**WELCOME TO “51-72”**

Hi everyone, Sadly I have still not heard anything further about our Grant Application. I know patience is supposed to be a virtue, but I am gradually running out of it 😞. We are also still unsure about where we will be able to hold our May meeting ... the new restaurant in Forster Bowling Club is due to be opened before Easter, hopefully 15 April, but the Club is unsure whether or not the builders are going to start work on the new Auditorium straight away. So we will just go with the flow, I will keep you informed.

As you may know, the May meeting was to be our fundraising meeting, with a guest speaker from the local district nursing program scheduled to attend, but if we cannot have our May meeting then this will have to be re-scheduled for later in the year.

Unfortunately we can’t have a BBQ lunch after next Friday’s meeting, as the room is still the restaurant and will be in use for lunch. This is part of our “going with the flow” until the new auditorium is ready. But, please still join us. Cheers, Kim Dwyer

**REPORTS**

**PRESIDENT** - Hi members. The Moree Nasho and ADF reunion on 9-10 March was a success and our team, representing our Sub-Branch, laid a wreath on your behalf. Those who attended were myself and Gloria, Eric and Pat Janes and John and Sharon McNeil. Goodness me, Moree is a very, very hot place, it was 40c plus every day. On the Monday we boarded a bus, not a coach, for a day trip to Lighting Ridge, 7am to 7pm, and what a great day we all had, it was very memorable.

Gloria has mentioned in her report, the poor attendance of our members at the Nasho memorial on 14 February, but I must mention the wonderful work by the Military Re-enactment group on the day. Also, many thanks to our ladies who arranged the sandwiches on the day. I might also add that the heat made one of the more senior members of the re-enactment group feel unwell and he was taken to a doctor for assessment when he became a bit wobbly, but later in the day he returned to the Bowling Club for a light lunch and assured us that he was now OK. Our Sub-Branch did make a small cash donation to this group for their dedication and professional display.

The remodeling of the Forster Bowling is progressing and it may be some time before we can return to our normal meetings but we will look forward to a really good venue for our meetings in the future.

Our Sub-Branch has received 3 invitations to attend 2019 Anzac Day services, from Lodge Forster, Forster Public School and Holy Name School. The times and places will be announced at the April meeting.

**SECRETARY** - Hi members, looks like we can expect colder weather now, boy was the summer hot. Daylight saving is now a thing of the past and am I glad, too much daylight has made my curtains fade badly.

Lots of members who have not yet received their 2019 membership card can be advised that some renewal cards have now been received by our membership registrar, Judy, and will be handed out at our April meeting.

I was disappointed at the poor attendance by our members at the 2019 National Servicemen’s Day memorial service, 14th February, held at Little Street Forster. In past years lots of our members came along but this year the numbers were way down. Let’s hope that next year the attendance will be better.

Cheers, Gloria McNeil
SUB-BRANCH HAPPENINGS

MANNING RIVER CRUISE - THURSDAY 14th MARCH 2019

After all the recent heat of summer, thankfully today was cooler and overcast, which made for perfect weather for the cruise. We had a full boatload of 48 people, so that was also very pleasing. It was wonderful that Judy and Brian Collison were celebrating their wedding anniversary today and we all wished them well. As usual, Marie & Darren and their crew provided us all with a yummy Devonshire Tea morning tea and a lovely roast lunch with dessert. Cheers to them ☺

The cruise was 4 hours around Oxley Island and was a most enjoyable day.

Jack Worrad left the family home at Scone and worked as a draper at the department store giant, Anthony Hordern and Sons, in Sydney, prior to his enlistment on 30th August 1915, aged 23. Before being sent overseas, he served with a NSW unit of the Australian Light Horse.

Sergeant Worrad was lucky to escape with his life when wounded in action in France in early 1917. He was shot in the right ear & spent 2 weeks in hospital recovering.

