

RAE CORPS MAGAZINE
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION (Vic) Inc



SAPPER SUMMIT

Once a Sapper, Always a Sapper

D-DAY 80 YEARS ANNIVERSARY



This year marks the 80th anniversary of D-Day - the commencement of Operation Overlord, the invasion of Nazi occupied France on June 6 1944. As always, Sappers were everywhere, and on p.45 of this edition we highlight their many roles and the equipment they used.

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

ISSN 1325-7676
Number 110 July 2024

Printed by Bounty Print
65 Heatherdale Rd RINGWOOD

SAPPER SUMMIT

Sapper Summit is produced twice a year
By the RAE Association (Vic) Inc

General Association mail can be sent to:
The Secretary,
Royal Australian Engineers Association (Vic) Inc
P.O.Box 246
RINGWOOD EAST VIC 3135

Sapper Summit items should be mailed to
The Editor, Sapper Summit,
PO Box 246
RINGWOOD EAST VIC 3135
Email: sappersummit@raevictoria.com
Electronic articles are preferred using MS Word
for text and Jpeg (for images) formats.

Contact details, past copies of Sapper Summit and
general information about the RAE Association (Vic)
and its activities can be found on our website:
www.raevictoria.com

Disclaimer: The opinions and comments expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of the Editor or of the RAE Association Victoria (Inc) .



<u>Inside this issue:</u>	Page
President's Column	3
CO's Column	4
From the Squadrons	5
Another Reunion	9
Annual Muster	11
Association Annual General Meeting 2024	19
RCH Good Friday Appeal 2024	21
A Sapper Goes Snowboarding	24
A Tribute to the Tunnel Rats	27
RAE Excellence Awards	28
Another Valley Mural	29
ANZAC Day 2024	30
Blue Tongues Reunion	39
Holdfast 2024	41
Operation Overlord 80 Year Anniversary	45
Lt Col Colin Bowater	48
RAE Corps Birthday celebration	49
Kapooka Tragedy Memorial	52
Canberra—Newcastle Tour	55
2024 Waterloo Dinner	60
Brigadier Michelle McCormack	66
Merchandise	72

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

President:	Don HUGHES
Vice President:	Todd MacDOUGALL
Secretary:	Jim DAVIS
Treasurer:	Duncan HOWARTH
Elected Members:	Mel CONSTABLE
	Eric HOWATT JP
	Margaret HANDTE
	Michael POTTS
	Mark SHANKS RFD
Ex Officio member:	Bruce MURRAY AM
	(COL COMDT & SRCC Rep)
Padre:	John RAIKE
Mascot:	ZEUS
See:	www.raevictoria.com for up to date news 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 Victorian Sappers.

"Telling our Story", is one of the Chief of Army's priorities this year.

Sapper Summit does this well for Sappers in Victoria. Other priorities are, Trust, Readiness and better managing our resources.

After the Chief of Army, LTGEN Simon Stuart AO DSC, and the Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army, WO1 Kim Felmingham NSC OAM, visited Oakleigh Barracks to recognise half a century of dedicated and committed service by Captain Noel Tipton on Friday 13th October 2023, they had the opportunity to visit

the History Room.

With further global conflict erupting this year in the Middle East the defence minister and Deputy Prime Minister, The HON Richard Marles MP, announced significant changes to our Army's organisation and disposition in support of the Defence Strategic Review of 2023.

In essence, the Army will be transformed and optimised for littoral manoeuvre operations by sea, land, and air.

No doubt, this will provide many opportunities for Victorian sappers. The need for a highly effective military engineering capability within Australia remains paramount.

On the heritage front, a significant plaque was placed on the Victorian Trades Hall building in Lygon Street, Carlton. Organised by a dedicated team led by our Patron, COL John Wertheimer AM RFD, this commemorates the first permanent Australian military engineer depot established in 1864.

Numerous ceremonial and social activities continue to attract a diverse array of sappers of all ranks, trades, and category of service from throughout Victoria, and interstate. Family and friends are always most welcome.

The Association continues to flourish and grow whilst supporting all serving and retired sappers in the State. A diverse, talented, and devoted committee help navigate this pathway forward. We welcome Todd MacDougall as our new Vice President.

Please enjoy this Waterloo edition of *Sapper Summit*.

***Good Sapping & UBIQUE,
D.C. (Don) Hughes***

From The Regiment



CO 22 Engineer Regiment



LTCOL RUSSELL COLLINS

8222981 Lieutenant Colonel Russell Collins RAE.

Lieutenant Colonel Russell Collins entered the Australian Defence Force Academy in 2002 studying Civil Engineering and graduated with honours in 2006. On completion of his Regimental Officers Basic Course in 2007 he was posted to 21st Construction Squadron where he fulfilled Works Officer, Second in Command and Plant/Transport Troop Command roles. In 2010, Lieutenant Colonel Collins was posted to 22nd Construction Regiment as the Adjutant and Operations Officer prior to posting to Defence Materiel Organisation within the Land 125 Phase 3C program in 2012 as a Project Manager and subsequently Deputy Program Director.

Over the course of his Full-Time military career Lieutenant Colonel Collins deployed on the Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Program to Kalumburu, Western Australia in 2008, Timor

Leste as the Engineer Officer in 2010 and to Afghanistan as a Project Engineer in the Force Extraction Unit in 2013. During this time Lieutenant Colonel Collins also completed a Master of Engineering Project Management at the University of Melbourne.

After transferring to Part-Time service in October 2014 Lieutenant Colonel Collins was posted to the 22nd Engineer Regiment as the Training Major. In 2015 he performed the duties of Officer Commanding of the 8th Combat Engineer Squadron and in 2016 he was promoted to Major and posted as the Officer Commanding the 105th Construction Squadron. Lieutenant Colonel Collins was then posted to Headquarters 2nd Division in 2018 as the Staff Officer Grade 2 Quality Assurance within the Individual Training Branch prior to completing Australian Command and Staff Course in 2019.

During the 2020 bushfire season Lieutenant Colonel Collins performed the duties of Force Engineer on the Joint Task Force 646 Headquarters before being posted to Career Management Agency as the Career Advisor for Combat Service Support Officers in the Southern Region. Lieutenant Colonel Collins was posted to Headquarters 4th Brigade as the Staff Officer Grade One Training in 2022 and Staff Officer Grade One Plans in 2023. In 2024 Lieutenant Colonel Collins was appointed as the Commanding Officer of the 22nd Engineer Regiment.

In January 2014 Lieutenant Colonel Collins secured employment at Australia Pacific Airports Corporation as a Project Manager. Over the subsequent 10 years he has been promoted several times and has fulfilled the following roles: Senior Project Manager; Runway Development Program Deputy Director; Head of Project Management, COVID-19 Crisis Director, Head of Safety, Risk and Compliance and is currently the Head of Safety, Procurement, Project Management Office and Integrated Capital. Lieutenant Colonel Collins and his wife Caroline have two children; Adam and Laura aged 12 years and eight years respectively. He enjoys golf, reading and spending time with friends and family when time permits.



NCO TRAINING WEEKEND

24-25 SEP 2023

LCPL Nathan O'Malley



As the sun rose in anticipation on a warm September Saturday, the junior non-commissioned officers (JNCOs) of 22nd Engineer Regiment gathered at Oakleigh Barracks to the smell of freshly brewed coffee and the aromas of WO2 Tim Place's baking for a weekend of professional development and leadership training.

Although JNCOs across the regiment were invited it was the brave members from 8 and 10 Squadrons, who were greeted by the Commanding Officer, LTCOL Scott D'Rozario for an opening address; emphasising the value of the Corporal role within the Army and discussing the improvement of training and personnel retention.



The training program for 'Ex NCO' developed and delivered by WO2 Place and supported by SGT's Justin Merrett and Sam Hateley began with a seminar covering leadership styles, tenets of military leadership and setting the standard for the soldiers of the Regiment. As part of this, WO2 Place introduced novel challenges that tested our mechanical aptitude: with limited resources, as is expected in our military experiences, we were divided into competing teams to construct the tallest load bearing tower from a mixture of dried pasta, masking tape and creative expression.



True to the theme, WO2 Place presented a second team-based conundrum on maximising the number of slices possible in a cake that appeared to have experienced its own technical challenges in the baking process. Food based humour aside, the opportunity to engage with other JNCOs, in a supportive environment and with a diverse range of experience in the room allowed for deep discussion into how we can advance our own careers and develop our soldiers more effectively including seeking mentorship and improving lines of communication.

Command relationships and scenarios with SGT Hateley rounded out the afternoon session, closing with an open forum with Regimental Sergeant Major Thomas Jesser. The RSM provided the opportunity to discuss, candidly, topics and concerns within the regiment and encouraged suggestions for how to address those concerns. The RSM was generous with his time and the opportunity was cited as a highlight by those in attendance.

Dinner was served in the Officers Mess with aplomb by SPR Kutey and SPR Fang with honoured guest Jim Davis sharing some of his perspectives. SGT Merrett also shared some of the corps history with a presentation on the Waterloo dinner. A delicious informal dinner, also attended by a former member of (lifestyle farmer) WO2 Place's livestock lasted well into the evening with many seeing a need for the weekend to become a permanent annual event.

The following morning, CPL Harrison King, infamous as the current 8 SQN record holder for Heaves took everyone for a 'rigorous' PT session, which saw the better of the more social Lance Corporals from the previous night, provided an example of how to apply trade skills and greater training value into Physical Training. Shaking hands following leopard crawls, jerry carries and wall jumps certainly make AFA/TCCC skills more difficult to apply.





The instructional period of the 'Ex NCO' concluded with a detailed lesson on digital administration that clarified programs, points of access and streamlined the processes that keep the flow of information moving including handy hints and important updates which despite its dry content was clear in its application to JNCO duties and received rapt attention.

The weekend concluded with a social BBQ lunch which provided further opportunities for the JNCOs and senior

soldiers of the regiment to share time. From the attendees: the training program was relevant to our role and provided rare time to work with our peers and continue to develop the network of ideas and relationships to benefit the regiment now and into the rapidly changing future for Army. The repeat of this event in 2024 will be eagerly awaited.

By LCPL Nathan O'Malley



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




10 CES on EX PLATYPUS SECRES NEWBOROUGH TRAINING DEPOT

19—21 JULY 2024

by Spr Gavin Kalnins



Across the weekend of 19-21 July, the 10th Combat Engineer Squadron conducted EX PLATYPUS SECRES at the Newborough Training Depot. In line with the Army Reserve's realignment to defence of the Australian north, the focus of the weekend was on homeland defence and construction tasks. The 22 ER training troop also accompanied 10 CE SQN to Newborough, where they conducted land combat training, to prepare them for the Land Combat Module.

The primary task of the sappers of 10 CE SQN involved making a reinforced concrete tetrahedron and laying a concrete slab. Not only did this offer an excellent opportunity for practicing concreting skills but provided the unit with ready-made targets for a future demolitions weekend. Under the watchful eye of CPL Rosenberg, the sappers made good time in mixing and pouring the necessary concrete, all while in less-than-ideal weather conditions. Civilian experience in construction and engineering possessed by a number of the soldiers proved invaluable in this task.



