

SIGNAL NEWS



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Official Journal of the Royal Australian Signals Association (Tas)

2.
SIGNAL NEWS
March 2020

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Signal News

Editor: Dick Goodwin

Distribution:

March, June, September, December

All 2020 “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 4.15^{pm}

Autumn Luncheon:- Wed 11th Mar 2020 at Claremont Hotel 12th for 12.30^{pm}

Anzac Day:- Saturday 25th Apr 2020

Hobart March and Cenotaph Service from 10.30^{am}. Meet at “The Globe” Hotel (rear car park) by 9.45^{am} for free transport to either venue.

Lunch at ”The Globe” 12.30^{pm} for 1^{pm}.

Medals to be worn

Annual Luncheon:- Wed 18th Jun 2020. Venue/timing TBA

Annual General Meeting (73rd):-

Friday 2nd October 2020.
5^{pm} at RAAF Memorial Centre

Commemoration Day: Sunday 11th 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: Fri 13th Nov. Timing & Venue TBA.

Medals may be worn

Committee Meetings 2020:-

Meetings start at RAAF Memorial Centre at 3.15^{pm} on 6th Mar, 5th Jun, 4th Sep, 6th Nov.

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

A much appreciated Community Service

3.

From The President.

Greetings to all for 2020. If you are reading this you have survived another Christmas and New Year and hopefully look forward to a great 2020.

In writing this it is hard to sometimes develop some interesting items for our newsletter. However Dick looks after that side and I hope everyone tries to make an effort to give him some interesting information for future editions of Signal News.

Each year your Committee tries to maintain a standard program so you should not forget what is on.

We are open to any suggestions in the department of social activities so if you have any ideas discuss them with your Committee members.

We have had our First Friday for 2020 to start the year and obviously with good communications we still had the normal roll up. The winning group from the Eastern Shore (down to 2) turned up to collect the normal ration of prizes. It is a good job we had a carton for their spoils.

We are normally operational on First Fridays from 1600 hrs (4pm) at the rear of the RAAF Building at 61 Davey Street.

Don't forget our MOBILITY SUPPORT scheme. If you have limited mobility and would like to attend an activity, contact Dick, myself, Denise Geeves or Mick Farley by the day before any function and we will arrange transport pickup and return for you.

David Harcourt was a little down health-wise until recently however we now look forward to his return.

A social item - our first lunch will be at the Claremont Hotel on Wednesday 11th March, gathering at 1200 for 1230. A pleasant gathering to start the year so make an effort to be there.

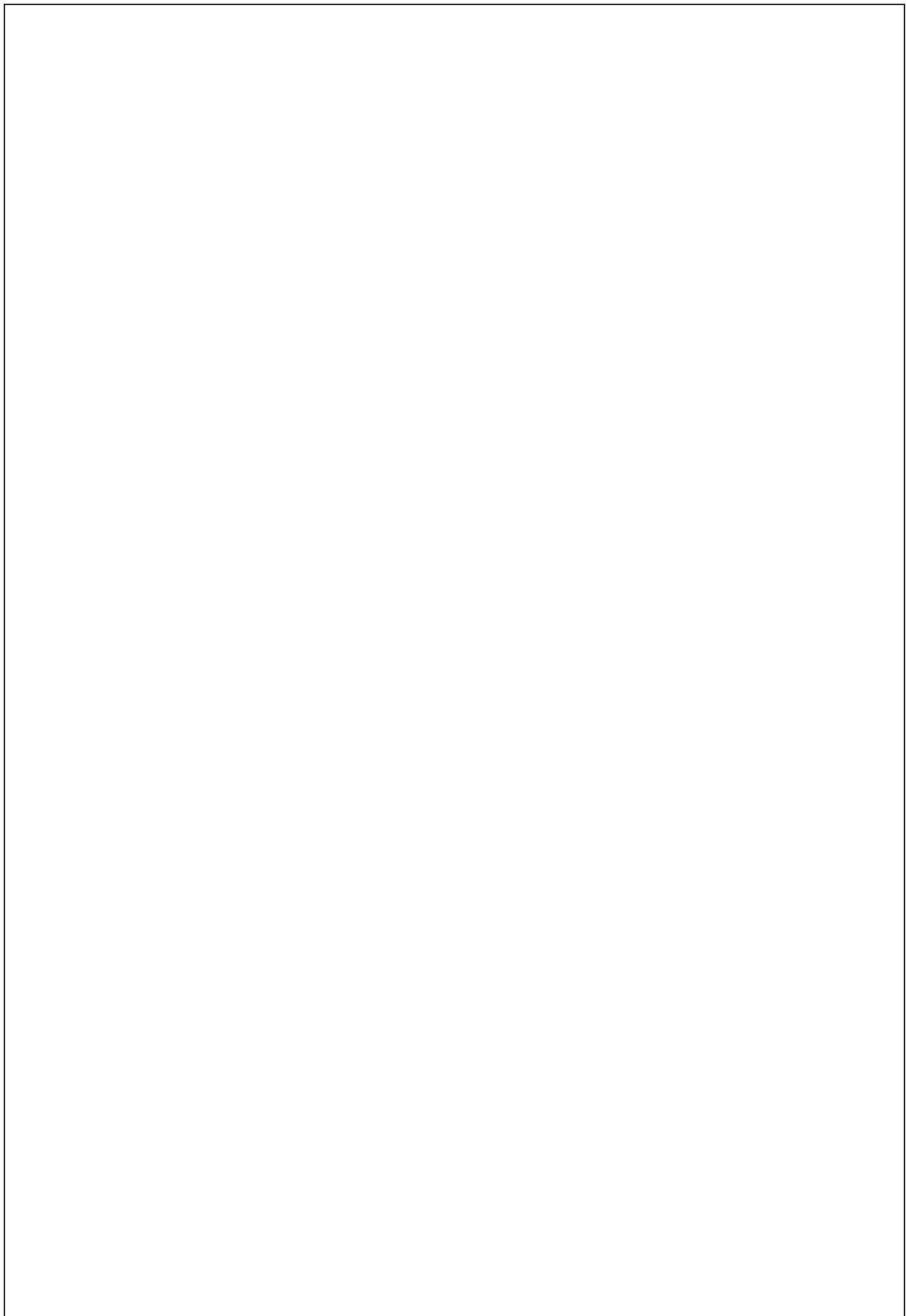
ANZAC DAY will follow our normal format on the 25th April however because our long term base at the "Waratah" has been sold and closed we have to find a new base.

