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*The Official Quarterly Magazine*

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# 5 FIELD AMBULANCE R.A.A.M.C. ASSOCIATION

Welcome to the new look 5 Field Ambulance R.A.A.M.C. Association, the official quarterly magazine for the 5 Field Ambulance Association.

The 5 Field Ambulance Association was formed and has been in operation for almost 100 years (1915), working to help with major tragedies throughout the War-Torn Countries.

The 5 FIELD AMBULANCE R.A.A.M.C. ASSOCIATION is essential reading for everyone concerned about the safety of our troops overseas and up to date with what's happening around the the

various divisions. But apart from being a genuine "Who's Who" and a "What's What" there is also great reading – the latest news and stories and snips from history and much, much more.

In short, the 5 Field Ambulance R.A.A.M.C. Association, in its attractive A4 colour format, provides a valuable marketing medium for any product or service in any way related to the Australian Defence Force. The added bonus for advertisers is that they are – and are seen to be – actively

supporting a wonderful organisation of largely "unsung heroes" while at the same time communicating effectively with their customers.

We want to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest and to assure you that our professional team at Statewide Publishing is always here to help.

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## CONTENTS

Message from the President .....	3
From the Hon. Secretary .....	5
ANZAC Day March Arrangements .....	7
Australian Army Awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia: Trooper Mark Donaldson .....	9
Letter to Trooper M.G. Donaldson .....	13
Sick Parade / Vale / Whereabouts of Members .....	14
Insects and Human Disease: The Pioneering Roles of Joseph & Thomas Lane Bancroft .....	15
Eric Leo Susman, MB, ChM, FRACP .....	21
Obituary: Eric Leo Susman .....	31
My Brother Eric .....	37
Thank You / 2009 Fund Raiser / Kind Acknowledgements / New Members.....	39
Messages from Members .....	41
5 CSSB Health Company News .....	43
Items of Interest .....	44
Activity Sheet .....	47
Application for Membership .....	48

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# Message from the President

Welcome to the Autumn edition of 5 Field Ambulance RAAMC Association Quarterly Magazine.

I have been representing the Association at the 2009 Sydney Anzac Day March – Participants Meetings on 22nd January and 5th March 2009.

Our Association's next activity is the Anzac Day March which this year has some major changes. The first being our position in the march and the second being the new location for the post march reunion.

This year we will be marching earlier at Serial 60 behind the RAAMC Association NSW (INC) Banner. This group will include 1st and 5th Field Ambulance Associations led by the respective Health Section detachments from 8 and 5 CSSB. Also 1 HSB Association and any RAAMC veterans, especially those who have served post Vietnam. We will form up in BENT Street from 10am.

The post march reunion will be at the Paddington-Woollahra RSL, Oxford Street, Paddington opposite Victoria Barracks

Through the splendid efforts of Major John Straskye (SO2 HSAR-NSW) we will have at our head Major General Jeffrey Rosenfeld, the current Surgeon General Defence Health Reserves and also joining us is Colonel Georgeina Whelan AM CSC, Col/ Health Land Command who was the Commanding Officer Health Support Banda Aceh during Operation Sumatra Assist.

The RAAMC ASSOCIATION (Inc) continues to meet every two months at Victoria Barracks. I would sincerely recommend that you try to attend these meetings which are most informative and conclude with lunch and refreshments at the Paddington-Woollahra RSL. The next meeting is scheduled for 3rd April 2009 at 1030 hrs.

The Reserve Forces Day Council continues their detailed build up to this year's Parade on Sunday, 5 July 2009.

A Warning Order is out to all Associations for the next meeting on Thursday, 26 March 2009 at 1930 hrs Defence Plaza, 270 Pitt Street, Sydney.

The meeting will cover:

- RFD 2008 Association Parade Awards
- Presentation of certificates of dedication to Associations and Standard Bearers
- Update for National Parade Sunday, 5 July 2009
- Role of Association President and ASM's on the parade day
- Information regarding the future support Defence will provide to RFD.

I have just returned from two weeks trekking in Tasmania. I organized a group of 8 like souls to trek from Lake Ada across the Western Tiers to camp at Lake Fanny (Day 1). Day 2, Lake Fanny to Mount Jerusalem and on to camp at Lake Ball. Day 3, Lake Ball to Lake Adelaide, Lake Meston and after a bit of typical Tassie rain on to camp at Junction Lake after a long tiring day. Day 4, We went down or rather back and forth along the Mersey River through the Never Never to Hartnet Falls and on to camp at Windy Ridge on the famed Overland Track. Day 5, To Pine Valley hut for three nights where we climbed the Acropolis, the



*Photo taken at Zermatt on the Italian/Swiss Border 2006*

Parthenon, visited the Labyrinth and were rained in for day three. Day 8, We trekked out of Pine Valley to Lake St Claire and the ferry to Cynthia Bay and transport. After over-nighting at Brady's Lake we moved to a shack at Eagle Hawk Neck and spent 4 great days doing day walks (one took 10 hours to complete). Day walks included The Candle Stick, Tasman Track, Cape Pillar and a full day beach walk.

To all our members and with thoughts for our number of sick, Edna and I wish you all well in these uneasy economic times and hope to see you at our next gathering.

**Derek Cannon**



*(L/R) Derek Cannon, Warwick Wilkinson, John Phillips and Alan Curry*





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# From the Hon. Secretary

*Dear Member,*

Welcome to 2009. Another year is now upon us with three months of it gone already.

Our committee sends you its good wishes and we hope you have a healthy and happy year for yourself and your family.

To our sick and hospitalised members, may you be as comfortable as possible and, hopefully, have a speedy recovery. We hope this magazine gives you some "lift" in spirit.

Over the Christmas period Ruth and I again took our 'van to South West Rocks Caravan Park (Horseshoe Bay Beach) for six glorious weeks.

We got talking one day to an "old timer" who came walking through the van park. He lives in SWR and says he is known as the "Baron of Back Creek".

(For any of our members who have been to SWR, Back Creek would be well known to you—I still jump off the bridge! Anyway, he gave me this poem that someone had penned about him.) *(I have included it in our magazine for your enjoyment.)*

In the time we were at SWR our granddaughter, Abby, gave a belated birth (due 19th December) to their 3rd child, a daughter, Macey, at Port Macquarie Hospital on the 28th December, so it was a very stressful time for all concerned but thankfully we were only 40 minutes "visiting time" away from SWR.

Although little Macey was jaundiced they were both discharged from hospital, in good condition, on New Year's Eve at 5pm! The doctors and nurses were terrific.

Macey's twin brothers, Manu and Marley, (15 months old) are trying to come to grips with this "new arrival" but we are completely overjoyed.

We had a lovely Christmas with MOST of our family at Port Macquarie. Our daughter, Julie, could not get away from work (in Tasmania) and our youngest son, Greg and his family, were O/S in the US for 10 weeks.

In writing the above I am ever so mindful of the terrible tragedy that has occurred in Victoria, *(since we arrived home)*, with that awful loss of lives and homes. I can't imagine what horror must have been in the survivors' minds as they raced to get away from the conflagration. I beseech each and every reader, if they have not already done so, to "give something" to this Bushfire Appeal—it is never too late. Any major bank or the Red Cross will accept your donation.

No doubt you would have read by now of the VC awarded to Trooper Mark Donaldson which was invested, by the Governor-General at Government House on 16 January 2009. *(I have included a letter we wrote to him plus his background information in our magazine.)*



Alan Curry  
Hon. Secretary

## Happy Birthday

**JANUARY:** Colin KLINE, Don JARMAN "Bill" O'KEEFE, Barry PERIGO and Chris STRODE.

**FEBRUARY:** Brett FERRARI and Brian TAMS.

**MARCH:** Barry COLLINS, Kevin HURRELL, Charles O'MEALLY, Diana ROTHFIELD and Sr. "Sue" THOMPSON

I have been remiss in forgetting our OWN Birthday. 5 Field Ambulance was "raised" on the 15th March 1915, at Liverpool, Sydney.

A Happy (belated) Birthday to John Smith who advised his birthday was November.  
*(Thank you, John, it has now been recorded.)*

Our Association wishes you "All the Best" on your "special" day –  
have you given me your month of birth yet?



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# ANZAC DAY MARCH ARRANGEMENTS



We look forward to your presence and participation again in 2009. Some of you will be marching with us for the first time and we welcome you. Public Transport is FREE if you are wearing your medals etc.

We trust that you will be able to march with us but if not we would welcome your presence at our NEW VENUE for ANZAC Day. (see details below).

This will be the **first time** that ALL (hopefully) RAAMC Units will march together. That is, we will all fall in behind the main RAAMC Association Banner.

The RAAMC Association will be led by Major General Jeffery Rosenfeld, who is head of Defence Health Reserves. Maj.Gen. Rosenfeld is especially coming up from Melbourne to take part.

We will have our Banner and Australian Flag, (hopefully carried by serving members of the Health Company of 5 CSSB) with our Members marching behind within the ORBAT of the medical units (we will "Form Up" behind 1 Field Ambulance).

**DRESS:** ADF personnel will be in Ceremonial Dress and will carry our Banner and Australian Flag.

Members will be in lounge suits and ladies as appropriate. Medals, Name Badges and Berets to be worn.

**FORM UP:** Will be in **BENT Street** in the vicinity of Bligh Street.

**TIME:** from 10am.

## **POST MARCH RE-UNION:**

Will be held at the Paddington-Woollahra RSL Club. It is in Oxford Street, Paddington and just across the road from Victoria Barracks.

The 380 bus will drop us right at the door of the P-W Club and the bus stop is around the corner (from the Elizabeth Street **March Dismissal Point**) in Liverpool Street.

We will meet there, after the march, from **Noon onwards**.

Bistro meals and drinks are available at reasonable prices and we are endeavouring to secure a "private" room.

If you are unable to march we would welcome your presence at the P-W RSL Club.



*Members marching on Anzac Day 2008*





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# AUSTRALIAN ARMY

## AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS FOR AUSTRALIA

### TROOPER MARK GREGOR DONALDSON

For most conspicuous acts of gallantry in action in a circumstance of great peril in Afghanistan as part of the Special Operations Task Group during Operation SLIPPER, Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan.

Trooper Mark Gregor Donaldson enlisted into the Australian Army on 18 June 2002. After completing Recruit and Initial and Employment Training he was posted to the 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. Having successfully completed the Special Air Service Selection Course in April 2004, Trooper Donaldson was posted to Special Air Service Regiment in May 2004.

On 2 September 2008, during the conduct of a fighting patrol, Trooper Donaldson was travelling in a combined Afghan, US and Australian vehicle convoy that was engaged by a numerically superior, entrenched and coordinated enemy ambush. The ambush was initiated by a high volume of sustained machine gun fire coupled with the effective use of rocket propelled grenades. Such was the effect of the initiation that the combined patrol suffered numerous casualties, completely lost the initiative and became immediately suppressed. It was over two hours before the convoy was able to establish a clean break and move to an area free of enemy fire.

In the early stages of the ambush, Trooper Donaldson reacted spontaneously to regain the initiative. He moved rapidly between alternate positions of cover engaging the enemy with 66mm and 84mm anti-armour weapons as well as his M4 rifle. During an early stage of the enemy ambush, he deliberately exposed himself to enemy fire in order to draw attention to himself and thus away from wounded soldiers. This selfless act alone bought enough time for those wounded to be moved to relative safety.

As the enemy had employed the tactic of a rolling ambush, the patrol was forced to conduct numerous vehicle manoeuvres, under intense enemy fire, over a distance of approximately four kilometres to extract the convoy from the engagement area. Compounding the extraction was the fact that casualties had consumed all available space within the vehicles. Those who had not been wounded, including Trooper Donaldson, were left with no option but to run beside the vehicles throughout. During the conduct of this vehicle manoeuvre to extract the convoy from the engagement area, a severely wounded coalition force interpreter was inadvertently left behind. Of his own volition and displaying complete disregard for his own safety, Trooper Donaldson moved alone, on foot, across approximately 80 metres of exposed ground to recover the wounded interpreter. His movement, once identified by the enemy, drew intense and accurate machine gun fire from entrenched positions. Upon reaching the wounded coalition force interpreter, Trooper Donaldson picked him up and carried him back to



the relative safety of the vehicles then provided immediate first aid before returning to the fight.

On subsequent occasions during the battle, Trooper Donaldson administered medical care to other wounded soldiers, whilst continually engaging the enemy.

Trooper Donaldson's acts of exceptional gallantry in the face of accurate and sustained enemy fire ultimately saved the life of a coalition force interpreter and ensured the safety of the other members of the combined Afghan, US and Australian force. Trooper Donaldson's actions on this day displayed exceptional courage in circumstances of great peril. His actions are of the highest accord and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Special Operations Command, the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.

#### Personal biography of

#### Trooper Mark Gregor Strang Donaldson, VC

Mark Donaldson was born in Waratah, Newcastle, NSW on 2 April 1979. He spent his formative years in northern NSW where he graduated from high school in 1996.







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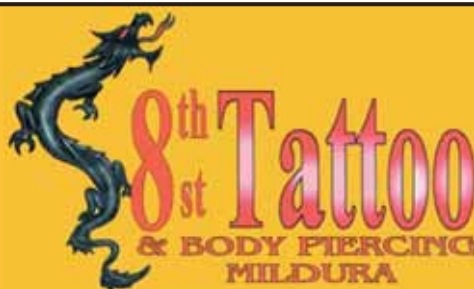
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Trooper Donaldson enlisted into the Australian Army on 18 June 2002 and entered recruit training at the Army Recruit Training Centre, Kapooka, NSW. He demonstrated an early aptitude for soldiering and was awarded the prizes for best shot and best at physical training in his platoon. Subsequently he was allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and posted to the school of infantry at Singleton, NSW, where he excelled in his initial employment training. At the completion of this training he was again awarded best shot and best at physical training, as well as the award for the most outstanding soldier in his platoon.

He was posted to 1st battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, Townsville, QLD in November 2002. It was during this time that Trooper Donaldson decided to pursue his ambition to join the Special Air Service Regiment.

In February 2004, he successfully completed the Special Air Service Regiment selection course and was posted to the regiment in May 2004. He was then posted to I Troop, 3 Special Air Service Squadron. Since that time he has been deployed on operations to East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq.

On 12 August 2008, Trooper Donaldson was wounded in action whilst conducting nighttime operations in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan. He recovered from his minor wounds and continued on the deployment.

Trooper Donaldson was involved in an incident on 2 September 2008 in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan that resulted in him being awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia. He was invested by her Excellency the Governor-General of Australia at Government House, Canberra on 16 January 2009. Trooper Donaldson remains posted to the Special Air Service Regiment in Perth, WA.

Trooper Donaldson is married to Emma and has a daughter Kaylee. His parents are deceased.

## Significance

The Victoria Cross is the pre-eminent award for acts of bravery in wartime and is Australia's highest military honour.

It is awarded to persons who, in the presence of the enemy, display the most conspicuous gallantry; a daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice; or extreme devotion to duty.

## History

The Victoria Cross was created by Queen Victoria in 1856 and made retrospective to 1854 to cover the period of the Crimea War.