The squadron also had the opportunity to break in some freshly issued chainsaws, giving the soldiers time to get familiar with both their operation and maintenance. It's safe to say that the Newborough mess was not short of firewood to keep the digs warm after knockoff!



Classic 'sappernuity' was on display in the construction of a hedgehog by soldiers led by LCPL O'Malley.

Although without the tools required to weld the hedgehog together, 10 CES nonetheless got the job done with little more than a battery-powered drill, some nuts and bolts, and some careful measurements.



The sappers also had some time to re-familiarise themselves with other small engine tools, such as the angle grinder, tamper, and power pack, the latter of which was used to jack hammer concrete and drain an underground command post.

On Saturday night, the sappers honed their marksmanship in the MWTSS facility, with a twist. After completing some preliminary serials involving section defence, the difficulty was upped in a scenario involving contact with the enemy while in MOPP gear, after undergoing a simulated gas attack. Soldiers then got some further exposure to night vision equipment, such as BNVDs, LAIDs, and LAIRDs during another MWTSS scenario.

MWTSS: Mobile Weapons Training Simulation System MOPP: Mission Oriented Protected Posture BNVD: Binocular Night Vision Device LAID: Laser Aiming Illumination Device LAIRD: Laser Aiming Illumination & Ranging Device
--



In order to warm up during a wet and cold Sunday morning, SGT Merrett organised a very diverse PT session. It included not only standard circuit training, but some 'fun with logs', and even an impromptu Yoga session led by SPR Beddoe.



EX PLATYPUS SECRETS gave the soldiers of 10 CE SQN an excellent opportunity to work together to refresh and develop skills vital to homeland defence.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL REUNION

BAIRNSDALEADVERTISER.COM.AU | WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024



Royal Australian Engineers Association Victoria committee member, Mark Shanks, recently returned Gilbert Reynolds' dog tags to his daughter, Marjorie Mills. The moment marked a 12-month journey of the tags being found and sent to the Bairnsdale Advertiser office.

In an emotional follow up to the earlier report in Sapper Summit 105 (Dec 2021), another set of I.D. tags has been returned to a family.

For Marjorie Mills, a 12-month wait for her father's ID tags came to a head recently when the Bairnsdale Advertiser and the Royal Australian Engineers Association of Victoria (RAEAV) were able to return them to her.

Marjorie's father, Gilbert Reynolds, was a member of the 2/9th Field Company, Royal Australian Engineers. The unit saw action in the Middle East, Papua New Guinea, Borneo and Balikpapan. As a Sapper he was trained in a range of Military Engineering skills, such as bridge building, preparing field defences, repairing roads, but his specialty was demolitions—a "powder monkey".

When Gilbert eventually returned home from the Army, Marjorie was only three years old. Peter McCulkin was the one to find the tags while fossicking at an old WW2 training ground near Kairi on the Atherton Tableland in Far North Queensland. The tags were likely discarded after being replaced after the campaign in PNG. Once Mr McCulkin found the tags, he managed to contact Marjorie and the RAEAV, who organised to have the tags returned to her. Off they went on a 2900 km journey to Bairnsdale, where they were received by staff at The Advertiser.



Pete McCulkin was the one to find the tags while prospecting in the Atherton Tablelands in Far North Queensland.



Marjorie holding her father's dog tags for the first time.

RAEAV Committee Member Mark Shanks travelled from Yarragon to officially return the tags to Marjorie.

Holding her father's I.D. tags was an emotional moment for Marjorie. "I've been waiting and waiting for these", she said. "This is lovely".

Mark, in turn, was thrilled to have been able to return them to the family. Mark explained that the tags are made from aluminium, which is rustproof. The name and service number of the soldier is stamped into the metal, and a hole is punched to allow a cord to be attached.

Marjorie said that after receiving the tags, she would take them home to show her family,



Marjorie with her father.



Below left: members of the 2/9th conducting a mine search on 4 July 1945 in Borneo.
AWM 110925

Below right: the Company's camp at Zenag in New Guinea in February 1944.
AWM 070941



RAEAV ANNUAL SAPPER MUSTER

OAKLEIGH BARRACKS 02nd March 2024

by Jim Davis



Once again, we were so fortunate to have the support of the CO 22nd Engineer Regiment (LTCOL Russell Collins) who made the facilities of Oakleigh available for our annual Muster, and supported the night by providing a Duty Officer and staff. Without doubt Oakleigh is an ideal place in relation to location and facilities for a night like this.

The annual Muster is the most important event on the Association's calendar and provides members, family and friends the opportunity to gather and enjoy the social and camaraderie aspects of the night. This year support for Muster was outstanding with a crowd of 120 people attending. As usual Jock and Margaret conducted a raffle with some wonderful prizes – we were so fortunate to have some wonderful gifts donated by Stu (Ace) Williams (a former 4 CER sapper) who has supported us for many years and once again made a substantial donation and even travelled from Cairns to attend the Muster. Ryan Appleby also surprised us with a presentation bottle filled with a wonderful elixir. The support of people like Ace and Ryan helps us provide substantial prizes and allow us to keep entry costs low. The Ringwood RSL (through the energetic efforts of Margaret) also donated 3 bottles of Irish Cream liqueur.

For the 8th year the Association provided a spit roast

meal which was served in the Drill Hall – people were not disappointed with the quality or quantity of the meal with many going back for seconds. The meal consisted of a main and sweets. The big winner was Don's Assistance Dog Zeus.

As with all evenings there must be some formalities, and these included a report by the President (Don Hughes) on the Association's achievements throughout the year and potential future events. Don went on to welcome everyone to the function in particular the Patron, Padre and several senior Officers. Regrettably the new CO (Russ Collins) was a late apology.

During his speech Don took the opportunity of making three presentations. The first was to previous CO (Scott D'Rozario) : plaque in recognition of his support to the Association. Michael Plant received the 22nd Engineer Regiment's 2023 award as the most outstanding junior Officer, and finally to Noel Tipton who retired in December 2023 after 50 years of service to Defence: a personally autographed copy of the book "Mentions in Despatches" by Dave Sabben (on the Vietnam war and the Battle of Long Tan).

Our thanks must be extended to the CO (LTCOL Russell Collins) for allowing the Association the use of these wonderful facilities along with great support from the staff in setting up the depot. Duty Officer (DO) was LT

Joe Earnshaw and GD's SPR's Tate Moody, Yutian Fang, Louise Beddoe, Alex Fransisca and Dave Szalay. The bar was manned by Scott White with support from several of the Officers who were in attendance. Special thanks to Anne Court and Daniel Kowalski from the Q Store who spent a lot of time to make sure everything was right and I must not forget the outstanding efforts of OPS CAPT Michael Plant assisted by LCPL Shanan Dean – there was wonderful cooperation and support from all elements of the Regiment.

So many people deserve to be acknowledged for making the night a success but thank you to Jock & Margaret for your raffle work, Duncan Howarth on the financial side with his trusty "Square" device to obtain money from many of those in attendance and Mel and Pottsy who are so important for the success of the night. The Muster is the Association's major fellowship event for the year and is not convened to make money but to bring together a good cross section of sappers of various ages and ranks to enjoy the company of like-minded people and this evidenced with many people travelling from Echuca, Kerang, Wagga, Latrobe Valley and as I mentioned Cairns.

The most important thank you is saved until last and that is to the people who came along on the night and supported the Association by attending because without your support and encouragement the night would be a failure.



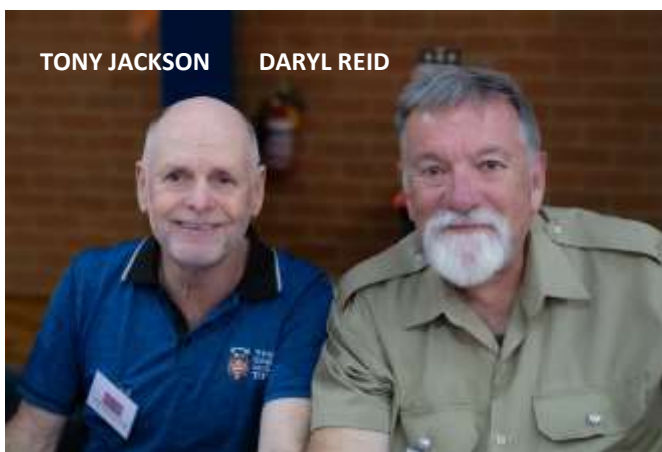
JANET & PAUL MATTHEWS



KATE BARNES AND TRENT ROSENBERG



PRESIDENT DON HUGHES ADDRESSES THE THROG



TONY JACKSON DARYL REID



KELLY & OWEN McLAUCHLAN



KEVIN MOSS



DON WITH THE VERY EFFICIENT CATERING STAFF



**MICHAEL PLANT—MOST OUTSTANDING
JUNIOR OFFICER 22ER**



ANDREW MOTT

JIM PAXTON



JOHN MOREY

LAURIE YOUNG



TOM MULHOLLAND

JIM DAVIS



JILSKA WILLIAMS

ROB CAMILLERI

KELLY WILLIAMS



TOM MORLEY



ALISON HARRIS

PENNY DAHAN



DYLAN WHITE



**DIEGO
MACHILLANDA**

**NOEL
TIPTON**

**REECE
SIMON**



FIONA INCE



**PETER & DIANA
WILMOT**



JEFF BRUMHEAD



**JOHN
WERTHEIMER**

**MICHELLE
McCORMACK**



MARILYN MOSS



MICK COBELLI

KELLY BURGESS



MEL CONSTABLE

BRUCE MURRAY



**WENDY
KENNEDY**

**LEONARD (KIWI)
CAMPBELL**

**STAN
APPLEBY**

**MAREE
KELLY**



**TOM
MULHOLLAND**

**OGI
JOVANOVIC**



**DAVID
KELLY-GRIMSHAW**

**TREVOR
MAYS**



SCOTT D'ROSARIO RECEIVES HIS PLAQUE



SCOTT WHITE



**RAPHAEL
MARANON**

**RODNEY
SALVIN**

**DAN
CULLIFORD**



DON GREET'S DARYL & SHIRLEY REID AND FAMILY



STEVE FISHER

BRUCE MURRAY



JIM
DAVIS

SHANNON
GARRETT

STEVE
SMITH



DAVID WAINWRIGHT

TOM JESSER



THE THREE MUSKETEERS— KIM, REX & ANDY HOWES



SHARON COATES



DAN CULLIFORD

PETER DONOVAN



DUNCAN HOWARTH

STUART HUNTER

GEOFFREY HUNTER



GEORGE WEEKS

ANDREW SCHNITLER



IMOGENE & MATTHEW (MAGIC) MAGILTO



DON HUGHES

STUART
(ACE)
WILLIAMS



CESARE
(DIGGER)
DI GREGORIO

MARIANNA
DI GREGORIO

MATT
DOE



GEORGE
WARD

DAVE
CONLAN

DON
HUGHES



CARL SECCUL & SALLY FIGDOR

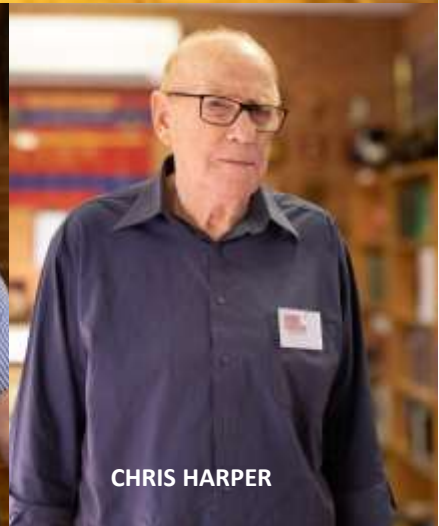
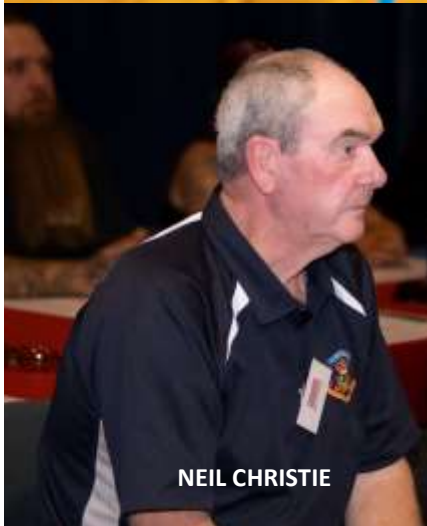


JOSHUA GREGORY & MICHELLE CAMPBELL



KIRSTEN
LINDEN

MICHELLE
McCORMACK



Once a Sapper, Always a Sapper

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

11 APRIL 2024

Jim Davis

On 11th April 2024 the RAE Association conducted its Annual General Meeting which was held at the Ringwood RSL – a number of those attending the AGM arrived early and started the evening with a meal.

