

SIGNAL NEWS



CERTA CITO

JUNE 2021

Official Journal of the Royal Australian Signals Association (Tas)

(Founded 1945)

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SIGNAL NEWS

June 2021

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Signal News Distribution:

March, June, September, December

Editor: Dick Goodwin

All 2021 “1st Friday’s” of the Month (excludes January) Social Functions are held at the RAAF Memorial Centre, 61 Davey Street, Hobart.
(Enter via the rear car park). Starting from 4.15pm

Annual Luncheon:

Wednesday, 2nd June 2021
Venue: Dr Syntax Hotel, SANDY BAY
Timing: 12.15p for 12.30p
(Park in the Hotel rear carpark)

Annual General Meeting (75th):-

Friday, 1st October 2021.
5^{pm} at RAAF Memorial Centre

Commemoration Day: Sunday 10th Oct.

Service: 11.45^{am} at Anglesea Barracks Signals Memorial
Medals to be worn

Lunch: RAAF Memorial Centre from 12.30^{pm}.

Remembrance Day Lunch:

Friday 12th Nov. Timing & Venue TBA. *Medals may be worn*

Committee Meetings 2021:-

Meetings start at RAAF Memorial Centre at 3.00^{pm} on Mar, Jun, Sep, Nov.

**Printed by Nic Street MP,
Member for Franklin**

A much-appreciated Community Service

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From the President.

Welcome to the mid-year (2021) issue of SIGNAL NEWS – just about time to start preparing for Christmas! The last few months have been most confusing but as always Secretary Richard got everything under control.

We started off the quarter with our March luncheon and then with our traditional lunch on ANZAC DAY. Most confusing organizing for the Parade this year - initially, not on, then on; with a booking system. Police held up bookings until they reviewed the operation. We made a bid for 20 starters and started with 14 plus another 6 for those wanting to only attend the service. As I am beyond the marching like a few others, we had a few changes. Mel Cooper led the team with Dave Marsh as our Flag Bearer and young Anthony Goggins carrying the sign.

In our initial planning we could not have lunch at THE GLOBE hotel as they are closed on Sundays but they made an exception for ANZAC DAY and we ended up with access to their FUNCTION ROOM which is an ideal, private area with excellent access. Indeed Max Brett (*100.5 year young*) even made the effort and attended on his electric chair, with David Harcourt acting as his guide. A very good meal and good attendance with room for another dozen next year.

We also welcomed a new member to our lunch in WO2 **Steve Straughan** who is on ARES Full Time duty with 144 Sig Sqn Det at Dowsings Point. Welcome Steve. Also welcome back to **Max Roberts**, former popular Sqn SNCO who has had a bit of a break. Great to see **Rod McNeill** marching too and interesting to hear that he is still building a 'Spitfire' plane at Margate.

The next event on our social calendar is the Mid-year Luncheon to be held on Wednesday 2nd June at Tony Marchant's "**Dr Syntax**" hotel in Sandy Bay. In the past Tony has provided transport for our Anzac Day marchers and those attending the Domain service and was a very reliable operator. Our 'forward Scouts' have recently tested the fare at the Syntax and can vouch for the quality, variety and cost of the meal.

Yours in Signals,

Owen



Sigs marching in the 2021 Hobart Anzac Day parade. (Photo courtesy of Dallas Stow)

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS AT BRIGHTON – THE FIRST DAY

The wind moans and sighs through the pines, and passes over the newly mown grassed parade grounds and training areas. The buildings are deserted, except for a large brick one from which wisps of steam are escaping. The cooks are at work already. A dog barks in the distance, momentarily disturbing the otherwise all-pervading silence. It's early morning and the frost lays undisturbed. This is Brighton Camp, late '50s, sadly now desecrated and devoid of its well-remembered and historical buildings, nothing but a flattened area, not-so-gradually being developed into a housing estate. God help the perpetrators.

A low murmur becomes slowly more audible and gradually resolves itself into the beat of mighty 6-cylinder side-valve engines, their gearboxes whining in defiled and angry but submissive response to double-declutched multiple change-down as the convoy slows and enters the gates. For these are the wonderful '42 Stude's which started me on such a long and enduring love/hate relationship with these magnificent beasts, nay, mechanical and aesthetic masterpieces, so many years ago. Left past the empty sentry hut/guard-house, right past the Hospital Complex, past Norrie Park and the Camp Theatre, the Sgt's and Offr's messes, the Admin and 'Q' buildings, the old long-filled-in swimming pool, the Chapels and tennis court, curving 180 degrees around the top of the loop past the RASIGS terminal, to the line of empty WW11 huts waiting patiently in the slowly warming sun for their latest occupants to give them meaning and renewed life. For they have seen and offered succour and shelter to young men, boys really, on their way to another, perhaps final engagement on the other side of the world, their varnished wooden walls ringing and reverberating to the staccato rattle of rapidly worked bolt-action rifles, and of hob-nailed boots on forging bare wooden floors.

The convoy halts, drivers and off-siders dismount – the clangour of tailgates being unclipped and crashing down against chassis rails permeates the air. Shouted orders to dismount from belligerent ARA NCO's who have appeared from no-where, and the convoy's cargoes are disgorged, to stand somewhat dis-orientated and bewildered on the bituminized roadway and harangued into some semblance of order, their worldly goods in brown kitbags and .303 rifles beside them, the latter often nearly as tall as their young keepers. For these are but young boys, some not yet 14, others barely, some 15 or occasionally, perhaps, 16. Tailgates are slammed shut, crews mount-up and the trucks move off, empty now, devoid of their young living cargoes, to disappear into the never-land of the transport compound, their task done for the day. The soon silent engines ticking as the hot metal contracts in the clear, but still cool, morning air, their crews their only witness as they conduct, as I was to learn later, their last-parade service.

