

**RAE CORPS MAGAZINE**  
**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION (Vic) Inc**



# SAPPER SUMMIT

*Once a Sapper, Always a Sapper*



**2020 a Year of Unique Challenges—As Always:**  
**SAPPERS SOLDIER ON**

Sapper Summit is edited by Graeme Lambert for the Royal  
Australian Engineers' Association (Victoria) Inc

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## SAPPER SUMMIT

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and its activities can be found on our website:  
[www.raevictoria.com](http://www.raevictoria.com)



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This edition of Sapper Summit contains a diverse range of articles and reports. I thank each contributor for their efforts in providing material that is informative, reflective and thought provoking. Your contributions are vital to keeping this magazine relevant to the serving and retired sapper communities. Editor

## Your RAE Association (Vic) Committee

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about the Association and its activities.

Visit us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/RAE-Association-Victoria-893405714081186/timeline/>

## President's Column



### ***Despatches***

**from the President's Bunker:**

***Greetings Fellow Sappers,***

Welcome to 2021. We all look forward to an enriching and vibrant year for all Sappers in Victoria.

As Victoria emerged from drought, bushfire and the onslaught of the pandemic during 2020, our Victorian Sappers were placed at the forefront of our national defence. This again highlighted the need for a well-trained, ready and flexible ADF. Significant contributions were made by ***"Victoria's Own Sappers" – the 22<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Regiment.*** The "Regiment" did us proud.

The Association was restricted in its annual events. Many trips, functions and ceremonies were cancelled or postponed. The Regiment celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday on 4<sup>th</sup> August this year. A significant milestone for any military unit.

This edition of Sapper Summit will focus on the past year and showcase the contribution made by Sappers in protecting our nation. Many received well deserved accolades. We thank those moving on and welcome those marching in.

Our AGM was conducted virtually in September and we must pay enormous gratitude to our past President Bill Van Ree and our Secretary Jim Davis, for their wise navigation of our "ship" through those often-difficult waters. Thank you greatly Bill and Jim.

After 6 and a half years on the Committee Graeme Lambert has stepped sideways. We are most grateful that he will continue as the **Editor of Sapper Summit.** This magazine is both a credit to Graeme and the Association winning great accolades Australia wide. Well done Graeme.

We also warmly welcome our new committee member Mark (Jack) Horner. Jack, a Tasmanian, is a widely experienced sapper who brings a wealth of great attributes to our Association. Welcome aboard Jack.

The Association is fortunate to have such a focused, committed and diverse committee tackling an array of important functions for sappers in Victoria: Duncan Howarth, "Jock" Howatt, Michael Potts, Mel Constable and Margaret Handte are all invaluable members. Our Patron John Wertheimer along with our Padre John Raike have graciously accepted our invitation to continue in these important appointments for a further three years. Nationally, the Colonel Commandant RAE Southern Region, Colonel Bruce Murray, has also been extended for a further three years. The annual **Sapper's Muster** in February will provide an important get-together for Sapper's of all ranks, trades and backgrounds throughout Victoria and beyond. We look forward to a wonderful night of comradeship. It is also a great opportunity for partners to enjoy the night and meet the diverse range of people who make up our association.

***Warm Regards & UBIQUE***  
***D.C. (Don) Hughes***

## From The Regiment



### CO 22 Engineer Regiment



LTCOL Sharon Coates

As I reflect on my time in command, I feel that it has gone by very quickly. It does feel as though it was only a blink of an eye ago that I was conducting a handover parade with LTCOL Michelle McCormack. However that was January 2018 and now it is time to say farewell to the Regiment. Firstly I'd like to thank all the members of the Regiment for their support and commitment. I really have enjoyed my time as your CO.

2020 has been an unusual year for us all, with OP Bushfire Assist at the beginning of the year, seeing the Call Out of the Reserve Forces for the very first time. 22ER soldiers and officers responded admirably and as always I was as always proud to say I was their commander.

As the mid-year addition of Sapper Summit showed, the Regiment did an amazing job of supporting the community.

Then came COVID! Late March saw the Regiment start parading remotely to comply with State Government restrictions. Little did we think then that we would parade remotely for approx. 8 months. The work done by the SQN staff, From MAJ to LCPL to organize interesting and relevant training that could be done over ADELE and online meetings was outstanding. They arranged guest lectures to trivia nights all in the aid of ensuring that our members were engaged.

The Regiment had a number of Officers and Soldiers involved on OP COVID 19 through support to DHHS, watch keepers, LO's and a Decontamination Training team. Once again the feedback that I received always reflected the professional nature and can do, no job is to big or small attitude of a Sapper. Our Sappers continue to do us proud.

It was extremely disappointing of have to cancel the majority of our training weekends in 2020. However training is slowly returning to "COVID Normal" with the 105 Construction SQN, construction block training run in late October and face to face parading recommencing in November. We have busy few weeks up until mid-December when we move in to our reduced tempo period, with Combative Marksmanship Continuum, Army First Aid, Tactical Combat Casualty Care training and preparation for the upcoming high risk weather season.

Sadly this year we could not hold the Waterloo Dinner due to COVID restrictions. This was a great disappointment, as like with the Sapper Muster it is a fabulous opportunity for past and present members of the Corps to get together and catch up on all the goings on. Hopefully in 2021 we can reconvene.

As I contemplate on my three years in command, I can truly say I have had the

privilege of leading and commanding a remarkable group of highly dedicated and committed members of society, be they Reservists or ARA. All have given everything they can to be the best they can at soldiering. I believe that 22 ER will only continue to get better and better over the coming years given the level of commitment of its members.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy Christmas and New Year at home. I look forward to seeing you at social events in the future. I wish LTCOL Scott D'Rozario every success in his command and hope he enjoys it as much I have.

*Sharon Coates*

*UBIQUE*



## Operation Covid-19 Assist - Unmasked

For many 4th Brigade Soldiers, 2020 will go down in history as 'the year of the mask'.

In January, soldiers wore masks while infiltrating the smoky bushfire affected regions of Victoria on Operation Bushfire Assist. A few short months later, many of these same reserve soldiers found themselves donning masks again, on Operation Covid-19 Assist, the ADF's response to the coronavirus pandemic.

For Soldiers of 22ER, it has been a remarkable year with minimal training opportunities due to the lockdowns, yet two separate ADF Operations within our Victorian backyard.

Sapper Singh and Sapper Dean are two diggers from 22ER who have ridden the 2020 rollercoaster by serving and helping out where possible. Both were recently part of Operation Covid-19 Assist in Victoria. Their time on Ops had them working alongside Victorian Police (VICPOL) at Vehicle Check Points (VCPs) on the fringes of the city enforcing travel restrictions,



## AUSTRALIAN ARMY MUSEUM of MILITARY ENGINEERING

### *Our Role*

To collect, preserve and exhibit the history of the Corps of Royal Australia Engineers and the Royal Australian Survey Corps



### *Public Access*

The museum is open to the general public. Visitors without a Defence Pass are to meet at the Holsworthy Barracks Pass Office.

Current, government issued photo identification will be required for all visitors over 16 years of age.

Group bookings are essential, other visitors are advised to call to confirm timings.

### *Location:*

Macarthur Precinct, Soldiers Way, Holsworthy Barracks, Holsworthy (Enter via Heathcote Road)

### *Contact:*

Tel: 02 8782 8822 Fax: 02 8782 8842 Email: AAMME.mailbox@defence.gov.au

### *Hours:*

ADF Members and Defence Civilians: Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm

### *General Public:*

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday Visits commence at 9:45am and 12:45pm Other times can be arranged by appointment

and supporting Police on COVID compliance foot patrols in popular public areas in and around Melbourne.

“Working with VICPOL was great,” explained SPR Dean. “VICPOL were happy to have our support, and I felt that having ADF uniforms standing next to VICPOL helped to soften the Victorian community’s attitude towards the imposition of the unusual rules and restrictions people were living under.”

### **Police Community Patrols**

The Police Community Patrols (PCPs) involved VICPOL and ADF personnel teaming up to conduct foot patrols in popular public spots such as Docklands, Royal Botanic Gardens and Williamstown. The mission being to ensure the public complied with COVID rules such as mask-wearing, social gatherings, and the like.

The gentle approach employed by VICPOL had them interacting with the public in a polite and friendly manner, handing out masks when needed and conducting welfare checks on those sleeping rough to ensure they were healthy and symptom-free.

