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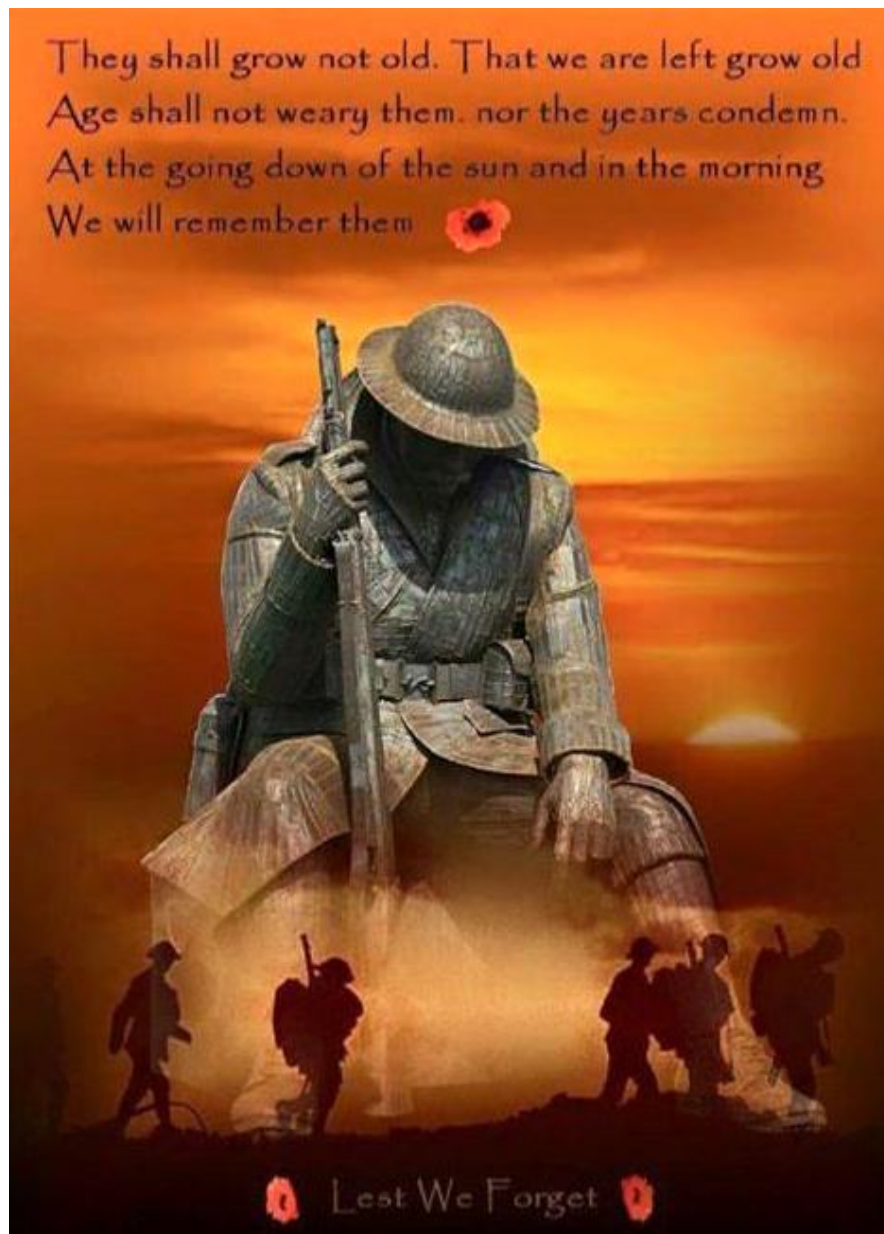
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# The Purple Circle

Editor: Ian Johnston.

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Autumn Edition 2016



## **Next Meetings**

The next general meeting will be held on 17th April. This is just before ANZAC Day so hopefully we will get timings for the Dawn Service, bus to the city, vehicles for non marchers and 13 Fd Sqn's afternoon festivities.

The next meeting after that is the AGM to be held on 17th July. Mark this date in your diaries.

## **Passing Parade**

**William (Bill) Brewster** passed away on 10 January 2016. Bill was aged 86 years. He joined the Army in 1951 and served in Korea in 1952 with 1RAR as an Assault Pioneer. He spent the remainder of his 15 year career with 22 Const Sqn. Bill let his Association membership lapse when he retired with his wife to Dongara.

