

June 2019

SIGNAL NEWS



CERTA CITO

Official Journal of the Royal Australian Signals Association (Tas)

SIGNAL NEWS

March 2019

PATRON: John McDermott (Life Member)

ASSOCIATION DIARY

**Problems with formatting
Committee members, "1st Fridays functions
and Annual Luncheon parts of table below
ANNA!**

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Distribution:

March, June, September, December, 2019

2019 "1st Friday's"

Feb 1st, Mar 1st, Apr 5th,
May 3rd, Jun 7th, Jul 5th, Aug 2nd,
Sep 6th, Oct 4th, Nov 1st & Dec 6th
All start at 4.30pm

Annual Luncheon:- Wed

5thJun 2019 at Claremont Hotel,
12n for 12.30pm

Annual General Meeting (73rd):-

Friday 4th October 2019.
5^{pm} at RAAF Memorial Centre

Commemoration Day: Sunday 13th 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:

Nov 8th Timing & Venue TBA.
Medals to be worn

Committee Meetings 2019:-

Meetings start at RAAF Memorial
Centre **at 3.15^{pm}** on 1 Mar, 7 Jun, 6
Sep, 1 Nov.

**Printed by the Hon. Wil
Hodgman, MP, Liberal Member
for Franklin**

A much appreciated Community Service

3.

THE PRESIDENTS REPORT

Welcome to the mid-year edition of 'SIG NEWS' our 78th year of the publication already.

Great to see David Harcourt back in action but in a much reduced form.

Also good to catch-up with Graeme Boscoe at our May 'First Friday' function. He was our former Association Auditor of long-standing and was visiting Hobart (from Bendigo Vic) for a few weeks in April/May.

At this time as always, we have a busy social programme. The End of Summer Lunch in March (notice we have moved from dinner to lunch) attracted a rollup of 16 and we had a most enjoyable gathering at the Claremont Hotel. Is it true that Basil Apted may be a shareholder?

ANZAC DAY we had a contingent of 16 for the Hobart march. Good effort. Made up by Dave Marsh and a couple of his stalwart. An only fair turn up of Association members and as always there were a few who are ex-Sigs, who like to march with us. This year Dave Marsh carried our banner and Allen Pullen and son carried our sign. Thanks fellows.

Lynn Chaplin came down from Launceston to join us for lunch. Lynn 's recent health has not been too hot however she is heading back to her bright self.

Denise gave Lynn a rest on the chocolate wheel tickets at the Waratah which did not quite cover costs but an enjoyable day for the 16 attendees without the washing up.

The initiative for the provision of a bus for our members to the march and THE CENOTAPH, is admired by other organisations. This year we hired a bus from Seabrooks Coaches with Peter at the helm, to cover our transport requirements to the march, then the Cenotaph and back to the Waratah after the Service.

Our previous provider, Tony Marchant, was not available.

The next Social Activity is the Annual Lunch on Wednesday 5th June at the Claremont Hotel; 12n for 12 30pm.

Our Commemoration Day Service is on Sunday, 13th October is at our Anglesea Barracks Memorial at 11 45am followed by lunch at the RAAF Memorial Centre.

Also don't forget our Memorial Day Lunch on Friday, 8th November at a venue to be advised. Make a note in your diary or smart phones. Our AGM is on the First Friday in October the 4th at 1700

Well that's it from me for this issue and please remember support Dick and David in their quest to capture as much of our former Unit and Association history and particularly to identify people in the myriad of photographic material we retain.

Yours in Signals

Owen

4.

THE COWRA BREAKOUT

(The Cowra Breakout (A story of folly and misguided principles, desperation, death and destruction))

The August 5, 1944 breakout of Cowra Prisoner of War (POW) camp by 1,100 Japanese prisoners is reputedly one of, if not the biggest, POW breakouts that has occurred anywhere in modern times. It was certainly the largest prison escape of WW2 and probably the bloodiest.

At the time the Cowra camp housed 2,200 Japanese POWs. The Japanese section of the Cowra camp had reached its capacity and leading up to the breakout a rumour had spread among the prisoners that all except the officers and NCOs were to be transferred from Cowra to Hay (NSW). This was confirmed on August 4, 1944 when the Japanese were notified of the move. From the Japanese perspective this was akin to separating parents from their children, so they decided to engineer an escape before this could happen.

Armed with an assortment of knives, spears, clubs and blankets to throw over the barbed wire bordering the camp, the prisoners made suicidal charges for the wire and the camp gates. A group of several hundred ran directly towards a Vickers gun being fired by Privates Ralph Jones and Ben Hardy. Jones and Hardy had next to no hope of halting the group of desperate and determined Japanese prisoners and they were overwhelmed and killed. Some years after the war both men were awarded the George Cross posthumously. The prisoners threw clothes on the barbed wire so that they could climb over it, but they were shot in the attempt.

Subsequently, it was found that 378 prisoners had managed to escape the camp.

Near to the POW camp was an Australian Recruit Training Centre occupied by a group of young and untrained recruits. They were the only resources available to commence a search of the surrounding area for the Japanese escapees. They were such raw recruits that the powers that be felt that they could not be trusted with weapons, so the search parties were unarmed! The folly of this was soon made apparent when some of the young searchers led by a Lt Harry Doncaster, came upon a number of Japanese escapees. In the resultant scuffle Lt Doncaster was stabbed to death. Over the next ten days or so the search parties found most of the escapees. Not all were alive though. Some escapees had hanged themselves in the bush and two had thrown themselves under a train. A number of other escapees were discovered by a local farmer who had shot and killed them. The eventual toll from the breakout was 231 killed and over 100 wounded or injured. Four Australians were killed and four were wounded.

The whole point of the breakout for the Japanese was never really to escape prison but to die a warrior's death. Soldiers of the Japanese army were never supposed to be captured but to die honourable deaths by their own hands or at least by the hand of a colleague. This was what their militaristic culture at the time determined. Japan did not recognise or acknowledge that any of their servicemen captured during WW2 were POWs.

