"SAPPER SUMMIT"

RAE CORPS NEWSLETTER

VICTORIAN ENGINEERS

June 2007 *ISSN 1325 – 7676* *Number 58*

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RESERVE FORCES DAY MARCH -- NEXT SUNDAY!

The Reserve Forces Day March will be held next Sunday 1st July.

Retired Sappers attending should assemble at the Old Sappers Association banner in St Kilda Road at 11.00 hrs on Sunday. The location is just south of Princes Bridge (Melway Ref. Map 2F – G-H7)

Serving members not marching with their units are most welcome to march with us. As usual the dress includes medals, decorations and awards.

Step off is at 11.30 hrs.

The salute will be taken by the Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshall Angus Houston, AO AFC.

The Chief of the Defence Force thinks the event is significant and is worth his time to attend, so we Sappers should make a special effort to come along and make it worth his while.

After the parade all Sappers are invited to meet for lunch at Bill Bell's Hotel, corner Morray St and Coventry St, South Melbourne.

Any enquiries should be directed to
Bruce Campbell on: Tel: 9568 0320, or
Tel: 5974 1685

.... *The Editor*

Sapper Summit is produced four times a year by the RAE (Vic) Historical and Heritage Association Inc. (Reg No. A0046126U.)

The President is Maj Bruce Campbell (Rtd)
The Secretary/Editor is Maj Austin Byrne (Rtd)

Mail can be sent to:
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OAKLEIGH SOUTH, VIC, 3167

We need Your Articles!

Our deadlines for articles for the remaining 2007 issues are:

- August issue by 10 August
- November issue by 26 October

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

Austin Byrne on Tel: (03) 9803 1061
email to: austbyrne@bigpond.com OR

Bruce Campbell on Tel: (03) 9568 0320 or (03) 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 Association. The format and clarity of the articles is the responsibility of the contributor.

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ROB YOUL'S COLUMN:

Last Anzac Day I looked for the fortress models at Oakleigh South. In the old days, they were so conspicuous at Swan Street – in the main hall – but now they're a bit out-of-the-way, and share their space with other more contemporary and conventional memorabilia. Recent research and diplomacy by the redoubtable (get it!) Jim Newlands might force us to look at them in a new light. Bearded and bristling Jim is a valued member of the Victorian sapper community. Born in Aberdeen during World War II, he migrated here, grew up in McKinnon, studied agricultural science, was a keen and pioneering rock climber, taught (and led cadets) at various high schools, worked as a statistician and quarantine inspector, and is now retired at Vermont South. Jim loves brewing, Indian cooking, dogs and cats, war games, military history, *bonsai*, orchids and ribald humour. If he's not a polymath, he's a golly-math!

Many readers will have heard him speak on another of his passions: the history of fortresses, a fascination undoubtedly initiated in Scotland. Jim has written several articles over the years for *Sapper Summit*. He came into our community through Lieutenant Colonel George Giummarra, a workmate at the Australian Road Research Board. George told Jim about the fortress models held by our formation since the late 19th century. They were constructed by soldiers in the fortress unit of the colonial Victorian army at the depot located for twenty-three years in the present-day Wellington Parade South-Jolimont Road area. The sappers built their models from wood: I suspect Queensland or NZ kauri and perhaps some Baltic spruce, fir or pine, the main softwoods then available in Victoria. By any standards they are attractive and skilfully crafted. Thanks to the equally impressive craftsmanship of WO I Bill Fry, who restored our collection in the early 1990s, they are in splendid condition.

Immediately he saw them, our models delighted Jim, who has been quietly studying and evaluating them ever since. A recent trip to Europe confirmed what he had always thought: our collection seems to be unique, in that it was amassed from day-to-day training projects by sappers themselves, rather than professional fortress architects. France has the largest collection of fortress models Jim has so far located. Throughout the centuries, models played a major part in construction, training, and assessing weaknesses when planning battles or rebuilding fortifications to withstand, or take advantage of, new military technology. Jim says the French collection was maintained under the tightest security in Europe. Napoleon much preferred to work with models. Now displayed as a *plans-relief* (three-dimensional) collection in the Museum of the Army, at Les Invalides, Paris, it comprises over 70 pieces, representing a good proportion of the forts in France. These models, some from the 1500s, were made from plaster, wood, metal and papier mache; aerial photographs, maps and extensive explanations help visitors take it all in. Some models include surrounding towns and countryside and cover more than ten square metres.

The collection's conservator was delighted to learn of our collection, and hopes to come out and see it one day. In the Channel Islands, which Jim also visited, and which we will cover next issue of *Sapper Summit*, especially the German occupation, Jim met a British fortress enthusiast who was

similarly excited by the collection, and urged Jim to write an article for *Fort*, the esteemed UK journal. In Belgium, Jim found a huge (3.5x3.5 m) model at Namur of that famous fortress, and he enjoyed a 60-kilometre coastal tram ride that took in a Napoleonic fort and a restored 1.5 kilometre stretch of Hitler's Atlantic Wall. Indeed, Jim found fortifications very topical in Europe in 2007, the tercentenary of the death of Sebastien le Prestre de Vauban, the towering French marshal and military engineer. He served under Condé in Spain, and in 1658 was France's chief engineer under Turenne. In 1678 he became *Commissaire-générale des fortifications*, and proceeded to strengthen the frontier defences, building the fortresses of Landau and New Breisach, for example, and rebuilding Strasburg in 1681. Besides constructing or improving over 150 strongholds, he conducted 40 sieges, including Lille (1662), Maastricht (1673), Cambrai (1677), Ghent (1678), Namur (1692) and Old Breisach (1703) – the year he was made a marshal of France, aged 70. Let's hope he had a weekend off from time to time!

* * * *

Recent sad news was the death of Major Roger Clark at Bacchus Marsh, a cheerful and enthusiastic officer with an SEC background, who led 39 E&M Squadron in my day, and had other commands, including 91 Forestry Squadron. Roger had great rapport with everyone; he got on with the job and was delightful company. His father had been in the prison service, so Roger had lived within most of Victoria's gaols, and he had lots of interesting recollections. Vale Roger, a good soldier and a fine friend.

... *Rob Youl*

COMING EVENTS

Reminder
The RAE Corps Officers Golf Day 2007
at The Royal Melbourne Golf Club.

Keep **Friday 19 October** free.

For more details, please contact:
Capt Bill McAuley on Mobile 0428 486 018.

We apologise, but we have no excursions scheduled for the immediate future

RECENT EVENTS

WATERLOO DINNER

This year's Officers Waterloo Dinner was held on Saturday 16 June at the Oakleigh Barracks.

