



THURUNKA

December 2007

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

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

Coming Events - 2008

Update your diary now

Committee Meeting 1	Wed	27 Feb	1800 hrs	RACA Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed	5 Mar	1200 hrs	CTA Club
March edition		Mid-March		
Committee Meeting 2	Wed	26 Mar	1800 hrs	RACA Club
ANZAC Day March	Fri	25 Apr	1030 hrs	City
Signals Reunion	Fri	25 Apr	1200 hrs	City Hotel
Committee Meeting 3	Wed	28 May	1800 hrs	RACA Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed	4 Jun	1200 hrs	CTA Club
THURUNKA June edition		Mid-June		
Reserve Forces Day March	Sun	6 Jul	1030 hrs	Sydney
Committee Meeting 4	Wed	30 Jul	1800 hrs	RACA Club
RA Signals Plaque Dedication	Tue	19 Aug	1000 hrs	AWM Canberra
Battle for Australia Service	Wed	3 Sep	1100 hrs	Cenotaph Sydney
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed	3 Sep	1200 hrs	CTA Club
THURUNKA September edition		Mid-September		
Committee Meeting 5	Wed	24 Sep	1800 hrs	RACA Club
*Eastern Region Corps Dinner	Sat	Nov	1900	TBA
National RA Signals Re-union	Fri-Tue		Nov	Adelaide SA
*Annual Memorial Service	Sun	23 Nov	TBC	Signal Hill, South Head
*Annual General Meeting	Sun	23 Nov	TBC	Paddington RSL Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed	3 Dec	1200 hrs	CTA Club
*Committee Luncheon	Sun	7 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.

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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
15th February 2008.

Recent Events

Annual Wreath Laying and Memorial Service 2007

At five minutes to eleven the Catafalque Party was posted to the beat of the drum. This beautifully sunlit day was being disturbed only by the sea-plane overhead. At the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month all fell silent as those assembled bowed their heads in remembrance of those who had gone before and paid the supreme sacrifice in the defence of our way of life. This small but dedicated gathering was joined by local passers-by for the



Association's Annual Memorial Service at our Memorial Stone at Signal Hill, South Head Sydney.

The service that followed was conducted by Army Chaplain, Captain Tracy Sutherland. We were reminded of conflicts past and present and our determination for a just peace. We remembered and prayed for our troops around the world, particularly those in conflict areas, working to achieve a just world. The bugler piercing the silence at the Last Post and Reveille added foreboding to the moment.

The Catafalque Party was from 8th Signal Regiment with the drummer and bugler from Army Band - Sydney. Guests included the CO, 8th Signal Regiment, LTCOL James Rutups, and representatives from 17th Signal Regiment.

Our thanks go to Chaplain Tracy Sutherland, The Catafalque Party from 8th Signal Regiment and Army Band - Sydney for their contribution in the Memorial Service.

And afterwards...

(Continued on page 3)



Clockwise from left: Memorial Stone

Members, families and friends in remembrance of those who have gone before us.

Association President, Chris Ballantine, lays the wreath on behalf of the Association, members and friends with the Catafalque Party from the 8th Signal Regiment.

(Continued from page 2)

The Annual General Meeting

The Association members, families and friends retired to the Paddington RSL where the President called the AGM for 2007.

At the meeting, the President gave his Report. (Refer to the following pages for details.).

The president then declared all committee positions vacant and called for election of the new Committee. The new committee was elected into office for the coming twelve months. The Committee is the same as that for last year, except that Errol Hazlewood did not stand for Treasurer. These duties have been assumed by the President as a temporary measure, while the Committee looks for a new Treasurer. A vote of thanks was moved for Errol and passed unanimously.

The Committee, Editor and Honorary Auditor for 2007-2008 are:

President	Chris Ballantine
Vice President	Tony Staas
Secretary	Mike McEvoy
Treasurer	(Vacant) (Chris Ballantine)
Members	Ken Myers, Barry Izzard John Wynn Jones, John Rowlands
Editor <i>THURUNKA</i>	Ken Forway
Hon Auditor	Bob Eaglesham

After the meeting the members, families and friends got together in the bistro bar for a very congenial luncheon that lasted well into the afternoon.

Rhumb Corps Luncheon

Why not join us on the first Wednesday of the quarter, (March, June, September and December each year) for the Rhumb Corps Luncheon. Currently we meet at the CTA Club, Martin Place, Sydney at noon. This has proved a popular and easily accessible venue. We gather on a first-name basis, in an informal atmosphere, to catch-up with others, talk about those who are not there, how better it was in our day and start sorting out and solving problems, big and small, that would better human-kind. All this is over a steak and a wine and a beer or two (all at member's expense). No appointment or booking necessary, just turn up and join in.

Battle for Australia Day - 2007

Again this year the Battle for Australia Memorial Service at The Cenotaph, Sydney bathed in sunshine and attracted over 1200 veterans, family and friends as well as many of Sydney's lunch-timers and passers-by. The Association was represented by 6-8 members.

The service, to remember those who fought and died in the conflict in northern Australia and Papua New Guinea, was once again honoured with PNG local chiefs, in full regalia.

And afterwards...

...members and guests reformed at the CTA Club Sydney for the Spring Quarter Rhumb Corps Luncheon. This was a good ending to a perfect day.

Eastern Region Corps Dinner - 2007

The ER Corps Dinner proposed for Sat 17 Nov 07 at the Wardroom, HMAS Kuttabul was **cancelled** owing to lack of numbers. Only 20 acceptances were received - five from the Association and most of the remainder from 17 Sig Regt. The decision to cancel was made in full consultation with MAJGEN Irving (Hon Colonel), CO 17 Signal Regiment (host unit) and I.

