

THE FURPHY

ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

July 2026 Edition



**1 Commerce Ave, Armadale, WA 6112
PO Box 697, Armadale, WA 6992**

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email: secretary@armadalersl.com.au

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General Meetings:

Second Sunday of the month at 1100hrs

Annual General Meeting:

Second Sunday of September

Committee Positions

Armada Sub-Branch Committee	
President	Mr Mike Fairweather
Vice President	Mr Bob Giles
Secretary	Ms Carol King
Treasurer	Mrs Cheryl Cowie
Warden	Mr Graeme Cowie
Warden	Mr Keith Northcott
Membership Officer	Secretary
Committee	Mr Geoff Scott
Advocate / Welfare Officer	Mr Brent Errington
Bar Manager	Mr Mike Fairweather

ADVOCATE / WELFARE

Brent Errington “Erro” is available as follows:

At the Armadale RSL Sub-Branch:

Monday: by appointment only
Thursday: between 0900 - 1400hrs

Weekday Contact Details:

Mobile: 0407 449 150
e-mail: welfare2@armadalersl.com.au

Diary Dates for July

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>
Sunday	5 th	Social Committee Meeting	1100
Tuesday	7 th	Management Committee Meeting	1100
Sunday	12 th	General Meeting	1100

A gynaecologist notices his new patient is nervous..

While snapping on his gloves, he says, 'Do you know how they make latex gloves?'

She shakes her head. 'There's a plant in Mexico. People dip their hands in latex and let it dry.

She stays stone-faced. A minute later, she bursts out laughing. The doctor asks, 'What's so funny?' She wipes her tears and says, 'I just imagined how they make cond0ms!



58



7



Secretary's Notes

Hi Everyone,

We had fabulous news during the month when we received notification that the Sub- Branch has been granted an amount of \$146,745.59 to be spent on upgrades to our Building.

The amount is some \$30,000 short of what we actually applied for and some items will need to be taken out of the scope, but the President will elaborate further in his report.

Thanks to everyone who assisted in obtaining quotations etc., and our sincere appreciation is extended to the State Government for making the funds available.

The 110th State Congress was held on Saturday 27th June, matters of relevance will be communicated to members at the upcoming General Meeting.

Executive and Committee Nominations open on 12th July and close on 9th August. These will be posted on the Notice Board. Voting for positions will be at the AGM on Sunday 13th September.

Best regards as always,

Carol King

Sub-Branch Secretary

e-mail: secretary@armadalersl.com.au



**NO MATTER WHEN YOU SERVED IN THE MILITARY!
ALL VETERANS ARE FAMILY!**



Me 262: The Best Fighter Plane of World War II?

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Members,

We are in the process of obtaining updated quotes for the Veterans Facilities Grant and following that, a decision will be made as to the priority of items. The Solar Panels and Batteries, upgrading the electrical wiring and switchboards, replacing the gas ovens and ablution area refurbishments along with re-carpeting the Wilson Room and office areas are on the priority list at this time.

It's possible that we may have to be closed on occasions to enable this work to proceed however, we will do our best to keep disruption to our opening hours to a minimum.

We will definitely require assistance from members for some of these activities to occur (for example emptying out all the office areas ready for carpet installation) but I will let everyone know when we need help.

That's about all from me for now,

Mike Fairweather

President

Returned Services League Armadale Sub-Branch

Ph: (08) 9497 1972. M: 0403 980 290

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e-mail: president@armadalersl.com.au



It's always nice to see couples enjoying a day out



M2A3 Bradley



A great image showing the scale of the Grand Slam bomb. Here, newly made Grand Slam bombs wait to be delivered at the Elswick Works factory in Newcastle, England, 7 January 1945

Membership Update

As at 30th June 2026:

Service Members:	146
Affiliate Members:	40
Social Members:	<u>79</u>
Total:	<u>265</u>

1 new Service person and 2 Social Members accepted. 1 Service transfer from Armadale to Narrogin.

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Carol King

Tel: 9497 1972

e-mail: secretary@armadalersl.com.au



NO NEED TO BE NERVOUS, MR. FLINTSTONE,
IT'S JUST A ROUTINE COLONOSCOPY.



