



# THURUNKA

June 2008

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

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## Coming Events - 2008

### Update your diary now

Reserve Forces Day March	Sun	6 Jul	1100 hrs	College Street, Sydney
Committee Meeting 4	Wed	23 Jul	1800 hrs	RACA Club
RA Signals Plaque Dedication	Tue	29 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, Martin Place
THURUNKA September edition		Mid-September		
Committee Meeting 5	Wed	24 Sep	1800 hrs	RACA Club
Eastern Region Corps Dinner	Fri	17 Oct	1900 hrs	Randwick Offr/Sgt Mess
RA Signals Re-union SA		7-11 Nov		Adelaide SA
Annual Memorial Service	Sun	23 Nov	1100 hrs	Signal Hill, South Head
Annual General Meeting	Sun	23 Nov	1230 hrs	Paddington RSL Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed	3 Dec	1200 hrs	CTA Club, Martin Place
** Committee Luncheon	Sun	7 Dec	1200 hrs	TBA
THURUNKA December edition		Early December		

\*\* TBC: Dates and details to be advised or 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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## DID YOU SERVE IN THE CMF/RESERVES?

60 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE NATION  
JOIN THE RESERVE FORCES PARADE  
SUNDAY 6 JULY 2008

DETAILS ON PAGE 10

RESERVE FORCES  
ENHANCING AUSTRALIA'S  
DEFENCE CAPABILITY

## ER Combined Officers/Sergeants Corps Dinner

will be held at  
Randwick Barracks  
Officers/Sergeants  
Mess on Friday  
17<sup>th</sup> October 2008,

Timings:  
1900 hrs for 1930 hrs  
(timings tbc).  
Cost approx. \$50.

## Next Issue

Copy for the next issue of  
THURUNKA must be in the  
hands of the Editor,  
Ken Forway,  
28 Mendelssohn Avenue  
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Or by e-mail:  
[thurunka@optusnet.com.au](mailto:thurunka@optusnet.com.au)  
NO LATER THAN  
15<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

# Recent Events

## ANZAC Day 2008

The morning started with showers which were a nuisance during the March assembly, however, they had cleared by the time Post WW2 Signals marched-off at 1145 hrs.

Our numbers were about 100, similar to 2007 and it was pleasing to welcome visitors from Queensland, Victoria and South Australia. One of our visitors met an old SVN mate for the first time in over 30 years.

The smartly turned-out Banner Party was provided by the 17th Signal Regiment followed by a uniformed contingent from the 8th Signal Regiment, providing an impressive marching body.

The Combined Signals Reunion was again held at the City Hotel and numbers were estimated to be 500. The Association was pleased to receive 25 applications for membership from current and former members of the Corps at the reunion. They are welcomed elsewhere in *THURUNKA*.

It was very satisfying to see the mix of attendees. There were the members from the WW2 17th Line of Communication Signals Association, Korea, Malaya and Vietnam veterans,



**The President and Vice President lead the Association marching through the streets of Sydney on ANZAC Day, 2008**

current and former Navy and Air Force. Units represented included 8th Signal Regiment (142 and 155 Signal Squadrons), 17th Signal Regiment (130 Signal Squadron, 145 Signal Squadron, Support Squadron and 127 Signal Troop), 126 CDO Signal Squadron and 301 CDO Signal Squadron.

The stamina of our younger Corps members is impressive as they headed off for other watering holes when the reunion

wound up at 1700 hrs. The licensee stated that some of the members had knocked on the hotel door at 0700 hrs and he was pouring schooners shortly thereafter.

*Chris Ballantine*

President



**A few of the many members of the Association, who marched in Sydney on ANZAC Day.**

# Association Matters

## Appointment of Patron, Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc

The Committee is honoured to announce that Major-General R.P. (Paul) Irving, AM RFD has graciously accepted appointment as Patron of the Association. Major-General Irving is currently the Corp's Representative Colonel Commandant.

Major-General Irving follows in the footsteps of eminent past Patrons including the late Brigadier Bill Artis and the late WO1 Pat Buckley, AM.

Commissioned from OTU Scheyville during the second Post World War 2 National Service Scheme, Major-General Irving had a number of regimental postings including 5th Signal Regiment, 8th Signal Regiment and 142nd Signal Squadron, which he subsequently commanded.

Major-General Irving's senior appointments included first Commanding Officer of the re-raised 8th Signal Regiment, Commander Reserve Command Staff College, Director, Army Personnel Agency, Sydney, Commander 8th Brigade, Deputy Commander Training Command and Commander 2nd Division.

In his civilian career, Major-General Irving holds legal, accounting and industrial relations qualifications and works as a senior executive in the NSW public sector.

*Chris Ballantine*

President

*We welcome MAJGEN Irving as our Patron and wish him well in these duties...Ed.*

## Financial Report

Members' subscriptions are the financial life-blood of the Association. The funds from this source meet the cost of administering the Association, publishing and distributing the quarterly newsletter and from time to time, making grants to Eastern Region Signals Units.

The committee recognises that for some members, the subscription could become a burden and for that reason has maintained the annual fee at \$10 for well over a decade. It is unfortunate that some members have become tardy in paying their fees which has placed a financial burden on the Association and the responsible members who regularly pay their fees on time.

As at 28 May 2008, the following figures indicate the financial status of our members:

- 163 members (73%) are currently financial (to 30 June 2008)
- 119 members (53%) are financial to 30 June 2009 and beyond

- 44 members (20%) of the currently financial members will need to pay their fees prior to 30 June 2008 in order to remain financial
- 30 members (13%) are up to 12 months in arrears
- 32 members (14%) are over 12 months in arrears

The committee will be reviewing the continued membership of members who are over 12 months in arrears.

All members are reminded of their responsibility to remain financial by the prompt payment of fees. Fees may be paid in advance.

If you are not sure about your financial status, please contact the Acting Treasurer, Chris Ballantine on tel 02 9972 4957 or e-mail [cjb47@optusnet.com.au](mailto:cjb47@optusnet.com.au). Payments may be mailed to Chris at 8/62-64 Lynwood Avenue, Cromer NSW 2099.

Chris Ballantine

Acting Treasurer

## WELCOME to our new members

We have 25 new members who enlisted into our ranks on ANZAC Day. This is the largest number that we have had for a few years and gives us confidence in the continuance of the Association into the future.

We welcome the following:

SIG Henry Acopian	155 Sig Sqn
LT Daniel Armstrong	17 Sig Regt
CAPT Bryan Brackin	ex-125 Sig Sqn
SIG Gerald Casey	ex-HQ SIGS BCOF
CAPT Kane Dalton	SUR
SIG Ashley Flanigan	Corrimal, NSW
SIG Mario Habib	155 Sig Sqn
SGT Peter Hanstock	ex-110 Sig Sqn
CPL Michael Holt	Padstow Heights, NSW
LCPL Peter Ivey	1 CDO
SGT 'Johnno' Johnston	17 Sig Regt
CAPT Lloyd Malone	301 Sig Sqn
LCPL Neil Mansell	Perth, WA
Mr Tim Minion	301 Sig Sqn
SIG Michael Rutherford	142 Sig Sqn
Mr Tom Somers	17 Sig Regt
SIG Jie Tan	155 Sig Sqn
Sig Ajay Tarda	7 Sig Regt
Mr Paul Taylor	Ermington, NSW
CPL Peter Thomson	3 CSR
MAJ Chris Thrupp	301 Sig Sqn
SIG Nathan Townsend	17 Sig Regt
SIG Kevin Ward	127 Sig Sqn
SGT Tim Wedesweiler	126 Sig Sqn
Mr Laurie White	ex-133Div Loc Bty

*Ken Forway*

Membership Member

## RASigs Ass'n Standard

Colleagues,

I attended the RFDay March brief last Thursday night with Barry Izzard. At the briefing Associations were presented with their new standards, including ours. The standards were presented by MAJGEN Warren Glenny AO RFD ED. Our Standard is in the form of a Corps Flag, edged in gold tassels. The wording "Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW)" appears in black at the top of the standard. The Standard is affixed to a wooden banner pole and can be carried by one person, like a flag. Unlike the Association Banner, the fabric is a lighter synthetic and the embellishments are screen printed not overlaid fabric. The Reserve Forces Day Committee (RFDC) has requested that the Standards replace banners, flags etc at the RFDay March and be carried by one member in a standard dress of blue jacket, white or blue shirt, Association tie, Corps beret and white gloves. Given that RFDC secured the Standards at no cost to Associations, I feel we should comply with dress requirements, including gloves.

