

THE VOICE

April 2015 Edition

Contents:

Editor's Opening	1
Life Members	2
Directory	2
Editorial Disclaimer	2
Merchandise Available	2
President's Report	3
Anzac Day Details	3
A Menacing Coincidence	3
Notices	4
KVAA Inc. 2014 Accounts	4
Why Anzac Day?	5
Donations 2014	6
Renewal Reminder	6
Going On Leave	7
Ripped From The Headlines	8
New Medallion – Update	8
General Confusion	8
The Riddle of the L-8 Blimp	9
Out & About	11
From the Vault...	11
I Gave You ONE Job...	11
HMAS Wort	12
An Unfortunate Encounter	13
USAAF Air Safety	13
Words of Remembrance	14
The Buzz Bomb	14
The Glory of War	14
Worse Than the Titanic	14
Farewells	14
The Ode	14

Editor's Opening

Welcome to the Anzac Day edition of *The Voice*. Speaking of Anzac Day, all the information you need for this year's march is on Page 3. As usual the committee running the event has issued a list of 'do & do nots' for the march. From (my admittedly imperfect) memory and after examining the photos of previous marches (available for download from the website), I think we largely follow these rules, breaking only Rule 6. Please note that depart time is 10:35 this year, so get there well before then.

An informal survey has revealed that even less people read the yearly financial information than peruse the *Disclaimer* each issue – and you can't get any less than zero. (Actually you can, but we'll leave that to the realm of mathematicians and politicians). Thus, the *Treasurer's Annual Report* has been left out of this issue. However, the *KVAA Inc. 2014 Accounts* remain. These provide a snapshot of our financial health. That said, if you feel your life is void and empty without reading the *Treasurer's Annual Report*, or you are a fanatical completist who eagerly cuts out and keeps each yearly report, then give the editor (me) a call and I'll post you a copy.

A special shout-out to all those who donated in 2013-2014, our best year ever according to our Treasurer. Every little bit helps and its not hard to add a bit extra when renewing your subscription. You'll find an A-Z listing of these generous souls on Page 6. Speaking of subscriptions... those who haven't re-subscribed will find their last chance on Page 6 as well.

One of the (very few) perks of being editor is the fuzzy warm feeling you get on hearing how far-flung the readership of *The Voice* is, copies of which seem to be passed around from veterans' group to veterans' group quicker than the flu in winter. One such reader is the President of the French Korean War Veterans' Association. I hope his English is better than my French which consists of *bonjour*, *c'est la vie* and Yoplait (which, despite the advertisements to the contrary, isn't actually French for yoghurt).

One of the members of this association, Annie Flagey, sent me a copy of their journal, *Le piton*, and a request. See the *Notices* section for the request. The journal itself is 32 high-gloss pages with copious colour photos. My French being only slightly better than my Mongolian, I can't comment on the contents which are entirely in French as if designed for a French readership. Very strange.

Associate Member

International Federation of Korean War Veterans
Korea & South East Asia Forces Association of Australia
Sister with Korean War Veterans Association Australian Chapter
Twinned with the South London Branch British Korean Veterans Associations
Twinned with the Korea Veterans Association of Canada

Affiliated Associations

Association of Queensland Korea Veterans Inc.
Australian Korea Veterans Association Inc.
Korea War Veterans Association of NSW
Korean War Veterans Association of Sunshine Coast Inc.
The Sunshine State Chapter of the Korean War Veterans Assoc. Inc. of the USA

Allied Associations

Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemaker Veterans' Association Inc.



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 John Burke†
 Bill Campbell†
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 John Duson
 Athol Egeberg
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 J F Frawley OAM BEM†
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Committee

Ron Christie, John Duson, Ron J. Kennedy, Allen Riches, Arthur Roach, John Moller OAM JP

Appointments

Chaplain: John Brownbill RFD KSJ 0418 359 085 **General Committee:** Alan McDonald

Pensions: Charlie Slater 9355 7264 & Ian Donald (Welfare Office, Bentleigh RSL) 9557 4547

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Editorial Disclaimer

Articles in *The Voice* are printed on the understanding that, unless stated, they are the original works of the contributors or authors. The editor reserves the right to reject, edit, abbreviate, rewrite or re-arrange, any item submitted for publication. The view of contributing authors are not necessarily those of the Association, the editor or publishers of *The Voice*.

Merchandise Available

KVAA pocket badge	\$10.00	\$	Kapypong battle print	\$ 6.00	\$
KVAA lapel badge (undated)	\$10.00	\$	The Hook 1953 battle print	\$ 6.00	\$
KVAA lapel badge (1950-57)	\$ 5.00	\$	RAN silk print: Ships in Korea	\$15.00	\$
KVAA windscreen decal	\$ 5.00	\$	Tie (with KVAA Inc. logo)	\$20.00	\$
KVAA beer (stubby) holders	\$ 5.00	\$	Car number plate surrounds (set)	\$10.00	\$
Korean War map (laminated)	\$ 6.00	\$	Korean War bumper sticker	\$ 2.50	\$

TOTAL . . . \$ _____ + \$2 pp = \$ _____

Please put a check beside each article requested and insert the dollar total.

Surname: Given Names:

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Cheques or money orders should be made out to: The Treasurer, KVAA Inc., 1 Kent Court, Werribee 3030, Victoria

President's Report



Vic Dey, National President, KVAA Inc.

In the last issue of *The Voice*, I spoke a little about the upcoming 100 year anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign. That time is closing fast and our whole nation is getting behind and fully supporting the concept of the Gallipoli remembrance, and of our forefathers who fought so bravely and in doing so created Australian history and a great tradition for all future generations to follow. I pray that it will be a fantastic day both here and overseas for all past and present servicemen and women.

