



THURUNKA

March 2010

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

Patron MAJGEN R P Irving AM PSM RFD (Retd)

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Coming Events - 2010

Update your diary NOW!

Committee Meeting 2	Wed 31 Mar 1800 hrs	RACA Club
ANZAC Day March	Sun 25 Apr 1000 hrs	Sydney City
RASigs Reunion	Sun 25 Apr 1200 hrs	City Hotel, Sydney
Committee Meeting 3	Wed 26 May 1800 hrs	RACA Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed 2 Jun 1200 hrs	CTA Club
<i>THURUNKA</i> June edition	Mid-June	
Reserve Forces Day March	Sun 4 Jul 1030 hrs	Sydney
Committee Meeting 4	Wed 28 Jul 1800 hrs	RACA Club
Battle for Australia Service	Wed 1 Sep 1100 hrs	Cenotaph Sydney
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed 1 Sep 1200 hrs	CTA Club
<i>THURUNKA</i> September edition	Mid-September	
Committee Meeting 5	Wed 29 Sep 1800 hrs	RACA Club
* Eastern Region Corps Dinner	Sat Nov 1900	TBA
* Annual Memorial Service	Sun 14 Nov TBC	Signal Hill, South Head
* Annual General Meeting	Sun 14 Nov TBC	Paddington RSL Club
Rhumb Corps Luncheon	Wed 1 Dec 1200 hrs	CTA Club
* Committee Luncheon	Sun 5 Dec 1200 hrs	TBA
<i>THURUNKA</i> 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.

ANZAC DAY 2010

RASigs Assn (NSW) March and Re-union

Sydney city, NSW

See inside for further details

We look forward to seeing you there.

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Next Issue

Copy for the next issue of *THURUNKA* must be in

The hands of the Editor
Ken Forway

28 Mendelssohn Avenue
EMERTON 2770.

Or by e-mail:

thurunka@optusnet.com.au

NO LATER THAN
14th May, 2010

Coming Events

ANZAC Day 2010 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 Aboriginal
and
Torres Strait Islanders for their Service in all
Wars & the Personnel Involved in Peace
Keeping Operations

Sunday 18th April 2010 at 10am

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

Guest of Honour
To be advised

Special Speaker
Rev Lloyd Bennet
Senior Chaplain (Rtd) – Australian Army

Music by
Police Band Ensemble - supported by St. Stephen's Singers

Morning Tea will be served after the service.

Medals to be worn
Rector Rev Graham Wintle

Association Matters

Association website: <http://www.rasigs.com/nsw>

New Treasurer for Our Association

We are pleased to announce that one of our members, Allan (Peewee) Johnston, has been appointed as Treasurer for the Association. We welcome Allan to the position of Treasure and trust that all members will assist him in the performance of his duties in the Association.

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 us 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 Treasurer by the end of April.

Mr Allan Johnston
PO Box 85
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

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 126 925 501.

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 to our New Member, **Mr Geoffrey Fitzgerald**, son of the late Jim Fitzgerald. Geoff joins us as an associate member. We welcome Geoff and trust that his membership will be a positive experience to us all.

Future Activities and Events – Any Ideas?

One of our members has suggested to the committee a number of strategies to improve our public exposure and longer term recruitment. The types of activities suggested are:

- Annual mixed, semi-formal luncheon or dinner at a suitable venue with a VIP guest speaker;
- Family excursions;
- Greater use of the media to promote the Association; and
- Invite the public through the media, to attend our annual memorial service and other suitable activities.

As an Association we do have a reasonably busy calendar as indicated in *THURUNKA*, together with other activities attended by committee members. Our quarterly Rhumb Corps luncheons already provide a social opportunity for members to meet on a regular basis and partners and friends are most welcome at the luncheon.

Before initiating any of the above mentioned activities, the committee would welcome your comments on what you think will work to improve our activities, membership recruitment and retention. Of course, any cost associated with increased activities would need to be met by the members.

Comments can be made to the President or Secretary by telephone, e-mail or mail. Their addresses are shown in *THURUNKA*.

**VALE - Jim Fitzgerald OAM**

25827 SGT (ret) James Patrick (Jim) Fitzgerald OAM

3 Bn RAR Korea and 1 Bn RAR Korea
<http://www.koreanroll.gov.au/veteran.aspx?id=1222616>

Colleagues

It is with regret that I advise of the passing of our valued member, Jim Fitzgerald OAM.

Member Neil McClintock rang me to advise that Jim passed away at 2.30am Tuesday, 15th December, 2009 from a brain haemorrhage. He had been in poor health for many years and had been confined to a wheel-chair.

Jim was a Korean War Veteran and later served for many years at 8 Sig Regt, Lidcombe, rising to the rank of Sergeant.

Jim was also very active with the Auburn RSL Youth Club for which he was awarded the OAM. Jim is survived by two sons.

Chris Ballantine

President

RA Signals Association (NSW)

VALE - LTCOL Barry Gordon SWAN ESM ED (Retd)

It is with regret that I must advise of the passing of LtCol Barry Swan ESM ED (Retd) on 2nd January 2010 from cancer. His funeral was held on 7th January 2010.

Whilst Barry was not a member of the Association, he was well known to me and many of the longer serving members of the Corps in NSW.

Born in a farming community on the North Coast, he enlisted in the CMF during the 1950's and served in 1st Corps Signal Regiment, Forest Lodge, Sydney with the likes of Ron MacDonald, Barry Tinkler, John Ballantine

and Pat Buckley; 402nd Signal Regiment, Dundas; OC 143rd Signal Squadron, 8th Signal Regiment, Lidcombe; Officers' Training Group, Ingleburn where he qualified for LtCol. His final posting was to HQ FF Comd, Logistics Planning Group where he retired in 1981.

