



Newsletter of the Sappers Association (NSW) Inc.

Patron COL Sandy MacGregor, MC RFD (Retd)

June 2022

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Attachments

Sappers Spring Slosh

Our Office Bearers

President	Brian Malouf	M 0409 666 216
Vice President	John Hanley	M 0424 841 581
Secretary	Danny Duke	M 0417 722 551
Treasurer	Jeff James	M 0409 901 800
Committee		
Sjouke Havenaar	Adam Davis	Dave Hadfield

Calender

Sat 1/ Sun 2 Oct 22	Sappers Spring Slosh
Sat 22 Oct 22	Annual General Meeting
Sat 5 Nov 22	SME Ball/Sappers dinner (TBC)

Presidents Message

Welcome to the Winter 2022 edition of our Newsletter.

I trust you, like me, are looking forward to longer daylight hours after the Winter Solstice.

You would be aware that the Sappers' Annual Dinner planned for 26 March 2022 (an end of COVID "catch-up" event) was cancelled due to a lack of patronage. Your committee, however, is keen to arrange a dinner later in the year, as we have traditionally done in the past, but have concerns regarding the numbers of members and guests likely to attend. You may also be aware that 2022 is the 120th anniversary of the formation of the RAE and we are endeavouring to hold a dinner in conjunction with the School of Military Engineering (SME) School Ball planned for **Saturday, 5 November 2022**. Our liaison with SME to organise a combined function is ongoing. We will advise our members of definite arrangements as soon as they are firmed up. Meanwhile, please pencil in your attendance at a Sappers' dinner on this date.

Although the persistent rain caused the cancellation of the Sappers' Autumn Sloss event planned for 9/10 April 2022, a "catch-up" event (Sappers' Spring Sloss (SSS)) is now planned for **1/2 October 2022**. I encourage members, particularly serving members, to attend this SSS event (refer attached flyer).

The Sydney CBD ANZAC Day march this year was conducted free of the previous year's COVID controls. Some 25 Sappers marched behind the Association Banner carried by a Banner Party provided by the 5th Engineer Regiment. Attending members were provided with the Association's impressive new membership card, distributed by our Secretary, Danny Duke. The post-march reunion was again held at Hotel Harry, where we joined our Patron, Sandy Mac Gregor, who gallantly marched the entire route with his Tunnel Rats, despite his recent health concerns. I wish to acknowledge the great efforts of our Banner custodian, Terry Wheeler, in maintaining and attending to the logistics of our Banner, which is essential to the march.

The post-march reunion, however, was somewhat diminished by the uncharacteristic poor service from Hotel Harry staff. I raised this genuine concern with the Hotel Functions Coordinator on 26 April 2022 and was advised that the staff had already had a de-brief on the service shortcomings on the day. I was assured the staff had already planned ways to remedy these shortcomings and that Hotel Harry will provide the service we expect in the future.

A former Committee member, John Ray, has recently made a very significant donation to the Association, on behalf of his late wife, Faye. John and Faye have been dedicated supporters of the Association over many years. The Committee is investigating ways the Association may be able to honour Faye and commemorate RAE service to Australia. The 1st Field Squadron Association is currently raising funds to erect two memorial Bailey bridges to commemorate the service of Sappers in World War One. One bridge is to be erected at Amiens, France and the other at Yowoong, Brisbane. Your committee is presently considering ways in which we can both honour Faye and support our fellow Sapper association. You will be kept informed of developments in this matter.

As indicated in previous Newsletters, the Committee would welcome any feedback or suggestions as to how we can better provide for the needs and wants of Association members.

Meanwhile, I wish you and yours a healthy and mild winter, without excessive rain.

Sincerely,

Brian Malouf

THE BRIDGE OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND FRANCE

A MEMORIAL TO ALL AUSTRALIAN ARMY ENGINEERS WHO SERVED IN WW1

In 2015 1st Field Squadron Group Association Qld, Inc. (1 Fd Sqn Gp Assoc) commenced negotiations with The French City of Amiens, to construct a memorial bridge across the Somme Canal in their Botanical Gardens. The gardens themselves had been refurbished as they were bequeathed to the City by Louis XIV.

The City of Amiens was selected because this was the battle that defined the end of WW1, the last 100 days. It was also labelled by the German Commander, Ludendorff, "The black day of the German Army."

