



“Sitrep, Over!”

Official Monthly Journal of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc

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Patron - Major General Neil Wilson AM RFD

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Gallipoli. The Battle That Ended Badly

During World War I, German General Erich Ludendorff famously observed, “The English fight like lions.” “Yes,” a staff officer famously replied, “but they are led by donkeys.”



British General Sir Ian Hamilton might not have been a full-fledged ass, but he was certainly a bumbling Ferdinand the bull—shy, courteous and overly accommodating. Unfortunately, Lord Kitchener, Britain’s Secretary of State for War, gave him command of the 1915 invasion of Gallipoli—the amphibious landings by British, French and ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) troops intended to take Turkey, a German ally, out of the war. The campaign demanded an assertive, tactically brilliant, take-charge commander. Instead, the Allies got a kindly uncle who really didn’t want to interfere with his brigadier nephews.

Not that a promising young Winston Churchill had done any better. As First Lord of the Admiralty in 1915, he proposed that a task force of 18 aging

battleships charge through the Dardanelles, the narrow 38-mile-long strait that led toward the Turkish capital at Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). Forts flanked the high-bluffed Gallipoli Peninsula west of the strait, so Churchill’s strategy was akin to taking a convoy of vintage Cadillacs on a thunder run through central Baghdad. The British lost five battleships, mainly to mines but also to Turkish coast artillery.

This should have been a hint, not that Gallipoli was impregnable, for the Turks really didn’t have a modern army or much in the way of good artillery, but that the commanding terrain made a frontal attack potentially suicidal. Indeed, the Greeks—the Turks’ neighbors and longtime adversaries—had formulated a war plan in case the Gallipoli Peninsula ever needed to be attacked, and it called for 150,000 men. Lord Kitchener scoffed at that estimate. Johnny Turk would cut and run at the first sign of the Allies, he insisted, and half as many troops would do just fine.

Thus, early on the morning of April 25, 1915, Hamilton launched his enormously ambitious amphibious landing. An outline of the beachhead assault might read like a description of the D-Day landings were it not for the absence of any specialized landing craft. Armored assault boats did exist back in England, but they remained a well-guarded secret; heaven forbid invaders would use them and thus spill the British beans.

ITEMS OF INTEREST THIS MONTH

- **AMOS A** Page 3-5
- **CPL Numbnutz** Page 6-8
- **Editorial/Contact Us** Page 9
- **A True Story** Page 10
- **Believe it or Not** Page 11-13
- **Padres’ Ponderings** Page 14
- **Merchandise** Page 15
- **Financial Members** Page 16

Gallipoli. The Battle That Ended Badly

2

Instead, huge warships towed ponderous strings of cockleshells—essentially lifeboats—toward shore, then split the strings and transferred the towing job to slow, shallow-draft launches. Oarsmen stroked the final few yards onto the beaches.

The action most often memorialized in paintings of the landing was the beaching of the old steamer *River Clyde* to allow soldiers to emerge from its sally ports (doors along the hull at the waterline) and stroll ashore on gangplanks. Unfortunately, it was equally easy for Turkish machine gunners on the heights to pick off troopers one at a time as they popped from the sally ports like mechanical ducks in a shooting gallery. Of the first 200 soldiers to step from the ships, just 21 made it to the beach alive.

General Hamilton chose the battleship HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, the grandest ship available, as his command vessel. While it made sense to oversee the battle from somewhere offshore, an oceangoing capital ship engaged in long-range bombardment wasn't the ideal platform. Hamilton was too far from the beaches to see what was going on (chaos, for the most part), and his corps commanders were also literally and figuratively adrift during the crucial early hours of the invasion. Communications both ashore between units and from ship to shore ran the gamut from primitive to non-existent, so junior officers on the beach were largely left to their own devices.

Two thousand Brits had landed at a providentially undefended spot called Y Beach and climbed the cliffs unopposed. Having nothing else to do, no commanders to enact Plan B and no direction from Hamilton, they simply hunkered down and boiled water for cuppas. They heard distant firing but had no idea it signified the slaughter of ANZACs at the beachhead to their north. While the Turkish defenders were relatively few in number, they commanded the high ground with machine guns. A flanking manoeuvre by 2,000 Tommies could have ended the battle in minutes, but it was not to be.

To this day ANZACs haven't forgiven the English for "sittin' on their arses brewing tea and havin' a smoke" while Aussies and Kiwis who had never before experienced war were dying by the hundreds only hours away.

