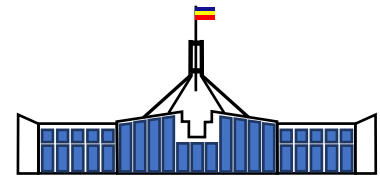




RAEME in ACTION



The newsletter of the ACT RAEME Association

Number 16: March 2024

For the attention of:

Members and supporters of the ACT RAEME Association

For the information of:

Members and supporters of all other national RAEME Associations

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President's Message

Greetings All, I trust this finds you and yours doing well. Albeit I was not in the best of health at the time (man-flu), it was good to catch up with a number of our members at our recent luncheon. It is clearly an interesting time in terms of how Defence is responding to recent global and Government activities. If I have interpreted it correctly, the ADF will no longer have a Joint Force, rather they will have an Integrated Force that has the potential to involve whole of Government responses to provide a greater range of options. Submarines and multi-domain long-range strike across the five domains, maritime, land, air, space and cyber, focused on deterring through denial, are a priority as a result of the most recent Defence strategic review. Minimal viable capability in the shortest possible time will drive future acquisitions and new technologies will be investigated to maintain the capability edge. What does this mean for RAEME? I am sure the HOC team are working through that now; however, I suspect that it will involve all of our technicians being exposed to a greater range of equipment types with more ones and zeros (electronic control systems) than ever whilst ensuring they retain the ability to maintain legacy fleets; the enduring challenge of living the 'with skill and fighting' dream! Stay well, APA

Getting our ACT together

Members, families or friends from other Associations who are visiting the ACT region are welcome to join us at our upcoming events. A reminder for each activity will be emailed to all Members in the week prior to the event. Further details can be found at: <https://act.raeme.org.au/>. Save these dates today!

Date	Time(s)	What	Where	Detail
Tues 26 Mar	1930-2030h	Informal drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club	Link
Thurs 25 Apr	0930h→	ANZAC Veteran's March	Australian War Memorial	Link
Fri 3 May	1230-1400h	Informal Mixed Lunch	Ainslie Football Club	Link
Tues 28 May	1930-2030h	Informal drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club	Link

MARCH						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

APRIL						
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29	30					

MAY						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Legend



Mixed Lunch



Informal Drinks



Spanner Club

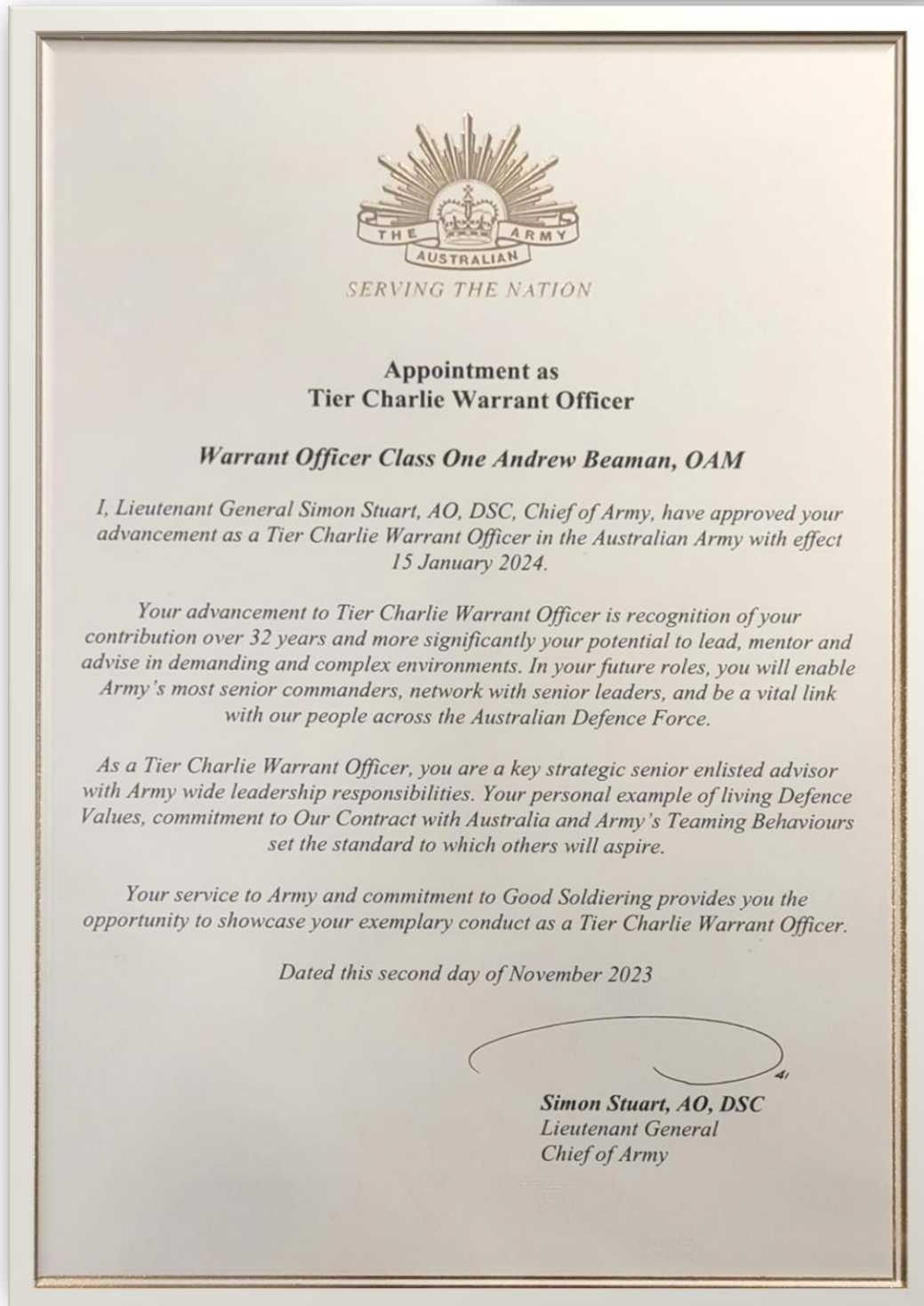


Significant Event

ASM of the Army

As noted in the Feb 2024 edition of *RAEME in ACTion*, WO1 Jim Beaman was formally appointed as the Army's first non-Regimental Tier C WO1 by the Chief of the Army, Lieutenant-General Simon Stuart and Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army, Warrant Officer Kim Felmingham.

We have just received a better image of the certificate Jim was presented with on the day. See below.



Jim has also confirmed that RSM Ceremonial has been advised to amend the [Army Dress Manual](#) to delete reference the "Tier C RSMs" and insert "Tier C Warrant Officers" although I may argue that "Tier C Legends" would be more appropriate!

ANZAC Day 2024

The event with the greatest military significance each year is undoubtedly ANZAC Day.

Pre-COVID, a large RAEME contingent (approx. 40-50+ members) would march behind the Association banner in the National Veteran's March at the Australian War Memorial however during COVID and subsequently due to the construction work at the War Memorial, numbers have typically dropped to around 20.



Thanks to the Australian War Memorial's Director giving his construction team a push in the right direction, **the War Memorial plans to open its Parade Ground for ANZAC Day this year.**

This provides us the first opportunity to reform as a large contingent to march together.

Maximum attendance for this year's ANZAC Day march is therefore highly encouraged, as is our regular gathering at Olim's after the parade for drinks, chats and sharing of memories (true or otherwise).

Key activities are:	4.30am:	Serving and retired ADF members read excerpts from letters and diaries of Australians who have experienced war first-hand.
	5:30am:	The Dawn Service
	9:30am:	The National Veteran's March commences with the ACT Association marching proudly behind our banner. The Anzac Day address to the nation will conclude the commemorations.
	~11:30am:	RAEME Association gathering at Olim's Hotel for fellowship.
	4:30pm:	The Anzac Day Last Post Ceremony at the War Memorial.