It was also during this battle that Australian Army Engineers distinguished themselves.

In dedicating this and a bridge in Brisbane we remember all Australian Army Engineers. The Australian Army engineers (the Sappers) on 8 August 1918 in Amiens France, demonstrated incredible courage under fire, determination that you could not cut with a chain saw and initiative that was jaw-dropping. This was World War One (WWI). On that one day, they helped to break through enemy positions and to cap it off, literally "ripped off" an enormous railway gun from under the noses of the enemy.

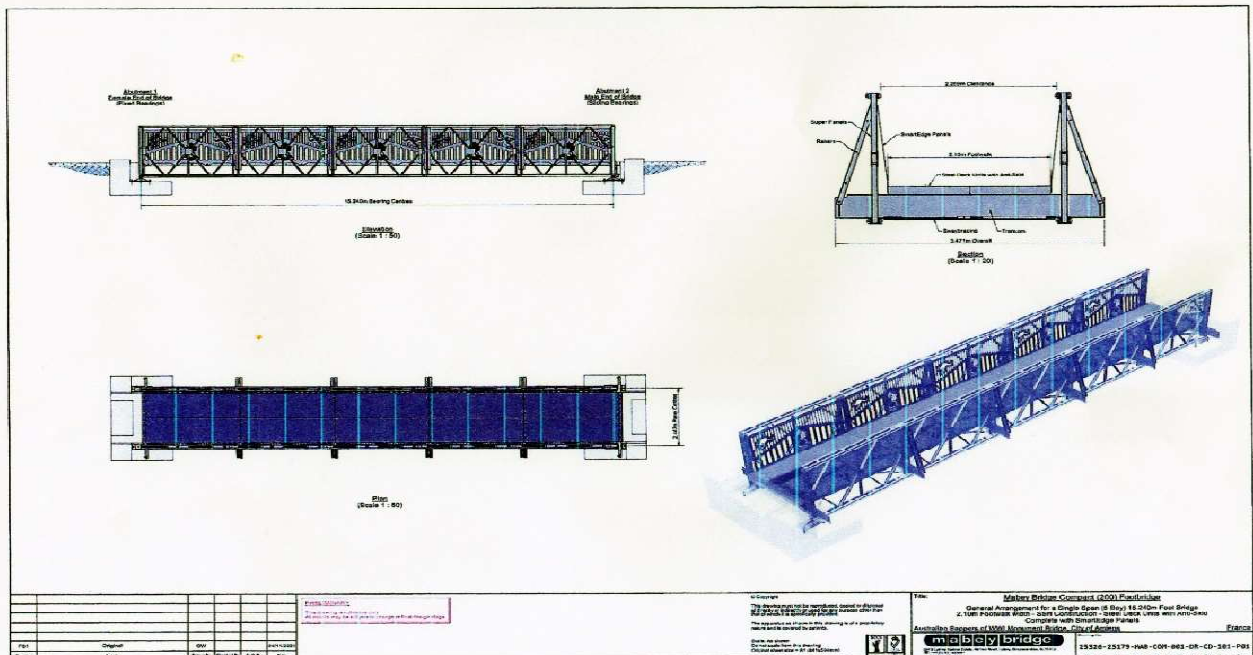
They received a huge number of decorations plus three citations for the Victoria Cross. From 8th August to the Armistice on 11 November 1918, the engineers were awarded 86 decorations for acts of courage in combat of which 15 were awarded on 8 August and 13 awarded on 29 September 1918. But they have never been recognized with a monument.

Our team wants to put that right. To give you an idea of a couple of instances of Sapper courage and resilience, the following accounts of Sappers in combat all occurred on 8 August 1918 – the first day of the Battle of Amiens.

Moving on to 2022, it was decided that as COVID-19 had placed restrictions on our ability to construct & dedicate the bridge in Amiens, (Now Scheduled for ANZAC Day 2024, The Committee of 1 Fd Sqn Gp, decided, in conjunction with the Brisbane City Council (BCC) to mirror the Amiens Bridge and construct the bridge in ANZAC Park Toowong, a Brisbane suburb. The bridge is to be dedicated on Remembrance Day 2022 (11/11) with artillery firing and a beating of the retreat.