Not all of the prisoners were fit enough to participate in the escape charge. Many, who for one reason or another were not able to run, hanged themselves in their huts or requested their comrades to kill them. The buildings were set on fire at the start of the breakout and the bodies of these prisoners were found later among the ruins.

Sergeant Major Kanazawa was singled out as the ringleader and scapegoat of the escape and was charged in a civil court hearing with murder. Kanazawa was found guilty and sentenced to hard labour. He was subsequently repatriated to Japan in 1946 after being in solitary confinement for 19 months. It is interesting to note that the prison breakout at the time was viewed as being a civilian rather than a military. Matter.

This is why the posthumous award to Privates Jones and Hardy was the George Cross - a medal not awarded in military conflicts. Nowadays there is little remaining of the old POW camp in Cowra.

There is a Japanese War Cemetery and there is the beautiful and very well maintained Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre, which attract visitors from all over the world. The few original mementos of the camp that were salvaged by locals are kept in a museum a (few sheds) on the edge of Cowra. The public is allowed to view these objects; although I understand quite a lot were sold to the public last year (2016).

(Reproduced and adapted by Allan Barden from internet searches and notes from the Croydon, Victoria Military History Group of which he is a member.)

Lt Col Brown – Camp CO at the time of the break-out



SOME THOUGHTS FROM A WHINGING OLD FART!

Dear Mr. Morrison,

As the official replacement for Mr. Turnbull, please find below my suggestion for fixing Australia's economy. Instead of giving billions of dollars to car companies & other business that will squander the money on lavish parties and unearned bonuses, use the following plan. You can call it the Patriotic Retirement Plan:

There are about 10 million people over 50 in the work force. Pay them \$1 million each severance for early retirement with the following stipulations:

- 1) They MUST retire. Ten million job openings - unemployment fixed.
- 2) They MUST buy a new Australian car. Ten million cars ordered - Car Industry fixed
- 3) They MUST either buy a house or pay off their mortgage - .Housing Crisis fixed.
- 4) They MUST send their kids to school/college/university - Crime rate fixed.
- 5) They MUST buy \$100 WORTH of alcohol/tobacco a week and there's your money back in duty/tax etc.
- 6) Instead of stuffing around with the carbon emissions trading scheme that makes us pay for the major polluters, tell them to reduce their pollution emissions by 75% within 5 years or we shut them down.
- 7) Cut down on polli's perks - they earn enough money to pay for their own petrol, food, drinks, airfares for their wives & families like all other hard working Aussies do. We pay big money but we still get MONKEYS.
- 8) No government credit cards for polli's - let them get their own then they will be more careful about how they use it and pay up on time so as not to incur interest.

It can't get any easier than that!

P.S. If more money is needed, have all members of parliament pay back their falsely claimed expenses and second home allowances. If you think this would work, please forward to everyone you know. If not, please disregard.

Grumpies of the World Unite.

Also, let's put all the pensioners in jail and the criminals in a nursing home.

This way the pensioners would have access to showers, hobbies and walks.

They'd receive unlimited free prescriptions, dental and medical treatment, wheel chairs etc. and they'd receive money instead of paying it out.

They would have constant video monitoring, so they could be helped instantly, if they fell, or needed assistance.

Bedding would be washed twice a week, and all clothing would be ironed and returned to them. A guard would check on them every 20 minutes and bring their meals and snacks to their cell

They would have family visits in a suite built for that purpose

They would have access to a library, weight room, spiritual counselling, pool and education

Simple clothing, shoes, slippers, PJ's and legal aid would be free, on request.

Private, secure rooms for all, with an exercise outdoor yard, with gardens

Each senior could have a PC a TV radio and daily phone calls.

There would be a board of directors to hear complaints, and the guards would have a code of conduct that would be strictly adhered to.

The criminals would get cold food, be left all alone and unsupervised.

Lights off at 8pm, and showers once a week. Live in a tiny room and pay \$600.00 per week and have no hope of ever getting out.

Think about this (more points of contention):

THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION

They keep talking about drafting a Constitution for Iraq. Why don't we just give them ours? It was drawn up by a lot of really smart guys, it has worked for centuries and we're not using it anymore.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

The real reason that we can't have the Ten Commandments posted in a courthouse or Parliament, is this -

You cannot post 'Thou Shalt Not Steal',

'Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery' and

'Thou Shall Not Lie' in a building full of lawyers, judges and politicians.....

It creates a hostile work environment.

It is time for us grumpy old folk of Australia to speak up!

(yep - you guessed it – Geeves)

6.

CADET CAMP – THE BIVOUAC - [Dictionary definition : Bivouac – ‘to camp without tents’]

We are to experience our first overnight exercise in the field which we are told is called a bivouac, over the back of the Range, and I viewed this with some trepidation. The night is expected to be clear and cool (as it turned out, bloody freezing) so we are told to roll and tie all our blankets, and shown how to sling them over the shoulder. For one of short stature, this made life interesting, what with rifle, greatcoat, fully laden packs, webbing, ration pack and the all-important (leaky) water bottle buckled onto the web-belt, the latter impossible to get at without unloading all the equipment (I learned later that the trick was to sling it over the shoulder, secured by a length of string).

We were trucked to the Range, then had to stagger to the bivouac site, probably only a couple of hundred yards, but seemed like miles to a young kid loaded like a pack mule, and told to erect our hootchies. As stated previously, the shelters in those days had to be constructed from your WW11 gas cape, supported by whatever pieces of native timber you could find (not much of that on the barren range flood-plane). After several failed attempts, most of us managed to construct some sort of shelter, which wouldn't have helped much in a rain storm or a breath of wind greater than 1 knot. It's going to be an interesting night. (I remember years later, Ian Rose, ex-Lt RA SIGS, laughing at our Australian tents half shelter and comparing them to the Brit full pup-tents – he'd have rolled around the floor in helpless mirth at gas-cape shelters).

