

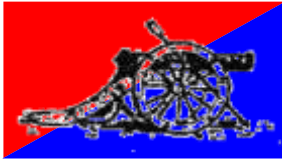
# CASCABEL

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ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

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## HONOURING



Australian and New Zealand Defence Force head dress sit atop two Steyr assault rifles as a memorial to the ANZAC heroes, at the Dili ANZAC Day dawn service in East Timor, 2010.



Flags from multiple nations fly at the Turkish International Service.

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## The President Writes

A slow and easy start to the year from my point of view.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend the Artillery Luncheon at the RACV Club, but I am told by a reputable authority (Reg) that the function was a success with 88 attendees. From a purely personal point of view I would like to see the function held at a venue with more car parking available at a reasonable price.

You will notice from the Membership Report that we are not quite managing to hold our numbers. Since July 2009 we have lost a balance of seven Life Members and nine Senior Annual Members. It is understandably difficult to recruit serving members into the Association, but if we can keep up the trickle of retired gunners and other interested applicants we will remain a very viable organisation.

Whilst on the subject of membership, I think that we should make more use of the RSL sub-branches to **"spread the word"** about the Association and our various activities. A good start to this would be to distribute copies of *Cascabel* to the various sub-branches. If you are a member of the RSL would you please raise this with your committee and let me know if they are agreeable to making *Cascabel* available to their members.

We have about 110 members on our email contact list. Please do not forget to notify me if you change your email address, (as some people appear to do with great regularity), so that you stay informed about the Association.

I look forward to seeing you at the next Association function.

Regards to all

Neil Hamer Contact: Telephone: 9702 2100  
MAJ (Retd) 0419 533 067

## Membership Report

Current Membership as at 30 Mar 11

Life Members	198	(201)
Annual Members	46	(46)
Senior Annual Members	12	(13)
Affiliates	33	(34)
Others (CO/CI, Messes, etc.)	12	(12)
Libraries	5	(5)
RSL's	2	(2)
<u>Total</u>	<u>308</u>	<u>(313)</u>

### New Members

We welcome Sgt B A (Bruce) Richardson, Life Member, to the Association

### Vale

It is with regret that we note the passing of

- Col L J Newell AM CStJ QPM ED (joined Jul 82),
- Maj Edward Perry MBE ED (joined Jul 82),
- Capt John Anderson MC (joined Jun 89),
- Capt Frank Mullins (joined Jul 82),
- Capt Frank Noble (joined Nov 80) and
- Capt William Smith (joined Aug 90).

The usual reminder about the proforma on the last page below the Parade Card.

If you have not already done so, it would be appreciated if you would provide the information requested so that our files can be kept up to date. This proforma should also be used to notify us of any changes in the future

Membership Co-ordinator  
Email: nhamer@bigpond.net.au

# From the Colonel Commandant

Last week LTCOL Jason Cooke and I attended the Annual RAA Regimental Conference at the School of Artillery. It was a very interesting two days, and the rate of change being achieved by the Regiment is truly amazing. The first day was devoted to the Regimental Committee and the second day to operational matters. I will address the first day and Jason will deal with the second.



The Regimental Committee continued the debate from the last meeting regarding **how it could make itself more relevant to today's serving and retired gunners.** The Regimental Committee comprises the Colonels Commandant, unit CO's and RSM's and independent sub-unit OC's and BSM's. Under the leadership of the Representative Colonel Commandant, Major General Tim Ford, a strategic plan is to be developed. Two key criteria will be included in this plan:

- The Committee will seek to work in conjunction with the RAA Associations in the States, and
- The availability of resources is the major limitation on the effectiveness of the Regimental Committee, and therefore a financial plan will also be developed.

Members will have seen a number of articles from Major General Ford regarding the exhibits from the RAA Museum, which was formerly in North Head in Sydney. These are now to be moved to a combined Artillery and Armour museum to be established adjacent to the base at Puckapunyal. It is understood that the current aim is to establish this Museum by the end of next year. In the meantime the exhibits will be stored at Bandiana.

If the museum is to continue to operate in a fashion similar to that at North Head, it will need the assistance of many volunteers to manage, restore and maintain the exhibits and to act as guides. Over the next twelve months discussions will be held with the Army History Unit to ensure that it is able to open as soon as possible. I will keep you informed.

Brig Neil Graham AM

Colonel Commandant, Southern Region

Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery

## **MESSAGE FROM COMMANDING OFFICER 2<sup>nd</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment RAA**

To all Gunners

There is much to pass on in this report as 2011 has started off, as I expected, with a Bang. I will provide a snapshot of activities and courses already **completed and indicate the Regiment's activities up** and till June this year. I will also outline the points in my address made at the recent very successful RAA Luncheon at the RACV Club. Next report I will focus on the major topics discussed at the RAA Corps Conference held at the School in March. However before I start, I hope and trust that you have all successfully survived the festive season and that you and your families are all in good health.

As I indicated last report, the Regiment was set for **a busy first three months of the year and I wasn't** kidding. The first event was Australia Day and the traditional Gun Salute but this year was a little different, as it was the first time the Regiment fired our M2A2 Salute Guns – all 6 of them. It was an amazing sight to behold and the first time I can remember having 6 guns fire at the Shrine of

Remembrance. I then took the Regiment to HMAS Cerberus for the annual mandatory training but also combined a series of weapon, individual and physical training activities utilising the excellent facilities the Navy have tucked away at Crib Point. This weekend set up success for a small arms weekend where the Regiment fired live on the small arm ranges. You will be pleased to know we have a few good shots within our ranks.

Additionally, 2/10 conducted a communication course for 2<sup>nd</sup> RAA Division members over a 3 week period whilst sending a number of new members to recruit course at Kapooka and a couple of potential bombardiers to a command post course in WA. As you can see we have been extremely busy, but more importantly from my perspective is the willingness and commitment given by all members of the Regiment. Attendance numbers are up, soldiers are enjoying their service, the regiment is conducting interesting training and the results are slowing showing.

**But we aren't stopping there. 2/10 is gearing up to** conduct: a Regimental Mortar live fire weekend; another suite of Mortar Courses for all 2<sup>nd</sup> Division RAA units (already over subscribed); conducting a series of weekends on behalf of 4 BDE to determine this years team to represent the Australian Army overseas in a military competition – CAMBRIAN PATROL; and lets not forget our traditional dawn service commemorating ANZAC DAY held at Chapel Street. Again everyone will be warmly welcomed to the dawn service and I would encourage you to attend.

4 BDE as a whole was involved with providing support to the recent Victorian floods and ramping **up for our commitment to the Army's major** exercise this year, TALISMAN SABRE 11 plus a possible deployment in 2012. These are major commitments by the BDE but it all depends upon the availability of our soldiers. As I said previously, I was immensely proud of 2/10 and our achievements and our involvement to these major activities.

At the recent RAA Luncheon held at the RACV Club, I provided an update on the health of 2/10 and where we are heading in the future. The essence of my address focused on what 2/10 gives the ADF, our relevance and the capability we provide. 2/10 is still at the centre and driving the mortar capability being developed for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division and the ADF. For 2/10 the conversion has been completed and we are now consolidating these new found skills. Additionally, we provide the backbone to the majority of scheduled mortar courses on behalf of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, as evident in the activities listed above. By the end of the year 2/10 will be able to put into the field 12 mortar teams with command posts plus 2 complete FO parties – all qualified.

Now for some quick public announcements. There is an open invitation to any member of our Gunner family to visit the collection of memorabilia at the Regiment. We would also love to see you all at any one of our Regimental or Associations activities including ANZAC Day or the Gunner Dinner. As I have previously stated, it is always an excellent opportunity to discuss all things Artillery amongst friends and fellow gunners.

Feedback and views from Association members are always welcome so please contact me on [jason.cooke4@defence.gov.au](mailto:jason.cooke4@defence.gov.au) if you wish to discuss anything. Again I extend all the best for the next quarter of 2011 and hope to see you at as many functions as possible.

Ubique

Jason Cooke

Lieutenant Colonel

Commanding Officer

2<sup>nd</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment

## RAA LUNCHEON

On Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> of March, 2011 a successful luncheon was held at the RACV Club, Melbourne for 86 Gunners. The Gunners were welcomed by Brigadier Doug Perry OAM RFD ED, Brigadier Neil Graham AM (Colonel Commandant) and Lieutenant Colonel Jason Cooke (CO of 2/10 Field Regiment, RAA).

Whilst the Gunners were partaking refreshments, meal and discussing past events, they were also presented with a background presentation of historical photographs. If by chance you have any gunner photographs, please contact Brigadier Perry or myself, so that we may include them in our next RAA Luncheon.

This is the second occasion that the RAA Luncheon has been held and if you missed out this year, there will be another luncheon in March, 2012.

Congratulations to Brigadier Perry on an excellent function.

Ubique

SSgt Reg Morrell



Brigadier Neil Graham AM (left) congratulating Brigadier Doug Perry OAM RFD ED on the RAA Luncheon.

During the luncheon, guests were invited to attempt the quiz reproduced on [p40](#). Col Graham Farley detailed the answers & I think I'm fairly safe in saying that no one managed a "perfect score".

See how you go!! Ed



## Editors Indulgence

When preparing this edition of Cascabel, my intention was to devote much of the space to an ANZAC theme. In part, I have achieved that.

However, unfolding events over the last few months led me to insert tributes for various people and events. These include:

- The 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of the RAAF ([p32](#))
- The 110<sup>th</sup> birthday of the ARMY ([p35](#))
- Our latest VC recipient ([p27](#)) and sadly:
- VALE to Col Laurie Newell AM CSTJ QPM ED, ([p17](#)) Cpl Richard Atkinson, ([p37](#)) Spr Jamie Larcombe ([p38](#))

*Click the links if you wish to go directly to those particular pages. Ed*



As I progress with the preparation of each journal, I am finding that the coloured content is increasing substantially. I suggest to all members that the coloured version enhances the presentation and reading of our journal. Unfortunately, the printed copies cannot be produced in colour as we are restricted by the prohibitive printing costs. The more of you that would prefer to receive each issue via email the better, as this will reduce our postage expenses & you gain a paperless, environmentally friendly coloured edition. *I am also including various links (see above and below) to other pages/sites which I hope will enhance your reading/viewing experience. (Feedback welcome).*

Please contact Maj Hamer or myself if you wish to have each journal delivered via email, (or both).

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### Cannibals in SVN

Five cannibals were employed by SAS in the Phouc Tuy province as scouts and translators during one of the operations during the Vietnam War.

When the SAS Squadron OC welcomed the cannibals he said, "You're all part of our team now.

We will compensate you well for your services, and you can eat any of the rations that the Army are eating. But please don't indulge yourselves by eating a Soldier." The cannibals promised.

Four weeks later the OC returned and said, "You're all working very hard, and I'm very satisfied with all of you. However, one of our Sergeants has disappeared. Do any of you know what happened to him?"

The cannibals all shook their heads 'no'. After the OC left, the leader of the cannibals turned to the others and said, "Which of you idiots ate the Sergeant?" A hand raised hesitantly, to which the leader of the cannibals replied, "You fool! For four weeks we've been eating Lieutenants and Captains and no one noticed anything,..... then YOU had to go and eat an NCO!

---

About 6 soldiers pull up on a main street in Halifax , Nova Scotia. They're in a standard issue WWII type Willys Jeep. In about 5 minutes, they completely disassemble the vehicle and reassemble it, then drive off in it fully operable! The idea is to show the genius that went into the making of the jeep and its basic simplicity. Fantastic.

Click the url or type the following into your browser.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch\\_popup?v=lgwF8mdQwlw&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=lgwF8mdQwlw&feature=player_embedded)



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The link below is of an Anzac Day Tribute of Amazing Grace & the Last Post.

Click the url or type the following into your browser.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mY\\_ezjs0vkl&feature=player\\_detailpage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mY_ezjs0vkl&feature=player_detailpage)

Viewing either of these links will lead you to many other interesting sites.

## Australians all round the globe paused to remember our Anzacs on Anzac day 2010

Of all the dawn services conducted around Australia and the world on Anzac Day, *none* was more poignant than the one in the United Arab Emirates where the Australian flag used in the ceremony had formerly draped the casket of Sig Sean McCarthy, one of 11 ADF members killed in action in that theatre.

David McCarthy, father of Sig McCarthy, who was killed in Afghanistan on July 8, 2008, joined ADF personnel at the service.

Deputy Commander Joint Task Force 633 Cdre Roper Royce addressed a large gathering of ADF and Coalition personnel during the service at Al Minhad Air Base and said commemorating Anzac Day in an operational area was especially moving.

"I would ask that you reflect on the sacrifice made by the 13 Australians and the many allies who have given their lives in this Middle East Area of Operation since 2001," Cdre Boyce said.

Elsewhere in the MEAO, the crew of HMAS Parramatta watched dawn break over the flight deck of their frigate while patrolling the Gulf of Aden while soldiers with

Iraq's Security Detachment saw the sun rise over Baghdad.

Soldiers from Mentoring Task Force 1 hosted Defence Minister John Faulkner at a large ceremony in Tarin Kowt, while members of the Rotary Wing Group and other personnel in Kandahar held a service at Camp Baker.

