



THURUNKA

December 2006

Newsletter of the
Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc.

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Coming Events - 2007

Update your diary

Committee Meeting 1	Wed, 28 Feb 1800 hrs	RACA Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed, 07 Mar 1200 hrs	CTA Club
Committee Meeting 2	Wed, 28 Mar 1800 hrs	RACA Club
ANZAC Day March	Wed, 25 Apr 1030 hrs	Sydney City
Signals Reunion	Wed, 25 Apr 1200 hrs	City Hotel
Committee Meeting 3	Wed, 30 May 1800 hrs	RACA Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed, 06 Jun 1200 hrs	CTA Club
THURUNKA June edition	Mid-June	
* Reserve Forces Day March	Sun, 01 Jul TBA	Sydney City
Committee Meeting 4	Wed, 25 Jul 1800 hrs	RACA Club
Battle for Australia Service	Wed, 05 Sep 1100 Hrs	Cenotaph Sydney
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed, 05 Sep 1200 hrs	CTA Club
THURUNKA September edition	Mid-September	
Committee Meeting 5	Wed, 26 Sep 1800 hrs	RACA Club
* Eastern Region Corps Dinner	TBA, Nov	TBA
* Annual Memorial Service	TBA, Nov 1100 hrs	Signal Hill, South Head
* Annual General Meeting	TBA, Nov 1230 hrs	Paddington-Woollahra RSL Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed, 05 Dec 1200 hrs	CTA Club
* Committee Luncheon	Sun, 09 Dec 1200 hrs	TBA
THURUNKA December edition	Early-December	

TBC: Dates and details to be confirmed

NB: Dates and details of events may change but are constantly reviewed in an attempt to advise changes to members in a timely manner.



The Signals Memorial, Signal Hill,
Watsons Bay, Sydney.

Seasons Greetings

The President and Committee of the Association and the Staff of **THURUNKA** all take this opportunity to wish you and yours a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

In this issue

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Recent Events

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Next Issue

Copy for the next issue of **THURUNKA** must be in the hands of the Editor,

Ken Forway,
28 Mendelssohn Avenue
EMERTON 2770.

Or by e-mail:
thurunka@optusnet.com.au

NO LATER THAN
20th February 2007.

Recent Events

'Battle for Australia' Day 2006

This year, bathed in sunshine, the Battle for Australia Memorial Service at The Cenotaph, Sydney attracted over 1000 participants, veterans, family and friends as well as many of Sydney's lunch-time itinerants.

The service, honouring those who served on land and sea and in the air, repulsing the direct threat to Australia in 1942-1945, was once again honoured with PNG local chiefs in full regalia. The Address was given by the Maritime Commander, Rear Admiral Davyd Thomas AM CSC RAN

...and afterwards...

members and guests met in the CTA Club, Sydney, for the Spring Quarter Rhumb Corps Luncheon. The luncheon was visited by our Publisher, Michael Gategood, and his wife Dawn. Michael and Dawn were requested to attend by our President, Chris Ballantine, so that the Association could thank Michael for his most valued assistance to the Association as Publisher and the occasion was marked by the presentation of our plaque to Michael. Thanks was also bestowed on Dawn for her tolerance and assistance for her part in making *THURUNKA* a most appreciated newsletter from both inside and outside of the Association. It may

appear superfluous of me BUT I also thank Michael and Dawn for the contribution they make in achieving such a high standard and quality in *THURUNKA* and on a long-time and consistent basis.



Caption: Our President, Chris Ballantine, presenting our plaque to Michael and Dawn in appreciation of the fine work that they do in the publication of *THURUNKA*.

The Association's Annual Wreath Laying and Memorial Service 2006

In a perfect Sydney morning, soaked in late spring sunlight and warmth, the Association conducted its Annual Memorial Service at Signal Hill, South Head, Sydney. Once again the 110th Signal Squadron provided the Catafalque Party. The Service was conducted by Chaplain, Captain Tracy Sutherland, where members, friends and by-standers stood and remembered those members who have served in the Corps of Signals, especially those men and women who made the supreme sacrifice in their fight for freedom and the Australian way of life. In the prayers offered, those currently serving in overseas conflicts were remembered. We wish them a safe return home.



The Catafalque Party from 110th Signal Squadron march on.

Association President, Chris Ballantine lays the wreath on behalf of the Association members, families and friends in remembrance of those gallant men and women.