The reason that the AGM has been switched to an offsite location and held at night was in the hope that we would attract a higher attendance number but more particularly get some serving members of the Regiment to come along – this year we managed to attract only a couple of serving sappers in Trevor Mays and Stephen Rothwell which I must admit is fairly disappointing, as it is from the younger members that our future leaders will come from.

Overall, the attendance at the AGM was disappointing and certainly down on previous years. The Association tried all avenues to encourage attendance but to no avail, but we did have our regular attendees and it was good to catch up with some friends like Austin Byrne and Bob Klos. Whilst everyone who makes the effort to come along is considered important, a couple of people worthy of mention are COL Bruce Murray, AM (Colonel Commandant RAE Southern Region) who travelled from Queenscliff and conducted the voting for the committee positions, also John Wertheimer (Patron).

Along with the normal business associated with any AGM there was the election of office bearers for the 2024 – 2025 year which are as follows;

President	Don Hughes (and Zeus)
Vice President	Todd MacDougall
Secretary	Jim Davis
Treasurer	Duncan Howarth
Committee	Mel Constable Eric (Jock) Howatt Margaret Handte Michael Potts Mark Shanks
Ex Officio member:	Bruce Murray (as COL COMDT RAE Southern Region).

Financially and membership wise the Association is in a reasonable position but as was mentioned if we cannot attract younger people to take on the roles within the committee then the Association will become nonfunctioning and die a natural death. This would be a terrible consequence bearing in mind the work and effort that has been done by the committee getting the Association into its current position.

Don provided a great address and summary of the Association's past year and the future ahead and he also took the opportunity of mentioning that a significant milestone that will be celebrated next year. It will be the 75th anniversary of the Supplementary Reserve (SR) with 105 Construction Squadron being the only real link back to this very successful innovation.

Don reminded the audience that a book project had been started some time back to commemorate 70 years of Engineers in Victoria (Forests, Fires and Fortifications) but with the diamond anniversary of the SR in 2025 he is now looking to concentrate on the book and have it ready for a launch to coincide with the 75th anniversary.

Don's address was extensive and informative.

As the Association enters its 10th year of supporting the Regiment and its Sappers, the question that needs addressing is how can the Association integrate more with the Regiment and gain the support and confidence of the serving members to ensure the future viability of the RAE Association of Vic?

A wonderful gesture arranged by Dave Conlan and performed prior to the AGM was the presentation of a birthday cake (made from vanilla slices and decorated with chocolate bullets) to Marg Handte and the singing of "Happy Birthday" – thank you Dave for being so kind and generous.

Jim Davis
Secretary



36 YEARS OF SAPPER SUPPORT

Good Friday Appeal 2024

22 Engineer Regiment & Friends.



By Zeus
Roving
Correspondent



Serving the people of Australia is what Sappers do.

Friends of Sappers help too.



Victorian Sappers have consistently supported the Royal Children Hospital (RCH) Good Friday Appeal (GFA) since 1988.

It's always a good Friday when they can raise nearly \$34K for the kids who are lovingly cared for in this world class facility. 2024 was another record for the Victorian Sapper Team.

Spearheaded by sappers from Victoria's only military engineering unit, 22nd Engineer Regiment, the team deployed to key intersections within inner Melbourne close to the

magnificent RCH facility in Flemington Road.

Always well supported by the *Ringwood Athletics Club* and the *Ventura Bus Company*, the expectant busload of *Tin Rattlers* quickly settled into, and as always en-

joyed, the bus trip from the Dublin Road, East Ringwood Engineering Training Depot to the city via the Eastern Freeway.

I really enjoyed watching the team prepare. With everyone putting on their high vision safety vests, filling out their volunteer nametags and then pinning them on, a bit of teamwork really helps here.



"It's going to be hot today, don't forget to wear your hat, keep hydrated and apply sunscreen" Jock (our intrepid leader) wisely advised.

Jock is always ably assisted by wife Joanne, and son Neil.

After Jock's (now legendary) briefing session to explain the conduct of the task ahead, particularly concentrating

on the health and safety issues, we embus.

Always getting a seat up near our driver (in case he gets lost, and I must navigate) we hit the road.

There was no need to worry, Frank Damiani, our Ventura bus driver was in his element and was well backed up



by the rest of the Ventura Bus crew: Cathy, Shannon, and Suzi. They have been keen and dedicated supporters of the GFA since the early days.

Always there too, providing backup support and driving tasks in his white 4-wheel drive Ute, is Paul the Painter. I stick close to Paul because he knows where all the treats are.

Sierra Delta is always there and so bubbly and happy; she makes sure I keep hydrated and takes lots of photos posting them on social media.

We drove past the newly constructed Ringwood East Railway Station and the Dublin Road underpass. The site has been a huge hole in the ground restricting access to the depot for months.



The resultant new station looks magnificent (despite not having any ablution facilities for humans).

On the bus, old friends are reacquainted from years gone by, whilst new ones are made.

I can remember exactly who gave me treats during past journeys, but I'm always on the hunt for possible new food sources.

We arrive in the city dropping off *Tin Rattler* teams along the way.



The Intersection Supervisors are well briefed and quickly deploy the teams onto the task of collecting for the kids. They even have cards with quick recognition (QR) codes on them to capture those without cash.

Naturally, Jock has also organised electronic donation options for those who cannot travel to the Hospital.

Some Tin Rattlers have travelled to the Flemington Road precinct under their own steam. Karen from Ballarat travelled by train and then cab, to join the team.

Bushy and Carl quickly organise the keen and well-disciplined sappers. Their CO and RSM would be very proud of the wonderful respect they receive from the public.

The *Ringwood Athletic Club* team look impressive with many of them in costumes. They always add fun and excitement to the day.

My favourite dress up for the day was Irishman Ciaran, who came along as a knight out of Monty Python – in-

cluding the horse clopping coconut shell sound effect device.

Taking in all the new city smells, I meander down towards the Hospital.

Past the biggest bowl of fish I have ever seen, and those ever-vigilant Meerkats, I can smell the sausages and hamburgers in the central courtyard of the hospital.

The place is abuzz with national sporting teams, characters from fairy tales and cartoons - even all my favourite superheroes are there.

Dance and cultural groups from around the globe take turns entertaining us.

Even those pesky young detection dogs from the Federal Police are there trying to learn how to behave in a big crowd.



Newspaper, radio and television crews are everywhere.

I locate the food stalls, but my owner wants to see all the Ferraris first. They are fresh from the Formula One racing carnival last week.

None of the Ferraris have bull bars or towing hitches. Some didn't even have roofs.

The back seats were way too small for me to adopt my prone position.

None of them even had 4-wheel drive and their ground clearance was way too low.

Finally, I queue up at the well organised food stalls and get to choose exactly what I want in my hamburger.

I naturally go for the carnivorous options rather than the vegetarian ones. I'm also offered a huge range of toppings – Smoky BBQ sauce is my favourite.

Now well-watered and fed, it's time to get down to business.

A young couple from Diggers Rest are sitting alone quietly with their couple of months old baby who has just gone through a series of life saving operations. We chat for ages and reflect on how lucky we are to have such a great medical facility for our kids.

Many we meet, are a long way from home. Being a country dog from the Riverina, I was able to relate with them about being far away from home in a big city.

Many miss their pets too. I was able to stand in, if only for a while, for them to refresh their bond with their loving (and obviously missed) pet from home.

Most of the kids, and parents, just wanted to pat me and give me hugs.

It's a hard job – but someone must do it.

The staff at the Hospital too, are overwhelmed with the support given by their community.

I'm so proud of the Sapper Team, doing what they do to raise funds for the kids.

It's so much more than just the amount raised, its about just being there, lending a helping hand.

Well done Sappers and friends.

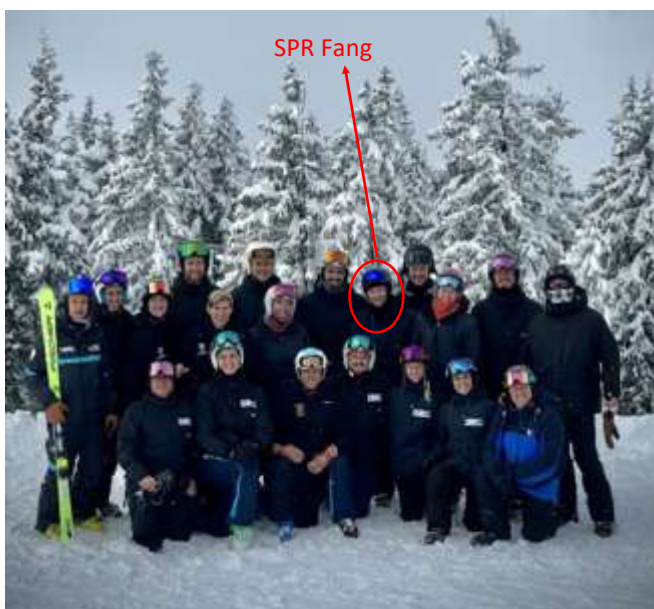


SAPPER GOES SNOWBOARDING

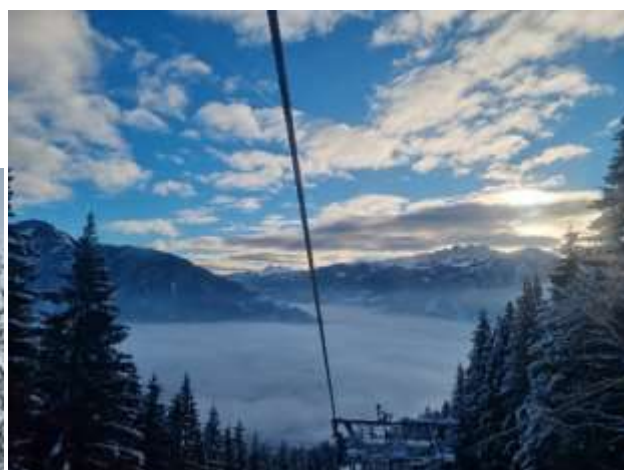
BY SAPPER YUTIAN FANG



In January this year, SPR Fang of 10CE SQN attended EX ALPINE CHALLENGE, where she was a part of a group of 19 ADF skiers and snowboarders who travelled to Europe to compete against the British Armed Forces. The team went to Austria to compete against the British Royal Air Force, and then to France where to compete in the British inter-services competition.



