



**"SEMPER PARATUS"**

*The Official Quarterly Magazine*

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# Message from the President



*Derek Cannon*

Welcome to the Spring 2009 edition of 5 Field Ambulance RAAMC Association Quarterly Magazine.

The Sydney Reserve Forces Day Parade was held this year in the Domain Sydney on Sunday July 5th. In excellent

weather the parade and new format went off very successfully. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members who gave up their Sundays to support our Association.

Particular thanks are extended to the following members of the Banner and Standard Parties who participated in the parade rehearsals on Sunday June 21st as well as on the main day. They were, Banner Party Alan Curry and Laurie Farrugia and Standard Party Michael Moroney (Bearer), Fred Bell (ASM) and I.

Members retired to the Berkeley Hotel at Chippendale for a fine lunch and refreshments. Again thanks are in order to our ASM Fred Bell who provided us with transport in the form of a Sydney Transport Bus very ably driven by his partner Maggie.

The wash-up meeting of ANZAC DAY 2009 by the ANZAC Day March Executive Committee was held at the Hyde Park Forum, 271, Elizabeth Street Sydney on Thursday June 11th at 11-30 am.

It was generally agreed that the 2009 Parade had been a success and the same format would be followed in 2010. The question of where descendants should march on the day is still being debated and

will be further examined in the planning phase for the 2010 Parade.

Battle for Australia Day on Wednesday September 2nd will be our next gathering for all those members who can attend. It would be good if we can encourage a few more members to attend this well conducted remembrance Service. We will follow this with a visit to the Club in Barrack Street for a drink and a bite to eat.

Your committee is currently involved in trying to resolve what to do with the 5 Field Ambulance memorabilia currently located with 5 CSSB Health Company. Alan Curry is active with this and at present the Army Museum Bandiana is a possibility.

Our Treasurer Brian Tams has raised the question of our finances with changes at the Commonwealth Bank not meeting our requirements. All members of the committee have been asked to comment on the proposal to move our finances to the Greater Building Society.

I have for some time been plagued in my outdoor activities by a lack of sensitivity in my lower limbs. If any budding neurologists can forward a treatment or advice regarding Peripheral Neuropathy other than the GOOGLE information I would love to hear from you.

In the meantime don't forget our annual reunion Lunch at the Berkeley Hotel 158 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale NSW on Saturday November 14th.

To all our members and with thoughts for our number of sick Edna and I wish you all well and hope to meet many of you at our next gatherings in September and November.

**Derek Cannon**

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# VALE

## (Jim Ellis and Max Heydon)

**James Morrison ELLIS AM** passed away on the 14 June. This eulogy was read by Andrew and I thank him and his family for allowing me to print it.

*"The 'Colonel' has, to coin one of his phrases, achieved his final promotion from the earthly order of*

*Dad was a man who lived his life modestly but with a dedication and a commitment to service. He lived without the right hand knowing what the left hand did and quietly moved forward without great fanfare. It is only after his passing and with some research that the breadth of his activities has been revealed. I am sure this itself is only part of the story.*

*It is a privilege to honour his memory by reflecting on his career in the army and as a civilian in war zones in many different places and at many different times. His life outside the conventional practice of orthopaedics was quite extraordinary and touched many of the sentinel events of post war history in remarkable proximity.*

*It must be said that dad, although he had many military habits shaped from his military life, saw "precious little poetry" in war, and shied away from glorious reminiscence. His World War 2 and Vietnam Service Medals went unclaimed for decades, and only issued about the time of his Medal of the Order of Australia. Although some have romanticized about his service he considered it poor quality against those, infantry in particular, who fought at Tobruk and El Alamein.*

*Despite this, his service was notable. At University he served in the Sydney University Regiment and then, after residency, served with the 2nd A.I.F. with 22 Battalion and then 2nd Field Ambulance in New Guinea and New Britain, just at the time of surrender.*

*He served until 1948 in the regular army and then re-enlisted in the CMF in 1961. He served with 1st and 5th Field Ambulances, 3rd and 4th Battalions Royal New South Wales Regiments finally finishing as DDMS Eastern Region. His practice was too busy and spread out between Mona Vale and Sydney Hospitals.*

*His time in New Britain was interesting and occurred at the time of the Japanese War Crimes Tribunal and rebuilding of the township and administration, of what had been the HQ of the Japanese war effort in the South West Pacific. He stayed in New Britain with duties involved in the repatriation of Japanese soldiers and several thousand Indian and Chinese who had been co-opted to work there. Time limits too much expansion on this subject but it was quite a period of history.*

*Later, mum was able to stay with him and became the first Australian woman back into Rabaul.*

*Dad told the story of Lt Gen Adachi, commander of the Japanese 18th Army, who took the blame for his men by committing ritual suicide. The Australians (dad included) wondered, too late as it transpired, why he was being visited the day before his death by so many of his senior colleagues.*

*After his death it became quite apparent why!*

*Always to see the best in all, dad considered Adachi a good officer because he took command responsibility on behalf of his army. The historical record seems to back this up.*

*The New Britain sojourn shaped his interest in tropical medicine and "far away places."*

*Later, he was appointed as a civilian contractor to 2 Military Hospital and to Balmoral Naval Hospital. He had a weekly clinic at Ingleburn for many years, before the days of "freeways", and all his children remember the long drives out there. He treated many of the*

*wounded from Vietnam after their to Ingleburn. I can remember an elbow replacement he designed for a destroyed elbow in one of his patients that at least reached prototype stage...I don't think it was implanted.*

*He took his appointments very seriously: On the night of the "Voyager" disaster, he drove to offer assistance to Balmoral Naval Hospital as survivors were landed by helicopter.*

*From 1964 to 1972 the Department of External Affairs sent surgical teams to Vietnam to support local infrastructure. Dad seized this opportunity to volunteer for service.*

*He spent 6 months as surgeon at Le Loi Hospital, a Vietnamese community hospital in Vung Tau. They were busy operating on many victims of war, as well as more routine surgical cases in fairly austere circumstances. This period covered the famous Tet Offensive and the work load was busy.*

*As children, we watched on TV. It must have been a great strain on mum, who not only would have been worried but had to raise five children, as well as managing his practice.*

*It appears he thrived on work at Le Loi and became deeply stimulated to help civilian victims of war and interested in the cultures of South East Asia. His study is lined with books on language and collections of various artefacts. It is probably fair to say he became addicted to this sort of work.*

*We can't go further without acknowledging the contribution of Ruth Kathleen Ellis to this and subsequent tours of duty.*

*Later he returned, in 1972, to Bien Hoa Hospital which was also incredibly busy. There is a family story of how mum visited him during this tour in time to stop him leading a relief column in to the town on An Loc, at that time surrounded by North Vietnamese Regulars (in Armoured Division strength) under a flag of truce, to rescue civilian wounded. It sounds like something that has veracity.*

*There is shortly to be a book published about these teams by Gary McKay (due out in October). Dad was interviewed by the Australian War Memorial for this and they have a precious sound recording made for the permanent record. It was his hope, and those of others, that this will lead to some publicity so that, in particular, the surviving nurses of these teams get the benefits they deserve from Returned Service.*

*Dad only marched in the later years of ANZAC day and then only with civilian nurses, at their request, and in recognition of their service.*

*Dad went on to have three tours with the International Red Cross into active war zones, ultimately being awarded the Australian Red Cross Medal for Meritorious Service.*

*The first of these was to East Timor in 1975, at the time of the civil war. The photograph you see on his book was taken at that time. It was a civil war that cost 1,200 lives and paved the way for Indonesian occupation. The team again was busy treating victims of war and was flown out in close proximity to the Indonesian invasion. Again he seemed in close proximity to a major historical event.*

*In 1984 dad returned to ICRC service, this time as a surgeon on a team on the Thai-Cambodian border at Khao-I-Dang refugee camp. At this time it was the largest concentration of Khmer outside of Phnom Penh. The Vietnamese were actively engaging the Khmer Rouge remnants as there were plenty of wounded to deal with. I had the opportunity to visit him and have a lasting image of his calmness in treating multiple seriously wounded/ Whilst looking out*







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the window I could see the Thai Air Force dropping napalm on a tree line in the middle distance whilst the hospital vibrated from artillery rounds impacting somewhere. Somehow his calmness under fire was reassuring in direct contradistinction to the car trip from Bangkok to the border which was distinctly nerve-wracking!

I'll take the opportunity to quote from Darryl Teague, a close friend who served alongside dad on that tour; "Jim was a fountain of knowledge, a tower of strength and a wonderful chap to have dinner with at the end of a long sixteen case operating list---'box on, Captain, box on.'"

In 1991 he returned to his last big mission, again to Cambodia, this time at the ICRC hospital at Kampong Speu. This hospital was "rough as goat's knees" but ultimately responded to quiet determination and training in sterilisation, hygiene and surgical practice honed in previous missions.

There were many other surgical trips such to Papua New Guinea and again to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, and later on behalf of Orthopaedic Outreach and The Australian Orthopaedic Association.

He was only recently made a Life Member of the Orthopaedic Outreach in recognition of his support for this charitable organisation.

He helped many surgeons from the Asia-Pacific region come to Australia for periods of training.

He was generous with his time and other support for them. We uncovered many letters from a wide area through Asia, expressing gratitude for help received.

In Phnom Penh his great friend Dr. Mok Theavy sends his condolences. Dad visited Cambodia last September to read a Paper. When he made these trips he always thought of himself as a kind of representative of Australian surgery, nurturing and supporting rather than as an expert. He felt he received more than he gave.

Finally, we come to his big project. "136 Surgical Tips for the Field surgeon." My darling sister, Sue, and cousin, Margie, worked on this with dad until his last days.

Dad was a practical man who used the ability to combine his intelligence with his humanity to seek simple solutions for complex problems.

This was best demonstrated by his fascination with "quick tricks"—tips he had observed or invented to help save lives or to do procedures properly with the minimum of intrusion and the maximum of out of the box thinking. He was always keen to find local alternatives to high cost equipment in remote regions of the world.

He spoke often about his "quick tricks"—he gave talks about them in English and French. He tried to involve his family in sharing his fascination with them as well. Some of the older siblings remember reluctant visits to beaches to discover the wonders of making potable water from gumleaves!

His first recorded list of "quick tricks" was in May 1967 at Mona Vale Hospital where he talked about six quick procedures.

In Cambodia in 1988 he spoke of ten "quick tricks"—"Being simple ideas which suit the surgeon in the field."

In 2002 he wrote "10 tips for the Troops" and he planned his project "66 Quick Surgical Tricks" last year to combine all these lists and add a few more ideas which were swirling around in his head.

He started writing his book early this year. As his thoughts poured out, 66 became 106 and then 136. As he learned of his illness there was a race against time to get the words and references.

In amongst 35 or so boxes of notes he knew he had the sketches and dot points he wanted—we found most of them.

He conscripted members of the family to pose while he wrapped them in bandages and he even offered himself as a model for one of

his favourites—No 9 "Easy Dressing on a Forehead". He was quite keen on the dressing "en pilote" and you will see him on page 15 in his book, which is a gift to everyone leaving the church today.

As he waited for the ambulance to take him to Mosman Hospital he dictated Trick 95 "Shoulder U Slab with epaulette and Velpeau bandaging" and last Thursday week he supervised Ed Marel... drawing the sketch for the Iliac Crest graft at Trick 83.

When he wrote his book he had in mind young medical practitioners who undertake procedures and those people and those people who are going overseas on humanitarian missions.

