

RAE CORPS MAGAZINE
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION (Vic) Inc



SAPPER SUMMIT

Once a Sapper, Always a Sapper



The funeral procession with four semi trailers
carrying 26 flag draped coffins

THE KAPOOKA TRAGEDY 80 YEARS ON

Page 42

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SAPPER SUMMIT

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General Association mail can be sent to:
The Secretary,
Royal Australian Engineers Association (Vic) Inc
c/- 22 Engineer Regiment
56B Dublin Rd
RINGWOOD EAST VIC 3135

Sapper Summit items should be mailed to
The Editor, Sapper Summit,
c/- 22 Engineer Regiment
56B Dublin Rd
RINGWOOD EAST VIC 3135
Email: sappersummit@raevictoria.com
Electronic articles are preferred using MS Word
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Contact details, past copies of Sapper Summit and
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President's Column

Despatches

from the President's Bunker:



Greetings Fellow Victorian Sappers.

A year of significant anniversaries and commemorations underpin 2025.

These include the centenary of the *Royal Australian Corps of Signals*, the 80th anniversary of the 26 Sappers who lost their lives at the *Kapooka Tragedy* in 1945, the 75th (Diamond) anniversary of the establishment of the *Royal Australian Engineers Supplementary Reserve* (RAE-SR) in 1950 and the 30th anniversary of the unimaginable carnage during the *Kibeho massacre* in south-east Rwanda in 1995.

The Association also became the first corporate member of the *Fort Queenscliff Heritage Association* (FQHA).

Now well established, the Association (RAEAV) continues to support all serving and retired sappers in Victoria whilst providing a conduit to other like organisations and events both locally and nationally.

Our most significant social activity, the *Sapper Muster*, is becoming legendary, and is not to be missed.

Before our next annual general meeting, in April 2026, all members are invited to review and refresh (if needed) our constitution to best reflect our pathway forward.

On the theme of anniversaries, our own Ringwood East 31st Army Cadet Unit (Norwood), celebrated its 50th (Golden) anniversary in 2024 along with the 22nd Engineer Regiment who celebrated its 10th anniversary since being raised with the amalgamation of the 4th Combat Engineer Regiment and 22nd Construction Regiment in 2014.

Recording and capturing the lessons learned from this sapper heritage is one of the fundamental aims of the Association.

A diverse, talented, and devoted committee continue to navigate this pathway forward. We welcome Todd MacDougall as our new Vice President along with several fresh and keen understudies.

Please enjoy this Waterloo edition of *Sapper Summit*.

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



WARRANT OFFICER CLASS ONE CLINTON MATHESON REGIMENT SERGEANT MAJOR

22 Engineer Regiment



Warrant Officer Class One Clinton Matheson was born and educated in Townsville, Queensland; and enlisted into the Army in 1994. Since then, he has served in the Corps of the Royal Australian Engineers.

On completion of his initial employment training, Warrant Officer Matheson was posted to the 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment. During this time, Warrant Officer Matheson served as a soldier and section commander and he deployed with the International Forces East Timor in 2000.

In 2001, Warrant Officer Matheson was posted to the 1st Recruit Training Battalion as a recruit instructor and in 2003 was promoted to Sergeant and posted to the Incident Response Regiment (IRR) as a Troop Sergeant. During this time he deployed on Operation Catalyst to Iraq as part of the Australian Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team.

Warrant Officer Matheson served as an Instructor at the Royal Military College Duntroon and subsequently as the Operations Warrant Officer in 2007. In 2008 he was posted back to the IRR where he served as the EOD Manager and Mobility Survivability Team Commander. Warrant Officer Matheson was then posted to the School of Military Engineering as the Sergeant Major EOD and after two years served as the Wing Sergeant Major of the Specialist Engineering Wing. During his time at the school Warrant Officer Matheson deployed several times to Afghanistan as the subject matter expert for three CDF Inquiries and as the Lab Manager at the Combined Explosive Exploitation Cell and transitioned that capability to the Afghanistan Captured Material Exploitation Labs.

In 2012 Warrant Officer Matheson was posted to the 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment where he was the Operations Warrant Officer and in 2014 was posted to the 20th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron, 6th Engineer Support Regiment as EOD Manager and in 2016 took over as the OIC of Training and Certification Cell. In 2017 Warrant Officer Matheson was then appointed as the Squadron Sergeant Major of 2 Squadron, 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment and during that time deployed to the Philippines. From there Warrant Officer Matheson joined the Capability and Sustainment Group (CASG) working on Land 2110 Phase 1B for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defence. In 2021 Warrant Officer Matheson then moved to Army Headquarter where he was the Capability Manager Representative for EOD, Search, Neutralisation, Exploitation and Electronic Counter Measures as part of Land 154 Phase 4 – Joint Counter Improvised Explosive Devices and DEF 8101 – Joint Counter Explosive Hazards and in 2025 was appointed the Regimental Sergeant Major of 22 Engineer Regiment. Warrant Officer Matheson has participated in Operation Warden, East Timor; Operation Catalyst, Iraq; Operation Acolyte, Australia; Operation Slipper, Afghanistan; Operation Parapet, Australia and Operation Augury, Philippines. Warrant Officer Matheson's awards include the Australian Active Service Medal, International Forces East Timor medal, Iraq medal, Australian Service Medal, Defence Force Service Medal, Australian Defence Medal, ISAF, the United States Army Commendation Medal and the Philippines Military Merit Medal. Warrant Officer Matheson has also been awarded the Army Combat Badge, Recruit Instructor Badge, Queensland Police Service Commonwealth Games Citation and G20 Citation.

Warrant Officer Class One Matheson is well travelled and enjoys exploring the history and cultures of other countries first hand. He also enjoys racing motorcycles, fishing, and SCUBA diving.

FROM THE REGIMENT



10 COMBAT ENGINEER SQUADRON ANZAC DAY 2025 GIPPSLAND

The 2025 Anzac Day was a great opportunity for the regiment to support the rural areas of Victoria, which had been missing the Soldiers of the 22 Engineer Regiment to add to their Anzac Day services. So on the 24th April 2025 the 22 Engineer Regiment, 10th Combat Engineer Squadron, with support from 105 Construction Squadron, was off to Newborough to support the Gippsland region for Anzac Day.

Arriving at Newborough on Thursday night, before Anzac Day, the catafalque parties quickly went off to all the locations they were conducting services the following day. It would also be the opportunity for the four newly promoted Lance Corporals and Corporals to be the "Guard Commander" for the first time. Rehearsals back at the Newborough Depot went late into the night.

Anzac Day arrived with the anticipated rain not appearing and the weather being unseasonably warm.

LCPL Duke and LCPL Wex (a few days later to be

promoted to CPL) commanded the Yallourn / Newborough RSL services with great turnout at the dawn service, where LCPL Duke managed his first command with minimal issues, before it was off to breakfast in the RSL. The day service started off with a march around the gardens, with the soldiers of 22ER leading the March.

Concurrently at the Yinar RSL, it was CPL Mullett and SPR Speirs (a few days later to be promoted to LCPL) who led the guard. LCPL Speirs had been conducting rehearsals of the Combat



Engineers from the Newborough Depot, and under the guidance of CPL Mullett, the services went off without a hitch. The cenotaph at Yinnar is one of only two in Australia that have the “bugler” as the monument. It was a privilege to be part of the community service.



The Morwell service had the reliable CPL O'Malley as the guard commander, his first time in command.

CPL Kelleher and CPL Goulas shared the com-



mand duties at the Moe RSL, where large crowds gathered. As Ex-serving member CPL Travis McInnes called the parade to order, the march through town commenced. It was notable that the Ex serving member SPR “Kiwi” Campbell marched with the RSL for the first time after so many years of being part of the 22ER element.



As the day heated up and a “flyby” by the roulettes occurred, the Anzac Day service ended.

All soldiers returned to the Newborough depot for the yearly Anzac Day Photo, held on the “WO2 Ben Stevens” MGB Bridge before it was off to the Newborough mess for a quick feed and drink.

Those present appreciated rural life and Anzac Day celebrations in Gippsland.

The feedback and appreciation from all RSLs in Gippsland was overwhelming, and much appreciated. Having soldiers come along and add to their events is important to the rural communities. The public of rural communities are also appreciative, giving their thanks for our efforts; asking for photos with their children and providing memories of that day. Generally, the opinion was that “it was awesome having the Army in the community again!”.

10CES group photo over page.



FIRST IN, LAST OUT— 8TH COMBAT ENGINEER SQUADRON TRAINING, 2025



8 SQN has wasted no time this year in reacquainting its Sappers with key skills that will carry them throughout their Army careers as Engineers, whilst further setting the Squadron in good stead ahead of Talisman Sabre 2025.

March saw the conduct of Ex Platypus Assaults, building foundational warfighting skills focused on Dismounted Minor Tactics, whilst

integrating Engineer Search activities, primarily Occupied Building Search.

Sappers ran through a variety of drills including individual personnel search which led into entering a residence for building search, detaining an individual suspected to have hidden material, and dead personnel Search.

This soon escalated to the Squadron conducting Section attacks during the movement to suspected caches, solidifying our skills as a multifunctional Corps.



EXERCISE PLATYPUS DEMOLITIONS

SPR Kenneth Panten – 22 Engineer Regiment

May training saw the development of our demolitions expertise, in Ex Platypus Demolish. On Friday 30th May, the members of the 22nd Engineer Regiment travelled to Puckapunyal to conduct our Annual Demolitions Training at Dems West. The night was cold, but the sky was clear, giving the Regiment a clear view of the night sky. A fire pit was started to keep us warm and morale was high leading into the weekend.