In Egypt, seven Australian soldiers, three from New Zealand and one from Fiji serving with the Sinai-based Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), greeted the dawn at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Heliopolis, Cairo, while other services were held at el Gorah in the northern Sinai and in Jerusalem.

Cpl Emma Tupper, a distribution clerk with the Australian MFO contingent said it was the first time she had participated in an Anzac Day catafalque party.

"**t was awesome, I was really happy to be chosen to be here today and I felt proud,**" Cpl Tupper said.

Another poignant dawn service was held in Dili, East Timor - the only area of operation in which Australian and New Zealand Defence Forces are currently combined in a single force.

Commander International Stabilisation Force (ISF) in East Timor Col Simon Stuart said he felt the ISF was carrying on the proud traditions of the Anzacs of old.

**"Celebrating Anzac Day on operations as part of a uniquely Anzac force - the only Anzac force on operations today - is significant and we took a moment to soak up that significance and atmosphere," Col Stuart said.** "There was certainly a lump in the throat as you heard the national anthems played and look around at the faces of the young men and women serving their countries here today - faces that are not too dissimilar to those in the photographs of 1915."



Historical site: CA Lt Gen Ron Gillespie salutes after laying a wreath at Bullecourt in France.

Photo by PG David Corbett

At the birthplace of the Anzac legend. Governor General Quentin Bryce joined the thousands of Australian and New Zealand servicemen and tourists on the 95th anniversary' of the fateful landings.

"As we stand on this tight, flat, open crest named Bloody Ridge, in the company of the fallen, and a lone Aleppo Pine tree, the intensity of the battle that was fought here remains clear and present," Ms Bryce said.

**"Four days of unrelenting slaughter and bloodshed, the lives of more than 4000 Turks and 2200 Anzacs lost, in an area the size of two tennis courts with enemy front lines separated by only a couple of cricket pitches, seven Victoria Crosses earned in three days for acts of valour in the face of the enemy bullets... bayonets, rifle butts, fists and boots - whatever it took - to defend our homeland and families, to assert our newfound nationhood and to uphold and bear out the sterling qualities that characterised our men.**

Today, rich in the knowing of these things, and fresh in the promise of the new light this morning brings, we assemble before these sacred gravestones and monuments to thank, honour. and remember."





## The Slouch Hat and Emu Plumes



Photo courtesy Victoria Barracks Museum, Brisbane

### *The Slouch Hat*

What was the origin of the famous Digger hat? According to what was known years ago as the New South Wales Ordnance Department, it was born from a shortage of helmets during the South African War.

Sir Harry Chauvel traced the hat from Tyrolean style which was first worn by the South African Police and later (in the early nineties) by the Victorian Mounted Rifle Regiment.

The first unit to top its uniform off with the **slouched felt hat was the Imperial Bushmen's Corps**, which was raised by public subscription on a Federal basis in January, 1900. Military stocks were notoriously short at this transitional period of Federation and in Adelaide, at least, the hat was simply an emergency issue. However, once they received these hats, the Bushmen fought like devils to retain them. The Victorians, under **the command of Colonel 'Tom' Price, who had** their hats replaced by helmets, organised a mass raid on the lines of a British Yeomanry Regiment, from which they emerged felt-hatted to a man.

Commenting in 1937 upon the suggested abolition of the slouch hat, the London Daily Mail, in a leading article, entitled 'The Old Shako',

expressed regret that the prosaic peaked cap was supplanting the Australian wartime headgear. **'The mind leaps back 20 years,' it said, 'and summons a picture of the Aussies, young, spare, and magnificently athletic, with their brown faces under slouch hats pinned up by the famous Australian badge.'**

The Poet Laureate (John Masefield) paid the **following tribute to the hat: 'Instead of an idiotic** cap that provided no shade to the eye, or screen for the back of the neck, that would not stay on in a wind, nor help to disguise the wearer from air observation, these men (the Diggers) wore comfortable soft felt slouch hats that protected **in all weather and at all times looked well.'**

The cadets at the Royal Military College Duntroon wear their chin strap back-to-front. This custom goes back to the death of Major General Sir William Bridges at Gallipoli in 1915. Bridges was the founder of the College and it is said that when he was shot he had his hat on back-to-front; in respect, the cadets at the College turned their hats around. Today the hat is worn correctly, however the chin strap is placed with the buckles on the right-hand side of the face.

*Thanks to Warrant Officer C. JOBSON for contributing the above information.*

*Another Anzac Day has just passed, so I feel it is appropriate that we may reflect on the origins of the following Customs & Traditions. Ed.*

## History of Reveille or Rouse

"Reveille" originated in medieval times, possibly around 1600, to wake the soldiers at dawn; "Rouse" was the signal for the soldier to arise. Rouse is the bugle call more commonly used in conjunction with the Last Post and to the layman is often incorrectly called Reveille. Although associated with the Last Post, Reveille is rarely used because of its length.

Today, the Rouse is associated with the last Post at all military funerals and services of Dedication and remembrance. It is played on the completion of one minute's silence, after the Last Post has been sounded. It calls the soldier's spirit to rise and prepare for another day. The bugle call played after the 'Silence' during any ANZAC Day ceremony is:

- ANZAC Day Dawn Service: 'Reveille'.
- ANZAC Day services and Remembrance Day services at other times of the day: 'Rouse'.

### Words to Reveille

Rev-eil-lee! Rev-eil-lee is sounding

The bugle calls you from your sleep; it is the break of day.

You've got to do your duty or you will get no pay.  
Come, wake yourself, rouse yourself out of your sleep

And throw off the blankets and take a good peek at all

The bright signs of the break of day, so get up and do not delay.

Get Up!

Or-der-ly officer is on his round!

And if you're still a-bed he will send you to the guard

And then you'll get a drill and that will be a bitter pill:

So be up when he comes, be up when he comes,  
Like a soldier at his post, a soldier at his post, all ser-ene.

### Words to Rouse

Get up at once, get up at once, the bugle's sounding,

The day is here and never fear, old Sol is shining.

The Orderly Officer's on his rounds

## The Significance of Silence

At every league (Returned Serviceman's) function, no matter how small, members' stand in silence for a brief interval to remember departed comrades.

At league clubs around Australia the remembrance silence has become part of the nightly nine o'clock ritual, when any light other than a memorial flame is dimmed, members stand in silence, and then recite the Ode.

A brief silence, usually one or two minutes, characterises many other remembrance ceremonies throughout the British Commonwealth.

The concept of a remembrance silence appears to have originated with an Australian journalist, Edward George Honey, who had served briefly in World War One with an English regiment before being discharged due to ill health. Honey was born in St Kilda, Melbourne, in 1885 and died of consumption in England in 1922.

In 1962, a group of Melbourne citizens formed a committee to obtain recognition for Honey as the man 'who taught the world how to remember'. For many years, a South African politician, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, had been credited with the idea. The Melbourne committee succeeded in establishing that 'the solemn ceremony of silence now observed in all British countries in remembrance of those who died in war' was first published by Edward Honey.

Honey published a letter in the London Evening News on 8 May 1919 under the pen name of Warren Foster, in which he appealed for five-minute silence amid all the joy making planned to celebrate the first anniversary of the end of the War. 'Five little minutes only', he wrote, 'Five silent minutes of national remembrance.'

A very sacred intercession ? Communion with the Glorious Dead who won us peace, and from the communion new strength, hope and faith in the morrow. Church services, too, if you will, but in the street, the home, the theatre, anywhere, indeed, where Englishmen and their women chance to be, surely in this five minutes of bitter-sweet silence there will be service enough'.

No official action was taken on the idea, however, until, more than five months later, on 27 October 1919, one Lord Milner forwarded a suggestion from his friend, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, to the King's private secretary, Lord Stamfordham, for a period of silence on Armistice Day, 11 November, in all countries of the British Empire.

Sir Percy wrote, 'When we are gone it may help bring home to those who will come after us, the meaning, the nobility and the unselfishness of the great sacrifice by which their freedom was assured'.

King George V was evidently very moved by the idea and took it up immediately. There is no record that Sir Percy was prompted by Honey's letter in the London Evening News, but with the King, both Honey and Sir Percy attended a rehearsal for a five-minute silence involving the Grenadier Guards at Buckingham Palace. Five minutes proved too long and the two-minute interval was decided upon.

On 7 November 1919 the King issued a proclamation asking 'that at the hour when the Armistice came into force, the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, there may be for the brief space of two minutes a complete suspension of all our normal activities so that in perfect stillness, the thoughts of everyone may be concentrated on reverent remembrance of the glorious dead'.

The Melbourne committee noted, 'The idea of silence as a token of respect to the dead was not new, of course, for there was silence on the **death of King Edward VII** and there was silence in South Africa when World War I was going badly for the allies, and there was silence in Australia for miners killed during the reign of Queen Victoria. The originality of Honey's suggestion is based on the fact that this was the first time in history that a victory had been

celebrated as a tribute to those who sacrificed their lives and their health to make the victory possible'.

Just how the concept of the remembrance silence was adapted by the League to become an essential feature of League functions, and particularly the nine o'clock ceremony is not clear. Some members have tried to explain the League's nine o'clock ritual in terms of the nightly eight o'clock ceremony at the Menin Gate in Belgium. An extract from a 1980 edition of *The Thirty-niner*, published in the Highgate sub-branch newsletter in 1981, sought an explanation in the chiming of the bells of Big Ben in London at nine o'clock each evening. According to this report, the practice of silencing BBC radio transmissions while Big Ben chimed nine began in November 1940 'as a propaganda symbol to free **men in the captive nations of the world**'. Moreover, this account has it that the then chairman of the Big Ben Council which introduced the practice had been influenced by a fellow officer who, in a premonition of his own death in a World War I battle, had asked on behalf of the dead, 'We will help you spiritually. Lend us a moment of your time each day and by your silence give us our opportunity. The power of silence is greater than you know.'

Some League members take a more practical view and, in the absence of written records, say the most likely reason for the timing of the nine o'clock service in Australia is that; that is when meetings would have finished, giving members time to catch the tram home in those early days, and that the men would have chosen to close their meetings with the remembrance silence. This view holds that a simple coincidence of practicality, and the wish to remember dead mates in any way promulgated by the King gave rise to the Australian ritual.

In any case, the South Australians had developed a nine o'clock service before World War II and at the League's twenty first annual congress in Adelaide in 1936, the national congress resolved 'that it be a suggestion to state branches that at all meetings of ex-servicemen a simple ceremony of departed comrades be carried out at 9pm similar to that observed in South Australia'.

The League's national president Gilbert Dyett had



introduced the practice of beginning Federal executive meetings with a minute's silence in memory of departed comrades in July 1930.

And similar rituals to the League's nine o'clock ritual had occurred in other countries before 1930. The program for an ANZAC Day dinner in Durban in South Africa held by the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTHs) in 1929 notes: 'The toast of "Fallen Comrades" will be taken in silence, during which the room will be placed in darkness and a "Light of Remembrance" is lit by the Commander. The MOTH anthem 'Old Soldiers Never Die' will be sung, after which the light will be restored.'

### Why is the Parade Ground sacred?

After a battle, when retreat was sounded and the unit has reassembled to call the roll and count the dead, a hollow square was formed.

The dead were placed within the square and no-one used the area as a thoroughfare.

Today, the parade ground represents this square and hence, a unit's dead.

It is deemed to be hallowed ground, soaked with the blood of our fallen and the area is respected as such by all.

### Why are Australian Soldiers called "Diggers"?

The nickname 'Digger' is attributed to the number of ex-gold diggers in the early army units and to the trench digging activities of the Australian soldiers during World War I. The actual origin of the name has been lost in time but the Australian soldier is known affectionately around the world as the Digger.

### History of the Dawn Service

The Dawn Service on ANZAC Day has become a solemn Australian and New Zealand tradition. It is taken for granted as part of the ANZAC ethos and few wonder how it all started. Its story, as it were, is buried in a small cemetery carved out of the bush some kilometres outside the northern Queensland town of Herberton.

Almost paradoxically, one grave stands out by its simplicity. It is covered by protective white-washed concrete slab with a plain cement cross at its top end. No epitaph recalls even the name of the deceased. The Inscription on the cross is a mere two words - "A Priest".

No person would identify the grave as that of a dedicated clergyman who created the Dawn Service, without the simple marker placed next to the grave only in recent times. It reads:

"Adjacent to, and on the right of this marker, lies the grave of the late Reverend Arthur Ernest White, a Church of England clergyman and padre, 44th Battalion, First Australian Imperial Force. On 25th April 1923, at Albany in Western Australia, the Reverend White led a party of friends in what was the first ever observance of a Dawn parade on ANZAC Day, thus establishing a tradition which has endured Australia wide ever since."

Reverend White was serving as one of the padres of the earliest ANZAC's to leave Australia with the First AIF in November 1914. The convoy was assembled in the Princess Royal harbour and King George Sound at Albany WA. Before embarkation, at four in the morning, he conducted a service for all the men of the battalion. When White returned to Australia in 1919, he was appointed relieving Rector of the St John's Church in Albany. It was a strange coincidence that the starting point of the AIF convoys should now become his parish.

