

CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009



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### Who is it for?

The Scheme is for current, past and Reserve ADF members of all ranks, who meet the entry requirements specified by each participating university for the undergraduate or post graduate qualifications on offer.

### Which universities are involved?

Currently we have 25 universities that offer pathways with agreed levels of advanced standing toward a number of their awards. 15 of these universities provide pathways for undergraduate studies \*, (eight on line at time of printing \*\*) while all 25 universities offer post graduate pathways.

The amount of advanced standing given does vary from university to university, and from award to award.

### Participating universities are:

- Australian Catholic University \*\*
- Australian National University
- Charles Darwin University
- Charles Sturt University \*\*
- CQ University \*
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- (inc Australian Maritime College)
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- University of Western Sydney \*
- University of Wollongong
- Victoria University \*\*

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# Message from the President

Welcome to the Summer/Christmas 2009 edition of 5 Field Ambulance RAAMC Association Quarterly Magazine.

The Battle for Australia Day commemoration was held on Wednesday September 2nd at the Cenotaph in Martin Place. Our Association was well represented with 9 members and Banner. Our Banner provided a fine backdrop for a lengthy photo shoot involving members and including the visiting distinguished Fuzzi Wuzzi Angels. We followed this ceremony with a visit to the United Services Club in Barrack Street for refreshments.

Four members attended the unveiling of the 7th Division Memorial Wall at Bass Hill on October 22nd. Those present were Derek Cannon, Alan Curry, Steve Baldick and Eileen Henderson. 5 Field Ambulance Association donated a plaque to the wall on behalf of the Second World War Victorian raised 2/5th Field Ambulance who we have close links.

Members retired to the Chester Hill RSL for a fine lunch and refreshments.

Alan Curry will parade our Standard at the Reserve Forces Day 2010 launch on December 5th at Shore School at 1000 hrs. This is a very well organized function and I invite you to join Alan and me on this day. Dress is Lounge Suit with decorations and medals.

Our Annual Reunion was successfully held at the Berkley Hotel, Chippendale on Saturday 14th November. 21 members were in attendance and the lunch was a great success. Of special mention was the attendance of our Association mentor Major John DeWitt kindly accompanied by his daughter Jennifer

Weir. Also Major John Layhe a new member and past RSM of 1 General Hospital and later commissioned and served on the HQ of Commander Second Division Medical Services. We thank Noel Tame for tracing Major Layhe. During proceedings' our Hon. Secretary introduced members to the New Corps Tie. I recommend all members to purchase this item so we can all wear the same tie at future parades.

I attended the October meeting of the RAAMC Association (NSW) at Victoria Barracks. Major John Straskye advised the meeting that RAAMC Corps Conference for 2010 is being considered for Randwick (NSW) over a weekend Friday, Saturday and Sunday possibly in early July, with the Saturday to include Reservists. Although not confirmed it is proposed the weekend will be sponsored by Business "Medical Companies". It is also proposed that the Sunday will take the form of the old "Corps Day".

The next meeting of the RAAMC Association (NSW) is scheduled for Friday 4th December 2009 at 1030 hrs. 5 Field Ambulance Association members are encouraged to attend.

Edna and I would like to wish all our members and their families and in particular our increasing number of sick members, a peaceful festive season and a prosperous healthier 2010

**Derek Cannon**  
**President**



*Derek Cannon*



*Derek Cannon and Steve Baldick at the 7th Division Ceremony*







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# VALE

## Doug Cummings and Estelle Lindsay

**Douglas CUMMINGS** passed away on the 12 August 2009. He had been a member of our Association for a few years, thanks to our good friend James Roche.

I was not able to attend Doug's funeral and I thank David Cavanaugh and Frank Laing for representing our Association. David and Frank were also good friends of Doug.

I was hoping to obtain Doug's eulogy from another good friend and neighbour—Ray Barham, but unfortunately it had not arrived in time for our newsletter "cut-off date".

I was able to find out that Doug was born on the 5th of October 1926. He enlisted in the RAF during WW 2 and his Service Number was 167915. I don't have any details of his RAF service.

Later, Doug enlisted in the army in the CMF on the 21st February 1967. His number was 257095 and he served until 4th October 1981.

Doug was commissioned on the 22nd August 1968, he then promoted to Captain on the 14th October 1971 and later promoted to Major on the 14th March 1975.

Doug served in the following units;

- \* Eastern Command Office Training Group.
- \* 8 Supply and transport Column.
- \* 5 Field Ambulance.
- \* HQ 2 Div.
- \* 1 Gen Hosp 2MD.
- \* 1 Field Ambulance (Willoughby).

Doug is survived by his two daughters, Barbara and Margaret and their families.

If any of our members, who knew Doug, would like me write more information on him, I would be most pleased to do so.

**Estelle LINDSAY** was a well respected Associate Member. She joined our Association after seeing one of our adverts in one of the major newspapers. Her late husband was in WW 2 and an uncle was killed in France in WW 1.

Estelle was a very kind contributor of various articles for our magazine and she always wrote to me saying how grateful and thankful she was at having made contact with us and later becoming a Life Member.

Her son, Bryan, lived with her and looked after her. About two weeks ago Estelle was getting out of bed and fell over.

It was unclear whether she had also suffered a stroke, but she had broken her ankle as well, which was discovered by the ambulance paramedics prior to being taken to hospital.

The surgeons "pinned" her ankle but informed Bryan that it was unlikely she would be able to walk and her condition had deteriorated also.

Estelle drifted in and out of consciousness but could not converse. She gradually faded away and died peacefully at about 5pm on the 5th December.

Estelle was a lovely, thoughtful lady who loved her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was in her 98th year and lived almost all her life in her home at Epping (NSW). I will miss her and her stories. (I hope to attend her funeral.)

**LEST WE FORGET**

### *Sincere Sympathy*

Our sincere sympathies are conveyed to our member, Dr Ken Doust, on the recent loss of his wife, Kath.

Kath was involved in a tragic accident on their farm at Narooma (on the south coast of NSW) on the 5th September and she did not survive.

It was, sadly, Ken and Kath's 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Kath is also survived by their six loving children, Jennifer, Allison, Ian, Penny, Amanda and Kate.

I was alerted to the sad facts by our member, John Roche, after which I was able to speak to Amanda at her dad's Practice.

We pray, Ken, that when you read this short message, as will the rest of our readers, you are in the loving care and comfort of your family and that we will all be thinking of you and your family at this very sad time.



### 2010 "Fund-Raiser"

The raffle tickets will be \$1 each and the winner will be drawn at our 2010 Annual "Mixed" Reunion lunch late next year (November).

The winner will receive half what we collect. Thank you in advance.






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# From the Hon. Secretary

## Dear Member,

I hope this newsletter finds you in good health and that your Christmas period is a happy and safe one.

If you have a friend who is sick or in health care, try and visit them with a word of cheer or phone them and tell them you are thinking of them.

Our committee wish each of you a happy and healthy Christmas and a prosperous New Year for 2010.

I must apologise to two of our members – Anthony Jordan and Jim Jordan (no relation) – for misspelling their surnames on a number of occasions. It is a bad error to make and one that I try to be conscious of. Hopefully, Anthony and James, I will not do it again.

I thank our publishers and printers for the professional manner in which they present our quarterly magazine to you.

It is because they are able to sell our product to prospective advertisement buyers. You may be able to assist by mentioning or recommending to any of your friends, whether they manage a business or work for a company, the value of advertising in our magazine—as well as possibly enhancing their own business it will certainly help our cause.

I put an article in our “*Items of Interest*” regarding our troops on overseas missions.

If any of them happen to read this issue, we wish each and every one of you a happy and safe Christmas until you are safe back home with your loved ones.

If any of our members have a relative or a friend in the ADF and overseas during this period—pass on our good wishes to them.

Sadly, at this time, our thoughts go out to the surviving family members of the recent tragedies that occurred in the wakes of the typhoon which struck the Philippines and Vietnam, and then the tsunami that hit the Samoan Islands and later, the two earthquakes that struck Padang in Sumatra—all this in the space of a few days in late September and early October.

We are grateful and thankful that our Government is sending urgent assistance to these stricken areas by way of the HMAS Kanimbla and later, HMAS Tobruk and HMAS Success plus Hercules C-130 aircraft to Samoa with medical supplies and relief packages. I have mentioned a bit more in “*Items of Interest*”.

Please note our NEW banking details (as printed on our Application Form and our Activity Sheet—both at the end page of our newsletter).

Ruth and I have sold our home at Lemon Tree Passage!  
(Continued on page 9)



## Happy Birthday

**OCTOBER:** John and Margaret GORRELL.

**NOVEMBER:** Roy CROSSLEY, Tony MILLAR, Gordon MILLS and John SMITH.

**DECEMBER:** Steve BALDICK, Fred BELL, George DONNELLY, Maureen LIVINGSTON, CHRIS O'REILLY, Heather PERIGO, Mick ROWLEY and Peter SULLIVAN.

**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 new member, Robert Bailey, for September.)**



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## From the Hon. Secretary...

We moved in here (from Ryde) on ANZAC Day, 1992 and our departure date will be REMEMBRANCE Day (11/11 at noon) 2009! We will be leaving a wonderful group of neighbours who have become very firm friends—and will always remain so.

We have reached that stage of our life where we needed to “down-size” and also our home had become too big for us to keep maintaining.

I can't believe how much “junk” we have again accumulated (again) in those 17 years—we must have forgotten the lesson when we left Ryde after 32 years!

As of writing this, we had to have our son's (Stephen) dog “Meg” put to sleep.

We had been looking after her since January this year because Steve was working away in the Gulf of Carpentaria and could not subject her to all the upheavals of moving from place to place.

“Meg” was a fairly big “bitza” dog but the “pound” classified her (when she recently went “walk-a-bout” from our younger son's (Gregory) home in Salamander Bay) as a bearded collie.

She was almost 18 years old, deaf as a post, did not bark or even growl in her old age and she was as gentle as a little puppy. She had arthritis and her eyesight was failing and toward the end was so restless, but as old and sore as she was she never shed her coat or got “mangy” as you might see in some other old dogs.

Our niece, Susan, is a vet nurse and I took “Meg” to her (21st October) at their clinic. I am crying now as I write this, what a very sad affair to be with “Meg” as she gently “went to sleep”. Stephen thanked us for looking after and nursing her.

Well, as of this issue, we have not bought another home but we are very happy living in our van in this tranquil caravan park in Salamander Bay, until we find our second last “resting place”!!!

Our new “temporary address” is P.O.Box 523, SALAMANDER BAY NSW 2317.

I spoke above about REMEMBRANCE DAY (11/11 at 11am). I again had the honour of giving the “CITATION” at our local Sub Branch Ceremony. It was a very hot morning but there were about 80 members and guests and Williamtown RAAF Base supplied a Catafalque Party and a Bugler. Our Women's Auxiliary

prepared the sandwiches and tea/coffee afterwards. It is a very solemn service.

I thank our fellow member, Laurie Farrugia, for emailing this very poignant message....

*“I crouched in a shallow trench on that hell of an exposed beach...steeply rising foothills bare of cover...a landscape pockmarked with war's inevitable litter, piles of stores, equipment,...ammunition...and the weird contortions of death sculptured in Australian flesh...I saw the going down of the sun on that first ANZAC day...the chaotic maelstrom of Australia's blooding. I fought in the frozen mud of the Somme...in a blazing destroyer exploding on the North Sea...I fought on the perimeter of Tobruk...crashed in a flaming wreckage of a Fighter in New Guinea...lived with the damned in that place cursed with the name Changi.*

*I was your mate...the kid across the street...the med student at graduation...the mechanic in the corner garage...the baker who brought you bread...the gardener who cut your lawn...the clerk who sent your phone bill. I was an Army private...a Naval Commander...an Air Force Bombardier.*

*No man knows me...no name marks my tomb; for I am an Australian Serviceman...I am the Unknown Soldier. I died for a cause I held just, in the service of my land, that you and yours may say in freedom...“I am proud to be an Australian.”*



Alan Curry  
Hon. Secretary



Our Motto “ALWAYS READY” (SEMPER PARATUS)  
Courtesy--Major Eileen Henderson.