Saturday was a full day of demolitions training for the sappers from the Regiment, providing the squadrons with good practice across a variety of demolitions targets. It was a quality day for sappers of all skill levels, with the day kicking off with a confidence serial consisting with a half cart of PE4 per user. The sappers calculated their FBT length and proceeded down to the impact area to conduct the serial. Accurate countdowns were cheered, but for some a slab or two may be owing for being a



few seconds out.

Saturday continued with various static demolition serials consisting of cutting, cratering & improvised charges, as well as a breaching serial, with sappers calculating the charge size and placement to achieve the effect. The day was concluded with a BNS serial setup by the NCO's with the Regiment viewing the effect from the top of the bunker. The targets used for the weekend had been pre-positioned by 105 construction squadron, ranging from rein-





forced concrete slabs, sandbag walls, Hesco, CAT wire fences, timber logs and pre bored holes for cratering charges.

Sunday wakeup was very cold, with hootchies frozen over, and the obligatory groans from sappers crawling out of their bivvy bags. We moved to the dems range and prepared for a morning focussing on urban breaching. First up was a static serial targeting timber doors to see the effects of different charges such as snib, door knob, rollup, slant, & light satellite. The overnight frost added an extra challenge to our task of fixing charges to the doors. After a variety of different approaches were made by teams (with varying success), our charges were placed and we were ready to fire on.

With the doors breached it was now time for

the Assault LUEB (light urban explosive breaching) practice.

The Regiment had completed lead up training in the months preceding the dems weekend with members rigorously tested on their urban assault drills. The 10 members conducting the live assault had been selected after successfully completing the pre-requisite assessment and demonstrating the required drills to a high standard. The teams had subsequently then conducted training each Tuesday night to develop their understanding of team dynamics, SOP development and tactics within the urban environment.

The weekend prior to dems (24-25 May), the urban team conducted breaching training with 5/6 RVR. We were able to get exposure to various manual breaching tools, including rams, Halligan tools and sledgehammers. This weekend was one of the best weekends of training I have had within the Army creating a great cross pollination opportunity, as we were able to gain experience from the infantry guys, and they were able to gain an understanding explosive breaching from the Engineers. The combined training allowed us to build a great level of mutual respect and foster a greater relationship between the CORPS.

With the safety checks done, and the rest of the Regiment looking on, the assault LUEB practice was ready to go. The 3 breaching teams conducted their clearance drills, identifying the closed door to be breached, and then rigged the door with the assigned charge. The teams then moved back behind the Hesco to the approved safety distance for blast overpressure (which was only 4 meters when calculated for the charge size) and fired on.

The LUEB practice was a great opportunity to understand where we can provide capability in the urban space, as well as providing sappers a deeper understanding of urban tactics, team integration and Manual Breaching.



Overall, the entire Dems weekend was extremely educational and fun, not only going through our normal training serials, but adding on the Assault LUEB team, as we have previously only done LUEB from a distance, and observing the effect of various charges on doors and walls. Having a team immediately push through into a structure post breach allowed for a high level of skill gain to further the capability for the regiment.



Talisman Sabre will provide an opportunity for the Regiment to put these skills into practice within a Tri-service environment, an invaluable

moment as we continue to build our capability through the year, and prepare ourselves for whatever may come.



VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service

Cpl Trevor Mays

This annual service, held during Reconciliation Week, pays tribute to the vital contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service personnel have made—and continue to make—to the Australian Defence Force in times of conflict and peace.

Captain Stephen Bowater OAM, RAN (son of past RAEAV President - Colin Bowater) as Chair of the Shrine of Remembrance welcomed all and spoke of the significance of the contributions of First Nations service men and women in Victoria from the Boer War onwards.

Representing 22nd Engineer Regiment was Corporal Trevor Mays with the 4th Brigade being represented by Brigadier Michelle McCormack.

Our President, Don Hughes along with his wife Michelle and Zeus, represented the RAEAV.



For over a century, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have served in conflict and peacekeeping missions involving Australia. Yet, for many years, their service and sacrifice were not formally recognised or commemorated.

In 2006, the late Aunty Dot Peters AM, alongside Retired Flight Sergeant Sam Halim, then-President of the Healesville RSL, led the first dedicated remembrance service to honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service-people.



Her son Dr Andrew Peters continues his mother's legacy. Aunty Dot was a strong Yorta Yorta/Yarra Yarra woman who Cpl Mays personally knew and cared for dearly. Her motto. (Sharing, caring and respect) held true with her.

This year's event marks the 20th year since it

was first brought forward, it took one more year for it to become an ongoing event, which is growing every year with local mob, dignitaries including a large number of military personnel now attending this very important event leading up to reconciliation and Naidoc events.



RAE ASSOCIATION SAPPER MUSTER

OAKLEIGH BARRACKS 01st March 2025

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 good with a crowd of 100 people attending which was down slightly on last year's numbers.

A factor affecting the attendance is no doubt the "cost of living crisis" and the Association is not immune to this. At the suggestion of a couple of serving members and, to attract some of the younger members of the Regiment, a new attendance category was introduced called "social attendance" which allowed people to attend without cost or partaking in the meal but to socialise. There were 10 people who took advantage of this. The experiment brought some of the younger people along which showed them what the night was all about.

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 the event 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.

Jock Howatt 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 towards the raffle and night. Ryan Appleby also provided support and prizes. Kevin and Marilyn Moss could not attend but provided a wonderful figurine and military book which was won by Kym Bishop. The support of people



like Ace, Ryan and Kevin and Marilyn helps us provide wonderful prizes and allow us to keep entry costs low.

For the 9th 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. Missing this year was Zeus so regrettably some scraps were thrown out.



As with all evenings there must be some formalities and in the absence of the President (Don Hughes) Jim Davis deputised and welcomed everyone to the function but in particular the Patron, CO, RSM, Chaplain and several senior Officers. A placemat was provided to everyone detailing upcoming activities and events and was also a souvenir from the night. A highlight of the night was the awarding of



Life Membership to Kevin Coleman for his wonderful and generous donation of his collection of sapper's knives which he had acquired over many, many years and from all over the world. The collection is on display in the history room and will be a feature for many years to come. It would be very difficult to put a value on the collection but it would be substantial.



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 CAPT Michael Plant and GD's SPRs Sam Colquhoun, Paul Falzon and Steve Foulds. The bar was manned by Rob Camilleri. 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. 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 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 was evidenced with many people travelling from Echuca, Girgarre, Latrobe Valley and Ballarat.

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. Sappers and their families are amazing people.

Jim Davis









RAE ASSOCIATION (VIC)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

RAE Association (Vic) Inc. – Annual General Meeting (AGM)

On 10th April 2025 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. This was a much better attendance than in previous years with about 31 members and 2 guests coming along.

By holding the AGM at night we hoped that we might attract serving members of the Regiment to come along. This year we were supported by serving sappers in Trevor Mays, Warwick Harvey and David Kelly-Grimshaw – hopefully next year we will see more sappers come along as it is from the younger members that our future Association leaders will come from.

It was good to catch up with some friends like Gary Campbell, Bill van Ree, Neil Christie, Kevin Moss and Graeme Lambert. Some notable guests were BRIG Bob Slater, COL John Wertheimer (Patron), Austin Byrne (Life Member). Whilst everyone who makes the effort to come along is considered important I would like to thank COL Bruce Murray, AM (Colonel Commandant RAE Southern Region) who travelled from Queenscliff and conducted the voting for the committee positions - it took him over 3 hours to get to the AGM.

Along with the normal business associated with any AGM there was the election of office bearers for the 2025 – 2026 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 Bruce Murray (ex-officio as COL COMDT RAE Southern Region)

In addition we are going to also welcome 2 members to the committee who will fulfil “assistant” roles understudying the roles of the committee members and whilst not formally on the committee they will be completing a very important role with the ultimate view of moving onto the committee – a very warm welcome to Stephen Davis and Glenn Arkell and thank you both for stepping up to help.

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 a couple of significant milestones that will be celebrated later this year. It will be the 75th anniversary of the Supplementary Reserve (SR) and the 80th anniversary of the Kapooka Tragedy.



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) and is well advanced but with the diamond anniversary of the SR this year he is now looking to concentrate on the book and have it ready for a launch (around November 2025) to coincide with the 75th anniversary. Don’s address was extensive and informative.

As the Association enters its 11th 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?

Bruce Murray is the President of the "Friends of Fort Queenscliff" (FFQ) and some time ago invited the RAE Association to become the 1st Corporate member of the FFQ to which we agreed to with the proviso that the matter would have to be ratified at our AGM – Bruce addressed the AGM and provided a background and benefits of being a Corporate Member of the FFQ and took questions. The matter was put to the vote and passed unanimously.



Another very pleasant duty for Don was the granting of Honorary Life Membership to our Patron COL John Wertheimer who has provided so much to the RAE Corps, his community and our Association – without doubt John is the "Don" of the Corps here in Victoria.

Jim Davis
Secretary 11th April 2025



ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS 2025

Croydon RSL March

Sunday 13 April 2025

Due to the proximity of Anzac Day to Easter, the Croydon march was held on the second Sunday before the 25th.

A small contingent of RAE Association members attended the Croydon march in lieu of the usual event in Ringwood, which was not held this year. Michael Potts laid a wreath on behalf of the Association.



