

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



It's been good to see a more consistent turnout on Tuesday evenings. Whether it's the great company, the fun of Scrabble or even Glenn's culinary expertise (see picture below), the room has been filled with enthusiastic Scrabblers who can't get enough of the world's best game.



AUSTRALIAN SCRABBLE CHAMPIONSHIP

I have just returned from an adventure in Perth, playing in the Australian Scrabble Titles. You might notice in the report below that there is very little mention of how I went in the competition. Let's just say I'm looking forward to next year's tournament.

Easter was wonderful. The blue skies and balmy weather of Perth were the backdrop to this year's championships. The venue was the rather salubrious Pagoda Hotel, with the large Scrabble auditorium looking out through floor-to-ceiling glass and onto the Swan River. A dream venue!

Three days of competition, with a total of 24 games, proved very challenging. It was very humbling to play Andrew Fisher in my fifth game. Andrew was runner-up in the World Titles last year and yes, I was runner-up in that game, if you really need to ask.



Each evening had its own attraction. On Saturday, Rocky Sharma (an ex-member of our club) allowed me to share his Chivas Regal scotch (a decent fellow is Rocky). On the Sunday, I was treated to a delicious pizza dinner at the home of Lexie Neale's sister-in-law. Some of you might remember Lexie –in the photo above – who visited to our club twice recently. The final evening was the Presentation Dinner at the Pagoda, with lots of regaling and laughter.

On the final night, Russell Honeybun (fittingly from West Australia) was presented with the Championship trophy. As for my own result, well, perhaps next year ...



AFTER THE TITLES

As if Perth wasn't enough, I flew to Hobart straight after the titles where I met my wife and sister for a few days' holiday and also to support one of my students in a public speaking competition.

The magnificent weather followed me from Perth and, never having visited Tasmania before, my breath was taken away by the beauty of the scenery. The hectic pace of Sydney disappeared into the distance and was replaced by peace, serenity... and a lot of fishing. Not by me, who happens to be a Philistine when it comes to the art of angling.



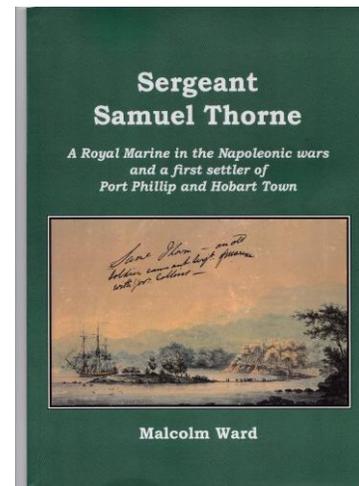
As you can see in the photo, I was relegated to watching Kris and Barb enjoy catching nothing, which seems to be the lot of most fishermen, as far as I can see.



MILITARY MEMORIES

As Anzac Day has just passed us by, I thought it would be timely to include an article or two on the military contribution of some relatives linked to members of our club.

Thanks to Robin for this next story.



My Soldier Ancestor — Sergeant Samuel Thorne (1775-1848) by Robin

'People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors.' Edmund Burke 1729-1797

My three-greats grandfather was born in Somersetshire England. He joined the Royal Marines at age 21, served under Admiral Duncan (no relation) in the Napoleonic wars and was promoted to the rank of sergeant. In 1803 Sam joined Colonel David Collins' expedition to Port Phillip, overseeing Bass Strait against possible French interest. The settlement was not initially a success and Collins received orders from Governor King to proceed to Van Diemen's Land.

Sam served on HMS Calcutta on the trip from England to Port Phillip and then on to Hobart. Aboard ship there were convicts, Royal Marines, the ship's complement and free settlers. All up there were 640 people which included wives and children. Sam continued as a Royal Marine in Hobart guarding convicts. After behaving badly in some unspecified way he was reduced in rank to private. He left the Royal Marines. For a while he was a policeman but for most of his life he was a farmer, a publican and ferry owner. Over the years, his businesses seemed to prosper, fail, recover, and then finally went into bankruptcy.

Sam entered the Hobart debtors' prison in 1836, for how long is not known. We do know he was out of prison in 1848 at the time of his death. Debts and speculation in anticipation of capital gains appear to have combined to lead to Sam's downfall. This is the lesson I have learned from Sam's life.