The team was made up of a diverse group of skiers and snowboarders from all over Australia. From Navy engineers with beards, to Air Force pilots who were way too keen to go flying through the air (on a snowboard).



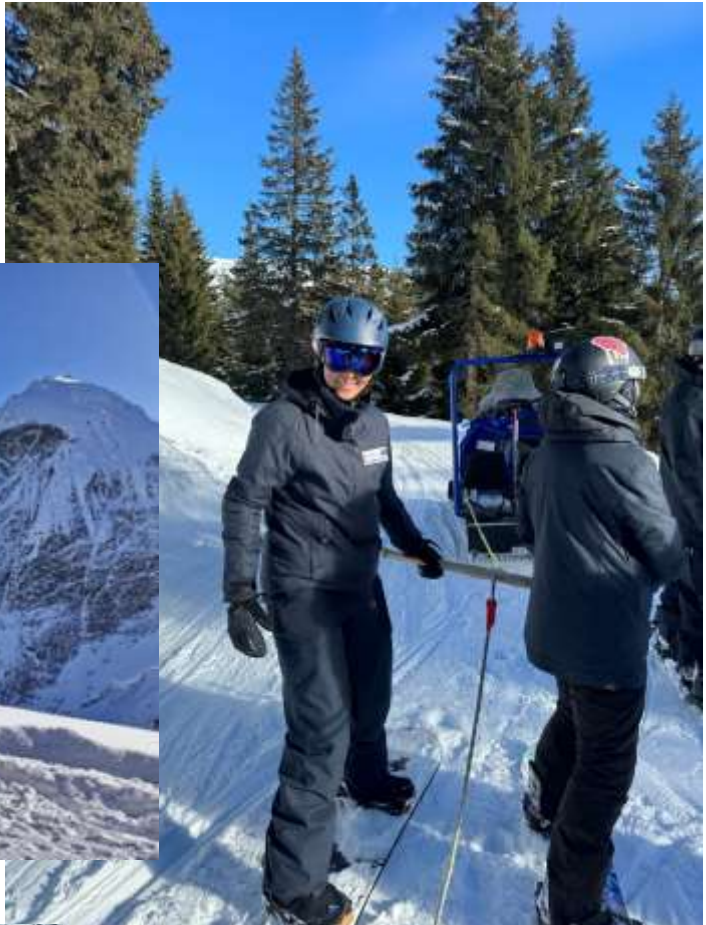
Austria is a beautiful country with vast outdoor areas and big mountains. It's hard to describe the feeling of awe you get when you go up a gondola lift, rise above the clouds, and find yourself surrounded by more mountains and more clouds!

The British inter-services competition, in France, was a big event with all three British services sending a ski team, a snowboarder team, and a telemark skiing team. The level of competition was very high and the race courses they built were bigger and scarier than the ones SPR Fang had previously competed on in Australia.



They also had a media team with a drone. It captured this amazing photo of all the competitors!

The big mountains in Austria allow the team to train on terrain that is steeper and more challenging than what is typically found in Australia.



The ADF snowboarder team competed in three events. Above left is the start of the boardercross course. In this event, four competitors race down the course together. The course contains various features designed to test the competitor's skill and bravery, including sharp

turns and jumps. Above right is the terrain part where our slopestyle competition was held. In this event, competitors have to perform tricks on boxes, rails and jumps in order to earn points.



The last event was the parallel giant slalom. This is a knockout competition where two snowboarders come down at the same time - one person weaving through the blue flags and the other through the red flags. This was a night-time race and it drew quite the crowd!



SPR Fang is very grateful to be part of the ADF organization that so enthusiastically supports sports. She believes that sport contributes something important to our Army culture. Sports is about improving yourself; it is about learning new skills through practice until you are able to do the things that you previously could not.

TUNNEL RATS

A Poem by Colin Fraser

When I was just a young lad , my country said man
We need you for our fight in South Vietnam
So they dressed me in a uniform and taught me to fight
Then they put me on a ship and said you'll be alright

I was a trained up Digger, only twenty years of age
Fighting in a country that all seemed very strange
They sent me down the tunnels to see what I could find
Booby traps, the enemy, and of course the jungle mines

I was a trained Tunnel Rat, a man that was admired
Crawling through those tunnels, the mud and the mire
Pokey holes and crevices that I could just fit through
Trip wires, dummy floors just to name a few

We were always on the lookout for traps and tripwire
The well trained enemy we had to admire
They mixed among the locals in the shining daylight
Gathering information they could use on us at night

Fourteen months I spent in this God forsaken land
Doing all I could to give the South a hand
But when my time was over and they shipped me back home
I said goodbye to my mates and I was all alone

There was no one there to greet me, or say a job well done,
Just a man in uniform to take away my gun
They called me a baby killer, I know not but why,
I went and fought a war and watched a good mate die

To those of you who were lucky your number was not drawn
Do not raise your eyebrow or look at me with scorn
For this is my story and to you I must tell
This is what I went through—a war of bloody hell

Written by Colin Fraser on behalf of those brave courageous Tunnel Rats of South Vietnam.





ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS ORDER OF THE DAY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2023 EXCELLENCE IN MILITARY ENGINEERING AWARDS

15th MARCH 2024

To all Sappers past and present, it gives me great pleasure to announce the recipients of the Royal Australian Engineers, Excellence in Military Engineering Awards for 2023. These awards acknowledge in an appropriate manner, outside the existing Honours and Awards scheme, the achievements and enduring service of our Sappers.

RAE Excellence in Engineering Awards:

- Lieutenant General FJ Hickling AO, CSC Award for *Most Outstanding Engineer*, **Lance Corporal R Brook (3 CER)**
- Major General S Day DSC, AM Award for *Most Outstanding Lieutenant (ARA)*, **Lieutenant J Parker (2 CER)**
- Warrant Officer Class Two RC 'Mick' Mace MM, BEM Award for *Most Outstanding Junior Non-Commissioned Officer (ARA)*, **Lance Corporal R Brook (3 CER)**
- Warrant Officer Class One B Wade OAM, CDS Award for *Most Outstanding Sapper (ARA)*, **Sapper I Reitermeier (3 CER)**
- Colonel AH 'Sandy' McGregor MC Award for *Most Outstanding Lieutenant (ARes)*, **Lieutenant N Hannaway (13 ER)**
- Warrant Officer Class One R 'John' Raddatz OAM Award for *Most Outstanding Junior Non-Commissioned Officer (Ares)*, **Corporal T Carpenter (3 Fd Sqn)**
- Sergeant M Chalk MG Award for *Most Outstanding Sapper (Ares)*, **Sapper B Easson (3 Fd Sqn)**

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

Ubique and Follow the Sapper

M Say, DSC
Brigadier
Head of Corps
Royal Australian Engineers

ANOTHER MURAL IN THE VALLEY

BY SPENCER GOSS



In Sapper Summit 107 we featured a mural painted on the wall of the Newborough RSL, depicting military veterans from the area, including George Harris, a very active member of the community.

Recently the Moe RSL commissioned another mural (above) by the same local artist, Steve Bechaz. This one features a scene inspired by a photo taken by famous war correspondent and photographer Damien Parer, and shows a wounded Digger being assisted across a stream by a mate.

THE ORIGINAL IMAGE:



The wounded soldier is PTE Wally Johnson (58/59th Bn) of Moe, who was wounded by a Japanese grenade in the battle for Salamaua in Papua New Guinea, on 13 July 1943.

His assistant is SGT Gordon Ayre MM, a Bandsman also from the 58/59th Bn, from Shepparton, Vic., who was awarded the Military Medal in the same action.

Wally Johnson also happens to be the father-in-law of Max Bamford, a member of 38 Fd Sqn.



There is also a statue of the pair (crafted by another local artist, Jim Lawrence) in the foyer of the Moe RSL.

ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS 2024

RINGWOOD RSL ANZAC DAY MARCH RAE ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC. 21st April 2024



The RAE Association was again invited to participate in the 2024 march conducted by the Ringwood RSL. The march commences at Target Square and includes many local groups such as veterans, Scouts, Army and Air Force Cadets along with community groups. There was also a contingent from the South African Association who were regular participants in the previous Reserve Forces Day.



This march is a family day activity with many young children representing their loved ones and able to happily participate in the march as the guidelines are not as strict as with the ANZAC Day city march. It was great to see the younger children marching and participating as there is no doubt as they are the future of events like this and will keep the value of ANZAC Day alive.

The weather was very kind to us and we could not have asked for a better day – cool, clear and fresh but with no rain.

Number wise we were down a little but as I am reminded, “quality before quantity, Jim”. I am sure those marching and their families enjoyed the day irrespective of the number of participants. I know of several people who were away and sent apologies. A noticeable absentee was our good friend Dave Conlan who is in Townsville and will participate in 3 CER’s Anzac Day Service.



The Vice President (Todd MacDougall) was our Parade Commander.



The Association was supported with our banner by 2 Troop Commanders of 22 Engineer Regiment (LT’s Charlotte Bradstreet and Joseph Earnshaw) and we must pay thanks to the Regiment for their support at such a busy time of the year. By having the banner carried it allows the members of the Association to march with their family and friends and not have to worry about this task.

The Regiment provided a cenotaph party for the formal activity at the clock tower and the drill was performed to a remarkably high standard – In charge was LCPL Andrew Purcell and they can all be proud that they represented the Regiment to the highest standard.



Following the march a service was conducted by the RSL at the clock tower including wreath laying, speeches, and the normal formalities. Todd MacDougall laid a wreath on behalf of the Association, its members and all sappers.



Following formalities at the Clock Tower the gathering moved back to the RSL where finger food and drinks were provided and where everyone had the opportunity to catch up and enjoy the day.

All in all a successful day only made possible by the outstanding support of the members of the Association, their family and friends. The day also provided the opportunity to march behind our banner and be on display within our local area of Ringwood. By participating with the RSL on this special day it strengthens our ties with the Ringwood community.

Without doubt a wonderful day and one that I

hope we will continue to support for many years to come

Jim Davis





DAWN SERVICE RINGWOOD EAST DEPOT ANZAC Day 2024



This year's Anzac Day started at Ringwood East depot with a Dawn Service which was conducted under very cool and inclement weather conditions with a very light drizzle that held off until the very end of the Service. The Regiment had parade commitments with the 4th Brigade and a very tight timeline so as soon as the Dawn Service finished it was onto the buses and off into the city to meet its parade obligations. This meant, regrettably, that there was no "gunfire breakfast" but that did not put people off and there was a good turn up to support the Regiment.