A commitment has been made to re-establish an ER Corps Dinner Committee early next year to ensure the success of the 2008 dinner.

Chris Ballantine

President

Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc.

President's Annual Report 2006/07

How the years have passed – this is my seventh annual report as your President.

I have been honoured to lead the Association during this period and my role has been made easier by the dedication and effort of the members of the Committee, who have met and worked throughout the year to effectively administer the affairs of your Association. In particular, I wish to acknowledge the efforts of the outgoing Treasurer, Errol Hazlewood. Errol took on this important role in 2001 and has worked hard to maintain our healthy financial position, as the annual financial statements will indicate.

As at 30 June 2007 members' funds totaled \$15,072, an increase of \$287 over 2006.

The life-blood of the Association is our members and over the past twelve months new members have really only replaced deceased and outgoing ones, leaving us with a current membership of five affiliated WW2 Signal Associations and 235 members. Unfortunately many members are not currently financial. ANZAC Day usually boosts our membership, however as many of these members are serving, postings interstate results in the loss of members after 12 months. It appears that many service and community organizations have a similar struggle to maintain a viable membership base.

During the past 12 months I have represented the Association at a number of meetings, unit presentations, parades and dinners. During December 2006, I presented a perpetual Association trophy to 142nd Signal Squadron. These activities assist in the promotion of the Association to serving soldiers. Earlier this year I was pleased to attend the first birthday dinner of 17th Signal Regiment at Holsworthy.

ANZAC Day continues to be the Association's primary activity and numbers marching and attending the reunion have been most encouraging. The reunion has continued to be held at the City Hotel in the Sydney CBD and the new owner has indicated his full support for future reunions. This year the owner met the cost of the free drink vouchers given to members on payment of fees which amounted to about \$400.

The Reserve Forces Day March in July remains low in member priorities based on the very poor attendance each year. It is a shame that the Reserve members of the Association cannot allow time to attend the march and reunion. Despite the low numbers, the Association will continue to support the activity. This year the Association donated \$100 to the RFDay Committee to assist with their costs.

The Association also supported the Battle for Australia Commemorative Service at the Cenotaph, Martin Place, Sydney in September by attendance and a financial donation of \$100 to the organizing committee.

Our annual memorial service was held as usual at Signal Hill, South Head just prior to the Annual General Meeting. This year the service had added significance because it was actually on Remembrance Day. Whilst attendance has been traditionally low in numbers, it has not detracted from the solemnity of the occasion. Guests this year included members of the 17th Signal Regiment. My appreciation is extended to Army Chaplain Tracy Sutherland and to the Catafalque Party from 8th Signal Regiment.

On a less formal note, our quarterly Rhumb Corps luncheons at the Commercial Travellers' Club, Sydney continued during the year with an opportunity for relaxed fellowship over ale, a wine and a good steak. I encourage members to attend at least one luncheon each year.

Our newsletter *THURUNKA* continues to be issued each quarter and I have received very positive feedback from members and our fellow interstate associations on the quality of the publication. I acknowledge the hard work of our editor, Ken Forway and publisher, Mike Gategood in the production of the newsletter and the assistance of members of the committee in its printing and distribution. The increasing availability of the internet has assisted in the electronic distribution of *THURUNKA* to members. This has reduced production effort and postage costs.

I have previously commented on the poor state of affairs within the Corps in relation to domestic matters. Since the demise of the regional Corps Sub Committees and lack of communication from our Head of Corps, domestic issues have slipped into a void. A good example this year is the last minute organization of the ER Corps Dinner! If it had not been for the representations of the Association and several senior Corps members, the dinner would not have occurred. I understand that our Head of Corps is to change shortly and I trust the new HOC will take a more effective role in balancing operational and domestic matters than his predecessor.

On a more positive note, the Association has approached our Representative Colonel Commandant, MAJGEN Paul Irving, AM RFD to be our Patron and I am pleased to advise that the General has agreed in principle. Arrangements are proceeding to formalize the appointment, following which a formal announcement will be made in *THURUNKA*.

The support provided to the Association on ANZAC Day and at our Memorial Service by the 110th Signal Squadron, 8th Signal Regiment and the 17th Signal Regiment has been appreciated and I look forward to working with the new CO, 8 Signal Regiment, LTCOL Paul Hummerston and CO 17th Signal Regiment, LTCOL James Roche during 2008.

In conclusion, I encourage all current and past members of the Corps residing in NSW to support the Association through active membership.

I wish all members of the Association and their families a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

Chris Ballantine
President



Vale – Ray Ctercteko

We have been advised that one of our members, Ray Ctercteko has died. As well as being a long-time member of the Association, Ray was the Secretary for St Stephen's Anglican Church, Chatswood and would advise us of their annual

ANZAC Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance. Our thoughts go out to the family and friends of our mate, Ray.

Vale - 5714460 **Peter George Brice**, AACC, 104 Sig Sqn Vietnam 1967-68

10 December 1945 to 13 November 2007

It is always sad to inform you of the passing of another Vietnam veteran. Peter (Bruiser) Brice of Albany, WA was a member of the Australian Army Catering Corps and posted to 104 Sig Sqn Vietnam as a cook. Peter passed away after a long bout with cancer. He had been a TPI veteran for many years and it was his big heart that kept him going so long with this disease eating away at him.

