



SAAF Association Port Alfred News



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TALE DRAGGER

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NEXT MEETING AND CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT THE SKI BOAT CLUB ON 27TH NOVEMBER - 12.00 FOR 12.30.

We look forward to seeing you. Please call Hugh at 046 624 1589 or Wally at 046 624 1861 to let us know as to who is attending and who cannot join us. Any apologies can also be communicated to either Hugh or Wally.

WELFARE OF MEMBERS

Sick Bay: Denzil Goosen, Gavin Kendall, Joan Grisdale, Tim Bradbury, James Hoyle and Trevor Underhill.

We hope that your health improves in the very near future and that you are soon back on your feet again.

OBITUARY

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing to higher service of Eileen Moody.

She was 100 years old. Our deepest condolences to her family and friends and we hope that God gives you the strength to get through this difficult time.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES FOR DECEMBER:

1st Martin Allison; 3rd Marianne Fryer; 11th Vanessa Naude; 16th Jean Botma and Roy Reynolds; 17th Tim Bradbury;

Birthdays at this time of year
Should bring good luck and good cheer.
So near to Christmas and New Year
So what, have fun with all those dear.

OLD FRIENDS

Two elderly ladies had been friends for many decades.

Over the years, they had shared all kinds of activities and adventures. Lately, their activities had been limited to meeting a few times a week to play cards.

One day, they were playing cards when one looked at the other and said, "Now don't get mad at me...I know we've been friends for a long time but I just can't think of your name... I've thought and thought, but I just can't remember it. Please tell me what your name is."

Her friend glared at her. For at least three minutes she just stared and glared at her. Finally she said, "How soon do you need to know?"



A CHRISTMAS STORY, BUT NOT BY CHARLES DICKENS.

On December 20, 1943, a miracle happened in the darkest hours of World War II. Just four days before Christmas, two enemies – a German fighter ace and an American bomber pilot – met in the skies over Germany. What they did had not happened before, or since. They decided not to kill one another.

The American's bomber was damaged. The German's fighter was primed for the kill. But when the German's eyes met those of the American pilot, something changed in both men.

Instead of destroying the bomber, the German escorted it out of Germany, to safety.

The two pilots parted with a salute. Then in the late 1980's, as old men, the American and the German searched for one another, re-united and became best friends.

It's the greatest little-known story of World War II.

A book called "A Higher Call" by Adam Makos follows the experiences of these two pilots from different nations – Charlie Brown, the American farm boy turned B-17 pilot – and Franz Stigler, the German airline pilot turned fighter pilot.

Both were good men who never asked for World War II and when their lives collided in the skies over Germany, they were forever changed.

The book's message is controversial but powerful: that enemies can be brothers. It's a war story with a message of peace and hope. It's a true story too, and the kind of story our world needs to hear.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS IN AFRICA



Ethiopian depiction of the birth of Christ

ETHIOPIA

Christmas in Ethiopia is not celebrated on 25 December but on January 7, as most people follow the ancient Julian calendar.

Traditionally referred to as "Ganna," an Ethiopian Christmas typically begins with a day of fasting, followed by church services and then a feast that includes stew, vegetables and sourdough bread. Though most friends and families do not exchange

gifts, communities gather to play games and sports, and enjoy the festivities together before returning to work.



Children dress up for a Christmas play in Ghana.

GHANA

Christmas in Ghana is a well-deserved break, coinciding with the end of the cocoa harvest and beginning on December 1, four weeks before Christmas. Families decorate their homes and neighbourhoods like they do in the US, using lights, candles and sparkly ornaments. For most Ghanaians, it's just the beginning. On Christmas Day, things really kick into full swing, starting with a family meal – usually consisting of goat, vegetables and soup - and followed by a church service for the whole community and a colourful holiday parade.

(Ed's note: One wonders how many people actually celebrate Christmas in these two countries, when a large proportion of people are starving)

THE PSYCHIATRIST AND THE PROCTOLOGIST.

Best friends graduated from medical school at the same time and decided that, in spite of two different specialities, they would open a

practice together to share office space and personnel.

Dr. Smith was the psychiatrist and Dr. Jones was the proctologist; they put up a sign reading:

“Dr. Smith and Dr. Jones: Hysterias and Posteriors.”

The town council was livid and insisted that they change it.

So, the Docs changed it to read: Schizoids and Haemorrhoids.”

This was also not acceptable, so they changed the sign again.