The marchers were accompanied by the Croydon Brass Band and the Old Scotch Pipes & Drums.



Also in the march were groups from local Scout and Guide groups bearing flags and banners, while 408 Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets provided the Catafalque party.





HEIDELBERG REPATRIATION HOSPITAL Thursday 24 April 2025

In association with Department of Veterans' Affairs and a joint venture with Vasey RSL Care V Centre, the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (Austin Health) commemorated Anzac Day on Thursday 24th April in the magnificent Memorial Gardens.

The new CEO of Austin Health, Jodie Geissler, welcomed many distinguished guests and veterans to the commemoration with over 25 wreaths laid along with the unveiling of a Victoria Cross Project within the hospital and a magnificent Victoria Police plaque and cheque from the Blue Knights for the hospital's ongoing support to first responders. Don and Zeus represented the RAE Association of Victoria and laid wreaths for Sappers, Peacekeepers and for our Indigenous warriors.

Master of ceremonies was Rob Winther with Jude Pinkerton-Treloar reciting the ode.







ANZAC DAY 2025: CITY MARCH

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION (VIC)

Dave Rundell and Jim Davis

It has been 110 years since those brave young men of the Australian and New Zealand military forces threw their bodies onto the beaches at Gallipoli, and today we come together to remember them and their deeds and pay homage to all members of the Defence Force past and present.

Around 0800h the Association gathered in Flinders Street outside the Station in preparation for the march to the Shrine of Remembrance. There was an opportunity for us to catch up with old mates who we haven't seen for a while and to exchange stories and information of those who were not able to attend the march.



At the form up point Dave Rundell took control to ensure that when called forward everyone would be ready and prepared to join the march and with about 40 people in attendance (including some of our good friends from the Royal Engineers) the Association stepped

off at 0920h with the wonderful Cadets from 31 ACU leading with the banner followed by Don Hughes (and Zeus) who were the Contingent leaders.



The weather was fine and the crowds generous with their support and encouragement.

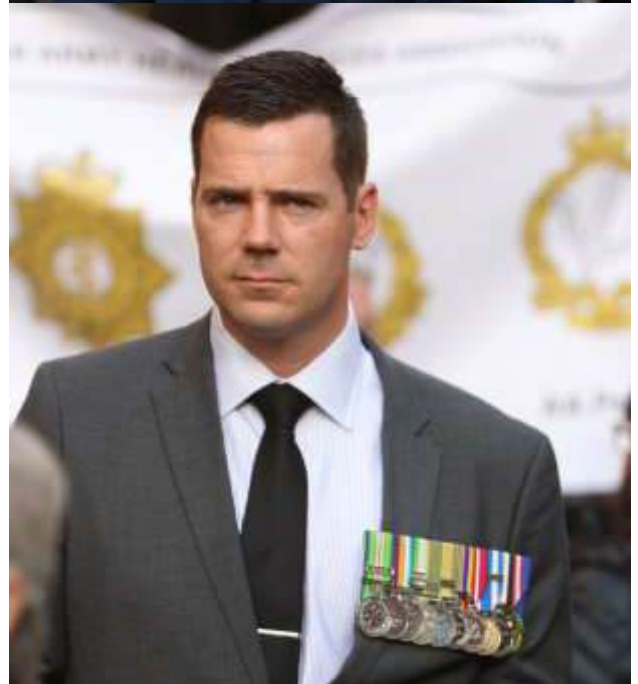


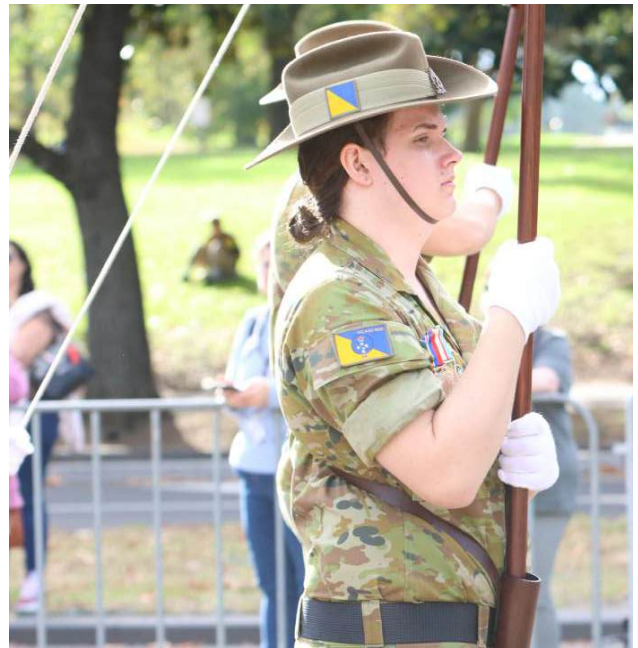
Upon reaching our dispersal point, we all moved to the rear of the Shrine for a photo opportunity for everyone under the banner, and in smaller groups as well.

Finally after many "hold and smile" we said our goodbyes and departed our separate ways to hopefully see each other next year if not before at some other gathering.

Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the Association on this very important day.



















UBIQUE



Petals of Remembrance

A Poem by Emily Phillips

Poppies grow where their blood was shed, where their last breaths were taken from them all too soon,
Poppies are picked and placed under their name to remember them as the trumpet plays its tune,
And on this day that we commemorate what we lost for what we have now gained,
But at what cost have we gained as we also mourn and now it will never be the same,
Someone's brother,
Someone's father,
Someone's husband,
Someone's son,
Went out willing to sacrifice their lives for ours and yet I cannot thank all of them as it was not a battle all
came home from,
We march down the street as they did in the war walking proud and true,
And some of us are walking history as they came home, some of the few,
But as tears scar our cheeks before being swept off by the chilling wind,
We tend to relish in the chilling pain as it distracts us from the words spoken we get to hear but they
never did,
Lest We forget,
The words spoken by many on this day,
As the flag reaches half mast and we convince ourselves we are okay,
As we are not the ones who fought this war,
We didn't face men our own age both scared to kill but more so to die which makes this part of history all
the more raw,
We bond with others on this day seeking comfort searching for the arms that the wind swept away,
The medals that should be on their left now reside on our right weighing us down with their bravery from
those days,
The eyes we seek are now those bright big stars,
As the poppies now represent what they did and who they are.

-Emily Phillips



BLUE TONGUES REUNION

16th – 18th May 2025

By Jim Davis

In line with the traditions the annual “Blue Tongues Reunion” was held at Major Creek Streamside Reserve, Nagambie. I attended on Saturday 17th May 2025. The morning was very crisp and when I arrived mid-morning the campfires were certainly most welcome.



The wind was chilly but the one thing that was very evident, even with the drive up to Nagambie, was that the country is in desperate need for a good long soaking rain. Must be heartbreaking for the farmers.



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 and this year there was a very large number of other people staying

within the facility making it a bit difficult to find a suitable spot where our group could congregate in some isolation. As this is public camping ground there are limitations of what you can and can't do and the lighting of campfires. It is obvious that each year more and more people are choosing to camp here so the area is getting very busy – maybe we might have 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. Many people stay for the entire weekend whilst others just drop in to say hello and stay a few hours. There were certainly some very good caravans on display.



Attendance numbers were down this year with some regulars not making the trip like

Tony Jackson, Greg (Vic) Morrow (and Bea) along with Bob “Redman” Jones and Neil Christie. Now I know everyone has to make an effort and travel to get to the reunion but some people travel quite a distance to get to it most years like “Doc” Kincaid, Dave Stevenson and Paddy Donaghy.



When we gather these days the main point of our conversations seems to centre around our health issues and how many tablets we are taking and our last visit to hospital. George took a moment to mention that one of our regulars for many years in Rod Olsen is very unwell and has a battle to regain good health following a very bad stroke – get well Rod as you were missed at the campfire.



Regrettably, and indicative of our ages, the Honour Board has had a few extra names added since last year and we remember those people who can no longer join us. Thanks, George, for looking after this very sad but important part of the history.

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 avail-

able 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 2026. If any reader gets the opportunity of participating in the 2026 reunion you should jump at it 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 21st May 2025) 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 no matter where I stand or move to the campfire smoke it seems to follow me – maybe I am being sent a message!

Jim Davis





OVERWATCH AUSTRALIA (OA) Inc. is a not for profit national organisation tasked to reach out and assist current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families. 1800 699 2824.

Its primary mission is to take a “boots on the ground” approach to assist personnel who are in danger of self harm, or are in trouble with the law, or are in financial difficulties or are in hospital or just need someone to visit. It also guides people in the right direction for services which Overwatch does not provide.

The Overwatch concept and organisation was initiated by Kyle Tyrrell, Kevin Lanaghan, Dean Bliss and Paul Sexton who in early 2013 reacted to a spate of suicides within the veterans’ community.

They initially created an RAR Overwatch as a 24/7 response and support organisation for former members of Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) Special

Air Service Regiment (SASR) and 2 Commando Regiment. Its success soon expanded to today’s OVERWATCH AUSTRALIA with cover to all military services (Army, Navy and Air Force).

OA is one of very few crisis organisations that pro-actively identifies and communicate direct with those in need of crisis assistance rather than waiting for them to come to us.

It has two volunteer member classes: gatherers of information and first responders. Most volunteers are former or current serving members of the ADF.

