

# RAEME ASSOCIATION NSW INC.

ISSUE #142 DECEMBER 2015



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WISHING YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A

HEALTHY AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



## PRESIDENTS REPORT



### From the President's Desk

As 2015 draws to a close, it is fitting to reflect that it has been another year when the most significant influence on all our lives has been 'change'. Either change that impacts upon us individually or dictates that we must take some action to adapt to the change that is forced upon us. Your Association is certainly not immune from this trend.

There have been several events since last newsletter, including the visit to JLU (East), The Corps Birthday/Christmas Party and the 103 Fd Wksp Coy End of Year Parade. Reports on all these events part of this edition.

A very dedicated team, headed up by Jim Hislop has been working for several years to build a case for our Federal Government to restore relativity of the DFRDB payments. A petition has been prepared but without significant support from the defence force family – past and present – the chances of success are not great. Read the story inside and gather all your colleagues to get behind this important; and long overdue matter.

Our year in review is conducted through our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the AGM to present the activities and review 2015 is to be held on:

**Saturday 27 February 2016 from 1000hrs at Smithfield RSL, Neville St. Smithfield**

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, there are a number of issues which are impacting on the Association and need to be addressed. The AGM is the event that gives every member an opportunity to offer their opinions and ideas to the Committee or to offer their services and talents as part of the Committee. Please make every effort to attend this meeting and keep your Association strong. There are still members of the Committee who are performing more than one function. It would be great if we could spread the load a little more evenly!

May I wish every member and their family a safe, happy and festive time over this Christmas and into the New Year that will be 2016.

Brendan Robertson

Arte et Marte

## Visit to the Joint Logistics Unit (JLU) East

### September 2015

On Friday 25 September I was a member of the RAEME Association group of four who were granted permission to visit the above establishment at Moorebank NSW. The visit had been arranged by Capt Wins Coles with the operators of the large complex.

We were met at the new entrance gate off Moorebank Ave by Mr Andrew Foster , the Maintenance Manager from Transfield Services who hold the contract for the maintenance workshop in the repair of army vehicles and equipment. Now it should be noted that our visit was not arranged through the Dept of Defence but by the operators of the complex namely Transfield Services.

Now many members of the RAEME corps will remember 2 Base Wksp RAEME, 2 Base Ord Depot Supply and vehicle park RAAOC which were in operation as individual units until the late 1980's when they were combined together into a Defence National Distribution Centre in the area where the old 2BOD buildings were once located in Moorebank Ave.

This once owned army land either side of Moorebank Ave has been sold off to several major freight companies. It is planned that a large inter-modal freight depot will be constructed along this area. To facilitate this change the new JLU-E building site has been constructed in the old ammunition building areas of Anzac Ave.

The Western side of Moorebank Ave (including the SME area and the old Moorebank Offrs/Sgts Mess area) is to be constructed as a road transport area for Toll-Ipec and the Eastern Side (2 Base Wksp & 2BOD areas) will be a rail freight yard for Patrick Holdings.

There is a rail line that extends into this area from the Glenfield-Holsworthy railway line which has been recently upgraded.

Now back to the visit. We were registered and signed in through the security area, given a temporary visitor pass and a fluoro vest to wear, and escorted by Andrew Fisher and two of his assistants. All these members incidentally were ex RAEME tradesmen.

We were escorted through the main office and saw rows and rows of computer screens which basically is for the inventory & supply of stores and vehicle & equipment maintenance. We also met the only military member in uniform, Col Brick, who was the military CO.

We were advised that there were only three serving military staff at the whole complex.

While walking to the vehicle workshop we passed the main supply store and I was surprised to find that it is being run by Mayne-Nickless/Mayne Logistics and they seemed to have stores sitting everywhere under the verandas of their large storage building with very few people in attendance.

On entering the vehicle workshop I was surprised to find that there was a young woman at the office doing paperwork but not a single tradesman at work. We were told that the staff work Monday to Thursday with a total of 38.5 hours and have the Friday off.