Water was a bit of a problem, we are told, as the little water-course close by, was only a trickle of coffee-coloured mud. If we had to refill our water bottles, we were advised to use the water sterilization tablets from the ration packs we had previously been issued, as there was a dead sheep in the creek. Probably didn't use his sterilization tablets – made even clean water taste terrible anyway. At least I didn't have to waste water shaving.

Time to investigate the contents of our ration packs and prepare the evening meal, after first reading the green instruction sheet. You're pretty much on your own, and learn by trial and error how to operate the nifty little can opener/spoon (about half the length of the later version) and hex stove, the latter producing foul fumes when the damned hex tablet went out. Learn to use a couple of rocks to shelter the dinky flame. Hope I don't run out of 'Greenlite' matches. I always found the ration pack food most palatable, having been expertly prepared by the dietitians at Scottsdale (Tas), despite comments to the contrary from others in later years. Some jokers are hard to please. Probably didn't even like the teeth-breaking (Cadbury's) ration-pack chocolate.

Seven o'clock, and we're organized for our first patrol. In the distance, a Vickers fires a couple of bursts, disturbing the silence of the early evening. I seem to recall that Denis Brain was one of the gun crew. We wander through the scraggy tree-line in a sort of single file as darkness falls (never heard of arrow-head or staggered file in those days, let alone one-up etc). The darkness instantly changes to a sort of ethereal brightness as a flare initiates and slowly drifts down on its parachute. We are ordered to stand stock still to avoid detection. Deeper darkness enfolds us as the flare extinguishes, and it takes a while for eyes to become re-accustomed to the night. Someone fires a couple of blanks, and is instantly berated – fires another round in defiance. Probably Japhead Styles - rounds make more satisfying noise than his bloody water pistol.

After a couple of hours of this, what seemed to me senseless 'patrolling', we return to our bivouac site, thoughtfully identified by a beckoning fire. Bit of a warm, then wiggle into bed under the dodgy shelter, which by this time had partially collapsed. Sleep, then wake at some wee small hour, absolutely freezing with the gas cape fully collapsed on top of me. Shiver for the rest of the night until Reveille at about 6. At least it didn't rain. Pleased to get up, as I can light my hexy and at least warm my hands, huddled in my great coat. Around me, others are doing the same thing, and the tantalising smells of egg-omelette (canned) and hot cereal blocks (hard as rock until softened, more or less, with hot water in the bottom of a dixie, and sweetened with condensed milk from a green tube) waft through the camp site. Is that bromide I can smell in the tea?

Another bout of pointless patrolling, this time uneventful – Japhead had probably run out of ammo - then it's time to return to the camp-site, eat our final meal of dog bikkies, canned marg and veggie from the remains of the ration pack, pack-up and prepare for the trek back to the trucks for the return to Brighton. Very pleased to get back there and a hot shower (COL Two-Fathers would be proud of me) - at least I'll get a good, warm, night's sleep after cleaning rifle and gear. Interesting experience, that first bivouac.

Footnote. In later years as a Pl Comd, I still have a vision of WO2 Curphy (Sock) demonstrating the contents and preparation of a ration pack on a tables FS, to recruits in the field in a most humorous fashion, dressed in greens with a white Cook's apron and his signature bush head-apparel (a sock) temporarily exchanged for a spotlessly clean, white Chef's hat. He got the message across as he always did, for such was the nature of the man. It was a far cry from that first Cadet Bivouac meal experience.

Certa Cito (Tas)

SOME IRISH HUMOUR FROM "OTHERS"

IRISH FIRE FIGHTERS

One night outside a small town in Southern Ireland, a fire started inside the local chemical plant. In the blink of an eye, it exploded into massive flames. The alarm went out to all fire departments for miles around.

When the fire fighters appeared on the scene, the chemical company President rushed to the Fire Chief and said, "All our secret formulas are in the vault in the centre of the plant. They must be saved. I'll give 50,000 Euros to the fire department that brings them out intact." But the roaring flames held the fire-fighters off.

Soon more fire departments had to be called in as the situation became desperate. As the firemen arrived, the President shouted out that the offer was now 100,000 Euros to the fire department who could save the company's secret files.

From the distance, a lone siren was heard as another fire truck came into sight. It was the nearby rural township volunteer Fire Company composed mainly of men over the age of 65. To everyone's amazement, the little broken-down fire engine roared right past all the sleek newer engines that were parked outside the plant. Without even slowing down, it drove straight into the middle of the inferno.

Outside, the other firemen watched in amazement and disbelief as the old timers jumped off right in the middle of the fire and fought it back on all sides. It was a performance and effort never seen before. Within a short time, the old timers had extinguished the fire and saved the secret formulas.

The grateful chemical company president announced that for such a superhuman feat he was upping the reward to 200,000 Euros, and walked over to thank each of the brave fire fighters personally.

"The local TV news reporter rushed in to capture the event on film, asking their chief, "What are you going to do with all that money? "Well," said Paddy Murphy, the 70-year-old fire chief. Da foist ting we're gonna do is fix da brakes on dat fecking truck!" (*Hodgy*)

IRISH VASECTOMY

After having their 11th child, an Irish couple decided that that was enough, as they couldn't afford a larger bed. So the husband went to his doctor and told him that he and his wife didn't want to have any more children.

The doctor told him there was a procedure called a vasectomy that would fix the problem but it was expensive. A less costly alternative was to go home, get a large firecracker, light it, put it in a beer can, then hold the can up to his ear and count to 10.

The husband said to the doctor, "B'Jayzus, I may not be the smartest guy in the world, but I don't see how putting a firework in a beer can next to my ear is going to help me with my problem." "Trust me, it will do the job", said the doctor.