**Walter (Buck) Rogers** passed away on 18 January 2016. Buck was aged 80 years and 8 months. He completed two tours to Vietnam, 1968-69 (1 Fd Sqn) and 1970-71 (17 Const Sqn). During his tour with 1 Fd Sqn, Buck received a Mention In Despatches (MID).

**P B (Mick) Edstein** passed away on 1 February 2016. Mick served in Japan with BCOF for 7 years, then in Korea, 17 Const Sqn, 24 Const Sqn, 32 Terminal Sqn, Mendi PNG, 9 Fd Sqn in Singapore and AHQ with DEngrs.

**Trevor Charles** passed away on 12 February 2016. Trevor was aged 90 years and 6 months. He served in WW2 with 2/32 Battalion, 9 Division on Labuan and North Borneo. Trevor was one of the original members of 22 Const Sqn.

For those Ex 24 Construction Squadron members, John Dransfield and Harry Webb have passed away this year. Both served in Borneo with the Squadron from June to December 1965. John was a plant op and Harry a plant Sgt.

## **Sick Parade**

Peter Billington has spent a couple of weeks in St John of God hospital where the doctors fitted a new pace maker and carried out some more tests so they could adjust his heart medication. Pete is back home again and is being well cared for by wife Kathy.

## **Wedding Bells**

Congratulations to Stephen and June O'Neil (nee Harrison) on tying the knot earlier in the year. Trying to keep things like this a secret doesn't work Steve, I have my spies out looking for these type of juicy stories .

## MEMBER PROFILE

### NORMAN (NORM) QUARTERMAINE



Norm was born on 30 January 1921 in Katanning WA. He had one brother and three sisters.

Norm went to school in Wagin and then in Midland. He left school at age 14 to work in an office as a clerk. He didn't like working in an office so he left and took up an apprenticeship as a carpenter with a local builder. Norm was in the third year of his apprenticeship training when he joined the Army on 6 August 1942.

Because of his trade, he was assigned to 13 Field Company, RAE. The Unit spent some time working around the Mid West area of Western Australia and whilst on leave in Geraldton with a mate, he met a young lady named Olwyn See and they formed a close friendship.

13 Field Coy moved to the Northern Territory where they constructed and maintained roads and bridges in the area around Batchelor, south of Darwin and carried out repairs to the wharfs in Darwin. In 1944, the Unit moved to New Britain where they carried out general Field Engineering work including road and piled bridge construction in support of 13 Infantry Brigade.

Norm was discharged from the Army with the rank of Sergeant on 1 November 1945 and went back to work to finish his apprenticeship. Norm stayed with the firm and when the owner retired, Norm took over the firm and continued building houses in the Midland - Guildford area until he retired in 1981.

Norm married Olwyn in 1947 and they have two daughters. After living in Midland, they moved to Scarborough in 1956. In 1981 when Norm retired they moved to Albany to be closer to family where they lived for about ten years before moving back to the Perth.

In 2011, Norm unveiled the World War 2 memorial at the RAE Memorial Precinct outside the Ryan Club at Karrakatta.

Norm and Olwyn now live in Trinity Village, Duncraig.

## Celebrating 100 Years

On 7th April, John Edward "Jack" O'Sullivan celebrated his 100th birthday. Jack was born in Dwellingup many years ago. He served with the 2/2 Forestry Company in Scotland cutting and milling timber for use in Europe after the fall of France. On his return to Australia, he was posted as a SSgt PT Instructor at Wagga Wagga. After the war Jack had a successful 31 year career with the WA Police Force.

Jack celebrated his birthday with his wife Jean, daughters Barbara (Wilmot), Glenda (Hollingworth), son Grant and residents at St Ives Village at Northshore.

A larger celebration with extended family and friends was held on Sunday 10th at Manners Hill Park in Peppermint Grove.



Ian Johnston presenting Jack with his HOC Birthday Certificate



Jack & Jean with Barbara and Paul Wilmot



## 13 Field Squadron Happenings

### Postings & Promotions

Capt Leigh McWhirter has been posted in as Unit 2IC. Leigh was a Troop Comd with 1 CER and last year an instructor at RMC Duntroon before joining the Unit.

