



Respect, Gratitude, Admiration

TRIBUTE

The Newsletter of the Military
Historical Society Australia,
Queensland Division

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A couple of bits of coloured rag
Not the sort of thing of which you'd bring
Yet more than badge of shiny brass
Its value grows with the years that pass
Faded now, but memory clings
Of days of glory and valiant things
Of normal men who seemed as giants
Because of two strips soft and pliant

THE COLOUR PATCH

by Gordon Wallace

President Report

Firstly, may I acknowledge the wonderful job our Secretary/Treasurer and 25 volumes as Editor of Tribute by Ian Curtis - his dedication to our national military history has been superb - thank you Ian.

Now, I was able to attend a meeting in Brisbane last week with the lunch topic "*The law and allegations of war crimes by Australian troops in Afghanistan*". The first subject was the Roberts-Smith (RS) defamation case against Fairfax Media. The judge found against RS on the basis under civil law of "the balance of probabilities". Unlike criminal law where conviction must be "beyond a reasonable doubt", the judge considered the Fairfax case to have been "more likely" than the RS case. Consequently, time will tell if another authority chooses criminal charges against RS.

There has been one criminal case brought against a LCPL and a SGT some years ago for a case where several children were killed and other civilians injured when an explosive device was thrown through a window into a building from which an enemy combatant was firing at our troops (he too was killed). The case was dismissed. The Brereton Report has identified up to 25 Australian soldiers who may have committed war crimes. No charges have yet been laid although one or more are close (apparently).

My opinion: In the absence of criminal charges, evidence and proof of guilt, that a Chief Of Defence Force can splatter in the public domain that individual medals and unit citations should be withdrawn is a bloody disgrace to that man. A basic tenet of leadership and man management when I did officer training is that you support your soldiers until proof of wrongdoing is beyond question and even then, you offer assistance where feasible - you DO NOT offer punishment at the first word of an investigator without subsequent charges, proof and conviction.

Further, in regard Senator Jacqui Lambie's hysterics about the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigating Campbell and other senior officers, the ICC would only investigate in the absence of a proper investigation by the country in question. Also, the supposed offence should be 'widespread' rather than a narrow incident. So, Campbell et al will be judged by the officers and soldiers under their influence - I hesitate to use 'command' as he displays little command responsibility, to me.

More brightly. This year's Ex Talisman Sabre will give our new breed of servicemen and women a great opportunity to show off their skills and develop those skills with the participation of those from other countries. Best wishes and safe training to all involved.

The Voice. Another opinion: I'd reckon our First Nations people have developed and achieved more in the last 200 years than the previous 59,800 years and many of the sensible amongst them acknowledge this.

The AGM approaches and you need a new president, secretary, treasurer and tribute editor - please, a few of you are needed to put up your hands to support Russel Paten as he offers to take over as President and develops a new committee.

Neil

From the Editor

As I come to the end of my time as Editor of the MHSA (Q) Newsletter which we currently name *TRIBUTE* who would of thought when I started that I would reach 25 Editions. It has been a great learning process for me and a lot of fun putting it together. To all those members who have either contributed or organised others to provide copy, thank you, for your personal reflections, research articles, poetry and humour. I would also like to thank those who sent me emails of support or constructive criticism over my time as Editor. I do hope that someone will volunteer to become the Editor and steer the ship in the direction that they feel will provide members and readers good Military History information and can extend the distribution.

In this the 25th Edition of *TRIBUTE* the feature article a feature on the Navy during the Vietnam war which is supported by a few short articles of interest. **In Show and Tell there is a request from the Cloncurry & District Historical & Museum Society looking for information. If you can help please respond to me. It would be good to help them out.**

Ian



The Weight

(Source: Sunday Mail and AWM)



'The Weight'

This object symbolises the weight of responsibility passed on from one RAN ship to the next when they were deployed to the CTG158 task group. HMAS *Parramatta* was the last in a line of 19 deployments to the Northern Arabian Gulf area. One of a series of photographs taken aboard HMAS *Parramatta* by Mal Booth, Head of the Australian War Memorial's Research Centre, as part of the Memorial's Curators in the Field program. This program continues the Memorial's tradition of documenting Australia's experience of war, through observing the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and collecting records, photographs, oral histories and objects for the Memorial's National Collection.

This year marks 50 years since the end of the Vietnam War. More than 13,500 Navy personnel consisting of Fleet Air Arm, clearance divers, transport and escort ships, medical teams and the RAN Fleet Band carried out operational tasks at sea, ashore and in the air. However, most of the heavy lifting was done by the destroyers Perth, Hobart, Vendetta and Brisbane II.

This heavy lifting is recognised in the form of 'The Weight' a symbol of the handover between ships at the end of each deployment. Made from the base of two chromed five-inch 54 inch cases it has two brass plates. Engraved on the top plate is inscribed 'The Weight'

with the ships name, date of deployment and the ships gunline callsign on the bottom. It is now in the Australian War Memorial.

Vietnam was a soldiers war but the role of the Australian Navy should never be understated. Destroyers rotated from 1967 to 1971 as part of the US Seventh Fleet on the 'gunline' a ring of steel around the Republic of Vietnam providing naval gunfire support and intercepting local vessels disguised as fishing boats.

Each deployment was for about six months, with crews working rotating four-hour shifts for up to six weeks, continuously shelling onshore targets as ground troops gave co-ordinates.

Brisbane II was deployed twice, Hobart and Perth three times and Vendetta and Perth both received US Navy Commendations.

Former Brisbane Gunnery Officer Captain Ralph T Derbidge MBE RAN (Retired) said, 'You could always tell a destroyer crew-cum-Vietnam War sailor, but you couldn't tell him much. They were good, and they knew it,'

Vietnam War sailors were held in high regard in the Navy even after the war ended. Many Commanding Officers and others went on to be promoted to some of the most senior positions of the RAN including Chief of Navy. Others became highly valued instructors.

Their classes, on seeing the Vietnam ribbons on their dress blues, immediately knew that the person teaching them had very much, 'been there, done that.'



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

NAVYMO291 / 12

Captain David Willoughby Leach, Commanding Officer of HMAS *Perth*, passes The Weight, symbolising the official handover of gunline duties, to Captain Alan Antony Willis, Commanding Officer of HMAS *Brisbane* in February 1969.

The stories of both Captains Leach and Willis are detailed below thanks to RAN Web site

Vice Admiral David Willoughby Leach

Chief of Navy (1982-1985)



Vice Admiral David Willoughby Leach AC, CBE, LVO served as Chief of the Naval Staff from 1982 to 1985. Leach was born on 17 July 1928 in Perth, Western Australia. Cadet Midshipman Leach joined the RAN College in January 1942, aged 14. During his time at the college he was appointed Chief Cadet Captain and was awarded the King's Gold Medal for exemplary conduct.

In 1946-47 Leach served in Royal Navy ships of the British Pacific Fleet before completing his Sub Lieutenant courses in the United Kingdom in 1948. While training in the UK as a Gunnery Specialist he obtained a private pilot's licence.

When he returned to Australia he served in HMA Ships *Australia* (II), *Murchison* and *Arunta* (I), and in 1960-61, after specialising in gunnery,

he served in the RAN flagship HMAS *Melbourne* (II) as the Fleet Gunnery Officer. As a Lieutenant he played State Representative Rugby for Victoria.

