



THE VOICE

April 2016 Edition

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Editor's Opening

My bit this edition is a little shorter than usual (yes, I can't believe it either). The truth is I have little to say (and, yes, I can't believe it either). This is not to say that I have nothing to say. First off...

Last year we published the *KVAA Inc. 2014 Accounts* (a snapshot of our financial health or otherwise and required by law) without the usual *Treasurer's Annual Report* (not required by law) with the proviso that anyone who wanted a copy could let me know and I'd post it to them. Well, was I ever inundated with requests for this report. Er, no, I wasn't actually and would have been astounded if anyone requested it. No one did, which is just as well as Gerry didn't actually write one.

Another year, another *KVAA Inc. Accounts*, and again without the *Treasurer's Annual Report*. If you are really, really desperate for a copy then send our Treasurer a written request signed by your grandmother with the cash gift, and Gerry will see what he can do.

Secondly, subscriptions. As usual, a slow response. Do remember that your subscriptions are the basic building block of the Association. Without them (and donations) we would cease to exist – and by 'we' I mean me and *The Voice*. Please keep the Editor employed – renew your subscriptions NOW!

On a related topic, a few of you have pointed out that bank cheques and money orders are getting increasingly expensive, in fact totalling about a third to a half of the subscription cost itself. Is Direct Deposit (placing the funds directly into the KVAA account) available? The answer? We're looking into it, but...my guess – Don't hold your breath.

Finally, well done Ron Christie who spotted my deliberate error (that's my story and I'm sticking to it) in February's *Voice* where in the *Rescue from Behind Enemy Lines* story on Page 5 the date was given as "On the afternoon of October 26, 1952...". This, of course should read: October 26, 1951. For noticing the incorrect date Ron wins lots of good karma for use in his next life. Actually, for once it isn't my mistake and I can safely blame the author, Lt. G. C. "Taffy" Hughes. The error is in the original *Navy News* article.

I was thumbing through some back issues of *The Voice* when I came across the membership figure for 1988: 120 veterans. It's currently at 338. Strewth! You guys must be breeding.

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

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Australian Korea Veterans Association Inc.
Korea War Veterans Association of NSW
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Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemaker Veterans' Association Inc.

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by



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Editorial Disclaimer

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Merchandise Available

KVAA pocket badge	\$10.00	\$	Kapypong battle print	\$ 6.00	\$
KVAA lapel badge (undated)	\$10.00	\$	Tie (with KVAA Inc. logo)	\$20.00	\$
KVAA beer (stubby) holders	\$ 5.00	\$	Car number plate surrounds (set)	\$10.00	\$
Korean War bumper sticker	\$ 2.50	\$	Commonwealth Shoulder Flak	\$ 2.50	\$

TOTAL . . . \$ _ _ _ _ + \$3 pp = \$ _ _ _ _

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

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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

Editor's intro: Not so much the President's Report as much as the President being lazy report. In fairness, it's been a busy month for the Executive. Here is Vic's Report, a slightly edited (for space) version of the speech he delivered at the conclusion of the dinner on 24 March launching the drive for the Korean War Memorial.

The Korean Consul-General, Mr Jo Hongju; to the previous speakers, already acknowledged and welcomed here this evening; ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of Australian Korean War veterans, our wives, widows and our families, we extend our grateful thanks for your presence and support here this evening.

In all honesty, we are really excited at the prospect of a Korean War Memorial here in Melbourne, and we thank the Consul-General for organizing today's Golf Day and also for hosting this evening's dinner.

Obviously the hard yards are still ahead, but if we continue to assist the Consul-General in every way possible, then I am sure that we can achieve his and our dream of a Memorial here in our City. The vast majority of us are in our eighties (I mean the veterans not necessarily our wives) but we will give our full support to this important project.

The Consul-General has organized what is now known as *The Melbourne Korean War Memorial Committee* under the Chairmanship of Mr Jung Gon Sub. This committee (of which KVAA Vice president, Tom Parkinson, and I have the privilege to be part of) met last Wednesday evening [March 16th] to discuss every possible aspect needed to – hopefully – maximize the whole project to run as smoothly as possible and still bring the proposed Memorial to fruition.

There are many, many Korean War plaques dedicated around our vast country and there are also many *Missing in Action* plaques in remembrance of those who have no known grave. All these are loved and respected. My belief is that the people of the Republic of Korea consider Korean War Memorials an emblem of Peace.

We Australian veterans saw the devastation and destruction during those terrible years, and those of us who have had the opportunity to revisit Korea have seen the fantastic progress they have made in the decades since the cease fire, to become one of the world's largest trading

(continues on Page 10)

ANZAC Day Details

ANZAC Day this year falls on a Monday (the date, the 25th, of course, staying the same). For those who work, hooray, a day off with full pay!

The muster area for BCOF, Korea, Malaya and Borneo veterans this year is **Swanston Street West** (opposite the City Square and between Flinders Lane and Collins Street) at 1115 hours with step off time at 1140 hours. For the civilians reading this it's 11.15am with step off time 11.40am. This is the same location as last year; however, the time has changed to a later 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. As usual, transport will be provided for those who can't march but don't want to miss participating.

One other change of note: the Anzac Day Church Service will be held at St Pauls Cathedral on the 17th April 2016 at 1330hrs (1.30 pm). For those on the snailmail list, this copy of *The Voice* will probably reach you too late.

And, as usual, may I present you the march rules (which, I might add, with the exception of the absurd Rule 6 we generally observe, so everyone who regularly attends give yourself a pat on the head and have an extra cookie):

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.