The workshop itself was modern with CO1 extractors, individual hoists in each bay and a traversing crane down each side but the whole scene appeared without a soul. There were five 6x6 G5 vehicles, two 2A Land Rovers, Mack Tip Truck and some Mercedes Unimogs on the workshop floor awaiting some sort of attention under the new organisations similar to the JLU-E.

I could not imagine any major refurbishment of vehicles like the Studebaker 6x6 or the P3 International 4x4 truck rebuilding programmes that were once carried out by the main Base Workshops being done under the new organisations similar to the JLU-E.

The area is large and necessitated a lot of walking from the main gate to the workshop area which could be a problem in wet stormy weather.

Is the new concept working? Well it is not for me to evaluate but if I were to offer an opinion I would say that our servicemen and women were more the experts in the field of military supply, repair and transport and worked more than four days per week if required.

Harry Cole (Maj)  
7th Intake VM  
RAEME

### A Challenging Year for 103 Fd Wksp Coy

We were pleased to receive an open invitation from CO 5 CSSB to attend the unit End of Year Parade and Achievement Awards Day at Holsworthy Barracks to be held on Sunday 29 November 2015.

On a very warm day that heralded the impending arrival of Summer, a small group of Association members gathered at the unit's new facility within the greatly revamped Holsworthy Barracks.

Following the presentation of awards and promotions, the CO addressed the parade and assembled visitors, delivering an impressive review of the tasking statistics and operational deployments completed during 2015.

After march off; our group were provided with a guided tour of the purpose-built workshop facility which was only occupied in March this year, following many years at Banksmeadow.

The workshop facility, equipment and specialist vehicles were in keeping with the operational demands on the unit, both within Australia and overseas.

A very fine traditional Army BBQ lunch was enjoyed by all to round off the day.

Check out the Photo Gallery for photos from this event.

Arte et Marte



## Reserves on Parade



## Memory Lane for Ex CSMs



## Now this is not the way we used to do it



## Recovery to the rescue



## The New 103 Workshop





## **SYDNEY ANZAC DAY MARCH UPDATE No. 1/2016**

### **THANK YOU**

The organizing committee of the 2015 Sydney ANZAC Day March would like to thank everyone who participated in making the March such a success in marking the Centenary of the Gallipoli landings. Particular thanks needs to go to the NSW Government agencies such as the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Veterans, Police, Fire Brigades, Ambulance, Traffic Management Centre and Transport NSW for the resources and man- hours they committed to the event. We also owe a debt of gratitude to the City of Sydney Council, Dawn Service Trust, the SES, our volunteer bands and especially our group of dedicated volunteer Marshals. Your hard work made all the difference on the day. Thank you.

### **NEXT YEAR**

As you are no doubt aware there is a Light Rail Project starting construction later this year which will make the use of George Street impossible for future Marches. A group of senior members of the March committee have investigated and evaluated a number of alternate routes within the CBD paying particular attention to aspects such as the width and gradient of the street for senior veterans, having an appropriate focal point for an Act of Remembrance, access to public transport and minimal disruption to existing form up locations.

After careful discussion with key participants and government agencies the committee feels the best alternate route for the Sydney ANZAC Day March is;

start line at Martin Place and Elizabeth St

march south on Elizabeth St

observe the Act of Remembrance adjacent to the ANZAC Memorial in Elizabeth St

participants wheel left into Liverpool St for dispersal

vehicles and bands wheel right into Liverpool St and use Castlereagh St to return to the start line

This route will allow the March to continue as a solemn March of Remembrance while also allowing as many spectators including senior veterans and Legacy widows to participate.

While the March will no longer pass the Cenotaph, an Act of Remembrance will still be observed and the Cenotaph will continue to hold the Dawn Service and Sunset Service Commemorations on ANZAC Day.

Greater detail about these changes will be forwarded to participants in due course however we ask that people keep an eye on the RSL NSW website and encourage all associations to register to receive these updates.