Until the Victoria Cross for Australia was created in 1991, Australians were eligible for the Victoria Cross and other awards under the Imperial system of honours.

The Imperial Victoria Cross has been awarded to ninety six Australians. Ninety one received the Victoria Cross while others serving with Australian forces and five Australians received the award while serving with South African and British units.

Australians were first recognised for their gallantry in the Boer War and more recently during the Vietnam War.

Australians have been awarded the Victoria Cross in the following conflicts:

- 6 in the Boer War 1899-1902
- 64 in World War I 1914-1918
- 2 in North Russia 1919
- 20 in World War II 1939-1945
- 4 in Vietnam 1962-1972

Nine of the crosses awarded in World War I were for Australians at Gallipoli.

## Victoria Cross for Australia

The Victoria Cross for Australia was instituted in the Australian honours system by Letters Patent on 15 January 1991.

It replaced the British or Imperial Victoria Cross. Trooper Donaldson has been awarded the first Victoria Cross for Australia.

## Past recipients

Ninety six Australians have been awarded the Imperial Victoria Cross. No recipients had been awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia.

The first Australian to be awarded a Victoria Cross was Captain Sir Neville Howse VC KCMG CB KStJ during the Boer War (1900). He also served in World War I and later as Commonwealth Minister for Health, Defence and Repatriation.

The most recent recipient of the Victoria Cross was Warrant Officer Keith Payne VC OAM for gallantry during the Vietnam War (24 May 1969). Under heavy enemy fire Payne instigated a daring rescue of more than forty men, many of them wounded, and led the party back to the battalion base.

## How it is awarded

The Governor-General awards the Victoria Cross, with the approval of the Sovereign, on the recommendation of the Minister for Defence.

The Victoria Cross may be awarded posthumously.

The post-nominal entitlement for the Victoria Cross is VC.

A subsequent award of the Victoria Cross to the same person is made as a bar to the Cross. They are also entitled to the post-nominal VC and Bar.

## Medal design



The Victoria Cross is designed in the form of the Maltese Cross: in the centre of the medal is a lion guardant standing upon the Royal Crown.

The words "For valour" are inscribed below. The Victoria Cross is suspended from a bar by a crimson ribbon. On the reverse of the cross the date of the act of bravery is inscribed, along with the name, rank, and unit of the recipient.







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**I would like to congratulate you, on behalf of our President, Patron and committee and our entire Association, on being invested with the bravest of all awards.**

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**On reading your resume` one can see that you are a dedicated soldier not only in your manner and bearing but most importantly working in a team environment and looking out for your fellow soldier mates.**

**Who can say what went through your mind at the moment of the start of your courageous acts? We all know now that you did what you thought you must do—come what may—and you saved lives at the selfless expense of your own endangerment.**

**You are a “man amongst men” and may you always have good fortune bestowed upon you.**

**You now travel in a very select company of very brave men. Your Unit, your family, your friends and the wider community are all the better with men like you among us.**

**Yours Sincerely,**



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## VALE

### William Patrick Anthony CRAWFORD

Pat, as he liked to be known, joined our Association over 11 years ago after seeing our advertisement in one of the Sydney newspapers.

Since joining us, he would always be at our parades and also at our Annual Reunions with his wife, Nona.

Pat took ill a few years back and eventually had to be placed in a Nursing Home in Bexley. His health deteriorated over these years to the extent that, at the end, he could not communicate nor eat properly.

He was a very quiet and proud man who loved the company of his family and friends and I think it was a welcome release when he passed away, in the Nursing Home, in the early hours on 21st January 2009.

Pat was a National Serviceman in the 1st Intake at 13 NSTB in January 1952 and then transferred to 1 Div Sig Regt before transferring to 5 Field Ambulance where he discharged in January 1957. His rank on discharge was T/Cpl.

But Pat's fame became prominent as a cricketer.

He was noticed for his performances in grade cricket and was selected for NSW, as a fast bowler, when he was 21. In his first season he topped the Sheffield Shield averages with 25 wickets for 12.96.

Pat had a brilliant season in 1955, in a team which boasted players like Benaud, Miller, Davidson and Lindwall and his form earned him a Test Cap for the Ashes Tour in June, 1956.

He made his Test debut at Lords in the 2nd Test but unfortunately, "broke down" with a leg injury during his 5th over.

Pat won back his spot later in the year, during their tour of India and he was starting to come good but again "broke down" during the 3rd Test at Calcutta.

This was to be his final Test and within a year his cricket career was ended, due to injury.

Pat's first class cricket career figures showed, that in 37 matches he took 110 wickets for an average 21.02 (in one match he took 10 wickets), he scored 424 runs with a batting average of 19.27 (his top score was 86), his best bowling was 6 for 55 and he made 18 catches.

Pat's service was held at St Catherine Laboure Catholic Church in Gympie on the 28th January and our Association thanks Warren Barnes (President of the Miranda RSL Sub Branch) for organising, at short notice, their Pensions Officer, Mrs. Betty Ebre, to conduct the RSL Service.

Pat's family really appreciated this gesture.

Pat is survived by Nona and his two stepchildren, John and Margaret, and their families, some of the grandchildren took part in the service.

Our Association also thanks Steve Baldick, Fred Bell, Mick Rowley and Brian Tams for their attendance.

Our Association extends its sincere sympathy to Nona and her family.

*(I kindly thank member Mick Rowley for informing me about Patrick and also kind thanks to family friend, Jim Stanley, for emailing Pat's eulogy and Cricket Australia for their "stats" of Patrick).*

## LEST WE FORGET

### Do you know the WHEREABOUTS of the following?

The members listed below served with 5 Field Ambulance and are out there in the wilderness somewhere! Can you help? Do you know any of them? If so contact them (or myself) and tell them they are part of the 5 Fd Amb "Family" and we would like them to "come home":

Janine BAILEY, Robert BAILEY, Marlene CABALLERO, Patrick CLARKE, Scotty GANNON, Lib. HART, Jon HAWKES, Harry MUNDAY, Matthew McDONALD, Christopher McGLASHAN, Cameron McKEE, Barry ROBERTS, Simon ROGERS, Matthew SALERND, Steve SHARP, Lara SLATTERY, Joanna SPRY, Dugald SYDNEY-JONES, Camilla THOMAS, Julia WALSH, Michael WALSH and Katrina WARD.

Do you know any other past member's contact details?—I'd like to hear from you!



# INSECTS AND HUMAN DISEASE: THE PIONEERING ROLES OF JOSEPH AND THOMAS LANE BANCROFT OF BRISBANE

*A Review Article by Professor John H. Pearn AM, RFO, MD, FRACP, FACTM.*

Preceptor, School of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Queensland,  
Department of Paediatrics & Child Health, Royal Children's Hospital, Herston, Australia

## ABSTRACT

The concept of a living creature, itself unaffected, as an intermediate carrier of disease, a "vector", came late to medical science. Linnaeus (1707- 1778) first suggested that insects might be such carriers, a theoretical idea further reinforced by Ehrenberg in 1838. The Scottish physician, Sir Henry Holland (1788-1873), In his Medical Notes: On the Hypothesis of Insect Life as a Cause of Disease also proposed the possibility. However, it was the meticulous research of six doctors - Dr Joseph Bancroft, Dr Thomas Lane Bancroft, Sir David Bruce, Dr Patrick Manson, Sir Ronald Ross and Dr Charles-Jules-Henri Nicolle - which established the reality of an intermediate stage in disease transmission. In Australia, the first research linking insects as potential vectors of human disease was undertaken by Dr Joseph Bancroft (1836-1894) who identified an adult nematode worm (later named *Wuchereria bancrofti*) in a lymphatic abscess of a patient in Brisbane in 1876. *Wuchereria* parasites were demonstrated in mosquitoes of the genus *Culex*, and it was initially suggested that the worm passed from mosquitoes to the human host by water contamination. Joseph Bancroft's son, Thomas Lane Bancroft (1860-1933), undertook meticulous experiments (1893-1901) to show that the mosquito was the intermediate host and vector of *Wuchereria bancrofti* and thus the cause of human clinical filariasis. Joseph Bancroft, who was based in Brisbane, was also the first to describe tick paralysis. Thomas Lane Bancroft also undertook transmission experiments using volunteers to demonstrate the transmission of 'the organism of dengue; being sub-microscopic, to two out of five human volunteers by the day-biting mosquito', now classified as *Aedes aegypti*. Thomas Lane Bancroft's daughter, Josephine Mackerras (1896- 1971), the third generation member of this family, was the first (in 1947- 48) to establish that cockroaches were a vector for *Salmonella* pathogens. This paper provides an analytical perspective of the pioneering role of the Two Brisbane doctors, the Bancrofts, in providing proof that arthropods could transmit disease.

## Introduction

Epidemics have been the lot of humankind since the onset of recorded history. The principles of "contagion", in the sense of a two-stage victim-to-victim transmission, were well understood by the sixteenth century. A new concept, that of a three-stage transmission by an intermediate creature, a "vector" was not introduced until the last decades of the nineteenth century. This quantum shift in thinking constituted a most significant advance in

the chronology of medical science. Two Brisbane doctors (father and son), Joseph Bancroft (1836-1894) and Thomas Lane Bancroft (1860-1933) contributed significantly to a new paradigm of what came to be known as disease "vectors".

## The Role of External Agents in Disease Causation

Hieronymus Fracastorius Veronensis (1484-1553), always known as "Fracastorius", in 1584 clarified thinking concerning different external agents which cause disease. He defined contagion or infection and designated the phenomenon of contagion from other pathogenic processes such as putrefaction and thermal injury.<sup>1</sup> The great leap forward occurred with Pasteur's demonstration (1870-1880) of the direct effect of viruses, bacteria and fungi which were finally encapsulated in his germ theory of disease, in this latter, Pasteur demonstrated that *Staphylococcus pyogenes* ("microbe en amas de grains") was the cause of boils and that *Streptococcus* ("microbe en chapelet de grains") was the cause of puerperal septicaemia.<sup>2</sup> Pasteur emphasised that "contagion and disease can be the expression of the living processes of foreign microbial parasites, introduced from the outside, descending from parents identical to themselves, and incapable of being generated de novo".<sup>3</sup> All these causes of human pathology, ranging from trauma to microbes, were examples of "direct" agents, with a one-to-one relationship between cause and effect.<sup>4</sup>

The concept of an intermediate agent which, itself unaffected, might transmit a living pathogen from victim to victim was first suggested by Linnaeus (1682-1755) but finally proven as a "new" form of disease pathogenesis by clinical and laboratory researchers working in Australia, China, Africa and India in the last decades of the nineteenth century. It was said that "this process of development in an intermediate host was a new principle in parasitology".<sup>5</sup> The word "vector", to describe the agent by which such transmission might occur, was not used in the formal biological or medical sense until 1922.<sup>6</sup> After Linnaeus' original suggestion that insects might transmit disease, this theoretical idea was further developed by Ehrenberg in his infusoria in 1838.<sup>7-12</sup> The Scottish physician, Sir Henry Holland (1788-1873), in his Medical Notes: *On the Hypothesis of Insect Life as a Cause of Disease*, also proposed the possibility.<sup>13</sup>

## The "Intermediate Host"

It was the meticulous research of six doctors - Dr Joseph Bancroft, Dr Thomas Lane Bancroft, Sir David Bruce, Dr Patrick Manson, Sir Ronald Ross and Dr Charles-Jules-





Henri Nicolle - which established the new concept of an intermediate stage to modify what hitherto had been the two-agent model of human infectious disease. This "process of development in an intermediate host was a new principle in parasitology".<sup>14</sup>

In 1894 Sir David Bruce showed that trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness) could be passed experimentally from big game animals to cattle by the blood transmission of *Trypanosoma brucei*, following the bite of the tsetse fly, *Glossina morsitans*. This discovery was followed by the work of Sir Ronald Ross of the Indian Medical Service, who in 1897 demonstrated *Plasmodia* parasites in the stomach wall of *Anopheles* mosquitoes which had been fed upon the blood of malarial patients. This break-through built on the work of Ross' mentor, Sir Patrick Manson, who considered that either mosquitoes or sandflies might be involved in the spread of filariasis, based on his work in Amoy, China. Although it had long been known that the body louse, *Pediculus*, was associated with typhus, it was not until 1909 that Charles Nicolle (1866-1936) demonstrated that epidemic typhus was transmitted by a rickettsia carried by the body louse, a finding for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1928.

### Dr Joseph Bancroft (1836-1894)

Dr Joseph Bancroft was a pioneer medical scientist who had emigrated from Nottingham in the United Kingdom in October 1864, to commence a new professional life in the small township of Brisbane, a former open air gaol (from 1824 until 1842) for recidivist convicts from Sydney. By 1864, Brisbane had a population of some 12,000 citizens. Joseph Bancroft, already an esteemed naturalist and biological researcher, bought five acres of virgin bush on Enoggera Creek at the Three Mile Scrub, where he subsequently established a fine garden, experimental farm and research laboratories. It was there that he first proposed that mosquitoes might serve as potential vectors of human disease.<sup>15</sup>

Joseph Bancroft identified an adult nematode worm (later named *Wuchereria bancrofti*) in a lymphatic abscess of a butcher's apprentice in Brisbane on the 21st of December, 1876. Three months later (in 1877), he found a further four live adult worms in a patient with a chylous-hydrocele. Bancroft sent a letter (and several specimens, separately) to his former teacher, Professor William Roberts, a renal physician and surgeon of Owen's College, Manchester.<sup>16,17</sup> Roberts in turn passed it on to Professor T. Spencer Cobbold, an eminent London parasitologist who at once published the account in the *Lancet* (July 14th, 1877), naming the new worm, *Filaria bancrofti*, ...in honour of "a highly meritorious observer and able surgeon".<sup>18</sup> Cobbold expanded on the discovery in a second paper, *On Filaria bancrofti*,<sup>19</sup> but no mention was made in either paper of any transmitting insect or other agent.

