



CASCABEL

Newsletter of the

October

Royal Australian Artillery Association (Vic) Inc

2021

Number 15

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From The President

Fellow Gunners,

Freedom at last. I hope you are all enjoying the chance to get out into your local communities, having coffee at your local café, breakfast at your favourite spot around the corner or at least visiting family and friends without having to worry about restrictions and travel distances. Let's hope that this is the start of returning to normality whatever that looks like in the future. I know it has been really tough for a number of our members either due to health, loneliness or just being couped up in your place of residence so to all of our gunner communities and members a warm and sincere shout out to say Hi and I hope you are all OK.

Despite what has occurred in Victoria, gunners around the country have been able to celebrate our 150th Birthday and I congratulate 10 MDM REGT Assoc for hosting an event at Queenscliff on the 1 Aug 2021. It was really disappointing from my behave that the rest of Victoria and hence the RAA Assoc of Victoria couldn't join with our gunner brethren around the country and celebrate on this important milestone.

However I would encourage all of us to join with 2/10 Bty on St Barbara's Day Saturday 4 Dec when they will fire an 18 round salute as part of the national Fire Plan celebrating our 150th Birthday. There will be a short ceremony to recognise the event with a 25LB on display from the 2/4 Fd Regt that saw service in Borneo during WW2 followed by a BBQ back at the Chapel Street depot. Details of the event will be sent out shortly.

The RAA Assoc of Victoria will hold our AGM on St Barbara's Day where you are all most welcome to attend but if unfortunately you can't make the day we will also be conducting it online. Again details will be sent out shortly. I would encourage you all to get involved as we have an actioned packed series of social events lined up for next year where I am hoping to meet you face-to-face.

This year was tough on all of us but things are looking up so let's be positive about 2022 and let's take to opportunity to renew our friendships, gather together and celebrate who we are as gunners. I look forward in re-meeting all of you shortly.

Have a great Christmas, celebrate the New Year and bring on 2022.

Ubique,

Jason

From The Secretary

From a correspondence and secretarial perspective, we seem to have hit a lull after all the preparation for the 150th Anniversary here in Victoria. Unfortunately, lockdown has meant that our activities have needed to be postponed. At this stage it looks like we will be able to run events over the St Barbara's Day weekend, combining the Association AGM with Bty-led activities. Details TBA.

As always, I encourage you to visit the Association website (<https://artilleryvic.org.au>) and also become a member of our Facebook page ("**Artillery Assoc Victoria**")

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ArtilleryAssocVictoria>). As we start to open up and run activities, we will be communicating there and via emails.

The Editor asked us to reflect on personal items of interest. I've been cleaning and dec-cluttering my house in preparation for selling. After 18 years here I've collected a ton of stuff, including a lot of military items. This includes a drill cane (with 50cal rounds on either end) given to me when I was a young Cpl teaching drill at 3 Trg Gp at Pucka. My commission, signed by Sir Ninian Stephen (Governor General) and Kim Beasley (Minister of Defence). There's also the assortment of plaques from the various units and schools, and a box of Pams I don't know how to get rid of. I have two cart cases in dire need of some brasso – one unmarked and the other engraved from when I finished up as GPO at 23 Bty.

Finally, the old Grade 1 slouch hat and peaked cap that have lived on my study shelf for a long time. The cap was a Christies cap bought at the store in Sydney on my first trip to the School (when it was still in Manly). The cap cost me a ton of money at the time (I think I was still at uni) and not long after they changed the Order of Dress and removed the cap. Both hats feature the spinning wheel badge used by WO1 and officers. They are curved rather than flat and have a wheel affixed by pin to the

badge, so it spins freely. I asked a RSM about it once and he replied that it's "to keep young 2LTs occupied". Now to figure out where to put this "stuff", as most of it is too good to discard.

Jason



A Word From The Editor

As this is the last Newsletter for 2021 I take this opportunity to wish you all the Compliments of the Coming Festive Season and a Safe (Covid free) Happy New Year.