Ted Hawkins

Phone: 07 5499 3704

Vale - 1/3930 SIG **Robert Brose**

Bob Brose died in Brisbane on 20th July 2007. He joined the Army on completion of National Service in 1955 and was allotted to RASigs. He qualified as a Lineman Field and PL

in 1956 and was awarded the Medallion for being Top Student. I was a student on the same course, 1/56 Lineman FD and PL, at Balcombe. On completion of the course Bob was posted to Malaya in early 1957 and was RTA (Returned to Australia) in 1958 following a motor vehicle accident. I served with Bob in Malaya during the emergency 1957-58 with 28 (Commonwealth) Brigade Signal Squadron.

Bernie Binge

Lest We Forget

SICK PARADE



T&PI Federation President, John (Blue) Ryan

It has been reported that Blue Ryan had a bit of a heart problem. I have spoken with Blue's wife and he is ok; he has been under tremendous stress as we all know and it has taken its effect. What he needs is some rest, no phone calls and a bit of free time.

Milton Kirk

Phone: (08) 94096682

ANZAC DAY 2008 - Signals Ambush at Bermagui NSW

Check the 104 Sig Sqn Web Site Notice Board for more Info: www.au104.org

Proposed Itinerary

Thursday 24th April 2008 (Fire Up Day)

Meet and Greet at the Famous Million Dollar View Bermagui Pub (Evening)

Friday 25th April 2008 (Anzac Day)

Dawn Service, March and Luncheon at Bermagui Country Club

Saturday 26th April 2008 (RAP Day)

Lay day with Possible BBQ lunch

Sunday 26th April 2008 (Farewell Day)

Mixed Bowls Morning at Bermagui Country Club, with lunch and farewells.

With it being a long weekend people will have to book early and first in best dressed. Ian is caretaker at the Anchorage Holiday Units and is organising a total book out of the 17 x 2 bedroom units for most to stay at a good price TBA.

See Bermagui Web Site: www.sapphirecoast.com.au/bermagui.htm

Contact

(ASAP if you would like to attend to assist with numbers, etc)

Bob Shearing: bermibob@bigpond.net.au

Mobile 0418 628 444

Ian Bardwell: bardy51@hotmail.com

Mobile 0409 001 407

Sounds like a good reason to get together if you are in the area next ANZAC Day, for a coldie or three. Good wishes to all who attend. Let all and sundry know about the Signals Ambush at Bermagui on ANZAC Day 2008 – the more the merrier.

Cheers,

Bob Shearing



CORPS MATTERS

RASIGS Corps website: <http://www.defence.gov.au/army/RASIGS/default.htm>

RASIGS Plaque at the AWM

This RASigs Plaque is to be dedicated on 19th August, 2008 at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. This is a good opportunity for members and friends of the Sigs community to congregate and honour those who have served their country in the Vietnam War. Should you wish to attend, please register your intent now. For contact details see end of article, "RASIGS Plaque Ceremony at the AWM, which follows this letter.ED

A letter from the President RASA (ACT).vb

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SIGNALS ASSOCIATION - ACT

Patron: MAJGEN R.P. Woollard AO

28 Dethridge Street
Higgins ACT 2615

The President,
RASIGS Associations and
Signals Vietnam Veterans Associations

September 2007

Dear Friends,

It has been a very quick year since I wrote to you and told you about the plaque project we were undertaking on everyone's behalf which would see a plaque depicting units who served in South Vietnam placed in the Sculpture Gardens at the Australian War Memorial. The good news is that our project officer Peter Murray, assisted by Neil Horne, has negotiated a suitable plaque with the Australian War Memorial and the detail is at the stage of being cast. I enclose a copy of the final product in black and white for your perusal and interest.

Peter has had quite a time negotiating with the AWM staff which included the Official Historian, other Staff and the Director himself. At times it took the joint efforts of both Peter and Neil to see that the wording in particular best described the units and sub elements of the Corps that served in South Vietnam. Whilst the wording is not exactly what we had hoped it would be, it is as close as could be achieved within the constraints of the AWM and Peter and Neil are to be commended on there efforts and persistence.

Peter has negotiated a date for the Plaque Ceremony which will be Tuesday 19th August 2008. He is awaiting confirmation of the date from the AWM but my sources indicate that the date is a goer and our day follows Long Tan Day.

Peter has proposed, and my Committee agrees with the thrust, that we now canvass widely for ideas on how and who could play the lead role in the ceremony. I have attached a draft e-mail that outlines his approach to Ted Hawkins, Denis Hare and Denis Nicholson requesting through their e-mail groups, feedback and suggestions. The same offer of course applies to our fellow Associations and I would be particularly pleased to receive ideas and suggestions from your Association members.

The cost of the plaque is currently being borne by a grant/donation from the Department of Veterans Affairs with the balance being guaranteed by an anonymous donor. I would like to canvass donations from Associations and individual members

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and others who may be prepared to assist with the purchase of the Plaque and associated ceremony costs. The AWM seek a fee which covers the placing of the Plaque in the ground and the morning tea cost is to be paid by the Plaque organisers with support with venue etc from the AWM. There is no intention of paying or subsidising specifically invited attendees.

I outlined the process of having a plaque dedicated at the AWM in my previous letter and once again make the suggestion that as a Corps we can pursue similar ventures to recognise other units that have served. We should take that matter up once we have completed this project, but we should be aware that other Corps and the other Services are quite aggressive in pursuing such ceremonies.

A Plaque Dedication Ceremony at the AWM is a moving experience. I attend such ceremonies on a regular basis as a member of the Australian Rugby Choir, the Choir contracted to support such ceremonies. I can vouch for the value of these Plaque Dedications and in doing so recognise the effort and importance that the Australian War Memorial Director and Staff place on such ceremonies. I believe that the dedication of this Plaque to our South Vietnam members who served and paid the supreme sacrifice is an opportunity for the Corps to gather at the Australian War Memorial next year and pay tribute and remember those who died, served and supported.

