



THURUNKA

March 2009

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

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Coming Events - 2009

Update your diary now

ANZAC Day March	Sat	25 Apr	1030 hrs	City
Signals Reunion	Sat	25 Apr	1200 hrs	City Hotel
Committee Meeting 3	Wed	27 May	1800 hrs	RACA Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed	3 Jun	1200 hrs	CTA Club
THURUNKA June edition		Mid-June		
Reserve Forces Day March	Sun	5 Jul	1030 hrs	Sydney CBD
Committee Meeting 4	Wed	29 Jul	1800 hrs	RACA Club
Battle for Australia Service	Wed	2 Sep	1100 hrs	Cenotaph Sydney
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed	2 Sep	1200 hrs	CTA Club
THURUNKA September edition		Mid-September		
Committee Meeting 5	Wed	30 Sep	1800 hrs	RACA Club
* Eastern Region Corps Dinner	Sat	Nov		TBA
National RASigs Re-union		5-12 Nov		Vietnam
* Annual Memorial Service	Sun	Nov	TBA	Signal Hill, South Head
* Annual General Meeting	Sun	Nov	TBA	Paddington RSL Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed	2 Dec	1200 hrs	CTA Club
* Committee Luncheon	Sun	6 Dec	1200 hrs	TBA
THURUNKA December edition		Early-December		

* TBA: Dates and details to be announced / 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.

Errata

Please note an error in 'Coming Events - 2009' in the December 2008 edition of Thurunka for Reserve Forces Day. The date was incorrectly stated as 8th July, but this is a Wednesday. The correct date is Sunday, 5th July, 2009. Please check and amend your diary as appropriate....ED

In this issue

Coming Events

ANZAC Day

Association Matters

VALE / Sick Parade

Items Miscellaneous

Change of Address

Corps matters

- Australia Day Honours
- Reunion in Vietnam 2009
- The Victorian Bushfires
- Trust Fund for Victims
- The Corps Museum
- 103 Sig Sqn Museum

Media Releases

Seniors Concession Fares

FYI

Letters to the Editor

Military History

- New WWI & WWII Memorials

Flash Spotters

In the Blue Corner

581 Sig Tp

Tail-end Charlie

- Australian hero awarded VC

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 May 2009.

Royal Australian Corps of Signals



Your Host:
The Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc.



ANZAC Day 2009 March

The ANZAC March will follow its traditional format. The form-up point for the Association being the usual location at the corner of Bent and Phillip Streets, Sydney from 1000 hrs. Be early and catch up with your old service mates. All current and former members of the Corps are welcome to join Association members in the march. Spread the word and bring a mate along.

...and the re-union...

The Signals re-union venue is again the City Hotel, corner of King and Kent Streets, Sydney from 1000 hrs. This venue will be closed to the general public until late afternoon and bar snacks will be available. This is the opportunity to get together with old and new, serving and retired, members and friends of the Corps. Relive and Remember.

ANZAC SERVICE of THANKSGIVING AND REMEMBRANCE

Commemorating
The Tradition of ANZAC
And especially remembering the wonderful service of the Women in the many Women's Services of our Armed Forces, in the Land Army and other civilian groups in the times of war.

Sunday 19th April 2009 at 10am

at

St. Stephen's Anglican Church
(cnr. Mowbray Rd. & Sydney St. Chatswood)

Guest of Honour

Mrs. Amy Taylor AM

Chairman of Council of Ex Service Women's Associations (NSW)

Special Speaker

Rt. Rev Bishop Glen Davies

Anglican Bishop of the Northern Region (NSW)

Music by

Australian Army Band Sydney - supported by St. Stephen's Singers

Morning Tea will be served after the service.

Medals to be worn

Rector Rev Graham Wintle

Association Matters

Annual Subscriptions

Yes, Annual fees are now due and payable.

Again this year we have included a payment slip with your copy of THURUNKA. This payment slip is designed to assist you when you make your payment. If any details are in error please advise by correcting the slip with your remittance.

You are requested to keep up to date and make your remittance at the ANZAC Day re-union or forward by post to the President and Acting Treasurer by the end of April.

Mr C.J. Ballantine
8/62-64 Lynwood Avenue
CROMER NSW 2099

If you want, you can pay more than one year's fee in advance. You may pay as many years in advance as you want.

Now you can pay by direct deposit. Simply deposit your remittance to the Association's bank account: Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc.

BSB 112 879
Account No 126925501

Then advise the Acting Treasurer of the deposit, with your name, date and time of transaction, so that he is able to account for your deposit.

Receipts are available for cash payments. If you require a receipt just ask. If you are paying by post and require a receipt; please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your remittance.

Welcome

We welcome our new member LTCOL John Petteit RFD (Retd). He comes to us after spending over 30 odd years in the Corps of Sigs in the CMF/ARes.

LTCOL Petteit served in 1 Sig Regt, 8 Sig Regt, HQ 2DIV. His non-corps postings included 2 Trg Gp, OCTU and 2 ARRU...We extend to John Petteit a warm welcome to the Association.

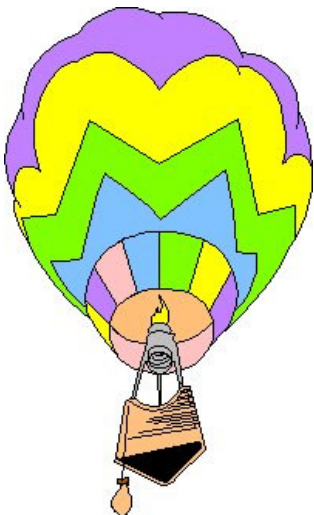
Membership Officer

Rhumb Corps Luncheon

At the June Rhumb Corps Luncheon we are being visited by Bob Ferraris OAM, National Secretary, Armoured Association. The Rhumb Corps Luncheon is an informal get-together for Association members and guests to discuss common matters of interest over a good steak and fine wine at the Commercial Travellers' Association Club, in Martin Place. The next Rhumb Corps Luncheon is on 3rd June at 1200.

We look forward to seeing you there....ED..

Where am I?



A man in a hot air balloon realized he was lost so he reduced altitude and spotted a woman below. He descended a bit more and shouted, "Excuse me, can you help me? I promised a friend I would meet him an hour ago, but I don't know where I am." The woman below replied, "You are in a hot air balloon hovering approximately 30 feet above the ground. You are between 40 and 41 degrees north latitude and between 59 and 60 degrees west longitude.

