"SAPPER SUMMIT"

RAE CORPS NEWSLETTER

VICTORIAN ENGINEERS

September 2009 *ISSN 1325 – 7676* *Number 67*

GOLF DAY

The RAE Corps Officers Mess Golf Day t be held at Royal Melbourne Golf Club Friday October 16, 2009.
Get your entries in by 1 October 2009.
See page 4.

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COLONEL COMMANDANT'S REMARKS

It has now been 12 months since I assumed the role of Colonel Commandant and I take this opportunity to thank the current and previous Commanding Officers and members of 4 CER and 22 Const Regt for their warm welcome and support to me and the excellent work that they have done over this period.

And what a year it has been. The support to bushfire fighting and recovery defined the year and showed the commitment, flexibility, capacity and capability of the Victorian Sappers. The response from individuals and from the units was outstanding and has been recognised by comments and testimonials from the highest levels in the country and state – I can only add my congratulations and appreciation for all your efforts in supporting fellow Australians in their time of greatest need.

The support to operations has also been impressive at the individual and formed small team level, with Victorian Sappers supporting most current operations in some way – we have had some articles from individuals and noted in the unit summaries in Sapper Summit – it would be good to get more of these. Congratulations to all involved and thanks for your commitment and efforts.

.... to page 2

If you have a blue ☒ symbol after your name on your address label, then you have not yet paid this year's subs.
You will also have an insert reminder.

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

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We need Your Articles!

Our deadlines for articles for the remaining 2009 issue is:

- November issue by 30 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:

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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.

Colonel Commandant's Remarks... *continued from page 1*

The units remain busy with training and support activities including range and demolition practices, search training and exercises, counter mobility training, preparation for the annual camps and construction activities. It is pleasing to see the cooperation between the two regiments and the realistic tasking that is being given to both, including key roles within brigade activities and on the ACAP tasking for next year.

CO and RSM 4 CER and I recently represented the Corps at the Memorial Service for Sir John Holland. The service was a fitting farewell for a great Australian and was attended by a number of former Sapper officers acknowledging Sir John's military service and his life-long support for the Sappers. I passed condolence messages from many Sappers on to Lady Holland and the family, together with a message from the Chief of Army, along with my own personal message. It was also sad to see the passing of Jack Ross the last Sapper to serve during World War One. RSM 4 CER represented the Corps at Jack's funeral.

Regards,

Hutch

ROB YOUL'S COLUMN

Everyone knows what you mean when you say 'Civil War' – the one in the USA from 1861-65, also called 'The War between the States' and other names. It was notable for its political complexity; its reliance on civilian volunteers; the economic and technical aspects (with the North industrially self-sufficient, and the South having relatively few factories and still trying to export its crops); new weapons such as the monitor, submarine and a rudimentary machine gun; its bloodiness – 620 000 servicemen died for a start, around a third in action; the poignant written records, since most soldiers were literate; photographic collections created by pioneer cameramen like Matthew Brady; the universal use of railways by the North to move troops and supplies; the many colourful generals, some superb, some incompetent, often West Point classmates; the involvement of African-Americans in the fighting (covered by me earlier); its music; its diverse and fascinating social and cultural legacies; and the scholarship it has generated.

Over 10 000 military engagements took place during the war, almost half in Virginia and Tennessee. The Union population of 22 million greatly overshadowed the Confederacy's nine million in 1861; the Southern population included more than 3.5 million slaves and about 5.5 million whites. The disparity grew as the Union garrisoned more and more southern territory, and cut off the Confederate lands west of the Mississippi. When war broke out, the Union controlled the Navy and over four-fifths of the shipyards, steamships, river boats. Augmented by a massive shipbuilding program, Union fleets enabled the Union to dominate the river systems and blockade the entire southern coastline. European immigrants joined the Union Army in large numbers, including 177 000 born in Germany and 144 000 from Ireland. In addition, nearly 200 000 African-American men, most escaped slaves, served as Union soldiers and sailors. The South had its military traditions – some called it chivalry; its rural, even feudal roots; its horsemanship and the fact that it was

generally fighting on its own soil. It represented the old ways, whereas the North was deep into industrial revolution. How did they manoeuvre such large numbers of men in the field before modern communications emerged?

The Confederacy numbered, in order of secession, the states of South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas, all separating before 1 February 1861, when James Buchanan was still President. After the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter on 12 April 1861, and Lincoln's subsequent call for troops on 15 April, four more states seceded: Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina. The Confederacy also claimed the New Mexico, Arizona and Indian Territories, which became states much later, the last as Oklahoma.

The border states of Kentucky and Missouri declared neutrality very early in the war. The former gradually came to side with the north; however a second, pro-Confederate, government emerged in some southern counties. The southern counties of what would become West Virginia (that bloc of Virginia generally against slavery separated from the Confederacy [actually Virginia] in 1861, gaining statehood in 1863) were similarly inclined, but did not achieve lasting power. Missouri was more complex; the majority of the legislature and the governor voted to secede, but not before a constitutional convention dissolved the legislature and governorship after Federal troops took over the capital. The Confederacy recognised the pro-Confederate elements in both Kentucky and Missouri and laid claim to those states based on their authority, with representatives from both states seated in the Confederate Congress in Richmond, Virginia, just 158 kilometres from Washington. Later versions of Confederate flags had thirteen stars, reflecting these affinities.

In 1861, authorities declared martial law in Maryland, which almost enclosed the US capital, Washington, to block attempts at secession. Delaware, also a plantation state (but it had freed almost all slaves), never considered secession, nor did Washington (DC) itself. However, citizens from those states had divided loyalties. Only Delaware among the slave states did not produce a full regiment to fight for the Confederacy. Delaware is said to have provided a higher percentage of soldiers than any other state, and overwhelmingly they fought for the Union. (I've also seen this claim for Iowa.) Some counties in eastern Tennessee wanted to leave the Confederacy, but were checked by martial law.

Visiting eastern USA earlier this year, I found all this fascinating. Starting in Savannah, Georgia's Atlantic port, we thanked Sherman for sparing it from arson and devastation during his march to the sea late in the war. The old town has some 21 elegant 18th century squares, many around war memorials. We called on Parris Island with its USMC training camp and museum (no connection with the Civil War – but a story in itself – a big sub-tropical Pucka isolated on a huge estuary, full of cam uniforms and marching chants), then went to Charleston, South Carolina, another incredibly pleasing town. The touchstone for the war, it is almost as beautiful as Savannah, and the home of an officer school called The Citadel.