There was a good attendance of 60 Officers and guests.

The new Head of Corps, Brig Wayne Budd CSC was the main guest, and gave a run down on what was fronting the Corps as the Army adjusts to meet the latest expectations.

He believes there is a need to establish vibrant RAE Associations in all States to help maintain the Corps togetherness. As part of this, he is looking to establish a web based information system which will provide a one stop shop for information on what the Corps is doing, both nationally and locally, and covering both serving and retired Sappers.

He will also get the Sapper Magazine back on the rails again as the CORPS magazine

The President of the RAE (Vic) Historical and Heritage Association presented Brig Budd with a copy of the ***First 50 Years of 22 Construction Regiment*** after the Dinner. Brig Budd said that he saw the production of these Unit Histories as an important part of maintaining the Corps' historical and heritage traditions.

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The Old Sappers held their Waterloo Dinner at the Oakleigh Barracks on Sunday 17 June as a Midday Dinner.

It is reported in the Old Sappers Report. The grapevine reports that two visitors who had said that they could not stop for the speeches, were still there at the end of the day – evidence of a very good presentation.

DEFENCE MEDAL

Last year, we published details on how to apply for the Defence Medal. The medal is awarded to Regular and Reserve force members who have completed their initial enlistment period, or 4 years service, whichever is the lesser. The starting date for service is 3 September 1945.

If you want the details, contact the Editor.

NEWS FROM THE UNITS

22 CONST REGT

SINCE our last update in Sapper Summit, 22 Const Regt has again been busy. Works are continuing at the Urban Operations Training (UOT) facility, Puckapunyal. The Unit's Adjutant, CAPT John Thurgood, is project manager for the facility and will oversee its completion before handover to CAT-C.

After a Regimental Planning Conference that was conducted at Fort Queenscliff over the weekend 30 Mar to 1 Apr 07, 39 Const Sqn was directed to raise 91 Forestry Troop (91 For Tp). The forestry capability will sit at 39 Const Sqn's location at Newborough in the La Trobe Valley, with a Forestry Section sitting within 105 Const Sqn at Oakleigh Barracks. The Forestry set of niche skills includes tree identification and classification, tree felling (>1000mm diameter), timber milling to task specifications utilising the in-service PSM and grading of generated timber.

ANZAC Day 07 was the first time in many years that the Regt has participated in the March in Melbourne and for the first time as a part of 4 Bde. 22 Const Regt had the distinct privilege of hosting the Parade Leader of the ANZAC March, LTCOL (Retd) Bernard O'Dowd. The CO tasked LT Dale Hopcraft with the duty of escorting LTCOL O'Dowd to the Dawn Service at The Shrine before taking over himself at the conclusion of the March in accompanying LTCOL O'Dowd for the afternoon. LTCOL O'Dowd was A Coy Comd, 3 RAR during the Battle of Kapyong (23-24 Apr 1951) and led the march on ANZAC Day

On the recruiting front, the Regt teamed up with 4 CER to provide a static Engineering display at the Avalon International Airshow 07 in Mar and more recently participated in the Share the Knowledge event which is a careers and community event that is held annually in Warragul that provides career information to the Indigenous community in the La Trobe Valley region. The Share the Knowledge event was well attended and the Unit's Recruiting Team was successful in providing both general and Army Engineer recruiting information.

22 Const Regt is the principle organizer for the Hammel Dinner that will take place on Saturday 21 Jul 07 at the Naval and Military Club. Les Carlyon, the former editor of The Age and author of 'Gallipoli' and 'The Great War' will be the guest speaker at the dinner and all 4 Bde Officers are invited to attend.

.... *LT Dale Hopcraft*

4 CER

The 4th Combat Engineer Regiment has maintained its training tempo since the last Summit update. In April the Unit conducted a field exercise as part of EX PLATYPUS BURROW. This focused on the practical aspects of providing force protection, including target hardening; high risk engineer search and vehicle check point operations. The training weekend was backed up with a significant commitment to ANZAC Day commemorative activities. This included providing nine Catafalque Parties and a Dawn Service at the Ringwood Depot, with Unit members and approximately forty others in attendance. After the Dawn Service and breakfast the Regiment marched as part of the 4th Brigade in the ANZAC Day Parade in the city. Once the formal commemorative activities were over, the other obligatory ANZAC Day activities were held at the Depot and a great day was had by all.

Training has continued, with the 4CER concentrating on basic soldier and combat engineer skills, including weapons handling and demolitions over the last few weeks. This was in preparation for the training weekend in June, where the Unit conducted a demolitions practice as well as a live fire range shoot. These basic soldier and combat engineer skills are an important component of the Unit's training continuum designed to ensure it can meet its commitment to the High Readiness Reserve.

In addition to ongoing Unit training, 4CER has provided critical support to other organisations, including RMC (battle noise simulation) and courses run by other Brigade units. The Unit also hosted a visit from COMD 2nd Division, MAJGEN Flawith on 1 May 07. Several promotions to LCPL and CPL have occurred over the last couple of months along with a large amount of presentations of the Australian Defence Medal. At the end of April several soldiers completed the Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Defence Assistant Instructor course at SME; this has provided a good opportunity for soldiers to pick up some specialist skills and enhance the Units capability as well.

Future planning includes a Sappers Challenge training weekend as a Section competition, a Module 2 IET course to be held at the Ringwood Depot during July, and preparation for EX HAMEL to be held at Cultana in SA in September.

ASSOCIATION REPORTS

BLUE TONGUES GET TOGETHER MITCHELTON, 5 - 7 MAY 2007

The annual Blue Tongues Get Together was held on the riverbank at Majors Creek at Mitchelton on the first weekend in May. There were some 20 people who came along to a well set up camp and enjoyed a weekend renewing friendships and swapping reminiscences. There were several new faces amongst the attendees.

The camping went fairly well. There was a series of camp ovens which offered an excellent dinner. Those present could select from farmed pork, wild pork, rabbit and a leg of lamb, plus all the vegetables to go with them.

There was also a bbq lunch, and it is suspected that the 10 redfin that one member caught did not survive the weekend.

--- *Congratulations to the organisers for maintaining a grand tradition.*

* * * * * * *

WOODPECKERS RAE ASSOCIATION

18 "Woodies" and their partners had a very pleasant social time at Beechworth over the weekend of 3 - 4 March 07.

Prior to a Committee meeting, the Woodpeckers visited the Forestry Heritage Museum, which is run by the Forests Commission Retired Persons Association. A Woody Plaque, recognising the role of the Forests Commission in the establishment and manning of 91 Forestry Sqn., was presented to Russ Ritchie, of the FCRPA. The presentation, made by past 91 Forestry OCs Ollie Raymond and Les Malseed, was photographed by a reporter from the Border Mail. The wording on the plaque read:

"From the Woodpeckers RAE Association in recognition of the sponsorship of the Forests Commission, Victoria for 91 Forestry Squadron RAE CMF (SR)".

