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The Purple Circle

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Winter Edition 2024



Memories from November 1999

Holdfast Reunion

PASSING PARADE

Larry Charles Sykes passed away on 2 March 2024 aged 75 years and 4 months. Larry served in Vietnam from September 71 to February 1972 with 17 Construction Squadron and 55 Engineer Workshops and Park Squadron finalizing the return of engineer stores and equipment to Australia.

Dave Cook passed away on 13 March 2024 aged 78 years and 10 months. Dave twice served in Vietnam from September 1965 to June 1966 with 3 Field Troop, then to August 1966 with 1 Field Squadron and from September 1967 to August 1968 with 17 Construction Squadron.

John (Bob) Brackenbury passed away on 19 March 2024 aged 86 years and 3 months. Bob never served in the Army but was awarded honorary membership through his first wife Steffoni's father, Spr Edward James Keating who was a Prisoner of War at Sandakan. Bob was a strong advocate for the Sandakan POW Association and the Sappers who dies at the POW Camp and on the death march across Borneo.

Keith William Tomkinson passed away on 24 March 2024 aged 82 years and 6 months. Keith served in Vietnam from November 1968 to November 1969 with 55 Engineer Works and Parks Squadron. He was a 'Class of 61' OCS graduate.

Raymond John (Brute) Carroll passed away on 1 April 2024 aged 73 years and 11 months. Brute served in Vietnam from May 1970 to May 1971 with 1 Field Squadron.

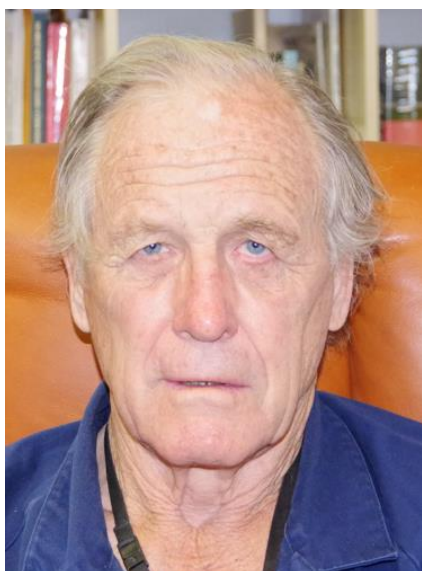
Michael Edward (Grumpy) Foster passed away on 15 April 2024 aged 79 years and 7 months. Grumpy served in Vietnam from July 1969 to June 1970 with 1 Field Squadron.

Francis Barry Bates passed away on 11 May 2024 aged 78 years and 11 months. Frank served in Vietnam from July 1968 to July 1969 with 55 Engineer Workshop and Park Squadron.

LEST WE FORGET

Getting old is like being in a haunted house. There are sounds and smells that cannot be explained.

MEET OUR MEMBERS



Bruce Hughes AM CSM

Bruce was born in Brisbane, Qld in August 1944 and has one sister. He grew up in Stafford among the paddocks and creeks of Hickey's dairy. He attended Stafford State Primary and Kedron State High school.

Bruce left school at the age of 18. While at school he worked part time packing shoes into boxes for dispatch to the various branches of Vic Jensen's Shoes in Brisbane.

He joined the Army in January 1963 as a cadet at RMC, Duntroon, graduating in 1966. He then attended the University of Queensland to complete his Civil Engineering degree. Bruce served with 24 Const Sqn, 17 Const Sqn (SVN 1970-71), CE HQ N Comd, CE 2 MD, DGAW-A, CE 5 MD, SASR and also spent a period attached to John Holland in Hobart during the reconstruction of the Tasman Bridge. Besides SVN, Bruce also served in UAE and Afghanistan (2008). He was involved in the construction of the Lord Howe Island airstrip in 1974.

When posted to the CE's Branch at Swan Barracks, he assumed the position of Project Director Special Training Facilities. For 42 years, he was involved with Complex Technology Ranges (CTechR) developing new technologies and adapting existing technologies to a safe and suitable standard for service in this day and age.

Although he retired from the Army in 2018 after 55 years (circa 40 years as a major) he still works, under contract to the ADF, providing consultancy services for the construction of CTechR and indoor live firing ranges for the army in Perth, Sydney, Shoalwater Bay, Greenvale and Darwin as well as in the USA. He continues to consult, on behalf of Defence, with countries such as Canada, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Cambodia, Singapore, Indonesia, UK, Germany and Malaysia.

Being an avid rugby union follower and player, Bruce played in the Armed Services Rugby Union side in 1967, 1968 and 1969 playing alongside Geoff Stooke in the second row. He also played in the 1972 ASRU side.

Bruce met Lynne in a pub in Sydney in 1978 and they married in 1980. They have no children.