Barry and his wife, Barbara moved back to a farm at Bowraville, NSW where he became heavily involved with the NSW State Emergency Service. His services were recognised in the 2009 Honours List with the award of the Emergency Services Medal (ESM).

Barry was a private person and whilst not technically oriented (he was the manager of the Sydney Office of a large accounting firm), he is remembered for his sound grasp of communications principles, his ability to command and his sound guidance to junior officers in the areas of Army finance and administration.

The Association has passed on its condolences to Barry's wife, Barbara.

Chris Ballantine and Ken Myers

VALE - Colin STUART

3809582 LCPL Colin Campbell STUART

Australian Regular Army, 24 October 1995 to 30 June 2002

It is with regret that I advise a Young Veteran (Royal Australian Corps of Signals), has passed away.

3809582 LCPL Colin Campbell STUART

Australian Regular Army
RASIGS

DOE: 24 October 1995

DODisch: 30 June 2002

Employment: Operator Communications; Operator Information Systems and Radio (ECN 266)

OP Service:

OP WARDEN (INTERFET) 9 Jan 2000 to 20 Feb 2000; and

OP TANAGER 21 Feb 2000 to 1 May 2000.

Units posted: 1RTB, 104 Sig Sqn, 5/7 RAR, 1 Command Support Unit, 7

Command Support Unit

Enquiries and wishes please to:

John Wyatt

City of Albury RSL Sub-Branch

Fax: 02 6025 2603

Phone: 02 6021 1341.

"We Believe"

Paul Copeland OAM JP

Australian President

Oceania Representative

Association Internationale des Soldats de la Paix

(Soldiers of Peace International Association)

P.O. Box 552

TORQUAY VIC 3228

P/F: + 61 3 5264 8244

M: + 61 419 355 226

E: chook126@bigpond.net.au

W: <http://www.fname.info/aisp/eng/>

Skype: [chook660](#)

VALE - Bob WOOLLARD A.O.

447 (SX24359) MAJGEN (ret) Robert Peter (Bob) WOOLLARD A.O.

WW II & Korea

[http://www.wv2roll.gov.au/script/veteran.asp?](http://www.wv2roll.gov.au/script/veteran.asp?ServiceID=A&VeteranID=845340)

[ServiceID=A&VeteranID=845340](http://www.wv2roll.gov.au/script/veteran.asp?ServiceID=A&VeteranID=845340)

<http://www.koreanroll.gov.au/veteran.aspx?id=1221776>

Date of Birth 27 Jul 1921, Adelaide SA

Date of Death 20 December 2009, Canberra ACT

It is with sadness and regret that we have been advised of the passing of a great man who was a truly valued servant of Australia and the Royal Australian Corps of Signals.

Messages of condolence may be forwarded to the following who will collate them for presentation to the General's wife, Mrs Diana Joan Woollard and family.

President

RASIGS Assn (ACT)

MAJ Bill Wattam

Phone 02 6254 1228

Mobile 0439 828 551

E-mail (h) wwattam@bigpond.net.au

From Blue Hawkins

Blue has advised us of the following.

VALE - Bryan Panting

3176719 Bryan Stanley (Puff-Puff) Panting

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam

<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/VeteranDetails.aspx?VeteranId=1270892>

Date of Birth 8th March, 1950

Date of Death 4th February, 2010

Messages of condolence may be for-

warded to Bryan's wife:
Mrs Jan Panting
8 Yelka Way
Bertram WA 6167
Phone 08 9439 3292
Or through Bryan's daughter's e-mail
rachel.atkinson1@bigpond.com

VALE - Chris Murray
318331 Chris M. Murray
152 Sig Sqn
DoD 8th December, 2009
Chris was unique in that he was the student of merit on his SAS Selection Course; an award that has gone to very few non-RAInf personnel. Messages of condolence may be forwarded to:
The Secretary
The House
E-mail: kevan1@inet.net.au

VALE - David Saunders
Storeman 104 Sig Sqn 1976-79
David served in 104 Sig Sqn from approx 1976 to 1979 and many members that served during that time would remember him with affection. He worked within the store area but was a very good footballer that was part of our premiership team during that time. He lived for many years in Queensland and spent the last couple of years in Darwin. Our thoughts and prayers are with his loved ones at this time. David will be laid to rest in accordance with traditional customs. Messages of condolence may be passed to:
Arti Koopman
E-mail: akoopman@bigpond.net.au
He will collate them and pass them to the family.

VALE - Gary Douglas Beckett
1735585 Gary Douglas Beckett
110 Sig Sqn Vietnam 1970-71
<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/VeteranDetails.aspx?VeteranId=1245577>
Date of Birth 21st January, 1948
Date of Death 16th December, 2009
Messages of condolence may be forwarded to:
Roslyn (Kent) Beckett
22 Venus Ct
White Patch QLD 4507
Phone 07 3410 7216

Mobile 0437 752 556

VALE - MAJ Frank FLYNN
2/40056 (69120, N80374, NX113050)
MAJ (ret) Francis Haydn (Frank) FLYNN, WW II
<http://www.ww2roll.gov.au/script/veteran.asp?ServiceID=A&VeteranID=750536>
Date of Birth: 24th July, 1913
Date of Death: 19th December, 2009
From 'The Courier Mail', 22nd December, 2009
FLYNN, Francis Haydn (Frank), Major (Retired)
Formerly of Brisbane, Frank passed away peacefully on Saturday, 19th December, 2009, aged 96 Years. Beloved Husband of Toni (deceased), beloved Father of Loretta, Father-in-law of Brian Stewart, Grandfather to Angela, Rosemarie, and Mark, Great-Grandfather to his eight adoring Great-Grandchildren. The DVA site revealed this.