I will need a volunteer to carry the Standard in the march. That person will need to be in place about 1030 hrs as they are going to mass the Standards and march them down College Street, peeling off to their respective groups. The cost of white gloves will be borne by the Association. As ASM, Barry should not be Standard Bearer. Each march participant will receive a commemorative certificate, signed by Sir Lawrence Street and the Governor-General, MAJGEN Jeffries.

Regards,

*Chris Ballantine*

## Annual Subscriptions - Clarification

### From the Acting Treasurer – Payment of Fees

It has been brought to my attention that fee notices forwarded to some members during March/April 2008 were erroneous. Details of some payments made in person at the 2007 ANZAC Day Reunion were not taken into account when preparing the fee notices. This error is regretted and will not prejudice members' standing.

Any member who considers that an error has been made is requested to contact me or note the returned fee slip accordingly and the financial records will be adjusted.

The Association's financial year ends on 30th June each year and the fee notices that were recently dispatched cover any arrears and the 2008/09 financial year. New members joining on ANZAC Day are deemed financial for the following financial year.

*Chris Ballantine*

Acting Treasurer

PS: I am anxious to hear from any member who would like to join our committee as Treasurer. A knowledge of very basic accounting/bookkeeping would be an advantage; about an hour per week and attendance at committee meetings in Sydney CBD every 6 weeks. The position is until November 2008 when fresh nominations will be called at the AGM.

## The People You Meet...

*Whilst some of the Association members were enjoying a quiet 'coldie' after a luncheon presentation at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) in Sydney, in April, we were surprised to bump into a former Association Secretary, Des Lambley. He and his wife were on their way back to Queensland, after visiting family and friends and participating in ANZAC Day in Melbourne. It was good to share a beer with you again, Des and hope that you and Di had a safe trip home...ED.*

**Battle For Australia Day  
Commemorative Service**

**Cenotaph, Martin Place, Sydney**

**3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008**

**See page 10 for details**

**RHUMB CORPS LUNCHEON  
COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE**

**CTA CLUB, MARTIN PLACE,  
SYDNEY**

**NOON, 3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008**

**SEE PAGE 10 FOR DETAILS**

## Vale - Major General K.J (Ken) Taylor AO RL

From a Signals point of view, MAJGEN Taylor had a significant input. He loved his communications background and always visited the Patrol Signallers cse with the comment, "I didn't know anything about comms" and then proceed to mention the ACA (Australian Communications Authority), frequency spectrum, propagation, etc, etc catching out the not so wary.

MAJGEN Ken Taylor passed away peacefully in his sleep at 0615h, Saturday 22 Mar 08. The Pilbara Regiment Headquarters in Karratha is Taylor Barracks.

The following is from the Pilbara Regt website:

*(Please note that this was prior to the MAJGEN's demise and is therefore in present tense....Ed.)*

### "HONORARY COLONEL - THE PILBARA REGT "MAJOR GENERAL K.J (KEN) TAYLOR AO. RL.

"General Taylor's direct involvement with the Regiment has existed since 1980 when, as the Commander of WA, he set the foundations for raising 5 IRC in Port Hedland in 1982. General Taylor graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1950. He then completed a Bachelor of Science Degree at the University of WA. From university he was posted to Army HQ Signals Regiment and then to 4 RAR.

"General Taylor experienced active service in Korea during 1953-1954 where he operated with 1 RAR and 2 RAR. From active service, General Taylor was sent to Shrivenham UK to the Royal Military College of Science where he completed a two year postgraduate course in applied science and technology. His next posting remained overseas with the British Army of the Rhine.

"On returning to Australia, General Taylor served in Army HQ in the Operations Research Group. He attended Staff College in 1961 and was subsequently posted to Operations Branch, HQ Far East Land Forces, Singapore.

"In 1965 he raised 103 Sigs Sqn and in 1966 was appointed CO of 1 Sig Regt. During his command, General Taylor directed the planning and execution of the complete communications for largest defence exercise held in Australia since WW II.

"From 1967 he was Head of communications-Electronics Branch of SEATO HQ in Bangkok. From Bangkok General Taylor returned to Australia for a short time prior to attending Joint Services Staff College in Latimer, UK.

"On return to Australia, General Taylor was appointed a number of staff positions including Director of Army Recruiting and Director of Military Arts Duntroon in 1973.

"Promoted to Brigadier in 1976 and was appointed Director General Computer Operations in the Dept of Defence. In 1980 he was appointed Commander 5th Field Force Group and 5th Military District, WA. In 1982 he



departed WA to assume the appointment of Chief of Material - Army as a Major General. "General Taylor was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1985 and retired after 38 years of service. General Taylor was appointed as Honorary Colonel of The Pilbara Regiment on 23 June 1988.

General Taylor continues to take a wide interest in the commercial world; he is currently a director of numerous marketing and technology firms. He also participates in Governmental advisory committees and Appeals Tribunals.

"General Taylor is a keen sailor and currently resides in East Fremantle with his wife Ket."

*Michael Clarke*

M.J.S. CLARKE

WO2

SSM SPT

1 CSR

Nui Dat Lines

Robertson Barracks

PALMERSTON NT 0830

08 8935 2330

[michael.clarke2@defence.gov.au](mailto:michael.clarke2@defence.gov.au)

### Vale - MAJ W E Hughes MBE

Just noticed the following in Saturday's Chronicle:

"Hughes, William Edward (Bill), late of Toowoomba, passed away on Wednesday, 19th March, 2008. Aged 84 years. Beloved husband of Joan (dec'd)."

Regards,

*Barry Hampstead*

### A word for Big Bill.

Bill served as a Rifleman/Sniper in the 2/31st Battalion 2nd AIF in New Guinea for 2 years before they found he was under age. By that time he was 18 so they left him there.

After WW2, he rejoined the Army, ended up in RASIGS and was a pretty scruffy digger until he met his late wife Joan, who straightened him out. She did what no RSM was able to do up to that stage in his life.

As a Cpl in 101 Wireless Regiment, he had more power than any Cpl ever had in the Army. He was also one of the best Cricketers in the Regiment. In Singapore, as a WO2, the Brits loved him and gave him an MBE.

As a WO2 in charge of our Detachment at Kroh on the Thai Border, he easily outshot members of B Company, 2RAR when they wanted to see if people from the Sigs Corps could shoot. They were equally surprised that the rest of us could shoot too.

Anyone who ever played billiards or snooker against him knows how good his eyesight was. He was the terror of the Sergeant's Mess.

As a WO1, the bean-counters didn't want to Commission him because he had falsely signed an attestation form in

WW2, until the General over-ruled them saying half the WW2 Diggers did the same.

As a Lieutenant arriving in Vietnam in 1967, he would have had the largest set of Jungle Green Shorts in IATF. They took up most of the ropes of a 16 x 16 tent.

After Big Bill retired from the Army, he travelled the world and enjoyed it until a wog of some sort got him in South Africa. Bill's health was never the same after his trip to South Africa and losing his wife Joan didn't help. Bill spent his remaining years at Warhaven.

VALE MAJOR W E Hughes MBE, truly an RASIGS Identity.

*Eric Grace*

### VALE CAPT Bernard Johnson OAM, RASIGS

131829 CAPT (QM) / WO2 (SSM) (ret) Bernard John (Bernie / BJ) Johnson OAM

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam

DoB 27 October 1948

DoD 9 April 2008

It is with sadness that we advise that Bernie lost his final battle last evening. Bernie was one of nature's true gentlemen and will be sorely missed by his family and friends.

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

### A Thank-you from Bernie's Family...

I am Bernie's Brother Michael.

I would like to say, thank-you for all the wonderful support you have given to us as Bernie's family. The e-mails that we have received have just made me and all of us appreciate how much my brother was liked and respected and there have been many! I thank you!

It will take time to grieve but nothing to remember.

Can you pass this onto your network?