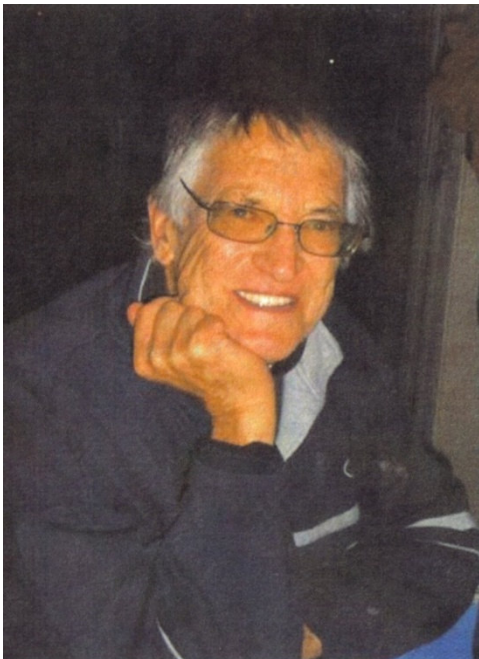
"You must be an engineer," said the balloonist.

"I am," replied the woman, "How did you know?" "Well," answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is technically correct, but I have no idea what to make of your information, and the fact is, I am still lost. Frankly, you've not been much help so far."

The woman below responded, "You must be a manager!" "I am," replied the balloonist, "but how did you know?" "Well," said the woman, "you don't know where you are or where you are going. You have risen to where you are, due to a large quantity of hot air. You made promises, which you have no idea how to keep, and you expect me to solve your problems. The fact is you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but now, somehow, it's my fault."



VALE - 2101776 WO2 Errol James Hazlewood (Retd)



RASigs Ass'n (NSW)

It is with regret that I inform you of the passing of Errol James Hazlewood from cancer at Greenwich Hospital at 8pm, Friday 20th February, 2009 on his 72nd birthday. He passed away peacefully surrounded by relatives there to celebrate his birthday. In his traditional style, he passed away with champagne on his lips.

Errol served in the National Service 7 Jan 1958 - 24 March 1958, CMF 25 Mar 1958 - 26 Nov 1964 and the Army Reserve 10 May 1965 - 22 Oct 1986. His principal units were 13 NS Trg Bn, 14 Field Regt, 7 Field Regt, 1 Div Sig Regt, 142 Sig Sqn and 8 Sig Regt in his final posting as SSM. He was awarded the Reserve Forces Medal and Clasp, Efficiency Medal and was entitled to the

National Medal, ADF Medal and the Anniversary of National Service Medal. Errol has served on the Committee for many years and was Treasurer up until his hospitalisation. The Committee is most thankful for not only the valued service he gave to the Association but also for his sense of humour, mateship and culinary skills.

Certa Cito

Chris Ballantine

VALE - Victor Malcolm (Vic)

Campbell, OCS Class of June 1960

It is with sadness that we have learnt of the passing of another valued member of the Corps, passed away on Wednesday, 29th October last. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends. Messages of condolence may be forwarded to Vic's daughter:

Cat Campbell

Mobile 0424 447 560

e-mail catnap@comcen.com.au

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

VALE - CPL Rocelyn Freeman

108 Sig Sqn

(Mrs Rocelyn Clifton)

It is with a heavy sadness that we have learnt of the tragic death of a member of the Corps who was caught in the current Victorian bushfires. CPL Roz Freeman was an ARes member posted to 108 Sig Sqn at Simpson Barracks; she was unfortunately caught by the VIC Fires on Saturday, 7th February, 2009.

Our hearts, thoughts and prayers go out to all involved in the bushfire emergency.

People wishing to, are able to make a donation (to be held in trust) to Roz's daughters - Michaela and Brittney.

Donations will be gratefully received, on behalf of the girls; by either SGT Tina Waddingham or Ms Debbie Stockdale at HQ 4 Bde (receipts are available).

Further information available from:

Sergeant Tina Waddingham

Headquarters 4th Brigade

Simpson Barracks

MACLEOD VIC 3085

Tel: (03) 9450 7334

Mob: 0425 760 874

Fax: (03) 9450 7382

Email: tina.waddingham@defence.gov.au

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

VALE - WO2 Neville John Harper (Retd)

RASigs Ass'n (Qld)

It is with sadness that we learn of the passing of another long-serving valued stalwart of the Corps. Sadly, Neville passed away on Friday 27th February 2009 at approximately 2.30 pm. Neville had been ill for several years and in respite care for quite a long time.

Records show that Neville was the first Vice President at the birth of Royal Australian Signals Association (Queensland) on 13th May 1977. He remained an active executive committee from this time till his notification in writing he was no longer to continue any active role due to his illness.

Neville was a member of the CMF and served with the CMF components of both 4 Sig Regt and subsequently 1 Sig Regt.

At a surprise afternoon tea at his home on 1st July 2005, with several of the Committee present, the President Stan Conlon, presented Neville with a Certificate of Appreciation and a Certificate of Life Membership for his longer than 27 years of service to the Association. Neville was the Association's only Life Member. Neville will be sadly missed by his wife, Dorel, family and friends.

Messages of condolence may be passed to:

Ron Auburn

Secretary/Treasurer

RASIGS Assn QLD

Phone 07 4124 0558

e-mail: tourers184@bigpond.com

who will collate and pass them to the family.

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

VALE - WO1 (ret) Frederick Walter Gunning

1st Bn RAR Korea

552 Sig Tp & 709 Sig Tp Vietnam

DoB 22 November 1928

DoD 9 February 2009

It is with great sadness that we have learnt of the passing of an honoured

and valued retired member of the Corps of Signals who previously served with the Corps of Infantry. Our thoughts and prayers are with Fred's five children, Wally, Sue, John, Will and Stephen, and their families at this sad time. Fred was one of the good guys and a mentor and role model to many. He will be fondly remembered by those left behind and welcomed by the Good Lord. Messages of condolence may be passed to the following who will forward them on to the family:

Godfrey Smith Funerals
182 Piper St
Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone 02 6331 4084
E-mail: gsf@ix.net.au
Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

VALE - Graeme Roberts
104 Sig Sqn, SVN

Unfortunately I have to advise that 3788586 Graeme Charles ROBERTS, 104 Sig Sqn, SVN has passed away. Graeme was admitted to Epworth Hospital to have a back operation and passed away a few hours later from a heart condition they could not resolve. Another excellent Operator has gone.