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# BATTLE for AUSTRALIA COMMEMORATION DAY

## (Summary)

Another beautiful Spring morning greeted everyone present. It was a pleasure to arrive at Martin Place early and help the BFA Committee set up the seating arrangements and place the "Reserved" stickers on the particular seats.

I was a little "upset" prior to the start of the Ceremony.

As I was assisting to set up chairs etc, a "person" was yelling out... *"Why are you all glorifying war... get over it... etc, etc"*.

He was obviously "some tomato slices short of a salad sandwich" but I thought how sad it was to hear him screaming his remarks out.

I suppose there are a lot of sane people who might think the same thing—but I wonder what they would do if, in the future, our country came under attack, from an enemy?

Our good member, David Cooper, is the main organiser of the event and was also the very competent MC of the proceedings. He and his helpers are a credit to the smooth running of the Commemoration. Another pleasing feature is seeing the participation of more and more school children.

We had our banner present, and others I noticed were 30 Beaufighter Squadron, 18 Infantry Bn, Liberator Squadron, RAA Coast Battery, HMAS Hobart and HMAS Perth.

For the first time, the BFA Committee had set up a covered marquee to seat approx 60 or so viewers, to be able to sit through about 20 minutes of interviews and some pictorial history of WW 2 in Australia.

*(Continued on page 13)*



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It was FREE and open to the public from about 9.30am to 4pm.

The National Servicemen's Association were especially thanked for "manning" the tent all day. What a great idea this was.

The service started right on time at 11am with a spectacular "flyover" of an FA18 Fighter (straight down Martin Place) from Williamtown RAAF Base.

The Catafalque Party was mounted and a Royal Salute was given for our State Governor, Marie Bashir AC CVO.

The Address of Welcome was given by the Chairman of the BFA Commemoration Committee (NSW) Inc., Mr. David Price AM.

A highlight of his "Address" was the presentation of Service Medals to the "Fuzzy Wuzzy" Angels.

They received a very generous applause and were ably "looked after" by our good member, John Phillips OAM.

The BFA Address was given by Air Commodore G.G. Michael AO OBE AFC.

He gave a very succinct history of our fight for survival, especially during 1942 and 1943.

It is absorbing to listen to what happened throughout this dreadful time and one we must never forget.

The hymns and the Ode were conducted by various High Schools and were a credit to their teachers.

At the end of the Commemoration John Phillips escorted the two "Fuzzy Wuzzy" Angels, Mr. Benjamin Ijumi and Mr. Frederick Soka, to our Banner where we took some photos of the group.

Our Association thanks the following members for their attendance;

*Steve Baldick, Robert Boyter, Derek Cannon, John Charter, Barry Collins, David Cooper, Alan Curry, John Gallagher, Eileen Henderson, Kevin Hurrell, Bill Molloy, John Phillips and Brian Tams. (My sincere apologies if I have omitted your name.)*

After the Commemoration some of us met at the Services Club in Barrack Street for a drink and a bite to eat. A very memorable and pleasant couple of hours.



# RF DAY "LAUNCH"

*(Summary of Saturday 5th December)*

An overcast, humid morning saw the 2010 official "Launch" of Reserve Forces Day.

It was again held at the Shore School in North Sydney and commenced about 10.30am.

It involved many Associations' Standards being "Marched On" and paraded in two ranks facing about 100 spectators and dignitaries.

The purpose of the "Launch" was to give recognition, by way of a "Ribbon", to the recipients of a Government (Australian) Medal for any service that was served overseas, as a reservist.

The main dignitaries were Mr. Roger Price MP (representing the Government) and Major General Craig Williams AM, Commanding Officer of 2 Division.

They were accorded a Royal Salute and inspected the Standards.

When this was concluded, all the Ribbon recipients (about 40) were marched on in single file, facing the guests, and introduced individually whilst Mr Roger Price pinned their ribbon to their lapel.

Following Mr Price was the MAJ GEN Williams and Keith Payne VC. They shook each person's hand and each spoke quietly to every single recipient.

It was wonderful, simple ceremony and was enjoyed by all.

After the Standards were "Marched Off" to a rest area, the guests were then ushered into the School Hall where they were all seated.



*5 Field Ambulance Association Members.*

*Front Row L-R: David Cooper OAM, Ray Hyslop OAM (Association's Patron) and Alan Curry  
Back Row L-R: Kevin Hurrell, Derek Cannon (Association's President) and John Overton OAM  
Absent: John Phillips OAM*







They then watched a short video, before all the Standards were then marched up onto the stage and placed in "holders". The Standard Bearers marched off the stage and took their place in the hall.

Two recipients were introduced and told their "story" to the delight of all the guests.

The ceremony concluded about 11.30am where everyone mingled and had tea/coffee and biscuits

before heading for home.

Our Association sincerely thanks the following members for being in attendance;

Our President, Derek Cannon, David Cooper OAM (he was also responsible for assisting to "look after" the "Ribbon" recipients), Alan Curry (carried our Standard), Kevin Hurrell, John Overton OAM and John Phillips OAM.

## RAAMC car "bumper sticker" available for sale

**\$2.50** each (includes postage)



# RAAMC







## Annual "Mixed" Reunion Summary

It was a lovely afternoon at our venue, the Berkeley Hotel, in Redfern.

21 Members and wives and friends all met about noon for some pre lunch food and drink before being seated in the Dining Room.

It was very pleasing to see all the ladies "mixing in" because it can be awkward when meeting new faces for the first time.

Jennifer Weir (John de Witt's daughter), offered Grace and afterwards I gave the LOYAL TOAST before introducing our President.

The lunch was most convivial and animated. There were no "special" seating arrangements, and it was a very pleasant atmosphere.

Our President, Derek Cannon, thanked everyone for coming along and making it a good afternoon. He especially thanked two new members for attending viz; Bill Thompson, an ex RSM, and his wife Denise, and John Layhe.

After he read the "Apologies" he brought everyone up to date with all the happenings throughout the year, which included the forthcoming presentation of our Australian Light Horse "Tapestry", to the War Memorial in Hyde Park (an article was written about this in our 2'09 magazine), also

the forthcoming RFD "Launch" at the Shore School in North Sydney, on the 5th December and a "Menin Road" Dinner, also to be held on the same evening by 5 CSSB at their unit in Banksmeadow.

Derek passed around some photos of the 7th Division "Plaque" Ceremony held at Bass Hill on the 22nd October, a photo of the Light Horse Tapestry and short history and another photo of a well-dressed President "sporting" the new RAAMC Tie.

Some orders were taken for the new RAAMC Corps tie.

Our Committee sincerely thank the following members and wives and friends for making our lunch a success;

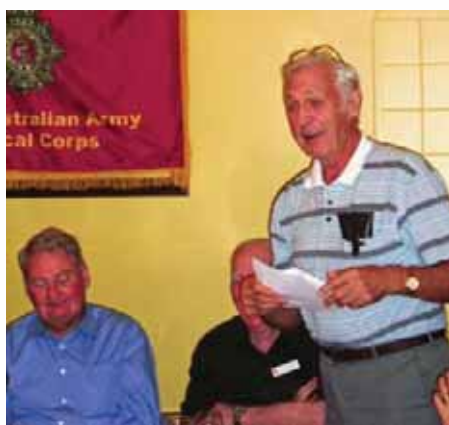
Steve BALDICK, Fred and Margaret BELL, Derek and Edna CANNON, Alan and Ruth CURRY, John de WITT, Nelson and Margaret FIORENTINO, Kevin HURRELL, John LAYHE, Bill and Kerry RYLANDS, Rob STEWART, Noel TAME, Brian and Gail TAMS, Bill and Denise THOMPSON and Jennifer WEIR.

"APOLOGIES" were received from;

Warren BARNES, Scotty BOYD, Robert and Helen BOYTER, Lee CASTLE, Barry COLLINS, John DAVIES, Ray HYSLOP, Huss MAHOMET, John PHILLIPS, Bob REID, Jim ROCHE, Diana ROTHFIELD, Mick ROWLEY, Sr. Elizabeth SHEARD and John WEAVER.



*Derek giving his report.*



*President Derek Cannon reading his report.  
Seated from L/R --Bill Thompson and  
Kevin Hurrell*



*Margaret and Fred Bell with Alan Curry*



*L-R Derek Cannon, Bill Thompson,  
John de Witt and Steve Baldick*



*Some of the ladies listening intently to  
Margaret Fiorentino. L-R from bottom of  
screen, Kerry Rylands, Margaret Fiorentino,  
Gail Tams, Edna Cannon, Jennifer Weir,  
Ruth Curry and (obscured) Denise Thompson.*



*Seated from L/R is John de Witt and John  
Layhe. At rear from L/R Alan Curry Bill Rylands  
and Kevin Hurrell*







## 2009 Fund-Raiser Result

Our Committee would like to thank the following members/friends who contributed to our raffle.

We could not get by without your very generous support. Some members just wanted to donate and not go in the raffle and we thank you.

As I wrote earlier, the "Raffle Prize" was to be HALF the money we collected in raffle tickets. We sold 159 tickets and these were put into a plastic bag and drawn by Michael (our publican) at the conclusion of the luncheon.

The winning ticket was "Yellow" B 33 and was held by our ASM, Fred Bell (I suspect Margaret, his wife will be the actual winner!!)—it was worth \$80 and will be placed in Fred/Margaret's Bank.

We thank all the following for buying a raffle ticket or donating, throughout the year.

*Steve BALDICK, Fred BELL, Scotty BOYD, Derek CANNON, Alan CURRY, Theo DECHAUFEPIC, John de WITT, Nelson FIORENTINO, Kevin HURRELL, John LAYHE, Estelle LINDSAY, Gordon MILLS, John PHILLIPS, Jim ROCHE, Bill RYLANDS, Rob STEWART, Noel TAME, Brian TAMS, Bill THOMPSON and Jennifer WEIR.*

(My sincere apologies if I have omitted your name. I have packed all my documents into boxes and they are stored until we find a home/unit etc that we like—hopefully, back in Lemon Tree Passage.)

## SICK PARADE

John A'QUILINA, Neil BARRIE, "Scotty" BOYD, Robert and Helen BOYTER, Derek CANNON, Kevin CARTER, David CAVANAUGH, Brian CHANDLER, Barry COLLINS, John DAVIES, Vic ("Bluey") DAVIS, John de WITT, George DONNELLY, Bert FERGUSON, Nelson FIORENTINO, Ray GRANT, Ray HARRINGTON (*Merrylands Aged Care Centre*), Kevin HURRELL, Neville JOHNSON, Sir Keith JONES, Anthony JORDAN, Ted KRAMER, Bob LEECH, Huss MAHOMET, "Roy" McDONALD, Rayda NOBLE, Charles O'MEALLY, Barry and Heather PERIGO, John PHILLIPS, Alan ROBINSON, Peter ("Tommo") THOMPSON Sr., "Sue" THOMPSON (*Big Sister Hostel, Room 216, 2c Kanimbla Rd., Miranda*), Arthur WALTON, John WEAVER and John WOODHEAD.

## Thank You (From your Committee)

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

Thank you, also, for giving your "unwanted Magazine" to your local doctors/hospital waiting rooms/Nursing Home/local chemist /etc "Reading Rooms" for their enjoyment.

....To all the businesses that have paid our publishers to have their advertisement placed in our magazine.

....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**

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, we hope this is not so, but if it is please let me know and your wishes will be respected.



*Whispering Butterflies*

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# 5 CSSB Health Company NEWS

\* Congratulations to two members of the unit – CPL Megan Gale and PTE Nathan Cash. Their names appeared in the November '09 issue of ARMY. They were honoured to receive "The Soldiers' Medallion" for dedicated service in 2009.