Digressing, most of my generation surely recall black and white advertisements in the back pages of National Geographic for military academies, with cadets in shakos, heavily embroidered epauletted jackets and white trousers – it's Americana, especially in the South, not just for preparatory schools, but also universities, as I'll describe. Maybe you remember the film *The Strange One*, with George Peppard?

Twenty days after South Carolina left the Union on 20 December 1860, Citadel cadets fired the war's first shots when they opened fire on the Union ship *Star of the West* entering Charleston harbour. On 12 April, General Beauregard's shore batteries, some manned by cadets, opened fire on the Union-held Fort Sumter in the upper harbour. After 34 hours, Major Robert Anderson surrendered the fort. The Citadel continued as an academy during the Civil War, with Charleston cadets and others enlisted into South Carolina's military, drilling recruits, manufacturing ammunition, protecting arms depots and guarding Union prisoners. In 1854 they battled Sherman's advance guard at Tullifinny Creek. After the war, the Citadel and grounds were a federal garrison for seventeen years, before the academy was re-established. It shifted to a larger site some 30 years ago. Every building around the vast grassy parade ground is castellated and built in cream stone or brick. There are some 4 000 students; women are admitted.

Passing through Morganton, North Carolina, we walked around the town square with its deciduous trees, leafless then; its white Georgian courthouse; its statue of Senator Sam Ervin of Watergate fame, a Morganton native; coming finally to the Civil War memorial, which listed on a long white wall, company by company, regiment by regiment, the names of those who had served, all of them white, presumably. This is supposedly typical of the South – families remember the detail – whereas in the North the monuments are more general in character. Nevertheless, in Brooklyn we saw an archway rivalling anything in France, stone with elaborate sculptures, erected in 1889-1901 by an ex-servicemen's association to commemorate the Union dead – no mention of the enemy. I asked if there were

any memorials showing Johnny Reb shaking hands with a northerner – definitely not!

The next military excursion was to Blacksburg, home of Virginia Tech, a similarly magnificent campus of impressive stone buildings set around another huge green – and scene of a recent shocking massacre (2007) – almost impossible to contemplate when you're there on a mild Sunday afternoon, with hundreds of students and their families taking the air. Virginia Tech also has cadets, rare in a public university – and not to be confused with ROTC, which is more like a university regiment here – part of the US Army. Having been founded in 1872, the cadets have no Civil Warries to tell, but members have served in every US conflict since then. The first Black graduate emerged in 1958, and women entered the corps in 1973.

Finally we called on the 54 hectare campus of the Virginia Military institute (VMI), Lexington, in the Shenandoah Valley – a delightful town with a comfortable, almost English atmosphere. The most famous graduate is George Marshall; the best known professor, General Stonewall Jackson. Again accepting both genders as students, the institute is the oldest state-supported military college in the US, and one of six senior military colleges. All VMI students are military cadets, who live in a spartan, physically demanding environment, combined with strict military discipline. VMI offers bachelor's degrees in the fields of engineering, science and liberal arts. Whilst every cadet must participate in the ROTC, on graduation they may either accept a commission in any of the US military services or pursue civilian endeavours.

Founded in 1839, on the site of the Lexington state arsenal, cadets under then Major Jackson saw abolitionist John Brown hanged after the battle at Harpers Ferry. Who recalls 'Santa Fe Trail' with Errol Flynn – I do! An entertaining film, but apparently full of historical liberties.

The Institute helped train the Southern armies, besides participating in many battles. VMI alumni were regarded as amongst Confederacy's best officers — fifteen became generals, and others stood out in the Union forces. On 15 May 1864, VMI cadets, aged from 14-22, fought as an independent unit at the Battle of New Market. General Breckinridge held the cadets in reserve until Union troops broke through, when he reportedly stated, 'Put the boys in...and may God forgive me for the order. The VMI cadets held the line, eventually pushing forward and capturing a Union artillery emplacement, to secure a Confederate victory, a unique achievement. Accordingly, VMI is the only US military college authorised to fix bayonets and wear red during formal parades.

On return, I read an entertaining book by Tony Horwitz: Confederates in the Attic – dispatches from the unfinished civil war. Horwitz, husband of brilliant Australian writer Geraldine Brooks, spent over two years as a re-enactor, dressing in threadbare Confederate uniforms, carrying all the gear and arms that an infanteer of that era would employ, marching across the countryside in all four seasons, on minimal sleep and food. He writes of the people he meets, their self-imposed ordeals, the search for absolute authenticity by the most committed buffs, and the rapid consumption by suburbia and warehouse development of most battlefields.

Finally, to my amazement, when we had guests from southern Missouri, Duncan Mathews rang me on a whim. A popular 6 Group ex-nasho sergeant, father of Amy Mathews of Home and Away, he left 91 Forestry Squadron around 1980 to work in Sydney. A second marriage to an American brought him to picturesque Harpers Ferry on the Potomac, where he runs a specialty timber business. John Brown and his body of guerrillas attacked the arsenal here in 1859, and Jackson defeated McClellan in 1862. Duncan sends his greetings to all. I'd had no idea I'd be passing almost by his door when en route from Virginia to Pittsburgh.

Sources: I drew heavily from Wikipedia to write this article, and from college websites, as well as Tony Horwitz' book and general publications on the Civil War.
... Rob Youl

COMING EVENTS

The RAE Corps Officers Mess Golf Day. The Sir John Holland Cup. Playing for the Evans-Zoller Trophy.

The Officers Mess Golf Day will be held at Royal Melbourne Golf Club on **Friday 16 October 2009.** The Day is open to all RAE serving and retired officers, both Regular and Reserve. It is also open to RE Officers and Engineer Officers from Allied Forces.

Tee Off is 1000 hrs sharp on the East Course.

Players may enter singly or in pairs. The format is usually a pairs ambrose. Only one form is required for a pairs entry. ***Note*** Only serving or former serving officers in The RAE may compete for the trophy.

Note that the handicapper requires accurate handicap information before the day.

Green fees: $105.00 with cheques payable to "The Royal Melbourne Golf Club". Members of RMGC are exempt this fee. Dress in the Clubhouse is jacket and tie.