Huts are allocated. Cadets struggle with their loads to deposit them on, after first collecting and unfolding from a pile in the end of the hut, a steel tubed, cyclone-wire-based folding bed. Then hurried off to the straw hut – pick up a paillasse cover (a sort of oversized sugar bag), fill it with straw, sling it over the shoulder and move back to the hut. Which hut was mine? They all look alike. Ah, that one. (I was to learn that too much or too little straw in the cover led to problems when it came to making up and eventually sleeping in, a bed). March to a building called the Saw Tooth (this is a huge Q store – at least I knew what that was, but I never did find what the other alphabetical stores were) under the command of our own CUO's (Cadet Under-Officers – sort-of cadet 2LTs), bird-dogged by the ever present ARA, to be issued with rough grey blankets (no sheets), pillow (no case) large and small dixies which had seen better days, chipped white enamel drinking mug, water bottle with a dodgy cork stopper, large and small '37 patt packs and haversacks, giggle jackets and trousers (several sizes fits all – take what you're given), WW11 gas cape (I learned very quickly that you COULD, with a bit of ingenuity, make this into a passable shelter on bivouac), 'Sign here - next', stagger back to the hut and learn how to square-off the paillasse and make up a bed with hospital-folds at the end. Swap giggle jackets and trousers amongst ourselves to find ones that more or less fit. Change out of WW11 battle-dress into the 'new' work dress – some even had only three or four metal half-penny-sized buttons missing (fortunately my mother had packed needle, thread and spare buttons).

It's lunch time. Weapon security is drummed in as you are leaving your rifle unattended while you go to lunch, which I found out was called 'Mess') Unclip and remove bolt from receiver and place it under pillow (so nobody can find it!) Learn that dixies, eating utensils (your own) and tea-towel (your own) are to be carried in the small haversack and slung over the left shoulder, held rigidly in place with left hand/arm, and marched off to what was called the Mess Hall – the finest and most substantial brick-building in the whole camp, from which more steam was now escaping. Form a single queue and shuffle to the serving area at the front. The smells and aromas of fresh hot food fills the air, tantalizing the taste buds and liberating the gastric juices from salivating glands. Food is ladled from huge serving trays and giant pots (also apparently also known as dixies) into our own large and small dixies - wonderful food which I was to discover in later service was, for cadets, the best that could be obtained.

5.

(School Holidays at Brighton, Cont.)

I remember one cook in particular, a big man with jet black slicked-back wavy hair with the most doleful hang-dog expression I had ever seen, wearing a white 'T' shirt and apron and comical black and white checked trousers. Norm was his name, I think. Sit 4 to a green stool (stools, folding – which it turned out was aptly named in army nomenclature), 8 to a 'tables FS', which had previously been assembled by work parties, as they were apparently called. No table-cloths. The noise of countless young voices. Crash! Somebody's seat has collapsed depositing its erstwhile occupants all over the gleaming, spotlessly clean floor. Momentary confusion as victims pick themselves up in embarrassment to the chortles of those unaffected, and figure out how to re-assemble (and tighten!) offending stools-folding. Occupants gingerly re-seat themselves. Despite the more than adequate servings, and seconds if you wanted them, bread and butter is readily available and scoffed by those who want to linger over lunch. After a cup of luke-warm tea, which somebody said was heavily laced with some substance called 'bromide' designed to cool the blood, whatever that meant, eventually wander out to rinse dixies in the hot-water tubs, which by this time are barely tepid, with a coating of insipid and partially coagulated grease and floating unidentifiable bits of vegetable from those who, wisely, had gone before. One learned later to eat quickly to avoid this problem. Back to the hut in your own time, stopping first in the ablutions (apparently the army name for the wash etc area) to use the plentiful hot water to clean and dry still filthy and grease-coated dixies, etc. Rinse out filthy tea-towel and hang over end of bed.

Lunch period is over. First up is a medical. Everyone strips, and dressed only in a Great-Coat, jocks and boots, is marched to the Hospital Complex for what is apparently colloquially named a short-arm inspection. Rough serge rasps on tender young skin. To this day I am never quite sure whether the examining medico said 'cough please' as he none to gently gripped my bits and pieces with a great hairy paw, or something else which sounded like it and also started with a 'c'.

That humiliation over, march back to the lines, dress and take a guided tour in three ranks around the total camp complex. Halt and turn at attention to face each building of interest as its function is explained. Surprised we didn't have to salute it. And there in one cyclone wired enclosure are my wonderful Stude's, grinning, it seemed to me, from their minimalist dual-eyed cabins from behind tall steel-grill protected radiators and gorgeous long sloping bonnets and little piggy-eared headlights on open-fronted squared guards, seemingly bursting with vibrancy in every inch of their being. I'd have happily saluted THAT installation.

File into the Camp Theatre, which by the time we got there, was absolutely chockers, where we are to be addressed by a full Colonel whose name was something-or-other hyphen Smythe. Apparently, he was referred to, as a result of his hyphenated surname as Two-Fathers. The full significance of this rather inventive and irreverent nick-name escaped me until some years later. Don't remember much of his address except for his reference to hygiene. It seemed that he considered that anyone who didn't shower daily as 'filthy' and 'disgusting'. Bearing in mind this was the '50s and not every family had a separate shower, this caused me some personal consternation. After all, I came from a middle-class family which only had a bath and wash-basin, and thus had never even seen a shower, let alone had one. Anyway, with some trepidation, I resolved to address that problem, at least while I was in camp. Being a bit of a shy kid, it took me a bit of getting used to the idea of showering in a communal ablution block consisting of only multiple shower heads, and toilet cubicles without doors. (I remember 'The Fort', years later, where there weren't even cubicles!).

