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The Purple Circle

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Our Corps made history on 13 May 2018. The Sovereign's Banner of the RAE was paraded on ANZC Parade in Canberra and received our first Unit Citation for Gallantry. Our "Colours" were paraded with those of 1RAR, 3RAR, A SQN 3 CAV REGT, C SQN 1 ARMD REGT and 12 FD REGT Royal REGT of Australian Artillery. These Corps/Regiments together with the 1ATF (Fwd) troops are officially recognised to wear the Australian Unit Citation for Gallantry as a result of our service at the Battles of FSPB Coral and Balmoral from 12 May to 6 June 1968. Some Australian logistics detachments and allies from NZ and the USA are able to apply for it as well.

The award looks like this:



The Unit Citation for Gallantry is awarded to a unit for extraordinary gallantry in action.

The insignia of a Unit Citation for Gallantry is a gilt rectangular frame surrounding a deep green ribbon. The frame has a design of flames emanating from the outer edges of the frame to the centre.

Members of uniformed services wear the insignia in accordance with the dress rules of their Service. In civilian dress serving and ex-serving personnel generally continue to wear these insignia in the same way as they are worn in uniform.

The Sappers who were at the Battles will be issued with the award, including the Federation Star, and are to wear it on the right breast. Personnel who were members of the unit when an award was made wear a Federation Star in the centre of the ribbon and continue to wear the insignia after leaving the unit. Army and Air Force dress policy allows personnel who are subsequently posted to the unit to wear the insignia without the Federation Star, but only while actually posted to the unit.

Passing Parade

John Scorse passed away in early May 2018, aged 82 yrs. He served in Vietnam from January 1967 to January 1968 with the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam. For his service in Vietnam, John received a Commendation for Distinguished Service and was also Mentioned-in-Dispatches. With the formation of 3 Field Engineer Regiment, he was the Unit's first Regimental Sergeant Major.

Graham Daunt passed away on 9 May 2018, aged 68yrs. He served in Vietnam from December 1969 to December 1970 with 55 Engineer Works & Parks Squadron.

Rodney Armstrong passed away on 14 May 2018, aged 69 years. He served in Vietnam from June 1970 to June 1971 with 17 Const Sqn.

Warren Edwards passed away on 17 May 2018, aged 72 years. He served in Vietnam from March to December 1968 with 17 Const Sqn as a part of the Land Clearing Team.

Athol Busk passed away in June 2018, aged 85 years. He served in Vietnam from July 1969 to July 1970 with 1 Fd Sqn.

Sick Parade

Bob Horrocks was rushed to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital about 3 weeks ago by ambulance where he was kept in for 4 days, so staff could keep an eye on him and run some checks. After adjusting his medication, Bob is back home and all is well.

Brian O'Toole has had a hip operation and is now recovering at home.

Queen's Birthday Honours

Congratulation to the following Association members on their awards:

BRUCE HUGHES on being awarded the Member (AM) of the Order of Australia. The award was for

“Exceptional service to the Australian Army in the field of specialist military engineering between 2003 – 2017”

NORMAN TATTERSHALL WELLS on being awarded the Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia. The award was for

“Service to veterans and their families, and to military history”

This will cost you both a ‘round of beers’ at the Ryan Club.

MEETING OUR MEMBERS



Roland (Roly) Daily

Roly was born in Geraldton in 1937 and grew up in Northam and Perth. He has one sister. Roly attended Primary School in Northam and South Perth and then attended Junior Test High School in West Perth

He left school at the age of 15 and started work with ES Wiggs & Co but left soon after to take up an apprenticeship with George Boucher as a plumber.

As a 12-year-old, Roly joined the cadets and then in 1956 was called up for National Service joining 13 Fd Sqn. In March 1959 he joined the regular army serving with 23 Const Sqn at Warradale, SA, 1 Fd Sqn Casula and 22 Const Sqn Karrakatta.

He left the army in 1964 to join the WA Police Force serving 6 years before leaving to return to his trade as a plumber. He also re-joined 13 Fd Sqn.