No doubt it must have been the memory of his first Dawn Service those many years earlier and his experiences overseas, combined with the awesome cost of lives and injuries, which inspired him to honour permanently the valiant men (both living and the dead) who had joined the fight for the allied cause. "Albany", he is quoted to have said, "was the last sight of land these ANZAC troops saw after leaving Australian shores and some of them never returned. We should hold a service (here) at the first light of dawn each ANZAC Day to commemorate them."

That is how on ANZAC Day 1923 he came to hold the first Commemorative Dawn Service.

As the sun was rising, a man in a small dinghy cast a wreath into King George Sound while White, with a band of about 20 men gathered around him on the summit of nearby Mount Clarence,



silently watched the wreath floating out to sea. He then quietly recited the words: "As the sun rises and goeth down, we will remember them". All present were deeply moved and news of the Ceremony soon spread throughout the country; and the various Returned Service Communities Australia wide emulated the Ceremony.

Eventually, White was transferred from Albany to serve other congregations, the first in South Australia, then Broken Hill where he built a church, then later at Forbes NSW. In his retirement from parish life, he moved to Herberton where he became Chaplain of an Anglican convent. However, soon after his arrival (on September 26, 1954) he died, to be buried so modestly and anonymously as "A Priest".

White's memory is honoured by a stained glass window in the all Soul's Church at Wirrinya, a small farming community near Forbes NSW. Members of the parish have built the church with their own hands and have put up what they refer to as "The Dawn Service Window", as their tribute to White's service to Australia.

## History of the Ode of Remembrance

The Ode comes from For the Fallen, a poem by the English poet and writer Laurence Binyon and was published in London in the Winnowing Fan; Poems of the Great War in 1914. The verse, which became the League Ode was already used in association with commemoration services in Australia in 1921.

### **FOR THE FALLEN**

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children

England mourns for her dead across the sea,  
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,  
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal  
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,  
There is music in the midst of desolation  
And glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,  
Straight of limb, true of eyes, steady and aglow,

They were staunch to the end against odds  
uncounted,

They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again,

They sit no more at familiar tables of home,  
They have no lot in our labour of the daytime,  
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires and hopes profound,  
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,  
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known

As the stars are known to the night.

As the stars shall be bright when we are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,  
As the stars that are stary in the time of our darkness,

To the end, to the end, they remain.

### *NOTE:*

*Each year after Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, debate rises on the word 'condemn' or 'contemn'. The Ode used is the fourth stanza of the poem For the Fallen by Laurence Binyon and was written in the early days of WW1. By mid September 1914, less than seven weeks after the outbreak of war, the British Expeditionary Force in France had already suffered severe casualties. Long lists of the dead and wounded appeared in British newspapers. It was against this background the Binyon wrote For the Fallen. The poem was first published in The Times on 21 September 1914 using the word 'condemn'. Some people have suggested that the use of 'condemn' in The Times was a typographical error. However, The Winnowing Fan, published a month or two later and for which Binyon would have had galley proofs on which to mark amendments, 'condemn' was again used.*

*Binyon was a highly educated man and very precise in his use of words. There is no doubt that had he intended 'contemn', then it would have been used.*

*Contents of pages 18 - 21 courtesy of:*

*Forces Command*

*3rd Brigade Community*

# The forgotten heroes of war. An Anzac Day special

Editor and publisher of The Enthusiast

Mel Campbell writes:

The Anzac legacy is a contentious one, as evidenced by the recent literary stoush over **Marilyn Lake's** and **Henry Reynolds' *What's Wrong With Anzac***. But if there's one aspect of war we can all agree on, it's that animals are pretty adorable.

Horses have gone to war for thousands of years -- notably with medieval knights and the Mongol hordes -- while elephants were deployed to fearsome success by ancient leaders including Alexander the Great and, famously, the Carthaginian general Hannibal.

**The US Navy's secretive Marine Mammal Program** trains dolphins and sea lions to detect enemy sea mines and guard against intruding human divers; the equivalent Soviet program is rumoured to have trained dolphins to attack and kill humans.

Goats have been traditional in the British military since one strolled onto the Boston battlefield during the American Revolutionary War; a much-decorated war goat, Taffy IV, died in action in WWI. The Brits take their military goats seriously: a goat major was once court-martialled for "prostituting" his charge to a local breeder. (The **court was unmoved by the major's claims he did it out of sympathy for the goat.**)

And in 1898, a regimental goat butted an unfortunate colonel who happened to be bending over. *The English Illustrated Magazine* called it "a disgraceful act of insubordination".

Cats, meanwhile, have long prowled the decks of navy ships. Hilariously, in WWII the Royal Navy decreed that "all cats in naval establishments must wear collars at all times", embroidered with **their ships' names**. However, as nobody was inclined to stump up the funds for thousands of jaunty cat collars, the order was quietly ignored.

Other animal warriors came back to bite their military minders. During WWII, Soviet anti-tank dogs were supposed to crawl under enemy tanks like canine suicide bombers, but in practice the

dogs were scared of gunfire and ran back to their trenches to blow up their own soldiers instead.

Around the same time, the United States gave the go-ahead to a \$2 million "bat bomb" project, in which bats would detonate incendiary bombs over flammable Japanese buildings. A test run in a simulated village was a roaring success -- so much so that the bats also burnt down the research facility and a hangar containing a **general's car**.

**Since the program wouldn't be field-ready until 1945**, the top brass made the fateful decision to develop nuclear weapons instead.

Here are some of *Crikey's* favourite military animals:

**Horrie The Wog Dog:** So named because he was adopted in Egypt by Australian private Jim Moody (such carefree political correctness wouldn't wash these days...) Horrie saw 18 months of active service from 1941-42 in Egypt, Crete, Greece, Palestine and Syria, giving early warning of enemy aircraft and carrying messages. Horrie was wounded by shrapnel and survived the sinking of the Dutch transport ship *Costa Rica*, but pitiless quarantine officials demanded he be put down on his return to Australia, despite **Moody's pleas that Horrie could aid wartime fundraising**. *The Truth* tabloid bemoaned him as "a victim of Quarantine blood lust". However, rumour has it that Horrie himself did not die in 1945, but rather a ring-in hastily obtained from the local pound, leaving the real Horrie to live out his days in idyllic Corryong.

**Wojtek:** With a name translating as "he who enjoys war", this Syrian bear cub was rescued in Iran by Polish soldiers in 1943 and trained to transport ammunition in the heat of battle. Like his fellow soldiers he lived in tents, travelled in trucks, and enjoyed beer and cigarettes (which he ate). After the war Wojtek moved to Edinburgh Zoo, where he enjoyed considerable media attention (and surreptitiously thrown ciggies) until his death in 1963.

**William Windsor:** Known as "Billy", Lance Corporal Windsor (Ret.) is a goat formerly attached to the Royal Welsh infantry battalion of the British Army. Billy is descended from the royal herd of cashmere goats given to Queen Victoria

as an accession gift from the Shah of Persia. He was temporarily demoted to fusilier after an **embarrassing display at the 2006 Queen's Birthday** parade in which he tried to head butt a drummer. Before his retirement in May 2009, Billy received a daily ration of Guinness ("to keep the iron up") and two cigarettes ("thought to be good for the coat"). Like Wojtek, he ate them.

Nils Olav: Perhaps the highest-ranked military animal, Colonel-in-Chief Sir Nils Olav is the



**penguin mascot of the Norwegian King's Guard.** He lives at Edinburgh Zoo and was adopted in 1971 while the guard was in town for the Military Tattoo. Nils rose rapidly through the ranks before dying in 1987. His successor, Nils Olav II, was knighted in 2008 by King Harald V of Norway amid much pomp and ceremony that, honestly, Nils did not appear to care very much about.

Sergeant Stubby: This pit-bull-cross shipped out to France with his owner, John Conroy, and saw a month of combat in 1918. He learned to sniff out mustard gas, hear incoming shells before humans **could and find wounded soldiers in no man's land.** He even captured a German spy! Back home, Stubby became a national celebrity and met three presidents: Wilson, Coolidge and

Harding. He died in 1926, aged nine or 10.

Cher Ami: This brave little American pigeon saved the lives of 194 men at the Battle of the Argonne in 1918. His two comrades-in-wings having been Jerry-canned, Cher Ami flew his SOS message 25 miles in as many minutes, despite losing a leg, taking a shot to the breast and being blinded in one eye. Medics carved him a wooden replacement leg, and he returned to the US with the Croix de Guerre, but never fully recovered from his wounds and died in 1919. Unusually for a decorated veteran, he was stuffed and is now **on display in the Smithsonian Institution ... alongside Sergeant Stubby.**

Sabi: This elite Australian bomb-squad Labrador served at the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games before shipping out to Afghanistan to help detect improvised explosive devices. Insurgents ambushed her vehicle convoy on 2 September 2008, and Sabi was declared MIA. After 14 months, an American soldier noticed her accompanying a local man and returned her to her base.

**Sabi's return was duly trumpeted on Remembrance Day 2009;** Kevin Rudd was making a surprise visit to Afghanistan at the time and got to meet her personally. What happened to Sabi while she was missing remains a mystery, although *The Age's* **Misha Schubert** had plenty of silly ideas.



Bath done, belly full and ready for another game of catch.

*Photo: ADF*

# Obituary

Colonel Lawrence James Newell AM CStJ QPM ED

Policeman – Citizen Soldier – Community Leader

12 February 1920 – 14 January 2011



Assistant Commissioner 1972

Lawrie took his lead for uniformed community service from his father Frank who served with the Royal Berkshire Regiment in World War One. On medical advice to seek a warmer climate Frank immigrated to Australia with his young family in 1922 and the following year enlisted in the Victoria Police Force.

Frank spent his early police force years in country postings, but eventually the family returned to Melbourne and Lawrie was able to undertake secondary education at Melbourne High School.

Upon leaving school he took up various civilian employment opportunities and prior to World War Two enlisted in the Citizens Military Force component of the Australian Army. His long professional career with the Victoria Police Force commenced with being sworn into the rank of Constable at the age of 20 years.

Two years later he married and thus commenced a busy multi career life with

advancing seniority in his police and army careers and his family responsibilities increasing.

He was commissioned into the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery in 1951 in the rank of Second Lieutenant and progressed to command 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Regiment RAA in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 1963. He retired from military service in 1972 in the rank of Colonel.

His service to Australia was highlighted in December 1967 when, in his police capacity as Inspector, he commanded the search for Prime Minister Harold Holt who tragically disappeared off Cheviot Beach near Portsea. **Lawrie's police career concluded after** achieving the rank of Deputy Commissioner, and was followed in 1978 by his appointment to the position of Chairman of the Country Fire Authority of Victoria – a position he retained



22 March 1969



until retirement in 1983. His community service entered a new phase in 1984 when he accepted the position of Deputy Commissioner, later **Commissioner of St John's Ambulance** and served in that capacity until 1992.

He was awarded the Queens Police Medal in 1973, the Efficiency Decoration for service to the Australian Army, appointed an Officer of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem and made a Member of the Order of Australia for services to Emergency Services of Victoria in recognition of his contribution to the Country Fire Authority. As a Freemason he achieved high office in the Grand Lodge of Victoria and enjoyed membership of the Returned and Services League and of Probus.

Lawrie is survived by his wife Jean, third generation policeman son Lawrie (Junior), daughter Pam and daughter Lindy.

Lawrie will be remembered with affection by the many friends he made in organisations with which he served and with admiration by those who were privileged to serve under his command.

**Firm but friendly describes Lawrie's leadership style** and his record of service is an outstanding community example.



## Letter of appreciation

**Mr Reg Morrell**

**Treasurer**

**Royal Australian Artillery Association**

Dear Reg

I write this letter to you on behalf of my mother Jean and my sister Pam Stephens and of course from myself.

I would like to thank you very much for your attendance at the funeral of my father Colonel Lawrence James Newell on Thursday 20 January 2011 at Saint Matthews at Cheltenham.

It was great to see so many old comrades of **dad's at his funeral and I feel that there is little doubt** that it marks the respect of which so many held for him after all his years of serving in the Royal Australian Artillery and that I believe dates back to around the era of 1938. In addition to those who attended at the funeral, we received many phone calls from others who were unable to attend due to prior appointments or because of illnesses or disablements that they suffer themselves.

I am aware that for many years that dad kept abreast with what was taking place within the Royal Australian Artillery Association by reading **"Cascabel"** and although during his later years he was unable to keep in touch physically due to his disabilities he gained great pleasure for the information imparted in your publication.

If you could pass on the sincere thanks of the family to the Royal Australian Artillery Association membership it would be truly appreciated.

Regards

Lawrie Newell



[Click here](#) to return to editor's page



## GALLIPOLI SNIPER

The latest copy of the Outback magazine contained an article on Billy Sing, known as the Gallipoli Sniper, who in a few short months on the Gallipoli peninsula became the Allies greatest sniper, possibly the best sniper ever. He is reputed to have killed more men than any other foot soldier in history.

**Below is Billy's story** which I have taken, in large part, from the Outback together with additional information from the Australian War Memorial. I noted that Billy died within days of my own grandfather – both deaths caused by the effects of mustard gas attacks they were subjected to during the war. Research shows that most soldiers were returned to the front line **after 'recovering'** from the effects of gas – BUT – they paid a terrible price later! Almost all soldiers who were gassed during **WW1 died in their 30's, 40's and early 50's** with virtually none living to reach old age. Reading their death certificates it was a horrible and painful death due to the damage the gas had caused to their lungs, throats and respiratory systems.