David Fry
MAJ (Retd), RASIGS
dfry3@optusnet.com.au
19 February 2009

VALE WO2 Maxwell (Max) Ellem
(Retd)
561 & 709 Sig Tps Vietnam
DoB 09 July 1938
DoD 4 March 2009

It is with great sadness that we are letting you know Max passed away peacefully in the early hours of Wednesday 4 March 2009, at Clare Holland House. We want to thank all those wonderful people who have replied to our e-mail, both in the civilian and defence families. Your efforts in contacting us at this difficult time are much appreciated and very comforting.

Warm regards,
Max's family.
Messages of condolence may be forwarded to:
Mrs Alma Ellem
16 Eggers Pl
Bonython ACT 2905
Phone 02 6293 1829
e-mail: ellemm@internode.net.au

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

VALE - Peter Busby
National Service Officer

It is with sadness that we have been advised of the passing of another valued member of the Corps. Peter Busby died suddenly on the 19th November, 2008, aged 63. He was an old Bundy boy, but as a National Service officer in the late 1960s he served with RASigs at 5 Sig, as I recall. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

Messages of condolence may be forwarded to:
Mrs Pat Busby
Ogilvie Rd
Blackbutt QLD 4306
Phone 07 4163 0529

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

MAJ Ross Eastgate advises us of the following:

"The Scheyville guys dug this up for me. Nominal Roll lists 1734977 Peter Wayne BUSBY in graduating Class 1/69, allocated to Sigs. I'm pretty sure he went to 5 Sig Regt at Dundas."

VALE - Mr Keith Price

Bar Steward, RASIGS Corps Officer's Mess.

It is with much regret and a heavy heart that I inform you that Keith passed away on Wed 11 Feb 09. Owing to illness, Keith retired from the Mess on 19 Dec 08, having completed almost 30 years of dedicated service behind the bar. Additionally it has been proposed that the Main Bar be dedicated in Keith's name. The Mess Committee is in the process of organising a brass plaque to be engraved and recessed into the top of the bar to acknowledge the contribution Keith has made to the Mess Life over the years.

Messages of condolence may be forwarded to:

MAJ Sue Manning
PMC RASigs Officer's Mess
OC / SI ATW
DFSS
Simpson Barracks
MACLEOD VIC 3085
Tel: 03 9450 7565
E-mail: sue.manning@defence.gov.au

Lest We Forget

SICK PARADE



COL Wolfe Cox (Retd)

Barry Tinkler has advised that he visited COL Wolfe Cox Ret'd in a nursing home in Melbourne, in August of last year. Wolfe is now 93 years of age and has advanced Alzheimer's disease. He did not recognise Barry. His wife Molly, who is 94 years of age, is fit for her age and recognised Barry during his visit. COL Cox was 2IC of 2 Div Sig Regt, served in 1 Bde Sig Sqn, was CO 1 Div Sig Regt in 1960 and was CI of the School of Signals during the 1960's.

Regards

Chris Ballantine

MAJ Leon Sharpe (Retd)

After 5 months in hospital, 27 blood transfusions - 4 Chemo sessions - 8 to go - Leon has been transferred to Eden Rehab at Cooroy, Qld. Already his strength and mobility seems to be improving. As at Mon 22 Dec 08 16:59; Leon arrived home on the 19th from Rehab, hopefully for good. He will be having his 5th treatment of chemo next week. Last week he had his 31st blood transfusion since July. He will be going back to the Rehab hospital early January, twice a week - 4 hour sessions - for six weeks. He has asked me to thank all those kind people for their lovely cards and good wishes. They were much appreciated and adorned his room to make it more homely and cheerful. We look forward to catching up with many of you in the near future. Leon would like to again thank everyone for their kind wishes and prayers during his long stay in hospital. We both wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2009.

Best wishes from us both,

Val Sharpe

December, 2008

O1 Christopher David (Chris) Morrow (Retd)

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam

Contact at home:

Chris & Julie Morrow

69 Elof Rd

Caboolture QLD 4510

Phone 07 5495 3016

E-mail: morro7@bigpond.com

Chris Morrow is in the Holy Spirit Hospital at Chermside, Brisbane where he is recovering from an amputation of his leg below the knee on 6th February; he also is being monitored for a heart problem. He stated that he suffered a heart attack also. (I believe this was at the hospital). I spoke with Chris this afternoon. Good news is that he is returning home sometime Friday 13 Feb. He has to return to hospital for treatment every second day. He sounded very happy with this news, compared to the initial bleak outlook of being there for ten weeks.

Regards.

Popeye

Paul A Sams

4/42 Lyon Street

Moorooka Qld 4105

popeyesams@hotmail.com

WO1 John Myers (Retd)

(Former Chief Clerk RASIGS)

104 Sig Sqn & 32 Small Ships Vietnam

All replies direct to:

Brian Fisher

I've had a call from Margaret (John's wife) tonight and she is a very busy little lady. As at tonight he is still in the Tamworth Hospital. As most mates/friends will know he has got lung cancer but recently he has increased his illness by adding a kidney infection and pneumonia to his troubles. The latter two problems occurred a couple of weeks back and after being admitted to Barraba Hospital he was transferred to Tamworth Base Hospital. Marg expects that he may be moved to a Private Hosp

in the near future and be released back to home when all infections are under control - no idea when at this time. Marg's daylight hours have been and will continue to be tight for her. She has to drive to and from Tamworth daily, run the farm (Including oversee cows calving etc, etc). As she is not fully aware of who are John's friends and she has asked me for help in this matter. Therefore I ask that instead of calling/e-mailing him or her please direct these to me as I will continue to be in contact with both and I'll keep everyone abreast of any changes as they occur.

He is NOT a well man owing to the lung cancer and didn't need the extra troubles.

Regards

Brian Fisher

1/399 George St

Deniliquin NSW 2710

03 5881 3132

04 2981 3132

brfisher104@bigpond.com

December, 2008

LTCOL (ret) Father John Francis

'Tink' Tinkler, RAACHD,

Army Padre, HQ 1 ATF Vietnam

Messages of support may be forwarded to:

Fr John 'Tink' Tinkler

PO Box 11

Moama NSW 2731

Phone 03 5480 0141

e-mail: (none)

Tink has recovered sufficiently from Q-Fever and is now back on limited duties in his parish; there is an answering machine in the parish office.

Regards

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

WO2 Edward Roderick (Tanker)

Hawken (Retd)

581 Sig Tp Vietnam

I am improving ever so slowly each day some times I take two steps back and

one forward. I am having a lot of trouble with my tail bone and bladder urinating (more false starts than good starts) the tail bone suffered a bit of cooking resulting from radium treatment. I am on new pain management treatment which is helping. Please feel free to pass this info on to the Signals Corps fraternity. Regards

Tanker

Edward Roderick (Tanker) Hawken
Phone 07 4667 1670 (Warwick QLD)
e-mail: edward.r.hawken@bigpond.com

WO2 Ronald August (Bluey) Still (Retd)

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam 1968-69
I visited Ron at the Mater Private yesterday, where he is recovering greatly from a reconstruction op on his reconstructed left knee. Larger pin/rod inserted to replace shorter loose one from previous reconstruction.