Joseph Bancroft went on to demonstrate microfilariae in recently imbibed blood in a *Aedes vigilax* mosquito, which had been fed on an infected person. He also demonstrated *Wuchereria* parasites in mosquitoes of the



The granite Bancroft Memorial created by the Queensland Branch of the Australian Medical Association, the Caboolture Shire Council and the Caboolture Historical Society. Unveiled in 1963. Situated at Deception Bay near Brisbane, it commemorates the life and works of Joseph Bancroft (1836-1894) and his son, Thomas Lane Bancroft (1860-1933). Pioneer medical scientists of Australia. The author (Prof. John Pearn AM) and co-trustee is pictured beside the Memorial. (Picture taken in November, 2000)

genus *Culex*.<sup>16,17</sup> Bancroft suggested that the worm was passed from the human host to mosquitoes, which parasites (he postulated) then underwent development and were then released into water, with humans then infected by oral ingestion. Two years later, Patrick Manson in China showed that microfilariae underwent development in the mosquito.<sup>20</sup> Subsequently in 1884, Dr Patrick Manson read a paper before the Linnean Society of London, in which he referred to the mosquito as the "intermediary host".<sup>21</sup>

In Brisbane, Joseph Bancroft believed that the microfilariae parasitized human victims who drank contaminated water, and in this way were infected: "From considerable research on the matter the following conclusions may be provisionally accepted: mosquitoes swallow the parasitic blood, and carries this to the water in which she lays her eggs. She leaves the water contaminated with embryonic filariae. Persons drink the water containing filariae, and become afflicted with one or more of the disease conditions known to be caused by the parasite [elephantiasis and filarial abscesses]". In 1878, in another manuscript published in the *Lancet*, Professor T.S. Cobbold first used the term "intermediate host" in reference to the mosquito. In the next year (1879), writing from London he noted "In April 1877 Dr [Joseph] Bancroft informed me of his expectation of the finding of these insects [mosquitoes] sucked up the larvae of the filaria while engaged in their attacks on man".<sup>24</sup> Not appreciating the species specificity of different genera of mosquitoes as



such "intermediate hosts", Joseph Bancroft had used a non-host species of mosquito, *Aedes vigilax*, in his research which involved the experimental feeding of mosquitoes on an infected person. After such experiments, he demonstrated the presence of microfilariae in the stomachs of his experimental mosquitoes, but observed no further development.<sup>16,17</sup>

### Dr Thomas Lane Bancroft (1860-1933)

Joseph Bancroft's son, Thomas Lane Bancroft (1860-1933), undertook meticulous experiments (1893-1901) to show that the mosquito was the intermediate host and vector of *Wuchereria bancrofti* and the cause of human clinical filariasis. Thomas Lane Bancroft established a number of experiments to identify the arthropod intermediate host of both dog and human filaria. The research was bedevilled by a lack of knowledge of the natural life cycles of mosquitoes, and the erroneous belief "that mosquitoes only fed once in their lifetime, that they died after oviposition and that they lived for a maximum of seven days."<sup>17</sup> Bancroft finally established an experimental mosquito colony of *Culex ciliaris* (now *Culex quinquefasciatus*) which would survive for approximately eight weeks if fed on ripe bananas. Thomas Lane Bancroft's advocacy secured a grant of £7 Sterling from the Queensland Branch of the British Medical Association, based in Brisbane. The crucial question, of the mode of transmission of the "intermediate host" to humans, was reported in an Addendum (dated 1st June, 1899) to a paper which he published in the Journal of the Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales: "It has occurred to me that the young filariae may gain entrance to the human host whilst mosquitoes bearing them are in the act of biting. The entrance of warm blood

into the mosquito may excite the young filariae in consequence of which they pierce the oesophagus and pass down the proboscis into the human skin."<sup>25</sup>

His final detailed experiments were undertaken between 1899 and 1901, when by a meticulous series of experiments, using dissected sections of the female mosquitoes which had been fed on infected humans, he described in detail how the young filariae may be seen "swimming up and down the apparent canal in the [mosquito's] Labium." Thomas Lane Bancroft also established the life cycle of the dog filarial worm, *Dirofilaria immitis*. Again he referred to the mosquito as the "intermediary host."<sup>26,27</sup> He also undertook transmission experiments using volunteers to demonstrate the transmission of "the organism of dengue; being sub-microscopic, to two out of five human volunteers by the day-biting mosquito", now classified as *Aedes aegypti*.<sup>15-17</sup>

### Conclusion

By the end of the nineteenth century, the concept of the "intermediate host" in a three-link chain of disease transmission was well established. The role of mosquitos as vectors of the yellow fever virus was reported by Walter Reed (1851-1902) in 1901, and in 1909, Dr Charles-Jules Henri Nicolle, in Tunis demonstrated that the human louse, *Pediculus*, was the intermediate and transmitting agent for typhus - the scourge which had been known for centuries as "camp fever," "jail fever", or "ship fever". The concept of the "intermediate host" and its proof in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, was a necessary step for subsequent attempts at the global eradication of the diseases concerned.<sup>35</sup> The "siren song of eradication"<sup>36</sup> was sung throughout the twentieth century with failures to eradicate yellow fever<sup>37</sup> and malaria,<sup>36</sup> because of the inability to eradicate the intermediate host or transmitting vectors.

The use of the word "vector" was first recorded as an astronomical term in 1704 and defined as "that Line by which the Planet seems to be carried round its Centre".<sup>39</sup> Its first biological use was not recorded until 1922, when it featured in the 31st edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica - "such arthropoda ... being specific "nurses" or intermediary hosts of the parasite actually causing the disease, are known as 'carriers' or 'vectors'".<sup>39</sup> Since that time its use has perhaps been debased, the word "vector" occasionally being used as a synonym for fomes or fomites - "the stethoscope is yet another vector of pathogenic organisms",<sup>40</sup> and as an inappropriate descriptor of one infectious agent simply passing on an infection by direct contact, as in the old (1584) Fracastorius model - "A small boy recovered after being bitten by a rabid bat, it being thought that the disease had been modified by passing through this unusual vector".<sup>41</sup>

The two Bancrofts were working virtually in scientific isolation, in their farmhouse laboratories in what was at that time (1876-1900) the bush outskirts of the emergent town of Brisbane. With their background in both botany and zoology, they pursued meticulous microscopic



The plaque records the service "of two esteemed scientists who contributed to the greater good of all humankind."





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observation and combined this with human clinical experiments. They worked in the era when the transit time to carry a letter from Brisbane to experts in Europe took four to five months. Nevertheless, their work established the complete lifecycle of the filarial parasite. The control of vectors, using the term in its correct sense, remains one of the greatest challenges to preventive medicine in the world today. The lessons of history suggest that a comprehensive understanding of the biology, life-cycle and adaptations of vectors will be necessary if vector-borne diseases are to be successfully controlled or eradicated.

## Acknowledgement

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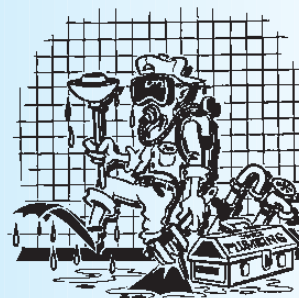
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# ERIC LEO SUSMAN, M.B., Ch.M., F.R.A.C.P.

## 1896-1959

By Sir Kempson Maddox (date of writing unknown)  
(With kind permission by member, Jim Roche OAM)

When I joined the Honorary Medical Staff of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney in 1930, my colleagues among the Assistant Physicians were Drs. Cotter Harvey, Thomas Greenaway, Eric Susman. We each were allowed to have two or three in-patients, and our main duty was to conduct the Medical Out-Patient Department, then located in the basement of the original building.

This was my first contact with Dr. Eric Susman, known to his friends as "Gus", with whom I was destined to become a close friend and colleague for the next thirty years. He had created an early reputation at Mosman Preparatory School and at Church of England Grammar School, North Sydney, for unconventionality and exhibitionism, two entertaining attributes he retained for the remainder of his life. His father was of German-Danish descent, a successful importer trading as Tallerman & Co., and his mother of Irish descent, whose sister was a Nun. Eric had one brother, Maurice Phillip (Mick), his junior by a year or two, studious, precise and conventional. Both brothers selected Medicine as their vocation. Eric could have been a very successful merchant.

He had an interest in his father's firm, and kept close to the Stock Market. He even claimed dealings in foreign currency such as buying rupees with pesos and selling them for lira or francs! Lin Clowes, a contemporary medical Student from Mosman, told me that on the opening day of the University Term when he and the Susmans were to attend for the first time, Eric arrived on the ferry wharf at Mosman, timing his appearance to be just before the cast off. He was clad in a bright green velveteen coat with a human femur under his arm. When asked what he was trying to do, he replied that henceforth he would be recognised at once as "Susman, Medical Student"!

Later, he and his brother obtained some anatomical specimens for dissection at home, entirely illegally of course, and after the dissection buried them in the backyard. They were said to be observed, and the police were informed. I am not sure what followed!

Eric pursued an undistinguished medical course, interrupted by the First World War.

In 1915 he enlisted under age, and was in Gallipoli where a Turkish bullet hit him in the buttocks, whereupon he was returned home as an unembarrassed casualty.



(Dr) Eric Susman  
taken in 1915

He graduated M.B., Ch.M. in 1922, and was appointed briefly as a Resident Medical Officer, first at Sydney Hospital, then at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Dr (later Sir) Archie Collins was the Medical Superintendent at the time, and had some difficulties in correcting some of Susman's original methods of treatment.

When appointed as Resident Medical Officer to Dr. George Rennie, a very well known Physician and upright Presbyterian, Eric was told in confidence that actually Dr. Rennie had a keen interest in horse racing. Hoping to make a good introductory impression on his new chief, he met Dr. Rennie in the Front Hall with a battery of tips for the next race meeting at Randwick. Dr. Rennie was said to have suffered acute physical shock, and Eric had already earned his reputation as an "enfant terrible".

After a year's residency, he left for London, where he decided to specialise in neurology. He was admitted as a Member of the Royal College of Physicians. He obtained a post as a Member of the Royal College of Physicians. He obtained a post at the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases, Queen's Square. This was, and still is, the most famous neurological centre in the British Commonwealth, and in Susman's day Drs. Adie, Collier, Walshe, Riddoch, Kinnear Wilson, and Brain were on the Staff.

It was a great opportunity for "Gus". He lived at the time with a deaf Melbourne Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon, with a high pitched voice and a whimsical manner, by the name of Raymond Hennessy, and a lady known as "Eleanor". Eleanor was a good looking, somewhat buxom lass, a "femme succulante", an Australian to whom both doctors were devoted. It was Hennessy who married her in Melbourne. Subsequently, Eric had many girlfriends, from many sources, but no one wholly supplanted Eleanor.

He returned to Sydney about 1930 and began practice at Kings Cross - "my spiritual home", as he called it, in partnership with Dr. John Maude. He found it necessary always to collect his fee at the time of the visit or consultation, because of the itinerant nature of the inhabitants of "The Cross".

On one night he was called by an agitated woman to a flat where he discovered a man, unconscious from drink, lying on the floor. The woman was wringing her hands and





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*Eric & brother Mick Susman, circa 1909*

calling out for his speedy removal, as she expected her husband back at any moment. No efforts revived him, even the use of the stomach pump, was unsuccessful, so Gus said he was sorry, he could do no more. Would she please pay him his fee, he asked. She said she had no money at all in the flat, whereupon Eric proceeded to empty the man's pockets, and, after taking what was owed, gave the rest to the astounded lady, as her share of the takings!

I don't know how many guineas he charged for his services, it probably was a variable sum. He used to say that, "Poets, Prostitutes, and Physicians were always paid in guineas." He told us that he ran a professional "Saturday morning special" session, where he returned the shilling of the guinea to the client!

When I first met him at the hospital, he had already begun a consulting practice at "Locarno", 141 Macquarie Street, where he occupied the whole of the top floor as a residence and consulting rooms. He maintained his early reputation for flamboyancy, exhibitionism and originality. He appeared at this time in black coat and striped trousers, bowler hat and yellow gloves. He did not own a motor car, but had an excellent knowledge of when his colleagues usually left the "Street" for the 'ospital and a timely phone call would secure him a "passage", as he called it.

He had no interest in such things as cars, sailing boats or contact sports. He did, for a time, play tennis on the harbourside court of a certain North Shore doctor, but hit so many balls into the water that the invitation was allowed to lapse. He played squash at the University Club which was next door to his flat, swam leisurely occasionally, and for the rest cultivated the arts of the salon and boudoir.

On one occasion he accompanied Dr Fred Chenhall to a saleroom to purchase a new car. He was given a long and very technical description of the car in question by the earnest salesman, after which he said, "I don't understand anything about all that, but could we try the horn?" Considerably later he did appear to have a car with a

female chauffeur, but I am not sure whether it was his or hers.

His antics at the hospital soon became famous, and his "out-patients" beloved by the students. By this time he sported a red cavalry type moustache, hair "en brosse" and pince-nez spectacles attached to a black ribbon. They were used to practise gestures, and to impress both patient and students. Female patients were invariably called "Madam" and males "My man". He would arrive mostly on time in the ward to teach his students, take a pinch of snuff and begin by saying, "Now, give me the gen".

He preferred reading Johnson and Shakespeare to medical journals, and much of his leisure time was spent in entertaining the opposite sex, drinking beer, or playing bridge or poker. He was in considerable demand for cocktail parties, and at a pinch could manage up to three per night. He rarely cooked for himself in consequence, but tie could prepare a good casserole or similar dish which would do for several days. He had been a member of the University Club, because of its proximity to his flat, since his undergraduate days and surpassed most others in his beer account.

His practice included many unusual types of both sexes, and was not limited to neurology. During the depression years of 1930-31, a brewer from New Zealand arrived to consult him about his nervous affliction. Susman made a great show about the fact that he had booked, with difficulty, a passage on one of the K.P.M. steamers for a holiday cruise to Singapore; and that it would be very inconvenient and expensive if he remained in Sydney to care for this patient. The fact was that with no "trade" offering, as he called it, he had applied for a post as Ship's Surgeon with the Dutch Shipping Company, and indeed was about to accept it. The brewer protested that he would make it worthwhile to cancel the voyage, and was duly admitted to St. Luke's Hospital. He remained there for some weeks, during which time several colleagues were invited in consultation to examine the particular bodily system in which they had a special interest, - Cotter Harvey, the chest; Tebbut, the blood; Greenway, the abdomen; myself, the heart, and so on. Meanwhile, he was successfully treated for his nervous condition, but the total bill was a record!

Susman had several attractive secretaries at this period. One of them was alleged to have murdered her husband with a hammer, and brought to trial. Susman took personal care of her preparation as the accused, and even dressed her in black. She was duly acquitted.

He was a lusty hunter of permissive females, and told us of conquests in many suburbs. Rumour has it that, returning from a weekend at Palm Beach, one anxious companion asked him in a whisper to reassure her that if the worst had happened, he would attend to it. "Certainly not", came the reply, "it would not be fair to all the others." Much later, my wife and I lived in his flat in "Locarno", but to my relief the walls were mute.

Sir Herbert Schlink had a genuine affection for him, although he never allowed himself to show it. "The Master",





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as "Gus" called him, really enjoyed his "clichés", the deliberate provocation, and the outrageous suggestions. "Susman goads me into a fight, and when I turn around to ask him to pass the ammunition, all I see is his backside disappearing over the hill."

They both liked bridge, Gus for the game, which he played with will, and considerable attention to the varied psychology of his partners and opponents; Schlink used it as an excuse to see his friends and declaim on hospital plans, and public personages. A rubber with him took a long time to play.

About 1935 he organised the "Hospital Bridge Club", to meet monthly, usually at the Australian or Union Club. The original members were all on the staff of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, and comprised Schlink, Susman, Lindeman, Collins, Chenhall, Davy, J. Halliday, Money, Blakemore, Robinson. A sumptuous dinner began the evening, and at first the members dressed in "tails"! I am not a bridge player, but later was invited to join, which I did for the chance to see friends whom I rarely met otherwise. When I joined, the game was for *one shilling* per hundred points. This was noted in a book kept by Money, and a settling effected at the end of the year. Susman kept the party amused, wearing a "Suzanne Lenglen" sunshade, and repeating distracting remarks such as "Don't bother to look at my hand", "Keep your hand up", "Come on Ash", and snoring, etc. He usually won, as at poker.

