

The Communicator

Royal Australian Signals Association (Queensland)



December 2016

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Laugh if you want to!

Presidents Report



No new word from Huey.

We will take it that his words are echoed from the end of year function in wishing all a safe and happy Christmas and prosperous new year.



Secretary Treasurer report

Message from the Secretary/Treasurer as it gets on towards Christmas
Well it was good to see the 24 that turned up to the Sherwood Services Club for the annual Christmas Bash. I think that all those who attended would have walked (crawled or struggled) away with a full tummy. I know that this household didn't have much in the way of an evening meal as it was not needed. Sorry to those who used public transport (railways) and had a Cook's tour via the buses to get there as Queensland Rail didn't seek prior approval from our board of management in carrying out track work on the line on that Sunday. However, all made it bar one.

Our next big event for us signallers here in Brisbane is Anzac Day and I'm sure that our magic editor will get another edition or 2 out before then. I'll have more information about that day's activities for him in the new year.

It only leaves me now to say have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and stay safe and well until we meet again. Chris

Editor.

Well another one nearly over, we can look forward to a fresh start in 2017. As mentioned the end of year function was very enjoyable, thanks to the Sherwood RSL caterers and staff for a great spread. Also, a good turnout, this was probably due to organisations having a talk about clashing dates well done you blokes. (I would say there would have to be a Liney involved somewhere).

Okay this will probably be the last newsletter for the year the next will be early next year then leading into Anzac Day as soon as I receive info for Anzac Day I will shoot it out onto the airwaves. In the meantime, I will still send anything I receive from Adam West, anyone not wishing to receive these please let me know.

To all a safe and happy Christmas and a Prosperous new year.

DIGGER





End of year function Sherwood RSL 2016.

<> Long ago and far away!! <>

HISTORY NOT taught in High School!

Tinian Island, Pacific Ocean.

It's a small island, less than 40 square miles, a flat green
Dot in the vastness of Pacific blue.

Fly over it and you notice a slash across its north end of uninhabited bush, a long thin line that looks like an overgrown dirt runway. If you didn't know what it was, you wouldn't give it a second glance out your airplane window.



On the ground, you see the runway isn't dirt but tarmac and crushed limestone, abandoned with weeds sticking out of it. Yet this is arguably the most historical airstrip on earth. This is where World War II was won. This is Runway Able:



On July 24, 1944, 30,000 US Marines landed on the beaches of Tinian.... Eight days later, over 8,000 of the 8,800 Japanese soldiers on the island were dead (vs. 328 Marines), and four months later the Seabees had built the busiest airfield of WWII - dubbed North Field - enabling B-29 Super fortresses

to launch air attacks on the Philippines, Okinawa, and mainland Japan.

Late in the afternoon of August 5, 1945, a B-29 was manoeuvred over a bomb loading pit, then after lengthy preparations, taxied to the east end of North Field's main runway, Runway Able, and at 2:45am in the early morning darkness of August 6, took off.

The B-29 was piloted by Col. Paul Tibbets of the US Army Air Force, who had named the plane after his mother, Enola Gay. The crew named the bomb they were carrying Little Boy. 6 hours later at 8:15am, Japan time, the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

Three days later, in the pre-dawn hours of August 9, a B-29 named Bocks car (a pun on "boxcar" after its flight commander Capt. Fred Bock), piloted by Major Charles Sweeney took off from Runway Able. Finding its primary target of Kokura obscured by clouds, Sweeney proceeded to the secondary target of Nagasaki, over which, at 11:01am, bombardier Kermit Beahan released the atomic bomb dubbed Fat Man.

Here is "Atomic Bomb Pit #1" where Little Boy was loaded onto Enola Gay:



There are pictures displayed in the pit, now glass-enclosed. This one shows Little Boy being hoisted into Enola Gay's bomb bay.



And here on the other side of ramp is "Atomic Bomb Pit #2" where Fat Man was loaded onto Bocks car.



