

June 2017

SIGNAL NEWS



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SIGNAL NEWS

June 2017

PATRON: G.GARD OAM. BEM

ASSOCIATION DIARY**President**

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First Friday Functions 2017:- Jun 2nd, Jul 7th,
Aug 4th, Sep 1st, Oct 1st, Nov 3rd & Dec 1st.**Annual Luncheon:-****Wed 7th June 2017:** – Venue: Shoreline Hotel,
Howrah 12.30^{pm} for 1^{pm}**Vice Presidents**

M N Cooper

R A Woolley

**Annual General Meeting (71st):- Friday 6th
October 2017: 5^{pm}**

At RAAF Memorial Centre

Secretary

R J (Dick) Goodwin ADEM (Tas)

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Treasurer

M F Farley

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**30th ANNIVERSARY REUNION of
Disbandment of 146 Sig Sqn and
Commemoration Day Weekend:-****Saturday 14th Oct 2017 "Beaumaris"****Dinner** – 6.30 for 7.00pm at Clarence
Senior Citizens Club, Bellerive.*Miniatures to be worn***Sunday 15th Oct 2017 Service: 11.45^{am} at
Anglesea Barracks Signals Memorial.***Medals to be worn***Lunch: RAAF Memorial Centre from 12.30^{pm}.****Committee**

D Harcourt

G Rawnsley

G Gard OAM BEM (Life Mbr)

Remembrance Day:- Association Luncheon**Hon Auditor**

James Lyons

Friday 10th November 2017: Venue &
Timing TBA*Medals to be worn***Signal News****Editor:** Dick Goodwin**Committee Meetings 2017:-** Sep 1st & Nov
3rd at the RAAF Memorial Centre, at 3.15^{pm}**Signal News Distribution**

June, September & December.

Printed by the Hon. Will Hodgman MP.**Liberal Member for Franklin****A much appreciated Community Service**

THE PRESIDENT WRITES

Welcome to the mid-year edition of SIG NEWS. Half-way through 2017 already.

We have been having a reasonable roll up on our First Fridays. A visitor after 35 years, former Sqn Trg Sgt Mick Morris from Hervey Bay caught up with some previous associates.

Also, as always, at this time we have had a very busy social programme. The Annual Lunch in March, (notice we have moved from dinner to lunch) with a small rollup (approx., 16) and I think we all had a most enjoyable gathering.

ANZAC DAY attracted 20 to the Hobart March with visitors who like our company. Also several 144 Sig Sqn members and a couple of other ex-Sigs. This year Mel Cooper's granddaughter could carry the sign and did a great job. Mel organised a "volunteer" from 144 Sqn carry the Association Flag. He also did a good job.

Lynne Chaplin came down from Launceston to join us for the lunch and for first Friday. Her persuasive nature sold the tickets on the chocolate wheel at The Waratah.

It is a great opportunity for our regulars to get together and not worry about the washing up. Total turn up at the Waratah was 20 to enjoy a lunch which was a selected menu for us. The chocolate wheel did not quite cover our bar costs which makes me think that thirsts are increasing. Thank you for your attendance and participation. The Association picked up the bar bill.

The initiative for the provision of a bus to take members to either the March or the Cenotaph Service from the Waratah and then return after the service to the Waratah was available again this year due to Denise Geeves organising and volunteering her services. A much appreciated service and much admired by other organisations. Thank-you Denise.

The next Social Activity will be our mid-year luncheon on Wednesday 7th June at The Shoreline Hotel, Howrah. Timings; 12.30 for 1.00pm start. At the time of writing I do not have the numbers as it is after the First Friday in June.

Remember we are having a REUNION on our Commemoration Weekend 14/15 October 2017. A dinner on Saturday 14th October and our Commemoration Day Service on Sunday 15th October at our Memorial at 11.45^{am} at Anglesea Barracks followed by lunch at the RAAF Centre . More to follow, but feel free to make an early booking.

Also our Remembrance Day luncheon on Friday 10th November at a venue to be advised.

A couple of highlights for your information. Our Patron Geoff Gard is now 95 and he and wife Marj are celebrating their 75th Wedding Anniversary. Congratulations.

That's it from me for this issue so make sure you mark your diaries for the next six months.

Yours in Signals,

Best wishes to all,

Owen

4.

THE 17TH (& FINAL) OC –614804 MAJ WALTER BENJAMIN BUCHANAN, SILVER STAR (USA)

Walter Buchanan was born in Brisbane on 19 October, 1940. He had a happy childhood, though as the only child, was required to take on extra duties and responsibilities at a young age as his father passed away, after four years of disability, just before Walter's 15th birthday. His father had been a medic at Gallipoli but as a matter of pride, refused any pension so Walter learnt not to take things for granted.