I'm afraid that I irritated my partners, particularly Lindeman, by bad calling, and worse play, but they were very indulgent. I finally resigned in 1969, when very few of the originals remained, and I understand that the Club broke up in 1974, after 40 years, and 400 meetings. The loss of Susman, Schlink, Collins, F. Chenhall and Lindeman by death, rang down the curtain.

Susman never retired before midnight, rose late, and then conducted his business with his telephone to his broker or Tallermans. At this point also he wrote his daily diary (in green ink). This was never shown to his friends, and was to have been bequeathed to the Mitchell Library, only to be perused years after the demise of those whom it "libelled". Scot Skirving was said to have done this, and Susman imitated him. He was once the recipient of a writ for alleged libel. The matter concerned a lady, but he loved gossip and often purveyed more or less scurrilous rumours. He had perhaps been lucky that he had not been sued before. To show his contempt for the document, he posted it on his lavatory wall!

By the mid 30's, Eric was once more clean shaven and in some demand as an orator. He usually chose a subject such as "Alcoholism", "Neurosyphilis", "Deafness", where he could include extracts from Shakespeare, Boswell or Pepys.

Professor Lambie once asked him to give his lectures on neurology, much to the students' delight, where his flourishes with his spectacles, his quips and ribald clichés never failed to amuse.

One morning he hid the smallest member of a tap-dancing team, a little Lorain dwarf, about three-and-a-half feet high, under the lecturer's desk. He whipped him out

on to the top, at the moment when he was discussing the usually good I.Q. of such little people by asking him to tap a measure there and then.

Always a showman, and always on the lookout for something bizarre or entertaining, his O.P.D. was very well attended.

He discovered that the husband of one of his patients was a snake catcher, and jokingly, and in disbelief, asked her to bring in some to show him. This she did at the next visit, and in a second, several snakes were slithering over the floor. Gus jumped to the top of the wooden partition separating the cubicles, and remained suspended there until the rest of the reptiles were safely back in her bag.

He enjoyed hearing patients describe their marital difficulties. One old dear with a distinctly unattractive daughter enlisted his advice as to how to get her married. "Take in a lodger", suggested Gus. Six months later both women reappeared, both blushing pregnant.

About 1935, he and I, Jim Flynn, Gil Phillips and N.M. McIntosh all joined the Royal Australian Naval Reserve. We were supplied with handsome uniforms, as Surgeon Lieutenants, and attended the Reserve Depot at Rushcutter's Bay about once a month, to examine recruits, and to give some elementary talks on first aid to the Sick Berth Staff.

We spend ten days a year in a ship, usually on a buoy in Sydney Harbour, or on Garden Island in the company of regulars like Surgeon Captain L. Darby, Surgeon Commander Mackenzie, and others. It was a pleasant change from our usual daily routine. War seemed very remote, and we enjoyed the parties at the Depot or on the quarterdeck of a visiting man'o'war.

Gus and I often played squash at the University Club, and both being bachelors, we met frequently and yarned far into the night. We joined the same German class. His father died about this time. His mother was my patient, a kind and generous woman, outspoken and unconventional. On one occasion I noticed an unusual appearance of the fundus (or back) of one of her eyes, and referred her



Eric & friends during Naval Service, WW2





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to an eye specialist, who was my neighbour. "Do you have any sugar?", he asked her as he peered through the ophthalmoscope. "No", she said, "My husband will pay the bill".

Life drifted on pleasantly until 3rd September 1939, when Hitler invaded Poland, and Gus and I suddenly found ourselves medically examining reservists at H.M.A.S. Rushcutter throughout the night, as 1000 men were suddenly required to man the destroyers in reserve.

Gus was appointed to H.M.A.S. Westralia, a coastal steamer of some 10,000 tons, commissioned as an Armed Merchant Cruiser, provided with four First War six-inch guns and a small aircraft. She joined the East India Squadron based on Colombo. I was temporarily kept in Sydney as the base Medical Specialist, and in medical charge of recruiting. I had married and we moved into Gus' flat at the top of "Locarno", 141 Macquarie St. An occasional letter in green ink reached me, but I obtained most of my knowledge of how he had fared at sea, when we swapped jobs a year later.

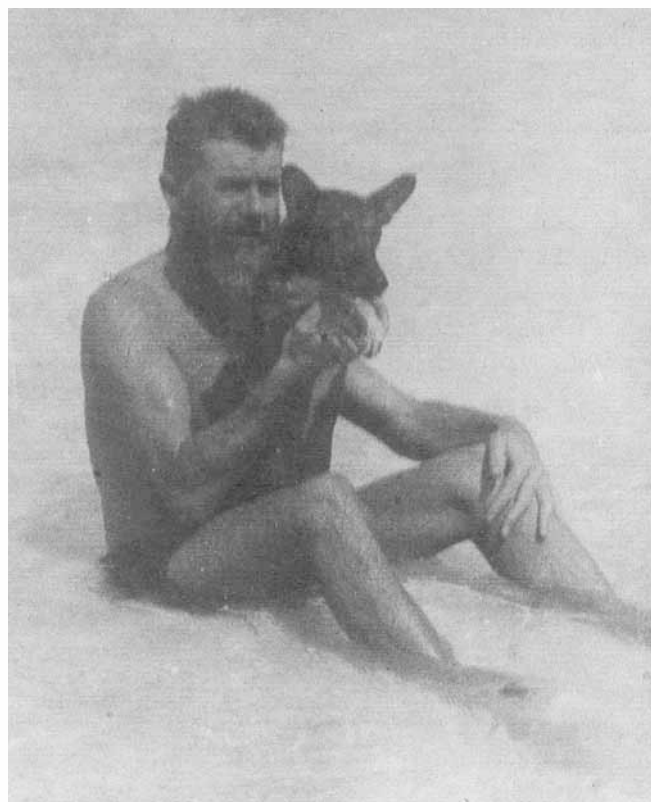
The wardroom had enjoyed his company. He played bridge daily or poker, and somehow had prevailed upon the Captain, a retired R.N. officer, to allow him to have a small dog on board! Of course, the dog was a great favourite with the troops. After a Christmas dinner small rolled up balls of the black pudding were scattered in various sacred parts of the ship, as well as on Susman's bunk, and caused quite a reaction. Further, I was told at Darwin, after a shore party, the dog ascended the ship's gangway on his hind feet, followed by Susman on all fours!

Immediately he went to sea, Gus grew a profuse dark reddish beard fringed with gray "like the hind end of a silver fox", as someone picturesquely described it. One morning, as he was crossing the beach at Mt. Lavinia, near Colombo, a couple lying nearby clutched each other at the spectacle of this near naked man with this striking beard through which ran a black ribbon attached to his spectacles, and with a book under his arm. "I won't believe it until I see him walking on the water!" said the man to his companion.

These and many similar stories were told me by his brother officers and by the good P.O. Chadder, in charge of the Sick Bay. A good psychologist, persuasive and shrewd, "Gus" was a new type of subordinate for Senior Naval Officers. He requested, and obtained, more shore leave than any more conventional medical officers, always as the result of a new and original excuse.

Back in Sydney, he retained his pepper coloured beard, to the delight of all beholders. In addition, he carried a small leather satchel containing his cutlery, claiming that the worn knives and forks of wartime were unhygienic.

His former apartment in Macquarie St. was now occupied by a radiologist, so he rented a small home unit opposite H.M.A.S. Rushcutter, on the third floor. After one bibulous evening in the wardroom of the "Asphalt battleship", as the Depot was called, he appeared to "pass out", and was carried limp and seemingly helpless, across Beach Road and up three flights of stairs by two generous



*Eric during Naval Service, WW2*

young friends. As they eased their heavy load to the floor outside his flat, Gus said, "The key is in my starboard hand jacket pocket."

By this time, 1942, he had been promoted to Surgeon Lieutenant Commander, but he began to suffer from trigeminal neuralgia, and prevailed on Sir Douglas Miller to inject the trigeminal ganglion. "You find me, dockie, in one of my more unhappy moments" he would say.

He was popular with the "Yanks" who were now numerous in Sydney, and with the wardroom of the "Tromp", an isolated Dutch destroyer, whose crew could not be relieved from Holland.

He had lent some furniture to patriotic ladies who entertained ardent foreign officers, jestingly claiming an exchange in some kind instead of in rent. He kept in touch with his old friends, "Grummie" Pratten, Bobby Brasch, "Brasch's idiot son", G. Falkiner ("the poor little rich boy"), Laurie Foster, and of course, Herbert Schlink, whose residence atop of "Craignish", 185 Macquarie Street, he referred to as "Berchtesgaden".

About 1943 he was to join H.M.A.S. Hobart in the North Pacific. He had not long been a member of the ship's company before she had her stern blown off, and limped back to Sydney.

Gus returned to shore duties, and frequent leave. He did not go to sea again.

With the end of the War, demobilisation, and the return of the staff of the R. P.A. Hospital to civilian work, Eric, true to form, persuaded the Chairman (Schlink) to allow him a small office in Gloucester House, the Private Wing of our Hospital, with telephone, secretary and services supplied with the compliments of the "ospital"!





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The Bridge club resumed its meetings, and Gus, now a Senior Physician, had his own unit of some 25 beds in the medical wards. Those unerring and profound critics, the medical students, wrote as follows:

*'As he swerved to the left in the Main Hall, we would answer his beckoning finger and hare off to the ward. "Come on, son, give me the drill", he would order as he fumbled with a "pulse" - "Before our amazed but fascinated eyes, he once partook of snuff!" (From the Year Book of 1939)*

*'An arresting eloquence, adorned with phrases gleaned from the classics and foreign parts, embellished by a significant pursing of the lips and a flourishing of the hands...; and in the 1945 Year Book, 'un homme du grand air. His flashing eyes, his floating hair weave a circle round thrice',*

and further

*Nous qui sommes*

*De par Dieu*

*Gentilhommes*

*De haut lieu*

*il fait faire*

*Bruit sur terre*

*Et La guerre*

*N'est qu'un jeu. (Victor Hugo).*

In 1945 Eric's friend, the artist Fred Leist, made a portrait of him in white naval uniform, and caught well the challenging look.

The 1956 Senior Year Book describes Gus as "awaiting with gleaming pince-nez, slightly greying hair and dramatic quizzical mien, the answer to his question, "Have you any original views on the pathogenesis of this malady?"

In the "dead house", symptoms and signs were discussed in Latin, German, French and occasionally English. He loved debunking the "clever young house doctors" who, not content with just oral treatment, "inserted a tube in every orifice".

In 1942, the late Frank Louat Q.C. and I formed a small Dining Club. We called it "The Nucleus". Eric was invited to become a Member, and proved to be a lively participant. The Club met every two months for 23 years, but, as these things do, folded up when five of the original members had either died or left Australia permanently.

Many medical immigrants from Central Europe arrived in Australia in the early post-war years. A few were academics, even professors, but many others were graduates of little known medical schools in Hungary, Poland, Lithuania etc. They came as "assisted migrants", with their families, very little money, and with no guarantee of registration to practise. Some could scarcely speak English, and answered professional questions in broken Latin!

Gus and I were among those requested to test their medical knowledge. One afternoon we spent a considerable amount of time with one candidate, in vain trying to elicit a correct interpretation of elementary findings with the stethoscope. After allowing our examinee a long period to recognise the presence of a simple cardiac murmur, Gus, in desperation, tore open his

own shirt and said, "listen to this and tell me what you hear". I knew that Gus had an aortic systolic murmur. Our European friend listened long and intently then turned to Gus and said "very bad, Doctor, very bad!"

In 1949 he persuaded his friend George Falkiner ("the shepherd"), a millionaire, to donate a squash court to the 'ospital. Many residents, nurses and students who have enjoyed this facility don't know to whom they owe their gratitude.

As the fifties moved onwards, Gus' practice, never large, became smaller. He began to look older, gave up squash, but not the girls or parties.

When I called on him on the other side of the "Owen Stanleys" as we called the small hill which separated us at Darling Point, a lady was often present. I was not surprised, therefore, when about 1955 he told me that he was taking her to Europe. They had an enjoyable trip in a car, which she drove expertly.

Shortly before his departure, his mother, "Mum Suss", was found to have terminal cancer, and, as her medical attendant, I was instructed by the two brothers to see that she was not allowed to suffer a long and distressing illness, that *is*, not to press for useless surgery.

On his return from Europe, Gus bought a small house in Double Bay for his "friend". It was decorated and furnished in modern fashion, and Eric began to spend more time there than in his flat. In the course of a lover's quarrel, he stormed out of the house. His friend, believing he had returned to his fiat, followed, but on arrival at his flat obtained no response to her knocking. It transpired he was settled in a roadside tree, watching her come and go.

On one or two occasions I was called to this house in alarm because of a sudden bout of breathlessness "au moment critique". This was obviously a serious development, but he continued to drink, smoke and pursue his complicated social programme as before.

One night, as I was dressing preparatory to attending the Bridge Club, I was called to the phone, and Herbert Schlink, in a tone of great concern, told me that Gus had collapsed just after mounting the short stair to Schlink's flat. "I think he's dead" said Bertie. I left at once, and on arrival found life extinct, and a very distressed host.

A service was held at the Hospital Chapel two days later, at which I delivered the panegyric to a large number of friends inside and outside the building. Hennessy had come from Melbourne, and with a dozen of Eric's close friends we attended the cremation service at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium.

Gus had frequently said that he had prepared a record which was to be played at his funeral service, but there was no mention of this in his will. He did, however, leave a sum of money for a "Wake" by his friends, but this was correctly vetoed by his brother and trustee.

His diary, no doubt a salacious but entertaining document, was bequeathed to the Mitchell Library, not to be perused or made public for 10 years after his death.

This arrangement was said to be identical with that desired by Scot Skirving, another shrewd and fearless critic



of his peers, who, when asked whether he would be attending the funeral of a colleague, is reported to have said, "No, but I heartily approve of it!"

Gus, nobody's fool at business, died a rich man. He had once purchased some acres of land in the Mona Vale Road, St Ives, for the sum in the region of £1000 - on impulse at an auction. He leased it to a couple who bred Corgi dogs, and called it "Schmozzle Farm". "Schmozzle Farm" later became a much desired and very fashionable area, probably worth at least a hundred times more. This, plus his shares in Tallermans, many gilt-edged investments, and his legacy from his parents must have added up to a considerable sum. He bequeathed a sum to the Royal Australian College of Physicians, of which he was a Foundation Fellow, for a Susman Prize.

He left £5000 to the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital for a hospital Medical Library, and a number of his personal belongings, e.g. the elephant's foot, and some of his furniture are to be found there. The "Susman Library", as it is called, is easily the best medical library of any of the teaching hospitals of Sydney.

To John, my son, who was one of his godsons, he left shares in the equivalent of £1000, and also to Ruth, elder daughter of Dr Cotter and Laura Harvey (and his godchild), and one or two other young people. The house at Double Bay and its contents became the property of his final "Good Companion".