July Service Members:

Dew	Mr	Damien	16/07	Dunn	Mr	Richard	14/07
Flavel	Mr	Marc	30/07	Gardiner	Mrs	Shirley	13/07
Graveson	Ms	Trudi	14/07	Hibbert	Mr	Glenn	23/07
Robson	Mr	Brent	05/07	Sargeson	Mr	Laurence	21/07

July Affiliate Members:

Cavanagh	Mr	Michael	16/07	Skehan	Mr	Josh	23/07
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July Social Members:

Borger	Mrs	Julie	24/07	Brough	Ms	Lyndall	14/07
Garbutt	Ms	Kathy	28/07	Hodge	Mrs	Pauline	02/07
Mwanawasa	Mr	Matolo	27/07	Sue	Ms	Corbie	12/07

If there are any errors or anyone has been missed off the list, please advise

The Secretary (Membership Officer)

These members may collect a free drink of their choice during the month

We hope you have a very special Birthday

Bar Manager's Report

G'day All,

Unfortunately, it has come time to raise the prices of everything.

The bar takings are down considerably; we do need more attendance to try and remedy that situation so bring your friends and family along.

Cheers for now,

Stormy





Australian soldiers washing their gum boots outside the gum boot store at Houplines, near Armentieres. January 1917.

Infantry and working parties were issued with dry boots from this store before going into the line, and on returning handed them back, after washing off the mud in the tubs provided for the purpose.



HMAS FLINDERS, (survey ship), completed the RAN's first survey controlled by a satellite navigation system, off the coast of Bougainville.



New Guinea Campaign. Battle of Buna–Gona. 16th December 1942. The three Chapman brothers of South Australia, who all joined the 2/27th Battalion, pause for a break just after the fall of Gona. L - R: Private's Maxwell, Desmond and Raymond Chapman

