



# THE VOICE

October 2019 Edition

## Contents:

Editor's Opening	1
Life Members	2
Directory	2
Editorial Disclaimer	2
Merchandise Available	2
Yokosuka and the Korean War	3
Outstanding Leadership and Brilliant Victory	5
HMAS Australia's Unique Record	6
Feeding the Starving	7
Happy To Sign	7
Heading to Libya? Use a Compass	7
His Only Prize Was Death	8
A Better General Than Swimmer	8
Operation Herbertus	9
He Must Fall	10
The Patton Slapping Incidents	11
Tigers on the Hill	11
WWII Civilian Bombing Casualties	12
Xmas Luncheon Invitation	12
HMAS Wort	13
Dikko	14
Farewells	14
The Ode	14

## Editor's Opening

In the June 2017 edition of *The Voice*, I carried a short piece on WWII and Korean War veteran, Fred From, who, although 99 years and 11 months, attended ANZAC Day in Brisbane. He did so in conjunction with fellow veteran, Grahame Tweedale, aged 95, who completed the march on foot. I think I pointed this out in the hope that it might inspire Melbourne veterans for ANZAC Day 2018.

It didn't work, obviously.

Frederick Rennie From turned 100 a few weeks later on 30 May 2017, and 101 on the same date the following year, and 102 in 2019. His remarkable innings closed in early August.

Dennis Lehmann didn't quite have the same runs on the board but he held up his end until 16 August this year. Dennis was a KVAA Life member, KVAA Treasurer 1997-1998, and Vice-President from 1999-2004. Another stalwart member gone.

The KVAA Xmas lunch invitation is on Page 12.

Apologies for the late arrival of *The Voice* in your in-tray or letter box. I offer the usual excuse: matters beyond the editor's control. But, as they say, better late than never.

**The KVAA has been invited to the Shrine for Remembrance Day on Monday, November 11, the focus this year being on the Korean War. Our President, Tom Parkinson, has been asked to recite the Ode.**

**We are also looking to hire a mini-bus to transport anyone interested in attending from the Stella Maris to the Shrine, then, after the ceremony across to the Korean War Memorial at Quarry Park in Maribyrnong from a short follow-up service, then back to the Stella Maris.**

**If you are interested in attending contact the KVAA National Secretary, Deb Rye, on 5448 8758 or 0419 334483.**

Since I have some space to fill, here's a (groan-inducing) joke...

A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?," they asked, as they moved off. "Because," he said, "I hate chess nuts boasting in an open foyer."

### Associate Member

International Federation of Korean War Veterans Association  
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.

The Voice is proudly sponsored by



# Life Members

Colin Berryman OAM  
 Jim Boxshall†  
 Rev. Burne Brooker†  
 John Brownbill  
 RFD, KCSJ, KiT (Scot)  
 John Burke†  
 Bill Campbell†  
 Victor Dey OAM†  
 John Duson  
 Athol Egeberg†  
 Alan Evered MRAC, MRSV  
 Mick Everett†  
 J F Frawley OAM BEM†  
 Stan Gallop†  
 Olwyn Green OAM (Hon)  
 Des Guilfoyle†  
 Geoffrey Guilfoyle  
 John Holford  
 Neville Holl†  
 Murray Inwood†  
 David Irving†  
 Ron J. Kennedy  
 George Lang OAM†  
 Dennis Lehmann†  
 Kenneth Mankelow†  
 Bruce Maxwell  
 Alan McDonald OAM  
 Ian McDonald†  
 Allan Murray†  
 Ray McKenzie†  
 Don McLeod†  
 George Mitchell†  
 Bill Murphy†  
 Ormond Petherick  
 Jack Philpot  
 Allen Riches  
 Arthur Roach  
 Ivan Ryan†  
 Joe Shields†  
 Gerry Steacy  
 Doug Wilkie JPT  
 †Deceased

# Directory

**Patron :** Major General David McLachlan AO (Retired)

**National President :** Tom Parkinson

Phone: 03 9350 6608 or c/- Pascoe Vale RSL 03 9354 6364 or president@pascoevalersl.com.au

**National Vice-President :** Alan McDonald OAM

Phone: 03 5975 4113 / Email: alanmc12@iprimus.com.au

**National Secretary :** Deborah Rye

Phone: 03 5448 8758 / Mobile: 0419 334 483 / Email: secretary@kva.org.au

## Correspondence

The Secretary, 260 Station Street, Epsom, Victoria 3551

## The Voice

The Editor, PO Box 3, Grantville, Victoria 3984

**National Treasurer :** Merrill Lord

Mobile: 0432 836 182 / Email: merrilllord78@gmail.com

## Committee

Milton Hoe, John Moller OAM JP, John Munro OAM RFD ED,  
 Laurie Price, Allen Riches, Arthur Roach

## Appointments

**Chaplain / Veterans' Affairs:** John Brownbill RFD, KCSJ, KiT (Scot) 0418 359 085

**Editor:** Geoff Guilfoyle Phone: 03 59976240 Email: editor@kva.org.au

## Delegates

**ACT:** Colin Berryman OAM (Phone: 02 6258 2463 / Mobile: 040 896 2415 / Email: jacol57@bigpond.net.au)

**Geelong:** Arthur Roach (03 5243 6113)

**New South Wales:** Merv Heath (02 4343 1967)

**Queensland:** Harry Pooley (Phone: 07 3200 0482)

**Queensland (Kilcoy Region):** Kelly Frawley (Phone: 0428 186 788 / Email: kel52bes@gmail.com)

**Riverina:** John Munro OAM RFD ED (Phone: 03 5480 3778)

**South Australia:** John Jarrett (Phone 0411 420 162 / Email: jarrett8083@gmail.com)

**Tasmania:** George Hutchinson (Phone: 03 6275 0762)

**Western Australia:** John Southorn (Phone: 08 9531 2008 / Email: bessboss@westnet.com.au)

## Website

www.kva.org.au

## Editorial Disclaimer

Articles in *The Voice* are printed on the understanding that, unless stated, they are the original works of the contributors/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 KVAA Inc., the editor or publishers of *The Voice*.

## Merchandise Available

Bannerettes (flags)	\$15.00 .....	\$	Kapypong battle print	\$ 6.00 .....	\$
Tie (with KVAA Inc. logo)	\$20.00 .....	\$	Christms cards	\$ 2.00 .....	\$
Korean War bumper sticker	\$ 2.50 .....	\$			
Windscreen decals	\$ 4.00 .....	\$	<b>TOTAL . . .</b>	<b>\$_____ + \$3 pp = \$_____</b>	

Surname: ..... Given Names: .....