\* The Menin Road Dinner was re-instated on the CO's list for one of the yearly Unit celebrations. It was held on Saturday night (5th December) at 7pm for 7.30pm in the Unit's Mess Room.

I, along with our President, Derek Cannon, and our Patron, Ray Hyslop, were sent an invitation to attend, and unfortunately Derek could not make it but Ray and I were treated to some wonderful camaraderie by the CO LTCOL Phillip Moses and his troops.

The night was "neat casual attire" and it was a most relaxed atmosphere. The unit's catering staff did a magnificent job in the selection and presentation of the food and sweets. One of the highlights for us was to hear the way their CO addressed his troops and brought them "up to date" with the latest news that will probably affect the unit in the near future and the next couple of years.

It was pleasing to see a number of his troops receive recognition for their efforts during the past year. When the dinner was completed, all the OR's and the guests were ushered back to the Sgt's Mess whilst all the unit Officers stayed back and helped clean up all the dishes etc.

Ray and I thanked our hosts for the wonderful evening and headed back home about 11pm.

## \* Reserve Rates of Pay for ADF. (Discounted) (Source: ARMY newspaper Nov '09)

NB: Non Discounted is approx. 12% higher.

PTE (Grade 1)	would receive	\$ 90.83 per day	(up to Grade 10 receives \$163.53 per day)
LCPL (Grade 1)	"	\$ 94.70 "	( " " " \$167.40 " )
SGT (Grade 1)	"	\$119.14 "	( " " " \$196.96 " )
WO2 (Grade 1)	"	\$137.87 "	( " " " \$213.48 " )
ALLOWANCE: \$11.72 per day.			

## 2010 Reunion Venue

Is it time we had a change of venue? As informal as it is, the Berkeley Hotel is getting a little "cramped" especially since the dining room was changed.

Some members feel that we should explore the possibilities of another venue.

Two that come to mind are the NSW Rugby League's Club in Phillip Street (it is near to Martin Place Railway Station).

I am a Member of this club, and the Burwood RSL Club (which is close to Burwood Railway Station).

Do any of our attendees (or any other member) have a suggestion re a Luncheon or a Dinner and where at and what date? We normally try for the middle of November only because it is close to Christmas but our committee is open to any suggestions.

### POEM (for us "oldies")

#### *"A row of bottles on my shelf"*



*A row of bottles on my shelf caused me to analyse myself.  
One yellow pill I have to pop, goes to my heart so it won't stop.  
The little white one that I take, goes to my hands so they won't shake.*

*The blue ones that I use a lot, tell me I'm happy when I'm not.  
The purple pill goes to my brain and tells me that I have no pain.  
The capsules tell me not to wheeze, or cough or choke or even sneeze.*

*The red ones—smallest of them all, go to my blood so I won't fall.  
The orange ones, very big and bright, prevent my leg cramps in the night.*

*Such an array of brilliant pills helping to cure all kinds of ills,  
But what I'd really like to know—is what tells each one where to go!*

*(With kind thanks to member, Nelson Fiorentino. Author is unknown)*



# MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS

**Robert STEWART** sent me a post card from Canada. He was in Banff and had a week to go after leaving Lake Louise.

Rob said he thoroughly enjoyed the sights of Toronto, Ottawa and Calgary, especially visiting the very interesting military museums in Ottawa and Calgary.

The post card he sent depicted the mass Military Bands "Beating the Retreat" on Parliament Hill at 2.30pm prior to the "Sound and Light Show" at 7.30pm.

It is an event that takes place from the 6th to the 9th August each year.

Rob passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association and hopes to be with us at our Annual Luncheon. *(Thank you, Rob, for your card and good wishes. Hopefully, when you read this you will be back home safe and sound.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Barry and Heather PERIGO** sent me a CD about an ABC interview on the Vietnam medics. Their son, Paul, recorded it and it is about 10 minutes of a very interesting interview. If you missed this "talk" on ABC National on the 18 August 2009 I would be very happy to post it to you.

Barry and Heather have been in "wars" lately with Heather having a knee operation and lately to Napean Hospital with a heart scare; she said she is ok but tired.

Just recently they were helping each other to carry a cage of young chickens when the cage slipped out of Heather's hands and it resulted in Barry enduring lots of back and knee pains and worse--tearing his rotator cuff. He is going to try physio before, possibly, more radical surgery.

Heather and her nursing girlfriends (one of them, Barbara Buscombe, was in Vietnam) enjoy yearly re-unions and this one was at Barry and Heather's home on their property in Orchard Hills, in Sydney's west.

She said there was not much sleep but plenty of laughs and reminisces after a wine or two. Heather said their next re-union will be held in Tuncurry.

Heather wrote that whilst she was unable to make it on RF Day, Barry struggled through the march until he heard ...*"Straighten up there, Perigo!"* as his unit marched past ours—I could not resist it. He looked at us with a wide smile AND renewed vigour.

Heather said further along their four young granddaughters excitedly yelled out...*"Poppy, Poppy, Poppy."* And about ten or so marchers looked across automatically!

They both send their best wishes to their friends in the Association and wish all a happy Christmas. *(Thank you, Barry and Heather, for your thoughtful card and CD. I hope when you read this you are both in good health.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**John ROCHE** wrote to say he and his brother, Jim, attended the "Fromelles Day" Ceremony in the War Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney, on Sunday 19th July.

It was to commemorate the 5th Division of the first A.I.F. at Fromelles.

John said the only mention of the "Cobbers" statue was on the cover of the hand-out.

He said it was a very nice ceremony and the Korean War Vets

also placed a wreath. A sergeant from the UNSW regiment played a fine rendition of the Last Post.

The chaplain read the poem "Fromelles" (by noted poet, Jim Brown) prior to the first prayer. *(This poem was printed in our inaugural issue of our coloured magazine (December '08) on pages 36, 37 and 38.)*

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

*(Thank you, John, for your letter. We hope you have a great Christmas and New Year.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Estelle LINDSAY** sent a lovely card with a photo of a magpie "perched" on the top of her back door. She loves all the birds that come and visit and they also bring their young.

Estelle and her son, Bryan, enjoys reading our newsletters and especially the poems.

She sent me a particularly nostalgic poem she wanted to share with us. *(It certainly brought back memories of seeing my mum, in her later years, struggling down our local street with the groceries. I was fortunate to be able to pick her up in my car from time to time.)*

Estelle is now a GREAT GREAT Aunt as her great granddaughter has just given birth to a very healthy boy. Estelle often reflects on her fortunate life in that how lucky she has been to see her family grow.

Estelle passes on her happy Christmas wishes to all in our Association.

*(Thank you, Estelle, for your thoughtful card and words. Your poem is just lovely and I hope we have the room to include it in this issue—if not, we will keep it for another issue. We hope this finds you in good health.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**"Scotty" BOYD** enjoys reading all our news and passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association.

He advised me that he will be on big outback trip of many weeks. It will start in late August and hopefully he will be back home in early October. Scotty will travel through NSW and Queensland to Lawn Hill National Park.

He had been diagnosed with his 4th inguinal hernia but has been cleared to travel. Scotty hopes to have an operation to repair it, in late October and this may interfere with his plans to meet us at our Annual Re-Union lunch in November.

He wrote that the weather in Tassie, in August, has been deplorable. The most rain in 50 or so years with big floods. Nearly all the dams are full as are the storage lakes.

The government anticipates they should get through the summer months but then there is the constant fear of bush fires with all the new undergrowth—*"we can't win!"* wrote Scotty.

I received a further email from Scotty apologising for not being able to be with us at our Annual Re-Union because his doctor advised against taking any chances with the strain of flying etc. He passes on his good wishes to all his friends and wishes all a Happy Christmas.

*(Thank you, Scotty, we hope your trip was a memorable one and we look forward to reading about it soon. We are glad that your operation was successful.)*





**Rayda NOBLE** has recently moved into her new home. She said it has taken about 6 months and it has left her completely exhausted, but she loves her new unit and is now quietly "settling in" and appreciating her new surroundings.

Rayda enjoys her "Rat's work" (*Rats of Tobruk*) and one of her many chores was, when moving, "boxing" all her "Rats" memorabilia.

She had a bit of chuckle when she was moving her kitchen table to discover some old chewing gum stuck underneath. She "emailed" her children—"Who put the chewing gum under the table?" and could just imagine them all laughing because mum never looked under the table!

Rayda told me that her nephew (Scott Hoare) is in the navy at HMAS Waterhen (*named after the WW 2 destroyer of that name*).

The "Waterhen" is a "small ship's base" that is located in Sydney Harbour, near the Berry Bay fuel terminal and the nearby Waterhen Park and playground, together with other RAN destroyers from the Mediterranean Fleet...HMAS Nestor, Nizam, Parramatta, Stuart, Vampire and Vendetta.

Every year there is a Commemoration Service to remember the sinking of the HMAS Waterhen during WW 2, on the 29th June 1941.

*(The Waterhen was engaged in a regular run from Alexandria in Egypt to Tobruk harbour in Libya. She carried supplies, ammo and material for the Tobruk Garrison in 1941 and was bombed and sunk in what was commonly termed "bomb alley"—between Mersa Matruh and Tobruk. Just days prior to her being sunk she towed the damaged ship "Pass of Bermuda" into harbour. She was carrying 750 tons of urgently needed petrol and supplies for the Tobruk Garrison. Earlier, the "Waterhen" had saved 496 people from the sinking hospital ship "Vita" and delivered them safely to Alexandria....my kind thanks to the Patron of the "R.O.T." (NSW Branch), Brigadier O.H. (Zac) Isaksson MC).*

Rayda said that Scott's grandfather was in the "Siege of Tobruk" and would have been so proud of his grandson being chosen as the official guide who escorted seven members of the Rats of Tobruk to the Parade Ground for the Ceremony.

Rayda keeps in contact with her good friend in Queensland and she also sent Rayda photos of the Tobruk Sunday Service which was held at the Tobruk Memorial in Bundaberg on the 5th April.

She said there were only two surviving "Rats" that she knows of, who were in attendance, as well as about 150 people including students from the West State School. Their motto is—"Keeping the Memory Alive".

She sent me a "reminder" to watch the SBS segment on the 27th September, about Ron Barrassi's (*the AFL legend*) father. Ron's father was killed in Tobruk and the story was about Ron tracing his ancestors. *(I did watch it and enjoyed the story.)*

Rayda passes on her good wishes to her friends in the Association, Neil Barrie, "Bluey" Davis and Tom Pritchard.

*(Thank you, Rayda, for your kind words and emails. We hope you are much better now that the trauma of moving is over. I hope you will try and sit back and relax and not worry too much, your friends are thinking of you.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Peter THOMPSON** enjoys reading about the news and passes on his good wishes to all his mates in the Association.

He was one of many who enjoyed the email I sent to everyone depicting parts of

France as it was in 1944/45 and now.

Peter said his wife, Cassandra, recognised quite a few scenes from her recent trip there.

He has just had a new hip replacement 4 months ago and is in line for the other one. He hopes to be right for next ANZAC Day.

Peter informed me that his tenure as a Director at his local club (Blacktown RSL) is now over, having been defeated in the recent club election.

He said it was a great learning curve and he enjoyed the experience.

*(Thank you, Peter, it was good to hear from you, especially about your hips—we hope that when you get your second hip you will be able to march with us again.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Doreen FORD** wrote to tell me a little of her CMF experience from the early 50's.

She tried to enlist in the CMF when she was 16 but was refused at that stage.

Doreen sent me a copy of a "clipping" from the old "Sun" Newspaper, it was dated Thursday 20th August, 1953, and it showed two nurses (Privates M.Shelley and M.Gournarde) practicing on a full scale model (called "Prudence").

There were about 70 nurses in camp at Singleton and it was the first women's camp held in NSW. The nurses were all from 3 RAANC attached to Victoria Barracks.

The only woman doctor in the barracks was Dr. Clair Chalmers and she assisted fully qualified army doctors to instruct the girls at the hospital.

