

Mt Evelyn RSL News

Volume 3, Issue 6, Xmas 2013 A Sub-Branch of the Returned and Services League of Australia



MERRY XMAS



AWARD PRESENTATION TO BETTY CRITTENDEN



Above: Roger Boness, Dr Robert Webster, Tony Smith MP and Heather McTaggart with Betty Crittenden and her award. (Photo: Deanne Webb)

2013/2014 Meeting Dates

Dec 20th, 2013
No January meeting
Feb 21st, 2014
Mar 21st, 2014
April 18th, 2014
May 16th, 2014
June 20th, 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>



Follow us on facebook

On Saturday November 16th, 2013 the Mt Evelyn RSL was proud to host an award presentation to one of the club's stalwarts, Betty Crittenden. In front of a large crowd of RSL and community members, as well as Betty's family, she was presented by Vice-President of RSL Victoria, Dr Robert Webster with the 'RSL National Certificate of Merit with Gold Badge', the highest honour a non-service member of the RSL can achieve.

On the day Mt Evelyn RSL President Roger Boness spoke about the hard work Betty has put into the RSL over 28 years including serving for a record 22 years as president of the Women's Auxiliary. *'Betty has performed numerous tasks and roles for the club and the welfare of the members'*, he said *'and has supported two husbands who have been executives at the club'*.

Heather McTaggart, a former MLA for this area and past secretary of the Women's Auxiliary, talked about how during this time Betty has not only dedicated a large amount of time to the club but also managed to raise three children and six grand children as well as nurse two husbands and a daughter-in-law through ill health.

Tony Smith MP, the Federal Member for Casey, also paid tribute to Betty and honoured her for not only putting so much time into the club but also for the work and effort she has contributed to the Mt Evelyn community.

Important Dates
Coming Up:

**MT EVELYN
RSL**



***XMAS
LUNCH
2013***

The Mt Evelyn
RSL's annual
Xmas lunch will
again be held at
the popular
'Twisted Vines'
restaurant.



**159 Monbulk
Rd, Silvan**

**Tuesday
December
10th 2013
2.00pm**

To book in
contact asap
**Dot Ervine on
9736 3638**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The festive season is upon us and with that in mind I would like to sincerely thank the community of Mount Evelyn, our voluntary organisations, local schools, businesses and elected representatives for their ongoing support of the Mount Evelyn RSL Sub-branch commemorative services during 2013. Similarly the Yarra Ranges Shire Council for their understanding and support in the major redevelopment and landscaping of our community memorial garden. The major project has been well received by all user groups and provides a unique reflective environment in remembrance for those who served.

2014 will be equally as challenging as 2013 with the centenary commemoration of the Great War, along with our normal planning for our members activities and outings. Our Sub-branch has been the driving force in ensuring our local communities receive adequate assistance in restoring our local memorials and recognition of Avenues of Honour which haven't stood the test of time or simply faded from older knowing minds. Never the less, important in our local military history. In February next year we will be following up the publication of 'The Last Light Horseman' with a book on the history of the Monash militia camp that occurred where the Lilydale Lake is today in 1914. This, along with the unveiling of some memorials to the camp by the Rotary Club of Lilydale, will kick off the local centenary events. More on this will follow.

Finally I would also sincerely thank the RSL Committee and members for their involvement and support, ensuring our community RSL met community expectations during 2013.

On behalf of the RSL committee and members of the Mount Evelyn community RSL we extend our very best wishes to all for Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

LEST WE FORGET

- Roger Boness

APPEALS OFFICERS REPORT

Well we've just finished another year's Poppy sales and although I don't have all poppy trays back as yet it is looking like another record – over **\$3080!!**

This is a fantastic effort seeing that all our sales come from the one source – the Mt Evelyn community – so once again thanks to Mt Evelyn IGA for their support. Thanks also to Robyn from the chemist, Jenny & Sandra who sold them at work and to our great band of workers who manned our table over those weeks.

Regards –

Dot Ervine, Appeals Officer

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



BETTY'S JOKE PAGE



A mature (over 50) lady gets pulled over for speeding.

Older Woman: Is there a problem, Officer?