Overwatch members are constantly looking on social media for “cries for help” and when discovered the Command Team will, on verification, task the nearest First Responders to act speedily.

Each state and territory is an Area of Operations that is run by a State Co-ordinator. A list is kept of persons who are willing to respond to an incident, SOP’s are drafted and strictly adhered to, triple 0 is automatically notified with details gathered by the team if any suicidal action is suspected of being committed.

Due to the nature of the work every OA volunteer is carefully vetted before acceptance. First Responders are trained in the DVA Operation Life suicide prevention course.

Once engaged, OA will act as a bridge to alert public support services (ambulance, police, health, welfare, community, etc.), VVCS and relevant Ex Services Organisations who are able to assist with ongoing support.

Today, OVERWATCH AUSTRALIA has an expanding national support network of over 5000 volunteers (3700 Observers and 1,528 First Responders).

Duty First

RAE OVERWATCH

is a Corps-specific subsidiary of Overwatch Australia, specifically to support serving and retired Sappers.

Sappers looking out for Sappers in times of need.

No matter how long you've been in or out.

The group Coordinator is Bob Ihlein (robert.ihlein@gmail.com)
or phone 0434550556

You can also find them at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RAEOverwatch/>

THE SOLDIER'S BATTLE

A POEM BY COLIN "FISH" FRASER

AN OLD DRUNKEN MAN SAT SILENT
ON A LONELY BAR ROOM CHAIR
HIS CLOTHES WERE TORN AND TATTERED
HE HAD LONG AND SHAGGY HAIR

HIS EYES LOOKED DARK AND WEARY
AS HE SAT IN SAD DESPAIR
NO ONE KNEW OF HIS HARDSHIP
AND THEY DIDN'T REALLY CARE

HIS STORY IS LIKE MANY OTHERS
WHO HAVE SEEN THE TASTE OF WAR
HE CANNOT ERASE THE MEMORY
OR EVEN UP THE SCORE

AND AS HE SAT IN SILENCE
AND DRANK HIS BEER DOWN
HE COULD HEAR THE JOY AND LAUGHTER
OF THE PATRONS ALL AROUND



NEXT TIME YOU SEE A DRUNKARD
SITTING SILENT AT THE BAR
TAKE THE TIME TO PITY
FOR HIS WAR TORN MIND IS SCARRED

HE DRINKS TO HIDE THE MEMORIES
THAT COME BACK DAY AFTER DAY
A LONELY SOLDIER IN BATTLE
FIGHTING HIS LONELY WAR

YES A LONELY SOLDIER IN BATTLE
FIGHTING HIS LONELY WAR

Need help? See pp. 74/75

KAPOOKA TRAGEDY MEMORIAL EXCURSION 21st MAY 2025

By Jim Davis

This year's Kapooka Tragedy Memorial Day was a significant one as it commemorated 80 years since the tragedy.

Not only does the Corps acknowledge this devastating event annually but it is also etched into the history of Wagga and its people. This year the City of Wagga Wagga recognised the occasion by honouring those who perished in the tragedy by naming the streets of a new subdivision after them.

Accordingly, this year there were two ceremonial events conducted – the first by the City of Wagga Wagga at the subdivision site and the second at the Kapooka Tragedy Memorial.

The journey to Kapooka is certainly a very long one but it is so worthwhile. Making the trip this year were Don Hughes (and Zeus), Michael and Sue Potts, Jim Davis, Kim Howes and Stu Hipwell in addition there were a few members of the Tasmanian Sapper's Association (Micho and Monty). Don laid a wreath on behalf of the Association.



Once again the Regiment was an active participant and this year some 10 members attended. The Regiment's participation is through the outstanding efforts of LCPL Trevor Mays who takes on the responsibility of organising the trip as a learning objective for the young sappers not only by attending the memorial and learning about the tragedy but by visiting other sites of interest like the graves at the Wagga Wagga military cemetery. It was great to see that several members were involved in the official ceremony at Kapooka by providing readings. Trevor Mays had been involved in



The Explosion, 21 May 1945

"At approximately 1445 (2.45 p.m.) on Monday 21 May 1945, an explosion occurred in a dugout in the Demolition Area at the Kapooka Camp. As a result of this explosion twenty-four soldiers were killed outright and four were seriously injured, two of whom died within two hours of admission to hospital."



Timeline: Week 4 Demolitions, Day 1, Afternoon Lectures/Demonstrations

- 1415 Lance Sergeant (LSGT) C. J. Kendall and three trainees entered the dugout to prepare the fuses for the night exercises. They attach match heads to the slit end of the length of safety fuses together with the electric leads and bind with fused detonator wire.
- 1430 Sergeant (SGT) Jack Pomeroy, Corporal (CPL) Bill Cousins and twenty-two trainees entered the dugout. SGT Pomeroy explained the purpose of the night's exercises and then began his lesson on the preparation of hand charges. Explosives, including 100 pounds of Monobel and ten pounds of Gellignite, were stored in the dugout.
- 1440 LSGT Kendall left the dugout to prepare for the night exercise.
- 1444 (approx.) Sapper (SPR) Alan Bartlett saw CPL Cousins standing alongside LSGT Kendall's three men counting the detonators with the blue safety fuses attached in his hand and then turned to say something to his mate.
- 1445 (approx.) The explosion occurred. There was an abnormally loud noise; the roof of the dugout collapsed and smoke and debris spiralled into the air. LSGT Kendall was blown back several metres by the blast.



1445-1450

- SGT R. G. Tafe (150 metres away) ran to the dugout; found LSGT C. J. Kendall lying on the ground 10-15 metres from the entrance; and found one man (later identified as SPR Allan Bartlett) in an upright position embedded in a wall.
- SGT Tafe and Warrant Officer (WO) E. M. Dodds removed SPR Bartlett and placed him in a sitting position on the rubble.
- Captain (CAPT) E. O. Merry (800 metres away) drove to the Camp Hospital and alerted Medical Officers; also rang Major (MAJ) M. Berg, the Assistant Chief Instructor.
- Two more survivors, SPRs Ivan Merritt and William ("Bill") Reid found.
- Loud speakers called for doctors, ambulance attendants and truck drivers. New recruits were warned to stay away from the area and soldiers who had returned from the Middle East or New Guinea were asked to attend.

1455-1500

- MO CAPT L. M. Judd arrived with three ambulances driven by AWAS ladies; later joined by RMOs from 1st and 4th Battalions, CAPTs Bennett and Miller.
- LSGT Kendall and SPRs Bartlett, Merritt and Reid were conveyed to the first ambulance and taken to the Camp Hospital.
- Seven complete bodies were removed from the remains of the dugout.

1500-1510

- OC of the Camp Hospital, MAJ L. W. Tunley arrived and left for the Camp Hospital; organised for the bodies to be placed in an unoccupied ward.
- Chief Instructor MAJ G. F. Macdonnell and his assistant MAJ M. Berg inspected the dugout.
- Recovery squad tried to match the remaining body parts. Despite all their efforts not all parts were found.
- The bodies were ferried by the remaining ambulances to the Camp Hospital.
- CAPT Merry inspected Squad Roll Books to check on the bodies present.
- Runners were sent around to order all sappers to report in and by a process of elimination it was established that twenty-eight sappers were missing, either killed or injured.
- Later the debris in the dugout was sieved and various articles including identification discs and the remains of a textbook were recovered.

1520 CAPT A. W. L. Smith, Adjutant 1 RAE Training Battalion, began to identify the bodies at the hospital

1535 CAPT F. M. Ellis informed the Wagga Police.

1540 MAJ G. F. Macdonnell, Acting Chief Instructor, notified BRIG C. Pryor, Second Australian Army, by telephone.

1600 Wagga Police Sergeant Sherwood arrived at Kapooka Headquarters and on consulting the National Security Regulations, advised CAPT Ellis that a Coroner's Inquiry would not be required.

2000 All bodies identified and a nominal roll of deceased soldiers produced.

2020 CAPT Ellis rang Australian Military Forces Headquarters, NSW Echelon and Records Casualty Section and gave full details of the soldiers.

2030 CAPT Ellis confirmed his message by signal and sent a copy of the signal to the Second Australian Army.

MAJ Tunley then made out and signed Death Certificates for each of the deceased and handed them to CAPT Ellis for transmission to the Court of Petty Session in Wagga.

The next-of-kin were advised by telegram.

An information panel at the memorial details the main points of the disaster.

the restoration and beautification of the site, so this visit is important to him not only to re-visit the worksite but also provide firsthand input on the task.



A large contingent of serving Sappers attended.



The turnout at both ceremonies was good, and included relatives and descendants of several of the Sappers who lost their lives. Many of you would know WO2 Les Norton (Ex 4 CER) who is related to one of those who



Maureen Raunic and her brother Frank Pomeroy remember their father SGT Herbert (Jack) Pomeroy

died in the accident (SGT Jack Pomeroy) – Les had his brother (Kevin) representing the family at this service.



At the street naming ceremony the principal speaker was the Mayor of Wagga Wagga (Dallas Tout) along with some of the family representatives, whilst at Kapooka it was COL Roger McMurray who gave the principal address on behalf of the Head of Corps (BRIG Michael Say).