“The PCPs were more like community welfare patrols, ensuring everyone was keeping safe, rather than strict compliance checks,” explains SPR Singh. “We were there providing a positive and reassuring presence alongside the Police. This softer community-oriented approach was a good look for both VICPOL and the ADF.

### **Vehicle Check Points**

Both Sappers also found themselves on the frontline of Melbourne’s infamously named ‘ring of steel’. The VCPs scattered around Melbourne served to monitor public movement and restrict non-essential travel during the lockdown. Three eight-hour shifts were employed to keep the VCPs operating 24-hours a day.

“Working the graveyard shift (11 PM to 7 AM) at a VCP was taxing,” said SPR Dean. “Some of the nights dragged as people were already

under curfew, so nobody was out anyway. At night, you may only check one or two vehicles per hour.”

According to SPR Singh, the public was receptive and understanding at the VCPs.

“There’s no doubt that the VCPs placed an inconvenience on many Victorians.” elaborated Singh. “However, the vast majority of people in the community were understanding, and many also thanked us for our work.”

### **Lockdown Life**

Soldiers on Operation Covid-19 Assist were still required to follow strict lockdown rules. The ADF housed personnel in hotels in Melbourne’s CBD, with each soldier having their own private room, effectively creating social distancing within their living arrangements. Soldiers were only allowed out of their room for three reasons - work, exercise and to collect meals (which then had to be consumed in one’s room). Social interaction with other ADF personnel was limited to work only.

According to SPR Singh, “the weirdest part of the Op was not being able to interact much with other diggers. An important and enjoyable aspect of being an Aussie soldier is mateship, camaraderie, and chatting with the other diggers during downtime. The necessary lockdown restrictions prevented much of this.”

As 2020 draws to an end, it will be remembered as an unusual year, with 22ER being called upon to provide an unprecedented level of community support.

“When reflecting upon 2020, I’ll be able to proudly say that I did my part to help out our community,” SPR Dean explains. “Simply put, my experience involved a green uniform and many, many disposable masks.”

## RECALLING 22 ER OP BUSHFIRE ASSIST





22 Engineer Regiment Deployed to regional Victoria—Op Bushfire Assist 2020











*For more sapper history in pictures, visit the ever growing collection of RAE photographs at:*

**[www.raevictoria.com](http://www.raevictoria.com)**

## **What an extraordinary year it has been.**

For almost eight years I've been a member of the Australian Defence Force and this year was the first time I was able to serve on an Operation and do my job in the ADF. This was one of the primary reasons I joined the army reserve. I joined to help and do what I can in a time of need. From Operation Bushfire Assist to Operation Covid Assist, this year has brought incredible experiences.

### **OPBA**

Working for both operations was a challenging and rewarding experience. OPBA brought me into contact with the wider and regional communities of Victoria. The lives people live outside of the suburbs can be very different to my city life. I was involved in a number of different taskings. One of the more important ones was supporting the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) conduct damage assessments.

A few of us put our hands up on New Year's Eve and the very next day shipped out to --- East Gippsland to drive the 'fireys' around the back roads and dirt trails as they assessed the damage that the fire had done. This was so the Incident Control Centres could collate all the information and start pooling the required resources needed immediately to begin the recovery process.

In those first few days of 2020, we started coming across more and more people who were returning to their properties to see the damage for themselves and some were already doing what they could to start fixing up their fences, sheds and water points for their livestock. Many a little chat about what had happened and how they were getting through it was had. These turned into long conversations with stories coming through of what life was like and what their plans were for the future. It became very clear that this engagement with the community through our

presence of just being there was part of the healing process.

It was the beginning of the recovery effort, so many people had lost their homes and their possessions and didn't have much. Some had nothing, but they still had experiences that they wanted to share. Often the best support we could provide was to listen.

### **OPCA**

There was a large emphasis on engaging with the community during OPCA. The ADF was asked to assist the police force in making sure that people were doing the right thing. The two main tasks were the Vehicle Checkpoints (VCPs) between metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria and the Community Engagement Patrols (CEPs).

The checkpoints were for the most part a bit like a midnight gun picquet... a long and monotonous experience with the occasional spike in excitement when someone would run through the checkpoint and we'd watch the cops clambering to figure out which police car to jump into to chase the offender down. These checkpoints have been instrumental in containing the spread of the virus and it was uplifting to see in person that almost all of the people travelling were doing it for the right reasons.

The community engagement patrols were a welcome change from the VCPs, that allowed us to get out of our hotel rooms for more than the allotted two hours (sometimes the simplest part of a job is the best – almost a perk!). The patrols meant we were engaged in taking up the sights, smells and the sounds of a different setting every few days. We patrolled many parks, reserves and waterfronts. It was great to see locals making the most of the two hours they were allowed outside. Most people had their masks on in public when they were required to and the very few who did not, automatically put theirs on when they saw us and the police officers

patrolling. The police officers were great company and had lively stories to tell. I learnt that no police officer wants to ruin anyone's day with a \$5000 fine and often they were just observing people's attitude when they were caught in the wrong.

Every kid waived to us in every playground we walked past. We even reunited a little girl with her mother after she'd walked off too far. We stopped a bunch of people who were playing a sport that was not allowed under the restrictions and asked them to leave. We would not have known about them if another concerned walker had not alerted us.

The police officers would not have dealt with a sex offender if a council worker had not told us during one of our patrols and I will not forget the countless questions we were able to answer so the locals could be clear on what the restrictions allowed. This was successful community engagement and it's a two way street. You don't know if you don't ask and you don't know if you don't listen.

*SPR Singh*

## **22 ENGINEER REGIMENT – EOY BBQ AND PARADE.**

CO (LTCOL Sharon Coates) invited the RAE Association to provide the manpower to help with a BBQ for the Regiment to finalize an exceedingly difficult and trying year.

For most of the Regiment the 08<sup>th</sup> December 2020 was the final parade for the year with the evening to include farewells, welcomes, promotions and awards.

The Association provided a great crew which included Don Hughes (& Zeus), Bill van Ree, Duncan Howarth, Jock Howatt, Michael Potts and Jim Davis. Mel Constable was also in attendance and opened the Engineer Room. Assistance was also provided by Noel Tipton who had everything ready to go. There was plenty to eat and after consuming their fill the formalities of the night commenced at 9.00 PM in the Drill Hall.

A notable promotion was for WO2 David Ryan to WO1. Ben Healy was promoted to MAJ and assumes control of 8 CES. Jackson Ferguson



SPR Singh with his father –promoted to LCPL

## Issue 103 Podcast

### BRERETON REPORT

### ONGOING DISCUSSION

Justice Brereton's report into alleged war crimes by our special forces in Afghanistan is triggering a lot of discussion around failures in lines of accountability. It raises questions about on-the-ground Australian Defence Force lawyers, the very people who are meant to be experts in the Laws of War.

ABC Radio National "Law Report" discusses the role of ADF Legal Officers within the context of the Afghanistan deployments.

[How well did ADF Legal Officers in Afghanistan perform their task? And the right to silence a focus in High Court decision - Law Report - ABC Radio National](#)

*[click link to access the podcast](#)*



Sapper Summit is acutely aware of the significance of the Brereton Report on veterans, other service personnel and indeed upon the nation. It is noted that allegations made in the report have not been proven. This podcast is provided as a discussion point around the enquiries findings and is not a statement of policy by the RAE Association—Victoria.

#### **Editor's Note:**

Podcasts listed in Sapper Summit do not promote the views or opinions of the RAE Association Victoria Inc. Podcasts are included to provide readers with material of historical, strategic or military related interest. (Editor)

(ARA) was promoted to LCPL as was Jasjit Singh.

Farewell to the LTCOL Sharon Coates, (SO1 Army Career Management), CPL Brett Grayling (to MUR), CPL John Duck (SUR), RSM WO1 Ben King (to RSM 2 CER), CAPT Isaac Thomson (RMC), CAPT Lachlan Wallace (ADFA), WO2 Steve Davis (Brigade), CAPT's Bischoff and Kocovski.

Welcome to LTCOL Scott D'Rozario (CO) and WO1 Mark Everingham (RSM)

Congratulations to SGT Luke van Bakel on his Bronze Commendation Award, CAPT John Alekoz awarded the HOC RAE outstanding LT (Ares) for Australia, LCPL Bowden for his ADM and CPL. Dickson – Commanders Joint Task Group 629.2 – Commanders award for Excellence

Thank you to CO and RSM for allowing the RAE Association to assist and for giving us the chance to show our faces to the many new people of the Regiment. The Association is here to help and support the Regiment at any time.