His term of office having now expired, the South Korean Consul-General, Mr Jung Sung-Sub, who so graciously hosted the Dinner and Korean Concert and Cultural Festival last year for Korea War veterans and their families, has departed for Korea and a well-earned retirement.

On 24 February he hosted a farewell reception at the Hawthorn Cultural Centre. Many dignitaries from all walks of life (politics, business, veteran, etc.) were present to pay respect to a very fine gentleman who worked hard on the Australian-Korea relationships in many fields, and who always found time for Australian Korea War veterans.

On behalf of the KVAA Inc. and other organisations representing Korean War veterans, and those veterans who met the Consul-General individually, I wish he and his family a long and fulfilling retirement. I am looking forward to meeting the new Consul-General in the not too distant future.

Anzac Day Details

Given that the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landing falls this year, Anzac Day has been altered to reflect this with the descendants of those who participated in the ill-fated campaign also marching. Consequently, though the jump-off point for Korea War marchers remains the same, the time is significantly earlier. As usual, transport will be provided for those who can't march but don't want to miss participating.

The muster area for BCOF, Korea, Malaya and Borneo veterans this year is Swanston Street West opposite the City Square. Veterans and families are to gather at 10:00 for a 10:35 start. A bus will be available at the conclusion of the ceremony to take participants from the Shrine to the Stella Maris Seafarers Centre for a light lunch.

1. All marchers should form-up and march six abreast.
2. Veterans are to march directly behind their unit banner, accompanied by ONE carer if needed. That carer should be of an age where they can directly assist the Veteran.
3. Veterans who may have difficulty completing the march are encouraged to use the transport provided, but must remain in the vehicle until the march is completed.
4. If a Veteran must fall out of the march, he or she should be directed to a Marshal for assistance. Unit Associations are to continue moving so as not to disrupt the momentum of the march.
5. Descendants are to march BEHIND the Veterans, and be old enough to march the full distance (approximately 1km), without assistance.
6. Representation of your Veteran forebears is to be restricted to ONE descendant per Veteran and the descendant is to wear the Veteran's medals on the right breast (the left breast is reserved for the original recipient of the medals).
7. Descendants are to dress in appropriate clothing, as your forebears would have done. Therefore, all marchers should wear neat and tidy clothing, out of respect for the fallen (torn denim, sporting attire, dirty joggers are not considered appropriate).
8. The carrying of framed photographs of relatives, and the pushing of prams and pushers, is not permitted.
9. Veterans are requested not to join or leave the march other than at the Assembly and Dispersal points.

A Menacing Coincidence

In March 1951, the comic strip *Dennis the Menace* was born... twice. With only three days apart (but an identical debut day), both Hank Ketcham (USA) and David Law (UK) created their first comics containing a character with an identical name. The two men were unaware of each others cartoons, but when the coincidence was made known to them, they agreed to simply both continue writing their strips without interfering with the other. Of course, if this happened today it would end in court as each sued the other for precedence and creative control with a possible fortune in merchandising at stake. Oh, guess which version (via a 1960s television series and a later Hollywood movie) is best remembered today?

Notices

Scarves for Sale

Winter is almost here. Time to rug up, and what better way than with a woolen scarf (with colored vertical stripes, representing the nations who served under the U.N. in the Korean War).

Did I hear you inquire: "Where can I get one." Glad you asked. Our Vice-President, Tom Parkinson, can help you. Just call him on 9350 6608 or at the Pascoe Vale RSL on 9354 6364.

The cost of the scarf is \$35 plus \$5.20 p&p.

Here's your chance to make a fashion statement and help our organisation at the same time.

Korean War Memorial Church Service

The annual Korean War Memorial Service is on **Sunday 21 June at 10am**. Each year, Melbourne's Korean community conducts a memorial service at the Korean Church of Melbourne, followed by light refreshments. Although primarily a sombre occasion, it is also a memorable one due to the excellence of the choir and musicians. Please note, the Korean Church Secretary requires the names of attendees. It is most impolite to just turn up on the day. If you plan to attend please advise Alan Evered on 0412 521 488 or at secretary@kvaa.org.au **ASAP**

**Korean Church of Melbourne,
23-27 Glendearg Grove, Malvern.
(Melways 59 C10)**

Fantacci, Hollis and Buck

French infantryman, Oreste Fantacci, was captured by the Chinese in February 1951 after the Battle of Wonju. Five months later he made his first escape attempt, accompanied by two Australians: Thomas Henry Hollis, 2400311, born in Sydney on 27 Sept. 1925 and Donald Pattison Buck, 2400000, born on 21 July 1923 in Murrurundi, NSW. Both served in 3RAR in late 1950, were made prisoners of war and remained so until August 1953.

Annie Flagey, of the French Korean War Veterans' Association, is trying to gather information on this escape and, in particular, Hollis and Buck (from what I can determine, both now deceased). If you were a prisoner of war with Buck and/or Hollis or served with them, and especially if you have information on this escape, or on Oreste Fantacci, contact the Editor, Vic Dey (contact details, as usual, on Page 2) or Alan Evered (0412 521 488).