VALE - Gregory Blair
Sig Gregory Wayne Blair
110 Signal Squadron Vietnam
<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/VeteranDetails.aspx?VeteranId=1258141>
All replies direct to:
Shelli Blair
E-mail: shelli.bell@hotmail.com
If anyone has memories of Wayne, please share them with his daughter, Shelli, as she is compiling a history of her father's military career.

VALE - Thomas Spark
1734619 Thomas George Spark
104 Sig Sqn Vietnam
Date of Birth 9th March, 1948
Date of Death 12th January, 2010
<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/VeteranDetails.aspx?VeteranId=1244736>
Messages of condolence may be forwarded to Tom's wife:
Mrs Jan Spark
173 Raceview St
Ipswich QLD 4305
Phone 07 3389 7634
E-mail: jspark09@optusnet.com.au

VALE - John Collins
8266553 LTCOL (ret) John Collins
John Collins was an RASigs officer who served in 2 Sig Regt and was also a Project Director of Project PARAKEET.

Upon retirement from the ARA he transferred to the ARes on 1st August 1998 and joined the Australian Public Service.

VALE - James Smith
31755 James Wendell Smith
British Commonwealth Base Signal Regiment, Korea
<http://www.koreanroll.gov.au/veteran.aspx?id=1224503>
(Please note that Jim's rank on discharge in 1954 at the age of 23 was CPL - not WO2 as shown on this website)
Date of Birth 2 October 1931
Date of Death 15 February 2010

VALE - Richard Hocking
5715670 Richard Ian Hocking
104 Sig Sqn Vietnam
<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/VeteranDetails.aspx?VeteranId=1236331>
Date of Birth 30 November 1946
Date of Death 21 February 2010
Messages of condolence may be forwarded to Rick's wife:
Mrs Yildiz Hocking
11 Rivergum Pl
Morley WA 6062
Phone 08 9378 1935

VALE - Wayne MASON
448363 Wayne John (Mum) MASON
Det 152 Sig Sqn Vietnam
<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/VeteranDetails.aspx?VeteranId=1259126>
Messages of condolence may be forwarded to Wayne's wife:
Mrs Patricia Mason
5 Newhaven Tce
Burton SA 5110

It is with sadness and regret that we have been advised of the passing of these valued servants of Australia and the Royal Australian Corps of Signals. They will be sadly missed by families and friends. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families at this time.

Ted (Blue) Hawkins
Phone 07 5499 3704

Lest We Forget

SICK PARADE



Michael Gategood

2151201, 142 Sig Sqn

Our Publisher, Michael Gategood, is really in the wars and has prepared this edition of THURUNKA under difficulty. The retina in his right eye detached and he has been down in Newcastle getting it repaired. However, because his left eye was done this time last year with only partial success he now has limited vision and will do so for some weeks. He still prepared THURUNKA but under difficulty as his eyes got tired and he had to rest them. We thank Michael for his persistence and dedication and wish him a speedy recovery with no harmful long-term effects.

Lindsay Evans

1734471 Lindsay William Evans
104 Sig Sqn Vietnam

It seems that our old mate is suffering throat cancer and is due to start radiation and chemotherapy treatment in the coming weeks.

He welcomes contact from old mates.

All replies direct to:

Lindsay Evans

E-mail: evolindsay@hotmail.com

Mobile 0402 721 619

Regards

Ted (Blue) Hawkins

Barry James Billing

38724 SGT (ret) Barry James Billing
110 Sig Sqn Vietnam

All replies direct to:

Barry Billing

Mobile 0419 845 350

E-mail: baza1@bigpond.com

If you remember from a couple of years ago, Barry suffered breast cancer and had his right breast removed; approximately 3% of breast cancers occur in men with the other 97% occurring in women. Sadly, the cancer has returned and he is undergoing major cancer treatment again. Additionally, he has been in hospital since mid-December with an acquired back injury after falling down a flight of stairs in The Rocks district of

Sydney. He swears to me that he wasn't merry after a night of dining with his wife!

Barry is currently in:
Delmar Private Hospital
58 Quirk St
Dee Why
Sydney NSW 2099
Phone 02 9982 7655

He welcomes contact from old mates via his email or mobile. He doesn't know when he will be released from hospital.

I spoke to him and, Barry being Barry, he was in a positive mood.

Regards

Ted (Blue) Hawkins

Phone 07 5499 3704

Frank Burgess

212538, Francis Kenneth Thomas (Frank) Burgess, 3 RAR Korea
<http://www.koreanroll.gov.au/veteran.aspx?id=1211474>

110 Sig Sqn Vietnam

<http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/VeteranDetails.aspx?VeteranId=1276834>

All replies direct to:

Frank & Joan Burgess

5 Craig St

Ballina East NSW 2478

Phone 02 6686 5687

E-mail: fktp@westnet.com.au

I am sure that many of us remember Frank with fondness. One of the characters of the Corps, he called a spade a 'flaming' shovel and had little regard for authority if he felt it was being misused.

I am sure that we wish him well and, though many will not be able to visit him in the flesh, we can at least cheer him up with e-mails or phone calls to his home or phone (as above).

Get well soon mate.

Regards

Ted (Blue) Hawkins

Stolen from the Internet

...If anything can be stolen from the Internet!

Here are the words to the haunting melody, we now know as

'The Last Post'

Day is done.
Gone the sun.
From the lakes
From the hills.
From the sky.
All is well.
Safely rest.
God is nigh.

Fading light.
Dims the sight.
And a star.
Gems the sky
Gleaming bright.
From afar.
Drawing nigh.
Falls the night.

Thanks and praise.
For our days.
Neath the sun
Neath the stars.
Neath the sky
As we go.

.....
This we know.



