Street in Kew near his parents, Archibald James and Annie. Employed as a labourer, nothing is known of his life before he enlisted in February 1915 aged 35, to "serve our Sovereign Lord the King in the Australian Imperial Force". His service history shows him leaving Australia on 10 May 1915, posted to 23rd Battalion, later to Divisional HQ. In 1917 Jordon was posted to the Australian Army Veterinary Hospital at Calais where he was united with Sandy, one of many thousands of sick horses to pass through the hospital. With plans to repatriate Sandy to Australia, Jordon was allotted as his groom for the voyage home on SS *Boorall* in September 1918. Cleaning the stalls, rubbing the horses down and walking them around the ship were routine tasks.



Jordon and Sandy reached Australia in November 1918. Sandy went to the Remount Section at Maribyrnong in Footscray where he spent his days grazing, dying in 1923 from old age. Jordon was discharged in December 1918, returning to his labouring job, a hard slog after his many years away overseas but the next four years were marred by illness. Tuberculosis, a respiratory disease he “picked” up on the crowded troop ship on the voyage home, led to his premature death on 12 December 1923 and he was buried in an unmarked grave in Box Hill Cemetery.

The story may have ended there but Sandy's story intrigued me and in September 2016 I decided to see if I could find Jordon's grave. A visit to the cemetery confirmed his last resting place in the Church of England section, plot 1781. I was supplied with a map by the office staff with Jordon's grave marked with an X. Tucking the map under my arm I wandered off to find Jordon. I knew his grave lay among rows of marked burial sites so I started midway along the third row in from West Drive. When I came across grave markers beginning with 1600 I knew Jordon must be further along. Looking closely at the grave markers I counted them off "1760, 1763". I was on the right track now. I moved further along: "1781" - there it was, no headstone, only a bit of earth with grass and weeds. I had found Jordon's last resting place!

Archibald Thomas Jordon served his country proudly for three and a half years: as a soldier who fought for his country he should be honoured with a headstone and grave, not just a patch of earth covered by weeds. Documents provided by historians, genealogists or anyone who could authenticate a soldier's identity and service was the original way to go but a policy change limiting headstone requests to a veteran's next-of-kin or authorized family

representative has made it hard to do the right thing. Unless Jordon's next-of-kin can be found or a family member authorizes (in writing) someone to do this (such as myself) he won't be getting a headstone. However there may be one way to achieve this.

The Office of Australian War Graves provides headstones and graves for soldiers whose death was caused by war. Jordon's medical board review on discharge listed varicose veins but he was known to suffer from tuberculosis, an infectious pulmonary disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* which affects the lungs, classic symptoms being a chronic cough with blood-containing sputum, fever, night sweats and weight loss. Not everyone infected with TB bacteria becomes sick. Jordon was one of the few who did, passing away in December 1923. If I can prove Jordon's death was war-related - that the TB bacteria he picked up on the crowded troop ship home caused illness in the years after his return then Archibald Thomas Jordon can finally rest in peace with a proper grave and headstone. **Grave below @ Box Hill**

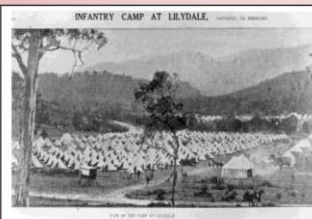


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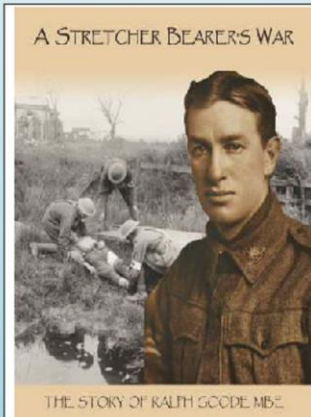


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2.00PM

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Event Days (guest speakers, tours etc):

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1.30pm

'Hardy House' –

Mt Evelyn RSL Hall

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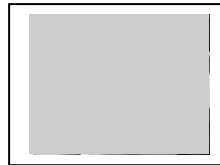
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RALPH PROCTOR DISPLAY

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



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9am - 1pm

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Featuring various stall holders and local businesses.

Fresh produce and an RSL sausage sizzle and devonshire tea.

www.facebook.com/mtevelyncommunitymarket



JOHN JAMES PURCELL

In commemoration of the centenary of World War One, the Mt Evelyn & Lilydale RSLs have divided the local war memorials between them and will be holding a service on the centenary date of those listed on these memorials who died while on active service. In connection with this will be publishing their biographies in each of our newsletters.....

John James Purcell was born in 1890 at Lilydale, the son of John and Christine Purcell. John spent his early years growing up in Lilydale before his family moved to 4 Gibb St, Balaclava where he attended the Brighton Road State School for his education.

After he finished his schooling he took up odd jobs as a boundary rider and a labourer around Victoria and New South Wales. He was living at Bulla, Victoria when he enlisted in the AIF, at the recruiting centre in Kerang, on June 26th, 1915. His medical records show he was five feet, eight inches tall, had fair hair and blue eyes.

He undertook his initial training at the army training camp at Seymour where he was allotted to the 8th reinforcements for the 8th Battalion and given the regimental number 2655. He embarked with his unit from Port Melbourne on the SS Marakini on September 15th, 1915

The following month he was in camp at Egypt and the month after that he was sent to Gallipoli with the 8th reinforcements for the 8th Battalion serving on Anzac Cove. He was only at Gallipoli a few weeks when he was evacuated with the rest of the 8th Battalion on December 7th, 1915.

After a short stay on Lemnos Island he was sent back to Egypt in January 1916 where the AIF was being reorganised. As a result he was transferred from the 8th Battalion into the newly formed 60th Battalion.

While here he got himself into a bit of trouble and was charged with 'absenting himself without leave' and tried by Field General Court Martial. He was found Guilty and had to undergo 56 days Field Punishment and forfeit 5 days pay.

In June 1916 the 60th Battalion was sent to France arriving in the Fleurbaix area in early July. They weren't here very long when they were sent to Fromelles. On July 19th, 1916 they were ordered to attack the enemy trenches. John Purcell was last seen charging over the top of the trench. He was listed as missing soon after; he was aged just twenty-seven years old.

A Court of Enquiry held in the field on August 4th, 1917, pronounced his fate as Killed in Action.

He is remembered today at the memorial at Y Farm Military Cemetery in France.

Right: *Local school students remember John Purcell at a ceremony at the Lilydale War Memorial on the centenary of his death*

MT EVELYN FURPHYS

- Welcome to new members: Chris White, Brett Curnow, Gail Mosley.
- We welcome back to SYR council Tim Heenan, who was always a great supporter of the Mt Evelyn RSL when he was in council.
- Members bid a fond farewell to the sub-branch's long time padre and good friend Rev Richard Schoenmaker. Richard & Lesley are leaving Mt Evelyn to help start off a new church in Pakenham. We thank you Richard for all your support over the years to the club and for all your efforts in the Mt Evelyn community.



- Best wishes to Bruce Watkinson who is in hospital again
- Members saw Andy Franks recently and say he is well
- Should you require any assistance or advice - Deanne Webb (the Sub-branch's Welfare Officer).
Ph: 0402 783 849



If undeliverable return to:

The Mt Evelyn RSL Sub-Branch
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The Digger's Café

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Editor: Anthony McAleer

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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
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Contact the Secretary at:
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