*Jim Davis*  
*Secretary*



22 ER End of Year Parade 2020





Below: Michael Potts and Don Hughes lend a hand at the BBQ





SGT Scott White and Anthony Jones



CAPT Ian Green and Matthew (Magic) Magilton  
08 December 2020



SGT Luke van Bakel receiving his  
Bronze Commendation Award from  
LTCOL Sharon Coates  
08 December 2020



## **RAE ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC. – ANNUAL REGIMENTAL AWARDS 2020**

On 28<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the President (Don Hughes and Zeus) and I were invited to Oakleigh Depot to present the Association's awards to the Regiment's most outstanding Sappers as selected by the CO (LCOL Coates) and her executive team. In addition to the Association's awards there were several promotions and other awards.

Due to the current socializing conditions in Victoria, the awards weekend had to be carefully managed and accordingly there were two presentation sites – Ringwood and Oakleigh.

The year started off under extremely difficult conditions for the Eastern States with tremendous bushfires impacting on substantial parts of Victoria and New South Wales resulting in a large number of the Regiment's members being mobilized to assist fighting the fires. After things were starting to return to normal, along came COVID-19—the impact of which no one could have envisaged. Again, many members of the Regiment were called upon to help with the management of the virus.

There was a worry (unfounded) that due to

COVID-19 restrictions and the ability to parade and train, that it would be difficult to identify Sappers for these awards but we have seen many Sappers of all ranks step up to the plate and render outstanding service not only through the disasters but with the way they manage and train during the lockdown and the imposed restrictions.

This year was sent to try everyone, but the wonderful Sappers of the Regiment were up to the challenge proving their outstanding ability and adaptability in the most difficult of years.

This year's award winners are.

### Most outstanding Sapper

Francis (Frank) Coppa

Most outstanding JNCO

CPL Brett Grayling

Most outstanding Jnr Officer

CAPT John Alekoz

Special mention must be made here for John Alekoz – not only did he receive the RAE Association award for the Regiment but he also received the Sandy McGregor Corps award for the Most Outstanding Lieutenant Ares (Australia wide) and was promoted to Captain – a trifecta – congratulations John



**RAE Association (Vic) Inc. - Annual Award Winners 2020**  
**Left - CAPT John Alekoz, President Don Hughes, CPL Brett Grayling and Sapper Frank Coppa**

The Association is immensely proud of all sappers and it is the Associations intention to continue to support the Regiment with awards such as these which acknowledges the unbelievably valuable contribution that sappers make to the success of the RAE.

*Jim Davis*



The RAE Association congratulates all award winners, soldiers promoted and otherwise recognized for exceptional service.

## **RAE ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC. – CHRISTMAS LUNCH – 08<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

As has been the tradition for several years, the Association held its annual Christmas lunch where the opportunity is taken of thanking the many executive members of the Regiment who have supported us throughout the year along with the honorary appointments of the Association.

From the Regiment, we welcomed LTCOL Sharon Coates (CO), LTCOL Scott D'Rozario (incoming CO), WO1 Ben King (RSM), WO1 Mark Everingham (incoming RSM), MAJ Paul McComb (LO), WO1 Sean Chainey (RAE Corps RSM) and John Raika (Padre) and COL Bruce Murray (Colonel Commandant RAE Southern). COL John Wertheimer (Patron) was an apology.

Due to COVID-19 and the many restrictions, we were worried that this year we would not be able to hold the lunch however restrictions were eased just in time to allow us to gather for this important event. Lunch was at the Kilsyth Club which proved to be a wonderful venue.

Prior to the lunch several presentations were made to the following

### **On Behalf of the RAE Association (Vic) Inc.**

LTCOL Sharon Coates – after 3 years as CO has been posted.

WO1 Ben King – RSM – due to Service needs Ben is being posted to 2 CER as RSM – he had only been at Ringwood for 1 year and what a turbulent introduction year it was for him.

### **On behalf of Head of Corps RAE – BRIG John Carey, DSC.**

Mel Constable was awarded a Head of Corps RAE Commendation for his tireless work with the restoration and management of memorabilia – Presented by COLCOMDT

Bruce Murray.

### **Plaques for Recent Conflicts –**

These bronze plaques are being presented to three (3) RSL Clubs, all 22 ER depots (3) and Repat Hospital (2) to acknowledge the involvement of Sappers in recent conflicts. Generous funding was available from the Federal Government Community Awards.

It was great that Margaret Handte was able to bring her mum Ursula along to enjoy the lunch and company.

*Jim Davis*



Bruce Murray and Mel Constable



Below: RAE Association Victoria President Don Hughes and Padre John Raike



## Remembrance Day Message from RAE Association President

### Remembering Sappers

#### *Fellow Victorian Sappers,*

This Remembrance Day, as we commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, we reflect on those who have died as a result of war, warlike operations, peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

The Royal Australian Engineers have been involved in every conflict facing Australia and we remember the ultimate sacrifices made by all Sappers. This year, the RAE Association Victoria is particularly honouring our sappers from more recent conflicts – post 1975.

These include wars in Afghanistan and Iraq along with numerous Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, Humanitarian, Security and Relief operations at both home and abroad. Victorian Sappers have been involved in all of these conflicts and operations over these last 55 years. This includes the recent bushfire assistance in Victoria.

Under the “*Saluting Their Service*” commemorative grants program, the Association has produced bronze plaques to commemorate recent conflicts. These will be blessed at a special (restricted) ceremony at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital on Remembrance Day, ready for distribution to each engineer training depot and our supporting RSLs.

Often, sappers have led the way in these conflicts and have brought great credit upon themselves, the Corps and the Australian Defence Force.

On this Remembrance Day, we commemorate all Sappers from all conflicts.

#### **UBIQUE**

Don Hughes

President, RAE Association Victoria



### Remembrance Day 2020

COVID 19 restrictions meant that Remembrance Day 2020 was a very scaled down event. The Ringwood RSL conducted a small service with all social distancing protocols in place. The Last Post was sounded at 11am. A short address followed from the sub branch President. Wreaths were then laid. A wreath was laid by the RAE Association Victoria. Although the service was intentionally small and restrained, it was pleasing to see many workers from nearby building sites, pause work and join the service, paying their respects to the fallen.





## Recent Conflicts Plaque

### Text

In Memory of the Veterans  
of the Wars in

## ***IRAQ & AFGHANISTAN***

Along with Veterans of numerous  
***Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, Hu-  
manitarian, Security and Relief  
Operations***

At both Home and Abroad  
2020

***Lest We Forget***

***Erected by the Royal Australian En-  
gineers  
Association of Victoria***



**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS  
ORDER OF THE DAY**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE  
2020 ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS AWARDS**

**27th November 2020**

To all Sappers past and present, it gives me great pleasure to announce the recipients of the Royal Australian Engineers Awards for 2020. These awards acknowledge in an appropriate manner, outside the existing Honours and Awards scheme, the achievements and enduring service of Sappers.

**RAE Excellence in Engineering Awards:**

- Lieutenant General FJ Hickling AO, CSC Award for Most Outstanding Engineer, **Lance Corporal Alex Robinson (3 CER)**
- Major General S Day DSC, AM Award for Most Outstanding Lieutenant ARA, **Lieutenant Mark Loneragan (6 ESR)**
- Warrant Officer Class Two RC 'Mick' Mace MM, BEM Award for Most Outstanding Non-Commissioned Officer ARA, **Lance Corporal Alex Robinson (3 CER)**
- Warrant Officer Class One B Wade OAM, CDS Award for Most Outstanding Sapper ARA, **Sapper Matthew Campbell (3 CER)**
- Colonel AH 'Sandy' McGregor MC Award for Most Outstanding Lieutenant ARes, **Lieutenant John Alekoz (22 ER)**
- Warrant Officer Class One R 'John' Ruddatz OAM Award for Most Outstanding Non-Commissioned Officer ARes, **Corporal William Rickard (13 Fd Sqn)**
- Sergeant M Chalk MG Award for Most Outstanding Sapper ARes, **Sapper Ryan Meyer (3 Fd Sqn)**

**The Brigadier General CH Foott CB, CMG Award:**

Award for an individual who has rendered outstanding and significant support or service to the Corps of Royal Australian Engineers – **Lieutenant Colonel George Hulse, OAM (Retd)**

I congratulate all recipients on the dedicated application and determination of service which has earned you high regard from your superiors and peers. Your efforts bring great credit upon yourself, your unit and the Corps.