After the Committee meeting a further presentation was made to Ken Howe. The presentation consisted of a Woody Plaque and a "20 years Service to The Corps" certificate. The plaque's wording read

"3144504 Cpl Ken Howe Enlisted 19 July 1983 Discharged 31 January 2005, In recognition of valued service and mateship Woodpeckers RAE Association Inc".

A BBQ and social evening followed the presentation.

Sunday morning again had a museum theme with a visit to Ken Howe Seniors "Dog House" a large shed with a display, of old tools, antiques, oddities and photos, that rivalled the content of the Forestry Museum.

En route home, Ollie Raymond, Bob Brasher and Graeme Ford stopped at Benalla where Ollie made a further presentation of a Woody Plaque to Jim Kilpatrick's widow Shirley. The plaque's wording read:
"In memory of a dinkum sapper and friend Jim Kilpatrick. Woodpeckers RAE Association Inc. March 2007"

Overall, a very enjoyable and productive weekend was had by all.

... *Oliver Raymond, President*

* * * * * * *

OLD SAPPERS ASSOCIATION INC.

Association members participated in the Dawn Service at Oakleigh Barracks and the Anzac Day March in Melbourne where a number of descendants joined us.
Our part in the March flowed fairly smoothly this year on a glorious Melbourne morning.

Our Waterloo Dinner was held on Sunday 17 June at the Oakleigh Barracks as a midday Dinner.

Committeeman Allan Rantall organised our guest speaker, Colonel Terry Beaton. He gave a spirited talk on the museum at Hellfire Pass, Thailand and his expert knowledge of the Burma-Thailand railway.

Inquiries re membership are always welcome. Contact our Secretary, Jim Crosling on 9438 2273

Jim Muir
President

22 CONSTRUCTION REGIMENT REUNION – 2007.

The next Reunion will be held at Yarrawonga in October.

Please put the weekend 26 / 27/ 28 October in your diary and keep it free.

Enquiries to:
Jenny Eaton,
PO Box 95 Paynesville, 3880
Email: jensden@bigpond.net.au
Mobile: 0427 196 038.

Calling All Past & Present Sappers.

Invitation

The Annual RAE Reunion for 2007
is to be held on
SATURDAY 7th July 2007

at the OR's MESS
at 4 CER Depot,
Dublin Road, Ringwood East.

Timings 7.30pm to 12.00pm.

Costs $15 per head, includes hot & cold snacks.
Drinks at bar prices.

The evening is open to all past and present sappers, plus support staff of the RAE and their partners ---
Hope to see you there!
Contact Details: Margaret Handte –
03 9879 2986-voice mail

From Oliver Raymond:

NON-EQUIPMENT BRIDGING.

In the spirit of previous contributions from the older members of the Corps, I would like to give you some wisdom from the past.

I can remember on one of my promotion exams being asked to theoretically bridge a small river as part of an advance. We had just driven through a magnificent regrowth forest of eucalypts to get to the river. My answer was that, given 91 Forestry Sqn and one long day, I could have a class 30, two span bridge across that river, using techniques in common use in the Victorian timber industry.

At one stage while I was Ops Officer for 22 Regt, I conducted an expediency engineering weekend for the Officers and Senior NCOs of the Regt. We looked at a number of situations (not only bridging) in which conventional equipment solutions were not available, but other solutions could be made to work.

My plea is: do not have a closed mind to technical solutions. The Forestry Institution in which I received my training had a motto that I feel applies to most things in life, It was "CIRCUMSPICE", which being loosely interpreted means "LOOK AROUND".

As the following extracts from the book "Elephant Bill", about the Burma (now Myanma) Campaign shows, there is more than one way to build a bridge!

Take them to heart.

EXTRACTS FROM "ELEPHANT BILL" BY J.H.WILLIAMS.

EXTRACT ONE.

"Almost every day representatives of all sorts of different Army services visited us, but all of them had to return to their H.Q.'s at Imphal every night. One of the first to arrive was the CRE of the forward Division, who called on me at our camp at Moreh to ask if we could help with elephants, to drag a few logs, and assist the sappers in building a bridge over the Lokechao River at Moreh, as a Brigade was to move forward, but could not possibly do so until it had been bridged. I replied that of course we could, but asked what kind of bridge did the sappers mean to build, and where were they? Blue prints, pink prints, and even white prints were produced from a pigskin portfolio. My first impression was that I was being shown a design for the new Ava-Mandalay Bridge! All these plans were merely to cross a river four feet deep and two hundred feet wide, full of fast flowing, clear water. He told me the sappers would not be able to get up for some time, as they were busily engaged on a hill section farther back, but that timber was required in readiness.

I picked up a pencil and drew him an "elephant bridge," and after making a rough calculation of the number of logs that would be wanted and the number of days to complete it without any assistance from the sappers, and that it would take anything in the Division on wheels or tracks.

"What class will it be, and what width?" asked the officer.

"First class, and twelve foot wide," I answered.

"No, I mean what tonnage vehicle will it take? The CE wants it to be 22 foot wide."

"What is your heaviest load?" I asked.

"About 10 tons".

"Well I will guarantee it will take a twenty ton load, and you can tell the CE that he can't have it 22 foot wide. When we've finished this bridge, we'll build another one for vehicles going in the opposite direction. In any case there would not be enough timber for a 22-foot bridge at the site you've chosen. But we'll find another site nearby, for a second bridge."

The CRE put his plans away reluctantly, and was obviously somewhat doubtful about these new methods of bridging rivers. Then he said, "It's O.K. by me, but I must be getting back, and will see the CE and let you know the day after tomorrow."

Before his jeep was out of earshot I was giving orders to my head elephant-man to arrange for the felling and logging of trees, 4 to 6 feet in girth with boles 25 feet long. All the riders were to make dragging harnesses for 25 elephants.

Browne had the work under way before 1000 next morning.
Shortly after this the Brigadier of the 49th Bde arrived to have a look at this circus camp in front of him. He had come out of Burma, in command of a Scottish regiment with the Burma Army. I explained the whole thing to him, and he cheered me up a lot by saying: "Don't worry a damn about anyone. Build your bridge, and if the sappers want another, they can build another." It was then 2 Dec, and he told me confidentially that the bridge would be required by 19 Dec.

Actually, the whole of his Bde transport passed over that bridge on 15 Dec. The elephants were of great interest while they were building this bridge, and many visitors to Tamu came forward to watch them."