Full details will be promulgated as they are locked in.

Please put this significant event in your diary today!



For more details about the Australian War Memorial's Redevelopment plans, visit their website at: <https://www.awm.gov.au/ourcontinuingstory/ourplans>

ANZAC Day Nation-wide

Canberra

Dawn Service: 0530h at the Australian War Memorial

March: 0900h assembly on ANZAC Parade for 0930h step-off.

Function: Post-march at Olim's Hotel in the "RAEME Room"

POC: **RSVPs for function planning required NLT 07 Apr**

Visit: <https://act.raeme.org.au/index.php/notices/events/event/66-anzac-day> and click on the "RSVP" link or send an e-mail to: Secretary@act.raeme.org.au

Adelaide

Dawn Service: 0500h at the SA National War Memorial

March: Stepping off from 0930h from the Cnr North Terrace & Gawler Place

Gathering: TBA

Brisbane

Dawn Service: 0428h sharp at Brisbane City's Shrine of Remembrance, Anzac Square but arrive early (around 0330h) as the crowds can be quite large.

March: Stepping off at 1000h in Adelaide St, City

Gathering: Post-march at the Port Office Hotel. Tickets will be required to enter before 1400h.

RSVP: Tickets will become available: <https://www.qld.raeme.org.au/index.php/notices/events>

POC: DeputyChairman@qld.raeme.org.au

Darwin

Dawn Service: 0600h at the Cenotaph

March: 0845h form up on the Esplanade for 0900h start.

Gathering: TBA

Hobart

Dawn Service: 0600h at the Cenotaph, Queens Domain

March: 0930h preassemble at Customs House Hotel on Murray St, 1045h Assemble in Macquarie St (near Victoria St) for an 1100h step-off

Lunch: 1230h at Customs House Hotel, Murray St.

Launceston

Dawn Service: 0600h at the Cenotaph

March: 0830h pre-assemble at Launceston RSL, Wellington St, 0915h Assemble in Charles St (near Green GP) for 0945 step-off

Lunch: Launceston RSL, Wellington St after the march.

Melbourne

Dawn Service: 0530h start at the Shrine of Remembrance but arrive early (around 0500h) as the crowds can be quite large.

March: Stepping off from 0900h at the Cnr Flinders and Swanston

Gathering: TBA

Perth

Dawn Service: 0550h start from the State War Memorial, Kings Park but arrive early (around 0430h) as the crowds can be quite large.

March: Stepping off from 0900h from St Georges Terrace

Gathering: Rubix Bar and Restaurant at the IBIS Hotel, 334 Murray St from 1000h.

St Helens, Tas

Dawn Service: 0600h, St Helens Memorial Park.

March: 0830h pre-assemble at St Helens RSL, 1045h Assemble in Cecilia St for 1100h step-off.

Luncheon: 1200h at St Helens RSL

Sydney

Dawn Service: 0500h at 5 CSSB, Holsworthy Barracks.

To attend, email your name and ID number to President@nsw.raeme.org.au

March: 0900h assembly in O'Connell St, CBD for 1000h start.

Luncheon: Post-march at the Castlereagh Club, 199 Castlereagh St, City.

Cost \$35/head. Tickets must be purchased NLT 12 Apr

POC: Enquiries to Treasurer, Bob Joseph (0418-215-182, Treasurer@nsw.raeme.org.au)

Townsville

Dawn Service: 0520h at the Anzac Park Cenotaph or 0540h at Thuringowa Cenotaph, Riverway Precinct

March: 0830h assembly the Strand Park for 0900h step-off

Function: Post-march (but open from 0630h) at Flynn's Hotel.

Wear/carry something RAEME-related (Cap, tie, tie bar, hat badge, collar dog, lapel pin, badge, patch, cufflinks etc) for entry or be escorted by someone with this

POC: Tank Pontifex, North@qld.raeme.org.au

Wodonga

Dawn Service: 0545h in Woodland Grove on High Street

March: 1000h assembly in top carpark of Wodonga RSL, Reid St. Look for Apprentice flag.

1030h form up where directed by marshals for a 1045h step-off

1100h Memorial Service in Woodland Grove on High Street

Gathering: Post-march at the Wodonga RSL sub-branch for refreshments and traditional games.

POC: Chris Frampton

Invictus Australia Defence Community Sports Day

What: Join Invictus Australia for a thrilling Family Sports Day at Tuggeranong Archery Club, exclusively for the Defence Community – serving, former serving, and family members. Experience a day of 'Come & Try Sports' with an array of FREE activities for the entire family, including face painting, a sausage sizzle, Drone Racing, and much more.



Delight in trying out various sports such as Archery, Electronic Sports, Pickleball, Wheelchair Rugby, and more. In addition to the sports excitement, connect with key Defence Support Organisations, including Veteran Support Centre, DMFS, Defence Health, Defence Bank, Australian Military Bank, Smart Salary, Hoplite, Open Arms, Duntroon Community Centre, Kookaburra Kids, Australian Military Wives Choir, and many others. They will be present to meet you and provide valuable information.

Don't miss this opportunity to come together, enjoy thrilling sports, and build connections within the Defence Community. Mark your calendars for a day of fun, camaraderie and new experiences.

When: Saturday 23 Mar 2024 from 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Where: Tuggeranong Archery Club, 299 Soward Way Greenway, ACT 2900

Cost: Free

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/invictus-australia-defence-community-sports-day-tickets-808530635897?aff=oddtcreator>

Organisers: Invictus Australia strengthens the wellbeing of veterans and their families through the power of sport. From grassroots to international level, whether playing, coaching, volunteering or officiating, Invictus Australia believes in the power of sport to assist in recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration of our servicemen and women. We do this through partnerships with sporting bodies, ex-service organisations, governments, business and the community.



Invictus Australia is the NFP responsible for organising Invictus Games Sydney 2018. We carry on the legacy of the Games every day in local communities, as all veterans and their families can benefit from involvement with sporting communities, particularly 'at risk' veterans.

We are a not-for-profit registered charity and rely on the generous support of government, corporate Australia and the general public. As well as promoting the physical, social and emotional benefits of sport, we shine a light on the unique needs of younger veterans and the challenges they face as they transition from military to civilian life.



<https://invictusaustralia.org/>

Corps Update

The following was summarised from a Corps Update provided by the Corps RSM on 01 Mar 2024.

Intended recipients. The RSM has expressed concern that his regular updates are not being received by many junior soldiers. If you receive updates from him, share it with all subordinates as his emails are for everyone's benefit. Knowledge is power.

Corps Conference. The Corps Conference location for 2024 is Townsville within 3 Bde. The dates are yet to be locked in however are currently:

01 Oct – All ranks BBQ – dinner

02 Oct – Day 1 of conference

03 Oct – Day 2 of conference (mid-afternoon finish – all ranks dining-in night)

The RSM will release a 'Warning Order' shortly with the agenda, accommodation details etc.

Opportunities for serving members. A little-known fact is the positions available to corps members via the following:

- **Overseas Postings.** There is a one stop shop for all information on preparing an application for an overseas posting. This link will also take you to the overseas postings soldier gazette. There are numerous positions available for CFN up to WO1 (especially our Aviation brethren). Make sure when checking for positions you filter for 'Any Corps & RAEME'. As always, please use your Chain of Command for advice and guidance. <http://drnet/Army/DSCMA/Pages/Overseas-Posting.aspx>
- **Matt Stone Racing.** The affiliation with Matt Stone Racing has got off to a flying start in 2024, with ASEME providing two JNCOs to be integrated within the crew for the Bathurst Race Weekend 22-25 Feb 24. Again, members of the Corps have returned with amazing reports of their interactions and experience, as well as a fantastic report from Slade Perrins (partnerships and Media Manager MSR). WO1 Ben Munro has been in consultation with ASMs in all regions IOT gather persons interested in being part of the program, he will contact members individually once confirmed. If you are interested, please go through your ASMs to have your name put forward.

