

1871

A Field Battery Association, Inc.

National Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2015

2015

From the President's Chair.

G'day fellow members, Firstly, I would like to wish everyone a very happy and prosperous New Year. On saying that, I have just found out that we have four of our members on the sick list; they are Ron Hart, John Sheehan and Max Franklin, give them a call and cheer them up.

We still have 36 members who are un-financial for the current year, which is in the second half of the financial year, financial year runs from 1st July – 30th June, I have sent letter out to these members and I hope to get a good response. Due to attrition our numbers are declining and in a few years we will not exist, we all have to try and get new members to join the Association. Gunners from other Bty's can become Associate Members if they wish to join the 'A' Field Battery Association.

I received a phone call and an email from Maj. Cameron Stephenson and after speaking to him and reading the email found out their group of ex 'A' Bty members from the late 80's and early 90's is planning a reunion in Brisbane this ANZAC Day and they would like to join us in the march and the post march activities. All of our members around Brisbane please take note of this and endeavour to come along and meet these ex-members and make them feel welcome, you never know, we might get some new members. There could also be a visit to the Bty on the 24th April; I will let you know about this as soon as I know.

Last year we had an invite from 1 Regt to attend their Dawn Service and several of us did attend and I laid a wreath on behalf of the Assn. This year I hope we get an invitation once again and if we do, I hope we can participate again with the people who attended and also a few more would be nice.

The boat cruise is on again this year and I do hope the debacle of last year is past us. The riverside pier where we usually board the boat is under repair



and so will not be available. The only pier we can use is the South Bank City View wharf. We have to get on the City Cat at the Pig & Whistle, head up stream, get off at the South Bank wharf and walk to our pier. Brisbane Star Cruises have booked the wharf for our use. Details are at this stage, depart at 1300hrs and the cost will be \$25 or \$27, will be advised which one.

Barbecue lunch & first drink free if numbers allow. Cruise duration is 3 hours. Please let me know if you intend going on the cruise ASAP.

Our Annual General Meeting and Reunion is going to be at Sawtell RSL, NSW, once again and the people, who have attended, have had a great time. Please make the time to attend, especially our Vietnam boys and partners. The Reunion will be from Friday 12th until the evening of Sunday 14th September 2015. I will let you know the costs in the next newsletter. We will be holding our 2016 Reunion in Canberra. Could our Canberra members check out some sites and let me know, hope to go to the War Memorial and Treloar Centre, for starters.

Our Editor is having trouble finding items to go into our newsletter, come on everyone; some of you must have items that would be of interest to all members, so please make an effort and inundate Butch with articles. I am: I am writing a report on my Vietnam escapade last September and will include it in the next newsletter.

Something which has been lacking for some time is the reports we were getting from the Bty, they seem to have dried up. I know the Battery Commander and Battery Captain would love to send us reports, also all the Lieutenants must have some spare time. Come on BSM and Sgts show the officers up and you send us reports. We put out a newsletter every three months; the next one will be in May. I would love to see some serving members come to our Reunion in September. Hooray for now, Tex

Below are some images of The Brisbane Star for the post march cruise of the Brisbane River on Anzac Day 2015. Please contact Tex to confirm your booking on this delightful cruise.

Welcome to Brisbane Star Cruises

We have great pleasure in introducing you to our charming vessel, the 'BRISBANE STAR'. Our aim is to make your cruise as enjoyable as we can. We operate on the Brisbane River and are registered to carry 130 happy passengers.

We have a fully licensed bar. Our caterer can provide a full range of delicious menus to suit any occasion or budget. Self-Catering is also permitted if necessary. We're a fun, flexible floating company focused on having every one of our guests leave with a great big smile on their face...it's our guarantee.



The Lower Deck



The Bar



The Upper Deck



THE SPIRIT
LIVES
2014 - 2018



Anzac Day Saturday 25 April 2015

Anzac Day goes beyond the anniversary of the landing on Gallipoli in 1915. It is the day on which we remember Australians who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.

The spirit of Anzac, with its human qualities of courage, mateship, and sacrifice, continues to have meaning and relevance for our sense of national identity.

In Canberra the Memorial, in close cooperation with the Returned and Services League of Australia ACT, hosts the:

Dawn Service.....National Anzac Day Ceremony....Last Post Ceremony

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commemorative Ceremony will be held after the Anzac Day Dawn Service at the Aboriginal Memorial plaque on the side of Mount Ainslie.

