



# The Germ Journal



**Issue Number: 38**  
**30 September 2010**

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Welcome to the September 2010 Edition of the Germ Journal (the Ex-104 Battery Member's Newsletter).

## **Contact List Updates:**

If any Germ has an E-mail address that is not recorded on the Contact List please let me know (corcorf@bigpond.net.au). It will save time and money if all I have to do is mail out electronically.

### New/Change of address, etc.: -

Glenda and Barry Basham's new Email address;  
glenbarry@tpg.com.au

Tony Ferraro's new Email address;  
acferraro@acferraro.com.au

Peter (Ozzie) Jenkins is now living in Brisbane he can be contacted on 0417 721 326.

Pieter and Gay Leembruggen's new Email addresses;  
Peter - pieterleembruggen@gmail.com  
Gay - gayleembruggen@gmail.com

I am having trouble with the following email addresses for Germs that have changed their address, are new to the circulation and/or I just have the wrong address because the emails are bouncing back.

Bruce Cowan, Rod Cocking, Peter Small, Mike Clee, Gordon Johnson, Dave Mathers, Stuart McArthur, Bill Daley, Bill Hogue and Leo Nicholson.

If any one can help me out it would be appreciated?

## **12 Field Regiment RAA Association:**

No Report this Quarter.

## **Royal Australian Artillery Association:**

No Report this Quarter.

## **National Artillery Museum at North Fort, North Head:**

Volunteers are still needed at the Museum, so if any Germs have some spare time on their hands Mick Crawford would appreciate a call.

## **Reunions:**

Adelaide 2013;

Received from Bob Dehle.

I am helping organise the next Reunion in Adelaide in 2013 and would like a note to go in the Germ to let everyone know that planning is well under way.

Ken Hayes (Zoomas), Bob Marshall and I, along with our lovely ladies, have had a number of meetings since early May, and most of the big decisions have been made with regard to venues and activities. We plan to have an event that will allow a great time together as well as showcase Adelaide.

The Reunion will officially start on Tuesday 23rd April and ending with a Battery Dinner on Saturday 27th April.

A mail out will be sent during October to start the process and let people know the details.

Please mark these dates in your diaries in ink and look forward to getting together once again.

Regards

Bob Dehle  
68A Rapid Drive  
VICTOR HARBOR SA 5211

Phone (08)8552 2779 Mobile 0407406110  
Email [bobdehle@bigpond.net.au](mailto:bobdehle@bigpond.net.au)

#### **Items of Interest:**

Contributions from around the country follow;

#### **Rob and Rosemary Brooker's News: -**

July 2010.

Hi Frank,

Have finally read the June Germ Journal, thanks for putting a few lines in for us.

When I have a bit of spare time, I will write an article for the Sept. Journal while details of our holiday are still fresh. I guess you will be able to store the details till the end of Sept.

It was a shock to come home to the cold weather. Rob and I both have colds, which we caught on our bus trips. Hope to be better soon.

We go to Adelaide in about 3 weeks as my baby sister is turning 50 and we haven't seen our Mums this year, so a visit is overdue.

Later in July 2010

Rob and I are both still recovering from the flu we picked up on our 2nd bus trip. We both had flu shots before we went away, but this is obviously a different version, which caught us when we were tired and resistance was down.

There seems to be a number of guys with cancer in the latest newsletter, so that is not good. Hope they all have full recoveries.

September 2010

After 6 months planning, Rob and I had a fabulous 38 day holiday in Canada and USA in June and July traveling with Scenic Tours. We had back to back tours and in the first 24 days we did the Rocky Mountaineer train trip through the magnificent Canadian Rockies, then a bus tour round British Columbia and Alberta, followed by the Alaskan Cruise through the Inside Passage. Our accommodation was mainly at the Fairmont Hotels, which was a very comfortable experience. Some of the highlights on the West Coast included our stay at Lake Louise, the Motorcycle Ride on a Harley Davidson bike with sidecar in Jasper, dinner at the Clubhouse at Whistler with a buggy ride around the golf course after ordering our dinner, the

Peak to Peak Gondola in Whistler which featured in the Winter Olympics earlier in the year, Butchart Gardens and the Historic Walking Tour in Victoria BC.

