

**PRESIDENT**

Mr Ian Johnston

50 Nicholli Street  
DUNCRAIG WA 6023  
Ph: 08 9448 5590

Email: raeassoc2016@gmail.com



**SECRETARY**

Mr Trevor Jones

PO Box 94  
DIANELLA WA 6059  
Ph: 08 9371 1290

Email: raeassocwasec2017@gmail.com

Patron: Mr Geoff Stooke OAM

Website: [www.wasappers.com.au](http://www.wasappers.com.au)

# The Purple Circle

Editor: Ian Johnston

Contact: 0409 019 518

Spring Edition 2022



**13 Engineer Regiment Sign and Name of Lines**

## **PASSING PARADE**

**Brian Desmond O'Sullivan** passed away in 2022 aged 91 years. Brian served in Vietnam from April to October 1968 with AFV Detachment 55 Engineer Workshop and Park Squadron.

**Richard Arthur McKenzie** passed away on 8 April 2022 aged 85 years. Richard was a 7<sup>th</sup> Intake Army Apprentice bricklayer. He was a member of the Association

**Terrance William Simmonds** passed away on 6 June 2022 aged 74 years and 4 months. John was a National Serviceman who served in 22 Construction Squadron in 1968-1969.

**Paul Gregory Wilmot** passed away on 13 June 2022 aged 76 years. Paul served overseas with PNG Construction Squadron 1969 -1971, Israel & Egypt with United Nations Military Observer Team 1974 - 1976 and RSME in UK 1983 – 1985. Paul was a member of the Association.

**Trevor Charles (Clyde) Steart** passed away on 17 June 2022 aged 77 Years and 6 months. Trevor served in Vietnam from August 1967 to March 1968 with 17 Construction Squadron.

**Peter Rupert Skien** passed away on 12 July 2022 aged 76 years and 8 months. Peter served in Vietnam from January 1969 to January 1970 with 17 Construction Squadron. Peter was a national serviceman.

**Russell Bayden Mackie** passed away on 24 July 2022 aged 73 years and 7 months. Russell served in Vietnam from April 1970 to April 1971 with 21 Engineer Support Troop and Det 55 Engineer Works and Parks Squadron.

**Stuart John (Stewie) Holmes** passed away on 10 August 2022 aged 92 years. Stewie was a CMF/ARes soldier serving from 1956 to 1982 with 44 Railway Squadron and 13 Field Squadron. Stewie was a member of the Association.

**Michael Beeching** passed away on 10 August 2022 aged 73 years and 1 month. Michael served in Vietnam from September 1971 to March 1972 with 55 Engineer Workshops and Park Squadron.

**Peter Frederick Young** passed away on 12 August 2022 aged 80 years and 1 month. Peter served in Vietnam from July 1969 to July 1970 with 17 Construction Squadron.

**Victor John Gadd** passed away on 22 August 2022 aged 84 years and 7 months. John served with 32 Small Ship Squadron and sailed to Vietnam on the Vernon Sturdee from April to June 1966 and on the Clive Steele from February to March 1971.

**Geoffrey James Freeland** passed away on 31 August 2022 aged 88 years 6 months. Geoff served with 32 Small Ship Squadron and sailed on the Harry Chauvel to Borneo in 1964.

## **LEST WE FORGET**

### **RAEA Committee**

At the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 17 July, the following members were elected as the committee to run the association for the 2022 – 2023 financial year -:

President - Ian Johnston  
Vice President - Harry Hickson  
Secretary - Trevor Jones  
Treasurer - Peter Billington

Committee members - Trevor Johnson, Russell McEntyre, Lynne Reynolds

Welcome to the 2022 – 2023 committee Harry.

### **Service Rewarded**



SSgt Phil Gibbings was presented with his second Federation Star for 45 years army service. The Star was presented by MAJGEN Craig Williams (Ret) at the presentation ceremony on Tuesday 5 July in the Ryan Club following the 13 ER Establishment parade.

Phil served a total of 46 ½ years in the Army Reserve retiring in early August and is proud to be the longest serving member of 13 Fd Sqn and the last Combat Engineer Staff Sergeant in WA.