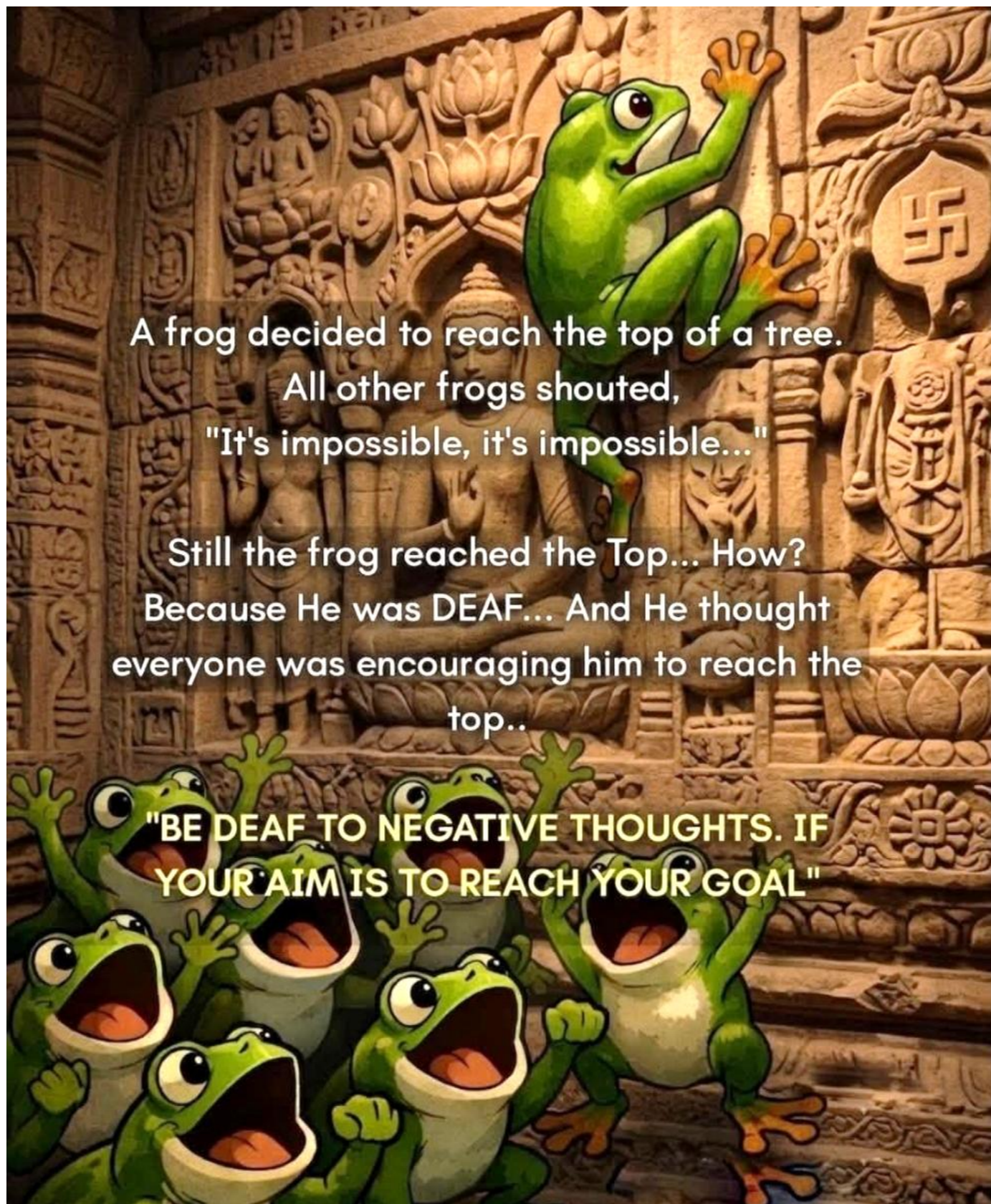




The German 21 cm Mörser 18 heavy howitzer at Bodø, Norway, in fall 1943, was known for its dual-recoil system and two-part transport for easy deployment.



Pilot Hal Bitzegio and a ground crewman by F4U-1A Corsair of the VF-17 Jolly Rogers at Ondongo, New Georgia, November 1943.

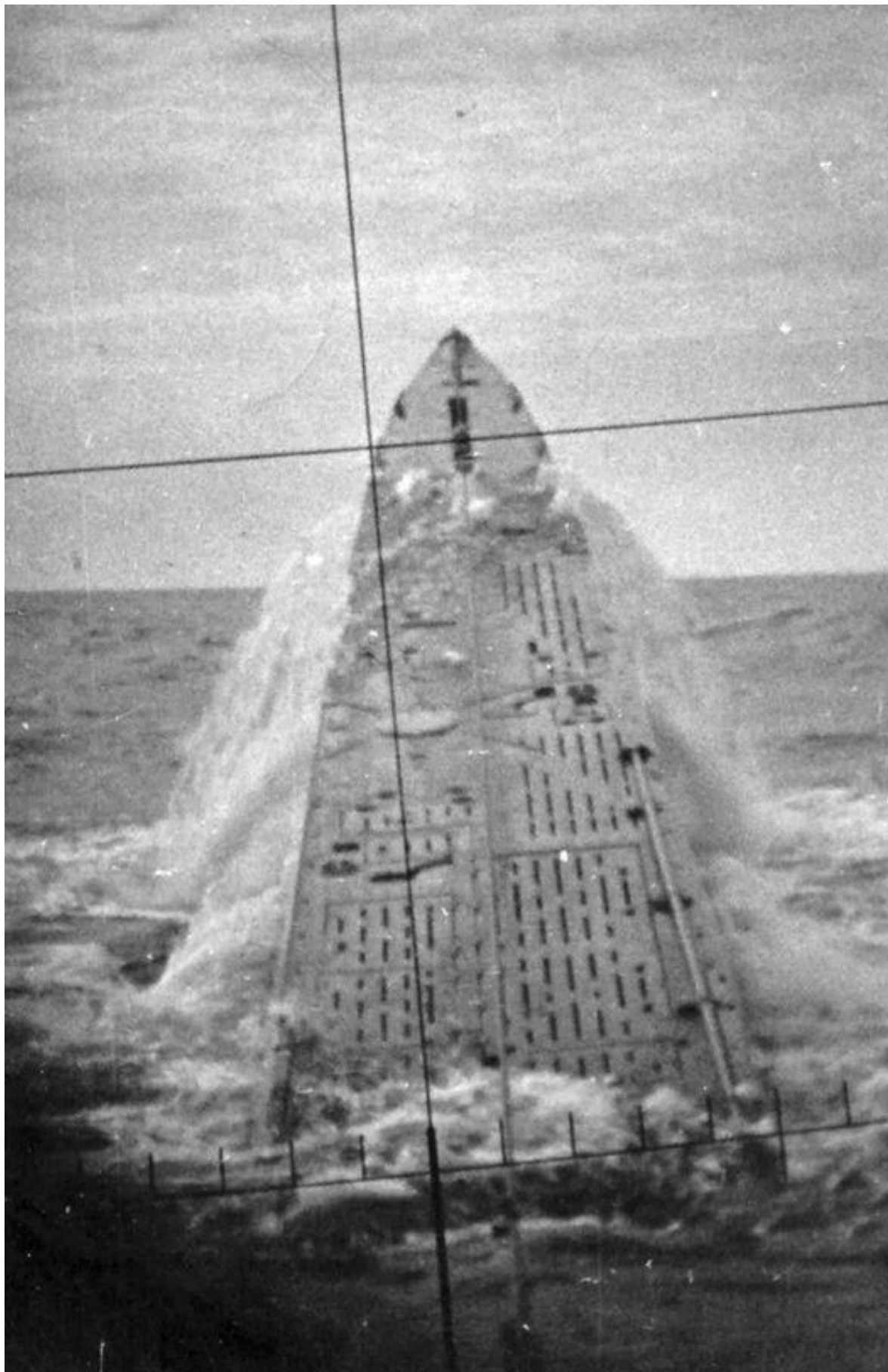


A frog decided to reach the top of a tree.