After we left Vancouver, we flew to Montreal to experience the other side of Canada with a 17 Day Eastern Canada and USA Explorer tour. We saw some amazing things on the East Coast and we had a helicopter ride over Niagara Falls, which we both agreed was a fabulous way to see the Falls. We loved Quebec which is predominately French with lovely old buildings. Rob and I spent an afternoon in the Toronto International Ice Hockey Hall of Fame, which was fascinating and we learnt a lot about Ice Hockey. We also visited the War Museum in Ottawa, which was great. We were travelling along with Queen Elizabeth 11, who was in Ottawa for Canada Day and then shared our hotel in Toronto. Niagara Falls is an amazing place, we were fortunate to see the fireworks over the Falls from the USA side on the 4th of July, having also seen a wonderful fireworks display in Ottawa on Canada Day. It was amazing timing for our tour to coincide with these special days. We had a day in Lancaster, Pennsylvania to learn about the Amish People, then travelled to Washington DC where we visited the Memorials, including the Vietnam, Korean and World War Memorials and Arlington National Cemetery, the White House and the Capital Building. In New York we went on the Uptown and Downtown Tours on top of double decker buses, which was fun.

The second tour on the East Coast was different with more cities and museums, while the West side had snow and mountains. The weather was varied, with snow in Banff and we had a heatwave in New York. We saw lots of black bears and other native animals. We had great male tour guides and bus drivers, with so much expertise in Canada's history and geography, which made our holiday in North America such a wonderful and memorable time.

If anyone is thinking of a holiday in Canada, we would definitely recommend it, as it is a beautiful country and the people are great, including all the young Australians working there. I now have nearly 5,000 photos to sort through and select for a photo album!!! Of course Rob and I both picked up the cold/flu that travelled round the 2nd tour bus, but fortunately it really hit us after we arrived back home. At least we had flu shots before we went away, so guess that helped.

Apart from our great holiday, Rob has been playing lawn bowls and I am now dreaming of another holiday before we get too old to travel. The weather has been lovely in Canberra and we went to Floriade last week, which is a very pretty sight, as a result of all the rain we have had this year.

Hope everyone is well.

Regards.

Rob & Rosemary

Frank and Paula Corcoran's News: -

Hello to all,

Well I have finally finished that Honour Board that I have been doing for the Woomera Area School. The final number of veterans amounted to 2 Borneo/Malaya, 31 Vietnam, 1 Rwanda and 3 Iraq, not bad for a little school in the desert. Interestingly, fellow Germ Barry West and I are the only two Nashos.

I recently delivered the Honour Board to the School so it can be mounted for the unveiling on 11/11. It has been 35 years since I was last in Woomera. I must say I was really disappointed how Woomera has been let go. The place reminded me of Marysville after the bushfires last year. The Americans have all gone now and the place is more in caretaker mode, being kept alive for the various military exercises that go on from time to time. The small supermarket has most things. I would guess that the permanent population would be no more than a couple of hundred people tops. The 2 x 50 metre swimming pools have been replaced with a 25 metre pool with a 1 metre springboard. Also the 180km road to Port Augusta is all bitumen now and it's less than 2 hours drive away. Other countries use the facilities from time to time. I know the Japanese are using some of the infrastructure for their space projects. The super hornets were bombing out on the range when I was there.

Woomera was designated a hardship posting for the Americans when they were there. No TV, no McDonalds, KFC and the like with limited entertainment and other facilities. The yanks, they like it all served up to them. I'm sure the road would still be unsealed if it wasn't for them

Paula and I went back to Townsville for a 4 day reunion with a few of the people I worked with there last year. It was good to catch up again as we were all from different parts of Australia and were retained to do a difficult job at the time. The atmosphere was a bit more relaxed and we did not need any security guards this time around.