Five o'clock. Mess time again. Hasten to get up close to the front of the queue to avoid the dixie washing problem – but not too close, for the first half a dozen or so were usually extracted from the line and co-opted as food servers, and thus ate last. Food as good as lunchtime. Forego the cup of tea – the bromide worried me. Pick up a banana from the front of the Mess Hall, wash dixies in hot water this time and head back to the lines. Learnt fast. Lie down for a bit and eat my banana (its after 5 and you could lay on your bed). Don't feel too good, but it's not the food that's upset me.

7 o'clock. Time for CO's hour. This turned out to be an address by a Minister of Religion, known as a Padre. CO must have been busy CO-ing or whatever it is they do. Back to the lines.

It's 8 o'clock. The hectic activities and confusion of the day are over, and we are left to our own devices till lights out at 9. Clean rifle with piece of oil-soaked cloth called 4x2 (actually 2x1) – messy business this, the first time around, till you get the hang of it.

(School Holidays at Brighton, Cont.)

Somebody's jammed his pull-through in the barrel. Tears and panic from hapless rifle 'owner'. Might have to go to some mythical personage called The Armourer, who wouldn't be happy. Pull-through finally comes out. Relief. Tears stop. (I remember doing something similar years later with the gas-piston chamber of a SLUR).

Polish boots, blanco gaiters and belt and spread to dry. Polish belt-brass, buttons and badges – oops, brassod tunic. Bit of spit fixed that indiscretion. Tastes terrible. Some head for the camp's three phone-boxes, one of which never worked, but with 2 or 3 hundred kids in camp, the queues are extensive. Some are probably still waiting. Others head for the ASCO canteen, the 'wet' area being apparently off-limits to us. Hardly mattered - I didn't even really know what a 'wet' area was, except that it seemed to be extremely noisy and untidy with a very messy floor and tables, from what I could glimpse through the partially opened door. Should have retained the same ignorance and quit while I was ahead.

Some in the hut are boisterous, some strangely silent as the darkness of night approaches and enfolds the camp, and the thought of a first night away from home dawns, now that the activities of the hectic day no longer fill young minds. For many, it's their first time away from home and the comfort and security of a loving and caring family. Some-one starts to whimper a bit and is instantly ragged by his hut 'mates' as being homesick and therefore a sissy. He's not a sissy. I know, for I feel the same way. Just too scared to show it.

A kid called 'Japhead' Styles (for his unfortunate looks and vague resemblance to an Oriental) runs up and down the hut squirting those who look a bit upset with a water-pistol filled with warm water (for as he explained it, he was really kind-hearted at heart), and kicking-in the folding ends of their beds so they collapsed all over the floor. This really comforted them. A-hole. But he's one of the school's rough-nuts, and nobody wants to take him on. Try to read, but the words are strangely blurred and my eyes won't focus. Try to write home, but, equally strangely, the paper is uncharacteristically damp.

9 o'clock. Lights out. The hut settles down with the sound of the odd whimper, and I can finally drift off to sleep between sheetless, rough blankets, silently on an oddly damp pillow-case-less pillow. Guess I, too, am a sissy after all.

(Many years later, in response to a phone-call from concerned staff, I can recall a wee-small-hours quick trip to Coningham to retrieve my wife's then 12 y.o. daughter from a school Music Camp. I didn't begrudge it – I knew exactly how the little darling felt).

So ended the confusion and heart-ache of the first day of Cadet Camp. Tomorrow's got to be a better day. Only 13 to go.... Why oh why didn't I stay home and enjoy the school holidays? *Certa Cito (Tas).*

Footnote. *Although the supposed use of bromide in tea as a 'blood coolant' is largely a myth, in late middle/early old age, that Cadet Camp tea does seem to be occasionally, finally, starting to work. Who can I sue? CC*

FLYING (Condom use on an aircraft)

A man and a woman are seated next to each other on a flight. They start eyeing each other, and both realize they want to do the same thing. He slips a condom out of his pocket, and she looks delighted. "Rear toilet?" He suggests. "Five minutes", she agrees and goes off.

He waits five minutes, then goes and slips in there with her. Right, get that condom on, she says. Soon, they are both sighing with pleasure.

But a sharp-eyed stewardess has noticed them, and realized what they are up to, So, she humiliates them by making an announcement over the PA system. "To the lady and gentleman in the rear toilet, we know what you are doing, and it is expressly forbidden by airline regulations. Now, please put those cigarettes out and take the condom off the smoke detector."

What were you thinking?? I worry about you sometimes!!

(Basil McClymont)

THE ITALIAN TEST

I was a very happy man. My wonderful Italian girlfriend and I had been dating for over a year, and so we decided to get married. There was only one little thing bothering me. It was her beautiful younger sister.

My prospective sister-in-law was twenty-two, wore very tight mini-skirts and generally was bra-less. She would regularly bend down when she was near me, and I always got more than a nice view. It had to be deliberate because she never did it when she was near anyone else.

One day her 'little' sister called and asked me to come over to check the wedding invitations. She was alone when I arrived and she whispered to me that she had feelings and desires for me that she couldn't overcome. She told me that she wanted me just once before I got married and committed my life to her sister.