Cheers,

Popeye

23 January 2009
Paul A Sams
4/42 Lyon Street
Moorooka Qld 4105
popeyesams@hotmail.com

MAJ RAH (Rob) Murray (Retd)

It seems that Rob has suffered a sudden serious illness on a visit to Adelaide and spent time in Royal Adelaide Hospital. I am sure that we wish him well in his recovery. Ross Eastgate visited Rob and Barb in the hospital. Rob is in good spirits and on the mend. He is hoping to be discharged Monday, 2nd March and to return to Brisbane later in the week. Without going into the gory details, it was all a close run thing, and he was lucky to be in hospital and under observation when he suffered what was a major, life-threatening crisis earlier in the week. He was in good hands, received care from the highest levels.

Messages of support may be forwarded to:

Rob & Barbara Murray
41 Alvisio Ct
Narangba QLD 4504
Phone 07 3888 2637
Mobile 0407 628 058
e-mail: yarrumai@bigpond.net.au

Regards

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

Phone 07 5499 3704

WO1 John Taylor (Retd) (Ex RSM)

It seems that our old mate, John, has been in the wars with his health. I am sure that we all wish him a speedy recovery, if only to alleviate the sufferings of his devoted wife, Barbara. Messages of support may be forwarded to:

John & Barbara Taylor
46 Greenland St
Wishart QLD 4122
Phone 07 3349 2768
e-mail: johnandbarbt@yahoo.com.au

This is just a short note to let you know that John has been in hospital (Greenslopes) again with severe heart problems. He is home again now. He has had two more "stints" inserted and if they do not work he will need another major heart operation. He has to rest, cannot drive for a week, cannot lift anything heavier than 5 lbs for 4-5 weeks.

Apart from that we are OK.

Regards,

Barbara Taylor

As for the weight-lifting, I notice the parameters are within alcohol guidelines!

Regards,

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

ITEMS MISCELLANEOUS

New e-mail address for Albert Grulke

As at 1000 hours Monday, 9th February 2009 my e-mail address was changed to
agrulke7@bigpond.com
Any mail sent to my old e-mail address since then will need to be re-sent
Albert Grulke

Change of e-Mail Address

CAPT (ret) Graeme Hugh (Breaker) Cusack
Graeme, now living in Vietnam, has had a computer crash and changed his e-mail address at the same time. He welcomes contact from old mates to assist him to rebuild his address book.

Old e-mail address: breaker.vvmc@optusnet.com.au

New email address:

breakervvmc@gmail.com

Please update your address book accordingly.

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

New e-mail Address

Neil Jamieson
Please note Neil's new e-mail address:
njbej@westnet.com.au
and update your records accordingly.

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

New e-mail Address

David Goldhardt
RASIGS - 211359 David (& Linda) (Goldie) Goldhardt - New
Email Address

Old e-mail Address - dlgoldhardt@optusnet.com.au

New e-mail Address

dlgoldhardt@lizzy.com.au

Old Optusnet e-mail stopped on 25 Feb 09

Please update your address book.

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins



CORPS MATTERS

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

2009 Australia Day Honours

Paul Irving, AM RFD

I am pleased to advise that our Patron, MAJGEN **Paul Irving** AM RFD, has again been honoured in the New Years Honours List with the award of the Public Service Medal (PSM). The holder is entitled to the post nominal PSM. The extract reads:

Mr Richard Paul Irving AM RFD, Galston NSW for outstanding public service particularly in the implementation of public sector reforms and productivity in New South Wales.

Barry Swan, RFD ED

Also of interest to those who know LTCOL **Barry Swan** RFD ED (Retd), now residing at Tewinga NSW, he was awarded the Emergency Services Medal (ESM) for services to the State Emergency Service (SES) in the 2009 Australian Day Honours.

Regards,

Chris Ballantine

Paul Staughair, AM, RASigs

Member (AM) in the Military Division of the Order of Australia was awarded to COL Paul Staughair (our past Head of Corp (HOC)), who received an AM in the Australia Day honours. COL Paul Edwin Staughair, received his award for exceptional service as Director Network Centre Warfare – Army, Signals Head of Corps and Commandant of the Defence Force School of Signals.

Regards,

Denis Hare

PO Box 115

Glasshouse MOUNTAINS QLD 4518

Ph: 07-54387512

Mob: 0419-334535

e-mail: dhare@au104.org

Hurry...not long to go now...

The Royal Australian Corps of Signals Vietnam Re-union

5 - 12 November 2009

A Message for all Chooks

All ex and serving members of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals and their families are invited to a Re-union to be held in Vietnam.

The in-country price for this Re-union, including accommodation package, re-union kit. All breakfasts, 3 lunches and 6 dinners, tours, entertainment, boat and hydrofoil, 'paypal' fees and transfers start from USD \$595 per twin share.

The basic price is 2-star hotels at USD\$595.00 per person twin-share through to around USD\$980.00 for some 4-star hotels. The costs have been established so that there is only one fee per person. The hotels are formulated on a per person twin-share price so if you want a single room you will have to advise so a single fee can be applied. All Tours mentioned including entrance fees, English speaking guides, Hydrofoil and Drink Package for functions.

For detailed information on the RASIGS Reunion–Vietnam 5 - 12 November 2009 go to

<http://www.rasigsvietnam.com/>

Chairman of Committee Gregg Dickson:
'gregg.dickson@rasigsvietnam.com'.

It is now time to check out this re-union and put in your Registration. The very good web site gives you detailed information on this Re-union.

With Kind Regards

Sheldon Maher OAM

PO Box 7350

Lismore Heights NSW
2480

Phone 02 6624 4486

Fax 02 6625 2895

smaher@bigpond.net.au



www.rasigsvietnam.com

The Victorian Bushfires of February, 2009

Some of our fraternity is suffering....

From the desk of RSM DFSS...

It is with much sorrow that I inform you of his current circumstances. It has been reported to me that CPL Darren Gibson has lost his wife and children in the VIC fires. He is currently in Alfred Hospital suffering from severe burns. I am happy to take messages of support at this time.