Address: ..... (Please Print)

State: ..... Post Code: .....

Cheques/money orders should be made out to: KVAA Inc. and sent to: Merrill Lord, PO Box 107, Frankston 3199, Victoria

# Yokosuka and the Korean War

by Tom Moore

Yokosuka, America's base in Japan, is the pillar of peace in the Far East. The waters off the southeast of Japan are some of the deepest in the world, over five miles deep. The Yokosuka Base is located on Miura Peninsula, inside the huge 510-mile Tokyo Bay. It is ten miles south of Yokohama, and forty miles south of Tokyo.

Thousands and thousands of American military personnel, and millions upon millions of tons of military supplies for the Korean War, have passed through this military base. Its shipbuilding/repair and ship berthing facilities are outstanding.

## Thank You, France

In 1865, a young 28-year-old engineer from France, Francois Leon Verney, looked over Yokosuka harbor. It had a striking resemblance topographically to the French port of Toulon, thus simplifying Verney's task of designing.

In 1866, Verney started with the first of 42 French architects and engineers to build foundries, ship repair slips, shipbuilding ways, warehouses, armories, and quarters. In 1875, the *Seiki-Maru*, an 897-ton ship, with a 443-horsepower propulsion-plant, became the first modern warship built in Japan. It had both steam and sails, and could make ten knots speed.

*Seiki-Maru* was launched at Yokosuka in 1890, as was the first all-steel ship constructed in Japan, the *Yaeyama Maru*, a 1,600-ton warship. To protect Tokyo Bay, three man-made forts in the entrance to Tokyo Bay were completed, heavily fortified, and manned in 1896. They exist today.

## A Threat To The U.S.

In 1922, the world's first true aircraft carrier, the *Hosho*, a carrier from the keel up, not a conversion, was completed. By July 1941, the U.S. had clamped an embargo on the export of aviation gasoline, chemicals, iron ore, and scrap metal to Japan, seized all Japanese funds in America, and closed the Panama Canal to Japanese shipping.

Plan Z, the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was adopted in the Japanese War College, and rehearsals for the attack were started in 1941. Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo's strike force (including 8 aircraft carriers and 600 aircraft) sailed for Pearl Harbor on 22 November, 1941.

On 2 December, a coded message was sent to the strike force from the Yokosuka Naval Base by Admiral Yamamoto: *Niitaka-Yama Nobore* (Ascend Mount Niitaka) code for "Launch the attack on the enemy." Then came the second part of the signal: the number 1208, code for 8 December, the date to commence hostilities (Japan time).

## A Clever Cover-up

The radio operators of the Japanese ships were kept behind at the Yokosuka Base to send messages to fool U.S. radio monitors, since the operators each had a distinctive transmission touch, to make it seem the attack force ships were still in Japan. Another cover-up tactic was to send Army soldiers dressed in sailors' uniforms to the haunts on the Ginza in Tokyo, where Yokosuka sailors on liberty congregated, showing the fleet was still in the vicinity.

As a result of the sneak attack, 6 U.S. ships were sunk and 12 ships damaged. Military installations were severely damaged and 188 U.S. aircraft were destroyed. Casualties included 2,004 U.S. navy men, 75 marines and 360 army personnel killed or missing. The Japanese lost 5 midget submarines, 28 aircraft, and fewer than 100 men.

The U.S. and Japan were now officially engaged in World War II.

## Building Up Yokosuka – And Its Ships

In late 1943, officials at Yokosuka constructed air raid shelters. The work was done manually by workers using picks, shovels, and wheelbarrows. Within a few months, the hills of the main base were filled with over 500 caves and tunnels and 16 miles of underground caverns. Underground rooms were 30 by 40 feet.

Japan's building of huge war ships was unprecedented. The battleships *Musashi* and *Yamato* displaced over 59,000 tons, exceeding British and U.S. standards at the time of about 35,000 tons. No nation had ever launched ships large enough to mount nine 18-inch guns. Despite their size, they were not unsinkable. *Musashi* was sunk in October 1944 during the Battle of Leyte Gulf; *Yamato* suffered a similar fate in April 1945 near Okinawa.

## And The Ships Get Even Bigger

A shield of secrecy surrounded the construction of the *Shinano*, whose keel was laid in 1940 at Yokosuka as a battleship. It was then converted to an aircraft carrier, taking two years longer to build than a battleship. Never had the world seen a warship as large as the *Shinano*, with its 68,000-ton standard displacement, 858 by 162 foot flight deck made of special steel plates that were 11.8 inches thick and reinforced by a heavy layer of concrete so the ship could withstand aerial bombing attacks. The ship was equipped to handle over 85 aircraft of all kinds, and it carried a complement of over 3,500 men.

The secrecy surrounding the construction project was so tight that other shipyard workers did not know the ship was being built. To maintain

*(continues on Page 4)*

*Yokosuka and the Korean War (continued from Page 3)*

that secrecy, special agents of the *Kempeitai* (secret police) were with the workers, even off duty, and the workers were required to live on the Yokosuka Base.

No one inside or outside of Japan knew of the ship's construction. After four long years of effort, on 11 November 1944, the ship was floated in Dry Dock No 6. It was decided to move the giant vessel to the island of Shikoku, in the Inland Sea, for camouflage and hiding. The "unsinkable" ship, seventeen days after it was launched, got underway on her maiden voyage, with four escorts, on 28 November 1944.

The next day, the U.S. submarine *USS Archerfish* (SS-311), skippered by Commander Joe F. Enright, made radar contact with a large fast moving vessel. At 700 yards, Enright put six torpedoes into Japan's new aircraft carrier's hull, below the water line at 3a.m. At 11a.m. the giant ship slipped beneath the waves, stern first, never having fired a shot or launched a plane.

It was probably the shortest-lived capital ship in history. The fruit of years of planning and labour at Yokosuka had disappeared – as did Japan's chances of winning the war.

### **What A Mess Yokosuka Became**

With the end of WWII, Marines of the 4th Regiment, 6th Division, waded ashore from landing crafts at Yokosuka Naval Base on 30 August 1945. At the same time, Admiral William F. Halsey, commander Third Fleet, aboard *USS Missouri*, sent Rear Admiral Robert B. (Mick) Carney ashore in the light cruiser *USS San Diego* as his personal representative to accept surrender of the Yokosuka Naval Base. The ceremonies took place on the pier, alongside *USS San Diego* at 1100, when Vice-Admiral Michitore Totsuka handed over the base to Carney.