Thank you all

*Michael Johnson,*

on behalf of the family

### Vale LtCol Peter Wilkins

Dear Family and Friends,

It is with great sadness that we convey to you that Peter, our beloved husband, father, father-in-law and grandfather died Sunday 30th March 2008 after 16 months of suffering with stomach cancer. He died at home with all his loving family around him to comfort and demonstrate how much he meant to us.

We thank everyone for your caring love and concern over the past few months, and would like to quote the last paragraph of an e-mail he had drafted but not sent, explaining why he had not been in contact recently. He said "Despite all, I have had a fulfilled and happy life with a wonderful family, great friends, successful career, and no regrets. If I had a chance, I would do it all again. I remain, as always with love and best regards, Peter Wilkins."

From Bev, Sharyn, Scott, Greg, Jan, Angus, Lachlan and Erin.

*Bev Wilkins*

[Email: bevww@mortbay.com](mailto:bevww@mortbay.com)

77 Grays Pt Rd

Grays Pt, NSW, 2232, AUSTRALIA

Phone: (02) 8005 0249

Mobile: 0448 662 325

*LtCol Peter Wilkins was a well liked member of the Association who would attend functions as often as he could. His wit, humour and general encouragement will be missed at future gatherings, but he will not be easily forgotten...Ed*

### VALE -. Graeme (Spooky) Pope

It is with sadness that we have learnt of the passing and funeral of another Corps member. As 'Lofty' Evans indicates below, 'Spooky' was living in Alice Springs and must have moved to the Cairns region and forgot to notify us of his move. It is regrettable that we didn't know so that he could have made contact again with old friends in FNQ.

I first met 'Spooky' in 1970 at 533 Sig Tp Townsville (later Det 4 Sig Regt Townsville). He was a good bloke. Sadly, he struck some bad luck in his personal life, not of his making. Some years ago, I spoke to him in the Alice and he was enjoying life. He will be well remembered.

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

Phone 07 5499 3704

From Lofty Evans...

...As shown in the Cairns Post dated 3rd Apr 08 and the funeral service was the 4th of Apr 08.

I have checked the DVA Vietnam Nominal Role and the Vietnam Book.

Graeme (Spooky) Pope served in Vietnam

709 Sig Tp 13/06/66 - 15/07/66 and

552 Sig Tp 16/07/66 - 13/09/66.

110 Sig Sqn 07/04/71 - 16/10/71.

He was serving in 103 Sig Sqn when I first met him in 1974.

Another member of the Corps has moved on. I last spoke with Spooky about 5 years ago when he was living in Alice Springs. He must've snuck into Cairns - not sure when.

Thanks

### VALE - 3204018 SIG Jason Jenkinson FCU UNTAC

It is my sad duty to inform all those current and ex-serving members, particularly RASigs, that the following member of the family is no longer with us:

3204018 SIG Jason Jenkinson (Jenko).

Jenko passed away in the early hours of this morning, Thursday, 6 March 2008, from a long battle with stomach and lung cancer. He was 40 years old. He leaves behind his partner Sophie, parents, sister Ellie and nieces and nephews. Please send all messages to:

Sophie,  
165 Cambridge Crescent,  
WYNHAM VALE, VIC, 3030

His mates were with him yesterday.

Jenko served as a Reservist Infantryman with the 5th/6th Battalion Royal Victorian Regiment and enlisted into the Australian Regular Army as a Linesman, Royal Australian Corps of Signals. He was posted to 1st Recruit Training Battalion, School of Signals, 2nd Signal Regiment, Force Communications Unit Cambodia (5 May 1992 - 14 Mar 1993) and Land Force Signal Unit before taking discharge in 1995. He served with the Australian Customs for 2000-2007. Jenko was a one-eyed Tigers fan (Richmond) and will be sadly missed by all those who knew him and his warped sense of humour.

Regards,

*Paul Copeland,*

National President,  
Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association  
Inc.

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TORQUAY, VIC, 3228  
AUSTRALIA

+61 3 5264 8244

"Looking After Our Own"

[E: president@peacekeepers.asn.au](mailto:president@peacekeepers.asn.au)

[W: www.peacekeepers.asn.au](http://www.peacekeepers.asn.au)

**Vale - 2791880 Wayne Thomas Hackett**

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam 1968-89

25/05/1947 - 25/05/2008

It is with sadness that we have received advice today from Ballina RSL Sub-Branch that our mate Wayne has finally lost his battle on Sunday 25 May 2008; you will notice that he passed away on his 61st birthday.

Regards,

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

*Lest We Forget*



## SICK PARADE

**Ill Health - 312809 Kevin Frederick (Mitch) Miller,**

110 Sig Sqn Vietnam 1970-71

Another old Sig is sadly doing it tough and welcomes urgent contact from old mates.

All contact via Kevin's wife:

Mrs Maybell Miller

24 Mitchell Cres

Portland VIC

Phone: 03 5523 2783

[E-mail: kevin60@bigpond.net.au](mailto:kevin60@bigpond.net.au)

Regards,

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

**Ill Health 214343 MAJ (ret)**

**Peter Thomas Martin**

103 Sig Sqn Vietnam 1966, 104 Sig

Sqn Vietnam 1970-71

Around Christmas time - Peter was admitted to Canberra Hospital with some psych problems. He was diagnosed with Sudden Onset Dementia - which has now been graded as a state of Delirium. He has been 'certified' and has now been a resident

in the Psych/Geriatric Ward at Kenmour Hospital in Goulburn for quite awhile.

Sandra has taken a flat in Goulburn to be close to him. Sandie's mobile number is 0401 599 762.

He can have visitors - and it is believed that visitors or callers may do him good. It would probably be prudent to call Sandy because some of the medication has a bad effect on him. There are only five people in that hospital unit.

Regards,

*Bert*

**Peter Martin (Update - 21 Mar 2008)**

Sandra Martin and family wish to thank everybody for their calls and good wishes re Peter. It is requested however that we all desist from calling the Hospital in Goulburn as there is inadequate staff to handle the extra phone calls - and, furthermore, they are

unable to give out information about Peter due to the privacy laws in place.

It is also considered that we should not try to speak to Peter by phone as it is now causing some emotional problems which could be affecting his recovery.

However - you may obtain updates by calling Sandra's mobile which is 0401 599 762 or daughter Nicole at the family homestead on 02 4478 1272.

With a change of medication - Peter is showing considerable improvement and the family is hopeful that it won't be long before he can be moved to a better environment, i.e. Home.

Regards,

*Bert Lane*

[bertlane@bigpond.com](mailto:bertlane@bigpond.com)

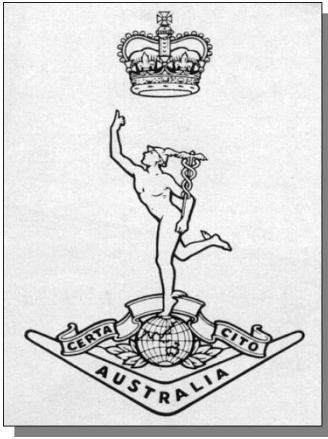
**David Harding**

Once again we have to advise the ill-health of a Long serving Corps and Association member; David Harding of Wauchope had another heart attack early in the year that required a seven day stay at the Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney. We trust that he has now fully recovered.

Regards,

*Chris Ballantine*

(Continued on page 8)



## 1 Sig Regt 50th Birthday

In 2 years time (22 May 2010 to be precise) the 1st Signal Regiment will be celebrating its 50th Birthday. The current CO has already commenced planning for 50th Birthday celebrations based around the Regiment at Gallipoli Barracks in Brisbane. The celebrations will be conducted over a week and will include (but not limited to), a re-enactment of the move from Ingleburn by form of a relay run, a Banner Parade (which will also be the finish of the relay), Regimental Dinners, Formal ball in the city, Open day with current and old equipment, a display of unit history, and possibly the turning of the first soil for the new Regiment which is currently under planning.

This week will be officially sponsored and run by the Regiment (with the help from some local olds) so it should be a good week with all of the bells and whistles.

It is planned to create a website specifically to keep everyone informed, I will pass on the URL via this means when it is raised.

