

# The Messenger OF THE GODS

Official Newsletter of the Royal Australian Signals Association (SA) Inc.



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## Hello All,

Well this difficult year has now claimed one of our own, sadly our great friend Dean Hudson has passed away. Dean was a long-term member of the association, in fact a celebrated “Life Member”. Dean has been such an amazing supporter of the association and without people like Dean, we would never survive. Dean will be greatly missed by all of our members and the Corps. Our condolences go out to the family at this sad time.

On Association matters, we have not yet had a committee meeting due to Covid 19 restrictions and health concerns. I believe it is best to just wait a bit longer and see how things go. Also, we normally have meetings at Keswick and at this stage Defence have restrictions so it is best that we stay away. Hopefully we will be able to get together just before Christmas.

On Corps matters, A few months ago I was fortunate enough to become a member of the RASigs Corps Council and also a member of the Certa Cito Foundation. In this position I represent all state RASigs Associations. Meetings are held Bi-monthly using Video Conferencing, this has meant the continuation of information sharing and the ability to re-establish the Certa Cito Foundation. The good thing about having a

position on the Corps Council and the Certa Cito Foundation is that all association members now have a voice to Corps through this representation.

As you would know the Corps is coming towards its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2025. One of the many roles of the Certa Cito Foundation is the organisation of the celebration of our birthday. Princess Anne should be attending this event with possible major events in Canberra and/or Melbourne. Potentially a National Reunion in Melbourne, this will be confirmed over the coming year.

Once again, I would like to mention the RASigs National Reunion is being held next year in Townsville 16-22 June 2021. All the details are on the website under Reunion [www.rasigs.com](http://www.rasigs.com) please come along.

Finally, if you have any suggestions or event ideas that support the RASigs Association both Nationally or state based, please let me know. Stay safe and well.

**“Certa Cito”**

**Regards**

**Bruce Long  
President**

**RASigs Association (SA)**

### **VALE Dean (Rock) Hudson**



11.10.1945 – 21-8-2020

Association President (Bruce Long), Committee members and Dean's Mates attended his funeral on 31 August 2020.

His eulogy highlighted his dedication to his family, his long civilian career starting with the PMG's Dept as a Telegram Boy and later with Australia Post. This was interrupted by his call up as a National Serviceman in 1966 and service to his country in Vietnam in 1967-68. Dean will be remembered for his commitment to the Royal Australian Signals Assn in SA for over 27 years.

He served as Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Member and Membership Secretary. He was always up for a challenge. He cooked BBQ's, sold raffle tickets and lucky squares. Nothing was too much trouble when it came to supporting our Association through some tough times which resulted in him being awarded Life Membership. His warm and friendly manner was always present during meetings and other Association activities and will be sadly missed. To his wife Velma and family, we offer our Sincere Condolences.

**RIP Ole Mate**

*Brian Melville*

## THE P51 STORY

We were in Hanger #4 of the Pima Air and Space Museum to view the beautifully restored B-29, when I happened to take notice of a P-51 Mustang near the big bomber. Its name? "Bad Angel". I was admiring its aerodynamic lines and recalled enough history to know that until the Mustangs came into service, the skies over the Pacific Ocean were dominated by Japanese Zeros. Then something very strange caught my eye. Proudly displayed on the fuselage of "Bad Angel" were the markings of the pilot's kills: seven Nazis; one Italian; one Japanese AND ONE AMERICAN. Huh? "Bad Angel" shot down an American airplane?

Was it a terrible mistake? Couldn't be. If it had been an unfortunate misjudgement, certainly the pilot would not have displayed the American flag.

I knew there had to be a good story here. Fortunately for us, one of the Museum's many fine docents was on hand to tell it. In 1942, the United States needed pilots for its war planes lots of war planes; lots of pilots. Lt Louis Curdes was one. When he was 22 years old, he graduated flight training school and was shipped off to the Mediterranean to fight Nazis in the air over Southern Europe.

He arrived at his 82nd Fighter Group, 95th Fighter Squadron in April 1943 and was assigned a P-38 Lightning. Ten days later he shot down three German Messerschmitt Bf-109 fighters. A few weeks later, he downed two more German Bf - 109's. In less than a month of combat, Louis was an Ace. During the next three months, Louis shot down an Italian Mc.202 fighter and two more Messerschmitt's before his luck ran out.

A German fighter shot down his plane on August 27, 1943 over Salerno, Italy. Captured by the Italians, he was sent to a POW camp near Rome. No doubt this is where he thought he would spend the remaining years of the war. It wasn't to be. A few days later, the Italians surrendered. Louis and a few other pilots escaped before the Nazis could take control of the camp.