Craftsman Magazine. A fantastic response has been received for earlier calls for articles for the magazine. The Editor, Dave Clarke, has expressed his gratitude to those that have taken the time to submit articles. Dave will commence putting the magazine together for release later this year.

Corps Shop. The HOC Corps Shop is now live at: <https://raeme.org.au>. Please continue to provide feedback IOT for us to build the stock on items you (the Corps) want to see for sale.

RAEME Corps Awards. Please begin to consider nominations for the awards. The Corps RSM will release more information in a month or two (relating to the changes within the Corps Instruction).

ASEME News.

ECN 222 – Marine Technician has progressed to a point where ASEME have a basic understanding of the training requirement for in-service transfer and IET. A summary of what we know:

- In-service transfer for 'big boat' qualified pers will be considered. Those pers will receive an offer to trade transfer once the L8710 workforce plan is approved and Army Position Numbers (APN) are converted to ECN 222 Marine Technician. This will be merit based (lead by Workforce and Training Group and offer distributed by CMA). At this point in time, the 'Gap' training for transfer into the category will be minimal (based on qualifications and currency).
- In-service transfers (fully qualified) will not incur a 'ROSO'
- The analysis for Introduction into service (IIS) training for L8710 Littoral Manoeuvre capability is still to be conducted for the new Landing Craft Medium – LC-M (details here), Landing Craft Heavy – LC-H and Amphibious Vehicle - Logistics – AV-L.

Corps Update continued

ECN 418 – Energy Technicians with Auto Elec qualification. It seems there is mass confusion surrounding the employment of ECN 418 for rectifying auto elec issues. Auto elec is no longer taught as part of the ECN 418 IET continuum; however, this does not automatically preclude already qualified technicians (deemed competent during their IET) from conducting analysis, repair or replacement, as their qualification remains extant. If wishing to mitigate risk, ASMs can assess and provide Tech Authority.

Workforce and Training Group. The W&TG web page has been updated with information on each of the employment categories. See Workforce and Training Group – Maintenance on the Defence network at: <http://collab/army/altc/ectd/SitePages/Maintenance.aspx>

The Manual of Army Employments RAEME page with your employment specification has changed and is now at http://drnet/Army/DPCA/Manual_of_Army_Employments/Pages/RAEME_ES.aspx

W&TG are working on the new Land Engineering Officer Employment Specification to simplify and clarify the management of RAEME Ground Officers. LEO are currently managed under the Logistics Officer ES (http://drnet/Army/DPCA/Manual_of_Army_Employments/Pages/RAEME_ES.aspx) with an excessive number of skill grades.

Looking Back

Looking back into *The RAEME Craftsman* magazine, Edition 2 of May 1979, we found an interesting story written by one of our own, Christian “Barney” Bahnerth!

300 CLICKS DOWN THE MURRAY

Warrant Officer C. P. J. “Barney” Bahnerth



A well dressed canoeist-adventurer



Setting off on the first of the 300.

An anguished cry of — “Oh no! Not again!!” rent the air of the peaceful household when my wife discovered me, immersed in a stack of maps, reading the Murray River Pilot.

Memories flooded back, of Easter '77, when a two hundred kilometre canoe trip was preceded by similar symptoms. Mumbled remarks such as — “Hmmm, three hundred kilometres in twenty odd days . . .”, and, “. . . should be interesting”, were sufficient indication to the family that, for some time to come, the main topic of conversation would centre around long distance canoeing.

All sorts of difficult questions required answering. Such as, “How much sugar does a person need per day?” and, “How long will bacon keep?” and so on. Estimates were made, a daily schedule planned, supplies supplied and equipment prepared.

I arrived in WAIKERIE, South Australia, complete with “Duyfken” my pet canoe, to start the journey down river. After a quick farewell to wife and daughters, who had provided transport and company on the journey to the start point, I embarked to paddle my own canoe three hundred clicks (kilometres) down the great Murray River.

Only a short distance was planned for the first day, just in case I had over-estimated my fitness. However, with conditions in my favour I surprised myself by completing the first day's distance and part of the next day's, before setting up camp for the night. The rain that fell soon after was a blessing in disguise. Waikerie's town water had an unpleasant taste compared to the rainwater caught in the tent fly.

Breakfast was prepared at daybreak, by which time some perishables had lived up to their description. Unruly



An ideal campsite after 203 clicks



An attractive old distillery passed at the 228 clicks point

bowels for the rest of the day drove home the point that perishable foods are not suitable tucker for a trip of this nature. My first lesson. More were to follow.

Despite the gastric discomfort, good progress was made again on the second day. Passing an interesting old distillery, some sixteen kilometres from Waikerie, and two of the planned campsites early in the day, I headed for a third. As it turned out the third was too crowded, so I continued down river before deciding to call it a day at HOGWASH SANDBAR.

After paddling thirty-four kilometres in a day and a half HOGWASH SANDBAR was paradise.

Deteriorating conditions on the third day and an increasing wind strength made paddling more difficult and the cooking of meals increasingly unsafe. That night the tent had to be stormset and the cooking of a meal postponed. I endeavoured to settle down to sleep but worsening weather made this as difficult as cooking the meal. After an uncomfortable night I welcomed the daybreak, even though conditions were still against me.

The next leg of the journey got off to a slow start and became even slower as the time passed. The wind increased in strength to the point where my muscles rebelled and the waves, whipped up by the wind, were too big for the canoe to negotiate. Twice the canoe was almost swamped.

Despite all the paddling effort applied only three kilometres were covered. Even paddle steamers experienced difficulty negotiating the bend of the river near MORGAN.

I waited for two hours in the faint hope that conditions would improve, without luck. A recon made on foot, further down the river bank, only served to prove that conditions ahead were worse, rather than better. As a consequence camp was set up for the night, opposite the pumping station on the Whyalla pipeline. Only a slope was available but the best was made of it.

I awoke the following day to the pleasing realisation that river conditions had completely reversed. The Murray was as calm as a millpond and an early start was made. Breakfast was taken at Morgan soon after sunrise as a prelude to the best day's canoeing so far, even though some headwinds sprung up again in the afternoon.

The paddle steamer 'COONAWARRA' passed me twice that day, testing my canoeing skills on both occasions. The head-on wash on the first pass was rather difficult but the backwash on its return pass was even more

so. With a lesser load in the canoe I might have surfed instead.

As the journey progressed, both river and weather conditions continued windy and variable with mainly headwinds. South of BLANCHETOWN there was a marked increase in water-skiers with, of course, their tow-boats. Buzzing my canoe became a dangerous diversion for an inconsiderate few. Dangerous for me that was, as they worked hard at trying to create waves much higher than the fifteen centimetre freeboard of my canoe.

More than once spectators were heard to shout, "Swamp the ****#!", or words to that effect. Real charmers! Later I was to learn that threatening to throw a beer bottle or two, in, or in front of, a skiiboat had a very sobering effect on their actions.

When I got swamped for the second time — at a mooring — the offender made the mistake of mooring there, too. I offered — with axe in hand — to reduce his freeboard to the level of mine. Needless to say he declined and apologised. He could see I was serious — and furious.

I decided then that, discretion being the better part of valour, the best action to take was to leave BOWHILL — posthaste, and did, after removing most of the water from the canoe.