I have visited Darren in Hospital with LTCOL Sue Coyle (ex OC 104 Sig Sqn, now CO 17 Sig Regt). Darren is in a drug induced coma in the ICU. He has burns to his arms, legs, and lower-back. The bottom of his feet being the most severe; he may have lost some toes. He is to go into surgery again.

I have spoken to family members on his and Lesley's side. You will not see this in the media as the family wishes to maintain Darren's privacy.

LTCOL Coyle and I have started to work on support for Darren and family today and will let you know what assistance you can give him in his time of need. At this time please spread the word to as many people as you can.

CPL Darren Gibson enlisted into Army in 1990 and was initially posted to Artillery before becoming a SIG (ECN 266). He was posted to 8/12 MDM Regt, 1 CSU, 1 RTB (instructor) and 1 CSR. He deployed to Cambodia, Bougainville, Solomon's and Iraq. He discharged from Defence in 2008. He moved to Kinglake West on his discharge with his partner Lesley, his daughter (5 years) and son (3 years).

Michelle

M.E. GRIFFITH
WO1
RSM DFSS
(03)9450 7505

0419 442 938

Trust Fund for Michaela and Brittney Clifton
Daughters of Roz Freeman (Mrs Rocelyn Clifton).
CPL Rocelyn Freeman, 108 Sig Sqn

It is with a heavy sadness that we have learnt of the tragic death of a member of the Corps who was caught in the current Victorian bushfires. Our hearts, thoughts and prayers go out to all involved in the bushfire emergency.

A Trust Fund account for the daughters of Roz Freeman has been set up; donations can be electronically transferred or deposited into the following:

DEFCREDIT

ITF Michaela & Brittney Clifton

Account no: 20780585

BSB: 803-205

Member no: 78292 or 14373 (required if transferring from another 'Defcredit' Account)

Receipts are available for cash.

Lest We Forget

Tina Waddingham

Sergeant

Brigade Recruiting Liaison Officer

Headquarters 4th Brigade

Simpson Barracks

MACLEOD VIC 3085

Tel: (03)9450 7334

Mob: 0425 760 874

Fax: (03)9450 7382

E-mail: tina.waddingham@defence.gov.au

Corps Museum now in *Silicon Chip*!

Here is some information for people interested in our Corps museum. The Royal Australian Corps of Signals Museum has been written up in a current electronics magazine. The five page article was written by Rodney Champness and was published in his Vintage Radio column on pages 90-95 in Vol 22 No 2 (Feb 2009) issue of *Silicon Chip*. It is worth perusing and is available in most newsagencies.

Regards,

Jim Gordon

Museum Manager

I secured a copy of Silicon Chip and was impressed by the article and encourage others to read it. The next step is to go to the museum and experience the history. Well done to you and your staff and volunteers, Jim, for the hard work that has gone into the Corps Museum....Ed.

3 CSR 103 Sig Sqn Museum Update

<http://www.defence.gov.au/army/3csr/Museum.asp>

All replies to:

Museum Asst Curator

Geoff (Lofty) Evans

Historical Preservation Cell

3 CSR

Lavarack Bks

Townsville QLD 4813

Phone 07 4771 9645

Mobile 0408 062 316

Fax 07 4771 7029

e-mail (Museum): 3csr.preservation@defence.gov.au

e-mail (Lofty): lofty.evans@defence.gov.au

Subject: Stuff

Peoples,

Things are starting to look up. We have found a Series 3 FFR – it looks like it was left outside a place it should not have been as there are lots of bits missing but half a rover is better than no rover. It is going to take a long time to even make it look almost respectable or presentable but I reckon we can find most of the bits and things.

We have come up with an idea about a Website that would be designed by one of the local schools - just got to find out what our restrictions would be.

Bits and pieces of equipment are turning up. I have almost finished scanning all of our photos – just takes time.

We must be doing well as the Main Q wanted to borrow some of our gear to make up some of the discrepancies.

Still waiting for the 500W to arrive – it shan't be much longer – shall we run it up just for the fun of it?

Ref the names for Somalia – almost there – just one more bloke to check out and then off to the engravers.

I am off to the US from the 4 Mar till 14 April. Any questions or suggestions and the like please e-mail Webby or leave a message for him on 07 4771 9645.

That's it

See you on the airways

Lofty

Media Releases

Here are some more MEDIA RELEASES that we received via our network concerning the Defence Force, and particularly, veterans. We are unable to include all the content of these releases within the pages of THURUNKA, so what it has been decided is to list them for your reference with the relevant media contact details should you choose to follow them up. This by far is not the full list, but those brought to our attention considered relevant to us.

If you wish to receive the Ministers' media releases automatically by e-mail please go to:
www.minister.dva.gov.au/subscribe.htm

...ED.

Media Release - Seniors Concession Fares

Media Release: Cheaper fares for seniors around Australia
Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

04/01/2009

(Extracts)

Seniors around Australia are now able to access concession fares on most interstate public transport systems as a new national scheme begins to rollout. From 1st January, the new national scheme started rolling out to allow seniors to use their concession cards outside their home state. The scheme will provide incentives for 'grey nomads' to spend their tourist dollars in Australia and is a boost for communities and businesses that depend on tourism. When fully operational, over three million Australians who hold seniors cards will benefit.

The Australian Government has offered almost \$50 million over four years to State and Territory Governments so that they can provide concessions to Seniors Card holders who are using public transport services outside their home state. Discussions with the Western Australian and Queensland governments are continuing. In the meantime, from 1 January 2009 Queensland will begin offering concessions on its urban public transport to interstate concession holders.

Joint Media Release 015/2009

DEFENCE FORCE MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND TRANSITION REVIEW REPORT

Wednesday, 4th February, 2009

THE HON. WARREN SNOWDON MP Minister for Defence Science and Personnel

THE HON. ALAN GRIFFIN MP Minister for Veterans' Affairs

The Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, the Hon. Warren Snowdon MP, and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Alan Griffin MP, today welcomed Professor David Dunt's independent Review of Mental Health Care in the ADF and Transition through Discharge report.

“The Government is committed to providing the very best mental health support to Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and those transitioning to the ex-service community,” Mr Snowdon said.

Media contacts:

Kate Sieper (Warren Snowdon): 02 6277 7620 or 0488 484 689

Laura Ryan (Alan Griffin): 02 6277 7820 or 0437 863 109

Defence Media Liaison: 02 6265 3343 or 0408 498 664

Media Release – VA01

Support for veterans hit by Victorian bushfires

Tuesday, 10th February 2009

The Department of Veterans’ Affairs’ Deputy Commissioner in Victoria, Mike O’Meara, today encouraged veterans affected by the bushfires to contact the Department for information on how to access support and services.