CORPS MATTERS

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

The RSM of 1 Sig Regt has advised us of the Regiment's 50th anniversary celebrations. If you wish to attend contact the RSM by e-mail, as he requests NO PHONE CALLS (except for those without e-mail). A letter by post might be a better option for those not able to send an e-mail...Ed.

1st Signal Regiment - 50 years 1960 - 2010

Saturday 5th Jun 2010

The following is information regarding the 1st Signal Regiment (The Premier Regiment) 50th anniversary celebrations:

Itinerary

0900h - Birthday Parade with the Princess Anne Banner.

1100h - Open Day including a Historical Display. (To include BBQ lunch and light refreshments, raspberry cordial of course).

1900h - 50th Anniversary Ball. (Venue and dress to be determined).

Timings

Timings are a rough guide only.

Venue

The venue for all activities is likely to be Gallipoli Barracks. However, further information as it comes to hand.

Invites

The Commanding Officer, LTCOL James Murray, cordially invites all past and present serving members of RASigs and/or 1 Sig Regt to attend.

Formal invites will be sent to past COs and RSMs. I would appreciate names and addresses of past COs and RSMs if any of your team could help me out.

Accommodation

Accommodation is NOT available at Gallipoli Barracks.

Transport

1 Sig Regt will assist with the admin arrangements for VIPs and large groups (i.e. Tpt to and from the airport); however we do not have the capacity to

assist individuals.

Returns

Returns can be sent to me via e-mail:
danny.smith@defence.gov.au

Please, NO PHONE CALLS except for those without e-mail.

In conclusion

This day will be a great day for past members to catch up and renew friendships and to have a look at some of the new technology within the Corps.

If anyone has any memorabilia that would be suitable for the display could they please let me know?

Bill Ryan has kindly volunteered to bring the following:

1 X 110 Pirentie Hardtop FFR (actually one of the prototypes) with a GRC-106 and RT-524 fitted.

1 X Series 2A FFT (1964 Vintage) with a C11/R210 and C42 fitted.

Please RSVP via E-MAIL.

Please, NO PHONE CALLS except for those without e-mail.

Danny Smith

(Danny Smith)

Warrant Officer Class One

Regimental Sergeant Major

1st Signal Regiment

P: 07 3332 6260

M: 0438 769 238

E: danny.smith@defence.gov.au

1 Sig Regt

Gallipoli Barracks

Enoggera QLD 4051

The RSM would appreciate names and addresses of past COs and RSMs...ED.

A Special Thanks From Sister Trish

I received this letter of thank, via Gregg Dickson, from Sister Trish, who is the Australian Nun running the **Loreto Vietnam Australia programme**. Sister Trish is responsible for about six thousand disadvantaged children, from birth to adulthood. The children are disadvantaged mentally and/or physically, from many incidents that are occurring in to-day's world. (Children are still being killed and maimed by land mines as they scavenge for scrap metal in the fields, or just play in them.)

In Vietnam there is no 'dole' nor 'disability pensions'; your family has to look after you if you are so afflicted. What Loreto does is to take these children and give them a future, where they can get some dignity and participate in family life and contribute to their own well-being, if not to that of society.

Loreto is the organisation that the **RASigs Vietnam Re-union 2009** supported. Funds were raised through collections, donations and auctioning off the excess paraphernalia from the re-union. In fact our Association donated \$200 to Loreto by way of the banner auction (Grand Hotel, Vung Tau). It is proposed to display this banner at the Sydney re-union on ANZAC Day...Ed.



www.rasigsvietnam.com

The letter starts...

Dearest Friends,

I haven't forgotten you all for even one minute since the happy days we shared whilst you were all here in Vietnam! In the meantime, we've opened a new school and had our big LORETOFEST and I knew that it would take me until now to write to you all!

When I recall the many moments I shared with you here, there is significant warmth about getting together with so many wonderful people! Also, I still feel somewhat humbled to realize that I was truly 'gifted' in meeting each and every one of you with thoughts of where you'd come from, what you've 'carried'



for so long and I glow at the reality of how you are now!

It was great to hear of your families, your experiences, you 'grandies' and the amazing directions which you have taken over the past 40 years! I have learnt so much from you all: the aspect of being always able to laugh and above all, for your thoughtful outreach for the kids in the care of the Loreto Program and your willing generosity!

With all my heart I thank you for EVERYTHING that each and every one of you gave to our (now your) kids in so many ways. Funds have reached 54,500,000 VND (have you forgotten the worth of the Dong?) already and Gregg tells me there is still more to come. Then there was the



Children of 'Loreto'

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

laptop, clothes, pencils, colouring books, other books and all kinds of stationery goods! You sure had your actions planned so well and then, even on arrival here, you still kept giving!

My heart is filled with the deepest, most profound appreciation possible to all of you for the incredible outreach you have made through your event which in turn is all “for the kids”! Your generosity gives me such personal strength to ‘keep going’ here and from the depths of the kids’ love for you – also comes their BIG shout of thanks!

At this stage, we’re looking at about 42 bicycles for the kids from your donations. I also need to say, that because of the busyness of these days (new school getting settled, end-of-the-year, also my annual holiday in Australia) – I have decided that the logistics of organizing this number of bikes for the kids in underprivileged District 9 are pointing to the fact that the ‘Bike Presentation Day’ will have to ‘wait’ until early March 2010. Usually, once we ‘announce’ we have funds for bicycles, the process after that with contracts, paper work, approvals, notifying schools and authorities etc. takes about two months. Before I head ‘home’ I honestly don’t have enough time to pursue this wonderful ‘project’ – in the light and hope of doing it correctly and with the greatest honour to you all! With this news – you know that I am a woman of promises – and you WILL get a total account of that presentation when it happens!

I send Season’s Greetings to you all: may Christmas be happy, fun, “bubbly” and full of life and light!

Once again, my deepest and loving thanks to each and all. You’re embedded in my heart and memory – always and I’m hoping like crazy that we will meet again in the future.