He was content and satisfied when he was handed a copy of his book. It was one legacy and the other rests in the hundreds of people he influenced to carry out his work.

(Andrew Ellis and Sue Vardon)

Among the very many mourners were some from our Association and Jim's family thanked us for being present.

Andrew, especially asked me to pass on all the family's thanks for those members who sent emails, cards and condolences.

Our Association thanks the following members who were able to be present to say farewell to our comrade, Jim.

Steve Baldick, Fred Bell, Barry Collins OAM, Alan Curry, Bill Molloy, Jim Roche OAM, Brian Tams and Warwick Wilkinson AO. (My sincere apologies if I have omitted your name.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Maxwell Patrick HEYDON** passed away on the 26th June and a large gathering of family and friends attended his funeral at Beresfield North Chapel on the 2nd July to pay their last respects.

Max joined our Association in 2006 and since that time, until he took ill with cancer, was always involved in our activities, whether it was attending meetings with me at Victoria Barracks or coming to our re-unions.

He was able to attend the Reserve Forces Day Parades in Newcastle accompanied by his wife, Helen.

We were work mates on the wharves in Sydney and later, after retirement, good neighbours of Ruth and myself at Lemon Tree Passage.

We were both members of our local Sub Branch and he was highly regarded by our community.

Max was a local Annandale boy (Young Street) and he married his childhood sweetheart, Helen Parker, who lived in the next street.

He was called up for National Service in August 1955 and after his 3 months basic training at 13 NS Training Bn completed his obligation with 17/18 Bn.

Max was discharged with the rank of Private in June 1960.

He was awarded the NS Medal (1951-72) and the Australian Defence Medal.

Max had operations and treatments for almost the last 10 years and, as those years went on, it appeared that he might beat this scourge, but early this year his health started to decline. In May and June he had many treatments but succumbed when he went into a coma during the last four days of his life.

Max passed peacefully away with his family ever by his side.

His family has lost the man who will never be replaced in their lives. Our Association has lost another good member, and I have lost a very dear friend.

Helen and her family asked that her thanks be given to the Lemon Tree Passage Sub Branch for conducting the very moving RSL Ceremony for Max.

Farewell, my good friend, Max.



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# From the Hon. Secretary

*Dear Member,*

I hope our newsletter finds you in good health, especially to our sick members whom we hope are in good hands as well as in good spirits.

If you know of a member who is not well please contact me, or any of our committee, so that we can give them a "get well" call.

I was fearful that this dreaded "Swine Flu", that is spreading throughout the world and has, of course, hit us here in Australia, has not struck any of our members. I have not had any reports that our members are affected but if they are we hope they get better quickly.

*I think we should be forever grateful for our country's Intelligence Agencies. There are sinister forces constantly at work to undermine our strength and resolve. If "they" get the upper hand, then may God protect us. The average person would not have a clue what goes on except when it "breaks" in the news and, of course, I refer to the latest terrorist plot which has just been uncovered. We must never become complacent or acquiesce and remember our training—be alert—stay vigilant.*

I continue to get positive "feed-back" about our newsletters and for this we sincerely thank you for your letters and articles. A big thanks goes to our publishers and printers for the very professional way they present our Newsletters.

  
Alan Curry  
Hon. Secretary



John Smith carrying the Standard with Alan Curry, Kevin Hurrell and James Jordan marching behind at the Reserve Forces Day--Newcastle 2009

## Happy Birthday

### JULY:

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### AUGUST:

Derek CANNON, Brian CHANDLER, John DAVIES, Phillip FAGUE, Barry FOSTER, John MAIR and Tom PRITCHARD.

### SEPTEMBER:

Bill CLUTTERBUCK, Victor ("Bluey") DAVIS, Ray GRANT, Ray HARRINGTON, Norma HUTTON, Jim JORDON, John WEAVER and Gordon WRIGHT.

**Our Association wishes each of you "All the Best" on your "special" day – have you given me your month of birth? A belated "Happy Birthday" for Anthony Jordan for April.**



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# BATTLE for AUSTRALIA COMMEMORATION DAY

(FIRST Wednesday in September, 2<sup>nd</sup>)

The first Wednesday in September every year has now been **officially** sanctioned by the Government as the day to be commemorated for this very important occasion.

It will be in Martin Place, Sydney from 10.30am.

We will be displaying our Banner on the north/west wall of Martin Place, opposite the Cenotaph.

**The Ceremony will start** at 11am and conclude about 11.45am.

If you are able to be present at this important Ceremony, please join with myself and other members on some "Reserved Seats" prior to commencement.

Please wear a suit and tie, with Medals, Beret and Name Badge.

Darwin was first attacked from the air by wave after wave of Japanese bombers and fighter planes in February 1942. The Government of the day knew by that time the dreadful peril that Australia was faced with.



*"Battle for Australia Ceremony" in Martin Place 2008*

*Photo shows (Front): Bill Molloy, Steve Baldick and Alan Curry. (In the rear): Derek Cannon, John de Witt, Kevin Hurrell and Barry Collins*

We ordinary Australians have only realised the enormity of what was to come since "Freedom of Information" became available 30 years after the events—that was from 1972 onwards.

The BFA Committee have worked tirelessly over all these past years to see the fruits of their labour all worthwhile.

By this I mean seeing the ever growing presence of school children that take an active part in carrying on the memory of this important Ceremony.

It will be a major step forward in our school system if and when the time comes for an Australian Government to implement a curriculum on "Australia at War".

This is in no way advocating the glorification of war but is a reaction to what happens when your country is attacked by an enemy or an Allied country is attacked and asks for your help.

Hopefully, you might be present with your son or daughter or a relative. You are most welcome.



*"Battle for Australia" Ceremony in Martin Place.*

*Kevin Hurrell (in blue cap) and behind him are Steve Baldick, John de Witt, Derek Cannon and Gordon Wright.*



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# RESERVE FORCES DAY (Sydney)

## (Summary)

This RF Day was a “new” format in that it was a parade in the Domain and not a street march down Macquarie Street.

The day was a beautiful, crisp winter morning with a fresh breeze blowing.

All Associations’ Banners were assembled in their own area and kept as a separate identity from the Standards.

All the Associations’ Standards were also in their own separate area for the troops to “Form Up” behind and march on parade when the order was given.

The VIP dais was situated on the centre (rear) line of a large rectangular Parade Ground with all the Dignitaries, including the “39ers”, seated behind the dais.

Everyone was treated to some very stirring, and famous, wartime tunes played by the Royal Artillery Association and 23 Field Regiment Bands prior to the commencement of the parade.

Another added touch was the female soloist who sang “I still call Australia home” and the National Anthem—just great.

The bands were basically stationed in the centre of the Parade Ground facing the dais—they were dressed immaculately and their marching drills were outstanding. They helped make the Parade a wonderful success.

Then, at a given drum beat signal, all the Associations’ Banners marched onto, and around the edge of the Parade Ground and took up their allotted locations on the perimeter of the Parade Ground.

While the Banner Parties were marching to their respective positions, all the troops were being called “On Parade”, which was in a large area at the rear of the Parade Ground. It was mainly out of sight of the Dignitaries and invited “39ers” and their guests.

What an amazing spectacle it was to witness all the massed bands march the Colours “On Parade” and



*Our Members “On Parade” with Banner in background.*



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*A wide shot of the Domain Parade Ground (Sydney)*

then see all the Reservists marching in column of route, in their respective Brigades and sub units.

Every unit was marching behind their own Standard, all in step, to the Pipes and Drums.

The troops marched up to their respective Banners and halted and turned to face the dais. Our President, ASM and Standard Bearer then marched to the front of our troops.

All Banners were to one side and to the rear of their units.

I estimate there would have been close to 1,000 men and women "On Parade" on the 3 sides of this large Parade Ground.

Our State Governor, Her Excellency, Marie Bashir AC CVO arrived to a Royal Salute and inspected all the troops and the bands, after which she gave a very stirring speech regarding the effort given by our Reservists and all who support them, including their employers.

The National Chairman of the Reserve Forces Day Council, Sir Lawrence Street AC KCMG QC, also spoke about the value of our Reserve Forces.

After the last Royal Salute and the National Anthem, the Governor was given "3 hearty Hip, Hip Hoorays"



*A rear shot of our members (Sydney)*

The Parade was then called to "Attention" by the Parade RSM and marched past the Official Dais in column of route and out off the Parade Ground where they were "Dismissed" by their respective ASM's.

As each unit of troops left the Parade Ground, their Standard Bearers peeled off and marched "In Line" to stand in front of the Dias as a final Salute to the Dignitaries.

The Standards and the Banners then followed a Mounted Escort as they marched past all the Dignitaries, and then to their "Dismissal Area".

I can't speak more highly of the "39ers" who were given "pride of place" in the V.I.P. area. They looked so proud to be there.

Three of their number (one from each arm of the services) represented all the "39ers" to stand with our State Governor and the National Chairman of the RFD Council and the Prime Minister's representative, The Honourable, Dr. Mike Kelly AM MP, to take the Parade Salute.

The other group to be commended were all the bands; The Australian Army Band (Sydney) and (Newcastle), The Artillery Association Band, 30th Bn NSW Scottish Regimental Association Pipes and Drums, RAACT Pipes and Drums, UNSWR Band and the 1st/15th Royal NSW Lancers Band and 23 Field Regimental Band. They were a huge success and deserve every accolade.

We must also thank John Moore and his tireless committee who worked and planned very hard in the lead up to this "new" concept.

It was a brave and bold decision that "paid off".

The "down side" was a couple of Associations did not "show" and of course, the standing around and waiting, but unfortunately there is no answer to this problem—the "upside" to this problem is all the camaraderie that exists within every unit who is "On Parade"!



The other problem that might be encountered in the future is wet weather!

I dread to think what might have happened.

Four of us took part in a 4 hour rehearsal on the 21st June (with a lot of others, but many did not show up!) and it had been raining for about 3 or 4 days prior, the ground was very muddy in parts and most unpleasant.

Our Association thanks the following members and friends who made the 2009 RFD Parade a success by either marching or attending with their Associations;

Our President, Derek Cannon, who led our troops, Fred Bell, our ASM, Michael Moroney, who carried our Standard, Laurie Farrugia, who helped me carry our Banner.

Our troops were Steve Baldick, Warren Barnes (marched with 17 Bn), Robert and Helen Boyter, Terry Fry, John Gallagher (in VIP Area), George Harris, Anthony Jordan, Edwin Lowery, Bill Molloy (in VIP Area), Barry Perigo (marched with 30th Bn), John Shoobridge, George Sip, Paul Steel, Stephen Steigrad, Brian Tams and David Verco.

(There was another gentleman in our group but we failed to get his name.)

Those that were able adjourned to the Berkeley Hotel for lunch and refreshments.

Derek thanked everyone for making the day a success, particularly those who volunteered for the rehearsal. A noted absentee was our good member, John de Witt who was ill.



*At the Berkeley Hotel after the RFD parade in Sydney  
Seated L/R: George Sip, Brian Tams, Mike Moroney, Fred Bell,  
Our President, Derek Cannon, Terry Fry, Steve Baldick (caught at a  
bad moment) and Edwin Lowery.*

## NEWCASTLE (Summary)

It was a pity that I received notification, too late to put in our Reserve Forces Day Magazine, that Newcastle was going to hold a Parade on the Saturday.

I did have time to send the info to all our members who are on email and it was pleasing to have three members and one old RAASC friend join with me to represent our Association.