The Annual General Meeting

After the Wreath Laying and Memorial Service members and friends retired to the Paddington-Woollahra RSL Club where the President called the AGM for 2006. During the meeting the President, Treasurer and Auditor gave their reports. (Refer to the following pages for details). The President thanked the outgoing Committee and then declared all committee positions vacant and appointed Barbara Edwards as Returning Officer. The President then asked Bob Eaglesham if he would stand as honorary auditor for another year and he accepted. The President then appointed Bob Eaglesham as the Honorary Auditor.

A motion from the floor spoke to thank the outgoing Secretary, John Wynn Jones, for his contributions made to the Association over many years. This motion was soundly supported by all others in attendance. The President then thanked the returning officer and welcomed the new Committee to the table.

After the meeting the members and friends got together for a congenial luncheon, where, by tradition, old stories rose to the fore in even newer revised editions.

The Committee, Editor and Honorary Auditor for 2006-2007 are:

President	Chris Ballantine
Vice President	Tony Staas
Secretary	Michael McEvoy
Treasurer	Errol Hazlewood
Members	Ken Myers Barry Izzard John Wynn Jones John Rowlands
Editor <i>THURUNKA</i>	Ken Forway
Hon. Auditor	Bob Eaglesham

Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc

President's Report 2006

The year was again one of membership maintenance and a modest range of activities that appear to meet the expectations of our members. In the past attempts to increase the number and range of activities has achieved limited success.

The age base of our members has been traditionally in the mature bracket and the challenge has become maintaining a viable membership base in the short term and developing strategies for growth in the longer term. This year we started with 218 members and finished the year with 190 members. Unfortunately we lost 21 members who were substantially unfinancial. The problems of membership retention are not unique to NSW, with many associations faced with the same challenges we have.

A further challenge we are faced with is one of succession planning. Committee members have tended to be in for the long haul (my predecessor, Pat Buckley was in the chair for about 15 years!) however some are now feeling the need for a break. Unfortunately there hasn't been a show of interest from members to attend the annual general meetings and nominate for

the committee.

The committee met on five occasions during the year at the Royal Automobile Association Club in the City to manage the affairs of your Association. Attendance at these meetings is generally very good and the contribution of the committee members is acknowledged.

Your Association remains financially viable. We commenced the year with assets of \$14,761 and finished the year with \$14,785. The audited Treasurer's report will provide you with detailed transactions for the year. Our financial position has enabled us to increase our support to units in the way of awards and sponsorships.

Our regularly quarterly Rhumb Corps luncheons at the Commercial Travelers' Club, Martin Place, Sydney continued during the year. Whilst attendance varied from the core of about six members up to about a dozen, the opportunity for fellowship with a cold beer, a good steak and a glass of red is hard to beat. I encourage any members who have not attended the luncheon to give it a go - I'm sure you will return

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

on the first Wednesday of each quarter (March, June, September and December).

ANZAC Day has been reported in detail in *THURUNKA* and needless to say it remains our primary annual activity together with the combined Signals reunion. Attendance of about 80 marching has been consistent over the years, and the reunion has become an outstanding success. Numbers at the reunion at the City Hotel, Sydney was about 500 this year. Whilst I have received a few negative comments from members about the congestion and noise at the venue, the future of the Association lies with the younger members of the Corps who are now attending the reunion in increasing numbers. At this time there are no intentions of changing the reunion arrangements.

In stark contrast, Reserve Forces Day in July was a disappointment. The members attending barely reached a dozen and the absence of the Reserve Signals Units reflects poorly on the Corps. This year I was appreciative of the support of the 155th Signal Squadron, which provided the uniformed banner party.

The Eastern Region Corps Dinner was recently held at Randwick Barracks. The new barracks support contractor, ESS Services was an improvement on the previous contractor. The meal and service were excellent as were Army Band Sydney, which played during dinner. Unfortunately numbers were well down on previous years – about 50, although the Association was well represented.

I have previously commented on the decline in Corps traditions and domestic matters with the all-too-common explanation that the Army is too busy to worry about such matters. Such an attitude, in my opinion, will lead to further erosion of our esprit-de-corps. However, on a positive note, it is pleasing that Association member, MAJGEN Paul Irving AM RFD (Rtd) has been

recently appointed as the Corp's Representative Colonel-Commandant. The regional Colonels-Commandant will be replaced by Regimental Honorary Colonels.

