

THE VOICE

August 2009 Edition

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Youth Ambassador Program

In July, grandchildren of Korean War Veterans from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK, Columbia, and Thailand, plus South Korea took part in the first ever Youth Ambassadors for Peace camp, held in Korea by the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs. Of the Australian grandchildren attending, five were those of KVAA members (four from Victoria and one from Queensland).

The flights from all overseas attendees arrived at Gimhae International Airport in Busan on Wednesday, July 1. The Youth Ambassadors were housed in Busan at the Arpina Youth Hostel, a hotel complete with athletic facilities and expansive grounds. On day two, the ambassadors attended an orientation ceremony at Nurimaru APEC House. (Nuri means 'world' and 'maru' means summit). This centre was built specially to accommodate the 2005 APEC world summit which was attended by the premiers of 21 leading world nations.



A group shot of the Australian contingent.

From there the Youth Ambassadors travelled to the UN Memorial Cemetery to visit the graves of Korean War fallen and the UN Wall of Remembrance. After dinner, the ambassadors attended a lecture by a professor from the Republic of Korea Naval Academy, who gave a broad perspective on the significance of the Korean War; what was prevented, what was achieved and what it meant for the world.

Next was a visit to Geojedo, an island better known to some as Koje-do, the centre for housing prisoners of war during the Korean conflict. Not much survives from the old camp, though the barrack buildings are intact and house relics from those times. There is also a huge diorama that recreates

(continues on page 13)



Associate Member

International Federation of Korean War Veterans
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
Australia & Korea Veterans Assoc. Sunshine Coast Inc
Korea War Veterans Association of NSW

THE VOICE

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Editorial Disclaimer

Articles in *The Voice* are printed on the understanding that, unless stated, they are the original works of the contributors or authors. The editor reserves the right to reject, edit, abbreviate, rewrite or rearrange, any item submitted for publication. The view of the contributing authors are not necessarily those of the Association, the editor or publishers of *The Voice*.

President's Report

With the depth of winter upon us, I trust your aches and pains are minimal. Take care until the warmer weather arrives. The annual ceremony held at the Korean Church of Melbourne on June 21st was well attended. The Reverend Hamish Joo and his congregation were once again excellent hosts.

After a memorable and moving Service in the Church we were served refreshments by our hosts and later a beautiful gift was presented to each Australian family. I feel that the friendship and generosity of the congregation of the Korean Church shows that peace and harmony still exists. If only it existed world wide.

There was a new Korean Church dedicated on Saturday, July 11th. The Reverend Chang-Bae Byun was inducted as the first Minister. A number of KVAA Inc. members attended this most impressive ceremony, and again we received the warm and sincere welcome that the Korean Community always extends us. During the refreshments provided later we mingled with the congregation of three other churches who came to support the new Minister. Situated in Werribee, the new church should prove a wonderful asset for the people of the western suburbs. The Reverend Chang-Bae Byun has our best wishes in creating a prosperous and viable church for his congregation.

On the 23th to 25th of October each year, Korean War veterans from various organizations meet in Canberra for a memorial ceremony for departed comrades. This year we are staying at the Crestwood Gardens Motor Inn in Narrabundah. Friday October 23rd is meet-and-greet time at the Harmonie German Club

(continues on page 6)

South Korea Remembers...

It may seem strange to many in the West that the South Koreans commemorate the start of the war that ravaged their country from end to end rather than its conclusion. But then, it never has reached a definitive end, finishing in a ceasefire and stalemate, and not a peace-treaty; a point driven home by the current sabre-rattling of the North and the (empty, we hope) threat to resume the conflict.

The [South Korean] Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs held a stirring remembrance service on the 25 June in Seoul to commemorate all who served, and those who fell, in the Korean War. Huge flags of all of the 22 United Nations Allies were displayed in the new park in Seoul Plaza during memorial services in downtown Seoul.

The program was held under the auspices of His Excellency, Kim Yang, Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs. The main speaker for the event was South Korea's Prime Minister, Han Seung-soo. Prime Minister Han is the highest ranking official in the Korean Government, next to President Lee Myung-bak. He also is chairman of the newly formed 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Commission, a large government body that includes 15 Cabinet Ministers and officials from many principal government agencies.

The Commission is planning, and will put into effect, a wide range of commemoration programs, including a grand launch

ceremony in Seoul on June 25, 2010. One program that has been finalized involves the Ministry of National Defense Joint Military Task Force for the recovery of remains of servicemen killed in the Korean War.

The task force was organized in 2000 during the 50th Commemoration of the Korean War period. The Task Force has just agreed to begin searching for remains of Fallen within the Demilitarized Zone for the first time, beginning in 2010.



