

NOTICE TO MARINERS

Newsletter of 32 Small Ship Sqn RAE Association Incorporating RAE Tn

Patron: Colonel K.L. Duncan (Rtd)

President's Message

This year is the 50th anniversary of Landing Ship Medium (LSM) by Harry Chauvel and AV1354. To celebrate this occasion the Association to hold a remembrance ceremony at the Australian War Memorial. Permission has been granted by AO (Mil), the Director, Australian War Memorial no. 97 in the Western Courtyard of the Australian War Memorial in a formal manner and in keeping with the traditions of the Australian War Memorial. The ceremony will be held on the morning of Tuesday 20 October 2009. It is also proposed to hold a dinner that evening at Pavilion on Northbourne Avenue, Dickson.



the delivery of the first two Task Force "Krait Two" AV1353 Brudenell White.

Association committee is planning the Association's plaque. Major General Steven Gower AO War Memorial to visit our plaque the Australian War Memorial in a this ceremony lay a wreath on the

As a past PMC I have fond memories of my time at the Sergeants' Mess at Chowder Bay (dining in nights and back to Chowder Bay nights). The Mess building is currently under major refurbishment and it is planned to open in August as an event and function centre. There have been structural changes to the building including a viewing deck stretching the length of the building to take in the spectacular views of Sydney Harbour. There will also be a function room appropriately named the Sergeant Major's room. The Mess will be operated by the same organisation operating The Tea Room Gunners Barracks (formerly the old WRAAC School Officers' Mess) at Lower Georges Heights. Michael Schultz, one of our long serving Sydney members, is a member of the Sydney Heritage Fleet which is an organisation that restores, maintains and operates a fleet of historically significant vessels. He is looking for volunteers to help with the preservation of these vessels. A notice to this effect has been placed in the newsletter of N.S.W. members. The Fleet's website is www.shf.org.au

Mick Crosbie, former President of the Mosman R.S.L. Sub-Branch emailed me the sad news of the passing of ex-Sergeant John Myers, RASIGS. John enlisted in the Australian Army in September 1963 at the age of 17. His war service included deployment to Borneo during the Indonesian confrontation in 1966 and two tours of Vietnam – first on the AV1353 Harry Chauvel 1967-68 and then with 104 Signal Sqn 1971. John lived in the township of Barraba 90km north of Tamworth on the Manilla River in New South Wales where he was a popular identity and involved in many ex-service activities, Legacy and in 2003 was awarded citizen of the year. Our condolences to his family.

JAMAIS ETRE REMORQUE



July 2009 Notice to Mariners

ANZAC DAY MARCH AND REUNION – SYDNEY

After a week of cold winds and rain in Sydney we got a mild and sunny ANZAC Day. Ocka and his son, Anthony, provided a dram of something bracing to fortify the troops waiting to get underway. Our numbers were up again for the march with about 50 stepping off with the sterling assistance of a Banner Party from 8 Combat Engineer Regiment. Just as well too, otherwise we would have been out of step for most of the march. We had a good band too (pleasant change) which helped considerably.

After the march, and after renewing friendships in a couple of pubs, the troops trickled back to Hunters Hill for the reunion lunch.

Again the numbers were up a bit with 65 signing on. It was good to see a few interstaters among us again with Arthur Jackson from Brisbane and Pat Scott and Daphne from Melbourne. Fred Hartnack once again traveled from Tassie, along with Les and Amy McFadzen from Brisbane. Wally and Michael Blumenfeld were the ACT representatives. For about the twentieth year in a row John Purcell joined us from Cairns. It was good to see that Mike Priest made his biennial run from Chelmsford, Sussex in the UK, and for his initial attendance the award goes to Graeme Inglis who is based in Kobe, Japan. Graeme is the 2nd Engineer on a bulk carrier sailing regularly from Japan to South America.

As usual, the caterers put on a very good buffet lunch, assisted by Kaye Shannon who always ensures that the event goes smoothly. Well done Kaye. The bar was also professionally run by Anthony Murray and Ocka's son in law, Matt Jordon. Ocka organized a shed full of fresh tiger prawns from his mates at Costis Seafoods who always provide them to us at a good price.

Ian Johnston was going to bring his model of the Brudenell White but sadly he couldn't make it as he had to have a hernia operation the day before. It turned out well for him and he's now on the mend.