All other frogs shouted,
"It's impossible, it's impossible..."

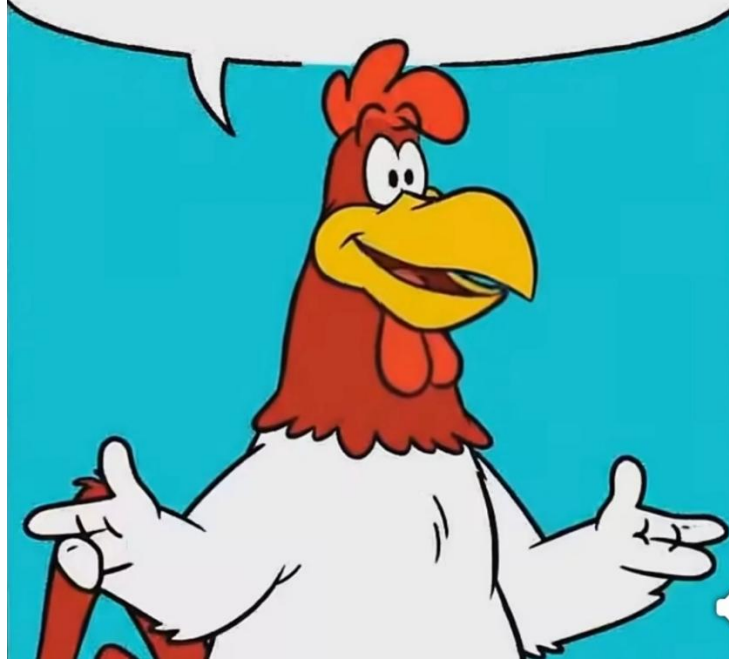
Still the frog reached the Top... How?
Because He was DEAF... And He thought
everyone was encouraging him to reach the
top..

**"BE DEAF TO NEGATIVE THOUGHTS. IF
YOUR AIM IS TO REACH YOUR GOAL"**



The bow of the Type VIIC U-boat U-427 bursts from the sea. The image was captured via a camera shot through the submarine's own periscope.

Sometimes I sit quietly and wonder why I'm not in a mental asylum then I take a good look around at everyone and realize...maybe I am