Notices

Seeking Information On...

Here's one for those who served in post-ceasefire Korea. A colleague from Bourton on Water recently met up with veterans in his village. He was given a tankard found at a sale that contains the following inscription:

GWP CLARKE
SEOUL V PUSAN
CRICKET MATCH
PUSAN KOREA
28/29 AUGUST 1954

He is naturally curious to know more about Clarke and the two day event. The nearest match to GWP Clarke in the Korean War Nominal Roll is Walter George Clarke. Not him, however. He left Korea in April, thus GWP probably isn't an Aussie. If you can help, let the Editor or Secretary know. Contact details on Page 2 as usual.

Seeking Information On...

Here's another one for those who served in post-ceasefire Korea. It is an inquiry from a Korea War veteran named Vic Day or Vic Dey (or something like that). He is wondering what happened to the Leave & Transit Depot Camp in Tokyo which was used by Commonwealth troops during the war. He paid two visits to the camp (November 1952 and March 1953) while on leave. Presumably it was eventually dismantled or re-purposed, but when and by whom? If you can help this old digger with his inquiry, then, well, details on Page 2 as usual.

Charity Lunch

The Bataan Association has arranged a charity lunch for the Challenge-Supporting Kids with Cancer. The \$30pp lunch will be at 1200, on Friday 13 May at the Noble Park RSL, 1128 Heatherton Road, Noble Park (just opposite Noble Park station). They have arranged a guest speaker, Leon Wiegard – an Olympian and past President of the Fitzroy Football Club. Comedian Oscar Swary will also be there to entertain. For details or to book contact John Laughton JP on (03) 5904 9457 or 0417 336 423 or by email: johnfl@aapt.net.au or send cheque/money order with your details to 90/2 Cameron Street, Cranbourne East, VIC 3977.

Appointment

Congratulations to Commander John Moller OAM RANR (Rtd.) on his election as President of the NAA, Victoria Section. John has also been Mayor of Sandringham Council and, more importantly, is a member of the KVAA Inc. and a past-National Secretary.

KVAA Inc. 2015 Accounts

Korean Veterans Association of Australia Income and Expenditure Statement For the Year Ended 31 December 2015

	2014	2015
Income	\$	\$
Interest received	85	37
Donations	3,525	3,490
Subscriptions	10,196	7,380
Merchandise	3,578	2,122
Anzac Day - Raffle	1,351	
Anzac Day - Entrance Fee	650	
Miscellaneous	7,034	
Distribution From Trusts	140	
Other Income	2,963	8,994
Total Income:	22,489	22,023
Expenses		
Auditor's remuneration	1,012	1,012
Bank fees and charges	100	77
Changes NMV-Managed Funds	9,742	
Wreaths and Plaques	523	1,518
Depreciation - other	305	244
Donations	20	50
Fees & Permits	90	
Functions and outings	6,460	6,238
Hire of Plant & Equipment	525	660
Insurance	1,050	2,130
Materials & Supplies	3,365	4,223
Postage	3,600	3,496
Printing & stationery	2,584	
Sundry expenses	70	28
Telephone	981	358
Total Expenses:	30,426	20,235
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax:	(7,937)	1,789
Net profit attributable to the Association:	(7,937)	1,789
Total changes in equity of the Association:	(7,937)	1,789

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.

* * *



Recovering the Meteor

by Richard A. Gilham

A24184, Leading Aircraftman, No.77 (Fighter) Squadron

After finishing my basic airframe mechanics training, on 4 April 1952, I was posted to the 2nd Operational Training Unit at Williamtown (NSW) to maintain Vampire jet fighter aircraft being used to train operational pilots. During the next twelve months I passed my exams, upgraded to airframe fitter and then was promoted to leading aircraftsman. On 20 March 1953, I was posted to 491 Maintenance Squadron at Iwakuni, Japan.

We had been working on Meteor jet fighters for about five weeks in preparation for being posted to Korea when the WO Engineer emerged from his office and told us one of our aircraft [A77-415] was down on a beach on the island of Pangyong-do, off the west coast of Korea at about the 38th parallel. The location was known as "K53". I remember him saying, "I want three volunteers – you, you and you," so the rescue crew consisted of LAC Don Brown (Airframes), LAC Stubberfield (Engines) and myself (Airframes), to accompany the warrant officer. We were told to pack our personal gear, plus rifles and ammunition, and report to 36 Transport Squadron to help load a complete spare Derwent jet engine and tools into a DC3 aircraft.

We took off from Iwakuni and made our way across to the west coast of Korea. The pilots informed us that to avoid detection by enemy radar we would be flying at about 100 feet above the water and that they would have to negotiate nature's monoliths rising out of the sea. The timing of the flight was crucial, to allow a landing on the 60 foot width of hard sand exposed at low tide. After the pilots landed safely on the beach, we unloaded all our equipment, plus the jet engine. The DC3 then took off to return to Iwakuni.

Checking the Meteor for damage, we located a gaping hole in the starboard engine and started work immediately to exchange engines. We were then joined by our island hosts, the American service men operating a forward radar station on the hill, who supplied a crane to lift the engines. During our stay on the island we camped with them but the trouble was they had no beer, only bourbon, so we were forced to relieve them of a couple of bottles.