Throughout most of his career, Phil received enormous support from his wife Kim who was also a member of the ARes at 13 Fd Sqn.

Congratulation Phil on a wonderful career.

## MEET OUR MEMBERS



### Steven Whitfield

Steve was born in Osborne Park Hospital in September 1970 and has 1 sister. He grew up in Koolyanobbing and Perth area, attending Bambara Primary and Craigie and Willetton High schools. He left school at age 18 and started work as a kitchen hand at Hungry Jacks.

In 1989, he joined the ARes serving with 13 Fd Sqn working as a Fd Engr, Tp storeman, Acting Unit S4 while the SQMS was deployed overseas and as Unit Ops Cpl. Steve was finally discharged from the Army in 2011.

After leaving Hungry Jacks, Steve worked part time and full time for a number of security companies. On leaving the security industry, he started work for Thiess Pty Ltd Civil Construction, working in regional areas and still currently works for the Thiess Global Mining Division, conducting parts planning and parts facilitation for the organisation.

Steve met his partner Cristene via family acquaintances, they do not have any children although there are 2 grandchildren from his partners side of the family.

In his spare time, he is a Militaria Collector and a sporting shooter at club and state levels.

Steve and Cristene currently live in Banksia Grove.



### Andrew Thompson

Andrew was born in Manchester, England in October 1968 and moved to Australia in 1971 . He has 4 sisters and a brother. He grew up in Glendalough, attending Glendalough and Hamersley Primary Schools and Warwick Senior High.

Andrew left school at age 17 and started work at Bunnings as a truckies offsider for a short time, then worked with Bankwest before going to Derby for 6 ½ years to help run a mechanical garage. He has worked in Real Estate since 1999.

In 1988, he joined the Army Reserve serving with 13 Fd Sqn for 3½ years and then Norforce (Derby) for 8½ years before leaving the ARes in 2000.

Andrew met his wife Liselle while shopping in 2005 and they married in 2012. He has 2 sons and a daughter from his first marriage and 2 stepdaughters from Liselle's first marriage. They have 1 granddaughter.

He spends his leisure time enjoys the simple things in life on his acreage in Muchea.

Andrew and Liselle currently live in Carramar.



## **13 ENGINEER REGIMENT**

On the evening of Tuesday 5 July, 16 Battalion Battle Group parade to commemorate the forming of 13 Engineer Regiment and the formal separation of 13 Fd Sqn from 16 Battalion. It was a proud moment for all engineers, those on parade and those spectating when the Battle Group shoulder patch was removed and replaced with the 13 ER shoulder patch placed on the shoulder of the parading Sappers.

Since the formation of 13 Engineer Regiment (13ER), I have had the opportunity to make contact with the incoming Commanding Officer LTCOL Lachlan Robertson and the incoming Regimental Sergeant Major WO2 Eron Sage. Eron is to be promoted to Warrant Officer Class 1 in the next round of promotions.

Both Lachlan and Eron have indicated that they would like to be involved with the Association including attending meetings and addressing the members.

### **Short biography – Lieutenant Colonel Lachlan Robertson**

Lieutenant Colonel Lachlan Robertson's regimental service includes postings to the 1st Combat Engineer Regiment (CER), 2nd CER, the School of Military Engineering, the Incident Response Regiment (IRR - now Special Operations Engineer Regiment) and the United States Army Engineer School. He has deployed to Timor Leste, Afghanistan, and on domestic disaster relief and counter-terrorism support operations. Lachlan's most rewarding roles to date were commanding A Squadron, IRR and to serve as Australia's Defence Adviser to Fiji. Lachlan is happily married to Wendy and they have four wonderful children. He is humbled to have the privilege to command the 13th Engineer Regiment from January 2023.