Walter joined the Army as a 'boy' in Queensland at the age of 17 years....and the military history records tell the factual story of his various placements.

Eight years on, he assisted in setting up 145 Sig Sqn in Vietnam and on his return in May '67, he caught up once more with family friends, amongst whom was Margaret (the young sister of his mate). The courting period with Margaret was in full swing when Wal was posted to Singapore in Nov '68. It continued on via letters and tapes and they were married in Oct '70, immediately on his return. He did thoroughly enjoy his time in 'Singers' –he even took up sailing and came home with a few trophies.

Postings to Canberra, Melbourne and then three years in Port Moresby quickly followed, with children starting to 'arrive' by then. Despite being a die-hard Rugby Union supporter, he found himself the President of the Defence Aussie Rules team in Moresby, while announcing he knew absolutely nothing of the rules of the game!! The team was revitalised and grew to five teams (A, B & C grading) by the time he departed, with a premiership win thrown in. Wal very much enjoyed his time in Moresby, creating admirable working – and friendship – relationships, working with the local lads and assisting in the training and preparation in the lead up to PNG Independence in 1975.

He and the family (now including three sons) returned to Canberra in early November 1975, right at the time of the tumultuous political foray. (*He always said that the toppling of the then Prime Minister was because he had returned!*)

Army Office claimed his various skills initially in Mat Branch then DEFARM Log Branch for a few years after which time he was promoted to Captain as part of the new PSO arrangement and was transferred to 2 Sig Regt. After some discussion, considering the needs of the young family, it was decided that he would transfer, unaccompanied. It is to be noted, to his credit, that travel back and forward to Canberra, occurred most weekends, usually by car (*can't trust the RAAF!*), where his time would be taken up with the usual family activities, especially soccer games; maintenance around the home as well as aiming to maintain his Rotary commitments. After two years he was posted back to Canberra as the RQM where he served a few more years before resigning from the regular force in 1984.

Thence followed a new life, working, dare we say it, as a member of the Federal Public Service (!!) as Supply Manager with the Antarctic Division in Hobart. This was a challenging time, for the reasons of adjusting to a very different psyche in the work place, to say nothing of the completely new environment in which he was working, requiring visits to the Australian Antarctic bases for short periods.

His light relief was his weekends with 6 Training Group at Brighton, where he thoroughly enjoyed the typical camaraderie and familiarity of military life. And of course, it goes without saying that he was assigned to 146 Signal Squadron, apparently to close down the Unit. This was a stressful time but in the end, the job was done.

Following almost four years in Tasmania, family reasons required the family return to Canberra. During this transition time, he took up full time service with ARES, working from Canberra and spending some months in the Pacific setting up communications in a number of the various islands in the area.

Being the great raconteur that he was, stories abounded such as his time as a deck passenger (literally) on a copra vessel and also having the HMAS Brisbane needing to about face and do a good days' sailing to transport him from one location to another. (Who was this guy??!!)

Relinquishing his military lifestyle once more, Walter took on the role of International Marketing Manager at the Royal Australian Mint which required development of completely new skills which he apparently was able to achieve.

5.

(The last OC Cont.,)

It also required some travel - Bolivia, *where most folk seemed to be high on cocaine –or was it the altitude?* and Korea, the latter requiring him to reside there for 8 weeks, overseeing the melting down of Australian coinage which had been transported and sold to this country – another fascinating cultural experience.

After some years, he moved to the area of Professional Development /Adult Education with the Federal Government requiring interaction, working with various organisations, including considerable time training ATSIC staff in far flung areas such as Broome, Alice Springs, Darwin, etc.

After resigning from the Public Service, he continued this line of work, having established his own business. Before too long, Wal moved to voluntary work only, and thoroughly enjoyed his time with the Canberra TAFE teaching ESL experiencing a great range of nationalities - and attitudes. His rapport with these people was noted and appreciated and his usual sense of humour always shone through. In 2002, with all the lads having left home, he and Margaret moved to Brisbane, nearer to family and thence followed various lower limb surgeries. Following recovery from these, and following 30 years of active Rotary service, he was asked to take on the role of District Governor in July 2009 (a twelve month position) – the District concerned covering a small area of SE Qld and also PNG and Solomon Islands. This was certainly a highlight and it seems his leadership, energy and personal skills were greatly appreciated.



Wal on Anzac Day 2008



Wal in 'the greens' - last day at 146 Sig Sqn

Early 2012 saw planning for more travel for he and Margaret but that was not to be as he received a sudden diagnosis of an aggressive leukaemia in April and even with great determination on his part, Walter passed away on 27th January, 2013.