I would love to see the actual "back of the envelope" bridge design that Elephant Bill showed the CRE!

EXTRACT TWO.

"One or two small Bailey Bridges had been brought up, but no bridging programme had been possible for these roads, as all bridging materials were wanted for the crossing of the Chindwin at Kalewa. No less than 270 log bridges and log culvert crossings were put in by elephants over these four routes, thus allowing all motor transport and tanks to move forward, before the main bridging programme was undertaken.

As the roads to the Chindwin were completed, Forestry Companies arrived, to obtain the timber required for building assault craft and small barges at Kalewa. 500 assault boats were built at Kalewa, from timber extracted by elephants and cut up at the sawmills. They also supplied the portable sawmill, with the timber for decking the main bridges, for an all weather road from Tamu to Kalewa."

Ask yourself how many sets of equipment bridging we have in Australia compared to how many gaps we could have to cross in an advance, if an enemy had destroyed all bridges over gaps in front of our troops. Then keep these extracts firmly in your memory!

HEAD OF CORPS, RAE

Under the current Army system the position of Head of Corps, RAE is a job given to a Sapper in addition to his main Army appointment. Here is a short biography on out new Head of Corps:

Brig Wayne Budd CSC entered Duntroon in 1979. He studied Civil Engineering and graduated with Honours. He served as Troop Commander and Construction Officer in 17th Construction Squadron and as Operations Officer in 18th Field Squadron. He was also seconded to the John Holland Construction Company for engineering experience in 1987.

Brig Budd commanded 21st Construction Squadron and SME. This was followed by a series of staff appointments. He has also served in an exchange position with the United States 25th Infantry Division, where he was posted to the 65th Engineer Battalion.

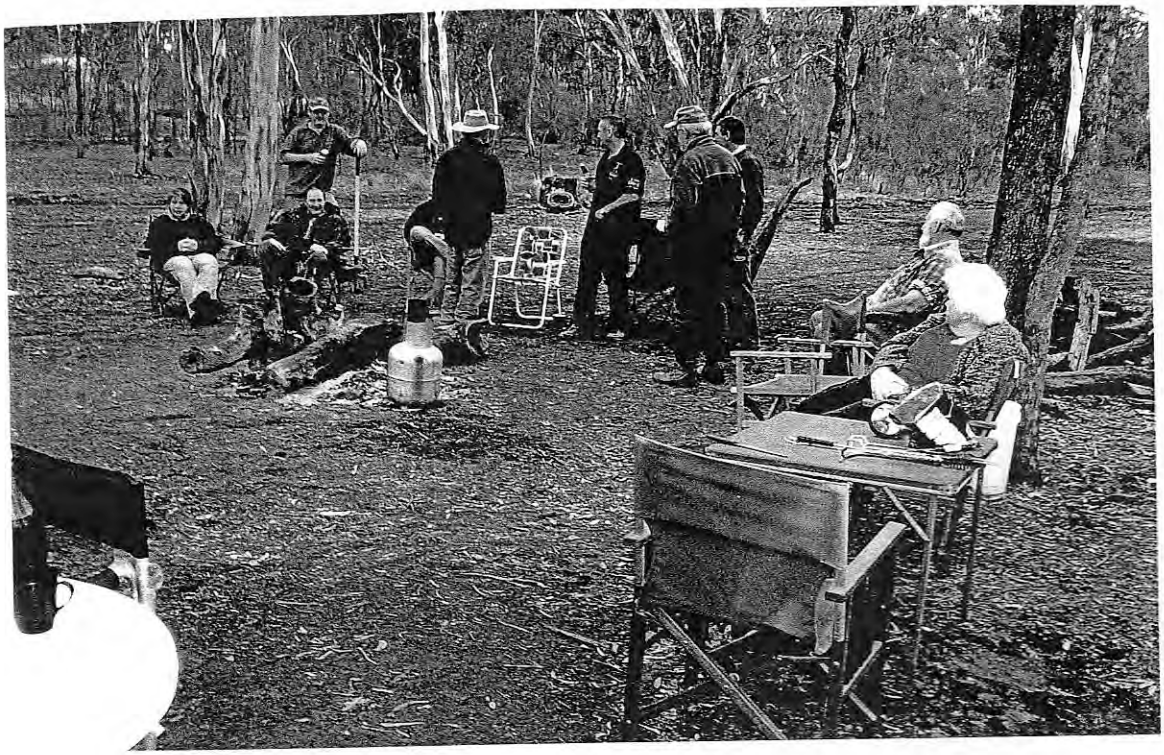
Brig Budd served as the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Coalition Joint Headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq in 2003.

He took up his present appointment as Director General Headquarters Joint Operations Command Project in January this year. (The building of a new HQ just outside Canberra)

He now is also the Head of Corps RAE, which means that he is the focus for matters that relate to Sappering across the Army in general.

Sir, best wishes from us in Victoria.

RECENT HAPPENINGS



The Blue Tongues Camp at Majors Creek in May.

80th Birthday Party for WO2 Keith Bennett –
-- Former SSM of 106 Construction Squadron.

(There are memories of a similar jumper flying from the 106 Sqn flagpole after a Magpie win)

THE WOODPECKERS AT BEECHWORTH

Ollie Raymond Presenting A Woody Plaque to Shirley Kilpatrick

The Museum Presentation.
Major Les Malseed, Russ Ritchie, Major Ollie Raymond.

VICTORIAN SAPPERS in the SECOND WORLD WAR – Part 2

By Graham McKenzie-Smith
(Grimwade Publications
Perth, WA 08 9364 5277)

The first of this series (Sapper Summit No 57) covered the types of RAE units raised in the Second World War and this article will concentrate on the RAE units raised in Victoria as part of the pre-war militia. Victoria raised engineer units for 3 Inf Div, 4 Inf Div and 2 Cav Div. These 'pocket unit histories' will be published in 2008 in Graham's book, which will provide a similar snapshot of all units in the Australian Army in WW2. Graham would welcome any feedback and can be contacted at *grimwade4@bigpond.com*

CRE 3 Aust Infantry Division

Pre war plans were for *3 Inf Div* to have an AHQ Reserve role and mobilization in December 1941 found them at Seymour (Vic) with *10 Fd Coy*, *15 Fd Coy* and *53 Fd Pk Coy* while *4 Fd Coy* was attached to *4 Inf Bde Gp* at Bonegilla. In March 1942, *4 Inf Bde Gp* left the division and moved to Warwick (Qld) while the rest of the units moved to Bonegilla. In May the division moved to Queensland with the role to defend Brisbane from the south, as part of *1 Aust Corps*. *CRE 3 Inf Div* and *53 Fd Pk Coy* were at Maclean Bridge, *10 Fd Coy* at Jimboomba (att *10 Inf Bde Gp*) and *15 Fd Coy* at Casino (att *15 Inf Bde Gp*) while *4 Fd Coy* rejoined at Eagleby (att to *4 Inf Bde Gp*).