It was a great afternoon with everyone enjoying themselves. Good to see many ladies attending too. The raffle prizes this year were the ever popular marine clock and barometer sets. These solid brass instruments are set onto highly polished western red cedar. The winners were:

1st Prize: 3" clock and barometer set. Ticket No: 1160 Heather Davey, Springton SA

2nd prize: 6' barometer Ticket No: 1935 Doug Wyness, Mandurah WA

3rd Prize: 5" clock Ticket No: 1330 Arie van Arkel, Geeveston TAS

Lucky Door Prize; Bottle of Black Label and glasses. Les Muras, Dural NSW

Congratulations to the prizewinners and thanks to everyone who participated in the raffle.



ANZAC DAY SYDNEY

Some of the members seen at the Sydney march and meeting



From left Kerry Stuart, Dave Clarke, Arthur Jackson and Pat Scott



Left to right: Graham Berry and Mike Priest





Left to right – Angus McKinnon, Neal Vansleeve and Graeme Inglis.



Left to right: Geoff Clarke, Ralph Pridmore and Garry Smyth



ATTENDANCE AT HUNTERS HILL, ANZAC DAY 2009

Wally Blumenfeld, Holt ACT	Michael Blumenfeld, Holt ACT
John Bryant, Newport Beach NSW	Elizabeth Bryant, Newport Beach NSW
James Brown, Runaway Bay QLD	Cheryle Bushnell, Dural NSW
Bob Clarke , Glenorie NSW	Sue Low, Glenorie NSW
David Clarke, Ashfield NSW	Grant Clarke, Ashfield NSW
George Cosis, Leumeah NSW	Judith Cosis, Leumeah NSW
Ken Duncan, Cremorne NSW	George Fisher, Epping NSW
Brian Goodes, Hunters Hill NSW	John Gerber, North Rocks NSW
Lyn Gerber, North Rocks NSW	Fred Hartnack, Beauty Point TAS
Ken Hull, Noravile NSW	Brian Hart, Woy Woy NSW
Graeme Inglis, Kobe JAPAN	Arthur Jackson, Moorooka QLD
Les Muras, Dural NSW	Ross McMurray, West Pymble NSW
Les McFadzen, Alexandra Hills QLD	Amy McFadzen, Alexandra Hills QLD
Graham Murray, Castle Hill NSW	Beth Murray, Castle Hill NSW
Anthony Murray, Silverdale NSW	Emma Murray, Silverdale NSW
John McGregor, North Avoca NSW	John Marsden, Pymont NSW
Norm Mason, Woronora NSW	Joan Mason, Woronora NSW
Ray Mazurek, Forster NSW	John Purcell, Mount Sheridan QLD
Mike Priest, Chelmsford ENGLAND	Ralph Pridmore, Turramurra NSW
Allan Reading, Engadine NSW	Margaret Davidson, Engadine NSW
Bruce Reilly, Camden Park NSW	Rina Ross, Camden Park NSW
Colin Smith, Cairns QLD	Heather Mae Smith, Cairns QLD
Ashley Sanders, Noraville NSW	Kerry Stuart, Lawson NSW
Ken Shannon, Carlingford NSW	Kaye Shannon, Carlingford NSW
Garry Smyth, Westleigh NSW	Geoff Summergreene, Neutral Bay NSW
Jackie Hardie, Neutral Bay NSW	Peter Tierney, Saratoga NSW
Pat Scott, Gladstone Park VIC	Daphne Scott, Gladstone Park VIC
Neal Vansleave, North Rocks NSW	Graham Berry, Bondi NSW
Brian Waites, Yarramundi NSW	Val Waites, Yarramundi NSW
Geoff Clarke, Wamberal NSW	Matt Corton, Glenmore Park NSW
Hans Kumpel, Sydney NSW	John Pulis, Concord NSW
Angus McKinnon, Riverhills Qld	

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's annual general meeting will be hold on Thursday 5 November at 1100hrs. The location is the R&SL Memorial Hall, corner of Alexander and Ady Streets Hunter's Hill.

Come along and support your Association. Refreshments will be provided.

Please circle your diaries, calendars or put a note on the fridge.



July 2009 Notice to Mariners

ANZAC DAY – CANBERRA

This Canberra Report is brought to you by our Poet Laureate, Speedie Sahariv who once again ventured out into the inclement conditions of our national capital:

“The weather turned out to be normal for Canberra around this time of year; cold, blustery and wet! The RAE in Canberra marches under a banner incorporating the RNZE and the RE, and normally gets a good roll up with a sprinkling of visitors.