**Trust Billy's story (below) is of as much interest as it was researching.**

Secretary

VVMC QLD

### Gallipoli Sniper – Billy Sing

**Billy Sing, nicknamed 'The Murderer' was a World War 1 hero, once known around the world. But by the time he died in 1943, alone and almost penniless he had all but been forgotten. Billy was born in 1886 in Clermont, QLD to a Chinese father from Shanghai and an Englishwoman. This son of**

a Chinaman rose above the racist attitudes and laws of the time and was a likeable young bloke admired for his sporting prowess, particularly with the rifle. While still a boy, the story went, he could shoot the tail off a piglet at 25 paces with a .22 rifle.

From the age of 15, Billy worked as a station hand, ringer and horse drover further cultivating

his childhood bush skills, including hunting. He honed his shooting skills at the Clermont Rifle Club, and later at the rifle club in Proserpine. A regular winner of shooting prizes, he was also a good cricketer.

Sing was in his prime when he journeyed to Brisbane to join the 5th Light Horse (LH) Regiment in 1914. The 5th LH was in Egypt when the ANZACS landed at Gallipoli. Leaving their horses **behind, Billy's regiment** deployed in May 1915 as **Infantry to Turkey's Gallipoli Peninsula. Trooper 355, Billy Sing became 'probably the most dangerous sniper in any army throughout the war', wrote Ion Idriess.**

Idriess sailed to war on the same boat as Billy and became a popular author after the war. He was also an experienced bushman and at times was **Billy's spotter.**

**'Abdul the Terrible', as the Allies called him, was the decorated Turkish sniper bought to Gallipoli to stop Sing! He methodically studied the Australian's handiwork – up to nine kills per day. Having finally located Sing's specially constructed 'possie', Abdul prepared to take down his prey – only to be shot between the eyes by Sing.**

**Abdul was one of Sing's 201 confirmed Gallipoli kills, though he probably took the lives of many more Turks – there was not always a spotter to verify kills, and it was sometimes difficult to**



determine if targets that had been hit and fallen into trenches had actually been killed. Though **bringing grief to Turkey, Sing's exploits saved Allied lives and was perfect propaganda** – he was mentioned in despatches, awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and lauded in newspapers from Sydney to San Francisco.

**But it didn't go all Sing's way. He was wounded in August 1915, when a Turkish sniper hit the telescope of his spotter, who was badly wounded before the bullet finally came to rest in Billy's shoulder.** As the weather deteriorated, Billy succumbed to the cold, wet weather and the appalling conditions in the trenches and was evacuated to Malta just weeks before the Allies withdrew from the Gallipoli peninsula.

Bouts of illness kept Billy in England for some time before he was deployed to the Western Front in January 1917 with the 31st Australian Infantry Battalion, where soon after he

was wounded and sent back to England to **recuperate. He wrote home, 'We had an awful time in France this winter; it was the coldest they've had for years.....It would break your heart to see the dead bodies lying around unburied.'**

Following his discharge from hospital he was given leave. Sing headed to Edinburgh, where he had a whirlwind romance with a waitress Elizabeth Stewart. On 29 June they were married. A month later Billy was back in the trenches!

Private Sing was awarded the Belgian Croix de Guerre in early 1918, for his role in leading a patrol, killing several German snipers at Polygon Wood in September 1917. Over his period of service he contracted influenza, rheumatism,

mumps, had been gassed, shot on two occasions, sustained shrapnel wounds to both legs and his back, spending quite some time in and out of hospitals, eventually causing his medical discharge.

The mustard gas caused lifelong lung disease for Billy and it signalled the end of his military career when in July 1918 he was shipped home. Despite having been wounded, gassed and ill several times he was declared fit and able to work when discharged in Brisbane.

For a time Billy was buoyed by an enthusiastic



Trooper Billy Sing of the 5th Light Horse Regiment speaks with Lieutenant-General Sir William Riddell Birdwood (back to the camera) in Egypt, 1915.

welcome in both Proserpine and later Clermont, but that soon faded. He set out to be a sheep farmer like so many other soldiers on blocks donated to returned servicemen by the Federal Government, but his land was poor like many of the blocks in this flawed scheme. Almost a third of the soldiers turned farmers walked off the land – including Billy

Sing.

**There's no indication that Billy's wife was ever part of his new life.** There is correspondence showing that he applied for Elizabeth to have free **passage from Britain, it doesn't seem to have eventuated.**

Though hampered by illness and his wounds, the failed sheep farmer still had to make a living. He turned to gold prospecting and did well enough to go on weekend sprees with his mining mates. He also got a reputation for heavy drinking and a bad attitude. When the gold ran out, Billy turned to labouring in Brisbane where he continued to work hard although complaining of pains in his heart, chest and back.

# **We've had an awful time in France ... It would break your heart to see the dead bodies lying around.**



The sniping position of Billy Sing at Gallipoli, near Chatam's Post, where he was described as a "picturesque-looking man killer".

On May 19, 1943, Billy was found dead in his boarding house bedroom. Five shillings were also found but no sign of his war medals.

As his humble grave marker in the Lutwyche War Cemetery weathered away, Billy Sing was all but **forgotten**. **50 years after his death a newspaper article revived interest in 'this ace Australian sniper'**. A plaque was erected on the site where he died and in 1995, a statue of Sing was unveiled with full military honours in his hometown of Clermont.

**In 2004 Australian Army snipers named their Baghdad post the 'Billy Sing Bar & Grill'. Last year, on the 66th anniversary of his death, wreaths were laid at Sing's grave during a ceremony attended by various dignitaries, including the Chinese Consul-General.**

Sing was buried in the Lutwyche War Cemetery, in Kedron, a northern suburb of Brisbane. His grave is now part of the lawn cemetery section of the Lutwyche Cemetery, and the inscription on his headstone reads:

AT REST

WILLIAM EDWARD (BILLY) SING (DCM)

Born Clermont Qld. 2-3-1886 — 19-5-1943

Reg. No. 355 Australian Fifth Light Horse Regiment and later the 31st Infantry Battalion

Son of JOHN SING (bn. SHANGHAI) and MARY ANN (nee PUGH bn. ENGLAND)

AND MARRIED FOR A TIME TO ELIZABETH (STEWART) IN EDINBURGH 29-6-1917

A man of all trades, Pte. Sing was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous gallantry, the Belgian Croux De Guerre and mentioned often in despatches. Serving at Gallipoli and in France from 1915-1918, he became known as Australia's most effective marksman/sniper accounting for more than 150 of the opposing forces.

His incredible accuracy contributed greatly to the preservation of the lives of those with whom he served during a war always remembered for countless acts of valour and tragic carnage.

*Thanks to WO2 Max Murray for forwarding this interesting article. Ed*





## Update on AAAM, North Fort and RAAHC

23rd January 2011

Dear Gunners and Friends.

I am writing to further update you all about recent activities concerning the Australian Army Artillery Museum (AAAM), Army's presence at North Fort and the artillery collection under the care of the RAAHC. This update outlines progress since my message of 11th December 2010 and the outcome of a range of recent meetings involving the Army, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, the RAAHC and groups of volunteers.

### The Australian Army Artillery Museum

In accordance with the Army decision in early December, the AAAM officially closed at North Fort on the 19th December. The Army History Unit and Army staff at the AAAM are now preparing to vacate North Fort by mid 2011 and to transfer the AAAM collection initially to storage at Bandiana. AHU moved some large outside items owned by the AAAM to Bandiana before Christmas and will move more in the next few weeks. Army advises that access to North Fort to visit the Memorial Walkway and for volunteers to assist the transition is available from 9AM-3 PM Monday to Friday. Army will hand over the tunnels and external access to the North Fort area to SHFT from 1st February.

Army have confirmed that a new Army museum to display the artillery collection will definitely be built at Puckapunyal where the School of Artillery is now located. It is likely to be a new combined Australian Artillery and Armour Museum built on the perimeter of the base to allow easy public access. The Deputy Chief of Army has assured me that every means is being examined to quickly build this facility, and he will advise further on

planning for this soon.

The Army has allocated considerable funds to ensure the move of the AAAM items to Bandiana is professionally handled. I am assured the Collection will be securely housed there under cover and in waterproof and aired containers. A curator will be specifically assigned to account and care for the Collection, and funds approved for quarterly inspections by experts nominated by the Regimental Committee. Nevertheless, it is of concern that the AAAM collection may be stored in Bandiana for some years. While it is proposed that items from the RAAHC collection that most appropriately should be held by the AAAM will be loaned to Army as part of the future AAAM collection, alternative arrangements are required for some RAAHC items that would deteriorate in storage or to which the Regiment and the public needs access to in the interim. This includes the library, the Whitelaw collection, some of the uniforms and other valuable items.

### North Head and the SHFT

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (SHFT) was set up by the Australian Government to conserve, protect and improve public access to former Defence and Commonwealth sites around Sydney Harbour. The sites include Cockatoo Island, North Head Sanctuary, Headland Park, Chowder Bay, Woolwich Dock and Parklands, Macquarie Lightstation, Marine Biological Station, Snapper Island and HMAS Platypus. The SHFT aims to develop these sites into public spaces that offer tours, education programs, events, exhibitions, parklands, walks and business tenancy. It has a current charter as an independent organization through until at least 2033.

In recent years the SHFT has developed a

management plan for the North Head area (called the North Head Sanctuary – NHS) which recognizes the historical links that the military have had at North Head through the School of Artillery, and acknowledges responsibility to maintain the various fortifications and tunnels on North Head, the Defence of Sydney Monument and the Memorial Walkway. The Trust's Management Plan for the NHS was adopted on 3 September.

SHFT has clarified that they fully support the further development of North Fort in accordance with their management plan. They plan to open the complete NHS area for public access as soon as possible after 1st February including an Orientation Centre and a refurbished Café at North Fort. They intend to use the NHS to interpret the story of the Defence of Sydney. They propose to keep and develop further as appropriate the Battle of Sydney Monument, the Memorial Walkway, the 9.2 in Gun emplacements, tunnels and associated fortifications, and they will support the establishment of a significant Defence of Sydney museum that will also acknowledge the artillery and School of Artillery history at North Head. As a result of recent meetings at North Head, they have recognized the valuable work and projects being undertaken by the volunteer guides and workshop groups at North Fort, and are looking at how they can best maintain this capability. It appears the SHFT will wish to retain at North Head a maintenance capacity and guided tours of the tunnels, fortifications and their Museum. The SHFT has agreed that the RAAHC can maintain the existing library at North Fort in its current building for the interim, and to provide other support to the RAAHC during the transition period.

The RAAHC is prepared to loan a few appropriate items to the SHFT for display at NHS and elsewhere around Sydney. Consultation on what this might entail has commenced. It has also been agreed between SHFT and the RAAHC that the Memorial walkway will continue to be administered by the RAAHC with the support of the SHFT. It is intended to complete the walkway and conduct an opening dedication during 2011.

### [The RAA Historical Company \(RAAHC\)](#)

In late 2010 the RAAHC refocused as a national artillery organization with the aim to foster, maintain and promote the heritage of artillery throughout Australia. In this respect it plans to work closely with all federal, State, regional and local organizations interested in the past and present history and heritage of Australian artillery. The RAAHC will be contacting State and regional artillery organisations over the next 6 months or so to further develop a partnership that appropriately develops a national perspective on all artillery matters.

The RAAHC has a valuable artillery collection; some under trust from individuals and benefactors, mainly located at North Head with a portion on loan to some other artillery organizations around Australia. A good amount of its collection has been on loan to and displayed at the AAAM at North Fort. The Collection includes guns, field, locating and air defence artillery equipments and ancillaries, vehicles, uniforms, maps, special collections, books and pamphlets, and artillery memorabilia. Multiple numbers of some items are held in the collection.

Discussions are underway with the AHU to clarify the ownership of some items in the current holdings at North Fort. It is the intention of the RAAHC to loan to the Army all those items that should be most appropriately displayed in Army museums including the future AAAM. Other items in the RAAHC collection might be loaned to other national, state, regional or local organizations, including the SHFT, that may have a close historical association with items or can best display and maintain the items, but the process to finalise this allocation will take time. In the interim, the RAAHC is therefore negotiating with the SHFT to temporarily retain some of the Collection at the NHS for further classification and repair.

We will continue to need RAAHC members and volunteers to support this process.

The RAAHC has also agreed with the SHFT and the AHU to maintain its library at North Head for the foreseeable future as a national artillery research centre, possibly including a Sydney fortifications section. It will remain in its existing building at least for the next 12 months.

We will need volunteers in the Sydney area, and



elsewhere where technology allows, to assist in the development and maintenance of the Artillery Research centre.

### Websites

The RAAHC currently manages the North Fort website [www.northfort.org.au/](http://www.northfort.org.au/). In light of what is happening at North Head and the revised focus of the RAAHC, this is not now appropriate as the RAAHC website. This website will therefore close soon and a new RAAHC website will be established.

The official Army artillery website is [www.army.gov.au/RRAA/](http://www.army.gov.au/RRAA/). This website is managed by the RAA Head of Regiment staff and has recently been revised and improved. All official information on RAA matters, including history and heritage, will be displayed on this website.