Officer: Ma'am, you were speeding.

Older Woman: Oh, I see.

Officer: Can I see your license please?

Older Woman: I'd give it to you but I don't have one.

Officer: Don't have one?

Older Woman: Lost it, 4 years ago for drunk driving.

Officer: I see...Can I see your vehicle registration papers please.

Older Woman: I can't do that.

Officer: Why not?

Older Woman: I stole this car.

Officer: Stole it?

Older Woman: Yes, and I killed and hacked up the owner.

Officer: You what?

Older Woman: His body parts are in plastic bags in the trunk if you want to see.

The Officer looks at the woman and slowly backs away to his car and calls for back up. Within minutes 5 police cars circle the car.

A senior officer slowly approaches the car, clasping his half drawn gun.

Officer 2: Ma'am, could you step out of your vehicle please! The woman steps out of her vehicle.

Older woman: Is there a problem sir?

Officer 2: One of my officers told me that you have stolen this car and murdered the owner.

Older Woman: Murdered the owner?

Officer 2: Yes, could you please open the trunk of your car, please.

The woman opens the trunk, revealing nothing but an empty trunk...

Officer 2: Is this your car, ma'am?

Older Woman: Yes, here are the registration papers. The officer is quite stunned.

Officer 2: One of my officers claims that you do not have a driving license.

The woman digs into her handbag and pulls out a clutch purse and hands it to the officer. The officer examines the license. He looks quite puzzled.

Officer 2: Thank you ma'am, one of my officers told me you didn't have a license, that you stole this car, and that you murdered and hacked up the owner.

Older Woman: I bet the liar told you I was speeding, too!!!

** How does Moses make his tea? Hebrews it.*

** Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!*

** A cartoonist was found dead in his home.*

Details are sketchy.

Dan was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business. When he found out he was going to inherit a fortune when his sickly father died, he decided he needed a wife with which to enjoy his fortune.

One evening at an investment meeting he was introduced to the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty absolutely took his breath away! Smitten with her beauty, handing her his business card he said, *"I may look like just an ordinary man, but in just a few years, my father will die, and I'll inherit 20 million dollars."*

The gorgeous woman was impressed and took his business card. Three days later, she became his stepmother.

Lesson: Women are so much better at estate planning than men

The doctor, who was known for his extraordinary treatment of arthritis had a waiting room full of patients. A little old lady, almost bent over in half, shuffled in slowly, leaning on her cane. When her turn came, she went into the doctor's office and, amazingly, emerged within 5 minutes walking completely erect with her head held high.

A woman in the waiting room, who had seen all this, rushed up to the little old lady and said:

"My God it's a miracle! I saw it with my own eyes. You walked in nearly bent in half and now you're walking out of here, upright! What did the doctor do?"

"He gave me a longer cane."

**I use to be a banker, but then I lost interest.*



Follow us on facebook:

www.facebook.com/mtevelynrs1

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE - 2013

The weather was perfect once again for this year's 'Remembrance Day' service as a crowd of over 250 gathered together at the Mt Evelyn War Memorial Gardens. Highlight this year was the talk by our guest speaker, Daniel Meadth, and the superb job undertaken by our school children, especially those who did readings and those who were involved in the choir. Piper Iain Townsley, Bugler Tom Steele and Padre Richard Schoenmaker again helped make our ceremony a moving one. Jim Hurley reported large numbers at Wandin as well.

Photos: Deanne Webb & Les Kennedy



Left & Right:

The crowd gathers



Left:
Piper Iain Townsley



Right:
Bugler Tom Steele



Left:
President Roger Boness



Right:
Mt Evelyn PS



Left:
St Mary's PS



Right:
Schools choir



Left:
Daniel Meadth,
Chair of
METIC



Right:
Birming-
Ham
P S



Left:
Yarra
Hills SC



Right:
The War
Memorial

WREATH LAYING

Cr Maria McCarthy
Daniel Meadth

Christine Fyfe MLA
students from Yarra Hills

Ken Reed
President Mt Ev CFA

Edna Purser
and family



Below: Rev Richard Schoenmaker

Matt Crymble and Iain Townsley



MT EVELYN STREET FESTIVAL



The RSL were proud to be associated with the Mt Evelyn Street Festival once again. Russell Kirby represented the club on the organising committee and on the day we again had a stall where we promoted the club and sold some of our books and poppies. Thanks to all who helped man the stall, especially Roger who was there all day.