Roly met Maureen when he was 14 years old and they married in 1957 and lived in Osborne Park. They have 5 children plus 14 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

Roly retired in 1996 to spend more time with family and to go caravanning and travelling overseas. Roly and Maureen now live at Settlers Lakeside Village, Ravenswood.



Andy (Joe) Betti

Joe was born in Nannup in 1945 and grew up in Northcliffe. He has 2 sisters and a brother.

He left school in year 9 and started work at the local timber mill stacking timber. Joe jumped at the opportunity to do a crane drivers course. In 1965, the family moved to Donnybrook where he found work with the Preston Timber Company.

Joe was called up for National Service in September 1965 and after recruit and initial employment training was posted to 22 Const Sqn and saw overseas service in Sabah, Borneo with the Unit.

Joe took discharge in September 1967 and returned to Donnybrook to work on his cousin's farm for 17 years and then in local government until he retired in 2009.

Joe met Wendy in 1967 and they married in 1970. They have 2 daughters, 3 grandsons and 2 granddaughters.

Joe and Wendy still live in Donnybrook where they enjoy gardening, caravanning and bowling. They are also involved in the local Aged Care Community.

Congratulations to Frank Mallard

RSLWA salutes Frank Mallard

RSLWA congratulates Frank Mallard who recently was awarded the Swan City Council Citizen of the year and Senior Citizen of the Year.

The Ellenbrook RSL Sub-Branch member is a local legend in north-eastern Perth with his work with the RSL contributing to his being honoured on Australia Day.

Winning both awards is a genuine rarity and it tells of the high esteem in which Frank is held in the community. The ever-humble Frank thought that there had been a mistake when he was told that he had been nominated for the awards.

Frank was brought up in Kalbarri and, after attending a Catholic College in Geraldton, he joined the Australian Army. He served in Malaya, Borneo and then as an engineer with 1RAR from May 1965 to May 1966, when the unit was attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Bien Hoa. What is interesting is that, at this time, Aboriginal people were not considered full citizens in Australia.

The list of achievements that contributed to Frank winning the two awards include brilliant work for the Ellenbrook RSL, where he is Vice-President and his involvement in the Veterans' Health Day event held last year which was a major success.



Among the other organisations and events that Frank has assisted include St Helena's Catholic Primary School, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, City of Swan, Indigenous War Graves, the amphitheatre at Wave

Rock and the Voice of the Voiceless ministry.

Frank is also treasurer of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Association of WA.

Well Done Frank!

Article courtesy of RSLWA Listening Post

Malayan Campaign & Indonesian Confrontation

I received an email late last month from Sel Christie via John Jesser which in part read: -

Staff and volunteers at the Australian War Memorial are currently researching, digitising and indexing records to create a searchable roll representing Malayan Emergency, Malay Peninsula and Indonesian Confrontation.

The Roll will be due for release in June 2019.

The Roll will include the names of all service personnel who served in those conflicts.

Fire Support Base Balmoral & Coral

Secondary role came like second nature

WHEN engineers were forced to fight as infantry at FSB Coral, it came as second nature to former Lt George Hulse.

After serving with infantry battalions, Mr Hulse commissioned to become an officer, leading 1 Tp, 1 Fd Sqn Gp in Vietnam.

Two weeks after arriving, Mr Hulse went with his men to FSB Coral and was allocated the forward right sector of the squadron's fighting perimeter.

"We were required to adopt our secondary role from the moment we arrived," he said.

"I was also required to command a mine-laying group of combat engineers at FSB Balmoral.

"I was also allocated tasks as an engineer recon officer, sourcing material for roads, tracks, water and helicopter landing zones."

Mr Hulse said the sappers worked from sun-up to sun-down on fortifications of HQ and other unit defence enhancements like tracks, roads and trying to supplement the water supply.

"The squadron provided support with combat engineer teams, a corporal and six combat engineers, to the companies of 1RAR and 3RAR, plus mini-teams to the two tank troops, cavalry

troops and APC squadron elements," he said.