One of the nurses, Private Nancy Baker, said ... *"It looks like another war is inevitable and we will be fully prepared and ready to go."*

Doreen (her maiden name was Treble) said it was a shame that she had to leave the Nursing Corps once she got married—but that was the rule then!

She said she would love to "catch up" with some of her old army nursing buddies.

*(Thank you, Doreen, that was very nice of you to share some of your experiences with us—who knows—some of your old friends from 3 RAANC just might read this little piece and start the ball rolling.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Susan SALVI** was a little anxious after an email I sent to her (and a number of other members) that depicted quite graphic shots of helicopter tragedies.

She emailed me back to say that she had just completed her "Helicopter Underwater Escape Training" (HUET) and is due to do an Aeromedical Evacuation Course in February. My email "shook" her a bit but she has passed it on to some pilot friends.

Susan will be in Brisbane shortly and then on to New Zealand in December and later, Europe in March 2010.

*(Thank you, Susan, for your reply. I know your army training will stand you in good stead. We send our encouragement to you for success in your forthcoming courses.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Kathleen LOADSMAN** passes on her good wishes to her friends in the Association.

She has been working overseas quite a bit over the last few years.

In 2007 Kathleen worked for the Australian Red Cross (through ICRC) in Eritrea for 9 months. She worked in the Government hospital in Barentu (near to the Sudanese border) in the surgical ward, as a teaching nurse.

Kathleen then came back home and worked in the Royal Hospital for Women in Sydney, in the postnatal ward.



It wasn't long before another opportunity came along to re-join the Red Cross to work in Kandahar, Afghanistan. This position was supposed to be as a gynaecological ward nurse but the job description and the actual work differ on these missions and this was the case for Kathleen.

The ward was still in the "planning" stage so Kathleen ended up as a surgical ward nurse, first with female patients and later, with male surgical ward, including ICU.

Kathleen said the culture is very different from Australia and she is ever thankful of being born in Australia.

She said the ICRC is supporting Mirwais Hospital and it is a very busy place.

They treat many "weapon" wounded and road accident cases. The surgical teams are kept very busy and in one month they treated over 700 surgeries.

Kathleen said life for the "delegates" is quite restricted. We live in a "compound" and travel to and from the hospital, which is ...*"literally across the road"*, in two vehicles, for security reasons. We are not allowed out of the compound, other than to the hospital or the airport.

Every day there is the sound of gunfire and helicopter and other military plane noise. Occasionally, there is an explosion from bombs or rockets.

*(Kathleen wrote that it was strange how she got used to it and was not filled with fear at her work, but once she got back to Australia and heard a "loud bang" she immediately had thoughts of "where am I?" or "what was that?")*

She said it was not the threat of weapons etc that nearly caused her downfall "over there", but a perforated appendix!

Kathleen had an appendix operation in Kabul which resulted in complications. She had to be evacuated to Dubai to undergo a second operation where she was hospitalised for 3 weeks before being able to be flown back to Australia to fully recover.

She credits her army training (and her stubbornness) for resuming her work back in Kandahar after an absence of 2 months, since her first operation.

Kathleen has since finished her mission and is now back home.

*(Thank you, Kathleen, for you allowing us to read some of your overseas work. I am pleased that you are back to normal health but it must have been quite an ordeal at the time. It is good to have you back home.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Stephen STEIGRAD** emailed to say he enjoys reading our magazine. It was remiss of me that I, first, forgot to put Stephen on our "SICK PARADE" and second, missed saying hullo to him at the RFD Parade in the Domain.

I was with the Banner Party and Stephen was with our other members in the "Form Up" area.

He remarked that now that he has 2 NEW knees, the RFD Committee has cancelled the March...he was looking forward to trying them out.

*(Thank you, Stephen, for your email. It was good to see you there even though I did not get to shake your hand.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Ron FOLEY** passes on his good wishes to his friends in the Association and enjoyed "catching up" with all the news.

He and his partner, Adrienne, have been on an extended stay in New Zealand and have only just arrived back home after 5 months.

*(Good on you, Ron and Adrienne, it's good to have you both back home safe and sound. When you get a chance you might like to share some of your NZ experience with our members.)*

**Jim ROCHE** wrote to say hullo and pass on his good wishes to his friends in the Association.

He sent me a précis from COL Crozier AM CSM, DHSARER (*Director Health Services Army Reserve Eastern Region*) titled...*"Professional Development for the Health Services Personnel"*.

It was open to all ranks, whether Full Time or Part Time, including civilian health practitioners and those interested in joining the ADF---and it was FREE.

The program was held at Randwick Barracks on the 25th August from 1800hrs and the theme was "THE SHOULDER".

The Speakers were COL Tony Delaney, Dr. James Linklater, Dr. Graeme Macdougall and Mr. Joel Werman.

Jim went with Bill Molloy and Frank Lang and said there were about 100 present. He also sent me another "flyer" from the Military History Society of NSW Inc.

Brigadier Phil Carey AM RFD ED (Rtd) was to give a lecture, titled *"Scandal or Mischief: Douglas MacArthur, Eddie Ward and the Brisbane Line Controversy, 1942-43"*. It was to be held in the Auditorium, History House, 133 Macquarie Street in early September. I did not get a chance to go but it would have been a very interesting lecture. *(Thank you, Jim, for your letter and other info.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Brett FERRARI** sends his good wishes to his friends in the Association. He advised me that he has a number of colour photos on 5 Fd Amb taken at various times and was going to scan them and send them to our webmaster to place on our web site ([www.5fdamb.com](http://www.5fdamb.com)).

I only just discovered his email to me and have since replied. *(My apologies, Brett, for the tardy reply. I hope you got the info ok and we look forward to viewing whatever "shots" you are able to supply to our website.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Michael STRINGFELLOW** sends his good wishes to all his friends in the Association.

He sent me an email from the Solomon Islands where he is currently on a "Tour of Duty" with "Operation Anode" (*see "Items of Interest"*).

Michael is a medic and "attached" to the current unit (2/17 RNSWR) for 4 months and will hopefully be home for Christmas.

He has seen a fair bit of Honiara, both during the day and night, and sees things as going *"pretty well"*. He wrote that it took almost a month to adapt to Solomon Island timing.

Michael was very impressed with the NZ soldiers, more especially the women who are serving in the ranks. He said they are very professional with their section "attack and defence" work. They match it with their male counterparts with the carrying of their equipment etc and do all they are required to do. The Kiwi soldiers he spoke to all spoke highly of the women soldiers and said they do a good job.

Michael's words were...*"If the women can do the job, so be it...I somehow reckon the Kiwi women would kick my arse!"*

*(Thank you, Michael, for sending us a small insight into your thoughts on your "Tour". We thank you and all our other soldiers for the tremendous effort you make in assisting the countries you are sent to. We all look forward to your (and your fellow soldiers) safe return home and a JOB WELL DONE.)*

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## NEW MEMBER/S

**Robert JAMES** came across one of our magazines in his Retirement Village on the Gold Coast and cut out an Application Form to join us as an Associate Member. We are certainly honoured, Robert, to have you join us and we hope that you continue to enjoy reading our newsletters.

Perhaps you might like to write and let us share a little of your life's story but in any case, thank you for being part of us.

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**Lee CASTLE** is another gentleman who read our magazine and filled in the Application Form to join us as an Associate Member.

Lee also lives on the Gold Coast at Burleigh Heads. Thank you, Lee, for joining us and I noted that you apologised for not being able to come to our Annual Re-Union. You are most cordially welcomed to our Association.

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**Geoffrey PRIOR** is a very welcome addition to our ranks. I had noticed an F.G. Prior in my old address book (from our late Secretary, Kevin Findlay) and it is good to see Geoffrey become a member.

I thank Geoff for his very generous donation of Life Membership and we look forward to meeting him in the near future and perhaps a story of his time in the CMF.

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**David FRANCIS** is warmly welcomed into our ranks as an Associate Member.

David read one of our newsletters and filled in an Application to join us. He is cordially welcomed from his home in Camberwell North in Victoria. Thank you, David.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Dr. Robert BAILEY** received our magazine from one of his old 5 Field Ambulance mates and sent me an application. We thank Robert for joining us.

Robert served as a Medical Assistant and was good friends with Brett Ferrari and Jon Hawkes to name just a few. He later transferred to 1 Commando Unit and then to the Sydney University Regiment.

He currently lectures at a Brisbane University and is a qualified Chiropractor.

We look forward to meeting Robert in the future.

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**David PHILLIPS** is warmly welcomed to our ranks. David served with 1 Field Ambulance and also with 5 Field Ambulance and is currently Chief of Staff HSAR/ER (*Health Services Army Reserves/Eastern Region*).

We thank his dad, John, for introducing David to our Association and we sincerely thank David for his contribution of Life Membership.

We look forward to meeting up with David in the near future.

## KIND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*(Of monies received since last newsletter of August 2009.*

*Please contact me if your name has been omitted.)*

- **Ken ALLEN** (EFT \$40) for RAAMC Corps Tie (*Non Member*)
- **Steve BALDICK** (Cash \$40) for Re-Union Lunch \$35 and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **Robert BAILEY** (Cheque \$15) for New Member Subs
- **Fred BELL** (Cash \$75) for Re-Union Lunch \$65 and 10 Raffle tickets
- **"Scotty" BOYD** (Cheque \$25) for Subs \$15, and Raffle Tickets \$10
- **Derek CANNON** (Cheque \$80, Cash \$40) for Re-Union \$70 and Raffle Tickets \$10 and new Corps Tie \$40
- **Lee CASTLE** (M/Order \$15) for New Member Subs
- **Alan CURRY** (Cash \$85) for Re-Union Lunch \$70 and donation \$10 and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **John de WITT** (Cheque \$70 + \$5 Cash) for Re-Union Lunch and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **Nelson FIORENTINO** (Cash \$80) for Re-Union Lunch and 10 Raffle Tickets
- **David FRANCIS** (EFT \$15) for New Member Subs
- **Kevin HURRELL** (Cash \$45 + \$40) for book "Military of the Hunter", Re-Union Lunch \$35 and 5 Raffle tickets
- **Robert JAMES** (Cheque \$15) for New Member Subs
- **John LAYHE** (Cheque \$108 + \$5 Cash) for New Member Subs \$15, Beret \$30, Beret Badge \$8, Name Badge \$20 and Re-Union Luncheon \$35 and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **David PHILLIPS** (Cheque \$100) for New Member/Life Membership
- **John PHILLIPS** (Cheque \$25) for Donation
- **Geoff PRIOR** (Cheque \$100) for New Member/Life Membership
- **R and N EXCAVATIONS** (Cheque \$352) made out to our Association instead of Statewide Publishing P/I
- **Bill RYLANDS** (Cheque \$65 and Cash \$5) for Re-Union Lunch and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **Sr. Elizabeth SHEARD** (Cheque \$100) for Life Membership
- **Rob STEWART** (Cash \$40) for Re-Union Lunch and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **Noel TAME** (Cash \$55) for Re-Union Lunch \$35, Subs \$15 and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **Brian TAMS** EFT \$85 + Cash \$5) for Re-Union Lunch \$70, Subs \$15 and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **Bill THOMPSON** (Cheque \$100 + \$5 Cash) for Re-Union Lunch \$70, Subs \$15 and Donation \$15 and 5 Raffle Tickets
- **Jennifer WEIR** (Cash \$2) for 2 Raffle Tickets.



# Stems of Interest

**(1) Charles DOBSON:** Charles is a good friend of our Association. He is my eldest son's father-in-law and he lives with his wife, Nancy, in Wauchope. Charles recently received a letter from one of his WW 2 buddies and enclosed in it was a copy of the "Townsville Story" – an article written by Heather Brown for "The Australian Magazine" (Jan. 25-26, 1992) *Australia 1942—The most dangerous year.*

It brought back some memorable times for Charles when he was posted there during the war years in WW 2.