The pilot of the downed aircraft had used his emergency system to inject air pressure into the hydraulic system to enable the undercarriage to come down. This air had to be removed completely from the system for the hydraulics to operate correctly, so after the new engine was in place we jacked up the aircraft and bled the hydraulics. We conducted several retraction tests on the undercarriage and checked the hydraulic air brakes on the main planes. One time, while catching a lift in an American weapon carrier to the radar base, I noticed some 44-gallon drums washed up on the beach. I asked the driver, "What's in those drums?" and he replied, "I don't know, man, let's find out."

To my amazement, he then drove straight into one, gouging a hole in it with the bumper bar. With that, he got out of the vehicle, touched the liquid with his finger, smelt it, and said, "Yep, that's fuel oil guy."

I was wondering what would have happened if it had been high-octane fuel! With no wharf available, the only way they could bring fuel in was to dump the barrels at sea and let them wash in onto the beach.



Aircrew working on A77-415 on the beach.

On arrival at the radar base on the hill, we watched a New Zealand frigate off the east coast of the island, bombarding targets on the mainland, changing position frequently to prevent the enemy getting a fix on her.

Later that night, after unidentified aircraft were detected in the area, the air raid alarm sounded. We headed for the dugout, where one of the American servicemen had set up a .5 machine gun on a tripod, saying, "I'll give this son of a bitch something to write home about." Luckily for us he didn't get to fire it, because I think the lot would have finished upon top of us!

The next day the Meteor was ready to be flown out. A signal was sent to Kimpo for a DC3 to return to collect us, with a jet pilot to fly the repaired aircraft out. A DC3 arrived the following morning with Pilot

D.J. Monaghan on board. We informed him of the work we had carried out on the aircraft, adding that we had run the new engine which checked out okay. The pilot was concerned about the length of the beach for take-off. We watched apprehensively as the aircraft slowly lifted off and headed for two high mountains. Just as the pilot approached the mountains, he turned sharply and flew up the valley between them. Shortly afterwards, he flew back over the beach and wagged his wings, signaling that everything was okay and he was heading back

(continues on Page 6)

Recovering the Meteor (continued from Page 5)

to Kimpo. To make use of the low tide, we quickly loaded the DC3, said goodbye to our American friends and took off to return to Iwakuni.

Unfortunately, according to a pilot's report, after going back into combat, A77- 415 was lost on 22 June 1953 when a RAF exchange pilot was carrying out a rocket strike on some troop and supply shelters in North Korea. There was some flak in the area and the pilot experienced a loud explosion at the rear of the aircraft. Most of the controls were jammed causing the aircraft to climb to 15,000 feet. The pilot dispatched a MAY-DAY signal and nursed the aircraft back to friendly airspace and ejected. A Helicopter picked him up and took him back to base.

The armistice was signed on 27 July 1953, with 77 Squadron maintaining a presence in Kimpo for some time afterwards.

First published in the NSW RSL publication *Reveille* April/May 2001 edition under the title *Incident in Korea*.

Reprinted (with permission) in *The Voice* December 2001.

During World War II, it was high-end Elizabeth Arden cosmetics firm that produced the iconic black-face camouflage cream used by United States combat personnel for night missions.

ANZAC Day

by Ramon Mason

Early in the morning of April the 25th,
groups of people wait, some of them nervous,
awaiting the event to give their spirits a lift;
the start of the ANZAC Day Dawn Service.

Then it's down to the Sub-Branch Hall,
for breakfast and a nip of rum,
a meal for everybody, big or small
and everyone's welcome to come.

Church parade is at nine am,
it is also held in our hall,
open to all denominations of men,
a little religion's good for us all.

At ten hundred hours the moment has come,
we're formed up ready in the street,
the band starts with the roll of a drum,
we march to the beat of our rhythmic feet.

It's down the Street, to the applause of the crowd,
to the lilt of the band we're singing a song,
every man happy and every man proud,
no faltering steps as we're carried along.

We form up in ranks at the Remembrance wall,
we listen to speeches, hymns and prayers,
we are waiting impatiently for the call,
fall out to the club, the beer's waiting there.

We're not here to glorify war,
rather to remember our mates,
war to all is a festering sore,
let's abolish it along with its hates.

At the end of the day when we're fuzzy and warm
and all our reminiscing has been told,
thankful indeed that we're safe from harm
and fate has allowed us to grow old.

Ripped From the Headlines...

Navy Airmen Do Job Of Facelifting Wolmi

ABOARD THE CARRIER FLAGSHIP OF REAR ADM. JOHN HOSKINS – Admiral Hosking's pilots spent Thursday rearranging the land mass of the island of Wolmi with an aerial assault that combined with point-blank naval shelling to turn the once verdant isle into a bleak brown spot.

While jet Panthers scouted surrounding areas for enemy air activity, the carrier's Sky-raider dive bombers and Corsair heavy duty fighters dived on the island, which is located just outside of the harbor of Inchon.

The pilots described their attacks as something resembling advanced flight school ordnance training. Lt. (j.g.) Edward H. Albright, a Corsair pilot of Herington, Kans, gave this description of the island: "There was a slope leading down to a cove that I happened to notice yesterday. It was covered with grass and shrubbery. Today when I was directed to work the area over again, every bit of grass was gone and only a few trees remained."

GUN EMPLACEMENTS on the small island were knocked out with 1000-pound bombs.

The island was rocked with anti-personnel bombs and rockets.

In addition to neutralizing Wolmi, the Navy attack planes put 10 trucks out of commission over on the peninsula.

The jet patrols reported knocking out a supply boat and two small motor boats in a channel southwest of Munsan and the destruction of three military trucks.