Pension Increase

Veterans, their partners, war widows and widowers across Australia saw an increase to their pensions from 20 March 2015 as part of the bi-annual indexation process. As pension rates are calculated on a daily basis, the pension paid after the 20 March increase (on payday 2 April 2015) was paid partly at the old rate and partly at the new rate (just in case you were wondering). The first full payment at the new pension rates will be 16 April. A summary of pension rates is available online at www.dva.gov.au/media Pension Increase

KVAA Inc. 2014 Accounts

Korean Veterans Association of Australia Income and Expenditure Statement For the Year Ended 31 December 2014

	2013	2014
Income	\$	\$
Interest received	61	85
DVA grants	5,331	3,525
Subscriptions	13,260	10,196
Merchandise	1,102	3,578
Anzac Day - Raffle	750	1,351
Anzac Day - Entrance Fee		650
Miscellaneous	7,034	
Distribution From Trusts		140
Other Income	210	2963
Total Income:	27,749	22,489
Expenses		
Auditor's remuneration	902	1,012
Bank fees and charges	92	100
Changes NMV-Managed Funds		9,742
Wreaths and Plaques	814	523
Depreciation - other	381	305
Donations		20
Fees & Permits		90
Functions and outings	10,379	6,460
Hire of Plant & Equipment	500	525
Insurance	1,060	1,050
Materials & Supplies	1,366	3,365
Postage	4,348	3,600
Printing & stationery	1,547	2,584
Sundry expenses	4,200	70
Telephone	1,468	981
Travel and accommodation	14	
Total Expenses:	27,070	30,426
Profit (loss) from ordinary activities before income tax:	679	(7,937)
Net profit (loss) attributable to the assoc. & investments:	679	(7,937)

Wyndham Accounting Services has prepared this financial report in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, examining on a test bases of evidence supporting the amount and other disclosures in the financial report. The policies do not require the application of all the Australian Accounting Standards.

* * *

Why Anzac Day?

Since 1915, one day in the year has involved the whole of Australia in solemn ceremonies of remembrance, gratitude and national pride. That day is ANZAC Day – 25 April.

Why does the Nation pause to commemorate what most historians choose to describe as a failure or a sad series of blunders? It is because every person and every nation must, sooner or later, come for the first time to a supreme test of quality; and the result of that test will hearten or dishearten those who come afterwards. For Australia as a nation that first supreme test began in the early hours of Sunday 25 April 1915 on the Gallipoli Peninsula in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The historical lead-up to the events which took place came to boiling-point with the commencement of World War on 4 August 1914. Historians have long since analysed the motivations on all sides which led to that disastrous war. In Australia, the motivations which led our national leaders to commit our country to the conflict, and our extraordinary volunteer army to respond to the call to arms were very simple.

Most of the colonists had come originally from the United Kingdom which they continued to call 'Home' or 'The Mother Country'. When war appeared inevitable, on 31 July 1914, the great Labour leader, Andrew Fisher, made his famous statement: "Should the worst happen, after everything has been done that honour will permit, Australians will stand beside the mother country to help and defend her to the last man and the last shilling."

On the following night the Liberal Prime Minister, Joseph Cook, said, "If the old country is at war so are we."

On the 4 August, an offer of 20,000 men was made, and ten weeks later the first contingent of volunteers was on the water bound for Egypt. For volunteers, apart from the sentimental motivation, there was a very strong strain of idealism. They believed that a small nation (Belgium) was being trampled underfoot by a mighty power, and that their role was, as the children of the time sang in the schools:

To help the weak against the strong,
To guard the right against wrong,
And bear the flag of Truth along.

As they sailed towards Egypt one of the few pieces of 'grand strategy' in World War 1 was being developed. The idea was to capture the outlet from the Black Sea in order to relieve pressure on our Russian allies in the Caucasus and influence Bulgaria to join the allied cause. It is not unreasonable to believe that success would have greatly shortened the war and saved millions of lives on both sides. On 8 August the Allies were on the very verge of success; but the campaign was narrowly lost.

The Gallipoli campaign lasted from 25 April until 20 December 1915. Australia's test of nationhood began in the darkness of that fateful Sunday morning of 25 April. The soldiers landed in the dark under fire; and always under heavy fire, climbed precipitous cliffs mostly covered by prickly oak scrub through which progress was difficult even for the strongest. Individual courage and initiative won a foothold on the plateau and the ridges, which for the next eight months saw epic valour and endurance on both sides.

Apart from the heavy casualties from attack and counter-attack the lines were so close that there was no respite from bombs, shells and mines. Mental strain and physical illness reduced the bodies of our finest youth to gaunt skeletons held together only by determination. Finally pressures of other theatres of war led to the evacuation, itself a casualty-free miracle.

Any senior student who fails to read the accounts of Gallipoli by Australia's Alan Moorehead and England's John Masefield is failing to take up an important share of his or her national heritage.

It was not that Gallipoli, with all its casualties, hardship and suffering was worse or even as bad as the experiences of later campaigns, or the sufferings of defence forces and civilians in later conflicts. But because it was the first great national test of our young men in the horror of war it has become the focal point of remembrance and gratitude for the fallen and the broken in health of all wars; of the contributions made by civilian workers in areas subject to attack; and of the continuous heartbreak and courage of the women and children whose agony of fear became a reality of deprivation.

So every year, on or near 25 April, we have a time of remembrance and gratitude to those who helped to keep our country free from invasion and our way of life free of choice; to acknowledge our debt to their mothers, wives and children, and our obligation to those who through their sacrifice now need our help.

Beyond that we have a legacy of responsibility that the heritage fought at so costly a price should not suffer in our hands; so that the word ANZAC does not so much commemorate an event as a standard of character in action which we must maintain in all circumstances – in peace as in war.

Source: *Anzac Day: traditions, facts and folklore* www.anzacday.org.au

Donations 2014

(21 Nov. 2013 - 20 Oct. 2014)

To all members of the KVAA Inc. who have so generously donated funds to the Association from across Australia and overseas, a sincere thank you to each and every one of you. It proves the Association's strength is solid, and that comradeship with the ranks remains equal to that forged during the Korean War. May we all grow stronger as the year progresses. (Gerry Steacy, Treasurer, KVAA Inc.)