One of my aims for the year was to improve liaison between the Association and the Corps units in Eastern Region. This has occurred. Many of the units have or had affiliations with WW2 unit associations however with the passing of time, these associations are slipping into history. Our Association is being called upon to fill this gap and moves are afoot to re-initiate annual and perpetual awards to the units and we welcome applications from Eastern Region Signals units for sponsorship in this regard. I look forward to this liaison increasing next year.

The year concludes with our annual memorial service at Signal Hill, South Head followed by our annual general meeting at Paddington RSL Club. Attendance at these two important activities has in the past been disappointing with very few members, apart from the Committee, attending. The Association does not ask much of its members and these two activities are an opportunity to contribute to the Association and have a say in its management.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the committee for their efforts keeping the Association running. Without this small, dedicated group, the Association would fold. I would also wish to recognise the support provided this year by the 110th Signal Squadron and the 155th Signal Squadron for the ANZAC Day March banner party, the Reserve Forces Day March banner party and the annual memorial service catafalque party.

Chris Ballantine
PRESIDENT
19th November 2006

Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc.

Financial Statement for the Year Ending 30th June 2006

Income	Last Year	This Year
Members subscriptions	2270	2095
Sale of merchandise	404	162
Interest received	291	518
Sundry income	12	6
Total Income	2977	2781
Expenditure		
Newsletter	558	714
Merchandise: Purchases	440	
Presentations		26
Administration/Allowance	577	556
Donations/Wreaths	440	410
Depreciation	337	210
Bank charges	0	0
ANZAC Day Function subsidy		436
Refunds	0	0
Total Expenditure	2544	2352
Operating Surplus (Deficiency)	\$433	\$429

Members Funds represented by:	
St George Bank balance 30 June 2006	\$13,358.20
Association Banner and Flags	\$210.00
Merchandise on hand	\$1216.41
Office equipment (wdv)	(nil)
Accumulated Funds	\$14,784.61

Chris Ballantine
President
1 Oct 2006

Errol Hazelwood
Hon. Treasurer
1 Oct 2006

Notes to the 2006 Accounts

Merchandise	
B/F 1 July 2005	1371
Purchases	0
Disposals	155
On hand 30 June 2006	\$1216
Association Banner and Flags	
Value @ 1 July 2005	200
ADD Ancillary equipment	10
Depreciation allowed	(nil)
Value @ 30 June 2006	\$210
Office Equipment	
WD Value @ 1 July 2005	
Fax machine	100
Omega Zip drive	110
Depreciation allowed	210
WD Value @ 30 June 2006	(nil)

The Association's cash funds are held in a Portfolio Cash Management cheque account with St. George Bank Ltd.

Auditor's Report

To the members of The Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc.

I have examined the financial records of the Association kept by and presented to me by its Honorary Treasurer and have conducted tests and reconciliation of these records and accounts.

I have obtained all the information and explanations requested from these records and accounts in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Association.

I am informed that the Association is a Non-Profit organisation and is exempt from Income Tax liability whilst it conducts and promotes its affairs within the applicable regulations of the Income Taxation Act.

I am satisfied that the accounts appear to record and explain correctly the transactions and financial position of the association for the year ending 30th June, 2006.

Robert J Eaglesham
Hon. Auditor
24th October 2006.



Vale **Bill Heugh**

Bill Heugh (110 Sig Sqn SVN 1971-72) passed away on Wednesday night, 30th August 2006. Details are not known.

Ron Auburn
Secretary/Treasurer
RASA (Qld)

Passing of **Betty Chessell**

Sadly, Joan Stephensen has advised that Betty Chessell passed away at 1.00 AM on Wednesday morning, 13th September 2006. Betty served from December 1943 to September 1945 at the Central Bureau at Ascot, a close suburb of Brisbane. It provided signal centre facilities servicing the principal WW2 joint Australian/US intelligence operations.

Ron Auburn
Secretary/Treasurer
RASA (Qld)

1736884 **Daryl John –(Vic) Morrow**

21 Sep 1949 • 14 Sep 2006
A National Serviceman, Soldier, Machine Gunner and Mate. Wounded in Action, 21 Sep 1971 laid to Rest, 21 Sep 2006
"A Soldier Died To-day"

It is with regret that we announce the passing of Di MacIntyre, the widow of the late LTCOL Glenn MacIntyre (ex CO 8 Sig Regt). Di passed away after a short but difficult illness.