Much Love

Trish

4th. December 2009



Loreto Children Receiving Bikes



Triet, Year 9, has been chosen as the lucky recipient of the new laptop! Triet is actually in Year 9 and he’s seen here with Mr Tam (Principal) and his friend Thanh. Triet comes from a very poor family (many members have vision impairment) – but he is very clever. He’ll certainly head to University: unknown ‘faculty’ yet – but he is an excellent student!

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

Reserves hit for Six by Army leadership

Defence Reserves Association Press Release - 9 December 2009

The Defence Reserves Association is very concerned by Army's Reserve Restructure Plans.

The plans "fly in the face of the Government's 2009 Defence White Paper" which emphasises Army as a total force with higher readiness of Reserve Forces to enhance ADF capability.

Major General Jim Barry said "Australia cannot afford to waste the investment that has been made in Reserve Forces or diminish its capacity to sustain future rotations. The Army Reserve needs to be focussed to meet White Paper requirements, and not dumbed-down in capability or stripped of regular personnel".

The negative Scoreboard reads:

1. Army proposes to downsize the Army Reserve by merging two brigades in NSW, widely increasing the span of command for Reserve commanders, reducing the South Australian brigade to a battalion group and by merging numerous units including Melbourne and Monash University Regiments in Victoria.
2. Army is to halve the Regular Army cadre staff of the Army Reserve to assist in filling the "hollowness" in regular infantry units. This is to occur barely 12 months after the Army Reserve has taken over a major portion of the now defunct Training Command's role.
3. Army proposes to offload depots in metropolitan and country areas and cluster Reserves in "super-bases" following a review of the defence estate, whilst the White Paper talks of Army relating more to the community. However, money from asset realisation is expected to be minimal and will go back to Consolidated Revenue and not to Defence.
4. Army has slashed Army Reserve training, with training days down by 20% from last year until 30 Jun 2010, and extensive cutbacks already directed to all training, exercises, night parades, and ceremonial parades, Support for ANZAC Day 2010 has been reduced to a shoestring.
5. Army has directed large cutbacks to the already low Reserve ammunition allocation to support an unforecasted regular exercise.
6. Army will not meet equipment deficiencies in Reserve units even though these have been known for a long time. Despite Government's direction in the White Paper, Army does not plan to move "high end long lead time" capabilities

into the Reserves.

Army has hit Reserve morale for six. Many experienced Reservists and instructors are "voting with their feet" by taking other jobs and reducing Reserve commitments. The lost training investment is very high and makes no economic sense for Army quite apart from its diminished capability.

From Lancer's Despatch February 2010 www.lancers.org,

Australian General Service Medal for Korea receives Royal approval

THE HON. DR MIKE KELLY MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support

Friday, 12 February 2010

005/2010

Australian General Service Medal for Korea Receives Royal Approval

The Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM MP, today announced that Her Majesty the Queen has approved the official regulations and design for the award of the Australian General Service Medal for Korea.

"The Australian General Service Medal for Korea is being struck to recognise former Defence Force personnel who completed 30 days participating in operations in South Korea. This includes any location within 161 kilometres seaward from the coast of South Korea during the post-armistice period from 28th July 1953 to 19th April 1956." It is expected that the medal will be available for dispatch to some eligible recipients before ANZAC Day 2010.

Former Defence Force personnel who served in South Korea during the post-armistice period are encouraged to submit their application to the following address:

Directorate of Honours and Awards

Department of Defence

PO Box 7952

CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

People who have previously applied for the award do not need to reapply but should contact the Directorate of Honours and Awards if their address details have changed since applying.

Further Information:

Please call the Directorate of Honours and Awards on 1800 111 321 (toll free within Australia) or +612 6266 1050 (from outside Australia), or visit <http://www.defence.gov.au/medals/> Media contacts:

Elyse Gatt (Dr Mike Kelly): 02 6277 4840 or 0437 502 246

Defence Media Liaison: 02 6127 1999 or 0408 498 664
www.defence.gov.au

The 'RSL Salute'

Returned and Services League of Australia

In London on Armistice Day 1920, during the ceremony to unveil and dedicate the Cenotaph in Whitehall, a funeral procession accompanying the remains of The Unknown Soldier, which had arrived from France the previous day, was to halt at the Cenotaph during the ceremony before proceeding to Westminster Abbey for internment. The official party included the Empire's senior soldiers, sailors and politicians and as many Victoria Cross winners as could be assembled. The ceremony concluded with a march past. The Regimental Sergeant Major of the Guards Regiment conducting the ceremony, faced with a gathering of highly decorated and high ranking military men (including the Victoria Cross winners), all wearing rows of medals, decreed that all would salute the Cenotaph as they marched past by placing their hand over their medals, signifying that "No matter what honours we may have been awarded they are as nothing compared with the honour due to those who paid the supreme sacrifice".

The RSL maintains that tradition to honour the dead by placing the right hand over medals (not our heart, our medals) during a march-past at a ceremonial occasion, or at a wreath laying ceremony

Item extracted from the Communicator, Feb 10, newsletter of the RASA (Qld).

2010 AVVRG Long Tan Trek Tour

We have been advised of the 2010 AVVRG Long Tan Trek Tour being conducted in August and hosted by Dave Sabben MC. Walk the Long Tan battlefield with the former 12 Platoon commander at the Battle of Long Tan. Also visit other sites and places such as 1 ALSG area, Nui Dat, Saigon and Vung Tau. An optional 9-day/8-night tour extension starts following the Long Tan Tour, where more sites are visited through the country, ending with a 2-night R&R at Ha Long Bay. We have included the flyer as an annex to this edition of THURUNKA.