**John Carey, CSC**  
Brigadier  
Head of Corps  
Royal Australian Engineers

27 Nov 2020

## REMEMBERING LOST SOULS

*By Jan Smeaton*

I hope I've brought enough tissues. We're about to board a bus and are heading for the Western Front. I'm concerned I'll spend four days sobbing in front of emotion-filled memorials and my intrepid fellow passengers.

In a short while we leave the hustle-bustle of Paris behind and the perfect French countryside opens up before us. We have stepped back in time, and I am amazed and delighted at the gorgeous little villages and the absence of character-sapping modern buildings. I pinch myself, and wonder what it was like for our boys in 1917. How could what I see before me, be that same countryside in Frank Hurley's images of mashed, pitiful, soulless mud. I'm trying to picture it but find it hard to reconcile.

As the paddocks take on an even greener hue, and the plump Belgian Blue cows loll about uncaring of my anxieties and expectations, we arrive in beautiful Ypres. We stroll down Grote Markt, and there it is. The Menin Gate. I am overwhelmed by its majesty, fearful of what I'll find within, yet overpoweringly drawn towards its amazing strength and reverence. Will my great uncle's name be there?

It is. I find a crevice and place a lovingly crocheted poppy against his name. Suddenly the tears arrive. I never knew him, but here I am, weeping. Not just for Ted, but for all the young lives. 54,896 commonwealth souls whose remains were never retrieved, never buried in a proper place. My mind momentarily

wanders and I see Will Longstaff's painting 'Menin Gate at Midnight'. Now I understand, and forever I'll feel intimately connected to it.

In the days that follow we visit many Commonwealth cemeteries, each one beautifully laid out, lovingly cared for and a testament to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Our guide is amazing. He has the ability to overlay a picture across the fields before us, and we come to know and understand in some small way, the unthinkable hell it really was.

We head back to Paris, through the quaint and peaceful villages and undulating countryside with a church spire on every hill. We learn tales of heroes, share family histories, and wonder how Belgium and France could ever recover from the horrors it suffered.

Back to Paris and beyond. Back to relative peace in our time.

*Editor: Lieutenant Jan Smeaton RAAMC, from Seaford in SA, is the partner of Major Alan Smeaton RAE who was the Second-In-Command of 22 Construction Regiment in the mid Nineties. Both Jan and Alan visited the battlefields of the Western Front in France in 2019. Menin Gate is a WW1 monument but they travelled a few weeks after the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of WW2. In Normandy, they spent a day at Gold and Juno beaches. They also visited the Pegasus Bridge.*

## **New RAE Association Web Site, [raevictoria.com](http://raevictoria.com)**

Our old web sites have closed and our one and only new web site is at [raevictoria.com](http://raevictoria.com) This is now the new home of the RAE Association (Vic) Inc. This site incorporates all the Association activities in the one place including all the History and Heritage collections and photographs.

Our new look site has pages for our **Future Events** (once all this Covid 19 stuff passes), **Latest News**, All copies of our famous **Sapper Summit** going back to and including the number one issue and beyond to read, Many associated **Publications** are also available to read, Our great **RAE Association shop** is there, **Membership** applications and renewals, **History & Heritage** that includes all our Heritage Markers, Collections, Photos & Videos totalling nearly 19,000 items and more added regularly and all are available for viewing and comment. There is a **lot more than this** to read and interact with on our new web site. Join us!

### **REMEMBERING ANIMALS IN WAR**

**By ZEUS (Canine correspondent)**

Animals have long shared the burden of war. Horses have given warriors mobility and endurance enabling great speed and surprise in warfare. Genghis Khan's Mongols, Knights in shining armour, American Indians, European Cavalry and even the Australian Light Horse have all used Horses.

Elephants and camels too, have given warriors advantages in war. At the battle of Kadesh between the Egyptians and Hittites in 1275BC Ramses II had a lion fight beside him. Herds of cattle have been used to stampede enemies and even bees were used by ancient Greeks and Romans to catapult over a besieged city wall or castle to disrupt the defenders. In both German East Africa (now Kenya) and Vietnam, beehives were used like booby traps and initiated to disrupt a foe.

Military logistics is greatly enhanced by horses, mules, donkeys, oxen, elephants and camels transporting guns, ammunition and supplies to keep an army mobile. Medical evacuation too, was improved using animals. Simpson and his Donkey became infamous on the Gallipoli peninsula during the ANZAC landings.

Communications have benefited from the speed of animals whether a despatch rider on a horse, a messenger dog or carrier pigeons delivering critical messages. The speed of animals can often be the critical factor in turning the tide of battle.

Dogs have consistently been faithful comrades to soldiers. Whether to seek out and track the enemy, protect installations or detect weapons of war, dogs have played a significant role. It is not only their keen senses but also their undying loyalty that endears them to soldiers.

Even dolphins and sea lions have been used for sentry duties by maritime forces, canaries to detect gas and rats to detect explosives.

Many animals become mascots for military units. Australian Diggers training in Egypt took a photograph of their Kangaroo mascot in front of the Pyramids. Some military units or ships have Tigers, Dingoes, Eagles, Roosters, Platypuses or even Cats. Often, they wear smart uniforms and join the unit on ceremonial parades. They are all well loved and cared for, and greatly enhance morale.

Note: Zeus is a trained Assistance Dog (Young Diggers) and is the official mascot of the Royal Australian Engineers Association of Victoria.

# ANZAC:

## The Story of “Turkish” Charlie Ryan

*By Don Hughes*

I thought I knew the ANZAC story well but recently stumbled upon a new insight - the story of Charlie Ryan. He was born at Killeen Station just north of Melbourne in 1853. The son of a grazier, Charlie dedicated his life to medicine and the care of others. He graduated as a surgeon from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland in 1875.

Seeking adventure, Charlie sought medical experience with the Turkish Army in Constantinople (now Istanbul). However, the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-78 broke out and Charlie found himself in the Balkans at the siege of Plevna (Islamic calendar 93) as a young military doctor. Despite his brave caring of the wounded, he was eventually captured by the Russians in another front in Eastern Turkey.

After the war, Turkey honoured Charlie's distinguished service with the Order of Mejdidiye (4<sup>th</sup> class) and the Order of Osmanli (second highest order in the Ottoman Empire). A hero to the people of Turkey, he returned home to Melbourne in 1878 to become a successful civilian doctor. He also was made the representative [similar to an ambassador] of the Ottoman Empire in Australia for some years.

He still liked Army life and continued as a Captain in the Volunteer Medical Service. Charlie was the Doctor who tendered the wounded bushranger Ned Kelly, and after his execution – declared him deceased on 11 November 1880.

At the outbreak of World War 1 in 1914, Charlie enlisted as the senior doctor for the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, Australian Imperial Force (AIF), and

landed in Egypt just after his 61<sup>st</sup> birthday. He had enlisted to fight the Germans. Aboard the troopships bound for the ANZAC landings, at a dinner for senior officers, Charlie knew more than anyone else in that invading fleet, how hard the Turks would fight to defend their homeland. It prompted him to state “If, after 40 years, I am now about to fight them, it is not because of a feeling of enmity, but because of orders I have received as a soldier.” Clambering up the steep cliffs of Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, Charlie and the ANZACS landed on the peninsula to face the Turkish commander, Mustafa Kemal and his troops. On 19 May, the Turks launched a major attack which became a slaughter; over 3000 Turks lay dead in no-man's land!

Both armies wanted to bury the dead as the putrid smell had become unbearable. A one-day cease fire was declared on 24 May when all day both sides buried their dead in shallow graves. This was the first time; the Turks and Australians came face to face and talked to each other. There are diary entries of swapping Turkish tobacco with bully beef. Respectfully, the seeds of comradeship between two countries were sown on that day, this still thrives today.

Charlie Ryan carefully attached his Ottoman Medals and, armed with only a box camera, proceeded to direct his medical staff tending the wounded. Some Turks became seething, thinking he had stolen the decorations.

In an unused Turkish voice of 40 years, the distinguished looking doctor was able to placate the situation. All stopped their gruesome tasks. Time seemed suspended. The Turks remembered the **“Hero of the battle of 93” - Charles “Plevna” Ryan!**

Shortly after this infamous Armistice, Charlie contracted dysentery and typhoid. He recovered and was knighted by the King in 1916 and appointed the senior doctor of the Australian Army until 11 November 1918.