July 1942 saw *32 US Inf Div* moving into the area south of Brisbane under *HQ 1 Aust Corps* so *3 Inf Div* moved to Maryborough where they, and *41 US Inf Div* at Rockhampton would come under *HQ 2 Aust Corps*. *CRE 3 Inf Div* moved to Tinana with *4 Fd Coy* and *53 Fd Pk Coy* while *10 Fd Coy* moved to Oakhurst. *15 Fd Coy* remained with *15 Inf Bde Gp* at Casino where they came under direct command of *HQ 1 Aust Corps*. However the Japanese landing at Buna (NG) and their advance over the Kokoda Trail caused *HQ 1 Aust Corps* and *7 Inf Div* to be sent hastily to Port Moresby and Milne Bay in August, leading to another change of plan. In September, *3 Inf Div* moved to the Sunshine Coast where *CRE 3 Inf Div* and *53 Fd Pk Coy* were at Glenview while *4 Fd Coy* was at Palmwoods and *15 Fd Coy* was at Caboolture. In September as part of a general reduction in the army *10 Inf Bde* was disbanded and *10 Fd Coy* transferred to *CRE 2 Aust Corps Tps*. In December, *CRE 3 Inf Div* moved to Mapleton and *53 Fd Pk Coy* to Nambour while *15 Fd Coy* was sent to Rocky Creek to work on the 'Atherton Tableland Project' to prepare training areas for the troops returning from fighting in New Guinea.

In February 1943, *HQ 3 Inf Div* moved to Port Moresby (NG) and almost immediately was sent to Wau to replace *HQ Kanga Force* which had been fighting the Japanese in the Wau/Salamua/Lae areas. *CRE 3 Inf Div* now controlled *2/8 Fd Coy*, *2/14 Army Fd Coy* and *2/25 Fd Pk Coy* supporting the forward troops. *CRE 3 Inf Div* moved to Bulolo in April. As the fighting approached the coastal areas near Salamua the centre of gravity moved away from Wau so *CRE 3 Inf Div* came under command of *HQ 5 Inf Div* moving to Tambu Bay in August along with *2/8 Fd Coy* while *2/25 Fd Pk Coy* moved to Nassau Bay. *2/14 Fd Coy* left for Buna while *11 Fd Coy* arrived with *29 Inf Bde Gp* for the final stages of the fight.

The capture of Saluamua and Lae in September saw *CRE 3 Inf Div* move to Lae with *HQ 5 Inf Div*, taking only *11 Fd Coy*. In October, *4 Fd Coy* moved to Lae (att *4 Inf Bde Gp*) and after working on the Lae base area *CRE 3 Inf Div* moved to Finschhafen in January 1944 with *HQ 5 Inf Div* to relieve *9 Inf Div*. Here they controlled *4 Fd Coy* and *8 Fd Coy* (att *8 Inf Bde Gp*) but in February *CRE 5 Inf Div* arrived from Milne Bay and relieved them so they left in March to rejoin *HQ 3 Inf Div* at Kairi (Qld). Here they found *5 Fd Coy* (att *5 Inf Bde Gp*), *23 Fd Coy* (att *23 Inf Bde Gp*), *24 Fd Coy* (att *7 Inf Bde Gp*) and *54 Fd Pk Coy*. *24 Fd Coy* was transferred to *CRE 2 Aust Corps Tps* at Cairns in April as was *54 Fd Pk Coy* in June while *23 Fd Coy* moved to Bulolo (NG) with its brigade in May and *5 Inf Bde Gp* was disbanded in June so *5 Fd Coy* was attached to *7 Inf Bde Gp*.

After a relatively short period or rest in Australia, *CRE 3 Inf Div* went back to New Guinea in July 1944 and moved to Wau where they took over *12 Fd Coy* (att *6 Inf Bde Gp*), *23 Fd Coy* (att *23 Inf Bde Gp)* and *53 Fd Pk Coy*. All units moved to Lae in August. In October 1944 Australia agreed to take over from US troops on Bougainville so they could be available for the Philippines Campaign. *2 Aust Corps* with *3 Inf Div* were allocated the role and *CRE 3 Inf Div* moved to Torokina in November taking with them *5 Fd Coy* (att *7 Inf Bde Gp*) and *53 Fd Pk Coy*. *11 Fd Coy* (att *29 Inf Bde Gp*) joined in December and *15 Fd Coy* (att *15 Inf Bde Gp*) in January 1945. At this time *CRE 3 Inf Div* started to move south following the brigades which were pushing the Japanese south and at the end of the war they were approaching the Japanese base area at Buin.

4 Aust Field Company

Mobilised at Bonegilla (Vic) in December 1941, *4 Fd Coy* was under command of *CRE 3 Inf Div* and attached to *4 Inf Bde Gp* which was in AHQ Reserve. In March 1942, *4 Inf Bde Gp* moved to Warwick (Qld) where they were the first reinforcements to Queensland. In April, *1 Aust Corps* took over the defence of South Queensland and *3 Inf Div* moved north to cover the area south of Brisbane with *4 Inf Bde Gp* guarding the beaches of the Gold Coast and *4 Fd Coy* at Eagleby. Briefly they moved to Tinana in August when *3 Inf Div* took over the defence of Maryborough, but the Japanese advance towards Port Moresby (NG) led to *7 Inf Div* deploying there so *3 Inf Div* returned to cover the Sunshine Coast with *4 Fd Coy* at Palmwoods.

After the Papuan Campaign many troops needed rest and retraining so *4 Inf Bde Gp* moved to Milne Bay (NG) in February 1943 and *4 Fd Coy* joined *CRE 5 Inf Div*. Here they mainly worked on the expanding base facilities which continued after the rest of *4 Inf Bde Gp* joined *9 Inf Div* on their invasion of Lae in September. After its capture, *4 Fd Coy* moved to Lae in October to rebuild the base under command of *CRE 3 Inf Div* until March 1944 when they moved to Finschhafen to rejoin *CRE 5 Inf Div* and to work on the base facilities there. By May, Madang had been captured and *4 Fd Coy* moved there to rejoin *4 Inf Bde Gp*.