### **Short biography – Warrant Officer Class Two Eron Sage**

Warrant Officer Eron Lee Sage's regimental service has included postings to all three Combat Engineer Regiments, the "Home of the Sapper" and the Combined Arms Training Centre. He is fortunate enough to have deployed on a number of warlike and non-warlike operations including East Timor as part of INTERFET in 1999, Iraq in 2006 and Timor Leste Aviation Group in 2009. He served in Afghanistan in 2010 as a part of the Engineer Operational Mentor and Liaison Team. His non-warlike operations include the Victorian Bushfire response in 2009 and OP Fiji Assist in 2016. Warrant Officer Sage is married to Cassandra and has two children, Ethan aged eleven and Tyler who is eight. He enjoys a variety of sports and his other interests are weight training and motorsport.





22 Engr Sqn, from 13ER, has been created as a STEM incubator.

Photo: Cpl Nakia Chapman

## Engineers of creative thinking

### Capt Sandra Seman-Bourke

13 BDE in Western Australia has evolved from a part-time workforce brigade into a test bed for innovation and modernisation across Army.

The brigade's 13ER, officially raised at Irwin Barracks in July, has now added its second squadron, the specialist 22 Engr Sqn, as a STEM incubator with capabilities including rapid fabrication, robotics and decision support.

13ER Acting Commander Lt-Col Michael Hadlow said 13 Bde had been propelled to the forefront of Army's modernisation, transformation and innovation program.

"By enhancing engineering capabilities in Western Australia, Army is harnessing the population's potential in the region, while increasing Army's ability to respond to domestic operations," Lt-Col Hadlow said.

The IXG/MakerSpace lab has been integrated into 22 Engr Sqn, providing a 'think hub' of design and prototyping for 13 Bde members.

MakerSpace, at Irwin Barracks, is equipped with a workshop, electronics

lab and 3D printers. It is open to all services and encourages innovation, non-linear thinking and idea sharing.

In another first for Army, six reservist specialist service officers were appointed through the BHP/Army Workforce Mobility Trial.

The trial's bespoke training program fast-tracks recruitment by mapping specialist skillsets into an Army reservist position and creating a shared workforce model between the two organisations.

The new recruits have started their military journey in 22 Engr Sqn and will bring a real-world mindset to Army and the broader Defence network.

Commander 13 Bde Brig Brett Chaloner said an integrated Defence system in Western Australia was critical in an increasingly unstable global environment.

"Enhancing partnerships and habitual collaboration with industry and academia, providing military-based solutions, including rapid prototyping and fabrication, to real-world issues makes us stronger together," Brig Chaloner said.

Providing military-based solutions, including rapid prototyping and fabrication, to real-world issues and threats, makes us stronger together.

– Brig Brett Chaloner,  
Commander 13 Bde



### Law of Close Encounters -

The probability of meeting someone you know **INCREASES** dramatically when you are with someone you don't want to be seen with.



## CADET PRESENTATION



On Sunday 10 July, the WA Cadets held their mid-year parade where senior cadets are recognised for their efforts at the two week Leadership and Skills training camp.

The president, Ian Johnston presented the RAE Association of WA scholarship certificate and award to newly promoted Cadet Under Officer Dominic Adriano.

The parade was a pleasure to watch, the drill and marching was as good as you would expect from regular full time soldiers. The way they paid respects to the Corps Colours when they were marched on and off the parade ground showed they were proud of their colours.

Congratulations to the outgoing CDT Under Officer Danica Old, the current CDT RSM WO1 Aiden Ward and the incoming CDT Under Officer Dominic Adriano for the professional way they conducted the parade.

## Luncheon at Mullaloo Beach Hotel

Thanks to Trevor Johnson, the Association held another luncheon at the Mullaloo Beach Hotel. It was a bit disappointing that only 10 members, partners and friends attended. The lack of numbers didn't spoil the lunch and atmosphere for those who attended.



Jim Spink, Trevor Jones and Kaye Dallas, partner to Tex McPherson

Tex McPherson, Peter Reynolds and Lynne Reynolds



Trevor Johnson, Jeanette Barankewitsch and her friend Jo Zaida

Ian Johnston was the photographer and is not shown.



## Waterloo Dinner 2022

The Waterloo dinner was held in the function room at ANZAC House on Friday 24 June. A total of 87 Sappers attended of which 26 were Association members with another 7 belonging to both 13 Field Squadron and the Association.