(The last OC Cont.,)

In closing, it could be said that some of his personal attributes could be said to be:-

- Thriving on developing new concepts and initiatives – he was a ‘big picture’ man and not too interested in details or obstacles!!
- A great love of history, particularly that of a military flavour, his Scottish ancestry and its traditions.
- Loving a good laugh and a joke and being easily able to hold the floor while regaling his stories. One mate stated... “He was a brilliant story teller sharing larrikin moments and some wisdom as well. Often you could hear his laughter from the other side of the room as he shared a joke or three.” His ability to quickly recognise and seize an opportunity.
- Enjoying mixing with young people. He was held in high regard by many – as evidenced by presentation of a memorial plaque and a moving tribute at University of Queensland’s International House where he had devoted considerable time and energy.
- And, of course, his love of and pride in, his family.

Walter’s lengthy service with Sigs was always proudly recalled, and the camaraderie always treasured.

And a quote from a mate, in closing ... *“his enthusiasm and loyalty were highly valued and his capacity for work and ability to do it at a very high standard, spoke volumes about him as a professional soldier.”*



The Last Parade

By the way - before Wal passed away he posted some documents to the Editor which contained some startling revelations about the ‘big feller’s’ efforts to retain the ARES Sqn for Tasmania or at least, a meaningful ARES presence in this State. He was concerned to try to retain a role in which local Active Reserve members could continue to learn and serve.

And so ends this series of feature articles produced over the past 3+ years to honour the 17 OC’s of the Tasmanian Signal Squadrons. (Your editor had the enjoyable experience of working closely with all but 5 of those officers either in Sqn HQ’s or the former PMG’s Department). I certainly appreciated the support and trust freely given by them all.

Thanks also to the gentlemen who provided information for inclusion in this series and particularly to the families and personal friends of all contacted.

(RJG – Editor)

BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA SPEECH

Commander Jeffcoat gave the Keynote address at the 2016 'Battle for Australia' Commemoration Service at the Cenotaph, Sydney on 7th September. Here is a shortened version of her speech...

Ladies and Gentlemen, first I would like to acknowledge the *Gadigal* people, the traditional custodians of this land on which we are gathered, and I pay my respects to their elders, past and present. I am honoured to be invited to address you on this national day of remembrance. It is a privilege to be able to remember with you to-day, the events of 1942 and early 1943.



Commander Rebecca Jeffcoat

MILITARY HISTORY

The period of time when Australians and our allies fought to defeat Japan's plans to force Australia's surrender. November and December of 1941 were disastrous months for Australia. HMAS Sydney and her crew of 645 were lost to the German raider 'Koroman' and in the Far East, the British capital ships 'Prince of Wales' and 'Repulse' were sunk. Hong Kong fell on Christmas Day 1941. Malaya was invaded in December and despite a fighting withdrawal, by 15th December 1942, Singapore was surrendered. This resulted in the imprisonment of 100,000 British, Australian and Indian Troops.

This series of catastrophic events led to the Australian Prime Minister, John Curtin, declaring on 16th February, 1942 that the fall of Singapore can only be described as Australia's Dunkirk. The fall of Dunkirk initiated the Battle for Britain; the fall of Singapore opened the Battle for Australia. He foresaw the impending massive struggle to defend Australia against Japanese military oppression. And in the weeks and months and years ahead this Battle for Australia would be fought over land and at sea challenging Australia's territorial integrity.

To-day I would like to tell the story of the service Corvette. Their service goes hand in hand with the Battle for Australia. It is a story of courage over adversity and Australian ingenuity and the incredible efforts of a honey-bunch to build 60 Australian designed ships. We needed a fleet of escort ships to guard convoys and keep seaways the open. The result was a ship designed by Australians who had never designed ships before; built by Australians, who had never built ships before and manned by Australians, many of whom had never been to sea before.

The keel of the first was laid down in February, 1940. She was launched in August and commissioned in December, named HMAS 'Bathurst'. Corvettes were soon widely managed this was at eight ship yards and com- missioned at the rate of 26 days. They served in every theatre of the war. They escorted convoys, sank submarines, shot at and sometime downed 'planes, swept mines, ferried troops, bombarded enemy shore guns, surveyed uncharted waters, towed damaged ships to safety and even landed spies.

They steamed a total of eleven million kilometres, nearly all of it in dangerous waters and often behind enemy lines. In 1942 seven corvettes fought in the Malayan campaign in the waters around Singapore. They were the last allied ships to leave Singapore when it fell. Then the last to leave Java when it fell, too. At the same time, others were tackling the Japanese across Northern Australia. HMAS Deloraine that was only commissioned eight weeks before Tookmon. a Japanese submarine, the '1124', 80 Kms west of Darwin and sank it.