Lt. Cmdr. Marvin J. Ramsey of Kansas City, Kans., who led the last strike of Skyraiders, gave a final report on Wolmi, saying, "There's just not much left of that island."

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

Operation Sabre

In February 1945, at Port Bannayne on the Clyde, six strange looking craft were hoisted onboard the depot ship *Bonadventure*. They were British XE craft, under orders with their crews to proceed to the Far East, to heap, if possible, more woe on the already sorely pressed Japanese.

These tiny underwater vessels were not designed for comfort. In overall length they spanned some 50 feet, but this included propeller, rudder and hydroplanes, so that the internal length was only 35 feet. The hull did not exceed 5½ feet in diameter, allowing headroom of some 5 feet.

A very small man could stand upright under the periscope dome, but elsewhere in the boat headroom was barely sufficient for the average man in a sitting position. Movement between compartments meant bending double, and nowhere could the arm be extended without touching either the hull or some part of the equipment.

Officially termed XE class submarines, they were internally divided into four compartments. Forward was the battery room. Next came the escape compartment, known as the “W and D” (wet and dry), which permitted one member of the crew at a time to leave and re-enter the submarine in a diving suit. Amidships lay the control room, containing the steering and depth controls, the periscope and an assortment of miscellaneous gear and machinery. Finally, aft came the engine room, containing a diesel engine for surface propulsion, and the battery driven main motor for underwater operations.

Speed was approximately 6½ and 4½ knots respectively. They were in fact, a submarine in miniature, except that there were no torpedo tubes. Their punch was packed in two powerful explosive charges, each containing two tons of amatol and a time clock. Termed “side cargoes”, these were housed externally, one on either side of the hull. Exploded beneath a ship, a single charge proved devastating in its effects.

In the confined space of these little “boats”, a crew of four: C.O., first lieutenant, diver and engine-room artificer, lived their dangerous lives, attacking the enemy in his lair whenever the opportunity arose, and becoming, as the war progressed, a byword for daring. A small but select and gallant band of men, who before the war ended, were able to count four V.Cs among their number.

Bonadventure and her six “midgets” (XE1 to XE6) constituting the 14th Submarine Flotilla under Captain W. R. Fell, duly arrived in Australian waters. By this time the Japanese were reeling under repeated blows from the combined might of the American and British Pacific Fleet.

Hiroshima and total victory were only weeks away. There seemed to be little hope of operational use for the little craft and their enthusiastic crews.

Admiral Fraser was pessimistic and the Americans merely exhibited a non-committal interest. Morale fell, and disbandment of the flotilla seemed just around the corner when two urgent needs presented Captain Fell with the opportunity to prove the value of his XEs.

One was the cutting of the underwater cable between Singapore and Tokyo and via Saigon and Hong Kong. The other was the destruction of the Japanese heavy cruisers *Nachi* and *Takao*, known to be lying off Singapore Island, undamaged, and a constant threat to Allied shipping.

Two “midgets”, XE5 (Lt. H.P. Westracott) and XE4 (Lt. M. H. Shean), were detailed to cut the cable off Hong Kong and Saigon respectively. Two others, XE1 and XE3, were ordered to deal with *Nachi* and *Takao*.

Lt. Shean, in command of XE4, was already an experienced underwater sailor. He joined the RAN in October, 1940, completed an anti-submarine course at *HMAS Rushcutter*, and sailed for England in May, 1941. On arrival he was appointed to the corvette *Bluebell* for service in the Atlantic. At the end of 12 months, he volunteered to serve in special craft, and was sent to the third training course for midget submarine crews.

Qualifying, he joined the 12th Submarine Flotilla, and with this group of “midgets” took part with four other RAN officers in the attack on the German battleship *Tirpitz*. Later he took part in several hazardous operations and gained a D.S.O. for his part in the attack on enemy-held Bergen harbour in April, 1944, when in command of XE4, he sank the German ship *Barenfels* and seriously damaged docking facilities.

The decision made and the orders issued, there followed a brief period of training on the Queensland coast. Grapnel operations on the sea bed, using an old cable, were repeated again and again, until it was proved that, given reasonable conditions, it would be possible to cut the vital Japanese communications. Unfortunately, the experiments cost the lives of two officers, including Lt. D. Carey, RN, who vanished without trace while diving in about six fathoms of water.

Trials completed, *Bonadventure* proceeded to Subic Bay, in the Philippines, where she dropped off XE5 and her crew for the Hong Kong operation. On July 26, she arrived at Brunei Bay in Borneo, where the Australian 9th Division had recently driven out the Japanese. Here XE4 was launched, and with a temporary crew of four, set out on the 650-mile journey to the Indo-China coast, towed by H.M.S *Spearhead*.

The weather was perfect, and since the risk of counter-attack did not seem great, the two submarines were able to spend long periods on the surface. Only a lone junk was sighted, otherwise throughout the voyage

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Operation Sabre (continued from Page 7)

Spearhead and XE4 appeared to have the wide waters of the China Sea to themselves.

On the night of July 30, the two submarines reached a position off Saigon, some 14 miles off Cape St. Jacques, and here XE4's operational crew took over. There were five of them: Lt. Shean in command, SBLT Ben Kelly as First Lieutenant, and SBLT A. K. Bergius and SBLT K. M. Briggs as divers, with E. R. Coles in the engine room.

In pitch darkness and a freshening wind, XE4 set out on her mission. A heavy swell began breaking over the forward casing as Shean, the only man topside, conned the craft from a position aft. Stepping forward to investigate a loose casing bolt, he slipped, and in one silent movement fell into the sea.