Due to Hamilton's haphazard planning, the beachheads ANZAC forces were able to secure were cramped and highly vulnerable. In fact, British corps commander General Sir William Birdwood suggested an immediate evacuation, to which Hamilton replied: "There is nothing for it but to dig yourselves right in and stick it out....You have got through the difficult business, now you have only to dig, dig, dig until you are safe." (Australians have since borne the fond nickname "Diggers.") At one point, the clueless Hamilton wired Kitchener, "Thanks to the weather and the wonderfully fine spirit of our troops, all continues to go well."

After eight months of pointless trench warfare, Hamilton's forces evacuated the bloody beaches. Half a million men on both sides had died for nothing in a true standoff—combined British and French losses numbered just 700 men more than Turkish losses. Each year on April 25, the invasion anniversary, Australia and New Zealand celebrate ANZAC Day, marking their painful emergence into true nationhood.

LEST WE FORGET



ARMY MUSEUM OF SA



The Museum owes its existence to the drive and commitment of the inaugural committee members who were passionate about the retention, renovation and exhibition of SA's military artefacts. After two years of meetings and planning conferences, the inaugural meeting of the Army Museum of South Australia's Committee was held on 21 September 1992, at the Naval, Military and Air Force Club.

When the Museum first opened its doors to the public, it was housed in Building 136, now the Research and Education Section. Storage and workshop areas moved into Buildings 8 and 9, previously the armoury and POL store.

The Museum was officially opened by Dr Erica Roberts, Army Historian on 30 September 1992, after which the inaugural General Meeting for members was held.

The first AGM of AMOSA Inc was held on 11 April 1994, and in 1995 the Museum participated in the 'Australia Remembers' celebrations with its first major external display at Torrens Training Depot. The display was well received by the public which led to a further display in the Defence Services Museum on Kintore Avenue (SA Museum annexe). These displays helped to raise the public persona of the fledgling Museum.



By 1997 the collection had outgrown its original housing, and by chance, the old stables (Building 76) became available. Volunteers renovated the building and moved displays into their new home in time for the official opening on 27 April, 1997 by the then Minister for Defence for SA, Mr Ian McLachlan, MHR. The exhibits settled happily into their new housing and the Museum was opened to the public on Sunday afternoons between the hours of 12noon and 4.00pm. No admission fees applied.

From conception until 1998 all work at the Museum had been carried out by a group of dedicated Volunteers under the direction of the Foundation Management Committee. The first workshop for volunteers to map out future directions for the Museum resulted in the display from the Defence Services Museum being relocated back to Keswick Barracks.

In 2003 the Army History Unit decided to disband the existing Volunteer structure, AMOSA Foundation and register it as a company limited. The implementation of this new structure was agreed to during a Special General Meeting held on 17 March, 2003, however the Operating Agreement was not ratified by the Board of Directors until 2 June 2003. The inaugural AGM of the new Foundation was held on 24 November, 2003. During 2007 the Museum administration was able to move into Building 203, previously occupied by 9 Brigade.

AHU/Defence Financial Support

The Department of Defence, together with the three services, Army, Navy and Air Force, formally recognised the significance of military historical collections and museum which existed within Australia. Consequently, the Australian Army History Unit (AAHU) was formed to assist Army museums and historical collections. In 2007 the AHU assumed responsibility for all Army Museums, which has resulted in considerable financial support from them.

ARMY MUSEUM OF SA



ARMY MUSEUM OF SA



www.amosa.org.au

**Keswick Barracks, Gate 4,
ANZAC Highway**



Opening Times

SUNDAY, MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY

Sunday from 12.00 noon to 4.00pm

Monday and Wednesday from 11.00am to 2.00pm

Closed on Public Holidays.