A good campsite was soon found and the process of make and mend given first priority, starting with a complete unpack and inspection of all items. Only three items, packed in sealed plastic containers, had escaped the excess moisture. The remainder had to be laid out on the groundsheet and dried — to the delight of the local ant population, a couple of whom volunteered to accompany me for the rest of the trip.

Lesson No. 2, perhaps. Carry all food items in re-sealable containers if they are required for more than one meal.

After a near textbook camp, the canoe was repacked and an early start made. I had realised, by this time, that morning breezes were easier to cope with than afternoon winds. The weather forecast predicted that for the first time I might even experience tailwinds. In anticipation of this I rigged the mast and kept the touring sail in readiness. My luck was in. Later in the day I managed to sail before the wind for about ten minutes before meeting up with two other canoeists.

That night, attracted by the promise of a pub and a shower, I settled for the luxury of a caravan park

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ANNUM. The SOUTHWARK sandwich tasted better than ever.

Favourable winds next day allowed the use of the touring sail again for a brief spell. "Duyfken" performed well, even whilst towing another canoe. However, increasing wind made sailing unsafe whilst soaring temperatures turned paddling from a fun thing to hard work.

Work ceased about lunchtime, near WAL FLAT, and camp set up in the shadiest spot available. That day the mercury steadied at 44°C — much too hot for my motor! Complete rest and plenty of fluids became the order for the rest of that day.

At sunrise on day eight the Murray was once again as calm as a millpond. Unfortunately, though, it didn't stay that way. A sudden wind sprung up — a headwind again — causing the two canoes to raft up and seek shelter.

When the wind abated a little, more progress was made, but the combined action of wind direction and river flow again made conditions dangerous. An unscheduled stop was made on a low lying island.

After an improvised meal it was realised that the size of the island was decreasing — rapidly. Discretion once again being the better part of valour, we elected to sit in the canoes to await the abatement of the wind.

It seemed hours before crossing the river to higher ground could be risked.

Along the bank on the other side were a group of holiday shacks, one of which was owned by a Bruce and Judy Harris. They had watched our struggle against wind and rising water and when they saw how fatigued we were — hospitality plus was offered.

Their children offered us their air mattresses and we slept the night away in the garage of a three-storey holiday shack after, that is, we had been royally entertained by our hosts. For example, we were offered the choice of six varieties of port. They couldn't, it seemed, do enough for us. Sleep came very easy that night!

Keen to take advantage of the early morning calm we graciously declined breakfast and, after saying our farewells, made an early start, completely refreshed from a good night's sleep.

At AVOCA DELL, just before MURRAY BRIDGE, I took my leave of the two canoeists whose company I had enjoyed for the previous few days and set off for places further downriver.

A private campsite near a bird sanctuary at MASON ROCK proved too inviting and permission was obtained to stay the night. By this time my stomach realised it had not experienced food since the day before. To compensate a king size meal was prepared from the full day's rations and demolished in record time.

The natural bathing and washing facilities at Maso. Rock were utilised to the best advantage and an extremely good night's rest saw me fit for an early start again next day. Heavy rain also had an early start and didn't cease until approximately 1100 hours when the winds dropped to a dead calm.

TAILEM BEND was reached half an hour later, at which point the winds increased yet again. I make no apologies for the repeated reference to the wind strengths for, as any canoeist will verify, winds are one of the biggest problems. Again, with this increase in wind no progress could be made for several hours and, after finally crossing the river, conditions became too difficult to continue.

Camp was set up and the canoe examined in readiness for the final leg to WELLINGTON. Some repairs were found to be necessary and the repair kit justified, at last, as a necessary inclusion on the equipment list — Lesson No. 3.

The father of one of a group of rafters I met that day offered to ring my pick-up party in Adelaide, an offer I accepted gladly.

A leisurely final leg was paddled with very mixed feelings. A very enjoyable, though at times hard, journey was nearing its end, as I reflected on the lessons I'd learned.

Some minor modifications to the canoe, such as improved spray sheets, would have made the journey easier and the effect of skiboats less dangerous. Food needs careful planning if full rations are to be carried, preferably in resealable plastic containers. Last, but by no means least, never attempt any journey with only one canoe unless you have had the advantage of several journeys in the company of at least two other boats and five to ten years of canoeing experience with some, preferably, as a canoeing instructor.

A life jacket is a MUST on any canoe journey and definitely VITAL on a solo. Coveralls, or long sleeved garments reduce the risk of sunburn, whilst unattended wet feet reek highly at first — and cause great discomfort later.

Footnote: The pet canoe "DUYFKEN", meaning Little Dove, was named after the ship of Captain (later Admiral) Willem Janz who's landing at Cape Keerweer (Queensland) in 1606 was the earliest recorded landing of a European on Terris Australis (Van Diemens Land or New Holland).



Peace at Mason Rock.



Peace at Mason Rock.

The Australian War Memorial Sculpture – For Every Drop Shed in Anguish

On Thursday the 23rd of February, the Australian War Memorial held an event to [dedicate a new sculpture](#) recognising and commemorating the suffering caused by war and military service. The sculpture, by artist Alex Seton, is known as “For Every Drop Shed in Anguish.” The event was solemn and dignified. It was attended by countless dignitaries, not least of which include His Excellency, the Governor General Sir David Hurley, Her Excellency, Mrs Hurley, the CDF, CA, the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite (Assistant Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Assistant Minister for Defence), Mr Andrew Kefford (Dep Sec DVA Policy), the Hon Kim Beazely (Chair of the AWM Council), Mr Matt Anderson (Director of the AWM) as well as the families of several veterans who had died in service or after struggling with the effects of their service. Ngunnawal elder Dr Aunty Carolyn Hughes welcomed all with the Ngunnawal word ‘Narragunnawali’ which was translated as ‘you, me, we together’. [Mr Anderson](#) also welcomed all to the ceremony by describing it as a “rededication” ceremony; recalling the words of Lord Gowrie VC when he opened the Memorial in 1941, he said that when people leave here, they should utter ‘Never Again. Never again’.



This statue includes 18 droplets hewn from Queensland Australian Pearl marble drawn from the quarries of Chillagoe region. The artist noted that every droplet has a particular shape, defined by its delicate surface tension as if it is about to burst. But more importantly, when touched, these stone forms reveal themselves to have an inner strength and resilience that the artist hopes can provide a promise of hope and healing.

The sculpture recognises the blood, sweat and tears shed in anguish during military service. The War Memorial hopes it provides a point of connection to all who have suffered due to service, be that their own suffering or that of someone close to them. The silent suffering that many veterans struggled with until their untimely end was a major theme of the event with thought-provoking yet heart-wrenching speeches from people including [Dr Karen Bird](#), the mother of veteran Jesse Bird who took his own life when the struggles from his service got too much. [Mr Ben Farinazzo](#), a former soldier who fought through severe PTSD to now use his experience to give others strength, also spoke from the heart. He reminded all that as we're moving away from the hard-edge side of deployment and what we've done, we're now looking at the emotional impact. It's quite a significant event and we'll see the flow-on effect over time.

Dr Bird noted that of the thousands of names on the walls of the War Memorial commemorating the service of those killed during conflict or from the physical wounds sustained, only 453 service men and women were recognised by the AWM who died by suicide caused by or linked to their service. She challenged the Memorial’s leaders, our politicians and DVA hierarchy to consider this omission more closely.



A musical interlude was presented with [Ian Moss's](#) heart-rendering performance of *When the War is Over*. A further classical musical tribute was played nearing the end of the service as guests experienced the sculpted elements up close, many of who laid poppies or photos of loved ones lost.