Media inquiries: DVA Media on 02 6289 6203

Media release

Support for Veterans AFFECTED BY QUEENSLAND FLOODS

Tuesday, 10th February 2009

The Department of Veterans’ Affairs’ Deputy Commissioner in Queensland, Alison Stanley, today encouraged veterans affected by the floods in Queensland to contact the Department for information on how to access support and services. Ms Stanley said the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) was available to support veterans and their families affected by the disaster.

Media inquiries: DVA Media on 02 6289 6203

Media Release VA001

Decision to Review Gulf War Syndrome Welcomed

14 January 2009

The decision by the Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) to re-examine Gulf War Syndrome has been welcomed by the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin. A recent review into Gulf War Syndrome in American veterans has prompted the RMA’s investigation.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

Media release VA002

2009 Deeming rate to be lowered

18th January, 2009

Many veterans with investment income will benefit from a lower income test deeming rate to apply from 27th January 2009, the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin, said today. The reduction in the rate reflects the ongoing reductions in interest rates and the impact of the global financial crisis on investments. DVA pensioners who would like to discuss their rate of payment should contact the Department on 133 254.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

Media Release VA003

GOVT COMMITTED TO COMMEMORATING WESTERN FRONT SACRIFICE

Wednesday, 21st January 2009

The Australian Government is committed to finding the best way to commemorate and highlight the service and sacrifice of Australians on the Western Front, the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin, said today.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

Media release VA006

DUNT VETERAN SUICIDE STUDY PROVIDED TO GOVERNMENT

Tuesday, 17th February 2009

Yet another election commitment by the Rudd Government has been delivered with the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Alan Griffin, receiving the independent Dunt review into suicide in the ex-service community. “The Government is committed to improving the mental health of current and ex-service men and women during and after their service careers,” Mr Griffin said. The study examines broad issues of suicide in the ex-service community and a number of specific cases in the last three years. It also helps to identify the extent of suicide in the ex-service community, some common contributing factors, veterans who may be at risk and what administrative changes can be made to help combat the problem.

There are already several mental health programmes available to current and former serving members and their families.

Further information on these services can be found at

www.dva.gov.au

or by calling 133 254.

Media inquiries: Darren Loasby 0419 004 876

Media Release VA127

COSGROVE JOINS CALL FOR MORE FAMILIES FOR VIETNAM STUDY

28 December 2008

General Peter Cosgrove has joined the campaign to encourage Vietnam-era service families to register for a study to research the long-term effects of war service on families and children. General Cosgrove, one of Australia’s most respected soldiers and a Vietnam veteran, is supporting the Vietnam Veterans’ Family Study which is currently recruiting participants. “Invitations to participate in the study were sent to randomly selected Vietnam-era army personnel – 10,000 each of those who served in Vietnam and those who didn’t,” Minister for Veterans’ Affairs Alan Griffin said.

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109

FYI

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

DISCLAIMER: The thoughts and ideas and any views expressed in the articles of *THURUNKA* are those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of The Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc. or the staff of *THURUNKA*. Nor are we able to attest to the accuracy of the information so contained. 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*.

Voluntary work and the VEA, SRCA and MRCA

A message from Minister Griffin....

A number of people have expressed concerns about how the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) treats voluntary work with community and welfare organisations under the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA), the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (SRCA) and the Military, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA).

There appears to be a belief that voluntary work is treated differently under SRCA and MRCA than it is under the VEA. Some people are concerned that undertaking voluntary work will trigger a review of incapacity payments. This is not the case.

To clarify the issue and re-assure veterans wanting to do voluntary work, the Repatriation Commissioner, Brigadier Bill Rolfe AO (Retd), has written to a number of ex-service organisations and the Training and Information Program Committee Chairs to state:

- DVA is supportive of veterans undertaking voluntary work;
- Voluntary work is treated the same under all three Acts; and
- Undertaking voluntary work will not trigger a review of pension or incapacity payments.

A copy of Brigadier Rolfe's letter and policy statement is attached in the web links below.

I would urge any veteran or veterans' representative to refer to this statement should they have any issues with the way such matters are being interpreted.

Alan Griffin

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

www.dva.gov.au/temp/Letter_to_ESOsFeb.pdf

www.dva.gov.au/temp/VW_statement_attached_to_ESO_letter.pdf

Wines at a Discount

A message from Bruce Long, President, RASigs Ass'n (SA).

Hello Fellow Sigs,

I know some of you would have seen this before but I feel it necessary to send it again in the hope that you will help a company that has supported the RASigs and if looked after will continue to do so in the future. This company provided

support to the RASigs Re-union here in Adelaide in the way of good quality wines and all I ask is that you give them a chance to provide you with some offers that you have no obligation to buy whatsoever. I personally will be buying their product as I can see the great savings and the good quality wines being offered

Your Favourite Wines at Exceptional Prices

The RASigs' Association (SA) has forged a new partnership with Premium Wines Direct, one of Australia's largest direct distributors of wine. Premium Wines Direct will deliver our members brands you know and trust, plus many hard to get labels at very competitive prices (some at or below wholesale!). They are able to do this because they buy direct from producers (no wholesale margin) and are able to offer huge savings to our member's nation wide.

The very best of what is on offer is condensed into the RASIG's Association Wine Update

There is no obligation to purchase and you may unsubscribe from this service anytime.

Premium Wines Direct is a proud supporter of the RASIGs Association.

Website: <http://www.winedirect.com.au/premiumdirect/>

Once again thank-you for helping those who help us.

Regards

Bruce Long

President

RASigs Association (SA) Inc

Merger of Commonwealth Superannuation Boards

FM AD SUPER POLICY\DEFENCE PERSONNEL EXECUTIVE - R 242321Z NOV 08

Recently, the Hon. Lindsay Tanner MP, Minister for Finance and Deregulation and senator the Hon Nick Sherry, Minister for Superannuation and Corporate Law, jointly announced a government decision to reform the governance and administration framework of the main Australian government military and civilian superannuation schemes.

They said that on 1st July, 2010, the Military Superannuation And Benefits Scheme Board, the Defence Force Retirement And Death Benefits Authority and the Australian Reward Investment Alliance (the trustee of the government's civilian superannuation schemes) will merge to take over the management of the military and civilian super schemes. As part of the announcement, the ministers also indicated the department of finance and deregulation, with the help of

specialist advisers, will undertake a study to examine options for the future administration of the superannuation schemes that are currently administered by COMSUPER.

It is intended the outcomes of this study will be brought back to the government before the end of this financial year (that is, by 30 June 2009). The government proposes to implement agreed recommendations by 1 July 2010, to coincide with the commencement of the operation of the new board.