Museum Admission fees

Adults • \$5

Children • \$2

Family • \$12

Concession • \$3

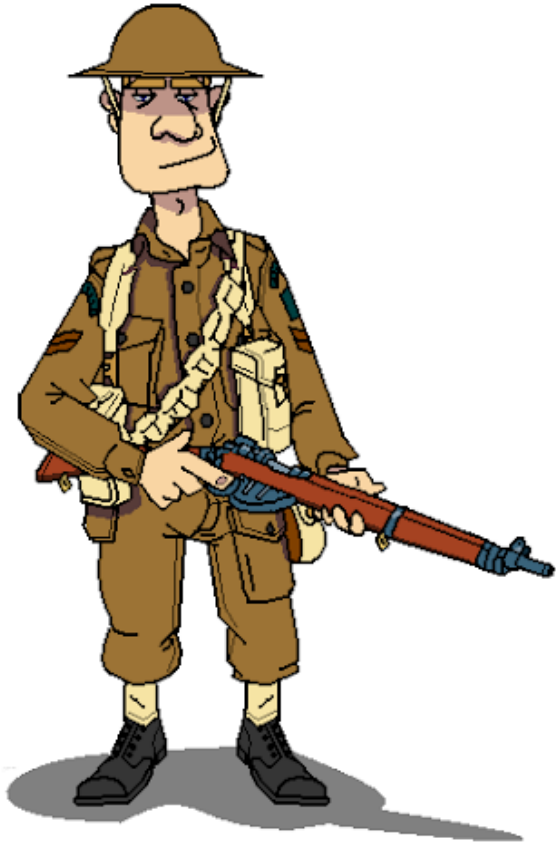
Serving Defence Members (with ID) **FREE Admission**

Research Fee (per page) : **\$5**

EFTPOS facilities available



Thanks to Des Hawkins for his support with this article. Editor



Corporal Numbnutz Funnies.

A couple of women were playing golf one sunny Saturday morning. The first of the twosome teed off and watched in horror as her ball headed directly toward a foursome of men playing the next hole.

Indeed, the ball hit one of the men, and he immediately clasped his hands together at his crotch, fell to the ground, and proceeded to roll around in evident agony. The woman rushed down to the man and immediately began to apologize. She said,

"Please allow me to help. I'm a physical therapist and know I could relieve your pain if you'd allow."

"I'll be all right... I'll be fine in a few minutes," he replied breathlessly as he remained in the foetal position, still clasping his hands together at his crotch. But she persisted, and he finally allowed her to help him.

She gently took his hands away and laid them to the side, she loosened his pants, and she put her hands inside. She began to massage him, around and around, up and down. This went on for quite some time and she then asked him, "How does that feel now?"

To which he replied, "It feels really, *really* fantastic, but my thumb still hurts like hell."

**OLD AGE COMES AT A
BAD TIME!
WHEN YOU FINALLY
KNOW EVERYTHING,
YOU START TO FORGET
EVERYTHING YOU KNOW.**

**The Police caught two guys stealing
car batteries and fireworks. They
charged one and let the other one off!**



If you think you are smarter than the previous generation...50 years ago the owners manual of a car showed you how to adjust the valves. Today it warns you not to drink the contents of the battery.

Is Sex Work?

An Infantry Major was about to start the morning briefing to his staff.

While waiting for the coffee machine to finish its brewing, the Major decided to pose a question to all assembled.. . . .

He explained that his wife had been a bit frisky the night before and he failed to get his usual amount of sound sleep.

He posed the question of just how much of sex was "work" and how much of it was "pleasure?"

A Captain chimed in with 75-25% in favour of work.

A Lieutenant said it was 50-50%.

A 2nd Lieutenant responded with 25-75% in favour of pleasure, depending upon his state of inebriation at the time.

There being no consensus, the Major turned to the Private who was in charge of making the coffee. . . .
.What was his opinion?

Without any hesitation, the young Private responded, "Sir, it has to be 100% pleasure."
The Major was surprised and, as you might guess, asked why ??

"Well, sir," said the Private, "If there was any work involved, the Officers would have me doing it for them."

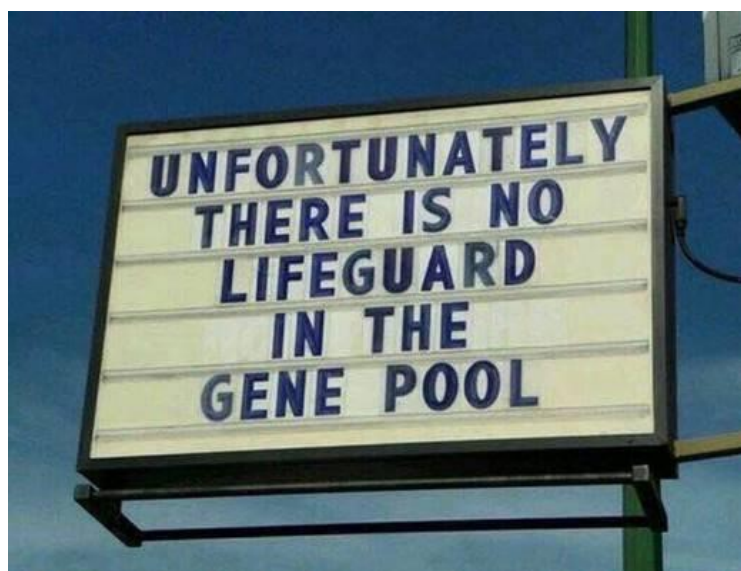
The room fell silent.