“Catatonics and High Colonics.” – No go.

Next they tried: “Manic Depressives and Anal Retentives.” Thumbs down – again...

Then came: “Minds and Behinds” – still no good.

Another attempt resulted in: “Lost Souls and Butt Holes.” - unacceptable again!

So they tried: “Analysis and Anal Cysts.” – not a chance.

“Nuts and Butts.” – no way.

“Freaks and Cheeks.” - still no good.

“Loons and Moons.” – forget it.

Almost at their wits end, the docs finally came up with:

“Dr. Smith and Dr. Jones – Specializing in: “Odds and Ends.”

Everyone loved it.

(From Irma Jones – courtesy of Wally)

SPRING WAS ONLY YESTERDAY

It was only yesterday that I looked out to see –blackbirds nesting in a hedge and blossom on the tree – daffodils and hyacinths – and now the creepers glow – rose and crimson on the wall. Where did Summer go?

In a flash it came and went. I tried to hold it back – by counting every moment, but it passed and in its track – Autumn weaves a leafy carpet, russet, flame and red – where the golden goblets of the crocuses were spread.

Why does time increase its pace? It should be otherwise. Every year should be longer, but

each one swifter flies... Summers used to linger, now they hurry on their way. Looking back it seems to me that spring was yesterday.

LACEWORK STORY DEPICTS ANGUISH OF WW1

Richard Brooksbank recently told the extraordinary story of his great grandmother, Louise Lienaar Vergauwe, who survived not only the invasion of Belgium by Germany in World War 1, but endured being separated from her children and coping with her anguish by creating six unique pieces of lacework which expressed her anger and resilience as a woman, mother and Belgian citizen.

These six unique pieces of bobbin lace, were made with the use of continuous fine linen thread, no applique, and worked through a 4cm hole in an oil cloth.

Vergauwe taught herself how to make lace and her story is told through the narrative of her daughter, Yvonne Brooksbank Lienaar in her book, "The Story of "Ma's Laces" 1914 – 1918."

Vergauwe was born in 1890 and lived in Antwerp with her husband and two young children when the Germans invaded Belgium on 31 July 1914 at the start of WW1. The Belgian government mobilised its forces and Vergauwe's husband was called up for military duty. Like many others, Vergauwe, a teacher, eventually fled her home with her children, to Rotterdam in the Netherlands. She boarded her children with a sponsor family who safe-guarded them, while she had to return to Belgium as a civil servant. During the escalation of the war and owing to the fact that it was too dangerous to travel over the border, Vergauwe did not see her children for four years and it was during that period that she turned to lace making. Altogether she made six lace pieces, each one depicting an important event of the war.

(From: This England – Patience Strong – courtesy of Wally.)

The first one titled "The Defence of Yser" represented a battle which took place in October 1914 on a long stretch of the Yser River and Yperlee canal in Belgium. The piece of lace depicted a Belgian lion defeating the imperial eagle associated with Germany. The second piece "The Prediction" was in response to the "Deutschland uber alles" dogma being perpetuated throughout Belgium by the German invaders. Vergauwe intricately stitched together a piece of lace with an enraged eagle being immobilised by a bear (Russia), a lion (Belgium), a rooster (France) and the bulldog (England).

During this time she narrowly escaped being charged with high treason when German officers came knocking on her door one evening. She fled with the lace and evaded the German military.

Her third piece, "Belgium bowed but undefeated", depicts a woman who has endured "All" and being supported by a French soldier.

The fourth piece of lace was in response to America entering the war and as a result Germany announcing unrestricted warfare against all shipping even including ocean liners carrying American citizens. Vergauwe created a lace piece depicting the Statue of Liberty with the Stars and Stripes of the American flag stitched into the draping of the statue.

The fifth lace piece depicted King Albert, a Belgian hero at the time, fighting in the trenches with his fellow men. He is illustrated holding a rifle and this lace piece was held by the Belgian royal family for many years.

The sixth piece Vergauwe titled, "Peace" and it was the most important and significant one for her, reflecting when her husband and children returned home.



As this is the last edition of our Newsletter for 2017, we would like to wish you and your families and friends a Blessed and very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year. If you are travelling, we hope that you have a safe journey and a restful holiday.

Editor: Lyn.
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NOTE:

The Editors extend their thanks for all contributions received. Opinions expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Editors or SAAFA National Executive. The Editors reserve the right to amend or reject any editorial matter submitted for publication.