This was the first time the function room has been used for the dinner and the view across the Swan River to South Perth from the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of ANZAC House set off the evening.

From the amount of noise coming from all the tables, there were many stories and tales told, how many were true or just tall stories only the teller and those listening will ever know. Any way a good night was had by all.



## Remembrance Services

On Sunday 14 August, the president and vice president attended the Vietnam Veterans memorial to remember those Australians who lost their lives in the Vietnam war or from wounds after returning home.

This is the first time in quiet a while that members of the Association have attended this service as the date usually coincided with Sandakan Day.



A week later on 21 August, the president attended the Sandakan Day service to remember those Australians who died in the Sandakan POW camp in North Borneo and those who died on the Death March through the jungle from Sandakan to Ranau during WW2 and placed a wreath in remembrance of the Sappers from the WA raised 2/6 Field Park Company RAE and the other Engineer units who died as POWs of the Japanese.

Of the 2,434 Australian and British servicemen held in Sandakan POW camp only 6 Australians survived the POW camp and the death march.





## Precision Photography

Take off. An amazing photo. Being in the right place at the right time.



## 2021 Census on Serving and Veteran Personal

The following information has been extracted from the 2021 Census published in the RSLWA Sub-Branch Signal - July 2022

Service in the Australian Defence Force by state and territory 2021 Census				
	Currently serving in the regular service	Currently serving in the reserves service	Previously served and not currently serving	Total ever served
New South Wales	18,007	6,506	127,657	152,170
Victoria	6,866	3,973	94,393	105,234
Queensland	16,803	6,339	139,973	163,112
South Australia	3,940	2,053	41,861	47,852
Western Australia	4,496	2,413	55,507	62,417
Tasmania	290	670	17,515	18,473
Northern Territory	3,874	547	5,110	9,534
Australian Capital Territory	5,977	2,084	14,164	22,220
Australia	60,286	24,581	496,276	581,139

### **Law of Probability -**

The probability of being watched is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act.



## **NOTICES**

### **Membership Fees**

Membership fees are now due and Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September is the last day for paying fees. If your membership fees are not paid by then, this will be your last 'Purple Circle'.

### **Next Meeting**

The next general meeting will be held on Sunday 18 September with our last meeting for the year to be held on 20 November. All meetings are held at the Osborne Park RSL hall, on the corner of Main St and Cape St. Meeting start at the usual time of 11.00am with a light lunch and drinks provided at the conclusion of the meeting.

### **Contact Details**

When you decide to move house or change contact details, please let the Secretary know of your new details so we can stay in touch.

The Secretary, Trevor Jones can be contacted by phone - 0413 376 273 or by email - raeassocwasec2017@gmail.com

### **Laughs**

I said I was good at making decisions. I didn't say the decisions I made were good.

Without freedom of speech, we would not know who the idiots are.

I'm an engineer, so to save time let's just assume that I'm never wrong.

There is no such thing as a grouchy old person. The truth is that once you get old, you stop being polite and start being honest.

When I was young, I was poor. But after years of hard work, I am no longer young.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A GROUCHY OLD PERSON. THE TRUTH IS, ONCE YOU GET OLD, YOU STOP BEING POLITE AND START BEING HONEST.

# REMEMBERING QUEEN ELIZABETH II

**21 April 1926 – 8 September 2022**

When we all joined the Army, with right hand raised and left hand on the bible, swore our allegiances to “God, Queen and Country”.

Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> of September was a sad morning when we woke to the news that the Queen had passed away overnight, our time. Not only did we lose our Queen but we also lost our Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Australian Engineers.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> March 1963, 22 Construction Squadron provide a Royal Guard of Honour at Perth Airport as the Queen and Prince Philip left Western Australia.

This is the beginning of a new era for us as we adapt to a new to living with a new King, King Charles III. This will mean a new Corps badge, letter head paper and Association emblems.



The Queen inspects the Royal Guard of Honour provided by 22 Construction Squadron at Perth Airport.



After 70 years of devoted Public Service to her people  
MAY SHE REST IN PEACE