I thought I would get Charles' story for one of our magazine and "edit" some of the "Townsville Story" article as well. (See "Feature" Article—Charles Dobson's story, if space permits.)

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## **(2) Media Releases—from our Federal Government:**

(With kind thanks to the Dept. of Defence for all the following. They are NOT in chronological order, and some have been edited.)

### **(A) ADF Overseas:**

Did you know that we have approximately 3,600 troops currently operating in 13 countries overseas, to assist the various governments to try and maintain peace and order.

- (i) Operation "ASTUTE" employs approximately 650 ADF personnel to provide security support to the government of Timor-Leste and to the UN mission to maintain a stable environment.

*(The 20th September marked the 10th Anniversary of the deployment of troops to Dili, as part of the INTERFET Mission, to restore peace and stability to the region.*

*At the height of the trouble we had 5,700 troops on the ground—the biggest concentration of ADF personnel since the Vietnam War.*

*The Government commended the effort of the veterans, some of whom deployed more than once. Since the 10 years there have been more than 44,000 deployments of which 2,200 have been women.)*

- (ii) Operation "SLIPPER" (Afghanistan) employs approximately 1550 ADF Personnel in Afghanistan as our contribution to the International Coalition against terrorism.

Five Australian soldiers suffered minor shrapnel wounds and minor concussion, in early September, as a result of an attack by insurgents using an Improvised Explosive Device.

They were treated on the spot and then moved to the ISAF medical facility in Taren Kowt for observation and further treatment

- (iii) Operation "SLIPPER" (Middle East) involves an ADF contribution of approximately 800 personnel that supports "Slipper" but operates.
- (iv) Operation "RESOLUTE" involves an ADF contribution of approximately 400 personnel to the whole-of-government efforts to protect Australia's offshore maritime areas.

- (v) Operation "ANODE" involves approximately 80 ADF personnel as our contribution to the Australian-led (RAMSI) .. (Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands).

Recently, employers of reservists had the opportunity to spend 3 days in Honiara to observe their employees on "Operation Anode". It enabled the ADF to highlight the important role that reservists play and give the employer a better insight into the benefits that Defence Reserve employees can bring to their civilian workplace.

- (vi) Operation "MAZURKA" has approximately 25 ADF personnel as our contribution to the MFO.. (Multinational Force and Observers) in the Sinai Peninsula-Egypt.
- (vii) Operation "AZURE" has 17 ADF personnel as our contribution to UNMIS... (United Nations Mission in Sudan).
- (viii) Operation "PALADIN" has 11 ADF personnel in the Middle East as our contribution to UNTSO... (United Nations Troop Supervision Organisation).
- (ix) Operation "TOWER" has 4 ADF personnel as support for UNMIT... (United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste).
- (x) Operation "HEDGEROW" has 8 ADF personnel as a contribution to UNAMID... (United Nations and African Union Mission in Darfur).
- (xi) Operation "RIVERBANK" has 2 ADF personnel as our contribution to UNAMI... (United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq).
- (xii) Operation "PALATE II" has 1 ADF person as our contribution to UNAMA... (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan).
- (xiii) Operation "KRUGER" has approximately 80 ADF personnel as an ongoing contribution to the provision of security for the Australian Embassy personnel in Iraq.

### **(B) Base Security Review**

Following the arrests, in August last, of individuals planning an attack on the Holsworthy Army Base, the government ordered a Review to be carried out by the Dept. of Defence.

*(some media reports erroneously referred to ethnic backgrounds of taxi drivers—no such mention was made of ethnic background or of any drivers, in the Review.)*

Although the government has accepted the findings of the Review and to implement enhanced security measures, it will not be identifying these measures—for obvious reasons.

The government relies on the media to treat responsibly any information relating to the Defence Base Security Improvement Program.





(C) WW 2 sailor receives medal on 87th Birthday:

Sub Lieutenant Donald Reed was a young RAN officer during WW 2. He was assigned to act as a Royal Navy Liaison Officer aboard the Netherlands Minesweeper "Abraham Crijnsen" as it escorted shipping across waters patrolled by German U Boats.

Don Reed spent 10 months on board and unable to speak the language of those around him. When his time on board came to an end, his Commanding Officer, LTCOMDR K.G.Tiel RNN, recommended Don for a Netherlands War Cross with Bar.

The award was never handed to Don and he forgot about it as he settled back into civilian life again.

Don's case was brought to the attention of the Netherlands Government after a 65-year delay!

He was going to celebrate his 87th Birthday on the 10 September 2009 at the Caulfield RSL in Elsternwick (Victoria) and at 3pm he would have been presented with his well deserved medal by the Consul-General for the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Hans Nieuwland.

Australia's Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Russ Crane AM CSM RAN said:

*"...Mr. Reed is one of countless Australians who helped protect this country and her allies, and build on Australia's strong naval heritage. I congratulate Mr. Reed on this public recognition of his service."*

(D) Fromelles excavation completed:

The Minister for Defence Personnel, Mr. Greg Combet, announced that the archaeological excavation at Pheasant Wood, Fromelles, France has now successfully concluded.

The minister said...

*"A total of 250 sets of remains and 1,200 artefacts have been excavated from six graves. This is lower than the previous estimate of 300 remains."*

*The focus of the project will now fall upon the identification of the remains and their re-interment at the purpose-built Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Military Cemetery.*

*An early analysis of the remains and the artefacts indicates that a large number of those recovered appear to be Australian.*

*As part of the identification of the remains LGC Forensics is undertaking a comprehensive analysis of DNA samples taken from the remains to assist in DNA matching against living relatives.*

*In conjunction with this process further analysis of artefacts and remains will continue throughout September and October at Oxford Archaeology's "on site" laboratory to see if any evidence can assist with the identification process.*

*This information will be presented to the Joint Identification Board in March 2010, where the British and Australian Governments will consider the results and determine any appropriate further action that should be taken.*

*While identification of the remains is an extremely complex process, I remain hopeful that we will be able to identify a number of those we have found.*

*As the formal identification is a complex process that may take many months, and in some cases years, every soldier will be buried initially without a permanent headstone.*

*The burials will commence on the 30th January 2010 and continue through February until every soldier is laid to rest with full military honours.*

*Members of the public are welcome to visit the site during re-burials and view the proceedings from outside the cemetery.*

*A Commemorative event to open the cemetery is scheduled for the 94th Anniversary of the Battle of Fromelles on the 19th July 2010."*

The minister, on behalf of the government, sincerely thanked the Oxford Archaeology and all their staff for the hard work and dedication they put in throughout the excavations.

(E) DEFENCE 2020:

is a Government initiative that involves secondary school students, from across Australia, to increase their awareness and understanding that the role of the ADF has within the Australian community.

The participation challenge culminated in a series of 15 regional youth challenges held throughout the country over recent months.

23 students were chosen on the basis of submissions they made relating to the ADF and its role in Peace-Keeping operations since 1947.

The students showed remarkable drive and understanding of a range of complex defence issues. They toured various peace-keeping related sites and Defence establishments before presenting "role plays" to Government and senior ADF members.

It is hoped the students will take the experience back to their schools and help promote greater understanding of Defence and the ADF among their peers, and within their communities.

DEFENCE 2020 is an education resource program to help students investigate the relevance of Defence issues to their own lives.

The Minister, Mr. Greg Combet, congratulated the students saying they represented themselves and their schools with great distinction.

(F) Parliamentary Exchange Program (Known as ADFPP)

Recently, 15 ADF Personnel of various rank and gender were "attached" to a Senator or a Member of Parliament's Parliamentary office during the middle week in September 2009.

It allowed ADF members to gain an insight in both Parliamentary and Committee processes.

The program allows the Parliamentarians to return the compliment they receive every year when they are "attached" to any number of exciting and military operations and units.

So far this year, 45 Senators and MP's were "attached" for periods of between 5 to 10 days working alongside ADF Personnel in places like Afghanistan, Border Protection off Cape York, and RAAF Base East Sale—the home of the "Roulettes".

(G) Land 21 (Overlander):

is a Defence Materiel Organisation project. It is the largest land project in the current Defence Capability Plan.



It represents a \$4.6 billion investment and will deliver a fleet of 7,000 vehicles, modules and trailers to significantly improve the capability, logistics and mobility of the ADF.

At a recent "handing over" Ceremony in Graz, Austria, was the new proto-type "G" Wagon. A very capable vehicle that will include detachable unit-specific modules designed for specific tasks e.g. munitions transfer, field ambulances or troop carriers.

The order of 1,200 Mercedes-Benz G-Wagons and 315 "Specialist Modules" will require minimal modification for local conditions and will be delivered ready for operations. The modules will be manufactured by Varley, in the Hunter Valley.

The G-Wagons will now be subjected to a quality assurance and verification and validation testing regime. Testing is expected to be completed by August 2010 and the first delivery to the Commonwealth is expected in 2011.

(H) PARADE to mark the end of "OPERATION CATALYST".

A "Welcome Home" Parade was held on the Parade Ground of the Australian War Memorial on the 21st November.

It was to welcome home more than 300 current and former ADF veterans and Defence civilians who served on Operation Catalyst, in Iraq, from July 2003 until July 2009.

The RAAF conducted a "flypast" at 1,000 feet of three F/A-18 Hornets from 77 Squadron based at Williamstown, at about 1440hrs.

The Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshall, Angus Houston, in a speech at the National Parade, said it was one of the most complex operations ever undertaken by the ADF.

He asked all Australians to pause for a moment to consider the service of our fellow countrymen and women. They risked their lives, in our name and under our flag, to provide others with a brighter future.

He paid particular tribute to all the family members and friends of those who contributed to Operation Catalyst, including those in the Defence organisation back home. The Air Chief Marshall reminded everyone that this operation was a dangerous mission which saw the loss of three Australians.

The service honoured Warrant Officer Class 2 David Nary of the SAS and PTE Jacob Kovco of 3rd Bn RAR and Flight LT Paul Pardoel, a graduate of the ADF Academy, who was killed in Iraq whilst serving with the RAF.

The Air Chief Marshall said we remember the 27 ADF men and women who were wounded in this Operation. Some of them made full recoveries whilst others will never recover.

(I) INQUIRY into Recognition for Peacekeeping Service from 1947.

The Government (Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM MP) announced that an independent DHA Tribunal will inquire into the above. A call for submissions has been made and will EXPIRE on the 21st December 2009.

It seems that many people have raised this issue and Dr Kelly encourages them to take advantage and make a SUBMISSION.

(J) REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICES:

HQ Joint Operations Command commemorated with a service and a Dedication of a Memorial to the 29 ADF personnel who have died and the many wounded on operations in the 10 years since the original HQ was formed.

The Chief of Joint Operations, LT GEN Mark Evans said more than 50,000 troops have deployed on operations in this time.

The "service" will recognise the 11 deaths that have occurred in Afghanistan and the 90 wounded.

In East Timor, a solemn service will be held at Camp Phoenix in Dili.

In the Solomon Islands, a Commemorative Service will be held at the PTE Jamie Clark Memorial. This will involve a multi-national Catafalque Party from Australia, New Zealand and Tonga.

As well as troops from the Task Force and members of the 15 strong Participating Police Force, including many officers from the AFP, the High Commissioners from Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain will also be in attendance.

(K) ADF Refutes drug use in Afghanistan

The Sunday Telegraph and Brisbane's Sunday Mail reported (Sunday 22 November) that the ADF were using illicit drugs while deployed on tours of duty in Afghanistan and are returning home addicted.

The ADF refutes this and deplores the fact that these papers chose to omit much of the information provided so as to create a "headline".

The ADF provided evidence that between 16 June 2005 and 31 August 2009, more than 35,000 tests were conducted on ADF personnel, both in Australia and those deployed on operations overseas and the average rate of positive results were 1.54%.

ADF personnel are randomly selected (OR target tested, where information is considered and personnel are targeted on information brought to the attention of the Command).