The giant flags each measure 20x30 feet. Shown between them is an Honour Guard bearing the flags of all of the nations. The park is in front of a huge façade that screens the Old Seoul City Hall, the summit tower of which is seen in background.

Korean Church Service Report

Just over 70 Australian veterans, wives and family attended the annual Korean Church Service on Sunday, 21 June. Also present were the Honourable Alan Griffin, the Minister for Veteran's Affairs, and the relatives of John Longmore who was KIA in Korea: two daughters (Elsie and Beth), one granddaughter (Darlene), one great granddaughter (Kim), and one great great granddaughter (Sophie). [See photos on page 5]. As usual the choir and musicians were first rate, as was the dinner which followed the service, and not to forget the gift basket those attending left with. But the service was primarily a sombre occasion, as reflected in the words of KVAA President, Vic Dey, delivered after the Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession:

As we gather here today, to pay homage to the service personal from the 22 countries who paid the supreme Sacrifice during the Korean War; and also to those who have since passed on. Let us also remember the innocent civilian population who were caught up in the middle of the warfare between the opposing sides. They obviously suffered great privation and devastation to a degree that we can only imagine. So our prayers go out to all those who suffered.

Here in Australia, we have a number of very special memorial days during a calendar year: Anzac Day in April, Remembrance Day in November; our own Association Commemoration Day next month at the Shrine of Remembrance and of course today's Ceremony.

This gives us another opportunity, together with our hosts, to reflect and remember our loved ones, and those mates who are not here with us today. 59 years may seem like a lifetime but it is up to us to preserve and revere their memory. May God Bless them.

On behalf of our wives, our Widows and my fellow Veterans, I express our gratitude to the Reverend Joo, the Reverend Wooton and the congregation of the Korean Church of Melbourne for the warmth of your welcome and the hand of friendship you extend to each and everyone of us. We thank you all most sincerely for that friendship and the support you have extended to us. I assure you it is deeply appreciated.

KVAA Inc. Events 2009

January 28	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre, 600 Little Collins St. Melbourne.
January 31	Korean picnic.
February 25	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre followed by BBQ.
March 25	Annual General Meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
March 29	St Paul's Cathedral: Memorial service 1400 hours followed by refreshments at the Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
April 22	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
April 25	ANZAC Day parade.
May 27	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
June 21	Korean Church service: 10am at the Korean Church of Melbourne
June 24	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
July 26	Cease fire parade: Gather 1230 hours at the Shrine of Remembrance. Service: 1330 hours followed by refreshments at Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
July 29	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
August 26	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
Sept. 30	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre followed by BBQ.
October 28	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
Nov. 25	General meeting: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre.
December 2	Christmas luncheon. Details to be announced in <i>The Voice</i> . No general meeting in December.
Note:	Committee meetings: start 1000 hours at Stella Maris. General meetings: start 1100 hours. Dates are subject to change; however, members will be duly notified.

Out & About

In the 'better late than never' category...



The Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, is thrilled to meet KVAAC committeeman, Keith Langdon (right) at the MCG, ANZAC Day.

Memorial dedication at Bannockburn in April...no, not that campaign (England v Scotland, circa 1314). This monument at Bannockburn (near Geelong, Victoria) is dedicated to those who served in the post-1945 conflicts and peace-keeping operations.

Korean Church Service (21 June 2009).



Notices

Navy Bereavement Pin

The Navy Bereavement Pin has been commissioned and may be worn by any family member of Permanent or Reserve Navy personnel who died during their period of service. The pin is a distinctive 20mm gold-plated lapel pin emblazoned with the Royal Australian navy crest encompassed by a wreath. To apply for the pin a Navy Bereavement pin nomination form has to be completed. For further details:

Phone: 02 6266 2285

E-mail: NavyBereavementPin@defence.gov.au
or write to

The Director of Military Administration - Navy
CP47-040, Campbell Park Offices
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Andrew Salmon Wants YOU!

Author and journalist, Andrew Salmon, is working on a follow-up prequel to *To the Last Round* (see page 13) tentatively titled *Year of the Tiger: The Commonwealth Versus Communism, 1950*. This book will deal with the first British and Commonwealth troops to fight in Korea – the men of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, the Middlesex Regiment, the Royal Australian Regiment and 41 Commando Royal Marines. He is interested in contacting 3rd RAR veterans to conduct interviews – by letter, email or telephone. If you can help, contact the editor and I'll provide contact details.

Legacy Needs You

Legacy Week 30 August - 5 September 2009

Spare a few hours during Legacy

Week to help with the sale of badges.

Telephone 1800 LEGACY or 1800 534 229

or visit www.legacy.com.au

Walter Mills

Did you know WO1 Walter Mills 2/920 (NX 176559) 3RAR (passed away 25 May). If you did, Vic Dey would like to hear from you.