Admiral Halsey came ashore that afternoon to find the base in total disarray. All base papers had been burned, debris was piled high everywhere, and there was widespread vandalism and sabotage.

The first orders were to square away the base. Tokyo Bay had been cleared of hundreds and hundreds of mines so the 986 ships of the Third and Fifth U.S. Fleets could be at the surrender ceremony on 2 September 1945.

The Japanese had planned for a civilian defence of an American invasion of Japan. In the base caves were found stockpiles of munitions and weapons and caches of arms everywhere. A sizeable number of motor vehicles and aircraft, intact, gassed, and ready to drive and fly, were in large caves at Yokosuka and its airfield Atsugi, where they had been sealed behind brick walls.

Other caves contained food and money. One cave yielded 125 boxes of Dutch money. Others contained several tons of tin and mercury. Tons of gold bars were found on the harbour floor, covered with a layer

of coal four feet deep.

The harbor was covered with sunken vessels and bombed and burned remains of other ships sat around the harbor. The damaged hulk of the battleship *Nagato* was resting at the base. Submarines were the only effective combat boats still afloat. They were towed to sea and sunk.

Around 92 destroyers, 100 escort craft, 36 mine-sweepers, and a few auxiliary ships were divided among the U.S., Great Britain, China, and Russia. Despite the carnage, the base would prove useful to the U.S. in just a few years.

### **Yokosuka In The Korean War**

The Yokosuka base was valuable to the United Nations during the Korean War, during which U.S. and Allied naval forces operated out of Yokosuka and Sasebo. The base employed over 16,000 workers to take care of the 7th Fleet, with dry dock and pier side repairs and supplies. The small 100-bed dispensary was commissioned Yokosuka Naval Hospital (YNH), a full-size medical centre, with 4,388 beds. In December 1950, around 6,000 patients were admitted. Some 2,000 patients were off-loaded from two hospital ships in one 24-hour period.

During the Korean War, 80 destroyers, 11 Essex-type aircraft carriers, 8 cruisers, 4 battleships, many auxiliary, amphibious, and supply ships, and submarines operated out of Yokosuka Naval Base. The base provided logistic support to them all, including fresh meat and vegetables to all Allied ships and shore facilities.

A little known anecdote reveals that fresh dressed fryer chickens became a problem, so YNB begin raising chickens, and did so for over 18 months. No doubt all the enlisted vets remember the YNB EM Club, Club Alliance. It was not until 1969 that YNB removed the most-hated mid-night to 4a.m. curfew for U.S. personnel and discontinued the use of military payment certificates (MPC).

Until this time, U.S. military personnel, civil service employees, and their dependents in Japan were prohibited from possessing and spending U.S. greenback dollars.

The use of MPC by U.S. forces in Japan during the previous 24 years had been of considerable assistance in combating black market operations and controlling the rate of exchange between the yen and the dollar, or so we were told!

Korean War procurement orders kept Japan solvent during the period from 1950 to 1953. Few have ever attempted to deny that the Korean War benefited Yokosuka. The city thrived, even with the exchange rate of 360 yen to the dollar. Yokosuka Naval Base is still operating today, and housing thousands and thousands of American dependents.

Source: *The Graybeards* magazine Vol.30, No.2, Mar.-Apr. 2016

# Outstanding Leadership and Brilliant Victory

## Part Five

*The section covers the sections **Battle on Height 351** and **No Difference Between Front and Rear** from the pictorial book, **Outstanding Leadership and Brilliant Victory**, published in 1993 in Pyongyang, DPRK. As usual, any resemblance between this book and reality is purely coincidental.*

Height 351 on the east coast of our country was of great strategic importance in the eastern sector of the front.

If the enemy had occupied this height he would have been able to threaten the flank of the Korean People's Army, in combination with a unit landing on the east coast.

If this height were to fall into the enemy's hands, the Korean people would lose the Kosong area of Kangwon Province and, on the other hand, if the KPA were to take it, it would be able to drive the enemy dozens of miles away.

Therefore, the enemy had for a long time been fortifying their position on the height by making the fullest possible use of the latest military engineering techniques.

Not satisfied with this, he made a variety of warships and a vast flying corps ready to provide support at any time. He regarded this line as an "impregnable fortress" and a "line of no retreat", claiming that he would never hand over Height 351, even if he had to hand over Seoul.

On June 2, 1953 the combined units of the KPA were ordered to attack Height 351. Over 150 guns opened fire all at once. The KPA's accurate gunfire mowed down the enemy in groups and smashed their defences. The soldiers of the KPA launched an attack. The combatants of one unit rushed to the top of Height 351, the national flag of the DPRK flying at the head, while those of another unit feinted towards Height 208.3.

Enemy pillboxes for heavy machine guns protected by wire entanglements blocked the advance of KPA soldiers. Some KPA soldiers covered the entanglements with their bodies so as to allow others to cross over, walking on their backs. Other soldiers blocked the enemy's gun muzzles with their bodies to open a route for the attack.

In a bid to halt their attack, the enemy rained down shells and bombs at random, mobilizing many guns, warships and planes.

But, he could not stop the advance of the KPA soldiers.

The combined units of the KPA captured the height in 15 minutes after they launched their attack.

\* \* \* \*

There was no difference between the front and the rear for our people fighting against the US imperialist aggressors.

The people produced provisions and war supplies in large quantities in spite of the enemy's indiscriminate

bombing and bombardments from warships, and transported them promptly to the front.

Upholding the Party's slogan, "The struggle for food is a struggle for the country and for victory at the front", the peasants never suspended their struggle for increased food production in spite of the enemy's bombing and shooting.

The women handled ploughs instead of the young men and husbands who were fighting at the front. They camouflaged the backs of cattle so as to plough the fields and dug shelters at the edges of paddy and dry fields so as to continue to sow and transplant rice.

The workers built underground workshops and worked day and night to ensure wartime production. When the electric power supply was cut because of the enemy's bombing, they turned the conveyor belts with their hands in order to produce weapons and ammunition for the front.

In hearty response to the call of President Kim Il Sung for the transport of war supplies to the front to be fully guaranteed, the railway workers rebuilt destroyed railways, bridges and roads, sacrificing themselves in the shower of shells, and promptly transported munitions to the front. In 1952 they reconstructed more, than 420 bridges, including those over the Rivers Taedong and Chongchon, and over 90 tunnels, and they laid more than 240 kms of railways. They ensured wartime transport so as to destroy the enemy, reconstructing damaged facilities without delay.