5 drug classes are tested; Benzodiazepines, Cannabis, Cocaine, Methylamphetamine and Opiates (including Heroin), as well as steroids.

The following Fiscal Years' test results were given; 05/06 was 1.76%, 06/07 was 1.81%, 07/08 was 1.52% and 08/09 was 1.29%.

The ADF attributed the pleasing decline to the Selection and Recruitment process, Education and the culture of non-tolerance.

(L) WW 2 DIGGERS LAID TO REST IN PNG

The Government (*Mr Greg Combet MP, Minister for Defence Personnel, Materiel and Science*) announced (12 Nov) that remains, recently uncovered from the battlefields around Buna, Sanananda and Popondetta by an Army Investigation Team, have been positively identified from army archived records.

They were Lieutenant Talbot Tim Logan of the 2/12th Australian Infantry Battalion. He was killed near Buna on the 1st January 1943.

And Lance Sergeant James Garrard Wheeler of the 2/1st Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery (he was killed near Sanananda on 1st December 1942).





Both bodies were found in temporary graves until discovered. Then very intense research, over several months, took place to identify the remains.

The families of both men have been informed and they are receiving support from the "extended army family" through the Defence Community Organisation.

The Research Team also uncovered the remains of a further six bodies of which two are believed to be Australian but can't be positively identified.

The other four bodies are believed to be Japanese soldiers who died from unknown causes and will be handed over to the Japanese Embassy in Port Moresby, so they can be afforded a dignified re-interment.

The remains of LT Logan and L/Sgt Wheeler and the two unidentified remains ("Known unto God") will be "laid to rest", with full Military Honours, in the Bomana War Cemetery in Port Moresby, PNG, on 1st December 2009.

*(Service background)*

LT LOGAN; was born 10 February 1913 at Kuambu in Kenya. He enlisted in the army on 20 October 1939 at Hughenden, Queensland. He was 29 years old when he was shot by a Japanese sniper's bullet, just short of the beach at Buna, between the mouth of Simema Creek and Giropa Point, on 1st January 1943. He was in command of 9 Platoon, 2/12th Bn during the attack to capture Buna Mission. (The family sincerely thanked all those involved in identifying their beloved father, grandfather and great grandfather, Tim Logan. "He served so that we may be free.")

L/SGT WHEELER; was born on the 29th August 1919 at Narrabri in NSW. He enlisted in the army at Narrabri on the 29th October 1939.

In December 1942, L/Sgt Wheeler was part of a 2 man Australian Forward Observation Party in support of "I" Company, 126th Inf. Regt, he was the Forward Observer Assistant to the Forward Observer, Lt. T. Daniels, from the 2/1st Field regiment, Royal Australian Regiment, which was supporting a US Infantry unit operating near Huggins Roadblock. Lt Daniels was shot and killed by a Japanese sniper and L/Sgt Wheeler attempted to retrieve his body. He also was shot and killed. (The family of Jim Wheeler expressed their sincere thanks and is extremely grateful for the army in persevering to identify Jim. The family said it was extraordinary and fitting that Jim's burial in Bomana co-incided with the 67th Anniversary of his death. They said it was wonderful to know that he will be ... "laid to rest, at last, surrounded by his mates.")

(M) NEWCASTLE "Welcome Home" PARADE to 41 Wing:

Over 200 RAAF personnel were recognised for their outstanding service in Afghanistan with a parade through the CBD on the 11th October.

The men and women were from 41 Wing based at Williamstown and had been on Tours of Duty from 5 August 2007, having relieved the US "Tour of Duty" personnel.

The RAAF personnel were on deployment to the Control and Reporting Centre in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

Their job was the tactical command and control of the air space and to provide de-confliction and direct control of combat aircraft in support of ground forces, as well as provide air battle management across Afghanistan.

The troops led off the Mattara Maritime Grand Parade at 11am and were welcomed by all the Hunter residents and families of the 200.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

(3) **Reserve Forces Day Committee** sent us a request to find out if we have members who had received a medal from the government for volunteering their services overseas, whilst in the Reserves/CMF.

The RFD Committee has decided that the 2010 concept for Reserve Forces Day will be to acknowledge all Reservists who received a medal for such service.

I notified our members by email and post, in August, and I would have thought that we would have had more of our members contact me but I only received a handful of names. These have been passed on to the RFD Committee.

Their National (and NSW) RFD "Launch" was held on the 5th December 2009 again at the Shore School. I notified all our members on email and others by telephone. (See separate "RFD report")

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

(4) **7th Division A.I.F. Association** had a "plaque" Commemoration on the 22nd October 2009. I was in attendance together with our President, Derek Cannon and Steve Baldick.

Eileen Henderson was also present and represented the Nursing Association, she was accompanied by WW 2 nurse Margaret Ewart who served with the 2/9th AGH in Darwin, New Guinea and Moratai.

It was a wonderful turn-out to honour the many units who served in the 7th Division (The Silent 7th). We attended on behalf of our 2/5th Australian Field Ambulance comrades.

The service was held in the park, known as Remembrance Driveway. It is located on the corner of Miller Road and the Hume Highway at Bass Hill.

Thankfully, the rain held off and the 100 or so attendees including Federal, State and Local Governments representatives plus RSL representatives, participated in a well organised dedication Ceremony.

The culmination was the unveiling of the wall which revealed all the 40 units (including one for the "Fuzzy Wuzzy" Angels) who served in the 7th Division. The lower section of the wall showed all the VC recipients.



*Eileen Henderson, Derek Cannon and Steve Baldick*





*The plaque for 2/5th Field Ambulance*

The 2/5th was part of 18 Brigade and our plaque read:-  
(The Brown Diamond Colour Patch was on the left of the plaque)..

*2/5 Australian Field Ambulance.*

*Dedicated to the memory of all who served, especially the 8 mates who did not return supporting the 7th Division in their campaigns*

*LEST WE FORGET*

Derek laid a rose in Remembrance.

Although I could not accompany Derek or Steve back to the Chester Hill RSL Club for a "planned" lunch, they met up with Eileen and Margaret.

Derek and Steve said the day and the lunch, especially with Eileen and Margaret, was a memorable one. Steve said he won a bottle of nice red in one of the raffles and presented it to Margaret.

The 7 Division Association President, Mr. Dick Payten, is to be congratulated on the very fine presentation of the entire proceedings.

This "Remembrance Wall" was always on the "drawing board" and one could see how proud Dick and his fellow committee members were to see it all eventuate. And he thanked all those who had a hand in making it happen.



*Wall of plaques. Although 2/5th was in 18 Brigade, it is shown under 25 Brigade (2nd plaque down, last column)*

#### **(5) Our Quarterly Magazine:** is now 12 months old.

Our first issue was the Christmas Newsletter, December '08 last year, and we were pleased that you all approved of its new format.

Did you notice on our last issue ("Battle for Australia" –Aug.'09), the back page featured a young female soldier "on the Charge"!

I thought our publishers must have "trawled" the web site for this "shot" but it is actually the step-daughter of our publishing company's manager, Russell Maddox.

Her name is Alisha Smith and she is in the permanent army, in Signals (4 years now) in S.A.

Alisha joined in January 2004 and later completed her Operator Specialist Communications CSE in July 2005. She deployed to the Solomon Islands from October 2006-April 2007, working in HQ JTF 635.

She played rugby union for the army and went to Singapore in 2007 and later, in November 2007, went to France with a contingent from Australia's Federation Guard and provided ceremonial support to the Ceremony at Villers-Bretonneux.

She again played rugby for the ASRU at the National Championships in 2008.

Alisha recently told Russell that she "came across" one of our 5 Field Ambulance RAAMC Association magazines among her unit's reading matter!

Thank you, Russell, and tell Alisha we are proud of her.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

#### **(6) The RAAMC Association Inc.**

Their National President, MAJ John Straskye, advised me, by email, that they are planning on publishing a magazine bi-annually (*Summer/Winter*) with the aim of targeting the RAAMC veteran community for stories, news etc.

They will also seek any "news" from all or any of the RAAMC unit Associations, be they re-unions, history etc.

The new publication will be called "Fetch Starlight" and will be "edited" by Geoff Jones.

Geoff was previously the Editor of "Paulatim" and is currently the Editor of the 6 RAR Association Newsletters.

Geoff explained the reason why "Fetch Starlight" was chosen.

STARLIGHT is the appointment title for "Medical" in operational radio transmissions. The cry "Fetch Starlight" would be heard over the radio network when a medical officer or medic was needed, frequently in urgent situations.

As a title for the RAAMC Association Inc. magazine, the phrase..."Fetch Starlight" emits a clarion call to past and present members of the RAAMC to respond; to give input to the advancement of the RAAMC Association and to contribute their stories and suggestions to this, their magazine. "Fetch Starlight" is calling you.

It is intended to have as wide a distribution as possible. It is anticipated that every serving member in the RAAMC will be sent a copy via their unit.

RAAMC Unit Associations and groups will be mailed copies according to their request.

Copies will be sent to RSL and Vietnam Vets' Association and the like and also to overseas organisations such as, like our RAAMC Associations.

The COST to Unit Associations (& individual members) will be FREE.





In order for the magazine to be successful it needs contributions from members. It will rely heavily from contributions from the various RAAMC Associations.

The FIRST EDITION "cut-off" date will be 15 January 2010 and Geoff requested you make it a priority to send an article to him.

(Geoff's Email address is; [editor@raamc.org](mailto:editor@raamc.org) )

Geoff has requested that we inform him if we would like a copy sent directly to our home or via the Association's secretary.

To this end I have put this item on our "ACTIVITY SHEET" (see back page), please indicate if you would like "Fetch Starlight" mailed direct to your home.

I personally think it is a great idea and one well worth supporting.

(If any member would like to speak directly to John Straskye for any further information, please phone him on 0408.867.606)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**(7) Bill EVANS** "clicked" onto our website and viewed our Roll of Honour. He thought he might have seen his great uncle's name (William McLean Amphlett) and emailed me to see if I had any information on him.

I replied back to Bill and explained that our "Roll of Honour" was not a complete list of members (past and present) who ever served in 5 Field Ambulance (WW 1 and WW2 and the CMF/Reserves), but hopefully it records the known deaths.

Our email exchanges led to a small history of Bill's great uncle.

William Amphlett was born in Auckland, NZ and eventually came to Australia and lived in McLaren Street, North Sydney. Although no actual date of birth has been forthcoming, his enlistment papers showed him as 34 years of age (probably born in 1881/82).

2993, William McLean Amphlett, enlisted as a L/CPL on May 5th, 1915. He embarked from Sydney on the HMAS "Ajana" (A31) on May 31, 1915.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**(8) NEW" Corps Tie.** The RAAMC Corps committee has now approved a new tie. It has been quite an undertaking and our Association thanks all those involved.

The new tie will cost \$40 (which includes postage).

If you are interested in purchasing one please go to our "Activity Sheet" at the back of the magazine and fill in your order (and thank you, in advance).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**(9) Major General John PEARNS** was kind enough to send an article from the British Dental Journal (Vol. 205, No 11, Dec 13, 2008) to our President, Derek Cannon, who posted it to me.

With John's kind permission and that of the BMA I have reproduced it in full—there are 7 pages of fascinating reading on "Enduring Symbols of Dentistry: International metaphors of dental science".

I have passed it on to our publishers for them to include in this article if space permits—maybe in this issue but if not, it will be in a future issue.

(Thank you, John and Derek.)

**(10) Eastern Region History Committee** had their meeting in September and matters discussed were:-

- \* an article from the Boer War Memorial Committee. The committee have produced their 3rd newsletter, called "Monumentally Speaking".

One of their articles said that a Commemoration Ceremony will held on the 30th May 2010 at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney.

- \* The CMF/Army Reserve History of the Medical Corps. The preface is being prepared by Colonel Bill Molloy and a certain amount of the work has already been done.

- \* Major Eileen Henderson had some histories and photos regarding the Nursing Corps which she presented to the meeting.