I have enclosed the Message from the Head of Regiment. I notice that he signed the Message with "Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery".

I personally hope that this "catches on".

Not a lot of News for the Newsletter at the moment. The Program of Events is difficult to predict.

Neil Hamer

Membership Report

Hi to all members,

I hope everyone is safe and well after the longest lockdown on planet earth and hope that you or anyone in your family were not infected with covid. As you can imagine it has been very quiet on the membership front, that is, we have not lost any members or gained any since my last report. With the Christmas season approaching, I wish all members an enjoyable and safe time with your family and friends, hopefully we are granted that what we are familiar with celebrating. Take care.

Our current members are:

182 paid members

43 affiliate members

Paul Heron

*Reply to Colonel Commandant's Message to Our Captain General
on RRAA Birthday*



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Dear Brigadier Reach,

13th August, 2021.

have been asked to thank you for your kind letter containing a message of loyal greetings to The Queen.

This has been shown to Her Majesty and I now have pleasure in enclosing her reply.

*You sincerely,
Miranda Hansen Lise*

Miranda Hansen Lise
Private Secretary's Office



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Brigadier S Roach AM, Representative
Colonel Commandant,
Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery.

Please convey my warm thanks to All Ranks of the Royal
Regiment of Australian Artillery, both serving and retired, for their
loyal greetings sent on the occasion of Royal Australian Artillery Day
which was held on 1 st August.

I was interested to learn that this year's event commemorated
One Hundred and Fifty Years of service to Australia and the
Commonwealth.

The kind sentiments expressed in your message are much
appreciated. As your Captain General, I send my best wishes to all
concerned for a most memorable and enjoyable year marking this most
significant milestone.

ELIZABETH R.

August, 2021.

OFFICIAL***Message from the Head of Regiment***

Dear Fellow Gunners,

It has been excellent to observe that despite the restrictions and friction of COVID-19 all Regiments continue to train and exercise, keeping the RAA at the high standard we have come to expect. Time in the field, tactical deployments and pursuing technical mastery is a no fail for all gunners. I commend all ranks on their dedication and professionalism to our art and science. It should also be noted that across Australia that there are gunners embedded in each of the COVID task force elements, fulfilling a variety of roles in support of state and federal efforts. Whilst thankless and at times frustrating, this task is important and demonstrates the versatility and commitment of the RAA.

I acknowledge that the suspension of the RAA 150th activities resulted in sadness and disappointment within the wider gunner community. However, it would appear that given the number of uncontrolled variables and the recovery trajectories in New South Wales and Victoria, our plans would not have been feasible. The DHOR is coordinating the contingency planning that will see the execution on the high-profile RAA 150th activities in 2022. Have no doubt that our 150th anniversary will be appropriately recognised and celebrated.

We should also unpretentiously celebrate that the RAA is in the midst of the most significant modernisation and upgrade of systems, procedures and structures since its formation. This includes additions and enhancements across all Offensive Support, Air & Missile Defence, and Surveillance and Target Acquisition capabilities. I really must call out the sterling efforts of Colonel Andrew Langford and his Joint Fires – Army Team, who have been persistent and unyielding in stewarding through these modernisation efforts. The next ten years will see the RAA achieve new levels of range, lethality and protection, as well assume a pivotal role in how the Army and ADF operationally deploys, manoeuvres and fights.

Finally, there is no doubt that the ongoing situation with COVID-19 is a particular challenge for our people and their families and the impacts remain

largely unpredictable because of the way the changes to restrictions come at very short notice. Keep fighting the good fight, maintain support to each other and our people, and continue to demonstrate the drive and professionalism all gunners are known for. The Regiment is doing good things and this is not going unnoticed.