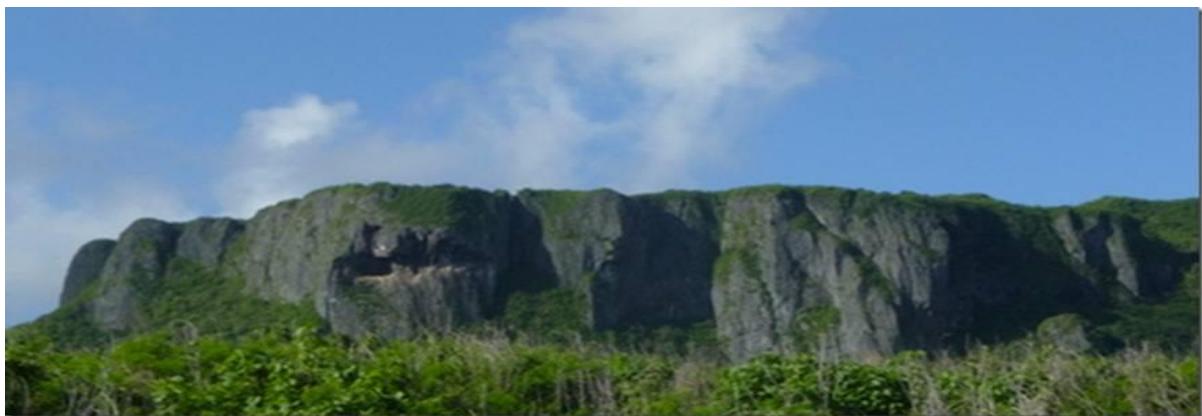
The commemorative plaque records that 16 hours after the Bombing of Nagasaki, "On August 10, 1945 at 0300, the Japanese Emperor, without his cabinet's consent, decided to end the Pacific War."

Take a good look at these pictures. This is where World War II ended with total victory of America over Japan. I was there all alone. There were no other visitors and no one lives anywhere near for miles. Visiting the Bomb Pits, walking along deserted Runway Able in solitude, was a moment of extraordinarily powerful solemnity.

It was a moment of deep reflection. Most people, when they think of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, reflect on the numbers of lives killed in the nuclear blasts - at least 70,000 and 50,000 respectively. Being here caused me to reflect on the number of lives saved - how many more Japanese and Americans would have died in a continuation of the war had the atomic bombs not been dropped.

Yet that was not all. It's not just that the atomic bombs obviated the US invasion of Japan, Operation Downfall, that would have caused upwards of a million American and Japanese deaths or more. It's that nuking Hiroshima and Nagasaki were of extraordinary humanitarian benefit to the nation and people of Japan.

Let's go to this cliff on the nearby island of Saipan to learn why:



Saipan is less than a mile north of Tinian.... The month before the Marines took Tinian, on June 15, 1944, 71,000 Marines landed on Saipan.... They faced 31,000 Japanese soldiers determined not to surrender.

Japan had colonized Saipan after World War I and turned the island into a giant sugar cane plantation. By the time of the Marine invasion, in addition to the 31,000 entrenched soldiers, some 25,000 Japanese settlers were living on Saipan, plus thousands more Okinawans, Koreans, and native islanders brutalized as slaves to cut the sugar cane.

There were also one or two thousand Korean "comfort women" (kanji in Japanese), abducted young women from Japan's colony of Korea to service the Japanese soldiers as sex slaves. (See The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War, by George Hicks.)

Within a week of their landing, the Marines set up a civilian prisoner encampment that quickly attracted a couple thousand Japanese and others wanting US food and protection. When word of this reached Emperor Hirohito - who contrary to the myth was in full charge of the war- he became alarmed that radio interviews of the well-treated prisoners broadcast to Japan would subvert his people's will to fight.

As meticulously documented by historian Herbert Bix in "Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan", the Emperor issued an order for all Japanese civilians on Saipan to commit suicide. The order included the promise that, although the civilians were of low caste, their suicide would grant them a status in heaven equal to those honoured soldiers who died in combat for their Emperor.

And that is why the precipice in the picture above is known as Suicide Cliff, off which over 20,000 Japanese civilians jumped to their deaths to comply with their fascist emperor's desire - mothers flinging their babies off the cliff first or in their arms as they jumped.

Anyone reluctant or refused, such as the Okinawan or Korean slaves, were shoved off at gunpoint by the Jap soldiers. Then the soldiers themselves proceeded to hurl themselves into the ocean to drown off a sea cliff afterwards called Banzai Cliff. Of the 31,000 Japanese soldiers on Saipan, the Marines killed 25,000, 5,000 jumped off Banzai Cliff, and only the remaining thousand were taken prisoner.

The extent of this demented fanaticism is very hard for any civilized mind to fathom- especially when it is devoted not to anything noble but barbarian evil instead. The vast brutalities inflicted by the Japanese on their conquered and colonized peoples of China, Korea, the Philippines, and throughout their "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" was a hideously depraved horror.

And they were willing to fight to the death to defend it. The only way to put an end to the Japanese barbarian horror was unimaginably colossal destruction against which they had no defence whatever. Nuking Japan was not a matter of justice, revenge, or it getting what it deserved. It was the only way to end the Japanese dementia.

And it worked - for the Japanese. They stopped being barbarians and started being civilized. They achieved more prosperity- and peace- than they ever knew, or could have achieved had they continued fighting. The shock of the atomic bomb is responsible.