Vale - 14664 **Kenneth R. Nicholson**

104 Sig Sqn SVN 22 Jun 71 to 11 Nov 71. Sadly, another of our brothers-in-arms has passed away; but he will be remembered. Ken's son, Daryl, advises that Ken passed away on Thursday 12th October 2006 after a short illness. Daryl also advises that his mother, Mary, is now, unfortunately, in a nursing home and suffering dementia. Daryl is accessing Ken's e-mail account. Ken & Mary have three children; Daryl, Veronica and Sean.

Ted Hawkins

Vale - 1735837 **Keith Edward Core**

104 Sig Sqn, SVN 8 Jul 70 to 9 Jun 71 Keith CORE of Tabulam, and formerly of the Gold Coast, passed away suddenly on Friday 23rd June 2006. Loved husband of Kaye; loved father and father-in-law of Kim and Dave, Michael and Naomi, Mark and Holly and Bryan; loving Pop to Joshua, Steven and Sharne. Aged 58 years.

Terry Fogarty
'phone: (07) 3266 6636

Vale - 24366 **Maurice G. (Mick) Anstee**

104 Sig Sqn SVN 1967-68. Paul Sams advises the passing of another of the old and bolds, Mick Anstee.

Ted Hawkins



Major Robert Allen RFD

Bob Allen was a gentleman educated at Trinity College Summer Hill, son of a Minister of Religion. His posting from 4CSE OCTU to the 8th Signal Regiment in 1966 brought a sense of purpose and life to the Regiment and Officers' Mess, which was just a small room in the drill hall. Nothing was impossible for Bob to resolve. He always asked the right questions at the proper time throughout his various postings. No one spoke ill off him, but some were ill the day after joint celebrations. His common sense and leadership had a flare in resolving awkward matters generally to the satisfaction of all. Perhaps this was a benefit from being a son of a Minister of Religion. His contributions to the Army and the Corps of Signals made it a pleasure to serve with him, as you knew he could be relied upon. If at any time he did not agree with your point of view (appreciation) he would say so, yet always tried to see the other view. It was a heart condition that denied him command of the 142nd Signal Squadron on the disbandment of the 8th Signal Regiments in 1975. He was posted as 2IC SUR, a less demanding position, to provide a recovery period for his heart. He did later, after regaining his health, command the 142nd Signal Squadron type A, in effect a mini Signal Regiment. Throughout his life he had insatiable desire to learn and this reflected most favourably upon him in his army and civilian occupations; the later as a Technical Purchasing Contract Officer with Electricity Commission.

In memorandum there are many who have been touched by Bob's gentle nature, a view to accept the inevitable and positive reason still serving in the Army one way or another.

Rest in peace, old friend.

MAJ Ken Myers RFD ED (Retd).

NX12225 Major General John Raymond Broadbent, CBE, DSO, ED

24 June 1914 - 27 October 2006

It is with deep sadness that I announce the death of John Broadbent. JRB, as he was affectionately known, was commissioned in the Sydney University Regiment before the Second World War. Following the outbreak of war, he joined 2/17th Australian Infantry Battalion, AIF, and served with the battalion in the Middle East, New Guinea and Borneo, where he commanded the battalion. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order and was mentioned-in-dispatches during the war. Following the war, he became a solicitor in Sydney and, in 1948, foundation Commanding Officer of 17th/18th Battalion, The North Shore Regiment. He later became successively Commander 5th Brigade and Commander 2nd Division; as well as serving for a term as President of the Law Society of New South Wales and later of the Royal United Service Institution of New South Wales.

BRIG D. R. LEECE PSM RFD ED (RTD)

30 October 2006

*Lest We Forget***SICK
PARADE****RASIGS Soldier Remains in Stable Condition****CPL Sarah Webster**

Sarah is back in Australia! To check out the latest go to this link:

<http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,20391199-2,00.html>

E-mail messages of goodwill etc can be forwarded to:

The Adjutant, 3 CSR, CAPT Phillip Cox.

E-mail: phillip.cox@defence.gov.au and he will arrange delivery to her.