Bruce fills in his spare time clay target shooting, playing rugby and collecting models of locomotives and rolling stock of the NSWGR.

Bruce and Lynne currently live in Como.



Doug Canning

Doug was born in Southern Cross in July 1942 and has three brothers. He grew up in Claremont and attended Graylands Primary School and CBC Fremantle High school.

He left school at the age of 15 and started work with the Burley Football Company in East Perth.

Doug joined the Army in August 1959. He served with 20 Field Park Squadron, 1 Division HQ, 2 Field Troop Malaya, 22 Construction Squadron and 32 Small Ship Squadron Detachment Vietnam. In August 1968 he took discharge.

After leaving the Army, he worked at the Swan Brewery for 25 years and then with Brambles in Port Hedland for another 8 years before he was forced to retire due to ill health in 2000.

Doug met Fay in 1969 at the Highway Hotel, Claremont and they married in 1970. They have two sons, 3 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

He and Fay spend a lot of their spare time visiting family in the eastern states and travelling overseas visiting places where he served during his time in the army. They also liked to visit Commonwealth War Cemeteries in Australia and overseas.

Doug and Fay currently live in Claremont.

Holdfast Reunion Names from Cover Photo

Held at: The Ryan Club,
13 Field Squadron, Karrakatta.
On: 6th November 1999

FIFTH ROW LEFT TO RIGHT:

Russell McEntyre - Crab, Robin White, Gary Huggins - Huggy, Mal Werrett, Eddie Carnegie, Richard Alexander, Steve Piper, Greg Flowers, Nathan Woodrow, Shawn Goodbody, Brendan Sullivan, Scott N Douglas.

FOURTH ROW:

Paul Talma, John Roberts, John Thompson, Dave Hastings, Peter Billington, Tim Wuttke-Bentley, Steve Gow, Wayne Reidy-Crofts, Alfonso Hernandez, Kylie Desoza, Rod Ennor.

THIRD ROW:

Ashley Killeen, Mark Healey, Frank Bowman, Mike Jones, Paul Bermudo, George Howell, Evan Jones, Bradley Courtney, Neville Clark, Jim Schryver, Ian Boettcher.

SECOND ROW:

Tony Falcone, Owen Vladich, Harry Hickson, Harry Meerman van der Horst, Owen Christmass - Santa, Ron Beard, Fred Banyard, Warwick Broomfield, Pappy Gaske, "Emu" Le Juge De Segrais, Jim Spink.

FIRST ROW:

Snaile Robinson, Steve Smilkovic, Randall Haigh, Chris Connolly.

Farewell to Ray Carroll

A large crowd of family and friends and members from the RAE association, North Beach RSL sub-branch and Tunnell Rats gathered at Karrakatta Cemetery to farewell Brute Carroll. It was standing room only inside the chapel and people were standing 6-8 deep outside on the covered entrance.

The service was followed with a 'wake' at the Claremont Hotel, and it was there that some guests asked about the significance of the axe being carried by one of the mourners.

The axe belonged to Brute's father, John Carroll who enlisted in the army in WW2 and served with the 2nd/2nd Forestry Company. The axe saw action in Scotland, New Guinea, Bougainville and New Britain.

The axe is carried every ANZAC Day by a member of the Association to acknowledge the efforts of the 2nd/2nd Forestry Company during WW2. The axe is held in the Ryan Club for safe keeping.



Nathan, Larrissa, Maree,
& Trent Carroll



Keith Kermode, Maree Carroll,
Peter MacDonald & Ian Johnston

An elderly man hurried to his 8.00am doctor's appointment, he wanted to finish quickly so he could get to another appointment. The doctor asked what it was and he proudly said that every morning at 9.00am at the hospital he had breakfast with his wife. The doctor asked what her condition was and he replied that for 5 years she has had Alzheimer's and hasn't know who he is. The doctor asked why he continues if she has no idea who he is and the old man replied "because I still remember who she is"



13 ENGINEER REGIMENT

The Regiment was responsible for the planning, organising and conducting of the Dawn Service again this year.

It was good to see a large gathering of sappers, association members, partners, families and guests who braved the chilly morning to attend again. A special thanks must go to the RSM, WO1 Eron Sage for his work in planning and organising the event, Major Glen McDermott who was the event emcee, to those who performed reading during the service and to the sappers who formed the catafalque party.



City March

Path Transit provided a bus and driver to get our members to and from the city for the march. The weather was fine and warm, and the march was at a comfortable walking pace.

Our numbers were down a bit this year, we would have been lucky if we had 30 marchers.

Room was tight again on St Georges Terrace with those carrying flags and picks crammed in against our big banner and some of the marchers behind had to stand on the footpath. It has not been until after the march has started were we able to sort ourselves out.