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'A' Field Battery Association RAA, Inc.

Committee Meeting: The meeting was held at Ian and Wendy Leven's residence, 76 Dolphin Drive, Ballina, NSW, 2478 on Saturday 6 December 2014.

Meeting Opened: The meeting was opened by the President, Mr Ron Bassan at 1003 hours EDST.

Present: Ron Bassan, Ian Leven, Bob Cunningham, Greg Kittelty and Ray Alcorn.

Apologies: Vince Greck.

Visitors: Ron Hart, Wendy Leven, Carol Cunningham, Margaret Kittelty and Bert Grey.

Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting which was held at the Events Centre, Caloundra, Queensland, on Saturday 23 August 2014 were read by the Assistant Secretary, Mr Ray Alcorn and were confirmed by Mr Ian Leven as a true and accurate record of that meeting.
Seconded by Mr Bob Cunningham and carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes: Nil.

Inward and Outward Correspondence: The Inward and Outward correspondence was read by the Assistant Secretary, Mr Ray Alcorn. It was moved by Mr Bob Cunningham that the Inwards correspondence be received and the outwards correspondence be endorsed. Seconded by Mr Greg Kittelty and carried.

Business arising from the Correspondence: Discussed as read.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer, Mr Bob Cunningham, presented his report which is attached. The Treasurer requested that the following cheques be passed for payment: 767029, 767030 and 767031. The Treasurer moved that the payments be approved and the report be received. Seconded by Mr Ian Leven and carried.

General Business:

a. Mr Ron Bassan nominated Mr Ron Hart for the position of Assistant Secretary on the Committee. Seconded by Mr Ray Alcorn and carried.

b. AGM 2015. Ian Leven briefed the committee on his investigation into the suggestion of the next AGM in 2015 being held at Ballina, NSW. He detailed the suitability of the RSL as a venue and the availability of motels, tours, etc. Ian suggested that the suitability of the RSL and the financial costs as unacceptable. Ron Hart then spoke about the changes made at the Coach House in Maroochydore. Much renovation to the Coach House and the Rooms has been undertaken.

Moved by Ray Alcorn that the 2015 AGM be held at Sawtell in NSW and the 2016 AGM be held in Canberra, ACT and we discuss the suitability of the Coach House at Maroochydore at the 2015 AGM. Seconded by Greg Kittelty and carried.

c. Membership: The President stated that there were 36 unpaid members for this year.

d. Don Sinclair and Bob Cunningham attended the opening of the A Battery Gunners' club at Enoggera in Queensland.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Committee will be held at Daryl and Luanne Bassan's residence at 21 Ascot Drive, Samford, Queensland at 1000 hours EST, on Wednesday 25 March 2015.

Meeting Closed: There being no further business, the President closed meeting at 1120 hours EDST.

Assistant Secretary: Ray Alcorn

President: Ron Bassan

Self propelled 25 Pounder - Yeramba

Attempts to procure self-propelled guns for training purposes from the United Kingdom proved unsuccessful during the immediate post-war period, and so an Australian project was initiated in July 1949 to convert a Grant III tank (M3A5) to the role of a self-propelled 25 Pounder gun.

The Canadian Sexton self propelled gun, built on the Ram tank chassis which was very similar to the US Grant Tank chassis, was chosen as the model, and drawings were obtained from Canada and used as the basis for the design. The conversion of the Grant tank involved the removal of the turret and upper portion of the hull, and replacing this with an armour plated open topped fighting compartment. The side doors of the Grant were retained, which allowed easy access for the crew and loading of the ammunition, rather than over the sides as in a Sexton.

A fabricated bolster and beam assembly was welded to the hull of the vehicle, and this supported a saddle on which a 25 Pounder gun was mounted. The gun mounting, although similar to that of the ordinary towed gun, was strengthened and the pintle increased in size to withstand the recoil forces when rigidly mounted on the tank chassis.

The recoil system was modified to limit the recoil of the gun to 20 inches (500mm). The 25 Pounder, was fitted with a muzzle brake and a counterweight near the breech. The mounting allowed an elevation of 40 degrees and a depression of almost 10 degrees. Traverse right and left of 20 degrees was possible before having to manoeuvre the vehicle. Standard 25 Pounder field gun sighting gear for both direct and indirect gun-laying was provided.