Command appointments followed in HMAS *Vendetta* (II) (1964-66) with the Far East Strategic Reserve, and as the captain of HMAS *Perth* (II) during her second deployment to the Vietnam War between September 1968 and April 1969. *Perth* was an efficient and effective ship providing swift and accurate fire on enemy positions from the gunline. On one occasion *Perth* was the target of 30 rounds of counter battery fire from North Vietnamese gunners. Due to rapid ship handling none of the incoming shells found their target. This deployment earned *Perth* a US Meritorious Unit Citation which was presented to the ship by the US Ambassador Mr WL Rice on 28 August 1970.

In recognition of his personal distinguished service and devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy during *Perth's* deployment, Leach was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1969.

Captain Leach served as Director of Naval Plans (1969-70), and was the RAN's representative in the UK (1971-74). In 1970 he was appointed a Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order (LVO) for his services as Liaison Officer during the Royal visit to Australia.

Promoted Commodore in 1975 Leach served in Navy Office, Canberra, as the Director of Naval Plans, Director General of Naval Operational Requirements (1975-76), Chief of Naval Materiel and Chief of Naval Personnel.

Captain Leach was the Australian Naval Representative in the United Kingdom (1971-1974). He returned to Britain and completed the UK's Senior Staff Course Royal College of Defence Studies (1977).

On promotion to Rear Admiral he was Assistant Chief of Naval Staff - Materiel (1978-79), Flag Officer commanding the Australian Fleet (1979-80), and Assistant Chief of Naval Staff - Personnel (1980-81). In 1981 he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO), for his service as Commander of the Australian Fleet.

On promotion to Vice Admiral in April 1982 he became Chief of Naval Staff. In 1984 he was promoted to Companion of the Order of Australia (AC), for services to the RAN particularly as Chief of Naval Staff.

His naval career concluded on his retirement in 1985 after three years in command of the RAN.

After retirement in 1985 Vice Admiral Leach continued to give significant public service as a member of the Council of the Australian War Memorial and as a Member of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. He also served as an Alderman and then Mayor of Woollahra, NSW, where he lived.

Throughout his distinguished career, and later life, Vice Admiral Leach gave great service to the nation and the Navy. During his 43 year career he exemplified Navy values in peace and war and made major contributions to the modern navy through his command and leadership at sea and ashore. Former Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral David Leach was the last former Chief of Naval Staff to have served in the RAN during the Second World War.

Vice Admiral Leach passed away in Sydney on 19 January 2020.

Rear Admiral Alan Antony Willis



Alan Antony Willis was born on 21 February 1926 at Learmonth in Victoria, the son of Dr and Mrs JRL Willis. He was educated at Geelong Grammar School before entering the Royal Australian Naval College (RANC) as a Cadet Midshipman in 1940, following in the footsteps of his elder brother James who had entered the RANC in 1937. Alan would go on to reach the rank of Rear Admiral while James would become a Vice Admiral; the first brothers to hold flag rank at the same time in the RAN.

Known throughout the Navy as 'Ack Ack', Willis was an excellent student and athlete. He won the open tennis singles championship in all four years that he attended RANC, and won his colours in tennis, cricket, rugby and athletics. He was made cadet captain (prefect) late in 1941 and chief cadet captain in his final year. Upon graduation at the end of 1943 he travelled to the UK for loan service in the Royal Navy (RN). His time in the RN included service in HM Ships *Duke of York* and *Rodney*, both of which performed convoy escort duties through the Arctic Ocean to Russia, as well as surveillance of the German battleship *Tirpitz* in northern Norway.

Upon his return to Australia after WWII, by which time he had achieved the rank of Sub-Lieutenant, Willis joined the cruiser HMAS *Shropshire* in January 1946 in which he returned to the UK as a member of the Australian contingent for the Empire Victory celebrations. He was promoted Lieutenant in December 1946 before *Shropshire* steamed to Japan in early 1947 as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF). Willis returned to Japan for service in BCOF later in the year after transferring to HMAS *Australia* (II).

He joined HMAS *Arunta* (I) in May 1948 before returning to the UK at the end of the year for another period of loan service with the RN. He attended the RN's Maritime Warfare School at HMS *Dryad* before joining the aircraft carrier HMS *Glory*. He completed his Long Navigation and Direction Course while in the UK.

Upon his return to Australia in early 1950 he joined the aircraft carrier, HMAS *Sydney* (III), and soon found himself back in British waters when the carrier travelled to the UK in July to embark aircraft for two new Fleet Air Arm squadrons. The ship returned to Australia in December 1950. *Sydney* undertook a six-month deployment with United Nations forces undertaking operations in the Korean War in 1951/52. She conducted seven separate patrols over the course of her deployment primarily off the west coast of the Korean peninsula.

Willis served ashore in HMAS *Watson* after leaving *Sydney* in April 1952 and returned to the UK at the end of the year for another period of loan service with the RN which would last for more than two years. He completed the Advanced Navigation and Direction Course at HMS *Dryad* before serving in the aircraft carrier HMS *Eagle*, and briefly ashore at Royal Naval Air Station Ford, HMS *Peregrine*, in West Sussex. He was promoted Lieutenant Commander in December 1954 while serving aboard *Eagle*.

He returned to Australia in May 1955 and served at Naval Air Station (NAS) Nowra, HMAS *Albatross*, before joining the staff of the RANC at HMAS *Cerberus* in August 1955. While there he married Joy Brown becoming step-father to Joy's children Geoffrey and Belinda. The couple would welcome another daughter, Jane, in 1961.

Willis joined HMAS *Quiberon* in January 1958, which deployed to South East Asian waters from March to May, and was briefly assigned to the Navigation and Direction School at HMAS *Watson* before once again departing Australia for loan service with the RN in September. He underwent the Naval Staff Course and associated tactical courses at HMS *President* in London, during which time he was promoted to the rank of Commander, and returned to Australia in April 1959 to assume his first command; the improved Tribal Class destroyer, HMAS *Warramunga* (II). He was in command when 'Little Mo', as the venerable destroyer was known, decommissioned on 7 December 1959.

Willis joined HMAS *Melbourne* (II) as Executive Officer in January 1960. *Melbourne* departed Darwin for her annual South East Asian deployment on 7 April to participate in the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) Exercise SEALION. SEALION was the largest SEATO exercise yet involving more than 60 ships from Australia, New Zealand, the US, the UK, France, India, the Philippines, Thailand and Pakistan.

Willis was assigned to HMAS *Harman* in Canberra from November 1960 to July 1962 where he was Secretary to the Joint Administrative Planning Committee and Staff Officer to the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee. He assumed command of the Daring Class destroyer

HMAS *Voyager* (II) on 31 July 1962 and, in late October, took part in Exercise SEASCAPE in Jervis Bay, a SEATO exercise designed to evaluate the naval control of shipping.

He returned to *Harman* in January 1963 to take up the position of Director of Officers' Appointments and returned to sea as Commanding Officer of *Voyager*'s sister ship, HMAS *Vendetta* (II), in February 1964. That June *Vendetta* deployed to South East Asia for operational service during the Indonesian Confrontation. The ship operated with both RN and RAN units, and conducted anti-infiltration patrols in the Jason Bay - Mersing area. She took part in Exercise REEF KNOT before returning to Sydney in December 1964 for a seven month refit.

Willis assumed command of HMAS *Watson* on 3 February 1965 at which time he was made Acting Captain and confirmed in that rank on 30 June. He returned to *Harman* once again in January 1967 for special duties before proceeding to the United States that July to stand by the final stages of construction of, and commission, the new Charles F Adams Class guided missile destroyer, HMAS *Brisbane* (II). *Brisbane* was commissioned in the RAN under the command of Captain Willis on 16 December 1967 at Number One Pier, Boston Naval Shipyard. In honour of the occasion, the day had been declared Brisbane Day throughout the 'Commonwealth' of Massachusetts by the Governor, Mr John A Volpe.

