

NOTICE TO MARINERS

Newsletter 32 Small Ship Squadron Association Incorporating RAE Tn

Patron: Colonel K.L. Duncan (Rtd)

President's Message

Lieutenant-Colonel (Rtd) John Bonnet passed away after a prolonged fight with cancer in the afternoon of Friday 18 November at Calvary Private Hospital. The funeral was held at the Canberra Crematorium on Friday afternoon 25 November.



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John served his time at sea with BP and obtained his Masters Certificate. After that he accepted a position with Joe Lyons, a substantial food manufacturer producing bread, cakes, pies, tea and coffee. Sir Joseph Lyons also founded the U.K.'s Territorial Force, now known as the Army Reserve. John worked his way up to a management position. However, he was only there for about two years when he saw an advertisement in a Merchant Navy magazine for the positions of Master Mariners in the Australian Army.

Tanks for about 10 years and obtained shore employment and worked for Joe Lyons and Co. The company was a

substantial food manufacturer producing bread, cakes, pies, tea and coffee. Sir Joseph Lyons also founded the U.K.'s Territorial Force, now known as the Army Reserve. John worked his way up to a management position. However, he was only there for about two years when he saw an advertisement in a Merchant Navy magazine for the positions of Master Mariners in the Australian Army.

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He applied and was accepted for a five year short service commission, was enlisted in June 1965 and was posted to 32 Small Ship Squadron. He did a number of voyages – one as XO on the AV Vernon Sturdee and then as OC of AV Harry Chauvel supporting the Hobart Regatta.

John commanded the first LSM to operate in South Vietnam on 6 May 1966. He was posted to Canberra and served as SO2 Marine Superintendent during work on LSM MK11 and the logistic ship program.

Elsewhere in this newsletter Peter Tierney, our Treasurer, has requested that if you make any payments by direct debit bank transfer to please follow up on your transactions with a note or email to him stating what the payment is for. The procedure for direct debit has a limit of usually 15 characters which in most cases is not enough to state the details of the payment. This includes your name which will take up most of this. Please read what he has to say and try to comply.

On behalf of the Patron and committee my best wishes to all members and their families for a merry Christmas and a safe New Year.

Ocka

JAMAIS ETRE REMORQUE



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VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY – SCHOOL OF MILITARY ENGINEERING

At Holsworthy on Thursday 18 August 2016 the RAE Vietnam Memorial Committee commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. Over 100 people turned up on a bright, sunny morning. Supporting the service was a bugler from the Australian Army band – Sydney, a piper from Ingleburn – Campbelltown Pipes and Drums and a choir from Wattle Grove Public School. SME provided a Catafalque Party and Flag Orderly. SME also allowed use of the Chapel, the Chaplain, the Chapel Annex where lunch was served, and the Caterers who delivered a great buffet lunch. The members of the RAE Vietnam Memorial Committee, headed up by Jack Peel, worked hard to make sure the day was a success. It was.

The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Markus Ludwig welcomed the guests, supported by his RSM, Warrant Officer Scott Middlemis. The CO spoke about the support given to returned servicemen and women by such organisations as Walking Wounded, Soldier On and Mates4Mates. These charities were established to provide rehabilitation and recovery programs for personnel who are experiencing hardships after their time in service. It was a well thought out and evocative speech, and warmly received.

2016 is the 100th anniversary of the battles of Pozieres and Fromelles on the Western Front during World War I and Wattle Grove Public School Choir sang a tribute to those who fell.

Initially the service was held in the All Saints Chapel where the Honour Roll was read, followed by a speech by the Guest Speaker, our Patron, Colonel Ken Duncan. A wreath was laid by Norm Mason on behalf of 32 Small Ship Squadron.



Ken and Dawn Duncan entering the chapel





The Regimental Sergeant Major, School of Military Engineering, Warrant Officer Scott Middlemis, Jack Peel and the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Markus Ludwig.



Carole Peel, Dawn Duncan, Ken Duncan and Wilf Gregg





Norm Mason, Ross McMurray and Brian Waites



Sappers with Explosive Detection Dogs undergoing training at the ceremony. Luckily they weren't required.





George and Judith Cosis



Frank Poole, Wilf Greg and Cec Weekes.





Chaplain Su accompanied by Ken Duncan, the CO and RSM



Wattle Grove School Choir



LONG TAN DAY - 18 AUGUST 2016 - SME

A presentation by Colonel Ken Duncan

Good Morning fellow Veterans, a special good morning to Ms Robertson and the staff and students of the Wattle Grove Public School, Member for Holsworthy, Ladies and Gentlemen. Today is of course the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle at Long Tan, South Vietnam, at a time when we were all young, fit and ready for anything. Today, the 18th of August has become our nation's day of remembrance for all involved in the Vietnam conflict.

