# "SAPPER SUMMIT"

*RAE CORPS NEWSLETTER*

**VICTORIAN ENGINEERS**

*May 2004* *ISSN 1325 – 7676* *Number 46*


## SUBS DUE

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## ROB YOUL'S COLUMN: "ANZAC DAY 2004"

Before the big day, I heard Major General David McLachlan interviewed on ABC Radio. He discussed the popularity of the pilgrimage to Gallipoli, its security implications, his own desire to go to Turkey, and how he himself would spend Anzac Day in Melbourne.

His program: a dawn service, reviewing the marchers at The Shrine, then the football. And he always ended it over dinner with the Turkish sub-branch of the RSL. I was delighted at this tradition. It would be a good dinner too! The Turkish cuisine is rich and delicious!

Early in May an Australian friend, John Dyett, a long-time New York resident, rang. He had travelled in Turkey in the early seventies and loved it, learning then of Kemal Ataturk, the Gallipoli commander, and his later central role in the evolution of modern Turkey.

John of course knew well Ataturk's superbly generous speech, made I think in the late 1920s at a ceremony to mark the Gallipoli campaign, and today finely carved into a wall near Anzac Cove:

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives, you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours. You, the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

My mate attends NYC consular functions from time to time, and for some years he'd been suggesting the Consul include this quote in his Anzac service. This year the Consul did so; an action that deeply moved the Turkish service attaches who were present.

Why not spread this practice; make it a feature of every commemoration at home? I've used this quote in a couple of Anzac speeches and it amazes, delights and humbles people. It certainly reflects well on Turkey and reminds us how we can forge firm friendships from the bitterness of war.

Would there be something similarly public and elevated from Vietnam? We also have an excellent relationship with the pragmatic people of that country, despite the ten years we fought there in the 1960s and 70s.

*  *  *  *  *

A couple of days after writing the above, John sent me the New York Anzac Day Commemoration Service program, and I found it very interesting. It's always held on the Sunday nearest Anzac Day in the ANZAC Memorial Garden, British Empire Building, Rockefeller Centre, and it intimately involves the Australian and New Zealand diplomatic corps.

After the three national anthems – the Star Spangled Banner is the third – came a short homily, a bible reading and The Recessional. Prayers followed briefly, then messages from the Australian and NZ prime ministers. The Turkish Deputy Consul General then read from Kemal Ataturk's speech at the inauguration of the Commonwealth Military Graves Memorial at Gallipoli in 1934.

The Australian Ambassador to the UN contributed a requiem, followed by his NZ counterpart, who recited *For the Fallen*, Laurence Binyon's familiar poem. A minute's silence, with bugler assisting, and a benediction ended the ceremony. The Australian American Association and the Kiwi Club of New York sponsored refreshments afterwards at the Australian Consulate.

Finally, the ANZAC Memorial Garden stems from the efforts of Nola Luxford-Dohlberg, born in Hawkes Bay around 1900, and a resident of and presumably an actress in Hollywood. Her broadcasts from the US were well known in NZ, and during World War II she ran the Anzac Club in New York, which hosted some 35 000 Australasian servicemen and women passing through the US. At the same time she created a garden of remembrance at the Rockefeller Centre, with a blue reflecting pool symbolizing the Pacific, and two small garden beds for Australia and NZ, which was opened in 1941 by Peter Fraser, NZ's then Prime Minister.

Nola Luxford-Dohlberg died in 1994, aged 98 years.

I was in New Zealand this Anzac Day. I've been there several times since 1970, visited most parts, met lots of great people, had some really good times and a few slightly bad ones, and I love it!

My son and I were staying in Hastings, Hawkes Bay, with a Kiwi friend: a farmer, tree grower, contractor, columnist and occasional broadcaster. He also has a more than passing interest in military history, probably stimulated by his childhood on a soldier settlement farm, and the fact that he was head prefect of Napier Boys High School, which included a VC winner amongst its former students.

STORKEY, Percy Valentine (1891-1969) b. Napier. Served as a colour-sergeant with the Wellington Regiment while a law student, before World War I. He was with the 19th Battalion of the Australian Imperial Forces in France when he won the Victoria Cross in April 1918. Lieutenant Storkey led ten men in an attack on German machine-gun installations, killing or wounding about 30 and capturing 53.

(Despite the obvious differences in topography, culture, accent, industry and quality of fish and chips [theirs are superb!], our two countries have so many tantalising similarities. And it's a very friendly place. I feel sure we'll have a much closer economic and currency union within two decades. From that regional level to the domestic, whenever I'm on Ewan's farm I'm overwhelmingly reminded of Victorian soldier settlement properties.)

In 1931, a severe earthquake devastated Hastings and Napier, but thrust up thousands of hectares of new coastal land around the latter – very useful now for farming, recreation, housing and infrastructure (major roads, the airport and busy timber and woodchip port). Moreover, the town centres and some suburbs were rebuilt in the latest styles of the era: Art Deco and Spanish Mission.

In the sixties and seventies, these 1930s buildings were gradually being demolished and replaced with *you-can-imagine-what-sort-of-crap*! Fortunately some of the locals rebelled. With a bit of research they found that their familiar streetscapes were of world standard, and of great interest to lovers of urban design. Our host's brother was one of these campaigners, and is the present CEO of Napier's Art Deco Trust. He was recently honoured through the New Zealand equivalent of the Order of Australia.