Once again the Association was invited by the Regiment to participate in the ceremonial aspect of the morning by providing two mem-

bers to mount duty with the Catafalque Guard. This invitation is seen as a very important one as it further increases our bond and ties with the Regiment and demonstrates the connection between the past and present. The Association is very honoured to have been invited and we thank the Regiment for this. Representing the Association in this year's ceremony were Kevin Moss and Michael Potts.

By conducting a Dawn Service the Regiment acknowledged the purpose and objective of the day and that is to remember those men and women who have served this wonderful country but in particular those who have paid the supreme sacrifice. Don Hughes represented the Association by laying a wreath.



Again, the Association acknowledges the privilege and honour it has been given by the Regiment to be part of its Dawn Service and our thanks go to the CO and RSM (LTCOL Russell Collins & WO1 Thomas Jesser) for making this possible and trust that the Association will be embedded in Regiment's future Dawn Services and be an integral part of this wonderful tradition.

The Association also laid a wreath at the RSL Dawn Service conducted at the Ringwood Clock Tower – Vice President Todd MacDougall represented the Association at this Service.

WARRANDYTE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATION

In Warrandyte, WO1 David Ryan (as President of the Warrandyte RSL) officiated at the large turnout of community members and official guests amongst the gum trees overlooking the Warrandyte Bridge.

A fly past by the RAAF Roulettes commenced the service that was well supported by Army Chaplain Martin Johnson.

WO2 Warwick Harvey officially represented the Commanding Officer of the 22nd Engineer Regiment. Warwick also recited the Ode.

The ANZAC address was given by the Federal Member for Menzies, the Honourable Keith Woolahan MP, himself an Afghanistan Veteran.

Other official guests included the State Member for Warrandyte, Nicole Werner MP, and the Mayor of Manningham, Councillor Carli Langi.

The Catafalque Party was provided by 306 Army Cadet Unit Monash.

HEIDELBERG REPATRIATION HOSPITAL

At the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, the ANZAC observance ceremony was held on the day preceding ANZAC Day.

Always well attended by numerous dignitaries and veteran organisations, over 25 wreaths were laid including one for the Royal Australian Engineers by our President, Don Hughes.



President Don Hughes (assisted by Zeus) was busy selling ANZAC badges at Warrandyte in the lead up to April 25



RSL ANZAC DAY CITY MARCH 25TH APRIL 2024

After a rather damp Dawn Service at Ringwood East depot, where we experienced a little bit of rain, the weather for the Melbourne march was overcast and cool but the rain held off.

Our Form up Point (FUP) was in the same location as last year in Flinders Street but on the other side (North), but on arrival we were obliged to relocate to the South side due to construction work. This did add a little bit of confusion for the Marshals as we were not in the correct Order of March – however we all

and help us – they represented their Unit with pride and certainly did us proud – let's hope that this support will be ongoing for many years to come – it also gives us a chance to



achieved our objective and that was to participate in this very important day and march. Considering the misunderstandings of the previous years associated with timings for the march everyone was asked to be in place early just in case we were called forward early but we stepped off pretty close to the designated time. Cadets were in place and banner ready well before the scheduled step off so we were OK.

Once again this year we were supported with our banner by Cadets from 31 Army Cadet Unit, Ringwood (Norwood) who were so willing to come into the city

meet some of the Cadets. This year Kevin Moss looked after the Cadets with great care and pride and made them very welcome and part of this day.

Our contingent was led by Bruce Murray, AM (COL COMDT Southern Region) who took the salute at the Eternal Flame. The Association certainly had good support with about 40 people marching behind the banner. Our numbers were certainly down this year partly because the Regiment was marching as part of the Brigade so we lost a number of people to the Regiment and there were a number of people away. It was great to see a contingent of Royal Engineers return and join us again this year – thanks to Mike Silvester for arranging this.



Spectator numbers this year seemed stronger and those people who did attend certainly gave a lot of vocal encouragement to the marchers – how great it is to hear support and encouragement from the onlookers. We all should be so proud of the support of the people who line the barriers all the way to the Shrine - we all have much to be proud of. The people marching behind our banner certainly looked the part in their dress, bearing and drill. I also felt that we were certainly one of the larger Associations participating.

Again, this year we had members of the Doncaster Camera Club who came along and photographed us at various locations throughout the march including the “class photo” on the rear steps of the Shrine – very difficult getting our class photo this year as the Brigade took over our normal location and we had to compete against them for a spot.

like the E&W due to the opening time, prices and surcharges, but in their defence we are provided with our own room, bar staff, good service and it is located near a major railway station.



To find an alternative city venue on ANZAC Day is near on impossible and even if you did find somewhere you would still encounter the surcharge costs. Only way to avoid the surcharge is if you moved out to the suburbs and then you disadvantage some.

Thank you all again.

Jim Davis



The Woodies joined us a little bit later for more photos. The class photo is the primary photo from the day but each photo that is taken creates a memory.

Our after march venue was once again the Elephant and Wheelbarrow hotel. Again our numbers attending the E&W were down but those who attended certainly enjoyed it and I certainly enjoyed the company of the wonderful people who came along to support us. There is some reluctance about using a venue







BLUE TONGUES REUNION

17th – 19th May 2024

Major Creek Streamside Reserve, Nagambie

In line with well established tradition, the annual “Blue Tongues Reunion” was held at Major Creek Streamside Reserve, Nagambie. I attended on Saturday 18th May 2024 and although very cool in the morning the afternoon was certainly “picture perfect” weather wise with clear blue skies.



The reunion is open to all sappers irrespective of rank with the only provisos being that you leave your rank at home, come with a great attitude, plenty of photos, stories and be prepared to be amazed by the great people that you will meet.



The area where the reunion is held is a public camping ground so there are other people staying within the facility which is monitored by and controlled by Parks Victoria and as this is public camping ground then there are limi-

tations of what you can and can't do. Gone are the roaring campfires of yester year. It appears that each year more and more people are choosing to camp here so the camping area is getting very busy – maybe we need to investigate another location.



As in the past the objective of this weekend is to enable people to catch up with old friends and renew acquaintances. There is a large turnover of people coming and going with some staying for the entire weekend and others just dropping in to say hello and only staying a few hours.



Attendance numbers were certainly higher this year and I would estimate that there were around 25 people there most of Saturday. This year we were missing a couple of very im-

portant members in Colin (Fish) Fraser (who was “house sitting” in QLD) and Paddy who was on a holiday in Northern Australia. But on the other side of the coin it was great to see Beth Stevenson there who travelled over from New Zealand for the reunion. There were certainly some very good caravans on display. Jacko even set up a little annex attached to his vintage car.

Regrettably the Honour Board has had a few extra names added since last year notably Mick Murray and Gary Nash both of whom were wonderful supporters of the reunion and the Association – let’s hope that this is one tradition that we will not have to add to next year – thanks George for looking after this very sad but important part of the history.

One thing that does not seem to deter people is the travel and distance to attend the reunion - I mentioned Beth Stevenson who came over from NZ but there are also people like Bob “Redman” Jones and “Doc” Kincaid who both travel a fair distance to attend.



Food was aplenty with wonderful treats and roasts from the camp ovens showing that the boys have not lost their touch. In addition,



BBQ’s were ongoing with ample nibbles available for those who wanted to venture from the campfire.

This is a great activity and George, Bill, Fish and Foxy need to be thanked for their efforts and encouraged to keep up the good work. At the same time thanks must be given to all those people who take the time to come along to the reunion and support it because without them it would just not happen no matter how much work the organisers put into it.



Well the reunion will now be put to bed (lights out) for another 12 months with the escapades reminisced and talked about until 2025. If any reader gets the opportunity of participating in the 2025 reunion you should jump at it with both hands and come along for the experience of a lifetime. It is a great weekend.

Without reunions and gatherings like this so much of the Corps Victorian history would be lost and whilst not everyone would agree with the concept of this weekend it is an important event on the social calendar

Personally I am so pleased that I went along as everyone makes you so welcome. Even though I did not stay for long (I was on my way to Wagga for the Kapooka Tragedy Memorial on 19th May 2024) I really look forward to this outing.

Thanks again to all those who came along to make this a great weekend – you have all helped add some wonderful memories to this old mind. One thing I will mention is that with the campfire smoke no matter where I stand or move to it seems to follow me – maybe I am being sent a message!

Jim Davis

HOLDFAST 2024

3FER & SAPPERS REUNION

TOWNSVILLE 26—29 APRIL 2024

Ron Brandy

The Queensland Sappers Association (North Queensland Branch) organised and hosted a wonderful reunion and range of activities 26-29 April 24 at various venues in Townsville and at the home of 3CER in Laverack Barracks.

All compliments to Deb and her committee for organising and hosting the reunion which was very well supported by local Sappers and their families and many interstate travellers.

The following outlines the activities and are accompanied by selected photos.

A full range of photos are available on Face Book: Nth Old Sappers Association. There are many photos of Holdfast 24 to test your memory/recognition of those you may know.

26 April 24. Meet and Greet at the Dingo Inn, 3CER, Laverack Barracks.

3CER wholeheartedly welcomed past Sappers and family to the Dingo Inn for a great afternoon-evening gathering. Serving sappers and officers were welcoming and engaging. It was a privilege

to engage with the young soldiers and learn of their experiences and ambitions.

The 'Dingo Inn', a multipurpose facility, was the perfect location to enjoy a cool drink and reminisce with former sappers and to catch up with some who I hadn't seen for over 45 years. Some recognition was difficult because of either age, camouflage, or both. Beards, sunglasses etc. Nonetheless, much banter and good cheer was enjoyed. A notable presentation was made by Bob Kudybah to CO and RSM 3CER, being a 42 year old bottle of 3FER Port, source unknown. Bob vouched for the fact it had accompanied him all over the world, had not been opened, but was unable to vouch for the quality or drinkability. Bob's gift was received with applause and thanks. No doubt it will find pride of place in the 3CER museum.

Our arrival and departure from Laverack Barracks were well organised and efficiently executed through good planning, appropriate documentation, good will, and cooperation by all.



Dingo Inn Training and Lecture Facility



Refreshments at the Dingo Inn



L to R, WO2 Bob Kudybah OAM, WO1 Neil Dickinson



BRIG Greg Jenkins, WO2 Les Norton

27 April 24. Formal Dinner (i.e. no thongs, shorts, or bikinis!), Townsville RSL.

A wonderful occasion to mix informally with old and new mates. A very well organised and attended function. Short on formality and entertaining with a great presentation by WO1 Kevin Van OAM (Retd.) and MAJGEN Steve Day DSC AM (Retd.)

By chance, the event coincided with the 25th anniversary of the deployment of 3CER to East Timor. Kevin gave a wonderful synopsis of the preparation, deployment and work undertaken by the Regiment on deployment. Steve gave a delightfully crafted recollection of a particular incident involving an overflowing septic pit, a combat engineer squadron whose lines were in the direct line of the overflow, and a valiant effort to remove the offending product. The story has been recorded by the Australian War Memorial and it is recommended listening!