As noted by the Hon Mr Thistlethwaite, the Service community is a tight-knit one which is trained to act as one. It therefore feels the collective pain when one of our own is lost. This sculpture provides a peaceful place for quiet contemplation to allow each of us to pause and reflect on those no longer with us.

After the ceremony, the artist, Alex Seton ([who also spoke at the event](#)), was kind enough to describe his journey to create this sculpture, not just for the three years it took to sculpt each piece with such care and precision but also to reach the decision to proceed with the chosen design.

Alex noted that after a friend lost his father in Afghanistan, he learnt that whilst our Nation may not agree with the conflict in which Australian's serve, they need to acknowledge those who serve in that conflict and the struggles faced by them and their loved ones.

The design of the tear drops was not one that Alex had in his heart prior to gaining the commission; it was one he formed after meeting with the families of those veterans no longer with us. Alex learnt of their pain, their anguish and the tears they shed for their loved ones. He chose the marble not for perfection but for its imperfections with each stone having rust-like streaks yet with an inherent material strength.

When coupled with the sensitivity of a smooth surface, Alex felt that this material was a beautiful representation of service men and women.

Alex advised that he chose 18 tear drops for no reason other than the aesthetic value of making a meaningful production without being too busy or crowded. He was surprised to hear that the number had quite some significance in that 18 was the number of servicemen killed in the Blackhawk tragedy of 1996 and also the number killed during combat of the Battle of Long Tan.

Alex hopes that future audiences will connect with the sculpture on a personal level especially through the physical presence of the material which in itself provides a peaceful element. For visitors who have never been touched by the service, sacrifice or loss of loved ones, they can interact with the art, draw from it as they feel appropriate or learn from the stories of service available via QR codes that surround the sculpture.

When closing her address, Dr Bird shared the words of French writer and philosopher, Voltaire from 1785:

“To the living we owe respect, but to the dead we owe only the truth.”

Lest we forget



- <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBf2Rx>
- <https://www.awm.gov.au/media/press-releases/blood-sweat-and-tears-set-in-stone-at-australian-war-memorial>
- https://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/11699-awm-foreverydropshedinauguish_program_web_v2.pdf

RAEME Annual Get Together – From Clarrie Sanders



The weekend of 23-25 of February saw over 160 wives, partners, past, and present members of the Corps, assemble at Yallakool Park on Bjelke-Petersen Dam, not too far from Murgon QLD, for the 7th Annual RAEME Get Together.

Friday afternoon kicked off with a cocktail hour, kudos to Lynette Yates and Terry Johnson for keeping the crowd's thirst slacked on this very warm day. Once everyone's thirst had been satisfied, the "PMC", Greg Riley, addressed the crowd at the meet and greet 'happy hour' with a welcome and 'in-brief' to let everyone know the planned events, timings, and a few camp expectations for the weekend.



A couple of honourable mentions for distance travelled to get to the Gathering, Jaquie & Trevor Gillam for caravanning it up from Tassie to attend, but even that was pipped by Glen & Wanmai Jones, flying in from Thailand to attend.

A 'Smoke-house BBQ' prepared by Damian Pointon and a team of able helpers was dinner for tonight and enjoyed by everyone. After dinner, live duet called "Deal'n", supplied by the park management, kept everyone entertained till well past a lot of people's normal bedtimes.



Saturday morning there were a few hardy souls out exercising, one even drove to Wondai to take part in a Park-run event, but most opted for a more laidback start to the day with the on-site coffee van of Rob & Victoria being a very busy 'attraction'. During the day, many travelled to the nearby towns of Murgon & Goomeri for more supplies, while some sampled the fine offerings from the local bakeries, pubs, and clubs, before heading back to the 'Gathering' for another round of fun and entertainment.

Cocktail hour kicked off midafternoon and coincided with a visit from Moffetdale Ridge winery for some tasting and sales. During the afternoon Mike Wilko Wilkinson put his Sgt's Mess Calcutta skills to the test and auctioned some very rare and desirable Corp merchandise.

As it often does when RAEME takes the field, it started to rain, not a deluge, just intermittent light showers, enough to dampen down the surroundings but not enough to dampen spirits or subdue the crowd. Dinner was a fantastic seafood buffet, prepped and served by Steve and Pauline Pointon, again with a myriad of willing helpers.

Then the fun started... Judging of the 60-70's theme 'best dressed' with Jaquie and Trevor Gillam romping away with first prize. Then the karaoke night got under way thanks to the efforts of our 'music co-ordinators', Elvis Presley (Terry Johnson) and Nancy Sinatra (Cheryl Clegg). A special mention



must go out to Charmaine Johnson for sending Terry back to us from her hospital bedside, to co-host this event. After being bitten by a Red-Backed spider Friday afternoon, Charmaine had been admitted to Gympie Hospital early Saturday morning for treatment, citing that she was being heavily sedated and was just going to sleep, Terry should go back to the Gathering.

This year with aid of some more modern technology than an intermittent 3G data link which in the past has failed every year, the night was a huge success. Within the group there were some stand-out singers, the two hosts and a couple of others fit this tag, there are also those that are getting better and a few that would sound better if they just gargled gravel. Skill sets aside, the night had people literally dancing in the rain like no-one could see them and singing like no-one could hear them and partying on till the wee hours of the morning.



Sunday morning, Rob and Victoria's coffee van was the place to be until the "Crafty Markets" got underway. Some crafty ladies and a few of the crafty crafties had items ranging from home-made jams, relishes & pickles through to hand made ceramics, timber carvings & hand painted jewellery for sale.



We then got onto the 'march-out checklist', everyone gathered for a group photo that we managed to pull off between the persistent light showers. The award of the "Busted Ring" given out each year for a "Significant Error of Judgment", this year's awardee, Steve Pointon, for trying to stop a highspeed tungsten saw blade with his hand.

Over the weekend, the Gathering gets a significant amount of support from the local community, from discounted rates at the van park, the supply of marquee, the loan of equipment such as a BBQs and a cold-room, Friday night's entertainment. To pay this forward, the Gathering raises funds over the weekend from the raffle of a WW1 Teddy

kindly donated by Peter Wooley, merchandise and food sales, and the simply generous donations from the attendees.



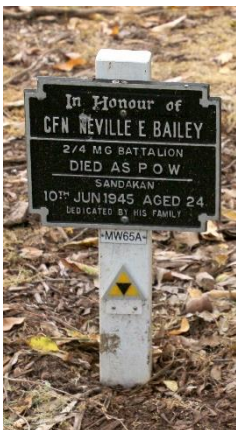
These funds are then passed on to the local Murgon Hospital Auxiliary as this will benefit the entire local community. To date the Gathering has funded or at least helped to fund a make-over of the hospice care unit, a motorised recovery trolley and several other projects. This year the 'PMC', Greg Riley, was able to pass on to Mrs Murial Schultze, the President of the Hospital Auxiliary, \$3,200 raised by the Gathering.



RAEME Nationwide

Happenings across the RAEME National Network include:

- **Tasmania.** Our friends in Tasmania are busy pulling together their next reunion of all who have served on the Apple Isle. Locking in numbers of likely attendees is critical for them as they need these numbers to first of all establish that the reunion will go ahead but to then lock in venues. At this stage, the reunion will occur in mid-Nov 2024 so if there is a chance you can go, please get in contact with the Association ASAP. Details are online at <https://tas.raeme.org.au/>
- **Western Australia.** The WA Association recently released their latest newsletter, *The Word from the Horse's Mouth*. In this edition, the Association outlined its plans for its ANZAC Vigil. This is a regular event for the Association that occurs from 1900h on the evening before ANZAC day. The RAEME Vigil will be held at the Sandakan memorial in Kings Park. The Association will meet up in the car park to the rear of



the local tennis club and move forward from there, under the direction of their Piper, Rob Reeves and their Padre, Kim Kuchil.