There are also a large number of other Artillery related websites operating in Australia based around regional RAA Associations, past and present artillery unit associations and interested organisations. I encourage all these websites to be linked and to assist in informing all gunners, past and present, and all interested individuals about artillery matters.

### Future

The RAA Regimental Committee and the RAAHC Board will continue to closely monitor, and influence where possible, the development of this situation. We are determined to ensure the preservation of the artillery collection at the future AAAM and around Australia. We see this process as an opportunity to ensure a better national perspective and approach to artillery matters.

I will keep you informed as the situation develops. We encourage the constructive support of all Gunners and friends through this process, and encourage the continued support and assistance of our volunteers both during the next few months and as long-term supporters of the RAAHC and the Regiment.

Ubique,

Major General Tim Ford, AO (Retd)  
Representative Colonel Commandant and  
Chairman RAAHC  
23rd January 2011

### Operation CHRISTCHURCH ASSIST Concludes

Operation CHRISTCHURCH ASSIST, the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) contribution to the Whole of Government response to the devastating Christchurch earthquake in February, has formally concluded as the focus of operations in New Zealand shifts from rescue and recovery to long-term reconstruction.

The RAAF C-17s and C-130 Hercules aircraft moved almost 500 passengers and transported nearly 132 tonnes of cargo to assist our neighbours in their time of crisis. This significant effort has been closely coordinated with New Zealand Emergency Authorities, allowing the right personnel and equipment to be delivered where it was needed.

The Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal **Angus Houston**, said that: **"The fact that the RAAF has been able to move specialist police and rescue personnel and their equipment to support the crisis demonstrates the ADF's ability to support other agencies when their specialist expertise is required and can be complemented by the capabilities available within the ADF."**

The RAAF C-17s and C-130s are incredibly capable aircraft and have provided the heavy lift capability that was required when moving the equipment and specialists to assist in New Zealand.

**"These aircraft and their crews responded in very short time and have moved search and rescue personnel, repatriated Australians caught in the disaster, delivered a field hospital to Christchurch and transported a desalination unit to provide fresh water to our neighbours.**

**"Whilst the RAAF airframes and their crews have done the heavy lifting, personnel from the three Services in the ADF were involved in the coordination and planning of this operation.**

**"New Zealand and Australia have a long history of standing side by side through good times and bad, and we will continue to stand by our friends and neighbours in New Zealand as they recover from this tragedy.**

**"While Operation CHRISTCHURCH ASSIST has now officially drawn to a close, the ADF continues to assist in the disaster relief response in Japan through Operation PACIFIC ASSIST."**

## **A QUARTERMASTER'S PRAYER**

Courtesy Maj David Osborne (Rtd)

"During the 1960's my Father was a WO1 in the Royal Australian Corps of Signals, having re-joined the Regular Army after World War 2 service as a gunner in 2/11 Field Regiment. At the time he was RSM of 3 Signal Regiment in Albert Road South Melbourne. At the time the only way to create space within the rank structure to be able to promote Sergeants and WO2's was that senior RSM's were offered to go on a Q Commission course (it was commonly called a "knife and fork" course) to gain a Commission and become a Quartermaster, sometimes with the rank of Lieutenant, but usually becoming a Captain fairly quickly. My Father, who by around 1965 was the senior RSM in his Corps, was offered such an opportunity and went to what was then called the Jungle Training Centre at Canungra in South East Queensland. It was at this course that he acquired the paper attached named the Quartermaster's Prayer. I hope it is of interest to readers to recall the remarkable skills of everyone in or attached to the Quartermaster's Store. I'm sure that many of the sentiments hold true today, almost 50 years later. My father retired by age in 1973 with the rank of Major and his final posting was Adjutant/Quartermaster HQ Southern Command at Victoria Barracks."

### JUNGLE TRAINING CENTRE

### PEACE ADMINISTRATION WING

#### A QUARTERMASTER'S PRAYER

Dear Lord, help me to become the kind of Quartermaster my CO would like to have me be.

Give me that mysterious something which will enable me at all time satisfactorily to explain policies, rules, regulations, instructions and procedures to my staff and storemen even when they have never been explained to me.

Help me to teach and to train the uninterested and dim-witted without ever losing my patience and my temper.

Give me that love for my fellowman which passeth all understanding so that I may lead the recalcitrant, obstinate, no-good soldier into the path of righteousness by my own example and my soft remonstrance, instead of busting him on the nose.

Instill into me inner tranquility and peace of mind that no longer will I wake from my restless sleep in the middle of the night, crying out: "What has my CO got that I haven't got, and how did he get it?".

Teach me to smile if it kills me.

Make me a better officer and leader of men by helping develop larger and greater qualities of understanding, tolerance, sympathy, wisdom, perspective, equanimity, mind-reading and second sight.

And when, Dear Lord thou hast helped me to achieve the high pinnacle my CO has prescribed for me, and when I shall have become the paragon of all quartermasterly virtues in this mortal world, Dear Lord, move over!



Bombs away: LBdr Adam Ralcliffe.  
8/12 Med Regt, selects a shell at  
Armadillo in Helmand province.

Photo W02 Mart Dowling

# Shot at future

By Michael Brooke

RAA gunners deploying on Operation Herrick are returning with valuable experience from combat that has validated current artillery doctrine and training for the first time since the Vietnam War. Lessons learnt by NCOs and junior officers while serving in the gun line with British artillery units in Helmand province, Afghanistan, have better prepared the RAA for future operations.

CO 8/12 Mdm Regt Lt-Col Neil Sweeney said there were numerous benefits for the RAA detachments involved in Op Herrick, where they operate the LI 18 Light Gun.

"The six-month training in the UK with our British counterparts, followed by six-month deployments to Helmand province, allows the RAA to build new levels of experience we can inject in all gun-line personnel," he said.

Lt-Col Sweeney said Op Herrick confirmed the quality of Army's training because the feedback from the UK artillery regiments was that Australian gunners were highly trained and highly respected.

"There is an immediate recognition that we produce very professional gunners who are capable of integrating into a unit, go on operations with that unit and successfully fulfil their tasks and jobs."

He said Op Herrick had allowed Aussie gunners to validate the training regimes that have been in

place over the past 30 in 40 years and have now been tried and tested in combat.

"The lessons learnt will drive some doctrinal improvements for operating in terrain and environments like **Helmand province**."

Capt Nick Cooper, 8/12 Mdm Regt said in Helmand province the RAA gunners conducted a whole range of fire missions in support of British and Coalition forces and were primarily involved in fire support for manoeuvre forces.

Capt Cooper, who deployed in 2008 with Rotation 8 as part of 7 Parachute Regt, Royal Horse Arty, said they conducted 191 fire missions and fired about 2900 rounds in support of British, Danish and US forces.

"The missions ranged from direct and indirect fire missions in certain areas such as the valleys they are working to control, illumination missions, smoke and the application of high explosive ordnance in support of Coalition forward manoeuvre operations," he said.

Capt Cooper said the main benefit of the deployment was learning and sharing that experience.

"The bombardiers have gone on to train recruits or junior soldiers in this regiment and the experiences have taught them what is important in the modern counter-insurgency field-gunners environment."



## Australian Army

### Awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia

#### Corporal Benjamin Roberts-Smith, VC, MG

#### Citation

For the most conspicuous gallantry in action in circumstances of extreme peril as Patrol Second-in-Command, Special Operations Task Group on Operation SLIPPER.

Corporal Benjamin Roberts Smith enlisted in the Australian Regular Army in 1996. After completing the requisite courses, he was posted to the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment where he saw active service in East Timor. In January 2003, he successfully completed the Australian Special Air Service Regiment Selection Course.

During his tenure with the Regiment, he deployed on Operation VALIANT, SLATE, SLIPPER, CATALYST and SLIPPER II. Corporal Benjamin Roberts-Smith was awarded the Medal for Gallantry for his actions in Afghanistan in 2006.

On the 11th June 2010, a troop of the Special Operations Task Group conducted a helicopter assault into Tizak, Kandahar Province, in order to capture or kill a senior Taliban commander.

Immediately upon the helicopter insertion, the troop was engaged by machine gun and rocket propelled grenade fire from multiple, dominating positions. Two soldiers were wounded in action and the troop was pinned down by fires from three machine guns in an elevated fortified position to the south of the village. Under the cover of close air support, suppressive small arms and machine gun fire, Corporal Roberts-Smith and his patrol manoeuvred to within 70 metres of the enemy position in order to neutralise the enemy machine gun positions and regain the initiative.

Upon commencement of the assault, the patrol

drew very heavy, intense, effective and sustained fire from the enemy position. Corporal Roberts-Smith and his patrol members fought towards the enemy position until, at a range of 40 metres, the weight of fire prevented further movement forward. At this point, he identified the opportunity to exploit some cover provided by a small structure.

As he approached the structure, Corporal Roberts-Smith identified an insurgent grenadier in the throes of engaging his patrol. Corporal Roberts-Smith instinctively engaged the insurgent at point-blank range resulting in the death of the insurgent. With the members of his patrol still pinned down by the three enemy machine gun positions, he exposed his own position in order to draw fire away from his patrol, which enabled

them to bring fire to bear against the enemy. His actions enabled his Patrol Commander to throw a grenade and silence one of the machine guns. Seizing the advantage, and demonstrating extreme devotion to duty and the most conspicuous gallantry, Corporal Roberts-Smith, with a total disregard for his own safety, stormed the enemy position killing the two remaining machine gunners.

His act of valour enabled his patrol to break-in to the enemy position and to lift

the weight of fire from the remainder of the troop who had been pinned down by the machine gun fire. On seizing the fortified gun position, Corporal Roberts-Smith then took the initiative again and continued to assault enemy positions in depth during which he and another patrol member engaged and killed further enemy. His acts of selfless valour directly enabled his troop to go on and clear the village of Tizak of Taliban. This decisive engagement subsequently caused the remainder of the Taliban in Shah Wali Kot District to retreat from the area.

Corporal Roberts-Smith's most conspicuous gallantry in a circumstance of extreme peril was



instrumental to the seizure of the initiative and the success of the troop against a numerically superior enemy force. His valour was an inspiration to the soldiers with whom he fought alongside and is in keeping with the finest traditions of the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.

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## [Australian Army](#)

### [Awarded the Medal for Gallantry](#)

### [Lance Corporal Benjamin Roberts-Smith](#)

#### [Citation](#)

For gallantry in action in hazardous circumstances as a patrol sniper in the Special Operations Task Group – Task Force 637, whilst deployed on Operation SLIPPER Rotation Three Afghanistan, May – September 2006.

On the night of 31st May 2006, Lance Corporal Roberts-Smith was employed as a patrol scout and sniper in a patrol which was tasked with establishing an Observation Post near the Chora Pass in extremely rugged terrain overlooking an Anti Coalition Militia sanctuary. Early in the patrol, after an arduous ten hour foot infiltration up the side of a mountain, the patrol was required to coordinate offensive air support to assist a combined Special Operations Task Group and other Special Forces patrol who were in contact with the Anti Coalition Militia in the valley floor to their north. Following this engagement the patrol remained in the Observation Post to continue providing vital information on the Anti Coalition Militia in the area. This comprehensive reporting had a significant effect on shaping the local area for the subsequent coalition forces operation.

On the 2nd June, the Observation Post had become the focus of the Anti Coalition Militia force and repeated attempts to locate and surround the position ensued. In one particular incident the Militia attempted to outflank the Observation Post. Lance Corporal Roberts-Smith was part of a two man team tasked to move out of their relatively secure Observation Post in order to locate and neutralise the Militia and regain the initiative. This task was successfully achieved.

In another incident, two Anti Coalition Militia attempted to attack the Observation Post from a different flank, Lance Corporal Roberts-Smith again moved to support and neutralise one of these Militia. Lance Corporal Roberts-Smith then realised that the forward edge of the Observation Post was not secure and made the decision to split the team and take up an exposed position forward of the patrol so he could effectively employ his sniper weapon. Whilst isolated, and in his precarious position, he observed a group of sixteen Anti Coalition Militia advancing across open ground towards the Observation Post. Lance Corporal Roberts-Smith effectively employed his sniper rifle to stop their advance whilst receiving very accurate small arms fire from another group of Militia to his flank.

Through his efforts, Lance Corporal Roberts-Smith maintained the initiative and ensured that his patrol remained secure by holding this position without support for twenty minutes. He was eventually reinforced by his original team member and together they continued to hold off the Militia advance for a further twenty minutes until offensive air support arrived.

Lance Corporal Roberts-Smith's actions on the 2nd June 2006, whilst under heavy Anti Coalition Militia fire and in a precarious position, threatened by a numerically superior force, are testament to his courage, tenacity and sense of duty to his patrol. His display of gallantry in disregarding his own personal safety in maintaining an exposed sniper position under sustained fire with a risk of being surrounded by the Anti Coalition Militia was outstanding. His actions, in order to safeguard his patrol, were of the highest order and in keeping with the finest traditions of Special Operations Command Australia, the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.

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## [Personal biography](#)

### [Corporal Benjamin Roberts-Smith, VC, MG](#)

Benjamin Roberts-Smith was born in Perth on 1 November 1978.

He enlisted in the Australian Army on 11 November 1996. He completed his training at the School of Infantry, Singleton, New South Wales.