All replies direct to:

(Continued from page 7)

## SICK PARADE

Fr Colin Reinhard

Former Army Catholic Chaplain, Fr Colin Reinhard, 1980-85,

Brisbane/ Townsville/ Balcombe/ Bonegilla, welcomes contact from old Army friends. Colin has been extremely ill lately. Colin can be contacted via: Phone 02 6672 1118 (Murwillumbah)  
E-mail [creinhard@bigpond.com](mailto:creinhard@bigpond.com)  
Regards,

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

# CORPS MATTERS

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

RSM  
1 Sig Regt  
WO1 Craig Rogers  
Gallipoli Barracks  
Enoggera QLD 4051  
Phone: 07 3332 6260  
E-mail: [Craig.Rogers@defence.gov.au](mailto:Craig.Rogers@defence.gov.au)  
Thanks,

*Rodney Kirkman*

## RA Sigs Museum

*In early April 2008 Mike McEvoy, Secretary of the NSW RA Sigs Association visited the RA Sigs Museum as had Brad of the Queensland Association, who had the following comments:*

Recently my wife and I visited the RASigs Museum at Simpson Barracks. This museum is well worth a look for those in the Melbourne area or those visiting the southern (mainland) capital. The museum is open Tuesdays between 1000 and 1500 hours, but I would recommend anyone intending to visit check the times by telephoning first.

All queries direct to:

RASigs Museum

MAJ Jim Gordon

Mobile: 0407 264 961 or if calling on a Tuesday (03) 9450 7876

E-mail: [jim.gordon@vicsig.net](mailto:jim.gordon@vicsig.net)

MAJ Gordon is also the Secretary of the Victorian RA Sigs Association and the editor of its newsletter "Cert Cito".

You can access the museum from

the front gate at Simpson Barracks by providing the guards with your (and your partners or whoever else is in the car with you) drivers licence. They take your details and return the

licence and provide you with a visitor's pass and directions to the museum.

As an aside, the museum is looking for any post-WWII Signals information and/or equipment to add to their collection.

Regards,

*Brad*

*Mike goes on to say...*a very interesting museum, with many good exhibits appealing to all ages of signallers. In fact the Museum itself is housed within a retired earth receiving station for satellite communications from the cold war days. It has only recently re-opened after being closed for an OH&S upgrade, disabled access etc. My favourite was the C11/R210 which brought back many memories, both good and bad. Good for the capabilities and distances one could communicate; bad because of the task of keeping up batteries to the beast. Mind you they did bring the advantage (?) of having to be vehicle mounted so that to take them anywhere in the field you had to drive rather than walk.

There is still room for many more exhibits and they has lots of equipment to display but cannot get enough \$s to convert the remainder of the building from storage to exhibition area - a costly exercise.

To find details of the museum, along with many other Army museums, on a website go to:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/Army/AHU/MUSEUMS/museum-index.htm>

The Melway reference for the Barracks entrance is Map 20 D7, the position of the museum within the barracks is also shown on the Melway at co-ordinates G7.

Also of interest is:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/army/RASIGS/Reading.htm>

for some of the reference material available.

Regards,

*Mike*

## Dennis Hare and the Battle of Coral/Balmoral 40th Anniversary

The Commemoration of the Battle of Coral went extremely well and 104 Signal Squadron was well represented, as was the tiny element of 547 Signal Troop present at the battle.

On the first night we packed Kings Hall at Parliament House to listen to the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and General Bennett sing our praises as we drank that \$100,000 worth of free grog promised to us.

Next day ANZAC Parade was closed to Canberra's usually busy morning traffic to allow veterans to gather at the front of the beautiful and original Vietnam War Memorial. Ample seating was provided yet many preferred to gather close and watch as the PM, Governor-General and other dignitaries arrived. The Federation Guard started the proceedings by saluting the Governor-General on his arrival. The GG recognized many faces who knew him as a Major OC of an infantry company in Vietnam days and sly winks and nods were exchanged between him and many old comrades in arms. He briskly inspected the Guard then

retired. A Catafalque Party was mounted within the memorial after which, Alan Griffith MP, Minister for Vets Affairs, addressed us. Then the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd addressed us. On this occasion and the previous night the PM acknowledged that successive governments in the past had not done enough for Vietnam Veterans. With others, I hope he passes that down to DVA and stops their aggressive folk subjecting some veterans and their supporting witnesses to punishing cross examination and questioning of their integrity (something I experienced first hand when acting as a witness for one of my own soldiers). Then Father John Tinkler put on his little show, always of a high standard and the final address was from LtGen Sir Donald Dunstan, late Governor of South Australia. The Honour Roll of those who made the supreme sacrifice was read as Corps Reps laid wreaths. On Sigs behalf, Norm Munro and Bluey Astill did an excellent job while the rest of us just stood, heads bowed, tearful but pretending not to be. After the Ode, Last Post, Minute's Silence, The Rouse and the Benediction, came the Piece de Resistance.... the March Past. Led by four trucks with gun crews towing artillery guns came the banners of the

battalions, Signals, Armour... all went proudly by, held by Vietnam veterans. It was a magnificent parade, lacking in polish but full of emotion and grand to watch. The event made us all feel proud of our service for this great country and we went home with warm feelings of mateship and sharing.

That evening we joined for dinner. Nearly 500 men and their families sat down to dinner at the Ainslie Club. It was an excellent dinner and hundreds met again and renewed friendships.

I want to single out one bloke from all those who made this event such a grand occasion - Dennis Hare. From the very beginning Dennis phoned, called, hunted, persuaded, bullied and cajoled many veterans into attending. Then he went to the trouble of helping to arrange accommodation, travel, meeting and so on for every single one. He deserves our heartfelt thanks and I would be grateful if you could acknowledge my thanks and the thanks of hundreds who appreciate his efforts. Between the pair of you, you and he do a wonderful job and we appreciate it. You both are the best living examples of the ANZAC spirit. .  
All the very best,

*Peter Murray*

## Proposed RASigs Reunion Vietnam 2009

Just to let you know that the reunion in Vietnam WILL be held in Saigon and Vung Tau from the 5th to 12th November 2009. The web site is ready and we are just waiting on the domain master to get his act together and get his work completed. Hopefully this week but I have said that before.

All Australian and allied signals personnel and families very welcome.

All replies direct to:

Gregg Dickson

E-mail: [greggdickson110@hotmail.com](mailto:greggdickson110@hotmail.com)

I have already booked entertainers for the concert party in the Free World Building and other things are in place. I have over 80 folk who have expressed interest in the reunion and I am sure there will lots more once the web site and the pricing structure is released.

*Gregg Dickson*

Chairman

RASigs Reunion Vietnam November 2009

## ANZAC Day Photos - Signals Brisbane

Hi all,

On the 104 Sig Sqn Web Site Notice Board are some photos taken of Signals in Brisbane on ANZAC Day. Old and bold, young, lovely, etc, etc.

The photos will remain on the site for 4 months and if anyone would like one of the photos full size just contact me with the photo number.

Enjoy,

*Dennis Hare*

PO Box 210

Collingwood Park Qld 4301

Ph (H): 07-38188021

Mob: 0419-334535

[E-mail dhare@au104.org](mailto:dhare@au104.org)

[104 Sig Sqn Web Site www.au104.org](http://104sig.sqnweb.com.au)

[RASigs 40th Coral/Balmoral Web Site http://coral-balmoral.au104.org](http://coral-balmoral.au104.org)

[RASigs Plaque Dedication AWM Web Site http://rasigs.au104.org](http://rasigs.au104.org)

# FYI

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### Reserve Forces Day, Sydney 2008.

Sunday, 6th July, 2008

1100 hrs - Northern end of  
College Street Sydney.

As the Association is a supporter of the parade, it will be on parade and we shall be marching under the new RASigs Ass'n Corps Standard. All members are invited to attend and to encourage all former CMF/Reservists and Cadre members to participate in this parade and march past. All attendees will receive a commemorative certificate signed by the Governor-General of Australia.

Form-up in College Street North (adjacent to St Mary's Cathedral and Hyde Park) by 1030 hrs for the 1100 hrs parade.

Preferred dress is navy blue jacket, blue shirt, light grey trousers, black belt; alternatively suit or sports coat. Tie (Corps tie if available), corps beret (optional), full medals. *No jeans, joggers or parkas, etc.*

#### The Parade, March Past and Salute

Prior to the commencement of the parade Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, AC, CVO, Governor of New South Wales, will inspect the ceremonial contingents.

