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The Purple Circle

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The President's Driveway Dawn Service

Passing Parade

Peter Rhys Cosh passed away on 15 February 2020, aged 73 years and 6 months. John served in Vietnam from August 1967 to September 1968 with 1 Fd Sqn

Kenneth Arthur (Ken) Sargent passed away on 20 February 2020, aged 74 years and 9 months. Ken served in Vietnam from March to December 1968 with 17 Const Sqn.

Philip Lamb passed away on 24 February 2020, aged 73 years and 4 months. Phil served in Vietnam from December 1968 to October 1969 with 1 Fd Sqn

Thomas William (Tom) Upson passed away on 12 March 2020, aged 86 years and six months. Tom served in Borneo from June to December 1965 with 24 Const Sqn and in Vietnam from January 1970 to January 1971 with 198 Works Section Nui Dat.

Peter Barankewitsch passed away on 12 March 2020, aged 74 years and 9 months. Peter served in PNG twice, in various units in Sydney and with 22 Const Sqn from where he was discharged. He was a member of the Association.

Kym White passed away on 17 March 2020 aged 65 years. During his nine years in the army, he spent time at Mawson and Davis bases in the Antarctica and he also served with 22 Const Sqn. He was a member of the Association.

John Ralph (Slug) Stanborough passed away on 22 March 2020, aged 74 years and 7 months. John served in Vietnam from October 1969 to January 1970 with 17 Const Sqn.

Anthony George (Tony) Evans passed away on 5 April 2020, aged 74 years and 10 months. Tony served in Vietnam from January to November 1967 with 1 Fd Sqn.

John Ignatius Moller passed away on 13 April 2020, aged 80 years and 11 months. John served in Vietnam from January to September 1969 with 21 Engineer Support Troop.

Ian Marshall Ross Maclean passed away on 18 April 2020, aged 83 years and 8 months. Ian served in Vietnam from February 1968 to February 1969 with 17 Const Sqn.

Rodney Harold (Bluey) Horton passed away on 19 April 2020, aged 72 years and 5 months. Bluey served in Vietnam from May to December 1967 with Detachment, 55 Advanced Engineer Stores Squadron.

Rudolf Philip (Phil) Kudnig passed away on 27 April 2020, aged 86 years and 11 months. Phil served in Vietnam from January to November 1971 as Commanding Officer 1 Fd Sqn.

Robert (Bob) Baguley passed away on 25 April 2020, aged 77 years and 8 months. Bob served in Borneo from December 1965 to May 1966 with 21 Const Sqn.

Francis James (Frank) Cross AM, DSM, MID, passed away on 9 May 2020, aged 85 years and 9 months. Frank served in Vietnam from October 1969 to October 1970 with HQ 1 Aust Task Force Saigon. He attended RMC and was a member of the Class of 56.

Harrold (Harry) Buckley passed away on 13 May 2020, aged 93 years and 10 months. Harry served with 1 Independent Fd sqn in Malaya and Borneo in 1959 and in Vietnam from October 1970 to October 1971 with AATTV.

Phillip Raymond (Phil) Duffy passed away on 20 May 2020, aged 69 years and 8 months. Phil served in Vietnam from November 1970 to November 1971 with 1 Fd Sqn.

James George (Jim) Fletcher passed away on 24 May 2020, aged 87 years and 7 months. Jim served with 32 Small Ship Sqn and made 1 trip to Vietnam on the Clive Steele from June to October 1966.

Michael (Mick) Keen passed away on 26 May 2020 in Laos where he lived. He served overseas in West Germany from 1981-82, PNG from 1983-86 and Pakistan in 1991. On discharge he worked with a demining unit in the middle east. Mick was a member of the Association.

Timothy (Tim) Gay passed away on 28 May 2020, aged 71 years and 9 months. Tim served with 32 Small Ship Sqn and made 2 trips to Vietnam on the Harry Chauvel and the Brudenell White in 1970 and then another 2 trip with 35 Water Transport Sqn on the John Monash in 1972.

Frederick Andrew (Fred) Banyard passed away on 31 May 2020, aged 101 years and 5 months. Fred was the last member of the WW2, WA Unit 13 Field Company. He served in the mid-west of WA, Northern Territory and overseas at New Britain from late 1944 until mid-1945.