Military history



Australian Military Forces WWII SANDAKAN 1942–1945

New Book on Sandakan

You probably know about the horrific events of WWII when Australian and British PoWs were sent to the death camp of Sandakan in North Borneo (now Sabah, Malaysia) and then put on death marches. Of a total of more than 2000 men only six survived – they were rescued by indigenous men, cared for and delivered safely into Allied hands.

I have written a book – SANDAKAN 1942–1945. Stories of the local people who heroically helped the Australian PoWs

It consists of first-hand accounts by members of the underground, their families and indigenous people (still living) who helped the PoWs. Most of the indigenous people are Christian and the biggest group is Catholic.

Among the underground were people of all races and faiths. The story is one of true gospel values and gives a message of hope that shared human values are greater than divisions of race, religion and culture.

I was given a grant to have the book printed so I am giving all the money to the descendants of the members of the underground and the indigenous people who risked so much to help the PoWs. The book is \$30 per copy. FYI the websites and information below.

All replies direct to:
 Author: Doreen Hurst
 Address: 43 Percy Cres CHAPMAN
 ACT 2611
 Phone: 02 6288 6195
 E-mail: dhurst5@bigpond.com

Cost: \$30 each
 P & H: \$10.95 (1 to 5 copies)
 SANDAKAN 1942–1945. Stories of the local people who heroically helped the Australian PoWs
<http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/4614215>
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/32178415?selectedversion=NBD44384921>
 For those of us who usually purchase

this type of book from the Australian War Memorial (AWM), their website - <http://www.awm.gov.au/shop/item/9780980671506/> - shows the book is out of stock at the AWM.

Doreen Hurst

Author

The above book could be a worthy addition to the following book on an honoured Australian Signals Officer who died at Sandakan:

The Duke

A Hero's Hero at Sandakan

Captain Lionel Matthews GC MC

Author: David Matthew (son of the subject)

<http://www.wv2roll.gov.au/script/veteran.asp?ServiceID=A&VeteranID=436500>

I have this book in my library (I purchased it from the author at the RASIGS reunion in Adelaide in November 2008) and it is a mighty read.

Regards

Ted (Blue) Hawkins

Phone 07 5499 3704

Media Releases

Here are some more MEDIA RELEASES that we received 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 some of 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 and 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 VA101

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Mailing List
 Thursday, 17 December 2009

Department Of Veterans' Affairs to Continue as Separate Agency

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, today reassured the veteran and ex-service community that the Government has no plans to merge the Department of Veterans' Affairs with other agencies.

"Consistent with our election platform, the Government remains committed to maintaining a separate and properly funded Department of Veterans' Affairs," Mr Griffin said.

"The Government understands that the needs of veterans and the ex-service community are unique. We recognise that delivering an appropriate level of service for this group requires a Department with a discrete budget and awareness of the special circumstances that exist within this community.

"Veterans should not be concerned by a recent announcement relating to the merger of agencies within the Human Services portfolio - my Department is not affected.

"The Department of Veterans Affairs will continue to work closely with both Centrelink and Medicare."

Media inquiries: Belinda Cole 0437 863 109

Media Release VA003a

Monday 15 February 2010

\$1.3M FOR VETERAN HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROJECTS

Encouraging veterans, war widows, widowers and their families to become involved in local health and well-being activities, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, today announced more than \$1.3 million in funding to support 98 initiatives across Australia.

"I am pleased to announce that more than \$1.3 million has been allocated in this round of the Veteran & Community Grants program," Mr Griffin said.

"The funding will benefit some 41,000 veterans, war widows and widowers and their families by supporting a range of initiatives including health, nutrition and exercise sessions."

"Veteran & Community Grants help fund local initiatives that improve access to community care services and encourage social interaction through Day Clubs, Men's Sheds and social excursions," Mr Griffin said.

"It is important that the veteran community has access to a range of programs where they can learn skills to help them remain independent and active, particularly for the elderly living by themselves."

Veteran & Community Grants are available to ex-service and community organisations, veteran representative groups and private organisations that contribute to the health and welfare of the veteran community.

Local and community organisations interested in applying for funding are encouraged to visit www.dva.gov.au/grants or contact their nearest DVA office on 133 254 (for metropolitan callers) or 1800 555 254 (for non-metropolitan callers).

Media inquiries: Sasha Nimmo 0437 863 109

Media release: VA007

Tuesday, 23 February 2010

GALLIPOLI'S VICTORIA CROSS MEDALS TO TOUR AUSTRALIA

The Australian War Memorial's collection of Victoria Cross medals from Gallipoli will tour the nation for the first time to commemorate the 95th anniversary of the landing.

Announcing the tour today, Minister for Veterans' Affairs Alan Griffin said it was a valuable opportunity for more Australians to see ANZACs' Victoria Cross medals.

"Gallipoli was where the ANZAC legend was born. These nine ANZACs epitomise the courage and sacrifice of those who fought there," Mr Griffin said.

"The Victoria Cross is the highest form of recognition that can be bestowed on a soldier for remarkable and unselfish courage in the service of others. The entire nation draws pride and inspiration from these brave men," Mr Gower said.

The nine Victoria Crosses will travel to Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia, Victoria and Queensland, from 20 March 2010.

Mr Stokes said was always conscious of the special place the VCs have in the hearts of all Australians.

"When the Australian War Memorial presented an opportunity to tour the Gallipoli VCs for the first time, I personally sought to ensure that all Australians would be able to visit the exhibition free of charge and learn about the lives of these brave men. The VCs are such an important vital part of our lives, in many respects they are a part of our core essence as Australians.

The touring exhibition will feature the medals of Corporal Alexander Burton, Corporal William Dunstan, Private John Hamilton, Lance Corporal Albert Jacka, Lance Corporal

Leonard Keysor, Captain Alfred Shout, Lieutenant William Symons, Second Lieutenant Hugo Throssell, and Lieutenant Frederick Tubb.