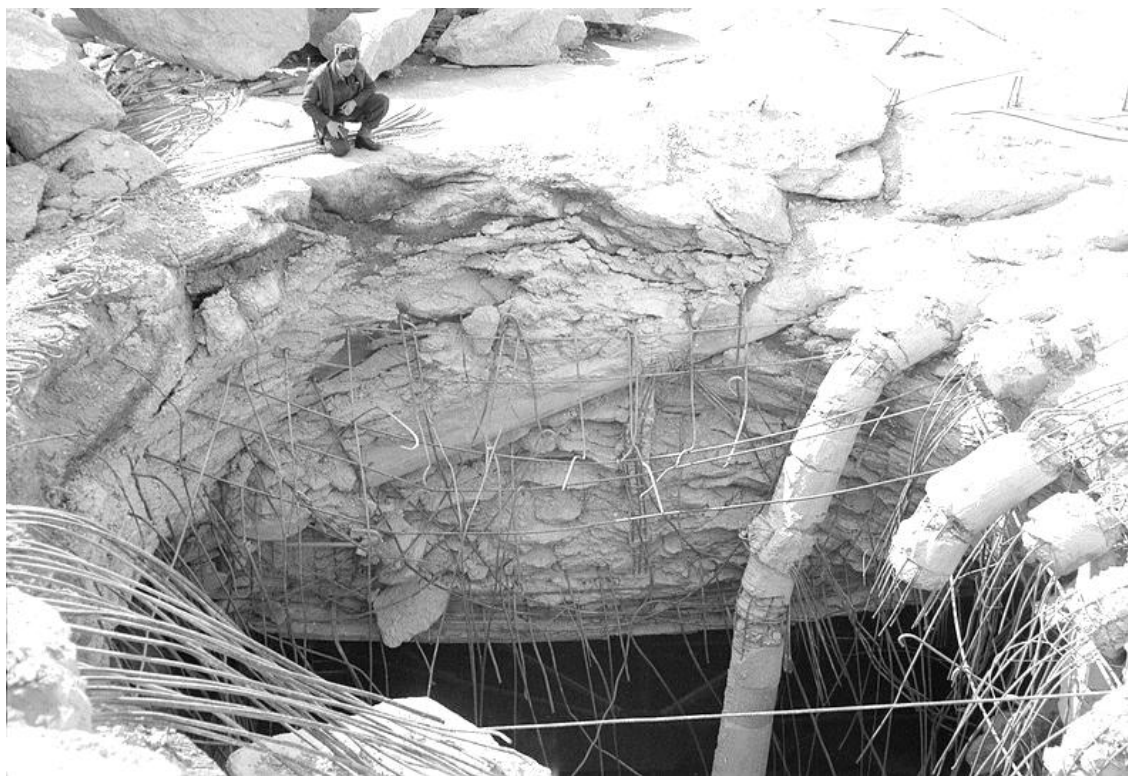


**DON'T PISS OFF
OLDER PEOPLE;
THE OLDER WE GET,
THE LESS
'LIFE IN PRISON'
IS A DETERRENT...**

The Duckit List



We're unsure of the circumstances here, but it doesn't look good. The B-29 Superfortress stands as the prime example of the result of 6 years of war-driven technological innovation



Grand Slam vs reinforced concrete. An amazing image that shows the scale of the damage left behind from a 22,000 lbs 'Grand Slam' bomb. This is the result of a raid from 18 Avro Lancasters on a submarine pen north of Bremen, Germany, 1945

If I sing HELLO and you think of
Lionel Richie instead of Adele, then
you can probably predict the weather ..
with one of your knees



Yesterday I helped
my Neighbor hang
a 75 inch TV he
bought from some
guy on the street,
when he turned it on.
it was the menu
from KFC.





Ya know... I haven't even had to turn the jets on. These bubbles are from that awesome chili you made for dinner.



Australian Prisoners of War

During World War II, 30,000 Australian service men, military nurses and civilians were held as prisoners of war (POWs) or internees. They lived in German and Italian POW camps, and Japanese POW or internment camps. Almost one-third of those in Japanese captivity lost their lives. Conditions varied depending on the location. Most POWs held by the Japanese suffered starvation, disease and often brutal treatment.

Whether they were in German, Italian or Japanese captivity, prisoners and internees needed to be resilient. They depended on their friends for survival.

Many former POWs, particularly those who had been held by the Japanese, struggled to adjust to peace conditions after the war. It took several decades before the impact of their captivity on their health and relationships was fully recognised.

Brief history of Australian prisoners of war

Australians have become prisoners of war (POWs) in most major conflicts of the 20th century.

During the Second South African (Boer) War of 1899 to 1902, 104 interned Australians suffered disease, lack of food and poor sanitation.

In World War I (1914 to 1918), around 4,000 Australians were captured by Germans on the Western Front, or on Gallipoli and throughout the Middle East by Ottoman forces (Turkish). Many were ill-treated, forced to work under difficult conditions, and experienced starvation and disease.

Of the more than 30,000 Australians made POWs during World War II (1939 to 1945), more than 22,000 were captured by the Japanese in south-east Asia, mainly in early 1942. Most of the 8,500 or so Australians in European POW camps had been captured in the Greek and Crete campaigns of 1941.

The Geneva Convention

At the time of World War II, the treatment of POWs was governed by the Geneva Convention (1929), or the 'Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Geneva July 27, 1929'.

In theory, POWs were expected to be treated humanely and with respect. Under the obligations of the convention, POWs could expect:

- access to Red Cross parcels
- adequate food, clothing and medical care
- living quarters of the same standard as their captors' living quarters
- payment for any work done
- not to do any work that is dangerous or military in nature.

In practice, this was not always the case.

Both Germany and Italy had ratified the Geneva Convention (1929). That meant prisoners in their camps tended to have better conditions, thanks to supplies delivered by the Red Cross. These care parcels topped up the prisoners' generally meagre rations.

Apart from that concession, conditions were generally basic. Disease was common, especially later in the war. Working conditions outside the camps were sometimes dangerous. Some POWs were exposed to Allied bombing attacks. Some were beaten by their civilian bosses.

Japan had signed the Geneva Convention (1929) but not formally approved it. As such, Japan argued it was free to use POWs in any way it chose. Almost 3,000 Australians died working for the Japanese in harrowing conditions on the Thailand-Burma Railway.