Thanks to the Trust, Napier is recognised worldwide, and tourism is booming. Main streets of New Zealand towns overall are well maintained, and gleam with bright paint jobs, but Napier is a gem, with its hill, sub-tropical street trees, and handsome buildings, generally in pastel colours with the characteristic Art Deco geometric patterns boldly picked out.

Hastings, 25 kilometres south, is the quiet achiever – some credit must go to local politicians, one of whom is Ewan's partner, the deputy mayor. Prosperity comes especially from fruit growing and food processing – Watties was founded here during World War II. Hastings has some pleasing Spanish Mission structures, especially the concert hall. New wineries and olive groves are everywhere, for the climate is probably the most Mediterranean in the country – much more like southern Australia – dry summers and mild winters.

New Zealand's perception of Anzac Day is changing, just as in Australia, with great media attention and increased participation by young people. Every town has its memorial and commemorative activities. *Hawkes Bay Today* had a remarkable and beautifully presented supplement telling numerous individual stories of World War I servicemen.

We went to the dawn service at Napier in the sound shell on the beach. Every day, dawn's rays hit Gisborne – 150 kilometres north – some three minutes before they reach Napier. There's no one much between Hawkes Bay and the International Date Line, so we had almost the first Anzac rituals in the world, certainly thrashing Oakleigh South by over two hours!

Although technically not a veteran, I had my couple of long service medals on, and joined the marchers for the 200-metre tramp along the foreshore. New Zealand's last World War I soldier died recently in a Hawkes Bay home, so there was no one from that era. There were World War II blokes of course, and men who'd been in Korea, Vietnam and on UN service – just as we get at home. Moreover there was a well turned out group of Territorials – the New Zealand Reserve – and several serving soldiers and sailors. The lemon-squeezer hat is back, though not universal, and looks great.

As a log ship passed offshore – possibly from Japan - in the dark behind the lectern I noticed two or three men, including a young Australian major, looking smart in slouch hat, service dress, Sam Browne, and UN medals. The ex-serviceman leading the service welcomed everyone, then said something like, "We mustn't forget the other half of the Anzac partnership. Are you there, Bill?" Bill, who turned out to be the Australian major, said "Yes!" The service leader continued immediately with the service, whereas I felt a more enlightening acknowledgement should have been made. The legacy of the Chappell brothers? (So we should ensure we acknowledge New Zealand in our services, especially as there are so many Kiwis resident here!)

Otherwise the service was exceedingly like ours: a padre; a terrific speech by a retired senior regular officer whose career spanned Malaysia, Vietnam and the eighties and nineties; Christian prayers; a fine bugler; a minute's silence; and so on … but no Anzac poem. (I only just realised this difference as I wrote my column. And in my short experience, wreaths don't seem to be as important as here.)

It was soon over and we marched off and fell out, the three of us repairing to the Hastings Services Club for a rum or squash, and a look at the wall displaying New Zealand's VC winners. Later we passed a big midday service at Havelock North, and visited a rural war memorial at Waipawa, with its captured German gun from World War I, and the usual long list of names of local men who went away. Just like an Australian country town!

A day later, we were at Waiouru at the fascinating New Zealand Military Museum, in the tussock grasslands of 'The Desert,' just below Mount Ruapehu, which unfortunately was wreathed in cloud. Waiouru is New Zealand's Puckapunyal, deliberately selected for its remoteness, climatic extremes, steep slopes and psychological impact on recruits.

Amongst the interesting things I learned were: at the start of World War I, New Zealand sent a naval expeditionary force to seize German colonies in the Pacific like Samoa, just as Australia did; New Zealand forces occupied Norfolk Island in World War II; the country seems to have had even more citizens in uniform than we did on a *per capita* basis; the World War I contingent was called the First Division; in the next war, the strain caused by maintaining the Second Division in North Africa and southern Europe meant that the Third Division, fighting in the Solomons, was brought home early and disbanded.

Even then, Monte Cassino left the Second Division severely depleted. Its war ended in Trieste, trading shots with Yugoslav irregulars.

The story of 19th century harbour defences in New Zealand is similar to ours – they had 'vanishing guns' too. The Maori Wars were very hard, with the fortified villages a real military challenge. There are small but well curated exhibits on Korea, Malaya and Vietnam, and UN work. The domestic and industrial side of both World Wars is also well covered, and the lives of Generals Freyberg VC and Kippenberger. Freyberg's body was said to be almost entirely scar tissue, he'd been wounded so often! The US forces had a big domestic impact too, with a 'Battle of Wellington' – just like the one we had in Brisbane!

However, there is little on Australia. (I'm an idealist!) I thought to myself, there's probably not much about New Zealand in the Australian War Memorial either. A friendly AWM historian confirmed this on my return, although there have been occasional exhibitions highlighting some aspects of our joint campaigns. I urge both museums

to look again at this arena, to recognise our collective heritage, astonishing efforts, the many times we've been side-by-side and the likelihood that we'll be increasingly close in future.
... *Rob Youl.*

## ANZAC DAY PARADES

## OAKLEIGH BARRACKS

As usual there was a good attendance at the Dawn Service at Oakleigh Barracks and 22 Regt maintained their usual high standard in provision of an excellent Catafalque Party and Guard, supported by the traditional piper in full uniform. The Padre, Trevor Cox led the service. Unfortunately attendance by returned members and family supporters was not as numerous as last year, but we feel sure it will pick up again in the future.

As reported elsewhere, serving members of the Regiment also provided guards and support at a number of ceremonies in various suburban and country centres.