To secure a place in the draw, complete the proforma on page 15 and return it to Capt Bill McAuley. You can phone Capt McAuley on 03 5489 3218 or mobile 0428 486 018. The Club contact is The Secretary, on 9598 6755.

Places are limited to a maximum of 20 and bookings must be made and paid by 1 Oct 2009.

RECENT EVENTS

NEW HEAD OF CORPS

From Brigadier Peter Clay:

You may be aware that Chief of Army recently appointed me as Head of Corps to replace Brigadier Wayne Budd during his deployment to Afghanistan. Wayne committed himself wholeheartedly as HOC and through his commitment, focus and leadership has achieved some great changes for our future engineer force.

For me personally, I am humbled to be given this opportunity to work closely again with a bunch of people who have been a big part of my Army life and whom I greatly admire and respect.

As I cast my eye across the Corps right now I am impressed. I see great examples of professionalism, commitment and teamwork. I also see breadth and depth of operational experience at a level we have not experienced in the last several decades.

In fact the Corps is now a big part of an Army community where operational experience and commitment has become an accepted 'normal' state of affairs. This is an important mindset as I see no indicators that our pace of operational commitments will slow down.

In fact, it is appears likely we will remain engaged in an operational environment that continues to test us. One where a Sapper might be clearing improvised explosive devices, helping the locals construct and fighting a determined enemy under media glare - all in the same day. This is a highly challenging environment to train for and operate in.

But I see that Sappers are really thriving in this environment. There are many reasons for this that include our practice of training hard to ensure we maintain good soldier skills as well as technical skills. But perhaps most important is our ability to consistently achieve the right mindset. As Sappers we have always prized intelligent, flexible and adaptable thinking as well as the hard work that gets the job done. Even when we are operating independently, and often remotely, we pride ourselves on achieving results in a no fuss optimal way - the quiet achievers.

I think that one quality that stands out in a great Sapper is 'Sappernuity'. I was introduced to this term by a wise Sergeant many years ago and I think it is worth reinforcing. I see Sappernuity as about being smart in whatever environment we're in. It means we use our trained skills but we are also prepared to use our heads and think unconventionally or 'out of the box' to achieve an outcome. We use Sappernuity for lots of things. Perhaps to gain support of the local people to work with us, to work out how to construct an improvised bridge or clear an obstacle, or maybe to design or solve a tactical problem. Whatever the task at hand, Sappernuity is a core quality that is about our ability to think, decide and act in a smart way.

So there is a great deal that we all should be proud of in our Corps. But there is no time to rest on our successes. The other great quality that we have is never being satisfied with the status quo, instead, driving ourselves forward to reinforce our successes and improve our weaknesses. Later this year you will all have an opportunity to put your ideas forward as we develop our Corps vision and plan for the years ahead. I look forward to your ideas and input as we map out our future together.

Best Regards,

Peter Clay
Brigadier
Head of Corps

* * * * *

RESERVE FORCES DAY MARCH SUNDAY 5 JULY 2009.

The March this year was organised by the Reserve Forces Day Council, who are located in NSW, and hence returned to the traditional date of first Sunday in July. The format was also changed somewhat, with less support provided by bands, but it was considered a success by all attendees.

Twenty-nine members of RAE marched, including seven from distant country areas: George Weeks, Les Francis, L Young and Stuart Hipwell from the Goulburn Valley and Les Lasham, Neville Jolley and Graham Rushbrook from other country areas.

For the first time for many years we were pleased to be joined by three serving members of 22 Regt., all marching in civvies. Two of them also carried their toddlers on their backs - a first for Reserve Forces Day. Retirees all miss the company of serving personnel marching with us on these days - that was a feature of our marches in the 1990s.

The March commenced just south of Princes Bridge and proceeded to the Shrine. On arrival there the banners, including those of the OSA and the Woodpeckers were lined up at the top of the Shrine steps, as a backdrop to proceedings. Meanwhile the remaining marchers formed up on the Forecourt under the orders of the RAAF RSM, WO1 Ross Chavasse. The RSM felt that we old timers had forgotten how to count 15 paces.

The service was introduced by Mr Jim Olive. Messages from the Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP and Her Excellency the Governor General, Ms Quentin Bryce AC were then read by Col George McKenzie OBE RFD.

Wing Comd. John Glover RFD gave the main address, in which he spoke at length on our tradition of service. The Wing Comd. had served first in the RAN Reserve, before transferring to the RAAF in a medical appointment.

Being 70 years since Reservists were mustered for service in the Australian forces at the beginning of WW2, a number of veterans of that early call-up, known as the 39ers, who attended with the official party, were presented with ribbons to commemorate the occasion.

At the conclusion of the ceremony most of the RAE attendees adjourned to Bill Bell's pub in South Melbourne, to enjoy lunch and share memories of their past service.

The RAE (Vic) H and H Association has sent a list of RAE marchers to the Reserve Forces Day Council in Sydney, for the Governor General to issue individual attendance certificates to attendees, though it is expected that they may not be delivered for some months.

.... *Bruce Campbell.*

RAE HEAD OF CORPS WATERLOO DINNER ADDRESS 2009

The Officers Waterloo Dinner was held this year at the Victoria Barracks Officers Mess on Saturday 20 June. There were 60 Officers present, including the Chief of Army, Lt Gen Ken Gillespie. The Signals Corps was represented by Lt Col Steven Lee who gave the toast to the Corps.

Each year, the Head of Corps prepares an address which is read at all Officers Waterloo Dinners across Australia, and in overseas deployments. It is a report card on the Corps.
The Colonel Commandant, Brigadier Peter Hutchinson delivered it on behalf of the out-going Head of Corps, Brigadier Wayne Budd ..... It is reproduced below:

Good evening fellow Sappers. Another Waterloo Dinner has been enjoyed and the Esprit de Corps that binds our Corps has brought us together again to remember our past and to review our achievements. It remains an honour for me to serve as your Head of Corps and to provide you with this update.