Lorry drivers carried provisions and ammunition promptly to the front, crossing steep mountains at midnight without lights, and transported various raw and other materials to factories and enterprises.

When fierce, bloody battles were raging at the front, President Kim Il Sung, being convinced of victory in the war, recalled the students and teachers fighting at the front to universities so as to train national cadres for his great plan for the rehabilitation and construction of the country.

In June 1951 President Kim Il Sung called a Cabinet meeting and got it to adopt the decision, "On the Preparations for the Opening of Schools at All Levels in 1951."

In accordance with the order of the respected Supreme Commander, all university teachers and students were, by the end of December 1952, recalled from the front to continue with their educational work and studies. Fifteen universities

*(continues on Page 6)*

*Outstanding Leadership and Brilliant Victory (continued from Page 5)*

and 54 specialized technical schools opened throughout the country, and at them the work of training national cadres was conducted on a full scale.

In April 1952 President Kim Il Sung left the Supreme Headquarters for a while to go to Kim Il Sung University which had been evacuated to a mountainous area, in defiance of the gunfire. There he delivered a historic speech before the faculty and students entitled, The Prospects of the Fatherland Liberation War and the Tasks of the University.

He clarified the direction of postwar rehabilitation and construction and of research and study into gigantic nature-harnessing projects, as well as the ways and means to train national cadres. He took care of the study and life of the students and saw to it that new quilts were provided for them who got just discharged from the front.

In June that year he visited Kim Chaek University of Technology, the Central Party School, other universities and cadre training centres, where he explained how national cadres should be trained.

Encouraged by him, all the students made every possible effort to acquire scientific knowledge in the spirit of beating the enemy, overcoming hardships and difficulties under the slogan, "Study is also a battle!"

(continued next issue)

## **HMAS Australia's Unique Record**

During World War II there were some spectacular sea battles with many individual feats of bravery and courage by both men and ships. Of these, none stood out more than one cruiser – *HMAS Australia*. This cruiser was destined to hold one of the most notable and distinguished records of any warship.

She had sailed the world three times and served longer than any other warship of the RAN, and for most of her service she was the flagship of the RAN. It is considered by Naval historians that *Australia's* unique record of service is unlikely to ever be exceeded by any ship of the RAN.

Before the Second World War, *Australia* served with the cruiser squadron of the Royal Navy Mediterranean fleet during 1935-1936 at the time of the Italian-Abyssinian conflict. The early period of the Second World War saw her on patrol and search in Australian waters and she escorted the first two convoys of Australian forces enroute to the Middle East. *Australia* saw action at the port of Dakar, West Africa, on two occasions that the Royal Navy intervened to immobilise the French Fleet to prevent it from falling into German hands. During this period she was hit by two six-inch shells and lost her aircraft with a crew loss of three.

With the entry of Japan into the war in December 1941, the *Australia* was recalled to the Pacific and resumed flagship duties on December 21, 1941. In the early part of 1942, the *Australia* joined the battle of the Coral Sea. On August 7, 1942, she escorted American marines to the landing at Guadalcanal. At the subsequent action her sister ship, the *Canberra*, was sunk together with three American cruisers. Later in 1942, the ship operated with American carriers and battleship task forces in the Battle of the Solomons.

The year 1943 saw *Australia* operating continuously in the Coral Sea area in company with *HMAS Hobart* which was later torpedoed by a Japanese submarine. From December 1943 to September 1944, *Australia* participated as flagship of Task Force 74 in the following landings: Arawe, Cape Gloucester, Hollandia, Aitape, Wakde, Biak, Noemfoor and Morotai, in the Halmaeras.

Next came Leyte in the Philippines. This operation was possibly the largest Naval operation of the war. The invasion armada consisted of 738 ships from battleships to tugs and the huge convoy had to steam over 1400 miles to reach its objective.

On the second day following the landing at Leyte, *Australia* was hit by a suicide dive bomber attack which severely damaged the bridge area and many sailors were lost, including her captain. *Australia* was ordered to proceed to Espiritu Santo for urgent repairs. After repairs, the ship rejoined the Seventh Fleet in time for the next engagement at Lingayen in the Philippines in January, 1945.

At this landing the Japanese made repeated attacks on allied ships with groups of suicide bombers and, in the space of four days, *Australia* was hit by five kamikaze planes. Despite the damage and loss of life the ship completed all of her bombardment assignments. The damage was so severe she was ordered out of the area and was sent to Plymouth, England, for repairs. The war finished whilst she was in England and she returned to Australia in January 1946.

*Australia* continued to serve as the flagship in the postwar period. During 1954 she acted as escort to the *Gothic* carrying the Queen during her Australian tour. The ship was finally paid off on August 31, 1954. She was towed to Barrow in England and broken up in 1956. The career of this gallant ship had ended.

Source: *Navy News*, 22 May 2001

## Feeding the Starving

by Lou Horyza

I arrived in Korea in April of 1952. After landing at Inchon we loaded onto a train that took us to the Replacement Depot at Yongdongpo a short distance from Seoul, where we were to wait for our assigned units to pick us up. There were five of us assigned to the Tank Company, 279th Inf. Regt., 45th Division. We waited about a week before we were picked up due to heavy action at the front.

At dinner the first night we were shocked to see a group of local people with coffee cans in their hands standing by the single-strand fence keeping them out of the area. Shortly after we were done eating, we washed our mess kits after dumping the left-over food into the garbage cans, we flushed them out with our left-over coffee, then submerged the mess kits into boiling water.

Finally, we scrubbed them in treated rinse water and then in clear, hot rinse water. We watched as a group of people crossed over the fence and started dipping their coffee cans into the garbage barrels. Then they ran back over the fence.

This happened until the Post guards shoved them away. The next day at breakfast they did the same thing. At lunch time the guards were posted at the fence, so a group of us took our mess kits directly to them before washing them out to give them clean food without the coffee mess.

That afternoon the Engineers came in with concertina wire and stretched it across the area to keep the locals out. They stopped us from going to the fence to give them our left-over food. What a shame! Here we had all that excessive food and they had none.

Source: *The Graybeards* Vol.28, No.2, March-April 2014

## Happy To Sign

by Eugene Mercier

In the first Week of April 1951, I was stationed at Camp Drake, a U.S. Army Replacement Centre outside of Tokyo, Japan. So I was able to get into that city fairly often. At that time the war in Korea had been going on for over ten months. Tokyo was a fairly busy place with continuous troop movements in and out. Busy too were the local newspapers, particularly the usually staid "Nippon Times" and the violently anti-American *Aka-Hata*, and *Redflag*, with their daily editorials and polls.