Urgent Reminder

Don't forget to fill out and send in your response to the *Proposed Agenda for Unity* from the last issue of *The Voice*. It is important that all members have their say in this vital matter. To be valid, your answer must reach us by the 14th September.

President's Report (from page 3)

next door.

On Saturday 24th, at midday, there will be a Memorial Service at the Australian Korean War Memorial, and in the evening, a banquet in the Harmonie German Club starting at 6.30pm. Dinner will be served at 7pm.

On Sunday 25th a bus will be provided to visit three locations: the old Parliament House, the National Museum, and the Australian War Memorial. After breakfast on the 26th we depart for our respective homes.

Accommodation and breakfasts, meet-and-greet food, and the bus, are all included in the price which is: \$580 a double, and \$290 a single. Veterans, widows and family members wishing to attend this memorable occasion should contact the Hon. Secretary, Mrs Heather Wilson, on 02 4297 0921 or fax 02 4297 2102.

Bookings close on September 30th. You may meet up with old friends and also make new ones. You can be assured of a warm and sincere welcome. I have found that the friendship, freely given and received by all present over these three days, is a truly rewarding experience. Looking forward to meeting old friends and making new ones.

Take care.

* * * *

KVAA Inc. Minutes Available

Any member can request a copy of the Minutes of KVAA Inc. Monthly General Meetings by notifying the Secretary.

Tulip Festival

Turkish Weekend (September 19-20)

Contrary to popular belief, the tulip is of Turkish origin, not northern European, and the Turks held the first tulip festival 400 years ago. The annual Tesselaar Tulip Festival's *Turkish Weekend* is a showcase of Turkish culture, with folk dancers and musicians, belly dancing, calligraphy, other cultural interests, delicious food, and more (including half a million tulips of various colours).

Tesselaar Tulip Farm, 10am to 5pm

357 Monbulk Road, Silvan, Victoria

Melways Map 123 B5

www.tulipfestival.com.au

Phone: 03 9737 7722

Adults: \$16 (Concession: \$12)

For group booking, phone ahead.

The Colombian Contribution

by Geoff Guilfoyle

In 1950, the Colombian Army consisted of 15,000 men and its purpose was primarily internal security. On 14 November that year, the government of President Laureano Gomez officially responded to the UN call for troops to counter the North Korean invasion of the South by creating the *1st Infantry Battalion Colombia* with 1,036 enlisted men and 43 officers. After training for several months near Bogota, the capital, by a special U.S. Army advisory team, the newly formed unit sailed for Korea on May 21, 1951, arriving at Pusan on 16 June 1951. After six weeks of advanced training, the battalion (officially given the clunky designation of BI-COL) was assigned to General William Hoge's *IX Corps* and deployed on the Wyoming Line.

The Colombian's first combat experience came on Colombian Independence Day on 7 August when a patrol led by Captain Alvaro Tovar came under heavy rifle and mortar fire five kilometres north of the main line, pinning part of the patrol for three hours before it could be extracted. On 12 October, *IX Corps* launched an offensive in the Sonbyok Valley with BI-COL among the assault battalions. During the operation, the Colombians flanked and overran a Chinese company at bayonet point and continued to attack until the 22nd. For this performance, the battalion received a US Presidential Unit Citation.

As winter settled in, the battalion alternated between the main line and rear reserve. In both positions they encountered a different enemy: intense cold. Snow and subfreezing temperatures were new to most men of the battalion and frostbite a constant menace. Despite this, patrolling continued.

On New Year's Day, 1952, a 30-man patrol into no man's land on the Kumsong front led to a running battle with a Chinese detachment in and around a snow covered and ruined Korean village. Covering fire from the US *24th Division's* artillery allowed the Colombians to eventually withdraw, leaving four dead behind (later recovered).

On 21 June 1952, the Colombian battalion was ordered to seize Hill 400 in the Kumwha Iron Triangle area. A 70-man detachment from *Company A* led by Lt. Mario Bernal moved by night, undetected, reaching the summit of the hill at 5:00 where they encountered 400 enemy entrenched infantry, vastly more than they were told to expect. The Colombians attacked and after a struggle ejected the occupiers.

The communists launched a number of unsupported infantry counterattacks, all beaten back. The last assault, this time supported by a mortar and artillery, forced the Colombians to withdraw at the cost of four dead and double that injured. The Colombians prided themselves on never leaving a fallen soldier behind. However, this time two of the dead remained on the battlefield, a blow to the morale of the troops.