Unfortunately, it was a small turnout and if it wasn't for the National Servicemen's Association's Members making up the major part of the parade, it would have looked very bare!

We marched behind our Standard (and just as well—the westerly wind was fierce and cold!) from TS Tobruk, which is situated near the park at the base of Fort Scratchley, up around the roadside and into Fort Scratchley, about 500 metres.

We did an "Eyes Right" to the Dignitaries at the Guardhouse prior to halting at the top of the Fort enclosure.

I must commend the two bands who marched us to the Fort; The Australian Army Band (Newcastle) and the RAASC Pipes and Drums—they were great.

Major John Spruce was the MC and the man to be thanked for getting the Newcastle Parade up and running.

It was pleasing to hear speeches from the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Alderman John Tate, and our own member, Major General Warren Glenny AO RFD ED (Rtd).

After the march I was able to introduce myself and our other members to Major General Glenny and the Curator of Fort Scratchley, Mr Bill Hopkins. They were pleased to shake our hands.

I wish to thank John Smith for carrying our Standard whilst myself, George Harris, Kevin Hurrell and my good RAASC mate from way back, Jim Jordan, marched behind.

Our other good member, Noel Moulder, marched with his National Servicemen's Association.

We later had a couple of sandwiches and a beer, courtesy of the Newcastle RF Day Committee—and very nice too, before heading back to our homes.



*L/R: John Smith OAM, Major General Warren Glenny AO RFD ED  
(Rtd), Alan Curry and Kevin Hurrell.*





## From your Secretary...

## Thank You

Thank you Members, for your yearly dues, donations and LIFE MEMBERSHIPS.

They are so very much appreciated and thank you, also, for giving your “unwanted Magazine” to your local doctor’s/hospital waiting room/s/Nursing Home/local chemist /etc “Reading Rooms” for their enjoyment.

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

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

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) <<http://www.raamc.com.au/>>

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 may 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.

## KIND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*(Of monies received since last newsletter of June 2009. Please contact me if your name was omitted.)*

- Theo **DECHAUFEPIC** (Cash \$10) for Raffle Tickets
- Terry **FRY** (EFT \$15) for New member Subs
- Ken **ILES** (Cheque \$15) for New Member Subs
- Anthony **JORDAN** (Cheque \$120) for Life Membership \$100 and Name Badge \$20
- Jim **JORDON** (Cheque \$15) for New Member Subs
- Yvonne **McLEAN** (EFT \$100) for Life (Associate) Membership
- Gordon **WRIGHT** (Cash \$15) for Subs

## 2009 “FUND-RAISER”

Our Association appreciates very much your purchase of our “Raffle Tickets” at \$1 each. To keep our Association strong and ongoing we need your financial assistance.

The winner will receive half the money that is donated and it will be drawn at our Annual “Mixed” Re-Union in November. You will be notified of the result.

## 2009 ANNUAL “MIXED” RE-UNION LUNCHEON

Further to our annual get-together with fellow members and wives/partners/friends that will take place on **Saturday, 14th November from 12 noon.**

We will meet again at the Berkeley Hotel in Redfern (our usual “meeting place”) and enjoy a nice meal in each other’s company, for a few hours.

The cost for the day will be \$35 (food and drink) per person.

Would you please indicate in your reply back to me (See “Activity Sheet” on last page) what lunch you would prefer from the following selections (after “Finger Food”):

- (A) Fish and Chips with Vegies or Salad.
- (B) Lambs Fry and Bacon.
- (C) Chicken Schnitzel with Vegies or Salad
- (D) Minute Steak with Vegies or Salad
- (E) Beef Curry

Cake and Ice Cream will be available for dessert with Coffee/Tea.



## NEW MEMBERS

Terry FRY is warmly welcomed into our membership. Terry first came along to the Reserve Forces Day Parade in 2008 and also the last one.

Terry enlisted in the Army Reserves with HQ 7 Bde in December 1994 and completed his Recruit Training at Wacol in May 1995.

He later completed his IET as a clerk and was an Ops Clerk with HQ 7 Bde. He took part in both local and interstate exercises—the most memorable being “Exercise Blue Diamond” in WA. This was a slow time recon of the Brigade’s Area of operations should hostilities break out.

An amalgamation of 6 and 7 Brigades in 1977 saw Terry with no position and he transferred to 2 Field Hospital.

He was, again, an Ops Clerk and took part in “Operation Vampire Bite” in 1977, in a joint exercise with 1 Field Hospital (from Sydney). He enjoyed this 2 weeks immensely.

In 1998, he was called to provide clerical support for “Operation Rainbow Serpent” which was held at Enoggera Barracks.

This proved to be an interesting time which also involved him in meeting other soldiers from the US, Canada, Britain and New Zealand.

Another memorable moment was his involvement in “setting up” facilities for the Gold Coast Indy Car Race in 1998.

The only downside for Terry was missing out on a lap in the pace car—one of the stunt motorcyclists chipped his knee bone and had to be transported to the local hospital, after being assessed initially at the 2 Field Hospital compound on site.

Due to a change in his civilian employment, which left him no time to fulfil his army duties, he discharged from the Reserves in 1999.

*(Thank you, Terry, for sharing some of your experiences with us. We look forward to further re-unions in your company.)*



Ken ILES saw our details on our web site and asked if he could join us.

Welcome to you, Ken, and we thank you for becoming one of our members, we look forward to meeting you in the future and hope you might find some time to tell us a little about yourself.

*(Thank you, Ken, we hope you may recognise a familiar name in our “Contact” details and if not may you make new friends in our Association.)*

Yvonne McLEAN is a very welcome Associate Member.

I went to our letterbox the other week and here was this unexpected Application Form filled out and Yvonne requesting to become one of our members.

I immediately rang to thank her for joining, not only as a yearly member, but as a Life Member. I asked how she heard of us and she simply said ...*“Through a friend”*.

We sincerely welcome Yvonne to our ranks and look forward to meeting her in the near future. Perhaps Yvonne has a “story” to tell us.



James JORDON is an old army buddy of mine from 3 Company RAASC days in the late 50’s early 60’s and he has been coming to our Newcastle RF Day Ceremony for a few years.

I used to confuse Jim with our other member, Anthony Jordon—and they are not related.

Jim is President of his local National Servicemen’s Association Sub Branch in Oxley (Tamworth). They have over 90 members with an attendance of around 40 every monthly meeting.

We therefore welcome Jim to our ranks and hope to introduce him to more of our members in the near future.



## SICK PARADE

John A’QUILINA, Neil BARRIE, Robert and Helen BOYTER, Derek CANNON, Kevin CARTER, David CAVANAUGH, Brian CHANDLER, Barry COLLINS, John DAVIES, Victor (“Bluey”) DAVIS, John de WITT, Bert FERGUSON, Nelson FIORENTINO, Ray GRANT, Ray HARRINGTON (Merrylands Aged Care Centre), Kevin HURRELL, Neville JOHNSON, Sir Keith JONES, Anthony JORDON, Ted KRAMER, Bob LEECH, Estelle LINDSAY, Huss MAHOMET, “Roy” McDONALD, Rayda NOBLE, Charles O’MEALLY, Heather PERIGO, John PHILLIPS, Alan ROBINSON, Harley RODD, Diana ROTHFIELD, Sr.“Sue” THOMPSON (Big Sister Hostel, Room 216, 2c Karimbla Rd, Miranda), Arthur WALTON, John WEAVER and John WOODHEAD.





# MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS

**Bruce WHITTET** passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association and hopes his story "spurs" others to do likewise. He enjoys reading our members' messages and trusts they will enjoy his. He was saddened to read about the death of Jim Ellis, whom Bruce had fond memories of.

*(Thank you, Bruce, it was a pleasure to record some of your biography. I am sure our members/readers will enjoy reading some of your life—I know I did. Your message of condolence was passed on to Andrew and his family.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**John SMITH** was one of many members who was saddened by the passing of Jim Ellis. John recalled when he attended Mona Vale Hospital one Saturday evening with what he thought was a scaphoid fracture, after a fall at tennis. The triage nurse told him he would have to see an orthopaedic surgeon later in the week.

Imagine my surprise, prior to leaving, when I "bumped into" Jim, who asked me what the problem was and I told him and said I had to see the stupid ortho doctor next week.

Jim said.."I am the stupid ortho!" and he promptly ordered the triage nurse to organise x-rays and plaster. John wrote..."One of my fond memories of Jim".

*(Thank you, John, for your email and kind thoughts of Jim.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Anthony JORDAN** enjoys reading our magazine and passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association. He is looking forward to meeting us in the Domain on Reserve Forces Day.

*(Thank you, Anthony, for your donation for Life Membership and your Name Badge. It is good to know you were well enough to meet us on Reserve Forces Day. I hope this finds you in good spirits.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Ken PHILLIPS** rang me a few months back regarding a list of names (ANZAC Day Newsletter, April 2009, see page 14, "Do you know the whereabouts of the following") and said that Jon Hawks was in the US the last time he heard, and Michael Walsh is a member of 1 Commando unit, and Chris McGlashen is with 2/17 RNSWR.

*(Thank you, Ken, for your "feed-back", I misplaced your note, all we can do is hope they read our magazine and want to re-join. I hope this finds Karen in good health.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Eileen HENDERSON** sent me the following very informative email on a number of items.

## ITEM (1)

She wrote about a C.O. of 5th Field Ambulance in WW 1; LTCOL Dr. John Hare Phipps DSO (1872-1936).

He was the youngest of five sons and a daughter and was

born in Cheshire, England.

When he grew up he followed his father's profession in medicine and graduated from the University of London and obtained his L.R.C.P. and his M.R.C.S. in 1897. Three of his brothers pursued the medical profession also.

The family migrated to Australia at the beginning of the 20th century and John registered as a Medical Practitioner in NSW in 1901.

He married Margaret Rutledge Johnson and they settled in Mosman (NSW).

John was a very keen amateur fisherman.

When war broke out, John enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps and attained the rank of LTCOL and commanded 5 Field Ambulance AAMC.

John was awarded the DSO in FRANCE in 1916. His Citation read:-

*This Officer has done excellent work throughout his period in France. During the operations at POZIERS, July 27th to August 5th, he displayed great energy in organising his unit at Chateau Hercourt, he worked day and night and I consider the evacuation of the 3,000 wounded, which was excellently carried out, was largely due to his initiative and devotion. All duties entrusted to him have been performed with the same admirable devotion.*

SIGNED: Alfred Sutton, A.D.M.S., Australian 2nd Division, August 15th, 1915.

After the war he resumed his medical practice in Mosman and became President of the Mosman Sub Branch of the RSL (then known as the RS&SILA), which received its Charter on the 8th September 1918, about 5 weeks before the Armistice was signed!

John was the President of the Mosman Sub Branch when the Foundation Stone of its premises, the ANZAC Memorial Hall, was laid on the 23 September 1921 with Lord Forster, the Governor General.

The Memorial hall was "opened" on the 5th May 1924.

The Sub Branch remained at the Hall until they moved to their new location in 1990 (The building is now owned by "Country Road")

It is also believed that John was also Grand Master of the Mosman Masonic lodge.

Eileen understands that there may be more information about John in the Mosman Public Library.

She wrote that John spent most of his life in Mosman and was a well respected and much loved doctor in the district.

To commemorate the receiving of its Charter in 1918, the Sub Branch celebrated the milestone with a semi formal dinner at the Mosman RSL Club.