After 19 months in New Guinea, *4 Inf Bde Gp* returned to Strathpine (Qld) in September 1944 for rest and retraining until February 1945. Then they moved to rejoin *5 Inf Div* at Jacquinot Bay on New Britain from where *4 Fd Coy* supported the advance to Open Bay to keep the large Japanese force bottled up at Rabual. At the end of the war they were part of the occupation force which moved to Rabual.

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10 Aust Field Company

Mobilised at Trawool (Vic) in December 1941, *10 Fd Coy* was under command of *CRE 3 Inf Div* and attached to *10 Inf Bde Gp*. They marched from Seymour to Bonegilla in March/April 1942 before moving to Jimboomba (Qld) in May. In July they moved to Maryborough with one section at Bundaberg and in September *10 Inf Bde Gp* was disbanded so *10 Fd Coy* passed under command of *CRE 2 Aust Corps Tps*. In October they moved to Witta near Maleny and in December 1942 to Woodford. The company moved to Kairi on the Atherton Tablelands in February 1943 and constructed the camp for the incoming *9 Inf Div* before leaving Townsville in May 1943 for Port Moresby (NG).

The next move was to Buna in July 1943 under command of *HQ Buna Base Sub Area* from where a detachment served at Morobe and the main body moved to Lae in March 1944, followed by one platoon in June. In October 1944, the unit moved to Torokina on Bougainville and continued under command of *CRE 2 Aust Corps Tps* until June 1945 when they were relieved by *7 Fd Coy* and while they were on leave in Melbourne the war was over and the unit did not reassemble after VP Day.

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15 Aust Field Company

Mobilised at Trawool (Vic) in December 1941, *15 Fd Coy* was under command of *CRE 3 Inf Div* and attached to *15 Inf Bde Gp*. They marched from Seymour to Bonegilla in March/April 1942 before moving to Casino (NSW) in May. In October they moved to Caboolture (Qld) with their brigade but in December left for Atherton to build the camps for the AIF before rejoining *15 Inf Bde Gp* at Cooroy in February 1943.

In March they moved to Port Moresby (NG) where they undertook various road and construction tasks with one platoon detached to support *15 Inf Bde Gp* (April to October) at Wau/Salamua and a section at Tsili Tsili with *57/60 Inf Bn* (July to November). In January 1944 the unit flow to Dumpu in the Markham Valley and advanced to Bogadjim with *15 Inf Bde Gp* before moving to a base camp at Madang in May from where they returned to Australia in August 1944.

After home leave the company reassembled at the *RAE Depot* at Kapooka (NSW) in September and then moved to Tolga (Qld) in November prior to embarking for Bougainville (NG) in late December. Initially at Torokina they accompanied *15 Inf Bde Gp* in their attacks along the Buin Road and returned to Australia in December 1945.

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53 Aust Field Park Company

Mobilised at Seymour (Vic) in December 1941 *53 Fd Pk Coy* was under command of *CRE 3 Inf Div*. They marched from Seymour to Bonegilla in March/April 1942 before moving to Maclean Bridge (Qld) in May, Tinana in July, Glenview in September and Nambour in December. When 3 *Inf Div* moved to New Guinea in February 1943 the unit stayed behind under *CRE First Aust Army Tps* and moved to the Bridging School at Dinmore in March before moving to Ravenshoe in May to come under command of *CRE 7 Inf Div*.

They moved to Port Moresby (NG) with *7 Inf Div* in July 1943 but the main unit stayed behind in Port

Moresby while detachments joined the division to take part in the Lae Campaign. *53 Fd Pk Coy* rejoined the division at Dumpu in December. Here they then came under command of *CRE 11 Inf Div* in February 1944 before moving with them to Wau in May. The unit rejoined *CRE 3 Inf Div* when they also moved to Wau in July before moving with them to Lae in August and to Torokina in November to take part in the Bougainville Campaign. In April 1945 they moved to Toko where they saw out the war supporting the push by *3 Inf Div* towards the south of Bougainville.

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3 Aust Infantry Division Camouflage Training Unit
23 Aust Camouflage Unit

This unit appears to have been raised at Glenview (Qld) in September 1942 but initially did not move to New Guinea with *3 Inf Div* in February 1943, instead arriving at Port Moresby (NG) in July. Despite many warnings to move to Lae they remained at Port Moresby until disbanded in June 1944.

CRE 4 Aust Infantry Division

The pre war role for *4 Inf Div* was the defence of Melbourne (Vic) from the east including the beaches on the eastern side of the fixed defence area at the heads. Mobilization found *CRE 4 Inf Div* with *HQ 4 Inf Div* at Mt Martha Camp with *2 Fd Coy* at Red Hill (att *2 Inf Bde Gp*), *6 Fd Coy* at Balcombe (att *6 Inf Bde Gp*) and *20 Army Fd Coy* with *54 Fd Pk Coy* at Mt Martha. In December, *20 Army Fd Coy* moved to Leongatha and *6 Fd Coy* at Dandenong. In February 1942 the plan changed with *4 Inf Div* taking responsibility for the forward positions on both sides of the Heads so *20 Army Fd Coy* moved to Fort Nepean and *21 Army Fd Coy* came under control at Point Lonsdale to undertake work in the Fortress Area. *6 Inf Bde Gp* was in Command Reserve and moved to Gherang with *6 Fd Coy*. The arrival of the AIF at Adelaide and US troops in Melbourne allowed reinforcements to WA so *6 Inf Bde Gp* left in March with the rest of *4 Inf Div* (less *54 Fd Pk Coy*) leaving in April.

By the end of April 1942, *CRE 4 Inf Div* was at Guildford (WA) with *2 Fd Coy* at Melville, while *6 Fd Coy* rejoined *4 Inf Div* at Moonyoonooka, and *13 Fd Coy* joined at Chidlows along with *56 Fd Pk Coy* at Guildford. May saw *2 Fd Coy* move to Bellevue and *13 Fd Coy* to Moora but these units exchanged locations in June. In July, *2 Inf Div* arrived in WA allowing *4 Inf Div* to move to the Geraldton area with *CRE 4 Inf Div* at Moora, *2 Fd Coy* at Utakarrra, *6 Fd Coy* at Mingenew, *13 Fd Coy* at Dandaragan and *56 Fd Pk Coy* at Moora. In November 1942, *2 Inf Div* took over the Geraldton Sector and *4 Inf Div* moved back to Perth. *2 Fd Coy* moved to Gingin in November along with *6 Fd Coy* to Bellevue. December saw *CRE 4 Inf Div* move to Guildford with *56 Fd Pk Coy* while *6 Fd Coy* went to Chidlows. The new year found *6 Fd Coy* at Gingin (att *2 Inf Bde Gp*), *2 Fd Coy* at Chidlows and *13 Fd Coy* attached to *8 Inf Bde Gp* at Moora under command of *CRE 2 Inf Div*. The reduced threat to WA, and the arrival of *1 Armd Div* allowed the infantry component of *3 Aust Corps* to be reduced and in February *6 Inf Bde Gp* left in March (without *6 Fd Coy*). *13 Fd Coy* left for NT with *13 Inf Bde Gp* and *2 Fd Coy* transferred to *2 Inf Div* with *2 Inf Bde Gp* while *CRE 4 Inf Div* left *6 Fd Coy* and *56 Fd Pk Coy* in WA when they moved with *HQ 4 Inf Div* to Townsville (Qld) in April.