Ammunition lockers were provided on the rear bulkhead of the fighting compartment, and these could carry 88 High Explosive and/or Smoke shells and 16 Armour Piercing shells.

Secondary armament was two Bren light machine guns, 2 Owen Machine Carbines, two .303 inch rifles and six hand grenades. The gun detachment comprised a commander, driver and four gun numbers.

No seats other than for the driver and gun-layer were provided.

A canvas canopy could be erected over the fighting

compartment during inclement weather.

The driving controls of the tank were repositioned from the centre to the right side. A hatch, similar to the Grant drivers' hatch was provided, which contained a protectoscope for observation when closed down.

A perspex window could be inserted into the open hatchway during adverse weather conditions. A sighting port was located in the left front hull plate. For communications purposes, a Wireless Set No. 19 Mk II (Aust) was mounted in the left rear of the fighting compartment. A cable reel was carried on the rear of the engine deck to allow signal line to be run between vehicles when firing as a Battery from static positions.

The Grant M3A5 chassis remained unaltered, except that M4 Sherman suspension units were fitted. Most Yerambas photographed in service mounted the Australian - made applique armour plate over the transmission housing.

The first unit was manufactured by the Development and Proving Establishment at Monegeetta, Victoria in 1949.

After trials of the prototype, the Ordnance Factory Bendigo was awarded an order to build thirteen units. The first production model was delivered in November 1950, with the total order being completed early during 1952.

The equipment was known officially as "Ordnance, Quick Firing, 25 pr Mark 2/1, on Mounting Self Propelled 25 pr (AUST) Mark 1, on Carrier, Grant, Self Propelled 25 pr (AUST) Mark 1". The equipment became known in shortened form as the SP 25 pr Yeramba - the name "Yeramba" meaning "instrument for throwing spears".

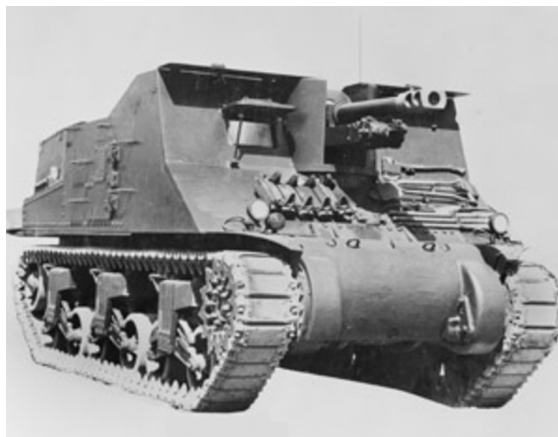
The 22nd Field Regiment, a Victorian-based Royal Australian Artillery unit was equipped with Yerambas, and took the title of 22 Fd Regt (SP). They provided fire support to the Second Armoured Brigade during its annual camps at Puckapunyal.

The Yeramba had a short service life, being declared obsolete in 1956. It was at this time that all the World War 2 vintage M3 Medium Grants and the Matilda Infantry tanks were finally withdrawn from Australian service.

A number of Yerambas have been known to survive, with the RAAC Tank Museum at Puckapunyal possessing a relatively complete example, but without the correct gun.



Officials inspecting the prototype SP 25-pounder Yeramba



This Month In Australian Military History– February

1 February 1943 Last Australian forces sail for home from the Middle East

Japan's entry into the war forced the Australian Government to decline British requests to concentrate on the war in North Africa and Europe. Australia began to 'look to America' for support and concentrated the bulk of her forces against the Japanese.

2 February 1942 First Japanese air attack on Port Moresby

The Japanese had hoped to occupy Port Moresby as a base from which to cut off shipping to Eastern Australia. Their defeat in the Battle of the Coral Sea thwarted the planned naval attack and invasion against Port Moresby.

3 February 1943 Australians counter-attack at Wau

Having failed to take Wau the Japanese were forced into retreat. At the end of the fighting some 1,200 Japanese had been killed as had some 300 Australians.

4 February 1945 Yalta Conference
Conference between President Roosevelt, Marshal Stalin and Prime Minister Churchill to determine the shape of post-war Europe.