Our lunch booking for ANZAC DAY is at "The Globe" Hotel at the corner of Davey & Antil Streets. Park in their Car Park at the rear of the hotel and the Bus will depart at 1000 dropping off the marchers at Victoria Street, then proceeding to the Cenotaph for the Service. When the Marchers 'survive' and attend the Service, our Bus will be available to return them afterwards to the Globe for 'First Aid'. This will be confirmed at the First Friday in April.

Well that's enough from me for this month so keep on signalling (in various ways) and I look forward to your company sometime through the year.

Yours in Signals

Owen



1st Australian Wireless Signal Squadron



'F' Station, 1st Wireless Signal Squadron in Bagdad in 1917

Mesopotamian Campaign

The 1st Australian Wireless Signal Squadron was a unit of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) which served in Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) during World War I. Formed in late 1915, it took part in the Mesopotamian Campaign from 1916 to 1918, providing communications to British forces. Later, elements of the squadron served as part of Dunsterforce in 1918 and 1919 and in Kurdistan in 1919. The unit was also known as the 1st Wireless Signal Squadron and 1st Australian and New Zealand Signal Squadron.



A pair of Australian signallers, each wearing a headphone set, listen in on an early Marconi Mk III crystal shortwave tuner set. The men are probably conducting a training exercise at the signalling school at Broadmeadows, Victoria

Formation

At the outbreak of World War I, the British Indian Army had a severe shortage of wireless equipment and trained operators. On 27 December 1915, the Australian government received a request for a troop of wireless signallers (approximately 50 soldiers) to be sent to Mesopotamia. The operators were raised from the Marconi School of Wireless in Sydney and the Broadmeadows depot in Victoria, while the drivers, who made up half of the unit, were raised from the Army Service Corps at Moore Park in Sydney.

The troop, which became known as the 1st Australian Pack Wireless Signal Troop, sailed from Melbourne on 5 February 1916 and after stops at Bombay and Columbo, arrived in Basra on 19 March 1916. The New Zealand government sent an equivalent unit which, together with the Australians, formed "C" Troop of the 1st Wireless Squadron.

Mesopotamian Campaign

On 25 April 1916, the first of the Australian wireless stations set off from Basra on a 140 miles (230 km) march north with the British 15th Indian Division. A month later the second station was sent by boat across Lake Hammar to Nasiriyah. Two New Zealand stations were sent to important locations on the Tigris.

In March 1916, the Indian government requested that a third troop and headquarters unit be sent to reinforce these two Anzac troops to form a squadron. This squadron became known as the 1st (ANZAC) Wireless Signal Squadron and consisted of two Australian troops and one New Zealand troop. Each troop consisted of four stations. About half of these stations were more powerful transmitters carried on six-horse limbered wagons, while the other half remained pack stations. Two of the Australian stations were charged with intercepting all enemy wireless communications, while a cipher expert, Captain Clauson of the Somerset Light Infantry decoded the messages and passed them onto Intelligence Branch.

(*1st Australian Sig Sqn cont.,*)

Maude's offensive

In October 1916, the squadron was moved to the front in preparation for the British advance. Stations "A" through to "H" were Australian, while Stations "I" to "L" were New Zealand. The mobile Anzac stations allowed the commander of the British forces, General Frederick Stanley Maude, direct control over columns of cavalry out on operations. The column commanders were required to report via the wireless stations, to Maude every hour. The stations achieved reliable communications by using a series of relays, in which the rear most station would dismantle the moment the foremost station began to transmit.

Although the rear station usually had a cavalry escort while it caught up with the main column, sometimes it had to depend on itself for protection. Stations "A" and "F" were on interception duties, while stations "B" and "E" were at the headquarters of the two British corps.

The British offensive began on the night of 13 December with a short thrust across the desert to the Shatt al-Hayy, a channel connecting the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The cavalry reached the channel by dawn and began advancing towards the Tigris. During this advance 'G' station came under fire from a Turkish monitor on the river and it and the cavalry were forced to withdraw back to the channel.

Between January and February, a series of infantry attacks cleared the Turks from the right bank of the Tigris river. During this period, the wireless stations supported the cavalry, who conducted raids, screened artillery movements and tried to outflank the Suwaikiya marshes, a wide flanking manoeuvre which failed due to torrential rains.

Kut fell on 23 February 1917 and the cavalry was ordered to cross the Tigris and cut off the retreating Turks. The Turkish rear-guard managed to check the pursuit of the cavalry, who were now too tired to cut off the Turks. However, British gunboats on the Tigris caught up with the retreat on the 26th and forced the Turks to abandon many gunboats, barges, land transport, ammunition and money.

The cavalry entered Aziziyeh, 100 kilometres (62 mi) north of Kut on 29 February, where it was forced to break off the pursuit for a week while it waited for supplies.

Fall of Baghdad

On 5 March 1917, Maude moved on Baghdad, but was checked on the Diyala River. Maude shifted a column to try to turn the Turkish left. The commander of the Turkish forces, Khalil Pasha, shifted his forces away from Diyala to mirror this move, allowing the 13th Division to cross the Diyala River on 10 March. Following his defeat, Khalil Pasha abandoned Baghdad the next day, destroying the German wireless station.

The Anzac signallers were amongst the first Allied troops to enter the city and were able to establish communications with Basra. In the afternoon of the 11th they were able to relay the King's congratulations on Maude's success.

Footnote:

The boat was piloted by Gertrude Bell, a British archaeologist who mapped and identified Mesopotamian ruins. She was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1917. She later helped create the modern state of Iraq.