The ministers made it clear that both military and civilian interests will continue to be represented under the new arrangements. Senator Sherry also said that the reforms will not affect members' superannuation benefits in any way. He said each scheme will retain its own legislative base and provisions.

The government's decision to create a single superannuation board for the main commonwealth schemes is generally consistent with the recommendation made by the review of Military Superannuation Arrangements (RMSA) concerning the future governance of military superannuation schemes. Defence officials continue to discuss with ministers and officials in other key government departments both the content of the RMSA and possible timetables for considering the other recommendations.

In commenting on the recommendations of the RMSA, the

government has said it is aware that superannuation is an important issue for both contributing and retired members of the Australian Defence Force and their families. It has indicated that decisions on the recommendations will not be rushed or taken lightly.

ENDS

Bert Lane

bertlane@bigpond.com

Vietnam War Research Website

I am passing this along because it is probably the best search list ever compiled about the Vietnam War. This simply has to be shared with anyone who ever served in Vietnam. It would take months to look at everything this site offers <http://www.cc.gatech.edu/fac/Thomas.Pilsch/Vietnam.html>

Phillip Springer

FYI the above website, which we have noted in previous times, but it is always good to remind others of a valued resource.

Regards,

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

Phone 07 5499 3704



Letters to the Editor

Dear Ed,

FOR WIDEST DISEMINATION, PLEASE

RASIGS RE-UNION, VIETNAM

NOVEMBER 2009

It has become obvious that the Committee for the Re-union in Vietnam from 5th to 12th November 2009 is not reaching as many ex sigs as it should. If you can think of any ex chooks that you know or have contact with to please advise them as soon as you can, the re-union web site so they can check it out.

Registration is open and money is payable by 30th June 2009.

Please spread the word and thank you all for your help in sending out this information.

Regards,

Gregg

Gregg Dickson

Chairman of Committee

RASIGS Vietnam Reunion 2009

gregg.dickson@rasigsvietnam.com

www.rasigsvietnam.com

The US Army Sea Duty Ribbon



One of our members, Mr Ernie Flint MBE ED, has been awarded The ARMY SEA DUTY RIBBON on behalf of the US Army for his service in the US Army Small Ships in WWII.

The Citation reads:

"You are commended for the great sacrifice you made for the United States Army and for the great country of Australia. On behalf of the United States Army Transportation Corps, please accept as a token of our appreciation the enclosed Honorary United States Army Sea Duty Ribbon. This ribbon is awarded to those who served aboard watercraft in defense of our nation."

and is signed

Brian R. Layer

Brigadier General, US Army

Chief of Transportation

Ernie told me that he was honoured to receive the Ribbon and would wear it with pride on behalf of all those who served in the US Small Ships.

Congratulations to Ernie...ED.

Military history

Remembering our history...

...In this edition of THURUNKA we are using military History column to advise you of the new memorials planned for World War I and World War II in Canberra...Ed.

Media release: First and Second World War memorials design unveiled

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Mailing List
PRIME MINISTER
MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS

FIRST AND SECOND WORLD WAR MEMORIALS DESIGN UNVEILED

Brisbane-based firm Richard Kirk Architects Pty Ltd was today announced as the winner of the design competition for two new national memorials to honour the more than 1.4 million Australian service men and women who served in the First and Second World Wars.

The winning design was selected from 43 entries during a national and international competition conducted in 2008.

The memorials will be built on the northern shore of Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra, at the foot of Anzac Parade, to frame the view of the Australian War Memorial.

The winning designs are symbolic of the spirit, sacrifice and commitment of Australians during both World Wars.

The memorials will honour more than 100,000 Australians who died in the World Wars and will be a permanent legacy to those who served or supported the war effort, both at home and overseas.

The Memorial(s) Development Committee is to be congratulated on its initiative, vision and commitment to this project.

Now the winning design is selected, the Committee will focus on raising enough money to see this important project through to completion.

The Memorials will cost an estimated \$21 million. The Australian Government has committed \$250,000 to the project.

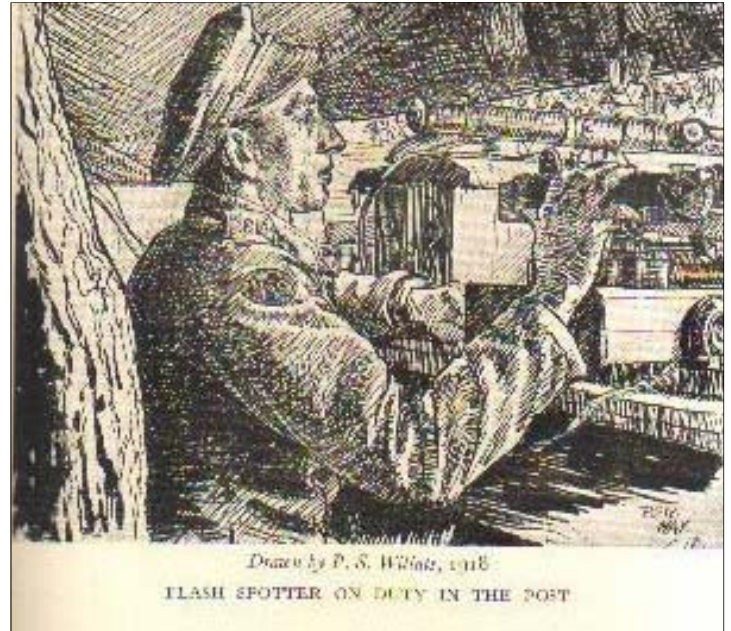
The Government strongly encourages all Australians to offer their support to the construction of this new national monument.

For details on how to make a donation visit www.mdc.org.au

CANBERRA

26 FEBRUARY 2009

PRESS OFFICE (02) 6277 7744



Flash Spotters and Sound Rangers

The image of a Flash Spotter at his post, a sketch drawn by P.S. Willets in 1918 is from the book *Flash Spotters and Sound Rangers* by John R. Innes, first published in 1935 and is an image that the Locating Artillery Association would like to reflect at North Fort Museum, Manly, NSW.

I believe the satchels to the left of the 'Flash Spotter' and to the left and below of the telescope, may be 2 x field telephones or communication device of some sort. Whilst it is only a sketch, it is very difficult to make out what is on the front of the satchels, if whether it is something like a hook/device to put a phone on, or whether one would 'click' or 'tap' to get attention (with an open line) at the other end of the line (a HQ Section).

To look at the image at first glance, the satchels look similar to an old fashion letter box on someone's lawn. Is anyone able to identify what the objects are please?