The past year has again been an active chapter in the Corps history. We continue to support the Australian Defence Force and the Army in significant operational undertakings around the globe and just as importantly here at home. The tragic consequences of the Victorian Fires earlier this year brought our sappers into operations in support of devastated Australian communities. Sappers from 4 CER and 22 Const Regt responded swiftly to the call for support and sustained a response effort in trying circumstances. While supplemented by members of the Incident Response Regiment as the task progressed, the Reserve members of the Corps demonstrated their agility and commitment, and showed why the Reserve will always play a part as the face of the Army in regional Australia. I congratulate all the members of the Corps who assisted in that tragedy.

Further afield on operations, the Corps has continued in its commitment to the task of providing a more secure world. In Afghanistan the Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Forces rely on their sapper elements to undertake their daily activities. With an engineer component based on a Combat Engineer Squadron, mobility requirements in a high threat environment have made the sappers a "must have" member of the operational team. The task of moving a convoy down valley roads has pitted the combat engineering and EOD skill of our sappers against a cunning and adaptive enemy. The 1st Combat Engineer Squadron from 1 CER has recently handed over to 16th Combat Engineer Squadron from 3 CER

as the 2nd MRTF began operations in Oruzgan province. Working alongside the MRTF is the Special Operations Task Group which continues to be supported by the sappers of the Incident Response Regiment. Like the MRTF, I continue to hear testimony that our combat arms brethren and special forces counterparts consider sappers a must have part of each and every operation. Sadly I acknowledge the sacrifice made by Sergeant Brett Till in March this year, losing his life responding to an IED. His passing was felt widely within the Corps and his name will be added to the list of our fallen such that his sacrifice, with theirs, is not forgotten. I am confident that the Corps family will continue to close around his wife Brianna and their children.

More recent announcements have included a modest increase in soldiers going into Afghanistan. The Corps has been charged with a share of that work load and around 40 sappers will have an opportunity to work in and around Tarin Kowt Airfield and Camp Holland as we continue to ensure our troops are well supported.

Closer to home in East Timor, a new rotation of Sappers continues to support the deployed Battle Group. Based on a Combat Engineer Troop reinforced with tradies, members of the 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment and 21st Construction Squadron will provide the essential support engineering capacity. Throughout all theatres though, Sappers from 19th Chief Engineer Works and Infrastructure Division are providing design, contracting, works and maintenance capabilities.

In support of our members deployed on operations; reform, modernisation and development activities continue within Army. The Chief of Army (our most senior sapper) has set a bold reform agenda for the Army, and the Corps has much work to do in support of that agenda. The Defence White Paper has been released and the Strategic Reform Program will provide the resources required for our future development. You will see an impact in your work environment in the future. Changes will be a positive for us as each reform leads to a better allocation of resources. For each of you the Officer and Other Ranks pay reform has also been implemented. I am convinced that these reforms have been overwhelmingly positive for the members of the Corps.

For the last two years I have discussed the work that we have been doing on our concept for a Modular Engineer Force that will support the Army of the future. Tonight I can inform you that the Chief of Army, on advice from his senior advisory group, has agreed to our Modular Engineer Force concept, with the implementation to begin in the next posting cycle. There was unanimous support from the Army's senior leadership for our modular building block approach to engineer capability, and with the agility and responsiveness that this will bring to providing the right engineer support to the right place at the right time. The Chief has agreed to the appointment of a Force Engineer who will lead a sapper technical control element that will be inserted into the new Forces Command structure. This C2 element will ensure consistency in engineer planning, the reintroduction of engineer standards appraisal, and will provide a focal point for Corps support to Army modernisation efforts. A growth path for the Corps has been acknowledged and the future equipping strategies addressed. This is a landmark agreement for the development of the Corps for the next six to eight years. I acknowledge on your behalf the work of LTCOLs Craig Jolly, Craig Madden, Dave Rye and Al Hollink in achieving this result. Col Steve Alexander will carry this work forward within Forces Command at this point of time and I know that you will all support his efforts to turn the concept into a fully implemented outcome.

The Modular Engineer Force also seeks to support the development of our Reserve capability. Work is ongoing with the 2nd Division on how the Reserve can fulfil the high and low readiness requirements outlined in the Modular Engineer Force. There are several initiatives running in Army at present and the likely outcomes will change the current paradigms of how we support the Reserve. The Reserve provides us with many unique sets of skills and these capabilities are to be fully integrated in the Modular Engineer Force. I am convinced that this work will build a stronger Corps for Army.

On the equipment front we are seeing, or will soon see, the introduction of several new pieces of plant; the fielding of the new Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units, the Personnel Explosive Lane Clearance Charge, and a new countermine flail. We must learn to adapt as new equipment comes into service, including adjusting our procedures as necessary to maximise the improvement in our capability.

I am happy to report that facilities issues are tracking better than I can recall. IRR is in its new facilities at Holsworthy Barracks, 3 CER is starting to receive some of its new buildings, plans are in place for new facilities for a Sqn of 1 CER in South Australia, 2 CER has a complete rebuild planned in Enoggera Barracks, 21 Const Sqn will get new facilities in Amberley, and funding has been secured to address 17 Const Sqn's historic accommodation!

Last year I challenged all leaders in the Corps to focus on the retention battle within. Reports tell me we are beginning to win that battle and our situation is improving. The School is continuing under

pressure to train new IETs at capacity and as these individuals flow to units; our challenge will be to seize the opportunities to develop our junior staff. Our RAE Junior Leadership training is outstanding and the RSMs of the Corps are doing a great job with our future leaders.

This year we can again be proud of the individual achievements within the Corps. These achievements are a testament to the talent, training and experience that resides in the Corps. Our Major General Craig Williams now commands the 2nd Division and Brigadier Bill Sowry commands the International Stabilisation Force in East Timor. In this year's honours lists we have again been well represented. Our congratulations go to Brigadier Andrew (Boomer) Smith for his AM, Lieutenant Colonel Dave Wainwright for his Distinguished Service Cross, Colonel Tony Wallace and Lieutenant Colonel Adam Boyd for their Conspicuous Service Crosses, Majors Ken Martin, Paul Faura and WO2 Geoff Rowland for their Commendations for Distinguished Service, and Captain Brenton White and WO1 Mick Kerr for their OAM's.