In 1997, Corporal Roberts-Smith was posted to the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR) where he served as a Rifleman in C Company, before advancing on to be a section commander in Direct Fire Support Weapons platoon.



During his tenure with 3RAR, Corporal Roberts-Smith deployed twice as part of the Rifle Company Butterworth Malaysia, and conducted two operational tours of East Timor including INTERFET in 1999.

In 2003, Corporal Roberts-Smith completed the SASR selection course and was selected to commence the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) reinforcement cycle. On completion of the reinforcement cycle, he was posted to 3 Squadron, where he served as a member of the Tactical Assault Group West and the Contingency Squadron.

While with 3 Squadron, Corporal Roberts-Smith was a member of a number of training and assistance teams throughout South East Asia. He was deployed on operations to Fiji in 2004, and has also deployed on Recovery Operations, as well as a number of personnel security detachments in Iraq throughout 2005/2006.

2006 saw Corporal Roberts-Smith deployed as part of the Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) in Afghanistan where he was subsequently awarded the Medal of Gallantry. He was again deployed with the SOTG in Afghanistan in 2007, and on his return was posted to Operational Support Squadron as a member of the Selection Wing where he took part in the training of SASR Reinforcements.

In 2009, Corporal Roberts-Smith was then posted to 2 Squadron where he deployed as a patrol second in command to Afghanistan. Upon his return, Corporal Roberts-Smith completed the SASR Patrol Commanders Course, and in 2010 was again deployed with the SOTG in Afghanistan. For his actions carried out within Tizak, Afghanistan, he was invested by Her Excellency the Governor

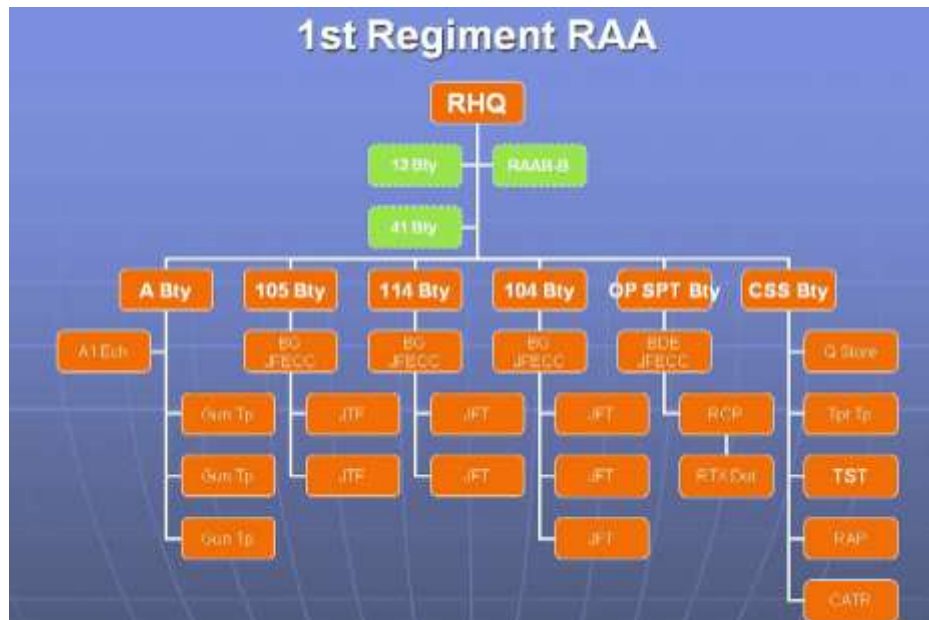
General of Australia at Campbell Barracks, Perth on 23 January 2011.

Corporal Roberts-Smith is currently posted to the Special Air Service Regiment. He is married to Emma, and they are the proud parents of 5-month old twin girls, Eve and Elizabeth.



*Courtesy of <http://www.defence.gov.au/>*

[Click here](#) to return to editor's page



## Reorganisation

The full-time field and medium units of the Royal Australian Artillery are undergoing a most significant reorganisation, probably the most notable since that of 1940 when howitzer batteries were removed and field regiments converted to the British Second World War establishments.

The schematic above shows the outline reorganisation of 1st Regiment (note that **descriptors such as 'field' and 'medium' have now disappeared**):

RHQ—remains basically unchanged.

13 & 41 Btys, RAA Band—Army Reserve—unchanged.

A Bty—becomes the gun or delivery battery with all 12 guns in the full-time batteries being brought under command in three troops each of a command post and four guns (déjà vu?)

105, 114 & 104 Btys—all to be observation batteries consisting of a battle group joint fires **and effects coordination centre (BG JFECC sic BC's Party)** and two or three joint fires teams (JFT sic FO Parties). 104 Bty will be reraised imminently whilst 114 Bty will not appear till 2013.

Op Spt Bty—Operations Support Battery will combine the former Arty Tac (now brigade joint fires and effects coordination centre, BDE JFECC) and the Regimental Command Post (RCP) which incorporates a retransmission detachment (RTX Det). The former BC HQ Bty (sic OpsO) commands this sub unit.

CSS Bty—Combat Service Support Battery takes all the logistic elements of the unit (Q Store, Transport, Technical Support Troop [sic LAD], RAP and Catering) and places them under command

of a non artillery major.

The concept of operations in Afghanistan has been the determinant for this organisation. Guns are deployed in small groups (one, two, three or four) whilst there is a high demand for more battlegroup and combat group RAA liaison parties than the current organisation can provide. All calls for fire are directed to the RCP.

When digital sights for the guns are procured, it is envisaged that the troop command posts will revert to control posts whilst the actual firing data will be transmitted direct from the RCP to each gun platform.

**Now, don't begin saying, 'But what if they have to fight in a jungle environment in direct support of an infantry battalion?' because the reply is, 'Well, we'll just change the organisation again.'** Think back to the late 1950s when the Korea **establishments were thrown into Malaya.** That's correct, the RAA changed from two troops of four guns to a battery of six guns which had the capability to divide into two x three gun sections. This became known as the Tropical Warfare establishment which has remained until now.

Whilst this is, perhaps, a mind-blowing exercise for some old Gunners to come to grips with, accept the change until the wheel turns again.

However, the rather sad part of this whole reorganisation is that, for the first time in its life (which extends back to 1916), the 105th Battery will not have guns on its equipment table. Does this make the battery a toothless tiger?

Arthur Burke

*Further information on the next page. Ed.*



## Further information on changes to RAA courtesy The Soldiers' Newspaper Army March 3, 2011

At the heart of the reorganisation is the planned introduction into service of the Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System (AFATDS), a fully automated digital battle-management system.

AFATDS is a complex system which requires highly skilled soldiers who are experts in their fields.

To enable this, the ARA Fd Arty Branch migrated to three specialised employment categories: ECN 255 Artillery Observer, ECN 254 Artillery Command Systems Operator and ECN 162 Artillery Gunner.

The changes are being made to meet the challenges of Adaptive Army and the introduction into service of new equipment provided by the artillery replacement project known as Land 17.

The Army's guns are being replaced with the M777A2, a capable, lightweight towed howitzer, which features improved mobility, range and accuracy.

The new artillery pieces will be used to re-equip units based in Townsville and Brisbane and the School of Arty in Puckapunyal, Victoria.

CO 1 Regt RAA Lt-Col Dave Kelly said the M777A2 was a battle-proven lightweight howitzer in service with a number of Australia's coalition partners.

"A key challenge will be that of cultural change - the RAA has been using a number of very sound tactics, techniques and procedures effectively over a long period of time to support manoeuvre forces," Lt-Col Kelly said.

"The introduction into service of Land 17 equipment will require the RAA to modify some of these tactics in order to optimise the employment of this equipment."

Beginning this year, 1 and 4 Regt RAA will each

receive 12 M777A2 155mm lightweight towed howitzers and AFATDS.

The School of Arty will also receive eight guns and AFATDS into the Joint Fires Wings and 53 Independent Bty to enable the successful delivery of training.

Early next year 8/12 Regt will receive its allocation of AFATDS. The unit will retain the in-service M1 98 155mm howitzer until the arrival of the 155mm self-propelled howitzer in 2016.

In early 2012 the ARA Fd Arty Regts will take delivery of the Digital Terminal Control System for observation post batteries, which will complete the digital link between the joint fires team and the guns, and enable forward observers to precisely identify and engage targets using the complete array of ADF joint fires assets.

A number of these systems have already been received due to an operational urgent requirement by the RAA, Special Operations Command and Air Force to support current operations in the Middle East.

Training on the new equipment will start this month at the School of Arty.



Fired up for change: A major reorganisation of the ARA Fd Arty Branch is underway to better reflect its new role. Gunners are shown here firing the existing 105mm howitzer.  
PhotobyLtAaronOldaker

The following are edited highlights of a Speech by Stephen Smith MP Minister for Defence Chief of Air Force Symposium Dinner, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Monday 28 February 2011

I thank the Chief of the Air Force, Air Marshal Mark Binskin for his invitation to address the **Chief of Air Force Symposium's Defence and Aerospace Industry Dinner**.

Tonight we acknowledge the 90th Anniversary of the Royal Australian Air Force.

This is a significant milestone.

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) was established on 31 March 1921 and is the second oldest Air Force in the World.

In late 1944, the RAAF peaked at over 180,000 personnel and 6,000 aircraft in over 60 squadrons.

In 1945, Australia had the fourth-largest air force in the world after the USA, USSR and UK.

This personally touched many Australian families. My father, then in his teens, joined the RAAF in 1943 and was about to embark overseas with his **mates at war's end. He was one of 215,000 men** and women who served in the RAAF between 1939 and 1945.

Over 10,000 RAAF personnel lost their lives.

Over 50 per cent of these deaths occurred in the air war against Germany over Europe.

Air Force personnel have since served with distinction in Korea, Malaya, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. They have also served with distinction in humanitarian and disaster relief missions throughout the world, including Bougainville, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Solomon Islands, Somalia and the Sudan.

Already in 2011, in what we always knew would be a busy year for Defence, the Air Force has been conducting a wide and demanding range of operations at home and abroad. In the face of the extraordinary natural disasters our country has experienced this year, the response by the Air Force and its personnel has been magnificent.

In response to the east coast floods in Queensland and Victoria, ADF helicopters and fixed wing aircraft have flown more than 1,000 flying hours, transported nearly 700 tonnes of stores and carried nearly 1,500 passengers both military and civilian.

**In the aftermath of Cyclone Yasi in Queensland's** north, Defence aircraft, from C-17s to King Air, have flown nearly 250 hours and airlifted more than 300 tonnes of cargo, including more than 200 tonnes of emergency food and water.

And most recently, Air Force has been at the forefront of Australian assistance to New Zealand following the terrible earthquake in Christchurch.

Air Commodore Gary Martin (Commander Air Lift Group) is commanding Joint Task Force 641 to provide air lift of civilian urban search and rescue personnel and equipment to Christchurch, New Zealand. So far, C-17 and C-130 aircraft have delivered much needed equipment, stores and emergency services personnel to New Zealand and have returned over 100 Australian civilians to Australia.

Around 150 urban search and rescue personnel and around 50 tonnes of cargo have been delivered – as well as search and rescue dogs. There are also dedicated Air Force personnel serving in operations around the globe, protecting Australia's national interests.

In the Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO), C-17s and C-130s have been the backbone of supporting our deployed forces. Three C-130J aircraft, based in the United Arab Emirates, provide in-theatre air movement for Australian and International Security Assistance Force forces throughout the MEAO, including Afghanistan. **C-17 aircraft from the RAAF's Amberley based 36 Squadron** provide routine strategic lift support to Australian forces in the MEAO, including Afghanistan.

Air Force assets and personnel also provide a substantial intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capability in the Middle East. Two AP-3C Orion surveillance aircraft provide maritime surveillance of the Arabian Sea and overland surveillance of Afghanistan.

Heron remotely piloted aircraft provide medium altitude reconnaissance, surveillance and mission



support to our ground forces in Afghanistan.

**Australia's Air Force operating these capabilities** today is small compared to its size at the end of the Second World War, with nearly 15,000 men and women, supported by 3,500 Air Force Reservists at eleven major bases and other establishments across Australia.

Today, four key roles Air Force conducts are control of the air, strike, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and air lift capability.

Control of the air is a fundamental basis for joint operations. Strike is an essential element of **Australia's defence capability**. **Australia's** capability in control of the air and strike is being bolstered with the acquisition of 24 F/A-18F Super Hornets to take over from the F-111. Delivery of these new aircraft is well advanced with initial operating capability achieved in December 2010. The Super Hornets will **complement the RAAF's existing fleet of 71 F/A-18A/B Hornets**.

Flight testing of the F-35, the Joint Strike Fighter, **Australia's next generation air combat capability** is well under way in the US. The RAAF will take delivery of its first aircraft in 2014. The F-35's combination of low observability, advanced weaponry and sophisticated intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance sensors, will allow Australia to maintain its capability edge and control its sea and air approaches.

The F-35 is a good example of the significant value in working together with other nations to develop capability solutions, and the benefits of common platforms and systems. Jointly operating capabilities reduce operating costs and increase the interoperability of our forces.

This is particularly important during a period when countries around the globe, including Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom and New Zealand are undertaking significant reform programs to achieve better value for money and more efficiency in defence acquisitions.