June Adams	David Connelly	Alison Gilmore	Stuart Johnson	Kevin Onley	Dan Slattery
Maxwell Airey	Charles Cornell	Brian Gibson	Leslie Jordan	Robert Palmer	Noel Slaven
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John Brennan	Wally Fawkner	Leslie Hughes	David Mitchell	Lucy Rose	Richard Woodhams
Colin Burgess	Gerard Fenning	Alan Hunter	Muriel Mitchell	Gig Ryan	
Maurice Butterworth	Clarence Flentjar	Murray Inwood	John Moller	Robert Sands	Total members who donated = 186
Bruce Campbell	Max Folan	Maurice Jennings	Kenneth Moore	Don Scally	
Joseph Charlton	Frederick Ford	Horace Johnson	John Murrells	George Sewell	Total donations from members = \$4,380.00
Douglas Charman	Douglas Franklin	Jim Johnson	Catherine Norris	Ray Shelton	
Walter Collins	Albert Gosch	John Johnson	Thomas O'Dey	Gerry Shepherd	

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I hope you are enjoying this copy of *The Voice* and you continue to do so with subsequent editions – assuming you have renewed your subscription. Oh, what's that? You haven't. Just as well then that I've included the Renewal Reminder below. Don't ignore it. This is your last chance or your *Voice* will be forever stilled.

Renewal Reminder

1st January 2015 to 31st December 2015 **Members – \$25 Associate Members – \$15**

Please submit your renewal direct to:

The Treasurer, KVAA Inc., 1 Kent Court, Werribee, 3030, Victoria.

The Association would like to emphasise the following policy:

No KVAA Inc. members are dropped from the Association because of financial difficulties or sickness. Any member who experiences these difficulties please notify the Secretary or Treasurer in order that your membership remains within the Association. Information received concerning these matters will remain **confidential**.

Please cut here - - - - -

Renewal Details (Please Print)

Name:	Address:
Telephone:
E-mail:
Signature:	State: Post Code:

Going On Leave

by Allan Helleur

3400341 1RAR & 2RAR

The summer of '52 sees me with 9 Section, 3 Platoon, on the forward slopes at '187', getting shelled almost daily. Top trench-ring forward facing on '187' is a particularly bad spot but the other platoons and coys are getting it too, and the jeep-head supply point; the Chinese try to be fair. It certainly was a long, hot summer that year.

Days on the hill, hot and dry; the ubiquitous tiny bees zoom in after your tinned 'C' ration fruit on the plastic spoon twist can and mouth. Nights down in the humid valley on patrol, probing towards the deadly dangerous foothills of enemy-held '166,' and the mosquitos, numerous enough, and big enough, to pick you up and eat you whole are always game to try. Mosquito repellent? It is supposed to repel 'em but nobody told the mosquitos. They are malaria-carrying, and if you've the sense, you have taken your daily palladrin tablet and have not thrown it into the bushes.

September comes with the days still hot and dry and the air ominously heavy; the regular shelling has churned much of the thick bushy green of '187' to a bare brown, and the singular smell of newly churned earth and explosives long remains with me. My delayed R&R leave in Japan is coming up at last – can't be too soon.

But the rains come first.

Yellow-brown mud everywhere you move: in the crawl-trenches, the weapon-pits and the long, winding foot-trail to the jeep-head. You try to keep the weapons dry and patch up the bunker water-proofing where you attempt to live and sleep. But there is an 'upside' to it all at first. The shelling becomes less and less and after 36 hours rain there is only the occasional in-coming shell. The Chinese and North Koreans are having their own monsoon problems. We count our blessings – but the novelty wears off quick. The Monsoon is now the Enemy and our problems increase.

A saturating, grey stillness envelops the whole front. The rough water-proofing of our bunkers where you try to live and sleep is increasingly found wanting despite frantic repairs. Mud in your food, your sleeping-bag, soggy cigarettes – it's hard to laugh and even the cynical, curved grin is rare. The crawl-trench drainage blocks and you wake up to water pouring into your bunker doorway hole. More frenetic repairs. The monsoon is relentless and some bunkers started to collapse; matches useless; canned-heat useless, it is sheer misery. Heavy, laden skies across the peninsula; it stops, starts, stops, belts down – respites are brief.

But I'm going on R&R leave in two days. Sorry mates. Lucky me.

Another unspeakable night but never mind, one down – one to go, Tokyo, here I come – wow!

Then the news filters through; the Imjim River is in full flood. Well, it would be. It happens every year. But this time it's so bad it's threatening the Pintail Bridge! The only bridge that can be counted on to withstand the mighty Imjim in full flood is closed! And the Pintail crossing is the only way to Seoul's Kimpo airport and the DC3s to Japan. Wretched news.

But in the morning comes hope. The bridge has re-opened, though traffic is strictly limited. Instead of the usual almost bumper to bumper two way stream of traffic over the long, high crossing, only one vehicle is allowed to cross AT A TIME – first one way, then the other. And the leave truck has low priority. Nevertheless, the order comes, "stand by to move."

We get away on ten minutes notice in the late afternoon. I was ready in five. A dozen of us on R&R, plus three or four more 'time-expired' en-route to Kimpo airport, Seoul, via the Pintail crossing, hanging on, bouncing along in the back of the inevitable three-tonner.