October 1952 saw BI-COL join other UN troops in a general advance, gaining three kilometres in the first day against moderate resistance. The battalion seized and held Hoegogae, a strategic hill near the heavily defended city of Kumsong which checked enemy infiltration and provided a firm base for patrols. Chinese counterattacks were beaten off and the hill handed over to ROK units on 15 November.

In early February 1953, BI-COL left the front line to prepare for Operation Barbula: the assault on Hill 180, near 'Old Baldy' (Hill 266) and Hill 255, soon to gain infamy as Pork Chop Hill. It commenced on 10 March with a night attack. Again, the numbers of defenders was underestimated and again the Colombians forced them from their position after a hard fight at the cost of eight dead, eight missing and 46 wounded. The Colombians discovered an elaborate system of trenches and bunkers with underground barracks for over 200 troops. This position taken, the Colombian battalion was shifted across to Old Baldy charged with defending the hill. It did so with only three of its four rifle companies available,

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A Colombian soldier disembarking at Pusan.

D Company having been sent on another mission. Ominously, some 1,500 Chinese artillery shells slammed into the Colombian positions each day from 13 March to 23 March. Clearly a major Chinese offensive was brewing.

The storm broke on the night of March 23. Under the cover of a 8,000 round artillery barrage, the Chinese 67th Division assaulted the US infantry regiment holding Port Chop Hill. Simultaneously, the 1st Battalion of the Chinese 141st Division attacked the Colombian battalion on Old Baldy.

The Chinese slammed into and overran both *B Company* and *C Company* then the battalion headquarters, though a counterattack regained this position. Captain Augusto Bahamon Amatt and *A Company*, though hard pressed, managed to hold out. A US infantry company arrived to help shore up the position but also came under heavy pressure.

Although their companies were shattered and scattered, the soldiers of *B* and *C Company* continued to fight in small squads, holding whatever defensive position they could against overwhelming odds with limited ammunition and no support. The battle raged throughout the night. Despite repeated requests for reinforcement, with Pork Chop Hill also under heavy attack, no further troops could be spared.

Corporal Joe Scheuber of the US 31st Infantry who fought on Pork Chop gives a stark account of the chaos that enveloped both hills: *We just got into our foxholes on the finger of Pork Chop when enemy mortar and artillery hit us. To our right, more incoming rounds. Then we saw Chinese behind us and realized we were surrounded. We fell back to the trench line at the top of the hill, but the Chinese had reached it first. Hand-to-hand fighting broke out. There was a tremendous amount of noise. I got nicked in the arm and my helmet got shot off. I worked my way down the hill, killing a Chinese soldier with a grenade. I ended up in a shell hole the remainder of the night, as the enemy artillery lasted most of the night.*

After nine hours of fighting the battle slackened and relief troops, finally dispatched, fought their way up Old Baldy to rescue and evacuate the survivors of BI-COL who were still under heavy artillery fire.

Fighting gradually died down as the Chinese reinforced the newly taken Old Baldy, resupplied their troops, and prepared to assault their next objective – Pork Chop Hill.

Nearly 100 Colombians died on Old Baldy with a similar number wounded. Of the 92 M.I.A., thirty ended up prisoners, with the rest presumed dead. It was the bloodiest day the Colombians suffered during the Korean War.

Reorganised, the Colombian battalion stayed in the line until the end of April then went into reserve.

Four Into One

The *1st Battalion Colombia* was actually four battalions, each arriving in Korea to relieve the previous incumbent. The benefit of this system is that more Colombians received training than would have had replacements came in the form of individual soldiers. The drawback made itself felt in the struggle for Old Baldy when the Chinese struck not at the combat hardened *1st Battalion Colombia*, but at its trained but relatively green replacement whose first real taste of combat came with the taking of the hill on 10 March. The *1st Battalion Colombia* was replaced by the *2nd* in July 1952; the *2nd* by the *3rd* in November 1952, and the *3rd* by the *4th* in June 1953. It stayed in Korea until October 1954.

Friend or Foe?

Some Colombians seeking shelter from the heavy shelling in the bunkers on Old Baldy were greeted by a group of orientals already there. Their hosts even gave them cigarettes. When the fire was lifted, the former inhabitants left. It was only later that the Colombians found that their involuntary hosts were not friendly ROK troops, but PLA soldiers.

Back on the front line on 28 May, they continued as before with mainly hill defence and patrols. Although it suffered casualties, it saw no heavy action before the war ended.

During its time in Korea, the Colombian Battalion suffered 163 combat deaths and 448 wounded, earned five campaign streamers and a US Presidential Unit Citation, and individual soldiers won a total of 18 Silver Stars and 25 Bronze Stars. The training and combat the Colombians received in Korea was a major factor in the growing professionalism of the Colombian Army.