This year members who served in 32 Small Ship Squadron RAE who attended and were spotted were: Neil Hurst, who brought his grandson along on what Neil termed as an Educational Trip, Warren Barsley was there mixing with the troops, Frank Poole who as everyone fondly knows for his ability at organizing events, and of course myself, creating a nuisance as always!

After the march all the Sappers adjourned to Olim’s Hotel (the old Ainslie Rex) for a bit of a get-together. It was here that someone approached me and asked if I was Small Ships. He had a bloke in the foyer who served with us (32)! I went and found a good looking young bloke (as all Small Ship Squadron blokes are) holding a beer in his hand and the other outstretched to shake mine! “Me mane’s Ron Woods,” he said. “I was a Nasho and served with the Squadron in 1968/69 on the Clive Steele”. The chat then progressed to the inevitable “Do you remember...Do you know”... Etc, etc.

Ron hails from Townsville and was down in this part of the world to bring us some rain – or so he said. Anyway he was very successful! Also, he’s been in contact with a few of the other blokes including Bobby Freeman and Derek Smith.

This ends the Canberra Report for 2009, I hope you all had a day to remember and not too many worries or tears shed.”



Ron Woods, left, with Speedie Sahariv at Canberra



ANZAC DAY – ADELAIDE

Les Dennis, who normally attends the Sydney ANZAC Day services, decided to spend the week end in Adelaide. While there he managed to catch up with some old mates and write the following report:

“I woke up in the morning to a cold, seriously wet and very windy day. It didn’t deter those hardy souls who turned out and marched through the streets of Adelaide. The few guys associated in the past with Chowder Bay and Small Ships marched with the Engineers (SVN) contingent and have links with the WA branch and their Engineers. The route has very little shelter and I was surprised at how many people lined the streets in the pouring rain, and the number of serving personnel marching without any wet weather clothing.

After a little confusion I made initial contact with Tich Freeman at the Torrens Parade ground where the march terminated. Then we met up with Bob Russell, Dave Miller, Ronnie Gibbins and his wife Olive, and that old warrior, Joe (the WO) Laxton. Joe is less mobile these days but is certainly very alert and still has his sense of humour. I spent some time chatting away in an outsize marquee erected on the parade ground which was crowded with ex-service personnel and their families and friends. As well, a two-up game was well patronized, operating in the large hall which is normally a war museum but was taken over for this purpose on the day.

A few days later I paid a visit to Joe at his home in a retirement village. I was made very welcome and we spent a few hours chatting and reminiscing about friends and acquaintances from years gone by. Joe has an impressive photo album and every photo evoked great memories. All too soon it was time to go, and I promised to keep in touch with Joe. He was unaware that we had an active association and asked me to pass on his regards to all who may remember him. And I just hope that I look this good as he when I turn ninety two (his current age).”

Note: We recently received word from Mick Ryan that Joe was admitted to the Repatriation General Hospital, Adelaide, with poor circulation to one of his legs and we subsequently found out on 6 July 2009 that he was having the lower portion of his leg removed. Although Joe is as strong as an ox, at his age such an operation would knock him around a bit. Good luck Joe, we are thinking of you and hope all goes well.

Further Update from Al Harwood through Mick Ryan - Joe is still waiting for the operation. The doctors had turned around and said they were going to take both legs and he said it was too much to handle. He told them to take one and let him recover before they take the other. They have him on drips and painkillers for a couple of days and he was a little more comfortable yesterday having had some sleep. He feels it may be Thursday or Friday before they do anything else.

He was very tired still but clearly in less pain. Didn't stop him telling me some great stories after I showed him the Christmas photo you sent around. I also passed on the email messages I had received. If anyone else wants me to take any messages, they can certainly send them to me and I will pass them on.

He also made the comment that he supposed everyone was saying they wished they had cut off his right leg years ago before he booted them up the bum with it. Anybody wishing to contact Joe can you do it through Al Harwood Warrant Officer Class One. Regimental Sergeant Major-Central Region [alan.harwood1@defence.gov.au]).





Dave Miller looking as if he lost the lot at two-up, with Tich Freeman



Joe Laxton, left with Les Dennis.