Following the inspection Her Excellency will move to the saluting dais in front of Parliament House in Macquarie Street.

The ceremonial contingents will lead the parade down Macquarie Street and then take up their positions. The remainder of the parade will then march down Macquarie Street. The parade will finish with a final review in front of Parliament House.

All marching personnel will disperse into Tarpian Way (off Macquarie Street) in the Botanic Gardens at the rear of Government House.

Keep an eye out for Association's Banner. **And afterwards...**The Association will regroup at the Ship Inn at Circular Quay, a short walk from the dispersal point, for a reunion luncheon.

**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.

### Battle for Australia Day, Commemorative Service, Sydney

The Battle for Australia memorial service is to be conducted at the Cenotaph, Martin Place, Sydney on Wednesday, 3rd September 2008 commencing at 1050hrs.

If you are attending the memorial service you are requested to be at the service at least ten minutes prior to the scheduled start time so that the service can start on time. (Remember -the earlier you get there - the better chance of a good position).

**And afterwards...**Why not join us at the Rhumb Corps Luncheon to be conducted at the CTA Club, up Martin Place, across Pitt Street. Meet in the Bistro lounge (Level two, one level down from the club's foyer). Just follow the crowd of Signallers.

### Vietnam War Exhibition - Update

*If you are lucky enough to find yourself in or around Tweed Heads on or about 14<sup>th</sup> August 2008, why not do yourself a favour and visit the Vietnam War Exhibition. For the cost of a gold coin you might even meet a buddy or two. You never know who you will meet when you don't have your GPMG-M60 with you!...ED*

#### The Returned and Services League of Australia

Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub-Branch & Gold Coast War Museum

## VIETNAM WAR EXHIBITION

Dates - 13-14-15 August 2008

Where - Twin Towns Services Club, Tweed Heads

The last e-mail we sent out asking for support for our upcoming project was a great success. I have to pass on our thanks for the enormous response in offers of memorabilia and man-power for the 3 days that the exhibition goes for; we still have room for those people who also want to be part of it.

It has been decided that we will ask for a GOLD coin donation on entering the exhibition in the ANZAC Room of the club. This money will then be donated to two very worthy Veterans groups.

This money is to be collected by the two groups (as both club and museum do not require funding from donations)

We have confirmed: a large number of local schools, RSL Sub-Branches & other Veterans groups who will be attending but we would ask that you spread the word for us again. The more people we get, the more the two veterans groups get (maybe you or your group could make a donation or arrange a tour to the exhibition)

Normie Rowe will be doing a concert at PALM BEACH/CURRUMBIN RSL Club to help raise funds for MiVAC (more info in the next update).

Thank you again.

Joe Russell (RSL) 07 5534 4076; and

Bob Meehan (Museum) 07 5533 5620

# Recommended for the Victoria Cross

*This hit the air waves on the 31st March, 2008.*

A Royal Marine has been recommended for the Victoria Cross after he threw himself on to an exploding grenade to save the lives of his comrades.

Lance Corporal Matthew Croucher stepped on a tripwire which triggered the grenade during a night raid on a Taliban compound in Afghanistan. He realised instantly that all four members of his patrol faced being killed by the blast.

Matthew Croucher insisted he must carry on fighting. Instead of fleeing he deliberately smothered the explosion, twisting on to his back to let his rucksack take the full force. The explosion hurled him across the compound leaving him stunned, bleeding from the nose and almost deaf, while kit from his shredded backpack was sent flying through the air in flames.

But within minutes LCpl Croucher, from Birmingham, was on his feet again and demanding to be allowed to continue the patrol. He even helped set an ambush - knowing that the Taliban would come and investigate the blast -

and shot dead an armed insurgent during the subsequent fire-fight.

Stunned by his bravery, the 24-year-old's comrades urged commanders to put him forward for Britain's highest honour for valour on the battlefield, and his citation will be considered by the armed forces honours and awards committee later this year.

If a VC is awarded he will become only the third man to earn it since the Falklands Conflict 26 years ago - and the first surviving recipient from the war in Afghanistan.

The incident happened during a pre-dawn raid last month when Marines from 40 Commando raided a suspected bomb-making factory close to the town of Sangin. As a team of four crept through the maze of mud-walled homes, LCpl Croucher's foot brushed the tripwire. He heard the distinctive click of the grenade's pin and spotted the device at his feet through his night-vision goggles. His colleagues barely had time to react to his yelled warning, and were still in the open when the grenade went off. By then he had thrown himself on to the grenade, pulling up his legs in the hope of avoiding fatal injuries.

He recalled: 'I thought, "I've set this bloody thing off and I'm going to do whatever it takes to protect the others."

'There have been a few times when they've saved my bacon. I figured that if I could keep my torso and head intact I'd probably survive - although I fully expected to lose a limb.'

L Cpl Croucher told the News of the World: 'All I could hear was a loud ringing and the faint sound of people shouting, "Are you OK? Are you OK?" It took 30 seconds before I realised I was definitely not dead'.

Senior officers stressed that the remarkable incident has been 'one among many' during 40 Commando's six-month tour of duty in Helmand Province. The unit is due to return to Britain shortly after months of often intense fighting, and will hand over to Paras from 16 Air Assault Brigade.

Three years ago Private Johnson Beharry of the 1st Battalion the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment received the VC for saving comrades during two ambushes in southern Iraq.

And in 2006 Corporal Bryan Budd, 29, of 3 Para, earned a posthumous VC for storming a Taliban machine gun post after he was injured in an ambush in Afghanistan. He killed several enemy but died in the process.

*Bob Lyons*

## Funds to honour Australia's veteran community

Projects across the country honouring Australia's wartime heritage will receive \$341,368 in funding, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, announced today.

Mr Griffin said the funding demonstrated the Rudd Government's commitment to helping communities honour Australia's wartime heritage.

"Today we have funded more than one hundred local projects and activities that recognise the contribution of the men and women who have served our nation in uniform," Mr Griffin said.

"Local communities play an important role in encouraging Australians to participate in commemorative activities, including attending Anzac Day and Remembrance Day services at local war memorials.

"The funding announced today will support a range of projects across Australia including the enhancement and restoration of community war memorials, the preservation and display

of wartime memorabilia, the publication of untold unit histories and schools initiatives for younger Australians."

"The experience of service has been part of the lives of many Australian families. This Government is committed to ensuring the legacy of those who have served, and continue to serve, is honoured and remembered for generations to come," Mr Griffin said.

Mr Griffin encouraged local community and ex-service organisations interested in applying for funding to visit [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au) or contact their nearest DVA office on 133 254. Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

## Four Tasmanian students awarded Long Tan bursaries

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Mailing List.  
VA046 Friday 9 May 2008

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, today announced four Tasmanian students, all children of Vietnam veterans, will receive up to \$9,000 each to help them complete their tertiary education.

Mr Griffin said the Government recognised the challenges children face due to their parents' service.

"The Long Tan Bursary scheme aims to help hard working students from Vietnam veteran families to take up the challenge of tertiary education and achieve their long-term study goals," he said.

"The bursary is awarded to students, including mature age students, who have achieved good academic results and who have overcome personal challenges to successfully complete their secondary education.

"These students have proven their ability and determination to pursue their careers and I am pleased the Australian Government has been able to support them in their studies."

Long Tan Bursaries will be presented to 53 students across the country in the coming weeks. This year, four Tasmanian students have received bursaries: - Madelaine McCausland, Bachelor of Arts, University of Tasmania; - Garry James, Bachelor of Ocean Engineering, Australian Maritime College, Launceston; - Samuel Kruimink, Bachelor of Science, University of Tasmania; and - Catherine Parsons, Bachelor of Business, University of Tasmania.

Mr Griffin said 250 sons and daughters of Australia's Vietnam veterans had benefited from the bursary scheme since it was introduced in 2000. The scheme was introduced in response to the findings of the Vietnam Veterans' Health Study to provide financial

support to children of Vietnam veterans with their tertiary education.