(Battle for Australia speech Cont.,)

Only a few short days later, on the 19th February, she was in Darwin Harbour when the Japanese aircraft attacked. By mid-1942, there were 24 corvettes convoying merchant ships around the Australian coast, when the Japanese submarines were operating. Two corvettes, Geelong and Whyalla, were in harbour the night war came to Sydney, when three Japanese midget submarines entered the harbour attacked, defence force depots and sank the depot ship Kuttabul, which is my establishment's namesake.

At the end of 1942 and into 1943, Corvettes supported the convoys that were bringing vast quantities of military stores and equipment to front line troops fighting in New Guinea. These troops were fighting through the Owen-Stanley Ranges and on the northern coast. Through all their extensive service, two Corvettes were lost in collisions at sea, one was sunk by a mine and only one, HMAS Armidale, was sunk by enemy action. She went down on the 1st December, 1942, off Timor, while taking supplies and reinforcements to commandos fighting there. Under attack by enemy torpedoes, bombers and fighters, Armidale was hit by two torpedoes at it wheeled from side to side. The Captain, Lt Comd David Richards, gave the order to 'abandon ship', but one man stayed, Tasmanian Ordinary Seaman 'Teddy' Sheean. He struggled back to the aft gun, strapped himself in and fired out at the 'planes which were strafing his ship mates in the water. Seven crew and 77 soldiers had been killed in that action.

HMAS Sheean, a Collin's class submarine, the first of the new Corvettes, HMAS Armidale, were named in recognition of the courage and ingenuity that characterized the Australian Corvette in the Battle for Australia.

Although focussing on the role of the Corvette, I cannot finish to-day, without recalling the events of this period which were rightly honoured in the Australian psyche. Those actions that eventually turned the tide on Japan's plan.

We remember the battles of Coral Sea, the Java Sea, Burma Straights, Milne Bay and the Bismarck Sea. The actions in New Guinea, from the Kokoda Campaign, Brunei, Sandakan and the Guadalcanal campaign.

What do we owe this heroic generation, these young Australians and our Allies? Who died defending this country in 1942 and secured our path into victory.

We honour the courage and tenacity of those who died fighting in the jungles of New Guinea.

We remember, with gratitude the loyalty and skill of the Papuan men who played a vital role in supporting our troops, especially the sick and wounded.

We remember those who were sick and the faithful sailors who stuck to their guns and died fighting like Teddy Sheean.

We remember the brave airmen who fought and died in the skies of the Pacific.

We remember the lonely coast watchers across the South-West Pacific who kept up a vigil for months and years and tapped out their vital warnings of Japanese activities.

We remember the allied merchant navies, who brought the troops their lifeline and paid for it with their own.

And remember and honour the men and women who made their contribution on the home front, remaining strong and steadfast despite hardship and the loss of life and the threat of invasion. We owe them all our remembrance and gratitude on this day, and every day. They never cease to amaze us with our life-long prosperity, liberty and peace.

To-day's Last Post bugle sounds for them all.
(Our thanks to "Thurunka" NSW RASA for this fine article)

TWO TASMANIANS

Two Tasmanian's were sitting around talking one afternoon over a cold beer.

After a while the first Tasmanian says to the second: "If I sneaked over to your house and make love to your wife while you was off fishing', and she got pregnant and had a baby, would that make us related?"

The second Tasmanian crooked his head sideways for a minute, scratched his head, squinted his eyes, thinking real hard about the question.

Finally he says: "Well, I don't know about related but I reckon it'd make us even." (*Ta Bob*)

PARAPROSDOKIANS

Paraprostdokians are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected and is frequently humorous. (*Winston Churchill loved them!*)

- Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
- The last thing I want to do is hurt you ... but it's still on my list.
- Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
- If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
- We never really grow up -- we only learn how to act in public.
- War does not determine who is right, only who is left.
- Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
- To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.
- I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
- In filling out an application, where it says, "In case of emergency, notify..." I answered "a doctor."
- Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy.
- You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.
- I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not so sure.
- To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.
Going to church doesn't make you a Christian, any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
- You're never too old to learn something stupid.
- I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder for me to find one now.

Sadly this is true!!! So.....

Spread the laughter, share the cheer, let's be happy, while we're here.

(The first time we heard about Paraprostdokians, we liked them) - *Al & Marg King – thanks.*

MRS NORMAN

Jim was listening to the radio this morning when the host invited callers to reveal the nicknames they had for their wives. The best call was from a brave chap who called his wife, "Harvey Norman".

The host asked why that name? He replied, "*Absolutely no interest for 36 months.*" (*Geeves !!*)

JOHN CONDON – BOY SOLDIER

In the corner of Poelcapelle cemetery is a grave standing out from the 6,544 other headstones for British soldiers who died near here in the First World War. Most of the long rows of upright marble slabs that divide the perfectly manicured lawn are unadorned but this one – on Row F, Plot 56 - is surrounded by small wooden crosses decorated by poppies. The crosses have been placed recently by British schoolchildren of the same age as the boy buried here a century ago – Private 6322 John Condon, aged 14.