Well, I was in total shock and couldn't say a word.

She said, "I'm going upstairs to my bedroom and if you want one last wild fling, just come up and get me." I was stunned and frozen in shock as I watched her go up the stairs. I stood there for a moment, then turned and made a beeline straight to the front door. I opened the door and headed straight towards my car.

Lo and behold, my entire future family was standing outside, all clapping! With tears in his eyes, my father-in-law to be put down his shotgun and hugged me and said, "We are very happy that you have passed our little test. We couldn't ask for a better man for our daughter. Welcome to the family."

The moral of this story: Always keep your condoms in your car! (*Bob Gray*)

MORE SELF-ISOLATION HUMOUR

*Half of us are going to come out of this quarantine as amazing cooks. The other half will come out with a drinking problem.

*I used to spin that toilet paper like I was on Wheel of Fortune. Now I turn it like I'm cracking a safe.

*I need to practice social-distancing from the refrigerator.

*Still haven't decided where to go for Easter. The Living Room or The Bedroom.

*Every few days, try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Pyjamas will have you believing all is well in the kingdom.

*Home-schooling is going well. 2 students suspended for fighting and 1 teacher fired for drinking on the job.

*I don't think anyone expected that when we changed the clocks, we'd go from Standard Time to the Twilight Zone.

*This morning I saw a neighbour talking to her cat. It was obvious she thought her cat understood her. I came into my house, told my dogs - we laughed a lot.

*So, after this quarantine will the producers of My 600 Pound Life just find me or do I call them?

*Quarantine Day 5: Went to this restaurant called *THE KITCHEN*. You have to gather all the ingredients and make your own meal!? I have no clue how this place is still in business.

*My body has absorbed so much soap and disinfectant lately that when I pee it cleans the toilet.

*I'm so excited - it's time to take out the garbage. What should I wear?

*I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to "Puerto Backyarda". I'm getting tired of "Los Livingroom".

*Classified Ad: Single man with toilet paper seeks woman with hand sanitizer for good clean fun (*Anon*)

AFL GRAND FINAL TICKETS

A man had two of the best tickets for the AFL Grand Final. As he sits down, another man comes along and asks if anyone is sitting in the seat next to him. "No," he says, "the seat is empty."

"This is incredible!" said the man, "who in their right mind would have a seat like this for the AFL final, the biggest football event of the year in Australia and not use it?"

He says, "Well actually, the seat belongs to me. My wife was supposed to come with me, but she passed away. This is the first final we haven't been to, together, since we got married."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. That's terrible. I guess you couldn't find someone else, a friend, or relative, or even a neighbour, to take the seat?" The man shakes his head. "No, they're all at the funeral." (*Ta - Geeves*)

GALIPOLI

*2009 Bronze Swagman Award for Bush Verse, Winton
Queensland.*

They came from the South and the great 'nor West
Where the broilgas dance and the eagle's nest,
To scrape their boots on a city mat,
And to warm their skull in an army hat
They were timber cutters and diggers of wells.
With never a thought for the Dardanelles,
But to join their mates from across the land
And march to the beat of an army band.
They cleaned their rifles and trained to kill
And to carry a pack in an army drill,
To force down rations and not complain
Of the blazing sun or the driving rain.
They came from the farm and the shearing pen,
The wide-eyed boys and the whiskery men,
From the mining camp and the factory floor,
And a prayer went out as they left this shore:
Come back!

Then into a thundering cloud they ran
And the ship was tossed as the storm began,
But the tough old sergeant had trained them well
And they'd follow him straight to the jaws of Hell.
So, the gear was stowed in a canvass sack
To be carried up high on a soldier's back,
And the sergeant bellowed: Button your lip!
We didn't come here for a fishing trip!
Then the night grew dark and the moon was gone
And the scuttlebutt said that the fight was on,
So, the sergeant issued a sharp command,
To head for the boats and prepare to land.
Then over the edge to the landing craft
To be suddenly rocked from the fore to the aft
And the sergeant muttered: You heard the plan!
Were you hoping to live forever man?
Let's go!

Then the Turkish armory roared again. To shatter the lives of a
dozen men. And somebody shouted, be steady now! As a body
went spinning across the bow. No place to run and no place to
hide, it was on to the shore or over the side, with blood-soaked
bodies and cries of fear There was never a moment to shed a
tear,

Then the beach came up with its sand and rock
And they looked for a leader to ease their shock. The one they
followed for months gone past. But the tough old sergeant had
breathed his last. So now they were left with a leader gone. And
nobody ready to guide them on. But the battle was fought at a
hectic pace. And another man rose to take his place. Lead on!

So, they dug their cover and inched ahead.
With a thousand maimed and a thousand dead. With the cliffs
above and the beach below and the mid-day sun with its searing
glow. Then the flies descended, as flies will do. To cover the
dead and the living too. While destruction rained from the cliffs
above. In a battle that only a fly could love. Then many a soldier
buried his mate.

But prayer and sorrow would have to wait. For the battle raged
and the toil was hard. To advance for an inch or defend a yard.
Then day after day and They came from the south and night
after night, Bloodied and battered, with no respite. Though many
a wounded comrade fell, they stuck to the task and performed it
well. Fight on!

Unbearable months of fear and doubt,
Then came the order: We're moving out!
So, the walking wounded limped to the shore
And those who could travel went home once more.
Back to the mothers who shed a tear
And the wives who waited in hope and fear,
Back to the lovers, loyal and true,
With the courage to start their lives anew.
But some returned to a different fate,
And the pain of a lover who didn't wait,
With crippled body and tortured mind.
And a war that could never be left behind.
Not the cutting of cane in the blazing sun
Nor the loneliest camp of a cattle run.
Could ever erase the pitiful plight.
Of a soldier's tears in the dead of night.
She's gone!