The bursary is named after the Battle of Long Tan on 18 August 1966, in which Australian soldiers of D Company 6 RAR encountered and fought off an enemy force of up to 2500 troops in a rubber plantation north of the village of Long Tan. Eighteen Australians lost their lives in the battle.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

## Book Launch

### Capt Lionel Matthews GC MC

Book Launch in Adelaide Thursday 10 April 2008 by His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC, CSC, RANR, Governor of South Australia. At the Naval & Military Club - By Invitation Only

All replies direct to:

Mr David Matthews

PO Box 1134

Blackwood SA 5051

Phone 08 8278 1882

[E-mail shedave@bigpond.net.au](mailto:shedave@bigpond.net.au)

[Website http://www.seaviewpress.com.au/index.php?act=viewProd&product](http://www.seaviewpress.com.au/index.php?act=viewProd&product)

Thought I'd drop you a line to tell you of the progress of my book *The Duke* about my father, Captain Lionel Matthews GC, MC. Finally, the book is off the press and will be launched in Adelaide tomorrow night by His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC, CSC, RANR, and Governor of South Australia.

It has taken me three-and-a-half years to research and write and contains 70 photographs and illustrations of my father and scenes in Sandakan, Borneo. I was fortunate in having General Peter Cosgrove AC, MC (Retd), former Chief of the Defence Force, write the foreword to the book. In it he says (in part): 'The story of *The Duke* is one of the finest and most moving and one unknown to the vast majority of Australians. This is a book that had to be written.....Lionel Matthews was a truly remarkable Australian who showed great qualities of leadership and selflessness throughout his life. He has remained to this day an example of the

very best type of Australian - a man who makes us all proud to be Australians. Enjoy this beautifully-told story of a hero.'

The book has been published by Seaview Press, of West Lakes, Adelaide, and costs \$35 plus postage of \$3.45 in Australia. There is a special cost of \$25 plus postage for ex-prisoners of war. It can be bought through me at P.O. Box 1134, Blackwood, South Australia 5051, or contact can be made on 08 8278 1882 or e-mail

[shedave@bigpond.net.au](mailto:shedave@bigpond.net.au) I will accept personal cheques or money orders.

Alternatively, it can be bought through Seaview Press by using card facilities on ph. 08 8242 0666 (international 61 8 8242 0666) or fax 08 242 0333 (international 61 8 8242 0333).

If you would like to link Seaview Press to your website, the direct address is:

[http://www.seaviewpress.com.au/index.php?act=viewProd&product\\_id=878](http://www.seaviewpress.com.au/index.php?act=viewProd&product_id=878)

Kindest regards,

*David Matthews*

## Peacekeeper and Other Veteran Members

Hello all,

We need members for the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project Committee (APMPC), in order to see successful completion of our National Memorial on ANZAC Parade in Canberra.

Any ESO and their members are cordially invited to help support this Project by becoming a member for just \$20 (Tax-Deductible).

Please help.

Regards,

*Paul Copeland.*

National President,  
Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association Inc.  
P.O. Box 552,  
TORQUAY, VIC, 3228  
AUSTRALIA

+61 3 5264 8244

"Looking After Our Own"

[E: president@peacekeepers.asn.au](mailto:president@peacekeepers.asn.au)

[W: www.peacekeepers.asn.au](http://www.peacekeepers.asn.au)

# Medals Recommended For Long Tan Heroes

*Article from: AAP By Max Blenkin  
- 30 April, 2008*

The man who led Australian troops in the Battle of Long Tan more than 40 years ago should receive the country's second-highest gallantry decoration, a panel of retired senior army officers has recommended.

They also want two platoon commanders who fought in the Vietnam War battle to receive the modern-day equivalent of the Military Cross.

The recommendations of a review panel, set up by the previous Howard government, follow long-running complaints from veterans that nominated awards for soldiers who fought at Long Tan were either downgraded or ignored completely.

Senior Australian commanders, operating at the time within a quota for bravery awards allocated under the British imperial decorations system, were blamed for the decisions.

The panel recommended company commander Major Harry Smith - who had been awarded the Military Cross after the battle - be awarded the Star of Gallantry, the contemporary equivalent of the

originally recommended Distinguished Service Order.

The decoration, second only to the Victoria Cross of Australia, recognises acts of outstanding heroism in action, in circumstances of great peril.

Platoon commanders - Second Lieutenant David Sabben and Second Lieutenant Geoff Kendall - should be offered the Medal for Gallantry, the contemporary equivalent of the Military Cross (MC), the panel said.

Both men had previously been recommended for the MC but were awarded the lesser mentioned-in-dispatches (MID) - the same as the task force's postal officer on the same list.

The panel recommended no action be taken to offer contemporary awards for any other participant of the battle.

Neither should there be retrospective permission for battle veterans to wear Vietnamese government awards.

The review found the number of awards for Long Tan was broadly consistent with comparable battles and ratios of awards achieved throughout the Vietnam War.

"However, the moderation of awards ... was influenced by a unique set of circumstances and resulted in a

mix of awards that did not adequately recognise the gallantry exhibited," the panel said.

Long Tan remains the best-known Australian battle of the Vietnam War.

It was fought on August 18, 1966, when 100 members of Delta Company, 6RAR, commanded by Maj Smith, encountered a regiment of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops.

Delta Company, outnumbered by more than 10 to 1, held off repeated attacks until a relief force arrived. Eighteen Australians died and 21 were wounded.

Controversy has long surrounded Long Tan bravery medals with Maj Smith's recommendations either downgraded or ignored by senior military officers in Vietnam.

Second Lieutenant Gordon Sharp, killed in the battle, was recommended for a posthumous MID but received nothing at all.

Special Minister of State John Faulkner said the Government would consider the report before responding.  
From: Blue Ryan

## The world has gone mad

The world-famous *Red Arrows* have been banned from appearing at the 2012 London Olympics because they are deemed '*too British*'.

Organisers of the event say that the Arrows military background might be 'offensive' to other countries taking part in the Games.

The display team has performed at more than 4000 events worldwide, but the Department of Culture, Media and Sport has deemed the display team '*too militaristically British*'.

Red Arrows pilots were said to be '*outraged*', as they had hoped to put on a truly world class display for the Games,

something which had never been seen before. Being axed from a British-based event for being '*too British*' is an insult - the Arrows are a symbol of Britain.

The Red Arrows have been excellent ambassadors for British overseas trade, as they display their British-built Hawk aircraft all over the world.

The Arrows performed a short fly-past in 2005 when the winning bid was announced, but their fly-past at the Games was to have been truly spectacular. It is to be hoped that common sense prevails.

*Barry R Tinkler*

# Military history



*Book Review by Mike McEvoy*

**Voices of War** – Australians tell their stories from World War I to the present.

Edited by Michael Caulfield.

Published by Hodder Australia (an imprint of Hachette Livre Australia Pty Limited)

ISBN 0 7336 2050 7 (541pp)

This book is the transcripts of 21 interviews taken from 60 interviews of Australians for the television series 'Australian at War'. Eight hours long, the series was commissioned by the Department of Veterans' Affairs on behalf of the Australian Government, as a gift to the nation for the *Centenary of Federation*.

Each interview tells something of the background of the interviewee across their life to get their war experience in context. So, each interview starts with early childhood, growing up and life till the war, then the wartime period itself and around ten to fifteen years post-war. In more recent conflicts or peacekeeping operations the background is somewhat more limited.

The editor comments that he selected from twenty-one interviews that he hopes represent the breadth and depth of the Archive, although not necessarily of our entire military involvement over the years.

I found this book in our local Municipal Library and being interested in military history it had immediate appeal. That appeal stems from the wide range of experiences that the interviewees were exposed to, from Ted Smout in World War, Patrick Toovey in El Alamein then POW of the Italians and the Germans in World War II right through to Garth

Fitzgerald, a loadmaster on a Black Hawk in East Timor. I was surprised to find a recollection from an old acquaintance from the days when our children were at school together – Colonel Peter Warfe from his time as Commander, Second Australian Contingent to Rwanda, Force Medical Offer, UN Assistance Mission. Like most people in the book Peter did not talk much about his "job" socially and I was amazed at what he and his team were exposed to and had to deal with in Rwanda.