Pte Condon, one of thousands of lads who lied about his age to fight for his country, is recorded as the youngest soldier to die in the war. He was killed in the Second Battle of Ypres, less than 10 miles away, when the Germans used poisonous chlorine gas for the first time. The trench he lay slumped in to escape from the artillery and grenade onslaught of the advancing enemy was drowned by a cloud of the yellow gas, tearing at the youngster's lungs and scorching his eyes.

Indistinguishable from the thousand men who died on May 24, 1915 in one of the worst massacres of the war, John's age only emerged later. Today his grave is the most visited on the Western Front. It is believed that only the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Westminster Abbey receives more visitors. The boy soldier had claimed he was 18 when he enlisted in his home town of Waterford, Ireland, two years before. He was really a pre - pubescent 12 – year -old, too young to shave. It was a rash act of bravery motivated by peer pressure and a desire for adventure that was to cost John his young life.

At the outbreak of war, the German army was three million men stronger than the British Army. So a frantic campaign for volunteers was launched and among those who joined up were 250,000 lads under the age of 19, the legal limit for armed service overseas. Such was the demand that recruiting sergeants turned a blind eye to teenagers who were obviously far too young to fight. They would tell them to come back if they naively gave an honest answer when asked their age. In an era when most people didn't have birth certificates, it was easy to lie about your age. And when the recruiting sergeants were being paid two shillings and sixpence for every new recruit, they weren't going to turn many away.

As excitement swept through the country, boys would join the back of town parades and only later tell their parents they had enlisted. Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State, on the famous recruitment posters, received letters from a boy, aged nine, appealing to him to put normal rules aside. If a boy was rejected from one regiment, he could simply try another one down the road. The minimum height for recruits was 5ft 3in, so tall teenagers would have no trouble volunteering to do their bit. However, a large number were weeded out and sent home because they finally admitted their real age or were too small to fight. It wasn't until conscription was introduced in 1916 that the tide of underage soldiers heading to the Western Front was stopped.

And after a growing realisation of the numbers of child soldiers in action a movement began to get the boys back. In the same year, the War Office agreed parents could demand their return if they could prove their sons were underage. John was so desperate to escape the poverty of his parents' home that he enlisted in the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment in October 1913, long before hostilities broke out. He gave his birth date as October 24, 1895, and he was stationed at the military barracks in Clonmel.

It seems extraordinary but all of his commanding officers were complicit in the lie. Six months after arriving in France with the British Expeditionary Force, John met his end. His parents had believed he was still at barracks until they received a letter from the War Office informing them of their young son's tragic death.

Some expert's claim John was actually aged 18. But the Commonwealth War Graves Commission still believe he was only 14.

(Reprinted from “*The Communicator*”)

WINDOWS V. FORD

For all of us who feel only the deepest love and affection for the way computers have enhanced our lives, read on... At a recent computer expo (COMDEX), Bill Gates reportedly compared the computer industry with the auto industry and stated:

"If Ford had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving \$25 cars that got 1,000 miles to the gallon."

In response to Bill's comments, Ford issued a press release stating:

If Ford had developed technology like Microsoft, we would all be driving cars with the following characteristics:

1. For no reason whatsoever, your car would crash....twice a day.
2. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you would have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason. You would have to pull to the side of the road, close all of the windows, shut off the car, restart it, and reopen the windows before you could continue. For some reason you would simply accept this.
4. Occasionally, executing a manoeuvre such as a left turn would cause your car to shut down and refuse to restart, in which case you would have to reinstall the engine.
5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun. Was reliable, five times as fast and twice as easy to drive - but would run on only five percent of the roads.
6. The oil, water temperature, and alternator warning lights would all be replaced by a single "This Car Has Performed An Illegal Operation" warning light.
7. The airbag system would ask, "Are you sure?" before deploying.
8. Occasionally, for no reason whatsoever, your car would lock you out and refuse to let you in until you simultaneously lifted the door handle, turned the key and grabbed hold of the radio antenna.
9. Every time a new car was introduced car buyers would have to learn how to drive all over again because none of the controls would operate in the same manner as the old car.
10. You'd have to press the "Start" button to turn the engine off.

PS - I'd like to add that when all else fails, you could call "customer service" in some foreign Country and be instructed in some foreign language how to fix your car yourself! *(Geeves)*

TELL ME IT ISN'T TRUE!

Here's a little fact for automotive buffs, or just to dazzle your friends.