"What was left of the unit in the defensive position had to revert to our infantry role during each night, defending the fighting perimeter of Coral."

On May 16, 1 Fd Sqn Gp and IATF's Defence and Employment Pl, were attacked by human-wave assaults from units of 141 NVA Regt.

1 Fd Sqn Gp had two artillery DF tasks to their front, one in front of Mr Hulse's troop and the other in front of 2 Tp, and these were called in at least three times.

1RAR defended about two-thirds of the Coral perimeter and 1 Fd Sqn Gp defended the majority of the rest.

Mr Hulse said the sappers took inspiration from the fact 1RAR had not succumbed to repeated NVA attacks and were determined not to let the NVA take a single engineer pit.

"There would be no surrender and no retreat," he said.

"We did our job."

Engineers laid two defensive minefields at FSB Balmoral on May 27, in front of D Coy, 3RAR.

Lt Hulse was in charge of the left forward minefield and Capt Rod Usback, of 1 Fd Sqn Gp, the right rear

minefield.

"I saw my minefield work against the charging NVA, but must admit the delay imposed on the determined NVA infantry soldier was minimal," Mr Hulse said.

"They charged straight through the minefield, took their casualties and just kept on coming with little, if any, delay or disorganisation at all."

He was impressed with the timely arrival of C Sqn's Centurions.

"The role of tanks in the battlespace changed permanently from that time on – I am now a very pro-tank person."

Mr Hulse took part in the long convoy from Coral back to Nui Dat on June 6.

He said the Battle of Coral-Balmoral was the only time in the RAE's history a complete engineer unit was deployed on an operation where they had to fight as infantrymen, as well as perform their sapper duties.

"They did this from the start to the finish of the operation – 26 days," he said.

"It didn't happen in WWI or WWII, albeit engineer units were called on to fight as infantry for short periods of time, and it has not happened since Vietnam."

Spr Kerry McCormick - 1 Fd Sqn Gp



THE noise of the bigger battles at FSB Coral is permanently etched in mind of Kerry McCormick.

"There was the noise of mortars, RPGs and small-arms fire from the NVA, let alone our own return fire," he said.

"We were used as infantry as well as engineers – we had our own perimeter to look after and we defended it like hell."

Mr McCormick also can't forget the dead Australians he saw when he arrived at Coral.

"We arrived on the morning of May 13 to be greeted with two or three groundsheets with Australian

GP boots sticking out from under them," he said. "Coral was the toughest time I had in country; sleep deprivation was a killer as hardly a night went by without some sort of probe at the wire."

Mr McCormick's unit left Coral on June 6 by road convoy.

"We demolished all our bunkers and any other gear that may have been useful to the NVA," he said.

"It was a huge convoy and it would have been suicide for the NVA to contact us."

Mr McCormick was proud to have served at Coral with a great bunch of sappers who fought their hearts out.

What Our Navy & Airforce are Doing



HMAS Toowoomba is led to Lapetasi Wharf, Port Vila, Vanuatu, by a local pilot boat during Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2018.

Two Royal Australian Navy ships from Joint Task Group 661.1 have arrived in Vanuatu to conduct the first port visit of the [Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2018](#) (IPE18) program.

IPE18 is an Australian Defence Force Joint Task Group deployment to the South Pacific, designed to enhance the strong and positive defence partnerships the ADF shares with its regional counterparts, through meaningful engagement, dialogue and training activities.

On Wednesday, HMAS *Success* completed officer of the watch manoeuvres with the Vanuatu Police Force vessel RVS *Tokuro* before the Pacific Patrol Boat led the Australian replenishment ship into Port Vila.

A B300 King Air aircraft from 32SQN.
Photo: LACW Kylie Gibson



Operation Solania

Casting a wider net in Pacific

FLTLT Tracey Li

A B300 King Air aircraft departed from No. 32 Squadron at RAAF Base East Sale on May 28 on a two-week deployment to the South Pacific, as part of Operation Solania.