Seven of the nine Victoria Crosses awarded at Gallipoli were for bravery during the battle of Lone Pine, on 6-7 August 1915. A total of 97 Australians have received the Victoria Cross.

Media inquiries: Sasha Nimmo 0437 863 109

The VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service can be contacted 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 1800 011 046.

To receive the Minister's media releases automatically by email subscribe at minister.dva.gov.au/subscribe.htm

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 direct....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

Researcher Warns On Herbal Medicines

Please, tell you doctor what, if any, herbal or other medicines you take in addition to what he/she prescribes. It could save your life!

Researcher warns on herbal medicines

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/herbal-remedies-could-be-deadly-says-forensic-pathologist-professor-roger-byard/story-e6frea6u-1225827809823>

MANY herbal medicines contain potentially lethal amounts of arsenic, mercury and lead and pose a serious danger if taken in large quantities, injected or combined with prescription drugs, an Adelaide researcher has found.

Adelaide University Professor Roger Byard, one of the state's most experienced forensic pathologists, has issued a warning to consumers about the potential dangers of herbal medicine after analysing a series of studies and research from around the world.

"There's a false perception that herbal remedies are safer than manufactured medicines, when in fact many contain potentially lethal concentrations of arsenic, mercury and lead," he said.

"These substances may cause seri-

ous illnesses, exacerbate pre-existing health problems or result in death, particularly if taken in excess or injected rather than ingested."

Professor Byard said one US study, that found 251 Asian herbal products found in American stores, identified arsenic in 36 of them, mercury in 35 and lead in 24 of the products and had the paper he produced published in the US-based Journal of Forensic Sciences.

There can also be fatal consequences when some herbal medicines interact with prescription drugs, Professor Byard said.

"As access to such products is largely unrestricted and many people do not tell their doctor they are taking herbal medicines for fear of ridicule, their contribution to death may not be fully appreciated during a standard autopsy," he said.

A herbal medicine known as Chan su, used to treat sore throats, boils and heart palpitations, is one of the worst offenders and can cause cardiac arrests or even comas, according to Professor Byard.

"Other side effects of herbal medicines can include liver, renal and cardiac failure, strokes, movement disorders, muscle weakness and seizures," Professor Byard said.

Regards

Blue

40% off Big Sky Publishing Australian Military History books

Big Sky Publishing is delighted to offer 40% off all our Australian Military History books. Many of these titles have been written by our Aussie soldiers and depict the reality of soldiering in the Australian Defence Forces. These books assist in ensuring our long and proud Military History is preserved and made available for fu-

ture generations.

We offer this discount in order to allow RSL Branches and Sub Branches to purchase these books for use as donations to schools and local libraries, for prizes and gifts to your local military or Cadet Units, for fundraising opportunities or to purchase and sell to your members allowing them to access these low prices.

§ **Looking Forward Looking Back** Customs and Traditions of the Australian Army, - RRP \$34.95 - Buy Price \$20.95

§ **Aussie Soldier Up Close and Personal**, - RRP \$34.95 - Buy Price \$20.95

§ **Aussie Soldier Prisoners of War**, - RRP \$34.95 - Buy Price \$20.95

§ **Combat Medic**, - RRP \$29.95 - Buy Price \$17.95

§ **Soldiers Tales**, - RRP \$19.95 - Buy Price \$11.95

§ **Pure Massacre Aussie Soldiers** Reflect on the Rwandan Genocide, - RRP \$34.95 - Buy Price \$20.95

§ **A Long Way Home One** POW's story of escape and evasion during World War II, - RRP \$24.95 - Buy Price \$14.95

Simply contact Big Sky Publishing for an order form. Minimum order is only five books in total and price includes delivery. An invoice will accompany the books.

For additional discounts on bulk orders please contact me via e-mail or 0407 615 490.

Denny Neave

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Web1: www.bigskypublishing.com.au

Web2: www.aussiesoldier.com.au

Letters, e-mails and faxes

We have changed the name of this column from 'Letter to the Editor' to 'Letters, e-mails and faxes' to broaden the outlook of the column and more accurately describe its contents...Ed.

That WS19 the impostor

I received an e-mail in response to my request in the December edition of THURUNKA concerning the 'WS-19' seen in the Jeep at Duxford Museum and the 'WS-19' that I saw in the War Relics Museum, Han Oi whilst in Vietnam. The pictures are re-created for your visual inspection...ED.

Dear Ed

Sorry to say but the bottom picture is a 'WS-19' OK but the one in the jeep is a 'WS-22'



The Wireless Set in the Jeep in the Duxford Museum



Wireless Set WS-19 as seen in the Military Relics Museum, Han Oi

So where are the differences?

1. On the left of the 'WS-19' set there are two sockets with lots of pins. The top socket was used to connect to the rotary converter producing 250 and 500 volts. The 'WS-22' set power supply sits alongside but has a smaller power connectors.
2. The second socket on the 'WS-19' set was for the intercom. Bear in mind that this was a tank radio so it needed a control unit. I think that the 'WS-22' set was used as an Artillery radio. Note that mic and headset plug is on the bottom right hand side.
3. On the 'WS-19' set there is a tuning control on the left hand side. This was for the 240 MHz transceiver for tank-to-tank comms. The 'WS-22' set has the antenna tuning roller inductor in the same spot. Antenna tuning with the 19 set was with a separate unit that sat on the top of the radio.

Ian O'Toole has an excellent museum of radios at Kurrajong. I bet that he would have both radios working up there.

Bob Lloyd-Jones

I thank Bob for that info and feel sure that we may now sleep in peace now that question has been answered and finally put to rest...ED.