One might think that such harrowing experiences would have taken the fight out of Louis, yet he volunteered for another combat tour. This time, Uncle Sam sent him to the Philippines where he flew P-51 Mustangs. Soon after arriving in the Pacific Theatre, Louis downed a Mitsubishi reconnaissance plane near Formosa. Now he was one of only three Americans to have kills against all three Axis Powers: Germany, Italy, and Japan. Up until this point, young Lt. Curdes combat career had been stellar. His story was about to take a twist so bizarre that it seems like the fictional creation of a Hollywood screenwriter.

While attacking the Japanese-held island of Bataan, one of Louis' wingmen was shot down. The pilot ditched in the ocean. Circling overhead, Louis could see that his wingman had survived, so he stayed in the area to guide a rescue plane and protect the downed pilot. It wasn't long before he noticed another, larger airplane, wheels down, preparing to land at the Japanese-held airfield on Bataan. He moved in to

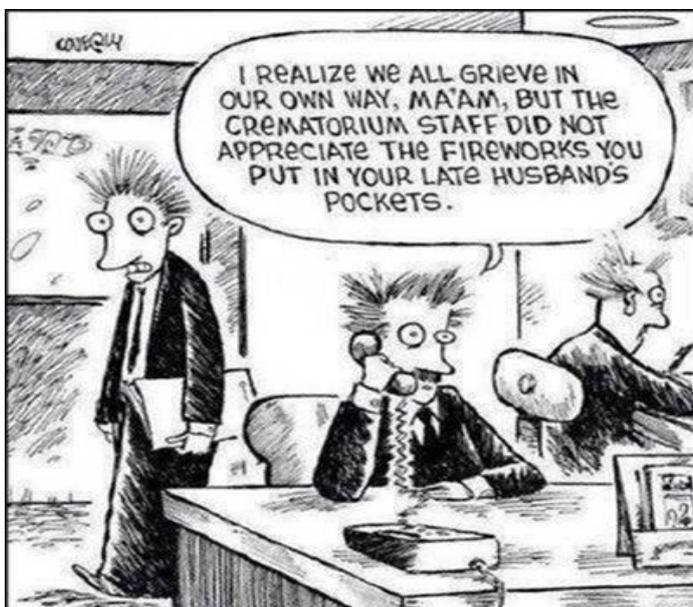
investigate. Much to his surprise the approaching plane was a Douglas C-47 transport with American markings. He tried to make radio contact, but without success. He maneuvered his Mustang in front of the big transport several times trying to wave it off. The C-47 kept ahead to its landing target. Apparently, the C-47 crew didn't realize they were about to land on a Japanese-held island, and soon would be captives.

Lt Curdes read the daily newspaper accounts of the war, including the viciousness of the Japanese soldiers toward their captives. He knew that whoever was in that American C-47 would be, upon landing, either dead or wish they were. But what could he do? Audaciously, he lined up his P-51 directly behind the transport, carefully sighted one of his .50 calibre machine guns and knocked out one of its two engines. Still the C-47 continued on toward the Bataan airfield.

Curdes shifted his aim slightly and knocked out the remaining engine, leaving the baffled pilot no choice but to ditch in the ocean. The big plane came down in one piece about 50 yards from his bobbing wingman. At this point, nightfall and low fuel forced Louis to return to base. The next morning, Louis flew cover for a rescuing PBY that picked up the downed Mustang pilot and 12 passengers and crew, including two female nurses, from the C-47. All survived. Later, Lt. Curdes would end up marrying one of these nurses!

For shooting down an unarmed American transport plane, Lt. Louis Curdes was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Thereafter, on the fuselage of his P-51 "Bad Angel", he proudly displayed the symbols of his kills: seven German, one Italian, one Japanese and one American. **(Al & Marg King)**

## SEE WHERE BEING SANCTIMONIOUS GET YOU!



In ancient Greece (469 - 399 BC), Socrates was widely lauded for his wisdom. One day an acquaintance ran up to him excitedly and said, "Socrates, do you know what I just heard about Diogenes?" "Wait a moment," Socrates replied, "Before you tell me I'd like you to pass a little test. It's called the Triple Filter Test." Triple filter?" asked the acquaintance. "That's right," Socrates continued, "Before you talk to me about Diogenes let's take a moment to filter what you're going to say. The first filter is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?" "No," the

man said, "Actually I just heard about it."