Sgt Glen Donaldson has been moved within the Sqn to fill the vacant SSM position. Promotion is pending on him completing his promotion courses.

## Association Member receives Award

Fred Abbott received a Premier's Australia Day Active Citizenship award as reported in the Mandurah Mail on the 28 January.

Mandurah Mail 28/1/16. AUSTRALIA DAY

# Honours for community champions in awards

THE 2016 Premier's Active Citizenship Awards were announced Wednesday morning during the City of Mandurah's Australia Day festivities.

Three individuals and one community group were honoured for their contribution to the community.

Frederick Abbott and Coral Richards both received Premier's Australia Day Active Citizenship Awards and Aaron Johnston received the award for under 25s.

Mandurah Lions Club took out the award for a community group.

**Premier's Australia Day Active Citizenship Award – Frederick Abbott**

Mr Abbott has been a member of the Dawesville (formally South Mandurah) RSL sub-branch for 11 years.

During this time Mr Abbott has held numerous positions on the committee since 2006 until 2015.

Not only has Mr Abbott performed all the above to an excellent standard, he has been of great assistance in the welfare of all members and their families.

Mr Abbott has been a mainstay of the Dawesville/Mandurah veteran community and was on the committee for re-locating the Mandurah War Memorial from the Eastern to the Western side of the estuary.

He was also a vital member of the organising committee for the recent 100th anniversary of Anzac commemorations, which saw 1050 students from 32 schools in the Mandurah, Pinjarra and Waroona zones commemorate this historic event.



Courtesy: Mandurah Mail

## Sausage Sizzle

Thanks to all who volunteered to man the sausage sizzle on 14 February. Over \$700 was made on the day.

Our next sausage sizzle is on Friday 29 April at Bunnings Balcatta, corner Erindale Road and Balcatta Road. Volunteers are required.

# Respects paid to tunnel rat

## Sgt Dave Morley

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ONE of Army's early tunnel rats was remembered 50 years after his death in South Vietnam, at the Australian War Memorial's Last Post ceremony on January 11.

Cpl Bob Bowtell, who was born on Anzac Day 1932, was a tunnel rat with 3 Fd Tp when he became the RAE's first battle casualty in Vietnam on January 11, 1966.

He died of asphyxiation while clearing one of the Cu Chi tunnels near Ho Bo Woods, outside Saigon, during Operation Crimp.

The operation targeted a Viet Cong headquarters believed to be concealed underground.

During the seven-day operation, eight Australians were KIA by Viet Cong and another 29 were WIA.



Cpl Bob Bowtell, RAE's first battle casualty in Vietnam.

## **MIVAC PROJECT WORKS**

Since the last report, MIVAC has been working on projects in 7 villages in Lao.

### **Ban Souy Noi**

- All done and dusted! – pleased to report that the standard of the workmanship improves with each new Project, and Mr Syamphay very impressed at yesterday's final inspection.
- Quite a celebration by the villagers yesterday. I was privileged to be invited to my first Baci ceremony along with Moua, No, Mea and Syamphay. The Baci is a Lao Buddhist "thank you" celebration (also performed at weddings, etc.) which is full of ritual and ceremony and culminates in all the villagers tying cotton strands around the wrists of the recipients. A very humbling occasion and a privilege for me to be involved.
- A huge feast of chicken and duck and steamed veggies and sticky rice, was followed by a number of toasts of warm Beer Lao plus some music and dancing led by yours truly! They loved it - a very happy occasion!
- The Health and Training Day is likely to be held in conjunction with Chomesy Souy in early February

### **Ban Chomesy Souy**

- All materials are on site ready for commencement next Monday 11th.
- Scope of works explained to No and Mea by Moua and Syamphay, prior to yesterday's celebrations at Souy Noi.

### **Ban Vangkham**

- The Health and Training Day is still to be finalised by PDPHD - hopefully for mid January.
- Project Signboard design has been approved by KCF – has been sent off for manufacture and hopefully installed in time for the visit from Mya Kirwan (KCF).

### **Ban Houad**

- A return visit is scheduled for Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January, to sign the Village Contract.
- The BOM and schematic drawings were submitted to PDPHD last week.