Charlie was the hero of two countries. Major General Sir Charles Snodgrass Ryan KBE, CB, CMG, VD, died on 23 October 1926. Turkish Historian, Haluk Oral, says of the extraordinary act at the Armistice by Charlie "He greatly helped to establish the indestructible foundation of Turkish-Australian friendship amidst the trenches of war".

Inspired by Turkish children who had studied the story in Oral's book in their project "Two Trenches One Letter", a deep understanding and commitment to the infamous words of Ataturk evoked an everlasting commitment to "open their country and ensure Australian fallen would always be respected."

John Gillam & Yvonne Fletcher, have written a wonderful book straddling this defining story of a little-known hero for both countries: "*Turkish Charlie Ryan: Canakkale's Anzac Hero*" (Legends & Lessons, 2018). This wonderful story of the human spirit has been beautifully illustrated by Lillian Webb. Every Australian should know, and cherish, this story.

A copy of the book can be obtained at Friends of Gallipoli Inc. [www.friendsofgallipoli.org](http://www.friendsofgallipoli.org).

[A wonderful school package is also available.](#)

**Editor's Note:**

This edition of Sapper Summit is somewhat different to previous editions published at the end of the year. The magazine usually chronicles the activities of the RAE Association and the work of 22ER over the preceding year.

The COVID 19 pandemic has severely restricted the Association's activities and the way 22ER has worked and trained.

The Regiment has performed outstanding service with Op Bushfire assist and members have contributed admirably to the State's COVID response. I take this opportunity to wish the outgoing CO well for her future endeavours and sincerely thank her for her co-operation with Sapper Summit. Thank you Sharon.



**Season's Greetings**

The Patron,  
President and  
Committee of the  
Royal Australian  
Engineers  
Association Victoria,

wish all members and friends a happy and safe festive season. Best wishes to all for a rewarding new year. Special best wishes go to all serving members, especially those who are deployed in the service of the nation.

**GUNNERS & SAPPERS**

***THE "RUPERTSWOOD" GUN***

*By Don Hughes:*

Sappers do not like Gunners! This competitive animosity originated at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, in London in the early 1700s.

Nicknamed "The Shop" (because it was originally a workshop of Woolwich Arsenal) or "Hell on Thames" (because discipline at Woolwich was rigorous), the Academy trained "Gentleman Cadets" for Corps requiring technical qualifications. Notably Gunners and Sappers, and later Signals. Major General Charles "Chinese" Gordon CB, despite having a gunner father, is one of its most famous sapper graduates. A long competitive rivalry was established.

**The Rivalry**

This rivalry still exists today. The Royal Engineers first played the Royal Artillery in Rugby on 11 December 1887. Sappers won 24 -0. Nearly every year since, Sappers and Gunners in the UK have vigorously thrashed out this animosity on the Rugby pitch for the Jones-Drake Cannonball Trophy Cup.

Why would a Sapper want to write an article about Gunners? Well, the story goes like this. Whilst posted as a Platoon Commander at the 1<sup>st</sup> Recruit Training Battalion at Kapooka in

1982, it was the British Army's turn to nominate the exchange positions for *Exercise Long Look*. They train their Recruits on a Corps basis – not on a combined All Arms & Services model like we do in Australia. That year, the Brits nominated a Recruit Troop Commander appointment at the Depot Regiment, Royal Artillery, located at *The Shop*, and Home of the Royal Artillery, in Woolwich.

My Kapooka Infantry Chief Instructor at the time (LTCOL Jery Taylor AM, MC) had no Artillery subalterns, so he said: "*Hughes, you wear bombs on your jacket – you can go!*" Little did he know of the entrenched historic rift between Gunners and Sappers!

### **Le Cateau Troop RA**

Not long after the Falklands War in the second half of 1982, I took up my exchange as Troop Commander of *Le Cateau Troop, 59<sup>th</sup> "Asten" Battery, Royal Artillery*. The British Army were experiencing downsizing, so my new Troop consisted of young Gunners that had already served in the Artillery Junior Leaders Regiment. They were sent to the troop at the Depot Regiment in Woolwich - to keep recruit training ticking over! Already well-trained young Gunners, they did not really need to do a Recruit Course!

This enabled some imaginative and creative manipulation of the recruit training package. Numerous adventurous training activities were conducted; scuba diving, rappelling, hiking around the English countryside and visiting the Isle of Man. We saw the RAF Red Arrows flying display team and the Royal Horse Artillery enacting their historical and impressive manoeuvres with horse drawn guns.

At the time, London was under constant terrorist threat from the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and a large explosive device had been detonated just outside Woolwich Barracks the previous year. This added a realistic dimension to our training and daily

routine.

*Le Cateau Troop* also visited France where it had earned its battle honour name along with 3 Victoria Crosses, a Distinguished Service Order and 2 Distinguished Conduct Medals - all in one action in WW1. The Troop also undertook community projects around the English countryside and visited the Brecon Beacons in Wales. We even did a week's guard duty at the Tower of London. Route marches (tabbing) around the English countryside and exercises on military estates featured - as well as tours of wonderful military museums.

### **A Sapper Laments**

So that is how I was probably the only RAE officer to ever command a Royal Artillery Troop. It was however, a rewarding and enjoyable exchange. It certainly satisfied my sense of adventure in new environments.

Luckily, I also took the opportunity to visit the Royal School of Military Engineering at Chatham and Engineer units deployed in Germany with the British Army on the Rhine (BAOR). This enabled me to also gain a taste of the life - of a Royal Engineer.

As a consequence, I don't mind understanding a bit more about artillery weapon systems. Woolwich was adorned with 1/3 scale models of every gun ever used by the Royal Artillery dating back centuries. On the parade ground stood the Guns captured from the Russians during the Crimean War. The bronze from these guns is used to make Victoria Crosses.

### **Australian Gunners & Sappers**

Just over the Victorian/New South Wales border, in Deniliquin, I accidentally came across a beautifully restored gun. The Deniliquin RSL is the home of a famous Australian artillery piece – The *Rupertswood Gun*. A magnificent example of the gunmakers art, this gun, one of two (the other is known as the *Sunbury Gun*), were both used by the Victorian Horse Artillery better known as the *Rupertswood Battery*.

This battery was a unique fighting force that

existed in Colonial Victoria from 1885-97 to protect the young colony from foreign invasion - particularly from Russia. The Volunteer Corps Act had been promulgated by the Colony of Victoria in 1854 to allow the raising of a number of rifle corps, yeomanry (cavalry) and artillery units.

A corps of volunteer engineers was also raised in 1860, with its first meeting at the Duke of Rothesay Hotel in Melbourne. It was attended by Victoria's adviser on defence works, Captain P. H. Scratchley RE (later Major General Sir Peter Henry).

Sir Peter had been commissioned from Woolwich in 1854 and served in the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, along with fortification construction experience at Portsmouth. This heritage of the Victorian Colonial Engineers is proudly carried into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by 22<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Regiment (Victoria's Own Sappers).

### **The Rupertswood Gun**

The *Rupertswood Gun* is an Armstrong 12 pounder (5.4kg) sliding block screw breech rifled bore of 3inch (75mm) calibre. The gun was manufactured by the Royal Gun Factory in 1864 (pattern 1859). It bears the crest of Queen Victoria forward of the breech and its serial numbers are 368 (Ordinance) and 408 (carriage). This type of gun was the first wrought iron, breech loading and rifled gun used in British service.

The *Rupertswood Battery* was founded by Sir William Clark who maintained the unit at his own expense and was named after his property "*Rupertswood*" near Werribee in Victoria. Major (later Brigadier General) F.G. Hughes commanded the Battery. After the death of its Patron the battery was disbanded. The gun's final duty was at the parade in Melbourne to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (60<sup>th</sup>) in 1897.

The gun was made available by the Landale family of *Dahwilly*, Deniliquin. It was faithfully

restored by Apprentices of the Australian Army Apprentices School at Latchford Barracks, Bonegilla in Victoria in 1989.

The *Rupertswood Gun* is beautifully preserved in a glass display cabinet proudly guarding the front entrance of the Deniliquin RSL. Its twin, The *Sunbury Gun*, is on display at the Sunbury Village Green.