You can wrap it in glory, if that's your way, or march at the
dawn of an ANZAC Day, you can flash your medals with
national pride, or preach up a storm on the mountainside, but all
I ask is a moment's thought for those who suffered and those
who fought, who left as boys but returned as men. And prayed it
would never occur again. For there's neither triumph nor peace
of mind to think of the thousands left behind

And for every battle a terrible cost.
Regardless of whether it's won or lost
Those shearers, laborers, teachers, cooks
The singers of songs and the writers of books
They ask no pity and no regret,
Just take good care that you don't forget!

(Keith Lethbridge)

WHY TEACHERS DRINK

The following questions were set in last year's GED examination These are genuine answers (from 16 year olds)

Q. Name the four seasons

A. Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar

Q. How is dew formed

A. The sun shines down on the leaves and makes them perspire

Q. What guarantees may a mortgage company insist on

A. If you are buying a house, they will insist that you are well endowed

Q. In a democratic society, how important are elections

A. Very important. Sex can only happen when a male gets an election

Q. What are steroids

A. Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs (*Shoot yourself now , there is little hope*)

Q. What happens to your body as you age

A. When you get old, so do your bowels and you get intercontinental

Q. What happens to a boy when he reaches puberty

A. He says goodbye to his boyhood and looks forward to his adultery.

Q. Name a major disease associated with cigarettes

A. Premature death

Q. What is artificial insemination

A. When the farmer does it to the bull instead of the cow

Q. How can you delay milk turning sour

A. Keep it in the cow (*Simple, but brilliant*)

Q. How are the main 20 parts of the body categorized (e.g., The abdomen)

A. The body is consisted into 3 parts - the brainium, the borax and the abdominal cavity. The brainium contains the brain, the borax contains the heart and lungs and the abdominal cavity contains the five bowels: A,E,I,O,U.

Q. What is the fibula?

A. A small lie

Q. What does 'varicose' mean?

A. Nearby

Q. What is the most common form of birth control

A. Most people prevent contraception by wearing a condominium. (*That would work*)

Q. Give the meaning of the term 'Caesarean section'

A. The caesarean section is a district in Rome

Q. What is a seizure?

A. A Roman Emperor. (*Julius Seizure: I came, I saw, I had a fit*)

Q. What is a terminal illness

A. When you are sick at the airport. (*Irrefutable*)

Q. What does the word 'benign' mean?

A. Benign is what you will be after you be eight (*brilliant*)

Q. What is a turbine?

A. Something an Arab or Sheik wears on his head. Once an Arab boy reaches puberty, he removes his diaper and wraps it around his head. (*now we're getting somewhere*) (*Basil McClymont*)

Seems as if the "ponderizations" in the last edition have started something !! (*Ed*)

FRENCH CHURCH NOTICE

It is possible that on entering this church, you may hear the Call of God.

On the other hand, it is not likely that he will contact you by phone.

Thank you for turning off your phone.

If you would like to talk to God, come in, choose a quiet place, and talk to him.

If you would like to see him, send him a text while driving. (*Bob Gray*)

YOUR SECRETARY SAYS

Very pleased to hear that my former supervisor and Sqn Chief Clerk of the early 1980's in **Doug Edwards** has joined the Association. After Doug discharged from the ARA he spent the last of his working life in a supervisory capacity with a Qld Council. Doug and his wife Christine reside in Redcliffe Qld.

Another of our Qld members, **Laura Hurd** has "shifted camp" and now resides near Rockhampton. Hope you are enjoying the change of scenery Laura.

Sorry to learn that **Brian "Capt Kilowatt" Watson** has experienced some further health issues which caused he and Shirley to miss out on joining us for Anzac Day. Hope you are on the mend Brian. Former long-term Committee member **Paul Hodgman** already missed a trip. Noela is recovering after a stint in hospital so 'Hodgy' had to defer.

Great to have former Sqn Trg Sgt **Dallas Stow** return to Hobart and take part in our Anzac Day activities. Dallas' memories of his extended posting to our local Sqn extend back over 30 years ago however little prompting was necessary to have him recalling local exercises and personalities.

Welcome to new members in **Steve Straughan** (*SSM, Tas Det 144 Sig Sqn – 'Swampy' Marsh' boss*) and a former member re-joining in popular Sqn Sgt; **Max Roberts**. Great have both of you 'on board' gents.

Another pleasant surprise was to have **Rick Boreham** (ex 124 Sig Tp) march with us on Anzac Day this year. Well done, Rick. Also, good to have Taroona ex-Services Club President and a former Committee member – one of our 'Liney' members, **Martin Potter**, and **Rod McNeill**, our Sandy Bay member, march with us again this year.

Members & visitors march in the Hobart Anzac Day parade – Dave Marsh was the Flag Bearer & Mel Cooper was Parade Marshall



Right - Dave "Swampy" Marsh – the last of the former 146 Sig Sqn members still wearing the 'green-skin' 34 years on – at the 2021 RASA Anzac Day lunch



A LESSON HARD-LEARNED

An elderly lady headed to the bank to make a withdrawal. She handed her bank card to a bank cashier and said, "I would like to withdraw \$10.

The cashier told her, "For withdrawals less than \$100 please use the ATM."

The old lady wanted to know why. The cashier returned her bank card and irritably told her, "These are the rules. Please leave if there is no other matter. There is a line of customers behind you."