Home from the war

Adjusting to life back in Australia after imprisonment was extraordinarily difficult for ex-POWs. There were few welcoming crowds on their arrival, little in the way of rehabilitation services and limited sympathy from an Australian public who could not comprehend what POWs had experienced and largely wanted to forget the war.

Returned POWs experienced a raft of social, health and financial issues. Employers often had little sympathy for workers with ongoing health problems.

Mental health and the effects of trauma were not well appreciated, and many former POWs carried the extra burden of self-doubt and shame.

Family life also suffered. In some cases, returned POWs had the additional loss of partners who had moved on after hearing no news for many years. Others had marriages that struggled under the weight of trauma resulting from their POW experiences. Rates of both divorce and suicide were high amongst returned POWs.

Many returned POWs also suffered ongoing physiological health problems resulting from their captivity. Ex-POWs were more likely to experience:

- arthritis from beatings during the war
- depression and post-traumatic stress
- hearing loss
- liver cirrhosis
- tuberculosis
- ongoing effects of tropical diseases and malnutrition.

They were also more likely to die earlier than other veterans.

Commemorating prisoners of war

Like the war service of First Nations Australians, the commemoration of POWs has been multi-layered and, at times, politically and socially sensitive. Arguments for recognition and compensation sometimes took decades.

Former POWs, such as 'Weary' Dunlop and Tom Uren were tireless in their advocacy for returned POWs.

Today, Australian POWs are commemorated through:

- films and plays
- memoirs and novels
- memorials, museums and war graves.

Australia's National Prisoner of War Memorial in Ballarat, Victoria, commemorates more than 35,000 Australians who were held prisoner during the Boer War, World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

Cowra Breakout in Australia during World War II

More than 1,000 Japanese men were interned at the 12th Australian Prisoner of War and Internees Camp in Cowra, New South Wales. About half of them were merchant navy POWs. In the early hours of a frosty morning, on 5 August 1944, they broke out of the camp. It was the biggest mass escape in World War II and one of the bloodiest in history. The escapees climbed over dead bodies and barbed wire. For many of the Japanese, it was a suicide mission and a final chance to regain lost honour. During the event, 234 Japanese prisoners died and 108 were wounded. Three Australian guards were killed. An officer was stabbed and killed during the subsequent hunt for escapees. About two-thirds of the Japanese prisoners in Camp B remained within the confines of the camp, alive or dead. Over 300 men were recaptured in the 9 days after the escape.

Escapes from Australian Camps

Some 12,000 foreign nationals from enemy countries were interned in Australian camps during the war.

Authorised under the *National Security Act 1939*, many of these camps were built in isolated regional and rural areas, such as outside the country town of Cowra, in the central west of New South Wales.

There were few escapes from Australian internment and POW camps.

Newspapers at the time reported occasional breakouts:

- German internees
- Italian internees

But these were few in number. They usually involved only one escapee or a small number.

One Italian POW gained notoriety for his many escapes and recaptures, Edgardo Simoni. Simoni was a lieutenant in the Italian army who was captured at the Battle of Bardia in Libya and sent to Australia in August 1941.

Also known as 'La Volpe' or 'The Fox', Simoni made several escape attempts from camps at Murchison, Hay and Myrtleford. Local civilians of Italian heritage helped Simoni while he was on the run.

After the war, Simoni was repatriated to Italy and retired from the army as a Colonel. He visited the site of the Hay POW camp as a tourist in 1974.

Cowra Prisoner of War Camp



Cowra prisoner-of-war camp, seen from the south-east

Cowra POW camp opened in 1941. It was built to hold Italian POWs captured by the Allies in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa.

Britain funded the construction of the camp. It was part of an arrangement with the Australian Government to take Axis prisoners captured overseas by Allied forces.

The first Italians began arriving in October 1941. They lived in tents while working alongside local labourers to build the camp.

Japanese POWs and internees began arriving at the camp in January 1943. The Allies were capturing Japanese personnel from the fighting in:

- Indian Ocean and South-East Asia
- South-West Pacific Area.

Other internees included Albanians, Chinese, Koreans and captured Indonesian civilians and merchant seamen.

By 1944, the overcrowded camp held some 4,000 POWs and internees.

Cowra POW camp was divided into 4 sections to hold the main nationalities:

- 'A' and 'C' compounds for Italians
- 'B' compound for Japanese non-commissioned officers and other ranks
- 'D' compound for Formosans (Taiwanese indigenous peoples) and Koreans, as well as Japanese officers.



