



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION  
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2020

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## ***GUNNER DINNER 2020***

At its meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August, the Committee decided to proceed with plans to hold the 2020 Gunner Dinner in early November, subject of course to any future Government restrictions resulting from the Covid 19 Virus. The Colonel Light Gardens RSL Club has again accepted our booking this year for **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November**.

Watch this space for details.

## ***VALE – COLONEL BRENTON MOLLISON, RFD, ED JP, GCSJ, MB, BS, FRCOG, FRANZCOG***

Members are advised of the passing of **Colonel Brenton MOLLISON**, RAAMC, on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Colonel Mollison was originally commissioned as an artillery officer in 13 Fd Regt at Keswick, but on graduating from university with a degree in medicine, transferred to the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, and, after a couple of years was posted back to 13 Fd Regt as the RMO; he was RMO of 13 Fd Regt when I enlisted in the Regt in 1962. Colonel Mollison continued serving in the Army Reserve for many years, at one time commanding 3<sup>rd</sup> General Hospital and, later being appointed as Honorary Colonel of the RAAMC in South Australia.

Notwithstanding his very busy life in medicine, and the Army Reserve, Colonel Mollison enjoyed his on-going relationship with ‘the Gunners’, and missed very few Gunner Dinners over several decades, until his health declined in recent years. It was a pleasure and honour to know him, and he will be sadly missed by many; he was aged 83 years. ***Rest in Peace.***

## ***THE REGIMENTAL STANDARD***

In July 1945 the Royal Artillery put forward a submission to the Master Gunner’s Committee for unit flags; the result, approved by the College of Arms, was a series of standards. The Royal Australian Artillery adopted the Standard in 1952 with the approval of the then Master Gunner of St James Park, Field Marshall the Viscount Alanbrooke.

The Standard conforms in both shape and style to heraldic usage and custom. It includes the Regimental badge (with upper scroll bearing the Battle Honour / Motto *Ubique*, but minus the lower scroll), and the relevant unit’s number (eg. 4, being 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment RAA), which is displayed upon the

Standard, positioned between the Badge and the first line of the scroll bearing the Regiment's second motto (*Quo Fas et Gloria Ducunt*). There is, however, a unique aspect about the Standard and that is to do with the grenade. The College of Arms was not supplied with an adequate brief with regard to the full required design and, as a consequence, the College employed the universal bursting grenade pattern of six flames, instead of the Regiment's seven-flamed bursting grenade; by the time the mistake was realized the College had approved the Standard's current design.

The Standard is granted to independent units but not sub-units. It is only flown on special occasions such as visits by Royalty or vice-regal dignitaries (eg, the Governor General), visits or inspections by general officers, Regimental colonels commandant or Artillery formation commanders, or in conjunction with regimental birthday celebrations. The Standard may also be flown for visits by senior VIP civilian personages (such as the Prime Minister, the Minister for Defence, etc) or allied officials of comparable rank or appointment. The only time that the Standard was flown daily was at Artillery Headquarters during the existence of the Directorate of Artillery. (*this article was written by Christopher Jobson, former RSM Ceremonial & Protocol Army, & Author of Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery Customs & Traditions, as it appeared in Cannonball, the Journal of the RAA Historical Company, Winter 2019 edition*).



**The School of Artillery's Standard**

## ***BORDER CLOSURES & CHECK-POINTS***

Members of both 16 Regiment and 6/13 Light Battery have been deployed to assist in manning SA's border check-points in support of the South Australian Government's decision to restrict the ingress of travellers into SA as part of the COVID 19 virus controls. On behalf of all members of the Association, the Committee has extended our best wishes to all of those deployed members as they undertake an important and sometimes challenging role, one that would not have been contemplated 9 months ago!