The old lady remained silent for a few seconds, then handed the card back to the cashier and said, "Please help me withdraw all the money I have."

The cashier was astonished when she checked the account balance. She nodded her head, leaned down and told her, "You have \$500,000 in your account and the bank doesn't have that much cash currently. Could you make an appointment and come back tomorrow?"

The old lady then asked how much she could withdraw immediately. The cashier told her any amount up to \$3,000.

"Well, please let me have \$3,000 now". The cashier then angrily went back to the vault retrieved stacks of \$20's and \$10's and spent the next ten minutes counting out \$3,000. "Is there anything else I can do for you today?", the teller asked sternly.

The old lady put \$10 in her purse and said "yes, I'd like to deposit \$2,990 into my account."

The moral of this tale - Don't be difficult with old people, they spent a lifetime learning the skills.

(Bob Gray)

ADF MUM

I have dreaded this day for many years,
I have farewelled my boy, with eyes filled with tears
But I am strong and extremely proud of my son
I have to be, I am an ADF Mum.

I'm told it gets easier the more they deploy
I just can't fathom it; this soldier is my boy.
I will treasure my week where we laughed to the core
But it is not easy being a mum sending your son off to war.

Our weekly phone calls we had were regular and clear
I guess they will be fewer while he is not near
I will think of him often and probably more
As he risks his life for our freedom, whilst off Aussie shore.

Do not disrespect our soldiers at war, especially to me,
For a soldier is all Matt ever wanted to be
He played with plastic guns in the backyard as a boy,
And ended up as part of our ADF 32 Platoon D-Coy.

He set up pretend frontlines and more,
He then graduated to Xbox and knew how to top score
But the games are now real and it cuts me to the core
My boy is now a soldier and flown off to war.

It is not that he hasn't been offshore before
He's been to Vanuatu, RIMPAC and some more
He has done his time and trained only by the best
But hardest is not knowing what will happen next.

So, I may be withdrawn and not wanting to talk
And say thank you now for all your support
Please keep him safe in your thoughts and more
Until he sets foot safely back on home shore.

He will serve his country with 3RAR
I'm a realist and I know things may go wrong afar
But I am strong and proud of my son
I have to be, I am an ADF mum.

Jo Gooden, Nhill Vic (went to High School there. Ed.)

DE TWINS

An Irish lady was excited to find she was expecting twins. Everything was progressing smoothly when unfortunately, she was involved in a car accident and had to be put in an induced coma. During this time the twins were born. But not long after she came out of the coma, she asked the Doctor, "what did you name the girl?" Denise," was the reply.

Oh, that's not so bad I quite like that. What did you name the boy?"
"Denephew."
(Geeves)

CENTENARY OF WW1 – SIGNAL ENGINEERS

By: *Denis Hare, BEM*

Introduction

During the centenary of WWI commemorations, in 2015, it was time to reflect on our signals forefathers.

The Australian Army has the unique distinction of having the first regularly formed signal unit, in the late 1800's, in the whole of the British Empire. After the inception of the Commonwealth Forces, "The Australian Corps of Signallers" was formed in 1906. The corps consisted of 9 companies that were located in or near our major cities. The corps remained as a self-contained unit until the introduction of universal training in 1911, when it was merged with the Australian Engineers. The story of the signal engineers in WW1 is one of striving and achievement, of courage and of sacrifice. Within visual distance of the Defence Force School of Signals at Watsonia, Vic., the first signal company was assembled and trained at Broadmeadows at the outbreak of war in 1914.

Gallipoli

Signal Engineers sailed with the first convoy from Australia and were the earliest to go ashore at Anzac Cove on the Gallipoli Peninsula on 25th April 1915. Their communications were the simple heliography and telephony supplemented by visual telegraphy and runners. As soon as they landed at Gallipoli, they established a divisional signal office and laid wires between the divisional HQ's and the advanced brigades. By midnight, the Headquarters signallers sat with telephones and message forms, constantly in touch with the brigades.

The sappers were constantly exposed to danger as they repaired telephone lines or were forced to show themselves as the relayed messages manually. This manual signalling was vital when the Army moved too quickly to establish a telephone network. They were also dispatch messengers who had to ride or run throughout the trenches.

The immaculate withdrawal from the Peninsula was made possible by the courage and efficiency of our signal engineers. The responsibility of the lines covering the withdrawal on the nights of 18th and 19th December 1915 was given to Captain Stanley Watson from the 2nd Divisional Signal Company. Stanley and his men (three sergeants and seventeen sappers) set to the task and on the 20th December, Stanley sent the final signal: '*Evacuation Complete 3.45am - casualties unknown*'. He then left by the last lighter. He was mentioned in dispatches for '*distinguished and gallant services in the evacuation of Gallipoli*'.

During his time at Gallipoli, Stanley commanded a small party of men who constructed a 64m pier, under fire, to allow vessels to more easily disembark stores and reinforcements, normally at night. The pier was named 'Watson's Pier' in his honour. The day after the pier was completed was the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo and a dinner was held in a dugout by the Sapper Officers to celebrate both events. This dinner, the First Engineer Waterloo Dinner, is now an annual dinner held by Officers of the Royal Australian Engineers on or about the 18th June in commemoration of the first dinner held at ANZAC COVE.

Western Front

The AIF then went to France and Belgium; the Western Front where in 1916-1917, communications were agonising problem owing the constant destruction of cables by the stupendous concentration of artillery fire. In the mud of Flanders, the Somme, at Fromelles, Pozieres, Messines, Bullecourt, Passchendaele and Villers-Bretonneux, our signal engineers maintained communications under conditions which demanded courage and endurance of the highest order. Then the inspiring victories of 1917, when the signal expertise developed under the harsh conditions of the previous two years fully met the demands of tactical penetration and rapid movements.