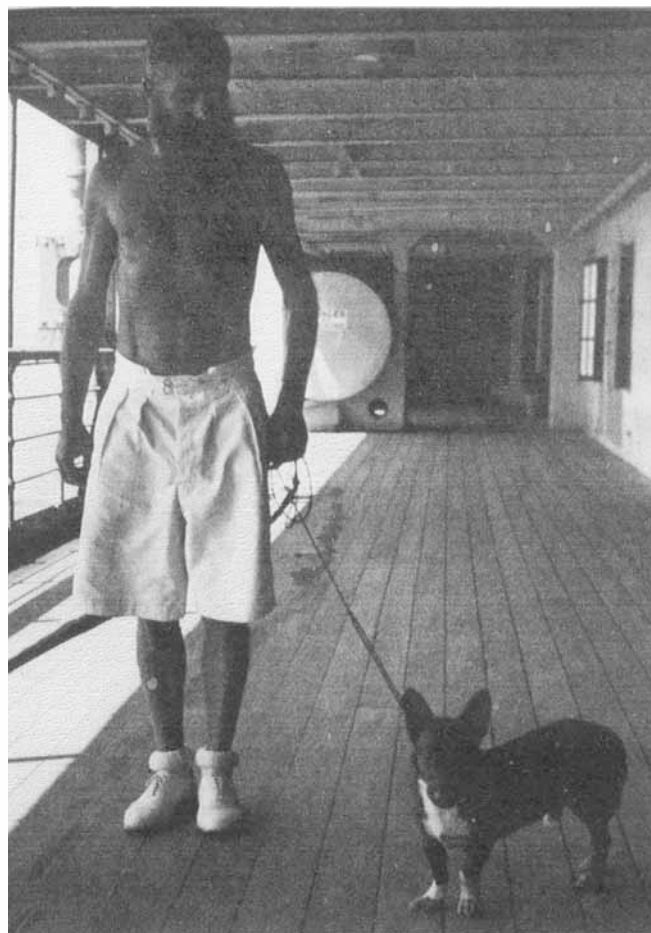
He is still quietly missed by many friends in many places. The original and entertaining conversation, his generosity and loyalty, his shrewd understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of his fellow men, his originality of phrase, (attended) the company of both men and women.

We all miss his cheery greeting and his many puckish twists of description. A year after his death, a dinner was held at the University Club, at which members of the various groups to which he had been attached met to revive their memories of him. About twenty men were present. We drank to him in absentia, and each recounted some incident or story about him. It was, in fact, an evening which Gus would have enjoyed to the full.

This entertaining, original and complex figure was popular with both men and women. He loved to shock the ladies, and the mode of reception of a risqué story would give him an indication as to whether they would "play", as he put it.

He enjoyed his Bohemian reputation, and liked to be talked about. He never missed the chance of showing off before a new audience, he loved scandal, the more salacious the better. He was often mischievous, sometimes to the point of offence or embarrassment. He liked to use that "famous wooden spoon" to "stir up the pudding", as he expressed it.

One of his beloved targets was "The Master", Sir Herbert Schlink, whom he addressed with little respect, cast stones at his favourites, and once referred to him in print as a "bigamous old fox"! None of us escaped his shafts. I was termed a "married bachelor" and a "General Specialist" with,



*Eric during Naval Service, WW2*

"What are you specialising in this week, Kem?", a reference to my rather catholic interest in most branches of medicine.

He liked to think of himself as a gourmet and a first class cook. This was hardly true. He did not know wine; he was a beer drinker. His own cooking was of the casserole type, designed to last a week!

No one quite knew how to assess his boastful claims as a Don Juan, an international financier, a "po" selling genius, a bon viveur. He disguised his real attitudes, and hid his secrets and aspirations, in a cloud of banter.

This said, I would claim against any dissension that Eric was loyal to his friends, and his hospital, kind and helpful to young doctors and students - "Come for a drink on Sunday. Bring a sheila".

He purveyed consistent good humour and good fellowship. I never saw him depressed or querulous. He bore his physical burdens bravely. He understood human values and frailties. He was a phenomenon gone from our midst today, a "character" with a sense of history, equally at home in the market place and the card room, the lecture theatre or the boudoir. He was a legend in his own time. His company was never dull, ever enjoyable. His puckish sallies and Victorian expressions, combined with an unrepentant exhibitionism gave us the gift of Heaven - laughter.

**THE END**





# OBITUARY

## Eric Leo Susman

*We are Indebted to Dr. Kempson Maddox for the following account of the career of the late Dr. Eric Leo Susman.*

The ability to distribute laughter is a gift beyond price. Eric Susman had this rare quality at an early age, and brightened the face and spirit of any company in which he found himself. People would begin to smile even on seeing him approach at a distance. This happy faculty reposed not only in his sharp wit, his many well-worn clichés and his brilliant ability to sum up a man or a situation in one devastating phrase, but in his dress, his mannerisms and his affectations.

He understood the temperament, the reactions, the hopes and fears of his friends and associates with an uncanny accuracy. His shafts never hurt; his criticism never wounded; his affection, kindness and loyalty were always beyond doubt.

He loved people, especially young people, and no new doctor ever joined the staff of his hospital without meeting the warmth of his hospitality. He loved children, as the parents of his godchildren can testify. He made friends in all walks of life, and his abiding generosity included many acts of kindness unknown to anyone else.

He had no worldly goods or pleasures which he did not share with others. He enjoyed gracious and leisurely living, rather than the synthetic and spurious diversions of an electronic age. He enjoyed games, either as a spectator—a test-match — or playing cards, where success did not follow blind chance, but required a battle of psychology with the opposition.

His schooldays at Sydney Church of England Grammar School at an end, he enlisted under age as a private in the Great War. A wound at Gallipoli brought him home to enter the Faculty of Arts at the University of Sydney, from which he soon transferred to the Faculty of Medicine, whence he graduated in 1921.

Of his student days at Sydney Hospital, his residency there and at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and his arrival in London, there are dozens of anecdotes which have been retold amid gales of laughter.

In London it was natural that he should become fascinated by the leaders of the great British School of Neurology, and by the metaphysical exercises in which the medical Colossi of the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases, Queen Square—Walshe, Holmes, Collier and Wilson—were then engaged.

He could be seen striding along Piccadilly in a felt hat with a broader brim than ever seen at the Royal Easter Show in Sydney, in contrast to the narrow bowler hat, striped trousers and yellow gloves which graced Macquarie Street two years later. He was admitted as a Member of the Royal College of Physicians of London in 1924.

Then followed his days of practice in Kings Cross, "Locarno", the artillery hair cut and the cavalry moustache, and his appointment in 1926 as honorary physician to the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. The rather dreary out-patient department became transformed into a happy meeting ground and the scene of many hilarious incidents, by no means all rehearsed.

Between the wars he lived energetically, full of assurance and zest for life. He became a first-class cook and connoisseur of wines, "*un vrai bon viveur*".

At the outbreak of World War II, he was called up by the Royal Australian Navy, and those of us who were fortunate enough to become his shipmates enjoyed his good company at a time when we needed it most. He kept the wardroom happy, and was loved by the ratings. During his periods of leave, which he seemed able to arrange more frequently than the rest of us, his quaint appearance in the

## PRESENTATION OF THE SUSMAN PRIZE FOR 1981

The President will explain that Dr. Eric Leo Susman had died on 10 June 1959.

In his will he had left a sum of money to The Royal Australasian College of Physicians for the establishing of an award by the College –

*"The Eric Susman Prize, to be awarded annually to a Fellow of the said College for the best contribution to the knowledge of any branch of internal medicine as adjudged by the Council of the said College and it is my wish that such contribution be of a high standard."*

The conditions of the award had been decided by Council which had then delegated to the Grants Advisory Committee responsibility for recommendations to Council for the annual prize.

In recent years that committee had concerned itself with ensuring that recipients of the prestigious College award be chosen from the ranks of Fellows who were more in the category of younger investigators, and who had made significant contributions to advance the knowledge and practice of clinical medicine.

Dr Kerr Grant said it should be understood that amongst the conditions for the Eric Susman prize is a preference for work largely in Australia and the fact that possible recipients must be nominated by another who shall provide a detailed appreciation of the value of the work performed and its application to clinical medicine.





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uniform of a surgeon commander with a long brown beard, edged with white, and his little brown suitcase containing his cutlery, almost became a civic byword.

After the war, he settled down to the serious business of being a senior physician, and his unique gifts as a teacher and his reputation as a "character" endeared him to his classes. Towards the end of the war, while the Johns Hopkins Unit was still with us, he organized and conducted Sunday morning medical rounds, which had quite an international character, and which formed the beginnings of the post-graduate school in medicine which distinguishes the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital at the present time.

He was a "PA," man always, and his remarkable capacity for organization, his originality and his diplomacy resulted in the squash courts, the idea of a superlatively good library, the address of welcome to new students and, just recently, the "sculpting" of the chairman of his hospital.

As chairman of the Medical Board for three years, he was energetic, constructive and imaginative. In company with Campbell and Noad, Eric Susman brought back to Sydney, and maintained, the high standard of medical neurology which he had acquired in London, and Instituted neurological clinics at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children and at his own hospital, and became the honorary director of the Northcott Clinic on the north side of the harbour.

His lectures and medical papers were always most carefully prepared, memorable in their flourish and originality. Susman was a great *litterateur* in his own right. His letters and essays must be preserved. His heroes were Shakespeare, Johnson and Pepys. He was a conscientious and consistent diarist, and extremely punctilious in his correspondence and business affairs.

In addition, he had a keen and penetrating appreciation of art, music, sculpture and the theatre. The Susman Art Prize, at the Sydney Technical College was established many years ago, and Fred Leist and A. Mezaros were his close friends.

In spite of a superficial flamboyancy and a tempestuous life, Eric Susman was a sensitive, modest man, never a snob, a good son and a loyal friend, and with a capacity for sharing confidences which his women friends perhaps would appreciate more than his men friends. He was a man of contrasts, shrewd and careful; a generous, devastating critic, but prepared to receive in good temper as much as he gave; unconventional, but with a strong sense of tradition and timing; apparently untidy, but obsessively systematic. He had exceptional business and organizing ability, and would have succeeded in many fields of life other than medicine.

*Bon viveur*, brilliant satirist, gifted speaker, constant friend, he had something in him of Byron, Edward VII and Alexander Woolcott. He was a great Australian, a distinguished son of his hospital and city, and it was our great good fortune and privilege to be his contemporaries. We shall finish and maintain the many things he has achieved in his colourful career.

Eric Susman was a man of great courage, and only a few would guess the depth of his physical suffering over the years. The vivid personality at the moment is too close for us to realize fully the jagged hole which his passing will leave in

our lives. Our own remaining days are suddenly bereft of much sunshine and laughter.

**Dr. NICHOLAS LARKINS writes:**

The untimely death of Eric Susman has created a great void. He was one of the most colourful and unique characters that the profession of medicine in Sydney has produced. The majority of his professional life was concerned with teaching, both post— graduate and undergraduate, at his beloved "Prince Alfred". He assessed himself as an exhibitionistic extrovert, and his *modus operandi* was his flair for the rococo and bizarre applied both to behaviour and to his method of expression. He was a master of English and adored the use of the paradox, the double negative, the less common synonyms for well-known places, a deliberate and mischievous mispronunciation of proper names. "*There will be many a dry eye when he passes Pinchgut outward bound*", he said of an unpopular character based on Sydney during the war. This capacity gave him tremendous power as a lecturer, teacher, writer and conversationalist, for he was outstanding as all of these.

He had a diversity of interests. An avid reader, a lover of the fine arts, of music and the art of living, he was an authority on wine and food and a superb host. He had tremendous drive and application for work, a fantastic gift for interesting himself in all acquaintances, and to his closer friends he was devoted.

And his friends are in every walk of life and of all ages—from Scot Skirving to the school children (particularly those of his friends), from admirals to ordinary seamen, from painters to cartoonists, from Judges to articled clerks. Susman found it effortless to remain streamlined in mind and attitude and interests, and yet he paradoxically ignored many new things.

Except for the briefest interval (when he employed a female driver) he owned no car, could not drive and pretended "*an incapacity to cope with the vagaries of the internal combustion engine*". He was, nevertheless, essentially practical and realistic, and reacted with forceful invective on any subject or person which offended his sense of adequacy. Of a late knighthood conferred on a distinguished member of the profession, he said: "*What is the use of knighting a man who is little more than a puff of smoke from a crematorium chimney?*"

By his death at the age of 63, the profession has lost, as well also his friends, a most fascinating associate who served in two World Wars and was outstanding in his profession as a teacher and practitioner, as well as an outstanding character and personality. To transpose Susmania, "*There is many a wet eye as he passes outward bound*", in his Puckish way no doubt to reorganise and add colour to the hereafter.

**Dr. RAYMOND HENNESSY writes:**

Dr. Samuel Johnson said of his friend Edmund Burke: "Yes, sir, if a man were to come by chance at the same time with Burke under a shed to shun a shower he would say 'This is an extraordinary man.' If Burke should go into a stable to see his horse drest the ostler would say 'We have an extraordinary man here.'"







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Most people acquainted with him would agree that these remarks fairly apply also to the late Eric Susman. He was above all else an original and vigorous personality. I vividly recall our first meeting—it was in July, 1923, at a London hospital. Susman had just completed a term as house physician with Purves Stewart at Westminster Hospital. Susman and I were interested in the subject of Quincke's disease, the aetiology of which, at that time, was not fully elucidated. I well recall that our discussion went well into the early morning. Since then our lives have been curiously interwoven.

Susman's chief characteristics were his animated conversation, his bustling vitality and boisterous enthusiasm. Like David Garrick, he was the first man of the world for sprightly conversation. His curiosity was universal, and like Bacon, he took all knowledge for his province.

His life was full of incident and adventure. At the age of 18 years he enlisted in the First Australian Imperial Force, and was in the second landing at Gallipoli, where he remained till the evacuation. At that time he suffered severely from diabetes insipidus, and as the shortage of water on the peninsula was constant and severe, one can imagine his terrible privations above all his companions. He often said that the first thing he did when he saw a dead soldier, friend or foe, was to grab his water bag.

He was sent back to Sydney and completed his medical course, graduating in 1921. He served a term as resident medical officer at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. He then went to England, and obtained the diploma of Membership of the Royal College of Physicians in 1924. He was elected a Fellow of The Royal Australasian College of Physicians in 1938.

By nature and by choice he was attracted to the study of neurology, and after being house physician at Westminster Hospital and West London Hospital he served a term at the National Hospital, Queen Square.

Susman commenced practice in Sydney towards the end of 1925, and in the following year was appointed to the staff of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital—an association with the hospital which regulated his entire medical life and terminated only with his death.

Between the two World Wars he joined the Royal Australian Naval Reserve, and was called up for duty in the Navy at the outbreak of war in September, 1939. He served most of the time at sea, generally in defenceless ships during the cruelest naval warfare in history. Although no man loved and used the comforts of life more, he cheerfully adapted himself to all the discomforts and dangers of shipboard life under war conditions.