We achieved this because we were determined to achieve victory. Victory without apologies. Despite perennial liberal demands we do so, America and its government has never apologized for using the bomb against Japan...Hopefully, America never will.

I find e-mails such as this one just plain fascinating. Although we do not forget, history fades into the shadows of our mind and we seldom think about it. But, we should remember and we should be constantly reminded of our history, where we came from and how we got here. Kind of interesting. Anyway, I think so.....

Reunions

CARBALAH REUNION WEEKEND

3-5 MARCH 2017 UPDATE

Hello again.

Our reunion is just over three months away so to assist with preparations please now deposit your \$80 into the account listed below to confirm your attendance. Contact me if you would like to know who has committed to date or shown interest.

6PM Friday 3 Mar - Welcome Drinks (at own cost) Canapes, 2 Course Dinner @ Toowoomba Picnic Point Panorama Room AM

Saturday 4 Mar - 7th Sig Regt (EW) 70th Anniversary CO Presentation, Demo Tour & BBQ.

PM Saturday 4 Mar - Meet for drinks @ Fitzy's, Toowoomba

Cost: \$80.00 per person (to be paid NLT 24 Feb)

Acct no. 719 214 BSB. 734 264

Ref. YOUR NAME MUST BE NOTED FOR TRACKING PAYMENTS PLEASE

Acct name. Christine Warne Dress: Smart Casual

Dietary Requirements: Please advise on payment via email below.

We look forward to catching up with you all again plus those of you who couldn't make it last time. See you soon.

cwarne2009@hotmail.com

Rod Harper

I would like to take this opportunity to promote the re-union of 121 Sig Sqn in Singapore, October 2017. The re-union in 2012 was a spectacular success with at least 83 persons attending. So far, for the 2017 re-union, we have 65 persons interested. All members of Royal Australian Signals who were associated in any way with 121 Sigs would be most welcome to attend.

Contact may be made via email: sylviarod@westnet.com.au

SVVA: 26 Jan 2017 Australia Day, BYO BBQ and Drinks

Where: Decker Park 25th Ave, Brighton

UBD Map 100, P10

Time: Early

TIDBITS

RSL RUNNER NOVEMBER 2016

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) has released a factsheet about non-liability health care treatment available to current and former members of the Australian Defence Force, which includes details of who is eligible and how they can apply to access treatment. All current and former members of the ADF with continuous full-time service are eligible for treatment of the following conditions: post-traumatic stress disorder, depressive disorder, anxiety disorder, alcohol use disorder, and substance use disorder. Find out more about Non-Liability Health Care via [this factsheet](#).



SPIRIT OF SERVICE GRANTS

The Spirit of Service is the new Queensland ANZAC Centenary small grants program that acknowledges the First World War or significant Queensland military milestones in the past 100 years. Grants are available for historical research and educational projects; preservation and conservation of WW1 history, stories, memorabilia artefacts; restoration or enhancement of existing memorials and honour boards; and public commemorative events.

Applications are now open for grants up to \$20,000, with round two closing Friday 3 February 2017. For more information and to access the online application, go to [ANZAC Centenary website](#).



Everyone seems to be in such a hurry to scream 'racism' these days.

A customer asked, "In what aisle could I find the Guinness? "The shop assistant asks, "Are you Irish? "The guy, clearly offended, says, "Yes, I am. But let me ask you something, if I had asked for Italian sausage, would you ask me if I was Italian? Or if I had asked for German Bratwurst, would you ask me if I was German? Or if I asked for a kosher hot dog would you ask me if I was Jewish? Or if I had asked for a Taco, would you ask if I was Mexican? Or if I asked for Polish sausage, would you ask if I was Polish?"

The shop assistant says, "No, I probably wouldn't."

The guy says, "Well then, because I asked for Guinness, why did you ask me if I'm Irish?"

The clerk replied, "Because you're in Bunnings."

The woman asked the pharmacist, "Do you have Viagra?" "Yes," he answered.

She asked, "Does it work?" "Yes," he answered.

She said, "Can you get it over the counter?"

"I can, if I take two !!" he replied.

During a visit to my doctor, I asked him, "How do you determine whether an older person should be put in a Nursing Home?"

"Well," he said, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the person to empty the bathtub."

"Oh, I understand," I said. "A normal person would use the bucket because it is bigger than the spoon or the teacup."

"No" he said. "A normal person would pull the plug. Do you want a bed near the window?"

It's all good fun

Have a great Christmas, see you in the new year, stay safe.

Digger



Veterans are men or women who not only served in warlike conditions, but served; they all at one point in their life wrote a blank check payable to their country for an amount up to and including their life.