Many dignitaries attended the Dinner including Don Rowe OAM, the NSW President of the RSL, the Lady Mayor of Mosman, Cr. Denise Wilton and relatives of LTCOL John Phipps DSO.

## ITEM (2)

Eileen had the honour of giving a "Presentation" to the Penshurst RSL Sub Branch, in February, on the Australian Army nurses who served at Gallipoli.



What a pleasant surprise to have our good member, Sr. Francis ("Sue") Thompson, as a guest in the audience.

"Sue", as our members know from our Sick List, is in a lovely Retirement Hostel in Miranda, and was taken to the club by the Welfare Officer for the occasion.

Eileen and "Sue" chatted for quite a while and was surprised to learn that "Sue" would be celebrating her 98th Birthday in March. Eileen said she was "full of beans" but bemoaning the fact that her teeth had all been removed and her new dentures weren't available as yet.

This presented "Sue" with a huge challenge because of the sumptuous luncheon that was provided by the Sub Branch—but Eileen said we gave her some of our oysters which she thoroughly enjoyed and after a couple of small ales was feeling great when the time came to take her home.

Eileen said it was a very pleasing occasion.

### ITEM (3)

AHS CENTAUR Commemoration Service 2009. (Also see our June '09 Magazine, page 15).

Eileen wrote that annual Commemoration Service for the 2/3 AHS Centaur was held on the 12th May at the 113 AGH memorial Chapel, Concord Hospital.

There was a large crowd present and the "Address" was given by Major General Raymond Sharp AO RFD ED (Rtd).

Eileen said the service had a predominately naval theme, with the Naval Psalm, Naval Prayer, Naval Hymn, and the Ode was read by a member of the Merchant Navy Association.

The music was provided by the NSW Corrective Services Band. The Piper was Mr. Bill Campbell OAM RFM EM, Regimental Pipe Major.

Schubert's "Ave Maria" was sung by Elizabeth Lowrencev, as she accompanied herself on the harp.

The Act of Remembrance included the laying of wreaths, Last Post and Rouse.

The Medical Corps Banner was hanging in a place of prominence and Colonel Robert Lusby was present and represented the Concord Hospital Medical staff.

When the service concluded, Morning Tea was served on the lawns beside the Chapel.

Eileen said that 332 people were on board the AHS Centaur when she was torpedoed. Their ages ranged from 15 years (Ordinary Seaman, Bob Westwood) to 67 years (Capt. Salt, the Pilot).

There were 64 survivors! These were 1 nurse, 30 merchant seamen and 33 medical personnel (Fd Amb and AASC).

The full compliment consisted of the Ship's Medical Staff of 64, which included 12 AANS nurses, 149 members of the 2/12 Field Ambulance, 44 members of the AASC attached to 2/12th as ambulance drivers etc, and 75 Merchant Seamen.

Eileen said that with the majority of personnel being medical, she has persuaded the organisers of the future AHS Centaur Memorial Service to include the Nursing Corps Prayer.

At present the Medical Corps and RAASC input is non-existent. She is hopeful that future services will embrace more Medical Corps Associations and RAASC participation by way of representation.

Eileen included some extracts, which I have edited, from the book;

*"Australian Hospital Ship-Centaur-The Myth of Immunity" by Christopher S. Milligan and John C.H.Foley—with kind thanks to the authors.*

*"JAP SUB SINKS HOSPITAL SHIP!" screamed the world's press in mid May 1943.*

*The death toll on the AHS Centaur was the highest of any merchant vessel sunk by a submarine in the Pacific during WW 2.*

*At 0410 hrs on the morning of the 14th May most of the 332 people on board slumbered peacefully in presumed safety.*

*By 0413 hrs (3 minutes) the "Centaur" had disappeared off the face of the earth, gone—destroyed.*

*A Heavy Artillery Battery was in the stages of construction on the eastern side of Moreton Island and at the time the Orderly Officer, Lt Russell Ward and his Orderly Sgt., Dermot Riley, were doing their rounds of the piquet.*

*They stopped to speak to Sapper Rudi Glass when suddenly their eyes were drawn seaward to a burst of bright, orange light on the horizon. It erupted into a fiery ball over an arc of 10 degrees. It all lasted about a few seconds.*

*Undoubtedly, those three soldiers had seen the death strike on AHS Centaur.*

### ITEM (4)

How the OWL became a "symbol" for the 5th Field Ambulance!

Eileen wrote that when the unit was "re-rolled" from 1 Gen Hosp to 5 Fd Amb, the new C.O. (a certain LTCOL Derek Cannon) agreed that we could have a competition to come up with an emblem for the unit.

There were two main syndicates who took the challenge seriously and went away to do research for an appropriate logo.

Our group comprised of Captains Eileen Henderson and Kathy Dolby (RAANC) and Warrant Officer Andy de Leeue (RAAMC) decided the OWL was the appropriate logo for the unit because; (i) they are wise, learned and trustworthy, (ii) very mobile, (iii) see well in the dark, (iv) tenacious, (v) hard working and (vi) cute. The syndicate felt all these characteristics could be attributed to a Field Ambulance (but maybe not the "cute").

Eileen asked an artist friend to do a drawing for the syndicate and "hey presto" they won the competition. The "OWL" was duly framed and presented to the unit AND the artist now has a PhD in Fine Arts and is a local artist and a teacher at the Art College.

Eileen thinks that "one day the OWL might be worth a few bob" and she also believes there may be a few "T" shirts still available from Derek!

Eileen has also sent some material to LTCOL Robert Likeman, who lives in Townsville, for a new book he is working on, called "The Gallipoli Doctors".

*(Thank you, Eileen for your very informative email, it is very much appreciated.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Estelle and Bryan LINDSAY** wrote to say they always enjoy our newsletters. The cold weather is miserable but Estelle keeps herself warm by her heater.

Estelle made a birthday card for me—on the front was the "blown up" photo of the Medical Corps Badge. On the top l/h corner she had pasted a "Happy Birthday" and at the bottom,





under the badge, was written "Semper Paratus".

What a most innovative lady she is, and I don't think she would mind if I tell our members she will be 92 years young in July. I marvel at her attitude and her positive outlook.

Sadly, recently, she wrote to say that whilst she had a really joyous time, over 4 days, with her family celebrating her birthday, her little dog "Maizy" took very ill and she had to have her "put down". It has left Estelle very sad. *(Thank you, Estelle and Bryan, for your thoughtfulness and your kind letters. What a sad letter you sent about "Maizy", I hope when you read this you are feeling a bit better—we are thinking of you.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Bill MOLLOY** was among the many mourners who paid their last respects to our friend, Jim Ellis.

Bill was sitting with other good doctors and friends of Jim; John Crozier, Charles New, Georgina Wheelan, Warwick Wilkinson and Jim Roche.

Bill said he was sorry he missed us.

Bill attended the Reserve Forces Day Parade in Sydney and thought it went off wonderfully well and that John Moore and his committee did a terrific job.

He was pleased it was a fine day and also had a chance to speak to some of our members on the day.

*(Thank you, Bill, for your email and kind words.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Rob STEWART** was sorry he missed being with us on Reserve Forces Day.

He was in London, staying at the well appointed, 229 room, Victory Services Club on Seymour Street. and sent me a post card to say he had visited the Durham Light Infantry Museum. *(Their website is: [dli@durham.gov.uk](mailto:dli@durham.gov.uk))*

It was most impressive, including a medal room which displays 11 VC's, numerous MC's, DSO's, DCM's.

There was one on display for a surgeon, James Scott M.O., MC and Bar (3 times) for courage and coolness. They have a chapel in Durham Cathedral;

Northumbria lost 12,500 men in WW 1. *(Thank you, Rob, for your card and we look forward to seeing you at our Re-Union.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Gordon WRIGHT** was hoping to be among the "39er's" on Reserve Forces Day because I had contacted John Moore and given him Gordon's name and also Sir Keith Jones's name as probable eligible participants.

John rang both Gordon and Sir Keith and talked at length with them and explained the criteria which made them ineligible. We were sorry neither were able to make it on the day.

Gordon said he feels sure that Sir Keith was one of the doctors in the Wallgrove camp in the late 1930's although he can't picture him. He wrote that he misses seeing some of his old mates from that time.

Gordon gets pleasure from reading our magazine, which arrived in June. He passes on his good wishes to all our members and said he is 90 years old now and still going strong.

He is looking forward to seeing us at the "Battle for Australia Ceremony" in September (after he comes back from Queensland to escape the winter months at Berowra in Sydney). *(Thank you, Gordon, for your letter, we look forward to your company in Martin Place in September.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Andrew ELLIS** wrote to express his and his family's thanks for all the kind messages of support received from our many members at the recent loss of his dad, Jim.

I had sent Andrew some words I had written about his dad, to include in our "VALE" section of our newsletter but when he sent me the family Eulogy I was very pleased to substitute it.

Andrew said he recalled a funny incident when Jim was in his 70's and was asked to speak at a Mess Dinner.

After the Dinner they played "Mess Football" with a frozen chicken! Jim was tackled by a burly Military Policeman and had his hip broken, Jim arranged his own transfer to Sydney Hospital and rang the family next morning as anaesthesia was being induced!

Andrew has recently arrived back home, from Shoalwater Bay having taken part in the big exercise "Talisman Sabre" with 1 HSB, to a "mountain" of work.

*(Thank you, Andrew, for your emails and dad's eulogy. We hope that when you read this your work load has decreased and that you and your family are in good spirits.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Rayda NOBLE** wrote that her home was sold last May!

She has paid a deposit on a very nice unit and that "settlement" should be completed by the end of September.

Rayda said that she put flowers on her "Little White Soldier" (Beauty Spot, Napean Highway, Carrum—at the mouth of the Patterson River, Melbourne) in remembrance of the Coral Sea Battle, May 1945 and has kept her flag lowered for 5 days in memory of all those brave men and women who gave up their lives.

She wrote that the recent 2/24th A.I.F. Inf. Bn. Association's newsletter "The Furphy Flyer in Mufti" (on page 12) requested any memorabilia (letters, photos etc) regarding the Siege of Tobruk (April to October 1941).

They would like them for the duration of an "Exhibition" scheduled in 2010.

Rayda asked if anyone can assist with any items, could they kindly contact Alastair Davison on (03) 9844.3036 OR email: [ajdavison@netspace.net.au](mailto:ajdavison@netspace.net.au) OR post to:-103 Pound rd., Warrandyte VIC 3113.

There is access to the 2/24th web page: (no www) <http://adavison.customer.netspace.net.au>

She read recently in the Defence Magazine (Issue 4, page 8, 2009), that an Australian Investigation Team has possibly found the aircraft, flown by the last two Australian ADF members, that was missing in action in Vietnam on the 3rd November 1970.

Flying Officer, Michael Herbert and Pilot Officer, Robert Carver were returning to base when their Canberra bomber was lost without trace.

The AIT was confident that the wreckage, which was



found in thick jungle in an extremely rugged, remote and sparsely populated area of Quang Nam Province, Vietnam, near the Laotian border, was that of the bomber, because military artifacts were found which included a club badge that was unique to the RAAF's No. 2 Squadron. No human remains have been found, as yet.

The former Minister of Defence, Hon Warren Snowden MP said...*"These brave airmen gave their lives in the service of their nation, and locating the crash site is an important step in accounting for them"*

*(Thank you, Rayda, I hope this newsletter finds you in good health and that the trauma of selling your home was not too big a "hassle"!)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Robert ("Scotty") BOYD** sends his good wishes to his friends in the Association and enjoys reading all the news.