A comprehensive internal training program began on 18 December as the final fit-out of the ship continued. Colours were half-masted from 20 to 22 December, and a memorial service conducted on board, as a mark of respect to the late Prime Minister Harold Holt who had disappeared while swimming at Cheviot Beach on Port Philip Bay the day after *Brisbane* had commissioned. Other USN ships in Boston at the time joined *Brisbane* in half-masting their colours. The following May, Willis attended an informal ceremony for the keel-laying of the USN destroyer escort named in Mr Holt's honour at the Todd Shipyard in San Pedro, California.

The ship's company had been in Boston for some months prior to the commissioning and had developed an excellent rapport with the local community. Many Boston families hosted crew members to Christmas lunch in their own homes and their generosity was reciprocated early in January 1968 when many members of the crew answered an emergency call for blood donations from the Red Cross when inclement weather had caused a blood shortage in Boston hospitals. More than half of *Brisbane*'s complement donated some 80 pints of blood. On 1 February 1968, the President of the United States of America, Mr Lyndon B Johnson, who had met Willis during the President's visit to Australia in 1966, penned the following commissioning letter:

Dear Captain Willis,

The firm bond of friendly cooperation between the United States and the Commonwealth of Australia, brought home to me by my recent visit to your country, is further strengthened by the remarkable spirit of the members of the crew of HMAS Brisbane in response to an emergency request for blood from Boston hospitals.

I have been told that the crew found Boston a pleasant and hospitable town during their stay of several months there while the Brisbane was being commissioned in Boston Navy Yard.

That hospitality was more than amply repaid when, nearly 300-strong, the Brisbane's crew answered this appeal despite hazardous wintry conditions that almost paralyzed the city, and curtailed activity of blood collections causing a dangerous shortage of blood in Boston hospitals.

I know the people of America join me in thanking them and in expressing to you and your crew our hope for health, well-being and long life as you put to sea on your maiden cruise.

Brisbane put to sea for the first time on 17 January 1968. She remained in North American waters until September conducting sea trials and exercises primarily off the US west coast and underwent a final maintenance period in San Diego from June to September. She departed Los Angeles for Australia on 28 September and arrived in her namesake port, Brisbane, via Pearl Harbor and Suva, on 17 October. The following day, at a ceremony conducted in the Botanical Gardens, the Freedom of the City of Brisbane was conferred on the ship and her crew. She arrived in her home port of Sydney for the first time on 22 October. By then she had already steamed more than 30,341 miles since commissioning.

In January 1969 *Brisbane's* crew began preparing for the ship's first deployment to the Vietnam War. She departed Sydney for Vietnamese waters on 20 March 1969 and arrived at Subic Bay, Philippines, on 31 March. After a brief work-up, she arrived in Vung Tau, South Vietnam, on 15 April and conducted her first naval gunfire support (NGS) mission that evening; a night harassment mission in the Vinh Binh province 70 miles south of Saigon.

Brisbane's NGS missions typically involved conducting one or more spotted missions during the day followed by a harassment fire mission of about four hours duration at night. She remained in the area south of Saigon until 8 May when she was assigned to support an operation on the island of Phu Quoc near the Cambodian border. She departed Vung Tau on 18 May to return to Subic Bay for maintenance followed by rest and relaxation visits to Manila, Philippines, and Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

She returned to the area of operations on 10 June where she joined USS *Rowan* in support of Task Force South. Over the course of four days the two destroyers conducted 189 NGS missions mostly aimed at intelligence targets or Viet Cong base camps. *Brisbane* then conducted operations south of the Demilitarized Zone in company with the cruiser USS *St Paul*, and later in an area northeast of Phan Thiet before departing the area of operations on 29 June for a maintenance period in Singapore.

On the morning of 30 June, while en route to Singapore, *Brisbane* encountered a burning merchant ship, MV *Sincere*. A fire-fighting party was despatched but, in spite of their efforts over the course of the day which involved 71 officers and sailors, the blaze could not be contained and *Sincere* was abandoned. Her crew was evacuated to *Brisbane* for passage to Singapore. *Brisbane* stood by the burning vessel until 3 July when the salvage tug *Salvana* arrived and took *Sincere* in tow but the ship later sank some 80 nm north-east of Pulau Tioman.

Brisbane returned to the gunline on 15 July operating off Phu Yen and Binh Dinh provinces. On 22 July she suffered a premature explosion in the barrel of Mount 51 injuring Leading Seaman Lenton Benfield and rendering the gun unserviceable. Benfield was landed ashore and returned to Australia for medical treatment. *Brisbane* returned to Vung Tau at the beginning of August to continue NGS operations before undergoing maintenance at Subic Bay where Mount 51 was removed. Following a brief visit to Hong Kong, she returned to Vietnamese waters to form part of the destroyer screen for the USN carriers *Oriskany* and *Constellation*. She departed the area of operations on 14 September and was relieved by HMAS *Vendetta* (II) in Subic Bay on 28 September where her replacement Mount 51 was also installed. *Brisbane* returned to Sydney on 13 October where Captain Willis relinquished his command. Willis was mentioned in despatches in January 1970 "for devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy as Captain of HMAS *Brisbane*". The following January he was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the New Year's Honours List. He was also appointed honorary Aide-de-camp to the Governor-General in June 1969.

Willis was a member the Joint Intelligence Organisation at HMAS *Harman* from October 1969 to May 1972 before being appointed Chief of Staff to the Flag Officer Commanding HM Australian Fleet at HMAS *Kuttabul* from May 1972 to December 1973. In his spare time he would go fishing at the boat harbour, he caught so many John Dory that the dockyard workers contemplated banning him.

In 1974 he attended the Royal College of Defence Studies in London after which he remained in the UK for a further two years as the Australian Naval Representative and Naval Advisor to the Australian High Commissioner, London, at Australia House.

He returned to Australia in January 1977 and took up the position of Director General Naval Operational Requirements. He was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral on 14 November 1977 and became Chief of Naval Operational Requirements and Plans. In July 1979 he became Chief of Naval Personnel, a position he held until his retirement in June 1980 bringing to an end a distinguished 40-year naval career. Willis retired with his wife, Joy, to the Isle of Capri at Surfers Paradise, Queensland. He passed away after a long illness on 28 November 1997.



HMAS *Brisbane* 11 at sea.

HMAS *Brisbane* 11, a Charles F Adams Class Guided Missile Destroyer was launched in Boston in 1966. Apart from her Vietnam service, she also earned battle honours in the Gulf War in Kuwait in 1991. More than 7000 sailors and officers served on *Brisbane* 11 during her service life.

During down time for maintenance or refits *Brisbane* 11 crews did a lot of community work such as raising funds for the Anglican Tufnell Children's house in Nundah. They built a BMX track and chicken coop, restored the chapel and played 'Dad for a Day.'

Brisbane 11 was also deployed to Darwin from Sydney after Cyclone Tracy destroyed the city. Darwin Mayor, Harry 'Tiger' Brennan said, 'We owe the Navy the greatest debt of all.'

Brisbane 11 was sunk as a dive wreck off Alexandra Headlands but one of its gun turrets and bridge are displayed outside the War Memorial.

A Letter to General Angus Campbell



Dear General Angus Campbell AO, DSC,

I drank alcohol while on deployment in Afghanistan.

There, I've got it off my chest.