MORE OF “HODGY’S” PONDERISATIONS

By the time I found greener pastures I couldn’t climb the fence. Sarcasm is natures defence against stupidity Nostalgia is an attempt to make happiness retrospective. People who live in glass houses should use next door’s bathroom. I love possums too, wanna trade recipes. I came, I saw, I ate, I napped. Never forget to remember to forget. Misers love company but never pick up the bill. If life’s a banquet I’m still starving.

Talk is cheap because supply exceeds demand. Lincoln is the least guilty President - he is in a cent.

I know all the answers so long as you ask the right questions.

If all the world’s a stage the director deserves a pay cut. Artist’s models only make a bare living.

If it ain’t broke don’t fix it unless you’re a consultant. The wind is just air only pushier.

The price is right-“Conditions apply”. Unlike some people I’m just an ordinary person.

I’ve never had bad luck-just fits of stupidity. Politicians are like pop music – different names but all sound the same.

If we really did profit from our mistakes, I’d be a millionaire. Youth is fleeting but immaturity lasts for forever.

All I get to exercise these days is caution. Midlife crisis is when your clothes are as old as your adult children.

Running on the super highway of information can damage your health. If flattery gets you nowhere try bribery.

When all else fails blame the software. An infinite universe & I end up here. Swim with the sharks but try not bleed.

Don’t hate yourself in the morning, sleep in until noon. The more that things change, the more they stay the same.

The trick to flying – Missing the ground.

(*Hodgy P*)



laughs and keeps walking.

That evening at sunset the boy comes walking by and to the old man's surprise, he is dragging behind him the chicken wire with about 30 chickens caught in it.

At the same time the next morning, the old man is out watching the sunrise and he sees the boy walk by carrying something kind of round in his hand. The old man yells out, "Hey boy, whatcha got there?" The boy yells back, "Roll of duck-tape." The old man says, "What you gonna! do with that?" The boy says back, "Catch me some ducks." The old man yells, "You damn fool, you can't catch ducks with duck tape!" The boy just laughs and keeps walking.

That night, around sunset, the boy walks by coming home and to the old man's amazement, he is trailing behind him the unrolled roll of duck tape with about 35 ducks caught in it.

At the same time the next morning, the old man sees the boy walking by carrying what looks like a long reed with something fuzzy on the end. The old man-says, "Hey boy, whatcha got there?" The boy says, "It's a pussy willow." The old man says "Hold on, I'll get my hat.

(*Bob Gray*)

Another pic/joke from the Geeves compendium!

OLD MAN

An old man sitting on his front porch in Louisiana watching the sunrise sees the neighbour's kid walk by carrying something big under his arm. He yells out, "Hey boy, whatcha got there?" The boy yells back, "Roll of chicken wire." The old man says, "What you gonna do with that?" The boy says, "Catch some chickens." The old man yells, "You damn fool, you can't catch chickens with chicken wire!" The boy just

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(*Bob Gray*)

SPEAKING ENVIRONMENTALLY!

A woman from Sydney who was a tree hugging, vegetarian and anti-hunter purchased a piece of native bushland in northern NSW. There was a large gum tree on one of the highest points in her property. She wanted a good view of the natural splendour of her land so she started to climb the big gum.

As she neared the top she encountered a koala that attacked her. In her haste to escape, the woman slid down the tree to the ground and got many splinters in her crotch.

In considerable pain, she hurried to a local ER to see a doctor. She told him she was an environmentalist, vegetarian, and an anti-hunter and how she came to get all the splinters. The doctor listened to her story with great patience and then told her to go wait in the examining room and he would see if he could help her.

She sat and waited three hours before the doctor re-appeared. The angry woman demanded, "What took you so long?" He smiled and then told her, "Well, I had to get permits from the Environmental Protection Agency, Native Vegetation, Parks and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management before I could remove old-growth timber from a 'recreational area' so close to a Waste Treatment Facility.

And, I'm sorry, they turned you down. (Geeves)

CHOIR BOYS

An Indian psychiatrist from New Delhi visiting Salt Lake City called at the local asylum and heard the inmates singing. Investigating further he saw a large group of choristers holding an apple and tapping it with the other hand. "Are they inmates?" He asked. "No, that's the Moron Tap-an-Apple Choir." He was told.

He got bright idea to make money from boys choirs. Back to India as quickly as possible and told Indira Ghandi that there was a lot of money to be made from boy's choirs. Hadn't the Vienna Boys Choir been successful? So they got 500 young boys together and trained them for weeks before presenting them before a visiting maestro. He listened to their first rendition and turned his eyes away and then said "terrible, terrible. They are not castrata."

Indira Ghandi was told they would need a little operation that would make all the difference. They had it and were ultimicimo. Then began their world tour as the Indian-Nackerless 500. (*you guessed it. – another Geeves special!*)

THE FLATTENED FROG

There was a 10 year old boy walking down the sidewalk dragging a flattened frog on a string behind him. He walked up to a house of ill repute and knocked on the door. When the Madam answered it, she saw the little boy and asked what he wanted.

He said, 'I want to have sex with one of the women inside. I have the money and I'm not leaving until I do.' The Madam figured, why not, so she told him to come in. Once in, she told him to pick any of the girls he liked. He asked, 'Do any of the girls have any diseases?' Of course, the Madam said no, but the boy replied, 'I heard all the men talking about having to get shots after making it with Amber. So THAT'S the girl I want!'

Since the little boy was so adamant and had the money to pay for it, the Madam told him to go to the first room on the right. He headed down the hall dragging the squashed frog behind him. Ten minutes later he came back, still dragging the frog, paid the Madam, and headed out the door. The Madam stopped him and asked, 'Why did you pick the only girl in the place with a disease, instead of one of the others?' He said, 'Well, if you must know, tonight when I get home, my parents are going out to a restaurant to eat, leaving me at home with my babysitter. After they leave, my babysitter will have sex with me because she just happens to be very fond of little boys. She will get the disease that I just caught.'