So the man went home, lit a cracker and put it in a beer can. He held the can up to his ear and began to count: "1, 2, 3, 4, 5," at which point he paused, and placed the beer can between his legs so he could continue counting on his other hand. This procedure also works in New Zealand and Tasmania! (*Bob Gray*)

QUICKIES

An old Irish farmer's dog goes missing and he's inconsolable. His wife says "Why don't you put an advert in the paper?" He does, but two weeks later the dog is still missing. "What did you put in the paper?" his wife asks. "Here boy!" he replies.

Paddys' in jail. The guard looks in his cell and sees him hanging by his feet. "What on earth you doing?" he asks. "Hanging myself" Paddy replies. "It should be around your neck" says the Guard. "I know" says Paddy "but I couldn't breathe".

(*Jess Porter – not Irish – a Westerway lass!*)

YOUR SECRETARY SAYS

Treasurer **Mick Farley** advises he still has a few of the attractive Association coloured Vehicle Window Transfers in stock (\$5 each) but only 3 of our Association Lapel badges (\$8 each). He hopes to replenish our stock of the popular Sigs Corps ties in the near future and is looking at some other items in the Corps Shop stock. Get in touch with Mick if you require any items.

On a sad note we were recently informed of the passing of **John Stanley Bellette**. A former Ssgt who worked in the QM Store at Beaumaris for five years (*including a period with the legendary John "The Pope" Paul*) in the 1970's. JSB attended our 2007 Unit Disbandment Reunion. He passed away in Glen Innes NSW after fighting-off bone cancer for a number of years. He joined the ARES after a 6 year stint with the ARA including a year in Vietnam where he worked with **Mel Cooper** at 110 Sqn. John served in the 124, 6 FF Gp and 146 Sig Sqn's in Hobart and worked in postings with 40 IRC, 6 ARRLS, HQ 6 MD & 6 Trg Gp. He was a member of Tasmania Police and served as a Prosecutor for some years. He joined your Secretary at Blackmans Bay District Cricket Club in 1973, playing with that Club for a decade, including in an A Grade premiership in 1975/76. Glen Innes RSL reported John's funeral was attended by a huge crowd and he was held in high esteem. Our condolences are extended to John's extended family.

Another sad note was the recent passing of Daria Homer, our new member **Howard Gomer's** wife. Our condolences have been passed to Howard.

I enjoyed a great but far too short visit from former Sqn C/Clk **Peter Polak** a few weeks ago. Pete, wife and young son are on a great adventure touring Aust. For a year. He still works in Defence, now as a 'civvy', in Brisbane. Looks exceptionally fit and has very clear and fond memories of his Hobart posting (1985/86) and wishes all with whom he served here, all the best.

Ken Moy recently had a visit from his good mate, former Sqn 2IC and RASA Auditor, member, **Graeme Boscoe**. 'Bos' moved to Bendigo a few years ago but has managed a couple of 'pilgrimages' to Hobart since. Graeme told me at the May "1st Friday" he misses Hobart's, smell of the sea air. I'll bet many on the 'big island' can relate to that! Here's a photo of the lads 'taking the air' a few years ago.



Hoping our most "senior" member, **Max Brett** (*below*) is looking forward to his next birthday on 10 Aug 2019, Max will be 99. We all miss his friendly face, stories and wit at our social gatherings. Here's Max at our Commemoration Day service at the Hobart Sigs Memorial in 2016.



Allan Nunn & his wife (*right*) recently celebrated their 34th anniversary at seaside Sorrento. Looking good folks.



THE RECOVERY SAGA*Attempt One.*

The accompanying DS had a short wheelbase LR (Truck ¼ ton GS) and drove down the hill to us. Hooking a tow chain onto the rear of the bogged FWR he attempted to tow us backwards. Result was that we sunk lower into what was now a mud heap and the area behind us where he was, now also was a mud heap.

Attempt Two.

Called up the nearest FWR and used it to replace the DS vehicle after of course, waiting for it to arrive. Result was simply a bigger mud heap.

Attempt Three.

Added the DS vehicle to the line and both pulled. Result was an even bigger mud heap. Then to top it off it started to rain. Really more of a heavy drizzle that continued unabated for the rest of the day.

Attempt Four and onwards.

All FWR's were called in one by one and joined together in one big line. Result was still negative, it was now after lunch and still raining and we were all very wet. We tried to dig it out but that just made everybody filthy and created even more of a huge mud heap. The troops were not happy!!

Finally, a call was made to the School and they sent out a large fire truck 6X6. When it joined the line to pull, all the tow points on the FWRs started to bend with the strain, so that idea was cancelled. All were removed from the line and the fire truck itself backed in to pull directly with its winch, and it worked!! We were free and made our way back up the hill unaided, carefully avoiding the now mega mud heap.

But then, guess what? The fire truck was now bogged at the top of the slope. We then had to empty it of its water load (more mess) and then all hands set to, to dig it out. We made it back to base just in time to get cleaned up for our respective evening meals. Next day was RTU day and I recall tying my greatcoat on the outside of my case as it was still sopping wet. If you have ever tried to dry one out you will know how long it takes and how heavy they become. I had to pay excess baggage to bring a heap of Victorian water back to Tassie. Cannot remember how much exactly but it was quite steep at the time.

As a course, it was quite successful from a student point of view. We all learnt a lot and had become familiar with and knew how to operate the latest equipment. For the DS it was probably a disaster and the course highlight, the TEWT never actually happened - but as a recovery exercise it was brilliant.

*And so ended, 56 years ago, my first course at Balcombe – one never to be forgotten. **Capt Ben Digo***

Two Geeves Quickies

1. Mick decided to join the Irish Police force and went along to the entrance examination.

The examining Sergeant, realising the prospective recruit was Irish, decided to ask him a simple question. "Who killed Jesus Christ?" he asked.

Mick looked worried and said nothing, so the Sergeant told him not to worry & he could have some time to think about it.

Mick was on his way home when he met Paddy. "Well Mick," said Paddy, "are you a policeman yet?"

Not only that," says Mick, "but I'm on my first case."