ANZAC DAY – PERTH

Mick Ryan reported that the wreath was laid at the Water Transport Memorial by Charlie Deans at the Engineer Dawn Service at 13 Field Squadron, Karrakatta. Also, well done Bruce Wiltshire who cleaned up and prepared the site. They had a good turnout for the march as they usually do, with most of them returning to the Ryan Club at Karrakatta to a well earned lunch and reunion.



Mick Ryan, left background and Charlie Deans in Perth



The Water Transport Memorial, Karrakatta



NEW MEMBERS

Ken Pountney served in 32 Small Ship Squadron on *AV1356 Clive Steele* in Vietnam. He lives at Teloepa NSW.

Lawence Toppinen served in Vietnam with 17 Constuction Squadron. He also served with 30 Terminal Squadron, 33 Terminal Squadron and 18 Transport Company. He lives at Swan Hill, Victoria.

Barrie Greenberger served in Vietnam with 11 Movement Control Group. He also served with the Army Apprentices School, 17, 21 and 24 Construction Squadrons, 10 Movement Control Group, 2 Movement Control Training Group and 32 Movement Control Centre. Barrie lives at Port Fairy, Victoria.

Angus McKinnon served with 32 Small Ship Squadron in Vietnam on *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* and *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee*. Angus lives at Riverhills, Queensland.

MISSING MEMBERS (The two Daves)

We've had a couple of requests for ex-32 Small Ship Squadron members. Details are:

1. **Sapper Dave McIntosh** was an electrician on *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee* in Vietnam from April to June 1966. George Venables, ex-709 Signals Troop, would like to contact Vietnam veterans, including Dave, to march together on ANZAC Day 2010 in North Queensland. If anyone can assist please contact George on 0407 105 950 or guven@bigpond.com
2. **Private Dave Barnes** was a cook on *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee* in Vietnam from January to June 1967. A mate of his, Ian Granland, would like to find him. If anyone knows the whereabouts of Dave please contact Ian on 02 4388 3207 or ian@tumbi.id.au

Passed On

Sir John Holland AC (21 June 1914 – 31 May 2009)

Clifton Vaughan Holland was born on 21 June 1914, the eighth of ten children, and was raised on his family's farm on the Mornington Peninsula, south-east of Melbourne. He acquired the informal name **John** at an early age, and he was always known as John Holland thereafter. He joined the army when WW2 broke out, and served in the Middle East, Greece and the Pacific, becoming a lieutenant-colonel. He returned to civil engineering, setting up his own business in 1949

Sir John was a strong sponsor of the Corps and many a junior officer that rose to high office can usually be found to have had a detachment to John Holland Construction.



VALE - BRIAN JOHN PEARSON

21 December 1945 – 27 April 2009

This Eulogy was given by John Spindler at Brian's funeral:

"I stand here today saddened and downhearted at the sudden and untimely passing of a friend and fellow Sapper, Brian John Pearson. On behalf of 32 Small Ship Squadron and Army Water Transport RAE, we join with Brian's many friends and offer our sincere condolences to his wife and sole mate, Sue – sons Daniel and Lloyd, daughter Coby, their partners, his beloved Grandchildren and his wider family.

Brian 'Piggy' Pearson as he was affectionately nicknamed was a conscripted National Serviceman who proudly served his country as a member of 32 Small Ship Squadron RAE. Brian served as a marine engineer on board the Army's landing ships some called "McHale's Navy". The ships were designed to land equipment on beaches, were flat bottomed and rolled and pitched in the slightest of seas. Brian sailed on a number of trips in stormy seas including to New Guinea, New Zealand and King Island.

The living conditions on board, some say were akin to those on a submarine, were harsh and were endured with stoicism and good humour by a bunch of young Australians, the majority of which had no sea going experience prior to entering the Unit. As a team we always managed to get the job done.

Upon reflection, I think it is fair to say that the harsh conditions seemed to bring out the best of spirit in the young men. Brian had a great sense of humour, sometimes a wicked sense of humour; he showed the best of spirit – just what was needed for the conditions endured. In 32 Small Ships / Water Transport there was a sense of belonging to a family rather than having a job. The sense of family remains with us to this day.

It is said that one doesn't seem to appreciate the days we have in our life until we let so many pass that are blank without good memories captured. There will always be fond memories of our brother and shipmate, Brian 'Piggy' Pearson.

Brian, may you sail in the night sky with the stars to guide you, in peace, knowing that the footprint you left upon this earth will be fondly remembered. Your shipmates all miss you".

Lest We Forget.