Japanese prisoners of war working in one of the vegetable gardens at the 12th Australian Prisoner of War and Internees Camp, Cowra - 1 February 1944, about 6 months before the Cowra Outbreak

Thick, entangled barbed wire almost 2.5 m high surrounded the complex. The 6 watchtowers were equipped with powerful searchlights, which gave the guards vantage points around the camp's perimeter.

The above is was one of a series of photographs taken for the Far Eastern Liaison Office to be used in propaganda leaflets to be dropped over Japanese-held territory during World War II.

Guards' views before the escape

The 22nd Garrison Battalion guarded the POWs and internees. Members of the battalion were mostly older men from the army reserve. Many had served in World War I, including veterans of New Guinea who were no longer fit for service. They were equipped with older-style rifles and 2 Vickers machine guns.

One guard on duty during the breakout was Sergeant Ashley Phillip Joseph Cooper.

Cooper said prisoners and internees were treated in accordance with the Geneva Convention. The International Red Cross visited regularly. Detainees were given fresh fruit, fish, rice and pasta. A still to make alcohol was later found in the Italian section of the camp. In short, most enjoyed a reasonable level of freedom within the confines of the camp.

Cooper said most guards thought it unlikely there would be any escapes from the camp:

“The Italians knew they had no way of getting back to their families until the war was over, and they were quite content to just sit back and - as the expression is - ride it out.

Camp authorities heard rumours of a planned breakout by Japanese prisoners 6 weeks before the mass escape occurred. But they dismissed it as unlikely.

Of course, the general consensus of opinion to that attitude was that why would they want to break out. They've got no hope of ever getting back to Japan from

Cowra. It's too far, the distance is too far. They're treated as well as what we're treated, the Australian soldier was treated. Their food and clothing was the same as ours.

All they've got to do is sit and wait like the Italians were until the war was over, and that was all there was to it. Well, we'd never ever thought they'd even try it, it was such a ridiculous thought on our part, that they would even try.

The camp guards had underestimated the shame the Japanese prisoners felt about their captivity.

What we didn't stop to think about was the mentality of the Japanese of that time.

You see, of that time, the Japanese soldier, his god was the Emperor. And to die for the Emperor was to reach heaven, Valhalla, whichever way you like to put it. And for that soldier to die for the Emperor was to reach eternity - full happiness. And we could not comprehend this attitude.

To us - I mean, alright, we gave our allegiance to the Queen, we gave our allegiance to our country, but we didn't think it was necessary to stupidly give our life for our country. Okay, if we had to, fair enough, but not to stupidly do it, but this was the way the Japanese thought. It didn't matter how they gave it, they reached happiness.

And this is something we couldn't comprehend at the time, that the Japanese of that particular era was quite happy to die for his Emperor - more than happy, you could have called it jubilant that he died for his Emperor, for his god."

'Bushidō' code of honour



A Japanese martial arts banner promoting Bushido, the Japanese code of honour

The code of honour for Japan's Samurai warrior class is called Bushidō. Dating back many centuries, the code honoured and encouraged:

- bravery in battle
- warrior skills of fitness
- military prowess
- filial piety (respect for family and ancestors)
- honesty
- integrity

In many ways, Bushidō was like the medieval Europeans' understanding of chivalry and the honourable behaviour of knights.

Bushidō became associated with Japanese nationalism and militarism during the 1930s. Since the early 1900s, it had been taught in schools and military training.

The code of honour now included an expectation of emperor-worship and patriotism. Surrendering to the enemy was shameful. Regaining honour was only possible through death.

Many detainees were influenced by this code at the time of the breakout, according to former Japanese POWs in oral history interviews. Some even kept their true identities secret when captured. They did not want their families to know they were prisoners.

The Breakout



High view of the 12th Australian Prisoner of War and Internees Camp at Cowra from the guard tower of "B" Compound. The Japanese prisoners lived in this section of the camp. The Japanese hospital buildings are shown on the right. Photographed 6 months before the Cowra Breakout on 5 August 1944

Official war historian, Gavin Long, said camp officers had heard rumours of a possible escape attempt. As a precaution, all Japanese POWs, except officers, were to be sent to the POW camp at Hay.

The Japanese POWs were given 24 hours' notice of their planned move from Cowra to Hay, in line with the 1906 Geneva Convention.

The men gathered to discuss their response. It was put to the vote. Some, like Marekuni Takahara, voted 'yes', although he admitted afterwards, he'd wanted to vote 'no'.

Plans for the mass escape were hastily coordinated, and the Japanese prisoners made the decision that no local civilians were to be hurt.

According to Masayoshi Yamada, it was expected that escapees would commit suicide if injured or caught.