My Association will provide whatever support this ceremony requires and we would love to see this ceremony be the first of many such ceremonies for the Signals Community. To this end I would appreciate your assistance in advising members of the event next year, supporting a wide attendance and advising of the opportunity to comment and suggest appropriate inclusions and also appreciate consideration to making a donation to the Plaque Project.

The event will include a dinner/BBQ and other activities and we will be looking at the general administration including offering billets, support etc. Ideas and requests on this aspect also welcomed.

I look forward to hearing from you and your members.

Best Regards,

Bill Wattam

President
RASIGS Association ACT
(M) 0439 828 551
(H) 02 6254 1228
(F) 02 6254 1229

RASigs Re-union South Australia November 2008 Reminder

Website: www.rasigs.com/htm_pages/reunion2008.htm
Just a quick reminder about the re-union being conducted by the RASigs Assoc of SA in November 2008.

Proposed Itinerary:

Friday, 7th November, 2008

Registration. Conducted AT Keswick Barracks

Saturday, 8th November, 2008

Family Day BBQ.

This includes BBQ Meats & Salads (drinks will be available). \$20.80 per Adult \$10.55 per Child

Sunday, 9th November, 2008

Parade & Meal.

A lunch will be served after the parade (drinks will be available). \$25.90 per Adult \$10.55 per Child

Monday, 10th November, 2008

Reunion Dinner.

This includes a 3 course meal & 5 hours drinking package. The Army band will be playing. \$102.70 pp

We have attached a Registration Form for your convenience. If you intend to attend the re-union, don't forget to get your registration in ASAP.

Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project

Please take the time to check out the project's website:
www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au

It's all about building the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on ANZAC Parade in Canberra.

All comments, queries, further info, etc. direct to:
Ms. Cleon N. Walters (formerly RASigs)

Committee Secretariat

Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project Inco
PO Box 907

Jamison Centre ACT 2614

Mobile: 0402 905 578

E-mail: secretariat@peacekeepingmemorial.org.au

RASIGS Plaque Ceremony

Progressive details of the Ceremony at the AWM.

BACKGROUND

In 2000 the Director of the Australian War Memorial (AWM), Major General Steve Gower AO, introduced a scheme whereby units, squadrons and ships which had seen active service could dedicate a plaque to be placed in the Western Courtyard of the AWM to recognise the sacrifice and service of their members. So far nearly 100 plaques have been dedicated and there are about thirty on the waiting list. Eventually the entire Western Courtyard will be surrounded by these plaques and they are already attracting visits from thousands of pilgrims and visitors. The RASigs Association (ACT Branch), on behalf of all who served in Signals units in the Vietnam War, undertook to join this National scheme and arrange for an appropriate plaque. The design and manufacture of the plaque have been

completed and now we invite all RASigs members and ex-members, especially Vietnam veterans, and their guests to the Dedication Ceremony to be held on 19th August 2008.

The plaque's design was undertaken to the AWM's strict guidelines. It displays the names of every Royal Australian Corps of Signals sub-unit and detachment which fought in Vietnam and commemorates the service of all who served and particularly those who fell.

Its cost has been underwritten by an anonymous donor but all who wish to do so may contribute any amount from \$1 upwards.

The bronze plaque is 400mm by 300 mm, of landscape format, Helvetica font with all lettering in block form with a raised edge border. It bears an RA Signals badge and colour patch at its top, a dedication, the years during which RA Signals unit served on the Vietnam conflict, names of sub-units and detachments and the words:

**“IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO SERVED AND
ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO FELL”
“LEST WE FORGET”**

An image appears above. (It does not do our outstanding plaque justice, for which I apologise).

PROGRAMME

Since our plaque is to lie at a most significant national monument and arguably the nation's most visited tourist destination, the Australian War Memorial, we strongly feel that all who served our Corps, past and present, and their guests should be given the opportunity to attend and take part in our dedication ceremony. The AWM have approved our request for the Dedication Ceremony to commence at the Western Courtyard of the Australian War Memorial at 1000 hrs on Tuesday 19th August 2008.

After the ceremony, which will take one hour,

morning tea will be served then a specially conducted tour of the AWM has been arranged.

There will be a social re-union function for all RASigs members, ex-members and their guests on the evening before the dedication that is on Long Tan Day evening (18th Aug 2008). Details will be advised later.

Our Plaque Dedication Ceremony is to be held on the day after Long Tan Day so visitors to Canberra will be able to attend both Long Tan Day commemorations



as well our ceremony.

MEMORABILIA

Ted Hawkins is obtaining estimates of cost and availability of wooden plaque replicas. Details will be circulated as they come to hand.

The Australian War Memorial will supply a high quality photograph in due course. Copies may also be available for sale.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

If you would like to be kept informed of new information as it comes to hand, please register your interest with Peter Murray or Neil Horn. Thanks.

CONTACT DETAILS.

1. PETER MURRAY

Address: 22 Charlotte St, Red Hill ACT 2603

Tel 02 6239 4722

Fax 02 6161 4722

E-mail: pmurray@netspeed.com.au

2. NEIL HORN

Address: 64 Banks St, Yarralumla ACT 2600

Tel 02 6161 2706

Fax 02 6161 2708

E-mail: nlcmh@webone.com.au

FYI

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

ICE Campaign - "In Case of Emergency"



We all carry our mobile phones with names and numbers stored in its memory, but nobody, other than ourselves, knows which of these numbers belong to our closest family or friends.

If we were to be involved in an accident or were taken ill, the people attending us would have our mobile phone but would not know who to call. Yes, there are hundreds of numbers stored but which one is the contact person in case of an emergency?