Mesopotamia and Palestine

Nor were conditions in these regions less exacting. Eighteen months in the extreme conditions of the desert, then, after the battles of Gaza and Beersheba, the advance on hard ground into Palestine and the ultimate defeat of the enemy. Again, the efficiency developed during the desert campaign made possible effective communications to satisfy more mobile operations.

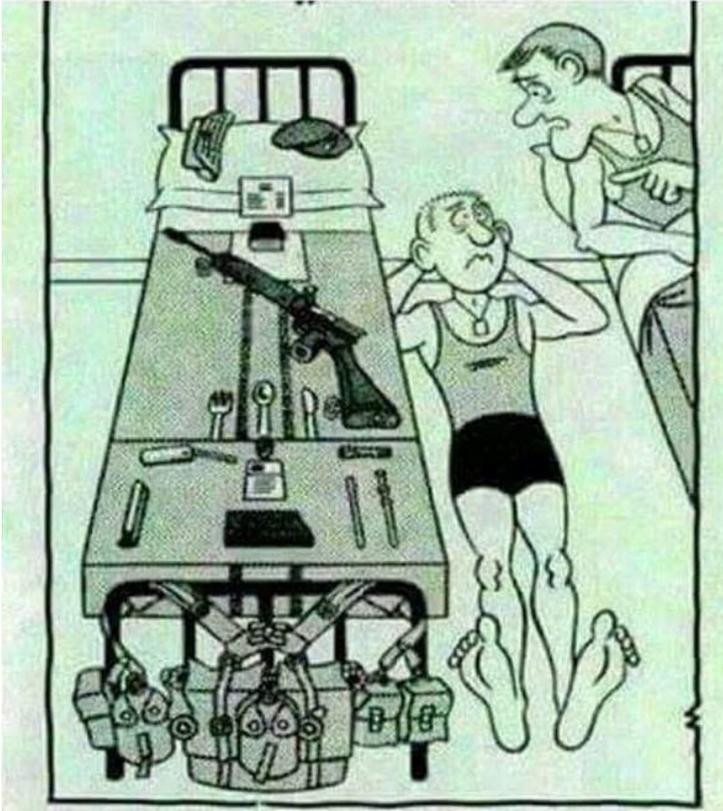
Conclusion

Our signal engineers in WW1 earned a grand reputation for efficiency and co-operation. They emerged from the War with a high morale and *esprit de corps* developed during the most exacting type of active service. All signal units separated from the Australian Corps of Engineers with the Divisional organization of 1921 and in 1925, the Australian Corps of Signals came into being.

(Denis' Article was printed in "The Furphy", November/Christmas Edition, 2015 – newsletter of the Vietnam Veterans Assn., NSW, Far North Coast Sub-Branch)

13.

Only another old soldier will understand this 😊



13.



A new camp commander was appointed and while inspecting the place, he saw 2 soldiers guarding a bench. He went over there and asked them why do they guard it.

"We don't know. The last commander told us to do so, and so we did. It is some sort of regimental tradition!"

He searched for last commander's phone number and called him to ask him why did he want guards in this particular bench.

"I don't know. The previous commander had guards, and I kept the tradition."

Going back another 3 commanders, he found a now 100-year old retired General.

"Excuse me sir. I'm now the CO of your camp you commanded 60 years ago. I've found 2 men assigned to guard a bench. Could you please tell me more about the bench?"

"What? Is the paint still wet ???"

ALL NIGHT

Ethel checked into a Motel on her 60th Birthday and she was a bit lonely. She thought, "I'll call one of those men you see advertised in phone books for escorts and sensual massages." She looked through the phone book, found a full-page ad for a guy calling himself Tender Tony, a very handsome man with assorted physical skills flexing in the photo. He had all the right muscles in all the right places, thick wavy hair, long powerful legs, dazzling smile, six pack abs and she felt quite certain she could bounce a sixpence off his well-oiled buns

She figured, what the heck, nobody will ever know. I'll give him a call. "Good evening, ma'am, how may I help you?" Oh my, he sounded sooo sexy! Afraid she would lose her nerve if she hesitated, she rushed right in: "I hear you give a great massage. I'd like you to come to my motel room and give me one. No, wait, I should be straight with you. I'm in town all alone and what I really want is sex. I want it hot, and I want it now. Bring implements, toys, everything you've got in your bag of tricks. We'll go at it all night - tie me up, cover me in chocolate syrup and whipped cream, anything and everything, I'm ready! Now how does that sound?"

He said, "That sounds absolutely fantastic, but you need to press "9" for an outside line."

(Elaine M – Chris G's mate)

THAT BOTTLE OF WINE

Recently, I was driving back to the Gold Coast from Port Douglas in Northern Queensland when I saw an elderly Aboriginal man walking on the side of the road.

As the trip was a long and quiet one, I stopped the car and asked the Aboriginal man if he would like a ride.

With a silent nod of thanks, the old man got into the car.

'*What's in the paper bag boss*', the old bloke said.

Without looking at the bag I said, ...'*It's a bottle of wine. I got it for my wife.*'

The old Aboriginal man was silent for another moment or two. Then speaking with the quiet wisdom of an elder, he said: '*Good trade...*'

(Geeves)

"A New National Structure for 8th Signal Regiment"

Regiment within the Army Order of Battle. The Regiment is now comprised of six Signal Squadrons and an Operational Support Squadron and has over 550 officers and soldiers. 500 of the unit members are from the Army Reserve.