Left: Ted Fairweather & Roger Boness with Dotty Dimple, aka Cr Maria McCarthy!
(Photo: J McAleer)

WELL DONE MT EVELYN CFA!



A huge congratulation to members of the Mt Evelyn CFA who were recently awarded the 'National Emergency Medal' for the role they played in the 2009 'Black Saturday' bushfires. Amongst those to receive a medal were many good friends of the Mt Evelyn RSL as well as members: Jim Hurley, Laurie Hollier, Steve Deakins, Geoff Brown and Ken Reed. Our long time Bugler, Tom Steele, was also awarded a medal for his involvement with the CFA during this period as well. **Photo: Mt Evelyn CFA**

MT EVELYN VETERANS HONoured

On Remembrance Day the Mt Evelyn RSL Sub-branch was proud to right a wrong when the names of two Mt Evelyn veterans were added to the 'Honour Board' that had accidentally been left off. Not only that, but we were honoured to have both of these veterans present to officially unveil their names on the 'Honour Board'. One of the veterans honoured was 92 year old Edna Purser, who served with the 'Australian Women's Army Service' during World War Two. Ironically her father's name was on the board but for some reason her name had been missed. The other veteran was Barry Brewer, who had spent much of his youth in Mt Evelyn. Barry served in Vietnam with 3 RAR (1967-1968) and is a veteran of the Coral and Balmoral campaigns; he also served in the army for over 20 years. Barry's name only came to light recently when his brother Adrian, who also served with the Australian Army for many years, visited the club. Quite a number of people were on hand to witness the event that took place in the hall after our Remembrance Day ceremony at the park.



Left:
Edna Purser & Barry Brewer unveil their names

Below:
A large crowd gathered in the hall to watch the unveiling ceremony including quite a number of Grade six students from Birmingham Primary School.

(Photo: D Webb)



THE 'LETTER TO THE EDITOR' ISSUE

You may remember the 'Letter to the Editor' issue from the last newsletter where members were criticised for plans regarding our memorial howitzer and the response issued by our Treasurer, Sandra FitzGerald. Since then we've been able to have discussions with the author and assured him that we consulted the Mt Evelyn community at every step of the project. He has since issued an apology (see right) for which we thank him and have let him know he will always be welcome at our club and our ceremonies.

RECENT PUBLICITY

Gun grief

SANDRA, to you and your members and friends of the Mount Evelyn RSL I offer my deepest apology for any grief I have caused you over the opinion I expressed in a recent edition of the Mail regarding the Mount Evelyn RSL.

I have been impressed by your close knit community and I wish you all the very best in the future.

Phil Measom,
Menbulk.

Left:
Mt
Evelyn
Mail
1/10/2013

Right:
Lilydale
Leader
15/10/
2013

Below:
Mt
Evelyn
Mail
8/10/2013

Revamped garden opens gates in memoriam

By EMMA SUN

THE Mount Evelyn RSL is encouraging the community to use the newly revamped memorial garden following the recent completion of works to the area.

After a crowded dawn service for Anzac Day was held at the RSL club-rooms in 2011, veterans decided to take last year's service outdoors on the garden.

This year's service drew record crowds, prompting calls for landscape works to allow more people to attend and be involved in the service.

RSL president Roger Boness said the new garden would be the centrepiece for the Mount Evelyn RSL.

"The RSL has been congregating all the town's memorials into this memorial garden," he said.



Mount Evelyn RSL president Roger Boness and Yarra Ranges Council gardener Aaron Roberts at the newly landscaped memorial garden.
107432
Picture: EMMA SUN

"One of the biggest issues was the original Avenue of Honour had to be cut down because the trees were becoming unstable and were a danger for the community and shoppers.

"The council has planted yellow box gums here for a new Avenue of Honour, and we will make a new plaque that will have the 13 names of the people who were on the trees."