5 February 1917 Captain H.W. Murray, VC Captain H.W. Murray, 4th Division, originally from Launceston, Tasmania, wins the Victoria Cross at Stormy Trench north-east of Gueudecourt, France.

6 February 1941 6th Division enter Benghazi, Libya

Benghazi changed hands five times as fighting, first against the Italians and later the German Afrika Korps, ebbed and flowed across Libya's Mediterranean coast.

8 February 1942 Japanese invade Singapore Singapore was believed to be an impregnable fortress but the Japanese advance from the Malayan Peninsula proved the falsity of this belief.

9 February 1943 Japanese defeat on Guadalcanal
After the ill-fated Philippines campaign, Guadalcanal was the first test of land strength between Japan and the United States in the Second World War. Japanese reverses at Guadalcanal contributed to their having to withdraw from the Kokoda Trail in 1942 when they were almost within sight of Port Moresby.

10 February 1944 End of Japanese resistance on the Houn Peninsula

Fighting in the Huon Peninsula lasted from August 1943 until mid-February 1944 and involved heavy fighting at such places as Lae, Finschhafen, Sattelberg, Shaggy Ridge and the Ramu Valley.

11 February 1951 Chinese offensive, Korea
Chinese launch their fourth phase offensive in Korea.

12 February 1940 First convoy of second AIF reaches the Middle East

Australia's first land campaign of the Second World War took place in North Africa against the Italians.

13 February 1946 Main Australian contingent of BCOF sailed for Japan from Morotai

Australians played a prominent role in the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan at the conclusion of the Second World War in the Pacific. They were allotted the devastated Hiroshima Prefecture on the island of Honshu.

14 February 1942 SS Vyner Brooke sunk
The Vyner Brooke, carrying 65 Australian nurses and other refugees from Singapore, was sunk by Japanese aircraft one day after leaving the island. The survivors made their way to Banka Island where one group of nurses were massacred by their Japanese captors. Only Sister Vivian Bullwinkell survived the massacre.

15 January 1944 Sio
The capture of Sio by the 9th Australian Division represented the final destruction of the Japanese 20th Division in the protracted Huon Peninsula campaign of 1943-1944.



Sister Vivian Bullwinkell



Harry Murray



Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival, led by a Japanese officer, walks under a flag of truce to negotiate the capitulation of Allied forces in Singapore, on 15 February 1942

16 February 1942 Banka Island massacre

22 members of the Australian Army Nursing Service and other survivors of the sinking of the SS Vyner Brooke massacred on Banka Island. The only survivor from this party of Australian nurses was Sister Vivian Bullwinkel.

17 February 1900 Paardeburg, Orange Free State, South Africa

A major action of the Boer War in which men of the New South Wales Mounted Rifles were involved that resulted in the surrender of 4,000 Boers under General Piet Cronje.

18 February 1941 Australian troops arrive in Singapore

Australia recognised that Singapore was vital to its own defence, without the island the British fleet had no suitable base for operations in the South East Asia. The 8th Division was sent to bolster the island's defence in the event of Japan's entering the war.

19 February 1915 Allied warships shell Dardanelles

This was the first allied attempt to force a passage through the Dardanelles and attack the heart of the Ottoman Empire. Its failure ultimately led to the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign.

20 February 1942 Japanese land in Portuguese Timor

The Japanese landing in Portuguese Timor heralded the beginning of a long and gruelling guerilla campaign waged by elements of the Australian 2/2nd Independent Company with the support of friendly Timorese.

21 February 1956 Australian and British aircraft bomb Kluang, Malaya

The raid was staged against the jungle base of the 7th Independent Platoon, Malayan Races Liberation Army in Central Johore and was carried out by Lincolns of No. 1 Squadron RAAF and Canberras of No. 12 Squadron RAF. It wiped out the camp and was regarded as the most successful of the 4,000 sorties flown by the Australians in Malaya.



P M John Curtin confers with MacArthur



Peter Badcoe

22 February 1942 General Douglas MacArthur ordered to leave the Philippines

MacArthur made his way to Australia from where he directed much of the war against Japan. His famous promise that 'I shall return' was kept when United States forces returned to the Philippines in 1944.