Bugle sounded the call to arms



The bugle played by fighter pilot Toyoshima Hajime started the escape of Japanese prisoners of war from Cowra POW camp in the early hours of 5 August 1944

In the early hours of 5 August 1944, the sound of a single bugle cut through the frosty night air.

Japanese fighter pilot and POW, Toyoshima Hajime, played the bugle as a call to arms for the camp's 1,104 Japanese prisoners. Hajime was the first Japanese airman to be captured on Australian soil. He committed suicide once outside the camp perimeter.

The Japanese set fire to 20 camp barracks.

Armed with sharpened kitchen knives, baseball bats and other makeshift weapons, prisoners launched themselves *en masse* at the camp's barbed wire fencing. They wrapped themselves in blankets and coats for protection. Some wore baseball mitts to protect their hands. A loud cry of 'Banzai!' pierced the air.



Escaping Japanese POWs used baseball gloves to protect their hands from the barbed wire fencing that surrounded the camp. These gloves were found in and around Cowra POW camp after the breakout on 5 August 1944

Guards began firing shots into the groups of prisoners.

Privates Ben Hardy and Ralph Jones of the 22nd Garrison Battalion forced their way through a group of prisoners to get to the camp's Vickers machine gun. They were knifed and clubbed by prisoners. Both men died, but the Japanese were unable to get the gun working. Hardy and Jones were posthumously awarded the George Cross (GC) for their bravery.

Another guard from the 22nd Garrison Battalion, Private Charles Shepherd, was stabbed by a prisoner and died.

Lieutenant Harry Doncaster, 19th Australian Infantry Training Battalion, was killed later when he was trying to catch a group of escapees.

Another 3 guards were injured.



Private O Treacy of the 22nd Garrison Battalion in the guard tower of "A" Compound at the 12th Australian Prisoner of War and Internees Camp, Cowra, 7 February 1944

Hundreds of Japanese prisoners escaped, and a huge search of the Cowra district followed.

The outbreak made news around the country, with major and small-town newspapers reporting the mass breakout. On 7 August 1944, *The Sydney Morning Herald* made the story front-page news.

In Melbourne, *The Argus* newspaper reported that Cowra residents heard of the escape at 7 am Saturday morning, 5 hours after the breakout. Farmers helped with the search. Many prisoners were found hiding in the countryside around Cowra.

Siblings Margaret and Bruce Weir were schoolchildren at the time of the breakout. They recalled meeting some of the escapees. Three Japanese internees turned up at their farmhouse, looking for food.

"There was my Mum calmly pouring tea and being the perfect hostess, as always, and chatting away to these strange looking gentlemen, all dressed alike, in their maroon coloured prison clothes, and all wearing old felt hats which we later suspected they had found in our shearing shed. They finished their meal and thanked my mother, and then they just sauntered off down towards the creek, where they were resting when the army arrived to recapture them."

Margaret was invited to the family home of one escapee some 40 years later. Her mother had given tea and scones to the Japanese man.

Bruce found an escapee while out rabbit hunting. The prisoner was lying so still that the Cowra schoolboy thought him dead. He did not worry about telling anyone what he had found until that evening.

The Argus reported that no homes in the area were broken into, and no civilians were hurt.

Within 9 days, over 300 Japanese had died or been wounded, and some 300 were recaptured.



Dead bodies lie outside the barbed wire of Cowra POW camp, with the escapees' blankets still hanging on the fence

After the breakout

Discipline at the camp was tightened after the breakout. All the guards' leave was cancelled for 6 weeks afterwards, according to Sergeant Ashley Cooper.

The Japanese prisoners were split up and sent to other camps.



Burial of 4 Australian soldiers killed in the Cowra prison camp breakout, August 1944

Reconciliation

In 1952, Cowra RSL began caring for the graves of the Japanese POWs who lost their lives during the breakout.

Branch president, Albert Oliver, was also instrumental in raising money for a commemorative Japanese garden in Cowra during his term as town mayor.

In a public move towards reconciliation between Japan and Australia, in 1964, the Australian Government opened:

- Cowra Japanese Garden
- Cowra (Japanese) War Cemetery.

The 75th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout was commemorated in 2019. The day included wreath-laying ceremonies, Japanese religious ceremonies, speakers and an art exhibition.

There have also been many visits between both nations. Several books, non-fiction and fiction, have also been published on the subject.



"Kamikaze" is a Japanese word translating to "divine wind." Most famously, it refers to the suicide attacks conducted by Japanese military aviators during World War II, who deliberately crashed explosive-laden planes into Allied naval vessels



RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH

Your RSL