Soon it's dark, and pissing down. The truck grinds and swishes slowly on along the tortuous route, skirting bleak, forbidding hills – can't see a thing. A quick stop at rear echelon for paperwork, tea and sandwiches and banter then off again on what passes for a road; slow, slow, stop: stop-start, stop-start. It dawns on us that we are now in the Pintail crossing monsoon queue.

At first all there is the hiss of rain and water draining from the hills in the middle of no-bloody-where. Then we hear rumblings, and an impression of some sort of light ahead. Thunder? A storm? Heads crane from the three-tonner straining to look ahead.

As we slowly approach the Pintail crossing and the sight and sounds take shape and it's a scene we'll never forget. There are many sounds, but the background noise is the continuous frightening roar of the Imjim River, higher than we've ever seen it before, rushing through the stalwart frame of the bridge. Hell, will it hold?

The whole area is illuminated by searchlights and flares and Centurion tanks are on both banks of the swollen river 50 yards or so up from the Pintail Bridge. They are firing into the river! Up-stream. The heavy

(continues on Page 8)

Going On Leave (continued from Page 7)

machine-guns of the tanks are firing more or less continuously, and the 20 pounders blast away at intervals. The mighty swollen river is bearing along its broad back all sorts of heavy, wooden jetsam – the remains of flooded out villages and god only knows what else. And the tank-firing is to smash up the big lumps, the roofs of houses and what-have-you, into tolerable size and shape before it rushes into the Pintail superstructure!

The shells get at the really big stuff and the machine-guns do the slicing up. The final scene in this fantastic drama is at the foot of the bridge super-structure itself. Engineers are somehow (I'm not sure how) safely secured on pontoon-like shelves right across the river, wielding long, heavy poles. And with the poles they are constantly prodding and poking and making sure that the continuous stream of chopped up flotsam flows between the bridge stalwarts and does not jam and build up, which if it did, would come quickly and be an obvious threat to the crossing.

What a picture! And high on the bridge itself, in splendid, illuminated isolation, a lone vehicle crosses – slowly, slowly, don't rock the 'boat!' After an age, it's our turn. Slowly, slowly does it. It's hairy all right; dunno' about the others, we aren't chatting, too much noise. For myself, I feel scared but yet fascinated as we cross the roaring middle of the mighty Imjim. Then we are across, and on the way to Seoul airport and Ebisu leave camp in Tokyo – and all that.

But hell, what a way to go on bloody leave.

First published in *The Voice*, April 1997. This is a re-edited version.

Ripped From the Headlines...

Elfin Ed Admired

By Sgt. Ralph H. Jones

24TH INF. DIV. IN KOREA

– **Cpl. Edward Lacy**, a five-foot- one-inch tractor driver from Chicago, Ill., has won the admiration of his buddies in the division artillery for his skill in driving a 20 ton tractor. He has driven 1000 miles over the rough roads and muddy rice paddies of Korea, during this 24th Division unit's 58 combat days, without an accident.

When he is perched behind the levers of the giant tractor, Lacy sits so low that he cannot see the road. But what he lacks in size, he makes up with alertness, two cushions and a folded Army comforter to become the best known driver in the battery.

"Lacy is the best in the business. He has put a massive howitzer into a lot of positions that even a mule isn't supposed to go," his section chief SFC John Vice of Elwood, Ind., said. "Besides that, he is a damned good mechanic," Vice added.

When the outfit is being shelled, the pintsize jack-of-all-trades has a knack for keeping his rig out of trouble. "He can dodge enemy shells with the ease of a politician dodging rotten tomatoes," a cannoneer in the section, PFC Calvin Lampke of Highland Wis., said.

Source: *Stars and Stripes (Pacific Ed.)*, Sept. 16, 1950

New Medallion – Update

The last *Voice* covered the issuing of a new (non-official but still prestigious) medallion. The sponsor of this award, Mr Young Hae Kwon, couldn't make it to the Annual General Meeting. Given his links to the South Korean government and defence and intelligence sections, he is "retired" more than retired, and thus is often requested to sit on this or that official or unofficial panel/commission or undertake this or that official or unofficial mission. We now expect him to attend our Anzac Day reunion at the Stella Maris Seafarers Centre, 600 Lt. Collins Street after the Parade on 25 April.

The question has also been raised as to whether you can still receive a medallion if you can't make it to the Stella Maris on Anzac Day (particularly those interstate). The answer is...watch this space. We will have an answer for you – very likely a positive one – in June's *Voice*. Note: this medallion is for living veterans and for **pre-ceasefire** service only (not post-July 1953).

General Confusion

The various ranks of general were introduced in the late medieval period and gradually formalized over the next three centuries. Following the same pattern as subalterns (company-grade officers), the senior commander of a field army was the captain general, followed by a lieutenant general and sergeant-major general. Over time, the captain was dropped, making the highest grade known just as general, sometimes called full general. The sergeant also fell out of use, making the lowest rank a major general and giving us the standard denominations known today. This also explains why though a major outranks a lieutenant this is reversed at the general level, a lieutenant general outgunning a major general.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine, No. 285 March-April 2014

The Riddle of the L-8 Blimp

by Brian Dunning

The crew of a blimp mysteriously vanished in 1942, but their blimp came back OK...without them.

It was a foggy Sunday morning in San Francisco, in August of 1942. The United States was at war with Japan, and coastal defenses along the western coast of the US remained on high alert for prowling Japanese submarines. A daily chore in San Francisco was a sortie by a naval blimp to look for subs outside San Francisco Bay. Today's flight of the L-8 started no differently, but the way it ended has kept people talking for more than 70 years.