No one below heard a sound, and only for the resource he possessed, Shean would no doubt have gone beyond human ken. But as XE4 swept past him, he made a supreme effort, and, seizing a wire jackstay near the rudder, hauled himself back onboard the moving submarine.

As dawn broke over the China Sea, XE4 dived and began a cautious movement towards the shore. A few minutes later, the divers, Briggs and Bergius, taking a short nap forward in the battery compartment, were rudely awakened by a sudden bump as XE4, shuddering from stem to stern, stopped.

She had collided with a submerged wreck, which was faintly visible in the periscope in the dim light now filtering down through the clear water. No damage was done and the ruffled divers were somewhat mollified on learning that the wreck had presented their C.O. with an accurate navigational fix.

Edging forward in the shallow water, XE4 reached the supposed cable area, and Shean released the grapnel. The search began at periscope depth to enable a constant watch for shipping, but, except for an odd junk and a single steamer observed leaving Saigon, the sea remained empty as the day wore on.

Suddenly the trailing wire tautened and strained as it gripped the sea bed. Briggs donned his diving suit, and through the escape hatch dropped to the sea bed. In minutes he was back and the wire slack. The grapnel flukes had grabbed at a projection on the sea bed.

Again XE4 nosed forward in the half light of seven to eight fathoms. Again the grapnel gripped, and down once more into the warm water went Briggs.

This time patience brought its reward, for there lying on the bottom, easily seen, was the sought-for prize – the Saigon-Singapore cable. Cutting proved a simple matter, and it was not long before Briggs was back on board displaying to his companions a 12-inch length of vital Japanese communication wire.

It was all surprisingly easy, and Shean confidently began the search for the Saigon-Hong Kong link. It was found at the first attempt, lying in 53 feet of water.

This time Lt. Bergius ventured on to the sea bed. At his first attempt the cutter, exhausted of compressed air by Briggs, refused to work. Bergius returned onboard, and after a brief spell took the second cutter, and with little difficulty, cut the cable.

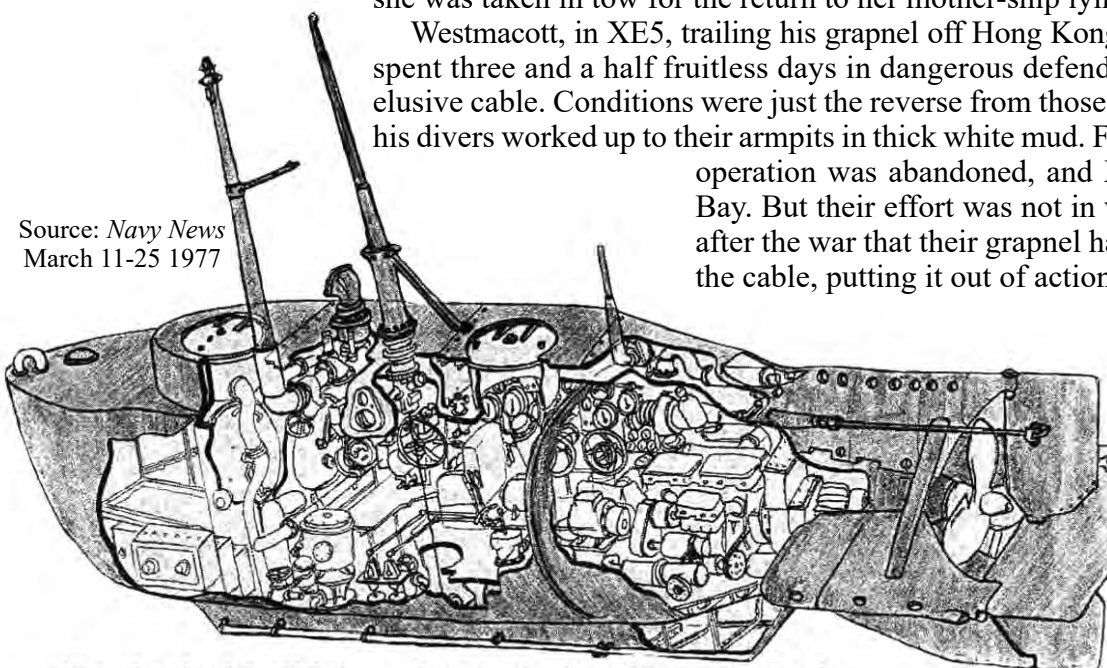
Operation Sabre was over, and the Japanese line was dead.

At 3p.m. on July 31, XE4 was on her way to rejoin *Spearhead* waiting out at sea. Early the following morning she was taken in tow for the return to her mother-ship lying in Brunei Bay.

Westmacott, in XE5, trailing his grapnel off Hong Kong, was not so lucky. He spent three and a half fruitless days in dangerous defended waters, seeking the elusive cable. Conditions were just the reverse from those at Saigon, and at times his divers worked up to their armpits in thick white mud. Finally, on August 3, the operation was abandoned, and XE5 returned to Subic Bay. But their effort was not in vain, for it was learned after the war that their grapnel had fouled and damaged the cable, putting it out of action.

When the war ended, Shean and his tiny craft were preparing an attack on Singapore. In fact, XE1 and XE3 had already passed their tows to the parent submarine when the cancellation came through less than an hour before sailing time.

Source: *Navy News*
March 11-25 1977



This sketch of the XE class submarine by *Navy News* artist Sandy illustrates the fact that the tiny vessels were not designed for comfort.

We Was Brung Up Proper!