The Address by Lt Col Stephen Bell, CO 22 Construction Regiment follows:

### ***Dawn Service Oakleigh 2004***
### ***-- Address by LtCol Stephen Bell***

We meet, at this bleak hour, on this day each year, to honour the heroism, tenacity, and resilience of that group of young men who's units were sent to Gallipoli, where, with equally raw young men from New Zealand, they joined British and French forces fighting in a campaign designed to shorten the war. The objectives were to open access to the Black Sea, relieve our ally Russia, bring the Balkans on to our side and prevent the Turks from entering the European theatre.

It was a grand plan premised however on poor understanding of the overwhelming numerical strength, the bravery and tactical advantages held by the Turks, which ultimately prevented allied success. Total allied Gallipoli casualties, including French and naval forces, were 33,000 killed, 78,000 wounded and 8,000 missing. Of these, Australians made up 8,500 killed and more than 19,000 wounded.

The shock news of these casualties, far from weakening this country's resolve at that time, actually served to strengthen it, for the recruiting rate increased for this all-volunteer force. Filtering back to Australia with the news of horrific casualties, were the stories of Anzac heroism from all sources. The British were amazed at the toughness, tenacity and resilience of our untried soldiers; from the French, from the navies involved, and from our own war correspondents like Bean and Murdoch, from war artists like George Lambert, and not least, from the enemy themselves.

The way these Anzacs bore the brunt of the fight in the Dardanelles stirred in Australians everywhere a new feeling of camaraderie, a feeling that matched the way in which the rest of the world suddenly began to look at Australia – not just as an offshoot of Britain, but as an independent nation of a very independent character.

And this view of ourselves, and the world's view of us, continues today, thanks, to that spirit forged at Gallipoli. We must not ever forget, though, what that spirit demanded; or the lives those men gave in the name of our nation. We must resolve anew that we will make this nation, Australia, into one worthy of their sacrifice.

My generation appreciates what it is like: what demands were made, not only on our servicemen and women, but on the home front, too. And we know in our bones how easily it could happen again, and how quickly the situation could arise – and how suddenly this country could be at the mercy of an aggressor. And then, if we treasure our freedom, our civil liberties, our free speech – our very lives, in fact – then we will all need that spirit of Anzac. We must never let it die.

This is also a day of thanks and quiet reflection on what a wonderful, lucky nation we live in. It is a time to reflect on Australia's commitment to continue to contribute to peace in other parts of the world. We cannot isolate ourselves and ignore these responsibilities. In a perfect world there would be no wars, no aggression and no requirement to maintain Defence forces. Unfortunately this is not a perfect world and there are more areas of conflict than ever before. Where necessary, to preserve the peace in our region or elsewhere in the world, we must be prepared to deploy our forces to fight for or protect the rights of our neighbours and our own nation.

As we live in a democracy we must always remember that the government makes these decisions, not by the Defence force. In reality these decisions are made by the Australian people, by you and me. We elect the government to represent us and to make those decisions to defend us. This is an enormous responsibility and one, which we must never forget. We, therefore, share the burden and we must never lay the blame on our Defence forces for being deployed on operations. Historians will argue about the rights and wrongs of these political decisions, as they should. However, our forces have merely gone where the country has ordered them to go. They have distinguished themselves in every theatre by their professionalism and their compassion. No one can or should demand more than that.

Some say this day glorifies war, but every veteran will be the first to say that their greatest wish and

most fervent prayer is that their children and this nation may never have to witness the horrors of war again. We must never forget that Northern Australia has already been subjected to war and that both service personnel and civilians have been killed in these actions on their home soil. Let us pray that this is never repeated.

As the ranks of our veterans continue to diminish, let us be determined to maintain this special day. To recognise the futility of war but to acknowledge that we must be prepared to defend our freedom and those of other nations as history is filled with peaceful nations being subjected to aggression.

Should threats develop in the future, let us pray that the Australian people have the same courage and resolve as our forebears to keep this great, very special nation of ours free and that we remain committed to contributing to peace throughout the world.

## RINGWOOD

4 CER were represented by a large contingent of particularly well turned out serving members in the March in Melbourne, and the commentators for the Channel 2 broadcast made a comprehensive but unfortunately not entirely correct report on 4 CER when they were on screen during the march. See also the 4 CER Unit report on page 7.

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# COMING EVENTS

## WATERLOO DINNER

This year's Officers Waterloo Dinner will be held on Saturday 26 June.

Pre-dinner drinks are from 1830hrs at the Oakleigh Barracks.

At 2000hrs, the group will move by Unit transport to the **Clayton RSL**, Carinish Rd, Clayton.

Coffee, cheese & biscuits will follow the meal at the RSL for 30 to 60 minutes. Transport will be available for the return to the Oakleigh Mess.

- Cost is $55.00
- The RSVP date is 1 June (*or when you get this issue of Sapper Summit)*
- Book with the Corps Treasurer, Capt Nicholas Dennington on 9870 7073.

See the Old Sappers report for details of their forthcoming Waterloo Dinner.

***Thanks to Bob Eaton for forwarding us his copies of the first 14 issues of Sapper Summit. This fills a gap in our records. Barry Atkinson also lent us some of the issues to copy.***

## RESERVE FORCES DAY MARCH 4 JULY 2004

The 2004 Reserve Forces Day Parade will be held in Melbourne on Sunday 4th July from 1100hrs. See the flyer page for details.

## SIR CLIVE STEELE LECTURE

The Sir Clive Steele Lecture format has changed this year. It is a great opportunity to catch up with the latest Army survey systems.