This piece is based primarily on a synthesis of *The Colombian Battalion in the Korean War* by Daniel A Fournie and *From Bogota to Old Baldy: Colombia's Contribution* by Les Peate, with additional material from minor sources.

We Were Not Ready

(Part One)

by Alan Beck

ex-RAAF (Japan / Korea 1951-52)

All Packed Up

The final week of June 1950 saw the departure of RAAF No. 77 Squadron in its final stages. All P51D Mustang fighters and squadron personnel were ready for loading or embarking on the naval vessel designated to take the squadron home. The 24th was the last day in Japan, and that night, party time at each mess at RAAF Base Iwakuni. It was a special occasion for another reason as well, being the first return to Australia for the squadron since its formation in 1942.

The squadron's duty officer, probably bleary-eyed and hung-over, took an early morning phone call on the 25th from the US Fifth Air Force HQ in Tokyo. The message was simple: stand by and wait for further orders. The reason why sobered everyone: the surprise attack by North Korean forces on the unprepared South. Even though departure hour was near and closing fast, the USAF still officially controlled squadron flying operations, and packed for departure or not, that meant 77 Squadron.

The United Nations acted immediately after the invasion by issuing Resolution No. 82 on June 25. It condemned North Korean aggression and insisted that their troops immediately withdraw behind the 38th Parallel.

North Korea ignored the Resolution.

The UN followed it two days later with Resolution 83 which, in part, called on member nations to furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and restore internal peace and security. The Australian Government quickly responded and committed two Royal Australian naval ships and the RAAF's No. 77 Fighter squadron to the conflict.

For No. 77 Squadron, the prospect of going home ended in disappointment. It didn't linger. The squadron was about to go to war, and that meant inevitable uncertainty, loss, grief and sorrow. The first operational flight took place just seven days later, on 2 July.

The First 100 Days

To return all squadron aircraft to flying condition as quickly as possible, pilots worked with maintenance personnel on the tarmac preparing their planes for war. Quickly readied, eight Mustangs stood on the tarmac ready to engage any North Korean aircraft approaching Iwakuni Air Base.

On July 2, under operational control of the US 5th Air Force, the squadron flew its first mission from Iwakuni. Our Mustangs were given the task of escorting a flight of US C-47 Dakota med-evac aircraft over South Korea. It ended in frustration when the Dakotas and Mustangs failed to rendezvous, forcing the Mustangs to return. Matters improved when, later the same day, the squadron flew cover for USAF B26 Invader light bombers and high cover for USAF B29s on their bombing missions. Next day, the role of No. 77 Squadron changed to air/ground support. It was in this role that the squadron won the reputation and respect for high performance and reliability.

Leaving Iwakuni early in the morning our Mustangs flew over the strait separating Japan and South Korea on their first sortie against communist ground forces. Landing at K2 airbase at Taegu (100km NW of Pusan) for re-fuelling and re-arming, they commenced their second attack, returning to K2 as necessary for the remainder of the day. This arrangement required that the Squadron's C-47 Dakota also fly daily to Taegu carrying the maintenance personnel required to carry out the servicing of the aircraft between attacks. Late each afternoon, the Mustangs returned to Iwakuni accompanied by the C-47 and the maintenance team.

Early next morning, the cycle restarted. This arrangement continued until 20 October 1950, a period of just over a hundred days.

81 Wing

The presence of the RAAF in Japan began immediately following the cessation of WWII in the Pacific. It existed as 81 Wing which comprised a number of squadrons, its duties more guarding the peace than fighting a war. When the conflict in Korea started, No. 77 Squadron was the last remaining flying unit of

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We Were Not Ready (from previous page)

81 Wing left in Japan, and it required an immediate move to a war footing.

Despite the generally excellent results, this unexpected re-activation was not without initial mistakes and inefficiencies. In the drive to make the Wing more effective, No. 77 Squadron was permanently relocated to Korea with the C-47s removed from the Squadron and formed into a new force: No. 30 Communications Unit. This required the adding of additional C-47 Dakotas. These came from No. 38 Transport Squadron (Malaysia) and No. 86 Transport Wing (Australia), taking the number of Dakotas to eight.

These changes meant acquiring additional ground staff. The maintenance personnel of No. 491 Maintenance Squadron and No. 30 Communications Unit now served with No. 77 Squadron in Korea as replacements when the squadron's regular ground crews returned to Japan for R&R. Nearly all RAAF personnel in the various units at Iwakuni spent at least 30 days posted into No. 77 Squadron in Korea under this arrangement.

Though the senior officers tried to introduce this new operational platform as quickly as possible, the Wing remained operating as 81 Wing until 20 October 1950, when it became 91 Wing with the purpose of supporting No. 77 Squadron and Commonwealth land forces in Korea.