Unlike a rigid airship, a blimp is just an inflated bag with no structure to help it keep its shape. Only a few hours after it left, the craft was seen drifting in from the ocean, sagging terribly into a V-shape. Some swimmers at the beach tried to grab it by its hanging control lines but failed. It bounced up the cliff side – dangerously dislodging one of its depth charges and stopping both its engines in the process – and continued its aimless drifting over the San Francisco peninsula. Soon it became entangled in some power lines and finally came to rest in the middle of an intersection in Daly City. As bystanders ran to help, the mystery became immediately evident: there was nobody on board.

The obvious suggestions came right away. Perhaps the men fell out. Perhaps they jumped out, either to commit suicide or to go AWOL. Maybe they got in a fight and threw each other out. Maybe one fell, and the other also lost his grip trying to help him. Maybe they had found a Japanese sub, and were forced to jump out at gunpoint. Nobody could really come up with any better guesses than these, and still to this day, the Navy hasn't either.

The L-8 had been a Goodyear advertising blimp until it was turned over to the Navy for the war effort. It was a solid ship, with a strong history and no real problems, and had successfully managed severe weather in the past. Its mission today was its usual daily patrol: to launch at 6:00am from Treasure Island, a large, flat, manmade island in the middle of San Francisco Bay, and from there to fly a large figure-8 pattern outside San Francisco Bay. The pattern went straight out to the Farallon Islands, a group of rocky prominences fifty kilometres out into the Pacific Ocean from the harbor entrance. From there they were to head for Point Reyes, about 30 kilometres north, and then about 65 kilometres south to Montara, a point south of San Francisco, and then back up to the Golden Gate and land at Treasure Island.

The trip usually took four to four and a half hours, and would be repeated after refueling. The men were trained to look for Japanese submarines, and were equipped with two Mark 17 depth charges in case they found any, and also a pistol and Browning .30 caliber machine gun. The gondola was a pretty comfortable affair, fully enclosed and still equipped to accommodate Goodyear passengers. You'd be no more likely to fall out of it than you would from a family car.

Of course, the Navy convened a board of inquiry, the transcript and findings for which are all available online. Findings were slim; questions were many. However the sequence of events was more or less put together. All went according to plan until 7:42am, when Cody made his final radio transmission, that they were going to investigate a possible oil slick. Crew aboard two boats in the area – a fishing vessel called *Daisy Grey* and a US liberty ship, the *Albert Gallatin* – reported seeing a blimp descend to a low altitude and circle the same area for nearly an hour. It was reported that at one point, the blimp dropped a flare. Afterwards, the blimp turned toward San Francisco – not where it was supposed to go, but the shipboard witnesses didn't know that.

By 10:30 the L-8 was overdue, and the Navy put out a radio call asking aircraft if they saw a stray blimp. Its position was reported at 10:49 by the pilot of a Pan-Am Clipper flying boat; at 10:53 by an Army P-38 Lightning fighter plane; and at 11:00 by another Navy plane that observed it rise to about 2000 feet and then descend. All these observers reported that everything seemed to be OK, with no indication that the L-8 was not under control, and they all placed it on its way back toward the Golden Gate. That's when it was seen, crumpled nearly in half, coming down onto the beach, and striking the cliff. Relieved of the weight of a 325-pound depth charge, it rose again and finally came to rest in Daly City. The Navy personnel got there around noon, and the questions began to be asked. What had happened to the crew?

The pilot was Lt. Ernest DeWitt Cody, 27, the experienced usual pilot of the L-8. He'd had a "15 minutes of fame" moment a few months before in connection with the famous Doolittle Raid, in which 16 carrier-launched B-25 bombers struck Tokyo. On April 4, 1942, Cody flew the L-8 out from San Francisco to meet the aircraft carrier *USS Hornet*, which was loaded with the bombers. The *Hornet* had steamed out of port two days previously, and L-8 went out to deliver a crate containing 300 pounds of delayed spare parts for the planes.

Also aboard was Ensign Charles E. Adams, 38, a twenty-year veteran of airships. Adams had been present at the crash of the *Hindenburg* in 1937 and was among those who rushed in to pull out survivors. He had

(continues on Page 10)

official commendations for his gallant conduct appended to his permanent service record, including a note of thanks from General Hermann Göring himself. Neither of the L-8's crewmen was a slouch.

The condition of the L-8 when it came down only served to deepen the mystery. There was plenty of weight still on board, including fuel, that Cody and Adams could have jettisoned if they were in any trouble, and no indication that they'd tried to do so. Everything on board, including three parachutes, a life raft, tools, etc., were still stowed precisely where they should be. Although both engines had been stopped and were slightly damaged when the L-8 first struck the cliffs, the fuel and ignition to both were still on. Its radio was functioning and set to the proper frequency.

Of all the items still on board, the most remarkable was a briefcase of classified documents, which Lt. Cody had carried on as was done every day. This briefcase was heavily weighted, and standing orders were for the briefcase to be thrown overboard into the ocean in the event of any emergency. Evidently no emergency had taken place.

What was missing, on the other hand, were two of the five water-activated smoke bombs the blimp carried, called Mark 4 float lights. If you did spot a submarine, you'd toss one of these where you saw it, and it would make a flame and thick black smoke for about two minutes. This is almost certainly what was observed by the witnesses on the boats.

Relieved of the weight of two crewmen, the blimp would have risen until it reached its pressure-height altitude, which was between 2100 and 2500 feet on that day. An automatic vent opened to release helium to keep the blimp from bursting, and it descended. So its appearance of being sagged into a V-shape was exactly as expected.