Cards/letters may be sent to:

CPL Sarah Webster

3 CSR

Milpo

Lavarack Barracks

TOWNSVILLE QLD 4813

Ted Hawkins

FYI**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

DISCLAIMER The thoughts and ideas and any views expressed in the articles of *THURUNKA* are those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of The Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc. or the staff of *THURUNKA*. While contributions are welcome not all of them can be published. Those published may be edited for length and clarity. Contributions are acknowledged as from our source, unless otherwise informed. Contributions cannot be returned unless arrangements are made with the Editor prior to or upon submission of the contribution for publication.

Can the worm!

With all the worms going around, here's a good way to protect your address book.

When/if a worm virus gets into your computer it heads straight for your e-mail address book, and sends itself to everyone in there, thus infecting all your friends and associates.

The following trick won't keep the virus from getting into your computer, but it will stop it from using your address book to spread further, and it will alert you to the fact that the worm has gotten into your system.

Here's what you do:

Firstly, open your address book (and if you've got separate groups go into the first group). Then click on "new contact," just as you would do when adding a new address to your list.

In the window where you would type a person's first name, type in "AAAAAAA". Do the same in the space labeled 'screen name'.

For e-mail address enter:

AAAAAAA@AAAAAAA.AAA .

Here's what you've done and why it works:

The "name" AAAAAAA will be placed at the top of your address book as entry # 1. This will be where the worm will start in an effort to send itself to all those on your list. But, when it tries to

send itself to AAAAAAA, it will be undeliverable because of the phony e-mail address you entered.

If the first attempt fails (which it will because of the phony address), the worm usually goes no further and others on your list will not be infected.

Here's the second great advantage of this method:

If an e-mail cannot be delivered, you will be notified of this in your Inbox almost immediately. Hence, if you ever get an e-mail telling you that an e-mail addressed to AAAAAAA could not be delivered, you know right away that you have the worm virus in your system.

You can then take steps to get rid of it!



CORPS MATTERS

RASIGS Official Website: <http://www.ozsignalman.com>

A very warm welcome to the ranks for...
...Our New Signal Regiment.

The Raising of the 17th Signal Regiment



On 30th August 2006 the Australian Army's newest regiment was raised - the 17th Signal Regiment - command support for the 17th CSS Brigade, at Holsworthy, NSW. The raising parade was reviewed by DCA and HOC MAJGEN Ian Gordon, AO and the Principal Official Guest was the LCA, MAJGEN Mark Kelly, AM.

The Regiment was raised to support the 17th Combat Service Support Brigade. Units of the Brigade are sited as far away as Townsville and Hobart, with sub-units and detachments in regional Victoria, Perth and Darwin. The major units of the 17th CSS Brigade comprise:

- Townsville-10 FSB
- Ennoger-2 HSB
- Randwick- HQ 17 Bde, 9 FSB, 39 PSB
- Holsworthy- 1 HSB, 17 Sig Regt
- Hobart- 2 FSB
- Adelaide- 3 HSB

The 17th Signal Regiment traces its lineage back

through two current units, the 130th Signal Squadron and the 145th Signal Squadron. The combining of these units, the raising of a Support Squadron along with the Regiment represents a significant step forward in capability and a new level of inter-operability and independence. Previous units with links to the 17th Signal Regiment are:

1 st Australian Air Support Control	1941
1 st Air Support Signals Unit	1948-1958
504 th Air Support Signals Unit	1958-1964
130 th Signal Squadron (TASS)	1964-1992, 2004-Present
3 rd Army Signal Regiment	1955-1957
3 rd L of C Regiment	1957-1965
2 nd Signal Regiment	1965-1992
Land Force Signals Unit	1992-1995
145 th Signal Squadron	1995-Present
Logistic Support Force Signals	2004-Aug 2006

The Regiment has been granted the honour of wearing the colour patch of the 17th Australian Lines of Communication Signals. This, along with the Northern Territory Force Signals and the Northern Territory Fortress Signals, formed the Signals Unit of the 12th Australian Division. The 17th Aust L of C Sigs was raised during the Second World War in response to the increasing threat to Australia's security from the North and the constantly changing troop dispositions throughout the PNG theatre. Their role was the redevelopment of overland communications from the Northern Territory (then part of South Australia) to the rest of Australia.

The Acting Commanding Officer is MAJ M.J. Kitchin and the Commanding Officer from January 2007 will be LTCOL James Roche, currently SO1 CISEW, LHQ.

Where are they now?

My name is Ken Williamson; I served in Sigs from 1949 to 1964, then with Emergency Reserve from 1964 to 1976. I often think of those good years and wonder what has happened to some of those I had the fortune to serve with.