Righton Walter (Wally) Cavanagh passed away on 1 June 2020, aged 95 years and 6 months. Wally served with 5th Welding Platoon serving on Morotai and Balikpapan late 1944 until late 1945.

Anita Perry passed away on 22 May 2020. Anita was the wife of Association member Peter Perry.

LEST WE FORGET

Names on the Life Members Honour Board

Geoff Stooke was born in 1948 and joined the Army in 1967. He attended the Officer Cadet School at Portsea and continued his officer training at SME.

Geoff had postings as Tp Comdr 23 Const Sqn, Assault Pioneer Platoon Comdr 1 Papuan Infantry Regt PNG, Sqn 2I/C 3 FER, 2I/C 1RTB, 2I/C 13 Fd Sqn, Ops Offr HQ 5MD and Admin Comdr 22 Const Sqn. He took discharge in August 1979.

Geoff joined the Association in 2002 and was a strong supporter in the setting up of our welfare system in looking after members who may fall into financial hardship and still supports the welfare system to this day.

In 1999, Geoff received an OAM for his services to rugby union in WA and in 2006 he was named Citizen of WA in the category of Sport.

Geoff was given Life Membership in 2007.

Peter Billington was born in Bridgetown in 1946 and attended Bridgetown Primary School and High School.

Peter joined the Army in 1962 as a 17th Intake Army Apprentice carpenter and joiner. After graduating from the Army Apprentices School at Balcombe, Victoria, he was assigned to the Royal Australian Engineers.

After graduating from Balcombe in 1964, Peter went to SME before being posted to 21 Const Sqn and going to Borneo with the unit from December 1965 to May 1966. Instead of returning home, he transferred to 22 Const Sqn doing a further 6 months in Borneo before returning to Perth with the unit in December 1966.

In February 1968, Peter was posted to 17 Const Sqn in Vietnam where he completed a 12 month tour of duty. On return to Australia in 1969, he was posted to 21 Const Sqn in Puckapunyal, taking discharge in January 1971.

Peter joined the Association in 1999 and served on the committee from mid-2004 to mid-2009. He was again elected to the committee in mid-2018 as treasurer. He volunteered to supervise the construction of our memorial and through his building contacts was able to source a lot of the materials.

Peter was given Life Membership in 2015.

Honours and Awards

Congratulations to Neville Clark for being awarded the Medal in the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to veterans and their families

MEET OUR MEMBERS



Alan Richardson OAM JP

Alan was born in Hawthorn, Victoria in 1941 and has 3 brothers and 2 sisters. He attended Camberwell Central Primary School and Swinburne Technical College. On leaving school, Alan's first job was with Harris Scarfe in Adelaide as a stores assistant.

He joined the Army in 1958 as a 13th Intake Army Apprentice bricklayer at the Apprentices School, Balcombe. After finishing his training, Alan served with 17 Const Sqn, 22 Const Sqn, 2 Fd Tp RAE 11 Indep Fd Sqn RE in Malaysia, 21 Const Sqn and 2 RTB Puckapunyal.

Alan took discharge in January 1967 and soon after moved to Perth and started to work in building construction with Strata Management where he still works.

Alan met Yvonne in Perth and they married in 1964 and they have 5 daughters, 13 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

Alan has been involved in local government for 16 years and has been a member of the RSL for 53 years. He has been a JP since 1994 and was awarded the OAM in 2013 for services to Ex-service and Local Community.

Alan and Yvonne live in Rivervale.



Stewart Shields

Stewart was born in Chinchilla, Qld in 1960 and has 6 brothers (1 deceased) and 2 sisters. He attended Chinchilla and Pittsworth Primary Schools and Pittsworth High School.

He left school at 15 and worked as a labourer/tractor driver before joining the Army in 1978. He served with 2 Fd Sqn and 24 Spt Sqn at 2FER, 17 Const Sqn and 12 Fd Sqn.

In 1984, Stewart went to Vanuatu with 17 Const Sqn to provide assistance by carrying out construction works.