One of the most talked-about pieces of evidence is the door. L-8 had a single side door, which was always safety locked from the inside during flight, and was confirmed to have been so by the ground crew. But at the crash site, the door was open; and not just open, it was opened all the way so that a catch engaged which held it open. Other pilots testified that it would be virtually impossible to do this from inside during flight. Thus, a lot of speculation has surrounded the position of the door.

However, common sense reveals that this is not remarkable. Somehow Cody and Adams did get out, and so the door was no longer safety locked from the inside when the L-8 came down. It landed in a busy intersection in Daly City, and many people were on hand. The first thing they did, which was long before police or the Navy arrived, was open the door to render help. The gondola was at a sharp angle facing nearly straight up, and the door would have to be swung up to open it. It was only natural for first responders to swing it up into the catch position. It would have been more surprising if the door had not been in this position by the time the Navy arrived.

There are some popular hypotheses and re-tellings of what happened to be found on the Internet. Some suspect that a stowaway may have been on board, who perhaps overpowered Cody and Adams. But this is impossible, as the gondola is quite small with no possible place for anyone to hide. It's also posited that perhaps, while flying low to look for the source of the oil slick, waves had gotten into the gondola and washed the men out. But the L-8 had definitely not come into contact with the water, as proven by hollow spaces in the bilge of the gondola and the lower fin both being bone-dry and containing dust which would have been washed out.

At the conclusion of its investigation, the Navy offered its own best-guess of what might have happened. Somehow Ensign Adams opened the door and fell out. Maybe he was airsick, maybe they were horsing around, maybe he was trying to get a better view of the oil slick, who knows. Lt. Cody tossed out the float lights to mark his companion's position, then circled low and, perhaps upon finding him, stopped the engines. In some circumstance, while single-handedly trying to control the blimp and retrieve Adams, Cody fell out himself. I can't think of anything that better fits the evidence. Perhaps deploying the life raft for Adams would have taken one hand more than Cody had available, and it's not surprising that making a radio report was lower priority than saving your buddy's life.

But the simple fact is that we don't know, and we can't ever know exactly what two men did in that small car over the Pacific Ocean on that grim day. It's consistent in every way with an honest accident. There is no foul play, no Japanese submarine, no alien UFO abduction, nor anything else extraordinary needed to explain what could just as easily be explained by a single moment of human inattention. We can't know the circumstances, but we do know that Cody and Adams ultimately slipped beneath the waves; and for that, we have for them today a few lines of the naval aviator's hymn that they knew so well:

*Guard and guide the men who fly, through great spaces of the sky;
Be with them traversing the air, in darkening storms or sunshine fair.*

Out & About



Above, South Korean Consul-General, Sung-Sub Jung's farewell dinner on 24 February at the Hawthorn Cultural Centre. Below, Dinner with South Korean Defence Attaché, Colonel Sandeok Hwang and Hwanyoung Cho on 25 February.



Below, Mark Ahn, talking about the AKYA (Australia-Korea Youth Association) at the KVAA Inc. Annual General Meeting, 25 March 2015, at the Stella Maris Seafarers Centre in Little Collins Street, Melbourne. (More on the AKYA next issue).



From the Vault...

When Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, left Australia after a royal visit in April 1954, the officers and men of *HMAS Vengeance*, then not far from the Cocos Islands, formed a "farewell" to her in the form of her signature and the year. *Vengeance*, the RAN's second light fleet carrier, was commissioned on loan from the Royal Navy from the 13th November 1952 until the completion of *HMAS Melbourne* on 13th August 1955. Old salt and KVAA member, Keith Arkinstall, swears that if you have a scanning electron microscope you can see him smiling and waving in the '4.'



I Gave You ONE job...



HMAS Wort

by Ian Hughes

A series of cartoons which appeared in *Navy News* in the 1980s & 1990s (now in public domain).



An Unfortunate Encounter

by Vic Jeffrey

Commissioned at Brisbane on 3 January 1943, the Royal Australian Navy corvette, *HMAS Bunbury*, had seen active service on Australia's east coast and in New Guinea waters as a convoy escort. It began when the *HMAS Bunbury* arrived in Fremantle on 29 September 1944 after visiting her name-port for the first time, to carry out tactical exercises with Fremantle-based Allied submarines working-up after refits and repairs.

One of the Royal Navy submarine flotilla boats based at Fremantle since September 1944, *HMS Sea Rover*, under the command of Lieutenant Angel, sailed for her patrol area in the Lombok Strait on 12 November 1944 in what was to be a most eventful cruise. Off the island of Bali, *Sea Rover* intercepted an armed Japanese tug towing a number of lighters carrying arms and vital supplies for the enemy war effort. Utilising her 3-inch (76mm) deck gun, the submarine dispatched the lighters which had been abandoned by the tug as it opened fire on *Sea Rover* with a machine gun, before later attempting to beach itself.

During the action an enemy aircraft appeared overhead causing the submarine to crash-dive with one crew member, later recovered, washed overboard. *Sea Rover* later sunk another small Japanese vessel before leaving her patrol area off Sumatra and heading home towards Fremantle where she was to rendezvous with *HMAS Bunbury* north west of Rottnest Island on 18 December.

On 16 December, the 750 tonne *Bunbury*, commanded by Lieutenant John Blackman RANR, weighed anchor at 0700 to exercise with the US Navy submarine *USS Bluegill* and the submarine rescue ship *USS Coucal* west of Rottnest Island. The exercise concluded at 2300 on the night of 17 December and *Bunbury* proceeded to the rendezvous area where she arrived early in total darkness. Unknown to *HMAS Bunbury*, *Sea Rover* had also arrived early and both were manoeuvring with no lights showing in the total darkness in a running sea.