After the march a lot of the members returned to the Ryan Club to celebrate with the Regiment over a beer or two.





ADF candidates march in to camp during the 2024 special forces selection course.

Photo: Maj Roger Brennan

Combined selection a first for SOCOMD

Maj Roger Brennan

FOR the first time, SOCOMD has run a combined selection course, allowing ADF personnel to apply for either special forces operators, or integrators – such as medics, signallers or engineers.

About 250 candidates from across the ADF travelled to Bindoon Training Area in Western Australia for the 2024 Special Forces Common Selection course, to be assessed for service based on personal and professional attributes.

They will then be selected

for reinforcement training for SOCOMD core capabilities as SF operators or integrators.

CO ADF School of Special Operations Lt-Col A said the significant weight of effort the command put into orchestrating common selection demonstrated the importance it placed on finding the right people.

“We select people for service in SOCOMD using an attribute-based assessment, where the course builds in intensity and applies pressure to ensure the candidate’s true character can be observed,” Lt-Col A said.

“The Common Special Forces Selection Course is the main effort for SOCOMD for the month of May, with all SOCOMD units working together for the planning and execution of this key force-generation activity.”

During the first week, before sunrise, candidates woke to conduct a timed 20km pack march, already feeling the effects of sleep deprivation and fatigue.

Senior directing staff at SASR, WO2 J, said the program was developed collaboratively across the command to align with real-world demands of special ops.

“Fitness levels and cognitive behaviours are observed throughout the course, and the data points we collect enable candidates a genuine opportunity to demonstrate leadership and collective or individual skills,” WO2 J said.

“This also ensures all of SOCOMD’s candidates go through the same experience during selection no matter the role they apply for.”

At the end of the course, successful candidates will move into the reinforcement cycle or specialist training.

Waterloo Dinner

The 2024 Waterloo Dinner will be held at the Yanchep Crystal Caves on Friday 21 June. RSVP closed on Tuesday 11 July. The flyer for the event is shown on the last page.

Bridge honours WW1 engineers

A UNIQUE Bailey bridge now stands over the Somme River in Amiens, France, as a permanent memorial to the extraordinary feats of Australian engineers during The Great War.

Dedicated last month, the bridge honours the memory of WW1 sappers in one of their defining moments.

On August 8, 1918, the first day of the Battle of Amiens, Australian engineers not only played a pivotal role in the offensive but also received the highest number of high-level decorations for bravery ever achieved by the corps in a single day.

Three of the sappers captured the formidable German Amiens railway gun, now displayed at the Australian War Memorial.

The 1st Field Squadron

Association aimed to commemorate the heroes with a bridge dedication in Amiens on the anniversary of August 8, 2020, but the pandemic forced a postponement.

Despite the delay the project's scope grew to include the construction of a sister bridge at Anzac Park in Toowong, Queensland, which was dedicated on November 11, 2022 as part of the year-long celebrations for the Royal Australian Engineers' 120th anniversary.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Matt Keogh said the bridge was significant.

"It stands as a lasting monument to all the Australian engineers who served in the Great War," he said.

The dedication was attended by distinguished guests, including CA Lt-Gen Simon Stuart.



Accompanied by French school students, an Australian bagpiper walks across the Bridge of Friendship in Amiens at its official opening.

Photo: Cpl Cameron Pegg





Officers and soldiers from 3CER march through the streets during the freedom-of-entry parade at Airlie Beach. Photos: Tpr Dana Millington

Parade a first for Whitsundays



3CER soldiers on parade with their detection dog.

In a first for the Whitsunday region, members of 3CER conducted a freedom-of-entry parade at Airlie Beach on May 11.

Despite being granted freedom of entry in 2017 in recognition of their invaluable assistance in Bowen following Tropical Cyclone Debbie, the parade was not held until this year because of the cyclone damage and the COVID-19 pandemic.



An APC from 3CER moves through the streets of Airlie Beach during the parade.

Pictures courtesy of Tpr Dana Millington and write-up part of article by Capt Brittany Evans

Do You Know

The unknown sapper in the last edition of the Purple Circle was Paul O'Connor.

This Edition's sapper served with 22 Const Sqn and 13 Fd Sqn.

Do you recognise this Sapper!



NOTICES

Next Meeting

The next general meeting will be the AGM to be held on Sunday 28 July.

Put this date in your phone or mark your calendar, as it is you, the members, who elect the committee to run the association for the next year.

The President will not be seeking re-election at the AGM as he believes it is time to stand down and let someone with new ideas to take the reins. At the AGM, all committee positions will be declared vacant so it is up to all members to put their hand up and seek election to the committee.