### **Ban's Phiane Luang, Na Kham and Keoban**

- These three Villages require substantial numbers of pre-cast concrete toilet tanks and lids - 50, 60 and 10 toilets respectively, each requiring 3 tank segments and a lid.



Completed water supply tank, valve box, poly overflow pipe, galv steel delivery pipe and 1 of 6 new village water points at Ban Souy Noi.

## **Cockburn RSL Steps Up**

Cockburn RSL Sub-Branch has stepped into the breach to provide \$2,000 for raw materials to help out an Afghanistan veteran caught in the Yarloop fires.

Ex combat engineer Matt Colebrook lost his home when flames wiped out nearly all of Yarloop in just seven minutes on January 7.

Cockburn raised the money in a single night and Pinjarra RSL will begin constructing the shed from patio tubing and sheet metal this week. A team of RSL members led by Brian Flatman is constructing the shed.

Courtesy: RSLWA Sub-Branch Signal

## **Veteran's Luncheon**

Fifteen senior members and drivers attended our luncheon on 14th March. It was good to see everyone enjoying themselves and having a chat with old and new friends. Looking at the size of the meal servings, many would only be having a light evening meal.



Jean Rideout, Jean Ewart, Wally Cavanagh & Stewart Holmes



Fred Banyard, Neville & Gloria Clark

Thanks to the drivers for picking up our non driving seniors and to the staff at the Karalee on Preston tavern for looking after us for the 3 hours we were there.



## **1 Combat Engineer Regiment**



Sappers from 23 Spt Sqn, 1 CER, deployed to Timor-Leste for a five week exercise to participate in Exercise Hari'i Hamutuk. Working with the Sappers were soldiers from the Seabee's, US Army, Timor-Leste Engineers and Engineers from the Japanese Self Defence Force. Pictured are personal working on the toilet and accommodation blocks.

WO1 Al Lewis, CSM, RSM said Exercise Hari'i Hamutuk is an ongoing activity for 1 CER with Sappers going to Timor-Leste to do construction tasks on a yearly basis.

It is a great experience for Sappers to work with soldiers from other Armies to learn new techniques and skills.

## **2 Combat Engineer Regiment**

7 Combat Engineer Squadron is committed to the Ready Battle Group (RBG) to remain 'Ready' for any short notice deployment in support of the 6th Battalion RAR, and honing skill sets in line with this. Collective training with range weeks and Infantry Minor Tactics exercises executed early in the year ensured 2 CER is meeting the certification requirements for the Ready Brigade. In addition to our RBG support, the Regiment is still also supporting Operations in the MEAO. Our thoughts are always with them and we wish them a safe return.

24 Spt Sqn is gearing up toward Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) 114 as the mounting HQ and will deploy to Malaysia this year. The deployment will see the Sqn build international relations with our SE Asian neighbours and developing Jungle warfare skills within 2 CER. Of particular note, 24 Spt Sqn will be undertaking significant reconstruction and refurbishment of facilities and infrastructure used by Australian and Malaysian military forces during RCB rotations.

In a rapid turn of events, and playing precisely into the role of the Ready Brigade, 2 CER was assigned as the Mounting Head Quarters and primary unit of Operation Fiji Assist 16, which is the Whole of Government response to Tropical Cyclone Winston, a Category 5 Cyclone, which devastated the Eastern side of Fiji in February causing significant destruction to housing and infrastructure. 2 CER mounted and deployed the Engineer Support Group (ESG) within 72 hrs, comprising of approximately 250 members from 10 different units, 109 members of which are 2 CER.

### **3 Combat Engineer Regiment**

18<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineer Squadron will also continue to support the development of the amphibious capability within Army, committing to a very full training dance card with 2 RAR. This training, as part of the Sea Series of exercises, will lead into the future certification of the Amphibious Ready Group.

25<sup>th</sup> Support Squadron has commenced preparations for Exercise Puk Puk 16 in Papua New Guinea, working closely with the PNGDF Engineer Battalion in Lae. These deployments provide an excellent opportunity to work with sappers from across Regular and Reserve units in Army, as well as our friends in PNG.

16<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineer Squadron has been exercising with 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment as this organisation approaches organisational maturity within the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, and has also been developing an advanced combat shooting package for the Regiment with support from 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment and the infantry battalions.