The bridge is to become not just a memorial but a piece of infrastructure to be used by those wishing to enter ANZAC Park. This mirrors exactly the Amiens Bridge which will be a memorial and a piece of infrastructure crossing the Somme Canal, a name etched indelibly in the Allied Armies of WW1.

JOHN PRITCHARD
Royal Australian Engineers (RETD)
VICE PRESIDENT
1ST FD SQD GROUP ASSOCIATION (QLD) INC.



THE RAREST RISING SUN BADGE



The following is an extract from Sabretache journal talking about this very badge.

"In reply to a query on Swiss manufactured silver Rising Sun Badge there is no doubt it must be the rarest of the rising Sun Badges. The badge was manufactured in Switzerland for members of the AIF who escaped or evaded capture after the collapse of Italy in 1943 and then found their way to Switzerland. The manufacture of the badges was arranged by Lieutenant D. A. MacDonald the Amenities Officer of the 2/13 Battalion. Badges were authorised by Major H. J. Kroger in his capacity as Senior AIF Officer in Switzerland. There is only one of these badges known to be in any collection in Australia. I leave it to you to determine the rarity of these badges which as the photographs show are about the same size as the normal collar badge but are more rounded in size."

This badge was originally purchased by John over 20 years ago from the family of **escaper WX4461 Private John Pallot 2/28th Battalion** and has resided in a local collection ever since. We are fortunate to have recently purchased the badge back and have on offer the only known Swiss Rising sun with provenance to have surfaced. **This badge was worn on the beret as no slouch hat was issued to the escapers.**

Buyers must be aware that another variety has surfaced (since the appearance of the above article), but does not come with any provenance and a key noticeable difference is that it is not double stamped. We have also included a copy of this rising sun with the purchase of this badge at no extra charge.

Membership Card

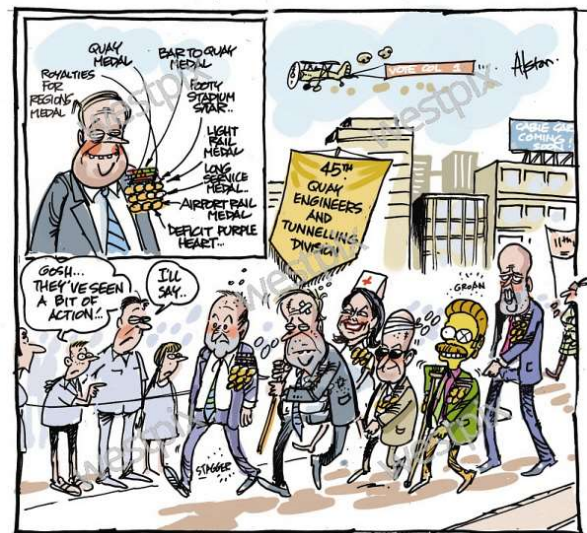


The **Sappers Association (NSW) Inc.** has introduced a new membership card.

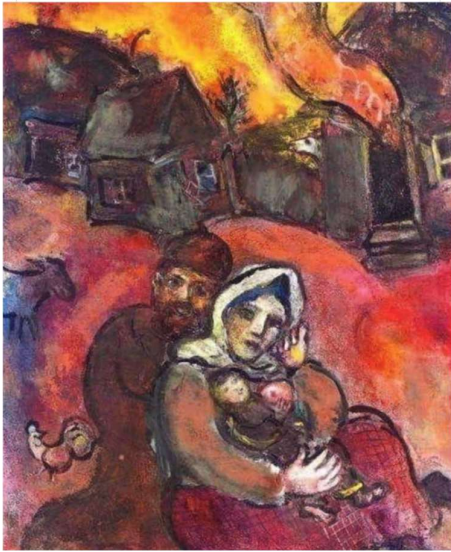
The intention is that this card will serve two purposes:

Be the individual's membership card, and
 Be able to be used as an identity card, as worn by those who participated in the 2022 ANZAC March.

The new cards will be printed and distributed to members in July.



Marc Chagall's "The Ukrainian Family" was painted during WWII. It could have been painted today. 🇺🇦



New doggie doo container



Photographs from the Somme and Northern France

Australian War Memorial



Under the AWM is the Sir John Monash Centre, this is an interactive study of the various sites around the Somme and WW1. This is worth a visit if you are in the area.