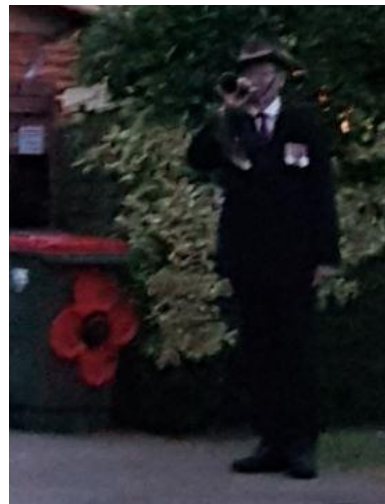
Stewart left the army in 1989 and worked with Telecom for 5 years before starting work in the mining industry where he worked both underground and on the surface. He currently works as an underground supervisor on a 2on-2off roster.

Stewart met Jacqui in Brisbane in 1979 and they married in 1982. They have 1 son.

Although still in full employment, Stewart and Jacqui like to travel, in 2015 they took a cruise to Gallipoli and have recently purchased a caravan so they can travel around Australia once border and regional entry restriction are relaxed

Stewart and Jacqui currently live in Falcon.

How Our Members Honoured The Dawn Service



Pictures from top left

Arthur Farmer, Peter MacDonald, Steve O'Neal, bugle boy Bob Keatch, Fred Abbott, Peter and Kathy Billington, Jon Tomczak and Gordon Temby.

Snake Robinson sent in a picture of a jar of coffee and a near empty bottle of rum. Poor bloke could not stand up to be in the picture.

Thanks to all who sent in pictures of their Dawn Service.

UNCLASSIFIED FROM HEAD OF CORPS, RAE

Fellow Sappers,

The Corps RSM and I recently attended a National Commemoration Service on the 18th February to officially acknowledge the sacrifice of those Australians who fought during Operation Hammersley, in South Vietnam back in 1970.

That evening we received a kind invitation to attend the Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association Dinner at the Hellenic Club in Canberra. What a night! It was a wonderful evening of remembrance and celebration with over 170 people attending, including 20 serving ADF personnel. For those soldiers, NCOs, warrant officers and officers who were able to make it, it was very much appreciated by all the veterans and their families in attendance.

I had the remarkable privilege of speaking at the dinner. I would like to share with you some extracts from that speech:

'On evenings like this most of us will remember the tragedy of losing comrades...and we do remember them...magnificent Sappers with broad smiles who led with purpose. But tonight is also about celebrating the Tunnel Rats - an absolutely essential part of RAE history.

Your efforts in South Vietnam were nothing but extraordinary. But we should not have been surprised.

I remember growing up as a young Sapper officer and learning about the legendary Tunnel Rats of South Vietnam. You were instrumental in finding and searching tunnels miles long and pioneering the employment of two man teams to carry out the search and demolition of hundreds of enemy underground bunker systems. You always led from the front – you had to. There was no other choice. The infantry and armour could not operate without you.

You developed new search techniques to save lives in the fight against mines and booby traps, which caused over 50 percent of Australian casualties at the peak of the war. And of course you paid an awful price, with 36 of your mates killed in action and just under 200 wounded from the same 650 men who operated in this role over the six years of the war, a casualty rate of around 33 percent.

The Tunnel Rats provided a flexible and adaptable force, quickly and without fuss – IT WAS WORLD-CLASS.

Your wide range of skills shown in the face of danger give truth to our Corps mottos of 'EVERYWHERE' and 'WE MAKE AND WE BREAK'. It was your collective dedication and obvious professionalism that so easily impressed and I can tell you, it has left such a strong legacy for those who have served after you.

The Tunnel Rats adapted, innovated and overcame, in order to get to the objective and accomplish the mission, whatever it was...And to me that is what being a combat engineer...a Sapper...is all about: a state of mind that figures out how to get the job done – no matter what – and has the willpower, perseverance and strength to see the mission through to completion...all the while taking great care of our People.'

In closing, Jim regularly sends the RSM and I a copy of each edition of Holdfast – it has pride of place in my office for all to read who come and go. For those of you who know, on the back page, it always ends with a salute to modern-day Sappers. Well, to Jim and all Tunnel Rats everywhere – Admiration, Awe and Respect (Heaps of It).