I ASKED MY DOCTOR TODAY "HOW LONG DO YOU THINK THIS COVID THING WILL LAST?" HE SAID "DON'T ASK ME, I'M A DOCTOR, NOT A POLITICIAN!"

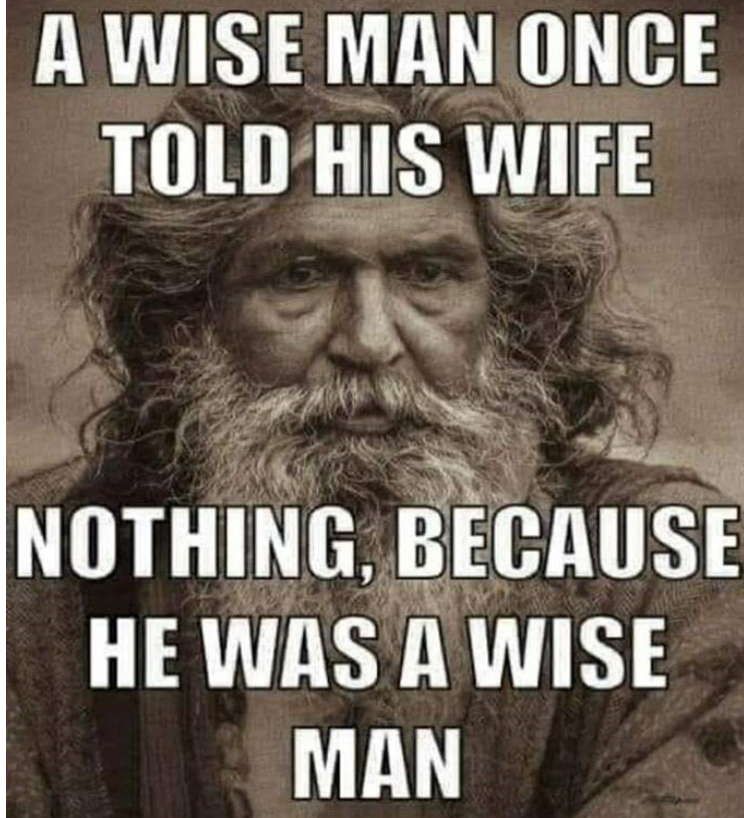


Is it really necessary for the first piece of toilet paper to be glued down enough to survive Armageddon?

**So many people
are too
judgemental
these days.
I can tell just by
looking at them!**



**I really don't
mind getting
older, but my
body is taking
it badly.**



**I WANT TO BE 14 AND
RUIN MY LIFE AGAIN!
I HAVE NEW IDEAS!**

EDITORIAL

Tributes are still coming in for old mate Jeff Ayles, but we need no reminding just how popular he was amongst the military fraternity right throughout the country. Jeff's career spanned many decades and he served with distinction in multiple facets, from a Private Digger, on up the ranks to Major, and he carried on his love for all things military by being one of the main reasons for the success of the Army Museum at Keswick Barracks (AMOS). If you haven't been there, put it on your list of "Things to See" when you're next in the city on a Sunday, Monday or Wednesday. There's free parking everywhere, and guided tours by the volunteers who share a wealth of knowledge with you. Pages 2, 3 & 4 tell you a little bit about it, but there's nothing like the real thing!

Our list of Association Merchandise has grown to now include Hoodies. They are extremely warm and very fashionable, with the RSARA logo on the left chest. Very competitively priced at **ONLY \$50**. Orders can be taken by contacting the Secretary on the email at right. (Check them out on our website by going to www.rsara.asn.au/merchandise)

Losing a mate like Jeff Ayles makes us aware of our own frailties and makes us appreciate what we have just a little more, because when we're gone, we're gone for a long, long time! All the more reason to keep your mates just a phone call away, and if you have any idea something could be wrong, give them a call and ask "Are U OK Mate?" Phone calls cost bugger-all these days, (excuse my Latin) so it's really only your time which is important, and surely, we all have time to make that simple call. I'm about to phone a mate and have a chat. Why don't you too?