When Mom and Dad get back, Dad will take the babysitter home. On the way, he'll jump her bones, and he'll catch the disease. Then when Dad gets home from the babysitters, he and Mom will go to bed and have sex, and Mom will catch it. In the morning when Dad goes to work, the Milkman will deliver the milk, have a quickie with Mom and catch the disease...and HE'S the son-of-a-bitch who ran over my FROG! (Al King)

ERIC MULVHILL JOHNSON ED KC LLB BA (LT COL) – TASMANIA'S JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL

Eric Johnson was born on 14 Oct 1890 in Dunedin, New Zealand and was initially educated at Waitaki Boy's High School at Oamaru. His scholastic career was brilliant and he won scholarships at Canterbury and Otago. He moved to Tasmania at the age of 15 and studied at The Friends School, of which he was dux, and won mathematics and science scholarships to the University of Tasmania.

He graduated with Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws degrees. Eric served articles with the Hon Tetley Gant and was admitted as a legal practitioner in Tasmania on 9 January 1914. He married Margaret Lillian Walch in New Town, Tasmania in July 1915 and they were to have 4 children (2 girls/2 boys). An avid sportsman, Eric had been awarded the Royal Humane Society bronze medal for lifesaving, having saved a woman from drowning at Eaglehawk Neck (Tas) in 1910.

He had been commissioned in the Senior Cadets and in the Citizens Forces in Tasmania before joining the AIF in 1915. In Jan 1916 Eric enlisted in 26 Bn and applied for a Commission. He embarked for service in WW1 from Melbourne in HMAT Afric, arriving in Suez, Egypt a month later, before being deployed to France.

In Dec 1916, Eric transferred to 1st Anzac HQ's for service as a Courts Martial officer. He was to be admitted to hospital twice for short periods in early 1917 before being promoted as Captain in May of that year. Eric was then attached to 4th Army, again for duty as a Courts Martial officer in July 1918. He was very highly regarded in his role often advising other legal officers on the procedures of the hearings, presiding over literally hundreds of cases, many of which were conducted only a mile or two from the fighting. The proceedings were even sometimes interrupted by artillery actions.

Capt Johnson was Mentioned-in-Despatches by Field Marshall Sir Douglas Haig's in his list of 16 Mar 1919. Eric returned to Australia after the war on Ascanuis in February 1919 and his appointment was terminated in May 1919. He did however continue to serve his country through an appointment as the Legal Staff Officer at 6th District Base HQ's, Hobart where he was promoted as Major and later as Lt Col.

Eric formed a legal partnership with W J Fullerton in 1918 and then with Robert Leslie Gatenby in 1919. In 1921 he was in partnership with Gatenby, Walker and Hinman, however the latter dropped out in 1922 and the remaining three continued until well into the 1940's. Eric was to become a King's Counsel in 1939. Eric Johnson was also awarded the Efficiency Decoration for his service as an Army officer between the World Wars.

When Kingborough RSL Sub Branch (now known as "Channel" Sub Branch) was first chartered in 1936, Eric was elected as its founding President and he continued to serve in that capacity until early 1944. He was also a trustee of the Sub Branch when it made its land purchase of 50 acres for a 'private' soldier settlement scheme for local members in 1941. When the remaining surplus land was sold off in 2000, the Sub Branch invested the proceeds and those funds support its work in the Channel region to this day.



Eric Johnson,

Circa 1928

(Photo kindly provided by the Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office) (NS655/1/648)

Eric passed away on 4 Aug 1955 and is buried in the St Clements Anglican Church cemetery at Kingston (Tas). The inscription on the Cemetery Gate plaque reads:-

'Erected by the friends of the late E H Johnson QC in memory of fallen comrades of the two World Wars'

(Your Editor is currently Secretary/Treasurer of Channel RSL Sub Branch & had the pleasure of researching Eric Johnson's life history when writing the book "80 Years of Service – History of the Kingborough RSL Sub Branch", published in 2016)

9.

HAT BADGES ARE TRUMPS

When I was first commissioned as a 2Lt, I was posted to 6MD Trg Gp as a Pl Comd. The theory behind this was that it was not deemed politic (or a good idea) to be a Cpl in the Sqn one week, then a Tp Comd the next. Dave Potter suffered the same fate, although I remember CPL Des Lewis (Dec) seemed to handle the instant transition in 1RTR (and eventually became a MAJ) successfully.

Anyway, on Day 1. as a Pl Comd on my first Recruit Course, I was wandering around among the gaggle of newly debussed Recruit arrivals, minding my own business whilst the NCO's were yelling at, and generally confusing everybody. I was trying to look like I knew what I was doing, when I noticed a young WRAAC Recruit standing forlornly and dejectedly by herself with her worldly possessions around her feet, obviously confused, disorientated, and probably wondering what the hell she had let herself in for.

I casually approached her with a view to trying to reassure her that everything would soon stabilize, she'd soon get fed and would be allocated somewhere safe and private to eventually sleep among her own kind. She seemed to warm to this, and as we talked, I noticed that her hats, KFF (which in those days were worn by females without the upturned brim), whilst perched jauntily on her head, seemed to have its WRAAC badge on the back. It occurred to me (always quick on the uptake was me!) that was a bit unusual.

As I started to walk away, I said to her as nonchalantly as I could, that, by the way, in 6 Trg Gp, the RSM, a stickler for uniformity and military protocol, generally liked the WRAAC personnel to wear their hats with the badge to the front, and that after I wandered off, she might care to go with the flow and discreetly re-arrange her head-dress.

I can't recall noticing her later so I guess she did, but I'll bet she never ever put herself into the position of suffering that ignominy again. Who knows, she may well have ended up as an NCO or Lt herself, doing hat/badge/dress-length inspections for other brand new WRAAC!