Last week Paula and I were in Tasmania to help daughter Nadia move into her new home in Blackmans Bay near Hobart. I have arms like a gorilla after all the lifting I did. We managed to spend a couple of days down at Bicheno where Nadia has a holiday house, mainly to bring things back to Hobart for the new house. Tassie is growing on me, it is a nice part of the world and so scenic where ever you go.

Yesterday (Wednesday) I had lunch with Rick Polley, Myles Charter and Peter Burls (102 Bty). I had not seen Myles or Peter in 40 years. Peter and I worked in the Commonwealth Bank so when we went into National Service, as Army pay was less than what the Bank pay was, the Bank as a generous employer made up the difference. In Peter and my case we did not access that money for the 2 years, so it was like a compulsory savings plan for us and a tidy little nest egg on discharge. I did not know it at the time but apparently it was a bone of contention for some of the other Nashos whose employers were not so generous. This issue has been festering for over 40 years and raised its ugly head again at lunch. There is a Germ who was a Butcher in Civy Street, who shall remain nameless but his initials are MC, that was paranoid about this fact and is still smarting.

Well that's me for the quarter. Sorry I am late out with the Germ Journal however, I had a busy September.

Cheers.

Frank and Paula

Dick Duane's News: -

Greetings fellow Germs,

I'm well and I hope you are all hanging in there.

Keep fighting Scrimmy, you are often in my thoughts. I recall travelling from Kapooka to North Head, calling into Marrackville to see his mother, with Terry Guest in his FJ Holden. No ordinary FJ this, he had a Jaguar 4 speed gearbox, floor shift. What was memorable, no bloody clutch. Select 1<sup>st</sup> gear then press starter button to get rolling, then crash 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Lucky there were no red lights up the hill from Manly.

Also recall being on guard duty with Peter Tillbrook as Guard Sergaent the night Harold Holt went missing. Then the Army sent me and Scrimmy to S.A. to do a colloquial Vietnamese language course. What a waste of time, but a good trip.

Thats all folks.don't drink too much. Just enough.

Cheers.

Dick

Rod and Sandra George's News: -

Hello Frank,

Good news from here, holiday in the UK with the Boss (of course) plus Daughter Belinda, her little boy Liam (16 months) and our son Cameron, starting next week, both spouses will be staying here, that means it's the old group of four plus the little guy.

Cameron will be coming back home after 11 days (his wife Emma is pregnant, due early Jan). Belinda and Liam will stay on to come back home, as Sandra and I head to Hong Kong for a week's hard earned R&R.

That's about all for now, good health and greetings to every Germ and Germette and all the offspring.

Regards,

Rod and Sandra George.

John Hannon's News: -  
Early July 2010.

I will be going for an op on my right shoulder, they will cut away the bicep and rotator cuff, drill a hole and reattach them. After I get over that one we will look at doing the other one.

Mid August 2010.

I have had my right rotator cuff repaired and my right bicep sown back on, pain is unbelievable. Now have to wait to get the other side done.

Hanno

John and Barbara Herbert's News: -

Barb emailed me to say she had all intention of putting together a contribution but missed the deadline.

Maybe next time Barb for the Christmas Edition.

Peter Jenkins' News: -

Hi Frank & Fellow Germs,

I'm in the process of moving to Brisbane after 20 odd years in Cairns. I have sold off all my business interests and property there and split the proceeds with my ex. So Brisbane, my old home town, signifies a whole new start for me. My new partner, Donna and I have just bought a new apartment at West-End, which is not far from the Uni. Donna is a lecturer there and I am a PhD student.

I ran into 'Noddy' Nordstrom (from the Orderly Room) on ANZAC Day this year. I thought maybe a few Germs may know him. I didn't recognise anybody else because they are all too bloody old now.

Anyone passing through Brisbane and wants to catch up over a coffee (no – I still don't drink) give me a call on 0417 721 326.

Regards

Peter (Ozzie) Jenkins

Russ and Marilyn Pullen's News: -

Hi Frank and Paula,

Hope all is well with you both. We are well here, Marilyn has had more facial surgery for skin cancers but otherwise no issues of any concern. We haven't been away since the Darwin trip and had intended to be gone in mid Sept. but Marilyn's 88yr old dad was sadly diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia late July, so we have been making regular trips down to visit. Tough bugger has already surprised the doctors twice with his resilience. Still got his own teeth (got his first toothbrush when he was 13) and prior to this illness was not on any medication of any type at all.