2. A Pom, a Welshman and a Scotsman were left legacies by a friend on condition that they each put a 5 pound note in his coffin.

The Pom put in 5 quid.

The Welshman put in a fiver which he borrowed from the Pom.

The Scotsman took out the two fivers and put in a cheque for 15 quid. Three days later he was startled to find that the cheque had been cashed.

The undertaker was an Irishman!

10.

PHILOSOPHY

As we grow older and wiser we realize a \$300 or \$30 watch - - - both tell the same time.

Whether we carry a \$300 or \$30 wallet/handbag - the amount of money inside is the same.

Whether we drink a bottle of \$300 or \$30 or \$3 wine - the hangover is the same.

Whether the house we live in is 300 or 3,000 or 30,000 sq. ft. - the loneliness is the same.

True inner happiness does not come from the material things of this world.

Whether we fly first or economy class, if the plane goes down - we go down with it.

Whether we fly first or economy class, if the plane reaches its destination - everyone arrives at the same time.

Therefore we should realize, when we have mates, buddies and old friends, brothers and sisters, husbands, wives, with whom we can chat, laugh, talk, sing, talk about north-south-east-west or heaven and earth - this is true happiness!

Six Undeniable Facts of Life:

1. Don't educate your children to be rich. Educate them to be happy, so when they grow up they will know the value of things, not the price.
2. Eat your food as your medicines. Otherwise you have to eat medicines as your food.
3. The one who loves you will never leave you because, even if there are 100 reasons to give up, he or she will find one reason to hold on.
4. There is a big difference between a human being and being human. Only a few folks really understand that.
5. You are loved when you are born. You will be loved when you die. In between, you have to manage!
6. If you just want to walk fast, walk alone; but, if you want to walk far, walk together!

Six Best 'Doctors' in the World:

1. Sunlight
2. Rest
3. Exercise
4. Diet
5. Self Confidence
6. Friends

And, finally: The nicest place to be is in someone's thoughts, the safest place to be is in someone's prayers. (**Bob Gray**)

VIRGINS

A young Chinese couple gets married. She's a virgin. Truth be told, he is a virgin too, but she doesn't know that. On their wedding night, she cowers naked under the sheets as her husband undresses in the darkness. He climbs into bed next to her and tries to be reassuring.

"My darling," he whispers, "I know dis you firss time and you berry flighten. I promise you, I give you anyting you want, I do anyting - juss anyting you want. You juss ask. Whatchu want?" he says, trying to sound experienced and worldly, which he hopes will impress her.

A thoughtful silence follows and he waits patiently and eagerly for her request. She eventually shyly whispers back, "I want to try someting I have hear about from odda girls... Numbaa 69."

More thoughtful silence, this time from him. Eventually, in a puzzled tone he asks her

"You want..... Garlic Chicken wif snow peas?"

(**Bob Gray-joke of the month for April 2019 ??**)

11.

THE COASTWATCHERS IN WW2

The Australian Coastwatchers brought the tide of Japanese invasive success to a shuddering halt, when two watchmen spotted and reported an impending invasion fleet of 5,500 Japanese troops. The Coastwatchers' observation was pivotal as it precipitated the Battle of the Coral Sea of May 1942, and stopped the invasion of Port Moresby. United States Admiral, William F. (Bull) Halsey would later state the "the Coastwatchers saved Guadalcanal, and Guadalcanal saved the South Pacific".

In early 1941, ten months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, the Australian Government set up the unpublished "Malay barrier" and deployed a series of "Bird" defence forces on the Islands north of Australia – the Sparrow force on Timor, Gull force on Ambon and Lark force at Rabaul. Tragically, these undermanned and under-equipped forces were totally outnumbered by the superior Japanese invasion forces that swept South after Pearl Harbour, incurring huge losses for Australian troops. The first of these invasions occurred on 22nd January, 1942 just six weeks after Pearl Harbour, when the Japanese invaded and occupied Rabaul, killing and capturing 73% of the token Australian force left to defend it, 1,053 of these POW's became casualties in Australia's largest maritime disaster of the war, when an unmarked prison ship named *Montevideo Maru* was sunk by a US submarine.

The founder and commander of the Coastwatchers, Eric Feldt explains in his historic book, *The Coast Watchers*, that in late February 1942, after occupying Rabaul, "the Japanese despatched a force to occupy Lae and Salamaua, Buka Passage and the Shortland Islands. Then, in May, they essayed to take Port Moresby from the sea, at the same time occupying Tulagi". Japan's ongoing effort to strengthen the offensive positioning of their empire in the South Pacific meant that Port Moresby was a primary target. According to James P. Duffy in his book *War at the end of the World*, Port Moresby was Japan's strategic goal. The MO Carrier Striking Force, as it was codenamed by the Japanese, intended to isolate Australia and New Zealand from their ally, the United States, in preparation for the Japanese attack on Australia. However, fortuitously, "an Australian Coastwatcher on the Solomon Island of Bougainville provided the first news of Japanese movements when he sent his message on 2 May 1942, that a large force of enemy ships was sailing south towards Tulagi. A second, similar despatch was made later the same day by another Coastwatcher on New Georgia. Both Coastwatchers transmitted their sightings to Headquarters at Port Moresby, which relayed the message".

Two days later, the Coastwatchers' warnings enabled the Allied forces to meet and vanquish the invasion fleet of the Imperial Japanese Navy in the battle of the Coral Sea, which was fought from May 4-8, 1942. This was the first naval repulse of the Japanese following their series of conquests, as they moved from the northern to southern hemisphere. As Duffy records "the most important result of this historic battle was that it averted the invasion of Port Moresby, with all it portended for the safety of Australia and the future of the war". Moreover, he notes, "*never again would an enemy fleet attempt to invade that vital port city*".