**Air Force's air lift capability is fundamental to Australia's ability to respond**. Air lift is critical in war time but as well is fundamental to an ability to respond quickly to natural disasters. The importance of airlift was highlighted during my

recent visit to New Zealand.

On 10 February, New Zealand Defence Minister Mapp and I announced in Wellington the successful reinvigoration of the Australia-New Zealand Airlift Agreement. This initiative was **developed at the Defence Ministers' Meeting in Sydney in September 2009** to complement the Pacific-focused Ready Response Force, initiated at the same time.

The Ready Response Force involves the sharing of key capabilities, such as the amphibious lift ship HMNZS Canterbury. It was also agreed in Wellington that Australia and New Zealand would increase cooperation, coordination and sharing in airlift.

Tonight I announce that Australia will consider the acquisition of an additional C-17A Globemaster III aircraft through the United States Foreign Military Sales program. I will discuss this with Deputy Under Secretary Grant during her visit here.

**The Air Force's current four C-17** aircraft were delivered over the period 2006 to 2008 and have provided an operational capability since 2007. They have delivered excellent service and have **provided Defence's first true global-airlift capability**. The recent events in Queensland and Christchurch have underlined the **C-17's as an essential part of Australia's capacity to respond** to natural and regional disasters.

While disaster relief has been a recent public focus for C-17 operations, they continue to support Australian and ISAF forces in Afghanistan and the Middle East, meeting their primary purpose in providing military long-range heavy airlift.

The C-17A aircraft can lift outsize and heavy cargoes over long distances providing a **significant contribution to Australia's ability to reach and respond to events**. One C-17A can carry up to four C-130 Hercules loads in a single lift and cover twice the distance in three-quarters of the time of a C-130 Hercules.

Currently, Air Force owns 4 C-17A and 24 C-130 aircraft. An acquisition of an additional C-17 would almost certainly obviate any need for the acquisition of two additional C-130 aircraft, currently planned for after 2013-14.

Given the significant work that is being undertaken by our current fleet of C-17 aircraft (*see pictures below*) in support of operations, including recent disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, and the unpredictable nature of some of these events, we are considering the acquisition of an additional C-17 aircraft now to provide Australia with a wider range of options to support such operations.

We are seeking cost and availability information to enable consideration to be given to the acquisition of another C-17 aircraft.

Tonight we congratulate the RAAF on achieving 90 years of distinguished service to the nation.

The RAAF personnel in attendance here tonight and throughout the course of the Australian International Air show and Aerospace & Defence Exposition at Avalon continue that distinguished service.

The Air show is a fitting celebration of the 90th anniversary of the RAAF. The Avalon Air show has a long standing reputation as one of the largest and most comprehensive events of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

I hope that you enjoy your dinner tonight, and that you enjoy the Air show over the course of the week.

*Courtesy Defence Media Centre*

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An RAF Group Captain was about to start the morning briefing to his staff. While waiting for the coffee machine to finish its brewing, the Group Captain decided to pose a question to all assembled.

He explained that his wife had been a bit frisky the night before and he failed to get his usual amount of sound sleep. He posed the question of just how much of sex was "work" and how much of it was "pleasure?"

A Wing Commander chimed in with 75-25% in favour of work.

A Squadron Leader said it was 50-50%.

A Flight Lieutenant responded with 25-75% in favour of pleasure, depending upon his state of inebriation at the time.

There being no consensus, the Group Captain turned to the Corporal who was in charge of making the coffee. What was his opinion?

Without any hesitation, the young Corporal responded, "Sir, it has to be 100% pleasure."

The Group Captain was surprised and, as you might guess, asked why?

"Well, sir, if there was any work involved, the officers would have me doing it for them." The room fell silent.

God Bless the lower ranks.



Those of us that spent a **bit of time in the air, going into hot LZ's or coming out of hot pick up zones** or those that were members of flight crews in Viet Nam will relate to this in a very personal way. Those that have not had these experiences may look at a Viet Nam Veteran a little differently.

Click on or type in.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qH2vbYs6ebc&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qH2vbYs6ebc&feature=player_embedded)

## Chief of Army Address

### Army Birthday 2011

#### An Army for and of a Nation

CDF, VCDF, CN, special guests, Ms Lorna Ward – who is I believe the oldest surviving female veteran of WW2 - members of the Australian Army. Thank you for joining us at this early hour, in this most wonderful place of remembrance. Could I start today by thanking the Director of the Australian War Memorial for making the facility available to us, and can I particularly thank those **members of the Memorial's staff who started** very early this morning. We are indebted to you.

Today our Army celebrates its 110<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was one of the very first Commonwealth institutions founded in the first months of Federation in 1901. The Army did not of course, commence its history fully formed. The birthday we honour today resulted from the administrative and operational amalgam of the existing military forces of the six federating colonies. Indeed, the Commonwealth Defence Act establishing the Army in law, then and now, was not passed until 1903.

The need for the unified defence of our island continent had been one of the major impetuses behind the federation movement. So in both a conceptual, and an organisational, sense the Australian Army has always been a truly national institution and a pervasive one in the national psyche.

This sense of the Army belonging to the whole nation has been further strengthened down the years in two ways. Firstly, by the necessarily apolitical culture and bipartisan constitutional position of the Army, defending all Australians equally, and secondly, by the mass participation of nearly two million Australians donning an Army uniform during the World Wars and lesser conflicts.

I strongly believe that we can safely say that most Australians continue to have a natural affinity with their Army. An affinity that they probably do not have, or at least have in the same way, with other longstanding Commonwealth institutions such as the Taxation Office or the Customs Service.

But this natural affinity does not just stem from a shared history, nor from the collective memories of so many Australian families with living or dead war veterans among their ranks. It also springs from contemporary and continuing contacts between people right across Australia, and their Army.

During the recent floods and cyclones in Queensland, for example, the Army - both regular and reserve, again assisted many communities and disaster relief agencies. Indeed, we still have soldiers assisting some communities today.

When visiting these hard-at-work troops in Queensland I had an opportunity to meet with Premier Anna Bligh. I was struck by something she remarked. It brought a perspective that I suspect most members of the Army, and the Defence Force, do not consciously realise or even think about.

Premier Bligh observed that the people of Queensland, in their hour of need, were experiencing a facet of their Army that is more usually experienced by the rest of the world, than **by most Australians, because of the Army's high profile overseas deployments.**

And this professionalism, sense of community and sensitivity that Premier Bligh noticed, when I think about it more, also includes the families of our soldiers. As Cyclone Yasi approached Townsville, the Army needed to move 5 Aviation **Regiment's helicopters out of harm's way. But we** needed to move them only so far South that they would be immediately available for tasking after the cyclone had swept through northern Queensland.

The Regiment's aircrew and ground-crew therefore moved over 30 helicopters to Mackay airport, 330 kilometres to the south, leaving their partners and children in Townsville to face what they knew would be a particularly devastating cyclone without them. This reinforces to me that we need to recognise not just the professional dedication and discipline of the soldiers involved. The unselfish willingness of their families to put the welfare of the wider community before their own, very understandable, concerns for family **safety, was also highly commendable — and** probably un-noticed by most Australians.

Yet such attitudes by our soldiers and their families are what makes the Army work, as both a military force and as a respected national institution.

Standing here around this pool of reflection above those many galleries of memories, in one of the 45 years out of the 110 that Australia has sent its Army to war, we are reminded that the year that has passed since we last stood here, has certainly not been an easy one. We have had 12 soldiers killed in action in Afghanistan and many more wounded. This is the highest number of casualties suffered in a single year since the last full year of our Vietnam commitment in 1971.

The price of our Afghanistan commitment has been high, not just for the men and women of the Army but also for their families and friends. It has been particularly hard for the members of units who have lost mates, and for the bereaved families of those soldiers now lost to us in all but memory.

The war in Afghanistan naturally remains the **government's highest defence priority, and the Army's main focus. Our task of assisting the Afghan Army 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade to secure Oruzgan Province is progressing well, but the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade is unlikely to be ready to assume full responsibility for the province by our 111<sup>th</sup> birthday. We will continue to face a hard war in Afghanistan for some years.**

While training and preparing for the war in Afghanistan, and for the threat of war in general, your Army also remains committed to numerous other tasks. Both scheduled, and as we have seen in Queensland, Victoria and the Northern Territory in recent months, as called out by the vagaries of climate in a more unpredictable fashion.

**In the Army's long service to the people of Australia this has always been the case. And for the foreseeable future this is likely to remain the situation.**

Ladies and gentlemen as I draw my address to a conclusion, I want to make an observation about the young men and women who make up our Army today. In my 43+ years of service I have seen many changes in Australian society, and in our Army. What that service qualifies me to say,

with utmost confidence, is that the current generation of young Australians who make up the bulk of our Army, are very impressive people indeed. It has been a unique honour to command them over the last three years, and to have served with such men and women over the length of my career since joining the Army as a 15-year old apprentice in 1968.

To those who fear that the soldiers of today might somehow be of a lesser quality, or lack the commitment and professionalism of the soldiers of yesteryear, let me assure them this is not the case. The Nation remains well served by its Army and the young men and women who volunteer to constitute it.

Of course, the people of Australia deserve no less and should expect no less. But as we've seen from the very public reporting of our work in recent times, they are not disappointed in their trust or their expectations.

Even after my own long career as a soldier, I continue to be surprised and hugely heartened by the sense of service, sacrifice and achievement that each generation of young Australians brings to our Army.

The people of Australia and their Army therefore **celebrate the latter's birthday today with pride in the Army's achievements over the last year,** tinged with considerable sadness at our losses in combat and accidents.

**But today, on our Army's 110<sup>th</sup> birthday,** we rejoice in the fact that, as it has been for well over a century, Australia continues to have an Army for, and of, the whole of the Australian nation. But before we celebrate today, just pause to reflect on the work our people are doing for our Nation even now in Afghanistan and many other parts of a troubled world.



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## VALE CORPORAL RICHARD ATKINSON - 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2011

Corporal Richard Atkinson farewelled

Family, friends and fellow diggers gathered today in Launceston to honour the life of Corporal Richard Atkinson, killed in action in Afghanistan on 2 February 2011.

Richard was remembered by family and friends as an energetic and talented young man whose impact on their lives will be cherished forever.

An honour guard and bearer party were formed **by Richard's mates from the 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Engineer Regiment to carry his service medals, slouch hat and an Australian National Flag into St John's Anglican Church.**

A catafalque party stood vigil over the accoutrements during the service and they were **presented to Richard's family by his Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Matt Pearse.**

Brigadier Gus McLachlan, Commander of the **Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade**, delivered the eulogy on behalf of the Army, and described Richard, 22, as a soldier who led with maturity beyond his years.

**"He knew the dangers he faced but he went and faced those dangers along side his mates and as a leader of his team," Brigadier McLachlan said.**

**"Whenever the scouts sensed the terrain was pushing them onto a predictable path, Akka, often with his mate and search partner, Sapper Rose, moved to the front. They knew this was marching towards the danger. They trusted each other implicitly, knowing the other would always cover their back.**

**"Corporal Richard Atkinson died while leading from the front, fighting along side one of his best mates on behalf of all of us. Through the strength and example of young men like Corporal Richard Atkinson, we have proof our future is in good hands."**

The memorial service was attended by the Governor of Tasmania, the Hon Peter Underwood; the Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard, MP; the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Tony Abbott MP; Minister for Defence, the Hon Stephen Smith, MP; Senator David Johnston, Shadow Defence Spokesperson, the Premier of Tasmania, the Hon Lara Giddings MP; the Chief of Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston;

Secretary of the Department of Defence, Dr Ian Watt; the Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie; and Commander 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, Brigadier Gus McLachlan.

Richard was killed while locating an improvised explosive device in the Tangi Valley in **Afghanistan's Uruzgan Province. He was awarded the Australian Active Service Medal with Clasp: International Coalition Against Terrorism (ICAT), Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Army Combat Badge, the Australian Defence Medal, and the NATO Medal with ISAF Clasp.** Richard also served in Indonesia on Operation Padang Assist, a disaster relief mission.

**Richard's remains will be cremated.**



Commander 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, Brigadier Gus McLachlan speaks during the memorial service for Corporal Richard Atkinson. Family, friends and fellow diggers gathered together at a moving **memorial service at St John's Anglican Church, Launceston to honour the life of Corporal Richard Atkinson, killed in action in Afghanistan on 2nd February 2011. An honour guard and bearer party were formed by Richard's mates from the 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Engineer Regiment to carry his service medals, slouch hat and an Australian National Flag into the church. A catafalque party stood vigil over the accoutrements during the service and they were presented to Richard's family by his Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Matt Pearse.**

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## VALE SAPPER JAMIE ROBERT LARCOMBE - 19<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2011

It is with deep regret the Australian Defence Force announces the death of Sapper Jamie Ronald Larcombe during operations in Afghanistan.

Twenty one year old Sapper Jamie Larcombe was from the Darwin-based 1st Combat Engineer Regiment.



Sapper Larcombe leaves his partner Rhiannon, parents Steven and Tricia, and three younger sisters, Ann-Marie, Emily and April.

Sapper Larcombe was born in Kingscote, South Australia, 1989. Jamie joined the Army in 2008 and successfully completed his recruit and combat engineer basic training in 2008 prior to being posted to the 1st Combat Engineer Regiment based in Darwin.