Here are a few names:

'Chook' Fowler, Fred Carlson, Pat Marmion, Reg Chambers, Bill Dickinson, Billy Bodger, Ian Tee, Bruce Lang, Les Punch, Reg Aldridge, Peter Maeder, Jim Messini, 'Midnight' Machin, Doug Gillshanon, 'Pom' Mathieson, Jock Lonie, Maurie Foster, Max Stark, Ken West, Dick Howard

Would it be possible to circulate this E-mail through other State Newsletters?

Anything you can do would be appreciated.

I live at Coolum Beach Qld

Regards

Ken Williamson

phone (07) 5446 2507.

E-mail from Ron Auburn RASA (Qld)

Along the same line:

For wide dissemination in the RASIGS community please.

1734980 Barry David Badcock, 110 Sig Sqn SVN, 27 Apr 71 to 16 Dec 71, is trying to locate two former mates who may be able to assist him with his DVA claim.

219508 Sig Robert Anthony (Bob) Burnet and 54331 Lt Lee Francis O'Neill

If you can assist, please reply to:

1 Barry Badcock [bbadcock@bigpond.com]

and

2 Ted (Blue) Hawkins [hawkins2@aapt.net.au]

Regards

Ted Hawkins

Looking for Mr Robinson

Francis Robinson is trying to find out some info on her father, who was in WW2 and the CMF after the war. She has been searching for info through Vet Affairs and Reveille but has not come up with anything as yet. Her Father was attached to Eastern Command Sig Regt and 5 Sig Regt Dundas.

Should any one have any info concerning her father, Mr Robinson, and can share it with her, her address is:

Francis Robinson

7/79-81 Arcadia Street

PENSHURST NSW 2222

208 Sig Sqn / 28 Com Brigade Terendak Malaysia

Name: Gary Brady

City: Melbourne

Hi, Gary Brady here, ex 1 RAR Vietnam 68-69, 28 Com Brigade Malaysia 69-71, VV Assn,

Over the years Australia provided a troop of Sigs to 28 Com Brigade. The unit was 208 Sig Sqn, it was British, but a troop of Aussies was there. I have tried various Sig sites, NO RESPONSE. Now these people were there.

Seriously, mate, all I require is a name, lead, body even dog-tags will do, these guys did exist, I'm hoping through your net work you'll be able to help,

Why does an Infantry person want this Info? A mate in the UK is looking for contact - they are ex 208.

Thanks

Gary

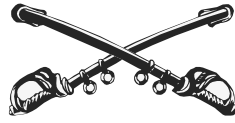
imagequilting@optusnet.com.au

Got a problem?

Check this out

Remember, there is always the Vietnam Veteran's Counselling Service on 1800 011 046 which is FREE to Australian veterans of all conflicts and even some family members qualify for FREE service. (Contact VVCS for more details).

MILITARY



History

RASigs in South Vietnam

Presentation by Colonel Commandant Northern Region,
LT COL Ian Willoughby

104 Sig Sqn Reunion at Twin Towns Memorial on Sunday 8th October 2006

We are gathered here in remembrance of those members of the Royal Australian Signal Corps who served in the Vietnam conflict from 1962 to 1972

It was in fact on 3 August 1962 that the first member of the Corps landed in South Vietnam. Then CAPT Barry Tinkler (later LT COL) was to lead a team of 5 Sigs Corps members in the initial 30 instructors of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV).

During the period of the conflict 4 officers & 12 WOs from the Corps served with the AATTV. WO2 Mike Gill was KIA on 6 May 1969. WO Ray Simpson received a VC for the action in which he rescued Mike Gill; however he died from his wounds before evacuation was possible.

709 Sig Tp was the next Corps presence in SVN. CAPT Dick Twiss plus 2 ORs landed on 26 May 1965 in support of the Australian Army Force Vietnam (AAFV) and 1RAR. The full troop of 2 Offrs & 46 ORs was in country by 2 June 1965.

No Signals staff was included in the initial AAFV. In July, MAJ Bill

Bodger from DSIGS arrived to study the comms problem and stayed 6 weeks.

On 14 September 1965, 527 Sig Tp Offr 2LT Jock Lonie & 29 ORs landed to operate the HQ COMMCEN.