I note you've come down heavily on your troops, with a new directive stating "deployed ADF personnel are banned from drinking alcohol," reiterating previous advice that was "flouted by the nation's most elite troops."

May I remind you, Sir, that all alcohol consumed by the troops was provided to us by ADF Senior Officers, to be consumed on days of Western cultural significance?

In hindsight, this was in spite of Middle Eastern cultural sensitivities likely offended by the ADF. In hindsight, I am sorry for my own insensitivity.

I drank my beer on Christmas Day 2014, Remembrance Day, and numerous other days, sitting next to two Major Generals (each decorated with an AM, CSC, and DSM) who drank theirs.

Are you and your top ADF leaders now to be reprimanded for providing that alcohol, and drinking it with your troops in Afghanistan?

Are you all to lose your service medals, and your coveted DSC's, AM's and CSC's?

Or are we going to continue this internationally-embarrassing facade, that you and your Senior Officers are too important to be held to account for mounting leadership failures?

Your public position of a retrospective alcohol policy is a clear example of what you and your officers consistently do: you weaponise your rank and your media access, re-inventing a narrative that paints your own soldiers as character-flawed (criminals even) insisting that your heavy-handed reproach of your own soldiers makes you somehow disciplined (a leader even).

Where did all of this start?

Lest we forget that in June 2019 the Federal Police stormed the ABC studios in Ultimo in search of the Afghan Files. Australian media began an immediate rebellion against the Coalition government by way of weekly emotional media stories about deceased veterans and their mothers. The consequent national support for veterans was palpable. Your own public image was annihilated (as was the Coalition government's political potency consequent to the

LNP's decade-long allegiance with your opposition to a Royal Commission to investigate your failures).

With the most expensive, tax-payer-funded PR and media executives at your fingertips, what would be the best way for you to reframe these nationally-lauded suicidal veterans as contemptuous?

The invention of a "war crimes" story would do the trick.

And it did do the trick, didn't it Sir?

My infantry colonel Dad went to Vietnam only once. All my WWI, WWII ancestors went to war only once. You are responsible for sending your own soldiers to Afghanistan up to 13 (thirteen) deployments in a row. You have consistently ignored the impact this has had on their lives, livelihoods and families, painting any of their real or perceived failures in war as just that: THEIR failures.

Every one of the accusations you have made about your troops are YOUR failures.

It's time, Sir, that you sink with your ship.

You and your Senior Officers are all decorated with DSC's, AM's and CSC's, but you're fooling no one with your decorations. All of you have succumbed to pressures from the very politicians who dictate which of you will become Governor General. Your career ambitions have blinded you to your primary responsibility: to ensure the welfare of the young men and young women that Australian parents have entrusted into your care for the defence of our nation.

1,200 of them are dead.

This Thursday, news will reverberate around the world that will shake the ADF to its foundations. Either way – you ought to brace yourself for a fight to defend the most noble military family this nation has ever known.

I hope, and pray that you will adopt a humble and responsible approach to the issues raised above. And I hope, and pray that the 1,200 families affected by your defective leadership will find in their hearts to forgive you.

In continued service to my ADF patients,

Dr Daniel Mealey

Editor; David Mealey graduated from Melbourne University in 2011 under a scholarship with the Army after completing a Biomedical Science Degree. He served in Afghanistan, UAE and Sri Lanka. He is currently a doctor in Moruya, NSW.

Inaugural ADF Chief of Personnel



Current Deputy Chief of Army Major General Natasha Fox has been appointed the inaugural Chief of Personnel in the Australian Defence Force. Major General Fox commenced her new role on 5 June, on promotion to lieutenant general – becoming Australia’s first female 3-star.

The *Defence Strategic Review*, released last month, recommended ADF personnel management be centralised into a single integrated system, headed by a Chief of Personnel reporting directly to the Chief of Defence Force. As Chief of Personnel, Major General Fox’s aim will be to increase the effectiveness, efficiency and cohesiveness of personnel management to achieve a more integrated ADF.

The DSR also recommended options be developed to change Defence’s recruitment framework. This aims to improve the eligibility pool of potential applications and to align service recruitment requirements to military employment, especially in key technical and specialist trades.

Defence Minister Richard Marles said Major General Fox brought more than 35 years of experience in leadership, and personnel and workforce management to her new role. “We want more Australians to experience a rich and rewarding career with Defence,” Mr Marles said. “A Defence career is one that provides fulfilling and well-paid work, job security and world-class training and education opportunities. “Major General Fox will play a critical role in ensuring we have an integrated end-to-end people system for all Australians who join the ADF.”

Minister for Defence Personnel Matt Keogh said he looked forward to working with Major General Fox and Deputy Secretary Defence People Justine Greig to transform the Defence people system to continue to support and enable the Defence workforce and future capability. “As a government we are committed to improving the welfare of serving and ex-serving members of our ADF, after all our people are our most important capability,” Mr Keogh said.

Stop Press - Lieutenant General Natasha Fox (who was promoted from Major General in early June) has been promoted to an Officer of the Order of Australia for contributing to Defence capability and effectiveness as Head People Capability and as Deputy Chief of Army.

Editor; Lt Gen Fox has featured in an earlier *TRIBUTE*.

(Source: Contact)

From the News

Is this happening in Australia?

A prominent survey of Americans published in The Wall Street Journal in March revealed a huge drop in traditional values – patriotism, religion, family, and community service since 1998, especially among young people. Overall, only 38 per cent of respondents said patriotism mattered, down from 70 per cent. The generational gulf this year was stark: only 23 per cent of adults under 30 said patriotism was ‘very important’ compared with 59 per cent for those over 65.

Some other interesting data from America shows that 71 per cent of youth don’t qualify for military service because of obesity, drugs, physical and mental health problems, mis conduct and aptitude, far more than a generation ago.

The days of US troops making their Australian counterparts envious, which prompted violent riots in Brisbane during WW2, are long gone.

A new US Army private earns about \$US22,700 (\$34,760) in his first year in base pay, about 40 per cent less than the equivalent Australian soldier.

(Source: Adam Creighton – The Australian)

Exercise Talisman Sabre

This year’s Exercise Talisman Sabre will be the biggest yet in terms of geographic spread and the number of partner nations joining Australia and the United States. Partner nations taking part will include Fiji, France, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and Indonesia.

Having been observers at previous iterations of the biennial exercise, France and Germany will contribute force elements to high-intensity warfighting training this year, taking place across northern Australia from Darwin to Townsville and Brisbane, from **22 July to 4 August**.

Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Tonga will embed personnel with Australian Army formations in amphibious landings and land combat. Observer nations this year include the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

Exercise Director Brigadier Damian Hill said the final planning conferences were held recently at Gallipoli Barracks in Brisbane. “An important part of a significant military exercises like Talisman Sabre are the planning events that are required to train together in dynamic situations across an area as large as northern Australia,” Brigadier Hill said. “So

when it comes time to conduct the exercise in July we're ready to go and show what we can do as likeminded partners working together."