July 2009 Notice to Mariners

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARRIVAL OF LSMs

On 31 December 1959 LSMs AV1353 *Harry Chauvel* and AV1354 *Brudenell White* arrived in Sydney via Guam, Rabaul and Brisbane, from Yokosuka Japan on the Task Force “Krait Two” delivery voyage. The second two ships, LSMs AV1355 *Vernon Sturdee* and AV1356 *Clive Steele*, arrived in Brisbane on 4 July 1960 and Sydney a few days later.

To mark the 50th anniversary of this significant event it is planned to have a ceremony for members, partners and friends at our unit plaque at the Australian War Memorial on Tuesday 20 October 2009 and an Anniversary Dinner that evening. The Albury Ambush week end is on 16 – 18 October and this will give those people who attended this event the opportunity to participate in the 50th anniversary should they wish to do so.

Broad details of the AWM ceremony and dinner on Tuesday 20 October 2009 are:

Australian War Memorial Service

Dress: Coat, tie and medals

- 0900 Poppy laying service at Unit Plaque
- 0945 Wreath laying ceremony at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
- 1045 Morning Tea followed by a one hour highlight tour of the galleries

Dinner

Venue: Pavilion on Northbourne Hotel
242 Northbourne Avenue
DICKSON ACT 2602

Timings: 1830 for 1900

Dress: Coat and tie.

Cost: Approximately \$50.00 per person for a three course dinner. A cash bar will operate throughout the dinner.

Accommodation: The hotel has over 160 rooms and a double room costs around \$165 per night. There are many other hotels, motels and caravan parks in the area.

Returns

This is a “Heads Up” showing the general outline for the ceremony and dinner. In early September registration forms will be sent to members giving all the details and costs. Details of accommodation venues will also be shown. So please think about attending this important event. Also, for those who can't make it to the Albury Ambush why not spend a couple of days in Canberra and commemorate the LSMs 50th anniversary.



VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY

A Vietnam Veterans' Day Commemoration Service will be conducted at the RAE Vietnam Memorial at the School of Military Engineering, Steele Barracks, on Tuesday 18 August 2009 commencing at 1100 hrs. This invitation is for all members of the public, Sappers, ex-Sappers and their guests. It is requested that a lounge suit or a coat, tie and medals be worn by the gentlemen. Please assemble at 1045 hrs at the RAE Vietnam Memorial which is located on Bircross Road. Show your driver's licence to the guard at the front gate, turn right at the first intersection and follow the signs to the car park. During the service an address will be given by John Leane who headed the works element of the RAE Detachment of the Australian Logistic Support Company at Bien Hoa, Vietnam from May 1965.

Following the service a barbeque lunch will be served at the Sportsman's Club for \$15.00 per head. A cash bar will be operating. This will also be a good opportunity to visit the various displays in the Heritage Precinct in the vicinity of the Memorial. If you can attend this ceremony please fill out the form below. If you just wish to attend the ceremony and not stay for lunch there will obviously be no cost.



Yes, I will attend the Commemoration Ceremony/ Lunch on 18 August 2009

NAME:..... \$15.00

ADDRESS:.....

PHONE NO:.....

GUESTS NAMES\$.00

Total \$.00

Please make cheques and money orders out to: **RAE Vietnam Memorial** and post to:

RAE Vietnam Veterans Day
PO Box 165
MOOREBANK NSW 1875



A LITTLE IRISH MYSTERY #2

In the March 2009 newsletter we ran a story about the tug, *Tulagi*, a British vessel which was earmarked for service with the Australian Army but never arrived. On reading this story, one of our members (and an ex-skipper), Tony Batt, sent this follow-up about *Tulagi's* big brother, the TIG:

“This class of tug was a standard TID (Tug-Inshore-Dock) and was based on the Thames lighterage tugs of the time, with 182 built to order by the Ministry of War Transport (MOWT), between 1943 and 1945. As the UK shipbuilding standard was riveting, the hulls were prefabricated in eight parts by any manufacturer who had a welding practice, then assembled and fitted out by R. Dunston at Hessele on the River Humber or at their other canal yard at Thorne, and also by W. Pickersgill at Sunderland. A hull was put together in less than a week.

The engines installed were 220 IHP steam reciprocating, driving a single screw. Initially they were coal fired, the most common power source in the UK. However, they became oil fired to allow world wide transfers. Many were re-engined after WWII, as diesels became available, particularly when sold to commercial companies, but certainly not all. I was on TID 53 in 1969 at Singapore, and she had been re-engined in 1953 but there were still SR TIDs around the Port. I am not sure of the number for *Tulagi*, but it may have been TID 45, built 1943 and transferred to Marchwood in December 1952.