In May 1943, *HQ 4 Inf Div* arrived in Townsville to relieve *HQ Yorkforce* and *CRE 4 Inf Div* took command of *12 Fd Coy* at Cairns (att *6 Inf Bde Gp*) and *16 Fd Coy* at Cairns (att *11 Inf Bde Gp*) as well as *27 Fd Coy* at Townsville and *55 Fd Pk Coy* at Sellheim. In June, *16 Fd Coy* moved to Merauke (NG) with *11 Inf Bde Gp* while *12 Fd Coy* moved to Port Moresby with *6 Inf Bde Gp* in July as did *55 Fd Pk Coy.*

To counter a Japanese build up in southern Dutch New Guinea the garrisons at Merauke and Torres Strait were built up in late 1943 so *HQ 4 Inf Div* moved to Cape York to control *Merauke Force* and *Torres St Force*. *CRE 4 Inf Div* moved to Burster Creek near the tip of Cape York in September and *27 Fd Coy* moved with them to Skull Ck. When they absorbed *CRE Torres St Force* they acquired *17 Fd Coy* and *1 AA & Frt Coy* at Thursday Island, *57 Fd Pk Coy* at Burster Ck as well as *16 Fd Coy* and *2/31 Dks Op Det* at Merauke. In October, *57 Fd Pk Coy* moved to Mutee Head to construct a jetty to allow direct shipment to Cape York without having to trans-ship at Thursday Island while November saw *7 Fd Coy* arrive to relieve *17 Fd Coy*. In December, *2/31 Dks Op Det* moved to Thursday Island from Merauke to relieve the sections of *2/3 Dks Op Coy* which had been working the wharves there and January 1944 saw *11 CRE (Wks)* arrive to take command of *1 AA & Frt Coy* and *2/31 Dks Op Det*. To speed up the Mutee Head Jetty Project *27 Fd Coy* moved to Mutee Head in February, replaced at Skull Ck by *7 Fd Coy* from Thursday Is. To better control the spread of work, *11 CRE (Wks)* moved to Merauke in April with *CRE 4 Inf Div* controlling all work in Torres Strait. In June *27 Fd Coy* at Mutee Head exchanged with *16 Fd Coy* at Merauke.

By late 1944 the threat assessment had been lowered and a rundown of troops was underway. In August *16 Fd Coy* left for the *RAE Depot* at Kapooka (NSW) for rest, retraining and reassignment and in September *7 Fd Coy* followed. October saw *CRE 4 Inf Div* hand over its remaining units to *HQ Torres St Area* and *HQ Merauke Area* and move to Mapee before heading for Kapooka. Here they awaited another role until disbanded in June 1945.

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2 Aust Field Company

Mobilised at Balcombe (Vic) in December 1941, *2 Fd Coy* was under command of *CRE 4 Inf Div* and attached to *2 Inf Bde Gp* which was manning the beaches between Somers and Portsea. When the AIF returned from the Middle East in March 1942 it was possible to reinforce WA so *4 Inf Div* and *2 Inf Bde Gp* left for Perth (WA). Initially they camped at Melville in April and then moved around WA with *2 Inf Bde Gp* moving to Greenmount in May, Moora in June, Utakarra Racecourse in July and Gingin in November. In January 1943 they left *2 Inf Bde Gp* and moved to Mandurah and then to Chidlows in February where they were joined by *2 Inf Bde Gp* in March at which time they also came under command of *CRE 2 Inf Div*.

When *2 Inf Bde Gp* left WA for Darwin (NT) in July 1943, *2 Fd Coy* was detached and after leave in Melbourne (Vic) they moved to Wongabel (Qld) on the Atherton Tablelands in August where they came under command of *CRE 2 Aust Corps Tps*. They moved to Upper Mulgrave in September and returned to Wongabel in November where they stayed waiting, like the rest of *1 Aust Corps*, for a role.

As the US moved towards the Philippines, Australia was finally allocated a role in Borneo with Hollandia (NG) as the initial staging area. *2 Fd Coy* moved there in January 1945 to prepare camps but Morotai (NEI) was used instead so *2 Fd Coy* moved there in April. *26 Inf Bde Gp* landed at Tarakan in May supported by an engineer group built around *CRE 1 Aust Corps Tps* which included *2 Fd Coy* and they saw out the war on Tarakan.

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6 Aust Field Company

Mobilised at Mt Martha (Vic) in December 1941, *6 Fd Coy* was under command of *CRE 4 Inf Div* and attached to *6 Inf Bde Gp* which was the command reserve and in this role they moved immediately to Dandenong where they prepared defence lines along the Cranbourne Rd. The brigade moved to Gherang in February 1942 when *2 Cav Div* took over the reserve role. With the arrival home of the AIF in March it was possible to reinforce WA so *6 Inf Bde Gp* moved to Chidlows from where they moved immediately to Geraldton with *6 Fd Coy* at Moonyoonooka. Along with the brigade group they moved around WA for the rest of the year, to Bellevue in July, to Mingenew in August, to Strawberry in October and back to Bellevue in November.

In December they left *6 Inf Bde Gp* and moved to Mandurah before going to Gingin to join *2 Inf Bde Gp* in January 1943. When that brigade moved to Chidlows in March, *6 Fd Coy* stayed behind at Gingin attached to *Richforce* until April when they moved to Bellevue where they came under command of *CRE 3 Aust Corps Tps*. In May 1943 they moved to the *RAE Depot* at Kapooka (NSW) for rest, retraining and reassignment but *6 Fd Coy* was disbanded shortly after to provide the men to expand the *Rlwy Const Coy*s which were being reorganized at that time to *Mech Eqpt Coy*s.

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54 Aust Field Park Company

As part of *CRE 4 Inf Div*, *54 Fd Pk Coy* mobilised at Mt Martha (Vic) in December 1941 to manage the engineer stores for the troops defending Melbourne from the east. In April 1942, *4 Inf Div* moved to Perth (WA) but *54 Fd Pk Coy* remained at Mt Martha as *56 Fd Pk Coy* was available in Perth. As the defences around Darwin (NT) were expanded *54 Fd Pk Coy* was sent to Adelaide River in June to control the production and distribution of engineer stores for *NT Force*. In December 1942, *CRE NT Force* became *CRE 12 Inf Div*.