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*"Artillery is just another obstacle type that Sappers can deploy, to win the land battle!"*

Maj Paul (Porky) Baker & LtCol Ian Stewart AM, Royal Australian Engineers, 1987



## VICTORIAN ENGINEER HERITAGE TRAIL

The Royal Australian Engineers Association has instigated a Victorian Engineers Heritage Trail with the view that similar projects will be taken up around the country.

The trail is designed as a salute to the Royal Australian Engineer achievements within Victoria over the years and to showcase their involvement within the greater community.

The trail involves having a marker erected, this being a treated pine post with a stainless steel shroud on top, to which a laser engraved stainless steel plaque is attached.

On this plaque is the Engineer logo followed by a brief description of the details of the project and under that is a QR code.

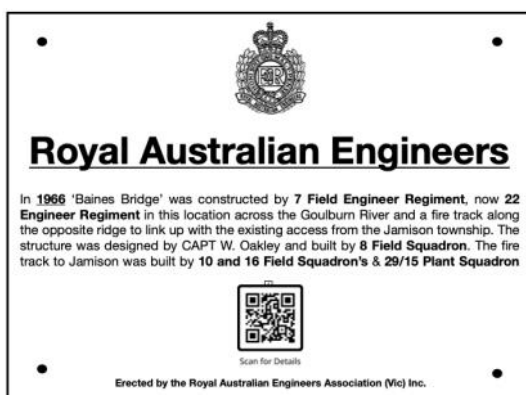
This QR code is where the main description and details are found. When scanned the link will take the visitor to our web site with the details of the project including photos etc if applicable.



We have already installed our first one at Mt Useful, Glenfalloch in Gippsland.



The following plaques have been ready to install since the start of 2020 but because of the pandemic they are still on hold but hopefully we should be able to erect them early next year.



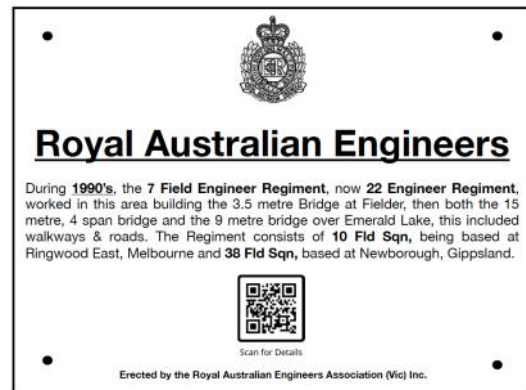
Baines Bridge, Jamieson



Redwood Bridge, Warburton



Puffing Billy, Belgrave and Emerald



Puffing Billy, Lakeside



Puffing Billy, Menzies Creek



Lake Eppalock Country Club

We have a number of sites planned for the near future including Walhalla Railway and the Back-water Suspension Bridge at East Bairnsdale.

It is quite remarkable how many projects the Victorian Engineers have been involved with over the years and if there are any projects that you think should have a marker erected and have the sappers that worked on that project be recognised, please contact us at [curator@raevictoria.com](mailto:curator@raevictoria.com) to let us know the details and hopefully we can erect one soon.

More information is available on our web site [www.raevictoria.com](http://www.raevictoria.com) on the History & Heritage page/Heritage trail.



## WELFARE AND WELLBEING

### RINGWOOD RSL President's Column



#### SUB BRANCH NEWS

##### Open for Business but.....

The good news is that the Sub Branch club premises are open and all the normal activities are now being conducted. After so many months of emptiness, the Sub Branch is once again a centre of camaraderie for veterans and members.

The not so good news is that whilst we are open there are capacity limits imposed so that during the road back to normalcy the Manager and staff have to ensure the overall numbers in the venue do not exceed the social distancing rules and as well ensure the numbers in each section of the venue do not breach the allowable space limits. It is for this reason and to help contact tracing if need be, that all visiting the venue have to log in and scan out on leaving and on occasion may be asked to move to another area in the club to balance the numbers so that no one area exceeds its allowable capacity. The Committee asks for understanding in this as to exceed the limits and not adhere to the social distancing rule could lead to the Sub Branch being at risk of a substantial fine.

Christmas this year will be quieter than normal. Sadly the Sub Branch is unable to stage our usual Christmas Day function because of the COVID 19 restrictions.

#### Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of so much of the work done to support members but like

the rest of us have been unable to actively participate because of the COVID 19 restrictions. The Committee looks forward to next year when we expect to be able resume our normal range of activities with the help of our volunteer workers. In the meantime I want to express my gratitude for the loyalty and efforts of our many members who offer their time and expertise to help others and assist the work of the Sub Branch.

#### Welfare and Pension Support

Despite being closed down for most of this year, Nicole Frost our Welfare Coordinator and the advocates from the Pension Office have continued to provide support to those who need assistance. If you need help that can be provided by either of these please call reception (98706604).

#### Membership

Although this has been a disrupted year our membership has largely held up and the overwhelming number of members have remained on our books. The Committee is grateful for this loyalty and support. In addition in recognition of the fate of the membership of the now defunct Maroondah Sports Club, the Committee has extended membership to these MSC members under the same conditions as our own members.

#### Finances

As you can imagine the Sub Branch finances have taken quite a hit this year. With revenue largely dried up during the shutdown and the monthly fixed costs continuing, the Sub Branch working capital has been steadily reducing and the Treasurer expects we will make a loss in the order of \$400,000 to \$500,000 as at 31 December 2020. In view of the Government imposed restrictions and notwithstanding the Federal Government "job keeper" support and the waiving of gaming charges and some State Government taxes, this has been an inevitable consequence. Never the less in recognition that members could not access the venue for most of 2020, the Committee resolved to waive the 2021 membership fee for all financial members as

at 31 October 2020. Because we could not conduct the normal ANZAC and Remembrance Day appeals this year which reduced our ability to generate income for our welfare fund, the Committee asks members to donate at least the equivalent of the membership fee to the Sub Branch welfare fund to help finance the support given to veterans and members.

### **Giant Welfare Raffle**

Because of the close down we have extended the time for the raffle which will now be drawn on ANZAC Day 2021 at 12:30. There are a number of prizes on offer ranging from an Indian motor cycle to gift vouchers. Many tickets have been sold to but there are more available from reception so please buy yours now.

### **Redevelopment of our Property**

We continue to work on the redevelopment project. The initial “exclusivity payment” of \$100,000 has been received from the developer. In addition we now have the draft “development agreement” which has been referred to our legal adviser for the development contract aspects of this project for evaluation and advice. We have also commissioned our firm of auditors to examine the books of the development entity who will be providing a guarantee in support of the mortgage to provide us with the assurance that it is capable of meeting this obligation.

Preliminary work on layouts and design is underway by the development architect and the planning approval process will begin once the Maroondah Activities Centre rezoning proposal has been finalized by the State Government and City Council.

### **Ringwood RSL free smart phone app**

To keep up to date with Sub Branch news and events, download our free app on your smart phone.

## **VETERAN NEWS**

### **Comment on the Afghanistan SAS Allegations**

I have been following the public debate on the

allegations that our soldiers have committed criminal acts whilst deployed on operations in Afghanistan. I feel compelled to take a moment to comment on the Brereton report and its allegations the SAS committed war crimes in Afghanistan over a period of 10 years.

In my opinion, the government has botched this in a most spectacular fashion.

The Prime Minister publicly released the report with a tag line of it containing brutal truths of criminal offences. This statement was quickly followed by equally condemnatory statements by the Defence Minister and CDF.

With such sensationalist statements the press reaction was inevitable and trial by media is well and truly underway. It's no wonder we now have leaders of other countries using our own Prime Minister's words to attack Australia and the integrity of its service men and women.

These untested allegations against our soldiers are now being used as tools by the CDF and Chief of Army to publicly vilify those who served in Afghanistan. Worse still some Army members are being punished before any due process has taken place.

How on earth are the targeted soldiers supposed to get anything like a fair trial with the media calling them murderers and politicians calling them a national disgrace?

### **Editor's Note:**

The RAE Association—Victoria has received significant support from the Ringwood RSL. Members have benefited from the club's services including its welfare support service. The association thanks the sub branch for its ongoing support and I especially thank the President for his support of this magazine.

Additionally if those who have been issued show cause notices are dismissed they will be out on their own with no ADF legal assistance to support them during the coming investigation and possibly trials in a court of law (and mind you I understand no officers are included in this action)

The only verdict which has been handed down is that of unqualified public opinion!