The four Goldberg brothers, Lowell, Norman, Hiram, and Max, invented and developed the first automobile air-conditioner. On July 17, 1946, the temperature in Detroit was 97 degrees. The four brothers walked into old man Henry Ford's office and sweet-talked his secretary into telling him that four gentlemen were there with the most exciting innovation in the auto industry since the electric starter.

Henry was curious and invited them into his office. They refused and instead asked that he come out to the parking lot to their car. They persuaded him to get into the car, which was about 130 degrees, turned on the air conditioner, and cooled the car off immediately. The old man got very excited and invited them back to the office, where he offered them \$3 million for the patent. The brothers refused, saying they would settle for \$2 million, but they wanted the recognition by having a label, 'The Goldberg Air-Conditioner,' on the dashboard of each car in which it was installed.

Now old man Ford was more than just a little anti-Jewish, and there was no way he was going to put the Goldberg's name on two million Fords. They haggled back and forth for about two hours and finally agreed on \$4 million and that just their first names would be shown.

And so to this day, all Ford air conditioners show **Lo, Norm, Hi, and Max** -- on the controls. *(Thanks Bob <Gray>)*

AN AUSSIE POEM

(Contributed by Al and Marg King) – this one will make you think a bit! (Ed.)

When the shearing sheds are silent and stock camps fallen quiet,
 When the gidgee coals no longer glow across the outback night,
 And the bush is forced to hang a sign, 'gone broke and won't be back',
 And spirits fear to find a way beyond the beaten track,
 When harvesters stand derelict upon the wind swept plains,
 And brave hearts pin their hopes no more on chance of loving rains,
 When we've lost the drive and heart we had to once more see us right.

When 'Pioneer' means a stereo and 'Digger' some backhoe,
 And the 'Outback' is behind the house, there's nowhere else to go,
 And 'Anzac' is a biscuit brand and probably foreign owned,
 And education really means brainwashed and neatly cloned,
 When you have to bake a loaf of bread to make a decent crust,
 And our heritage once enshrined in gold is crumbling to dust.
 And old folk pay their camping fees on land for which they fought,
 And fishing is a great escape; that is until you're caught.

When you see our kids with Yankee caps and resentment in their eyes,
 And the soaring crime and hopeless hearts is no longer a surprise,
 When the name of R M Williams is a yuppie clothing brand,
 Not a product of our heritage that grew off the land,
 When offering a hand makes people think that you'll amputate,
 And two dogs meeting in the street is what you call a "Mate",
 When 'Political Correctness' has replaced all common sense,
 When you're forced to see it their way, there's no sitting on the fence.

Yes one day you may find yourself an outcast in this land,
 Perhaps your heart will tell you then, 'I should have made a stand',
 Just go and ask the farmers that should remove all doubt,
 Then join the swelling ranks who say 'Don't sell Australia out'.

Bill Gates Mates?

A man is in the VIP airport lounge was en-route to Seattle. He is meeting with a very important client who is also flying to Seattle, but she is running a bit late.

While he is waiting he notices Bill Gates sitting in a lounge enjoying a cognac. Being a forward type of guy he approaches Bill and introduces himself. He explains to Bill that he is conducting some important business and he would appreciate it if Gates could throw a quick "Hello Paul" at him as he is with his client.

Gates agrees. Ten minutes later while the man is conversing with his client, he feels a tap on his shoulder. It is Bill Gates. He turns around and looks up at him.

Bill Gates says, Hi Paul, what's happening mate? Paul turned around in front of his client and said, "Piss off Bill, can't you see I'm in a meeting."

(630211/Bob/Robert/Fowlhouse - you have guessed it our "trussed-up" mate Geeves!)



2017 HOBART
REUNION
INFORMATION
BULLETIN

The Reunion is to mark the **30th Anniversary of the disbandment of the Hobart-based Signal Squadron** (under its various titles). It will be held in Hobart over the weekend **14-15th October 2017**. Functions planned are available to all members of the RA Sigs Association (Tas), former Squadron members, 124 Sig Troop & other Corps of Sigs members.

We will be pleased to welcome you and your partner/adult family members to each of the events. **Enquiries to Dick Goodwin – email dickieg19@hotmail.com.**

The Reunion weekend will commence on **Saturday evening, the 14th**, with the **"Beaumaris Dinner" to be held at Clarence Senior Citizens Club, Alma Street, Bellerive (6.30pm for 7.00pm)**. A 3 course meal will be served including pre dinner drinks. Miniatures may be worn. Dress – Gents - Lounge suit or jacket and tie (no denim). Ladies - after five wear.

Plenty of free parking is available at the rear of the Senior Citizens Club or in Alma Street.

At 11.45am on Sunday 15th, the short Corps Commemorative Service will be conducted by our Padre at the RA Sigs Memorial at Anglesea Barracks (off East side of Parade Ground). Access to the Barracks is via the main Davey Street entrance – parking available on the Parade Ground. We have arranged a wet weather venue should one be needed.