After Japan's defeat in the Battle of the Coral Sea, their battered and bruised invasion forces limped back to Rabaul, thus saving Port Moresby from the 'walk-in, capture and occupy' fate, which had been suffered at Rabaul, Timor and Ambon. Immediately following the Coral Sea battle, Japan and the United States fought a six-month long battle of attrition for control of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, during which time the Americans came perilously close to defeat. Such a defeat would have been catastrophic for Australia. Fortunately, the Australian Coastwatchers played a vital role in a key victory: the ultimate American success at Guadalcanal. Coastwatchers regularly sent two-hour warnings of bombers with supporting fighter squadrons. Such messages would be sent from their campsites in the enemy-held jungles of New Britain, New Ireland and Bougainville, to the US authorities on Guadalcanal, and the Australians at Port Moresby. These alerts saved countless lives, with planes 'up in the sun' ready to pounce, the Navy's battleships on 'battle stations' and their land forces with their anti-aircraft weaponry ready and waiting for the Japanese attacks. These warnings also enabled the US forces at Guadalcanal to defend hard-won territory, which were of enormous strategic value. The official acknowledgement by five-star US Admiral of the Fleet, William F. Halsey, was brief and poignant: "The Coastwatchers saved Guadalcanal, and Guadalcanal saved the South Pacific." A memorial recognising the role of the Coastwatchers stands in Honiara today.

12.

(The Coastwatchers in WW2 cont.,)

In essence, if the Coastwatchers had not routinely signalled their warnings by Morse Code, such as those mentioned above, the consequences would have been dire. Firstly, the capture of Port Moresby by the Japanese would have virtually severed US support for Australia and, using Port Moresby as a base, Japanese bombers would have been able to bomb Cairns – 525 miles, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton and Brisbane- 1,297 miles, and block the eastern sea approaches to Darwin, only 1,126 miles away, thus ‘opening the gate’ for the invasion of Australia.

Had the Coastwatchers not alerted the Allies to the impending Japanese attack, Australians would not have been able to launch their Port Moresby offensive and thwart Japan’s thrust toward Kokoda. This offensive was crucial as it protected the operation base of courageous forces fighting in New Guinea, who would later fight on the Kokoda Track and successfully repel the Japanese from their Buna, Gona, Lae and Sanananda occupations.

Subsequently, the combined forces of the US and Australia drove the Japanese from their strongholds at Lae and Salamaua, then Finhafen, Saidor, Madang, Aitape, Wewak, Hollandia, Biak, Wadke and Morotai. If it weren’t for the Coastwatchers, the Allied Supreme Commander, General Douglas MacArthur would have been constrained to defending the southern hemisphere disasters of Guadalcanal and Port Moresby. MacArthur would have therefore been prevented from redeploying his forces, who were instrumental in their successful island-hopping campaign, north of the Equator. MacArthur’s troops managed to reach and occupy Tinian Island where they launched the atom bombs that ended the war with Japan.

The role of Coastwatchers at critical points in the war was also acknowledged by Allied Commander-in-Chief, General MacArthur who stated in a foreword to Eric Feldt’s book *“they are officially credited with being a crucial and decisive factor in the allied victories of Guadalcanal and Tulagi and later on in the operations of New Britain.”* Apart from their vital intelligence gathering role however, the Coastwatchers also rescued 75 prisoners of war, 321 downed Allied airmen, 280 sailors, 190 missionaries and civilians, and hundreds of local people and others who had risked their lives for the Allies. One of those rescued was US Navy Lieutenant John F. Kennedy, whose PT 109 Patrol Torpedo boat was carved in two by a Japanese destroyer and destroyed in the Solomon waters.

After the sinking, the Lieutenant and his crew reached Kolombangara Island where they were found by Coastwatcher Sub-Lieutenant Reg Evans who organised their rescue.

In 1959, a memorial lighthouse was erected at Madang, on the north coast of Papua New Guinea, to honour the Coastwatchers. The memorial plaque bears the names of 36 Coastwatchers killed behind enemy lines while risking their lives in the execution of their duties. The plaque also bears this inscription: *“They watched and warned and died that we might live.”*

Ex-AIF Sergeant James Burrowes, (the author of this article - 98-years-old in 2016), served 4 years, including 2½ years as a Signaller Coastwatcher in ‘M’ Special Unit of the Allied Intelligence Bureau and 9 months with the US 7th Fleet Amphibious Landing Force. He spent 10 months in enemy-occupied territory over-looking Rabaul.

Burrowes is the last Signaller Coastwatcher survivor in Australia. He was awarded as Order of Australia medal in the Queen’s Birthday honours of 1990 for service to the Royal Life Saving Society of Victoria.

Coastwatchers was succeeded by the 1st Independent Signal Squadron in 1958, which was later re-named 301 Signal Squadron and in 1963 re-designated to 126 Signal Squadron (Special Forces).

The reserve soldiers were trained in coast watching by the veterans of WW2.

13.

MOBILITY SUPPORT SCHEME - REVISED POLICY

Purpose

To support members who are challenged to be able to attend RASA (Tas) activities or events in which the Association is taking part.

Provisions

1. The Scheme is restricted to the hire of public transport or reimbursement of reasonable costs for using private transport. RASA (Tas) will reimburse costs incurred (or pay accounts where applicable) to transport members and partners to and from venues.
2. Withdrawals from the Investment Account for transfer to the General Operating Account are authorised by the General Committee.
3. Access is primarily for mobility impaired/challenged members (and their spouses/carers) however cases of financially-challenged members, they will also be considered on a case by case basis.
4. Scheme funds are to be separately recorded in the RASA books of account.
5. Scheme Funds are currently invested with Tas Permanent Trustees (Long Term Fund). Investment interest payments are directed to the General Operating Account.
6. Public Transport must be pre-booked (**at the latest by 7pm the day before it is required.**) Members seeking Transport will need to contact one of the Committee by telephone. Details of proposed timings and the pick-up/drop off points (both ways) and if a wheelchair cab will be required.
7. Requests for transport support are to be directed to the following preferred members:-