Raffles were run and won. Memorabilia was sold at the intense rate, conviviality was running high, and a great night had by all.



WO1 Kevin VannOAM, MAJGEN Steve Day

28 April 24. Sunday Session, Palmer Street, South Townsville

For many who served in Townsville before say 1985, being in Palmer Street, South Townsville would have ended badly. In the '70's service personnel were banned from the area.

Today this element of Townsville has had new life and refinement. Accordingly, we gathered for a pleasant afternoon of nibbles and a cool drink to again connect or reconnect with former colleagues, friends, and families. Again, a well-attended, well organised, and pleasant function.



Allan (Horse) and Reldi Mancell



Lindsay (Brown Dog) and Sharron Brown

29 April 24. Farewell Breakfast, The Strand, Townsville (below)

Another well organised and executed occasion, well supported by attendees, with some more weary than others, but all appreciative of the effort and servings of bacon and egg banjos expertly prepared by the NQ Sappers Assn. Additional support was extended by the Townsville TPI group who provided a wonderful range of coffee, soft drinks and tea to order.

NQ Sappers Association BBQ capability



NQ Disabled Ex Service Persons coffee caravan. Unsurprisingly staffed by volunteer ex Sappers and partners along with other veterans.

OPERATION OVERLORD

NORMANDY, FRANCE

6 JUNE 1944

In the lead up to the 90th Anniversary of D-Day, Robert King of the Royal Engineers Historical Society prepared a brief overview of the 137 RE Sappers who lost their lives on 06.06.1944.

I have selected representative samples of his extracts, to outline the sorts of tasks given to these RE units, the equipment they used, and the losses they suffered. Sadly this includes some wounded airborne Sappers who were executed by the Germans.

Of course, there were Sappers of many allied armies at Normandy, but their experiences will have been broadly similar, and we honour them all.

82 Assault Sqn

Equipped with Churchill AVRE tanks, the Sqn landed on Gold Beach and was tasked with obstacle clearance on the beach. Lt Jack Booker RNVR commanded one of the LCT's that brought elements of 82 ashore and describes what he saw "Each of the craft carried six Churchill AVREs plus two collapsible boats loaded with explosives. The Royal Engineers were to clear beach obstacles that would impede the progress of the assault troops through the beach area. The six Churchill tanks on my craft had been specially adapted for this task. Two were equipped with forward facing rotating chain flails to detonate mines on the beach, a third tank carried a huge bobbin of strengthened matting, which was laid down over soft sand as the tank drove across the beach, leaving behind a firm path for other vehicles and tanks to follow. The gun turret of the 4th tank had been replaced by a large folding girder bridge, which could be thrown forward over tank traps. The fifth tank was armed with a powerful Petard gun for knock-

ing out beach emplacements. The shells discharged from a Petard were referred to as 'Flying Dustbins', such was their power. The last tank we carried was a Fascine, fitted with a huge round bundle of brushwood lashed tightly in a cylindrical bundle, which could be extended in front of the tank to fill a tank ditch. While at anchor, we had a grandstand view of the landings in progress, as waves of follow-up craft landed in the area cleared by the Royal Engineers. We saw several of our AVRE tanks being hit and bursting into flames and their crews jumping out to save themselves. From accounts I've since read the damage was inflicted by a well concealed German 88mm gun, which was eventually destroyed by one of the Petard AVRE tanks.

KIA; Maj Harold Elphinstone 34; L/Sgt Eli George 26; Cause unknown



The Churchill AVRE (Armoured Vehicle Royal Engineer) was a modified Churchill tank fitted with a Petard spigot mortar, designed primarily to demolish steel and concrete structures, such as bunkers and gun emplacements. Specialised equipment could be added to the AVRE to enable it to perform other tasks.

19 Fd Coy

A section of the Coy landed just after H-Hour on D-Day on Juno Beach under tcommand of 262 Field Company, RE. The rest of the company landed on 7 June 1944. They were deployed to clear mines and beach obstacle. Some casualties were suffered while transferring from ship to landing craft and others were incurred when one of the landing craft hit a mine.

KIA; Spr John Copland 18, John, a Londoner from Lewisham was the youngest Sapper to die in Normandy on D Day;



Flail tank operating with turret reversed.

263 Fd Coy

The Coy landed on Sword Beach 1½ hours late due to crossing difficulties. Initially tasked with clearing German beach obstacles the tide was now too high so they were tasked with clearing beach exits and laying trackway to relieve the congestion on the beach.

Subsequently they moved inland with 4 Cdo to clear two glider landing strips at St Aubin D'Arquonay by 19:00, needed to bring in reinforcements for 6th Airborne. They were driven back by the Germans initially but bypassed them and approached from Colleville-sur-Orne completing the landing strips by 20:00.

KIA Spr George McKean 29; There is no known place of burial for him so he is commemorated on the Bayeux Memorial to the Missing, Calvados.



Bobbin tank laying trackway in training.

629 Fd Sqn

The Sqn was attached to 3rd Infantry Division for the assault phase on D-Day and landed on Queen White and Queen Red sectors, Sword Beach in two phases from about 07:45 and then 13:45. They suffered heavy casualties from machine gun fire during the landing. Tasked with clearing mines from the partially submerged beach obstacles the Sqn lost a number of men drowned whilst doing so. Once the tide was too high to work on the obstacle clearance they moved to constructing beach exits whilst under sporadic shell and mortar fire.



An example of a beach obstacle (often with a mine attached) which needed to be cleared by Sappers. Usually placed so as to be submerged at high tide.

KIA; Cpl Harry Brown 29; Spr William Copeland 33; Spr George Crisp 24; Sgt Sydney Crowcroft 35; Spr Frank Dick 27; Spr William Gordon 30; Spr Joh Hall 28; Spr Bert Liddle 26; Spr William McCowat 27; Capt George McDougal 23; Cpl John Pike 21; Spr John Pluright 33; LCpl Herbert Potter 23; LCpl Albert Pugh 27; Spr Alan Walker 24; LCpl William Wallbank 28; Spr Charles Wallis 23; LCpl Ernest Walters 31.

591 (Antrim) Parachute Sqn and 6th Airborne Div HQ

A Stirling Mk.IV Aircraft took off from RAF Fairford at 23:45 on 5 June to drop men of 591 Parachute Squadron plus two men of Headquarters, Royal Engineers, 6th Airborne Division east of the River Orne. The Sqn was tasked to clear landing strips for gliders due to follow a few hours later. The aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire and crashed close to Château de Grangues, Grangues, Normandy. Four died in the crash and seven survivors taken prisoner were executed by the Germans.

Executed; Spr Peter Guard 20; Lcpl William Branston 24; LCpl Thomas Fraser 24; Cpl William Kelly 28; Dvr John Thomson 22; Spr David Wheeler 21; Spr Frank Wolfe 23.

KIA; Spr Albert Austin 21; Spr John Evans 24; Dvr Arthur Handley 24; Spr John Youell 20.

1018 Port Operating Coy

An advance party of 1018 Port Operating Company landed on Juno Beach on the afternoon of D-Day tasked with unloading vehicles from the landing craft onto the beaches.

KIA; Spr Harry Boyce 44 – Harry was the oldest Sapper to die on D-Day; LCpl George Cook 26; Spr Alan Dignan 28; Spr Thomas Galbraith 30; Spr George Hayto 21; Spr Frederick Knagg 30; Spr Charles Lockheart 25; Spr Horace Palmer 30; Spr Alfred Squires 29.

79 Assault Sqn, 5th Assault Regt

79 was attached to 3rd Infantry Division and equipped with Churchill AVRE tanks. Landed at H-Hour on Sword Beach they began clearing routes and were also deployed to Ouistreham

where they captured the German troops defending the lock gates and bridge.

KIA; Cpl Edgar Roberts 26. Killed by a German teller landmine shortly after landing, whilst hand clearing a route. Hand clearance was the main method used as the shrapnel in the sand made the use of mine detectors impractical. Spr Richard Lawson 30; Spr George Lorimer 29; Cause unknown.



Fascine carrier adding another level to a partly filled ditch



June 14, 1944, Arromanches, France. Royal Engineers working on the roadway leading to the Mulberry artificial harbour. This enabled a much more efficient unloading of all types of stores and equipment.

Vale

365542 LTCOL COLIN JAMES BOWATER, RFD (Retd)

04th February 1941 – 21st February 2024



Colin enlisted into the Citizens Military Forces in the Royal Australian Engineers on 27 May 1968, and was posted to 8 Field Squadron and then to 2 Field Squadron the next day as a Sapper. He also spent 18 months at 10 Field Squadron before he commenced Officer Cadet training on 3 February 1971.

Dave Lewis had recommended him for officer training when Colin was a LCPL in his troop at Ringwood. He was discharged as a soldier and commissioned a Lieutenant and posted to Headquarters Royal Australian Engineers 3rd Division to wait for the availability of a troop command for the next 2 years.

He had 10 months at 10 Field Squadron, then 8 months at 16 Field Squadron before posting to 7 Field Engineer Regiment in March 1976. Over the next 7 years promotions included CAPT in April 1977 and MAJ in May 1980, as-

suming command of 10 Field Squadron. He was posted to the 3rd Training Group for his training appointment from mid 1983 - mid 85 and then to Headquarters 6 Engineer Group for a short stint before his promotion to LTCOL and assuming command of the 7th Field Engineer Regiment on 1 February 1986. His final posting was headquarters, third division from March 1989 until his discharge on 3 February 1991.

Colin was renowned as a good listener with a cheerful and positive attitude.

He was awarded the Reserve Force Decoration and the Australian Defence Medal.

He was a good shot and achieved a first class rifle shot qualification on 20 March 1971.

He achieved his Efficiency Grant every year, a huge \$20.

He achieved an A level pass in his PT test every year, including his last one before retiring in 1991.

When the COLCOMDT BRIG Hutchinson gave Colin the challenge of creating a new Association from the History and Heritage Committee, he took to the task with typical energy. The Royal Australian Engineers Association (Vic) is a fully reformed and revitalised body which has continued to grow and serve its members.

In his civilian life, Colin was a skilled and dedicated teacher.

Most important of all, he was a loving husband to Mae and a dedicated father to their four children, as well as a Grandfather and Great Grandfather.

He will be missed.

UPWEY—BELGRAVE RSL EXCURSION

29 JUNE 2024

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS

122ND CORPS BIRTHDAY

Well, what a wonderful experience and day was enjoyed by those who came along to the Upwey-Belgrave RSL. This RSL is really a little gem tucked away off the Burwood Highway and certainly without the glitz and glamour of the bigger RSLs but what it lacked in size it made up in bucket loads with its welcome and hospitality. The purpose of the lunch is to acknowledge and celebrate the Corps 122nd birthday (01st July 2024) and on this occasion we had about 40 people who came together for lunch followed by a visit to the “Running Rabbit Museum”.

This RSL is staffed by volunteers who went out of their way to accommodate this larger than normal group. We enjoyed great service and were provided with an outstanding lunch. All birthdays should be celebrated with a cake and song and it is no different for the Corps birthday – Michelle Hughes prepared and provided a suitably decorated Mud Cake which was cut by Don Hughes and Rob Youl using a “Broad Headed Axe” which has historical ties back to the RAE and the Forestry Sqns.