Last year we bade farewell to General John Baker. His legacy to the Australian Defence Force is now in a sense immortalised at the Headquarters Joint Operations Command site at Bungendore, which was officially named the General John Baker Complex by the Prime Minister in March this year. Sadly this year we have also seen Sir John Holland pass away. A member of the Corps during World War II, Sir John went on to a successful engineering career and remained a strong supporter of the Corps and the Reserve. The annual John Holland awards are a reminder of that affiliation and support. Additionally we recently saw Jack Ross the last surviving World War I soldier pass away. Jack was a sapper signalman and it is only fitting, with our Signal Corps representative here tonight, that we acknowledge his life and commemorate another example of our shared heritage.

On the Corps heritage front, I can announce that Major General (Rted) Peter Day will lead the Corps History Volume V steering group. This is a big task and we wish him every success and our Corps support. Additonally, the Chief of Army has asked Brigadier Peter Clay to take on the role of Head of Corps as I deploy on operations. I know you will support him as he supports you.
It remains an exciting time to be a Sapper. The Corps is standing proud on operations across the globe and the professionalism of the Corps grows with every patrol and every clearance operation performed. The Corps has a new goal in implementing the Modular Engineer Force which will enhance our capabilities within Army. Our support is needed in the reform agenda within Army and across the Strategic Reform Program of the Department. I am confident in the future of our Corps and thank each of you again for your continuing service and professionalism. Thank you.
.... *Brig Wayne Budd.*

FROM THE REGIMENTS

22 CONST REGT

22 Const Regt, after a very busy start to the year with support to the Victorian bush fires, has settled down to concentrate on some simple engineering jobs. We joined in with 4CER to conduct a Dem's Range weekend in May and in June we commenced a construction task at the Army Tank Museum in Pucka.

The Tank Museum was looking to extend their facility and 22 Const Regt has come to their assistance to construct a Lysaght hut. 105 Const Sqn had been given the task and commenced works in June. They commenced levelling the site where the hut is to be built and poured the concrete for the footings in July. In August the Sqn will pour the pedestals for the Lysaght.

39 Const Sqn has also been busy during June and July completing minor tasks around their depot with a visit to the Forestry Coup to conduct further chainsaw training. In August they will commence preparation for a road construction task at the School of Music at Simpson Barracks, Watsonia.

CAPT Tony Johnston (OPSO) and CAPT Noel Tipton (OC 203 Wks Sect) have just returned from a recon for 2010 AACAP. 2 DIV have tasked 22 Const Regt to provide support to tasks allocated to 21 Const Sqn at Pukatja community in South Australia, just south of the Northern Territory border, 130 kms west of the Sturt Hwy. The Regt will deploy a troop size contingent next year in June/July.

WO2 Rob Emerson has just returned from six months in England and Afghanistan on defence exchange EX Long Look. We say a fond farewell to WO1 Dave Richards RE who replaced WO2 Rob Emerson, Dave spent a busy time at 22 Const Regt and 19 CE Wks, with a little time spent sightseeing around Australia.

22 Const Regt has had several members on deployment this year with SGT Ricky Morris returning from MRTF1 (OP SLIPPER) at the end of June and SGT Jason Sales (RASIGS) just completed his deployment with OP ANODE. The Regt welcomes these members back and is thankful for

their safe return. 22 Const Regt still has one member on deployment with OP ASTUTE, CAPT Adam Tull.
.... *WO1 Andrew Howes*
Adjt

* * * * *

105 CONSTRUCTION SQUADRON LYSAGHT HUT ERECTION FOR ARMY HISTORICAL UNIT (AHU) PUCKAPANYAL

The AHU is responsible for running the Tank Museum on behalf of RAAOC in Puckapunyal Military Area (PMA). AHU had purchased/acquired several Lysaght Huts through the Defence Material Organisation (DMO) and were keen to erect the huts to extend their on the site tank exhibition to house their new additions to the museum.

When they approached private contracting organisations they were alarmed to learn when that it was going to cost over $200k to erect the 30mx20mx6m high building. AHU did not have sufficient funds to achieve the construction. WO2 Joe Linford decided to call on 22 Const Regt as he had done in the past to erect the previous Lysaght Huts that are part of the museum.

In May 2007 203WKS carried out an initial Recon and a budget of $20k was given to WO2 Linford for approval for material to carry out the erection of the Lysaght Hut to be completed during 22 Const Regt AFX in October 2009. This task would provide the Regiment excellent training in horizontal and vertical construction and it given to 105 Construction Squadron to plan and carry out the erection of the hut. The 22 Const Regt OPSO was also keen to train pers on the Project Management Template as directed by the 2 Div Commander MAJGEN Craig Williams. This will enable the Squadron to prepare for potential overseas and AACAP tasks in the same manner as 6 ESR.

The Squadron commenced work on site on the 20th June with the task of levelling the site in order to commence and set out of the concrete pads. Things were going to plan with CPL Emery, LCPL Hedt capably assisted by SPR Crase making great progress. Then the heavens opened up!! Work had to be abandoned for a few days.

In order to make up time, all the reinforcing cages were prefabricated and the following weekend, in spite of 22mm of rain overnight they were able to prepare and have ready to pour 4 pads. And thanks to some of the boys who were able to go up during the week they were able to get back on schedule. The pads are now all poured with the next task the pouring of the pedestals to occur during the September weekend which will have the Sqn on track to erect the Lysaght during the units AFX.

.... *Major Peter Mercoulia*
OC - 105 Const Sqn

Preparing pads for the Lysaght Hut

4 CER UPDATE

The 4th Combat Engineer Regiment has been very active in 2009 with internal training, supporting other units and formations, and supporting operations in Australia and overseas. The exceptionally high tempo within Army has resulted in more opportunities for 4 CER to support Army's operational and training requirements, and members of 4 CER are excited about the prospect of continuing to support Army's operational needs in the future.

The Regiment has deployed several members on operations in 2009 thus far. WO2 Steven Attleir is currently deployed to Afghanistan, SGT Ron Willis and LCPL Jay Marriott recently deployed to Rifle Coy Butterworth, Malaysia, SGT Adam Reynolds also served in Afghanistan and CAPT Jon Cuypers was deployed to the Sinai Peninsular.

Members from 4 CER have been deployed on OP RESOLUTE as part of Defence's contribution to Illegal Fisheries and Illegal Immigration in the northern waters of Australia. 4 CER has also supported a number of external exercises and activates within Victoria. 4 CER provided Battle Noise Simulation (BNS) and plant support to the Royal Military College, Duntroon, as well as also providing BNS for Exercise Chong Ju as part of the fire-power demonstration for the Combat Officers Advanced Course held at Puckapunyal. 4 CER has also continued to support its fellow 4 BDE units by recently providing BNS support to 4th/19th PWLHR during the Light Cavalry Courses.