He wrote that himself and our other member, Noel Tame, recently met up with another good friend from 1 Gen Hosp days—RSM John Layhe.

Scotty said that John remembered quite a few of our members once names were tossed around. He was kind enough to give me John's details. Hopefully, we might have another good member in our ranks in the near future but even so, I have put John on our Mailing List for future newsletters.

Scotty is hoping to be with us at our Re-Union in November.

*(Thank you, Scotty, I contacted John—who knows, you might all get to the Re-Union and if so it would be a good thing.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**John GALLAGHER** attended the RF Day celebrations in the Domain and was accompanied by his wife, Sue.

They were in the VIP section and John said it was a wonderful spectacle and the RF Day Committee deserved every accolade for a bold new concept that was carried through with great confidence and fanfare.

John was encouraging us as we passed by him.

*(Thank you, John, for your note, it was good to see you—alas all too briefly.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Derek CANNON** (Our President) returned an email I sent to him recently when I enquired, among other matters, after his health.

We are in the process of trying to find a "Resting Place" for our Memorabilia and are hopeful it might be in the medical museum at Bandiana.

We are having some preliminary discussions with a few parties and may be in a position in the future to make some decisions.

You would have read in Derek's "Message" at the front of the magazine about his problem with Peripheral Neuropathy.

It causes the nerves in his calf's and feet to have a slow reaction, so much so that, as an example, when he is in his car, at traffic lights, he could not feel himself "revving" the engine. (The drivers either side of him must have thought he wanted

to "burn them off"! It is causing him great concern because it is curtailing his bush-walking and mountain climbing pleasures.

He is trying to adjust his life style by slowing down but is hopeful that a pending visit to his Neurologist (in December) will show an improvement.

*(Thank you, Derek, for your note. I hope one of our doctors may be of help.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**John de WITT** and myself have been writing to each other over recent weeks in an endeavour to finalise his "Story".

John has been pretty crook for the last two years and has been in and out of hospital.

He has had a type of nerve rash for the last 12 months or more and has frequent visits from the Home Nursing Staff to apply cream all over his body to lessen the itching.

He is back in his own home now, but can't get to any meeting or functions because of the rash treatment and other medication he has to take.

Each time I ring him he is ever so cheerful to me but I know he is doing it tough. He is grateful for the messages of good cheer from his mates in the Association and he hopes that when you read his story you will enjoy it.

He is hoping to join us on our Re-Union day in November.

*(Thank you, John, for all your perseverance and words of wisdom. We all hope that when you read this newsletter you are getting relief from your rash and feel better in yourself.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Jim ROCHE** was present at his good friend, Jim Ellis's funeral. He saw a number of our members including Warwick Wilkinson, Bill Molloy and another friend, Don Faithfull. He was sorry he missed our group at the conclusion.

Jim's cousin, Percival Holmes, was in 5 Field Ambulance in WW 1 and is in the process of getting together some information for our newsletter.

Doctor Bill McBride, is a good friend of Jim (Roche) and he must have read one of our newsletters because he remarked to Jim that his uncle, Bill Dunne, was also in 5 Field Ambulance in WW 1.

His uncle Bill was shot through the chest and Bill (McBride) had remarked that when he saw him in later life and saw the red mark on the front of his chest and another red mark on the back, to show where the bullet had gone through his chest. His uncle recovered and went on to fight again in France.

After the war, when he lived in Wagga Wagga he became the Mayor and had the pleasure of entertaining the Queen when she visited Wagga Wagga in the 1950's.

Recently, I sent our members (on email) a copy of an email from MAJ John Straskye (President, RAAMC Association Inc.) regarding a future diorama depicting RAAMC involvement from the Sudan war onwards. Jim wrote that he would be very interested to seeing the finished product. (See "Items of Interest" No: 10 in this newsletter.)

*(Thank you, Jim, for your letter. It would be of some interest to write about your cousin's WW 1 experience. I thank you for Dr. Bill McBride's details, I have put him on our Mail List.)*





# ITEMS of INTEREST

(1) **Cpl Stuart KING** is the RAP Sgt at 1st/15th Royal New South Wales Lancers in Parramatta and recently came across our newsletter and asked could his section be included in our mail out. Stuart runs a small section consisting of 13 members—this is now a formality with 10 copies going to the members of the RAP. *(Good work, Stuart and thank you.)*

(2) **Ian TUCKER** saw our particulars on our web site and sent me an email last November. Ian was the Training WO in 1993/95 and has since retired into another Government job. He said he recently attended the 11 Fd Amb re-union and this has “sparked” some old interest.

Ian also wrote that he is in constant contact with WO II Steve (Boris) Paris (ex RQMS during a similar period)—they would like to “stay in touch” and hopefully come to one of our re-unions. *(I have put Steve and Ian on our Mail List—hopefully we may get to meet them. I thanked Ian for his email.)*

(3) **Craig DAALMEIJER-POWER** visited our web site back in December and noticed the absence of his great great uncle, Leslie Power, from our “Roll of Honour”.

I wrote back to Craig and explained that our Roll of Honour did not include all those who served and died whilst in the service of the 5th or 2/5th Australian Field Ambulance.

It was a list of names, mainly from the inception of our Association, taken from our old “Address Book”. I have since then added a few from other sources and would be happy to record your great great uncle’s name among them.

Craig informed me that Leslie Power was born in 1894 in Girilambone, NSW. He enlisted and was posted to 5 Field Ambulance AAMC.

He was in Gallipoli and later, at the Western Front.

Leslie was attending to a patient when he was shot dead by a sniper on the 9th August 1918.

He now lays in peace, in Daours, France.

*(Thank you, Craig, I look forward to reading more about your great great uncle when you are able.)*

(4) **Ben RUSSELL** is another interested person who “clicked” onto our “great” web site to tell me a little of his Grandfather (“Poppy”), Jack Wilson Army Number 16179.

Jack enlisted in October 1915, a few months after his older brother, Harry, lost a leg at Gallipoli in early June.

Harry (his army number was 978 and was awarded the Military Medal), was a gunner in the 4th Field Battery of the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade, which took the ONLY gun ashore on ANZAC Day.

Jack enlisted in 5 Field Ambulance AAMC which was strange as the family had no prior medical training history, in fact, they were mechanics from the Victorian goldfields.

Ben said he never knew his “pop” because he died before he was born. Ben’s mum said “Pop” did not talk about the war or attend many re-unions—he tried to forget.

Ben said that the sights his pop would have seen and the men he would have attended to would have been horrendous.

His Pop’s war records show he suffered from trench fever and was in Amiens and Villers-Bretonneaux. He would have lost a great many mates.

When Jack returned home he slowly got his life going again as he resumed in his family mechanical business. After about 10 years he became a travelling salesman in the car parts industry. This was where he met his future wife (in Warrnambool, Victoria) in the late 1930’s.

Ben is still researching his “pop’s” records and will send us more information when it is completed.

Ben said he is starting a young family and in the process of moving homes and thanks us for putting him on our mailing list.

*(Thank you, Ben, for your email on your grandfather. I hope the “house move” goes smoothly and the family settle in comfortably.)*

(5) **Jane CALVERT** left a message in our “Guest Book” (on our website) for any RAANC/RAAMC girls who may have “marched in” to 31 Pl. in Kapooka in 1985.

Does this apply to any of our female members? Does any member know of a female member who was in Kapooka in 1985?

If so, Jane is organising a 25 Year Re-Union to celebrate the occasion when women started training alongside the men. *(Good on you, Jane, if you read this. I hope our Association might have, or know, someone who “fits the bill”, if so, they may let me know and I will give them your details.)*

(6) **The Eastern Region History Committee** held their quarterly meeting in May and their President, Colonel Bill Molloy, had a number of the newly struck Boer War Lapel Badges for the members who were present.

➤ These badges will be available for \$5 each and the money goes towards the Boer War Appeal. (The Re-Dedication will take place soon).

A Memorial Service was held on Sunday 31st May at 3pm on the southern headland of Watsons Bay, just above the Anglican Church.

Bill said it was the 107th Anniversary of the end of the Boer War and mentioned that a Lt Gideon Grieve, who was a member of the Black Watch and a Scotsman, died and was buried in South Africa.

Bill is still collecting material for the CMF/Army Reserve History of the Medical Corps (more was handed to him from Major Eileen Henderson).

If you find you can supply Bill with some of your own Medical Corps involvement, he would like to hear from you—preferably in writing but an initial phone call can “start the ball rolling!”

Let me know if you would like to contact Bill.

➤ Eileen Henderson is also following up more information on the Nursing Corps in the CMF. Can you give Eileen any Info?

➤ Lt Col Barry Morgan advised that he attended a meeting at the AWM recently and heard that a book is due to be published, by Libby Stewart, about the Australian surgical teams in Vietnam.

Barry also advised on the 40th Anniversary Commemoration of the Battle of Binh Ba (Operation “Hammer”), which occurred in 1969.



It was one of the few times that Australians were involved in village fighting. Barry said he was in the infantry at the time and later, transferred to the Medical Corps.

- Lt Col John Phillips advised the meeting of the details of the forthcoming "Battle of Australia Ceremony" in Martin Place on the first Wednesday in September (2nd) at 10.30am. John said a medallion may be awarded to the "Fuzzy Wuzzy's" who had been involved in the fighting, in New Guinea, against the invading Japanese. John said there were about 100 Fuzzy Wuzzy's still alive.
- The Medical Corps Tie was discussed and it seems that the Medical Corps Museum might like a copy of the old one (made in 1995).

*(As an aside, it appears that the RAAMC Corps Committee have sanctioned a new Medical Corps Tie as I write—more later.)*

On the discussions on the Museum, the ERHC are considering a visit, in the near future, to Bandiana.

- A new coin has been struck by the Royal Australian Mint – "The Australian Remembrance 20 cent coin".

It commemorates those Australians who made military history behind and beyond the battlefield; particularly the Australian Service Nurses who have healed, aided and died and of our servicemen and women for more than 100 years. The coin depicts an Australian Nurse tending a wounded soldier.

(7) **Dick PAYTEN** is the President of the 7th Australian Division A.I.F. Association.

For quite some time they have been planning a "Remembrance Wall" in Bass Hill (Sydney)—It has now happened and is in place.

It is in Remembrance Driveway at the corner of the Hume Highway and Miller Road, Bass Hill and the Dedication Ceremony will take place on the 22nd of October 2009 at 10am.

Their Association will have 30 plaques and 10 will be available for remaining units who supported 7 Div.

One plaque will be included for "our" New Guinea friends, the "Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels".

The plaques will cost around \$200 and contain around 30 words.

*(there was an example of one showing a colour patch, 2/31 Australian Infantry Battalion, Dedicated to the memory of those 263 men who paid the supreme sacrifice and all who served in the Battalion 7th Division, Lest We Forget.).*

Our Association has strong ties with the 5th and the 2/5th Field Ambulance who were part of 25 Brigade.

We will order a plaque with the wording to be agreed by our committee and other parties.

Dick was trying to locate "someone" from 2/4th Field Ambulance? CAN WE ASSIST HIM?

Hopefully, we can get a representative along to this important Dedication Service on the 22nd.

Refreshments will be available afterwards at the Chester Hill RSL Club from about 11.30am with a 3 course Luncheon will cost \$25 per head.

*(Please contact me if you are available to be at the Dedication.)*

(8) **Glen WALTERS** sent me an email and is trying to locate any unit history on the 14th Field Ambulance during WW 1.

Glen's great uncle was a member from 1916-1919.