"All right," said Socrates, "So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now let's try the second filter, the filter of Goodness. Is what you are about to tell me about Diogenes something good?" "No, on the contrary..." "So," Socrates continued, "You want to tell

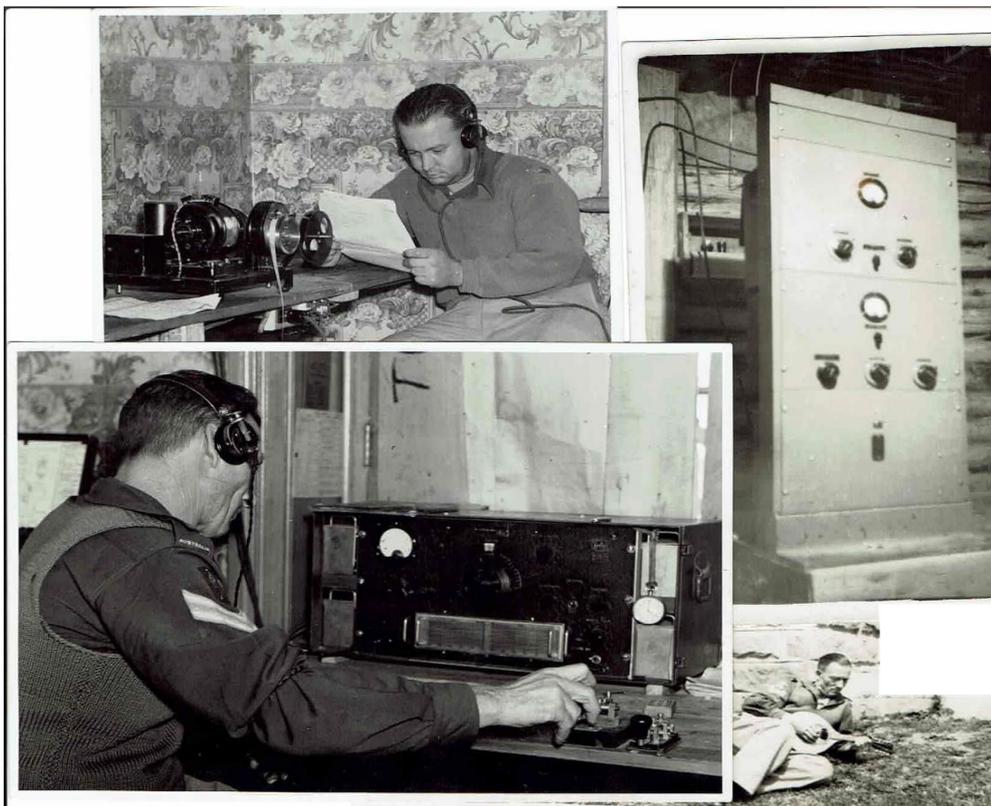
me something about Diogenes that may be bad, even though you're not certain it's true?"

The man shrugged, a little embarrassed. Socrates continued, "You may still pass the test though, because there is a third filter, the filter of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about Diogenes going to be useful to me?" "No, not really."

Well," concluded Socrates, "If what you want to tell me is neither True nor Good nor even useful, why tell it to me or anyone at all?" The man was bewildered and ashamed. This is an example of why Socrates was a great philosopher and held in such high esteem. It also explains why Socrates never found out that Diogenes was shagging his wife.

***(Keep this in mind the next time you are about to repeat a rumour or spread gossip - Hedgy)***

## **THE MILITARY HISTORY OF MOUNT STUART**



**Members of the staff of the Sigs Mt Stuart facility in 1944 are:-  
Top left – Ted Rees.**

**Bottom left & right – Cpl Stan Donovan & at top right is the radio transmitter**

The military history of Mount Stuart covers two periods separated by more than one hundred years. The first period was in the early 1800's, at a time when gangs of roving bushrangers

were a threat to the suburbs of Hobart Town. In 1824, for instance, William Shoobridge was shot and injured by a bushranger, during daylight hours, while working on his property near the present Bowls Club in Newdegate Street.

In an attempt to maintain law and order, the military constructed guard houses in the outskirts of Hobart Town on all the main roads. One of these was constructed on the hillside now known as Mount Stuart. This guard house still exists today, as no. 45 Elphinstone Road. Extensions have been added at the rear, to make a comfortable home, but the front is still largely original. It is a well-built stone and brick two roomed establishment, with small lock up cells under the main rooms, which were said to have been used to lock up prisoners, but which today are scarcely large enough for a

lawnmower and garden tools. The front door is in the centre, between the two rooms, and a spacious veranda is across the front, from which a guard would have had a good view as far as the Hobart Domain. There are photographs of the Mount Stuart hillside taken from the vicinity of The Friends' School at and just before the turn of the 20th century, showing the guard house as the only building to be seen on the hillside. Why did the military choose this location in Elphinstone Road? What sort of happenings took place? Alas, there do not seem to be any records of this guard house.