Hence this "ICE" (In Case of Emergency) Campaign.

The concept of "ICE" is catching on quickly. It is a method of contact during emergency situations. As mobile phones are carried by the majority of the population, all you need to do is store the number of a contact person or persons who should be contacted during emergency under the name "ICE" (In Case Of Emergency).

The idea was thought up by a paramedic who found that when he went to the scenes of accidents, there were always mobile phones with patients, but they did not know which number to call. He therefore thought that it would be a good idea if there was a nationally recognized name for this purpose.

In an emergency situation, Emergency Service personnel and hospital Staff would be able to quickly contact the right person by simply dialing the number you have stored as "ICE".

For more than one contact name simply enter ICE1, ICE2 and ICE3 etc. A great idea that will make a difference!

Consider spreading the concept of "ICE" by storing an "ICE" number in your mobile phones today!

It really could save your life, or put a loved one's mind at rest.

'ICE' will speak for you when you are not able.

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. We welcome contributions and thank those who contribute to the pages of THURUNKA.

Taking a trip?

THIS ONE IS FOR THE CARAVANNING MEMBERS...

...Ramon Deed Veteran's Retreat

Please see below for details of a caravaner's rest stop half-way between Mildura and Wentworth and where current and former Service personnel and their families are particularly welcome.

You can also check out other Veteran's Retreats around Australia at: <http://veteranretreat.tripod.com/retreats.htm>

This Retreat was named after Ramon John Deed, 3788300, born 25 July 1945, 1 Fd Sqn, Vietnam 13 March 1967 to 10 May 1967. He was from Mildura and went to Primary and secondary Schools with other local Veterans. He died at the US Evac Hospital, Long Bin 10 May 1967, from wounds from a mine incident at the Horseshoe the previous day. His was one of many lives claimed by the ill-fated minefield laid by the Australians between Dat Do and Phoc Hai.

The Ramon Deed Veterans Retreat is situated just off the Silver City Hwy, in Scout Rd, Dareton NSW. It is 17 km from Mildura and 16 km from Wentworth. The Retreat is situated on 22 acres and is managed by the newly formed Committee and Members of the Wentworth & Coomealla Districts Sub Branch. All Veterans, Peacekeepers, Peacemakers, Serving and Ex-Service Personnel and their families are welcome to use the Retreat. There are caravan and Camping facilities available as well as clubrooms and BBQ area. It is a relaxing peaceful environment to catch up with old mates and make new friends. Costs are \$10.00 per night - \$70.00 per week including power. At this stage there are limited powered sites, so bookings are preferred.

The township of Dareton, is only 5 minutes away and provides, Doctor, Chemist, Post Office, Taxi Service, a great Take Away food shop, Ladies and Men's hairdresser, Fishers IGA Store, Bottle Shop and Garage. The Coomealla Memorial Sporting Club provides Bowls, Pokies, Bingo, TAB and wonderful meals. The Coomealla Golf Club fronts the mighty Murray River and is an excellent course. The boat ramp has just been upgraded and the fishing is great.

Resident caretakers are Steve and Jackie Barlow, and they can be contacted between 9 am and 4 pm daily on 03 5027 4447.

Directions are, Turn off the Silver City Hwy at the Coomealla High School into Tallawalla Rd, then turn into Scout Rd & follow it to the end.

Regards,

Arthur Willemse

Military history



Townsville Address - Long Tan 2007

Brigadier George Mansford

Among us today are those who marched off to war in Vietnam from these very streets of Townsville to the beat of drums and cheering crowds. It was a war they did not plan and did not seek. They were young, proud, determined and confident. They had been imbued with wonderful qualities and values taught to them by a previous generation who also had seen war. These were values which were considered the norm of our nation at that time and included that a promise was a promise and to believe a man's word was his honour and a handshake sealed it.

As youngsters they lived in a time when for most Australians, draft dodging was a dirty word, and the domino theory was a constant theme, and service of country was never questioned.

Today we honour the fallen and those who have since left our ranks. It is also appropriate that such an epic battle as Long Tan is the focal point, but it is not just this historic battle we remember, but all of those forgotten patrols and ambushes as well as other battles now recorded as military history, and some of which are now etched as battle honours on regimental colours and Guidons, which I might add are now carried with pride by a new generation of military serving in operational areas such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Timor.

Like those before them there was the same duty, dedication, humour, mateship, suffering, boredom, the unknown, and the same love of nation, and why not? It was just the third generation since ANZAC, and after all, the genes were strong, the pride in those before them evident, the traditions and standards of the Australian armed forces firmly embraced.

Like those before them they sometimes questioned orders but got on with the job. They argued about aussie rules and rugby, bet on the Melbourne Cup and called the cook a bastard. Home was where ever they hung their hats or dropped their packs. For many their kitchen was a battered dixie and a well used mug. Their bedroom was often a leaking tent and their mattress a wet sodden jungle floor or a rocky ridge line. Like those before them they dreamed of going home, and wondered if they would. They shared the dangers, the work loads, the sentry duty, even their mail, and at night in the smothering darkness they would share the dreams of their tomorrow. On occasions there was the need to share the last tin of food or water. Is there any wonder as to why there are such indestructible bonds within the ranks of veterans?

The men and women I speak of were the magnificent warriors of that time, they were never found wanting. No matter what the dangers, no matter what the hostile environment, no matter what the uncertainty of

tomorrow, all of them, each and everyone did their duty. There was never, never a time that these men and women did not do what was asked of them, and often did more.