Can anyone assist Glen, if so contact me with the details and I will pass them on to Glen.

(9) **Glen and Wendy MASON** own a Military Bookshop business in Brisbane and sent me an email to say they "specialise" in unit histories and are currently looking at 1 Field Ambulance (Four years with the First, printed 1919).

If any member would like to supply Glen/Wendy with Nominal Rolls, Medal Citations, photographs etc they would be grateful.

They would acknowledge any material used in their book/s and return same when finished.

(10) **The RAAMC Association Inc. (NSW Branch)** met in June and discussed a number of Agenda Items.

The first Item was the success of the ANZAC Day March where the majority of Medical Corps marched for the FIRST TIME as a Corps bloc behind the RAAMC Banner.

The lunch afterwards, at the Paddington-Woolollahra RSL Club, was wonderfully supported.

After other representatives from 1, 2, 5, 8 and 11 Fd Amb and 1 Aust Fd Hosp gave their reports, General Business was discussed.

MAJ John Straskye, National President of the RAAMC Association Inc. advised members that he has had preliminary discussions with BRIG Tony Gill, RAAMC Head of Corps, regarding "establishing a RAAMC National Memorial".

This Memorial would suitably commemorate the service and achievements of members and former members of the RAAMC.

The Patron of the RAAMC Association Inc., MAJGEN 'Digger' James indicated he would speak to the AWM to see if a "Lot" has been allocated to the RAAMC on ANZAC Parade, Canberra. The General thinks this is so but will seek allocation if one has not been allocated.

The lengthy discussion agreed that the natural progression to the establishment of a National Memorial would be a committee comprising eminent current and former members of the RAAMC which would, among other matters, look at the design, location and fund-raising.

A Resolution from the NSW Branch was Moved and Seconded:

*"That this committee strongly recommend that a RAAMC National RAAMC Committee be put in place as soon as possible. Other RAAMC committee should be approached to ascertain their support to this matter"*

The Resolution was Carried.

*(Our Association would support this resolution wholeheartedly)*

Another matter was the election of a new Secretary.

The current secretary, David Czerkies, advised that he had great difficulty in attending the day meetings and asked that the position become vacant.

It was Moved and Seconded:

*"That John O'Brien be appointed as Secretary of the RAAMC Association Inc (NSW Branch)" CARRIED.*

### JULY NEWS

The National President of the RAAMC Association Inc., MAJ John Straskye, sent all members of the Association an email.

It advised that the RAAMC Association Inc. has commissioned Australian War artist, Martin Campbell to pictorially record the history of the RAAMC in art.





The painting, oil on canvas, will measure 2m x 1m and will be titled *"From the Sudan to Afghanistan"*—it will be donated to the RAAMC.

It will feature many famous iconic images in a way that has never been seen before.

It will not be a painting of photographs. There will be images of ALL major RAAMC units, including those who served in Vietnam.

When the RAAMC has received this finished painting, it is planned to produce 200 Limited Edition, signed and framed prints.

It is anticipated that the prints will cost \$500 each and All proceeds will go to the RAAMC Corps Funds. The RAAMC Association Inc. will not benefit in any financial way whatsoever.

*"This is a matter of esprit-de-corps"* wrote John.

*I would be delighted to take any "Expressions of Interest" from our members (or your friends) as to the future purchase of one of these Dioramas. (Please contact me via the "ACTIVITY SHEET" at the back of this newsletter).*

One of the items discussed at the recent (7th August) meeting was the CORPS Birthday. It is celebrated on the 1st of July each year and preliminary discussions/preparations will now be undertaken to come up with a suitable venue and date (in July).

The committee are confident that the CORPS BIRTHDAY celebration will be a success.

The next Meeting of the RAAMC Association Inc. (NSW Branch) will be the first Friday in October 2009 at 10.30am in Bldg 11, Victoria Barracks, Sydney. You are cordially invited to attend.

*(Please let me know if you would like to attend and if you would like to stay for lunch in the Officer's Mess.)*

#### **(11) Edited from the Vet Affairs Newspaper—June/July 2009.**

- (i) **PTE Edward "Ted" Kenna** was the Last WW 2 Victoria Cross recipient to pass away.

He was honoured with a State Funeral. Ted passed away on the 8th July.

In 1945 in New Guinea, Ted's platoon was under heavy fire from a Japanese machine gun nest, he exposed himself to heavy fire and attacked the enemy bunker, killing the crew.

This action enabled his company attack to proceed. He received the Victoria Cross for this heroic deed.

Some weeks later he was shot in the mouth and hospitalised. He spent more than a year recovering in hospital but it marked the end of combat duties as he was discharged in December 1946.

The good story behind this injury, if one can say this, is that Ted married the nurse who looked after him.

Marjory Rushberry and Ted Kenna had been happily married for more than 60 years. Ted is survived by his wife, Marjory, and their three children and many grandchildren.

*(Two VC recipients remain; Vietnam veteran, Keith Payne and Afghanistan hero, Mark Donaldson.)*

- (ii) **Death of our last WW 1 servicemen.** John (Jack) Ross.

Our country said farewell to John, who passed away on the 3rd of June 2009, in Bendigo, Victoria. Jack was 110

years of age. He was the last of the 417,000 Australians who served during WW 1.

He was a clerk when he enlisted in the A.I.F. in January 1918 and was trained at the Wireless Training School before being posted to the 1st (Depot) Battalion at Broadmeadow Camp in Victoria.

He was waiting for deployment overseas when the war ended. Jack was discharged on Christmas Eve 1918.

Jack served again in WW 2 as a member of the Volunteer Defence Corps.

Jack is survived by his daughter, Peggy, and son, Robert, and four grandchildren.

#### **(iii) Fromelles (Planned) Cemetery.**

We have read in previous newspapers and newsletters (and in a poem) of the discovery of a mass grave in Pheasant Wood, near the town of Fromelles in Northern France, which contained the remains of Australian and British soldiers who were killed there during WW 1.

Australia suffered 5,533 casualties in the Battle of Fromelles of which 1,917 were killed. The 5th Australian Division fought alongside the British 61st Division. The dead will be buried alongside each other.

This will be the first official war cemetery built in more than 50 years.

Work has commenced on the cemetery and it is hoped that the remains of the fallen, which are currently being exhumed, can be buried by early 2010 with a Dedication Ceremony and placing of Headstones, by July 2010.

The cemetery will be based on hexagon design with the headstones radiating out from a central cross of sacrifice. Hard limestone and red Belgium bricks will be used in the construction of the walls, wrought iron gates will mark the entrance and will remain open at all times.

#### **(iv) Government money available for ANZAC TRAIL on the WESTERN FRONT.**

\$10 Million over the next 4 years has been allocated to develop a project, in cooperation with French and Belgium authorities and local communities, at seven key sites to tell the story of Australians on the Western Front. Among the options being assessed are;

- Improving the museum at Villers-Bretonneux
- Relocating the existing museum at Fromelles.
- Improving links to regional Battlefield trails.
- Refurbishing the museum at Bullecourt.
- Establishing interpretive facilities at Pozieres and Mont St Quentin.

#### **(v) LEGACY WEEK—30 August-5 September.**

Legacy is seeking volunteers who might be able to give 2 or 3 hours to help sell Legacy Badges. All the money raised is channelled back to assist the widows or dependants of Australian veterans who have died as a result of their war service.

If you think you can assist then please contact your local Legacy club.

#### **(vi) 3 Fd Hyg Coy. (CMF)**

Bryan Nelson is seeking members who served in New Guinea 1971/72.



Do we have any of our members who were in this unit at the time?

If so, contact Bryan on (MOB:0402.080.571) or email:dallasm1@optusnet.com.au

*(If any member would like me to post this copy of the Vet Affairs Newspaper to them, please contact me—first in best dressed!)*

#### (12) THE LINK (Defence Logistic Magazine—Issue 5, July 2009)

ADF reform to take Australia to 2030 was released in May this year in a Defence White Paper:- *"Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century. Force 2030"*.

Part of the "Paper" involves Logistic Reform.

LTCOL David Hooper (*Supply Chain Branch, Joint Logistics Command*) commented that current facilities are 'dated' with WW 2 vintage warehouses in many locations, which have suffered from a lack of investment over a considerable period.

There are currently 24 major sites around Australia that support the Defence Storage and Distribution network.

This involves 201 warehouses with 583,285 m2 of storage for over 101 million items and valued at over \$5 billion in 2008, there were nearly 500,000 consignments moved within the network.

Involved studies have been carried out by JLC to reduce from 24 "wholesale" sites to 7—across Australia.

The 7 major sites being Amberley, Bandiana, Darwin, Edinburgh, Moorebank, Perth and Townsville. PLUS....

7 minor sites would be established at Hobart, Nowra, Oakey, Puckapunyal, Richmond, Wallangarra and Williamstown.

The improved model will incorporate modern practices such as bar coding coupled with an integrated commercial Warehouse Management System.

The new model will require significant capital investment of approx. \$482 Million. One of the ways this could be achieved is through PPP (Public Private Partnership).

Automated Identification Technology (AIT) will feature in all warehousing facilities being hand-held or static.

*(If you would like me to post this magazine to you, please contact me.)*

#### **DEFENCE Magazine Issue 4, 2009**

New, high tech Amphibious Assault Ships (called LHD's) are now in the process of production.

They will be joint Navy/Army crewed. The total amphibious capability will provide a combined arms battlegroup of more than 2,000 personnel, providing landing force, helicopter operations, logistics and intelligence as well as other supporting units including:-

- *Space and deck strength sufficient to carry around 100 armoured vehicles, including M1A1 tanks and 200 other vehicles (about 2,400 lane metres)*
- *Hanger space for at least 12 helicopters and an equal number of landing spots to allow a Company group to be simultaneously lifted and projected ashore.*
- *45 days endurance for crew and embarked force, including sustainment, medical, rotary wing and operational maintenance and repair support to these forces while ashore for 10 days.*
- *Command and control of land, sea and air elements of an Amphibious Task Force.*

- *The ability to conduct simultaneous helicopter and watercraft operations in a wide range of environments.*
- *A Hospital facility comprising two operating theatres, high, medium and low dependency wards, dental, x-ray, pharmacy and administration facilities.*

A contract was signed in 2007. It involves a Spanish company to construct and fit out the hulls and transport them to Williamstown dockyard in Victoria.

BAE Systems Australia Defence will fit out the superstructures and integrate them with the hulls.

SAAB will develop the combat system to have commonality with ANZAC Class ships.

Another company will supply the internal and external communication systems including air traffic and watercraft capabilities.

The first two ships, HMAS Canberra (LHD01) and HMAS Adelaide (LHD02) are expected by 2014 and 2015 respectively.

They will be "home ported" in Sydney and will be the largest warships the Navy has ever had and will displace approximately 6,000 tonnes more than the aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne.

*(This very informative and interesting magazine is yours for the asking—I will post it to you.)*

#### (13) I received a brochure from CISMFA (Critical Incident Stress Management Foundation Australia) that may interest our members.

They are having their 5th Bi-Annual Conference in Melbourne over 2 days (Monday and Tuesday 9th and 10th of November 2009).

The conference will include, among many other speakers, Mr Bruce Esplin (*Emergency Services Commissioner*), Mr John Faine (*ABC Radio*), Dr Rob Gordon PhD (*Consultant Psychologist for Victorian Emergency Recovery Plan and the Red Cross Emergency services*), Mr Walter Mikac (*Ambassador Alannah and Madeline Foundation*) and M/s Christine Nixon (*Chair Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority*).