The Vigil is the Association's traditional event to commemorate the foundation members of our Corps who were captured in Singapore and perished on Sandakan.

The four Craftsmen and one Corporal are the only RAEME members commemorated with plaques at Kings Park. The WA Association rightly sees it as their duty to remember them.

After the Vigil, the Association will retire to a venue that is yet to be decided but regroup the following day for ANZAC Day commemorations.

You can read more about the WA Association happenings as:

<https://wa.raeme.org.au>

- **Apprentice Association.** Expressions of interest are sought from members for the AGM and Australian Army Apprentices Association Dinner, to be held at the Maroochy RSL, Sunshine Coast Qld, on 26th October 2024. There will be an all-intakes get-together on the preceding Friday evening, with casual drinks and food at attendees' cost, to see who you can remember and those that you can't. The 2024 AGM of the Association will be held on the Saturday morning starting at 1030 hrs. Members' attendance is appreciated to see what is happening within the Association and also a chance to be part of the voting for those positions on the Committee that become vacant at the meeting. Or in fact to nominate for a position prior to the meeting. A formal sit-down 3-course meal for Association members and their partners will be held on the Saturday evening at 1830 hrs for 1900 hrs start. Seating will be at round tables to allow easier conversations to be held. To enable the Committee to better select the venues and best pricing we can negotiate, an indication as to the number of personnel who will be attending the get-together, AGM and dinner is required. **Please provide the following information to treasurer@austarmyapprentice.org by 30th April 2024:**

Name

Regimental number

Association Membership number

Intake

Total number of personnel attending, i.e., self and how many others?

Saturday morning AGM YES/NO

Saturday evening Dinner YES/NO, number

As time comes closer, the Association will provide a registration form which will provide actual pricing. Further details are at: <https://austarmyapprentice.org/>

Reunions or Gatherings

The following reunions or gatherings are being planned:

RAEME Association of Tasmania Reunion

Who: All past and present serving members who have served in Tasmania

Where: Hobart

When: 15 Nov – 1730h for 1800h – Welcome Drinks – Venue TBA

16 Nov – Dinner at Queens Head Hotel

17 Nov – 1230h for 1300h – BBQ lunch at Derwent Barracks

Cost: Dinner cost TBA closer to the event

RSVP: https://tas.raeme.org.au/index.php?option=com_rsform&view=rsform&formId=16

Note: The Committee understands the financial burden of travelling to Hobart but needs sufficient numbers to make the reunion viable. If the Committee determines that it is not viable the event will be cancelled and notification will be sent to those who have expressed interest.

This decision will be made by Friday 10th May 2024 therefore please do not make any firm travel plans until after this date.

60 Year Reunion – 19th Intake Vehicle Mechanics

Who: All intakes are welcome

Where: Sunshine Coast TBC

When: 23-26 Apr 2024

POC: Peter Leslie (0413-620-945, Petel28@outlook.com),

Pete Culnane (0439-726-100)

Annual OCS Portsea Alumni Lunch

Who: Alumni, Staff and other friends of Portsea are most welcome to attend

Where: Kittyhawk Room, Kedron Wavell Services Club

When: Tues 16 Jul 2024

POC: <https://www.ocsportsea.org/ocs-alumni-lunch-2024/>

101st Field Workshop Cocktail Reunion

Who: All past and present members of 101 Fd Wksp

Where: Ingleburn RSL Club – The Bardia Room

When: Sat 17 Aug 2024 from 1700h

Cost: \$60 per person

RSVP: Please RSVP ASAP to:

Rebecca Yoxall, Rebecca.Yoxall@defence.gov.au, 0414-438-302

Karen Cairns, karencairns@bigpond.com, 0438-385-109 or

Michelle Lafferty (nee Bond), dmjjj@bigpond.com, 0404-004-775

Priority 'to grow the brigade'

Maj Dean Benson

WHETHER it's being inspired by her family's history of military service, or balancing her service with the demands of two young children, family means everything to Brig Amanda Williamson.

That's why the new commander of Perth's 13 Bde wants her personnel to serve in ways that ensure mission success, while enabling them to address the other important things in their lives.

"Being a hybrid brigade means we have to do things a little differently while never losing sight of our mission," Brig Williamson said.

"This means we need to create a brigade environment where our people are empowered through technology

For me, it's critical that we give our people a place to which they want to come and work.

— Brig Amanda Williamson, Commander 13 Bde

to serve from alternate work locations and not be tethered to the historical norm of parading every Tuesday night.

"My partner and I have an effective co-parenting routine, which allows us to both contribute to our careers. I know so many in the brigade will relate to this, but what it often looks like in reality is that I'm going from school drop-offs to command synes, for example."

Brig Williamson took over from Brig Brett Chaloner in December and she's keen to ensure units in the west can continue to be their best after three years of unprecedented transformation.

"This transformation journey has positioned us perfectly to be able to pivot and meet the critical requirements set out in the Defence Strategic Review," Brig Williamson said.

One of her first priorities was to visit brigade members deployed to Rifle Company Butterworth in



Commander 13 Bde Brig Amanda Williamson outside the brigade's headquarters building at Irwin Barracks.

Malaysia as part of rotation 142.

During the visit in early February, she used her skills as a trained linguist to thank the Malaysian soldiers in Malay for their hospitality, and for offering opportunities in jungle and urban warfighting.

Like many in uniform, Brig Williamson's connection to service started long before she was born. Her grandmother joined the Royal Navy at just 16, which led her to meeting and marrying an Australian pilot flying in the Dam Buster squadron, and her father was a National Serviceman

in Vietnam, all of which inspired her to join the Army Cadets in Western Australia.

"Knowing what my ancestors did when duty called for them meant I always had a longing for the uniform, and so cadets felt like a natural first step for me," Brig Williamson said.

"It may surprise people to learn that more than 30 per cent of senior officers had exposure to the Army Cadets, so I'd encourage any kid to give it a go."

But there's no dwelling on the past for the new boss out west as she looks

to implement changes to life around Irwin Barracks by leveraging technology to improve life in the brigade and drive recruitment.

"My number one priority is to grow the brigade, and to do this I will focus on improving amenities for our soldiers," she said.

"There has been an initial burst of enthusiasm and excitement and I'd love to harness that to reinvigorate the mess facilities, the swimming pool and create dedicated family spaces."

With an interest in artificial intelligence and automation, Brig

Williamson is keen to explore technology avenues to enhance the efficiency of day-to-day tasks so personnel are free to focus on strategy and planning.

"For me, it's critical that we give our people a place to which they want to come and work, while also giving them ample options to serve from anywhere," she said.

"This will ensure 13th Brigade maintains its position as an attractive and contemporary workforce in the wonderful state of Western Australia."

Source: Army News Edition 1553, 14 Mar 2024 <https://www.armynewspaper.defence.gov.au/army-news/march-14-2024/flipbook/0/>

Calling all fighters!

Have you ever felt the need to punch someone but refrained because you didn't think anything good would come from doing so?

If that sounds like you, we may have the remedy; the **Veteran's Challenge Boxing Tournament!**



The Veteran's Challenge Tournament is a charity event to be held at the Hellenic Club on Saturday the 26th of October in partnership with the ACT Branch of the Australian Commando Association. Funds raised will go to support the work the Association does with Special Forces veterans and their families.



The event is open to males and females from around the country who have served, or are currently serving within the Australian Defence Force - even if you have never boxed before. There is also a Masters category, for boxers aged over 40.

All bouts will be matched to ensure even weight, age and experience. Each bout is no more than 3 rounds, with each round lasting between 1.5 - 3 minutes depending on age & experience. Tickets will be available for spectators online closer to the event. Doors open at 6.30pm, with the first fight starting at 7:00pm. A pay-per-view livestream will also be available for purchase, with details to be released in future.