## ***MEDALS, AWARDS AND BADGES IN AUSTRALIA'S WARTIME HISTORY***

While visible awards for battlefield courage and military service date to antiquity, the modern practice of displaying campaign and gallantry medals has more recent origins. Britain's first campaign medal was issued to Waterloo veterans in 1816-17. Four decades later, when the disaster in the Crimea was widely reported in the British press, reports of mismanagement at the highest levels of the army and government appeared alongside stories of great bravery and self-sacrifice. Queen Victoria, who followed the news closely, felt that such courageous acts deserved public recognition. The Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Victoria Cross, the highest award for gallantry, were instituted in 1856, and in 1867 the awards were extended to colonial forces across the British Empire.

Until 1975 Australian awards were made under the British system, which evolved to include a wide range of bravery decorations. Since then Australia has issued decorations under an independent system of honours and awards.

More than 71,000 Australians have been recommended for a decoration since Federation, with almost 47,000 having received one. Decorations tell of singular acts of courage and leadership, and all who wear the ribbon of a bravery award have distinguished themselves in the face of danger. But many moments of courage and leadership have gone unrecorded and unsung. An Australian infantryman recalled in a lull in the bitter fighting at Dernancourt in 1918: *'Ready for anything, we stand and wait, yarning about things seen and done today, brave deeds, passed unnoticed and unrewarded, taken as part of the day's work, though that part meant facing death'*.

Some who are recommended are surprised at being singled out. One VC recipient remarked: 'If I was the bravest man during that day, then God help the man who was most afraid'. Almost a century later another Australian, a peacekeeper decorated for bravery, said: *'As for the medals ... I'm prouder of being an Australian soldier on operations, I'm prouder of having served with the ... battalion and these guys within my section, within my platoon'*.

Decorations honour the individual, but campaign medals, with clasps indicating where they were earned, are far more widely distributed. They illustrate the extent of Australia's military involvements over more than a century. Some are for well-known conflicts or campaigns; others, like the Naval general Service Medal 1915-62, cover minor conflicts for which no specific campaign medal exists. Campaign medals recognise service in prescribed warlike operations.

They take in peacekeeping missions and some of Australia's most significant military involvements. Over time, new awards have been introduced. The Australian Operational Service Medal, instituted in 2012, for instance, succeeds the Australian Active Service and Australian Service Medals.

In addition to Australian bravery and campaign medals, Australians have received an array of decorations conferred by foreign sovereigns or governments. Australian formations have received foreign unit citations for operations ranging from peacekeeping in the Sinai to service in the Malayan Emergency, Indonesian Confrontation and Korean and Vietnam Wars. In 1991 Australia instituted its own system of recognising an individual unit's outstanding service with the Meritorious Unit Citation, which has been awarded for service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Medals and ribbons are familiar symbols of military attainment, but for veterans no longer in uniform there are few days on which these can be worn. Those who are eligible and who wish to display evidence of their having served are entitled to wear the Returned from Active Service Badge on civilian clothes. Though such a badge may not be widely recognised, it is reminiscent of times past when a range of pins and badges and patches could be seen affixed to civilian's clothing.

During the World Wars in particular, many Australians were entitled to wear insignia indicating their contribution. Civilian sailors who risked their lives on merchant ships wore a Merchant Seaman's Badge. At home, the Female Relative Badge or Mothers' and Widows' Badge were visible signs of a family's commitment to the war effort, and often of what that commitment cost. For some, the loss of a husband or son, represented by the addition of a star, made wearing the badge too painful: 'Mother had been proud to have four sons in the army', remembered one man, 'she wore a badge with four bars on it ... now she was entitled to add a star to one of the bars. She never wore that badge again'. Others wore

badge indicating the extent of their support for patriotic causes, to tell of their working in a reserved occupation or to make clear that they had been wounded and discharged from service.