One day I was walking down Avenue A near the Ginza when I came to one of their polling places. It was staffed by four or five young Japanese college students who were shouting through megaphones, "All Americans must leave Korea," "Americans must leave Japan and Korea," "Americans go home!" etc.

I stopped to watch this group for a moment or so. Suddenly one of the women stopped shouting and stood in front of me. "Oh, sir, Would you like to put your name on our letter of protest?" (Oh, sir? There I was, a mere corporal.)

At first I was going to refuse. Then I had an inspiration. "Yes. Sure," I said. "I will sign. I don't like the war in Korea either." And so I signed, With much smiling and loud applause. Then I walked on.

I didn't give any further thought to this incident. Several days later I happened to read the editorial page of the *Nippon Shimbun*. It read, "American Soldier Angrily Condemns U.S. Presence in Korea!" And there, among several dozen of the signatures, was my contribution. The signature read: Benedict Arnold.

Source: *The Graybeards* magazine Vol.31, No.3, May-June 2017

## Heading to Libya? Use a Compass

In early December 1940, *Operation Compass*, the codename for Wavell's offensive against Italian-held Libya, was kicked off with several assaults on Italian frontier camps near Bir Enba. These fortified camps were built to cover the approaches to the coastal road between Sidi Barrani and Bardia, and would seriously hinder any British advance into Libya.

On the night of 7-8 December, under a veil of strict secrecy and low cloud cover, the British were able to reach their assault positions without being detected by the Italians. All through the night of the 8th, the RAF and Royal Navy bombed and shelled Sidi Barrani and airfields to the west. At 0500 on the 9th, a detached battalion of the 4th Indian Division fired on Camp Nibeiwa's eastern perimeter in order to confuse the defenders as to the direction of the attack. At 0715, British divisional artillery shelled Nibeiwa in a brief but intense bombardment.

Matilda IIs from the 7th RTR spearheaded the attack and quickly destroyed 25 Italian medium and light tanks parked outside the main perimeter. The Matildas then engaged the Italian artillery and infantry at close range. British and Indian infantry following the Matildas mopped up the more stubborn pockets of resistance.

Early in the fighting the Italian commander, General Maletti, was killed by tank machinegun fire as he exited his bunker. The successful British ruse, the Matildas' imperviousness to enemy fire, and the blow to Italian morale caused by the loss of General Maletti, provided all the advantage the British needed. After two hours of hard fighting they had the entire camp well in hand and had captured over 4000 prisoners.

Source: *The General* magazine Vol. 29, No.3, 1994

# His Only Prize Was Death

by Lieutenant G. J. Swindon

He was Able Seaman William G. V. Williams, Royal Australian Naval Reserve. But to his mates he was simply Bill Williams a 29-year-old Melbourne City Council employee and a part time member of the Port Melbourne section of the RANR.

At 0700 on September 11, 1914, Williams landed at Kabakaul near Rabaul on the island of New Britain as part of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (ANMEF). Several warships, including HMA Ships *Australia*, *Sydney*, *Encounter*, *Warrego* and *Yarra* supported the landing, and men from *Warrego* and *Yarra* augmented the landing parties. Their task was to take control of the region which was part of the then German New Guinea. Their main objective was to seize the German wireless station at Bitapaka about five miles inland.

By the end of the day Bill Williams was dead, the first Australian to die in a war which was to claim 60,000 Australian lives.

As the men of the ANMEF advanced inland they came under sporadic fire from German Reserves and native troops who sniped at them from the dense scrub and trees. At 0930 Williams was advancing along the road to Bitapaka when he saw a group of natives in a coconut plantation near the road. Calling on another man to cover him he moved forward to investigate and found that the natives were hoeing crops amongst the palm trees. Bill Williams then turned away and again moved forward then suddenly he was fired on from the scrub.

Able Seaman Williams fell, mortally wounded with a bullet through his stomach. Stoker W. Kember (an Englishman serving in the RAN) moved forward under fire and dragged Williams to safety. Kember then carried Williams nearly half a mile back along the road to Kabakaul.

An Australian Army Medical Corps officer, Captain Pockley, who had been attending to some wounded Germans, heard that Williams had been injured and moved along the road to attend to him. Pockley met up with Kember and after giving some aid to Williams ordered Kember to carry the wounded sailor back to the beach at Kabakaul.

Pockley took his Red Cross armband off and tied it around Kember's slouch hat. As Kember carried Williams back to the beach at Kabakaul, Pockley advanced. A short while later Pockley and his assistant, Steward Annear, came under fire and Pockley was hit.

After lying in the road for some time he was picked up and carried back to the beach. Both Williams and Pockley were evacuated to the troopship *Berrima* then lying off the coast of New Britain.

That afternoon both Williams and Pockley died of their wounds.

The capture of Bitapaka proceeded but not without loss. Lieutenant Commander Elwell, RN, was killed leading a charge, with sword in hand, against a German trench and three Able Seamen (J. E. Walker, R. D. Moffatt, M. W. Street) were also killed. Another half a dozen sailors were wounded before the German forces surrendered on September 15. The Germans suffered one reservist and thirty native troops killed and the remainder surrendered and became prisoners of war.

The losses on the Bitapaka Road were over-shadowed a few days later on the 14th when the submarine AE1, which supported the RAN capture of German New Guinea, failed to return from patrol. In circumstances yet to be fully explained 135 officers and sailors of the Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy lost their lives.

The successful capture of German New Guinea was soon forgotten when the casualty lists for Gallipoli and the Somme started to roll in and by the end of the war nearly 60,000 Australians lay dead.

In a war that affected every Australian family the loss of a few men in the jungles of New Guinea paled into insignificance when compared with the monstrous losses at Gallipoli, Palestine and on the Western Front.

On September 11, 1914, Bill Williams earned himself a place in Australian history as the first Australian and first member of the RAN killed in action in World War 1.

Bill Williams was first, but his only prize was death.

Source: *Navy News* 2 October 1995

## A Better General Than Swimmer

Known as 'Old Blood and Guts' George Patton, commander of the U.S. Third Army, was one of the more colourful Allied generals of WWII. However, WWII was not the first time he came to international notice. In 1912, he represented the U.S.A. in the pentathlon at the Olympic Games at Stockholm. He did well in four of the five events – pistol shooting, 4,000 metre footrace, fencing and the 5,000 metre equine steeplechase. Only in the swimming did he fall behind. He finished a creditable fifth overall.