The Regiment currently has a combat engineer section and small training team deployed to India, participating on Exercise Force 18, an ASEAN training initiative focussed on Humanitarian Mine Action and Peacekeeping Operations. They are training closely with 17 other regional nations, sharing experiences and developing skills in these important fields.

### **6 Engineer Support Regiment**

6 ESR recently exercised their right of entry of the Freedom of the City of Redcliffe, led by CO Lt Col Amanda Johnston and RSM WO1 Shawn Goodbody.



“The Challenge” by the Redcliffe Police Officer-in-Charge, Craig Sanderson.



Exercising their right of the Freedom of the City of Redcliffe

### **Waterloo Dinner**

The OC 13 Fd Sqn has passed on the date for this year's Waterloo Dinner. It will be held on 17th June. No other details are available at the moment but as soon as something is heard, all details will be passed on.

I hope to speak with members of the organising committee on ANZAC Day.

## Dawn Service Timings

At this stage, the timings for Dawn Service are the same as last year. What we known is -

Karrakatta front gates open at 4.30am

Gates close at 5.30am

Dawn service starts at 5.45am

13 Fd Sqn wreath laying service starts at 6.15am

Breakfast immediately after - egg and bacon roll

Jim Spink has organised a bus to get everyone into Perth for the march

The march starts at 0900, not 0930 as in previous years

Form up is now west of Barrack Street, we are at the end towards William St

The bus will return to Karrakatta following the march

The fun and festivities will commence when the Ryan Club committee open the bar

Photo ID is required for everyone over the age of 18 years. Children under 18 years must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

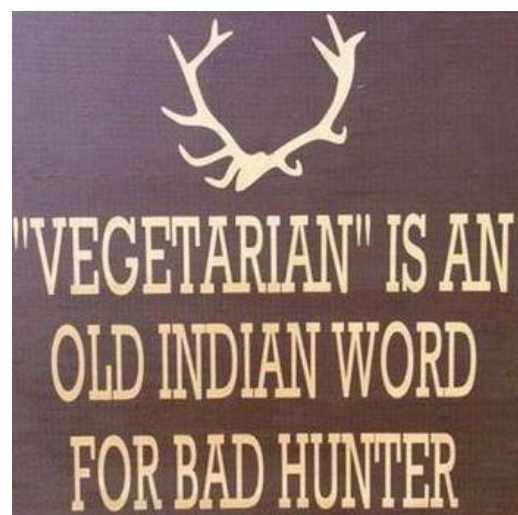
The march route will be east along St Georges Terrace, right into Victoria Avenue and then into Langley Park.

Any changes to the above times will be advised before ANZAC Day

## Jokes



"Okay your father managed to get a mouse. Now how do we use it?"



The following email was received by Neville Clark. Anyone wishing to participate should contact James Fitzroy on email - james.fitzroy@me.com

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**From:** James Fitzroy <james.fitzroy@me.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 19 January 2016 11:30 AM  
**To:** gloria.clark3@bigpond.com  
**Subject:** RSL Virtual War Memorial

Dear Gloria,

I am writing to you to let you know about the RSL Virtual War Memorial. Its purpose is to provide a suitable home virtual for Australian servicemen and women to tell the stories of their personal experience of war. To date, it is this crucial context which is missing from official histories. And it is this information which will provide a truly valuable resource for the RSL Virtual War Memorial Schools program which commences in South Australia this year.

The schools program will focus on First and Second World Wars however we are very committed to ensuring that we capture the stories from all conflicts.

I am a former Sapper myself from 1 Field Squadron and an intern with Virtual War Memorial.

I know of the valuable role a Sapper plays in the Army overseas and at home and I am confident that there are many personal stories that need to be captured.

I would like to ask you to encourage yourself and all members of the Royal Australian Engineers (WA) association to contribute your story and images to this unique project. All submissions are gratefully accepted and valued.

I have attached some links to the bottom for you to view and see how the story of a Veteran can be told and remembered.

Any support we can provide to make contributions possible, all you need to do is ask

Thank you for your consideration

Yours Sincerely

James Fitzroy

RSL Virtual War Memorial

0409 311 503

<https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au>

<https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/about>

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