23 February 1967 Major P.J. Badcoe, VC

Major P.J. Badcoe, Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, originally of Adelaide, South Australia, leads an attack against Viet Cong troops - it was the first of three acts of bravery between February and April 1967 for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

24 February 1971 Captain J.J. Smith, MC and Bar
Captain J.J. Smith, Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, performs the action for which he is awarded a Bar to his Military Cross in July 1971.

25 February 1951 Hill 614, Korea

12 Platoon, D Company, 3rd battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, captured this important piece of high ground at the second attempt, enabling the United Nations' forces northward advance to the Albany Line to continue.

26 February 1943 End of fighting at Wau

The Japanese recognised that Allied possession of Wau posed a significant threat to important Japanese bases at Lae and nearby Salamaua and sought to take the town. They were defeated after weeks of heavy fighting.

27 February 1942 Battle of Java Sea

In two separate actions off the coast of Surabaya involving heavy losses in Allied shipping. HMAS Perth was involved in the battle and was one of the few allied ships to survive. The action delayed Japanese landings in Java by only one day.

28 February 1991 Gulf War ends

With Iraqi forces having been driven from Kuwait and defeated in the field the coalition forces called a halt to the fighting.

29 February 1972 HMAS Sydney arrives at Vung Tau

On this voyage Sydney embarked 457 soldiers. HMAS Sydney made 21 voyages to Vietnam during the war.



Murray the assistance dog Labrador enlisted in the Australian Army

In what is thought to be a first for the Australian Army, Murray the Labrador assistance dog has been awarded the rank of Gunner, pledged his allegiance and has been formally enlisted into the Royal Australian Artillery, posted with the 16th Air Land Regiment at Woodside.

Gunner Murray is the fourth graduate of Operation K9, a program training assistance dogs for serving and returning military personnel. "He was given to us as an 18-month-old dog with the name Murray, and now by his enlistment he gets his rank which is gunner, which is equivalent to private," Regimental Sergeant Major, Warrant Officer Class 1, Brendan Fox said.

Placing his paw on a Bible, Murray was awarded rank and sworn into the 16 ALR in front of a hall filled with his colleagues.

Although Murray would obviously not be given the physical role of a gunner, his actual role within the 180 personnel of the 16 ALR is seen as of more importance by many.

Regimental Sergeant Major Fox hosted Murray's enlistment ceremony, describing it as a unique experience.



Gunner Murray enjoys a pat from his colleagues after the ceremony



Sergeant Matthew Kelsey with newly enlisted assistance dog Gunner Murray at the Woodside Barracks near Adelaide

"It was very special for me," he said. "The benefit of just that one dog for 180 people, regardless of where they are in their life, has impacted on each and every one of them."

A veteran of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, Regimental Sergeant Major Fox said having Murray on the base was an incredible boost for the mental health of all members of the Woodside Barracks. "The bold adjust [pressure release] you can get as an individual by simply taking him for a walk around the block or taking him for a run off the lead, up through the hills, for some is enough," he said.

Gunner Murray will bunk in the guard room of the 16 ARL overnight and when not on duty and he will mix freely with all members of the barracks during the day. "Still today, some seven months after he has arrived in the unit, it's a race to see who can get down to the guard room first to see who can take him to

PT and then who can take him away for the remainder of the day. Regimental Sergeant Major Fox said the 16 ALR had purposely made access to Gunner Murray non-formal to ensure personnel did not feel any pressure or associated guilt when utilising the assistance dog. Fox said, "I did not want any stigma attached to the person who was with the dog for the day," he said. "If an individual feels that he is struggling and feels that Gunner Murray will help him out

Royal Artillery Park (Halifax) is a military park, which is part of CFB Halifax, Nova Scotia.

It contains the oldest military Mess in Canada (1816) and the Cambridge Military Library houses one of the oldest library collections in the country (1810). The RA Park was initially funded from the conquest of present-day Maine, which was renamed the colony of New Ireland.

The site of RA Park was acquired in 1799 from John and Richard Cleary for £150, in the name of Prince Edward, to provide soldiers quarters, stores, officers' accommodations and a headquarters for the Royal Artillery personnel stationed in Halifax. Its acquisition resulted in the move of the Royal Artillery personnel and equipment from congested quarters on Argyle Street, opposite Grand Parade.