Source: *BBC History magazine* September 2012



# Operation Hubertus

(The German's last chance at Stalingrad, 11 November 1942)

For General Frederick Paulus, commander of the German Sixth Army, the battle for control of the city of Stalingrad had become the battle of attrition he feared. Shortages of ammunition and heavy weaponry were serious, but the crucial deficit lay in combat troop. None of the German divisions were near normal strength, and the only reinforcements being received were a trickle of convalescents returning to front-line duty.

Paulus repeatedly appealed for major reinforcements, citing his casualties and arguing that recent directives on staff billets and urban minefields did little to augment his offensive forces. He felt strongly that time was running short for his Sixth Army to secure the remaining tenth of the devastated city still held by the tenacious 62nd Soviet Army.

As his forces regrouped in early November, Paulus worried. The Germans were not equipped for winter warfare and intelligence reports of increasing Russian activity along his northern flank augured a major enemy offensive. Paulus planned for a final desperate effort to clear the city rubble – Operation Hubertus.

All available force were to be concentrated in a “Gruppe Schwerin.” New unit, some four battalion of pioneers (each with 600 specialists trained in demolition of fortification) then preparing to fly into Stalingrad, would lead the assault.

A dozen experimental assault guns mounting 150mm guns would join other armored vehicles for the street fighting. To reduce certain strongpoints, 210mm howitzers maintaining a steady fire for several days.

General Paulus emphasized these extraordinary preparations in an order to his troops on the eve of the attack. At the same time, however, special aid stations and field burial formations quietly moved up to the front lines.

When the officers of the pioneers arrived in Stalingrad on 9 November, they were met by Major Josef Linden, who was to command their phase of the operation. Among the targets shown them was the Red Barricade Gun Factory; Linden appraised it with glum foreboding, “100 barely hanging corrugated steel panels that creaked eerily in the wind; a perfect mess of iron parts, gun barrels, T-beams, huge craters.”

Cellars were turned into strongpoints. Every unturned tone threatened a booby trap. At the Barricade plant, the combat engineers were ordered to aim their first assaults at two Russian strongpoints – one called the “Chemist Shop” and the other known as the “Red House.”

The troops began the careful chore of preparing their demolition charges and flamethrower, confident that they would take both within a matter of minutes.

The Soviet defenders were well aware that a German offensive was in the offing. Newly compressed into a zone only six miles long and one mile deep, with the freezing river at their backs, the weary soldier entrenched themselves in cellar bunkers protected by heavy machinegun and anti-tank guns.

Steel plates with holes drilled through exposed only the muzzles of the gun, while mines and booby traps were strewn with abandon. Penal companies were organized into tank-killer close combat groups. Heavy artillery shells were withheld by the Front Command, but Chuikov was able to distribute sparse ammunition and food supplies to the men still in the factories.

Chuikov was in desperate straits. In the predawn darkness he sent a despairing message, “Deliveries of supplies have fallen through for three days running. Reinforcements have not been ferried across, and our units are feeling the acute shortage of ammunition and ration.”

The weeks of fighting had begun to take a toll on even the stolid Russian morale, and the commissars of the 62nd Army were ordered into the front lines to maintain discipline.

At 0300 hours on 11 November, Hubertus opened with a short and violent barrage. Ten battalions of German infantry, supported by tanks and pioneers, turned toward the Barricade Factory, the Red October Factory and nearby ruin. Paulus had launched his latest, and as it would turn out last, bid to capture the city.

The seven German divisions came on a three-mile front between Volkhovsloyevskaya Street and the Banny Gully. Chuikov's troops leapt to meet the Germans head-on.

The isolated Soviet command under Colonel Gorokhov attempted to relieve the pressure by counterattacking from the railway bridge over the mouth of the Mechetka towards the Tractor Factory. Fighting was unusually bitter, even by the fanatic standards of Stalingrad. Quarter was neither asked nor given.

Near the Red October factory, one batch of the German pioneer point troops ran into a Soviet assault group just moving into position. Inside a work hall, heavily armed soldiers fired point blank into each other. Some German units were forced back to their lines of departure; local Soviet counterattacks with a few tanks blunted other advances.

*(continues on Page 10)*

*Operation Herbutus (continued from Page 9)*

The Chemist's Shop fell almost at once, but the occupants of the Red House fought off attacks throughout the day and night. Next dawn, when the engineers finally broke into the place, the Russian defenders hurried to the cellar. The Germans ripped up the floorboards, tossed down full gasoline cans and ignited them with rifle fire. Then they lowered and detonated satchel charges.

At long last they were in full possession of the Red House; and there they stayed, trapped by withering fire from the Barricady Factory. Meanwhile, elements of the German 305th and 389th Infantry Divisions made better progress, winning ground on the bank of the Volga around the devastated oil depot and Barricady plant.

To the south, three German divisions were laboriously clearing ad-hoc Soviet bunkers. After five hours of the grim close-quarter fighting, Paulus committed his tactical reserve, overrunning the right flank of the Soviet 95th Division and reaching the Volga in the Red October plan on a frontage of about 600 yards. With that, the Soviet 138th Division was now cut off and isolated from the tattered remains of the 62nd Army. When Russian reinforcements tried to land from across the river, they were driven back by heavy flak and machinegun fire.

The 138th, trapped in the angle (a wedge of land only four hundred yards wide and one hundred deep) behind the Red Barricady, was written off. But this time there was not the tension that there had previously been among the officers of the 62nd, for they knew this to be Paulus' last fling. Though the fighting was hard, and the fluid situation critical, they were optimistic.

Casualties on both sides were extraordinarily heavy. Soviet and Nazi commanders both clamoured for more men from higher headquarters and demanded detailed situation reports from subordinate commands, all in vain. The German 336th Engineer Battalion lost eighteen men to a booby trap even before they left their start positions.

The Soviet 118th Guards Regiment defending the open ground in front of the Barricady had 250 men when the fighting began on 11 November; 244 were lost in the first five hours of fighting. The German engineers had lost 440 men in the same time period.

At the oil depot, the 1121h Guards Rifle Regiment commander could field less than 100 men in each of his battalions, and every other staff officer was dead. Lyudnikov's 138th Division numbered only seven hundred effectives.

A number of regiments simply ceased to exist in the cauldron around the Red Barricady Factory. Lyudnikov's division, the 138th, was in a very precarious position. Chuikov took to calling him by

radio each hour to tell him help was on the way.