It is on Saturday 17 July at the Oakleigh Barracks, and includes lunch, a display and 2 speakers. See the flyer page for details.

**Reminder**
**The RAE Corps Officers Golf Day 2004**
at The Royal Melbourne Golf Club.

Keep **Friday 15 October** free.

If you need more details before the next issue, please contact Capt Bill McAuley on (03) 5489 3218 or Mobile 0428 486 018.

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## SAPPER SUMMIT SUPPORT

The RAE (Vic) Historical and Heritage Committee produces Sapper Summit four times a year. Our deadlines for articles for the remaining 2004 issues are:

- August issue by 13 August
- November issue by 29 October

We are looking for news items, suggestions, letters to the editor, etc, including any constructive criticisms. For the next issue, send them to:

Bruce Campbell on Tel: 9568 0320 or 5974 1685
email: bandbcampbell@optusnet.com.au

***Note that articles or opinions of authors or contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Committee. The format and clarity of the articles is the responsibility of the contributor.***

# NEWS FROM THE UNITS

## 22 CONST REGT

Overall, it has been a busy start to the year, with an influx of new ARA staff and both Squadrons starting the year at a high pace. This started with AFX in February at SME, the Home of the Sappers.

The unit worked in excessively hot and humid conditions to train up in bridging and CBRND, while other members were involved in training or gaining additional codes for plant and Macks. Here is what the Sqn's have been up to since AFX:

**39 Construction Squadron:**

In March, we revised IMT at Sale, rehearsing section level formations and attacks, with Squadron Headquarter staff providing a training enemy. The weekend was completed with an F89 and F88 qualification shoot. April was very busy, with rehearsals for Anzac Day. On Anzac Day, our members supported seven RSLs and ten commemoration services. A truly outstanding community effort with support to Newborough, Moe, Morwell, Traralgon Yarram, Mirboo North and Yinnar. We look forward to continuing our close relationships with our local communities, and expect even more demand for our support next year. Three members from 39 Construction Squadron participated in Exercise Thylacine, an adventurous training activity in Tasmania, walking the challenging route to Federation Peak from Lake Pedder. A gaze into the crystal ball for the near future sees members from 39 Construction Squadron gaining additional civilian accredited skills at TAFE in June and consolidation of our IMT skills combined with a Demolitions practice.

LT Lindon GOODSON was recently deployed to the Solomon Islands to work as a Facilities Manager as part of Operation ANODE. LT GOODSON was the Plant/ Transport Troop Commander, and has been deployed for several months.

**105 Construction Squadron**

Over a four day period, 5 Mar – 8 Mar 04, in a joint venture with Parks Victoria and the Woodpeckers Association, 105 Const Sqn conducted watermanship training and minor repair works on the Snake Island jetty which was originally constructed by 91 Forestry Sqn in 1981.

Over the past two decades the pier has suffered the effects of severe erosion. The repair work included jetty abutment reinforcement and improvement to the pier. Both Parks Victoria and Woodpeckers were very appreciative of the support provided by 105 and was found to be a valuable exercise for the Squadron, opening the opportunity to extend our relationship with the ex-members further throughout the year.

During April, 105 Const Sqn conducted a range shoot in the Puckapunyal Military Area. Members had the opportunity to fire the 40mm Grenade Launcher Attachment, 84mm Carlgustav anti-armour weapon, throw the F1 grenade and brush up on F88 and F89 marksmanship skills.

Our ANZAC day commitments were extensive again this year with soldiers participating in activities for the Oakleigh Rotary Club, Oakleigh/Carnegie RSL, Philip Island RSL and the Oakleigh Barracks dawn service. All events were well received.

The Squadron will be completing maintenance on all the vehicles and equipment over May in preparation for the Winters Construction Exercises, where we will be completing various task for Units.

Overall, 22 Const Regt would like to welcome all new march-ins to the units, and invite all personnel interested to the Sir Clive Steele lecture on Sat 17 Jul 04, which will be a two-course luncheon, followed by refreshments in the Mess.

## Exercise Thylacine 2004 – (22 Construction Regiment)

On Wednesday and Thursday 14/15 April, 8 members (7 PT and 1 FT), in two chalks departed Oakleigh Barracks to transit Bass Straight on the Tor Futura (a Denmark merchant vessel) and the MV Victorian Achiever. Both ships belong to the Toll Shipping Group.

The two parties regrouped at Lake Pedder on the Friday morning, in Tasmania's southwest, and began the 50km trek towards Federation Peak. Federation Peak is said to be the most spectacular peak in Tasmania and the most challenging peak in Australia. Although it is not the highest, it dominates South West World Heritage Area and for many hikers, reaching its summit is the ultimate goal. Federation Peak is surrounded by cliffs, stands in one of the worst weather regions of Tasmania, and is approached along what many say is the most gruelling walk in Australia. What better place for an Adventure Training exercise.

Battling through the rain and leach infested mud the party hiked through relentless swamplands. The end of each day's hiking was meet with total relief. Whilst the southwest is well known to be wet and inhospitable the group was relatively comfortable, being well equipped by the SLG-Puckapunyal Adventure Training Store. One member did however run into difficulties. "The main problem with trekking in the South West is that your feet are constantly wet", said WO2 Chris Reeves. "One of our party retired early due to a loss of a number of toenails".