Congratulations to all my friends who were born in the 1920s, '30s, '40s, '50s, and '60s.

- First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank sherry while they carried us and lived in houses the walls and roofs of which were lined with asbestos...
- They took aspirin, ate blue cheese, bread and dripping, raw egg products, loads of bacon and processed meat, tuna from a can, and didn't get tested for diabetes or cervical cancer.
- Then after that trauma, our baby cots were covered with bright coloured lead-based paints.
- We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets or shoes, not to mention, the risks we took hitchhiking.
- As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags.
- We drank water from the garden hose and NOT from a bottle.
- Take away food was limited to fish and chips, no pizza shops, McDonalds, KFC, Subway or Nandos.
- Even though all the shops closed at 6.00pm on weekdays, 12 noon on Saturday, and didn't open at all on a Sunday, somehow we didn't starve to death!
- We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and **no one** actually died from this.
- We could collect old drink bottles and cash them in at the corner store.
- We ate cupcakes, white bread and real butter, milk from the cow, and drank soft drinks with sugar in it, but we weren't overweight because...
- WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING!
- We would leave home in the morning and could play all day, as long as we were back in time for dinner.
- No one was able to reach us all day. And we were OK.
- We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents.
- We lived in an age before local councils and schools removed anything fun and/or challenging from playgrounds in the interest of safety (and preventing lawsuits).
- Our mothers carefully and lovingly made/baked cakes, jam, biscuits, toffees to sell at school and church fetes; no longer allowed due to fear of food poisoning followed by mass lawsuits.
- Only girls had pierced ears!
- You could only buy Easter eggs and hot cross buns at Easter time.
- We were given air guns and catapults for our 10th birthdays,
- We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just yelled for them!
- Mum didn't have to go to work to help dad make ends meet because we didn't need to keep up with the Joneses!
- Not everyone made the rugby/football/cricket/netball team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Imagine that! Getting into the team was based on *merit*.
- Our teachers used to hit us with canes and gym shoes and throw the blackboard rubber at us if they thought we weren't concentrating.
- The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law!
- Our parents didn't invent stupid names for their kids like 'Kiora' and 'Blade' and 'Ridge' and 'Vanilla.'
- We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned **how do deal with it all!**
- We did not have Playstations, Nintendo Wii, X-boxes, no video games at all, no 999 channels on SKY, no video/dvd/bluray films, or colour TV, no mobile phones, no personal computers, no Internet or Internet chat rooms – and we still managed to have fun!
- Despite not have Playstations, Nintendo Wii, X-boxes, no video games at all, no 999 channels on SKY, no video/dvd/bluray films, or colour TV, no mobile phones, no personal computers, no Internet or Internet chat rooms – we were rarely bored, and if we were, our parents would always find a chore for us to do.
- Speaking of chores...we had to do them to earn our weekly pocket money; it was not just given to us.
- Banks actually seemed to value your custom and not simply see you as someone they could extract the maximum amount of money from in the shortest possible time.

You might want to share this with others who have had the luck to grow up as kids, before the lawyers and the government regulated our lives for our own good.

Melbourne Korean War Memorial Project

Why we need an official Korean War Memorial in Melbourne

We need an official War Memorial in Melbourne to honour the service and noble sacrifices of the Australians who served in the Korean War, 1950-53, in defence of freedom and democracy on the Korean Peninsula. A Melbourne War Memorial will further strengthen the long-standing and deep friendship between the Republic of Korea and Australia. Currently there are three Korean War Memorials in Australia, located in Canberra (2000), Sydney (2009) and the Gold Coast (2011). Globally there are 292 Korean War Memorials in 20 countries that participated in the war.

Framework for establishing the Melbourne Korean War Memorial

- The fundraising for the Melbourne Korean War Memorial commenced in January 2016, and the construction of the Memorial is planned to be completed in June 2017.
- This project is steered by the Melbourne Korean War Memorial Committee Inc. which was launched in January 2016.
 - The President of the Committee is CHOI Jong-gon (President of the National Unification Advisory Council Melbourne).
 - Vic Dey (President of the Korea Veterans Association of Australia) is the Committees Vice President
- Fund-sourcing plan for the Memorial:
- The Memorial is estimated to cost AUS \$500,000 (This estimated figure excludes the cost of purchasing land where the Memorial will be located. We are seeking a land donation from a benefactor, potentially the Victorian Government)
- To reach the \$500,000 target we are seeking to raise \$250,000 from Koreans residing in Victoria, Victorians and organisations in Victoria and \$250,000 from the Government of the Republic of Korea
- Site of the Memorial: potentially in the Shrine of Remembrance or in the Botanic Gardens
- Design and construction: there will be competitions for the design and construction of the Memorial

How the Memorial will be maintained

Once the Memorial is constructed, its ownership will be transferred to the Victorian Government. The Melbourne Korean War Memorial Committee will remain after the construction for the maintenance of the Memorial.

Overview of the Korean War and Australia's involvement in the conflict

- The Korean War commenced on the 25th of June 1950 and ended on the 27th July 1953.
- Combat forces from 16 allied countries; The United States, United Kingdom, Philippines, Thailand, Canada, Turkey, Australia (17,000 service personnel in total including 2,282 combat soldiers), New Zealand, Ethiopia, Greece, France, Colombia, Belgium, South Africa, Netherlands and Luxembourg participated in the war, supporting the Republic of Korea through the United Nations Command.
- Five countries; Denmark, India, Italy, Norway and Sweden provided humanitarian aid.
- There were 987,000 South Korean soldiers and 804,700 South Korean civilian casualties from the Korean War. United Nations forces suffered 151,500 casualties, of which 339 Australians were killed and 1,216 wounded.
- The Korean War cost US \$30 billion in 1953 (US \$341 billion today)

* * * *

President's Report (continued from Page 3)

nations.