My thoughts go out to the family and friends of the brave CFS firefighter who lost her life in the South East last week. Her family describes her as "just an ordinary mum doing extraordinary things!" And how true is that of all the volunteer firefighters who put their lives on the line nearly every day to defend property, lives and infrastructure. Our world is a better place for people like Louise Hincks, and we thank her for her service and her sacrifice. VALE Louise.

Finally, the RSAR Association have applied for a grant from the Federal Government to "increase our footprint" in the community. I'll say no more until next month.

That's what I think!

David Laing - Editor

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Visit us on the web at
www.rsara.asn.au

PAYMENTS FOR SUBS & MERCHANDISE

**Fees and Merchandise can be paid
by EFT through the following
Bendigo Bank account:**

**RSAR Association Inc
BSB 633 000
Acc. 1616 585 88**

Cheques etc can be mailed to

**The Treasurer
Christian Bennett
RSAR Association
5 Ashwin Parade
Torrensville SA 5031**

A True Story from the UK

sent in by David Hope

10

Lt. Colonel Robert Maclaren retired from the British Army in 2001 after a long fulfilling career. On the day that he retired he received a letter from the Personnel Department of the Ministry of Defence setting out details of his pension and, in particular, the tax-free 'lump sum' award, (based upon completed years of service), that he would receive in addition to his monthly pension.

The letter read,

"Dear Lt. Colonel Maclaren,

We write to confirm that you retired from the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards on 1st March 2001 at the rank of Lt Colonel, having been commissioned into the British Army at Edinburgh Castle as a 2nd Lieutenant on 1st February 1366. Accordingly your lump sum payment, based on years served, has been calculated as £68,500. You will receive a cheque for this amount in due course.

*Yours sincerely,
Army Paymaster"*

Col Maclaren replied;

"Dear Paymaster,

Thank you for your recent letter confirming that I served as an officer in the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards between 1st February 1366 and 1st March 2001 – a total period of 635 years and 1 month. I note however that you have calculated my lump sum to be £68, 500, which seems to be considerably less than it should be bearing in mind my length of service since I received my commission from King Edward III.

By my calculation, allowing for interest payments and currency fluctuations, my lump sum should actually be £6,427,586,619 and 47p.

I look forward to receiving a cheque for this amount in due course.

*Yours sincerely,
Robert Maclaren (Lt Col Retd)"*

A month passed by and then in early April, a stout manila envelope from the Ministry of Defence in Edinburgh dropped through Col Maclaren's letter box, it read:

"Dear Lt Colonel Maclaren,

We have reviewed the circumstances of your case as outlined in your recent letter to us dated 8th March inst. We do indeed confirm that you were commissioned into the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards by King Edward III at Edinburgh Castle on 1st February 1366, and that you served continuously for the following 635 years and 1 month. We have re-calculated your pension and have pleasure in confirming that the lump sum payment due to you is indeed £6,427,586,619. 47p.

However,

We also note that according to our records you are the only surviving officer who had command responsibility during the following campaigns and battles;

The Wars of the Roses 1455 -1485 (Including the battles of Bosworth Field, Barnet and Towton)

The Civil War 1642 -1651 (Including the battles Edge Hill, Naseby and the conquest of Ireland)

The Napoleonic War 1803 – 1815 (including the battle of Waterloo and the Peninsular War)

The Crimean War (1853 – 1856) (including the battle of Sevastopol and the Charge of the Light Brigade)

The Boer War (1899 -1902).

We would therefore wish to know what happened to the following, which do not appear to have been returned to Stores by you on completion of operations:

9765 Cannon

26,785 Swords

12,889 Pikes

127,345 Rifles (with bayonets)

28,987 horses (fully kitted)

Plus three complete marching bands with instruments and banners.

WE have calculated the total cost of these items and they amount to £6,427,518.119.47p. WE have therefore subtracted this sum from your lump sum, leaving a residual amount of £68,500, for which you will receive a cheque in due course.