The remaining members ascended from the Arthur Plain at a relative height above sea level of 250m to the backbone of the Quartzite East Arthur Range at 1100m. A particularly physical climb, being steep and muddy, with tree roots and branches to contend with. Camping up on the range was made pleasant; as Parks Tasmania had constructed several excellent raised campsites with running water. The sensitive nature of the alpine wilderness at that

# SAPPER SUMMIT -- Issue 46 (May 2004) -- EVENTS COMING UP

***This flyer covers 4 events:***

- ***The Reunion at Ringwood Depot on Saturday 3 July.***
- ***The Reserve Forces Day March on 4 July***
- ***The Sir Clive Steele Lecture on 17 July 2004***
- ***The 22 Regt Serving & Former Members Get-together at Paynesville on 22 / 24 October.***

*WANTED*

**All RAE Current and former Members plus RAE Supporter Members, and Partners**

*Come to the RAE Reunion & CORPS Birthday Celebrations*

**Date: Saturday 03 July 2004 ---Timing: 7.30pm onwards.**

**Location: Engineer Depot, 56 Dublin Road, Ringwood East**

*Cost: $10.00 per person or $18.00 per couple.*

*Includes: Raffle / snacks / drinks at bar prices & a slice of birthday cake.*

*A Great night to catch up with old and new friends*

Pre-bookings: Margaret on 9879 2986 voice mail; or Jenko on 9733 0497.

## RESERVE FORCES DAY MARCH -- 4 JULY 2004

The 2004 Reserve Forces Day Parade will be held in Melbourne on Sunday 4th July. As in 2003, the assembly point will be in St Kilda Road, near the Queen Victoria Gardens, just south of Princes Bridge. *2004 is the 150th anniversary of the formation of the Melbourne Volunteer Rifle Regiment – we have 150 years of the Reserve in Victoria.*

- Assembly time is 1100 hrs, for march off at 1130 hrs. Meet at the Engineers (OSA) banner.
- The March will conclude with a short service and wreath laying ceremony at the Shrine forecourt.
- After the March, all Sappers are invited to move to Bells Hotel, corner Morray St and Coventry St, South Melbourne for lunch.
- Mark the date in your diary and help the RAE put on another good show.
- *For further information, ring Bruce Campbell on 9568 0320 or 5974 1685.*

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## SIR CLIVE STEELE LECTURE

The Sir Clive Steele Memorial Lecture is an opportunity for Defence Force Engineers and civilian counterparts to gather together on an annual basis. You will hear keynote addresses on a current topic in the engineering field and to unite counterparts from the ADF and civilian employment.

This year we are trying a daytime lecture, coupled with lunch and a display. The day will commence with a display of survey equipment from the 1800s to today and current Royal Australian Engineers capability. The luncheon will be a two-course meal with refreshments. The details are:

**Date:** Saturday 17th July 2004 **Location:** Oakleigh Barracks – 1318 North Rd, Oakleigh South.

**Timings:**

1030 Display
1230 Luncheon
Luncheon Speaker – Major T. Lord
***United Nations Surveying in Eritrea and Ethiopia***
1400 Sir Clive Steele Memorial Lecture
Speaker -- Colonel D. Swiney
***A History of Surveying in the ADF***
1500 Happy Hour, Officers Mess

**Cost:** $15 per person.
Cheque Payment to:
22 Construction Regiment Regimental Funds
**Dress:** Neat Casual
**RSVP:** By 2nd July 2004
Capt Edward Plant, (03) 9550 3900
or edward.plant@defence.gov.au

**22 REGIMENT**
**SERVING AND FORMER MEMBERS**
**GET-TOGETHER**
**WEEKEND 22– 24 OCTOBER 2004**

*From Jenny Eaton:*
Well it has finally come together and I am pleased to advise that we can be accommodated in one spot and catered for also.
The Lakes Entrance RSL will be looking after us for the weekend and I have been able to arrange some great deals for us for the weekend.
Here are the details:

**Accommodation**: Cost per night for both Friday and Saturday:

| | |
|---|---|
| Single Room | $45 |
| Double | $54 |
| Triple | $67.50 |
| Quad room | $81 |

(Lakes Entrance RSL Motel)
*(Other combinations are available please let me know and I will get back to you on pricing, they have one room that will sleep 9.)*

**Breakfast** if ordered when you book: $5 continental OR $9 full cooked

**Friday evening** – meet and great in the RSL members bar, meals available in dining area. We can arrange a catered meal if you like – let me know your preference.

**Saturday night dinner** at this stage estimated pricing will be about $22 including sherry and nibbles plus a three course meal, one soup, choice of three mains and choice of two desserts. More about this later.

**Sunday morning**- brunch about 0900 – 0930 approx cost $10 ea person fully cooked as well as fruit/cereal etc.

**Boat trip on the Saturday**: ***We have two options and it will be a numbers game***: For groups of 30 persons we get some great discounts so please nominate you preferred cruise and we will go with the one that gets the most votes to ensure we get the discounts.

1. Leaving from Lakes at 1100hrs sharp cruise around the Gippsland Lakes have lunch at the Metung Hotel with a two course meal arriving back in Lakes Entrance at 1500hrs. Normal cost is $38.50 group booking $33 including the meal.
2. Leaving from Lakes at 1400 sharp cruise around the Gippsland Lakes and arrive back in Lakes Entrance at 1630hrs Normal cost $29, group booking cost $20.90. No meal included in this one so bring a snack if you like you might get a cuppa or a drink on board.

All bookings for accommodation are to come back to me as the RSL have asked for it to be done this way for the group discounts they have given us.