Secretary – 62 29 6124, President – 62 43 9747, Treasurer – 62 61 2514, OR contact another Committee Member

(There will be cases where one vehicle can be “shared”. The Committee member making the booking will make that decision)

8. Reports about the Scheme are to be published in “Sig News” on a regular basis and the policy is to be reviewed at least every 3 years.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

1st CSR (104 Sigs) – www.1csr.au104.org–
3 Combat Sig Regt History Room – www.3combatsignalregiment.com (old 103/104 Sig Sqn Vietnam & beyond – www.au104.com
Apprentices School – www.austarmyapprentice.org
APPVA – www.peacekeepers.asn.au ,ie.,Australian Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Vets Assn, ...ADF– www.defence.gov.au
Australian Centre for PTSD – www.acpmh.unimelb.edu.au– DVA - www.dva.gov.au .Legacy – www.legacy.com.au
Friends & Families of the First AIF – membership@ffaif.org.au
Honours & Awards – www.itsanhonour.gov.au ...RSL-www.rsl.org.au
National Vietnam Veteran’s Museum (Austr) – www.vietnamvetmuseum.org
Pronto in Vietnam – www.pronto.au104.org
RASigs – www.army.gov.au/rasigs
RASigs Associations – www.rasigs.com this site gets you into all of the State Associations
Email Network & Contact database – (Adam West) sigbd@netspace.net.au
Signalman Magazine – www.signalman.com.au
SoldierOn–www.soldieron.org.au
STAND TO – Journal of the Western Front Association – www.westernfrontassociation.com
The AIF Project – www.aif.adfa.edu.au
TPI Victoria – www.tpihq.com.au or www.tpivic.com
Younger Veterans Association – www.youngdiggers.com.au
WRAAC Association of Victoria – www.wraacvic.com

SOME RECENT “QUICKIES” FROM GEEVES!

Old Jake went to his doctor for his annual check-up. “Your hearing is getting worse,” says the Doc. “And you will have to cut down on your drinking, smoking and sex.”

What?” cried Jake in alarm, “Just so I can **hear** better?”

If you’re an old codger, then you shouldn’t complain about being old. There are many that are not given the privilege!

A young social worker used to call on Old Jake to cut up his meals and do little jobs around the house for him when she noticed a bowl of almonds on the table next to his meal tray. “They were given to me as a present, but I don’t want them,” he explained. “You can have them.” She said thanks and began to nibble away on them. “Funny present to give a man with no teeth,” she remarked as she had eaten most of them. “Oh no,” he said, “they had chocolate on them then.”

A Geriatric is a German cricketer who captures three wickets with consecutive balls.

Glossary of Management terms:

Delegate: Pass the buck. **Pending:** I haven’t figured it out yet. **Urgency:** Panic. **Long-range forecast:** Guess. **Scheduled:** -Hoped for. **Ambitious:** Ruthless. **Strategy:** Low cunning. **Shrewd:** Devious. **Analytical Projection:** Guess. **A deficiency analysis:** Search for a scapegoat.

Old Fred fronted up to the Sperm bank and offered his services. The old matron looked at him doubtfully. He was 83. But Fred would not be denied as he said he was as fit as a prize bull. Finally she gave him a little jar and ushered him towards a cubicle and pulled the curtain. For the next few minutes all she could hear was much grunting and puffing and it went on for so long she got worried. She whispered at the curtain... “Are you okay?” she said. “No I need help,” said Fred. “I can’t get the lid off this bloody jar.”

A Chinese take-away restaurant and a Greek fruit shop owner were side by side and each Friday morning the two would sweep the pavement at the same time. Con the Greek would take the opportunity to have his little joke: “What day is it today Charlie?” “It’s Fliday,” the Chinaman would reply and Con would roll about laughing.

Each week it was the same and Con would even get some friends to come along and listen to Charlie say “Fliday.” It got on Charlies wick, so he went along for elocution lessons and concentrated on “Friday, Friday, Friday.”

Next morning he was waiting for the big showdown, sweeping a clean pavement for ten minutes before Con appeared. “What day is it today Charlie?” grinned Con. “It’s Friday You Gleek Plick!”

A Tassie truckie named Bill was drinking in a Melbourne pub when he got a call on his mobile phone and after answering it announces to the barman for him to shout the bar. “What’s the reason Bill?” asked the barman. “My wife has just given birth to a fourteen pound boy.” He announced proudly. So the barman did as he was asked and bought everyone in the bar a drink. Ten days later on his return trip, Bill goes back into the same bar. He was asked how the new baby was and how much did it weigh now? “Oh, he’s fine and in good health. He weighs 12 and a half pounds NOW.” “Why the sudden weight loss of the child, asked Bill the barman.

“Oh, we had him circumcised.” Said Bill.

A little guy was sitting at the bar quietly drinking when a big guy walked in and smacked him off the stool onto the floor. “That’s Kung Fu from China.” The little guy sits back on the stool and continues to drink. All of a sudden WHACK! The big guy smacks the little guy again and says, “That was a karate chop from Japan.”

Not wanting trouble and thinking the big guy is nuts the small guy moves a few stools away and continues on with his drinking. All of a sudden, - WHACK!!- Without warning he feels a boot kicking him and he goes sprawling onto the floor once again. The big guy said with a smile, “That’s kick-boxing from Thailand”.

The little guy having had enough, gets up, brushes himself down and leaves. He had been gone for 30 minutes and returned to walk up behind the big guy and - Whack!! – knocks him off his stool and lays him out cold. He then told the barman, “When he comes to, tell him that was the crowbar from the back of my ute”.

It’s the AFL Grand final and a Tom makes his way to his seat right on the wing. A man sits down and noticed the seat next to him was empty. He leans over and asks his neighbour if anybody will be sitting there? “No,” says Tom. “The seat is empty.” “That’s incredible,” said the man. “Who in their right mind would have a seat like this for the AFL grand final and not use it?”