The new 91 Wing comprised the following units: Wing Headquarters, No. 391 Base Squadron, No. 491 Maintenance Squadron, No. 77 Fighter Squadron (primarily P51 Mustang), and No. 30 Communications Unit (Dakota transport).

No. 77 Squadron ended its Mustang days on 6 April 1951 when the squadron returned to Iwakuni for conversion to the new British Gloster Meteor jet fighter. It was back in action over Korea in July.

To the Last Round

On 22 April, 1951, there was silence on Imjin River front, around 40 miles north of Seoul, where some 4,000 U.N. (mostly British) dug-in troops under British command kept watch. This was the 29th infantry brigade drawn from three regiments — the Glosters, the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and the Royal Ulster Rifles supported by a tank and artillery regiment and reinforced by a crack Belgian battalion. The brigade's position anchored the American flank and covered a key invasion route to the south. Unknown to them, 27,000 Chinese troops, the vanguard of a 305,000-strong force were preparing to attack. It was the beginning of the largest communist offensive of the war.

The Chinese surged along a 40-mile front with the 63rd army descending on the 29th brigade's strong points. Though outnumbered 7-1, the 29th brigade held fast until cut off after four days desperate fighting. The order to break out came, and the brigade did, along a valley swarming with the enemy.

For the 29th brigade's battalion of Glosters, it was too late. Surrounded miles inside enemy territory, they made a last stand on a hill, fighting until they ran out of ammunition before trying to break free. Few escaped. Most spent the rest of the war in North Korean concentration camps.

Of the 29th brigade's 4,000 men, 1,091 were killed, wounded or captured and the battalion of Glosters effectively annihilated and written off. Ranks proved no defence (for once it could truly be said that the officers fought alongside the men). Of the commanders of the four infantry brigades, one was wounded, one captured and one killed. Even the artillery came under direct infantry attack. Each gun fired approximately 1000 rounds, about the same number as at El Alamein. The death toll was greater than the combined losses in every British campaign since WWII (Malaya, Borneo, Suez, Northern Ireland, the Falklands, and [to date] Iraq or Afghanistan) yet the battle at the Imjin is ignored in popular culture (as part of a wider ignorance about Korea).

In his book, *To the Last Round: The Epic British Stand on the Imjin River, Korea 1951*, Andrew Salmon attempts to redress the balance with the first comprehensive account of the bloodiest battle since WW2 fought by British troops. The author, a Seoul-based British reporter, interviewed veterans from all brigade units over a two year period and on three continents.

Though out in the U.K. (Aurum London ISBN: 9781845134082) and available from Amazon.co.uk, it hasn't yet received a general release in Australia (as of writing). However, it can be ordered via Booktopia at <http://www.booktopia.com.au>, hardcover for A\$54.

An Accurate Summation

Commander Minoru Genda, who had done most of the planning for the December 1941 Pearl Harbor raid, was known throughout the Japanese Navy as a brilliant staff officer who was never at a loss for words. This was true even during the worst of times. Genda was on the bridge of the aircraft carrier Akagi on 4 June 1942 at the battle of Midway when it, along with Kaga and Soryu, were reduced to blazing wrecks by US dive bombers. This was a severe blow to Genda, who had planned the aerial operations at Midway which were partly responsible for the situation in which he now found himself. Genda was joined on the bridge by his friend Mitsuo Fuchida, the air leader who had commanded the air strikes at Pearl Harbor but who was now weakened from an emergency appendectomy. The two old friends looked at each other for a few moments. Then Genda gave an accurate assessment of the situation, commenting, "I think we goofed." (From Strategy & Tactics magazine, No.102)

Monster Bat Raffle

Er, no, the KVAA isn't raffling a giant mutant flying rat-like animal with membranous wings. Our bat is much more cute and cuddlesome, especially if you are a cricket fan and, no, not that sort of cricket, as in the insect. I mean the noble game in which a flannelled fool attempts to hit with an overgrown toothpick a rock-solid ball hurled at him at 100 kph by an opposing flannelled fool. For any American, Canadian or Japanese reading this, picture baseball on tranquillisers and played, in its traditional form, over five days (and often ending in a draw).

The bat is signed by all the members of the 2009 Australian and New Zealand Test teams comes to the KVAA Inc. from Mark Slater (via his great uncle, KVAA member, Charlie Slater). Tickets are available from Tom Parkinson and are \$2 each. The proceeds go to a worthy cause: namely the KVAA Inc.

The raffle will be drawn by a neutral party at the Stella Maris Seafarers Centre at the conclusion of the 28 October general meeting. The winner will be notified and the result published in *The Voice*.

Tickets are limited so get in early.