I also have grave concerns over the veracity of the report itself with the investigating officer publicly canvassing a population in Afghanistan which has a hostile view of justice which is completely at odds with our own.

The CDF and Army Chief have failed as leaders and should be offering support to their troops, not throwing them under the bus before a verdict has even been rendered in a court of law.

The latest decision by the CDF and Secretary of the Defence Department to forbid ADF



lawyers from representing those being targeted will put an almost insurmountable barrier to any member charged obtaining justice with none being able to match the resources of the Commonwealth in mounting an effective defence; *so much for letting the process run its course and then expect a just outcome!*

The reception given to the Brereton report, the commentary of Australia's Leaders and the actions of the CDF and Army Chief cast a damper on the motivation and morale of the

armed forces of this great country and it is a truly disappointing way to honour the bravery, camaraderie and loyalty shown by our serving members.

I hear also that there have now been 10 suicides since the release of the report – when will this tragedy end?

#### **Your Health & Well-being**

Please take care of your health and if you need assistance that our welfare coordinator can arrange don't hesitate to call (98706604).

Other useful contacts are:

Nurse on call; 1300606 024.

Corona Virus Mental Health Wellbeing Support Services; 1800 512 348.

Victorian Government coronavirus hotline (Red Cross); 1800 675 398.

DVA, Open Arms on 1800 011 046

### **RSL STATE BRANCH NEWS**

The State AGM was held on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November. It was held as an electronic meeting and our nominated delegates were the Sub Branch President, Senior Vice President, Vice President and Secretary.

**There was one policy related motion:** That the State Branch supports the establishment of a Royal Commission into Veteran Suicide and this was adopted with overwhelming support.

#### **Branch Officers and Executive members**

**Elections:** The State President, State Treasurer and a number of member positions were up for election.

The resulting outcome saw the existing President re-elected however a number of new members were elected to the executive. These members have the task of adapting the League to the changed circumstances we all face and to guide the State RSL into a future as a relevant institution serving the veteran community.

## WELFARE and SUPPORT

Sapper Summit recognizes the demands placed on individuals through their military service. Through Sapper Summit, the RAE Association (Vic) aims to provide information to the Sapper Community on support and welfare services available both locally and nationally. The Association also aims to promote welfare, well being awareness and education. **Members have suggested the following support services.**


## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

May your Christmas Season be full of good cheer and happiness and we look forward to seeing you at the club as we return to normality.

**OPEN**  
Veterans & Families  
Counselling  
**ARMS**

If you have served or are currently serving in the ADF, you and your family members can use

**OPEN ARMS –  
VETERANS & FAMILIES  
COUNSELLING**  
(formerly VVCS)



To get support or find out more:  
**1800 011 046**  
[www.OpenArms.gov.au](http://www.OpenArms.gov.au)



Seasons Greetings Victorians and Tasmanians!

A huge congratulations to all Victorians who have done a fantastic job at adhering to the restrictions! It's made the holiday season even more exciting now that we are able to share it with our family and friends again.

Heads up - the Melbourne office will be closed until 4th January 2021 but we are still working remotely until the 24th of December.

We are looking forward to seeing you all in the New Year. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, bring on 2021!

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

At Soldier On, we know it's important to connect with others, especially during these trying times.

We have a range of social activities and mental health support programs to help you find the tools and mechanisms you need to keep going. Reach out to us today for a chat about what we can do for you.

For those of you transitioning from military to civilian life, or you are directly involved with someone who is, [this article](#) may be a helpful tool to help you navigate life without the same structure and balance that comes with being in the military.

## REACH OUT

*Click the link above or email:  
[psychology@soldieron.org.au](mailto:psychology@soldieron.org.au)*



**24-HOUR FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL  
COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT  
SERVICES**

## » Get Support

**Open Arms is a national service which offers:**

- + counselling for individuals, couples and families
- + group programs
- + on transition - stepping out and life management skills
- + peer networks to enhance support
- + case management for clients with complex needs
- + suicide prevention training
- + information, education and self-help resources
- + a phone line for people to call and speak to someone 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- + referrals to other services or specialist treatment programs, as needed

## » Eligibility

- + Current serving ADF personnel
- + Personnel transitioning to civilian life
- + Ex-serving members
- + Partners and children of serving and ex-serving personnel
- + Ex-partners who are co-parenting
- + Reservists with one day continuous full time service or hazardous service

Where there has been a death of a service person, parents and siblings can also access the service.

## » Stay in touch

- + Facebook - @OpenArmsVeteransAndFamiliesCounselling
- + Twitter - @OpenArmsSupport

**[www.OpenArms.gov.au](http://www.OpenArms.gov.au)**

*A service founded by Vietnam Veterans,  
now for all veterans*

P03833



RAE Association-Vic plaques now available. Orders can be made via our web site.



The Angel Squad is a support group for PTSD sufferers and PTSD-related drug and alcohol abuse and it is run exclusively for younger ADF veterans who have served post-1998.

The Squad provides a 'veterans only' support mechanism which enables members to maximise their efforts to reduce their PTSD symptoms and escape drug and alcohol dependence among people who understand their particular problems, share their experiences and speak their 'language'. Our program has been highly successful in helping many young veterans regain their health and quality of life and find a brighter future for themselves. Our meetings (known as 'debriefings') are held in the Melbourne CBD close to Flinders Street Station and are strongly based upon peer support and peer counselling.

The Squad also engages in a wide range of social, outdoor, fitness and other activities which are made available at no cost to members. Over the past year we have been involved in abseiling, range shooting, 4-wheel driving and motor sport, to name but a few.

Please direct all inquiries to Colleen McKenna (Founder)

[photoexplorer57@yahoo.com.au](mailto:photoexplorer57@yahoo.com.au)

NB. Some eligibility criteria applies.

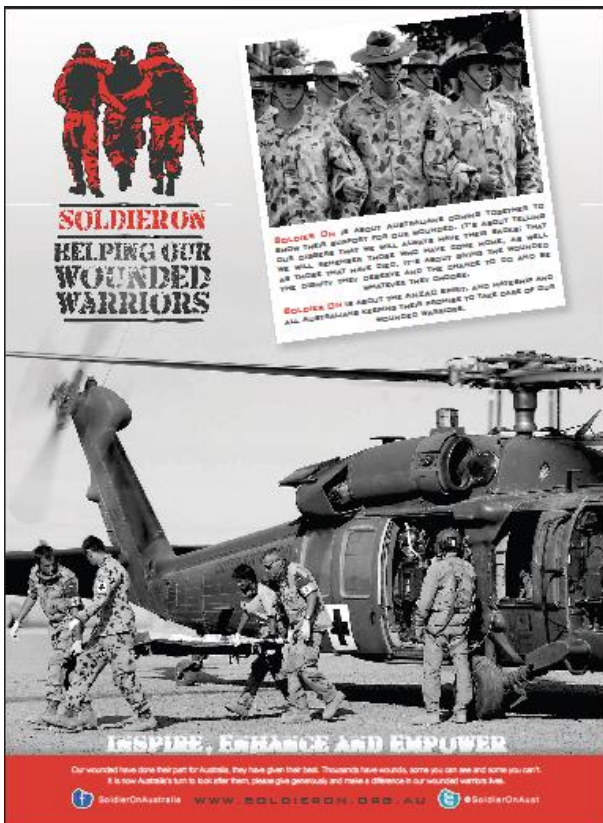
## MERCHANDISE

RAE Association—Victoria merchandise is constantly changing. To check our current offerings and to order, please visit our web site:

[www.raevictoria.com](http://www.raevictoria.com) With many events and excursions bound to resume once COVID 19 restrictions ease, dress the part in your association's shirts, caps and jackets.



RAE Association—Vic fleece jackets \$50 and matching beanies \$15 now available.



### SOLDIER ON

"Supporting Our Wounded Warriors"

Visit: [www.soldieron.org.au](http://www.soldieron.org.au)

RAE Association (Vic) is a proud supporter of

**SOLDIER ON**

## Association Shirts & Caps Available to Order



"Soft Shell" jackets and white Association caps are now in stock. Check the merchandise page on our web site. (model not included) Jackets \$90





## ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS SAPPERS' FUND



### Why subscribe?

Subscriptions to Sappers' Funds provide the income that allows us to care for our heritage and foster Esprit-de-Corps.

The Corps of Royal Australian Engineers has a collective responsibility to our predecessors and ourselves to ensure we preserve, protect and develop our heritage as well as continue to build our identity into the future.