They were joined by a detachment from 127 Sig Sqn - Project Sqn - under LT Owen Richards. Throughout the deployment in Vietnam, project squadron was to have detachments in country installing comms systems. They were also part of the withdrawal in 1971 - 1972.

145 Sig Sqn deployed to SVN in march 1966, supporting HQ AFV and the task force deployment to Nui Dat.

MAJ John Bird was OC and also Staff Officer Sigs on HQ AFV. The Sqn took over both 709 and 527 Sig Tp and included 552 Sig Tp. The main body was in country by 20 April 1966.

Sig Barry Logan was killed in action on 28 March 1967 while attached to US forces on OPERATION PORTSEA. The Sqn location in Vung Tau was named Logan Hill in his honour.

110 Sig Sqn replaced 145 Sig Sqn in April 1967 and after that time all replacements were on an individual basis.

Sig Thomas Moore from 110 Sig Sqn died in Australia of disease caught in Vietnam on 25 August 1970.

Sig D.A.B. Wallis from 110 Sig Sqn also died in Australia of disease caught in Vietnam on 17 March 1972.

During December 1971 and January 1972 the Sqn was closed down in Vung Tau and consolidated in Saigon to support the remaining Australian elements and the Australian Embassy.

They were finally withdrawn in December 1972. The last message to Australia was sent on 17 Dec 1972 of 1.79 million messages since 30 June 1965.

103 Sig Sqn deployed to SVN during April/May 1966 with the task force establishment at Nui Dat. The OC was MAJ Peter Mudd.

104 Sig Sqn replaced 103 Sig Sqn in April/May 1967 under OC MAJ Jerry Lawrence.

Individual replacements from 139 Sig Sqn, Enoggera into 104 Sig Sqn were used after then.

CPL Denis Donnelly of 104 Sig Sqn died as the result of an accidental discharge on 9 August 1967

SIG Alex Young of 104 Sig Sqn was killed in action during a mortar barrage on 16 May 1968 in the battle for the Coral Fire Support Base.

SIG Dennis Abraham of 104 Sig Sqn was killed in action on a US helicopter as radio detachment on 29 September 1968.

104 Sig Sqn ceased operations in Nui Dat on 16 October 1971 when

1ATF closed and the bulk of the Sqn boarded HMAS Sydney on 6 November 1971 for the return trip to Australia.

547 Sig Troop, of 2 Offrs & 35 ORs, arrived in country during May 1966 to provide electronic warfare support to 1ATF. The initial OC was CAPT Trevor Richards.

The Sqn relocated to Vung Tau in October 1971 and flew out to Australia on 23 December 1971.

Detachments from 152 Sig Sqn arrived in country with the SAS Sqn deployment in December 1966 under OC 2LT Peter Fitzpatrick. The Corps

history does not record the date of their withdrawal.

Other Corps members served in Vietnam with non-corps postings to the 3 headquarters, the civil affairs unit, infantry battalion signals platoon OCs, small ships and other elements.

In all 46,852 Australians served in Vietnam with approximately 16% (7,500) being members of the Corps.



Letters to the Editor

Dear ED,

You may be aware that the 'Army Combat Badge' is a new award for "any member of any Corps who was Force-assigned to an Infantry, Armour, Artillery, or Combat Engineer Regiment, etc, etc." 90 days continuous or aggregate service qualifies.

I have contacted the RSM Ceremonial and Awards in Canberra (WO1 Geoff Hansen, ph 02 6265 4091). He advises me that there will be something on the award website late next week (by end October) with four annexes, which may qualify Corps of Signals personnel, who were working with INF Bns, eg. Rad Tp members and perhaps linesmen and some other signals' trades

He advised that Corps Associations could make submissions through our Head of Corps to assess if Sigs might be eligible.

I also contacted Barry Tinkler (LTCOL Rtd) and he is supportive of our Corps being also eligible.

Sadly, info on our Corps involvement with Infantry ops is almost non-existent. But as many of our Corps members qualified for the "Thai-Malay" bar on the AASM, we might be OK.

Could this matter be officially brought to the notice of the relevant decision-makers and circulated via *THURUNKA* if we have a case?

Yours in friendship,
Bernie Binge

PS. This is retrospective, back to 1950. I also have records which show involvement of 28 COMWEL SIG SQN with INF Bns on operations on the Thai-border if you need them to support the case.