4 CER is continuing to maintain its commitment to 4 BDE by providing members for the Reserve Response Force (RRF) and High Readiness Reserve (HRR). A large number of members are currently completing Phase 4 of their IET, allowing them to sign up to the HRR by the end of August 2009. There are also a number of Reservist and Regular Army members who support other IET courses run by other 2 Division CER units in the form of both instructor support as well as administrative support.

The Regiment has been very active and will continue to be throughout the remainder of the year. We wish those deployed on operations all the best and the 4th Combat Engineer Regiment is looking forward to further exercises and activities in the latter part of the year.

.... *LT Andrew Proy*
Adjt

SOUTHERN REGIONS CORP BIRTHDAY

Early in 2009, senior soldiers from 4 CER met to commence planning for the Southern Regions Corp Birthday Dinner, to be held in conjunction with the 4 CER birthday. The concept discussed was to include both 22 CR and 4 CER, conduct an all ranks dinner with minimal expense and have the Sovereign (Corp) Banner in attendance. The goal was realised on 27 June 09 with an attendance of 87 serving members.

The dinner was held at 22 Construction Regiment which proved an ideal setting. Meals were prepared by SGT Ron Willis and his team to an exceptionally high standard; an absolute credit to their culinary skills. Steward support was provided by members of 1 PET COY and 4 CSSB. Music was provided by members of 4th /19th PWLHR Band and members of 2/10 Fd Regt Band.

The guest of honour was BRIG Hutchinson (R'td), Colonel Commandant RAE Southern Region. Also in attendance were current serving CO's of 4 CER and 22 CR and their predecessors, RAE Corp RSM WO1 Noel Johanson, Corp RSM Elect WO1 Tony Quirk (SCMA), and WO2 Barry Veltmeyer. The Dinning President was WO1 Kel Eaton.

Victoria boasts a strong RAE family, yet we previously have not taken the opportunity of uniting to celebrate the Corp Birthday. With this in mind, planning for 2010 has already commenced with consideration given to holding it later in July so as not to clash with the Waterloo Dinner.

.... *WO1 J.H.Davis*
OPSWO, 4 CER

LT COL SIR JOHN HOLLAND AC

27 June 1914 – 31 May 2009.

Sir John died just as the last issue of Sapper Summit was going to press, and there was no opportunity to include a detailed obituary. The following is by Maj Bruce Campbell:

The life of the late Sir John Holland AC was celebrated at a Memorial Service, attended by approximately 400 friends and colleagues in the Melbourne Cricket Club Members Lounge on 10 July, 2009. Mr Tony Charlton AM conducted the service, introducing the various speakers, as well as relating highlights of his own long association with Sir John.

Sir John's sons Jock and Richard spoke first, with details of Sir John's childhood, education and

youthful experiences as well as his wartime service. They were followed by three long serving members of the John Holland Group, who spoke of his professional life as an engineer and businessman. His son Peter, David Brownbill of the National Stroke Foundation and Sir John's personal assistant, Patricia Mahoney, then addressed his community contributions. Finally his eldest daughter, Sue, and eldest grandchildren, Anthony and Claire, spoke of Sir John as a loving and inspiring father and grandfather.

Sir John was the eighth of ten children and was born on the Mornington Peninsula, where he spent most of his peacetime life. Enthralled by the excitement of the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge as a boy of 12, Sir John decided to spend his life as an engineer "building bridges" – an aim he achieved both practically and metaphorically.

Sport played a big part in Sir John's life and throughout his education first at Frankston High School and then at Melbourne University he quickly developed his skills in cricket, football, athletics and golf, as well as leadership skills and interest in community matters. On completion of his Engineering Degree he worked for a short time as an engineering consultant until World War 2 brought a halt to his civilian career.

In 1939 he joined the Australian Army and soon after was sent to the RAE Officer Training course at SME. Liverpool. On completion of his course he was commissioned and immediately posted to the Middle East where, as an officer in 2/2 Fd Coy he took part in the battle of Bardia. This was followed by the defence of Greece and later withdrawal through that country, where he was involved in demolitions of roads and bridges to slow down the German advance. Then, together with other Australian troops he escaped from Greece by ship and, en route to Alexandria, survived many near misses by German dive bombers and submarines.

Once back in Egypt he was appointed a member of staff of a special SME established to train new RAE officers for the AMF in the Middle East. He was then sent back to Australia to join the newly established Z Force. This was a special Commando type force, trained in a wide variety of skills including parachuting, small boat operations and even unusual skills such as printing of counterfeit money. The Force became known unofficially as "Holland's Dirty Tricks Unit".

On of Sir John's greatest achievements in Z Force was the planning and conduct of the famous attack on Singapore Harbour. In this operation members of his unit sailed from Australia to the outskirts of Singapore in the unarmed ex-Indonesian fishing vessel, the Krait. The soldiers then paddled into Singapore Harbour in two-man kayaks and under cover of darkness attached limpet mines to the Japanese ships, succeeding in sinking six large merchant ships. They later escaped back to Australia in the Krait. Sir John ended the war as a Lt Col and CO of Z Force.

Sir John was discharged from the army at the end of World War 2 and quickly took up a posting with the Reserve Forces. He served as 2ic 3 Fd Regt and in July 1948 was prominent in all RAE activities, including the re-establishment of the 3 MD Officers Mess at Swan Street, being appointed its PMC in 1948. At the same time he became a key contributor to all RAE activities in Victoria, giving widespread support, particularly to young officers. He established the Sir John Holland Sword presentation, given to the best new RAE officer at the annual Waterloo Dinner and established the Annual Golf Day at Royal Melbourne Golf Club. He also became a keen member of the Naval and Military Club. He successfully led a team of ex-servicemen cricketers against an English team in a series of "tests" played in England many years after World War 2.