The service will be followed by a **"Farewell Lunch" at the RAAF Memorial Centre, 68 Davey Street** (a short downhill stroll from the Barracks) **at approximately 12.30pm**, where a smorgasbord with refreshments will be served. (The RAAF Centre is the current home of the Association). Plenty of free parking in the streets near the RAAF Centre.

We recognize that many of our former members are getting “a bit long in the tooth” and indeed, this may be their last opportunity to attend a milestone Sigs Reunion in Hobart so we are anxious to make your weekend not too arduous and hence an outstanding success.

Look out for a formal **Reunion Registration Sheet in “Signal News” due out in late August/early September**, but if you need to make travel and accommodation reservations we recommend you do so at the earliest. Accommodation can become tight from spring until late autumn! We don’t have firm costings for the dinner or lunch at this time but they are likely to be in the range of \$45-50 (dinner) and \$20-25 (lunch).

We are looking forward to catching up with as many of our former RA Sigs colleagues again as possible and trust you will take the opportunity to enjoy our hospitality and all that Hobart has to offer to visitors.

Anyone wishing to leave an apology message (***we will read them out at the dinner***) please direct an email message to Secretary; Dick Goodwin or post a copy to him at 102 Wells Parade, BLACKMANS BAY 7052.

THE SECRETARY SAYS

Lots of early contacts being made with queries about our forthcoming **30th Anniversary of Unit Disbandment Reunion in October**. Emails and other messages including from former Unit Trg Offrs; **Mike Mitchelmore & Maurie McNarn** and Tp Offr **Simon Kelland**. Maurie is likely to be an apology (away in Northern Aust., at the time) but the other two are 'threatening invasion'. *See the Presidents Page for more details of the events and timings.*

Also initially positive & quick responses from members to the Treasurer's request to bring Assn., Subs back up to date. Thanks to **Simon Kelland, Bob Gray, Dave Wilson, Les Bourne, Tom Currie, Kerry, Jamie and Mark Collidge, Ian Hosan, Bob Gray, Ben Baker, Owen Winter, Dave Marsh, Brett Martin, Cliff Auton, Brian Kemp, "Sapper" and Virginia Turner, Brian Marriott & Phil Baker** for your prompt action folks. And a special thanks to Simon for his wonderful donation which is very much appreciated.

Had an interesting email from **Stan "Bluey" Coulter's** (Sth Aust.,) son-in-law Robert recently checking on Stan's Subs, Anglesea Barracks Sigs Memorial plaques and whether we knew of any former 24 Sig Section (WW2) members still living. "Bluey" is nearing 95 but is still "switched-on" and reads our newsletters with interest. He now has a list of our members which we hope will enable him to identify any of his wartime comrades who are still 'with us'.

Great to have former Trg Sgt, **Mike Morris** back in the State for a brief visit after a 35 year "break" Mick attended the May "First Friday" and caught up with a few colleagues from his days at 'Beaumaris'.

WARNING!! Have it on good authority that **Terry Binyon** (former Tech Elec Cadre Sgt, 146 Sig Sqn) is due to visit Tas in Dec 2017. Understand Jan will accompany him to maintain "order"!

Great to welcome more new members into the fold in **Rhys Lonergan** (Ex 1 CSR), **Anthony Goggins** (currently serving in the AARES with 144 Sig Sqn's Tas Tp) and really an 'oldie' returning in former Sqn Cpl Storeman **Denis Hill** (retired St John's Park Greens Keeper "**extraordinaire**"). **Mick Downey**, former Op Rad with the local Sqn has also made contact. We are keenly anticipating him joining with us.

Also received a note from **Terry Rigney** (in WA) filling us in on the whereabouts of his son-in-law; Graham, who is a Lt Col and as the Defence Attaché in London, lead the Anzac Day Parade in Hyde Park.

Very sad to report that **Brian "Capt Kilowatt" Watson** – our long term member in Launceston, has lost his son. Brian's 46 year fire fighter son passed away in Perth WA after suffering a heart attack. We have passed on our sincere condolences to Brian and the family.

Had an interesting message via **Dave Wilson** (Tyabb Vic) and then **Bob Geeves'** (then at RHH). Dave had recently visited "*The Mayor of the Dargo High Plains*" and key shareholder in the Dargo (Vic) pub in former Sqn Cpl Liney/Rigger (our man 'in the mountains'); **Keith R Price**. Dave reported KR was looking a bit older but wished all members well and confirmed he was still admirably holding up the bar!