Apart from his military and naval experiences, which took him practically all over the world, he made several private visits to England, Europe and the United States of America, the most recent being in 1957.

As a physician he was not deeply read in medicine. He read men's minds more readily than he read men's books but he was a shrewd observer and learnt eagerly by viva voce. He was quick in sizing up a situation. His talents were best suited to cases of a bizarre and esoteric nature, and he loved those which had a human interest. His hands were exquisitely shaped, and he was adroit in any manipulation.

For instance, he quickly became proficient in cistern puncture when it was first introduced into clinical medicine.

As a host Susman was incomparable, whether at *tête-à-tête* or a large formal gathering. He delighted in arranging and organising to the last detail. He would inspect the food as it came into the kitchen and before it was prepared and cooked. His taste in wine was cultivated and reliable. He studied cooking seriously and was well accomplished, and loved to prepare meals for his guests in his own apartment. He was interested in all the polite arts, and was somewhat of a connoisseur in painting. He had an extraordinary gift for friendship and for convening and maintaining social groups.

All games of chance requiring the quick use of wits appealed to him, and he was superb at every kind of card game. He was not really musical, but he understood and appreciated music, which he studied as part of general culture, and he was instinctively attracted by the philosophy of the Wagnerian operas. He was an ardent theatre-goer and his tastes were amorphous, but he was particularly fond of the plays of William Shakespeare and of Bernard Shaw.

He was fond of feminine society, and few men knew better how to humour the ladies, were more assiduous to please them, or better understood their foibles. He loved to retail petty gossip, which he nothing extenuated, nor did he set down aught in malice.

He was very fond of teaching, but was not, I think, a good lecturer in the formal manner. He was rather inclined to overstate his case and overact his part. He was at his best in unpremeditated talks and discussions. His best written contribution was entitled "The Psychological Aspect of Deafness", delivered before the Australasian Medical Congress (British Medical Association) in Hobart in 1958—but this was written *con amore*.

His private practice was lucrative but never very large; it merely filled the interstices of his hospital duties, which, he took very seriously, and his social life, which was very full. He was always financially independent of his medical earnings. He did everything with gusto; even his personal daily routine of toilet was lavish and prolonged. He had a strong statistical instinct; for many years he kept a minute account of all his petty spendings, balancing each night even to the last halfpenny.

His enthusiasm was contagious, and his vivacious narrative powers carried his listeners along with him. When he was introduced into a company of strangers, he was generally found dominating the party by the end of the evening. For many years he consistently kept a diary; his war diaries he has bequeathed to the Mitchell Library, with instructions that they are not to be examined or published until the year 2000. They should make good reading.

His health failed rapidly during the last twelve months, and he was very interested in the nature of his malady, which was a puzzle to his medical advisers. I think he knew that it was gaining on him. He ordered his body to be opened after death, and allowed a generous emolument for the pathologist. His death was instantaneous—which was the only thing his medical advisers were unanimous in agreeing would not happen to him.

I loved the man, and gladly do honour to his memory, on this side idolatry. The words of Oliver Goldsmith accurately



describe him—he was an abridgement of all that is pleasant in man.

**G. SELBY writes:** (Thanks to MJA 1959, 2, 338-40)

Eric Leo Susman was born in Sydney on 7 March 1896. After leaving Sydney Church of England Grammar School, he enlisted in the First AIF as a private in September 1914 and was wounded at Gallipoli in the following year. He rejoined his unit after ten weeks in hospital in Egypt and remained at Gallipoli until the evacuation. His medical career was again interrupted by the 1939-45 War when he served as surgeon lieutenant commander on HMAS *Westralia*.

Susman's medical curriculum vitae was not exceptional. He entered the faculty of medicine at the University of Sydney after he was repatriated in 1916, graduated in 1921 and served his residency at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. In 1923 he went to London where he was house physician to Sir James Purves-Stewart at Westminster and West London Hospitals. This fostered his natural interest in neurology; which he pursued by working at the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases, Queen Square. There he learned the complexities of clinical neurology from none less than Holmes, Collier, Wilson and Walshe. He was admitted to Membership of the Royal College of Physicians of London, in 1924 and at the end of the following year commenced practice in Sydney.

He was appointed an honorary assistant physician to RPAH in 1926 and an honorary physician in 1945. He remained closely associated with RPAH until the end of his life and was chairman of the medical board of this hospital for three years. Neurology remained his special interest and, at a time when specialisation was not favoured in Sydney, he instituted neurological clinics at RPAH and the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children. He was the honorary director of the RSL Northcott Neurological Diagnostic Centre.

Eric Susman and (Sir) Kenneth Noad were the first neurologists in Sydney.

He became a foundation Fellow of the RACP in 1938 and was a member of the NSW state committee of the College from 1952 to 1958. He delivered the GE Rennie Memorial Lecture on *The Neurology of Chronic Alcoholism* in 1956.

He had independent means and did not strive to build up a busy private practice, which included both neurology and general medicine. He once told me: *'I may not be the best physician in Sydney, but I am the most expensive.'*

He collected an excellent library of neurological classics including the original works of Hughlings Jackson, Gowers and Charcot, but was less interested in reading current medical journals or in writing and publishing medical papers. When he retired as senior physician of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital he presented to the board the sum of 5000 Pounds for the purpose of establishing and equipping a modern clinical library;

Whereas Eric Susman's medical life was not exceptional, his personality certainly was and endeared him to all his colleagues and friends. He was known as 'Gus', a nickname he had acquired in his youth as a boy scout. No one who had the good fortune of being associated with him could have forgotten this remarkable, witty and eccentric man, who

infected his companions with his boisterous enthusiasm and *joi de vivre*. He was, at times, flamboyant and regarded himself as an exhibitionistic extrovert. These personality traits were apparent at an early age and they continued throughout his life and were hardly suppressed when he was ill.

When he started practice in Sydney in 1925, he was seen striding along Macquarie Street in a narrow bowler hat, striped trousers and yellow gloves.

His mastery of English and his sharp, quick wit created many remarks still recalled and recounted amid laughter by his friends and acquaintances. When some of his colleagues at RPAH had an informal discussion about the age of consent, Gus brought the seriousness of the matter to an end by saying: *'I don't really mind if they raise or lower the age, as long as they make it compulsory at twenty-one.'*

He was able to sum up the deficiencies of a situation or of a person with one devastating phrase, but his criticism was overshadowed by his kindness and loyalty.

Gus was respected and loved by his colleagues and students and had friends in all walks of life, who recognised that his personality had many endearing qualities and that his exhibitionistic, extroverted behaviour was only a facade for a sensitive, honest man who was always a generous, true and loyal friend. His tremendous enjoyment of life was transmitted to all in contact with him. He enjoyed art, painting, music and the theatre, was a connoisseur of wine and an excellent cook. He went to no end of trouble to find the best food and once wrote to a publican at Albury several months before we arrived there and ordered the Murray cod we wanted for dinner. He was an expert at all card games and enjoyed the chance of outwitting the friends with whom he played regularly. He never married, but was hardly ever without female companionship; ladies were enchanted by his charming and witty behaviour.

I met Gus when I was an RMO at RPAH in 1946-47 and, like most of my colleagues, fell under his spell. His generosity in helping all young graduates was unequalled. He was an excellent teacher, interested more in the bizarre and esoteric cases, and his manner of presentation made it easy to remember even the more dreary scientific facts. He likened the atrophic brain of a dementing patient to a shrivelled walnut in its shell. His postgraduate clinical demonstrations were always well attended and he had the audience spellbound when he presented a boy with self-induced photic epilepsy. The EEG machine was in the lecture room, the electrodes were applied, but the boy was then overcome by all the attention and ran out of the room closely pursued by Gus. One of the honorary physicians in the audience exclaimed: *'What a superb demonstration of Susmania.'*

Gus never mentioned his trigeminal neuralgia or his terminal cardiac illness to his friends and died suddenly in his sixty-third year on 10 June 1959. He will never be forgotten by his many friends in all walks of life and the Susman Library at RPAH and Susman Prize at the RACP remain as a memorial to an exceptional and generous man.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★





## Correspondence

### THE SUSMAN LIBRARY COMMITTEE

SIR:

On the occasion of his retirement as Senior Physician of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Dr. Eric Susman presented to the Board the sum of £5000 for the purpose of establishing and equipping a modern clinical library. His gift was prompted by his appreciation of the vital necessity for all students of medicine to have the benefit of ready access to a complete reference library housed and managed under conditions appropriate to study. It was his dearest wish that this library, as to his contents, its setting and its management, should rank with the finest scientific and clinical libraries in the world.

A great deal of preliminary planning was carried out by the librarians of the Fisher and Mitchell Libraries and by the Director of the Public Library. It became apparent after considering their recommendations and the cost of equipping and stalling the library, that Dr. Susman's gift was far short of the total amount which would be required to establish the library along the lines contemplated by him. It was at this stage that he persuaded his great friend, Mr. George Falkiner, to help with a contribution, but even his generosity has not bridged the gap.

It has occurred to me, and indeed has also been suggested to me by a number of Eric Susman's friends, that there are many people, both inside and outside the medical profession, who would like an opportunity of perpetuating

his memory in a fitting manner, and at the same time do a great service to the medical profession. Even his non-medical friends, I am sure, are aware of the devotion with which he applied himself to his task as Warden of Clinical Studies, and of his enormous and untiring interest in the teaching and welfare of the young men in the Faculty of Medicine. Personally I feel that no memorial could be more fitting than that this library should be the success that he had wished and fulfill the high hopes that he himself had cherished. It is for that reason that we have formed a small committee to give the opportunity to his friends of sharing in its cost

I feel there is no point in stating the maximum amount required, because whatever is received can be spent to good purpose, and if the total is of a generous nature it would permit of some portion being spent on a memorial plaque, inscribed in a manner which would do justice to his memory.

It is perhaps unnecessary to point out that all donations would be deductible for Income Tax purposes. If you are minded to contribute, would you be good enough to forward a cheque to Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Susman Library Fund, Missenden Road, Camperdown, N.S.W.?

Yours, etc.

H. H. SCHZJNK

Chairman, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital  
Susman Library Fund  
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital  
Camperdown, New South Wales

July 20, 1959

## My Brother Eric

(by Dr Maurice Susman)

My brother Eric Susman died on June 10th, 1959.

Many who use Susman Library at R.P.A. Hospital know him only by name, but many old friends and colleagues remember his eccentricities, wit, his odd teaching methods and some of his medical activities.

But there was a part of him that few outside his immediate family knew about. I refer especially to certain events of his youth that must have coloured his later years although he seldom spoke about them even to his nearest relatives. In his tenth year he suffered from *Diabetes Insipidus* (diagnosed by our G.P., Dr Phipps and later by the doyen of paediatricians, Charles Clubbe;). He used to pass gallons of pale urine and drink as much water; he lost his appetite and my parents offered all kinds of bribe to induce him to eat more. He lost all his mirth and forewent all custom of exercise. He continued this for three to four months and then the malady disappeared as suddenly as it had begun.

I recently found a clinical observation made by my father, a layman, that in the 8th week of his illness, my brother caught measles and had an immediate remission of symptoms, but these returned worse than ever as the measles abated.

The second and more important event in Eric's youth occurred in 1915. Not many of his colleagues know, or remember, that he enlisted in the first A.I.F. in September 1914 aged 18½. He was at the Gallipoli landing on April 25th,

1915, and was wounded on May 2nd.

After ten weeks in hospital in Egypt he rejoined his unit in time for the battle of Australia Valley and Hill 60. His unit then had three weeks rest in Lemnos and after this he spent the last two months of the year on Gallipoli until the evacuation. Towards the end he seems to have suffered a relapse of his childhood insipid diabetes; he once told me that he did not wash for weeks because he had to drink all his ration of water and he once risked his life to recover a water bottle from a dead soldier in no-man's land.

Soon after his return to Egypt he broke out in boils and was repatriated in 1916. He was far from well and I think he probably had some symptoms of the old *Diabetes Insipidus*, as on the advice of a Sydney physician whom I cannot recall, he went to Melbourne and had his pituitary gland irradiated. A little later he joined me in 1st year medicine.

This was not his last experience of war as he served in the Australian Navy for six years in World War 2. He always regarded this service as an amusing chore. It will be of more interest to old friends to let Eric himself tell of some of his experiences on Gallipoli as he recounted in letters to me or his parents.

His account of how he was wounded is in simple language which contrasts strongly with the plethora of purple patches which, in later years, he often used playfully to the delight of amused or bemused audiences.



Here is an extract from a letter to me dated May 18th, 1915 from Egypt: *"some particulars of how I got shot.*

*A general advance was ordered - a night attack -, and in spite of a huge volume of fire resulting in many casualties I managed to get through the night safely enough and we were entrenched fairly deep by dawn. The fire was terrific and by nine o'clock we found we were being enfiladed by one of the enemy's cleverly concealed machine guns. A couple of my mates were killed outright by the deadly accuracy of the Maxim's aim, our company sergeant major received a severe wound in the thigh and it finished up there was only one officer left.*

*We recognised our danger but could do nothing but lie there like rabbits in their burrows. But I had not long to wait, for in a few minutes I caught one in the calf of my left leg, a fair beauty. Now usually in trench fighting the wounded have to stay in the trench till night time when they are got out under cover of darkness. But my leg was stinging like blazes and men were climbing all over me with ammunition and water, so I decided to try and reach a sheltered hollow 20 yards in rear of the trench. But the machine gunner was too quick for me and got me right across the right cheek of the arse; it bled a lot at first, (see enclosed gory piece of trousers), but it soon stopped.*

*Well, I am getting along nicely now, but I haven't got a scrap of energy to do any writing but you will hear from me every week."*

The first medical officer to attend him on Gallipoli was John Story, one-time surgeon to R.P.A.H.

In another letter written from Gallipoli on August 21st, 1915 he says tersely: *"...You have probably heard about our advance on and around August 6th. I will not give any details as you will probably have read of the doings of the 13th Batt. ere you get this. I was fortunate enough to have taken part in this big operation and had a fairly exciting as well as trying time..."*

(This refers to the battle of Australia Valley aid Hill 60. )  
(Jim Roche wrote a remark here, that his stepfather, Marks Hayes, was wounded on August 22nd at Steel's Point. He was in the 8th Bn)

On November 26th, 1915 he wrote from his dug-out 971, Gallipoli: *"...I'm afraid it's going to be a long way to Tipperary... I don't think Gallipoli will bring about or even help to bring about any permanent victory..."*

This prescient comment about Gallipoli was written as were all the letters cited, in the year that saw Eric's 19th birthday, March 7th.

The last letter I ever had from him is dated June 8th, 1959, two days before he died: *"... I have had a bad attack of 'flu from which I made a slow recovery. It knocked my myocardium about..."*

#### LETTER FROM ERIC SUSMAN TO M.P. SUSMAN

Ghezireh Palace  
Cairo  
Hospital

Tuesday May 18th 1915

Dear old Mick,

Just a few lines to give you a few particulars of how I got shot. A general advance was ordered - a night attack, and in spite of a huge volume of fire resulting in many casualties I managed to get through the night safely enough and we entrenched fairly deeply by dawn. The fire was terrific and by

about nine o'clock we found that we were being enfiladed by one of the enemy cleverly concealed machine guns.