At 0300 on the morning of 18 December in poor visibility, *Sea Rover* collided with the *Bunbury*. The grinding impact buckled the submarine's bows and forward casing and punched two large holes in *Bunbury's* port-side bow plating slightly above the waterline which allowed water to surge in with every wave until damage control managed to shore up the damage.



The corvette HMAS Bunbury pictured in 1946 while serving as a unit of the 20th Minesweeping flotilla.

When news of the collision reached Fremantle, the corvette *HMAS Launceston* crash-sailed at 0340, heading for the area at speed. Meeting with the stricken vessels off Rottnest Island, *Launceston* escorted round the northern tip of the island and saw the battered vessels safely into Fremantle Harbour.

HMAS Bunbury passed through the boom defence nets at 0520, followed by the *Sea Rover* some 20 minutes later. The British submarine was placed almost immediately on the South Mole Public Works Department slipway where she remained for three days as her damaged bows were cut away and replaced with steel strengthening straps shaped to the contours of the missing bow to assist with strength and movement through the water.

HMS Sea Rover's 3-inch deck gun was removed to reduce top weight and the submarine sailed for the United Kingdom on 1 January 1945 without an escort and unable to dive or defend herself. The submarine safely reached the UK where she carried out full repairs, serving until she was broken-up for scrap in Scotland some four years later being surplus to peacetime requirements.

HMAS Bunbury's ammunition, anchors and cables were removed prior to her being correctly trimmed and slipped on 27 December. Repaired by the State Engineering Works, *Bunbury* re-entered the water some 16 days later on 12 January 1945 to resume her tactical exercise operations. *Bunbury* sailed from Fremantle for the last time on 17 April when she was transferred to New Guinea waters. She paid off into reserve at Sydney on 26 August 1946 after steaming 101,000 nautical miles.

Note: this is an edited version of the original article.

Source: *Navy News* Vol.33, No.16, 17 August 1990

USAAF Air Safety

According to the AAF Statistical Digest, in less than four years (December 1941- August 1945), the US Army Air Forces lost 14,903 pilots, aircrew and assorted personnel plus 13,873 airplanes – all inside the continental United States. They were the result of 52,651 aircraft accidents (6,039 involving fatalities) in 45 months. This is an average 1,170 aircraft accidents per month – nearly 40 a day.

Words of Remembrance

The following was written by Pericles well over two thousand years ago, long before the first Anzac Day, but only a stone's throw from Gallipoli:

Each has won a glorious grave – not that sepulchre of earth wherein they lie, but the living tomb of everlasting remembrance wherein their glory is enshrined. For the whole earth is the sepulchre of heroes. Monuments may rise and tablets be set up to them in their own land, but on far-off shores there is an abiding memorial that no pen or chisel has traced; it is graven not on stone or brass, but on the living hearts of humanity. Take these men for your example. Like them, remember that prosperity can be only for the free, that freedom is the sure possession of those alone who have the courage to defend it.

Engraved forever at Anzac Cove are these words from Kemal Ataturk, the Commander of the Turkish 19th Division during the Gallipoli Campaign and the first President of the Turkish Republic from 1924-1938:

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives. You are now living in the soil of a friendly country therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours. You, the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

Source: Anzac Day: traditions, facts and folklore www.anzacday.org.au

The Buzz Bomb

The World War II German Air Force's V-1 "buzz bomb" was the first cruise missile used in warfare. Each one cost approximately USD 11,000 in 2013 dollars, and some 8,000 were launched between June 1944 and May 1945. Altogether, it's estimated they were responsible for killing a total of some 11,000 Allied civilians and military personnel. That works out to 1.34 kills per missile.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine, No.279

Worse Than the Titanic

Because the events surrounding the sinking of the *Titanic*, and the loss of between 1490 and 1635 lives, are so well-known, many assume it was the worst maritime disaster ever. However, the greatest loss of life from a ship sinking is believed to be that of the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, torpedoed by a Soviet submarine in the Baltic Sea on the 30th January 1945, while evacuating German military personnel and civilians from East Prussia. Although the exact death toll is not known, it has been estimated she was carrying around 10,000 individuals of whom only about 1000 survived.

In a similar incident, *RMS Lancastria* was sunk by German bombers off St. Nazare on the 17th June 1940 while evacuating British troops and civilians. Although her official capacity was 2200 (including crew), due to the emergency she was carrying many more than her normal capacity. In the panic, no exact head-count was recorded and so, while the number of those lost can only be estimated, it is thought to have been between 4000 and 9000 lives.

Source: *The Skeptic* magazine Vol. 34 No.4 2014

The Glory of War

by Ramon J. Mason ex 3RAR & 1RAR

I'm standing on a hilltop in a strange foreign land,
why I'm standing here I don't expect you'll understand.
From childhood on, war to me was honour and glory,
now I understand that war is another story.

I never dreamt of all the agony and pain,
seeing one's dead friends lying in the mud and rain,
the emotions surging through me again and again,
whilst surveying the mangled bodies of the slain.

There is nothing honourable about my war,
there is no glory in the slaughter of men;
with burning emotions and feelings so raw,
then you go out and kill once again.

The feelings don't die, they're always alive,
you can't sleep at night and you wake up in fright,
'till the end of your days, your mind will strive,
to survive the bad dreams that fill up your night.

Farewells

Gordon J. Andrews, 2410004, 1RAR on 11 March 2015

Aubrey Clare, 23607, 3RAR on 8 December 2014

Kenenth J Pata, 35384, 1 RAR on 5 March 2015

Donald J. Robertson, 3400373, 3RAR on 25 Feb. 2015

The Ode

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

LEST WE FORGET