*Regards Jenny Eaton*

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**22 REGIMENT SERVING AND FORMER MEMBERS**
**GET-TOGETHER**
**ATTENDANCE RETURN**

**RSVP by 10 Sept,** so that boat trip details can be finalised.
Include a $50 deposit & quote postal address for receipt.

From:
Name .....
Address ..... Phone No: .....
..... Email: .....

I/we will/ will not be attending the weekend Number Attending:_____

I/we will attend the following:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Friday 22nd October 2004 | Casual Night | Yes / No | |
| Saturday 23rd October 2004 | Boat cruise | Yes / No | Option **1 or 2** |
| Saturday 23rd October 2004 | Dinner | Yes / No | |
| Sunday 24th October 2004 | Brunch | Yes /No | |

I require accommodation to be booked as follows: (Circle)

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Friday Night: | Single | Double | Triple | Quad |
| Saturday Night: | Single | Double | Triple | Quad |

**Return to:**

Jenny Eaton
PO Box 95, Paynesville, 3880
Phone: 03 5156 0298
Fax 03 5156 6398
Email:
hiddentreasures@datafast.net.au

altitude necessitates the protection of areas where trekkers and climbers are likely to camp.

On day 5 the party hiked the final 5km to the base of Federation Peak. To give readers some idea of the difficult nature of the terrain the party took 4hrs to cover the 5km. Spr Damien Coulson recalls the final ascent, "We dropped packs and began the climb which only half of those that make it to the base ever complete. Some have even fallen to their deaths. Climbing the cold Quartzite, we plunged deeper into the thick fog, passing by crimson red lichen, giving the appearance of blood splattered across the rock. 200m later we arrived at the top, surrounded by pure white cloud". Federation Peak at 1225m.

The final two days were spent descending treacherous Moss Ridge (3km travelled in 8 hrs) and fighting our way through the relentless rain forest to our extraction point a further 25km from Federation Peak.

This exercise had all the hallmarks of the classic adventure training activity, challenging members both physically and mentally, not least the 600m drop to Lake Geeves below Federation Peak.

-- *Maj Filip Likar*

*Apologies – we had no room for the photos*

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## 4 CER

4 CER has been engaged in a variety of activities over what has proved to be quite an intense couple of months. At the beginning of the year induction training was held down at HMAS Cerberus. The induction training was designed to shake out the unit and provide training in some basic skills and to participate in some activities that we do not normally get an opportunity to train in such as ship survival.

March saw the Unit participate in its first weekend activity of the year. The march weekend saw 10 CES conducting a water point on Greytown range and participating in a demolition practice. 38 SPT SQN conducted infantry minor tactics training and were introduced to water points and water purification.

April saw the unit fully support ceremonial activities on Anzac day. The unit participated in a number of RSL dawn services supplying catafalque parties. The unit also provided over one hundred members to march in the city. This year the unit was very privileged to have the opportunity to march with the RAE Corps banner.

May had the unit focus on mobility. 10 CES worked hard and very successfully conducted medium girder bridge training during day and night. 38 SPT SQN conducted a variety of soldier skills primarily focussing on navigation. The weekend also saw the Commander 4 Brigade and the Commander 2 DIV visit the unit in the field. The Commander 2 Div was a most welcome visitor and he was very impressed with the work ethic demonstrated by the unit.

Also through out the whole period has seen plant troop work very hard. Apart from supporting unit activities they have also supported Puckapunyal range, RMC and the school of armour. They have been involved in a wide range of tasks from road maintenance to booming bridges to digging in targetry.

This period has also seen a number of members on posting from the unit. LCPL Carl Seccul has only just returned from a stint in the Solomon Islands where he was engaged as a plumber. Maj John Roberts has been posted to work in East Timor and is expected back at the end of the year. WO2 David Colligan has been posted to the UK on an exchange program and will be serving with the UK Army for a number of months.

The next couple of months see the unit conducting more bridging and demolition operations. This means a lot of hard work in the next couple of months, but the unit morale is very high and the sappers are looking forward to the challenges ahead.

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## THE NEW CO, 4 CER LT COL DAVID WESTPHALEN

Lieutenant Colonel David Westphalen was brought up and educated in the Adelaide foothills, and enlisted into the Army in January 1979. Upon graduation from the Officer Cadet School Portsea in 1984 he was commissioned as a Lieutenant, allocated to the Royal Australian Engineers and posted to 21st Construction Squadron.

Lieutenant Colonel Westphalen's subsequent Field Force/Land Command postings were in either Command or Operations staff positions, and were to 22nd Construction Squadron, 1st Field Squadron, RHQ 1st Construction Regtiment/1st Combat Engineer Regiment and to RHQ 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment. His Training Command postings have been as Second in Command/Executive Officer, Recruit Training Wing, 1st Recruit Training Battalion/Army Recruit Training Centre, Project Officer Centre for Army Lessons, Combined Arms Training and Development Centre and Observer/Trainer, Combat Training Centre Battle Command Wing. He has held staff appointments as the Garrison Engineer, HQ 4th Military District, Chief Engineer Central Victoria and the Staff Officer Grade Two, Soldier Career Management, Army Personnel Agency - Melbourne. Lieutenant Colonel Westphalen assumed command of the 4th Combat Engineer Regiment in December 2003.

Lieutenant Colonel Westphalen transferred to the Army Reserve in March 2001 and is currently

employed as the Technical and Environmental Services Manager at the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Alpine Resorts Management Board. He holds a Bachelor degree in Engineering, a Masters degree in Engineering Science and is a graduate of the Australian Command and Staff College.