Yarra Ranges Council's gardener for Mount Evelyn Aaron Roberts said he also put in half a dozen RSL roses.

"It represents the flame with the sunrise, it's just something special for the garden," he said.

Mr Boness said the garden would be ready for the Remembrance Day ceremony, but would also be a place for locals to hang out.

"We couldn't be more pleased, we're absolutely delighted that the community of Mount Evelyn are actually using that space now," he said.

"They talk about it, sit there and have lunch, they come off the trail and just sit quietly and it's people of every age - I was amazed to see adolescent boys there, sitting there and quietly looking, it's quite exciting."

Right:

The Mt Evelyn Mail 29/10/13

The article below details the story of how the shire planted six RSL rose bushes in the war memorial garden as part of their plans to upgrade our special park (see article on previous page from 8/10/13).

Sadly soon after the article came out, these roses were stolen from the garden. The theft created much talk on facebook and one member, Jenny McAleer, raised the issue on 3AW's 'Rumour File' which resulted in our president, Roger Boness, being interviewed on 3AW about the stolen roses.

Thanks should go to the Shire Council who replaced the roses before our 'Remembrance Day' ceremony.

Below:

The Mt Evelyn Mail 5/11/13

Watch out

By MELISSA MEEHAN

SOMETHING had to give.

Mount Evelyn resident Jim Humphrey is a busy man - at one time or another he's been involved with St John Ambulance, the RSL, the Australian Air League, METIC and the Neighbourhood Watch.

So it's no surprise that after 43 years of being involved in community groups and events, sooner or later he was going to have to slow down.

This month, Mr Humphrey resigned as chairman of the Mount Evelyn Neighbourhood Watch after five years in that role.

"To be honest, I'm getting too old," Mr Humphrey said on Friday.

"It was getting difficult to fit everything in so I think it's time for someone young and enthusiastic to have a go.

"It's not an easy job - Mount Evelyn doesn't really have any crime.

"But that's no reason why people shouldn't be aware."

Mr Humphrey said the major concern for the Neighbourhood Watch in Mount Evelyn was getting the community to take a pro-active approach to crime in-



Jim Humphrey is a busy man.

stead of waiting for things like graffiti or vandalism to happen.

Involved in community groups since he was 11, Mr Humphrey said while he was standing down in his position of chairman he would still be involved in the Neighbourhood Watch.

"It's just hard thinking of how to keep people aware and alert when there doesn't seem to be much crime," he said.

"Last year we did the audit of the car park and found that there

was a large percentage of people not locking their car doors.

"We've only had one murder for as long as I can remember. We get a few robberies and while domestic violence has been an issue in the Yarra Ranges as a whole it's difficult to target."

He said he hoped the new chairman would have some interesting ideas and that the residents of Mount Evelyn stayed vigilant.

GOOD NEWS

Congratulations to our President Roger Boness who has, for the second year in a row, received a 'Certificate of Recognition' from the Victorian State Government during 'Victoria's Seniors Week'. His award was for all his efforts with the Mt Evelyn RSL and its members. *Well done Roger & well deserved!!*

Also good news for our hall. We have been very lucky to receive a grant for \$3000 from the Bendigo Bank. This grant is to be used for air conditioning for our hall. It is estimated that it will cost \$6000 all up and at the last RSL meeting members voted to pay for the rest of the costs out of the RSL's funds. That means that this Summer our hall users won't be forced by the heat to go elsewhere.

Mount Evelyn Mail

Tuesday, 5 November 2013 A Mail Newspaper Group publication Phone: 9781 9300 Trades and Classifieds: 1300 626 908

5 Anti-violence flash mob 7 Road safety targeted 21-23 Sports of all sorts

RSL slams thieves' disrespect for ultimate sacrifice...

Rose theft thorn

By REBECCA HILLS

A DELIBERATE and planned assault on the Mount Evelyn RSL Community Garden has left the community outraged.

Five specially cultivated Remembrance roses were stolen last Monday night with Mount Evelyn RSL President Roger Boness waking to calls from fellow community members.