This was pure bluff, intended to deceive German listeners; in fact Chuikov had no help to spare for Lyudnikov. The relief of the trapped division was to be a matter of creeping back towards his position building by building. Indeed, with the dawn of the next day. Everywhere in the city the Soviet troops began to counterattack, block by block, house by house, room by room.

Despite the losses, the Germans doggedly resumed their attacks on the morning of the 12th. But such attrition could not long be taken and the rubble city itself frustrated any efforts to coordinate operations. By the fall of evening, all four thrusts spearheaded by the pioneers had broken down into savage little battles that did not differ from the previous street fighting.

Nothing had changed. Scores of clashes ebbed and flowed in the city for another three days. German and Soviet troops often found themselves defending positions in the same building. Hubertus was over; the Sixth Army could not clear the city.

At dawn on 19 November, Chuikov and Paulus and all their weary men in the ruins heard the boom of big guns carried by the wind from a new direction far to the northwest. That barrage heralded the Russian counterattack to relieve the city. Paulus' fight to take Stalingrad was over.

Source: *The General* magazine No. 21, No.4, 1985

## **He Must Fall...**

by Shamsheer Sheikh

Early in May of 1917, at the tender age of twenty, Albert Ball was a Captain, a flight commander of No.56 Squadron, holder of numerous decorations and victor of over 44 enemy aircraft. He had just overtaken France's Georges Guynemer in the race for the coveted title Ace of Aces. His next goal: to overtake then von Richthofen's score of 56 and to meet the Baron (whom he had encountered once before) in the skies.

On the 7th of May, Ball, leading a patrol over Richthofen's airfield at Douai, met the younger von Richthofen. Lothar von Richthofen, who survived the war with 40 victories, was leading Jasta 11 in a red-and-yellow Albatross. In poor visibility, the pilots on both sides clashed in a confused melee.

Flight commander Captain Billy Crowe saw Ball chasing a German pilot into dense clouds. That was the last time. Ball was surprised by a machinegun in a church tower and consequently shot down.

Albert Ball was posthumously awarded Britain's highest military honour, the Victoria Cross. He was such an inspiration to later pilots that some coined the phrase, "He must fall, remember Ball."

Source: *The General* magazine Vol. 30, No.2, 1995

## The Patton Slapping Incidents

If a person knows nothing about the 1943 Allied invasion of Sicily, he is at least likely to be aware of the fact that it was during this operation that the notorious “slapping incident” involving General George Patton occurred. Actually there were two incidents.

On 3 August. Patton wandered into the 15th Evacuation Hospital while on the way back to his command post after visiting the hard pressed 1st Division lines at Troina. He encountered a man in one of the wards without visible injury. Inquiring as to why the soldier was in hospital, he received the reply, “I just can’t take it.”

As Patton put it, “I gave him the devil, slapped his face with my gloves, and kicked him out of the hospital.”

A week later, Patton dropped in on the 93rd Evacuation Hospital. An unwounded patient was sitting and sobbing. Patton asked what was the trouble.

“It’s my nerves,” replied the soldier.

“What did you say?” screamed the General.

“It’s my nerves... I can’t stand the shelling any more.”

The general lost all control, calling the man “...a Goddam coward, you yellow son of a bitch,” and slapping him.

Word soon reached higher headquarters. It caused an outcry back in the United States. Patton was forced to make public apology and was essentially rusticated later for over a year.

What had occurred was symbolic not merely of Patton’s explosive personality, but was also indicative of serious failings in American military policy. The first man had been in action barely a week. A replacement, he had been handled like so much meat, shifted from “repple-depple” to “repple-depple,” brought up to the front, put in a unit with little time to get acquainted and immediately sent into action. Little wonder that he collapsed.

The second man was a combat veteran, having been with his outfit from the November landings in North Africa; also, he was later found to have malaria. American manpower policy failed to provide for the rotation of men out of the front after several months on the line. Psychological problems developed if a man went four to six months in more or less continuous front line service. Neither soldier was malingering, nor was Patton’s response so unfeeling and inhumane as it might appear.

The Germans treated “battle-fatigue” cases as close to the front as possible. Men were given considerate and careful attention, but always with the understanding that they would eventually return to their unit. The Americans had used very much the same system in World War I.

The German recovery rate was far higher than that realized by the overly-solicitous attention accorded such men in the American Army, which actually discouraged recovery and deepened the existing disorders. By slapping the men, Patton was actually performing a useful service, though one which ought to have been performed by a trained therapist. Incidentally, the psychological professionals appear to have favored the German approach, only to be overruled.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine No. 89

## Tigers on the Hill

Hill 112 had a commanding view over the surrounding fields and several small villages, which made it a key position. It also dominated the area south of Caen, and thus attracted the best units of both combatants. Since June 27th 1944, it had been the focus of repeated attacks and counterattacks, with such heavy shelling that trees became shattered stumps.

On July 10th, a British combined tank-infantry force had wrested the hill from the SS defenders. After anti-tank guns were brought up and emplaced, the tanks withdrew for the night. That same night, the hill was subjected to an intense bombardment, then a counterattack by SS panzergrenadiers, but the SS were driven back by pointblank fire. No one is sure how many German assaults were repulsed; some say fourteen.

With daylight, Tigers joined the fray. The weary defenders quickly discovered that their hellish nightmare was not yet over.

The Tigers rolled up the hill, clearing a triangular wooded area of anti-tank guns. The Churchills broke formation and drove for the hill. They were no match for the Tigers, however, and it was a sadly uneven fight.

The remaining SS panzergrenadiers had gone to ground when the British artillery had begun shelling the area. But the impervious Tigers continued on alone and began butchering the infantry in their foxholes.

In desperation, the British called down smoke to cover them as they pulled back, but the Tigers drove through it and decimated the withdrawing troops. One Tiger was lost, but the hill was once again in German hands. This was not the end of the Hill 112 saga, however, as it continued to be the scene of bitter fighting until August 2nd.

Source: *The General* magazine No.31, No.2 1997

When the “Little Boy” A-bomb dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945 went off, only 700 milligrams (less than a 10 cent piece) of the Uranium-235 in it actually converted to energy via the fission process. That was enough, however, to create a temperature at the centre of the blast zone that was half again as hot as the surface of the sun.