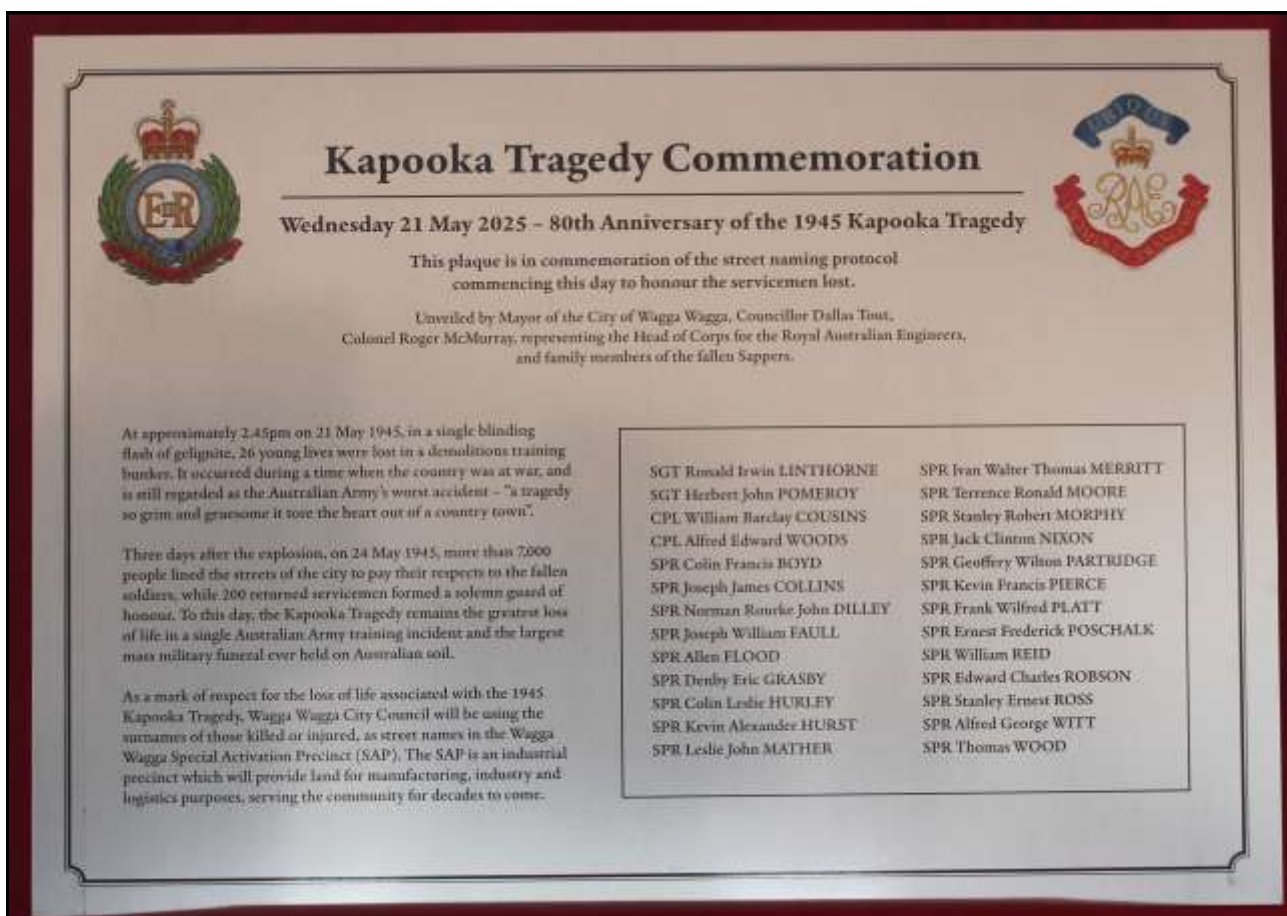
Some of those attending were COL Bruce Murray, MAJ Andrew Howes, MAJ Mark Everingham, WO1 Russell Peel (Corps RSM, RAE), WO1 Sean McAlinden, WO1 Damian Woolfe (RSM Ceremonial ADF) along with several senior RSM's and Warrant Officers from the School. It was great to see Bob Ihlein (RAE Overwatch) and John (Speedie) Sahariv also in attendance.

It is obvious that knowledge of this tragic

event is not disseminated widely enough, but this is changing. A recent graduate of the recruit course at Kapooka reports that the incident was included in their curriculum. Furthermore, The CO of SME (LTCOL Thomas Whale) brought a large contingent of the ROBC course members to both ceremonies (about 48 members) and along with the 22 ER members there is now a better understanding by these people of the background of what took place. Hopefully these young members of the Corps will start the ball rolling to ensure that the day is not forgotten.



The commemorative plaque is unveiled.



The plaque will be mounted on this granite boulder near the entrance to the estate.





The crowd at the memorial ceremony.



In the surrounding gardens, each of the victims is remembered on a plaque (left) placed beneath a Kurrajong tree.

The main memorial stone (below) is the focal point of the memorial.



As this was the 80th anniversary of the accident, special permission was granted to visit the actual site of the explosion. This is now private property, directly opposite the memorial and close to the tree in the

photo below.

As a mark of respect for the fallen, and without any direction, none of the visitors trod on the actual site.



PRESENTATION TO ANZAC DAY CADET BANNER PARTY JUNE 5 2025

The Association was able to make presentations to our Anzac Day Banner Party on Thursday June 5.

Our President, Don Hughes, made the presentation on behalf of the Association. Each Cadet who supported us received a framed photo of the group on the steps of the Shrine of Remembrance, with a personalised appreciation inscription plate attached.

Don gave a short speech about recent Association activities. The Cadets will also receive a copy of the June Sapper Summit, featuring the Anzac Parade report, shortly after it is produced.

Captain(AAC) Anthony Keats—OC 31 ACU—mentioned that each of the Cadets who participated in the march said that it was the highlight of the year so far.

Also, congratulations are due—31ACU is parading 93 cadets this year – their highest enlistment number ever.

The Cadets who formed our Banner Party this year were:



CDTSGT J. Paoli



CDTCPL G. Scott



CUO J. Harper



CDTLCPL O. Damante



CDT K. Butterworth and CDT P. Dickinson were unable to attend the presentation this evening, but received their photos separately.



31 Army Cadet Unit has a new Commanding Officer. CAPT(AAC) Adam Griffiths has moved to a new position as SO3 Cadet Development at Victoria Brigade Headquarters. We wish him well in his new role.

CAPT(AAC) Anthony Keats has assumed Command of 31ACU from the start of this year. Anthony is a long serving staff member of Army Cadets, most recently at 310 ACU Dandenong, and is also an ex Cadet of 31ACU.



OPERATION INTERFLEX: In support of Ukraine

By COL Scott D'ROZARIO

In 2024 I had the privilege to be selected as a LTCOL to be deployed for six months as the Deputy Commander to the United Kingdom's Operation Interflex as part of the ADF's overarching mission to support Ukraine, called Operation Kudu. The following story details my experiences and lessons learnt in that challenging environment.



Kudu patch

What is Interflex?

Op Interflex is the UK-led multinational mission, consisting of 15 nations and based in the UK to deliver individual training for the Armed Forces Ukraine (AFU), the Ministry of Interior Ukraine (National Guard Ukraine (NGU), and the State Border Guard Service Ukraine (SBGSU). During my time with the mission we delivered:

- Basic Recruit Training (BRT) - a bespoke five and then seven-week course;
- Basic Training Instructor Course (BTIC) - specific training to allow UKR staff to deliver recruit training); and
- Leadership Courses:
 - Section Commanders Battle Course

- Platoon and Company Sergeant Course, and
- Platoon Commanders Battle Course.



Australian Army soldiers deployed on Operation Kudu provide leadership training to Armed Forces Ukraine

Op Interflex had about 2000 staff, including the linguists who were critical to the mission. Then there would be anywhere between 2000 -2500 Ukrainian students at four locations spread across England. It created a Brigade-sized effect, with the Interflex HQ dislocated from its three UK Battalion HQs with their supporting elements and multinational companies attached, plus associated direct report (to HQ) Sub-Units

- Handling and Processing Centre (HAP); and
- Declared Overt Polling Team (DOPT).

The unique part of Op Interflex was that a Ukrainian person (either volunteer or mobilised) would be flown into the UK and at the HAP they would be issued all necessary kit to fight and survive, including toothbrushes and underwear. They would speak to the DOPT, who then developed a baseline of the Ukrainian trainee group, and then the trainees would deploy to the training location where they

would complete the relevant course. By the time trainees arrived at the training site the DOPT had provided an analysis of the trainees so as to ensure that the Training Delivery team knew the experience and skill level of the trainees and were able to adjust the complexity of the training to suit. The DOPT elements at the training locations would produce a mid and end of course report as a subjective evaluation of the training conducted that would be used to enhance future iterations of the courses.

Another unique aspect of Interflex was the integration of the BTIC students after being taught the theory of education and training into delivery of BRT in the UK. What better way to learn for a recruit than from contemporary experienced RUS-UKR war veterans, and what better way to learn to teach than by teaching?

My role on Interflex

As Deputy Commander INTERFLEX I was essentially an embed in the UK HQ. I was responsible for:

- Mission Governance and Assurance,
- Liaison with the
 - o 14 International Partners Forces;
 - o the Ukrainian Partner Force (Ukrainian staff posted to the UK to assist in the Coordination of training); and
- Hosting and managing Visits (1 star - 4 star Generals and Ministers of Parliament – UK and international).

After some work in the governance sphere, where I was able to engage with the UK Field Army to streamline processes to ensure we could assure mission safety. I then prepared the Interflex Operational Safety Management System and OHS processes documents, which allowed me to focus my attention on Training

Assurance with a significant bend towards lessons.