For those who haven't heard, our favourite 'teller of the jokes'; (**Bob Geeves**) has had a nasty fall and has busted his pelvis and as a consequence, is in traction at Huon Eldercare in Franklin (Room 65) and likely to be there for quite a while. I have suggested he 'bring the computer in' and now understand the laptop has arrived. Now for a "Dongle" and a Router! We all wish you the best for a speedy recovery Bob. Visits, cards, txts and letters are 'in order' – *no gifts of grog!*

15.

EVER WONDERED ABOUT THESE ?? (from Al & Marg King)

Why isn't the number 11 pronounced onety-one? (or *eleventy-leven* !! *Ed.*)

If 4 out of 5 people SUFFER from diarrhoea...does that mean that one out of five enjoys it?

Why do croutons come in airtight packages? Aren't they just stale bread to begin with?

If people from Poland are called Poles, then why aren't people from Holland called Holes?

If a pig loses its voice, is it disgruntled?

Why is a person who plays the piano called a pianist, but a person who drives a race car is not called a racist?

If it's true that we are here to help others, then what exactly are the others here for?

If lawyers are disbarred and clergymen defrocked, then doesn't it follow that electricians can be delighted, musicians denoted, cowboys deranged, models deposed, tree surgeons debarked, and dry cleaners depressed?

Do Lipton Tea employees take 'coffee breaks'?

What hair colour do they put on the driver's licences of bald men?

I thought about how mothers feed their babies with tiny little spoons and forks, so I wondered what do Chinese mothers use? Toothpicks?

Is it true that you never really learn to swear until you learn to drive?

If a cow laughed, would milk come out of her nose?

Why, Why, Why do we press harder on the remote control when we know the batteries are getting weak?

Why do banks charge a fee due to insufficient funds; when they already know you're broke?

Why is it that when someone tells you that there are one billion stars in the universe you believe them, but if they tell you there is wet paint you have to touch it to check?

Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard?

Why does Superman stop bullets with his chest, but ducks when you throw a revolver at him?

Why did Kamikaze pilots wear helmets?

Whose cruel idea was it to put an "s" in the word "lisp"?

If people evolved from apes, why are there still apes?

Why do people constantly return to the refrigerator with hopes that something new to eat will have materialized?

Why do people run over a string a dozen times with their vacuum cleaner, then reach down, pick it up, examine it and then put it down to give the vacuum one more chance?

How do those dead bugs get into the enclosed light fixtures?

Why is it that whenever you attempt to catch something that's falling off the table you always manage to knock something else over?

Why, in winter, do we try to keep the house as warm as it was in summer when we complained about the heat?



VALE 614797 Maj (Rtd) Geoffrey Neil MARTIN

Sad to report that former Sqn OC and member Geoff Martin has passed away in South Australia after a long illness. Geoff was born in Melbourne in 1932 and educated in that city.

He joined the 2nd intake at the Army Apprentices School at Balcombe Barracks in the early 1950's as a Trainee Vehicle Mechanic but did not complete that course. He then joined the PMG's Department and worked as a Telecom Technician before moving to Tasmania to take up an appointment with the Hydro Electric Commission also as a Technician.

Geoff had joined RA Sigs in 1956 and served for around 12 months in South Korea with ancillary forces during that country's war with North Korea. Geoff was serving in the same area as our V/P Ray Woolley. He also served briefly in South Vietnam during that country's war with North Vietnam.

Eventually Geoff was posted to the local Sig Sqn as a Sgt Tech and was then promoted as a WO2 (Foreman of Sigs). Later, Geoff was to qualify for appointment as a Lt and later still was promoted as a Capt in the Hobart Sqn before finally qualifying and being promoted as Major and appointed as OC 124 Sig Sqn in 1971. He continued in that posting until 1974.

During Geoff's appointment as OC he was to deal with the 1972 reorganization of the Sqn, the move to Anglesea Barracks and the return to Beaumaris Trg Depot as OC 146 Sig Sqn in 1974.

In his civil employment, Geoff took on the role of State Secretary of the Tasmanian Police Association in 1980. He carried this career through to a similar role with the South Australian Police Association until his retirement.

Geoff was married to Fay and had two children (Brett and Tracey). Brett was to serve with the local Sig Sqn as a Lt Radio Tp Comd before taking up an appointment with the RAAF Cadets.

In retirement, Geoff relocated to the shore of Lake Alexandrina at Goolwa. He continued to work voluntarily for the official recognition of the roles played by the former Balcombe Barracks including the difficult project to have the "Balcombe Gates" memorialised.

Although obviously battling ill health, Geoff travelled to Hobart in 2007 and 2012 to attend the 20th and 25th milestone Reunions of the Disbandment of 146 Sig Sqn.

In more recent years, Geoff organized the production of our Association colour "car sticker", copies of which are still available from the Treasurer.

R.I.P. Geoff