It would be of interest to Defence Force personnel, Hospital and Health Care, and many, many more groups in this field.

If you are interested in finding out more details I can forward the information on to you or you may call M/s Linda Espie (Chair) on (03) 9663.7999 or email: [cisfma@bigpond.com](mailto:cisfma@bigpond.com) or their web site: [www.cisfma.org.au](http://www.cisfma.org.au)

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

Congratulations to Megan Gavel who has passed her corporal's exams and also to Au Vu who is now Lance Corporal.

The O.C. Major Kym Henderson has told me that a number members of the unit have fallen ill over the past few months and this has affected their training.

One of the members is their Training W.O., Sgt. Craig Ellem, who has recently undergone shoulder reconstruction surgery, he is now recuperating and ready to start rehab. We wish the sick members well and a speedy recovery for Craig.





# “The Crabby Old Man”

(With kind thanks to a good friend—Bob King. Author unknown!)

Some time back, an old man died in a geriatric ward of a small hospital near Tampa, Florida. It was believed that he had nothing left of any value.

Later, when the nurses were going through his meagre possessions, they found this poem. Its quality and content so impressed the staff that copies were made and distributed to every nurse in the hospital.

One nurse took her copy to Missouri. The old man's sole bequest to posterity has since appeared in the Christmas Edition of the News magazine of the St Louis Association for Mental Health.

A slide presentation has been made based on his simple, but eloquent, poem.

This little old man, with nothing left to give to the world is now the author of this “anonymous” poem that has found its way to the internet.

## POEM—“A Crabby Old Man”

What do you see nurses? What do you see?  
What are you thinking, when you're looking at me?  
A crabby old man—not very wise,  
Uncertain of habit, with far-away eyes?  
Who dribbles his food and makes no reply  
when you say in a loud voice---“I do wish you'd try!”  
Who seems not to notice the things that you do.  
And forever is losing a sock or a shoe?

Who, resisting or not, lets you do as you will,  
With bathing and feeding—the long day to fill?  
Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see?  
Then open your eyes, nurse, you're not looking at me.  
I'll tell you who I am, as I sit here so still,  
As I do what you're bidding, as I eat at your will.

I'm a small child of ten, with a father and mother,  
Brothers and sisters who love one another.  
A young boy of sixteen with wings on his feet  
Dreaming that soon, now, a lover he'll meet.  
A groom soon at twenty—my heart gives a leap  
remembering, the vows that I promised to keep.

At twenty-five, now I have young of my own  
who need me to guide—and a secure happy home.

A man of thirty—my young now grown fast,  
Bound to each other with ties that should last.  
At forty, my young sons have grown and are gone,  
But my woman's beside me to see I don't mourn.  
At fifty, once more, babies play 'round my knee,  
Again, we know children, my loved one and me.

Dark days are upon me—my wife is now dead.  
I look at the future—I shudder with dread.  
For my young are all rearing young of their own,  
And I think of the years and the love that I've known.

I'm now an old man and nature is cruel  
'tis jest to make old age look like a fool.  
The body, it crumbles, grace and vigour depart.  
There is now a stone where I once had a heart.  
But inside this old carcass, a young guy still dwells,  
And now and again my battered heart swells.  
I remember the joys—I remember the pain.  
And I'm loving and living life over again.

I think of the years, all too few, gone too fast  
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.  
So open your eyes, people—open and see  
Not a crabby old man. Look closer—see me!

(Remember this poem when you next meet an older person whom you might brush aside without looking at the young soul within—we will all, one day, be there too!)



## MY STORY — Bruce Whittet

I was born in 1943 into a happy but disjointed family. My mother and father divorced after he came back from the war. My father was in the army in New Guinea during WW 2 but I don't remember too much about John Neville Whittet but did try to befriend him just before I got married and had some success in doing so. I do have an older brother (by 17 months), Geoffrey.

My mum remarried when I was 9 years old to my stepfather, Bert Cheshire. He was a Gallipoli veteran and proved to be a wonderful husband to mum and a dad to Geoffrey and myself. My younger sister, Jan, was born when I was 10.

I grew up in the Waverley area and we were within walking distance of Bronte beach. I remember my childhood as a joyous experience as I spent a lot of time at the beach.

My schooling was at St Charles School, Waverley and then secondary school at Waverley College—both were run by the Christian Brothers and whose discipline was well known at the time.

They had a strong influence in my upbringing and instilled many life-long values. I was not the scholastic type but three things were compulsory at Waverley, viz: devotion to "Our Mother, Mary", Rugby and School Cadets. To some of us, this was all that seem to matter to our fearless "Brothers"!

I enjoyed my time in the 4th Waverley Scouts and trying to play rugby for the school.

So, I was introduced to "service life" at the tender age of 14 whilst at Waverley College and thoroughly enjoyed my cadet experience where I achieved the rank of L/Cpl, mainly in the band as a snare drummer.

I remember an experience, as a cadet, when we were at Singleton Army Base, on the range, we were attempting to watch an old movie in an old tin shed (a Grace Kelly movie called "To Catch a Thief"), but the "boys" outside who could not get in, kept throwing rocks on the roof and the noise was deafening.

Naturally, we were sitting on the ground with our greatcoats wrapped around us and the officers were sitting up the back in "director's chairs"—I knew from that moment that Officers had a "gifted life"—how wrong one can be!

My formal schooling finished in 1960 and my first job was as a bank clerk for the "Bank of New South Wales". Initially at the Epping and Beecroft branches and then in the Sydney office in George Street, at the foot of Martin Place.

I knew the bank was not "my thing" but I made the most of it until I decided to leave home and join the navy in 1965 I had always been influenced in my early years by my schools and my two maternal uncles—they were in the navy during WW 2—one was a Petty Officer Torpedo Instructor and the other was a Petty Officer Physical Training Instructor, plus a neighbour whom I knew as "Uncle Bungy" Williamson. He was a Master-at-Arms at HMAS Kuttabul. I used to admire "Uncle Bungy" as a young boy. I found out many years later that he was a "feared" disciplinarian throughout the navy and his nickname was "The Black Prince"!

I somehow always had a yearning to join the navy but mum had refused to let me join thinking that navy life would be detrimental to my future life after being surrounded by sailors during, and since, the second World War.

During my days with the bank I served with the Naval Reserve at HMAS Rushcutter. This experience had given me an insight to basically do what I think I always wanted.

It was at the bank that I met my "future wife" Margaret Tregea.

### MY NAVY LIFE:

I enlisted in the Navy, in October 1965, and was sent to HMAS Cerberus in Cribb Point, Victoria for my recruit training.

Three months later I was "posted" to HMAS Sydney as all new male general entry recruits had to go to sea for 6 months common sea training before commencing Branch training.

Whilst on HMAS Sydney we conveyed Battalions to and from Vung Tau together with heavy vehicles and equipment.

Discipline on the ship was tough and left lasting impressions on most of us. "Billy Bud" discipline was very much alive and if you wavered from the norm you were treated with disdain and disciplined accordingly.

After HMAS Sydney saw me back at "Cerberus" and training for 12 months as a "Sick Berth Attendant", which was a lengthy medical training course compared to Army or Air Force, before a posting to the RAN Apprentice Training Establishment at HMAS Nirimba.

I was here for two years and saw the best apprentice training the navy could give.

I consider it was the best and most comprehensive apprentice training in Australia, at the time (1967 to '69).

Whilst serving at "Nirimba" I married Margaret in 1969. We moved in to her parent's home in Lane Cove in the February because Margaret's dad passed away the previous month and Margaret wanted to care for her mum.

Our first son, Andrew, was born whilst we lived there in 1971. Some readers may remember Andrew when he was in the ARA serving as a Corporal Medical Clerk at 1 Field Hospital followed by a posting to HQ Med Services at Victoria Barracks in the 1980's and early 1990's. He was known in those days as "Radar". He is now married to Val and living in Tamworth where he runs the program at "the Billabong Clubhouse" assisting people with mental illness.

I received my first promotion to Leading Seaman in 1969 and was posted, to sea, on board HMAS Supply—the fleet oiler.

I was on my own in the Sick Bay, except for a few short periods of time when a Reserve Medical Officer joined the ship. I was basically responsible to the Captain and the Fleet Medical Officer for the general health, follow-up treatments, inoculations and fitness (mostly without a Medical Officer) of the Ship's Company (about 70 personnel).

During this time Margaret lived at home in Lane Cove and continued working in the city at, was then, "Wales House" as a supervisor in the bank's cheque and deposit clearing house on what was called "Fabacus"—the first bank computer system in Australia, it occupied a whole floor of the old building on the corner of Pitt, Hunter and O'Connell streets.

The "Supply" was engaged in replenishing war ships at sea. There were daily "Sick Parades" and all the above mentioned "medical tasks" and necessary paperwork! I had to report daily to the Captain, whether at sea or in harbour, the "Sick List" and any other health matters of concern.





In 1970, I was posted to the RAN Hospital within HMAS Penguin to commence Pathology Assistant Training.

This training was mainly "hands on" but also consisted of 6 months at the military hospital at Yeronga in Brisbane, where technicians were trained and prepared to be sent to South Vietnam for pathology "in the field" especially cross matching of blood for transfusions.

It appeared that most of these fellows were National Servicemen with a Science (or similar) Degree, who rapidly absorbed the training and techniques.

This Army Path training was followed by 6 months at Hornsby Hospital working in an "all female" lab. where the Chief Technologist didn't like men near her "girls"—especially sailors.

Thank goodness for two wonderful pathologists, Doctors Bob Elvy and Bevan Coombs who took me "under their wings".

I then worked in, and then ran the laboratory at the hospital at HMAS Penguin, followed by 12 months posting to HMAS Stalwart during 1972.

The "Stalwart" was a Fleet Maintenance ship, with a "Sick Bay" compliment of an M.O., a CPOMED, a POMED, and 4 ABMED sailors. Amongst the latter 6 there was a Pathology and an X-Ray Technician plus an Operating Room Assistant, as "Stalwart" provided 2nd level and some limited 3rd level Health Support to the Fleet.

My experience on "Stalwart" was so interesting. I provided Pathology support and ran the medical stores.

We were deployed for 3 months in the Far East which found me in an "interesting" and speculative position—however, all diagnoses, treatments and follow-up procedures, especially those of a personal nature, were cleared and signed for by the M.O.

In 1972 I was promoted to Petty Officer Medical (Laboratory) and returned to HMAS Penguin and the hospital.

I was busy with doing other POMED jobs and some CPOMED duties in preparation to being "Commissioned".

I was "on call" to the laboratory with many "after hours" and night time "call ins" to run urgently required tests.

Our second child, Melissa, was born in 1973. She is now a happily married mum with 3 children of her own—Meg, aged 11, Jamie 7 and Liam 1—and manages to work part-time at Hornsby Hospital as a Clinical Nurse Educator.

On Boxing Day, 1974, I was requested to join HMAS Melbourne, by the then Surgeon Commander, Geoffrey Bayliss (later to be the DGNHS in the rank of Surgeon Rear Admiral). I was given 3 hours notice, prior to sailing for Darwin in the wake of CYCLONE TRACY.

At that time we lived in our first home, a unit at West Ryde and packing my steaming kit and getting to Garden Island from there on Boxing Day was not easy. I flew home from Darwin 3 weeks later to pack up and move my young family to Victoria to take up my first commissioned appointment at the hospital at HMAS Cerberus as the AO.