Your contribution, along with all the other serving and retired members of the Royal Australian Engineers making a similar commitment, is extremely important. This ensures your Corps Committee can support the fostering of our esprit-de-corps and the unique 'Sapper identity' remains a fundamental part of Army's culture and traditions

### What is the cost?

The annual cost of subscriptions is as follows:

ARA Officers -Sergeant: \$52 per annum (\$2 per fortnight)  
ARA Corporal -Sapper: \$26 per annum (\$1 per fortnight)  
ARes Officers: \$30 per annum  
ARes ORs: \$20 per annum  
Ex-Service Officers: \$30 per annum  
Ex-Service ORs: \$20 per annum  
RAE ex-service Association: Annual Donation

**For further information or to request support from the Fund, contact the RAE Head of Corps Cell via email at: [rae.hoc@defence.gov.au](mailto:rae.hoc@defence.gov.au)**

### What is the benefit?

Individuals may benefit from Sappers' Funds, either directly or indirectly. The Sappers' Fund provides financial support to:

- Corps sporting events, teams and tours
- Corps adventure training activities
- individual and team engineer awards and prizes including Battle Field Tour
- publication of Corps and unit histories
- RAE Association Victoria heritage and history trail plaques
- establishment and upgrade of RAE Memorials
- purchase of wreaths for funerals and remembrance of serving members
- assistance to Army History Unit to manage historical items relevant to the RAE
- RMC graduation prize

Individuals, groups and sub-units/units of the Royal Australian Engineers and affiliated Associations can apply for support from the fund at any time.

### How do I subscribe?

Subscriptions can be made by electronic transfer / direct debit to the following account:

- Australian Military Bank BSB No: 642-170
- Account Number: 100001677
- Name of Account: RAE Sappers' Funds

Please include your PMKeys number and surname with your payment.

# **About the RAE Association (Victoria) Inc**

## **Vision Statement**

The Royal Australian Engineers Association (Victoria) Incorporated will be the most relevant and recognized Sapper Association in Victoria with substantial membership and an enhance profile and standing within the serving and retired sapper community.

## **Mission Statement**

To promote the wellbeing and betterment of our members along with serving and retired sappers by the provision of a collegiate sapper association that values and promotes comradeship, esprit de corps, service identity and traditions.

## **Objectives**

- Increase the Association's membership.
- Develop the capacity of the Association to communicate with the serving and retired sapper community through the enhancement of the Association's journal "Sapper Summit" and through an internet presence.
- Establish and enhance the relevance of the Association to all sappers - serving and retired.
- Undertake the research and recording of sapper history in Victoria.
- Provide sappers with an organized identity for participation in ANZAC Day and other commemorative events.
- Promote the achievements of 22 Engineer Regiment and those of its members.
- Disseminate information relating to sapper events and activities.
- Recognize and acknowledge excellence and achievement within the sapper community.
- Provide and promote awareness of welfare issues and resources relevant to service personnel.
- Promote mateship.
- Promote esprit de corps between all members of the sapper family.
- Maintain and promote the traditions and achievements of the Australian Defence Force in general and the Royal Australian Engineers in particular.
- Seek continual improvement in administrative practices to ensure members receive optimal value for the membership fees and donations.
- Liaise with and develop co-operative working arrangements with like organizations and associations.
- Formally develop succession planning for key appointments within the Association.
- Raise funds to support these objectives and other Association priorities that may arise from time to time

For full details and news about the Association's projects and events, or to download an application form click on:

[www.raevictoria.com](http://www.raevictoria.com)

You can request an application form from:

The Secretary  
RAE Association Victoria Inc  
c/- 22 Engineer Regiment  
56B Dublin Road  
RINGWOOD EAST VIC 3135

## Join Us—Royal Australian Engineers Association (Vic) Inc

### Membership Categories



1. Ordinary Members and Associate Members (members who support the Association but do not meet service membership criteria) who pay their subscriptions by 1st of January receive a receipt.
2. Concessional Life Membership. A member, who upon reaching the age of 65 years (prior to 1st of January of the membership year) may elect to make a one off payment equal to ten times the annual subscription for an Ordinary Member. Such members will be granted Concessional Life Membership with no further fees being payable. They will receive a letter from the Committee to confirm the granting of this category of membership.
3. Complementary Life Membership. A member who has made a significant contribution to the Association either by way of a substantial financial or memorabilia donation, maybe awarded a Complementary Life Membership together with a letter from the committee confirming the granting of this membership.
4. Honorary Life Membership. Members over the age of 80 will be awarded Honorary Life Membership in recognition of their age status and contribution to both the community and the Corps. They will receive a letter from the committee confirming the granting of this membership.
5. Honorary Life Membership. Members who have made an outstanding contribution to the Association will be awarded Honorary Life Membership together with a framed certificate confirming the granting of this membership.

In categories 3 and 5, nominations are to be submitted to the committee with supporting justification and documentation. Nominations will be considered on a case by case basis.

Membership of the RAE Association Victoria costs \$20 per year with subscriptions due on 1 January each year. All members will receive an electronic copy of each issue Sapper Summit, the magazine of the Association. Hard copies will be available to members without email. Members can choose to receive coloured, hard copies in addition to their e-copies for an additional subscription fee. Contact the Secretary for details.

Applicants over the age of 65 may elect to pay ten times the annual fee to receive lifetime membership. Fees are not required from applicants over the age of 80.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP  
RAE ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC  
ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP**

Jim Davis  
Honorary Secretary  
28 Ireland Avenue  
WANTIRNA SOUTH, Vic 3152 E-mail: [jdavis01@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jdavis01@bigpond.net.au)

***(Signed application can be emailed as above or alternatively a hard signed copy posted to the Secretary)***

**\*\*SURNAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*GIVEN NAMES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**#PREFERRED NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*DATE OF BIRTH:**     /     /     **#NAME OF PARTNER/NOK:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*YOUR ADDRESS & P/CODE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*PHONE: (H):**-----\_-----\_----\_ **(W):**\_\_\_\_\_ **(M):**\_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*E-MAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**#REGIMENTAL/PMKEYS No.**\_\_\_\_\_ **#RANK:** \_\_\_\_\_

**#APPROXIMATE DATES OF SERVICE**                     /     /     **TO**     /     /

**\*\*AWARDS/DECORATIONS HELD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**#DETAILS OF SERVICE AND UNITS *(any approximate dates would be useful)***

*If more space is needed please use back of form.*

**\*\*CURRENT OCCUPATION/PROFESSION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* Mandatory information required for compliance and management purposes.**

**# Optional information but would be helpful if provided**

**\*\*SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_ /     /

Wish to become a member of The Royal Australian Engineers Association of Victoria Incorporated (RAE Association (Vic) Inc.). In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to:

Support the purposes of the Association.

Comply with the Constitution of the Association.

*Note: Under the Application for Membership clause in the Association Constitution, a person who wishes to join the Association must submit a signed written application to a committee member, and agree to the two items 1 & 2 listed above.*

*Constitution is readily available on the Association's website ([www.raevictoria.asn.au](http://www.raevictoria.asn.au)) or by contacting the Secretary*

***Partner/NOK – (optional)*** *information would be of assistance as an alternative point of contact for the member*

***Dates of Service, Service & Units served (optional)*** *- would assist in understanding your service history and confirm your qualification for membership.*

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FEE FOR 2020 HAS BEEN SET AT \$25.00 AND IS PAYABLE NOW WITH YOUR APPLICATION. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE REVIEWED ANNUALLY AT THE AGM. PAYMENT CAN BE MADE BY CHEQUE OR DIRECT CREDIT (see below). SHOULD YOU WISH TO MAKE A DONATION, REGARDLESS OF THE AMOUNT, IT WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED AND ALLOW THE ASSOCIATION TO CONTINUE ITS WORK WITH IMPORTANT PROJECTS** Payment can now be made by electronic transfer. Please use the details below and during the transfer ensure that you show your name in the reference box. **Show here that you sent subs/donation electronically on     /     / and amount \$     .**

**BANK – Westpac Banking Corp: BSB 033181 - Account No 169032 Account Name RAE Association (Vic) Inc.**

*If undeliverable, return to*  
RAE Association (Vic) Inc  
C/- 22 Engineer Regiment  
56 Dublin Road  
RINGWOOD VIC 3134

**Sapper Summit**

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