Around 1800, the Royal Engineer Establishment consisting of RE Square and the South Barracks were established on the east side of RA Park to provide accommodations for the Royal Engineers. These lands were thus incorporated into the Halifax fortifications, which

became collectively known as Imperial Fortress Halifax, with similar status as the Imperial Fortress of Bermuda, Malta and Gibraltar.

In the far corner of the Royal Artillery Park, a diminutive red brick building, is the Cambridge Military Library. This building was the social and literary centre of military Halifax. The Library opened in 1817 at Grafton Street, as an alternative to the more notorious choices of city entertainment. It moved to its present location in Royal Artillery Park in 1886 and was renamed Cambridge Military Library in 1902. The library was funded in part from Customs receipts gathered during the War of 1812 at the Battle of Hampden.

Cambridge Military Library



Tom Uren, 1921-2015

Former Whitlam-era minister earned widespread respect as a campaigner for peace and conservation.

At the time of his retirement from politics in 1990, he had served in a Labor cabinet and as a minister, risen to the deputy leadership of his party, and gained widespread respect as a campaigner for peace and conservation.

Uren was born in Balmain in 1921, the son of a labourer who had also been a jockey. But Uren counted his mother, to whom he was close, as the great inspiration of his life. The middle son of three, Uren grew up in the Manly area.

As a youth he bore the nickname Tucker – probably because he was considered “a good eater” – and he excelled at swimming and rugby league. But it was pugilism that he made his own. “I lived for boxing,” Uren recalled, and in 1940, while on leave from the army and suffering a bout of flu, he fought Billy Britt for the heavyweight championship of Australia, knocking his opponent down in the sixth round but losing the match on a technical knockout.

Uren joined the Royal Australian Artillery after the outbreak of war and was captured by the Japanese in Timor.

He spent his captivity in a variety of camps, suffered on the Thai-Burma railway, and spent the last part of the



Bombardier Tom Uren (third from left, holding a tin mug and a newspaper) with members of the 2/1st Heavy Battery in 1941

war working in Japan itself, where he got on well with the mainly elderly Japanese, beside whom he worked in a factory.

Returning to Australia soon after the war, Uren married Patricia Palmer, the sister of one of his fellow POWs, in 1947. In order to advance his boxing career, Uren then worked his passage to Britain but after limited success in the ring – the war years had taken their toll – he returned to his wife in Sydney where he took up a trainee floorman’s position at Woolworths. Uren rapidly proceeded to a more senior role, becoming manager of the company’s Lithgow store.

Uren joined the Labor party in Lithgow in 1952 and, after returning to Sydney, won preselection for the seat of Reid in 1957, entering the parliament at the 1958 election.

Life as a politician and especially as a Whitlam government minister had exacted

a toll on Uren’s family life. His first wife, Patricia, left him in 1974 to live in Dorrigo but the two remained close. After she was diagnosed with cancer in 1979, Patricia returned to live with him in Sydney. She died in 1981.

Uren is survived by his second wife, Christine Logan, a musician and long-time friend whom he had married in 1992; her daughter, Ruby; and two children from his first marriage, Michael and Heather.

Burma Railway

The prisoners of war "found themselves at the bottom of a social system that was harsh, punitive, fanatical, and often deadly..

The living and working conditions on the Burma Railway were often described as "horrific", with maltreatment, sickness, and starvation.

The estimated total number of civilian labourers and POWs who died during construction varies considerably, but the Australian Government figures suggest that of the 330,000 people that worked on the line (including 250,000 Asian labourers and 61,000 Allied POWs) about 90,000 of the labourers and about 16,000 Allied prisoners died.

After the railway was completed, the POWs still had almost two years to survive before their liberation.

During this time, most of the POWs were moved to hospital and relocation camps where they could be available for maintenance crews, others including Tom Uren were sent to Japan to alleviate the manpower shortage there.

After the end of World War II, 111 Japanese and



Prisoners of war laying railway track on the Burma-Thailand railway. c. 1943

Koreans were tried for war crimes because of their brutalization of POWs during the construction of the railway. 32 were sentenced to death

M2A2 Howitzer gun given to Hawks Nest Tea Gardens RSL Sub-Branch.

Tea Gardens Hawks Nest RSL Sub-Branch has been honoured with an original M2A2 Howitzer gun used in the Vietnam War.

Former president of the sub-branch Terry Munright said he first became aware the guns were available back in late 2011. "We filled out a lengthy application form and from 247 applications for only 38 guns, our sub-branch was successful," he said. "They not only looked at our application but at where the gun would be put and how it would be looked after," he said.