A couple of my mates were killed by being hit by the deadly accuracy of the Maxim's aim, Our company sergeant major receiving a severe wound in the thigh, and it finished up that there was only half of us left. We recognised our danger but could do nothing, just sit there like rabbits in their burrows. But I hadn't long to wait, for in a few minutes I caught one in the calf of the left leg - a fair beauty.

Now usually in trench fighting wounded have to stay in the trench till night time, when they are got out under cover of darkness. But my leg was stinging like blazes and men were climbing all over me with ammunition and water so I decided to try and reach a sheltered hollow, in rear of the trench. But the machine gunner (the German swine) was too quick for me and got me across the right cheek of my arse. Bled a lot at first, (see enclosed gory piece of trousers), but it soon stopped.

Well, old boy, I'm getting along nicely now but I haven't a scrap of energy to do any writing, but you will hear from me every week.

Ever yours affectionately,

Eric

---

#### "SUSMANIA"

**Precision:** *"Either it's raining, or it's not raining"*

**Dermatologist:** *"Don't bother to take your clothes off. I can see what you have. Next 2 please."*

**Oculists:** *"Those 'better or worse' fellows."*

**Stupid:** *"A one neurone job"*

**Unpopularity:** *"Many a dry eye when he passes Pinchgut outward bound."*

**Bridge:** *"Don't bother looking at my hand."*

**Visiting:** *"Dinner is Chez \_\_\_\_\_ . Don't forget your bicarbonate."*

**Impermanence:** *"A puff of smoke in the Crematorium chimney."*

**Tradition:** *"Poets, prostitutes and physicians are always paid in guineas."*

**Students' Rounds:** *"Have you any views on the pathogenesis of this malady?"*

**Hospital Morgue:** *"Learn and inwardly digest the lessons of the dead house."*

**Students' Rounds:** *"Symptoms, signs and effects were discussed in French, Latin and sometimes English, with equal facility and clarity. We found ourselves frequently enjoying manifestations 'a distance', in a person who was 'parenchymatically ill'."*

**From the Year Book:** *"An arresting eloquence, adorned by phrases gleaned from the classics and foreign parts, flavoured by sparkling wit, embellished by a significant pursing of the lips and a flourishing of the 'ands."*

**To an overanxious patient:** *"Madam, don't speak to the man at the wheel!"*

(As well as Eric Susman's service in WW 1 he also served in WW 2 in the Navy. The ships he served on were:- HMAS Assault, Hobart, Penguin, Rushcutter and Westralia.

(Again my kind thanks to member, Jim Roche, for sending me this information on a person who left his mark on the lives he touched.)



## From your Secretary...

# Thank You

Thank you very much, Members, for your yearly dues, donations and LIFE MEMBERSHIPS. They are so very much appreciated.

*(There are some members who are a little behind with their Subs—any little effort is much appreciated.)*

To our members who pay by EFT, thank you for identifying yourself.

Your contributions, letters and emails are enjoyed by us all and are an encouragement.

(Members on the Internet—don't forget our own

site (see Front Cover of our magazine) and also “surf” the RAAMC web site:- [www.raamc.com](http://www.raamc.com)

If you do visit our web site, please feel free to write a comment in our “Guest Book”.)

**5 Field Ambulance RAAMC Association** is also a proud member of the **RAAMC Association Inc.**

NB: Some of you reading this magazine may decide you now wish to discontinue to be on our Mailing List, I hope this is not so but if it is please let me know and your wishes will be respected.

## 2009 “FUND-RAISER”

In an endeavour to keep on top of our expenses we will be offering raffle tickets at \$1 each. Depending on how many we sell, the one and only prize will be HALF the money we collect and this will go to the member's name that is drawn at our annual Re-Union Luncheon in November. We look forward to your valuable assistance—every dollar is gratefully appreciated.

## KIND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*(Of monies received since last newsletter of 4'08. Please contact me if your name was omitted.)*

- Neil **BARRIE** (Cheque \$50) for Subs to 2012
- Victor “Bluey” **DAVIS** (Cash \$15) for Subs
- George **DONNELLY** (EFT \$100) for Life Membership
- John and Margaret **GORRELL** (Cheque \$30) for Subs
- John **MAIR** (Cash \$20) for New Member Subs \$15 and Donation \$5
- Tony **MILLAR** (Cheque \$30) for Subs to 2010
- Gordon **MILLS** (M/Order \$100) for Subs \$60 to 2011, Name Badge \$20, Beret Badge \$8, Lapel Badge \$7 and 5 Raffle Tickets \$5
- Chris **O'REILLY** (M/O \$15) for New Member
- Sr. Elizabeth **SHEARD** (Cheque \$35) for Subs \$15 and Donation \$20
- John **SMITH** (Cheque \$30) for Subs for 2007 and 2008
- Darren **WATERSON** (EFT \$35) for book purchase (“Military of the Hunter”)
- Thomas **VELLA** (Cash \$15) for Subs for 2008 and
- John **WOODHEAD** (Cheque \$20) for Subs \$15 and Donation \$5

## NEW MEMBERS

John MAIR is sincerely welcomed as an Associate Member. John's grandfather (Les “Doug” Dower) served in the 2/5th Field Ambulance in WW 2.

When John was “surfing” the net recently, he came across our website and wrote to me.

His grandfather enlisted at Caulfield on 15 July 1940 and went to the Middle East and later came back to Australia to prepare for fighting in PNG and Borneo. John said his grandfather's records also show he spent some time with the 2/4th Fd.Amb. and also the 2/9th AGH.

After the war his grandfather worked on the Hume Weir as a reservoir keeper.

John often tried to talk to him about his experiences but his granddad was reluctant to say what he went through. He passed away in April 2005 at age 86 and John said he lived a good life.

When John joined us he welcomed the loan of (the late) Lloyd Tann's book on the 2/5th Aust. Fd. Amb. A.I.F. which gave him a lot of insight of some of his grandfather's experiences.

*(Ed. Thank you, John, for your interest in our Association and we look forward to meeting or hearing from you in the future.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Chris O'REILLY saw our website and made contact with us. I have just received his application with pleasure but as yet have not been able to get more info. Hopefully I can put a message from Chris in our next magazine but in the interim we most heartily welcome Chris into our Association and may we meet in the not too distant future. Thank you, Chris.





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# MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS

**George DONNELLY** enjoys our newsletters and recently emailed Brian Tams to enquire if Don Booth (living in Cairns) was the same person who served when he was at the Unit.

*(Ed... Brian was a little embarrassed because George referred to him as "Sir"—but yes, George, Don would have been serving at the same time as you. Our Association kindly thanks you for your EFT donation of \$100 for Life Membership, it is very much appreciated.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Jim ROCHE** wrote say he enjoyed the new magazine and passes on his good wishes to all his friends in the Association.

Jim kindly posted me a lot of information on a Dr. Eric Leo Susman (known as "Gus" to his friends) and I have placed this in our newsletter.

Dr. Susman, was related to Kathy Roche (John's wife) because his brother, Dr. Maurice (Mick) Susman (a Colonel in WW 2 and a surgeon at Sydney Hospital) was Kath's uncle.

*(Ed... Thank you, Jim, for the info on Dr. Eric Susman, I am sure our members will not be offended by some of the content.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Darren WATERSON** sends his good wishes to his friends in the Association and thanked us for posting the book he ordered for his dad for Christmas ("Military of the Hunter—Citizen Defence Forces—Newcastle and Hunter Valley—1855-2005").

*(Ed... Thanks Darren, I haven't read the book as yet but we bought a copy to be posted to any interested member that may wish to read it. A member can purchase one for \$40 (incl. postage) if they would like to own their own copy.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Alen LUCIC** enjoys our newsletters and passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association.

Alen is a paramedic, happily married to Annabel, with a young family and they have just relocated (Feb/March) from Bourke to Mudgee and they are all in good health. Their twin children, Karl and Mara, had their first experience with "Santa" at Christmas and will celebrate their 1st Birthday on the 9th January.

He wrote to say he was "chasing horses" (in his ambulance, of course) at a recent race meeting at Louth (near Bourke) and had the pleasure of being introduced to our good member, Major General Warren Glenny AO.

*(Maj.Gen. Glenny is the NSW State Commissioner for St John Ambulance Australia and also Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of St John Ambulance (NSW). Major*

*General Glenny is also fondly remembered as one of our past Commanders of 2 Div.)*

Alen remarked how amazing it is who one might meet "out in the back o' Bourke".

*(Ed... Thank you, Alen, for your email. It seems to me you have a happy life and good on you. Good luck in your new work location –Alen signed off—ex Tpt and Evac Section, 5 Fd Amb/Med Coy/5 BASB.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Rayda NOBLE** sends her good wishes to her friends in the Association and thanked us for inserting the article about the Memorial in the park in Cairns.

Sadly, just after this letter from Rayda I was told by our good member, Tom Pritchard, that her husband, Alan, had passed away in hospital, after a long battle with cancer, on the 15th January.

Rayda was especially grateful for the effort put in by the National Servicemen's Association (Vic. Branch) at Allan's funeral. He was a well respected member of his NS Sub Branch.

*(Ed... Thank you, Tom, for letting me know. Rayda would have taken much support from yourself and Neil Barrie being there to comfort her. To Rayda, your friends are praying for you and you have the loving support of your family. Our sincere sympathies are with you.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**John WOODHEAD** sends his good wishes to his friends in the Association and enjoys reading our newsletters.

*(Ed... Thank you, John, I hope when this newsletter reaches you that you are in good spirits.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Victor "Bluey" DAVIS** sends his good wishes to his friends in the Association. He and his wife, Betty, have recently celebrated their 62nd Wedding Anniversary.

He said they both had a great day being entertained by their many nieces and nephews.

"Bluey" received some good news, after a P.E.T. scan, that his chest is good.

I had a chuckle when I read that, recently, after Betty had taken him to the podiatrist they went to their local RSL club for lunch, and when they arrived back home "Bluey" was glad to get his shoes off—Betty said..."You know, you have had your shoes on the wrong feet!"

*(Ed... Good on you, Bluey and Betty, I was pleased to hear the results of your scan. We hope the heatwave in Victoria does not take too much out of you both. We are thinking of you.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



**Ray GRANT** sends his good wishes to his friends in the Association and enjoys reading our newsletters.

He said that the article about Norma Hutton brought back a flood of wonderful memories. Ray and Arthur and their wives were very close friends and would attend army balls and various outings and even holidaying and house-boating on the Hawkesbury River.

The other name of Dr. Bob McInerney in WW 2 had Ray thinking, was he the same man whom Ray had known when he was a member of the 2/14th Light Field Ambulance, 1st Armoured Division—a Major McInerney was the 2 IC.

On discharge, Major McInerney went to the Royal Womens Hospital.

*(Ed... Thank you, Ray, for your letter. I rang Bob to ask if he was with 2/14th Lt. Fd. Amb. but unfortunately, it was not he.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Tony MILLAR** enjoyed our Christmas Newsletter and asked to pass on his good wishes to his friends in the Association.

*(Ed...Thank you, Tony, for your note and Christmas message.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Gordon MILLS** wrote to say he enjoys the newsletters and passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association.

*(Ed.. Thank you, Gordon, for your note and items, they should reach you by the time you read this newsletter and we hope it finds you in good health.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Sr. Elizabeth SHEARD** wrote to say she enjoys reading our news and hopes to see us on Reserve Forces Day.

Elizabeth wishes a Happy New Year to her friends in the Association and added... that with all the ads. in our new magazine she thinks this should help with our costs.

*(Ed...Thank you, Elizabeth, for your letter. Yes, you are right, as I wrote some time back that if we were fortunate enough, we may secure the services of a publishing company who would ensure the printing and postage of our newsletters was at no cost to our members—this has now happened, as you may have noticed on the bottom of page 1 of our Christmas Newsletter.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**John GORRELL** wrote that he was impressed with the new format of our new magazine and all the news. He and Margaret pass on their good wishes to their friends in the Association.

They were sorry they had to miss our Annual Luncheon due to prior commitments but are both hoping to be with us on ANZAC Day.

*(Ed..Thank you, John, for your letter. We hope you both can make it on ANZAC Day.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Estelle LINDSAY** wrote and said she enjoys reading all our news and thought the colour and the Medical Badge on the cover looked great.

She "corrected" me for saying she was 92..."but I hope I may see 93—time will tell."

She loves her dogs because she is very deaf and when Brian (her son) is away they let her know if anyone is around and they are very good company.

Estelle remarked that my visit to their home, last September, was very exciting because it was so unexpected; she said unexpected pleasures are the nicest. She regretted that she did not have a camera to record the moment.

The poem "ANZAC on the Wall" (*inserted in our ANZAC Newsletter, 1'08*) is very much treasured by her.

Estelle "stole" a verse because it reminded her of her Uncle Will, who was killed in WW 1, she wrote;

*"Uncle Will copped it at the front  
from some stray shrapnel blast,  
It took his life in seconds, he did not last.  
His mates gave him a funeral and a cross erected,  
It was good to know that Uncle Will  
was very much respected."*

Estelle wrote that if her Uncle Will hadn't been in 5 Field Ambulance she would never had joined and would have "missed out" the pleasures of being "...one of you all".

*(Ed..Thank you, Estelle, for your letter and may we still be writing in eight or so years we will congratulate you on receiving your telegram from the QUEEN!)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**John DAVIES** wrote a very nice letter. He enjoys reading about what is happening but apologises for not being as involved as he would like to be.

John and his wife, Moira, are not enjoying the best of health but their children and grandchildren keep them very much focused AND happy with all their achievements.

John said the farmers in the surrounding areas have had a bad season and the rains came too late to save the majority of the wheat crops.

John passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association.

*(Ed.. Good on you, John, throughout it all you manage to present a positive impression. You and Moira must be good role models to all your offspring—we are thinking of you.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★





**Noel MOULDER** and I go back a long way with 3 Company RAASC.

What a nice surprise he sent me just on Christmas. It was an old black and white photo, taken in the Sgt's Mess (at Ashfield, I think) at a Christmas function circa 1959. It shows Noel, myself and Colin Cooke—all having “a ball”.

Noel is congratulated at being appointed National Secretary of the National Servicemen's Association of Australia Inc. Our Association wishes Noel and his committee every success in their endeavours.

Any National Serviceman, or for that matter anyone, wishing to view their web site please go to [www.nashoaustralia.org.au](http://www.nashoaustralia.org.au).

*(Ed..Thank you, Noel, for your “Christmas gift”, it was quite a nice surprise.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Neil BARRIE** (one of our “original” 2/5th ) enjoys reading all the news and passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association.

*(Ed...Thank you, Neil, for the note written, on your behalf, by your daughter, Glenda. Neil is now in his 90's and has “slowed down” just a bit but always glad to hear your voice when I ring.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Major General John PEARN AM** wrote to congratulate us on our “new look” magazine and wishes us all the best for 2009.

John enclosed a 3-page article he wrote on the pioneering roles of Joseph and (son) Thomas Bancroft in connection with Insects and Human Disease.