Sir John established his own engineering construction company in 1948, initially with a work force of seven. His first contract was for the construction of a large building on the property of the then future Prime Minister, the Hon Malcolm Fraser, MP. From these humble beginnings, he quickly went onto establish the John Holland Group which eventually employed some thousands, buildings bridges, tunnels, roads etc throughout Australia and overseas. Notable projects included the Sorrell Bridge and reconstruction of the Derwent Bridge in Tasmania; the MCG Great Southern Stand; new Parliament House, Canberra, and more recently Eastlink. He was in the forefront of development of pre-stressed concrete in the 1950s.

He became a role model to his young engineers, strongly encouraging them to join RAE, play sport and be active members of the community.

He was made an Honorary Fellow of the Institution of Engineers (Aust) and his professional ontributions were acknowledged by Melbourne University,

Sir John was a great family man who contributed generously to his community. He will be sadly missed. His legacy to the RAE has been onsiderable and will be remembered. The RAE History and Heritage Association was particularly appreciative of his ongoing support and contribution.

... *Bruce Campbell*

ASSOCIATION REPORTS

RAE Vietnam Association

About 50 RAE Vietnam Veterans turned out for the memorial service at the Shine on the 18th August for Vietnam Veterans Day. The main emphasis for the day was the Battle of Binh Ba. After the service about half of the group made their way to the Prahran RSL for drinks and a light lunch. The overall numbers for all Vets seemed to be down on the previous years.
... *Vin Neale*

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22 CONSTRUCTION REGIMENT REUNION – 2009.

The next Reunion will be held at Leongatha over the weekend 23-24-25 October:

- Meet and greet Friday afternoon at the Leongatha Motel.
- Dinner Friday in Leongatha includes bus from motel and return.
- Saturday Bus trip and all meals and entry fees included – great day out assured.
- Saturday evening dinner at Leongatha RSL – bus from motel and return.

Double for the weekend $ 460 includes everything. (Just bring spending money)
Single for the weekend $ 300 includes everything. (Just bring spending money)
Any other combinations let me know and I will cost it for you.

Deposit required as soon as possible.

All enquires to Jen Eaton
Phone: 0427 196 038
Email: jensden@bigpond.net.au

* * * * *

RAE, RINGWOOD

We held an RAE social night on friday 17th July 2009. It was a small attendance but those who were able to make it had a great time catching up. I got a few e-mail and phone call apologies from ex-members that haven't been in contact for years. Great to hear the family news and to know that the RAE Corp family has not been forgotten even when family & work commitments take up so much of our time.

Now is the time for all of us to keep a look out around our local military depots when you are driving or walking past -- if you notice something not quite right then let the Duty Officer or the Orderly Room at the depot know asap. Let us all help to keep our fellow soldiers and communities safe.
..... *best wishes, Margaret Handte*

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WOODPECKERS RAE ASSOCIATION

Woody meets Squirrell

The article from Maurice Squirrell in the June edition re Black Saturday was a really good read and gave me a different insight to many of the stories I've heard post 7/2.

A few weeks ago, in the course of my Bushfire Community Support work with the Red Cross, I had cause with a colleague to travel from Whittlesea to Arthurs Creek. Well, we had to go past the Squirrell homestead and dropped in. Unfortunately, Maurice was offsite at the Pay Museum but Jane dropped her chores and coloured for us Maurice's written word picture. The way Jane described the events was matter of fact after the event, but no doubt the life and work experiences of both Jane and Maurice come to the fore when the s..t hit the fan and afterwards. Accordingly, I've offered Jane a ARC volunteer post assist me in my ongoing role as Emergency Services Liaison Officer for the City of Whittlesea and 4 adjoining Local Government Areas.

No doubt, the buzz of aircraft and in particular the roar of heavy equipment brought back memories of Army days for Maurice and the impact on people for Jane. For my colleague and I, it was great see and hear a positive report. The people living on the urban/rural interface of Melbourne's northern suburbs should understand how close they came to part of the Disaster – only a wind change saved many many more lives.
.... *Michael (Mick) Murray*
Vice Pres, Woodpeckers RAE Assoc.

SCOUTS AUSTRALIA AWARD: FOR VICTORIAN SAPPER

Here is some news on a former CO of 4CER. Congratulations on the acknowledgement of a long involvement in an aspect of community service:

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, the Chief Scout and Governor General of Australia, has formally announced the award of the "SILVER ARROWHEAD" for excellent Service to the

Scouting Movement for local sapper, Don (Chippy) Hughes.

Don's Scouting career includes extensive youth service in Mt Waverley prior to joining the Army in 1974 and then as a Scout Leader in Papua New Guinea (including Provincial Commissioner for the Southern Highland Province), as a Group Leader in both Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, and at Warrandyte/Park Orchards, Victoria.

The Governor and Chief Scout of Victoria, Professor David de Krester AC will present Don' award at a special ceremony at Scouts Australia's spiritual and training home in Gilwell Park in September 2009.

Soils Testing Kit for Sappers

At a Low Volume Roads Conference, held in Austin Texas 2007, I came across a soils test kit developed by the US Corps of Engineers, referred to as a Rapid Soils Analysis Kit (RSAK).

I wished the RAE had similar kit when I was CO of 22 Construction Regiment as a better way of assessing the suitability of various soils for building roads, hard standings, airstrip etc. Well this wish has come true as I have been able at ARRB to develop a similar kit for Australian conditions, which can also be used on military engineering projects.

The RSKA was designed specifically to meet USA military needs. It was required to provide a rapid, accurate and expedient means to determine soil classifications essential to establish the soil design criteria for contingency airfield and lines of communication construction using insitu soil. As a stand-alone the kit is shipped in two large Pelican cases. Figure 1.

Prior to the development of the kit only subjective field analysis techniques were available, and the results failed to provide tangible numerical data that can be used to establish the necessary construction criteria. The RSAK can also be included as a system on the RAVEN (RApid Vehicle ENgineer), Figure 2.

Figure 1 Rapid Soils Analysis Kit (RSAK)

The kit was recently employed in the construction of the airfield able to take C17 aircraft on the Bradshaw Defence establishment in the Northern Territory. This work was undertaken as Combined Joint Task Force made up of US and Australian Army Engineers and other units.

ARRB has recently developed a similar kit for mainly for civilian purposes, referred to as the Road Base Test Kit (RBTK). The RSAK was made available on short term loan to the ARRB thanks to the courtesy of the US Corps of Engineers. Much of the concept and methodology used to develop their RSAK was seen as suitable for the development of a similar kit for Australian requirements.