He identified those responsible as disrespectful and said he believed it was a deliberate and planned assault on the garden.

Mr Boness said the recently installed memorial garden was a place of ultimate and permanent respect for the men and ladies soldiers who have served the country.

Stolen from the garden were five specially cultivated Remembrance roses which are a symbol of peace and sacrifice to veterans and their families across the nation.

"This place has now become a community place of reflection and people are quickly torn and saddened those who have served," he said.

"It is really disrespectful for anyone to interfere with a sacred place like this."

"I'm just so sad."

Mr Boness said it is not just the RSL that is upset but all the community, with people upset that someone has taken such a disrespectful place.

"We are shattered, the roses had just been put in," he said.

Mount Evelyn police Sergeant Craig Krikorian said police had been unable to find the culprit or the car and said the theft was disappointing.

He said while police were still investigating, it would be difficult to find those responsible given that the garden was situated away from houses, businesses and CCTV.

"With the memorial garden such a focus in the town, this kind of act affects everybody," he said.

"It is a place of reflection and people have their own ways of paying respect to the fallen."

"It is a powerful, peaceful place to do that in and we want to keep it peaceful."

Grandson for the Yarra Ranges Council Rivin Brown said it is always disappointing to hear community places being vandalised, especially at such a sacred memorial.

"They were only put in a few months ago and it is an understanding that we are currently working on getting replacement roses for the garden," he said.

Mr Brown said he was unsure how much theft would cost the council but said it was important to ensure the garden is maintained and the roses were replaced quickly.

Yarra Ranges Council spokeswoman Yvonne Miley said it was a fine act and the council was disappointed to see and hear of this sort of behaviour going on in the community.

The concept of the rose stems from an idea of the late Robert 'Bob' Brown who was a long time member of the RSL with the intention to replace the rose taken up by the Mount Evelyn community which has been the backbone of the project.

Anyone with information about the stolen RSL rose bushes should call the Mount Evelyn Police Station on 9736 2475.

Picture: REBECCA HILLS

MT EVELYN RSL BUS TRIP – 14/11/2013

On Thursday November 14th members of the Mt Evelyn RSL plus a number of special guests from the community took a bus excursion out to Seymour to visit the new Vietnam Veterans Walk. Everyone was very impressed with the memorial and some members enjoyed finding their names on the glass wall. A short walk from here was the 'Seymour Club' where everyone enjoyed a wonderful lunch and where we were well looked after. From here we got back on the bus to visit the Tank Museum at Puckapunyal. Many of those on the bus enjoyed seeing the army base again, some hadn't seen it since National Service in the 1950's! One of our members, Major Tony Geyer, met us at the museum and we all were impressed with the collection on display. Certainly a great day had by all. **Photos: D Webb**



Left:
Luscombe
Bowl



Right:
Roger
Boness
finds his
name on
the wall



Left:
Vietnam
Veterans
Wall



Right:
Lunch at
the
'Seymour
Club'.



Left:
Roger
chats to
Major
Tony
Geyer at
the Tank
Museum



Right:
Tank
Museum



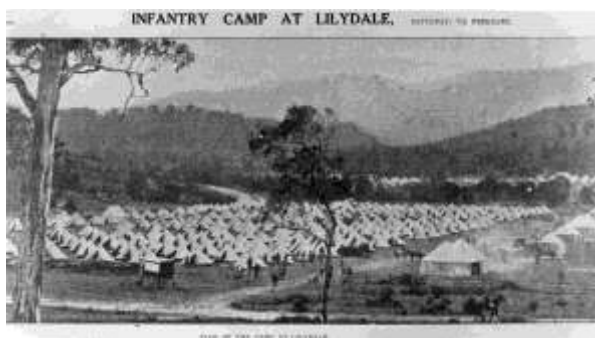
MONASH CAMP - LILYDALE CENTENARY EVENTS

In February 1914 Sir John Monash held a camp for the 13th Infantry Brigade where the Lilydale Lake is today and a performed a mock battle at Coldstream. This was inspected by General Sir Ian Hamilton. February 2014 marks the centenary of this and there are some special events happening.....