Everyone in attendance (including the RSL staff) were provided with a piece of Michelle’s cake which was topped with cream. The cake, which was designed, made and presented by Don and Michelle deserves to be recognised for the work and planning that was put into it - the cake was designed to represent many facets of the Corps. It was adorned with items indicating the various trades within the Corps and it was a “mud” cake which, as Don pointed out, is the stuff that sappers just love to roll in. On the cake was the platypus which is so

symbolic to RAE Victoria along with pieces of plant (borrowed from Don’s granddaughter). The base for the cake was a technical drawing board (used by Draughtsmen) There was the “122” candle along with sparklers which represented explosives – there was not a piece of the cake that had not been thought out to give credit and honour to the Corps. In pride of place was the iconic “Silver Sapper”. To serve the cut cake a trowel was used.

Michelle certainly put a great deal of work into this cake and its presentation and we thank her so very much. The President (Don Hughes) spoke for a few minutes to remind everyone about the significance of the day and acknowledging the reason for our get together. He thanked everyone for coming along and mentioned apologies from LTCOL Russell Collins (CO) and WO1 Tom Jesser (RSM) both of whom were on duty, Madre (Chaplain) Kirsten Linden who had family commitments, Kevin and Marilyn Moss and Chris Costello (COVID).



Another aspect of the day was the attendance by Rob Youl who is the President of the Woodies Association which, regrettably, is in the process of being wound up but will amalgamate with the RAE Association. As part of the wind-up process Rob presented the Association with one of the Woodies’ banners. Rob went on to explain a bit of the history behind this banner and the various units designated on the banner. This banner will be held in trust in the Association’s history room.

Following lunch and formalities many of us wandered over to the museum which houses an impressive collection of memorabilia. It is staffed by enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers who certainly made us wel-

come and ensured that received the most from our visit.



A most enjoyable day, wonderful venue along with great food and service which was complemented by the outstanding company. I am sure that everyone would have gone away from the day with a feeling of pride. I can think of no better way to celebrate such an important birthday other than the way we did it today. Happy birthday RAE.
Michelle – many thanks again for all your work and effort with the cake.
UBIQUE. Jim Davis





KAPOOKA TRAGEDY MEMORIAL EXCURSION

19 MAY 2024

by Jim Davis

The annual visit to attend the Kapooka Tragedy Memorial service is a feature of the Association's calendar and one I would urge everyone to consider attending at some time. The journey to Kapooka is certainly a very long one but it is so worthwhile. Personally, I certainly look forward to going along and making it a bit of a trip away. Andrew Mott and Erryn Gibson also make the trip this year.

This year marked the 79th anniversary of the tragedy and there was certainly a big break in tradition as the Memorial Service was held on the Sunday preceding the actual anniversary date (21st May.)

of several of the Sappers who lost their lives. Many of you would know Les Norton (WO2 - 4 CER) who is related to one of those who died in the accident (SGT Jack Pomeroy) – Les and his brother (Kevin) both attended – SGT Jack Pomeroy's daughter (Maureen) laid a wreath on behalf of the family. Also in attendance was owner of the land where the accident occurred and she pointed out some of the bunkers still there, along with a tree that was there at the time of the accident which featured on the front page of the Age Newspaper article. Andrew Mott laid a wreath on behalf of the Association and for all Sappers.



The Regiment, though the outstanding efforts of LCPL Trevor Mays, organised a contingent of 11 personnel to attend. Trevor Mays was involved in the restoration and beautification of the site, so this visit is very important to him not only revisit the worksite but also educate other sappers about this tragedy so that again it does not get lost in time. Trevor took the sappers out to the Memorial Cemetery where the victims are buried, further reinforcing the enormity of the accident. It is surprising the number of people from within the Corps who are not aware of this tragedy. The RSM (WO1 Tom Jesser) represented the Regiment.

The weather for the ceremony was sunny but with a cool breeze which kept the temperature down.

There was a reasonable turnout for the Service acknowledging this terrible event which claimed the lives of 26 Sappers. In the audience were relatives and descendants



A Catafalque Party (all RAE members) was provided by 1 RTB and were outstanding in their dress, bearing and drill. The Service concluded with a lovely afternoon tea which provided the opportunity of catching up with friends.

The Head of Corps (BRIG Michael Say, DSC) was unable to attend the Service and representing him was the senior RAE Officer from Kapooka (MAJ Andrew Howes – ex 4 CER) who gave the principal address. MAJ Howes and Corps RSM (WO1 Russell Peel) laid a wreath on behalf of the HOC.



There were several senior RSM's and Warrant Officers from the School and various other locations.



It was great to see Maurice Squirrell (a member of the Association) and his wife attending the Service. This was the 1st time Maurice had attended and expressed his disappointment that he had not been aware of this tragedy during his military career.



Other first timers were a group of Veteran bikies who

also only learned about this Service through a recent social media post – now most of these bikies were not RAE but wanted to come and pay their respects.

It is obvious that not enough is known within the Corps about this tragic event and it should be disseminated more widely. But for those who came along like the 22ER members they now understand what took place and can start the ball rolling to ensure that the day is not forgotten and continues to be commemorated and supported for many years to come.

Many thanks to those who came along and supported the Association and trust that you enjoyed the adventure and that you will consider attending this event again in the future.





Lest We Forget

CANBERRA—NEWCASTLE TOUR

10—16 JUNE 2024

Jim Davis

After a lot of planning and extensive investigation by Mel Constable, the trip got underway with the first stop being Canberra.

Those undertaking the tour were responsible for their own travel and accommodation arrangements with a detailed itinerary provided with timings and meeting points for the organised tours. Regrettably our numbers had dropped off with Duncan Howarth, Dave Conlan, Mel and Robyn Constable and Jim Davis taking part. Mel and Robyn travelled with their dog Jetta in their caravan, and after the excursion were then heading up North to the warmer weather.



Before commencing our tour at the AWM, the group caught up at the wonderful Poppy's Cafe for a coffee. Our first tour was at the AWM Galleries where our guide (David) made it very clear from the start that we had just 80 minutes and if you could not keep up or stopped to take photos and fell behind, you were on your own as he did not have the time to come looking for you.

Now David was not a young man, but I can tell you that he nearly ran for the entire tour, he was so quick. Any visit to the AWM is worth the effort and this was no exception – I will say here that I would have preferred to take longer at each of the exhibits.

There are extensive renovations being under-

taken at the War Memorial and there were restrictions on times within the AWM and displays.



That evening we attended the Last Post Ceremony where Dave and Duncan laid wreaths on behalf of Hill 60 and all Sappers – it was very cold but there was a very good crowd there. Only three wreaths were laid that night – the acknowledgement read at the Last Post was for a Victorian World War 1 Sapper, so that was very appropriate.



After the AWM Dave, Duncan and I went to dinner and caught up with Michael Bates (WO1) who was ex 4 CER TRG SGT. It was great catching up with Michael who has just retired from the ARA and has transferred over to Reserve Service.



really opened my eyes as to what an amazing structure this building is and I would encourage everyone to make sure they go and have a look at it.

When we arrived the Federation Guard were undertaking a rehearsal for a parade the next day and we managed to catch up with WO1 Damian Woolf (RAE ex RSM 1 RTB) who spent a bit of time with us – Damian is the RSM Ceremonial (ADF) so he is responsible for the ceremonial aspects with tri-Services and the Guard.



The next tour on the itinerary was a visit to Parliament House which, in my view, was an outstanding visit – our tour guide was “Nemo” who was certainly entertaining and knew his subject matter. I must admit that this outing



In the afternoon we had a tour of the AWM off-site storage areas which house exhibits waiting to go back on display (like G for George Lancaster bomber), or others being restored. The site is huge with three (3) very large warehouses purpose built including climate control to preserve the exhibits. Our guide was David and his assistant was Andrew – as I said a huge area which involved a lot of walking.





Originally the tour was intended to include a visit to SME and Sydney but for various reasons the Sydney aspect of the excursion was abandoned and the tour made its way to Newcastle. Duncan and David visited Lone Pine Barracks in Singleton on Friday where the Australian Army Infantry Museum is located, a very good display of infantry based items were shown. Mel and Robyn called in there after the tour on their way North to warmer weather.





It had been planned to visit Fort Scratchley on the Saturday and do the tour of the tunnels but Newcastle received a lot of rain with the result the tunnels were flooded and the Fort did not open on the Saturday – we rescheduled our Sunday visit to Fighter World to the Saturday afternoon which worked in fine. We were fortunate that a member of the Association (Peter Washusen and his wife Bev) live in Newcastle and their son (Scott) is a RAAF SQN

LDR at Williamstown Base so for Fighter World we had a special tour guide in Scott who certainly provided us with an in-depth tour of the facility.



After completion of this part of the tour Dave and Duncan departed and returned to Melbourne.

That evening we were invited by Peter and Bev Washusen to join them at the Newcastle Yacht Club for a meal – also joining us was Josh Farnsworth (ex OC 10 CES) who also lives in Newcastle.

On Sunday we returned to Fort Scratchley where we completed our tour of the Fort and tunnels, and we caught the daily firing of the time gun. We had a great tour guide in Roger who demonstrated a wealth of knowledge – Fort Scratchley is a wonderful example of our early fortifications, with the facility managed and staffed by volunteers who rely on donations and grants to keep the Fort open. The upkeep of a facility like this is substantial.

Roger was an ex RASigs man and invited us into his “man cave” where he had radios set

up and kept us entertained showing us how to use Morse Code. Following the tour of the Fort the formal part of the excursion was completed and we went our separate ways but with a lot more knowledge from a very enjoyable and worthwhile adventure.

Many thanks to Mel Constable for the mountain of organising that he did to get the excursion arranged and completed.

Jim Davis



RAE SOUTHERN REGION WATERLOO DINNER

21st JUNE 2024



The annual Waterloo Dinner is one of the most important social events on the Engineer calendar and accordingly it is eagerly anticipated.

Continuing from last years theme the function was conducted at the same non-military establishment in the Melbourne CBD. There were some misgivings concerning the loss of traditions by moving the dinner away from a military/RSL site but last year's venue proved such a success and excellent choice that it was decided to return and we were warmly welcomed back with excellent facilities and staff.

Whilst customs and traditions are an extremely important part of any function, such as the Waterloo Dinner, the other characteristic of the night is to bring members of the Corps together in a social atmosphere where there is an opportunity to catch up with people with similar interests and renew acquaintances and acknowledge this historical event.

The dinner had a wonderful cross representa-

tion of the Corps both in rank and trade with about 70 people attending many of whom travelled quite long distances from locations such as Albury, Pilbara, and Puckapunyal. There was also a good representation from Victoria Barracks.



Dining President was LTCOL Russell Collins (CO 22 Engineer Regiment) with the senior guest being BRIG Michelle Campbell (4th BDE COMD), BRIG Peter (Hutch) Hutchinson (Retd), BRIG Da-

vid Westphalen, BRIG Bob Slater (Retd), COL Bruce Murray (COL COMDT RAE Southern Region). COL Sharon Coates, COL Howard Ellis (Retd), WO1 Russell Peel (Corps RSM for RAE),

WO1 Tony Lynch (RSM 4th BDE). Representing the Signals Corps was LTCOL Simmone Reynolds (CO School of Sigs and Deputy HOC RASigs). COL Murray delivered the annual HOC address (on behalf of BRIG Michael Say, DSC) which was certainly informative and well received.