ANZAC Day March Executive Committee

[www.rslnsw.org.au](http://www.rslnsw.org.au)

ANZAC House (02) 9264 8188

July 2015

admin@rslnsw.org.au

### ***“A fully trained Jungle Bunny”***

“Where are you going from here Mr. Millbank?” the question hit me like a shot, my mind far away as we trudged up a hill in full combat gear towards the end of a three-day training exercise at the Australian army jungle training centre at Canungra Queensland. The questioner was a regular army sergeant major, Warrant Officer Class II Tetlow who was a Vietnam veteran. Although it had been August the previous year (1973) that Gough Whitlam had withdrawn the last Australian troops from Vietnam, for us aspiring officer cadets Vietnam was only just around the corner. In August 1974 Vietnam was alive and well and JTC was its home in Australia.

The Australian army, modelled on British lines, trains all its general service officers as infantry. A few special service officers sky pilots (padres) fang farriers (dentists) and blood butchers (doctors) get a two-week course teaching them to salute and put their boots on the right feet, but all the rest become “grunts”, and it takes a while!

So, as I say, we all become infantry; in army speak “grunts” (try walking around all day and half the night with about 25 kilos on your back and carrying fully loaded weapons and you find grunting is probably about the only expression you are capable of!). Becoming an infanteer all sounds very nice but what does it mean? To find that you answer to that you have to go to army doctrine, for the infantry it’s a simple mantra, “To locate, engage and defeat the enemy by night and day in all kinds of terrain regardless of weather”. If you substitute **kill** for **defeat** the purpose of the infantry becomes crystal clear.

In a very expensive programme (about AUD 20,000 in 1973/4 terms) spread over 18 months the Australian army taught me how to kill other humans in about a dozen different ways. Fortunately, as a peacetime soldier I’ve never had to use any of them, nevertheless because of my Canungra experience I’m a fully trained jungle bunny. Even though I never went to Vietnam it had been part of my consciousness for all the years I had been in Australia (arriving in 1965). Politically I never thought the engagement was wrong although I was definitely against conscription of any kind. Still I was in the age group to go and if I had to, I would have gone. Thus Vietnam was part of the era in which I had a strong consciousness and even though I had never set foot in the country it exerted a strong influence. Throughout my time in the army (1973-1988) the Vietnam experience exerted an influence in all my associations with units and people. The Vietnam experience has continued to exert an influence even now (2008) and comes to mind as the Iraq war appears to follow the same problems that were evident in Vietnam (troops in bases with little contact with the population and an enemy who hits and disappears). Vietnam then, was the background to my introduction to the Australian army and my days as a volunteer in Citizen Military Forces (CMF) now known as the Army Reserve (Ares).

For me joining the CMF was one part patriotism, one part macho and lots of parts egotism! Living in a huge continent with only 16 million people after coming from a country that could be easily hidden in a small Australian state made you realize how vulnerable we were to invasion from the north (Menzies and the “Yellow Peril”). That was the patriotism bit.

Living at home with a wife and two daughters and very few actual male friends certainly encouraged the macho bit (and extra money from army pay). However, it was the ambition of being an officer that really clashed the status symbols for me. Now at this point you must realize this is a memoir written years after these events took place. At the time I probably could not have articulated my reasons for joining the CMF, years of study of history at university have recently provided me with the ability to put my oft rambling thoughts on paper. Anyway, not to put too fine a point on the egotism bit, I was a working class lad (with a good trade background I might add) and my family had lots of private soldiers in the ranks (that’s a cross metaphor there) but never any officers – hence I saw a path to glory!



As you have gathered I have digressed from the main tale and we must return to Mr. Tetlow. Warrant Officer Class II Tetlow was for me the archetypal Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) who abounded in the Australian army of that time. I suppose you could almost say he was the sergeant major of your dreams (I said this was being written years later!). Tetlow was fiercely contemptuous of officers ("They couldn't dress themselves without a batman" he once said), totally independent and very strong willed. "You will do what I want you to do even if we have to stay here all bloody day and night to get it right". At the same time, he was totally caring about the diggers under his command (these days we would say, "He assumed the responsibility"). I found it easy to understand that with NCOs like Tetlow in charge how mateship could flourish in the army.