Looking forward to getting back up to Yeppoon to visit the youngest grandson but at the moment we are going down to Evans Head for a couple of weeks/whenever to be near the old fella, so we will be taking the van.

I daresay that by the time you get the journal out Frank those Magpie supporters will be licking their wounds after getting the wobbles YET AGAIN and the mighty Saints will be revelling in the glory of yet ANOTHER premiership. GO SAINTS!!!

All the best.

Cooee

Russ and Marilyn

Editor's Note: Unfortunately not this year for the Sainters Russ. It's hard enough getting the Magpies off the front page of the Melbourne Sun when they are loosing, it will take until Christmas for things to settle down now.

Kevin and Denise Scrimshaw's News: -

Hi Frank,

Hope all is well with both you and Paula.

As we always say, time really flies. It is 5 months since the Darwin Reunion and Christmas is creeping up on us. Our granddaughter turned 5 on the 1<sup>st</sup> September, where have those 5 years gone?

Denise and I would like to start by thanking everybody for the support, emails and phone calls. But I think we can honestly say that we wouldn't expect anything less from the 104 Bty extended family. None of us want or need sympathy, but it knowing that the support is out there really helps. We have had a couple of set backs, but Vietnam Vets don't roll over. So fingers crossed we hope to be back on track now.

I know that there are others out there with issues as well and our thoughts are with them also. It is a personal choice whether to go it alone and I respect that, but remember what I said, we are not after sympathy we are FAMILY. Denise and I are grateful for the support.

From both of us, stay healthy and safe.

Scrimmy.

Lee and Rosemary Stockley's News: -

Hi Frank,

After having a great reunion in Darwin including the Anzac Day march it was good to catch up with all the boys and girls. After that Rosemary and I went to Bali for 2weeks.

Life at home is busy with 2 mornings a week at the gym and the RSL Sub-branch takes up a lot of time, with me as Vice President and Pensions Officer and Rosemary as the Secretary .

Rosemary has just been voted in as President of the ex-Wrans Association NSW Branch, so she has many hats to balance.

I spoke to Ron Casey last week and he said he is going OK. Today I spoke to Scrimmy and he has a positive attitude. We wish them both well.

Our youngest daughter has just moved from Wagga to Mackay, so we will have to get up there to see the grand kids.

In November we are going back to Bali and in 2011 we have booked a trip back to London and a bus trip for 21 days around Britain, Wales, Scotland.

We think it is the time to travel while the health is still OK.

Frank that is enough from me and we hope all the Germs and their Ladies stay well.

Regards

Stockers & Rosemary

Barry and Sue West's News: -

July 2010.

Hi folks,

Let me update you on my treatment. I have just arrived back home again after a week in hospital, having had to have an emergency admission last Monday night because of chronic back pain as a result of the tumor in my spine causing compression of the spinal cord. That resulted in a week of radiotherapy sessions and a plethora of blood tests, bone marrow biopsies and x-ray scans of my whole skeletal system and a visit from the haematology specialists. Firstly, let me say that I am definitely not pregnant. Sounds strange I know, but one of my chemo treatments (which commenced on July 1) will be a continuing high dose of Thalidomide, not good for developing fetuses, but apparently very effective against Multiple Myeloma, which I now have confirmation of. That will be used in combination with a steroid called dexamethasone and stem cell replacement therapy - whereby some of my new bone marrow, along with "good" stem cells will be extracted from me and frozen, then all of my red and white blood cells together with remaining stem cells are killed off with high dose chemo, leaving me with zero immunity for a period of time, at which I will need to be in semi-isolation in hospital while I am given a complete blood transfusion with my new clean stem cells which had been frozen. The treatment will be ongoing. Sounds a bit like science fiction, but apparently becoming a common treatment for cancer. There is no guarantee of 100% success, and in all probability, I will need to revisit the treatment whenever I have a relapse. But then the alternative offers even less. What that means of course is that I will necessarily become less involved in some activities I have enjoyed in the past, because I am going to have periods of lethargy from the chemo and sustained periods of semi-isolation both in and out of hospital, to avoid infection during the stem cell replacement therapy.