AND I NEVER KNEW... by Chris

It's amazing what we don't know. My father, Henryk Ostrowski, almost never spoke about his experiences in WWII. Not surprising, as few people actually wanted to remember those awful experiences.

There was one thing Dad told me. When the Allies bombed the perimeter of Auschwitz, the most infamous of all concentration camps, the survivors, including Dad, promised God they would never eat potatoes again as a sign of gratitude that they lived through those times. Of course, potatoes would have been pure gold to people who were so terribly underfed. After telling me that, Dad said "That lasted for three weeks". I'm sure God forgave him!



It wasn't until well after my father had passed away, in 1997, that I found out how important he was. I discovered, through Wikipedia, that he had been a Polish war hero, involved in providing false papers for saboteurs and others seeking to escape the Nazis. He was one of those involved in an underground operation known as "Arsenal", where several key figures (including Dad) were rescued from the Gestapo. Then, an internet search revealed the fact that a Polish movie had been made of Operation Arsenal and when I viewed it in its original Polish language – a struggle, but I managed – I realized how significant he was in the Resistance movement. The most emotional moment came when I found out that Dad had been married to a Jewish girl before he married my mother. Tragically, his first wife did not survive the horrors of Auschwitz.

Most resistance during the war was organized through the Boy Scout movement, and Dad was a major leader in that organisation. In fact, when he finally came to Australia, he

was the head of the Polish scouting movement in this country for over thirty years.



My father never complained about anything. He was the most polite person I've ever known. When he met a lady, he would bow and kiss her hand and he never raised his voice to the four children in our family. He graduated after the war as an agronomist (a pasture expert) and I will always be grateful to him for putting his experiences behind him and coming to Australia, where he spent the rest of his life providing for his family.

SCRABBLE WORDS ENDING IN "-WAR"

While the topic of war is never a pleasant one, there are several interesting Scrabble words ending in "-war".

8-letter words that end in war

interwar

7-letter words that end in war

postwar

antiwar

6-letter words that end in war

prewar

psywar

prowar

nonwar

5-letter words that end in war

jowar

sowar

sewar

AUSTRALIAN RECORDS



Most of us are pleased when we get a game score of 400 or we get three bingos in the one game. To put it all into perspective, here are some all-time records in Scrabble games played in Australia. If it makes you feel slightly inadequate, I apologise!

Highest game score (764) Russell Honeybun.

Highest combined score (1210) Ed Okulicz and Michael McKenna. Ed scored 721, Michael 489.

Most bingos in a game (8) Alastair Richards.

Six players have had five consecutive bingos in a game.

Highest single word (302) for CRAZIEST Carol Hudson. And yes, it was a triple-triple.

Highest non-bingo word (171) for REQUIRED Graeme Lock Lee.

Longest word (14 letters) UN(COMPUTER)ISED Russell Honeybun. COMPUTER was already on the board.

And one all of us can aspire to: Oldest regular tournament player (98 years) Bil Rose. "Bil" is the correct spelling.

And just to make you feel even smaller, this is the board for the world record score in a single competition game, set by Michael Cresta of America. He scored 830 points!



ANAGRAMMER'S DELIGHT

Scrabblers really enjoy rearranging letters in a word, but here are some examples of truly clever examples.

DORMITORY:

When you rearrange the letters:-
DIRTY ROOM

PRESBYTERIAN:

When you rearrange the letters:-
BEST IN PRAYER

DESPERATION:

When you rearrange the letters:-
A ROPE ENDS IT

THE MORSE CODE:

When you rearrange the letters:-
HERE COME DOTS

A DECIMAL POINT:

When you rearrange the letters:-
I'M A DOT IN PLACE

THE EARTHQUAKES:

When you rearrange the letters:-
THAT QUEER SHAKE

ELEVEN PLUS TWO:

When you rearrange the letters:-
TWELVE PLUS ONE

THROUGH THE VALLEY

Our resident thespian, Glenn, is a man of many talents and is appearing this week in the play listed below. Diana Hilly has seen a previous performance by Glenn in another play and was thoroughly entertained, so it augurs well for the one below.

Tuesday May 30th

Wednesday 31st May

Sunday 4th June

8pm

C3 Church Wakehurst Parkway Oxford Falls

The story of David from his acceptance by Saul until his death and his son Solomon becoming King.