He is married to Debra and they have one child, Elise (aged 11 years). Lieutenant Colonel Westphalen has many hobbies including Rugby Union (but only as a spectator these days), cross-country running (slowly), shooting, fishing, down hill skiing beer brewing and gardening. In his spare time he also runs a small commercial cattle business.

# ASSOCIATION REPORTS

## BLUE TONGUES GET TOGETHER MITCHELTON, 21-23 MAY 2004

A preliminary report on the annual Blue Tongues Get Together, held on the riverbank at Majors Creek at Mitchelton over the week-end 21-23 May indicates that this event was at least up to its usual standard of good fun for all.

These re-unions have been arranged over the last several years by three of the old stalwarts of 105, namely "Weeksie" (who is still serving), "Foxie" and "Mitch". These three veterans cover a continuous period of service in 105 since the mid 1970's and have a wealth of tales to tell, dating back almost to the time when 105 was christened the "Independent Squadron". Originally, these events concentrated on old members of 105, but now include all serving and retired members of 22 who want a quiet week-end of fun at a riverbank camp site. Members, family and friends are welcome to go for the full weekend, for a day, or just to drop in to say "G'day".

Our spy reports that, by lunch time on Saturday 22nd approx. 20 people had arrived on site, and more were still on the way. Tents were springing up on the riverbank and as usual the campfires and BBQs were well alight and the fishing lines dangling in the river, but at that time with no success. At that time George W. was the only serving member present, but there were representatives from many parts of Victoria, including Tatura area, Ballarat, Maffra, Melbourne and Wangaratta. It was good to see a few of the younger recent retirees, as well as the usual old timers.

We would hope to give this event publicity before the event in future, but if you need to know more, ring George Weekes on 5854 6419, or Bill Mitchell on 5721 7323.

## 22 REGIMENT SERVING AND FORMER MEMBERS GET-TOGETHER

**WEEKEND 22ND – 24TH OCTOBER 2004**

The late Peter Bloor had been the driving force behind the 22 Regiment's Annual Spring Get-Together. He organised last year's one at Myrtleford, but passed away before it occurred.

**This year, Jenny Eaton has taken over the event, and it will be held at Lakes Entrance--thanks for taking responsibility for arranging one of the most important events in the 22 Regt's calendar.** Jenny reports that arrangements have finally come together, but there are some options involved and she needs feedback from likely attendees. See the flyer in this issue.

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## 16/22 REGIMENT GET TOGETHER

**with Lt Col Tony Ernst, Thursday 15 July 2004**

We have received a letter from Tony Ernst, one time CO 16 Const Regt, (see letters to the editor). He will be in Melbourne in July and is asking that old RAE friends meet him for lunch at the East Malvern RSL Club about noon on Thursday 15 July. Tony is well remembered by the members of both 16 Regt, which he commanded, and 22 Regt, with whom he was associated over many years, as well as many other members of the Sapper family.

The RSL Club is located in Stanley Grose Drive, Malvern East, Melway Ref. Map 60, A 12.

To assist in catering arrangements it is requested that those proposing to attend phone one of the following:

Lt Bob Fitzwilliam, ph 9889 5791.
Capt David Eakins, ph 5253 2780.
Maj Bruce Campbell, ph 9568 0320 or 5974 1685.

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## RAE VIETNAM ASSOCIATION Anzac Day 2004

This year saw the unfurling of the Tunnel Rats banner displaying their logo of a large rat carrying a torch and pistol. How proud were the men marching behind their very own banner for the very first time. Usually they march behind the Royal Engineers Banner but some of them had got together to form a committee to organize the banner and getting all the permissions required from the various departments. These men deserve the honour of their own banner, as they were the men who ventured down the tunnels in Vietnam seeking out the enemy. The large crowds certainly showed their appreciation to all the veterans. Each year the crowds seem to be getting larger with a lot of younger people turning out to watch.

After the march and service at the Shrine, all RAE Vietnam Association veterans went to the Bedford Club (formerly the Turf Hotel) to catch up with their mates. This year we had members from all over Australia attending. The Victorian veterans made them most welcomed. All had great day.

*Regards,*
*Allan (Bluey) Rantall*

**Vietnam Vets – The New Tunnel Rats Banner.**

## WOODPECKERS RAE ASSOCIATION

My promised report from the last edition is not necessary as Rob Youl did a big brilliant job with a great report, etc on our Labour Day weekend with 105 Construction Squadron. *(To the Editor – I thought we all had the same deadline for copy. Given Rob's report I accept we don't!).* However, there will be more to come, that being, combined activities for the Woodys and 105. Maj. Mark Roberts has met with the Association Executive and we have determined, subject to the necessary approvals/endorsements, to "formalize" our relations. This could mean, for instance, we have a couple of joint activities per annum. The benefits arising would be younger serving sappers share with us oldies our past experiences and the oldies having an ongoing relevant relationship with the serving Army.

Watch this space as we and 105 go forward!

ANZAC Day saw only Bruce Morrison representing the WWII Forestry Companies. Bruce was much appreciative of the efforts made by 17 (all ranks) from 105 who acted as a banner party together with a Rats of Tobruk Piper. Also marching were a small representation of Woodys. Thank you to the guys and gals from 105. Hope

Jacko shouted you in the OR Mess the following Wednesday night.