CO 32SQN WGCCDR Matt Drummond said Operation Solania is the ADF's contribution to a multinational maritime surveillance operation run by the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency.

"The operation aims to detect, localise and intercept illegal fishing activity within the Exclusive Economic Zones of the Pacific Island countries," said WGCCDR Drummond.

"The size of the Exclusive Economic Zones is huge and the Pacific Island countries have limited resources to counter such illegal fishing activity, which threatens the food security and livelihoods of many Pacific Island households.

"King Air aircraft, along with other ADF assets, provide effective intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support to the patrol of fisheries."

FLTLT Paul Robson, 32SQN's Detachment Commander of Operation Solania, said he was proud to be part of the operation.

"I know we are contributing towards the strengthening of alliances and security cooperation in the South Pacific region," said FLTLT Robson.

"In addition to countering unlawful fishing activity, Operation Solania also provides us an opportunity to improve coordination, integration and intelligence exchange with participating nations."

Operation Solania is conducted four times a year and is supported by air and naval assets from the Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group, which includes Australia, New Zealand, United States and France.

13 Field Squadron

Sappers from 13 Fd Sqn and members of the RAE Association of WA gathered at the “Burswood on Swan” reception centre on the night of Friday 22nd June to commemorate the Waterloo Dinner.

SSM WO2 Glen Donaldson was presented with his Certificate for “WARRANT” and Sgt Jeff Lawson was presented with the Australia Day Medallion.

A total of 74 sat down for a splendid meals and wines, of which 20 were Association members. This was the best turnout of members for several years. A great time was had by all with a lot of storytelling, laughter and drinking after the dinner. I hear some carried on after the venue closed by going over to the casino.

Then on Tuesday night 26th June, the Sqn celebrated its birthday in a low-key way with a few drinks after the nights training.

1 Combat Engineer Regiment

9 Fd Sqn was involved in the 1 Brigade Exercise “Predator’s Walk” which was run over the period 14 – 25 May in the Army training areas in the NT and SA.



Sappers from 9 Fd Sqn, 1CER, build obstacles at a simulated defensive position.

Photo courtesy of Army News

Engineer Joke

Some people say the glass is half full, other people say the glass is half empty

An Engineer would say the glass is twice as big as it needs to be.

NOTICES

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Association will be the Annual General Meeting to be held on Sunday 15 July. Meeting dates for the remainder of the year are Sunday 16 September and Sunday 25 November.

Membership Fees

Over the past few weeks the treasurer has been sending out membership renewal notices. It is requested that you pay your membership fees as quickly as possible. The methods of payment are shown on the renewal notice.

Sausage Sizzle

On Saturday 28th April, the Association held a sausage sizzle at Bunnings Malaga and raised \$1,036.91 on the day. Thanks to all the members and helpers who volunteered a couple of hours of their time cooking and serving. Specially to Neville who had spent the past week or so ordering and purchasing all the food and other items required for the sausage sizzle.