Yours sincerely"

1. The foo fighters were more than a band name.

Almost everyone has heard of the foo fighters, but few realize the origins of the 90s rock band name. In WWII, the foo fighters were a genuine concern. At night, American and British aircraft pilots frequently spotted bright lights in the distance. At first, they assumed the lights were Russian or German flyers. Until they began to move, that is.

The lights would change direction and speed away faster than any aircraft possibly could. Hundreds of reports were recorded, with some pilots even reporting dogfights with them. Since no one was able to figure out what the crafts were or who piloted them, they were given the nickname "foo fighters." To this day, it's one of the biggest military mysteries of WWII.

2. The Red Baron's killer was never found.

The Red Baron, a German fighter pilot during WWI, was so famous that even Snoopy knew of his aerial prowess. He was one of the most lethal fighters in history, with over 80 confirmed kills. He was a serious threat to the Allied forces throughout the majority of WWI, until he was mysteriously shot down.

A Canadian pilot named Roy Brown claimed to have shot down his plane, but the details of his story didn't quite make sense. No one knows for sure who killed him, but whoever it was would have had their name in the history books. The Red Baron was such an amazing pilot that the Allies helped to give him a decent burial in France in honor of his skill.

3. A Hungarian soldier turned out to be a serial killer...and he was never found.

During WWI, a man named Bela Kiss enlisted in the Hungarian army. He notified his landlord that he would be away for some time, and left for war. Some time later, the landlord heard that Kiss had died in combat, so he decided to rent the house to someone else. When he arrived to clean it out, however, he walked into a house of horrors. Several bodies were inside preserved in alcohol, all belonging to women who had disappeared.

It turns out, Kiss had been tricking women into marriage before killing them and taking control of their finances. Despite an extensive search, and a few reported sightings, he was never found.



4. A plane vanished out of thin air, starting the legend of the Bermuda Triangle.

It's hard to imagine that six planes could straight up disappear, but that's what happened. On December 5, 1945, five Grumman TBM Avenger torpedo bombers, collectively known as Flight 19, stopped responding to the control tower while on a training flight. A Mariner flying boat was deployed to search for the missing planes,



but the Mariner soon vanished too. While no bodies or wreckage was ever found, 27 men and six aircrafts were never seen again.

While many rumors cropped up over the years, the disappearance probably has nothing to do with the supernatural. The most likely explanation is that Flight 19's leader, Navy Lieutenant Charles Taylor, got so disoriented that he led the planes out to sea until they ran out of gas and crashed into the Atlantic. The rescue sea plane is likely to have exploded, as flying boats were prone to catching fire. Still, after all these years the resting place of the planes have never been found.

5. A strange ad was placed in the New Yorker magazine. But who published it?

Anyone can put an ad in the paper, but one published in the New Yorker was more than a little suspicious. The ad was for a real game called "Deadly Double," but the copy gave a not-so-secret message: "We hope you'll never have to spend a long winter's night in an air-raid shelter, but we were just thinking ... it's only common sense to be prepared. If you're not too busy between now and Christmas, why not sit down and plan a list of the things you'll want to have on hand. ... And though it's no time, really, to be thinking of what's fashionable, we bet that most of your friends will remember to include those intriguing dice and chips which make Chicago's favourite game: THE DEADLY DOUBLE."

A similar ad for the same product included the phrase, "Warning! Alerte! Achtung!" Okay, then. The dice shown in the ad's images were even more strange. Instead of numbers 1-6, numbers like 7, 20 and 12, were shown.

Some believe these bizarre ads were really a hint to American spies that an attack on Pearl Harbor was on the horizon. The creator's widow has denied any suggestion that the game had any connection with spy activity, but it still seems a little fishy.

6. Lieutenant Colonel Pete Ellis predicted the bombing of Pearl Harbor over 20 years before it happened.

In 1920, Lieutenant Colonel Pete Ellis was a bit of an odd-ball in the Navy. He was known for being pretty solitary and working late into the night. When asked what he was doing in his office so late, he said he was working on "a special project." A year later, he appeared to go mad. He gave a lengthy prediction of the future, including Japan's attack on several islands on the Pacific, the targeting of Pearl Harbor, and the use of torpedo planes. Considering torpedo planes hadn't been invented yet, he sounded crazy...except he was right.

All his predictions were dead on. After his prediction, he asked for a 90-day leave, which was personally approved by the Secretary of the Navy. He was given a sealed envelope and sent off to Europe, but he never arrived. He went to Japan instead, where he mysteriously died. A man who knew him travelled there to search for him...but he was found dead too! It's a strange story with many loose ends, but it's unlikely that we'll ever know the details.