Described by his army mates as dependable and genuine, whose country upbringing instilled a wisdom that was respected.

Sapper Larcombe has been awarded the Australian Active Service Medal with Clasp: International Coalition Against Terrorism (ICAT), Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Army Combat Badge.

**During Sapper Larcombe's service in the Australian Army, he deployed on the following Operations:**

- Operation Padang Assist (Indonesian Earthquake)
- Operation Slipper (Afghanistan) – Oct 2010 – Feb 2011.

Sapper Jamie Larcombe farewelled

Hundreds of family, friends and fellow diggers gathered today on Kangaroo Island to honour the life of Sapper Jamie Larcombe, who was killed in action in Afghanistan on 19 February 2011.

Brigadier Gus McLachlan, Commander of the **Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade**, delivered the eulogy on behalf of the Army, and described Jamie, 21, as a reliable soldier who fought from the front under the harshest of pressures.

**"He never took a backward step and he was trusted and relied upon by over one hundred other soldiers," Brigadier McLachlan said.**

**"Jamie you honour us all with your sacrifice, your courage, your love of your country, your love of your community and your love for your family. You lived the values and character we have been privileged to observe in your wonderful family. You died to make us safer. It is an honour to have served with you."**

**Jamie's mates from the 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Engineer Regiment** formed an honour guard as a bearer party placed his coffin on a gun carriage to be carried to Kingscote cemetery. He was laid to rest as a firing party fired a volley of three shots and the Last Post was played.

The funeral was attended by the Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP; the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Tony Abbott MP; Minister for Defence, The Hon Stephen Smith MP and many other dignitaries.

Jamie was killed during an engagement with **insurgents in the Mirabad Valley of Afghanistan's Uruzgan Province.**



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# Hall of VC's a must see

By Spr Nick Wiseman

RECENT Victoria Cross recipient Cpl Benjamin Roberts-Smith has loaned his medal to the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra for future display.

Cpl Roberts-Smith visited the AWM on February 21 to help unveil the rede-signed Hall of Valour alongside fellow VC holders Cpl Mark Donaldson and Keith Payne.

He said the Hall of Valour was inspirational and should be seen by all Australians.

"You look up to these people and see what they've done," he said.

"There is a piece of every major conflict here and to go through the Hall of Valour and sequentially read from the first VC through to Afghanistan, this allows people to pay respects to all soldiers and what they've done for Australia."

As for loaning his VC to the AWM, Cpl Roberts-Smith said he believed it belonged to the Australian public.

"As a child I used to love roaming the AWM and looking at the displays, especially the VCs, and I think it's important that the youth of today get to see them."

Cpl Roberts-Smith is still coming to terms with his new-found fame and being recognised on the street. When asked about his future, he said rumours he planned to undertake officer training were untrue.

"That floated recently in the papers. I don't even know where that came from," Cpl Roberts-Smith said. "I'm going to keep being a patrol commander - it's the best job in the Army."

The Hall of Valour honours the 98 Australians who have received the highest award for bravery in the time of war.

The AWM holds 63 of the 98 VCs awarded to Australians, including the two most recently

awarded to SASR members Cpls Donaldson and Roberts-Smith. It also holds three British medals in its collection.

Two platoons from Kapooka in the middle of their basic training were surprised when they arrived for their scheduled historic tour and met the VC trio at the Hall of Valour.

Rec Joe Dooley said it was great to read about the soldiers who had served before him and what they did to earn their medals.

"It was inspirational meeting [the recipients] in person and knowing what they have done," Rec Dooley said.

Governor-General of Australia Quentin Bryce officially opened the Hall of Valour at an evening function.



Honoured: VC recipients Keith Payne, left, Cpl Mark Donaldson and Cpl Ben Roberts-Smith at the opening of the redesigned Hall of Valour at the Australian War Memorial. Photo by LCpl Mark Doran



## Gunner Luncheon Quiz 2011

Source: EC's Notebook, Provisional, North Head, Feb 68  
And other specious references and clouded recollections

1. Which Corps is represented by the appointment title, 'FOXHOUND'?
2. Expand the fire order, "TOT."
3. What was the call sign for the 2ic of the field regiment?
4. Give one implication for a unit being in DS to an infantry one.
5. What sized unit or sub-unit would fire a "MIKE TARGET"?
6. In previous phonetic alphabets, what was the phonetic for "B"? The present one of course is "BRAVO"
7. There is a vehicle coming towards you with the Tac Sign, "Z2." Whose is it?
8. For use in New Guinea, the 25-pr was redesigned to reduce its weight. The barrel was shortened, the wheels modified and the shield was often dispensed with. What was its name?
9. If you were ever issued with a training pamphlet, what would almost inevitably be issued at the same time?
10. Brigadier rank is a crown and three pips. What did a Brigadier-General have in WW1?
11. What was a "TIDDLER"?
12. Apart *from* the carriage, the Yeramba had one distinctive feature from the towed 25 Pr of the day.
13. What are/were the number of mils in a hand span at the OP when indicating targets?
14. On Queen Elizabeth's accession the shape of the "crown" was altered. It's name?
15. How many mils in a "four knuckle" hand subtension?
16. Give the rate of fire at "Intense" for any of: 25-pdr, 105 mm L5, 105 mm M2A2 .
17. If for Artillery it is SHELDRAKE, what is it for Signals?
18. If the OPO said to his ACK that he wanted his AB 545, what would he be given?
19. Can you give a plausible origin for the "red tabs" on the collars of Colonels and above?.
20. A call for a "Mike Target" rates how many firing units?
21. What was the power rating of the generator for the 3 MK 7 Mor Loc Rdr?
22. The BP card AF B 250 was two sided. What was on the back?
23. What is the imperial diameter of the 25 pr bore clearance guage?
24. Who was "Arses Baggy" and what did he call the LAD? *"Lima Alpha Drongos"*
25. Many of you were collectors of licences for your G2. What was a GT Licence?
26. If you really had a good G2 score, what was an R licence?

*Solution in next issue. Ed*



## ADF Paralympic Team returns home with 24 medals

Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, Warren Snowdon, today met and congratulated a team of Australian Defence Force members who returned from a Paralympic Trial in the United States with 24 medals.

**"The team of five members with acquired disabilities from the ADF Paralympic Sports Program achieved tremendous success at the United States Marine Corp (USMC) Paralympic Trials in California.**

**"They won twelve gold, eleven silver and one bronze medal across the Paralympic sports of swimming, shooting, wheelchair basketball and track and field," Mr Snowdon said.**

**"They competed against approximately one hundred and fifty other wounded and severely injured members from the British Royal Marines, the Dutch Royal Marines and the USMC and have performed at the highest level. For five individuals to come back with 24 medals between them is a tremendous feat," Mr Snowdon said.**

**"Today, I would personally like to congratulate each of these members here on not only overcoming the significant hurdles they have faced individually after significant injury but also on their successes in the sporting arena.**

**"You have represented your country to the highest standard and we are all very proud of you," Mr Snowdon said.**

The Marine Corp Paralympic Trials were the second part of Exercise Wounded Warrior, an international exchange during the period of 6 to 28 February 2011 with wounded personnel from coalition countries such as Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the United States.

The first part of Exercise Wounded Warrior involved a number of ADF members participating on an exchange with the Canadian Forces "Soldier On Program", which gave them the opportunity to learn adaptive snow sports in Mt Washington, Canada.

The Chief of the Defence Force and Patron of the ADF Paralympic Sports Association, Air Chief

Marshal Angus Houston, also congratulated the ADF members on their participation and success.

**"This is an outstanding result. Your dedication and determination are an inspiration to us all. I look forward to continuing to follow our members' progress as they compete at home and abroad and continue to make us proud," Air Chief Marshal Houston said.**

The five members from the ADF Paralympic Sports Program ADF included:

- Warrant Officer Class 2 Dennis Ramsay, Albury-Wodonga, Medals in Track and Field and Wheelchair Basketball.
- Flight Sergeant Tony Benfer, RAAF Wagga Wagga, medals in swimming and Wheelchair basketball.
- Private Clint Vardy, Clerk, Army Personnel Agency – Brisbane, Medals in Track and Field, Swimming, shooting.
- Private Damien Thomlinson, Commando, 2 Commando Regiment, medal(s) in swimming.
- Able Seaman Paul De Gelder, Clearance Diver, Royal Australian Navy Dive School , HMAS Penguin, medals in supported Air Rifle shooting and shooting and swimming.

Exercise Wounded Warrior was the result of the Canadian Soldier On Program and the United States Marine Corp's Wounded Warrior Regiment inviting the ADF Paralympic Sports Program to send a team of members with acquired disabilities to their international exchange events.

The ADF Paralympic Sports Program supports the more seriously wounded, injured or ill members who have acquired a disability and promotes functional independence, and was launched in May 2010.

For further information visit : [www.army.gov.au/woundeddigger/](http://www.army.gov.au/woundeddigger/)

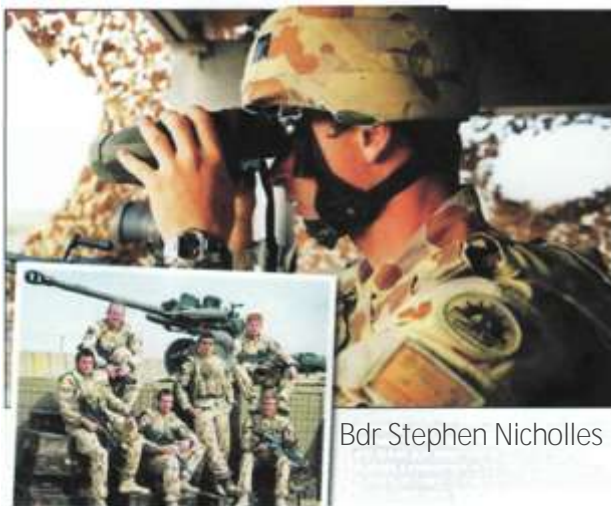
Photos will be available at <http://adfmedia.smugmug.com/Snowdon>

*Courtesy Defence Media Operations*

## Australian gunners on final mission in Afghanistan

With only three weeks remaining before the Australian Army concludes its unique attachment of artillerymen to British operations in Helmand Province, the **'gunners' have continued their efforts** by providing fire missions in support of coalition and Afghan National Security Forces.

Fifteen gunners from the Brisbane-based unit, the 1<sup>st</sup> Field Regiment are attached to the British 7th Parachute, Royal Horse Artillery (7 Para RHA) and are currently operating from a new patrol base at Lashkar Gah Durai, in northern Helmand Province.



**The Australian gunners of 105 'Tiger' Troop have lived and worked alongside their gunner colleagues of 7 Para RHA in remote Patrol Bases in Helmand for the past five months.**

Commanding Officer of 7 Para RHA, Lieutenant Colonel Gary Wilkinson, said that integration had been seamless and the Australian troops had been remarkably flexible and shown absolute adaptability to any mission.

**"Personally, it has been an absolute pleasure to have the Australians here. I have worked with the Australians on a previous HERRICK operation and now for this final deployment. It has been an effective example of multi-national integration on demanding operations," LTCOL Wilkinson said.**

While the security situation in Helmand Province has become increasingly stable, during an early stage in their deployment, at a Forward Operating Base in Helmand Province, the Australian and British position was attacked by insurgents with rocket propelled grenade

launchers and small arms.

The men were forced to defend their position by using the 105 mm light gun in a direct fire role, a rarely used technique for artillery.

The Australian Detachment Commander, Captain Mick Cook, said the deployment had been challenging but the growth of peace and stability had proved the worth of the commitment.

**"The warm and friendly reaction of the Afghan civilians to us is a key indicator that our work here is making a difference and worthwhile,"** Captain Cook said.

The Australian gunners will make their way home to Australia next month after what has been a long but rewarding final mission on Operation HERRICK.

The first Royal Australian Artillery contingent deployed to southern Afghanistan in March 2008, having conducted training in the United Kingdom for six months prior to joining Operation HERRICK.

The first contingent, from the Darwin-based 8/12 Medium Regiment, were the first Artillerymen to deploy in that role since the Vietnam War.

Three Australian Artillery Regiments have each provided two deployments to southern Afghanistan.



The British 105mm L118 light guns provide indirect fire support to troops on the ground many kilometres away.

Troops can call for offensive support to provide additional fire power when in contact with the enemy and often request illumination rounds to be fired to provide vision at night and to deter the enemy.

*Courtesy Army News*

Parade Card  
as at April 2011

Jan 2011	Jun 2011	Nov 2011
	21 Committee	3 AGM
Feb 2011		4 Golf Day
9 Issue 106 Cascabel Posted	Jul 2011	15 Committee
15 Committee	19 Committee	
		Dec 2011
Mar 2011	Aug 2011	6 Committee
3 RAA Luncheon	8 Issue 108 Cascabel Posted	
15 Committee	16 Committee	
	Sep 2011	
Apr 2011	20 Committee	
19 Committee		
25 Anzac day	Oct 2011	
	7 Gunner Dinner	
May 2011	10 Issue 109 Cascabel Posted	
9 Issue 107 Cascabel Posted	18 Committee	
17 Committee		

Change of Personal Details

Rank	Surname and Post Nominals	DoB
Address		
Telephone Mobile Email		
Additional Information		

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