Back in the field with the 13th Field Artillery Brigade, Sergeant Worrad fell ill and returned to hospital on 22 March 1917. A week later he had died of pneumonia at No.38 Casualty Clearing Station, Raven, France.

Jack was later named on a special honour board commemorating 48 Anthony Hordern employees killed during the war. The board consisted of a photo montage and was made by the company’s returned soldier and sailor employees. It used photos of of 46 of the 48 employees who died as a result of their service in WWI.

Leslie Parkinson worked in the Muswellbrook area as a labourer and shearer before signing up to join The Great War “adventure”. Born in Merriwa, Les enlisted on 4th January 1916 in Toowoomba and set sail for overseas four months later with the 26th Battalion.

In early 1917, the 26th Battalion joined the follow-up of the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line and attacked at Warlencourt on 1-2 March and Lagincourt on 26 March. It was at Lagincourt when Private Parkinson was shot by a sniper as his unit was passing through the village. He was aged 37. In the same action that day, Captain Percy Cherry was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

Private Parkinson has no known grave & is commemorated on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial in France.

A SEA STORY! BY CHARLES BRAUN

The date was 31 December 1899. The passenger steamer SS Warrimoo was quietly knifing its way through the waters of the mid-Pacific on its way from Vancouver to Australia. The navigator had just finished working out a star fix and brought the result to Captain John D.S. Phillips. The Warrimoo’s position was LAT 0º 31’ N and LONG 179 30’ W.

Do you know what this means? First Mate Payton broke in, We’re only a few miles from the intersection of the Equator and the International Date Line.

Captain Phillips was prankish enough to take advantage of the opportunity to achieve the navigational freak of a lifetime. He called his navigators to the bridge to check & double check the ship’s position. He changed course slightly so as to bear directly on his mark. Then he adjusted the engine speed. The calm weather and clear night worked in his favour. At midnight the SS Warrimoo lay on the Equator at exactly the point where it crossed the International Date Line!

The consequences of this bizarre position were many:

★ The forward part (bow) of the ship was in the Southern Hemisphere and in the middle of summer;
★ The rear (stern) was in the Northern Hemisphere and in the middle of winter;
★ The date in the aft part of the ship was 31 December 1899;
★ In the bow (forward) part it was 1 January 1900;

So, the ship was therefore not only in:
★ Two different days,
★ Two different months,
★ Two different years, and two different seasons,
But:
★ In two different centuries - all at the same time!
The first Anzac to hit the beach at Gallipoli was a tough, northern NSW cane cutter named Joseph Stratford. Letters and records reveal Corporal Stratford was credited by witnesses as being the first ashore at Anzac Cove. Beverley Maxwell and her brother, Bill Stratford, of Dubbo, found letters and records which they say confirm that Joe Stratford, their grandfather’s brother, was the first Anzac to reach the beach.

He struggled onto the beach and charged a Turkish machine-gun, bayoneting two Turks before falling over them dead, riddled with bullets. One officer at the time said Corporal Stratford should have won the Victoria Cross for his bravery. Stratford was listed as missing in action for more than a year before he was finally confirmed dead.

Stratford was a big man, his muscles hard from years slashing sugar cane and tough farm work. At age 34 he was a natural leader and the cream of Australia’s Anzacs. He was born in Maitland and was among the first to join up when war broke out.

At 2.45am on April 25, 1915, he was one of the first to climb over the side of the transport ship and down a rope ladder into lifeboats that were to carry the Anzacs ashore. At 4.10am the boat carrying Stratford was in front and about 300 metres from shore. The men saw the dark coastline slowly emerge against the first streaks of dawn.

What happened next is gleaned from letters and records collected by the Stratford family. "Joe Stratford was the first of Australia’s troops ashore at Gallipoli," Private Studley Gahan told a Lismore paper in 1916, in a tribute to Stratford. "Lieutenant Jones was second, and I was third."