- \* The history of 5 Field Ambulance (this is on the [www.5fdamb.com](http://www.5fdamb.com) web site).

- \* The HMAS Centaur Memorial Service.

- \* The deaths of Major Doug Cumming and LTCOL James Ellis.

- \* The RAAMC Association Inc. advising that Australian War Artist, Martin Campbell, is to be commissioned to pictorially record the history of the RAAMC in art. It will be entitled "From Sudan to Afghanistan" and the limited editions, measuring 2 metres X 1 metre, are expected to cost \$500 each.

- \* 7th Division "Wall Plaque Commemoration" in late October at Bass Hill, Sydney.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**(11) The RAAMC Association Inc. (NSW Branch)** discussed at its October Meeting;

- \* The impending retirement of Brig. Tony Gill in January 2010.

- \* Report by Col John Overton on the Defence Force Medical Association.

- \* Report by MAJ John Straskye on

- (i) New Corps Tie,

- (ii) RAAMC Corps Conference at Bandiana (Nov 5-7) and a proposal to hold the 2010 conference at Randwick.

- (iii) Meeting up with COL Shaun Fletcher, in the U.S. to present him with the "Harkness Medal".

- (iv) COL John Taske is the new Queensland Honorary Colonel and now President of the Queensland Branch of this Association.

- (v) Association finance.

- \* Report by COL Derek Cannon on 5 Field Ambulance Association activities.

- \* Report by Theo Dechaufepie, President, RAAMC Assn Inc. (NSW Branch) on Corps Day Function. Moved, Seconded and passed that Corps Day be celebrated on Saturday Evening 3rd July 2010 at the Paddington-Woolahra RSL Club.

- \* Discuss at next meeting to invite Col Georgina Wheelan to give a "Talk".

Friday, 4th December 2009 is the last meeting for the year (at Victoria Barracks) and the next one in 2010 will be Friday, 5th Feb. at 10.30am. Please contact me if you would like to attend.



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# Presentation of the RAAMC Painting “From The Sudan to Afghanistan



The RAAMC was presented with the painting “FROM THE SUDAN TO AFGHANISTAN” at the RAAMC Conference recently held at ALTC Bandiana. The RAAMC Association Commissioned the award winning Sydney painter Martin Campbell to illustrate the history of the RAAMC and was donated to the Corps. Although all conflicts are not covered because there would be too much information on such a confined space despite the painting being 180 cms x 140 cms. The painting, an oil on canvas, depicts a collage of nine iconic images, The Sudan, Gallipoli, the Western Front, Kokoda, the Charge at Beersheba, Pakistan/Afghanistan, Korea, Iraq and Vietnam. The painting is temporarily being hung at the ALTC Sergeants’ Mess until a suitable location can be found where everyone from the RAAMC may view it. There are to be 200 limited edition prints, framed and individually signed by the artist available soon. It is anticipated that, subject to final costings, each print will cost approx. \$300 - \$350 including postage and handling with the majority of the price being tax deductible. To secure your print email [john.straskye@defence.gov.au](mailto:john.straskye@defence.gov.au). To learn more about Martin Campbell visit his website at: <http://www.martincampbell.net>

The RAAMC Banner Party (*pictured right*) stands in front of the RAAMC Painting “From The Sudan To Afghanistan” at the RAAMC Conference Regimental Dinner At Bandiana.



Pictured (*left*) before the RAAMC Painting at the RAAMC Conference Regimental Dinner is a unique photo of all Health Service Regimental Sergeant Majors and the RSM ALTC (also RAAMC) with the Regimental Sergeant Major - Army.

(From L to R): WO1(RSM ALTC) M Jesenkovic CSC,OAM  
WO1(RSM RAAMC) M Wyatt CSM. WO1(RSM ARMY) S Ward,  
OAM WO1(RSM) K Chiesa CSM WO1 (RSM RAAMC) A De Santa-ana.



## **MY STORY**

### ***John de Witt RAAMC – Major (Rtd)***

My secondary education was at Canterbury Boy's High School, and in 1937 Frank Hasset was the senior cadet NCO and later, to become Sir Frank Hasset, Chief of the General Staff. Later, in 1939, that great Australian cricketer, Arthur Morris, was our School Captain.

Our school had a good military background.

My father, who was an ANZAC, passed away in September 1939 and I desired to do something at this stage in my life but my mother vowed not to allow me to join the A.I.F. so I finished up with 14 Field Ambulance which was a militia unit, and was commanded by that great soldier and doctor, S.C.M. Hiatt who later became ADMS of the Armoured Division. The unit was called up in 1940 for full-time training, I was the youngest in the unit at age 17.

We were running the Camp Hospital at Wallgrove and looking after 1,000 A.I.F. troops and 2,000 Militia troops. There was a "bit of trouble here and there" but the troops were aware that we were their medical back-up.

Everyone was happy in 1940 because "Old Rowley" won the Melbourne Cup at 100 to 1 and we had two Rowley's in the 14th. Our unit sent the "bookies" broke and the Army canteen "dry"!

My posting in the unit was Admission and Discharge Clerk and when we moved to Greta, I was still the A and D Clerk.

I managed to "con" myself onto a driving course with 6 Armoured Regiment and the C.O. was happy for me to go as the work load was minimal at the time.

The unit was being "broken up" to form 21 and 22 Field Ambulance so I took the opportunity to go to EComd Vehicle Reception Depot to take delivery of new vehicles from the makers for distribution to the units.

After 3 months, Lt Col Hiatt "conned" me back to 21 Field Ambulance where I was promoted to Tpt Cpl, looking after a new set of vehicles and I became a member of the A.I.F. on this transfer.

The Medical Corps were in a state of disarray due to lack of personnel and after 7 months in various training roles, 21 Field Ambulance was disbanded and I ended

up with 55 ACH and bound for Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory.

All the new stores were drawn from Ordnance at Moorebank and we entrained at Ingleburn for the long and arduous journey across Australia to Terowie in South Australia. Here we had to unload everything (due to changing rail line (narrow) gauge) and then re-load onto another train for, eventually, Alice Springs.

*(The locomotive broke a con rod some 250 miles south of Alice Springs and went on to Oodnadatta to get repaired, so a train full of diggers and vehicles were left in the middle of the desert. Luckily, near an artesian bore and living on field rations.*

*The locomotive returned 3 days later and the rations just lasted until we nearly reached Alice Springs.)*

When we arrived at Alice Springs we transhipped all the stores onto vehicles and then on to Tennant Creek.

The hospital (55 ACH) looked after all the casualties on the North/South Road, as well as aircraft crashes on the aerodrome.

I remember a bad crash involving a "Loadstar" airplane, with 30 or so Americans aboard, which overshot the runway, crashed and caught fire. Most of the casualties had 3rd degree burns.

The vehicle accidents were very constant.

Another role was looking after some 150 natives who had been left in the leper colony on Channel Island at Darwin. After the bombing they were transferred to Tennant Creek where a "specially built" compound was made available.

The compound was strictly under control 24 hours a day and this increased the medical work load. The hospital was always a very busy unit.

I was made the General Duties Sergeant with a second responsibility to "scrub up" and be an assistant in the Operating Theatre—I was involved in many operations.

During this time I experienced a lot of eye trouble and, funnily, my (future) wife Betty, who was an AAMWS, also had a bout of trachoma and so a mutual friendship developed. We got married in Melbourne when we were "on leave" from the Northern Territory in 1944. We





had a terrific life together and Betty always supported me in all my activities and raised four children with not much help from me, due to my many postings.

In 1945 the unit moved to Adelaide River (NT) to take over from 121 AGH but the RSM and myself, who both had over 3 years in the NT Force, were sent South for re-posting.

I was allotted to B.B.C.A.U. (*British Borneo Civil Affairs Unit*).

My eye problem stopped the posting and I was sent to Hay POW Group where we prepared for sending home the Japanese POW's. Each POW had to be medically examined and put on a check list. After 7 months at Hay, I took my discharge from the A.I.F..

From 1946 to '48 I went bus driving for Red Top Transport which were at Lakemba. They had a terrific fleet of busses at the time, with new AEC's and Whites.

In 1948 the Army wrote to me and asked would I consider coming back as they were forming the ARA. After some consideration I decided to re-join and found myself on the ARA Cadre of 1 Field Ambulance, which was part of 1 Armd Bde. and because I still had my heavy vehicle licence, I spent 3 months "ferrying" vehicles for the 12th/16th Hunter River Lancers.

I then attended the Senior Clerk's Administration Course at the Army Tech School at Ingleburn in July 1949, and in September of that year to the School of Army Health at Puckapunyal, Victoria.

In 1951 I was posted to 1 Fd Amb and later, as an Instructor, to the 19th National Service Bn. to train the NS men who would be allotted to Medical Units to complete their obligation.

Whilst here I received my Commission as Lieutenant.

Shortly after I was commissioned, I was posted to 5 Field Ambulance as the Adjutant and later, given the task to raise 1 FDS and 1 Gen Hospital.

I also qualified at No: 11 Parachute Course at Williamtown (in Port Stephens—north of Newcastle). It seemed at that time that the RAAMC were going to get a few vacancies for parachutists—it fizzled out due to lack of money.

Later, I changed from an ARA posting and took up a CMF posting as QM for 1 FDS and registrar at 1 Gen Hospital and then later, SOMS HQ 2 Div.

Whilst with the CMF I was re-employed by Red Top Transport as a reserve clerk and Company Public officer.

The company was eventually "taken over" so I re-joined the Army, full time, after an absence of 9 years.

I returned to the ARA in 1965 and was posted as SO 2 Ops HQ EComd to work on the raising of the Vietnam Force.

I went back as Adjutant to 1 Field Ambulance and then after 13 months was posted as SOMS HQ TAS Command, as Adjutant of 10 Field Ambulance, where I remained for 12 months.

I then returned to 2 Gen Hospital at Ingleburn as QM. Six months later I became SOMS HQ EComd where I stayed for 12 months.

I was then picked to join the Planning Team for ANZUK Force—so off to Singapore!

Singapore was a great posting. It was also a very busy posting.

All the Officers on the HQ were British, except for the four Australians.

We had to design postings and stores for a General Hospital (to look after families, as well), a minor care Hospital and some Medical Centres. Colonel Watson was the overseer for all this planning.

The Planning Team served on the British HQ and as well as getting to know all the Staff, I also had the opportunity to referee the local soccer teams at top level, as I had been refereeing in NSW and Tasmania.

When I returned to Australia I finished up on the National Soccer Federation as a referee and an Inspector and (now) a Life Member of the ASRF.

After nearly 2 years in Singapore, I returned to Sydney as SOMS EComd.

In 1975 I was picked as SO 1 to Medical HQ in Canberra under General Watson who was the DGAHS. This was a Lt Col posting but the new Labor Government "froze" all promotions to Lt Col and above, unless you had "passed" Staff College.

So, after a year, I saw what my DFRB was worth and then requested a discharge.

In 1976 I obtained a position at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital as the Equipment Officer when the new hospital was built.

When this was completed I went to Malaysia and set up the equipment tables for the new Teluc Intan Hospital, which at that time was the largest hospital in Malaysia.

During my lifetime a few activities gave me a lot of pleasure—like breeding Muscovy and Khaki Campbell ducks and growing dahlias for "show".

When I owned a boat I also thoroughly enjoyed my fishing and crabbing.

After all this time "charging around" I am now content tending my garden.

*(With kind thanks to our good friend, John, for sharing a part of your life for us.)*



## History of the Victoria Cross



The Victoria Cross was born in the carnage of the Crimean War, even though hostilities had ceased a good twelve months before the first award was made.