Thus today is a time for all Australians to reflect on the past and remind ourselves of the lessons we should have learnt from our venture into Vietnam. There will come a time when all these veterans will be gone, and future generations will rely on the written history to understand who and what they were. To read that the Vietnam expedition, regulars, and young conscripts who represented all walks of life had rallied from bush, the big and little smokes to become one of the most disciplined and effective forces to leave our shores. It should record that this force despite betrayal at home, despite political blundering, despite a stupid birthday lottery to determine who would be conscripted, met the challenge with sound professionalism.

It is also a time to remind all in this great nation that the military has continued to pass on the ANZAC torch to each subsequent generations and it continues to burn brightly today. By comparison, the torch of commitment that was lit by politicians so long ago to honour the service of veterans has become rather rusty and spluttering with frequent injections of political hype and propaganda. Let me make it clear that I embrace all political parties with such criticism. .

It is a time to also remember that many who did return suddenly

found themselves scattered throughout a society which they no longer understood. For some of these veterans alone with their personal traumas, there was no more the bark of a sergeant to discipline them, no more the sound of a military band to stir pride, no more a comrade to talk with, no more the brilliant warped humour where they could laugh at each other and mock the military system they served with total loyalty. They were alone with the past. Some decided it was enough and few noticed their passing. Sadly such trauma had not stopped and now embraces a new generation of veterans. The question we must ask is why such suffering treated with such indifference. Why such neglect? Have we not learned anything?

In recent times there was yet another mate who passed away. He had suffered for some time. Like most from his generation he never complained but shrugged his shoulders and got on with life. I can recall him saying despite his pain "this country was worth fighting for, and still is" and who among us could argue with such sentiment? However, his death finally convinced me that enough is enough in regards that false handshake, that spluttering political torch and those broken promises.

It is time to once more remind our community that there has

been betrayal of veterans from all campaigns. The root causes are apathy, ignorance and hypocrisy by a current generation of politicians representing all parties and a questionable policy within the national RSL.

Despite political hype and excuses the undeniable reality is that veteran entitlements have been consistently eroded by various governments in recent years. The examples are numerous but often clouded with propaganda by spin doctors and clever smoke screens.

The truth is that our mates suffering from mental and physical disabilities do not need beggar bowls but simply to seek what is their right. It is incomprehensible for them to beg.. Their life has been one of pride, mateship, respect, sharing, of sacrifice, and love of country, and serving to protect it and their families, regardless of the unknown consequences of that time, but now having survived their military duty there is uncertainty of tomorrow and beyond because of questionable policy.

It is a time for political parties to replace arrogance and benevolence with honour and recognition.

To-day our ranks grow thinner and that in itself is a reason to bond even closer. Now is the time to stand fast. To demand a better deal for our disabled mates. To ensure those

men and women currently serving on operations and those to follow are neither politicised nor ignored by indifferent and self-indulging politicians.

- It is also a time yet again to remind our national RSL leaders that they must be seen to be in the vanguard, and we must hear of their arguments to pursue and maintain the rights of veterans.
- No matter what the anger, the frustrations, we must continue to be a vibrant element of the community and not isolate ourselves from it.
- We must never lower our standards. We must attack relentlessly with energy and sound argument to pursue our cause but never to the point of personal abuse. These were the techniques of those who demonstrated against us when we were once young and we detested all of them for it... As veterans we are above that and abuse should not be part of our armoury. You are veterans who still stand tall and can look anyone one in the eye and say with pride.....I am a Vietnam veteran and fought with the best mates this country could offer.
- Until that next gathering, take bloody good care.

So, You don't have a computer!

We have, for a while, been using the Internet to produce and distribute *THURUNKA*. Over this time even the collection and distribution of general Association business has been by e-mail. This is a faster and more convenient mode of communication. As Committee members, we do not have to rely on post or wait for the next meeting to exchange documentation on the Association's business.

In the distribution of *THURUNKA*, about half the copies are sent by e-mail over the Internet. But we still send out hard copies of *THURUNKA* to those members who

prefer it or do not have a computer. I must stress that we will continue to post-out *THURUNKA* while hard-copy is needed.

In the pages of *THURUNKA* you are seeing increasing references to websites. This is done because it would be impractical for us to extract and distribute the content in what is, in many cases, just reference material. Yet it is considered that members might want to take advantage of these references.

But what if you do not have a computer or know how to use one?

Well, I will let you into the secret. If you are not already aware, you may be able to access the Internet at your local library. Many libraries now have computers available for their customers. I would be surprised if your local library does not have this Internet access. You may need to join

your local library, but this could open up a new world for you if you are able to trip to the library now and again. You may, of course, already be a library member.

If you do not know how to use the computers, ask the librarian. The library might even run courses on how to use them. One of the most popular courses in community colleges is teaching seniors how to use computers and the internet! You could even open up your own e-mail account (such as on hotmail or yahoo) and send e-mails around to friends and family members who also have Internet access.

A point for your consideration.

Ken Forway.

Editor,
THURUNKA

Search and Find



Vietnam veteran artist Christopher Gunn

Does anyone know the whereabouts of Vietnam veteran artist Christopher John Gunn, Service No. 4718778, gunner (4th Fd Regt-RAA), date of birth 25/12/1945, born SA Australia. Would Christopher or anyone knowing his whereabouts please contact Vietnam veteran artist Peter Daly.

All replies direct to:

Vietnam veteran artist

Peter Daly

Phone: 02 6646 0092

E-mail: pfdaly@bigpond.com

Searching for Vaughan BAXTER

The ex 'appys' (Army apprentices) are looking for info on one of their group: 58641, BAXTER, Vaughan Charles (Barney) They were told that he was killed in a tractor accident in the west of Australia but a check could find no evidence of this event. Does anyone know where and what happened to him? He was a Signal Corps Warrant Officer, chief clerk; he was in 1 Inf Bde Sigs, 5 Sig Regt and others.