Other witnesses said Stratford jumped off the boat and went straight underwater, the weight of his pack and weapons dragging him down. Many died this way, but Stratford managed to shrug off his heavy pack and struggle up to the beach. Stratford had only a bayonet attached to his wet rifle but he stormed up the beach at the Turkish guns.

In Roll of Honour documents held at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, a notation authenticates Lance Sergeant Stratford’s place in history: “Stated by eye witnesses to be the first Australian ashore on Gallipoli.” That landing has earned him a permanent place in Australian military history and made his mark for over a century.

Several of Stratford’s mates wrote letters to his parents. Private Gahan wrote: “There was not a man amongst us who did not love and look up to him. He was fair and straight. I felt when he did not answer the roll call that I had lost an elder brother.” Corporal Williams, from Killarney, wrote: “He was a true and loyal friend, a gallant soldier and a gentleman.” Private E. Turner wrote: "Many a man has lost a true friend in losing him.”

Military historian David Dial’s research has found Stratford spent three years with the NSW Lancers. He enlisted at Townsville in Queensland on October 5, 1914, when he was 34 years old and was a soldier with the 9th Infantry Battalion. Stratford was reported wounded and missing at Gallipoli after he threw himself onto an enemy machine gun position after landing. A court of inquiry on June 5, 1916, found he was killed in action on April 25, 1915.

Stratford received scant recognition. After the war a tiny north Queensland school was named Stratvell, combining the names of Stratford and Edith Cavell, a British nurse executed by the Germans in 1915.

Military historian Jonathan King said there were actually several claimants to being first on the beach at Anzac Cove, but Stratford had a very good case. "It was dark and boats were landing on different beaches so it is hard to say who was the very first ashore," King said.

Aged 34 when he was killed, Lance Sergeant Stratford has no known grave.

LEST WE FORGET

**BRAVERY OF FIRST ANZAC TO HIT THE BEACH AT GALLIPOLI**

**METHOD**

1. Combine flour, sugar, oats and coconut in a large bowl and mix.

2. In a small saucepan, melt butter and golden syrup. Stir mixture so they are combined.

3. Put baking soda in a cup, pour in enough boiling water to dissolve the baking soda (about 2 tblsp).

4. Add baking soda solution to butter and golden syrup (make sure the butter/syrup is still hot, but not boiling, or it will foam up & over your saucepan). Pour contents of saucepan into the dry ingredients & mix well.

5. Place spoonfuls of mixture onto baking paper on a baking tray. Bake at around 180°C for 15 minutes, or until light golden brown.

6. WARNING

Be very careful because they are highly addictive.
OUR YEAR’S PROGRAM OF EVENTS:
From time to time, EXTRA dates for special events, or outings such as bus trips, will be included in this program, marked with a **, so watch for any changes. Unless otherwise advertised, our meetings are held on the second Friday of the month (not Dec.), in DANNY’S REST., FORSTER BOWLING CLUB, STRAND ST, FORSTER, commencing 10.00 am. Street parking at front of Club, and a carpark at rear of Club, accessed from Cross Street.

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR NEXT 5 MONTHS:
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

APRIL 12 - General meeting, followed by lunch at Rinkside Café, if you wish.
**APRIL 25 - ANZAC Day - march details to be released.
MAY 2 - Committee meeting 2pm
MAY 10 - Unsure if this meeting will be possible, due to Club renovation. We will keep you posted.
**MAY 16 - Picnic Day at Elizabeth Reserve, Forster Keys, from 10am. BYO everything - free 😊

JUNE 14 - General meeting followed by lunch.
JULY 12 - General meeting and AGM, morning tea.
**JULY 23 - Annual Tenpin Bowling Championship - 12.45pm - Lunch; 2.15pm - 2 games of bowling, including shoe hire; Approx. 3.45pm - Afternoon tea and presentations in club auditorium.
JULY 27 - Korea Day.
AUGUST 1 - Committee meeting 2pm
AUGUST 9 - General Meeting followed by lunch.

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