Certa Cito (Tas)

Postscript. The WRAAC has long since been disbanded as an entity with females now allocated to a particular unit, and permitted/required to wear that Corps badge. Maybe I'm old fashioned, and perhaps sexist, but I yearn for the days when females were treated and identified proudly as such within their own Corps, rather than 'just another digger'. But perhaps the girls prefer it this way. Who knows? I for one never considered a WRAAC member attached to the Sqn, even though she had a different badge, as any less a member than males and remember them with pride. In fact, they helped to make the Sqn what it was. CC(T)

BUST-ME-GALL HILL

When I was a student in the Land Rover Wing at a driving course at Brighton Camp being run by 47 Transport Company. About day three, we set off on a long convoy drive up the East Coast. Must have been around 20 vehicles in our part of the convoy. Got to Bust-Me-Gall Hill and we all pulled over for our mandatory break. Went to pull the handbrake on (located under the driver's seat) and found it already ON! No wonder the thing was gutless. Quietly got out and peeped under. There was an ominous drip but not too bad. After our ten-minute break the other driver took over and nobody knew a thing about it. But I sure learnt a lesson that the DS never taught me! Have never done that again in any vehicle.

ST MARYS

Squadron driving course. We had stopped overnight at St Marys oval. All went to the local pub for a few drinks before evening meal. All course participants had chevrons on their sleeves. They all were – sorry, 'had' rank! Local comes over and puts his arm around my shoulder and says he is glad to find someone there who did not have rank. Could not see the jungle green insignia on my epaulettes.

BUCKLAND

Driving into Buckland training area in a Studebaker. Passenger (also a Sergeant) asks could he complete the drive into the base. Completely illegally, I agree and we change places. Road is wet and slippery. Coming around a left hand bend a little too fast, we slide off the road into the side of the cutting and bounce back onto the road again. We stop and get out. I am dreading what damage I will see. Lo and behold there is none!! Where we had hit the embankment was dirt (mud) would you believe and plenty of it was up the side of the truck. Before and after the dirt, the cutting was rock and we had neatly slipped between them. Wow, what a relief!

(Capt Ben Digo)

THE WORLD WAR 2 RAID ON AMIENS PRISON – A RESCUE MISSION GONE WRONG

‘Operation Jericho’ was an air-raid conducted by the RAF with the goal of freeing the captives of the Nazi-held Amiens prison in France. The raid happened on 18 February 1944 and though it wasn't a large-scale operation, its precision and accuracy meant that it contributed greatly to the war effort and helped to raise the morale of the French, living under Nazi occupation. In Amiens there was a high-security Nazi prison which held 717 prisoners, most of them being captured resistance fighters and political figures who were captured due to their support for the rebellion against Nazi occupation. British intelligence suggested that the Germans were already executing their prisoners and that an execution was scheduled on 19 February 1944, for 100 prisoners.

The mission was initially planned for 10 February and its original group leader was to be Air Vice-Marshall Basil Embry. He had to leave the command and participate in the planning for the invasion of Europe and was replaced by Captain Percy Charles Pickard, who was an experienced RAF pilot, but lacked practice in low-level attacks. The plan was to attack the prison using the DH 98 Mosquito bombers, which were categorized as light fighter-bombers, manned by a two-member crew with limited fire capacity. The size of the bombers was an advantage for this mission since they did not need to destroy the prison to the ground, but to precisely destroy the Northern and Eastern walls so the inmates may escape. They were also ordered to bomb the German mess hall during lunch time, in a hope of achieving the maximum level of casualties among the enemy. The weather conditions were still bad, with snow covering the most of Europe on February 18th, but it was imperative to conduct the mission since the prisoners were to be executed on the next day. The RAF had calculated that the bombing would certainly cause a number of friendly casualties, but decided to proceed since many of these men were already sentenced to death and thus had nothing to lose. The main group consisted of 18 Mosquito fighter planes and one Mosquito armed with a camera that was sent to film the entire raid, making it one of the rare operation captured completely on film. The group was led by Captain Pickard, call sign "Freddie", who was assigned to bring up the rear of the second wave of the attack and to assess the damage. At 0800, on February 18th, the group was briefed on their objective and the details of the mission.

They took off into weather much worse than many of the crews had previously experienced. This led to a series of mishaps before they arrived at their mission objective. Four Mosquitoes became separated from the main formation and contact with them was lost. One more had an engine malfunction. They were all forced to return to the base. This left the strike force with nine planes in the initial attack wave and only four more in the reserve. The rescue mission became even more daring than it was at the start since they basically had to make it in one run.

One minute past noon they stormed the prison. Three of the Mosquitoes were aiming for the walls and using bombs fitted with eleven-second delay-action fuses. In the first attack, they managed to breach the outer walls, but it was necessary to circle around for another run. Two others bombed the railway station which was used to send in reinforcements, thus giving the prisoners a fair chance of escape. At 1206 the Eastern wall was still not breached. The bombers flew as low as 50 feet (15 meters) above the ground and bombed it once again. In a second run, two of the Mosquitoes dropped 500 pounds (230 kg) of bombs on the main prison facility, killing and wounding many of the prison staff, including some of the inmates. At this point, the prisoners started to escape. Pickard judged the mission was a success and ordered the squad to head home. On their return, the Germans already had their fighter planes above ground. One of them shot the retreating Mosquito manned by Pickard and he crashed, dying instantly with his navigator.

Out of 717 prisoners, 102 died during the raid, mostly at the hands of the prison guards who were trying to stop the escape. The bombing of the railway station indeed gave the inmates a two-hour head start before the search parties could be organized. About 255 managed to escape, including 79 verified resistance fighters, but 182 were recaptured within the next 48 hours.

A French historian Jean-Pierre Ducellier spent years studying the Amiens Raid, claiming that it was an unnecessary effort and that the RAF's official motives were not the real reason for the raid. His reasons to think so were based on three verified facts: The French resistance did not request the bombing, nor did they transmit any information about the prison until asked for it by the British. There were no executions scheduled, nor expected. After the liberation of Amiens, the RAF Squadron Leader Edwin Houghton was sent to find the cause for Jericho, but he failed to find even the alleged list of executions to be carried out. Several of the prisoners to be liberated had not even been captured when the operation was ordered.