There are stories from two VC winners, Ted Kenna and Keith Payne, both telling it straight in their own inimitable way. There is even a story of a dog handler in Vietnam that reflects the strong bond between the dog and his "boss" and how they gained the trust of their fellow soldiers over a difficult time.

Generously illustrated (in black and white,) showing the story tellers at various stages of their lives and a photograph of each at the start of their story with a photo in uniform and more recently. The book has a comprehensive Index.

I recommend the book to anyone even slightly interested in the experiences of Australians at war.

*Mike McEvoy*

## Search and Find



### Searching for Australian POWs

(See page 15 for details)

If you know any Australian POWs, please pass this information on to them as soon as possible for their consideration.

For those who have or are reading the recently released "Aussie Soldier- Up Close and Personal", I strongly recommend co-operation, where possible, with this gentleman. The recently released book is a fantastic read of personal stories of Australian service personnel and some of the profits were and are directed to Legacy.

Regards,

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

### Calling all OWLs

CALLING ALL OWLs~1950's to 1960's vintage. Throwing out a net to see if we can catch any takers for a 50th Anniversary (plus) get together.

It's basically 50 years, next year, 1959, the start of those great exercises, such as Grand Slam, and the formation of 3 L of C LSF Sig Sqn. And many well-known and not so well-known OWLs were posted to such units as: 3 L of C Sig Regt; 1 Sig Regt; the three BG Sig Tps, and The Black Hole unit~Wireg.

OWLs (Operator Wireless & Line) were special a breed of operators. So what say, we all try to get together next year, and have an OWLs reunion, possibly on the Gold Coast, or in the State of greater participation of ex-members, or whatever. I have heard from Gary Fizzell, Bob Fellows, Jock Lawson, Doc Judd, Doc Orchard, Bert Lane, Clem Foster and Popeye Sams. So let's hear from more OWLs and can you send Course photos, and I can place them on the net for face identification.

If you are all interested, then I will also have it promoted in the RSL News, Vet News, or whatever.

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

Basically, what I see at the moment is all the OWL participators on Ex Grand Slam, Icebreaker, and Barra Winga; and all the OWLs course from the 1950's to the beginning of the OR/OKR trades. No offence to those who started off as ORs/OKRs.

All replies direct to:

George Parker

Phone 07 5573 7159

[E-mail edwardparker66@hotmail.com](mailto:edwardparker66@hotmail.com)

INT QSA K

George (Pills) Parker

1959-80

Ex WO2 SCC

## Looking for Prisoner Of War Stories;

After just releasing "Aussie Soldier- Up Close and Personal" the authors are once again seeking assistance with documenting Australian Soldiers stories. Their next project is on POW's.

All input is welcome also if people are unable to complete the questionnaire (available upon request to the address below).either Craig or Denny is able to interview them to capture their story. Finally this is open to all services, not just Army.

A brief synopsis is as follows:

In their first book, 'Aussie Soldier up close and personal', they looked at the core values of the Australian soldier.

They are currently researching 'Aussie Soldier - Prisoners of War', the second in this series. In this book the authors wish to tell the story of the Army's men and women who were captured and held Prisoners of War from the Boer War to Korea. They are asking Australian soldiers who were prisoners of war to contribute to this book.

The stages of being a prisoner of war that we will examine are as follows:

Capture

Processing

Daily Life

Escape

Humour

War Crimes

Compassion/Mateship

Repatriation

The authors would also like to include a chapter on Australian Seamen and Airmen prisoners of war.

You are invited you to participate in this book by completing, in as much detail as you like, the questionnaire, available from the address below. Whilst we cannot guarantee your story will be published, we will try wherever possible to include as many stories, quotes and anecdotes as possible. At a minimum, all those who do complete the questionnaire will have their names published in the acknowledgments to thank you for your assistance. Your participation will assist in documenting part of our Australian military history and will be of value to all who read.

If you have any further questions, or require a questionnaire or wish to assist in any other way please contact one of the authors:

Denny Neave

Mobile: 0407615490

E-mail:

[denny@bigskypublishing.com.au](mailto:denny@bigskypublishing.com.au)

Craig Smith

Mobile: 0403162966

E-mail: [craigedwinsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:craigedwinsmith@yahoo.com)

Questionnaires should be returned by no later than 30th July 2008 to either of the above e-mails or hard copies can be sent to:

Aussie Soldier

Big Sky Publishing

PO Box 303

Newport NSW 2106.

## Searching for RASigs Vietnam COMCENS

Would any person having knowledge of Australian or Joint Australian/ American Communications Centres located at Plantation Road, Saigon in 1968, please contact:

Neil Davie

[E-mail: atrax100@optusnet.com.au](mailto:atrax100@optusnet.com.au)

A Google search on 'Plantation Road Saigon' shows 10,600 mentions - too many for me to search and I couldn't find anything specific on the first page of mentions.

Regards,

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

## Searching for former 139 Sig Sqn mbrs

We are searching for contact details for former 139 Sig Sqn members:

OC MAJ David Watson

OC MAJ Gary Barnes

OC MAJ Ewart Challis

OC MAJ Gary Bell

OC MAJ Col Riley

SSM WO2 Brian Duke

SSM WO2 Arthur (Casper) Bowyer

SSM WO2 Col Dann

SSM WO2 Mal Simpson

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

[Ted \(Blue\) Hawkins](mailto:Ted(Blue)Hawkins@hawkins2@aapt.net.au)

[hawkins2@aapt.net.au](mailto:hawkins2@aapt.net.au)

And

LT Roy Birch

[Roy.BIRCH@defence.gov.au](mailto:Roy.BIRCH@defence.gov.au)

Regards,

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

## Searching for Former 135 Sig Sqn Members

135 Sig Sqn - Proposed Reunion - Searching for Former Members Listed Below

Please see the list below and, if you are able to assist with contact details for any of the members, please advise ALL of the emails here:

Cleon Walters

[cleon@internode.on.net](mailto:cleon@internode.on.net)

(co-ord of reunion contact details)

Terry Wilson

[tjwilson50@hotmail.com](mailto:tjwilson50@hotmail.com)

(co-ord of reunion contact details)

Ted (Blue) Hawkins

[hawkins2@aapt.net.au](mailto:hawkins2@aapt.net.au)

(keeper of the RASIGS dbase)

Benny Cale

Gordon Lowe (now in Alice Springs located East Side (Alice Springs), NT

Jeff Cook

Gary Hodges - located Minyama, QLD

Mick Maclouglan

Shortland? (Shorty)

Peter Miller - located Lara, VIC

Mal Edwards - located Arana Hills, QLD

Pete Derynl

Bill Foster

Regards,

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

**RASIGS - 39022 David Andrew Cochrane**

110 Sig Sqn & 547 Sig Tp Vietnam

All replies directly to:

Marc Phillips

Phone: 03 5977 2427

[E-mail: lonepine1915@yahoo.com](mailto:lonepine1915@yahoo.com)

Marc Phillips was adopted and is seeking information on and photos of the above member - Dave Cochrane (deceased) - his long-lost brother.

Any and all assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Somewhere in my boxes of photos, there will be some of Dave from our courses and I will forward these to Marc.

Regards,

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

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*Blue Hawkins has asked if anyone knows the whereabouts of the following personnel. If you know the whereabouts of any of these mentioned please contact the person and ask them to contact the enquirer directly.*

If you have contact details for 3789009

**Michael David (Paddy) Anderson**, 110 Sig Vietnam 1967-68, please advise: Laurie (Smokey) Dawson

[lauriedawson@bigpond.com....](mailto:lauriedawson@bigpond.com....)

If you have contact details for **Brian Wells** 101 Wrls Regt, please reply to: Bryan Thomas [dbthomas@tadaust.org.au](mailto:dbthomas@tadaust.org.au) (101 Wrls Regt was formerly Australian Special Wireless Group and later 7 Sig Regt.)

...

If you have contact details for 42467 **Richard Anthony Sullivan**, 527 Sig Tp Vietnam 1965-66, please advise: Robert (Bob) Fellows [robertmfellows@hotmail.com](mailto:robertmfellows@hotmail.com)

...And 'Blue' in all cases, Ted (Blue) Hawkins [hawkins2@aapt.net.au](mailto:hawkins2@aapt.net.au).