7. Ralph Sigler's death doesn't seem like an accident.

Ralph Sigler, an immigrant from Czechoslovakia, arrived in America when he was eight. He enlisted in the Army in 1947 and got married to a German woman shortly after while he was stationed abroad. When his tour was over, he brought her back to the states and the couple had a child. Over a decade later in 1966, FBI agents arrived at his doorstep to let him know he had been randomly selected to participate in counter-espionage. The family's ordinary life was turned upside down overnight.

In the following years, Sigler fed a great deal of false information to the SVR, Russia's intelligence agency. When he met Russian officials in person, he quickly earned their trust. He identified 14 SVR agents and over time grew worried that the Russians were starting to suspect something. The FBI approached him by this time, but Sigler made plans to retire from the Army.

His first contact with Russian officials came in 1968 in Zurich, and he soon earned their trust. Authorities have speculated that Sigler's work led to the identification of 14 SVR agents. He was given an estimated \$50,000 in compensation, every last penny of which he gave to the Army. In the mid-1970s, Sigler worried that he was "getting in too deep" and the Russians were becoming suspicious, which may have led him to offer extra information under pressure. By this time, the FBI had approached him.

The situation grew complicated, and some American intelligence officers were suspicious of his loyalties too. He was forced to take a polygraph test, which showed he was extremely on edge. Concerned, the Army arranged for Sigler to stay at a motel. Sadly, he never left. His body was found in the motel room after he had been electrocuted by two motel lamps. While the Army ruled his death a suicide, most believe he was killed and possibly tortured by Soviet agents. In his last call to his wife, he ominously told her, "I'm dying. I never lied." He was later awarded the Legion of Merit Cross for his sacrifices.



AUSTRALIA DAY REFLECTION

The Chaplains Office at Keswick is opposite the boozer. I love that because I love to hear the sound of celebration. After Tuesday night Parade at precisely 22:01 (and not a second before) a smile comes to my face as I hear the rustle of a chip packet and the hiss on opening a Diet Coke or Coopers.

And because I love a celebration I will be celebrating this Australia Day. But that doesn't mean that we can't do things better. In the future I look forward to celebrating an Australia Day that the First and Second Peoples of this Ancient and unique Great South Land jointly agree upon.

It is for this reason and for the future joy of all Australians that I offer this prayer:

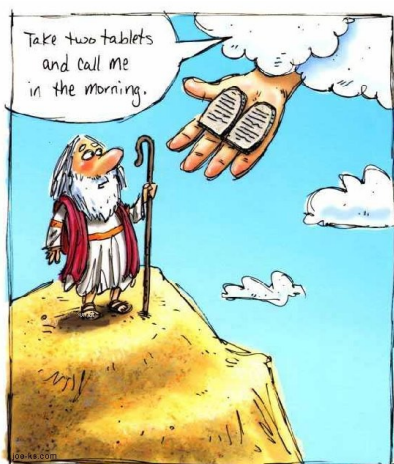
- Give us the courage to accept the realities of our history so that we may build a better future for our nation.
- Teach us to respect all cultures.
- Teach us to care for our land and waters.
- Help us to share justly the resources of this land.
- Help us to bring about spiritual and social change to improve the quality of life for all peoples in our communities, especially the disadvantaged.
- Help all young people to find true dignity and self-esteem by your Spirit.
- May your power and goodness be the foundations on which we walk together as First and Second Peoples; and build our families, our communities and our nation.

Amen.

The Padre

...any day, any time 0408 163 257

And if all else fails.....



2019/20 Bushfires.

Army Reserve padre Chaplain Paul Ghanem, formerly of 8th Signals Regiment, has been ministering to residents in the Adelong and Batlow areas of southern NSW who have been left devastated by recent bushfires.

Association Merchandise



CAP - \$25



Hoodie - Only \$50



Name Badge - \$30

Tie - \$30

Lapel Pin - \$20

**PLEASE ADD \$5 POSTAGE FOR
SMALLER ITEMS AND \$10 POSTAGE
FOR HOODIES AND POLO TOPS**

Stubby Holder

\$6 each

6 for \$30



Polo Top - \$45

Many sizes available



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THIS NEWSLETTER ARE
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THE OFFICE OF
TONY PASIN MP
MEMBER FOR BARKER**