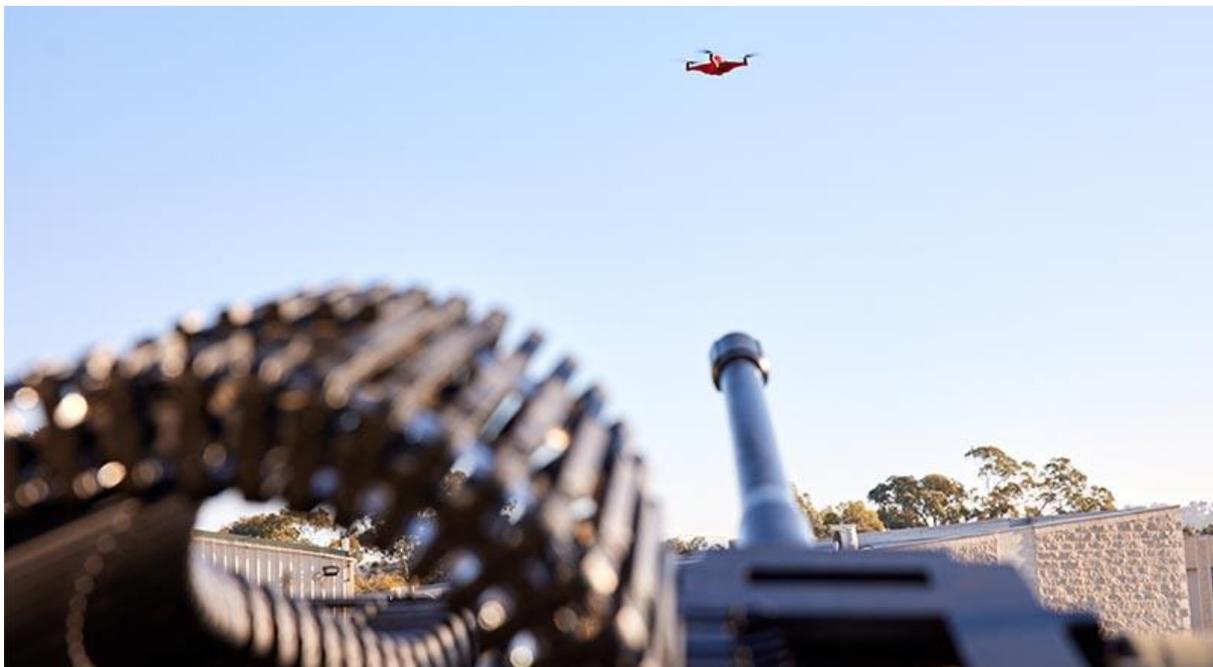
Brigadier General James Bartholomees, US Army Pacific in Hawaii, said Talisman Sabre gave the United States the opportunity to work with like-minded partners to rehearse setting the theatre across the joint force. "Ultimately, Talisman Sabre is all about building readiness as a joint and combined force with our key allies, as well as building integrated deterrence," General Bartholomees said. "The sheer magnitude of forces, equipment and vehicles that are required to move vast distances in order to set the theatre, enables training opportunities."

Director Joint Collective Training for Headquarters Joint Operations Command Royal Australian Navy Captain Tim Byles said the partner nations would bring capabilities to enhance the exercise's outcomes. "Whether it's specialist individuals, or a respective weapon system or capability, it makes Talisman Sabre 2023 richer and enhances the outcomes for all involved," Captain Byles said. "We have worked hard with our friends at the United States Indo-Pacific Command to design an exercise that builds and affirms our military-to-military ties and interoperability with other nations. "Our soldiers, sailors and aviators taking part can expect a good challenge of their skills alongside partner nations from across the region and around the world."

A large component of the exercise will be held offshore, with many countries providing maritime capabilities.

Occurring every two years, Exercise Talisman Sabre is the largest bilateral military training activity between the ADF and the United States.

(Source: Contact)



Slinger by EOS

Electro Optic Systems (EOS) has launched a new Australian-made counter-drone capability – named the Slinger – at its manufacturing facility in Canberra.

Slinger incorporates a radar, 30mm cannon with specifically designed ammunition, and EOS' proprietary stabilisation and pointing technology for counter-drone operations. It can track and discriminately engage moving drones at a range of more than 800 metres, with unique ammunition making it suitable for use in built-up environments.

Assistant Minister for Defence Matt Thistlethwaite, who officially launched the innovative local technology, said he continued to be impressed by the world-leading capability of Australia's defence industry.

Executive Vice President of EOS Defence Systems Matt Jones said EOS was excited to launch the Slinger in response to growing international demand for advanced counter-drone technologies. "This is a big day for Australia", said Mr Jones. "Slinger is a cutting-edge capability that demonstrates Australian innovation can lead the world in response to global security needs. "We have applied hard-won lessons from battlefields, including Ukraine, to our Slinger system, ensuring it will give real edge to those looking to hit back against the growing threat of drones."

Slinger has been designed and developed in Australia specifically for export markets, with a focus on addressing contemporary and emerging threats based on lessons learned in recent conflicts, such as Ukraine.

EOS is Australia's largest sovereign defence industry exporter and a provider of advanced military technology to the Australian Defence Force, employing approximately 300 staff across Australia, with more than 100 Australian companies in its supply chain.

(Source: Contact)



Australian Defence Apparel New Zealand (ADA NZ), a subsidiary of Australia's primary manufacturer of high-tech uniforms and equipment ADA, is offering New Zealand Defence Force recruits a glimpse into the future by equipping them with the latest innovation in digital fitting technology.

ADA NZ has partnered with Australian 3D-scanning technology company Bodd, to further revolutionise total apparel management systems to the NZDF. Bodd's advanced scanning technology captures rich body data in real time, and provides instant sizing across the entire defence catalogue of products, matched to each service member's measurements.

As the only sizing solution that can deliver sizing from head to toe from one single scan, the technology will drastically reduce resource requirements and is significantly faster than manual fitting processes within the defence force.

Chief Executive Officer of ADA Chris Dixon said ADA's partnership with Bodd was instrumental in delivering on the company's commitment to combine leading textiles and new technologies to solve apparel distribution challenges. "This revolutionary digital fitting technology allows for a seamless user experience, as it drastically reduces time required for fitting and kitting of defence personnel," Mr Dixon said. "We are excited to be rolling this out first to the NZDF this year."

As the largest uniform and equipment provider in Australia spanning military, law enforcement, healthcare and numerous government and corporate industries, ADA will also roll out this digital fitting technology and its benefits across industry.

Bodd co-founder and Chief Executive Rob Fisher said this was one of Bodd's first military deployments, following successful implementations globally across a range of protective and government services and they were incredibly excited to roll out with a local defence partner. "With our world-class technology, we can size a recruit to an incredible degree of accuracy," Mr Fisher said. "From 30 to 45 seconds of scanning, they can be fitted head to toe, from combat clothing to service dress uniforms, including footwear and accessories."

By matching the scanned proportions of the recruit against the inventory of every item of clothing that they require to perform their duties, a unique database is developed as part of their NZDF record.

In the future NZDF may also look to tap into the additional wealth of health and wellness information that can also be derived from a scan session.

Bodd's 3D scanners are manufactured in Australia thanks to the company's partnership with Bosch Australia Manufacturing Solutions.

(Source: Contact)

Navy



Rear Admiral (ret'd) Guy Griffiths, right, presents the Royal Navy ensign to Commanding Officer HMS Prince of Wales Captain Richard Hewitt

In a remarkable service in London, an Australian WW2 veteran presented a Royal Navy ensign to the captain of Britain's most powerful warship, aircraft carrier HMS *Prince of Wales*.

Overseeing the presentation, Australian Submarine Task Force's UK Liaison Officer Commodore Allison Norris said the link between Australia and *Prince of Wales* was a personal one. "The relationship goes back to World War 2, when retired Australian Rear Admiral Guy Griffiths was starting his career," she said.

Rear Admiral Griffiths' formidable career began as a midshipman in 1937. "I've seen a few scraps in my time," he said.