Under the new structure four Signal Squadrons that were previously independent were transitioned to come under the command of the Regimental HQs.

Prior to the establishment of the National Signal Regiment, 8 SIG REGT was comprised of the Regimental HQs in Randwick, 142 Signal Squadron predominately located in Holsworthy NSW with troops in Randwick and Newcastle and 143 Signal Squadron located at HMAS HARMAN in the ACT.

The new structure has seen the incorporation into the Regiment of 141 Signal Squadron in Queensland, **144 Signal Squadron** in South Australia and **Tasmania**, 108 Signal Squadron in Victoria and 109 Signal Squadron in Western Australia.

Whilst the Squadrons are now under the command of 8 SIG REGT, they are responsible for providing communications support to Reserve Brigades located within their respective States and Territories.

The mission of 8 SIG REGT is to force generate RA Sigs capabilities information communications technology to provide land forces to the joint force.

The 2nd Division has recently been tasked with an increased role in contributing to domestic disaster relief and domestic security support. In addition to this, 2nd Division continues to support overseas operations, International engagement and the reinforcing Battle Group as part of exercise 'HAMEL' and 'TALISMAN SABRE'.

As a result, 8 SIG REGT is required to provide Communication and Information Systems (CIS) to enable these tasks. This requires small team excellence and use of rapidly deployable communications capabilities.

Throughout 2020, 8 SIG REGT deployed signallers as part of overseas operations in the Middle East, reinforced Regular Army communicators as part of International Engagement in the South West Pacific and provided specialist Information Communications and Technology (ICT) effects in support of Operation 'BUSHFIRE ASSIST' and the Covid Task force.

The domestic response options provided by 2nd Division has also enabled the Regiment the unique opportunity to be equipped with modern commercial communications information technology capabilities in addition to the in-service tactical radios and deployable ICT Networks.

This has enabled the REGT to harness advances in commercial technology and where required overlay military capabilities to provide additional redundancy and resilience in support of disaster relief.

Additionally, the use of modern commercial CIS within select profiles enables the Regiment to harness the expertise of the civilian skill sets of Reserve Signallers, many of whom have professional ICT backgrounds in their civilian employment.

(From "Thurunka" April Edition)

15.

Max Brett salutes the Assn

L-R: Dave Potter, Dallas Stow, Chris Goodwin, Bev Andrews, Lyn Chaplin Owen Winter, Mick Farley, Ray Woolley, Sue & Fiona Farley. In the Foreground are Ian Hosan, Dave Harcourt & James Lyons



2021 ANZAC DAY LUNCH AT "THE GLOBE" HOTEL, HOBART



L-R: Owen Winter, Ray Woolley, James Lyons (*foreground*), Max Brett, Sue Farley, Rod McNeill, Marty Potter (*back to camera*) Steve Straughan, (*foreground*), Dick Goodwin, Mick Farley & Dave Marsh (*partly obscured*).

16.



**VALE - TX11197 WILLIAM
JOHN McDERMOTT –
27/12/1923-4/5/2021**

John McDermott was born in the Linda Valley on Tasmania's West Coast into a large family which moved to Launceston 4 years later to give the children better opportunities and more healthy

lifestyles than mining. He was educated at St Patricks College. On completing year 10, John worked in a footwear retailing business for 4 years.

John joined the Army on 16 March 1942 and commenced Signals training at the old Sandy Bay Rifle Range depot now occupied by the University of Tasmania.

He transferred to 12th Australian Infantry Brigade Signals at Brighton in June of the same year. His Unit was relocated to the Townsville Qld area a few months later and then as relief for the Darwin defences. John's Unit was defending the NT capitol during the bombing of that city.

At the conclusion of WW2, John was a Sgt and was transferred to the British Occupation Forces which took control of the Japanese Naval Base at Kure. He eventually returned to Tasmania and was discharged in October 1947. John then commenced working for the PMG's Department and studying for an Engineering Degree.

In the early 1950's John joined the CMF and qualified for first appointment as a Lt in 1955. He was later promoted as a Captain and continued serving in T Comd Sig Sqn until the late 1950's. John eventually resigned from the Army to concentrate on his career with the Postmaster General's Department/Telecom Australia until his retirement from the workforce some 32 years ago.

John married Fay Johnstone on 4 September 1948 and they had two sons; Michael & Christopher. They resided at Sandy Bay in a two-story brick home on Sandy Bay Road, primarily built by John, until a few years ago and then sold-up and moved into Sandown Village Aged Care facility at Lower Sandy Bay.

As a young man, John was a talented TFL (AFL) footballer and also played golf and bowled competitively. He was a multi-talented person who also designed and built the family's holiday "shack".

John eventually undertook further tertiary management training. He was a senior executive officer in the Telstra marketing area until retirement.

In more recent years John played a leading role in the Knights of the Southern Cross organisation, developing a state wide network of Catholic aged care homes and planning for the financing and improvement of other church properties.

Fay and John were terrific supporters of our Association for over 70 years. John was a Vice President for 17 years and also a very able and reliable Committee member for 21 years. He assisted our Presidents and our long-serving Secretary/Treasurer; Trevor Taplin, in the running of the Association over many of those years.

John was granted Life Membership in 2003 and accepted the appointment of Association Patron in 2018. He was still our Patron at the time of his passing.

John McDermott was a very thoughtful and well-liked person who had a cordial relationship with all of our membership and is sorely missed.

R.I.P. John