It was never publicly established who ordered Operation Jericho since Maurice Buckmaster, who was the head of the SOE Department in France objected to the claims that it was his organization which had ordered the operation to be executed. He suggested that it was the Secret Intelligence Service, better known as MI6, but this claim was also never officially adopted.

YOUR SECRETARY SAYS



L-R: 3 stalwarts at the Bar – Bob Geeves, Ian Hosan & Mick Farley. (Chris Goodwin & Owen Winter in background)
(Photo: "Miss Geevious" - Denise)

DATELINE GEILSTON BAY - recently 80 year old **Alf Graves** (our Chocolate Wheel maestro) climbed the shaky ladder, right to roof level. He was determined to clear a flourishing creeper from the spouting. Minutes later the creeper was safely deposited in the green waste bin, mission accomplished.

Next day he was ready to get to-grips with a dead bush in his front garden. Mattock well under the roots, he applied pressure, a little more pressure and then still more. It all happened at once, the bush came free, the mattock flew skywards while Alf went backwards. Shaken from the shock Alf took a moment, while prostrate across his knee high hedge, to reflect ... it would seem much safer up a ladder than down here on the deck. (**Dave Ransley** – the witness!)

I had a pleasant short visit from member and former Sgt Tech Elec in **Robert "Bob" Muir** who was visiting relatives on the Island a few weeks ago. Bob's very active in a group of ex-Telstra staff in the running of the their National Museum in Melbourne. It was good to catch-up again and enjoy a natter and a couple of 'cleansing ales' in the garden. Bob asked me to pass on his best wishes to all RASA (Tas) members.

Latest on **Ken Moy**'s progress is that he continues with his recovery treatment and is making further progress. Was hoping to rejoin the Clarence RSL folk for a drink or three in the near future.

AFTERNOON SEX

The only way to pull off a Sunday afternoon "quickie" with their 8-year-old son in the apartment was to send him out on the balcony with a Popsicle and tell him to report on all the neighbourhood activities.

"There's a car being towed from the parking lot he shouted". He began his commentary as his parents put their plan into operation.

"An ambulance just drove by!" "Looks like the Anderson's have company," he called out. "Matt's riding a new bike!" "Looks like the Sanders are moving!" "Jason is on his skateboard!" After a few moments he announced. "The Coopers are having sex!" Startled, his mother and dad shot up in bed.

Dad cautiously called out. "How do you know they're having sex?" "Jimmy Cooper is standing on his balcony with a popsicle!!" (Leigh Higgins – a Bruny mate of Bob Jager & your Secretary)

THE MOST DANGEROUS COMBINATION IN THE ARMY

I recall a long time ago on an IMT weekend at Buckland, I was tasked by the OC to go to a particular spot height, plot it, and when the troops arrived, instruct on exactly where we were and how the position was determined. I did that, and carefully performed a re-section on the ginormous Buckland Special map, folded 67 times to manageable proportions, confident that I knew exactly where I was, and that I could precisely explain to the troops when they arrived, exactly where we were, and how the conclusion was arrived at.

I was also conscious of the fact that several map anomalies existed on that particular document, and therefore was extremely careful to check and recheck my figuring, drawing, magnetic deviation, triangle of error, etc.

The troops arrived. Beautiful day, visibility unlimited. Plenty of features in the distance all around. Perfect for re-sections. The troops seated on the ground around the map listened, with probably feigned interest, to my dissertation on where we were, complete with magnetic deviation calculations for that year, etc. The period ended with my summation that that was why where we sat/stood was precisely the spot height as shown on the map.

I asked the standard ‘Any questions?’ and only got one response. One member asked reasonably respectfully, ‘if we’re at the spot height, why are we lower than that higher ground behind you?’ I could not believe my eyes on turning around to the direction nominated. There, in all its glory close by was a small but definitely higher pimple of ground. I had no option of course but to state that my compass sightings, possibly affected by an iron outcrop, had produced a triangle of error that was too large and off-centre – and that whilst there may have been a map anomaly, I could have corrected for it by simple observation of the surrounds. When you’re wrong, admit it. Thus ended the lesson.

I was to remember that occasion many times in my career, on various navigation exercises – the map is right, the compass is right, you are wrong – and if something doesn’t figure, observe the ground. And if the creek is flowing the wrong way according to the map, then you’re probably in the wrong grid square.

And the most dangerous combination in the Army? It’s been said many times before: a brand new 2Lt with a map, protractor and compass’
(Certa Cito (Tas)

THE BEER TEST

Now, as if everything else wasn’t bad enough, we find out that beer isn’t good for you!! Beer contains female hormones. Yes, that’s right, FEMALE hormones!

In Sep 2019, Montreal University scientists released the results of a recent analysis that revealed the presence of female hormones in beer. The theory is that Beer contains female hormones (hops contain Phytoestrogens) and that by drinking enough beer, men turn into women.

To test the theory, 100 men each drank 8 large drafts of beer within a one (1) hour period. It was then observed that 100% of the test subjects, yes, 100% of all these men:

- #Argued over nothing, # Refused to apologise when obviously wrong. # Gained weight.
- # Talked excessively without making sense. # Became overly emotional. # Couldn’t drive.
- # Failed to think rationally and # Had to sit down to pee.

No further testing was considered necessary!!

(Geeves)

13.

'EGGSTRORDINARY' TALE

PRELIMINARY. The recent 'egging' of Fraser Anning reminded me of a similar tale of many years ago. The story was related to me as an incident at a 1RTR camp at Buckland in the 60's. I was there, but only at the bottom of the chain, and, as an operator, one of the victims of ARA incompetence and disdain toward CMF, rampant at the time (and perhaps later). I only became aware of it many years later, when the story came out almost accidentally over a quiet and cleansing ale.

BACKGROUND. The AN/PRC10 and its derivatives (9A etc) were wonderful valve radios used by infantry as backpack short range 50 MHz FM VHF communication systems in the 60's, prior to the introduction of the transistorized/valve 25 set, which together with the 105's and M113A's, was the savior of Long Tan. They weighed 10 lbs or thereabouts, complete with CES and battery, and strapped within a harness, sat comfortably on the back of an operator.