I also believe that every Korean War Memorial, wherever it may be around the world, will remind future generations of the catastrophe that engulfed the entire Korean Peninsula. My hope and prayer is that War Memorials and the true meaning of their existence will always be there in remembrance of those who served; may it be the criteria to eventually stop all wars.

Again I express our gratitude for your support this evening. I hope and pray that it continues. I thank you all and God bless you.

* * * *

“Just the sort of bloody silly name they would choose!” was aircraft designer R. J. Mitchell’s reaction in 1936 on hearing the name the British Air Ministry chose for his new plane. That name? The Spitfire.

Mers el Kebir

During the disastrous land campaign in France in May 1940, the French Fleet had been dispersed to English and North African bases. By early July, two battleships, four cruisers, eight destroyers, and two-hundred patrol-craft, had been sent to England. At Alexandria, the French had stationed a battleship, four cruisers, and three destroyers. Six French cruisers were at Algiers. Of the two unfinished French battleships, the *Jean Bart* was at Casablanca, and her sister-ship, the *Richelieu*, was at Dakar. In Mers el Kebir, Algeria, the French stationed two battleships, two modern battlecruisers, and a submarine group.

On 3 July 1940, the Royal Navy suddenly seized all French vessels in British ports. Before sundown, a British naval force, designated as Force H, consisting of the battlecruiser *Hood*, the battleships *Resolution* and *Valiant*, the aircraft carrier *Ark Royal*, two cruisers, and nine destroyers, appeared off Mers el Kebir demanding the surrender of the French Squadron in the harbor. The French gave no reply to this demand because it conflicted with the armistice agreement which stipulated that French warships should be demobilized and disarmed under German or Italian supervision.

At dusk, the British force under Vice Admiral Somerville, opened fire against the French ships under the command of French Admiral Gensoul. After fifteen minutes, the British broke off the action. The French battleship *Bretagne* had been blown up with heavy crew casualties. A second battleship, the *Provence*, as well as the battlecruiser *Dunkerque*, were badly damaged. French casualties exceeded 1,300 dead. Only the battlecruiser *Strasbourg*, and the French submarines, escaped to Toulon undamaged.

Meanwhile at Alexandria, the French Squadron facing a similar situation, opted to disarm under British supervision. The French at Dakar came under British attack on 8 July.

As a result of the assault on Mers el Kebir, the Vichy government severed diplomatic relations with Britain on 5 July. In September, French naval forces reciprocated for Mers el Kebir, when they successfully opposed the Royal Navy's attempt to land Free French troops at Dakar.

The attack at Mers el Kebir, in violation of international law, inflamed the traditional Gallic dislike of England. The world was astounded by Britain's ruthless treatment of her former ally. Hitler was awaiting a peace overture when news of the British attack struck his headquarters like a thunderbolt. Mers el Kebir provided Hitler with early evidence of England's desperate mood and her determination to defend herself.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine No. 40

The Extreme End of the World

Convoy battles in the Arctic during WWII were fought in one of the most hostile regions of the planet. The destination of most of these merchant vessels was the port of Murmansk, in Northern Russia. In the Saami language, Murmansk means "the extreme end of the world," and the port is aptly named. Apart from constant storms raging most of the year, with snow and wind gusts of almost hurricane force, the Arctic Ocean had other pleasures in store for anyone navigating its waters.

First among them were the effects the Gulf Stream. The warm waters flow slowly up the eastern coast of North America, then across the Atlantic to skirt Ireland before reaching the polar air over the Arctic. The mixture produces sudden, frequent, and thick fogs, referred to as "sea smoke," sometimes so thick ships had great difficulty keeping position within the convoy.

The contrast in salinity and density between the warm Gulf water and the gelid northern water created thermal layers beneath the ships. The layers reflected sonar pings, making it almost impossible to detect submarines. The mixed and moving waters remained just above the freezing point, but only just. If a man fell into the water, he had at most ten minutes to live before succumbing to hypothermia.

The water also did little to melt icebergs and floating ice sheets (known as "growlers"). They were most numerous near the edge of the polar ice sheet, where ships stayed to keep as far away from German bases as possible. Many ships were damaged and forced to turn back after impacts.

Above the water, there was no bottom limit to temperatures. Sea spray froze as soon as it fell on decks and superstructures. If enough accumulated, it would capsize smaller vessels and could hamper operations on even the largest. Crews therefore had to work around the clock with hammers and steam, even, perhaps especially, during the worst weather.

The higher latitudes also brought extremes of daylight and darkness. Winter brought perpetual darkness for 115 days. Ships sailed with navigation lights off to avoid German eyes – aircraft might be grounded, but night was a friend to the U-boats – adding to the difficulty of keeping convoys together.

Summer produced the opposite problem. During the "midnight sun," German aircraft could operate 24 hours a day, enabling non-stop attacks while the convoys were in range. Ships ran low on anti-aircraft ammunition, and crews were kept at battle stations throughout; the men of Convoy PQ-18 (Sept. 1942) spent some four days without being able to sleep more than ten minutes at a time.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine No. 292

Editor's intro: It is strange that although most people know at least something about Canada's contribution to the defeat of the Axis powers in Europe, few know much about their effort in the Pacific against Japan. In this article, Lt. Col. Archie M. Steacy, CD UE, President of the British Columbia Veterans Commemorative Association writes of the little remembered struggle for Hong Kong. And, yes, his surname being the same as our Treasurer is not coincidental. This story is part of a larger narrative from a presentation entitled "Canada in the Pacific War, 1939-1945" delivered during the VJ Day Commemoration Ceremony on 15 August 2015.