Most of the Latin and medical terms may be strange to us “laymen” but our doctor members and other medical members will enjoy the article.

I enjoyed reading about the perseverance of Joseph Bancroft (and later, son Thomas) under what must have been very trying conditions in the mid to late 1800's in Brisbane. ( I have put John's article in our magazine.)

*(Thank you, John, for your Article and more importantly, ensuring that the Bancrofts' (and others) efforts are so properly recognised.)*

*In memory of the Victorian Bushfire tragedy  
(February 09)*

This poignant poem was sent to me via my email by our member, Nelson Fiorentino. I don't know who N.D. 11 Feb 2009 is but I wish to acknowledge him/her in our newsletter.

### **BLACK IS ALL I SEE**

Where green and gold once cloaked the land  
Where eucalypt and pine did stand  
Where man did live and lay his hand  
Now black is all I see

Where horses grazed and cattle drank  
Where grasses lined the river bank  
Where stood a house and water tank  
Now black is all I see

There was a town with store and hall  
Which proudly stood 'neath ridges tall  
Now nothing moves or lives at all  
And black is all I see

There stood a home and there another  
Where lived a daughter, father, mother,  
A sister, cousin, niece or brother  
Now black is all I see

Our nation grieves and holds them tight  
Throughout the darkness of the night  
Till daybreak brings an ashy light  
An black is all I see

“Poor fella, my country”

## **5 C.S.S.B. Health Company NEWS**

Our Association farewells Major Brian Malouf and the Training W.O. Peter Vigar as they have now completed their time with the unit.

They have been very helpful and co-operative with our Association over the last few years, especially in regard to ANZAC Day and Reserve Forces Day and many other administrative matters. Our Association wishes them and their families “all the best” in their new ADF locations.

In saying this, we now welcome the new Commanding Officer, Lt.Col. Phillip Moses as he takes over from Lt. Col. Ian Mondon and the new RSM of the Unit W.O.1 Geoff. Frew who takes over from W.O.1 Jason Burford.

The Health Company's new O.C. is Major Kym Henderson and the new Training Sgt. Is Sgt. Craig Ellem. We sincerely wish them a successful tenure.

We have sent a letter to the unit regarding ANZAC Day and it is hoped we may again have the pleasure of their company on this important day.



# ITEMS of INTEREST

## Eastern Region History Committee:

meet bi-monthly (Chaired by Colonel Bill Molloy) and discuss a number of topical matters, mainly medical.

At their November Meeting they welcomed back committee member, Major Eileen Henderson. (Eileen recently returned from a seven-week trip to South America and had some interesting articles and photos for their archives.)

The Committee had a discussion on the Reserve Forces Day "Launch" which was attended by Bill Molloy and Steve Baldick and both said the "Day" was a success.

Eileen remarked that with the change for the 2009 RF Day format it was hoped that it might "cut out" the excessive periods of "standing around" most especially for the older people.

Bill said a "New History of the University of NSW Regiment"—"The next 25 years" is now almost complete.

He has asked committee members, Ross Brown and Warwick Wilkinson, to help write a history of Pharmacy for the History of the Medical Corps which was the CMF/Army Reserve.

He also asked Eileen if she could write a history of the Nursing Corps from 1948-2008 for the History of the Army Reserve.

I mentioned in our Christmas Newsletter (page 26) about Bill's endeavour in writing the CMF History of the Medical Corps and if anyone might have any info they think Bill might be interested in using.

I forgot to put Bill's contact details; Bill's email is; [drmolloy@bigpond.com](mailto:drmolloy@bigpond.com) OR to post anything; Dr. W. Molloy, Suite 10, Level 7, 231 Macquarie St., Sydney NSW 2000.

In other issues discussed at their February Meeting:

- \* CMF/Reserve Histories received from; Lt. Cols. John Phillips and Ted Kremer and Majors Warwick Gordon Smith and John Straskye. (The committee is endeavouring to get more info from Warwick Smith, as well as Brig. Brian Pezutti, Lt. Col. Andrew Ellis, Cols. Lusby, Tony Delaney, Suresh Badami and Majors Cato, Henderson and Bernadette Motram.)
- \* Further info received about the WW 1 service of Lt. Col. John Phipps (awarded a DSO for his ability to evacuate 3,000 casualties at Pozieres).
- \* In regard to the book just released "Military of the Hunter", a question was to be asked of Col. Frank Lang whether 8 Field Ambulance was stationed there? (Ed. Yes, they get a mention on pages 88 and 179.)
- \* Seeking the history of 5 Field Ambulance! (Ed. There is some on our web site for WW 1 and WW 2 but very little else from 1921 to 1940, (although some of our members, including Sir Keith Jones, were in the 5 Fd Amb Militia prior to the forming of the 2/5th Aust Field Ambulance in Victoria!)
- \* Seeking to obtain the Eulogy of Col. John Westphalen AM RFD ED who passed away on the 22nd January 2009.

- \* Seeking to obtain the Eulogy of Col. Hallestrand from his daughter.
- \* Coming ceremony for the AHS Centaur, at Concord Hospital.

**Reserve Forces Day:** A number of our members who participated in RF Day last July, either at Newcastle or Sydney, should have now received their (numbered) Certificates.

We thank our members who were able to participate and the RFD Committee for the hard work they put into making each RFD Parade an ongoing success.

They are assisting our government, with their particular brand of advertising, to keep alive the immense value to our nation of the Citizen's Forces or as it is now known "The Reserves".

This year's (July 2009) ceremony will be held in the Domain.

*The Committee is very keen to hear from any of our members who were in "The Reserves" before the start of WW 2 and subsequently went on to serve in the war. A Book is to be written called "The 39ER's" and the author would like you to be in it. ARE YOU A "39ER"? Please let me know.*

On the subject of books, you may recall that the RF Committee was gathering information on people who served from 1948 onwards, in the Army/Air Force Reserves or Naval Reserve from 1950, to collate a book called "The Originals".

This project is now completed with the details of all who participated. It is on sale for \$25 and if any member would like me to secure a copy, please let me know.

## RAAMC Association Inc. (NSW Branch)

At their November (08) meeting decided that all interested Medical Units/Associations would be invited to march behind the RAAMC Banner in the 2009 ANZAC Day March.

A letter was sent to the RSL (NSW) Anzac March Committee to inform them of the revised format.

The Medical Corps will be led by Major General Jeffery Rosenfeld, together with the (NSW) Honorary Colonel, Suresh Badami OAM and the State President of the Association, WO 11 Theo Dechaufepie (Rtd) followed by any "unattached" medical corps personnel, viz; Any member who has served in a Medical Unit and that unit does not have an Association or their Association will not present on the day.

Behind the RAAMC Association Banner will be all the other Banners and their members, marching within the Medical Corps ORBAT, I.E. 1 AFH with banner and members, 1 Field Ambulance with Banner and members, 5 Field Ambulance with Banner and Members, etc, etc.







*Members of 5 CSSB Health Company carrying our Banner and Australian Flag.*

After the March, we will all meet up at the Paddington-Woollahra RSL Club, in Oxford Street (and nearly opp. Victoria Barracks.)

I know it is a change of venue for all concerned but for the sake of unity and especially to give confidence to the formation of RAAMC Association Inc. it will be very worthwhile.

This will be a good time to renew, or make new, friendships.

RSVP your name/s, for catering purposes, ASAP but no later than 20th of April.

## **ENLISTMENT in the ADF**

**from OVERSEAS:** Have you served overseas in the Armed Forces and have now enlisted in the ADF?

If you have a medal/s from another country, you cannot wear it on your Australian uniform UNLESS you have OFFICIAL approval.

An Application Form, together with supporting documentation, has to be submitted for assessment.

A medal/s for service in operations the ADF was not involved in may be approved if Australia supported or agreed to the operation.

**PAULATIM** is the official magazine of the RAAMC and is produced annually and contains interesting information from many sources.

Its 2008 magazine (of 64 pages) is in our possession and if any member would like me to post them a copy please contact me and I will send it to you with pleasure.

**BOFORS** is the Newsletter of the 18LAA Regt. Association.

It was sent to me as a "complimentary gesture" because my cousin in New York, Arthur Walton (who is also one of our good members), was a sergeant with 18LAA back in the 60's/70's.

So, if we have any old gunners in our ranks and they would like to read this December 08 newsletter, please let me know and it shall be posted to you.



*L/R: John de Witt, Heather and Barry Perigo, Harley Rodd, Helen and Robert Boyter, Steve Baldick  
At Rear- Brian Tams and Alan Curry*





# **“The Baron of Back Creek”**

(A poem by R. Head – written March 2002)

In every town I’ve ever been, you’ll always find this bloke,  
A man you have to find unique by any pencil stroke.  
A friendly chap who likes a drink, local legend so to speak,  
May I introduce Bart Plummer, the Baron of Back Creek?

The sunsets down along Back Creek are wondrous to behold,  
The bridge, the sand, the mangrove tones white, green and gold,  
And tied up snugly at her berth, the “No Name”, looking sleek.  
Owned by our Bart Plummer, the Baron of Back Creek.

And when the “No Name” puts to sea, our Bart is at the helm,  
And Billy Douglas baits the traps, the Tasman Sea their realm.  
With big snook working off the gaol there’s hardly time to speak;  
A fisherman of great prowess—the Baron of Back Creek.

Now a foreign bloke came to the “Rocks”, he thought he’d stay a week,  
He wandered off with rod in hand to fish along Back Creek,  
He sighted Bart and stepped right up and said.. “I’m Nick the Greek!”  
Bart said..”Well I’m Bart Plummer, the Baron of Back Creek.”

Now Bart’s a man who’ll tell you straight, I never tell no lies  
But yarns he spun this foreign bloke fair popped this tourist’s eyes.  
He told of how he put to sea and stayed out for a week  
And brought back forty boxes full, the Baron of Back Creek.

In bygone days with fishing poor, and hard to crack a smile,  
Bart stowed his nets and headed south and went to mine rutile.  
He left his mark on Smokey Beach where gulls and terns give cheek;  
A man so very versatile, The Baron of Back Creek.

Now if you visit South West Rocks, to the locals you should speak,  
And take a walk around the town and stroll down to Back Creek,  
And if good fortune smiles on you, your excitement’s sure to peak  
When you meet up with Bart Plummer, the Baron of Back Creek



# ACTIVITY SHEET (for 1'09)

**(Please indicate your choice/s with an X. or tick)**

- ☐ Please find enclosed my Subs for 2009 (\$15) (cover from January to December) or LIFE MEMBERSHIP (\$100) or Donation (*enter your details below*).
- ☐ Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ RAAMC Centenary “Coin and Token” set/s @ \$25 each.
- ☐ Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ RAAMC Centenary (Stamped) Envelopes @ \$2 each.  
(48 left—with 50c Stamp embossed)
- ☐ Please send me a 5 Field Ambulance RAAMC KEY RING (\$20).
- ☐ Please order me a NAME BADGE (\$20)  
The name on the badge to read:- \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Please order me a (XL/Large/Medium/Small) BERET (\$30), \*BERET BADGE (\$8), \*LAPEL BADGE (\$7), \*CORPS TIE (\$50)—please indicate size of Beret & whether Badges/Ties are to be RAAMC or RACT.
- ☐ Please order me a copy of Sir Keith Jones’s book.  
“One Man’s Story” an autobiography (\$25)
- ☐ Please loan me “Siege of Tobruk” Values video. I will return it after viewing.
- ☐ Please loan/order me “Military of the Hunter—1855-2005”. I will return it when read.

**(Please make any Cheques/Money Orders etc payable to:- “5 Field Ambulance Association” and post to either:- Alan Curry 34 Whitbread Dve, LEMON TREE PASSAGE NSW 2319 OR Treasurer,Brian Tams,4/24-26 Barrenjoey Rd., ETTALONG BEACH, NSW 2257-- acknowledgements in next issue. OR you may like to Direct Debit through the Internet, our details are--BANK: C’Wealth, BSB: 062-260, Account Name: 5<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance Association, A/c No: 00901381) and would you kindly identify yourself.**

**COMMENTS/ORDERS ETC: FROM:**

CONTACT No: MONEY ENCLOSED \$

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

“ SEMPER PARATUS “

## 5 FIELD AMBULANCE R.A.A.M.C. ASSOCIATION

Patron: Colonel Ray Hyslop OAM RFD

President: Lt.Col. Derek Cannon RFD

WEB SITE: [www.5fdamb.com](http://www.5fdamb.com)

A proud member of the RAAMC Association Inc.

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

<b>Preferred Title:</b> Mr./ Mrs./ M/s. Dr. Etc.		<b>Month of Birth:</b>
<b><u>FAMILY NAME:</u></b>		(Wife/Partner Christian Name)
<b><u>FIRST NAME</u></b>	<b><u>OTHER NAME/S</u></b>	
<b><u>Military/Civilian Awards (if any)</u></b>		
<b><u>ADDRESS NUMBER:</u></b> _____		
<b><u>STREET NAME:</u></b>		
<b><u>SUBURB/TOWN/CITY etc</u></b> _____		
<b><u>POST CODE:</u></b> _____		
<b>Contact Details:</b> <b>Telephone</b> (H) _____ (W) _____		
<b>FAX:</b> _____ <b>EMAIL:</b> _____		
<b>MOBILE:</b> _____		

I hereby apply to join 5 Field Ambulance RAAMC Association as (Please mark “X” in the appropriate box below)

☐ A FULL MEMBER (served/serving in the A.D.F. or Allied Forces)

☐ AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER (never served in the A.D.F. —Australian Defence Forces)

Annual Subscription (\$15) is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> January each year. LIFE MEMBERSHIP is \$100. (Reminders will be included in each “ACTIVITY SHEET”)

Cheques/Money Orders should be made out to “5 FIELD AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION” and forwarded to — Alan Curry (Hon Sect) 34 Whitbread Dve, LEMON TREE PASSAGE N.S.W 2319 OR Brian Tams (Hon Treasurer), 4/24-26 Barrenjoey Rd, ETTALONG BEACH NSW 2257 OR EFT, details are:- BSB: 062260, Account No: 00901381, Account Name: 5<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance Association, Bank: Commonwealth) —please identify yourself in the reference EG Bill Smith.

(SIGNATURE) \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE) \_\_\_\_\_





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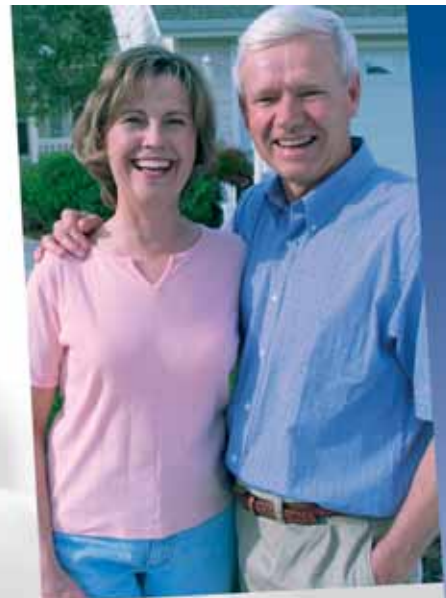
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