Ubique

Richard

RA Vagg

BRIG

Head of Regiment

Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery

Mobile: 0400 555 683

***ANZAC Requiem***

Delivered by MAJ James Eling. BC 2/10 BTY at the 2021 Anzac Day Dawn Service Sargood Barracks

Today, this ANZAC Day, we commemorate the 106th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli, we think of those of who served, who fought, who sacrificed. We remember and honour them, along with those they left behind, the wives, the sons, and the daughters. We remember what they did, where they fought and the reason why.

ANZAC Day is a day for all Australians to reflect on the service of each generation of ADF members. Their glory is that they served, suffered and sacrificed for our freedom.

As gunners - this year, the 150th year of Australian Artillery, so we should think of those who served the guns, served the Army and served our Nation over the last 150 years.

We think of those Gunners who trained at Puckapunyal, those Gunners who paraded or deployed from these very barracks, indeed, the gunners who served these fine guns here today.

We think of Gunner Edward Lewis, who died of illness in 1885 in the Sudan and is buried in Suakin, he was the first Gunner to die on Operations.

We think of the courage of LT Sam Thurnhill, a WA from 8 Battery at Pozieres in 1916, who was ordered to bring a single 18 pounder gun into action in no man's land in the direct fire role to support the infantry attack on Pozieres. Sam Thurnhill, aged 25, was killed in action 5 months later on the 5th of November 1916.

We think of the Gunners of the 55th Australian Siege Artillery Battery at 3rd Ypres in 1917. They served in the mud of Flanders fields and on those cold and wet nights they fired mission after mission, the targets of counter battery fire. Amidst clouds of poisonous gas, their gas masks made the laying and loading of the guns all that more difficult, but they endured with courage and resilience.

We think of the gunners of the 2/2nd Regiment at Brallas Pass in 1941. General Vasey ordered "Here we are and here we bloody well stay." They stayed. A section of guns halted the German advance and bought time for their mates to withdraw. This was our Thermopylae.

We think of the gunners of the Magnificent 9th Division, the Rats of Tobruk. During the First and Second battles of El Alamein, the 2nd / 7th and 2nd / 8th fired 320,000 rounds between them in support of 9th Division and Montgomery's Eighth Army as they put the Duetsche Afrika Korps to flight.

We think of the Gunners of the 8th Division, including the 2nd / 10th Field Regiment as they fought their fighting withdrawal from Malaya and across the causeway to Singapore, fighting vainly to retain the islands freedom, before being captured.

We think of the gunners of 2/14th, the only Regiment of the 8th Division not deployed to Singapore. They fought the War with their blue and red hat badge broken by a grey line down the centre, symbolic of the broken 8th, to be made whole once again when all the gunners of the 8th Division were returned from captivity. The 2/14th

went on to serve in New Guinea at Alexishafen, supporting one of the militia Brigades, Victoria's own 4th Brigade.

We think of the gunners on Imita Ridge, who fought the mountains, the rain, the mud as they manhandled 2 25 pounders up the Kokoda track. Up until that point, for our soldiers, the only artillery was incoming Japanese rounds. Gunners from the 14th Field Regiment struggled heroically so that they could, finally, answer the desperate calls of their mates when asked "Where's our artillery".

We think of the Gunners who fought the Anti aircraft battle at Crete, Divisional Locating battery Gunners, the supply staff who worked tirelessly to ensure the hungry guns were fed.

We think of the Battle of Long Tan. Never have Australians and New Zealanders been so close as when CAPT Maurie Stanley directed the fire of the Kiwi 161 Battery, along with 103 and 105 batteries RAA and the US A Battery 2nd/35th Artillery Regiment.

That day the batteries fired 3500 rounds in defence of Delta Coy, 6 RAR. The bond that was first forged at Gallipoli remained just as strong at Long Tan, and remains as strong today between our two nations.

We think of the gunners who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. These places are but a few examples of the conditions served, the battles fought, the rounds fired, and the lives saved and lost by Australian Gunners.

There are almost as many places as there are battles in the history of our Army. And this is why, when asked, "Where have the Gunners served", we answer 'UBIQUE!'