Tom replies, “Well, actually the seat belongs to me. I was supposed to come with my wife, but she passed away. This is the first Grand final we haven’t been together since we got married in 1967.” “Oh I’m sorry to hear that. That’s terrible. But couldn’t you find someone else, a friend or relative, or even a neighbour to take the seat?”

Tom shakes his head.

“No, they are all at the funeral.”

SECRETS TO INNER PEACE

If you can start the day without caffeine, If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,

If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles, If you can relax without alcohol,

If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it. If you can sleep without the aid of drugs.

If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time, If you can conquer tension without medical help

If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,

Then You Are Probably The Family Dog! And you thought I was going to get all Spiritual!

Handle every stressful situation like a dog. If you can't eat it or play with it, piss on it and walk away. (*Hodgy-ourPhilosopher!!*)

SEENAGERS

I just discovered my age group! I am a Seenager (*Senior Teenager*). I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, only 55-60 years later.

I don't have to go to school or work. I get an allowance every month. I have my own pad. I don't have a curfew.

I have a driver's license and my own car. I have ID that gets me into bars and the wine store. I like the wine store best.

The people I hang around with are not scared of getting pregnant, they aren't scared of anything, they have been blessed to live this long, why be scared? And I don't have acne.

Life is Good! Also, you will feel much more intelligent after reading this, if you are a Seenager. Brains of older people are slow because they know so much. People do not decline mentally with age; it just takes them longer to recall facts because they have more information in their brains. Scientists believe this also makes you hard of hearing as it puts pressure on your inner ear.

Also, older people often go to another room to get something and when they get there, they stand there wondering what they came for. It is NOT a memory problem; it is nature's way of making older people do more exercise.

SO THERE!!

I have more friends I should send this to, but right now I can't remember their names. So please forward this to your friends; they may be my friends, too. (*Bob Gray*)

SOME QUICKIES FROM OWEN

A man goes to see the Rabbi. 'Rabbi, something terrible is happening and I have to talk to you about it.'

The Rabbi asked, 'What's wrong?' The man replied, 'My wife is poisoning me.'

The Rabbi, very surprised by this, asks, 'How can that be?' The man then pleads, 'I'm telling you, I'm certain she's poisoning me, what should I do?' The Rabbi then offers, 'Tell you what. Let me talk to her, I'll see what I can find out and I'll let you know.'

A week later the Rabbi calls the man and says, 'I spoke to her on the phone for three hours. You want my advice?'

The man said yes and the Rabbi replied, 'Take the poison.'

John was on his deathbed and gasped pitifully. 'Give me one last request, dear,' he said.

'Of course, John,' his wife said softly. 'Six months after I die,' he said, 'I want you to marry Bob.'

'But I thought you hated Bob,' she said. With his last breath John said, 'I do!'

All eyes were on the radiant bride as her father escorted her down the aisle. They reached the altar and the waiting groom; the bride kissed her father and placed something in his hand. The guests in the front pews responded with ripples of laughter. Even the priest smiled broadly. As her father gave her away in marriage, the bride gave him back his credit card.

'SNIPPETS' (by Capt Ben Digo)**FORT DIRECTION**

1. Squadron Annual Camp. Reveille in the huts. One Sig complains bitterly about how stiff and sore he was and that he had a most uncomfortable night. Then reaches under blankets and pulls out a can Red Ale which he proceeds to devour with relish. It would not have been sleeping on the can, would it, which made his night uncomfortable? How anyone could sink a can of beer which was at body heat temperature at 0530 is beyond me.

2. Squadron Annual Camp. All troops issued with paillasses and directed down the slope to the room at the end of the latrine block, for straw. My first time on paillasses and I did not appreciate that one's comfort depends on how much straw you can stuff in it. Might as well have slept directly on the floor the first week. But when we 'changed straw' at the middle weekend, I more than made up for it – quick learner I was!

BEAUMARIS

Last day of Squadron Annual Camp. All troops busy with the usual clean-up and acquittal of stores back to the Q. Including washing of vehicles the total time on these chores would have been at least a couple of hours, before muster for pay parade and final dismissal. Well known 'horizontal' WO and his LCPL side kick seat themselves down comfortably to clean all the wet cell batteries and there they stayed until the end. Must have been the cleanest those batteries ever were!!

BRIGHTON

Squadron Annual Camp. Shakedown radio exercise in local area including an overnight stop. Dets to find their own locs and advise. Received message from one Det that they were in the dead centre of X village but could not find them anywhere. Eventually woke up that they were in the local cemetery. At least they had company! Not many people can say that they have slept overnight in a graveyard, either.

EAGLE HAWK NECK

Squadron radio exercise. Two Dets in Port Arthur area. Had wonderful comms with each other. Should have too I suppose, as one Det was at each end of the bar at Hotel Lufra. What a trip!

EAST COAST

Squadron radio exercise. One Det having trouble getting through (WS 62 sets). Very experienced Det Comd connects aerial to farm wire fence of indeterminate length and they boom out. What about conventional aerial theory, I hear you ask! (*Who did he/she learn that from? Think initials are KM! Ed*)

SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

How many remember the little ditty "Here's what happened to Private Placid, he poor fool added water to acid"? A lesson well learnt I reckon and never forgotten!

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IRISH FIRE INSURANCE

A man and his wife moved back home to Cork, from London. The wife had a wooden leg and to insure it in Britain was £ 2000.00 a year! When they arrived in Cork, they went to an insurance agency to see how much it would cost to insure her wooden leg. The agent looked it up on the computer and said to the couple, '£ 39.00.' The husband was shocked and asked why it was so cheap here in Ireland to insure because it cost him £ 2000.00 in England!

The agent turned his computer screen and back to the couple and said, 'Well, here it is on the screen. It says, "Any wooden structure, with a sprinkler system over it, is £ 39.00".

I always did find the Irish Logic far superior to most others. (*Hodgy*)