Tail-end Charlie

New Generation Veterans

We honour our old veterans; we honour them with pride,
And read of all the horrors they have carried deep inside,
We know they served in Asia or New Guinea's highland rains,
Vietnam or in Africa where many men were slain.

We know that fateful landing on Gallipoli's dark shore,
Wherever Aussies fought, we know there are so many more,
But now a new young generation needs our help as well,
They too have been to war and suffer with their private hell.

Though losses are not classed as great, their fears are just the same,
Those electronic hidden bombs, still injure, kill or maim,
They fight against an enemy they find so hard to see,
Who mingle in the market place, then cause much tragedy.

Insurgents in Afghanistan hide in the rough terrain,
Or roaming in Iraq, where, wearing robes they look the same,
The suicide stealth bombers, don't care who they hurt or kill,
Then, with their own beliefs, they try to break our forces will.

Our fighting Aussie spirit shows on any foreign land,
They're in the skies; they're on the sea, or on the desert sand,
Now many are returning with the horrors they still see,
And living with their nightmares; suffering bureaucracy.

I know on ANZAC Day, we all remember with a tear,
But ALL vets, young or old, they need our help throughout the year,
Support and listen to their stories, when they do get told,
Let's honour our NEW veterans, just like we do our old.

David J Delaney
10/02/2010 ©



and



**National Network
Travel & Cruise**

ABN 76 004 937 099 Lic 30280

1966



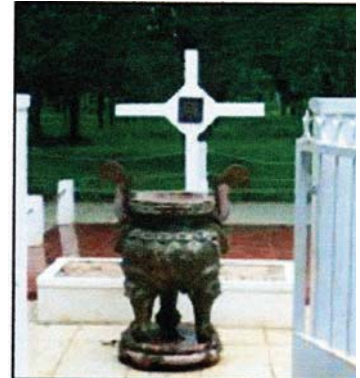
AVVRG and National Network Travel

announce the fundraising

2010 AVVRG LONG TAN TREK TOUR

Hosted and guided by
Dave Sabben MC

2009



Walk the Long Tan battlefield, which still looks much the same as it did in 1966, with the former 12 Platoon commander at the Battle of Long Tan.

Sunday 17 October 2010 - 6 days/5 nights

Saigon. Vung Tau, 1 ALSG area, Nui Dat, and featuring a 4-hour guided walk across the Long Tan battlefield where Dave will describe "in real time" all the significant events of the battle, on the locations where they actually happened.

\$2699

Per person. Twin share. See the website below for details. Includes international air travel.

This tour ends on Friday 22nd October at Saigon airport...

.....
...where an optional 9-day/8-night tour extension starts:

THE DECISIVE BATTLES OF THE VIET NAM WARS.

\$ T.B.A

(To be advised, but not more than \$199 pp twin share. No international air required if following the AVVRG Tour.)

Dave Sabben will host a further tour of many of the other decisive battlefields of the three Indo-China Wars.

We fly to HUE where we will visit DONG HA (let 72), the DMZ, Khe Sanh (1968), Hamburger Hill (1969), Hue Citadel (Tet 1968), and other sites.

Then to Hanoi to visit sites of military significance including the Army Museum which has the tank that broke down the Palace gates in Saigon in 1975, the 'Hanoi Hilton' prison, the 'wreckage of a B52 in Hanoi and other sites.

We will then spend a full day inspecting the Dien Bien Phu battlefield.

The extension tour will end with a 2-night R&R at HA LONG BAY.

.....
Numbers for both tours are

FOR DETAILS AND BOOKINGS...

VISIT THE **NATIONAL NETWORK TRAVEL WEBSITE** www.nntravel.com.au
OR PHONE **JUDI ON (03) 9654 4000**

*** AVVRG is an Australian non-government organisation (NOG) community of volunteers seeking to make a difference to the lives of disadvantaged citizens of Vietnam-. AVVRG. is also registered and licensed to operate and provide humanitarian aid in Vietnam.**

Modified specifically for the pages of THURUNKA for clarity by the editor and correctness



ANZAC DAY IS A TIME FOR REMEMBRANCE, NOT SHOPPING

From: DVA Mailing List [mailto:info@dvalists.aaa.net.au]

Sent: Monday, 1 March 2010 11:46 AM

minister-media@dva.aaa.net.au

Subject: Media Release VA010: ANZAC DAY IS A TIME FOR REMEMBRANCE, NOT SHOPPING

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Mailing List

VA010

Monday, 1 March 2010

ANZAC DAY IS A TIME FOR REMEMBRANCE, NOT SHOPPING

ANZAC Day is time to remember the more than 102,000 Australians who have made the ultimate sacrifice and died in the service of our country and not for shopping, Minister for Veterans' Affairs Alan Griffin said, expressing his disappointment in Kmart's application to trade on **ANZAC Day**.

"**ANZAC Day** draws together our community in paying tribute to the men and women who have served. It is the one day of the year we stop, as a nation, to remember their sacrifice and courage," Mr Griffin said.

"It is unnecessary and disrespectful to open shops while our veterans march in **ANZAC Day** parades.

"Shops can open on almost every other day of the year. I feel strongly that the solemnity of **ANZAC Day** should be preserved and that commercial enterprises can be put on hold for a few hours.

"**ANZAC Day** is a public holiday so that people are free to attend services and pay their respects.

"I'm pleased to say that each year we see more people attending services, including young people, paying tribute to all our servicemen and women.

"**ANZAC Day** is an important day to honour the men and women who have served in wars, conflicts and peace operations, and those who continue to serve in the Australian Defence Force, and I encourage Australians to attend a service and remember them, *not to go shopping*."

Media inquiries: Sasha Nimmo 0437 863 109

The VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service can be contacted 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 1800 011 046.

To receive the Minister's media releases automatically by e-mail subscribe at minister.dva.gov.au/subscribe.htm