If you have contact details or relevant information on the above member, please advise:

(1) Ted (Blue) Hawkins (110 Sig Sqn SVN)

hawkins2@aapt.net.au; and

(2) Lorrie Johnstone (110 Sig Sqn & others SVN)

sinai@aapt.net.au.

Regards,

Ted Hawkins

Phone: 07 5499 3704

Searching for Gordon Gotch and Allan Keast

Does anyone know anything of Gordon Gotch, he was our Tech Elec in Borneo in 1966?

Also my sgt., Allan Keast, same time. We were with 22 Const Sqn & 570 Sig Troop.

All replies direct to:

Charlie Manych

Phone: 07 5424 7259

E-mail: charliemanych@bigpond.com

Regards,

Ted Hawkins

Phone: 07 5499 3704

Searching for CAPT Tony Woodman and MAJ Tony Rasmussen

38482 CPL (later CAPT) Anthony John (Tony) Woodman, 520 Sig Tp, 709 Sig Tp Vietnam 1966-67 and MAJ Tony (Rass) Rasmussen.

Recently Ray Wilson was having a couple of ales with some old mates and talking of times and people they remembered from their service days (as one tends to and more so when suitably mellow) and two officers they served with at 4 Sig Regt were mentioned; they were:

Capt A.J (Tony) Woodman; and

Maj Tony (Rass) Rasmussen.

Neither Ray nor his mates have heard of either of them for many years. Would you be good enough to canvass your net and see if they can be found/contacted? Ray can be contacted at beachbumswil@bigpond.com or on 07 4938 7615 Both officers served in 4 Sig Regt, Brisbane, in the early to mid-1970s. If you have contact details for the above members, please advise:

WO1 (ret RSTT) Ray Wilson beachbumswil@bigpond.com;

and

Ted (Blue) Hawkins hawkins2@aapt.net.au

Thanks in advance.

Regards,

Ted Hawkins

Phone: 07 5499 3704

Searching for John Kenelm Byrnes

Searching for 235207 CAPT John Kenelm Byrnes MID HQ AFV (Army) 13 June 1967 to 19 June 1968

If you have contact details for the above member, please advise:

Roger Greene: roger@telecon.com.au

and

Ted Hawkins: hawkins2@aapt.net.au

Regards,

Ted Hawkins

Phone: 07 5499 3704

Vietnam Photographs from Brad Read

(ex 110 Sig Sqn SVN 1969-70)

Please see below for Brad's link to his on-line photo album of Vietnam. There are a LOT of photos.

<http://picasaweb.google.com/bradanne12/SVN19691970>

Regards,

Ted Hawkins

Phone: 07 5499 3704



Letters to the Editor

20th Anniversary of the Disbandment of Army Signal Squadrons in Tasmania – Reunion: 12-14 Oct 2007

I have written this message to express the sincere appreciation of the RASigs Association, Tas Branch and in particular, the Organisers, for your support/assistance in contributing to the outstanding success of our weekend Reunion.

Nearly one third of the participants were visitors from interstate and overseas, many of which had not returned to Hobart previously for periods of between 30-40 years.

To see people like Owen Cook, Denis Buckley, Alan King, Geoff Martin, Frank Moore, Brendon Evans, Peter McClean, John Bellette, Lance Townsend, Maree Riley, Simon Kelland, Chris Beauchamp, Alan Nunn, John Druery, Paul Hodgman and the Marshall brothers (just to mention a few) make great efforts to be with us was a great thrill for the organisers and our fellow Branch members respectively.

Please pass on our sincere thanks to your “networks of spies”. They have some wonderful contacts! (Personally I have never doubted the ability of RASigs personnel to locate fellow “Sigs” – they are clearly “the best” as communicators and that view has certainly been reinforced over the weekend).

We also appreciated the efforts of Jim Gordon to hunt down and retrieve copies of important Unit History from the Corps Museum at Watsonia.

As most of our visitors would be aware, David Harcourt and Lindsay McCarthy made video, sound and digital photographic records of the weekend functions and it is intended to print some CD/DVD's which will be available from Tas Branch, to interested persons, for a yet to be determined “mates rates” price. If you are interested in a copy, just provide a brief expression of interest and I will ensure further details are forwarded in due course.

Again, to all and sundry who assisted us to contact our former Sqns mbrs, a big thank-you. Our “25th” in 2012 certainly looks like being a “bolter”.

We hope to see many of you in Adelaide for the national reunion in 2008.

Dick Goodwin.

Vice President, Tas. Branch,
On Behalf of the Organising Group,
18 Oct 2007

Commonwealth Signal Corps History

Dear ED,
My latest book is out in a few weeks. Please see the attached flyer for details. There is a lot of information on RASigs.

Regards,

Cliff Lord

(Hon. Historian RNZSigs)

Pls note that the flyer/order form is an attachment to this edition...ED

Royal Corps of Signals Supplementary Volume

Dear ED,

Clarification on discounts for Signals books

It seems that the flyer we sent out has caused a little confusion. (See attachment)

The Supplement Volume, the forthcoming book due at the beginning of November, is available from us at 10% discount. The 50% discount relates to purchasing a copy of the paperback reprint of the original volume at the same time i.e., the 50% would be taken off the price for the paperback, not the Supplementary Volume.

I would love to give everybody 50% off the forthcoming book, but unfortunately would be rapidly out of business if I did so!

Thanks for your understanding!

Best wishes,

Duncan Rogers

Helion & Company Ltd

www.helion.co.uk

Tail-end Charlie

When the cans were cleared away from a very successful Sigs re-union at Anglesea Barracks it was noticed that...