RBTK has been developed to assist local road practitioners, particularly, in rural areas, to test how to make better use of local materials often of marginal quality for road pavements. This project has been possible because of the funding support provided by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

The RBTK provides a practical, easy to use, low cost method for assessing the suitability of natural gravels for various pavement uses. Details on the equipment contained in the kit and computer spreadsheet to calculate various properties should be available in late May 2009 on http://www.arrb.org.au/soilkit/

The kit requires the conduct of six separate tests to measure soil and water properties. The user enters the results obtained into a spreadsheet, accessed via the ARRB website, listed above to derive various material properties, as shown below to assess against given specifications

Tests conducted	**Estimated properties**
Test 1 - particle size distribution (PSD)	PSD in comparison with set specifications
Test 2 – liquid limit	Liquid Limit, Plastic Limit, Plasticity Index
Test 3 – linear shrinkage	Material classification
Test 4 – stone hardness	Maximum dry density
Test 5 – Emerson (dispersive properties)	CBR range
Test 6 – water salinity	Optimum moisture content
	Stone quality
	Emerson value

Where local materials do not meet target specifications the spreadsheet has the capability to undertake a mix design enabling up to three marginal materials to be blended. The software determines the proportion of each required to satisfy specifications as well as the estimated properties of the mix design, as listed above.

The estimated cost of the kit components, which are readily available from appropriate soil testing suppliers, is about $7,000. There is no cost for the use of the spreadsheet on the ARRB website. The entire equipment is housed in the one Pelican container as shown in Figure 3.

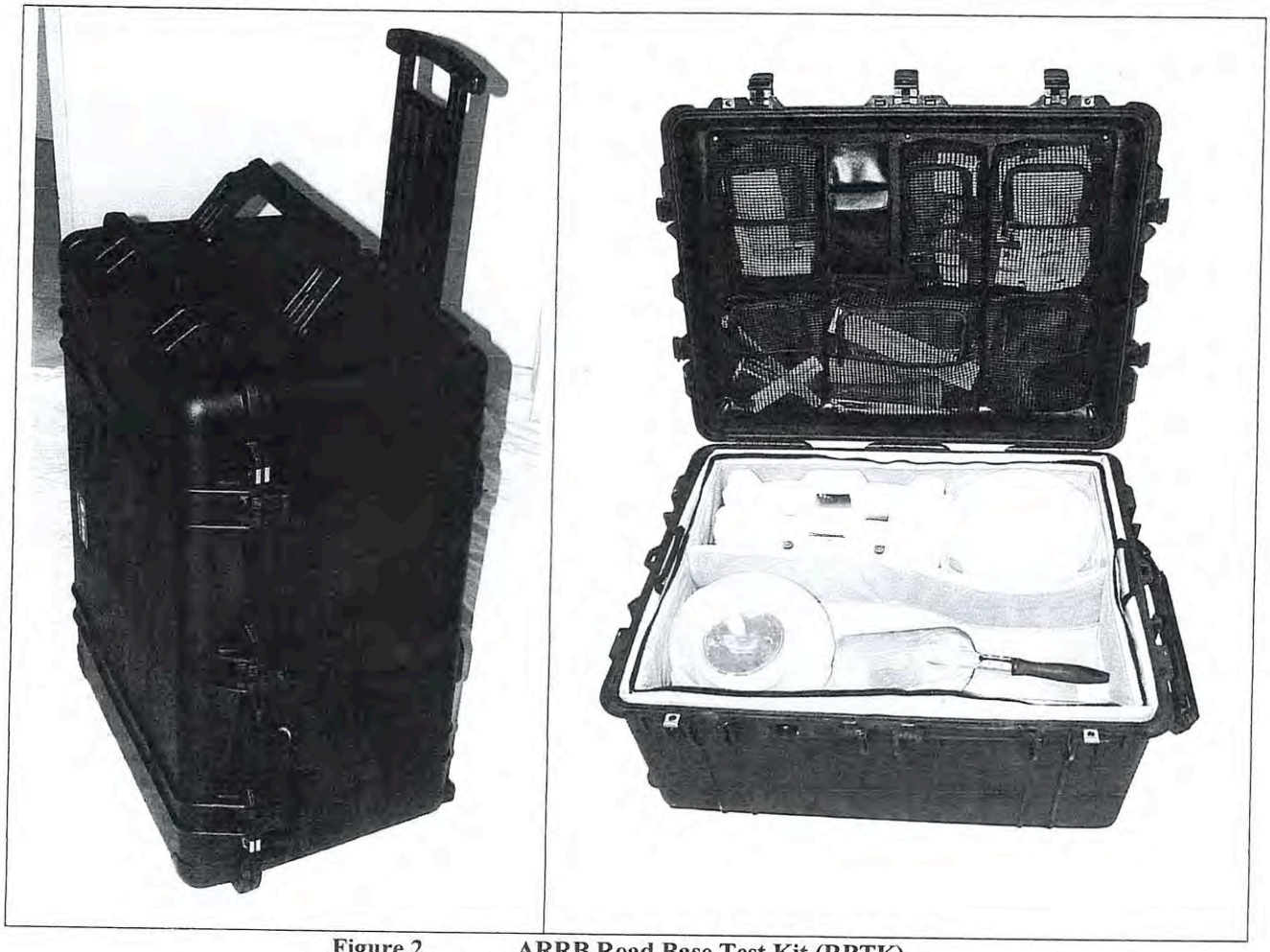

Figure 2 ARRB Road Base Test Kit (RBTK)

..... *Notes by*
George J Giummarra RFD
Principal Consulting Engineer
ARRB Group
Email: georgeg@arrb.com.au

The RAE Corps Officers Mess Golf Day: Friday 16 October, 2009

Nomination must reach Capt McAuley by 1 October 2009
Capt W J W McAuley, PO Box 86, MOAMA, NSW 2731 --- Tels: (03) 5489 3218; Mobile: 0428 486 018.

Name..... Rank..... Phone Home.....

Address ..... Phone Bus .....

..... Mobile.....

Member RMGC: Yes ☐ No ☐

Handicap.....Club where handicap applies.....

Green Fees: $ Cheque attached *(Your cheque (for $105.00) must be attached and is non-refundable unless the event is over-subscribed.)*