Can you identify any of the members in the photograph

The photograph below shows the 2 field Regiment Sergeants Mess 1962.

BRIG Doug Perry would like to verify and/or name the members shown. **Can you help?**

Any information direct to Brigadier Perry dperry@planet.net.au or 0419 355 675

Thanks



The Legend on the next page is the current best guide

LEGEND TO PHOTOGRAPH PAGE XX

Back	SGT R M Scott	SGT J G Perkins	SGT L E Milne	SGT J B Howson	SGT K J Phyland	SGT B C Cornell	* SGT D I Perry	SGT B L Sturges	* SGT J R Hawking	* SGT B H Hallman	SGT G Stening	SGT P H Tidd	SGT P D Joyce
Row 4	S/SGT K Johns (LAD)	SGT R C Ibbott	SGT B J O'Loughlin	SGT L S Baum	SGT A H Robinson	SGT R Hampton	SGT B B Green	SGT J R H Splatt	SGT F J Fahey	S/SGT F G Moulin	SGT J Gray (LAD)	SGT P C Harrison	
Row 3	S/SGT G N Cross	SGT J F Kelly		WO2 R F Woodward BEM	WO2 J D O'Brien	WO2 D W O'Toole	WO2 B R Harris	WO2 W Smith (LAD)	WO2 R H Wall	WO2 J C Martin	SGT G R Hanley	SGT B Griffin	SGT L Jones
													SGT B Bingham
Seated		WO2 B M Cave	WO2 B G Bolger	WO2 B V Upton	WO1 D Reid (RSM)	LTCOL L M Cutcliffe ED (CO)	WO2 N G B Haines	WO2 R E A Mathews	WO2 D L Macolm	WO2 G S Cecil			
Front		SGT J P Olney	SGT P Q Foa	SGT R J McLachlan	SGT L P Nugent	SGT B G Smith	SGT W I Brookes	SGT H A Bates	SGT B W Cleeman				
				Known to be Alive 1 May 20	Known to be Deceased			* Commisioned 2LT 1963					

ROBINVALE: THE STORY OF AUSTRALIA
AN ACCOUNT ABOUT A GUNNER FROM DOWNUNDER
A Story from "THE GUNNER"

The regimental magazine of the Royal Regiment of Artillery

Submitted by GNR Paul Heron

Named after Lieutenant George 'Robin' Cuttle, Robinvale is a small town nestled beside the Murray River in north western Victoria Australia. In May 1918 Robin was shot down over Caix near Villers-Bretonneux on the Western Front: he died as an airman but started his military life as a Gunner Officer. In 1924 and to the memory of their son, Robin's family renamed their new settlement on the Murray River – Robinvale ('vale Robin'). The town's centre 'Caix Square' pays further tribute to the place of his death. In 1984 the towns of Villers-Bretonneux in northern France and Robinvale were twinned in recognition of the former's liberation by Australian brigades on the 25th April 1918. Following the twinning Robin's uniform was donated by the family to the Villers-Bretonneux museum

Robin's military story starts at the outbreak of World War 1. He enlisted at Euston, a town on the Murray River, into the newly formed Australian flying Corps and although denied his passion to fly due to his eyesight he sailed for England on 29th November 1915 on the SS Malwa. In February 1916 Robin started Gunner officer training in St John's Wood and continued his training in the Royal Field Artillery gunnery schools at Shoeburyness and Okehampton. Robin was gazetted as a second lieutenant in the royal Field Artillery in the special reserve of officers in July 1916. He had been advised to obtain a commission in the Gunners where he would gain valuable gunnery experience after which he could apply to transfer to the Royal Flying Corps

In late July 1916, Robin aged 20, left for the Somme as a section commander in 50 Battery, Royal Field Artillery. In November 1916 Robin was awarded the Military Cross following an engagement at Butte de Warlencourt. The citation reads:

'For conspicuous gallantry in action. He displayed great courage and determination in endeavouring to relieve a wounded observation office under intense fire. He sent back information by lamp signal from time to time and was on duty continuously for some twenty hours.'