# WWII Civilian Bombing Casualties

During WWII, German bombing of civilians was almost entirely restricted to Britain. The period of greatest bombing was in 1940, when just under 37,000 tons were dropped; the total for the whole war was just over 74,000 tons. This figure is small compared with the Allied bomb load. They dropped just short of 2 million tons of bombs on Europe, including nearly 1.2 million tons in 1944 alone. The casualty rate reflected these figures. The bombing of Britain killed 51,000 people. The Allies, however, killed about 600,000 German civilians, 62,000 Italians, and over 900,000 Japanese. They also killed about 60,000 French people, even though bombing of occupied territory was not allowed before spring 1942. In Germany about 800,000 people were seriously injured and 7.5 million were made homeless. Overall the Allies killed at least 1,600,000 civilians through bombing.

Source: Ponting, Clive, *Armageddon*, Sinclair Stevenson, 1995

## Special Notice regarding the Xmas Lunch

This year any Korean War veteran who attends the lunch will do so **FREE**. If you served in Korea anytime from 1950-1953 and the post-ceasefire 'peace keeping' phase then, congratulations, you dine for **FREE**.

**Non-veterans** are wives, carers, family members, non-veteran friends, widows, Associate Members, Special Members and any combination thereof.

But if you served in Korea – you're a veteran.

In April 2009 a team of Swedish and Finnish divers discovered the Soviet submarine S-2, which had sunk off the coast of Sweden in 1940. The S-2 went down with all hands after hitting a mine laid by the 640-ton Finnish minelayer *Louhi*. During the course of its career the *Louhi* laid 1,275 mines. She was eventually sunk on 12 January 1945 from an acoustic torpedo launched by U-3 70 of the 4th U-boat (training) Flotilla based out of Stettin. It was one of the last successful U-boat attacks conducted in the Baltic Sea.

## The Korea Veterans' Association of Australia Inc.

Tom Parkinson (President) and The Committee

request the pleasure of your company at the annual KVAA Inc.

# Christmas Luncheon

**Venue:** William Angliss, 550 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne

**Date:** Tuesday 26th November 2019. **Time:** 11:30 am for 12:00 lunch

**Bill of Fare:** Three Course Christmas Dinner

**Meal Cost:** \$37 per *non-veteran* person. **Drinks:** Own cost at hotel prices

**RSVP:** 8th November 2018

Please detach and return to: **The Treasurer, KVAA Inc., P.O. Box 107, Frankston, Vic, 3199**

Please return your acceptance and payment by this date. We are committed to confirm guest numbers and **pay the caterer seven days prior to the function.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Please confirm attendance for \_\_\_ people.

Please read the **Special Notice** above before you fill out this form

Names of guests attending: \_\_\_\_\_

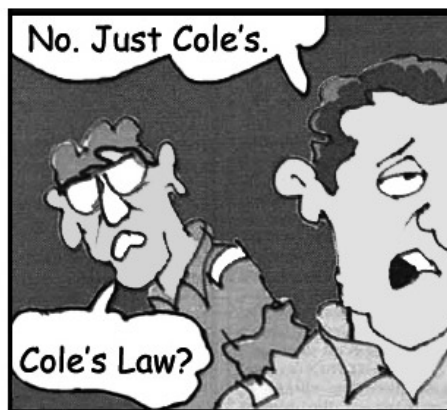
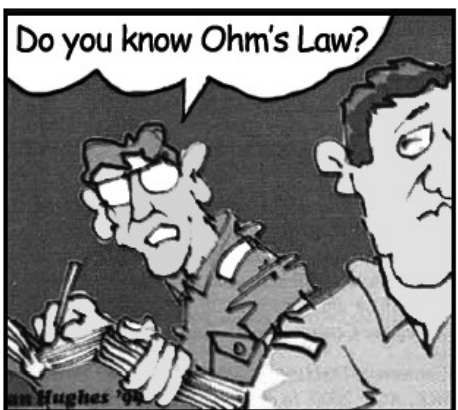
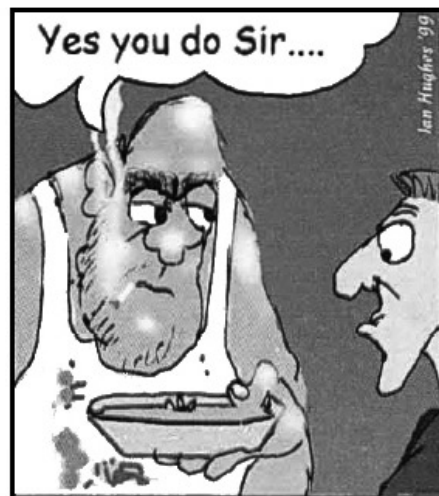
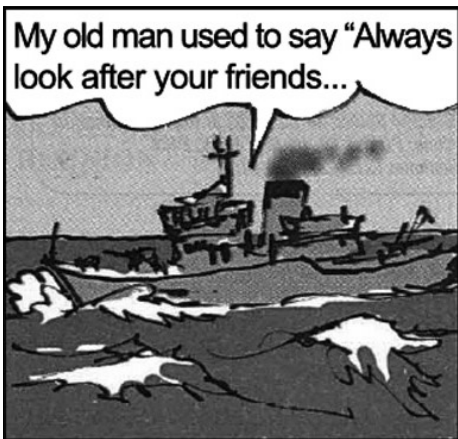
Enclosed please find my cheque / money order for \_\_\_ people @ \$37.00 per person: \$\_\_\_\_.00

Please make cheques / money orders payable to: **Korea Veterans' Association of Australia Inc.**

# HMAS Wort

by Ian Hughes

A series of cartoons which appeared in *Navy News* in the 1980s & 1990s.



Young priest to senior cleric: "Tell me, Father, is it all right for a young priest like me to go out with a nun?"  
Senior cleric: "Yes, my son – as long as you don't get into the habit!"

## Dikko by Bob Dikkenburg

A series of cartoons which appeared in *Navy News* in the 1980s-2000s.



## Farewells

Allan Keith **Cardinal**, 51213, 3RAR in early October 2019

George **Daniel**, 35836, *HMAS Shoalhaven*, *HMAS Bataan*, *HMAS Tobruk* on 15 July 2019

Frederick Rennie **From**, 1400007, 3RAR in early August 2019

Lawrence Edward **Hubbard**, O35094, No.36 (Transport) Squadron on 24 July 2019

Walter Raymond **Wilson**, 38761, *HMAS Bataan* on 17 July 2019

Lloyd Linton **Williams**, 36193, *HMAS Murchison* on 30 June 2019

Also

Denis Lindlay **Lehmann**, 31528, 3RAR on 16 August 2019

KVAA Life Member, KVAA Treasurer: 1997-1998, KVAA Vice-President 1999-2004

## 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