The Corps honours all Tunnel Rats who closed with the enemy and never let us down. Even today, many years later, they continue to support the Sapper. Next time you meet a Tunnel Rat, or indeed any Engineer veteran from the war in South Vietnam, please shake their hand and thank them for their incredible courage, determination and Sapper spirit.

All the Best,

John

JOHN CAREY, CSC

Brigadier

Chief of Staff | Headquarters Joint Operations Command
Head of Corps, Royal Australian Engineers

13 Fd Sqn



**Officer Commanding
13th Field Squadron, Royal Australian Engineers**

ORDER OF THE DAY

ANZAC DAY 2020

Let me start by quoting Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, who said (and I paraphrase), "Sappers really need no tribute from me; their reward lies in the glory of their achievement... in the late war there were never enough Sappers at any time... The Sappers rose to great heights in World War II and their contribution to victory was beyond all calculations".

Today we remember the deeds of all soldiers who have fought and served in the Australian Army, however as a Field Squadron, I think it is particularly poignant to also reflect specifically on the role Sappers have played. From the ANZACs to soldiers still serving today, Members of the Corps of the Royal Australian Engineers have been present in all conflicts or humanitarian missions for which Australia has committed itself since Gallipoli. The corps has truly lived up to its motto of 'Ubique', with Sappers forever being a highly respected, heavily relied-upon and often reassuring presence on battlefields and in disaster zones and crisis alike.

Australian Sappers have carved their legacy, displaying qualities such as resilience, mateship, ingenuity and determination. They have succeeded regardless of the environment, the challenge, the task, or the support being demanded. As a Corps, we may not have specific battle honours, like the battalions and regiments we serve alongside, however our legacy lives in unique and often incredible stories. Stories such as the ingenuity in the construction of Watson's Pier at ANZAC Cove, the heroism in the Saps underneath Hill 60 on the Western Front, the endurance in the construction of the Bulldog Track in New Guinea, the courage shown working on the barrier minefield in Vietnam, and the diligence of searchers in the desert and hamlets of Afghanistan.

Today, as we are unable to come together physically on this solemn day, let us all come together in remembrance and gratitude for the example and sacrifice of those who have gone before us. This very day, the Squadron has members supporting Operations in the national interest and this current crisis. As they step forward in their duties, they do so in the footsteps of the ANZAC legacy. They like most of us will pause briefly in a personal moment of reflection. As we pause today, may we remember that those original ANZACs were the best that they could be in their time, so may we continue to strive to be the best that we can be in our time.

Lest We Forget.

Glen R McDermott
Major
Officer Commanding
13th Field Squadron, Royal Australian Engineers

25th April 2020

13 Field Squadron News - April 2020

The start of 2020 has seen 13 Field Squadron operating at a tempo probably not seen since WW2.

Almost as soon all ranks had returned from the Christmas leave period requests for support to Operation BUSHFIRE ASSIST were received. Over the course of this operation the squadron deployed 25 personnel to various locations across Australia including Glen Innes NSW, Adelaide Hills SA and Kangaroo Island SA. Tasks undertaken included task reconnaissance and planning, tree felling, route maintenance and clearance (plant and chainsaw intensive tasks) and other assistance to property owners and government agencies. Most members deployed at short notice for periods of 2 – 4 weeks and worked closely with other ARA and ARES RAE units. The work was at times arduous and potentially risky, but applying previously acquired skills and experience, sound judgement and leadership with good measures of Sapper-nuity and old fashioned hard yakka the members achieved some fantastic results towards the reconstruction efforts. Feedback from higher command, other agencies and most importantly the affected communities was excellent. This resulted in a professionally rewarding experience, validating years of training to be able to help the nation in a time of need.

The dust had not even settled from Operation BUSHFIRE ASSIST before the squadron was again called up to support the nation through a crisis. This time the task was closer to home, and the squadron was asked to provide members to support Operation COVID ASSIST. To date over 35 members have deployed on this operation primarily to support the regional police check points supporting the WA police. This operation has presented unique challenges to be overcome, such as social distancing, protective health measures, hygiene requirements and shift work to name a few. The adaptable nature and practical approach to problem solving required of engineers has been put to good use to provide solutions.