Please cut along the dotted line

<p style="text-align: center;">(Please Print)</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Phone Number:</p> <p>Number of Tickets Required:</p> <p>5 10 15 20 Other:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> </p>	 <h2 style="margin: 0;">RAFFLE TICKET</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Order Form</h3> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Organised by the Korea Veterans Association of Australia Inc. Registered Charity Number: 56487</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0;">Prize: Commonwealth Bank Series Australia v New Zealand 2009 cricket bat</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Signed by all the Australian team under Ricky Ponting and the New Zealand team led by Daniel Vettori.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;"> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: small;">Drawn 28 October 2009 Winner notified Result printed in <i>The Voice</i></p> </div> <p style="margin: 10px 0; font-size: large; font-weight: bold;">Ticket \$2.00</p>
<p>Please ensure your name is shown on any cheque or money order sent to: Tom Parkinson, KVAA Inc., 627 Bell Street, Pascoe Vale, Victoria 3044</p>	

Chaplain's Corner

As you have most probably heard, I had the privilege of accompanying the Premier's Spirit of ANZAC Prize tour for Year 10 students this year. A tour which encompassed both Korea and Turkey, and Gallipoli in particular. The Korea leg of the journey was rather sentimental for me – it being my fourth return trip since the war. And imagine my surprise to have the honour of being asked to conduct the dawn service at the Korean National War Museum in Seoul on ANZAC Day. A most impressive ceremony which was attended by dignitaries from many nations.

Another very emotional part of the trip occurred at Gallipoli upon the site of the three fateful Krithia battles. But first, a little background information.

For some years now, I have conducted an anniversary service for the 2nd Battle of Krithia at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance each 8th May – this battle, for the most part, having involved the Victorian 5th and 6th Battalions whose successors are now combined as 5/6 RVR. (I was commissioned in the 6th Battalion, Royal Melbourne Regiment, and was later a company commander with 5 RVR).

Back to the story.

On this tour I conducted a memorial service on the 6th May at the Krithia War Cemetery which is situated in the middle of the scene of the Krithia battles and which is home to many graves of 5th and 6th battalion personnel. One of our group, Bruce Scates is the Professor of History at Monash University and he is a specialist in matters pertaining to Gallipoli.

Just prior to the service he gave a graphic account of how an English general, whose name I would rather forget, sent three battalions over open ground against the Turks, who were well dug in and prepared, only to see them massacred by withering machine gun fire. A few days later he committed the 5th and 6th Battalions in the same fashion with the same heart-breaking result. As the Australians commenced their advance, the Turkish colonel, who had a great respect for them, stood up in full view and cried, "Stop! I

want no more slaughter." But they did not retire – they continued the attack – and they suffered accordingly. To make matters worse that same general committed another group to a similar fate a week later.

I then commenced the service – with a lump in my throat and tears in my eyes.

A lovely side of the story is that on the night prior to all this, we were guests of the Mayor of Gallipoli at a dinner which was conducted at a school in Canakkale. This school has a strong affinity with Mount Clear College in Ballarat, one of whose teachers was a chaperone on our tour. And many of the students and their teachers from Canakkale were our guests at the Krithia service.

With the help of an interpreter I was able to conduct matters with due reverence and mutual respect for both Australian and Turkish soldiers who took part in the battle. A unique service indeed! Appropriate photos together with a transcript of the service are to be placed in the 5/6 Battalion Museum.

More stories will follow in later journals.

With every blessing, John Brownbill.



John Brownbill RFD KSJ

Turn Towards Busan

The (South Korean) Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA) advises that the *Turn Towards Busan* program will again take place this year with a ceremony at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan on November 11, at 11 am. A small number of Veterans from the 11 nations whose Fallen are buried within the UN Cemetery will be invited to participate. Last year, Tom Parkinson and Brian Price represented Australian Korean War veterans. As was also the case last year, relatives of the Fallen from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom also will take part in the ceremony. (The MPVA pays for the candidate's air fare and hotel room, meals and ground transportation expenses while in Korea for a six-day period, so if you think you are eligible, keep your passport handy – but be warned, places will be limited). More details of the ceremony in the next *Voice*.

one of the Koje-do prisoner of war compounds as it existed at the time. Less historical, though interesting in its own right, was a tour of the Samsung Heavy industries ship building facility that now dominates the island.

After three days in Busan, the group moved to Seoul and the National Cemetery (established 1956) where in front of the Hyeon Chung Tap shrine, after placing a floral tribute, they burnt incense in tribute to all Korean War dead and especially Korean servicemen with no known graves. Inside the shrine are 102,000 tablets engraved with details of Korean servicemen who lost their lives, but whose bodies were never returned.