He joined HMS *Repulse*, still a teenager, as it hunted the German battleship *Bismark*, and then a few months later *Repulse* harried the Japanese. Ultimately *Repulse* and its accompanying vessel *Prince of Wales* were sunk by 86 torpedo bombers in a harrowing encounter that cost many lives. Rear Admiral Griffiths saw further action in WW2, and undertook active service in the Korean and Vietnam Wars commanding various Australian destroyers. He retired in 1979 after 43 years of service.

Ray Hyde became fascinated by the fates of *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* and decided to make a documentary, culminating in planting a Royal Navy ensign on both ships in a dive on their wrecks. The ensigns were blessed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the dive was approved after much wrangling because of sensitivities about the site.

Unfortunately, poor weather allowed an ensign to only be planted in *Repulse*. And so, on 1 June, Commodore Norris hosted Rear Admiral Griffiths in presenting the blessed ensign to Commanding Officer *Prince of Wales* Captain Richard Hewitt.

“The ensign will take pride of place and serve as a constant reminder of the service that Australian’s made to the Royal Navy in WW2 and provide a lasting memory of our common bonds,” Captain Hewitt said.

(Source: Contact)

Army



Warrant Officer Class One Benn Goulter, left, and Brigadier Greg Novak, right, with veteran Signalman James ‘Jim’ Easton at the St Heliers Grace Joel Retirement Village, New Zealand.

At 106 years of age, veteran Signalman James ‘Jim’ Easton is thought to be Australia’s oldest living signaller. He joined the Australian Army in March 1941 and discharged from 8 Division Signals five years later after experiencing more than three years of malnutrition and mistreatment as a prisoner of war in Singapore, Thailand and Burma during World War 2.

Defying all odds, Mr Easton has gone on to live a long and healthy life, celebrating his 106th birthday at the St Heliers Grace Joel Retirement Village, New Zealand, in December last year.

When word of Mr Easton’s service and milestone birthday found its way across the Tasman, it caught the attention of the Head of Corps of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals Brigadier Greg Novak. “In January a social media group called ‘WWII uncovered’ put up a post about Jim, identifying him as a 106-year-old Australian Army World War 2 veteran from the Royal Australian Corps of Signals,” Brigadier Novak said. “That post was seen by a member of one of our veterans’ associations and was shared online a few times before it was brought to my attention later that month.”

When Brigadier Novak and Regimental Sergeant Major for the Royal Australian Corps of Signals, Warrant Officer Class One (WO1) Benn Goulter, were invited to represent the corps at the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals (RNZSigs) centenary commemoration, plans were put in place to visit Mr Easton at his retirement village in Auckland.

Shortly after landing in Auckland, the commemoration was cancelled because of Cyclone Gabrielle, and the visit to Mr Easton became the highlight of Brigadier Novak and WO1 Goulter's shortened trip.

With their checked luggage lost to Auckland Airport in the aftermath of the cyclone, Mr Easton was quick to comment jovially that Brigadier Novak and WO1 Goulter weren't wearing their uniforms when they arrived. "We wished him a belated happy 106th birthday, and he straight away invited us to his next birthday," Brigadier Novak said. "I sincerely hope we'll be able to make it across again, and bring one or two younger members of the corps to meet and talk with Jim."

Sharing his secrets to a long life with his guests, Mr Easton admitted to never smoking a cigarette or drinking a glass of beer. "I could never understand why anyone smoked," Mr Easton said. "I've seen a guy swap his soup with three beans in it for a cigarette."

Mr Easton also told his guests the story of the autographed Japanese fundoshi, or loin cloth, that was donated to the Australian War Memorial. In 1943, while a prisoner of war at Takanum, a Burma-Thailand railway construction camp in upper Thailand, Mr Easton 'found' the fundoshi near a Japanese troops' clothesline. At the end of the war, all the surviving signalmen from 8 Division Signals signed the fundoshi while they were awaiting repatriation to Australia.

Up until the age of 96, Mr Easton travelled back to Sydney for Anzac Day every year to catch up with his mates.

This year, at the Anzac Day service at his retirement village, Mr Easton read The Ode and sang a verse of one of his old Army songs before his thoughts inevitably turned back to his Army mates. "Bits and pieces come back," Mr Easton said, referring to his memories of what happened to him as a prisoner of war. "So many of my friends died there. Some of them didn't last a year after they got back and here I am, 70 years later and still going strong."

(Source: Contact)



Australian Army soldiers with 144 Signals Squadron train for combat during Exercise Hermes Recon at the Murray Bridge Training Area, South Australia

144 Signals Squadron returned to training for combat in the field after several years of providing a high level of support to domestic operations. Soldiers were put through their paces during Exercise Hermes Recon at Murray Bridge Training Area, South Australia. They undertook serials to develop infantry minor tactics with a focus on defensive operations, along with sharpening their high-frequency radio capability.

Lieutenant Adrian Crossing said the squadron was enthusiastic about the hit-out. “People join the Army and put on the green for this type of activity,” Lieutenant Crossing said. “It’s good for them to get back to their core skills, and I think it’s very exciting for them. “People join the Army and put on the green for this type of activity”

Radio operator Signals Janine Frost has spent three decades at the unit as a reservist and continues to jump at the chance to participate in field training. “The comms equipment over 30 years has changed so much, I’m always learning,” Signals Frost said. “That’s what keeps me here.”

However, she said there was more to it than just the training opportunities. “It’s such an amazing group of people,” Signals Frost said. “It’s changed a lot over the years that I’ve been here, and different people have come through, but they’ve all been really amazing, so it’s always changing and it always feels fresh.”

Officer Commanding 144 Signals Squadron Major Erica Abend was pleased with her troops’ efforts and emphasised the training’s importance in supporting an integrated 9th Brigade.

“9th Brigade ... recognises the need for talented part-time and full-time members to work together,” Major Abend said. “Getting back to regularly undertaking training activities such as these gives the brigade broader skills to draw-on and greater flexibility to surge when needed.”

(Source: Contact)

Air Force



The service and sacrifice of RAAF personnel who served in Royal Air Force Bomber Command in WW2 – as part of RAAF or Commonwealth squadrons – was commemorated at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra on 4 June.

Combat losses in Bomber Command were spread over more than 100 operational squadrons, including the RAAF's eight squadrons and those Australians who served in other Commonwealth squadrons.

This year, three RAAF members who returned after the war attended the commemoration as they have done for more than 80 years. Ron Houghton, who flew with RAF's 102 Squadron RAF, Max Barry, who flew with RAAF's 463 Squadron, and FLGOFF Bert Adams, who flew with RAAF's 467 Squadron, attended to remember colleagues and friends who served with Bomber Command. Air Chief Marshal Sir Angus Houston accompanied the veterans at the ceremony.

Dr Houghton was attached to 102 Squadron RAF at Poklington, Warwickshire, flying Halifaxes in Bomber Command before transferring to Supermarine Spitfires. "It's one of those things that seems odd at first, bomber to fighter, but my role in the Spitfire was purely a training role," Dr Houghton said. "My job was to play the role of Luftwaffe fighters during training for bomber crews, undertaking an attack profile to train bomber crews to be ready for fighter attack on missions. "The Spitfire was the best aircraft I have ever flown."

460 Squadron again supported the Commemoration with attendance, among others, by 462 Squadron and 464 Squadron, which also have proud histories of supporting Bomber Command in WW2.

Prior to the commemoration at the AWM on June 4, the Last Post Ceremony featured the story of a Bomber Command RAAF member, Pilot Officer James Allan Kerby, who flew

with 460 Squadron and had at least one flight on the AWM's 'G for George' Lancaster aircraft.