RUMOUR – I've heard that from next year serving members eg. the 105 group, will not be permitted to march in uniform. If true . . . SHAME . . . SHAME.

Tragedy continues for some of our members. Peter Lind, a Snake Is veteran, was killed a few weeks ago in a car accident. Heather Whelan and her husband shortly thereafter survived a like event being seriously injured but are recovering – good wishes.

... *Michael Murray, President*

## OLD SAPPERS ASSOCIATION.

Association members participated in the Dawn Service at Oakleigh Barracks and theAnzac DayMarch in Melbourne.

Our Waterloo Dinner has been confirmed for Sunday 13 June at the Noble Park RSL at 1130 for 1200 hrs. Our guest speaker, Major General D. J. McLachlan AO, will talk on his visions for the future of the Victorian RSL.

All Sappers are welcome to attend the dinner, which is a three-course meal, costing $15.00 per head for members and partners and $18.00 per head for non-members. Drinks are at bar prices.

Those interested should contact our Secretary, Jim Crosling on 9438 2273 by 4 June. Inquiries re membership are always welcome on the same number.

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## RAE ASSOCIATION

The new Association Committee is vigorously chasing Members to renew subscriptions.

The Committee has also been liaising with the RAE Reunion Committee regarding amalgamation, with the Reunion Committee likely to become a Sub-Committee of the RAE Association.

The next Reunion will be Saturday, 3rd July at Dublin Road East Ringwood. ... see the flyer sheet.

... *Arthur Cale*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*From Lt Col Tony Ernst*

"Editor "Sapper Summit"

Sir,

Although it is over 25 years since I left Melbourne and service in 6 Const Gp, I still enjoy keeping up with "Goings On" in RAE and especially just to see the names of those I served with and to know they are still fit and well.

I have little reason now to visit Melbourne, (when one lives on the Sunshine Coast there is little incentive to visit anywhere); I had planned to attend the 16 Const Regt 50th but unfortunately had a little health hiccup. I can hardly believe it is 30 years since I celebrated the Regt's 21st as CO.

However I do plan to be in Melbourne in July and would enjoy meeting up with any of "the old crew" of the 60's and 70's. I will be having lunch at the East Malvern RSL on Thursday 15 July (say about noon) and would love to catch up with anyone who can make it.

I am now located on the Sunshine Coast at Buderim and anyone travelling this way at any time please give me a call on 07 5477 0639 (mob. 0428 723 792).

I enjoy the newsletter immensely and wish you success with continuing publication.

Best wishes to all Sappers.

... *Tony Ernst.*

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*From Lt Col John E Slee:*

**MEMORIES OF SIR CLIVE STEELE**

"The report in "Sapper Summit" No 45 (March 2004) "Successful Sir Clive Steele Lecture" brought back memories of that great sapper which I would like to share with readers.

Such memories last surfaced when I had the honour of being lead speaker at the first Sir Clive Steele Lecture at Oakleigh Barracks in December 1993, the subject being "The Bulldog-Wau Road", a remarkable feat of the RAE in New Guinea, World War II (1).

The following takes us back to that project when I was at the time Adjutant to CRE First Army Troops, Lt Col J C Saint-Smith, who had control of the road construction.

In accordance with the usual practice various localities and geographical features had been named by the constructors, including "Steele Falls", not a particularly spectacular mountain stream, which tumbled down a cliff face to cross under the road by a small culvert. The unit on the job – probably 2/4 Field Sqn, had placed a quite respectable sign there.

During September 1943 the Engineer-in-Chief, then Maj Gen C S Steele, decided to inspect the road. Our top sapper arrived from Australia, no doubt as part of a comprehensive spin around NG, without any ceremony at the Bulldog (Southern) end of the project, to be met by the CRE. I suppose he was accompanied by at least one of his staff, but there was surely no great entourage. (There were not enough jeeps to accommodate many, anyhow).

The E in C wanted to inspect the whole road, 110 km of newly built mountain track – in some spots barely passable by jeep. He would have flown from Port Moresby by light aircraft to

Bulldog, and out from Wau by DC3, but jeep was the only option for in between.

So guess who was given the rather frightening honour of driving him over the route – the writer, then a 22 year old sapper Captain, not scared of generals, but rather anxious about the chances of taking his VIP passenger over the edge somewhere – and believe me some of the edges were quite something! The CRE followed in a second jeep for obvious reasons of caution.

The General turned out to be excellent, undemanding company. I just hope he enjoyed the experience as much as I did.

An interlude I had planned went over very well. We stopped at "His Falls" where I offered him a drink of the pristine mountain water. I long treasured a photo I took of him toasting me with an enamel mug of Steele Falls water, the sign visible behind.

I hope the photo is still with the other memorabilia, which I left with the Historical and Heritage Committee in about 1998. #

Later for a brief period in 1946, while awaiting demob, I met up with the E in C while on the E in C Staff at Army HQ, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, under the then Lt Col A T J "Ding" Bell.

Clive Steele was indeed a great sapper and leader in the two World Wars, highly respected by all ranks.

*Ref: (1) The Royal Australian Engineers 1910 to 1945 "Teeth and Tail" – Chapter 12.*

*... John E Slee, Lt Col, RL.*

*Editors Note*

*# If we have space we'll publish this in the next issue – Thanks John.*

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Officers and Senior NCOs, both serving and retired, are reminded that RAE Corps subscriptions for the year 2004 **are now due, and should be paid by 1 July**. See page below for the rates & the proforma.

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OAKLEIGH SOUTH VIC 3167

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.....

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