When I arrived, lessons were an afterthought. By the time I left, through exceptionally dedicated staff in the Op Interflex HQ, especially the Interflex G7 (Lessons) Officer from Norway, we had implemented the NATO lessons process with short-loop and long loop-cycles, and effective and simplified ways to capture and analyse opportunities to learn at the local-level Battalion (Training Delivery Unit), and across the Mission.



Ukraine personnel conduct urban assaults as part of the Platoon and Company Sergeants Battle Course delivered by Australian Army and Finnish soldiers .

What I did on Interflex

The deployment started off with a unique experience. I travelled to Tallinn, Estonia where I was fortunate enough to participate in a NATO led training conference hosted by Operation CABRIT (UK's military deployment to Eastern Europe as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence) Team. This really painted the picture and afforded me a deeper understanding of the true importance of the role I was about to embark upon.

Back in the UK I dove head-first into trying to shore up and complete the governance requirements of the mission and get out to the training delivery sites to understand the issues and meet the relevant Battalion/Regiment COs. I supported the Commander Interflex and mentored the Majors in charge of key positions, including Operations (Chief of Staff), Support (Deputy Chief of Staff) and Develop-

ment (G5). I also hosted a number of high-level visits with the Commander as well as by myself on behalf of the Commander Interflex. As part of my interest in lessons and development I took an interest in how Interflex could introduce Reality Based Training (RBT) methodology into its training delivery for Ukraine. I helped the G4 (Equipment Support) justify the need for RBT aids and tools, and for G7 (Training) (from NZ) to implement a RBT trial based on the Introduction into Service of Air-Soft rifles (not previously used in the UK) to support the enhancement of the Interflex mission pillars:

- **Lethality** – only the Trainees used airsoft weapons – this forced trainees to take aimed shots;
- **Survivability** – only the Opposing Force had airsoft weapons – this forced the trainees to take firing positions to avoid being shot; and
- **Offensive Spirit** – Force on Force Training – this forced trainees to enhance their will to fight.



UKR taking fighting position (whilst I was on mission)

I was also involved in higher-level planning to allow Operation Interflex to use Unmanned Aerial Systems (Drones) similar to how they were being used on the frontlines of the RUS-UKR war, including roles such as observation, attack, and dropping roles, as well as updating

the Interflex Leadership and Recruit training handbooks/manuals.



Australian Army trench training (whilst I was on mission)

As part of my role I was exceptionally lucky to get to work closely with the 3rd Battalion, Royal Regiment of Scotland (3Scots The Black Watch) and the Irish Guards (who were Battalion HQs where the Australian Training Company was delivering leadership training), the Royal Tank Regiment (RTR), and 28 Engineer Regiment (Counter-Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear).

I was also fortunate to get across to 3rd Royal School Military Engineering (3RSME) (based in Minley, UK) and meet the Leadership Team there, it was interesting see how they are approaching recruiting as they face similar challenges to what we have in Australia. I was also a participant in an 8 Engineer Brigade working group coordinated out of 3RSME.

What I learned

- Working in a multinational HQ means that to make any change requires engagement early and often and that those nations have to agree to the proposed change;
- Working as a demand-driven agency meant having to rapidly adjust and address the needs of the Ukrainian General Staff;
- The 14 nations delivering training had the one goal: to support the AFU, NGU, SBGSU to be the most effective sol-

diers, trainers and leaders possible; and

- Australia is a partner of choice for many things and our level of training is at best practice levels. When Interflex wanted to trial something new, such as AirSoft weapons or develop the TF VOHOR-dedicated enemy playbook, they asked the Australian Company.



ADF soldier marches alongside UKR team
(whilst I was on mission)

What Australia could learn from Interflex and the Ukrainian experience

- Medical
 - o Tourniquets – AUS need to begin the process to teach the ability of frontline operators to understand when and if a tourniquet that has been applied should be considered for controlled release to potentially save a limb.
- UAS: (Drones)
 - o Need to train with UAS as often as possible, in as realistic as possible way, due to the proliferation of UAS expected on future battlefields. UAS are being used to
 - loiter and provide good observation;
 - direct fires onto target;

- overcome defences and directly be used to delivery attacks; and
- drop explosives onto targets.

- Force Expansion

- o Use centralised control with a decentralised execution process to expand and rapidly train the force.
- o Develop bespoke courses to support the expansion to enhance Australia's capability fight against threats and aggressors.
 - Remove the nice-to-have things and focus on the necessary.

- Trench Warfare

- o We exist in a three dimensional war. While Australia does not focus on trench warfare, our counterparts are focussed heavily on it and we should learn from them to support out interoperability and enhance our ability to force project.

- Dedicated Enemy picture

- o In the same manner as the Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE), use a dedicated enemy in training. Consider the Opposing Force trained to act and operate using DATE TTPs so that we can enhance realism.

- RBT in ADF training

- o Take every opportunity to conduct training using RBT methodology and invest in RBT training aides and tools. This style of

training creates positive training memories that can be drawn quickly to allow effective and rapid decision making (Recognition Primed Decision Making (RPDM)).

Overall, the deployment was an amazing experience and opportunity to be able to contribute to helping a nation in need. I was exceptionally humbled by the experience and the exceptional UK, international partners and Ukrainian staff that I worked for and with.



Australian Army soldier embraces a member of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (whilst I was on mission)



SHANNON GARRETT 1000 STEPS ACTIVITY

31 MAY 2025

Shannon Garrett (below, centre) is a serving member of the RAE who has been diagnosed with a life-threatening disease called "Diffuse Midline Glioma" (DMG).



To highlight this terrible disease and raise public awareness of it on Saturday 31st May 2025 members of the ADF, along with family, many friends and colleagues gathered at the 1000 steps and participated in a fund-raising walk of solidarity for Shannon. There was very good support with an estimated 60 people attending.

Even though Shannon was in a lot of discomfort he still managed to conquer and finish this difficult course – congratulations Shannon.

The RAE Association (Vic) Inc. also supported Shannon by providing a light snack and drinks at the One Tree Hill Picnic Ground which was also the turn around point.

David Kelly-Grimshaw was certainly the main driving force for this activity and was supported by his wife Caroline along with RAE Association (Vic) Inc. members Jim Davis, Kevin Moss and Stephen Davis.

The link attached provides you with an opportunity to understand the health dilemma that Shannon and others with the disease are facing and his mission to raise funds for research into the disease.

Please take a moment to read Shannon's article and if there is an opportunity for you to assist please do so. Please feel free to disseminate this request as widely as possible.

<https://rundipg-org.grassrootz.com/shannon-garrett-raising-awareness-funding-for-dipg-dmg-research>





Anzac Commemorations



Anzac Day Ringwood 2025



Anzac Day Ringwood 1957

The ANZAC Day Dawn Service this year was attended by an estimated 3,500 to 4,000. The invited speaker was Mr Joe Piasecki. He is a younger veteran and served in the RAN as a submariner. He is an ambassador for Soldier On and member of our Veteran Games Team and was well received. The Catafalque Party came from 22 Engineer Regiment and as usual were very professional. My thanks to the Regiment for its support to our veteran community.

We served about 1,300 breakfasts as a service to veterans and their families and also to the general community following the service as thank you for their support to veterans.

The 'in-club' activities meant the Sub Branch was a hive of activity for the full day. It started with the breakfast followed by the traditional '2 up' game followed by screening the Anzac commemorations, Anzac Day AFL matches and a performance by the Ringwood Pipe Band.

Collectively we provided six commemorations for football clubs and three to local Aged Care facilities. We had more than 60 volunteers contributing on the activities during the day. Members of the Maroondah Brass and the Ringwood Pipe Bands along with the Ringwood Football & Netball Club gave invaluable support, and in addition our Chaplains brought members of their church community (the Pentecostal Church Doncaster) to help during the day. I and the Sub Branch Committee are extremely grateful to these volunteers for their invaluable support.

About The Ringwood RSL Sub Branch and its Club

The Ringwood RSL is licenced and gaming Sub Branch and is part of a network of community clubs that is integral to the fabric of the Victorian community. Our primary objective as an RSL Sub Branch is to support serving and former ADF members and their families as well as our other members. We offer members activities and facilities to host 'get togethers' to enjoy each other's company, to swap stories and particularly for veterans to share experiences and support and help each other in an empathetic environment. Our trading operations are essential to generate the revenue from which these benefits are funded.

The welfare and community support work of the Sub Branch is its major focus and some of those are listed here.

- Over a year we help many veterans in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. We provide assistance with their claims for support from the Department of Veterans' Affairs and our Welfare Coordinator and the team of volunteers provide much needed welfare and practical support to veterans in our region as well as to the older and less mobile members of the Sub Branch. These volunteer services include in-home and hospital support, welfare help, transport assistance, mobility aids as well as minor house and garden maintenance etc
- We support a social media based 'connect' group for modern-day ADF veterans which includes the Sub Branch sponsoring a team of 10 to participate in the annual Veteran Games held in the Gold Coast hinterland.
- We provide bursaries and assistance for children attending Ringwood, Heathmont and Norwood Secondary Colleges.
- We support the Ringwood Female & Junior Football Club including AusKick, Ringwood and Our Lady's Netball Teams, the Maroondah Brass and the Ringwood Pipe Bands.
- We also support the 'Rising Sun' Charity which is focused on meeting emergency needs of veterans in crisis.

We are a 'not for profit' entity. We operate with the sole purpose of supporting veterans, our members and their families.