Frommel Cobbers



Bullecourt Digger and Slouch Hat

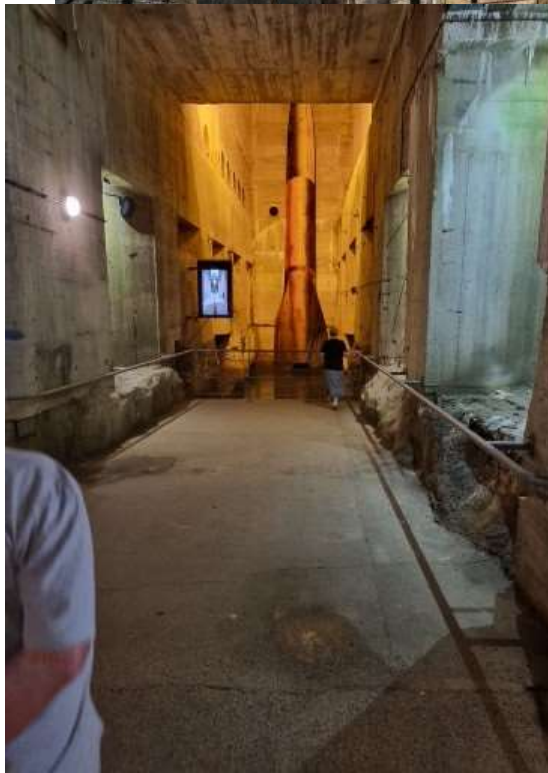


Pozieres



Eperlecques Blockhaus

The only site in France that housed both the V1 and V2 rockets, the building was bombed 25 times between August 1943 and August 1944



SAPPERS' SPRING SLOSH (SSS) 1/2OCT 22

The Sappers' Association of NSW is keen to promote social activities that develop and maintain *esprit de corps* amongst its Members. Although the Mar 22 "Slosh" event was cancelled due to persistent heavy rain, Brian Malouf has again offered the use of his Blue Mountains semi-rural home for a Sappers' gathering to enjoy good company and food, tell yarns and sing songs (with appropriate vocal cord lubrication) around a campfire, sleep under the stars (or hoochie/tent) and escape suburbia. There will also be a compulsory game of "Slosh" (a fun pool table game designed to invigorate participants!)

Date and Location: **Sat, 1 Oct 22** (say, 1200h) to **Sun, 2 Oct 22** (say, 1200h); 235 Chapman Parade, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776 (1km north of Norman Lindsay's Gallery and 200m north of Rita Ave).

General Idea:

Sat 1200-1700 – arrive, afternoon tea, familiarisation, pitch tents (extreme wet weather plan – camp in garage).

Sat 1700-1800 – "Slosh" instruction, for beginners (if required)

Sat 1800-2000 – BBQ dinner

Sat 2000-2359 – campfire, sing-a-long/yarns, refreshments, "Slosh", lights out

Sun 0800-1100 – hot and/or cold breakfast, settle "Slosh" technical points

Sun 1100-1200 – pack up, farewells and depart.

Catering: Brian to supply all food and beverages (cost \$30/head).

Member to Bring: Tent/hoochie, sleeping bag, air bed, stretcher, folding chair, etc, as required. (Brian can assist Members who have no camping gear – see return slip below). Drinks (non-beverage) in esky. Singing/yarn voices. "Slosh" skills (or a willingness to learn and enjoy).

Contact Brian: Mob: 0409 666 216.

Spouses: Should spouses wish to travel to the Mountains with their Sapper Member, they could (individually or as a group) stay at the Faulconbridge Motel (Tel: (02) 4751 2194 or 4751 2100), visit Norman Lindsay's Gallery, patronise local restaurants, attend local events (visit www.bluemts.com.au for details) and then collect the Member on Sun.

RSVP 24 Sep 22: Please confirm your attendance by posting the return slip (below) to Brian or by phone, smoke signal, semaphore or email: bgmalouf75@gmail.com (giving the relevant information).

----- (Please tear off and post) -----

SAPPERS' SPRING SLOSH (SSS)

I will be attending the SSS on Sat/Sun 1/2 Oct 22.

Please find attached \$30 cheque/money order payable to "Brian Malouf" or I will pay on the day (delete, as appropriate)

Name Email:

Telephone: Home..... Mob

NOK Contact Details

Name.....Tel/Mob.....

Special dietary needs (nominate)

Camping gear assistance required (nominate)