The reading on the day was done by Wing Commander Mary Anne Whiting.

(Source: Defence News)



Receiving a birthday honour from newly crowned King Charles III is an award RAAF Squadron Leader Christopher Godfrey will treasure.

Squadron Leader Godfrey was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross (CSC) for “outstanding achievement in development of air-to-air refuelling capability for the P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol and response aircraft for the Australian Defence Force and close allies”.

Commended for applying superb professionalism, tactical excellence and conspicuous dedication to duty as an instructor and flight commander at No. 11 Squadron, the award recognised his leadership during the development of the refuelling capability.

RAAF Surveillance and Response Group's Commanding Officer No. 11 Squadron, Wing Commander Adam Saber, said Squadron Leader Godfrey's secondment to the United States Navy during the transition from AP-3C Orions to P-8A Poseidons enabled him, once back in Australia, to turn the latent AAR capability into an operational one. “Although the P-8A was fitted with the equipment to perform AAR, the experience, technical mastery and training capacity required to actually implement the capability was far more complex,” Wing Commander Saber said. “AAR enables long-range P-8A missions and is a significant contribution to the Poseidon enterprise. Its importance to operational capability is something that will endure for the duration of the P-8A service life.”

The introduction of AAR capability during the COVID-19 lockdowns boosted aircrew morale as it removed the need for hotel isolation on some near-regional missions. It allows

RAAF to be more responsive to dynamic tasking because aircraft don't necessarily need to base and refuel within other countries.

Squadron Leader Godfrey said he was humbled by the recognition and proud he was able to help improve the P-8A's operational effectiveness. "I had the good fortune of working with a motivated team of professional aircrew, maintenance and operations staff who were all focused on achieving the AAR outcome," Squadron Leader Godfrey said.

(Source: Defence News)

Show and Tell

Cloncurry is looking for help

Hi Ian,

Our past President John Walton discovered near Cloncurry some 10 years ago a fighter airstrip that was built for/by the Americans during 1942.

In addition to the marked out airfield there were concrete wall for what looked like anti-aircraft gun emplacements

The unique feature of the airstrip is the use of white quartz rock to delineate the start/finish of the airstrip, direction to airstrip and the four corners of the airstrip.

The layout of the markings using the white quartz sufficiently wide and long to be visible from the air for incoming aircraft.



Corner of the airfield



End of the airfield

With Cloncurry district geology hosts gold and copper deposits with the occurrence of quartz veins and 'blows' being quite common.

However in the location of the airfield there was no evidence of such a quartz outcrop so the quartz had to have been transported in for the specific purpose.

If any of your members with specific interest in WW2 airfields has knowledge of such use of white quartz would be pleased to be put in touch.

My purpose in writing to you was to propose presenting a Webinar to your Society members the history of Cloncurry somewhat brief time as a USAF base in 1942, while also the location of RAAF No.23 Inland Aircraft Fuel Depot (IAFD), completed in 1942 and closed on 14 August 1944.

An Ink Drawing



Usually consisting of 4 tanks, 31 fuel depots were built across Australia for the storage and supply of aircraft fuel for the RAAF and the US Army Air Forces at a total cost of £900,000 (\$1,800,000).

At the same time would be pleased to provide a contribution to your journal 'Sabretache' with a story on the discovery of the fighter airfield with photographs of the unique use of quartz rock.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Colin Randall

President and Archivist Cloncurry & District Historical & Museum Society

PO Box 420, Cloncurry QLD 4824 Phone 0408969424

Poetry and Humour

Puns for the Educated

1. The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
2. A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class, because it was a weapon of maths distraction
3. No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationary.
4. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering
5. A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.

6. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
7. Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat said to the other: 'You stay; I'll go on a head.'
8. The soldier who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.
9. Two fish swim into a concrete wall. One turns to the other and says 'Dam.'
10. Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal? His goal: transcendental meditation.

The Lament

The piper playing the notes of the lament
Behind my eyes tears making sad comment
The notes are grieving for the piper's soing
In heart beats sorely to the keening
For the missing and the lost
Whilst the pipes are sore bewailing
At the waste of life war costs

And as the piper walks his measured tread
He pipes a sorrowful tribute to the dead
The loved ones – lost in air, at sea, on land
Seems grieving through the pipes we understand
That haunting, piercing cry and constant drone
Says to the end of time you are not alone
With sorrow and regret from heaven sent
Somewhere a grieving Scot piped a lament.

By Gordon Wallace

Important Dates - July

1 July 1916 – First day of the battle of the Somme

! July 1942 – Sinking of the Montevideo Maru

1 July 1945 – 7th Division landed at Balikpapan, Borneo

1 July 1977 – 20th Divisional Engineer Support Squadron

1 July 1977 – 16th Air Defence Regimental Workshops RAEME

1 July 1989 – AATC

1 July 1989 – 32nd Squadron reformed RAAF

1 July 1996 – Royal Australian Survey Corps disbanded (100th Birthday 1 July 2015) the function was moved to the RAE

1 July 2014 – Lance Corporal Todd John Chidley 2 Cdo Regt – died of a a non-combat related incident during Operation Slipper, Afghanistan

2 July 1950 – No 77 Squadron flies first combat mission in Korea

2 July 1952 – Operation Blaze, A Company 1 RAR raids Chinese positions on Hill 227

2 July 1993 – Death of Sir Edward ‘Weary’ Dunlop

2 July 2012 – Lance Corporal Luke Nathan Gavin 2 RAR – died of small arms fire during operation Slipper, Afghanistan

2 July 2012 – Explosive Detection dog DEVIL – died from a gunshot wound during Operation Slipper, Afghanistan

3 July 1900 – 400 Imperial Bushman in action at Leeuw Kop, South Africa

3 July 1950 – Pilots of No 77 Squadron in friendly fire incident. They destroyed a train carrying American and Republic of Korea soldiers.

4 July 1918 – Battle of Hamel, France

4 July 1918 – Lance Corporal T L Axford 16th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Vaire and Hamel Woods, France

4 July 1918 – Private H Dalziel 15th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Hamel, France

4 July 1941 - Acting Wing Commander H Edwards No 105 Squadron, Bomber Command was awarded the Victoria Cross in a raid on Bremen