The Battle of Hong Kong

by Archie M. Steacy

In Autumn 1941, the British government accepted an offer by the Canadian Government to send two infantry battalions and a brigade headquarters personnel, to reinforce the Hong Kong garrison: "C Force", as it was known. On 27 October 1941, *HMS Awatea* escorted by *HMCS Prince Robert*, embarked from Vancouver with 1,975 officers and men of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, from Manitoba, and the Royal Rifles of Canada, from Québec, for Hong Kong, arriving on 16 November 1941 for what was one of the first battles of the Pacific campaign of World War II, and a first for Canadians.

The Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941, turned a European conflict into a global war. On 8 December 1941, the British Colony of Hong Kong also suffered a surprise attack by the Japanese across the frontier of the New Territories. The attack was in violation of international law, as Japan had not declared war against the British Empire.

The attack was met with stiff resistance from Hong Kong's Garrison of local troops as well as British, Canadian and Indian units. Not even the best troops could have stopped the more numerous and better-prepared Japanese troops.

Within ten days the Japanese 38th Division, supported by extra artillery and infantry, overran the defenses on the mainland portion of the colony.

On December 18, the Japanese landed on Hong Kong Island itself. The defenders fought back as best they could, grimly holding onto their positions and counterattacking repeatedly. After seventeen days of bitter fighting, the Canadians, along with their British, Chinese and Indian allies, capitulated on Christmas night.

290 Canadians had been killed and are buried in San Wan Bay Cemetery. 500 were wounded. The losses would have been less heavy if the Japanese had not killed injured men and prisoners.

The survivors subsequently were faced with abominable conditions that prevailed in the prison camps. They were assigned to construction of a landing strip at Kai Tak (in Hong Kong), or to work in the coal mines of Niigata or at the Yokohama shipyards.

Suffering from malnutrition, disease and the violence of their guards, 260 Canadians perished from neglect or from harsh treatment. The 1,428 survivors were repatriated to Canada via *HMCS Prince Robert* and the *Empress of New Zealand* shortly after war's end.

Endnote: On 19 December 1941, during the Battle of Hong Kong, Sergeant Major John Osborn of the Winnipeg Grenadiers died when he threw himself on a Japanese hand grenade to save his comrades. His bravery was recognised with a posthumous Victoria Cross, Canada's first VC in World War II.

The Long Walk

Ib Poulsen, a young Dane, was the highest-ranking officer in the world's smallest armed force. He was the only captain in the Northeast Greenland Sledge Patrol, a cadre of 15 Scandinavians and their Inuit guides tasked with patrolling 500 miles of coastal Greenland aboard dogsleds. They were to look for Germans intent on setting up weather stations to broadcast observations crucial to U-boats and long-range Luftwaffe aircraft tracking Russia-bound convoys.

On March 23, 1943, they found intruders – or rather, the Germans found them. After a brief night-time firefight between 19 Wehrmacht troopers armed with submachine guns and grenades and three Sledge Patrolmen single-shot hunting rifles, Poulsen became separated from the others. It was 50 below, and having lost dogs, sledge, rifle, boots, winter and food, the Dane had a choice: surrender or walk 230 miles to the nearest Allied station, from which he could put out an alert the Germans had landed. Poulsen chose to walk.

He scrounged in abandoned huts along his route, finding blanket scraps, clothing odds and ends, frozen beans, an old rifle and a pair of battered skis useful only as drag-sled. With these crude supplies he risked a journey no native Greenlander had ever attempted, much less survived. The trek ultimately took 11 days, and when he reached the station, he learned that one of his mates had already transmitted an emergency radio broadcast about the Germans.

Source: *Military History* magazine, November 2011

HMAS Wort

by Ian Hughes

A series of cartoons which appeared in *Navy News* in the 1980s-2000s (now in public domain).



The man who gets the most satisfactory results is not always the man with the most brilliant single mind, but rather the man who can best coordinate the brains and talents of his associates – W. Alton Jones.

M.I.A. Plaque Dedication

Altona R.S.L., Wednesday 17 February 2016.



Ending on a positive note...

Elaine Langdon, Associate Member, and wife of Korean War veteran, Keith, recently found this note for Keith under her windscreen wiper at the local shopping centre:

Thanks for your service mate. Our country should take greater pride in you and your mates effort in such a brutal conflict. From a young Aussie who hasn't forgotten "the forgotten war". Cheers, Ben.



Farewells

Brian M. Bigelow, 35619, *HMAS Bataan* on 12 March 2016

Maxwell Broadhurst, 5400348, 2RAR in November 2015

William E. Hoare (Hall), 3400970, 2RAR in December 2015

Mervyn Lawrence Doyle, 28689, 1RAR on 16 January 2016

John Lord, 1472, 1RAR in November 2015

Gilmer John Lucas, 340105, 1RAR on 17 November 2015

Edward Nicholson, 21818, 3RAR on 3 February 2016

Paul Robinson, 11041, 3RAR on 12 January 2016

Kenneth S. Williamson, O22971, No.77 (Fighter) Squadron, on 5 January 2016

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