The Anglesea Cannon was missing!

This is a brief history of the Cannon and e-mails that went around in the precision operation to recover one of the Corps most interesting and valued assets. Read on...

----- Original Message -----

From: Darky Edwards

To: Undisclosed-Recipient

Sent: Friday, November 09, 2007 8:22 AM

Subject: Fw: Anglesea Cannon Missing

Please give the attached the widest dissemination ... this cannon is a piece of history and could be anywhere in the world. So please pass it on.

The Attachment

ANGLESEA CANNON MISSING

The Anglesea Barracks Sergeant's Mess is seeking a small wooden cannon that has an incredible history – even being



taken to war zones.

Mess secretary, WO2 Michael Hinchey, said HMAS Wagga Petty Officer's Mess first presented the wooden cannon to the Mess in 1956.

"This presentation commenced a tradition where the cannon would be liberated from the Mess for a fee which would go to Legacy," WO2 Hinchey said.

At times the cannon would be absent for many years, being taken around the world and even transferred to other ships for the return trip to Anglesea.

Now the cannon has disappeared and the Anglesea Barracks Sergeants Mess has began a world-wide search to locate it.

"The cannon acquired a history which was known across the US, NZ, Canadian and Australian navies," WO2 Hinchey said.

"Whenever ships visited Hobart, attempts would be made to remove the cannon from the Sergeant's Mess.

Despite circumnavigating the globe on the USS Missouri and being taken underwater on HMAS Ovens, it was a trip under the North Pole in 1985 that saw the cannon enter into military history.

"The cannon was on board the USS Aspro, a nuclear submarine, on its voyage under the North Pole."

"The USS Aspro carried out an historical rendezvous with another nuclear submarine, the USS Queenfish, under the ice and the cannon was transferred to the USS Queenfish during that time."

As each liberation and transfer took place, small plaques were added to the base, with additional wooded bases being added as more space was needed.

"The bottom base is actually part of the decking of the USS Missouri," said WO2 Hinchey.

Not all the liberations were by the Navy, with the Red Berets Parachute Display team, an NZ MP unit and a RAAF unit possessing the cannon at some stage.

It was HMAS Westralia which took the cannon to war on a tour of duty in the Persian Gulf in 1991. The cannon was later taken into Kuwait before being returned to Australia. The cannon was taken to the Antarctic in 1995 and also did a tour of duty into East Timor on board HMAS ANZAC in 1999.

"It was returned to the Sergeant's Mess shortly after and remained there for some time until it was noticed missing several years ago," WO2 Hinchey said.

"The history of this small wooded cannon is impressive and we would like to hear from anyone who can assist in returning it to the Mess – along with the donation for Legacy."

"We are hoping that it is on board a ship or perhaps sitting in a mess somewhere around the world. We do expect the search to go overseas."

WO2 Hinchey can be contacted at michael.hinchey@defence.gov.au

End of Attachment

(Continued on page 15)

From: Ted Hawkins
 Sent: Tuesday, 13 November 2007 11:56 AM
 To: Michael.Hinchey
 Subject: FW: Anglesea Barracks Hobart SGT's Mess Cannon Missing
 For Widest Dissemination in the current and retired Australian Defence Force Community Please
 Anglesea Barracks Hobart SGT's Mess Cannon Missing
 All replies direct to:
 Anglesea Barracks SGT's Mess
 Mess Secretary
 WO2 Michael Hinchey
 E-mail: michael.hinchey@defence.gov.au
 Michael

There are over 700 e-mail addresses in the BCC Box; mainly RASIGS Vietnam veterans but also other Corps and individuals from WW II to current.

I know that we RASIGS types have a reputation for liberating or borrowing items on a 'long-term' basis, but I think this could be a copy-cat action similar to the gnome-nappers who snatch a gnome from a front garden and then take him on a long journey from where the gnome sends postcards to the owner and then the gnome, after finishing his journey, is returned to the front-garden under dead of night.

Regards
 Ted Hawkins
 Phone 07 5499 3704

From: Michael Ryan
Sent: Friday, 9 November 2007 11:57 AM
To: Undisclosed-Recipient
Subject: Fw: Anglesea Cannon Missing
Bring that cannon back immediately stretch!!!

 From: Dick Goodwin
 Sent: Tuesday, 13 November 2007 8:48 AM
 To: Undisclosed-Recipient
 Subject: FW: Anglesea Cannon Missing
 Bluey – you're not hiding this "weapon" in the far north are you??
 Dick

From: Ted & Julie Hawkins [mailto:hawkins2@aapt.net.au]
Sent: Tuesday, 13 November 2007 6:12 PM
To: Undisclosed-Recipient
Subject: FW: Found - Anglesea Barracks Hobart SGTs Mess Cannon Missing
 For Widest Dissemination in the current and retired Australian Defence Force Community Please
Found - Anglesea Barracks Hobart SGT's Mess Cannon Missing

All replies direct to:
 Anglesea Barracks SGT's Mess
 Mess Secretary
 WO2 Michael Hinchey
 E-mail: michael.hinchey@defence.gov.au
 Michael has asked me to express his thanks to all who replied to both Michael and me (who forwarded the e-mails to Michael). The cannon has been found at RAAF Base Williamtown (near Newcastle) and will be returned ASAP. It seems that the new service personnel are not much different to the old service personnel; they still 'borrow on a long-term basis'.

Regards
 Ted Hawkins
 Phone 07 5499 3704

*Yes, with great relief, the Cannon is on its way home.
 The tradition continues.*

Have a safe and happy Christmas and New Year...ED.