Tea Gardens was one of four places in NSW to receive one of the guns, the others going to Oberon, Muswellbrook and Thirlmere.

The M2A2 Howitzer was introduced into service in 1967 and



Neil Davy of Myall Engineering, Barry Whiteman Terry Munright and Merv Mills

was critical in providing close artillery fire support to the Australian Army in Vietnam.

The gun has special significance for the Vietnam veterans in the Tea Gardens Hawks Nest sub-branch who used the same style of gun during their deployment. "It's the same type of artillery piece I was over in operation with. It was a very, very necessary weapon over

there," Vietnam veteran Merv Mills said.

Myall Engineering is in the process of measuring up the gun so it can be installed on a concrete slab at Anzac Park, Tea Gardens.

Mr Munright said he hoped the gun would be installed by next month, and will definitely be in place before the ANZAC centenary.

Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company 18 Pounder Gun Project

The Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company (RAAHC) has undertaken a project to create an original WW1 Quick Firing 18 Pounder gun team.

The project will involve the restoration of an 18 Pounder, its ammunition limber, the acquisition/restoration of harness and saddles, the recruitment of gun detachments, the acquisition of horses and the replication of period uniforms.

The Quick Firing (QF) 18 Pounder was the principle Field Gun of the British Army in World War One.

The gun saw service in every theatre of the Great War. Its calibre of 84mm and shell weight made it more brutal and destructive than the French 75mm and German 77mm.

Its ammunition had the shell combined with the cartridge thus giving it the description of 'quick firing'.

The 18 pounder gun was introduced into

Australian artillery gunners hard at work during an artillery bombardment near Zonnebeke October 1917



Australian service in 1906 and continued to be used until 1945.

Today only seven of this early model remain of which three are updated with pneumatic tyres and three are Museum items.

The RAAHC state that they hope "to provide a living memorial to Australian Artillery by deploying the gun and team for commemorative events starting in 1915 for the 100th anniversary of Gallipoli."

Slouch Hats and Strong Genes

Not so long ago I was invited to the Battle School in North Queensland to see a sub unit of the 3d Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment training for war and later that same night to break bread with its soldiers in austere facilities surrounded by tropical rainforest.

The visit caused me to reflect on soldiering so many years before when I had known previous generations of Australian military. Dare I confess old age but the truth is they included the fathers and grandfathers of today's young warriors.

Such names as Caligari, Fazekas, Tink, Caughey, Keating, Smith, Weir and the list rolls on from different places and eras. It was so easy to go back in time to see familiar faces from my time, to recall their deeds of such dash and daring and defiance even when the odds were against them.

From Gallipoli to the most recent conflicts in the Middle East, diggers have never been found wanting. There was always the familiar grin regardless of circumstances, the wry wit and the ability to get on with the task, no matter how difficult and dangerous. Above all was their pride and love of country and mateship including sharing, caring, protecting and giving life itself before they would let mates down.

On that memorable visit to the Battle School the commonalities were so evident. Like the youth before them they believe in immortality, have strong sense of purpose, immense pride and confidence and demonstrate a high standard of discipline. Mind you I am sure they are not perfect and no doubt there is still much to learn about the demanding skills of warfare but the essential characteristics they have inherited are so evident.



The impact on me was such that I put pen to paper and the verse that follows is but a simple effort to tell all that care to read it that the Anzac genes are very strong and its London to a Brick, they will remain that way in the Land of Oz. These young men and women who wear the nation's thread do our country proud.

The Genes Are Very Strong

Just this very morning I saw them training for war
Emulating the Anzacs who served so long before
Tired, thirsty and hungry yet always with wit and carefree grins
Young, seemingly immortal and determined to go
forward and win

I recall their fathers in troubled times from many years back
On freezing mountains, paddy fields, desert sands and
jungle tracks
They stood fast when all seemed lost and yet won through
Was there ever a task they failed to do?