So, in January 1975, following the Darwin experience, I joined HMAS Cerberus in the rank of Wardmaster Sub Lieutenant. I spent two very instructive and fruitful years here before my next posting.

Our 3rd child and second son, Matthew, was born in Hastings Bush Nursing Hospital whilst we lived in Hastings whilst at HMAS Cerberus in 1976. After finishing his High School Certificate, Matt was accepted into NIDA in 1994 and has had some great acting roles since then, including parts in

both Baz Luhrman's "Moulin Rouge" (as the composer and Parisian bohemian, Eric Sati) and "Australia" (as Brother Frank). Matt was also one of the six "young" men in the ABC Production "Changi" (in the role of Tom). He is married to Natalie and they have a 3 year old son, Jasper.

In January 1977, I was posted to Nowra to the Fleet Air Arm Base at HMAS Albatross as the Medical Admin. Officer and stayed here until January 1980.

Margaret and the children moved with me from Hastings in Victoria to HMAS Albatross in Nowra in NSW and when we arrived there it was straight after the huge hanger fire, and security like I have never seen before or since then was in place.

Work at "Albatross" was hectic, whilst the social life both inside the base and in Nowra itself was very fulfilling. The South Coast of New South Wales is a beautiful place to spend time in raising a young family.

During the next six years I had varied postings:-

HMAS Penguin and HMAS Kuttabul and an "out posting" to 232 Supply Company at Randwick. This was as the first uniformed RAN Liaison Officer within the Medical and Dental Supply Company run by the Army.

I worked with (the late) Major Alec Grant, a Pharmacy Officer commanding the Supply Company.

*(It was also my first contact with the army since my cadet days at school, apart from the 6 months spent at 1 Mil Hospital with the pathology training.)*

Also included was Naval Support Command as SO2 to the Command Medical Officer (who was also the Medical Officer-in-Charge of the RAN hospital)—there was a "brief" posting to Gladstone to run the "Blue Force" Forward Support Base during "Exercise Kangaroo" in 1981.

Finally, it was back to the hospital at HMAS Penguin as the AO with a promotion to Lieutenant Commander.

During the later part of my naval service I completed an Associate Diploma in Health Administration, by correspondence, with the then, Mitchell College of Advanced Education in Bathurst, now part of the Charles Sturt University.

Then, after 21 years in the RAN, I was transferred from Full Time Service to the Inactive Reserve List of Officers.

I then found there was life after the navy. I was the Chief Clerk and Deputy CEO at the Sacred Heart Hospice and then CEO of the Masonic Youth Welfare Fund. This "Fund" assisted "needy children" and I stayed in this most fulfilling position for the next 19 years, until my retirement in 2008.

Whilst enjoying my civilian job I still yearned to keep active, in some way, in the services. Unfortunately, there was no position I could fill (part time) in the navy as a Reserve Administration Officer, so....

## MY ARMY LIFE:

I "approached" the DMS 2MD, Colonel David Rossi (later Surgeon General Dept. of Defence, in the rank of Major General) to find out what was entailed in Army Health Services and he suggested I talk to his Reserve counterpart, (the late) Colonel John Von Willer and his deputy, (the late) Lt Col Mike Arlington.

What a great introduction to meet these fine gentlemen (and doctors), they befriended me as though we had known each other for years. (When they passed away I lost two very good friends. They lived respected and died regretted.) They "welcomed" me into the Army Reserve.



My first posting was to 1 Field Ambulance as the Quartermaster. I accepted the lower rank of Captain and, in a way, this was a wonderful learning curve which also afforded me time to spend with the Other Ranks. The unit welcomed me warmly.

My perception of the job was not as I had anticipated. I mean, I had 21 years in the navy and hadn't realised how "limited" I had become in my service outlook. 1 Field Ambulance opened my eyes to some of the way the army did things and I will be forever grateful to Andrew Paterson, Suresh Badami, Ted Kramer, Steve Kay, Ben Morris, our RSM Marion Bowen and others. These Officers assisted me in so many ways with their forbearance, instruction and understanding back in 1989.

I was afforded the opportunity to "get into the bush" with the Diggers, as a Platoon Commander, to learn how things were done, "be one of the boys" and not be involved in command and control responsibilities at an Operations level until I appreciated these responsibilities.

I also learnt from the Army Cadre Staff how things happen "officially" and "unofficially", especially when it came to QM Store and Transport Company management.

Ben Morris's expectations of my ability to run an "Ops tent" was a bit awry as it must have been thought that operations in the navy were the same, or similar, to those in the army—how wrong! Believe me, there is very little parallel between Navy and Army.

I finally convinced Ben to recommend me to the CO to send me on a JOAC (*Junior Officers Administration Course*) course at Ingleburn and an ROBC (*Regimental Officers Basic Course*) course at Portsea.

This did wonders, for my "learning curve" increased dramatically, overnight! I think I became an efficient Major after a ROAC (*Regimental Officers Advanced Course*) back at Portsea and I finally knew what this thing called SMEAC (*Situation, Mission, Execution, Admin, Command, Control and Comms*) meant and became fully conversant with it.

One of the most stimulating camps I was fortunate to attend with 1 Field Ambulance was "Exercise Silent Shadow" in 1990, in Coonabarabran and Baradine.

Setting up the Field Ambulance in the BMA on the outskirts of the township went off without a hitch and we were in a tactical state at the Exercise Commander's direction.

Half way through the first week we had to change our tactical state when Lt Col Paterson decided to turn on the lights and ambulance sirens to pick up and treat a lot of "no duffs" (*actual casualties*) all of whom were suffering from exposure—having got wet and then extremely cold in the mountain ranges adjacent to the Siding Springs Observatory.

We did not have a Pharmacist with us at the time, so I was very grateful for some dispensing skills I had learnt many years ago as a Sick Berth Attendant in the Navy, and as drugs were needed very urgently and all Medical and Nursing Officers in the unit were otherwise occupied around the clock.

I remember a very funny incident occurred early one morning around 4am. I relieved a young female member of the unit who was stationed "on the gun" at the unit's strong point.

The other member of the unit who was on guard "on the gun" was an unnamed corporal.

I was on guard with him for about an hour or so and he must have been unaware that I had relieved his companion.

I felt the nape of my neck being gently caressed! I asked him to desist as I was not that way inclined and, naturally, he was very embarrassed and had great difficulty in facing me for some time. I told him to forget the incident and put it behind him and next time to concentrate on performing his duty. He did so.

*(This is the first time this incident has been told.)*

During this time Ben came to live with us from Centrecare, at age 7. Margaret and I eventually adopted him as a son.

I subsequently transferred to 5 Field Ambulance as OC Admin. and although uneventful was most enjoyable. My CO was Lt Col Suresh Badami.

Before I knew it we "lost" our identity overnight. We became a Medical Company of 5 BASB (which is now 5 CSSB—*Combat Service Support Battalion*).

I joined the Battalion Ops Cell as Assistant Ops and another very steep learning curve teaching my Transport, Electrical and Mechanical Engineer and Supply counterparts all about CASEVACS and learning from them about Troop lifts, EME fixes and Supply in the "field".

It was a great time, interspersed with TEWT's and Battalion Training camps, including lots of support to units within 5 Brigade and support to Cadet camps.

Whilst at 5 BASB I had the pleasant duty to officially welcome the new OC to the Health Company, Andrew Ellis.

I incorrectly introduced Andrew as "Doctor Ellis" and he politely corrected me...*"Please use my correct rank and name when addressing me, Major Whittet."* I then asked Andrew if he was related to Jim Ellis, whom I knew as the Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon to the Navy—he replied...*"Yes, and dad said to say hullo to you, Lieutenant Commander Whittet."*

I was amazed that Andrew had remembered me from when he was a young doctor assisting his father at the RAN hospital all those many years ago.

Andrew and I became good friends and I have him to thank for, for giving me two good knees.

Since writing "my story", Andrew's dad, Jim, passed away only recently (in June). He died in hospital surrounded by his family, after a cancer struck him rather suddenly. I have lost another good friend.

He was truly a gentle person, a wonderful person and a great man.

Then the time came when I reluctantly "hung up my boots, slouch hat and rifle" in August 1998—on my 55th Birthday.

Holidays over the years have been few, as a family.

Work and Service life has been paramount but now that I am fully retired I look forward to spending time in helping out at St Vincent de Paul, singing in our Manly Parish Choir, collecting stamps and swimming competitively (*you can take the sailor out of the sea but you can't take the sea out of the sailor*).

I hope to be spending lots more time with our children in Sydney and Tamworth. I will be forever grateful to my darling wife, Margaret, for her wonderful support and patience over the years.

There have been many characters and life experiences along the way. Many fun and fabulous people I have come across, especially in the Army Reserve where we all experienced "like minds and like hearts", regardless of rank and file, lots of happenings some of which I will, undoubtedly, recall when I read this again.





# **ACTIVITY SHEET** (for 2'09)

(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** (*See my details below*).
- ☐ I **\*will/\*will not** be attending our **ANNUAL “MIXED” REUNION on Saturday, 14th November. I will be accompanied by \_\_\_\_ wife/partner/friend/s @ \$35 each (\$30 if non-alcohol drinker. \*Please indicate your intention (below) and RSVP BY 10 November.**
- ☐ Please allot me \_\_\_\_ **Raffle Tickets @ \$1 each.** (*See my details below*).
- ☐ Please send me \_\_\_\_ **RAAMC Centenary “Coin and Token” set/s @ \$25 each.**
- ☐ Please send me \_\_\_\_ **RAAMC Centenary (Stamped) Envelopes (1903-2003) @ \$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 and whether Badges/Ties are to be RAAMC or RAASC/RAEME.
- ☐ Please order me a copy of **Sir Keith Jones’s book.**  
“One Man’s Story” an autobiography (\$25)
- ☐ Please loan/order me **“Military of the Hunter—1855-2005”. I will return it when read.**
- ☐ Please **ORDER** me a copy of the above @ **\$45** (includes postage).

(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. EFT is not possible, as yet, due to NEW banking arrangements.

**COMMENTS/ORDERS ETC: FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT No:** \_\_\_\_\_ **MONEY ENCLOSED \$** \_\_\_\_\_

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“ SEMPER PARATUS “  
**5 FIELD AMBULANCE RAAMC 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><u>Preferred Title:</u></b> Mr./ Mrs./ M/s. Dr. Etc.		<b><u>Month of Birth:</u></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>Service/PMkeys Number (if applicable)</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><u>Contact Details:</u></b> <b><u>Telephone</u></b> (H) _____ (W) _____		
<b><u>FAX:</u></b> _____ <b><u>EMAIL:</u></b> _____		
<b><u>MOBILE:</u></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. EFT not available as yet—in process of “updating” our account.

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





**SWAPP Select** provides a range of employment enabling initiatives to assist Defence partners seeking work.

For further information go to our website at <http://www.defence.gov.au/dco>



# SWAPP Select

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**Childcare** (max \$250 per child)  
**Remote Internet Access** (max \$30)  
**Personalised Resume Preparation** (max \$500)  
**Training directly linked to an employment offer** (max \$2,500)  
**Professional Employment Assistance** (max \$2,500) / **Training** (max \$2,500)  
**Professional Re-registration Expense Payments (PREP)**

## Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme

Home & Contents insurance for Veterans (their widows or widowers) or ADF personnel who are:

- Entitled to use a DSH loan (whether used or not),
- Entitled to benefits under the *Veterans Entitlement Act 1986* (including AASM qualifying service), or
- Using the Defence Housing Assistance Act loan.

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