Robin was promoted to Lieutenant on 7th January 1917 and on 12th May 1917 was decorated by His Majesty King George V at Buckingham Palace. He was acting Captain with 9 Battery Royal Field Artillery attached to the Royal Scots when he returned to France on 15th May 1917. There he fought in the battle of Arras and as quoted in his war record 'assisted in the working of captured enemy guns'.

In August 1917 Robin transferred to the Royal Flying Corps and attended flying schools at Reading and Hythe completing the course at Cramlington. Robin returned to France in December 1917 as an observer in 49 Squadron, C Flight, Royal Flying Corps. He was reputed to be the biggest aviator in the Royal Flying Corps in World War 1 and had been nicknamed 'Tiny' by his fellow officers.

Robin continued to fly as an observer on photo reconnaissance flights and bombing missions. As reported in a letter to his mother, 'he was the only observer with the squadron who used two Lewis guns joined together'. Because they were heavier, the others were not strong enough to move them about at high altitude. He referred to them as his 'section'; two guns being a section in the Royal Field Artillery, his previous commission'. His pilot was a Canadian, Lieutenant Leckie, and their plane was named 'Tuff Guys'. Together they brought down several enemy planes.

On the 9th May 1918 Robin and Leckie were killed in action; the life span of air crew was short. They were returning from a successful bombing raid against ammunition trains in the German occupied French Town of Peronne when they were attacked. Robin's close friend Dreschfeld, who was also on the bombing raid, wrote 'While over the line the formation was attacked by a vastly superior number of Hun triplanes, five of which were brought down during the fight. Cuttle's machine was seen to go down, apparently well under control and presumably to captivity'. Sadly this was not the case and another Gunner friend wrote 'Tiny put up a grand fight bringing down two machines before he received his fatal wound'. The dogfight took place near Bray in the Arras sector of the Western Front

Robin's body was never found and in 1923 his mother and sister travelled to France where they were led by villagers and members of 49 Squadron to a crater in a field near Caix. After a lengthy search his family finally found the wreckage of is DH-9 plane but not his remains. The Arras Flying Services Memorial commemorates the 1000 airmen of the Royal Naval Air Service, the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Air Force who lost their lives on the Western Front and who have no known grave; Robin's name is inscribed on the memorial.

The name of Robinvale first appeared when Robin's mother erected a hessian banner with the name Robinvale outlined in flowers. This greeted the special train from Bendigo which had been engaged by Cuttle's Mallee Stores to carry prospective buyers to the land auction of their new township on 23 October 1924 (Mallee is a small town in New South Wales).

The Cuttle family commissioned three stained glass windows as a lasting memorial to their son Robin. The memorial windows were dedicated on 3 October 1926 by the Rt Reverend M C James (the first Bishop of St Arnaud) as part of its opening and dedication of the new Holy Trinity Church of England, Ultima. These stained glass windows were relocated with the assistance of the descendants of the Cuttle family and friends of St Peter's Anglican Church, Robinvale,

where they were dedicated by the Rt Reverend Andrew Curnow (Bishop of Bendigo) on the 8th February 2009. The windows reflect his service in both the Gunners and Royal Flying Corps.

Named by the Cuttle family in memory of their son, Robinvale is an enduring memorial to him and to those who have died in conflict.

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

RAA Luncheon 2022

It is still anticipated that the Luncheon will go ahead at the RACV Club next year. Fingers crossed.

St Barbara's Day 4th December and AGM

2/10 and Association activities are intended for the weekend 4th/5th December.

No specific details are available at this time.

The unveiling of the 12 Pounder at Werribee RSL will also take place on 5th December 2021.

Further Details

Will be made available on our webpage as they become available.

Submissions for January 2022 Newsletter to be sent to the Editor by 7th January 2022.