Australia's military commitments span more than a century and have involved millions of individuals. Many have become eligible to wear campaign medals, far fewer have worn decorations for bravery. Whatever their origin, the row or rows of ribbons on the left breast of a military uniform or the medals worn on days of remembrance count among the most treasured possessions of veterans around Australia. (*Department of Veteran's Affairs, 2020 Calendar*)



## ***A SUMMARY OF 16 REGIMENT'S TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN 2020***

Many thanks to [Capt Mick Parry](#), Adjt, 16 Regt, for the following summary:

### **Haydon Shield**

On 05 and 06 Aug 20, 16 Regiment RAA conducted the annual Haydon Shield competition. The Haydon Shield is a military skills competition based at the section level. The first day of this year's competition included the following activities:

1. A "Kit Check" which includes members having their individual equipment checked for compliance with a standardised load list for the conduct of the activity
2. The conduct of a modified fitness assessment which includes maximum cadence push-ups and sit-ups and 2.4km run in under 11:18
3. A military flotation test, where members are required to move the entirety of their equipment across the pool
4. An ethical decision-making scenario where members were required to consider their own ethical values and beliefs in comparison to another party's and decide to intervene or to allow the events to occur unhindered.
5. An observation lane that tests members ability to apply the principals of why things are seen
6. A dismounted navigation activity
7. The conduct of the obstacle course
8. A section task to clear an area of an expected enemy patrol, this included a friendly casualty and a requirement to extract the injured member to safety via a stretcher carry
9. The conduct of a military knowledge test and an all arms call for fire.

The second day of the competition saw the members conduct a 30 minute cardio-based PT session conducted as follows;

For 30 minutes in teams of 10, score is the total maximum distance of:

1. Meters on the rower
2. Meters on the stationary bike
3. Meters on the Airdyne (15min / team)
4. Meters on the SkiErg (15min / team)
5. Meters run (only 1 member running at a time)

The winning team travelled a total of over 43km in the 30 minute time period. The final activity of the day was the over-water obstacle course. This year the Haydon Shield was won by the CSS BTY section, commanded by CPL Wells, with 110 BTY coming in a close second, 111 BTY in third and AGO / RHQ BTY coming in fourth.

### **Minimum Evaluations (Minevals)**

16 Regiment RAA, recently conducted Minevals for the available detachments. The following explanation was given by the RSMIG about the process behind a Mineval:

16 REGT RAA has conducted Minevals for decades, from at least the days of the Rapier missile system in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Minevals are a form of assessment at detachment and command post level designed to measure the minimum requirement to come into action. Minevals are a useful tool to compare the standard between detachments or to measure the development of a detachment throughout the year by reductions in total time taken to complete subsequent assessments, or improvements in the various assessed components.

For a weapon detachment, radar detachment or for command posts, each Mineval commences in the same way. Firstly the deliberate physical clearance of the site and the initial occupation of the site. Once the site has been secured in this way, the detachment is under time pressure to complete the remaining serials without safety violations. An RBS70 detachment must physically set up the weapon system and achieve connectivity through TaCCS in under 20 minutes. Command posts are considerably longer assessments, with the manual assessment component alone having 90 minutes allocated for example. A detachment or command post can fail a Mineval by either a breach of safety, poor performance in a number of serials or by simply taking too long to complete the required tasks to come into action.

At the completion of all serials, participants are given a collective debrief and given feedback on what aspects they have done well, and what areas they need to focus on in the future to improve their detachment's efficiency and performance. Regular conduct of Minevals enables detachments to work more efficiently as a small team by gaining an excellent appreciation of each individual's tasks and responsibilities. Despite the concept being decades old, it still achieves its intended purpose today. Minevals are scored on a percentage basis, with 100% considered a perfect detachment deployment, the winning detachment this year was 11A (Radar Detachment), commanded by BDR Watson, with a 98% rating, in second was 12D (RBS-70 Detachment), commanded by BDR Atwood, with a 92% rating and in third was 11B (Radar Detachment), commanded by BDR Clifford, with a 91% rating.