4 July 2011 – Sergeant Todd Mathew Langley 2 Cdo Regt – died from small arms fire during Operation Slipper, Afghanistan

5 July 1945 – Prime Minister John Curtin died in office

6 July 1918 – Corporal W E Brown 20th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Villers-Bretonneux, France

6 July 1941 – Battle of Damour, Lebanon

6 July 1943 – Darwin bombed (Darwin was bombed 64 times during World War Two)

7 July 1942 – 9th Division in action at El Alamein

7 July 1942 – Horn Island bombed

7 July 1956 – Last RAAF transports return from Korea (the last Australian serviceman did not depart until 1957)

- 7 July 2007 – Commissioning of HMAS Childers
- 8 July 1942 – 460 Squaseon raisa Qilhemshaven
- 8 July 2008 – Signalman Sean Patrick McCarthy SASR – died from an IED Explosion during Operation Slipper in Afghanistan
- 9 July 1941 – Damour taken
- 9 July 1943 – No 3 and 450 Squadrons RAAF, and eight RAN corvettes involved in the allied invasion of Sicily
- 9 July 2010 – Private Mathew Bewes 6 RAR – died from an IED Explosion during Operation Slipper, Afghanistan
- 10 July 1911 – Formation of the RAN
- 10 July 1940 – Beginning of the Battle of Britain
- 10 July 1941 – Private J H Gordon 2/31st Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions near Jezzine, Lebanon.
- 10 July 1951 – Negotiations between the United Nations Command and the Communists began at Kaesong
- 10 July 1999 – Commissioning of HMAS Weller
- 11 July 1941 – Vichy French surrender in Syria
- 12 July 1965 – Last 3 RAR ambush of Malayan Emergency
- 13 July 1953 – HMAS Tobruk begins a two-week patrol of the northern part of Korea's east coast (It was Tobruk's last patrol)
- 14 July 1918 – Fighting at Abu Tellul, Palestine
- 15 July 1940 – Volunteer Defence Force formed
- 15 July 2006 -HMAS Albany Commissioned
- 16 July 1940 – HMA Ships Stuart and Waterhen at Bardia
- 17-18 July 1981 – Lieutenant A C Borella 26th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Villers-Bretonneux (He was the oldest member of the first AIF to receive the award)
- 18 July 2009 – Private Benjamin Ranaudo 1 RAR died from an IED Explosion during Operation Slipper in Afghanistan
- 19 July 1916 – Battle of Fromelles
- 19 July 1940 – HMAS Sydney sinks the Bartolomeo Colleoni
- 20 July 1943 – HMAS Hobart torpedoed
- 21 July 1942 – Japanese forces land at Buna and Gona
- 21 July 2021 – Afghanistan Inquiry Reform Plan

22 July 1917 – Four members of the Australian Nursing Service awarded the Military Medal (Sisters Cawood, Deacon, Ross-King and Staff Nurse Derrer)

22 July 1838 – Australian National War Memorial opened at Villers-Bretonneux, France

22 July 1942 – Beginning of the battle of the Kokoda Trail

22 July 1942 – Private A S Gurney 2/48th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for actions at Tel el Eisa, Egypt.

23 July 1916 – Battle of Pozieres begins

23 July 1916 – Lieutenant A S Blackburn 10th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for actions at Pozieres.

23 July 1916 – Private J Leak 9th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Pozieres.

24 July 1900 – Captain N R Howse NSW Army Medical Corps was the first Australian to be awarded the Victoria Cross and remains the only medical officer to win the award.

24 July 1927 – Opening of the Menin Gate Memorial Ypres, Belgium

24 July 1945 – Private F J Partridge 8th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions on the Bonis Peninsula, Bougainville

24 July 2003 – First arrival of RAMSI forces in Solomon Islands

24-25 July 1916 – Private T Cooke 8th Battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Pozieres

25 July 1994 – First arrival of Australian contingent of UNAMIR II in Rwanda

26 July 1940 – Formation of the Royal Australian Air Force Nursing Service (RAAFNS)

26 July 1942 – Darwin bombed by Japanese aircraft

26 July 1945 – Japan issued with ultimatum to surrender

26 July 1950 – Australian troops committed to Korea

27 July 1942 – Formation of the Australian Women's Land Army

27 July 1942 – Japanese capture Kokoda

27 July 1942 – Fighting at Ruin Ridge, western Egypt

27 July 1953 – Fighting in Korea ends

27 July 1996 – Commissioning of HMAS Collins

28 July 1916 – Sergeant C Castleton, 5th Machine Gun Company was awarded the Victoria Cross at Pozieres

28-29 July 1942 – Australian involved in heavy fighting at Kokoda

28 July 1942 – Townsville bombed by Japanese aircraft

29 July 1942 – Townsville bombed by Japanese aircraft (Townsville was bombed four times)

30 July 1942 – Port Headland, Darwin and Horn Island bombed by Japanese aircraft

30 July 1979 – DASF

31 July 1900 – Victorian naval contingent departs Melbourne on SS Salamis for China (Boxer Rebellion)

31 July 1914 – Labor leader Andrew Fisher declares Australian will defend Britain ‘to our last man and our last shilling.’

31 July 1917 – Third battle of Ypres begins

31 July 1962 – The Advance Party of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV) arrives in South Vietnam

31 July 2009 – Australian combat troops cease operational role in Iraq

A few final words worth remembering

“ Unless you were there, you don’t know what these men went through.” PETA CREDLIN

“ ...however bad his alleged failings, the service he rendered his country and his military colleagues at a different time, place and circumstances earn him the highest level of recognition for his exceptional bravery.”

RETIRED COLONEL ROGER DACE



I have followed the Ben Roberts-Smith case as close as I could and I have been so discussed with some of the arm-chair media coverage, particularly from the online media services.

The Victoria Cross hails as exemplary of not the actor but the act – an act of such valour, said Queen Victoria (who created the award on 16 January 1856) as to make one ‘Tremble with emotion’

‘Even were a VC to sentenced to be hanged for murder, he should be allowed to wear his VC on the scaffold, because it was the exemplary character of the deed that

mattered – and once the deed was done, not even having committed the worst crimes could erase its memory.

King George V

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE OLD PRESUMPTION THAT PEOPLE ARE INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY?

We will eventually know the truth about what and what did not happen.

I will wait, but whatever happens in the future, he should retain his VC.

Surveillance Camera

The Brereton Report recommended that body cameras should be worn by our Elite soldiers. What do you think? Personally I say No from me. Soldiers probably won't take the risk they need to take if they think everything they're doing is going to be reviewed afterwards by an armchair critic.

As one ex SAS Officer said, 'We train to fire and move, so (the cameras) will be pointing at the dirt half the time'

Military Historical Society of Australia, Qld Division Committee 2022 – 23

President	Neil Dearberg
Vice President	Russell Paton
Honorary Secretary	Ian Curtis
Honorary Treasurer	Ian Curtis
Committee Member	Scott Meares
Committee Member	

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>IMPORTANT EVENTS AND DATE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 July – AGM • 9 September – Bi-Monthly Meeting • 11 November – Remembrance Day • 18 November – Bi-Monthly Meeting 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>FELLOWS of MHPA</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Meyers (Deceased) • Anthony Staunton • Donald Wright <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NEW MEMBERS</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>VALE</u></p>
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MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Australian Business Number (ABN) 97 764 781 363

Membership Application

Queensland Division

Membership Fee Ordinary Member \$50, Family Member \$55 (ie 2 or more domiciled at the one address)

Name/s

Postal Address

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E-mail

Date/year joined the Society.....

Military Interests

I understand the above details will only be used by the Qld Division and the Federal Secretary of the Military Historical Society of Australia to maintain correct records of my membership and for general branch or administrative business, and by the Journal editor to assist with editorial planning. I understand that the Society's Constitution requires the Federal Secretary to maintain a membership register (including the Journal mailing list).

In addition to information kept for these purposes:

OPT IN I agree to my email details being included on the Federal Secretary's contact list which will be used solely to distribute Society business and convey items of interest to members (including members' notices) **YES/NO (cross out whichever does not apply)**

OPT IN I wish to be included on the members' interests register and give permission for my military interests and my phone/email/address contact details to be included on it (cross out whichever does not apply). **YES/NO (cross out whichever does not apply)**

I understand that I can revoke permission for inclusion on register and contact lists at any time

As part of your membership you will receive a quarterly edition of Sabretache, the journal of the MHS. **I require a hard copy (mail) / electronic (via email) version. (circle your option)**

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Direct deposit to the Qld Division MHS Westpac Account at Maryborough, Qld.

BSB No. 034-128 Account No. 23-3618

If paying by Direct deposit, reference your name and forward the application form as well.