General Specifications: Length 65ft, Beam 17ft, Draft 7ft 4ins, Displacement 124 tons.



This is an RE TIG at Marchwood. It is likely that it would have originally been delivered from Canada under the Mutual Aid Board. Some 235 were built on behalf of the MOWT (235 steel, 30 wood). They were of similar size and dimensions, but all powered with 3/400 diesels. I cannot read the nameplate but it may have been the *Tobruk*. I did not serve at Marchwood, only a long interest in tugs, so took the opportunity to make enquiries while posted to Chowder Bay.”

Thanks for that interesting story, Tony. The TIDs must have been a very popular design.



HOW AN OLD SHEARER GOT A “POST HOLE DIGGER”

by Ralph Pridmore

I've always been interested in painting and colour. (1) How do we see colour? (2) Do we all see the same colours? (3) What's the physical difference between say red and blue? (4) Do cats and dogs and insects see colour? (Answers below.) Except night vision, which is a poorly-focused system in only black and white, our vision IS colour vision. The visual acuity of human colour vision is amazingly good. Vision is by far our most accurate sense, instantly giving us the outline, brightness, colour, three-dimensional shape, and approximate distance of an object or scene. Can touch, smell, taste, and hearing do that? Nope, nor can they sense anything outside the planet's atmosphere; if the moon blew up, you would not hear or smell a thing. To us humans, seeing is believing; in contrast, a dog's best sense is smell. Our visual cortex is highly developed, as is a dog's smell cortex.

Anyway, I found my paintings just weren't appreciated for their true brilliance. I'd say to a friend, "Here's a present! One of my paintings!" And they'd run the hell away screaming, "No! Not one of those!" So I kept my day job in the Army but, still interested in colour, in 1973 I started reading everything on colour and vision. In 1976 I returned from Royal Military College of Science in UK (where they tried to teach us some military science, including information-gathering techniques such as radar, thermal imaging, aerial- and colour-photography), with a confidential report that said I was an idiot with no idea of science or much else. I'd got up the instructors' noses by complaining that my thesis (on "Military Uses of Colour") was better than the E grade they'd given it, and asking for an expert to re-assess it. The Lieutenant Colonel instructor who marked my thesis told me that as an ex-shearer in the damned colonies, I couldn't possibly have the education to get any better than an E grade, but he agreed (with a sour smile) to send it to their colour vision consultant in Oxford University. This bloke reported that my thesis was excellent, so the instructor replaced my E grade with an A, but he very kindly made very sure I got an E or D for the next two subjects in the course.

A year or two later, back in Oz, as a hobby I was inventing and demonstrating electronic technical aids for blind or deaf folk (one of which, to allow blind people to "see" colours by representing colours as sounds, was taken up by a university and built commercially). In 1977, I submitted a scientific paper to the Defence Science and Technology (DS&T) scientific journal but some Principal Scientific Officer knocked it back saying it was as complex and silly as claiming the pyramids were built by aliens! A bit rude I felt ... so I thought, bugger it, I'll send it to the best scientific journal on optics in the world (Journal of the Optical Society of America, founded 100 years ago), who immediately accepted it and published it in 1978. (Colour vision was treated as physiological optics.) When I told this to the Chief of DS&T, pointing out that his piddling little journal had refused my submission, there was a bit of a stink and the particular Principal Scientific Officer was asked to explain himself; he was sacked later that year, for formal reasons other than my complaint.

Meanwhile, driven by curiosity I was researching and publishing scientific papers in international journals on various aspects of colour vision including my special interest in complementary colours, which are any pair of colours that admix a given white (or given illuminant), and are basic to standard colour measurement. After about 25 years, I'd published some 30 papers, including half a dozen on complementary colours. I had some controversial (of



course: if it's not controversial it's not interesting) ideas on a broad theory of the physiology and roles of complementary colours in colour vision, and realised that if and when these ideas were published, I'd be challenging conventional theories of colour vision and my opponents might try to belittle me by pointing out: (1) I had no Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD, also known as a Post hole Digger, as every scientific researcher is supposed to have), nor even a Masters degree, nor even a science degree or degree of any kind whatsoever, and (2) heavens above, I had been a professional boxer and a shearer for 5 years as a young man when any decent scientist would have been studying in university, and (3) therefore I was an uneducated idiot (as the Poms at RMC of S had already told me).