Sun Feb 9th, 2014 – unveiling of plaque & storyboard sign at Lake as well as launch of a book on the history of the camp

Thurs Feb 13th, 2014 – unveiling of storyboard sign near Mt Mary Coldstream.

More details to follow



Above: The President of the Mt Evelyn RSL, Roger Boness, presents the winner of the Mt Evelyn RSL Hamper Raffle, S Ockwell, with her prize.

(Photo: D Webb)

Above: Our Vice-President Iain Townsley recently played the pipes at a special pilgrimage ceremony for Australian Commandoes at the Tidal River memorial near Wilson's Promontory. Iain was a former member of the Commandoes in Britain and Australia.

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.



The Mt Evelyn RSL is sad to announce the passing of Marie Franks, wife of past-president Andy Franks, and Chris Urand, the daughter-in-law of Betty Crittenden.

Our thoughts are with Andy & Betty.



Kim N Parry | Licensed Estate Agent
& Auctioneer
Justice of the Peace

Max Brown - Yarra Valley

M: 0418 334 416 anytime

P: 03 5964 4900

F: 03 5964 2189

E: kimp@maxbrown.com.au

kimperry@people.net.au

maxbrown.com.au

ORNDON KILBY MONTROSE MT EVELYN LILYDALE DISPLAY SEVILLE

PLEASE NOTE

*Copies of
'THE LAST LIGHT HORSEMAN'
are available for sale through the*

Mt Evelyn RSL

or at the

Mt Evelyn Post Office, Station St

PAUL E O'REILLY TIMBER FLOORING SPECIALIST

- Floor sanding & Finishing
- Cork, Parquetry supplied & laid

Ph: (03) 9728 2281

Mob: 0412514650

Art with Distinction

Custom Framing



- Custom Picture Framing
 - Custom Mats
- Restoration Work
 - Art Supplies

Steve Deakins
(Mt Evelyn RSL Member)
Ph: **9736 3033**

Mob: **0429 183021**

Shop 7B York Rd, Mt Evelyn

www.artwithdistinction.com.au

Gift vouchers available - great gift idea!!!

FITNESS CLASSES



At the RSL Hall

49 Birmingham Rd, Mt Evelyn

Improve your strength, Balance & Flexibility.

Vicki provides a social One Hour Strength Training Class to suit a wide range of fitness levels. Personal attention provided & program modified as required to suit individual needs.

Beginners most welcome!! Bring a drink bottle & a smile! Bring a friend! Call in & try it – first class is free!! Weights provided.

Contact: Vicki Walburg

Ph: **9736 2980** Mob: **0408 998 045**

vickiwalburg-fitness@yahoo.com.au

JJ's Photography



Ph: **9736 1822**

Mob: **0427100818**

Shop 7B York Rd

Mt Evelyn

www.jjsphotography.com.au

St John Ambulance

St John always needs enthusiastic, willing and capable people - *just like you* - to assist us in helping our community save lives through First Aid.

The Mt Evelyn Branch meets every
Tuesday night in the RSL Hall.

Call – Diane Dickson on **9736 2490**



**Caring
for Life**

The Mt Evelyn RSL always use:

HEWETT'S

**Mt Evelyn's
Quality
Butchers**



27 Wray Cres

Ph: 9736 2206

Email: hewettma@gmail.com

**The Mt Evelyn RSL is a proud member of...
The Mt Evelyn Chamber of Commerce**

Major Russell Kirby
is the RSL's representative on the
Chamber of Commerce
– any ideas or issues for the Chamber
ring Russell on: **0499475784**

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

71 Wellington Rd, Wandin

Open: Wed-Sun 10.30-4.30pm

STEVE'S WHEELCHAIR & SCOOTER REPAIRS & SERVICE



Prompt attention
to breakdowns
SWEP &
private work
7 Days

PH: **0400564267**

The Mt Evelyn RSL always uses:

TIGER SIGNS

*Computer Cut Vinyls *Digital

Prints *Banners *Signs

Contact Dave –

0419 897 134 or 9737 0888



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 arrives in New Guinea just after the fall of Rabaul

What was your role with 'Kanga Force'?