During her address LTCOL Reynolds pointed out that she has strong links to the RAE through her grandfather who was a sapper during WW2. In responding LTCOL Collins thanked LTCOL Reynolds for her kind words and took the opportunity of pointing out some historical aspects of both the RAE and RASigs.



Although there were some concerns concerning the cost of the function there are several positives to be taken out of having the function offsite and these include the fact that the

staff, food, drink, clean up and overhead costs are the responsibility of the venue. At the end of the night is just a matter of closing the doors on the way out. Other reasons why an offsite venue is ideal is that I am sure everyone would be aware that safety is a high priority at all bases. The entry requirements for non-serving personnel are very demanding, and in addition you must hire stewards and cooks when the budgets of all units is under stress.



Thanks from all must go to CAPT Emily Mirabella for arranging the night and selecting this venue – there is a huge demand placed on the person tasked with arranging an event like the Waterloo Dinner. Not only is it very time consuming but there are so many moving parts to coordinate with high expectations for a successful outcome. In this case there was an added complexity to the planning and evening as there was the need to transport people from both depots requiring drivers, support staff and vehicles.





Let's hope the wonderful tradition of the Waterloo Dinner will be ongoing and be passed onto the Corps future SNCO's/WO's and OFFRS.

Jim Davis



For those who attended I am sure that they had a wonderful night with ample food, drink and friendship and the venue was, without doubt, a great choice.





HEAD OF CORPS ADDRESS

WATERLOO DINNER RAE MID-YEAR UPDATE – JUNE 2024

Dear Fellow Sappers, A warm welcome to each of you wherever you may be for the 109th annual Waterloo Dinner – an important event in our Corps history that allows us to come together as Sappers, honour our proud heritage and reflect on the many achievements of our Corps. I will keep my address short with a focus on two areas: 1- the responsibilities of the Corps as part of Army's response to the National Defence Strategy and 2- our heritage and support to Sappers.

As per previous years I am not going to single out achievements by units, the Sapper Magazine serves this purpose and I strongly encourage individuals, units, higher headquarters and Associations to find the time to compile a submission. The magazine is an important medium that captures the accomplishments of the Corps and ensures they are preserved in history. The achievements of our people across the Total Workforce, have and continue to be significant. Our relevance and the demand for sappers remains strong within Army and across the Joint Force. This has been evident through extensive involvement of our people in operations, activities and investments both domestically and overseas. Our Sappers continually demonstrate their utility, professionalism and most importantly, empathy and humility. The release of the National Defence Strategy and recast Integrated Investment Plan has provided clear focus for the Department. It has also led to a requirement to think differently about how we modernise to ensure the ADF is best postured to meet future challenges. Army's response is already well and truly underway. The Combat Brigades will become more specialised, impacting each of our CERs. The Wks units and 6 ESR are regrouping to 17 Bde and our Reserve units are working hard to meet their objectives within homeland defence. This is just the beginning and I would offer that the delivery of Army watercraft and armoured engineering capabilities will require a fundamental shift in the employment of our teams as part of the combined arms teams. This will present opportunities; however the new capabilities are much more than just a new platform. It will require us all to think differently about how we structure, train and provide support within the combined arms team. While we need to be informed by history, I ask that you keep an open mind with a focus on the future. The Corps must identify legacy capabilities that are no longer fit for purpose or irrelevant and prioritise capabilities to meet future challenges. We will need to prioritise capabilities and make some difficult recommendations to inform decision-makers. This will necessitate a singular Corps position, which is sustainable and fit to meet future challenges. We await confirmation of the scheduling of the Capability Review. However we will not sit and wait, there is a lot we can do now to ensure we are well-positioned to inform key bodies of work being undertaken across Army and the Department. The Corps Conference will focus on two questions: 1. How does the RAE Corps optimise the Combat Engineer Regiments to best enable the focussed Brigades, and 2. How does the RAE Corps optimise the Engineer Construction Capability to best enable Army and the Joint Force. This work will require a dedicated and consolidated effort by our people. You all have an opportunity to provide input and I strongly encourage you to find the time to contribute to our modernisation and importantly, the future of the Corps.

As I turn to the second theme of our Heritage and support to our Sappers I wanted to provide an update on important heritage events and reinforce how each of you can play an active role in supporting our sappers. In April we saw two historical events in the vicinity of Amiens, France. The first was a memorial service centred on a Bailey bridge which spans a canal of the Somme River. The bridge commemorates the Australian Engineers of the First World War. The second was the rededication of the headstone of Sapper George Hook, killed in action on the 8th of April 1918. I want to personally thank everyone involved in making these events possible – you have made a valuable contribution to our history. Well done.

As we look to future events, next year will be the 80th anniversary of the Kapooka tragedy – this commemorates when 26 sappers were killed in an explosion while training for war on the 21 May 1945, an incident that remains the Australian Army's largest loss of life in a training accident. The plan to deliver Volume 5 of the Corps History continues to be developed. I am seeking your support for this important project, in particular to the fundraising plan which will be shortly released. This is linked to contributions to Corps funds – they remain an issue if we want to be financially viable and continue to provide support to our sappers. The senior leadership of the Corps agreed that our SNCOs and above have an obligation to contribute – I ask that these rank levels lead by example. Our people remain the centre of gravity within the Corps. Our Sapper Associations play a crucial role in this area. I encourage all Sappers to join an Association well before they leave the Army as this can support camaraderie and interaction across the Corps outside of our units and importantly, provide purpose and connection for our people. Once a Sapper, you are always a Sapper. In closing, I wanted to recognise all the leadership teams within units. I ask that you continue to build a culture that provides a positive experience for our people. Well done to all who received recognition as part of the Australia Day and King's Birthday honours. All members of the Corps should reflect with pride, and a sense of achievement, for their contribution to Army and the Joint Force. However, now is not the time to rest on past achievements, the challenges ahead are varied and many, I therefore ask that you identify opportunities where you can make a difference and ensure the Corps is well positioned for the future.

Thank you for what you do.

Follow the Sapper.

Ubique.

Brigadier Mick Say, Head of Corps, Royal Australian Engineers



RAE Southern Region Waterloo Dinner 21 June 2024



CAPT Ogi Jovanovic	Mr Adrian Maher	BRIG Michelle Campbell	WO1 Russell Peel	COL Bruce Murray	LTCOL (CO) Russell Collins	LTCOL Simmone Reynolds	Mr Des Lambley	BRIG Robert Slater	LTCOL John Raika
--------------------	-----------------	------------------------	------------------	------------------	----------------------------	------------------------	----------------	--------------------	------------------

LT Owen Townsend

WO2 Tim Farmer

Mr Noel Tipton

WO2 Jarryd Duffey

WO1 Anthony Lynch

MAJ Robert Bailey

WO1 Thomas Jesser

MAJ Remy Pinkerton

CAPT Emily Mirabella

MAJ Astrid Haggviat

WO1 Fiona Ince

Mr Ron Brandy

WO2 Warwick Harvey

CAPT Aaron Zee

MAJ Laura Cook

MAJ Robert Cox

LTCOL Jason Etham

CAPT Mark Nicholson

LTCOL Scott D'Rozario

CAPT John Alekoz

CAPT Aleksandar Kocovski

WO2 Stephen Davis

CAPT Michael Plant

CAPT Tani Preston

WO2 Gerard van der Velden

CAPT Dante Zanet

Mr James Davis

BRIG Peter Hutchinson

CAPT Jake Kilsby

WO2 Timothy Place

CAPT Daniel Mabil

SGT Nicholas Barand

CAPT Shannon Garrett

LT Ellen Rosengreen

SGT Caine Oakham

Mr Brian Burton

COL Sharon Coates

CAPT Cindy Nguyen

LTCOL Bruce McLure

LT Marc Zanier

LT Charlotte Bradstreet

SGT Robert Camillen

MAJ Ashley Bishop

MAJ Trevor Simpson-Bull

LT Ali Aden – Dining Vice

BRIG David Westphalen

COL Howard Ellis

SGT Karen Inglis

MAJ Brad Cree

CAPT James Marks

LT Bruce McDonald

LT James Sullivan

CHAP Kristen Linden

CAPT Lionel Boxer

NEW BRIGADE COMMANDER APPOINTMENT ANNOUNCED



It has been announced that COL Michelle McCormack is to be promoted to Brigadier and appointed as the new Commander 4th Brigade with effect in 2025.

This is a wonderful accomplishment by COL McCormack and acknowledgement to her contribution to the Defence Force particularly here in Victoria. Michelle's military background is with the RAE including her 1st command role as the CO 22 Engineer Regiment.

The RAE Association (Vic) Inc. sends Michelle our congratulations and best wishes on this wonderful news and is very proud to see an Engineer leading Victoria's own Brigade.

UBIQUE

Don Hughes
President

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.

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.

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



**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

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

PO3813

MERCHANDISE



Fleece jackets \$60 and matching beanies \$20 .



Sleeveless Fleece—for those in-between days—\$45



“Soft Shell” jackets \$95



Association Polo shirts in navy or white—\$45



Caps in three colour schemes \$25 ea.



Wool blend jumper \$80



Wool blend scarf \$20



RAE Assoc plaque \$50

MERCHANDISE

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

With many events and excursions planned in the near future, dress the part in your association's shirts, caps and jackets.

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 enhanced 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

You can request an application form from:

The Secretary
RAE Association Victoria Inc
P.O. Box 246
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. Complimentary Life Membership. A member who has made a significant contribution to the Association either by way of a substantial financial or memorabilia donation, may be awarded a Complimentary 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 \$25 per year with subscriptions due on 1 January each year. All members will receive an electronic copy of each issue of 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.

To apply for membership, visit **raevictoria.com** and follow the prompts, or contact the Secretary at **P.O. Box 246 Ringwood East 3135**.



RAE Sappers' Fund



RAE Sappers' Fund subscriptions are due 1 Jul each year.

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.

For more information out the Royal Australian Engineers, visit the [Home Page](#).
General enquires: RAE.HOC@defence.gov.au
RAE loans, grants and the Corps subscription: rae.sappersfund@defence.gov.au

SERCAT 7 Sergeant – Officer: \$52.00

SERCAT 7 Other Ranks: \$26.00

SERCAT 2-5 Sergeant – Officer: \$30.00

SERCAT 2-5 Other Ranks: \$20.00

To make your contribution, visit <https://www.trybooking.com/CJRTF>



Follow the Sapper

SOLDIER ON

Soldier On is a not-for-profit organisation delivering holistic support services that enable current and former Australian Defence Force personnel, and their families, to lead meaningful civilian lives.

Please consider supporting them in their important work. <https://soldieron.org.au/>

Need help now?

Soldier On is not an immediate crisis support charity, but if you do need help right away, there are organisations you can reach out to who are ready to help you.

Emergency
000

Open Arms
1800 011 046

Beyond Blue
1300 224 636

Lifeline
13 11 14