Helen Ahrens from Australia and Gabrielle Morales Gutierrez of Colombia place a Wreath of Remembrance at the Altar on the pavilion on behalf of all the Youth Ambassador for Peace members from seven different nations.

seven nations leave, not only with some real appreciation of just what their grandfathers and the people of Korea went through during the conflict, and the cost of the war in lives both civilian and military, but also the recovery of the South and the resilience of its people. They may also understand just how precarious the ceasefire is; that the war has never officially ended, and contrast the South Korea that their grandfathers helped make possible with the decrepit communist state to the north.

No trip to South Korea would be complete without a visit to the DMZ. Unfortunately, because of the size of the group, they couldn't take up positions at one of the more active ROK outposts overlooking features like Hill 355 or the Hook. They did, however, make it to Outpost Dora which overlooks the DMZ. Also visited was Invasion Tunnel 3 which extends from somewhere in North Korea to its exit just 435 meters south of the DMZ and roughly four kilometres south of Panmunjeom. To reach *Invasion Tunnel 3* requires climbing down a deep graded entry passageway to reach the main tunnel some 73 meters below the surface.

After six adventurous days, the Youth Ambassadors for Peace camp came to an end. These grandchildren from

Humour

Military Genie

A sergeant-major and two privates are walking through a city park and they find an antique oil lamp. They rub it and a genie comes out in a puff of smoke.

The genie says, "I usually only grant three wishes, so I'll give each of you just one."

"Me first! Me first!" says one of the privates. "I want to be in the Bahamas, driving a speedboat with a gorgeous woman who sunbathes topless."

Poof! He's gone.

"Me next! Me next!" says the second private. "I want to be in Hawaii, relaxing on the beach with a professional hula dancer on one side and a mai tai on the other."

Poof! He's gone.

"You're next," the Genie says to the sergeant-major "You can have anything you want."

The sergeant says, "I want those guys back in the motorpool after lunch."

A Telephone Repairman Joins the Army

A telephone repair man joined the Army. As part of his basic training, he went out on the rifle range. He fired 99 shots at the target, and missed the target with every shot! His Drill Instructor tried to find out why.

"What's the matter with you?" shouted the DI. "Why can't you hit the target? What were you in civilian life?"

"I was a telephone repair man," replied the new recruit, "and I don't know why I can't hit the target. Let me see..."

The man checked his rifle, checked his rifle again, and checked his rifle a third time. He then put his finger in front of the muzzle, pulled the trigger, and blew the end of his finger off!

"Well," the phone man said, writhing in pain, "the bullets are leaving here fine. The trouble must be on the other end!"

Farewells

Keith Cameron
on 27 July 2009
3400221 3Btn

George Lawrence
23971, 3Btn

Dennis T V Pearce
4/12299, 2Btn
on 8 June 2009

Francis Rodgers
on 20 June 2009
3400524, 3Btn

Cyril L (Skip) Constable
on 21 June 2009
4564, 3Btn

Patrick Owens
25014 1 & 2RAR
1952-59 &
RAAOC '59-1972

Condolences to Catherine.

John W Portlock
2400435 A Coy 3RAR

John Oswald Shepherd
on 5 July 2009
2400933 C Coy

Norman Joseph Gregory
5/400100, 3Btn

Merchandise Available

KVAA Inc. pocket badge	\$10.00	\$
KVAA Inc. lapel badge	\$10.00	\$
KVAA Inc. windscreen decal	\$ 5.00	\$
Korean War bumper sticker	\$ 2.50	\$
Korean War map (laminated)	\$ 6.00	\$
Kapypong battle print	\$ 5.00	\$
RAN print: Ships in Korea	\$ 5.00	\$
Korea Veteran caps	\$10.00	\$
Car number plate surrounds (set)	\$10.00	\$
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1 Kent Court, Werribee 3030

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

Correction:

In the last issue of *The Voice*, the reference on page 12 to the last tribute of the day being to another pilot from 77 Squadron, Keith Elwood Clarkson, was incorrect. Lieut. (P) Keith E Clarkson was a Royal Australian Navy pilot, flying with 805 Squadron (Hawker Seafury FB11) embarked on HMAS Sydney. He was killed in action on the 5 November 1951. Thanks to Ron Christie for spotting the error.

Early Peaceniks?



Here's a quick quiz for you. This picture, circa 1952, shows a group of Australian soldiers...

- displaying their contempt for the evil US imperium and lackey Allies for failing to end the war of genocide against the helpless people of North Korea.
- showing off the results of their calligraphy lessons.
- displaying a captured Chinese propaganda banner.

Hint: None of these soldiers is the young Jim Cairns.

For those of you who still can't figure it out, you'll find the answer on Page 15.