The physical layout divided the sets into two almost symmetrical units – the top half of the set was the transmitter/receiver unit, while the bottom half contained the battery, both cases held together by two over-centre spring clips (which could trim your finger-nails if you weren't careful when clipping the two halves together).

They had a nominal battery life of 24 hours on a nominal receive/transmit ratio of perhaps 9:1 as I recall, and therefore should last about 24-48 hours, or a week with minimal transmit.

THE PROBLEM. The problem was that the infantry platoons in RTR were using heaps of batteries at a prodigious rate, creating communication and replenishment problems.

The complaint to the CO of the Battalion at a Bn conference with the Coy and Pl Commanders was that communications were failing due to short battery life – some batteries only lasting hours instead of days.

As the invited PRONTO, and in front of the assemblage, the CO demanded of this particular officer, what the problem was. As a brand new 2Lt from RA Sigs, and attached to the Bn, caught wrong-footed, he explained to him that he thought the problem possibly was because the batteries the Bn received from the T Comd Q Store were out of date.

It was possible that indents for batteries from the mainland by the QM were being made at, perhaps, irregular intervals such that large quantities were received in one shipment, and therefore duly exceeding their use-by dates before issue, rather than smaller regular quantities of fresh long-dated batteries. The QM 1RTR apparently took umbrage at this, considering it a reflection on his professionalism, and him personally, by an upstart 2Lt. So much for that. Who knows what comments were exchanged between the CO and QM in private. They may not have been pleasant, knowing the CO of the day.

PAYBACK. Some days later, at a Mess function in the same camp, every one dressed in polys, the QM, apparently still smarting from the deserved dressing down he probably got from the CO, decided to get his own back.

During proceedings, the festering and affronted QM decided it'd be a good idea to smash an egg in jest on the 2Lt's head, which oozed and cascaded down over his hair, shoulder boards and poly shirt, completely ruining his normally immaculate summer dress attire, much to the amusement, no doubt, of the attendant Mess members.

A punch-up would not have been in good taste, particularly as the QM was an old man, and an ARA Capt. He retired in good grace to his more civilized (sort-of) RA Sigs lines, changed, and returned to the Mess function, once again immaculate.

CONCLUSION. Perhaps the QM got his own back in a narcissistic and childish way, but I don't doubt that he would have carefully scrutinized future indents, store holdings and use-by-dates (batts and rats) to ensure that such embarrassment to him would never occur again. Choccos can bite.

Certa Cito (Tas)

LUNCH WITH THE POPE

President Trump invited the Pope for lunch on his mega yacht, the Pope accepted and during lunch, a puff of wind blew the Pontiff's hat off, right into the water. It floated off about 50 feet, then the wind died down and it just floated in place. The crew and the secret service were scrambling to launch a boat to go get it, when Trump waved them off, saying "Never mind, boys, I'll get it."

The Donald climbed over the side of the yacht, walked on the water to the hat, picked it up, walked back on the water, climbed into the yacht, and handed the Pope his hat. The crew was speechless. The security team and the Pope's entourage were speechless. No one knew what to say, not even the Pope.

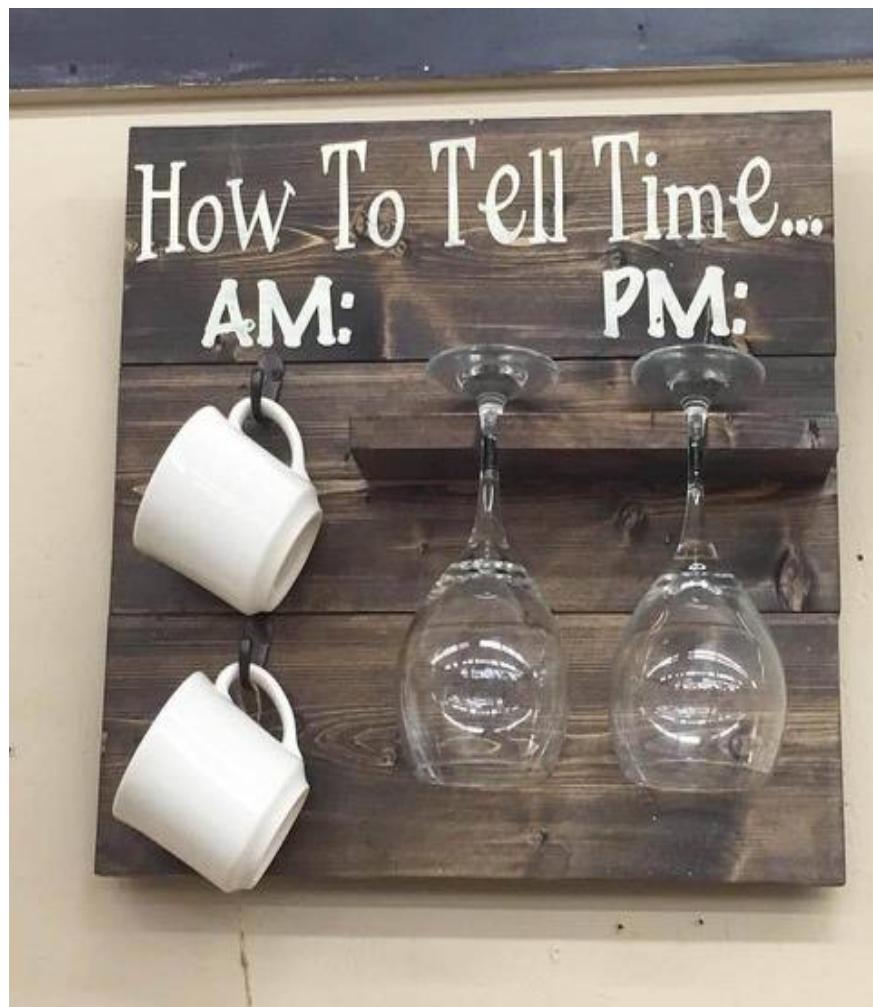
That afternoon, NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, CNN reported: "TRUMP CAN'T SWIM!"