As officers in training we used to laugh at Tetlow. When we did an exercise as a 10 man infantry squad out in the paddock we always had to ensure our machine gun (the most firepower we had available to us as a small group) was on the high ground of the terrain we were in. It was Tetlow who burned the change of terrain mantra on our brains. "Youse blokes from Sydney", Tetlow informed us one day, "When youse get to Lidcombe and are going to Liverpool and not Parramatta, youse have to change terrains". Some 35 years later I can't go through Lidcombe on a train without remembering Tetlow and "youse blokes from Sydney". Mind you at that time I'm making bloody sure if I do have a machine gun with me in the carriage that it is on the high side (that's on the northern side of Lidcombe station where you can see the Ukrainian catholic church) just in case Tetlow comes along to check!

Canungra was a no bullshit place. Apart from a few classroom type lessons in the first couple of days the rest of the time was spent somewhere out in the donga. They didn't worry too much about drill although we were always double marched around what there was of the actual camp (that's army speak for running). The main emphasis was getting out in the scrub and attacking the numerous enemy that lurked around the vast areas of Queensland rain forest that surrounded Canungra.

All of our training at Canungra was carried out by Mr. Tetlow and his mates WOII's sergeants and corporals. Officers were a rarity, they appeared from time to time, the NCOs gave them smart salutes and then seemed to ignore them. I do remember we met one officer called Wedgewood, but he claimed to be from the pie family not the china mob. I think if you wanted an egalitarian view of the army, Canungra ruled by Mr. Tetlow and his mates was the place to go.

I call the sergeant major Mr. Tetlow because that's the title in the army by which warrant officers (and lieutenants) are addressed. Even though we were to be commissioned within days and he would have to then salute me, and not the other way around, the rules were the rules and woe betide anyone who broke them. I had only been in the army a few months when I made the mistake of calling a sergeant "sir". He stopped in his tracks, he roared at me, "Soldier, can't you see I have three stripes on my arm?" You can't get away with saying, "No I'm blind", so I said meekly, "Yes sergeant". He glowered at me and said, "I've earnt this rank so don't ever call a sergeant sir ever again" (how's that for a reverse put down)

From the distance of years I can see sense in Mr. Tetlow's question to me. These CMF whackers, what are they up to? Here I was, almost middle aged ( $2 \times 34 = 68$ ) wearing glasses puffing up a hill with less than obvious enthusiasm. You could almost hear him thinking, "What was I thinking, what was I up to in the army at my time of life". Out of that line of thinking, what did the army offer me, and more importantly what could I offer the army? Well, what Mr. Tetlow didn't know was that I had trade papers (from a 5 year apprenticeship) and had continued studying for an engineering certificate. Mid way through OCTU I had sought an interview with CDEME (a Lt.Col) who assured me he would be delighted for me to join the workshop at Homebush as an engineer officer.



Thus with all the gall I could muster I said to Mr. Tetlow, "Sir, this time next week as a RAEME officer I'll be riding around everywhere instead of walking". A look of disgust crossed his face, RAEME were pogos (army speak for support staff) and hardly worth a good infantryman wasting his time to talk to them. As he strode away from me I got the impression he had become just a little pissed off with me. From then on and we had no more interesting conversations during the rest of my time as a trainee jungle bunny!

Roland Millbank

## Quick Updates

Former Head of Corps Andrew Mathewson has been promoted to MAJGEN. Andrew Mathewson, a 35<sup>th</sup> F&T. will be responsible for Helicopter Systems with Defence Aviation. Congratulations to Andrew.

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## VALE

Ken Mosley

October 2015

Bob Whittaker

7 November 2015

Lest we forget

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## DFRDB Petition for Justice

Fellow Australians,

The Government has effectively reduced the superannuation payments of Defence Force retirees by hundreds of millions of dollars per year. And the men and women, who served in the defence of our country for 20 or more years, are powerless to do anything about it. They need our [help](#).