They were replaced in January 1944 by *60 Corps Fd Pk Coy* and moved to the *RAE Depot* at Kapooka (NSW) for rest, retraining and reassignment. March saw them move to Kairi (Qld) where they joined *CRE 3 Inf Div* preparing to move to Lae (NG) but in June they transferred to *CRE 1 Aust Corps Tps* at Wongabel to prepare for coming operations in Borneo. However in November they moved to Mapee to join *CRE 11 Inf Div*. The end of the war saw them preparing to relieve *53 Fd Pk Coy* on Bougainville with *CRE 3 Inf Div*.

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4 Aust Infantry Division Camouflage Training Unit
24 Aust Camouflage Unit

Raised at Guildford (WA) in July 1942 they moved with *HQ 4 Inf Div* to Moora in August before returning to Guildford in December. In April 1943 *CRE 4 Inf Div* moved to Townsville (Qld) and *4 Inf Div Cam Trng Unit* moved with them and was renamed as *24 Cam Unit* in July. *30 Cam Unit* was sent to Cape York when *HQ 4 Inf Div* moved there

in September so *24 Cam Unit* remained at Dick Creek until November when they moved to the *RAE Depot* at Kapooka (NSW) and were disbanded in December 1943.

CRE 2 Aust Motor Division
CRE 2 Aust Armoured Division

The mobilization role for *2 Cav Div* was the defence of Melbourne (Vic) from the west and included the western side of the fixed defence area at the heads. Mobilization found the RAE units being controlled out of *HQ 2 Cav Div* at Geelong and consisting of *2 Fd Sqn* and *21 Army Fd Coy* who were working on forward defences on the beaches and on several defence lines on the approaches to Geelong. In February 1942 the plan changed with *4 Inf Div* being responsible for forward defences on both sides of the Heads so *21 Army Fd Coy* was transferred and *2 Fd Sqn* moved to Rowville with *3 Cav Bde Gp* in a reserve role. In March, *2 Cav Div* and *3 Cav Bde Gp* became *2 Mot Div* and *3 Mot Bde Gp* respectively.

The field squadron of a cavalry division incorporated a field park troop and with the change to a motor division structure a separate *3 Fd Pk Sqn* was formed in May along with separate *CRE 2 Mot Div*. With the addition of *6 Armd Bde Gp* in June, *2 Mot Div* became effectively a light armoured division but there is some confusion as to when (if ever) the name was formally changed to *2 Armd Div*. This summary will use *2 Armd Div* from October 1942 when the new name was formally adopted by *3 Armd Div* in NSW. *5 Fd Sqn* arrived at Balcombe from Warradale (SA) in June and in July *CRE 2 Mot Div* and *5 Fd Sqn* moved to Puckapunyal to occupy the facilities recently vacated by *1 Armd Div* while *3 Fd Pk Sqn* moved to Seymour. In August, *2 Fd Sqn* moved to Seymour.

With the restructure of the motor and armoured divisions in October 1942, *2 Armd Div* was to get *6 Armd Bde Gp* and *2 Mot Bde Gp* and the RAE component was to be *5 Fd Sqn*, *1 Fd Sqn* and *3 Fd Pk Sqn*. As a result *2 Fd Sqn* left for WA in October with *3 Mot Bde Gp* to join *1 Armd Div* and *1 Fd Sqn* moved to Wallgrove (NSW) with *2 Mot Bde Gp* as the first step to moving to Victoria. *2 Armd Div* had a short life and was disbanded before it could concentrate. *1 Fd Sqn* was transferred to *3 Armd Div* to be attached to *1 Mot Bde Gp* in February 1943 and *3 Fd Pk Sqn* was disbanded with a field park troop added to *5 Fd Sqn* to form *5 Indep Fd Sqn* which then went to the new *4 Armd Bde Gp*. *CRE 2 Armd Div* was disbanded at Puckapunyal (Vic) in March 1943.

2 Aust Field Squadron

2 Fd Sqn was initially the sole RAE unit in *2 Cav Div* and mobilized in December 1941 with *DivHQ* at Geelong (Vic) from where they worked on defence lines covering the approaches to Geelong from the south and west. When *2 Cav Div* moved into a reserve role in February 1942, *2 Fd Sqn* moved to Rowville with *3 Cav Bde Gp*. In April they absorbed *'S' Fd Tp* and in May formally became part of *3 Mot Bde Gp* before moving with them to Seymour in September. With the reorganization of the armoured divisions in October 1942, *3 Mot Bde Gp* was allocated to *1 Armd Div* and they moved to Mullewa (WA).

Here they came under command of *CRE 1 Armd Div* and moved to Mingenew (WA) when the division was concentrated in March 1943. In July they moved to Moora (WA) and when *1 Armd Div* was disbanded in September, *3 Mot Bde Gp* transferred to *CRE 2 Inf Div*. By January 1944 the troop numbers in WA were declining and *3 Mot Bde Gp* moved to Northam from where *2 Fd Sqn* left in February for the *RAE Depot* at Kapooka (NSW) for rest, retraining and reassignment. .

After a short period working on projects in Sydney in April they moved to Darwin (NT) in July under command of *CRE 2 Aust Corps Tps* to work on projects to prepare Darwin as a base for offensive action to Australia's north. Initially based at Parap they moved to Winnellie in August and then left Darwin in November 1944 when the project was abandoned. Next stop was at Wongabel (Qld) in November 1944 where they joined *CRE 1 Aust Corps Tps* preparing for a role on Borneo. However they stayed in Queensland, transferring to *CRE 11 Inf Div* in April 1945 and in July 1945 they moved to Kairi (Qld) under command of *CRE 5 Inf Div* until the end of the war.

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2 Aust Field Park Troop
3 Aust Field Park Squadron

2 Fd Pk Tp unit appears to have been formed at Geelong (Vic) in late 1941 as part of *2 Cav Div* and to be attached to *2 Fd Sqn* with a function of managing engineer stores for the various cavalry detachments defending Melbourne. In February 1942 they moved to Rowville and to Balcombe in May. Here they expanded to form *3 Fd Pk Sqn* before moving to Rokeby in July when *2 Mot Div* took over the camps vacated by *1 Armd Div* which had gone to Narrabri (NSW) for collective training. They remained at Rokeby until disbanded in February 1943 with many of the men transferring to *5 Fd Sqn*.

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