So I reckoned the time had come to get myself one of those Post hole Diggers (PhDs). Most of my scientific colleagues/ friends/ acquaintances had always assumed I had a PhD or a Masters, without ever asking. Now, I had some Leaving Certificate subjects when I joined the Army to go to OCS Portsea in mid 1963 (at 23) but none in science, so no university was keen on accepting me to start a science degree. Sure, I could do some studies to show willing and be accepted as a mature student, but doing an honours degree (the minimum standard to start a PhD) would take some 3 years, plus another 3 or 4 years to do the PhD; a total 6 or 7 years.

I was at a loss until some friends told me my previously published scientific papers (at that stage, about 30 papers, now nearly 40) would be accepted by most universities as more than sufficient qualification to start a PhD. I phoned a couple of universities, was encouraged by some sympathetic souls, and Macquarie University's Prof Max Coltheart (tickled that I'd published papers with no degree) volunteered to be my principal supervisor so I started there in mid 2007. (My assistant supervisor was mortified to find I'd published more papers than her! But I was twice her age!) Some universities including Macquarie have a 50/50 rule for publications-based PhDs, where previous publications can make up half the PhD thesis, and new research since joining the uni (published or accepted for publication by a scientific journal) makes up the other half of the thesis.

There are 3 to 5 papers (depending on length) required for the PhD so I chose my subject ("Roles of Complementary Colours in Colour Vision"), chose two of my already published papers as half the thesis, and started to research and write the remaining two or three papers. Well, at that stage I was running hot and publishing about 4 papers a year, working from home as usual. (I've never applied for funds/grants, which are almost as difficult as and far more boring than doing the actual research). So I'd written the required three papers within a year. But ... the university had a minimum of two years and an expectation of three or four years to do a PhD.

I applied for exception to the rule, was allowed, and submitted my thesis within a year of joining the uni. After examination by 3 examiners, I was awarded the PhD in Cognitive Science in July 2008 and given the piece of paper in the September 2008 graduation ceremony. At 68, of course I was the oldest PhD candidate in the uni. Me and Jonathon were the oddest PhD candidates in the uni; he was 22 with green and purple hair and several plastic rings in his nose and ears, doing a PhD on Ethics.

Yes, Ethics. At the grad ceremony, I remember stepping onto the stage and starting the long walk to where the Vice Chancellor, looking bored, waited to hand me my certificate (as I



approached briskly on my self-command, “To the front, March!”), when suddenly his head and eyes snapped round to lock onto me, a white-haired balding gentleman marching determinedly at him, arm-swing shoulder high. He glanced around as if to confirm he was in the real world, and back to me again, with a startled expression and then a smile. Can’t blame him really. I was some 20 years older than him.

So that’s “the few lines” you asked for, Ross McMurray. Hope it’s not too long.

Answers. (1) We see colour by turning physical stimuli (e.g. wavelength and power of light) into sensations in the brain. (2) Yes, we all see the same colours but with minor individual differences, except the colour blind. (3) The physical difference is that short wavelengths of light striking the eye stimulate blue sensation, mid-wavelengths green, and long wavelengths red. (4) Yes, all animals including insects operating in daylight see in colour (but not night animals like possums and owls).

Bio Sketch: Ralph Pridmore. Born India 1939, educated Scotland and England, emigrated at 17, worked on the land (NSW, QLD) 7 years including 5 in the shearing sheds (university of life). Officer Cadet School, Portsea, 1963-4. Got B passes in Long Transportation Course, Transportation Centre 1965, and Basic Officers Engineering Course, SME 1967. Was a Lieutenant or Captain Troop Commander in 30 Terminal Squadron, Corps Training Squadron SME, 18 Field Squadron, and 21 Support Troop in 1 Field Squadron Group South Vietnam in 1968-9. 1969-1973: Staff Officer 19 Commander Royal Engineer (Works), Captain Instructor Operations Wing SME, 2IC 30 Terminal Squadron, Operations Officer HQ 10 Terminal Regiment (promoted Major 1974). Attended Royal Military College of Science (UK) in 1974-5, then Staff Officer in Army Office and HQ Field Force Command. 1979-83: Operations Officer HQ 10 Terminal Regiment (again) and OC Army Maritime School, Chowder Bay. Resigned 1983 after 20 years. Then worked in my small company renovating/building houses, inventing technical aids for the blind or deaf, making/repairing stained glass windows, and researching colour vision.