The second period of military activity was during WW2, when the army occupied the house in Muir Court 'Eskdalemuir'. There were two activities. The first was the maintenance of radio communication with army headquarters in Melbourne, (*There still remains a radio mast in an adjoining garden which today is used as a base radio station by a local taxi firm*). This was probably seen as a wise precaution against failure of the telephone lines. At the time, there was one telephone cable across Bass Strait carrying only a few lines. Early in the war years, a radio link was set up with a base on the nut near Stanley. The Mount Stuart base, however, provided a direct link between Hobart and Melbourne. The other activity at 'Eskdalemuir' was the breeding and training of homing pigeons for war service. The pigeons were sent North and performed valuable service in the Torres Strait Islands and in outlying areas of Northern Australia. As part of their training they were sent in special boxes to Fort Direction, to be released for a flight home to Hobart. One Mount Stuart resident recalls that he was in the Army, stationed at Fort Direction, and personally used to release them for their flight home. The present owners of 'Eskdalemuir' still get the occasional visitor from the mainland knocking on their door, wishing to revisit a wartime posting in Tasmania.

## **MAYBE WE DON'T HAVE IT SO BAD!**

It's a mess out there now. Hard to discern between what's a real threat and what is just simple panic and hysteria. For a small amount of perspective at this moment, imagine you were born in 1900.

On your 14th birthday, World War I start and ends on your 18th birthday. 22 million people perish in that war. Later in the year, a Spanish Flu epidemic hits the planet and runs until your 20th birthday. 50 million people die from it in those two years. Yes, 50 million.

On your 29th birthday, the Great Depression begins. Unemployment hits 25%, the World GDP drops 27%. That runs until you are 33. The country nearly collapses along with the world economy.

When you turn 39, World War II starts. You aren't even over the hill yet. And don't try to catch your breath. On your 41st birthday, the United States is fully pulled into WWII. Between your 39th and 45th birthday, 75 million people perish in the war.

Smallpox was epidemic until you were in your 40's, as it killed 300 million people during your lifetime.

At 50, the Korean War starts. 5 million perish. From your birth, until you are 55 you dealt with the fear of Polio epidemics each summer. You experience friends and family contracting polio and being paralysed and/or die.

At 55 the Vietnam War begins and doesn't end for 20 years. 4 million people perish in that conflict. During the Cold War, you lived each day with the fear of nuclear annihilation. On your 62nd birthday, you have the Cuban Missile Crisis, a tipping point in the Cold War. Life on our planet, as we know it, almost ended. When you turn 75, the Vietnam War finally ends.

Think of everyone on the planet born in 1900. How did they endure all of that? When you were a kid in 1985 and didn't think your 85-year-old grandparent understood how hard school was. And how mean that kid in your class was. Yet they survived through everything listed above. Perspective is an amazing art. Refined and enlightening as time goes on. Let's try and keep things in perspective.

Your parents and/or grandparents were called to endure all of the above – you are called to stay home and sit on your couch!!! **(Bob Gray)**



## Out-field printing success

LS Kylie Jagiello

CONTINUING the next phase of a 12-month trial, 1CSSB soldiers recently deployed out-field for two weeks with a WarpSPEE3D metal printer on Exercise Buffalo Run. They aimed to see how the printer would operate in a tactical environment. CO 1CSSB Lt-Col Kane Wright said the results were successful.

“We were able to confirm through the exercise that the printer can deploy to the field, be ground loaded and camouflaged in a tactically sound manner,” Lt-Col Wright said.

“It was put through fault checking and test procedures and ready to operate within 45 minutes. “It is a mobile, deployable capability that can move around the battlespace rapidly and be brought to operation quickly to support war fighters.”

Operating the printer during the exercise, LCpl Sean Barton learnt a lot about its capability. “We initially had a few hiccups with the machine’s tolerance, and weather and vibrations caused by movement all playing parts in malfunctions,” LCpl Barton said “Through problem-solving with the SPEE3D engineers, solutions were found and rectified quickly.”

The printer stayed working effectively during the second week and had the ability to run 24 hours a day. After eight weeks of training to learn its operation and the design software, Cfn Naythan Ryan enjoyed the end result.

“Having gone through the learning processes, putting it to use and then having the final product in your hands was satisfying,” Cfn Ryan said. “Being able to produce our own parts in the field will help alleviate pressure on the supply chain.

“We could have a part ready to go on equipment in a few days instead of waiting weeks.” The trial was the culmination of ideas by officers and soldiers across the battalion. “We are trying to modernise Army and the wider Defence Force’s supply chains, to operate in a more effective fashion in the future,” Lt-Col Wright said. “Bringing the organisation into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



Above: Cfn Naythan Ryan, left, and LCpl Sean Barton, both from 1CSSB, stand in front of the camouflaged WarpSPEE3D printer during Exercise Buffalo Run at Mount Bunday Training Area, NT



Above LCpl Sean Barton designs spare parts to be 3D-printed using engineering software inside a mobile workshop. Photos: Cpl Rodrigo Villablanca