Below are some photos from the Haydon Shield competition;



**Left / below –CSS Battery conducting the run component of the 30min PT session on the final day**



**Left, members of 16 REGT RAA conducting the fitness component on the final day of competition**



**Left, member of 110 Bty conducting the over water obstacle course**

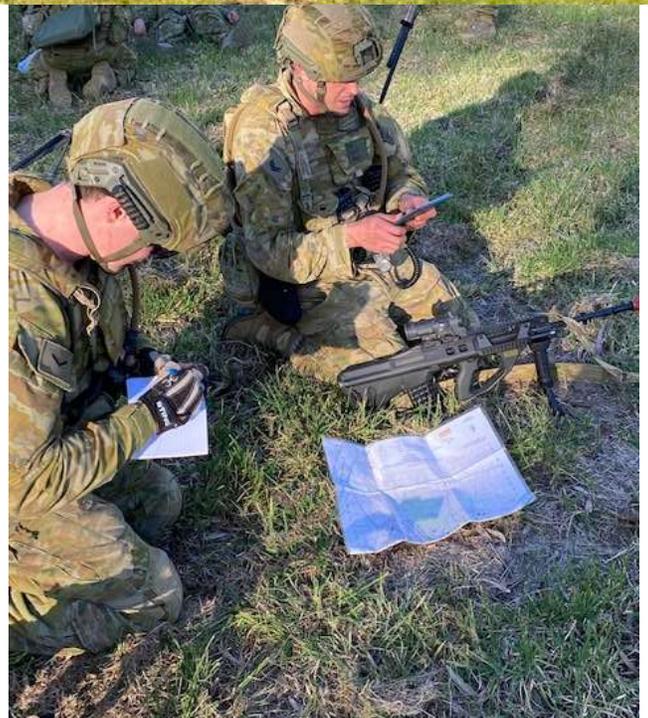


**Left, members of the RHQ/AGO composite section receiving orders for the clearance of an enemy group.**

**Below, members conducting fire and movement during the section clearance**



**Below, Section medic and commander treating a friendly casualty after the conduct of the section attack**



**Above, Section commander and section signaller sending post contact report.**



**Left, members conducting the traverse ropes component of the obstacle course**



**Left, Members conducting the monkey bars component of the obstacle course.**

**Right, spectators offering chocolates to members competing in the competition.**



**Right, CO 16 REGT RAA,  
LTCOL M Mankowski and the  
winning Section Commander and  
Section 2IC From CSS Battery**



**Below, CO 16 REGT RAA, LTCOL M Mankowski presenting the Champion Detachment  
Commander the 16 REGT RAA GBAD Capability Team Trophy.**



***LIVE FIRING IN THE TOP END – EX READY HAMMER***



**Gunners from 101 Bty, 8/12 Regt RAA, live-fire an m777 Light Towed Howitzer during Ex Ready Hammer at Mount Bunday Training Area, NT (Army, Aug 20, 2020)**  
**Note the fired round in the top right-hand corner of the photo.**

**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.**

**2019-2020**

**Committee:**

President	Major Geoff Laurie RFD (Retd)	8332.4485 (H)	0418.852.661
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	WO2 Tony Matz	0412.824.600	
	SSgt Ernie Reichstein	0401.046.681	
	Sgt Eddie Tanzer	0447.080.421	
	Sgt John Nield	0468.396.457	
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Assoc Reps at Army } Museum of SA }	Maj Geoff Laurie, LTCOL Stefan Landherr, Sgt Eddie Tanzer, Sgt John Nield, SSgt Ernie Reichstein		
16 Regt	LTCOL Mark Mankowski	CO 16 Regt	
6/13 Light Bty	Maj Mark Lee	BC 6/13 Lt Bty	
Proof & Experimental Establishment, Port Wakefield	Maj Tony Mumford	OC P&EE	

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**Committee Meetings:**

The Committee endeavours to meet on the second Monday in February, May, August, and November.

**Agenda items, and Newsletter Articles to:** Geoff Laurie or Jan Burgess

**Memorabilia** (when available)

RAA Tie \$40 - (currently in stock)      Book, 'Roundshot to Rapier' – A History of RAA in SA)      \$5

**Membership Fee:**

**Full Member:**      Annual Subscription:      \$30      Joining Fee \$20 (at Committee's discretion)

**Affiliate or Serving Member:**      50% of above annual subscription