Details regarding this event can be found at: <https://www.boxingact.org.au/events/212014/>

Fred is here to Stay!!

Source: [Department of Defence](#)

The field ration eating device, more commonly known as FRED, has served soldiers faithfully since World War 2.

First introduced in 1943 as part of the Operational Ration Type 02 (ORT2), the world-first 24-hour ration offered a realistic amount of food to sustain a soldier without catering support.

According to combat ration pack (CRP) technical adviser Captain Andre Borg, a key design aspect of ORT2 was its canned meals, which allowed previously unsuitable food such as stews or fish to be used.



“In order for soldiers to get into the canned foods, a magnificent and all-powerful device was required to open them. Thus, the FRED was born,” he said.

The first version of the FRED had only a single purpose as a can opener, but over time more functions were added to its design, including a bottle opener, capability to sterilise, and spoon shape.

The FRED has since transcended its humble beginnings, and has been employed by innovative soldiers in situations it was not designed for, including fishing lures and early warning devices.

“I once watched an RAEME [Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers] digger use an angle grinder to chop up a FRED to make an improvised tool, and then use that tool to somehow fix a thing on a semi-trailer and get us back on the road,” Captain Borg said.

Despite its simple design, making a FRED is relatively labour-intensive. Parts are stamped from hardened steel with a FRED die tool, and coated to prevent rust. The two pieces are then assembled on a different machine press.

While it can't be claimed that FREDs are handmade, the process is not automated, and they require a high level of human involvement, which adds to its manufacturing quality.

During his time as a technical adviser, Captain Borg conducted CRP taste-testing activities around Australia, and informed participants that canned cheese would be replaced with a non-canned alternative.



Captain Andre Borg with a new field ration eating device (FRED) at the manufacturing workshop in Queensland

He received considerable feedback regarding the implied removal of the FRED in addition to their preference to retain the cheese, as many soldiers expressed an affinity for the tool and advocated for its retention.

“I am happy to report that both canned cheese and the FRED will remain an important and enduring feature in the ADF's CRP design,” Captain Borg said.

Editor's Question: Can anyone remember what 'FRED' really stands for?

Veteran Support Centre

The Veterans Support Centre (VSC) is a veteran-run organisation with a mission to help veteran's through-life. Pre-2009, VSC was known as the *Vietnam Veterans & Veterans Federation*.



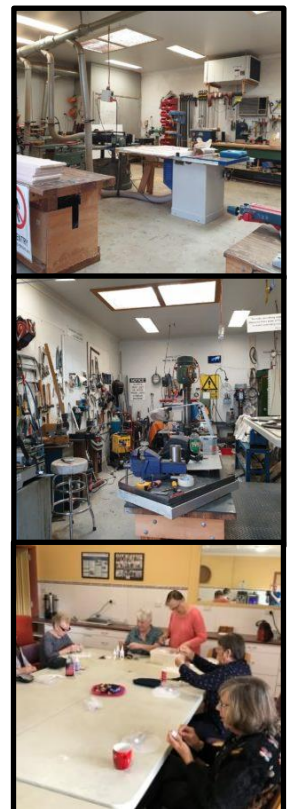
Contact. VSC is located at 9 Burkitt Street in Page, ACT. Their contact number is (02) 6255-1599 and their web address is: <https://www.vscact.org.au/> The office may be emailed at: office@vscact.org.au.

Services. Services provided by VSC include, but are not limited to:

- Advocates are available on week-days to assist with filling in paperwork and lodging claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Representation at the Veterans Review Board (VRB) and Administration Appeals Tribunal (AAT)
- Trained Wellbeing Advocate to support members
- The Food Van, which attends various community functions and a main source of fundraising

Regular activities. If any of the following regular activities sounds interesting to you, reach out to the VSC regarding your possible attendance:

- Mondays Gardening group from 1000-1200h
- Tuesdays Walking groups. Contact the organiser, Terry Lawler on 0401 109 550 or terrylawler71@bigpond.com to confirm starting locations each week.
Wood and metal workshops (all skill levels) from 1000h
BBQ lunch (\$5) from 1200h
- Wednesdays Coffee Connections for veterans and families from 1000-12000h (sponsored by Open Arms and the VSC)
- Thursdays Wood and metal workshops (all skill levels) from 1000h
Pie lunch (\$5) from 1200h
- Fridays Guitar group (all skill levels) from 0930h
Ladies Craft Group from 1300h (3rd Friday of the month)



Please contact the office for more details regarding any event.

Membership. Membership is open to Veterans of any conflict, serving and retired service personnel. Membership is not compulsory to attend functions or to attain support for DVA claims or welfare matters but it does support VSC work. It also gives access to early notification of a wide range of social activities held by the VSC. The VSC offers a place to get together with a mob of like-minded Veterans.

Cost: \$50.00 Single - \$55.00 Family. VSC warmly welcomes veterans or all ages but like many valuable organisations, they would appreciate the opportunity to support younger veterans.

The VSC membership form may be downloaded from the VSC website or as attached at the end of the January edition of *RAEME in ACTION* (<https://act.raeme.org.au/> Look under Publications).

DVA News: Veterans' Legislation Reform – Consultation on proposed changes

Source: <https://www.dva.gov.au/news/latest-stories/veterans-legislation-reform-consultation-proposed-changes>

The Government has today announced the commencement of public consultation on proposed changes to simplify veterans' entitlements, compensation and rehabilitation legislation.

This important body of work is the next step in responding to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide's Interim Report.



The Government is seeking comments on the draft Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Bill 2024 that, if passed by Parliament, will reform more than a century of veteran compensation legislation.

The Bill would implement a 'single Act' model with the following core elements:

- An improved Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act (MRCA) where all new claims for compensation and rehabilitation will be considered under the improved MRCA; and
- Closing the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) and the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related claims) Act 1988 (DRCA) to new claims for compensation and rehabilitation, with grandparenting of already approved VEA/DRCA compensation payments.

The proposed changes will see the MRCA enhanced for various entitlements, including:

- the introduction of a new Additional Disablement Amount (ADA), similar to the Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) available under the VEA. Like EDA, the ADA would compensate veterans who are Age Pension age or older and who have a high degree of incapacity due to service-related conditions.
- the introduction of 'presumptive liability', which means the Repatriation Commission would be able to specify injuries and diseases that can be determined on a presumptive (in other words – automatic unless proven otherwise) basis where they are known to have a common connection with military service.
- consolidation of household and attendant care, travel for treatment, and retention of automatic granting of VEA funeral benefits in the MRCA.
- an increase to \$3,000 for funeral allowance for previous automatic grant categories under the VEA, and the availability of reimbursement of funeral expenses up to \$14,062 for all service-related deaths.
- the availability to all veterans of the higher travel reimbursement amount, regardless of kilometres, when a private vehicle is used to travel for treatment.
- standardisation of allowances and other payments, including: acute support packages, Victoria Cross and decoration allowances, education schemes, prisoner of war ex gratia payments, and additional compensation for children of severely impaired veterans.
- enhancement of the Commission's ability to grant special assistance to veterans and their dependants.

Feedback and submissions during public consultation in 2023 on the pathway for legislation reform has helped the Government to respond to issues of most concern.

Further details on the proposed changes, how they impact veterans, and how to provide feedback, can be found on the DVA website, <https://www.dva.gov.au/about/royal-commission/veterans-legislation-reform-exposure-draft-consultation>

Submissions will be accepted until 28 April 2024.