Bernie, thanks for the info. We will most certainly bring this to the attention of the powers-that-be and see if we have a case. In fact the President has informed me that the Association will liaise with the Directorate of Honours and Awards in respect to your suggestion. ED

Tail-end Charlie

“ ‘CHOOKS’ -- WHAT COOKS??”

The following are the extracts of e-mails between Ron Auburn, Denis (Rabbit) Hare and Dave (Buddha) Winch. Denis' answer is certainly logical enough but who has any more information on the matter?

G'day Dave,

At the 2005 Reunion was the first time I had heard the term "Chooks". I know it refers to signals personnel but where did it come from and when. There is a few of us old "Chooks" that are curious.

Regards, Ron

Hello Denis,

Ron Auburn asked me in an e-mail today about the word "Chooks" when referring to Sigs pers. He wanted to know where did the endearing term come from and when? He said that he first heard in used at the 2005 Reunion.

Well, I don't know the answer. Do you have any ideas about the origin?

Cheers mate. Buddha

Hello Ron,

Thanks for your e-mail.

The term 'Chooks' is certainly puzzling. I have sent off an e-mail to Rabbit Hare asking him the question. He may have an answer. I certainly do not know where it originated. However, during my career from 1970 to 1993 I had heard the word 'Chooks' mentioned many times but never paid much attention to it. Even when walking past the back of 139 Sig Sqn there was actually a "Chook Crossing" complete with painted Chook Prints stencilled on the bitumen that led to an wire mesh enclosure that housed the 139 Sig Sqn Mascot - a Chook. However, it never really entered my mind about the relevance of 'Chooks' to RASigs people; i.e. I just thought it was a mascot thing for 139 Sig Sqn.

Well, when I was with the RAVEN Commissioning Team, I was involved in an issue of HF Radio Equipment to the 152th Signal Squadron, at the Special Air Service Regiment in Perth. I was in the Sergeants' Mess having a cuppa at mornos and was staring out the mess windows that overlooked on the sporting ovals. In the middle of the oval was an 11x22 tent base station with some vertical antenna masts outside with about 3 or 4 signalmen walking around and continually bending down picking up various small parts of HF antenna CES. I was still gazing without taking too much in when the Infantry RSM there said to me "Look at the 'Chooks', there playing with the antennae". Finally, I had a Glimpse of the Blinding Obvious that the signalmen on the SAS oval were performing exactly as 'Chooks' do when they eat. It probably stood out more because the signalmen on the oval were at a distance and looked rather

small. I reckon it took about 20 years of my service before I finally realised what the word was all about!

Hopefully, Rabbit can shed additional light for us.

Cheers mate. Buddha

Hi Dave and Ron,

I can never remember the term "Chooks" used in my service days however it is widely used now for Signals. It, I believe, comes from the SASR and a term used to class mark the 'Chooks' from the 'Grunts'.

Some quotes from *152 Signal Squadron - The History of the Corps of Signals in SAS 1957-1982*:

Foreword:

... Within the SAS Regiment, the camaraderie that exists between the signalers is quite unique. To start with they proudly respond to the title 'Chook', the origins of which are clouded in mists of time and the odd can of amber fluid. Over the occasional beer at 'The House', that place of quiet and at times not so quiet reflection for past and present members of the Regiment, ask any 'Chook' about the origin of the term and there will be as many explanations as there are 'Chooks' present at the time. ...

The foreword was written by Lt Col Peter Fitzpatrick, AM (Retired)

Preface:

... Over the years they become known as the 'Chooks' to such an extent that now many Corps of Signals soldiers in the Army are still referred to as 'Chooks'. When this started, and why is a matter of conjecture and much discussion. ...

Page 14 (Late 1950's - RASigs working with 1 SAS Coy RAInf):

... It was probably during this time that the first reference to the term 'Chooks' was made. This was in contrast to most Corps operators of the era who were referred to as 'Sparks' or 'Sparky', a term originating from World War II.

Because of the sound of Morse code and the pecking motion of the keys operation, not normally associated with platoon operations (Infsigs not Morse trained) the Corps operators were called "Chooks" in the SAS Coy. ...

Hope this helps.

Regards Denis

From *The Communicator* September 2006 Edition

Well, as published in an earlier article of THURUNKA (about 2 years ago) we learned that 8 Sig Regt, then 2 Div Sigs Regt, had a cock as a unit mascot while in the Middle East. Any other comments, clues or ideas?...ED