Some of our services and regular activities are:

VETERAN FITNESS ENGAGEMENT

The VFE is designed to promote connection through exercise and conversation with the modern-day veteran, first responders, their families and friends at Ringwood RSL. Our aim is to create an engaging environment in a space that's familiar with the model of camaraderie within the ADF and create lasting friendships for life after ADF service and among current and former emergency service members.

The program is open to veterans, their family members, RSL members, police, first responders and the local community and is programmed for Wednesday nights 1830-1930hrs.

WELLNESS & PENSION SERVICE—OASIS SUPPORT CENTRE

The Oasis Support Centre Ringwood is a service of the Ringwood RSL Sub Branch and provides Welfare and Pension support services to serving and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), their families & the wider community. The office is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays from 9am- 5pm with the Pension advocates available on Thursdays. Our Wellbeing Services Coordinator is professionally qualified to assist current ADF members, our Service Members, Veterans & Community members.

Other activities include:

STRENGTH & MOBILITY EXERCISE CLASS

A weekly exercise program aimed at our seniors and led by a Qualified Exercise Physiologist, Strength & Conditioning Coach aimed to enhance general strength & mobility. Tuesdays at 10am-11am in the VC function room.

FRIDAY NIGHT BOARD GAMES

We host a board games night every Friday beginning at 5.30pm to cater for those into table top gaming. All welcome.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Additional sub branch sections such as golf, angling and pool clubs are also available for members who may have interests in these areas. Further details are available at reception on request.

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.

VIETNAM TODAY

Mark Shanks

Xin chao!

In April 25, I visited Vietnam for the second time. April 25 also marked fifty years since the conflict we Australians call the Vietnam war ended. An end to constant conflict for the Vietnamese people that lasted over eight hundred and fifty years.

Geography and History

Located in the eastern portion of mainland South-east Asia, Vietnam is bordered by China to the north, the South China Sea to the east and south, the Gulf of Thailand (Gulf of Siam) to the southwest and Cambodia and Laos to the west. The capital, Hanoi, is located in the north, while the country's largest city, Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), is in the south.

Early in the nineteenth century, Western colonial powers started to discover the delights, resources and profits that could be made in south-east Asia. Eventually, France colonised the whole of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and there exists an influence that remains to this day. Ho Chi Minh and his North Vietnamese Army (NVA) led an uprising against their French oppressors from 1945 that culminated in a final battle at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and saw the French defeated.

Partitioning, first militarily and later politically, into the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, better known as North Vietnam, and the Republic of Vietnam, called South Vietnam (SVN) occurred from 1954 to 1975. The North Vietnamese were supported by the Soviet Union, China and North Korea. The Americans supported the SVN and deployed forces to assist. What happened then was a complete disaster for both the Americans and their allies; chiefly amongst them Australia as well as New Zealand, South Korea, Thailand and the Philippines. Essentially, these forces were unable to effectively win against the regular North Vietnamese Army (NVA), and the irregular local forces known as Viet Cong. Following reunification in April 1975 after the withdrawal of the American and allied forces, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was established in July 1975.

Vietnam has now undergone significant economic and social reforms and has normalised relations with many countries including the United States and Australia.

Social Complexities

I was born in the early fifties and so experienced those times of the start of what is now called in Vietnam, the American War. There was National Service in Australia, social upheaval, division, and disension within our society. There were demonstrations, civil unrest, and physical attacks on military personnel. Who can forget the welcome home parade in Sydney where marching soldiers had red paint thrown at them by demonstrators. Society forgets that defence personnel are an arm of government rightly obeying orders when deployed on active service. The schism left in Australian society was to last years and resentment across Australia lasts to this day.

The Start of the Trip, Ho Chi Minh City

So, with all that in mind, my partner and I embarked in March for what was my second trip in eleven years and her first trip to Vietnam. We arrived in Ho Chi Minh City (formally and still known by locals as Saigon) and encountered a temperature of 33°C with high humidity. This is a French infused city with a frenetic atmosphere. Saigon is a city of eleven million people, so exceptionally large. There are three million cars and unbelievably, eight million motor scooters! The traffic is chaotic but there is order to the chaos. Crossing the street is an exercise in courage until you finally take the advice of locals and simply walk across the road at a steady pace. If you run or stop, you cause a problem. The bikes just sway around you. There is still a sense of relief as you make it safely to the other side.

Not much had changed in Saigon. What was known as the Presidential Palace where the President of SVN resided, is now known as the Reunification Convention Hall and stands as a monument to the fall of Saigon. Looking at the wrought iron gates brings back the memory on our news in 1975 of the NVA tank crashing through signalling an end to the conflict. The War Remnants Museum continues to provide sobering stories of the twenty-year American War.

A day trip to the Cu Chi tunnels introduced the historical significance and functionality of the tunnels used by the Viet Cong. These tunnels formed an incredible defensive system that eventually stretched over 120 kms. People lived their lives underground in

oppressive heat with kitchens, hospitals, command centres and armouries. Children were born, people died, and life went on. The Americans knew the facility existed in the area and dropped 500lb bombs from the air to try to collapse the tunnels. Giant craters exist to this day as evidence of the failure of this tactic. The air echoes with the sound of tourists firing AK47's at the nearby range. VD400,000 or around A\$20 gets you a 20-round magazine. It all seemed too much like catering for the tourist rather than what I think it should be, a shrine and memorial to those Vietnamese who lived and died here. It was hot and humid, and one needs to remember to drink water constantly.

A day trip to the Mekong Delta, the food bowl of Vietnam, was next. A bit touristy looking at coconut gardens, sampling tropical fruits and a paddle in a sampan. Then a tuk-tuk ride through the local village to a restaurant sampling some great local food and afterwards a return to Saigon to sort out dinner. The people were welcoming, happy with the business we were bringing.

Hoi An

Out to the airport for an Air Vietnam flight north to Da Nang, about halfway up this long, thin country. A one-hour shuttle to Hoi An for three days was next. Hoi An is my favourite Vietnamese city. Old Town is a UNESCO World Heritage listed area where I got a suit, another jacket and a business shirt tailor made with two fittings in twenty-four hours delivered to my hotel. The tailor I go to also does tailored lady's wear. Old Town has Chinese temples, Japanese pagodas, French inspired houses, wooden shops, and canals. Plenty of shopping for those so inclined (and we were).



Hoi An Market

Vietnam is known for its delicious food and Hoi An is no exception. The produce markets are a wonderful experience that sees the locals haggling over fresh fish, spices, and vegetables. We inspected the ruins of the UNESCO Heritage listed My Son temples. Set in a valley surrounded by the massive Cats Tooth Moun-

Ruins of the My Son Sanctuary



tain, the temples were built between the 4th and 12th century. Sadly, they were damaged by American bombing. They cannot be repaired because the stone masonry skills of the

minority Cham people who built them have been lost over time.

A few hours bus drive the next day over the spectacular Hai Van Pass; the site of a French stronghold and defensive position, saw us arrive some time later at Hue. Hue was the former imperial capitol; the huge Citadel overlooks the city and was built for the personal use of the emperor and his concubines. It was the site of the start of the ruin of the Imperial family

when the French colonised Vietnam and now serves as a reminder of times past.



Flag tower at Imperial City, Hue

An interesting dinner was one evening at a private home. This was very much different to the

homes I have been used to seeing. Quite luxurious with large, well-manicured gardens and a private swimming pool. Attached was a large room used as a vegetarian restaurant in the Buddhist tradition where the owner, a youngish woman who was our host, taught cooking. What was interesting was her family's history during the American war. The Tet Offensive in 1968 was a series of surprise attacks by NVA and Viet Cong forces against South Vietnam and its allies. In Hue, the attacks overran the SVN army and the young ladies' grandfather who was occupying the grandest house in Hue was arrested as a collaborator. What no one knew in the town was that in fact he was a spy for the NVA. The only persons that knew of his background was his wife, also an NVA spy and his handler. Sadly, the handler was nowhere to be found to back up his story and this resident was executed two days later. His wife spent twelve

years trying to find the handler who when found, supported the story and this young ladies' grandfathers name was cleared. The family now occupy an honoured place in the town. The harsh reality of war. Just near Hue is the 17th parallel that was known as the DMZ or de-militarised zone. This was an arbitrarily drawn line on a map that separated North from South Vietnam. Largely ignored by both sides in the conflict, it was often used as a staging area for both armies' forays into each other's territory.

We visited the An Quang Pagoda, quite typical of others we saw. What made it interesting was that it was the home of The Most Venerable Thich Quang, the senior monk at the time who drove to a square in central Saigon arriving on 11 Jun 1963. As soon as he got out of the car, he sat down in the lotus position, another monk poured petrol over him, and he burnt himself to death in protest against the President of SVN's policies of discriminating against Buddhists and violating their religious freedom. I can remember the sight of the look of serenity on his face on my parents' television news screen. I doubt this vision would be allowed on our screens today. His heart, which was the only remaining recognisable piece of him, is on display at the pagoda.

On my first trip to this area, at a stop that we used to call a "happy place" (a restaurant/shopping area with clean toilets) I was finishing lunch when I noticed 8-10 older soldiers wearing their distinctive green uniform having a wonderful time and drinking plenty of beers. I asked our guide what it was all about, and he took me over to the group and introduced me as an Australian soldier. He explained they were on their way to Dien Bien Phu to celebrate their father's great victory over the French. The group immediately gathered round me thrusting beers into my hands and welcoming me as a fellow soldier. One had been a doctor with the Viet Cong. Knowing that I was Australian, I was amazed that they were so welcoming. We have a better reputation than the Americans; just one of those wonderful memories.