[Publishers note: Colours ...eh...I remember Ralph being the DS of the WO Qual course at SME in 1974. This newly promoted Major was invited to the Sgt’s Mess for the course break-up. Little did he know that ‘someone’ had hidden a large pair of scissors behind the bar in anticipation of Ralph wearing a flash brightly coloured tie to the function. Yep he came with a magnificent tie only to leave with about 25mm of it left below the knot. Dunno why he was pretty pissed off the next day!]

ASSOCIATION’S WEB PAGE

The association’s web page (www.32smallshipsqn.org.au) is now up and running. You can now place orders for the Association’s merchandise, contact the Committee members or comment (and complain) through the ‘Contacts’ Section.

We are now looking for contributions from association members. Have a look at “My first voyage” under ‘Nostalgia’. See if you can write a similar story as I’m sure that everyone would be interested. Any subject, as long as it doesn’t in-criminate anyone is welcome. Any photos as part of the story are welcome. Remember, it is your web page.



DONATIONS

Many thanks to the following members who made donations to the Association recently:

Bill Bott, Ken Burchill, John Bonnett, Brian Clulow, Phil Cameron, Ron Cavell, Mal Campbell, Ken Duncan, Keith Ford, Ivan Greenbank, Graeme Inglis, Ian Johnston, Jack Lawson, Kenneth Loadsman, Bob Madgwick, Bruce Mansfield, John McGregor, Noel Norton, John Pedder, Ian Porteous, Bruce Potter, Michael Schultz, John Sahariv, Brian Willcock, Bruce Wiltshire and Doug Whitwam. Your generosity is very much appreciated. Please advise if I have omitted anyone.

How much are your medals worth?

(Info from Shane Murphy, Precision Medal Mounting, Queanbeyan.)

Association members need to be aware of the significant value of their honors and awards.

Not only do they have high sentimental value to the recipient and their families etc, they have in most instances great monetary value to boot. Therefore some serious consideration should be given to the fact that they are a substantial asset within the household when considering house and contents insurance.

The inclusion of medals as a special item in the household insurance is most often overlooked. Below is a brief list of the more common medals awarded to Australian Service Men and Women and their current value. Food for thought and you can quickly do the sums. Top end value relates to a medal in its original box untouched and unmounted. Bottom end value relates to medal in very poor condition with no ribbon or mounting.

Name of medal	Bottom End Value	Top End Value
Australian Active Service Medal 45 - 75	\$243.00	\$365.00
Vietnam Campaign	\$365.00	\$730.00
Vietnam Logistics	\$490.00	\$800.00
Australian Defence Medal		\$234.00
Defence Force Service Medal + \$25 per clasp	\$243.00	\$490.00
Defence Long Service Medal + \$25 per clasp	\$490.00	\$730.00
Australian Active Service Medal 75 – (depending on clasp)	\$490.00	\$3700.00
Australian Service Medal 75 - (depending on clasp)	\$490.00	\$3700.00
National Medal +\$25 per clasp	\$365.00	\$490.00



Property for sale

(Can be now ordered through the Association Web Page)

Ties (new stock now arrived)	\$25.00	LSM Lapel Badge	\$12.00
Association Book	\$30.00	Collar Badge	\$6.00
25th Anniversary Plaque	\$25.00	Association Woven Patch	\$8.00
Association Cap Navy Blue	\$15.00		
Association Polo Shirt (navy blue only) made to order			\$30.00
Book "Rolling Through 32" (includes postage)			\$45.00

Please contact Ken Shannon 02 9871 4667 or property@32smallshipsqn.org.au

Disclaimer

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee of 32 Small Ship Sqn RAE Association Incorporating RAE Tn.

Contributions

Contributions are welcome from members and their families of anything that is of interest of members. So, if you would like to contribute please send in an electronic format (preferred) or a typed version. Just send it to the editor at

editor@32smallshipsqn.org.au

or to

**32 Small Ship Squadron RAE Association Inc RAE Tn.
Box 33
12 Philip Mall
WEST PYMBLE NSW 2073**

Email and Postal Addresses

Please let the Association know if you get a new email address or change your current one. The same goes for your postal address. Remember, we want to keep in touch with you!



July 2009 Notice to Mariners

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