(*Bob Gray*)

The Retiree's Clock

**This is the clock that we use in retirement.
It needs no batteries or electricity.
It is never fast or slow and it never stops.**

(*Hodgy*)



AUSTRALIA'S BUSHFIRES OF 2019/2020

(Well written by Graham Walker who owns a Saw Mill at Corryong)

Never in my lifetime have I ever seen a bushfire become so political, with so much interference from city based experts!

Australia is known for its bushfires, cyclones, droughts and flooding rains so what has changed this time?

I believe we now have a new breed of people in this country that NEED TO BLAME somebody for every natural event that occurs and they have infiltrated our communities with their ideology!

The majority in this country are the “Quiet Australians” who have seen it all happen before and know we will see it all happen again.

Our voice wasn’t being heard! We knew that the fuel load was too high, we knew that policy had changed allowing fuel reduction burns and we knew that protesting by minority groups was influencing decision making!

Just back on June 20, 2019 I raised these issues in a Regional Forests Agreement meeting in Corryong with representatives from DELWP, Federal, State and local governments regarding the fuel load in National Parks, the blackberries and noxious weeds in State forests and Parks, the lack of maintenance of fire tracks, the lack of water storages in these areas and outlined that we had a ticking time bomb right under our noses!

Climate Change didn’t light the fires in NSW and Victoria, lightning and arsonists did!! The fuel load was there and it was tinder dry from the drought.

But now the SWAMP is rising and along with social media and mainstream media they are driving a tsunami of hate, of blame, of rebellion like we’ve never seen before!

Everything that goes wrong has to be someone else’s fault!!

They CRY Climate Change but then board an aeroplane to go overseas!

The scientists are some of the worst hypocrites in this area! Fly to this climate conference and then to the next!

Children are being indoctrinated in schools before they can even read and write, about politics, climate change, gender equality, sex and religion at such a young age and well before they can make their own judgments on any of these matters.

This indoctrination then spreads like a virus and infects those who we thought were immune, until it becomes a plague of rebellion and uprising against those who are the quiet Australians.

I might be old fashioned, but the Australia I knew as a kid was far better!

We didn’t care where the power came from, as long as the toaster or the lights worked!

We didn’t care if it was a drought as we knew every day was one closer to it raining!

I battled the 1st of February 1969 bushfires in 45c heat as a 15 year old, I bent all the linkage arms on the tractor ploughing fire breaks, experienced the extreme heat of the fire, the lack of oxygen in my lungs, being too scared to sleep inside the house at 2am!

I saw the devastating loss of property, and the burying of dead stock.

We didn’t have P2 masks or were told every 5 minutes what the air quality was!! We wet a handkerchief and put it across our nose and mouth and tied a knot in the back and got on with it!! Then the chaos came again a few weeks later when torrential rains came and caused massive erosion and polluted our water, and 3 months later on the 5th of May we had cows dying of bloat as the grass was so prolific!

THIS WILL ALL HAPPEN AGAIN!!

This is the country we live in and know as Australia, NO politician can change it, NO Climate Change policy will either! Humans caused this atrocity by their ignorance of nature and the history we have on record that could be used to prevent this occurring this bad ever again!

Sorry about the rant but I’m not happy with the world right now!

Graham Walker (Corryong Sawmill owner)

"ONE IS NEVER TO OLD TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW!"

Manure... An interesting fact. Manure : In the 16th and 17th centuries, everything for export had to be transported by ship. It was also before the invention of commercial fertilizers, so large shipments of manure were quite common. It was shipped dry, because in dry form it weighed a lot less than when wet, but once water (at sea) hit it, not only did it become heavier, but the process of fermentation began again, of which a by-product is methane gas. As the stuff was stored below decks in bundles you can see what could (and did) happen. Methane began to build up below decks and the first time someone came below at night with a lantern, BOOOOM!

Several ships were destroyed in this manner before it was determined just what was happening. After that, the bundles of manure were always stamped with the instruction ' Stow high in transit ' on them, which meant for the sailors to stow it high enough off the lower decks so that any water that came into the hold would not touch this "volatile" cargo and start the production of methane.

Thus evolved the term ' S.H.I.T ' , (Stow High In Transit) , "So it's really not a swear word" which has come down through the centuries and is in use to this very day. You probably did not know the true history of this word. Neither did I. I had always thought it was a golfing term. (*Bob Gray*)

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO IN THE USA

The Year was 1919". One hundred odd years ago in the USA! Very interesting for all ages. What a difference a century makes! Here are some statistics for the Year 1919: The average life expectancy for men was 47 years. Fuel for cars was sold in drug stores only. Only 14 percent of the homes had a bathtub. Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph. The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower. The average US wage in 1919 was 22 cents per hour. The average US worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year. A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2,000 per year. A dentist earned \$2,500 per year. A veterinarian between \$1,500 and 4,000 per year. And, a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year.

More than 95% of all births took place at home. 90% of all Doctors had NO COLLEGE EDUCATION! Instead, they attended so-called medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press AND the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost 4c a pound. Eggs were 14c a dozen. Coffee was 15c a pound. Most women only washed their hair once a month and used Borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law that prohibited poor people from entering into their country for any reason. The 5 leading causes of death were: 1. Pneumonia and influenza. 2. Tuberculosis. 3. Diarrhoea. 4. Heart disease. 5. Stroke.

The American flag had 45 stars. The population of Las Vegas, Nevada was only 30. Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented yet. There was neither a Mother's Day nor a Father's Day. 2 out of every 10 Americans had graduated from high school. Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at local corner drugstores.

Back then pharmacists said, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach, bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health!" (Shockingly?). 18% of households had at least 1 full-time live-in servant or domestic help. There were about 230 reported murders in the ENTIRE U.S.A.

I am now going to forward this to someone else without typing it myself. From there, it will be sent to others anywhere in the WORLD all in a matter of seconds! It is impossible to imagine what it may be like in another 100 years. We've come a long way....OR have we?

(*Geeves*)