Sincere thanks,

John Posener

North Fort Museum

jposener@optusnet.com.au

In The Blue Corner

Blue Hawkins has advised us of the following. If anyone is able to help Blue in any way, or you have your own enquiry, please contact Blue directly....Ed

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins
(Keeper of the RASIGS contact dbase)
23 Belcher St
Caboolture QLD 4510
Phone 07 5499 3704
e-mail: hawkins2@aapt.net.au

Thanks...Ed.

Australian Defence Force - Honours, Awards, Medals

Bill Krause has advised me of the following. Check out this website to see what your entitlements are <http://www.defence.gov.au/medals/>
Thanks Bill.

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

Graeme Clare - Update

On behalf of Graeme and I, thank-you for the great response received. Because of information and support, Don and I believe we now have a very solid base for Graeme's claim (even for DVA). Just so everyone knows, besides not being quite well enough to work or the fattest or fastest bear in the bush he is fine and there is plenty of kick left. He has fantastic medical support and is looking forward to the birth of our second grandchild in February and seeing the Hawks go back to back in September (as if the magnificent Cats would let that happen again). If anyone is ever passing by Geelong, hospitality is on us.

Graeme will answer all his e-mails, but anyone who remembers knows he is not the quickest on a keyboard.

We would also like to wish all a very, very Merry Christmas and a wonderful 2009.

Thank-you

Glenda and Graeme Clare

GLENDAL CLARE
gmclare1@bigpond.com
3rd December, 2008

I also add my personal thanks to all who have taken the time to re-establish contact with Graeme & Glenda, and make a submission to Don McPherson which, from my own observations, is most helpful in the DVA claim.

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

110 Sig Sqn Vietnam - Plaques & Badges

LTCOL (ret) Bill (Des) Overstead has found some plaques at the 'old' price of \$38.00 plus GST and \$6.00 plus GST for the badge. To me, that adds up to \$44.00 plus GST of \$4.40 = \$48.00. I do not know about postage and handling; you will have to discuss that with the supplier.

As Bill points out, the price will double after this stock is sold.

There are only 5 (five) available at the old price above. If you want one, get in quick and order it from:

Rob Box
Client Manager
Lega Recognition Solutions
50 Terracotta Drive,
Nunawading Vic 3131
Ph 9894 8918
Fax 9894 7977
e-mail rob@lega.com.au

As all the oldies would remember, 110

Sig Sqn was part of 2 Sig Regt which has now morphed into 17 Sig Regt Holsworthy; I wonder if they have a plaque in their office foyer - it may be prudent if they did to show the history of the unit.

Regards

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

Photos Sought

I was wondering if any of your contacts would have any old photos from 1964 to 1969 of the School of Sigs at Balcombe, 104 Sig Sqn at Wacol or 1 Sig Regt at Ingelburn, or Kapooka in that time. I am putting a history together for my Grandkids and would love any info I can get.

Hope your health is ok now.

My address is:

18357 Charlie Manych
44 Mina St.
Toowoomba 4350
Phone 07 4636 6149
e-mail: charliemanych@bigpond.com

Regards

Charlie Manych

If you can assist Charlie Manych with photos as sought below, please contact him as below....Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

Searching for Jim Weeks and John (Roo Dog) Rees

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

Ted (Blue) Hawkins
hawkins2@aapt.net.au
(to update our RASIGS dbase); and
Joe Keipert
joe.keipert@yahoo.com

Ted 'Blue' Hawkins

Help wanted about 581 Sig Tp

I am about to take command of 581 Signals Troop early next year. I was hoping your association may have some history of the troop, or have members of the troop which are part of the association which could help with some history.

Cheers,

Fraser Trevaskis

fraser.trevaskis@defence.gov.au

If anyone is able to help Fraser, please contact him directly for e-mail, or to me and I will pass it on....Ed.

Tail-end Charlie

Victoria Cross for Trooper Mark Donaldson

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/vc-hero-stuff-of-legends/2009/01/16/1231608946055.html>

'Stuff of legends': Australian hero awarded Victoria Cross

Nadia Jamal
16th January, 2009

A serving soldier in Afghanistan, Trooper Mark Donaldson, has been awarded the prestigious Victoria Cross for Australia for exceptional gallantry after he rescued a wounded interpreter. Trooper Donaldson received the award from Governor-General Quentin Bryce at a presentation ceremony at Government House in Canberra today. It is the first time in more than 40 years that an Australian soldier has received the VC.

The award recognised his bravery in Afghanistan last year, where a battle raged around him during an ambush in Oruzgan province. The investiture was told that on numerous occasions Trooper Donaldson deliberately drew enemy fire in order to allow wounded soldiers to be removed to safety.

"As the battle raged around him he saw that the coalition force interpreter was lying motionless on exposed ground," the Governor-General's official secretary Stephen Brady told the gathering. "With complete disregard for his own safety on his own initiative and alone, Trooper Donaldson ran back 80 metres across exposed ground to rescue the interpreter and carry him back to a vehicle. Trooper Donaldson then rejoined his patrol and then continued to engage the enemy while remaining exposed to heavy enemy fire."

Trooper Donaldson was said to have displayed exceptional courage in circumstances of great peril.

"I salute you": Rudd

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said Trooper Donaldson's actions "leapt from the page" and was "the stuff of legends." Mr Rudd said Trooper

Donaldson had deliberately exposed himself to enemy fire, and his selfless act allowed the wounded man to be removed to safety in the battle.

Mr Rudd said that, when Trooper Donaldson picked up the interpreter, he returned him to safety and administered care before returning to the fight and continuing to engage the enemy.

"In our working day lives, that is the stuff of legends," Mr Rudd said.

He said it was also in keeping with the spirit of the ANZACs. Mr Rudd told Trooper Donaldson that the nation saluted him - a man of valour and a man who took the decision to place his own life in peril to save the lives of others.

"I salute you", Mr Rudd said.

Mr Rudd said Trooper Donaldson had joined the list of Australian heroes, adding his bravery would forever be engraved in Australian history. "Generations of school children will now know of the story of Trooper Mark Donaldson," he said. "It is a story of a hero, one which will be told in classrooms, workplaces and watering holes for many years to come."

Soldier an inspiration: Bryce

The Governor-General, Quentin Bryce, described Trooper Donaldson as an inspiration. "We gather around you to distinguish your actions, and to honour the individual they speak of, the person you are, your undertaking, your way of living," she said after the presentation. "We are here to dedicate your contribution, your unconditional surrender to duty and humanity, your abandonment of your own necessity so that others may be secured.