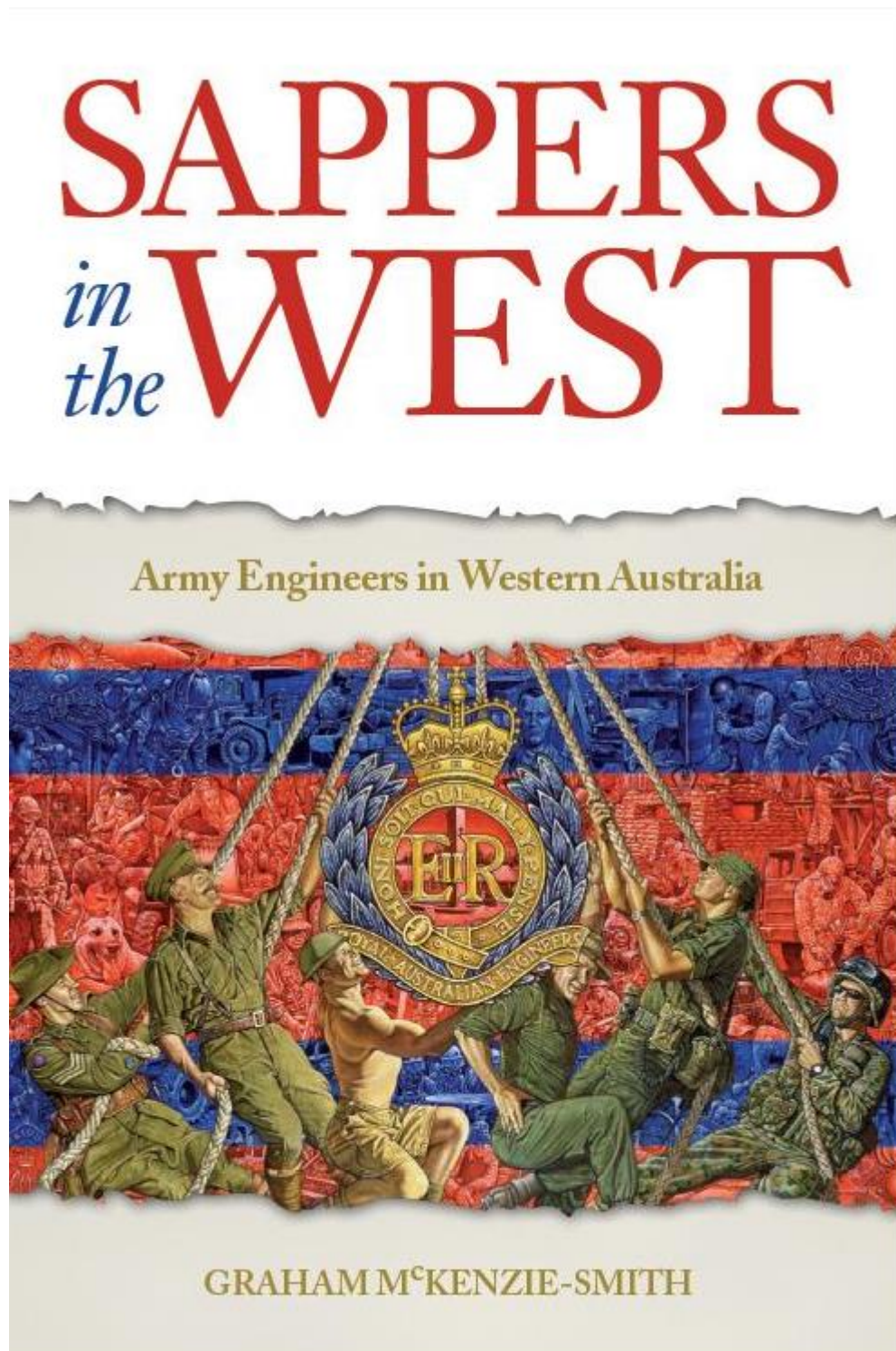
Our next sausage sizzle has been booked for Saturday 22nd September so mark the date in your diary, so you don't make a double booking on that day when we are asking for volunteers to help.

Change of Address

If in the last 6 months, you have changed any of your contact details, could you let the President or Secretary know. It makes life easier if their membership list is up to date. Contact details for the President and Secretary are shown on the front page of the Purple Circle.

Copies of the book “**SAPPERS in the WEST**” are still available through the Association by contacting the secretary Trevor Jones

The book details the history of the Corps in Western Australia since the arrival of the first Sapper Company from England in 1851 to 2015.



The cost of the Book is \$30.00 plus \$10.00 postage



21 ENGINEER SUPPORT TROOP (RAE) – VIETNAM

All Sappers and Supporters are invited to join us for this extraordinary reunion of ex engineers and their partners

Dates: From 10 September 2018 to 14 September 2018

Location: Harvey Bay Queensland.

This is shaping up to be an outstanding opportunity to enjoy a first class Reunion in a Resort Location that has been heavily subsidised to reduce costs. There are plenty of activities to accommodate everyone. This is a very popular holiday destination and I strongly encourage you to contact one of the contact officers for specific details.

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