They were K Force, Regulars, Nashos, Reservists and all as one
No matter the generation, they wore the proud badge of the Sun
Love of country and unit pride was the true compass for them
"Never let your mates down" is still the strident anthem

Mid a gathering storm, today's warriors move towards the crest
I see soldiering standards of the very best
Let there be no doubt the Anzac genes are forever strong
It's odds on to be the same when tomorrow's columns
march along

George Mansford © September 2014

From Egypt, France to WA, selfless Morphett Vale nurse Roselena Higgins dedicated life to others

by: Michael Milnes January 20, 2015

ROSELENA Higgins was one of the selfless Adelaide nurses who volunteered to care for the Australian wounded.

The Morphett Vale woman was 36 and single when she joined the Australian Army Nursing Service on July 20, 1915.

She embarked for Egypt from Melbourne on the



The house WWI nurse Roselena Higgins was born in, where Woolworths is on Main South Rd, Morphett Vale now

never married. "I don't remember much about her, but I was told she was a very good nurse in the war," Mrs O'Sullivan

HMAT A71 Nestor on

October 11, 1915. She was one of about 2500

Australian nurses who served overseas. Higgins

was posted to the 2nd Australian General Hospital and the 2nd Australian

Auxiliary Hospital. He

niece Margaret O'Sullivan, 85, also from Morphett

Vale, remembers her aunt as a very strict woman who

says. "I think she was one of the first ones to go. "She made several trips when they brought the wounded back to Australia on hospital ships."

Her record shows she was transferred to England suffering "overwork" after nursing in France. She received the 1914/15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal, but other details of her service are all but lost to time.

Mrs O'Sullivan said when her aunt returned in May, 1918, she went nursing in Western Australia before moving to Hamley Bridge and then to back to Morphett Vale. Her house was on the site of the current Woolworths supermarket on Main South Rd, Morphett Vale. "When we moved back to Morphett Vale in 1947 she moved across the road to where the Century 21 office is now, and we moved into the house she was living in," Mrs O'Sullivan said.

She died in 1961 aged 81 and is buried at St Mary's Church, Morphett Vale, only 400m from her niece's home and less than 1km from where she was born.



A portrait of WWI nurse Roselena Higgins



They shall not grow 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.
Lest we forget.



KEN. AGNEW
LES ASHBY
TOM. BANFIELD
CLARE. (BONNIE) BASSAN
TREVOR. BEER
FRANK. BERRIER
S.J. BLANCH (OAS. Malaya)
DOUG N. BRYAN
MALCOLM J. BUGG
GORDON CARMICHAEL
TOM. CARRUTHERS
KEITH. CHRISTENSEN
REG CLATWORTHY
RICHARD. DUGGAN
R.M. DUCAT (OAS. Malaya)
PAT. DALY
TOM. DAWSON
JOHN. DOWNES
BEVAN FILCE
MAURICE FONTAINE
GEORGE. FORSYTHE
M.K. FUSSELL (KIA, Afghanistan)
ROBERT J. (BOB) GRAY
BARRY HANDLEY
NEIL HARDEN
MICK. HARKEN
B.D. HENDERSON (OAS. Malaya)

REG KELLY
KEN. KENNEDY
BOBBY. LEWIS
JOHN. MACDONALD
BARRY MARR
I.G. MATHERS (KIA. Vietnam)
IAN. MEIBUSCH A.M
JACK MILLIGAN
E.J. (LOFTY) MOORE
BRIAN. MURTAGH
R.J. PARKER (OAS. Vietnam)
R.J. (JIM) PONTING
DAVE. QUIRK
PETER. RAINSBURY
CLIVE. RALFE
JOHN SALMON
BRIAN. SCOTT
PETER. SEDDON
ALBERT (ALBY) SHERIDAN
ALAN. SINGH
NOEL. SMALL
R. F. SMITH
BRIAN. WHISKER
JOHN. WHITELAW. AO,CBE
BERNARD. (PLONKY) WINE
GUS. WOOLFE
JOHN. WORBOYS

It is with a heavy heart that I must inform you all of the departure of one of our old Battery members.

2410761 Gnr Barry Leslie Handley passed away on the 11th February 2015.

Barry served in the Battery as a Command Post Signaller during the Malayan Emergency 1957 - 1959.

Barry is survived by his wife, Shirley.

Baz's funeral is at the Eastern Suburbs Crematorium, Sydney, NSW, on Wednesday 18th February 2015, starting at 0930. Medals are to be worn.

If anyone would like to pass on their condolences,

Shirley's number is: (02) 9718 6863.

Tex Bassan



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