Hanoi

Next morning it was out to the Hue Airport and another one-hour flight via Air Vietnam north to Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam which features tree-lined ave-

nues and widespread French architecture. A little cooler than Saigon, it was a much more pleasant place to visit. Traffic is still interesting with hundreds of motor scooters riding at you as you want to cross the road.

In the historic Old Quarter, there are thirty-six streets, a series of interwoven lanes and roads that historically sell certain products in each street. Silk, bamboo, ceramics, and lots more besides were available. We went to a small factory set up to give employment to people with disability. Here, they cut out small pieces of woven silk into the most magnificent intricate pictures of people and scenery. Next door as a part of the same facility was a silk weaving operation. The weaving machines are extremely noisy, none of the workers wore hearing protection and I am guessing that all would have various degrees of industrial deafness. There is no doubt that Vietnam can now be considered an emerging third world country, but they still have a way to go in such matters as OH&S!

Next day was spent on a walking tour of the Temple of Literature (an education facility for the upper class during the reign of the emperors), Ho Chi Minh's Presidential Palace that he never used except for special occasions, the two roomed house where he

slept and worked and of course, his mausoleum where his body is now displayed. They have military guards there who are changed every hour. They wear stunning white uniforms and march on to the entrance to the mausoleum doing something between a goose step and a slow march.

Travelling through one of the minor towns one afternoon, I was amused to see about fifty soldiers walking in single file. They were carrying the usual webbing, AK47's, a few LMG's and RPG's and each of them carried a large map board.

My guess is that they were Officer Cadets returning from an instructional period and reminded me strongly of my own time at Puckapunyal as an Officer Cadet.

A visit to the war museum located in a jail that was known as the Hanoi Hilton during the war is quite confronting. This was where the American pilots were imprisoned after being shot down. There were the usual exhibits and photos that well demonstrat-



Ho Chi Minh
Mausoleum Hanoi

ed the other side of the conflict. In one room was the disturbing exhibit of a genuine guillotine left over from the days of French occupation. This had been used many times by the French to execute partisans. Looking at it certainly gave me shivers.

Ha Long Bay

After three days of exploring Hanoi and surrounds, it was off to Halong Bay to spend a night on the water. The limestone pillars rearing out of the sea are quite spectacular. This area has quite rightly, long been a UNESCO protected area. Last time I was here, there was a lot of rubbish bobbing in the water and washed up on the rocky shores. The government seem to have gotten on top of this now, but there is another pollution; that is the vast number of marine craft and visitors to the area that must be putting a huge strain on the environment. As an example, there is one of these limestone pillars that has eight hundred odd steps cut into it for tourists to get to the top to enjoy the magnificent views. My fellow travellers reported the queues on the steps were quite large and slowed the process. I did not bother going.



Ha Long Bay

Back to Hanoi and the end of our fourteen-day “comfort standard” guided tour. For information, we used Intrepid Travel for our small tour (only twelve people) who were first class. Our guide was fantastic, full of information, empathetic and welcoming and I could not recommend them more.

Something to think about

Having now had fifty years of peace; the Vietnamese certainly have not forgotten their past struggles, but they are getting on with life. Although Vietnam is a communist state, many citizens are self-employed and experience freedoms that differ from the Stalinist model of communism taught to Ho Chi Minh during his early time in Russia.

I can remember in my late teens supporting the concept of the Australian government supporting of such things as “all the way with LBJ.” History has shown that following the “all the way” construct can have its flaws and failures. I argue that the US was late to both the first and second world wars and despite what their current President says, they certainly did not win both conflicts off their own bat. They also failed in Korea which continues to threaten world peace and failed in Vietnam to ensure the survivability of the South Vietnamese Government. The recent conflicts in the Gulf region and Afghanistan are similar military and diplomatic failures.

So where was Australia in all these conflicts? Right beside the US supporting them in their success and more particularly, their failures. I say this simply to provoke readers thoughts that the next time we look like rushing into a conflict not of our making, we do not just blindly follow our American allies.

As the Australian Defence Force, we are an arm of government; specifically, part of the executive branch. It is responsible for safeguarding our nations sovereignty, protecting its people, and supporting national interests, both domestically and internationally. This is doctrine, we as a defence force, are obliged to follow our governments bidding. To change that bidding, we citizens can only change the government at the ballot box or make our feelings known in sufficient numbers so that the government takes notice and changes their policies. I suggest we should be more critical when asked to aid in conflicts that are not of our making or interests.

Lastly, I spoke to a senior Officer at the RAE Assoc AGM a couple of weeks before leaving. He is a Vietnam Veteran and he said to me, with the pain of his memories in his eyes, “Mark, I never want to go back there again.” That had something of an impact on me. Those memories for many of our veteran community are harsh and as a community, we must never forget their sacrifices. Let us remember that 521 Australians were killed and over three thousand were physically wounded or injured. Many more have experienced severe mental distress since their deployment, with so many sadly resulting in suicide.

Lest We Forget.

Mark Shanks
MAJ (ret’d) RFD

WATERLOO DINNER

28th JUNE 2025

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

This year the dinner was conducted within a traditional military setting at the RA Sigs SGTS Mess at Watsonia and this was certainly a fitting venue considering that it is the 100th birthday year for the RA Sigs and the strong ties between the RAE and the Sigs.

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 and this was certainly achieved.

The dinner had a wonderful cross representation of the Corps both in rank and trade with about 75 people attending many of whom travelled quite long distances from locations such as Albury, Wagga, 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 McCormack (Commander

4th BDE), BRIG Peter (Hutch) Hutchinson (Retd), BRIG David Westphalen, BRIG Bob Slater (Retd), COL Sharon Coates, COL Scott D'Rozario, WO1 Russell Peel (Corps RSM for RAE), WO1 Matt Dickson, and WO1 Clinton Matheson (RSM 22 ER). Representing the Signals Corps was LTCOL Daniel Armstrong (CO School of Sigs and Deputy HOC RASigs). LTCOL Collins delivered the annual HOC address (on behalf of BRIG Michael Say, DSC) which was very informative.

During his address LTCOL Armstrong spoke of



the strong history between the two Corps and provided some examples of this history. His speech was certainly well received and had some lighter sides to it. In responding, LTCOL Collins thanked LTCOL Armstrong for his kind words and took the opportunity of pointing out some historical aspects of both the RAE and RASigs indicating that the RAE taught the Sigs a lot but in return there was also cooperation and links between the respective Corps.

For retired and nonmilitary people the big hassle associated with attending a function like this, on an active military base, is completing formalities with passes and escorts and



getting onto the base which certainly adds to the stress and time but with great planning and perception by the OIC of the function (LT Jonathan Zheng) this became a seamless exercise.

Thanks from all must go to LT Jonathan Zheng for arranging the night - 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 but I am pleased to say that LT Zheng certainly managed the high expectations placed on him resulting in a great success and outcome for this premier function.



Adding to the tradition of the night Piper LCPL Stuart Coghill provided his skill with the bagpipes and piped in the senior guests on arrival. The Piper enjoyed his dram of Whisky when offered it by LTCOL Collins.

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













FROM THE ARCHIVES:
The exterior view of a window made from soda water bottles and cement in a dugout occupied by men of the Royal Engineers near Cambrai, 22 February 1918. A Sapper cleans the window.



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.malbo@defence.gov.au

Hours:
ADF Members and Defence Civilian: 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.




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

MERCHANDISE



2025 Membership Renewal
\$25.00



Mailed hard copy of Sapper Summit
\$25.00



RAE Association Plaques
\$50.00



Donations—any amount



Apron with RAE logo—\$30.00



Caps Navy/White, Navy/Red or White—\$25.00 ea.



Polo Shirt Navy
\$45.00



Polo Shirt White
\$45.00



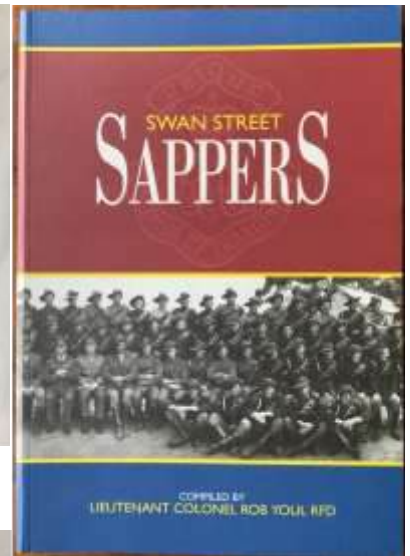
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Swan Street Sappers book
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Jacket—Soft Shell Navy
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Jacket—Fleece Top Navy
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Jacket— Fleece Top Sleeveless Navy
\$45.00

Association merchandise is constantly evolving. To check our current offerings and to order, visit <https://raevic.tidyhq.com/public/shop/products> .

Dress the part at meetings, events and excursions.

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**.

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

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» 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.

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

RAE OVERWATCH

is a Corps-specific subsidiary of Overwatch Australia, specifically to support serving and retired Sappers.

Sappers looking out for Sappers in times of need.

No matter how long you've been in or out.

The group Coordinator is Bob Ihlein (robert.ihlein@gmail.com) or phone 0434550556

You can also find them at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/RAEOverwatch/>



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.

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000

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13 11 14