The Crimean Campaign was the first war to be covered by regular correspondents, especially by reporters as perceptive and critical as William Howard Russell of *The Times*. Under his scrutiny the errors of officers, their prejudices and rigid attitudes, did not go unnoticed. He reported the disgraceful shortages of proper clothing and equipment, the ravages of cholera and typhoid fever, which caused the deaths of 20,000 men against the 3,400 killed in battle during the war. He also reported for the first time the courage and endurance of the ordinary British soldier. When the infantry stormed the heights above the Alma River, when the 93rd formed the 'thin red line' at Balaklava, when the Heavy Brigade charged the Russian cavalry and the Light Brigade the guns, Russell watched and reported what he saw to the British public.

At the time, the most esteemed award for military prowess in the British Army was the Order of the Bath, but the Bath was awarded only to senior officers. Junior officers and even NCOs might win promotion in the field - or 'brevet rank', as this kind of promotion was called. It was also possible to win distinction by being mentioned in the general's despatches, but at the outset of the war most of these honours were given to staff officers immediately under the general's eye and very rarely to the officers actually engaged in front-line action. The common soldier might expect a campaign medal, but this would be issued to every man who took part in the war, whether he had fought bravely or not. To remedy this situation the Distinguished Conduct Medal was instituted for NCOs and privates in 1854. This medal carried a pension and was highly valued but there was a growing awareness of the need for a decoration which would be open to all, regardless of rank and which would more fairly reflect the individual gallantry of men in the front line.



The British sense of fair play and a genuine admiration for gallant behaviour certainly played a part in the decision to institute a new award, but there may also have been an element of cynicism. Medals are a potent incentive to courage in battle, but they are also cheap.

The French, our allies in the Crimea, already had the *Legion d'Honneur* (first instituted by Napoleon in 1803) and the *Medaille Militaire*. The Russians and the Austrians also had awards for gallantry regardless of rank, and it was high time that the British followed suit. In December 1854 an ex-naval officer turned Liberal MP, Captain Thomas Scobell, put a motion before the House of Commons that an 'Order of Merit' should be awarded to 'persons serving in the army or navy for distinguished and prominent personal gallantry.... and to which every grade and individual from the highest to the lowest.... may be admissible'.

The same idea had also occurred to the Secretary of State for War, the Duke of Newcastle. In January 1855 he wrote to Prince Albert (Queen Victoria's husband), reminding him of an earlier conversation. The Duke suggested 'a new decoration open to all ranks'. 'It does not seem to me right of politic,' he wrote, 'that such deeds of heroism as the war has produced should go unrewarded by any distinctive mark of honour because they are done by privates or officers below the rank of major.... The value attached by soldiers to a little bit of ribbon is such as to render any danger insignificant and any privation light if it can be attained.' On 29 January the Duke followed up his letter by announcing the new award in a speech in the House of Lords. At about the same time an official memorandum on the subject was circulated within the War Office setting out the details of a cross to be awarded for 'a signal act of valour in the presence of the enemy'.



Events might have progressed quite quickly if Newcastle had not lost his job within a few days of this speech. But interest had been aroused. Lord Panmure, the new Secretary of State for War, corresponded with Prince Albert on the subject and the Queen herself was actively involved in the proposals. In a letter to Panmure Albert made pencil alterations to the draft warrant, which arose from his discussions with the Queen. It had already been decided that the award should carry her name, but the Civil Service's proposal was clumsy and long-winded: 'the Military Order of Victoria', Albert put his pencil through this and suggested 'the Victoria Cross'. Throughout the document, wherever the word 'Order' with its overtones of aristocratic fraternity occurred, Albert applied his pencil. 'Treat it as a cross granted for distinguished service,' he noted, 'which will make it simple and intelligible.'

Queen Victoria took a great interest in her new award, especially in the design of the Cross. When the first drawings were submitted to her, she selected one closely modelled on an existing campaign medal, the Army Gold Cross from the Peninsular War. The Queen suggesting only that it should be 'a little smaller'. She also made a significant alteration to the motto, striking out 'for the brave' and substituting 'for valour', in case anyone should come to the conclusion that the only brave men in a battle were those who won the cross.

Lord Panmure took the commission for the new medal to a firm of jewellers, Hancock's of Bruton Street, who had a high reputation for silver work. From the beginning, however, it had been decided that the new





decoration would be made of base metal and the first proof which the Queen received was not at all to her taste. 'The Cross looks very well in form, but the metal is ugly; it is copper and not bronze and will look very heavy on a red coat'.



Inspired perhaps by the Queen's remarks, someone had the happy thought that it would be fitting to take the bronze for the new medals from Russian guns captured in the Crimea. Accordingly, an engineer went off to Woolwich Barracks, where two 18-pounders were placed at his disposal. Despite the fact that these guns were clearly of antique design and inscribed with very un-Russian characters, nobody pointed out until many years had passed that the 'VC guns' were in fact Chinese, not Russian, and may or may not have been anywhere near the Crimea.

The Chinese gunmetal proved so hard that the dies which Hancock's used began to crack up, so it was decided to cast the medals instead, a lucky chance which resulted in higher relief and more depth in the moulding than would have been possible with a die-stamped medal.

By the spring of 1856 the Order was in hand, but there followed months of dilly-dallying on the part of Panmure and the various departments concerned, while they sorted out who would be eligible for the new award. Boards of adjudication were set up by the Admiralty and the army, but they took a long time making up their minds. Some commanding officers seized upon the opportunity to bring distinction to their regiments by putting dozens of names forward to the selection boards. Others ignored the whole thing. So while the 77th Regiment put forward no fewer than thirty-eight candidates, six regiments offered none at all. Lord Panmure declared that awards should be limited to the present hostilities, the Crimean Campaign. A rather parsimonious pension of £10 a year to each recipient was finally agreed upon, and the slow process of adjudication ground on for a full twelve months.



The Queen made it plain to Lord Panmure that she herself wished to bestow her new award on as many of the recipients as possible. The 26 June 1857 was chosen by the Queen as a suitable day, and that a grand parade should be laid on in Hyde Park and that she would 'herself' attend on horseback.

Preparations for the great day were made in something of a hurry. The final list of recipients was not published in the *London Gazette* until 22 June, and Hancock's had to work around the clock to engrave the names of the recipients on the Crosses. Those destined to receive the award had somehow to be found and rushed up to London, together with detachments of the units in which they had served. But because of the earlier delays some of the candidates for the Cross had left the services and were therefore not in uniform when they arrived for the ceremony. Nevertheless, the Queen herself was well satisfied with the arrangements.

Queen Victoria caused some consternation by electing to stay on horseback though the ceremony of awarding the sixty-two recipients with the Cross. There is a pleasing legend that the Queen, leaning forward from the saddle like a Cossack with a lance, stabbed one of the heroes, Commander Raby, through the chest. The commander, true to the spirit in which he had won the Cross, stood unflinching while his sovereign fastened the pin through his flesh. The other sixty-one seem to have come through the occasion uninjured. The Queen managed to pin on the whole batch in just ten minutes, which does not suggest lengthy conversation, but the whole parade went off extremely well to the rapturous applause of the public.



Prince Albert's influence was clearly expressed in the terms of the Royal Warrant for the Cross which has survived, with some alterations, to the present day. It was a medal awarded 'to those officers or men who have served Us in the presence of the Enemy and shall then have performed some signal act of valour or devotion to their country'. Far from striking the public as something with which to 'find fault', the new award was greeted with great enthusiasm by the British people.

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### POEM

(Author unknown ~ with kind thanks to Estelle Lindsay)

### “SOMEBODY’S MOTHER”

*The woman was bent and ragged and grey,  
 and bent with the chill of a winter’s day.  
 The streets were white with a recent snow,  
 and the woman’s feet, with age, were slow.*

*At the crowded crossing she waited long,  
 jostled aside by the careless throng  
 of human beings who passed her by,  
 unheeding the glance in her anxious eye.*

*Down the street with laughter and shout,  
 glad in the freedom of “school let out”,  
 come happy boys like a flock of sheep,  
 hailing the snow piled white and deep;  
 past the woman so old and grey,  
 hastened the children on their way.*

*None offering a helping hand to her,  
 so weak and tired, afraid to stir  
 lest the carriage wheels or the horse’s feet,  
 should trample her down on the slippery street.*

*At last, came out of the merry troop,  
 the gayest boy of all the group.  
 He paused beside her and whispered low—  
 “I’ll help you across, if you wish to go.”*

*Her aged hand on his strong young arm,  
 she placed, and so without hurt or harm  
 he guided the trembling feet along—  
 proud that his own were young and strong.  
 Then back again to his friends he went  
 his young heart happy and well content.*

*“She’s somebody’s mother, boys, you know,  
 for all she’s aged and poor and slow,  
 and someone, sometime, may lend a hand  
 to help my mother—you understand?  
 If she’s ever poor and old and grey,  
 and her own dear boy is far away.”*

*‘Somebody’s mother’ bowed low her head,  
 in her home that night, and the prayer she said  
 was “God, be kind to that noble boy,  
 who is somebody’s son, and pride and joy.”*

*Faint was the voice, and worn and weak,  
 but the father hears when his children speak.  
 Angels caught the faltering word  
 and ‘Somebody’s mother’s’ prayer was heard.*

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# AUSSIE POEM

*(Author unknown—sent to me by an email friend)*

*The sun was hot already, it was only 8 o'clock,  
the "cocky" took off in his 'ute to go and check his stock.  
He drove around the paddocks checking wethers, ewes and lambs,  
the float valves in the water troughs, the windmills on the dams.*

*He stopped and turned a windmill on to fill a water tank  
and saw a ewe down in the dam, a few yards from the bank.  
"Typical bloody sheep, he thought, they've got no bloody sense,  
they won't go through a gateway but they'll jump a bloody fence."*

*The ewe was stuck down in the mud, he knew without a doubt  
she'd stay there 'till she carked it if he didn't get her out.  
But when he reached the water's edge, the startled ewe broke free  
and in her haste to get away, began a swimming spree.*

*He reckoned once her fleece was wet, the weight would drag her down  
and if he didn't rescue her, the stupid sod would drown.  
Her style was unimpressive, her survival chances slim,  
he saw no other option, he would have to take a swim.*

*He peeled his singlet and shirt off, his trousers, boots and socks  
and as he couldn't stand wet clothes, he also shed his jocks.  
He jumped into the water and away that cocky swam,  
he caught up with her, somewhere near the middle of the dam.*

*The ewe was quite evasive, she kept giving him the slip,  
he tried to grab her sodden fleece but couldn't get a grip.  
At last he got her to the bank and stopped to catch his breath,  
she showed him little gratitude for saving her from death.*

*She took off like a Bondi tram around the other side,  
he swore next time he caught that ewe he'd hang her bloody hide.  
'Round and 'round the dam they ran, although he felt quite puffed,  
he still thought he could run her down, she must be nearly stuffed.*

*The local stock rep came along, to pay a call that day.  
He knew this bloke was on his own, his wife had gone away.  
He didn't really think he'd get fresh scones for morning tea,  
but nor was he prepared for what he was about to see.*

*He rubbed his eyes in disbelief at what came into view,  
for running down the catchment came this frantic looking ewe,  
and on her heels in hot pursuit and wearing not a stitch,  
the farmer yelling wildly.."Come back here, you lousy bitch!"*

*The stock rep didn't hang around, he took off in his car.  
Now the cocky's reputation has been damaged near and far,  
So bear in mind the Work Safe rule when next you check your flocks  
Spot the hazard, assess the risk, AND always wear your jocks!*

-----



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- ☐ Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ RAAMC Centenary “Coin and Token” set/s @ \$25 each.
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**(Please make any Cheques/Money Orders etc payable to:- “5<sup>th</sup> 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 — All acknowledgements in next issue. EFT details are: BSB: 637000, ACCOUNT NUMBER: 717253825, A/C Name: 5<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance Association, BANK: Greater Building Society. (Please Identify your name))**

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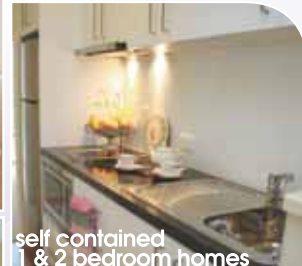
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