We were told we had to go to Wau and watch for any Japanese movements north of there, but we had to walk across the mountains to get there. We walked from practically sea level to over nine thousand feet. There was no track at all we had to make our own track, it was the hardest work I've ever done in my life, luckily we had native carriers to carry our equipment. Because it was such bad country we moved in about groups of twenty, I was in the second group, so there was a constant stream of blokes moving through the jungle.

What were the jungle conditions like?

Pretty thick, but once you got above four thousand feet all the jungles were full of moss and you were walking on a thick carpet of moss, no birds there, nothing, just constant mist. Because you're in the clouds all the time it deadens all the sound and you don't see the sun, it's almost like being in a different world.

What were the natives like?

Well in this part of the country lived the Kuku Kukus. These were pygmies, quite incredible little creatures, they are only about four feet, four foot six would be the tallest, and they all had pot bellies. Some would wear a loin cloth but most were completely naked. They watched us the whole time and followed us all the way, hung around in small groups. They were very hard to see, you can't see them most of the time but you knew they were always about. You would look up and just out of the corner of your eye you'd see a movement and they could just disappear in front of you, it was quite eerie.

They don't speak much to each other, well I suppose they wouldn't have anything to talk about, they just use sign language or made a clicking noise or rubbed an arrow on the bow to attract attention. We were the most people they'd seen in their lives so they were rather in awe of us. Whenever we'd stop each night we'd give them a tomahawk or a bush knife to whoever seemed to be their chief. They craved anything made of iron because it was something they hadn't come across. They were incredibly primitive people who hunted with bows and arrows. Fortunately they never learned to fledge their arrows, they were all sharpened in the fire, so they had a very limited range and they weren't very accurate, not like a British Bowman at Agincourt.

They lived almost exclusively on low grade foods and things. Our natives didn't like them because they were always fighting with them and the coastal natives don't use bows and arrows. I was told many years later that a lot of them died after we went through. They had very little strength or resilience so if they got a cold it would kill them. We probably sowed all sorts of germs among them and because of their poor diet they just didn't have any resistance.

Next issue: Bill arrives in Wau just as the Japanese land at Lae.

Right: Bill Harrison in 1999

MT EVELYN FURPHYS

- Congrats to club stalwarts, Ern & Pat Johnson, who recently celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary with dinner at the 'Billy Goat Hill Cafe' courtesy of the RSL.
- Farewell to Emma Sun, journalist at 'The Mail', who has left the paper for a life in politics. Emma was a great supporter of our RSL. We welcome her replacement Melissa Meehan and look forward to working with her.
- Welcome new members: Ray Donovan and John Allford.
- Sad to report that Joan Knight, the daughter of Joe Clark (The Last Light Horseman), passed away on September 13th. Joan was a great help to the RSL in getting her father's story published.
- 99 year old Ralph Proctor has now moved out of his home and into a nursing home. We wish him all our best.
- Best wishes to Bill Phillips who had a fall recently.
 - Should you require any assistance or advice - Deanne Webb (the Sub-branch's Welfare Officer).
Ph: **0402 783 849**
Or the Rev Richard Schoenmaker (the sub-branch's Padre)
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

The RSL is a great facility for anyone who requires a
place for clubs or social groups to gather. Most
weekends this facility lies idle and the RSL could be
making (albeit a small amount of) money from hiring
it to interested parties. We would greatly appreciate
your input if you know of anyone who might be
interested in hiring the hall for a night or on an
ongoing basis. However no Bucks/Hens or under
25's parties – although (under 10's) are OK!

All information on how to book the hall see:

Steve Deakins at 'Art With Distinction'

Shop 7B York Rd, Mt Evelyn Ph: **9736 3033**

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 –

Sandra FitzGerald

Membership Officer –

Betty Crittenden

Welfare Officer –

Deanne Webb

Ph: 0402783849

Padre –

Rev Richard Schoenmaker

Ph: 97361087

Appeals Officer –

Dot Ervine

Ph: 97363638

Chamber representative –

Russ Kirby

Ph: 0499475784

Justice of the Peace –

Kim Parry

Ph: 0418334416