As we are all aware the usual dawn service, city march and Ryan Club function activities were unable to be conducted at the squadron on ANZAC Day. However, a symbolic wreath laying ceremony was still conducted by the OC and SSM at dawn on the day, ensuring the commemoration of the sacrifice and service of our veterans was still observed by the squadron and the RAE Association. In addition, the pandemic restrictions have also unfortunately resulted in the cancelling of the Waterloo dinner in WA for 2020. A suggestion of a Holdfast reunion function held in conjunction with the RAE Association WA has been suggested to be held later in the year if possible. More to follow in time on this.

Finally, on behalf of all of 13 Field Squadron I hope all readers have been able to stay healthy and in good spirits during this period of separation, and we look forward to seeing you all in the near future once this is possible.

WO2 Glen Donaldson

SSM, 13 Field Squadron



13 Fd Sqn OC Glen McDermott and SSM Glen Donaldson laid wreaths at RAE Memorial on ANZAC Day



Cpls Will Richard and Aaron Chandler on Kangaroo Island, SA felling a fire damaged tree as part of a course run by 13 Fd Sqn.

RSL Life Membership

Congratulations to COL Geoff Simpson (Retd) on being awarded Life Membership of the WA RSL for his dedication and tiresome work as a Warden of the WA War Memorial.

Geoff was the Officer Commanding 13 Fd Sqn from 1983 to 1985 and was also Colonel Commandant Western Region from 2002 to 2018.

A lot of folk are wondering why Veterans aren't panicking about COVID-19, well

The current events have made me realise that my present life and my previous life in the military hold a number of similarities.....

- * Never any toilet paper
- * Lots of tinned food
- * Being told what to do all the time
- * Ordered into groups or defined size of groups
- * Watching others panic
- * Constant instructions which are always changing
- * Information which is out of date by the time you receive it.
- * Being told what to do in your free time
- * Standing in long queues to get food
- * Carrying a mask around all the time
- * Weekend plans all bugged up
- * Your favourite bars are off limits
- * Living under a permanent curfew
- * Constant travel restrictions

RAE Association Membership Fees

All membership fees for the next financial year will become due on 1st July and renewal notices will be sent out over the course of the next 2 – 3 weeks. It is requested that payment of fees be made before the end of August.

Small Raffle

The small raffle was drawn on Sunday 17th May and the winners were – David Cooper winning 1st & 2nd prizes and Michael Rodwell won 3rd prize.

Well done to Peter Billington for running the raffle and the draw.

Sappers in Heaven

A young Gunner arrives at the gates of heaven and is met by St Peter.

He is welcomed and thanked for his service and told that heaven for him will be just like his Regt bar, cheap beer, women and what ever else he wishes for!!!

The young Gunner thinks for a bit and says to St Peter " please no Sappers they have made my life hell, and heaven to me would have no Sappers".

St Peter looks at him and says " no Sappers I promise now off you go and enjoy a pint "

The young Gunner is enjoying his pint when all of a sudden the door gets kicked in and this big bloke in DPU wearing a Sapper cap badge grabs the young Gunner holds him down and drinks his pint, rubs the Gunner on the head and laughs.

7 days running this happens until the young Gunner can't stand it no more and heads of to see St Peter.

The Gunner explains everything that happened, and says you promised me no Sappers !!! after a while St Peter asks the Gunner " did the man have grey hair, white beard and a booming voice ??

Yes the Gunner replies with that St Peter starts to laugh!!!

That's not a Sapper he say's, that's God !!! He just thinks he's a Sapper!..

Luncheon

Once the restrictions are lifted on entry to hotels, we will get into organising another luncheon. It is hoped to hold the next one in Bunbury as a lot of our members live down that way and should be given the opportunity to join in with other members of the Association. There are many sappers who are not members living around Bunbury and we are hoping we can persuaded some of them to join the Association.

Next Meetings

Our next meeting will be the AGM to be held on Sunday 26 July. The meeting will be held at the Reabold Tennis Club in Floreat commencing at 11.00 am.