For the duration of their service, these men and women were conditioned to obey orders, regardless of the consequences. They are not used to protesting. They do not have a Union to represent them and fight for their rights and not even their senior officers will stand up for them. There aren't enough of them to make politicians take notice and that makes them soft targets for exploitation.

To access our petition on Change.Org Click [> here <](#) to read more and show your support for these men and women.

The only way we can make our politicians take any notice is through weight of numbers. You can help to achieve this by forwarding this email to as many of your family, friends and acquaintances as possible.

Herb Ellerbock

## The Army Museum at South Bandiana

This impressive army display museum together with the Army Apprentices memorial and the RAEME Craftsman memorial are located inside Gaza Ridge Barracks at South Bandiana.

This location is 4 kilometres from Wodonga along the Murray Valley Highway and almost directly opposite the old RAEME Training Centre.

The museum is open only on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00 to 15.00.

Entry is by a gold coin donation.

Unfortunately, due to the current security arrangements for entry to all army establishments, there is a procedure you must follow if you are planning a visit.

Prior to your planned visit you need to either fax, phone or e-mail the museum representative with the names of whom will be visiting along with the date of the visit and the time you will be arriving.

A visit to either of the memorials opposite the museum is dependent upon an escort being available from the museum staff at the time.

Note also that the BBQ area opposite the museum is no longer available for the public to use.

The information and contacts for the museum are:

Museum staff member: Sharon Lillis

E-mail: [Sharon.lillis1@defence.gov.au](mailto:Sharon.lillis1@defence.gov.au)

Museum Fax: 02 6055 2886

Museum Phone: 02 6055 2525

The museum OC/Manager is Major John Nelson

## 73<sup>rd</sup> Corps Birthday & Christmas Party 2015

15 November 2015

The Association's annual celebration of the Corps Birthday and Christmas 2015 was held at Smithfield RSL on Sunday 2015.

While the attendance numbers were somewhat disappointing, there was no lack of enthusiasm from the members of the committee to ensure the function room was suitably dressed for the occasion. Even the club function manager commented on how well the room was presented.

The club delivered a first rate lunch which was served quietly and efficiently by the club staff.

Between courses, there was a short presentation on the Corps History to enable those who were not able to attend the National Launch in Canberra to get a feel, not only for the launch ceremony but also for the origins, and the ethos that wove the compilation of so many stories into a living history, covering every aspect and theatre of operations for the members of our Corps. This presentation was backed by a slide show of the National Launch ceremony at the Australian War Memorial. Our thanks to Stefan Hreszczuk for this fine gallery of photos.

Cutting of the cake is always a highlight of any birthday celebration and this year the honour of cutting the cake fell to one of our most loyal and ardent supporters; Noel Christian. We are also delighted to report that he was totally taken by surprise as the accompanying photos would indicate.

The Door Prize Draw was conducted shortly before the finale of the occasion and it was the ladies who cleaned up the major prizes for the day. Those who were taking a shade of odds that Barry McFayden would figure in the winner's circle (for a third year in succession) were somewhat shattered.

Our thanks to the function team within the committee who organised this most enjoyable day and to the staff and catering team from Smithfield RSL. Well done to all.

Arte et Marte.



Ann & Brendan Robertson



Leonie & Win Coles



Bob Joseph



The Birthday Cake



Brendan & Noel



Noel Christian



Wally Hausman, Stefan Hreszczuk and Noel Christian





Table shot



Steve Walmseley & Bill Amor



Peter & Jenny Bull



Mr & Mrs Kevin Middleton



Great Table shot (Name all seated)



Lee Hausman & Nina Hreszczuk



John Notley, Ron Quinlan and Bill Amor



## CONTACTS FOR YOUR ASSOCIATION

Please remember to contact us if you change your postal or email address. Any of the following contact points will enable you to notify us of any change in your details. Or, just drop us a line to let us know what information you might like in the newsletters or just have a chat.

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