*Thanks...Ed.*

## Spread the Word

*The following persons have advised that they want their contact details spread around the Sigs Net.*

### New E-mail Address - Geoffry Jonas

RASIGS - 44045 Geoffry Rex Jonas  
104 Sig Sqn 1968-69

Change of Internet address

Please note Geoff's new e-mail address is:

[g.jonas@bigpond.com](mailto:g.jonas@bigpond.com)

Geoff welcomes contact from old mates.

Regards

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

### Change of Contact Details Terrence Scott

RASIGS - 342953 WO1 (ret)  
Terrence John (Terry) Scott, 110 Sig Sqn Vietnam 1968-69 & 1970-71

Terry has moved home and welcomes contact from old (aren't we all at our age?) friends.

239/7 Bay Drive

PIALBA QLD 4655

Phone: 07 4191 4101

[E-mail: tj.scott@bigpond.com](mailto:tj.scott@bigpond.com)

Regards

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*

### Requesting Contact: Kenneth Williamson

Would RASigs persons living on the Sunshine Coast/Gympie region, please reply to the following member who is seeking contact with old mates:

32168 SGT (ret) Kenneth Williamson

[E-mail: robyn\\_kenneth@hotmail.com](mailto:robyn_kenneth@hotmail.com)

If you are seeking old mates, please remember...

I don't give out block info on RASigs members from our RASigs dbase; privacy laws apply. I don't

mind putting old mates in contact with each other as a one-on-one but not as a block. Not to worry, I am sure you will pick up some e-mail contact and the network will grow with each contact. I could also suggest you ask your local RSL Sub-Branches to put a notice in their newsletters.

Regards

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

### New address-Brian Macauley

The new address for Brian and Avis Macauley will be is follows:

PO Box 3045

Belmont East WA 6104.

This will be the address for all mail to the Treasurer of the Royal Australian Signals Association WA (Inc)

ALL other mail to the RASigs Ass'n WA (Inc) t

The Secretary

Cathy Lofdhal

7 Danaher Mews

CLARKSON WA 6030.

Regards and best wishes

*Brian Macauley.*

### Contact Welcomed - SGT Ian Wedlock

38507 SGT (ret) Ian William Wedlock, 709 Sig Tp Vietnam 1966-67

Ian welcomes contact from old mates via:

Ian W Wedlock

71 Grant Rd

Caboolture 4510

Phone (07) 5495 3150

Mobile 0407 898 390

[E-mail iwedlock@optusnet.com.au](mailto:iwedlock@optusnet.com.au)

Regards

*Ted 'Blue' Hawkins*



## Letters to the Editor

### ANZAC Day 2008

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank the hundreds of thousands of Australians who took part in Anzac Day commemorations.

Ceremonies and marches were held across the country in almost every town and city.

It was pleasing to see so many young Australians played key roles in local services from reading poems to playing the Last Post. Many young Australians kept the Anzac tradition alive by marching and wearing with pride the medals of their forebears.

Anzac Day is an important day for all Australians. It is our chance to publicly honour the men and women who have served our nation at home and abroad in wars, conflicts and peace operations.

Organising Anzac Day services and marches is a huge task, and I thank everyone, especially veteran and local organisations, who volunteered their time to help put together this year's activities.

As our veteran community age, we look to the next generation to continue this volunteering tradition.

This year marked the 93rd anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli. More than 10,000 Australians made the journey to Gallipoli this year to take part in commemorations at Anzac Cove where the Anzac tradition was born.

2008 also marks the 90th anniversary of the final battles on the Western Front and the end of World War I. I was overwhelmed to see more than 5000 Australians make the long journey to France to attend the Dawn Service at the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux.

Thousands of Australians also attended services at other locations around the world including at Long Tan in Vietnam, Hellfire Pass in Thailand, Isurava in Papua New Guinea and Sandakan in Malaysia.

*Alan Griffin*

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

### RASigs Reunion here in Adelaide 7th to 11th Nov 2008.

Dear Fellow Associations & Corps Members,

I would like to ask for your help in promoting our upcoming National RASigs Reunion here in Adelaide 7th to 11th Nov 2008. We are getting registrations for the event trickling in as usual but time is running out and we would ask that you please advertise our function within your local newsletters, word of mouth and local networks to help get the message out. We also need to remind people that time is running out and we need to confirm catering and venues. I have put together a paragraph on the event with some details and a reference to our website for registration and further information, please disseminate as much as you can please. If people need to manually register I have attached a copy of our registration form that can be filled out and returned by post. Many thanks in anticipation.

The Royal Australian Signals Association of South Australia invites and reminds everyone, that from the 7th to the 11th of November 2008 is the National RASigs Diamond Anniversary Reunion in Adelaide. Our website, [www.rasigs.com](http://www.rasigs.com), has more details and registration facilities. The website shows ideas for accommodation and holidays as well as information on companies who are supporting us during this function. The 7th (Friday 10am to 1pm) is registration Day at Keswick Barracks (5 Minutes from the city), the 8th (Saturday Lunch) is Family BBQ Day in Bonython Park (2 minutes from the city), 9th (Sunday Morning/Lunch) is our Formal Parade Day (144 Sig Sqn with Princess Anne Banner doing formal parade), 10th (Monday Evening) is our Formal Dinner in the Adelaide Entertainment Centre with Army Band. Food & Drinks included in the price (5 Minutes from the city), 11th (Tuesday) Dedication/Remembrance Day Service. This event is celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the Bestowment of "Royal" upon our Corps. Please try to make this great occasion and register ASAP.

If anyone has contacts regarding potential sponsorship please let us know. Once again thank you in anticipation, if you require any further information please don't hesitate to call.

Regards,

*Bruce Long*

President,

RASigs Association (SA) Inc.

# Tail-end Charlie

**G**one but not forgotten, even today I was utilising the reasoning behind policy for the next generation of Z boxes. And how the DISCON CCU principles were created and pulled apart and put back together again is still very much alive, but these days I'm not looking at the 'ones and nones', but the kit it goes into. My area is at the cutting edge of making life so much easier for those folks in the field and in the office. So, yes another legacy is appearing on the horizon and where I left off on the writing of the policy for DISCON, I now look after the kit and the mantle of the new system is in the most excellent hands of another ex-WO2.

Well done all,

*Cleon Walters*

## DISCON is dead!!

Dear DISCONians,

Well the day has come when I have some sad news to advise – **DISCON is dead!!** The last official message to be sent via DISCON occurred in April 07 via the Harman site.

But here is the irony of it all for me. Due to my knowledge of **DISCON**, and in particular having managed the implementation effort, I have been asked by BAE Systems to assist in the decommissioning effort which is currently underway. I have had the pleasure (although it seemed wrong at the time) to wield a huge pair of cable cutters at Glenbrook and start the decommissioning by cutting a bundle of cables in the COMSEC room. A strange feeling I can assure you after having been involved from the start with system design through testing, installation and commissioning.

I must say to all that were involved, it certainly was a system to be proud of as it performed all its required functions for over 18 years continuous operation and only came to an end because of technology advancements, not because the system was failing. In fact the system was working perfectly right up to the day it was switched off. As I have helped with the decommissioning it has given me an opportunity to reflect on just how well designed and constructed the system was as

it still looked in almost new condition (all be it a bit dusty) so everyone involved should feel justifiably proud of their efforts.

Decommissioning progress to date is Glenbrook, Harman and Watsonia have been de-installed and sent to the SIMS metal shredder. The SIMS metal driver commented that a truckload (about 13 cabinets full of equipment) would take about 30 seconds, yes 30 seconds, to be turned into small pellets to be sorted into metal and other items. Apparently BHP buys most of the metal –who knows; perhaps your next fridge or car will have part of **DISCON** in it!

We are off to Tindal in the next couple of weeks followed by Enoggera and Pearce. After that all traces of **DISCON** will be gone although I suspect there will still be some parts of it hanging around for a while as staff at each site has held back a few items from the crusher.

To all the **DISCON** people I worked with over the years, thank you, the team spirit was terrific, the project was challenging and enjoyable and there was some great fun times.

If I have missed anyone in the address list or you know their address is wrong please pass this e-mail on if you have their details.

Cheers,

*Discon Grahame*