What's on in Cbr

The following public events are scheduled for the ACT region:

Happy and Glorious

- Lead:** The Museum of Australian Democracy
- What:** An exhibition of The Queen's Visit in 1954.
- Old Parliament House was central to the royal tour while the Queen was in Australia and the exhibition is presented in the very room the Queen used while she was at Old Parliament House. You can explore this room in the President of the Senate's suite and see how it was while she was visiting.
- Where:** Old Parliament House
- When:** Daily until 03 May 2024
- Cost:** Free
- Details:** <https://bit.ly/HappyAndGlorious>



Last Post Ceremony

- Lead:** Australian War Memorial
- What:** Each evening, the Memorial farewells visitors with its moving Last Post Ceremony.
- Each night the ceremony shares the story behind one of the names on the Roll of Honour.
- Where:** Australian War Memorial, Commemorative Courtyard
- When:** Commencing daily at 4.30 pm AEDT
- Registration:** <https://www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/last-post-ceremony>



View the original Australian Constitution

- Lead:** National Archives of Australia
- What:** Don't miss your chance to view the original Australian Constitution and the Royal Commission of Assent signed by Queen Victoria
- Where:** National Archives of Australia, Kings Avenue Parkes, ACT 2600
- When:** 20 Apr or 17 May only
- Cost:** Free
- Details:** <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/lifting-the-lid-view-the-original-australian-constitution-tickets-803615835597?aff=oddtcreat>



AUKUS Trials Artificial Intelligence in Robotic Vehicles

Source: [Department of Defence](#)

Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States have successfully demonstrated the integration of advanced autonomy and artificial intelligence (AI) to test the resilience of autonomous assets in a contested environment.

Conducted in South Australia in late 2023, the Trusted Operation of Robotic Vehicles in a Contested Environment (TORVICE) trial combined Australian, UK and US innovation and technology to test leading-edge AI in uncrewed robotic vehicles.

TORVICE tested the ability of autonomous vehicles to complete their missions and preserve network connectivity in a contested environment.



In December 2023, AUKUS Defence ministers announced that resilient and autonomous artificial intelligence technologies would be integrated into national programs in 2024.

The TORVICE trial takes us a step closer to adopting these technologies in the land domain.

The trial comprised UK and US robotic ground vehicles to represent autonomous multi-domain launchers and uncrewed ground vehicles, tasked to conduct long-range precision fires and other associated missions. The vehicles carried no weapons during the trial.

Australian scientists subjected the vehicles to attacks from electronic warfare, electro optical laser, and position, navigation and timing systems to test resilience.

Guy Powell, Principal Adviser, Land Autonomy, UK Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, said networked autonomy would be critical to future warfighting. “Robotic and autonomous systems have the potential to transform the battlefield providing a force multiplier while reducing risk to warfighters”.

“TORVICE allows us to understand robotic autonomous systems' operation in a contested environment and increase resilience of these systems. Working across three nations will accelerate development of robust capable systems.”

Shane Canney, Chief Land and Integrated Force, Defence Science and Technology Group, said interoperability with AUKUS partners on land, at sea, in the air and in cyber space would support the ADF to maintain its strategic military edge.

“Understanding how robotic vehicles react in contested environments accelerates our collective know-how and helps improve the system to overcome such attacks,” Dr Canney said. “Transitioning trusted robotic capabilities into the hands of our warfighters safely and ethically is a priority.”

Kimberly Sablon, Principal Director for Trusted Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy, US Department of Defense, said TORVICE built upon the first AUKUS artificial intelligence and autonomy trial held in the UK.

“The TORVICE project builds upon the work the AUKUS partners demonstrated in Salisbury in April [2023],” Dr Sablon said.

“During this exercise, we performed rigorous red teaming of our autonomous and AI systems to assess and mitigate vulnerabilities and to improve their resilience in contested and complex environments.”

Through AUKUS, Australia, the UK, and the US are collaborating to accelerate collective understanding of AI and autonomy technologies, and how to rapidly field robust, trustworthy AI and autonomy in complex operations.

Australia, the UK and the US continue to uphold the values of safe and responsible use of AI.

Did that really happen?

The following is a summarised version of a story published in Edition 1 of *Straight from the Horse's Mouth: 101 Tall Tales from our Nation's Finest Tradies*.

In the early 70s, our Bde ran a 150km race down the Darling River with Unit teams of 8 paddling flat-bottomed bridging barges. At the campsite at the end of each day, whichever unit won that day would get bragging rights. Most units took this very seriously too! Each boat was allocated a junior officer from another competing unit to act as an observer. Our Workshop boat observer was a young Arty officer. Following the starting gun on Day 1, the race went as expected. All arms-corps competitors paddled their hearts out to take the lead. The RAEME boat however took it easy. We paddled slowly and steadily before pulling into the first bank that was just out of sight from the starting point. Whilst there, we picked up our pre-positioned esky full of "refreshments" and supplies, including a shade canopy. Our young observer objected loudly to this. We gave him the option of joining in or swimming home. He chose wisely. We let the current take us and even had to be towed in by the race rescue boat at night. We were having a great time though! The base camp each of the 5 nights was awesome with showers, toilets, mess tent and sleeping tents. As we arrived last each night, it was obvious that every other team was trying hard as they were exhausted and sunburnt. We were feeling great after a relaxing time on the river. On the last day, the games started; we paddled our hearts out. We did so as we were well rested and feeling no ill-effects from the previous days of racing. We crossed the finish line with the tri-colours flying, well ahead of the other units and to the cheers and applause from town folk and the Mayor. We won! We were then treated as the winners we were and our Arty observer had a new-found respect for RAEME!

RAEME Humour Book

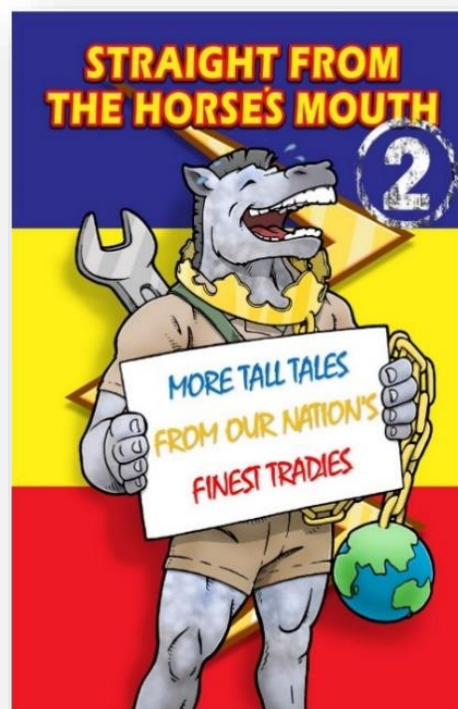
Due to the huge success of the First and Second editions of RAEME's humour book, *Straight from the Horse's Mouth* a third edition is being drafted now. The editors need stories!!

If you have any funny stories to share, new or old, factual or enhanced, please send them to the book editors at FunnyStories@raeme.com.

Remember, stories don't have to be true, just believable!

If you didn't get your order in for Edition 1 or Edition 2, it is not too late. Our Head of Corps Cell was gifted several hundred copies for sale from the Corps shop with all funds raised to be made available to support serving and retired members of our Corps. Ian also has a handful of copies left for sale (\$20 for Edition 1 and \$25 for Edition 2). He will take them to the next Association gathering. but once they are gone, they are gone!

The Head of Corps Cell shop is up and running online but they haven't as yet uploaded their books for sale. When they do, we will let you know but in the interim, requests for books can be sent to Head of Corps Cell at RAEME.HOCCell@defence.gov.au.



That's about it for this edition. If you would like to submit something for future editions, or if you would like to see something published relevant to the Corps, please email us at: Secretary@act.raeme.org.au.

Arte et Marte,

Ian Cook
Secretary
ACT RAEME Association