Contact Details

Have you move house or change contact details recently! Please do the polite thing and let the Secretary know of your new details so we can stay in touch. It saves a lot of hard work and time by committee members to chase up details.

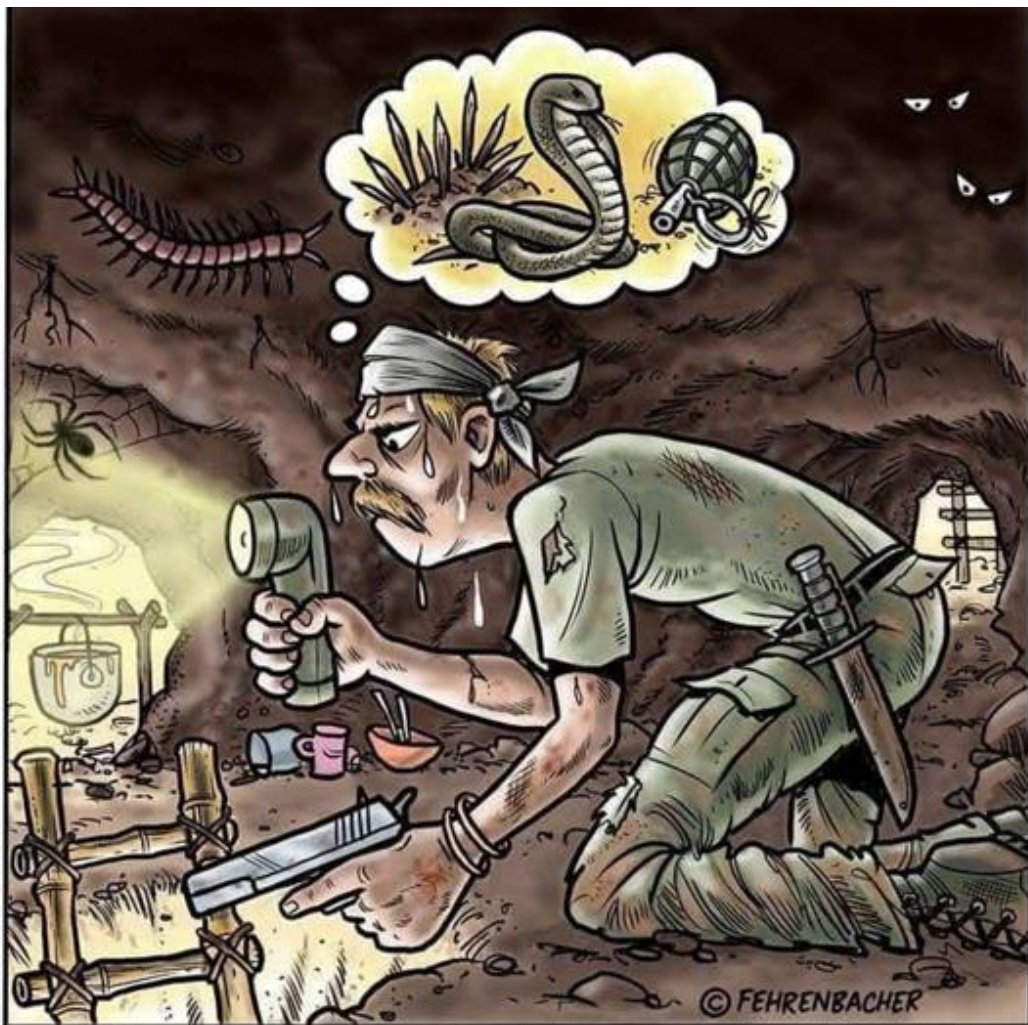
The Secretary, Trevor Jones can be contacted by phone - 0413 376 273 or by email - raeassocwasec2017@gmail.com

Some say life begins at 40, others say 50. Nonsense! Life begins when you decide to quit worrying about what everyone else thinks.

Laughs

Two little boys were at a wedding when one leaned over to the other and asked, "How many wives can a man have?" His friend answered, "Sixteen... four better, four worse, four richer, and four poorer."

They had to get a translator in at the benefits office today. Somebody came in speaking English. 😊



THE VIETNAM TUNNEL RAT...
FOR THE ULTIMATE GAME OF HIDE AND GO SEEK!



The 13th Engineer Regiment

and

The RAE Association of Western Australia

Location: Yanchep Caves

Date: 1800h 21 June 24

Transport from Irwin Barracks

at 1700h and return

RSVP: 13er.admin@defence.gov.au

NLT 11 June 24

Serving 13 ER Member \$120

RAEWA Association Member \$130

Other \$160

Payment to BSB 833-205 Acc: 20-354-835

Ref WL Surname