All sounds kind of hairy I know, but thankfully I have confidence in the medical team at The Canberra Hospital who are treating me and the support from our Department of Veterans Affairs has been excellent to date. In addition, the support I have had from my family and especially Susan, together with your support will make the task ahead that little easier. I thank you all.

August 2010.

Firstly, again thank you all for your well wishes, cards, emails, phone calls and visits, they are all much appreciated by both myself and Susan.

Let me give you an update on me. Firstly, let me say that I have already mentioned that my condition is incurable, so I may as well mention here that even with treatment, my life expectancy is likely to be of the order of 3 to 5 years at best, so you can see Susan and I have a lot to do in the next few years. Well the last month or six weeks has been very up and down for me. Many trips to the hospital for more scans, blood tests and radiotherapy on both my arm and my back. Unfortunately, my mobility is still not good, but improving slowly. The continuing high doses of radiation and the various drugs are taking their toll on my poor old body though and I have lost nearly 20 kg in weight - a mere shadow of my former self. Anyway, I'll continue to battle on until him Big Fella in the sky decides it's time for me to join him I guess. What more can I do? In the meantime, Susan and I will continue to plod through reams of paperwork, tax files etc to get things in some sort of order. I'm hoping for a review with the Haematologist in a few weeks and we should get some idea of how the current thalidomide treatment is working, so I will finish here for now and maybe report back in a few weeks time after that review.

September 2010.

Had my first review with the Haematologist yesterday (Monday). The news is encouraging in that my M-protein levels (ie the bad protein related to the myeloma cancer) have responded well to the current Thalidomide/steroid treatment and have dropped from 20 to 4. They will never drop to zero, but the result so far is very encouraging. The plan now is to continue at present on the same drug regime, with another review scheduled for November. My fingers and toes will remain crossed. In the meantime, I still have some work to do with physio on my right arm and right foot/leg (which is suffering "foot drop" probably as a result of the radiation treatment I have had to the base of my spine). Hopefully I will be able to regain much of my mobility. For those who last saw me some weeks ago, you will be pleased to note that a change in my pain medication has eliminated my constant nausea, I am eating much better now and I have regained some of the weight I had lost (I was 97kg when I went into hospital in June, and a little over a month ago I was down to 77kg. I am now back to 86kg).

Cheers for now.

Barry & Susan

#### **Sick Parade:**

I received an email from Ian Ryan (Secretary, 12 Field Regt. Association) in regard to Gunners who are on sick parade.

Hi Guys,

I would just like to let everybody know that there are a few sickies amongst us.

- Russell Hogan (102 Bty.) has complications with his Prostate. He is currently in Melbourne for a time. If you wish to contact Russell & his wife, Jennifer, please contact them on 0413 132 205.
- As many of you may well be aware that Kevin Scrimshaw (104Bty.) has not had a good report. Kevin & Denise can be contacted on 0417 419 701.
- Bob Bushby (HQ Bty.) is not at all well and is in Connie Fall War Vets. Croner Heights, Collaroy, NSW. His Daughter, Joanna can be contacted on (02) 9939 7442.
- Ian McGrath (LAD 12 Fd. Regt. 2<sup>nd</sup> tour) is in hospital suffering dementia and is unlikely to return home. He is in hospital in Geelong, Victoria. His wife Pam can be contacted on (03) 5272 2091.
- Some good news, Don Tait appears to be on the mend.
- For those who knew Captain Peter Wood (HQ Bty.) he unfortunately passed away on 1/11/08 after a long illness. Andy Monks, his nephew, can be contacted on (03) 9842 9642.

**Please**, I would encourage those of you who know these guys, if you could take the time to contact them or their loved ones.

Regards,

Ian Ryan.

#### **General:**

Next Edition will be December 2010. Up the Ol'Red Rooster.

*Frank Corcoran*