But what happened at Long Tan and why did it happen? There has been much conjecture over the years as to why the North Vietnamese and Vietcong were positioning for such a battle. The generally accepted view is that they were probing the Australian defences with a view to a direct attack on our relatively new base at Nui Dat. The aim was to cause major casualties and a re-think of Australia's actions and our contributions to SVN.

The fact remains however, that D Coy of 6 RAR, with just over one hundred men, under command of Major Harry Smith was confronted by 275 Regt and D445 Mobile Battalion on this day fifty years ago. With support from Artillery at Nui Dat and later with ammunition deliveries by APC's and RAAF Helicopters, our soldiers fought into the night and, by next morning, around 600 enemy soldiers had been killed or severely wounded.

Our Australian forces also suffered, with 18 soldiers killed and more than 24 wounded, but the fact remains the Australian Task Force base at Nui Dat was not fundamentally challenged again. That battle established an Australian dominance over Phouc Tuy Province for the duration of our involvement in South Vietnam.

In addition to Long Tan there are this year also many other anniversaries or highlights of our nation's military involvements around the world. Some good - some bad. One item of particular note this year was that we saw the return to Australia, after all those years, of the remains of Cpl Bob Bowtell, the first Australian Sapper killed in South Vietnam.

The worst event ever of course was at Fromelles in July 1916, when on the one day some 5553 Australian fell. The worst 24 hours in our nation's history.

This year is also the 65th anniversary of the battles of Kapyong and Mary Ang San in that "forgotten war", Korea. It is the fiftieth anniversary of the end of Indonesian Confrontation, the twenty fifth anniversary of the end of the first Gulf War and the seventy fifth anniversary of the siege of Tobruk.

Tobruk was of course a major Sapper event with massive field defences and minefields, but I want to touch on a slightly different aspect of the siege, and our Corps - the birth of Water Transport and the Transportation Service of RAE, 75 years ago.

The garrison of Australian troops in Tobruk was surrounded and cut off from all re-supply by land by the numerical strength and dominance of the German forces. The wharves and piers of Tobruk harbour had been destroyed by the enemy who controlled the sky with their fighters and bomber aircraft.

Although naval vessels laden with supplies and ammunition could enter the harbour under cover of darkness, the discharge of their cargoes could rarely be completed before the approaching daylight forced them to weigh anchor and depart the confines of the harbour. Soldiers of the RAE



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volunteered to try and activate some Italian tugs and lighters that were lying disused around the port so that the ships could be fully discharged in mid harbour and still return to sea before daylight. My old Chief Engineer the late WO1 Brownie Taylor was one of those involved and would have been known to some of you. Anyhow, these Sappers were successful and this method of cargo handling with tugs and lighters allowed the garrison to survive and later break out against the Axis forces.

Closer to home, at that time, the Japanese had captured Malaya, Singapore, most of the islands of the now Indonesia and were well established in Papua New Guinea and other islands to our north. Our Army was having major problems in the supply and maintenance of the troops on land, as well as with casualty evacuation.

Army asked Navy to urgently provide and operate a fleet of small, shallow draft vessels to provide this support, however Navy responded that it would take them at least another two years to develop such a capability.

The Engineer in Chief at the time, Maj Gen Clive Steele, recalling the soldiers working on Tobruk Harbour, perhaps in normal Sapper fashion accepted the task, using soldiers of the Royal Australian Engineers. Hence, a Water Transport organization was born into the Australian Army and which grew to some 15,000 men and over 1000 watercraft by wars end in 1945. These Army craft operated around Australia and Papua New Guinea and on into Borneo and later with the occupation forces in Japan and the United Nations Forces in Korea.

Post war, Army vessels continued to support the developing nation of Papua New Guinea using wartime craft, however by the late 1950's these craft were too slow and required a heavy maintenance commitment. Replacement vessels were needed and an added impetus was given to this need by Australia's procurement of Centurion tanks from Britain, to combat a renewed threat from our north. However, once the tanks had arrived at Puckapunyal in Central Victoria, our Army lacked the means to deploy them further afield, and the Corps was again required to assist.

This resulted in the purchase of four Landing Ships Medium, or LSM's from the US Navy to be crewed and operated by the Corps. Primarily designed to carry tanks into battle, they could also transport plant, cranes, trucks and the like, as well as properly prepared general cargo.

And here we have another anniversary as this year is the fiftieth anniversary of the first deployment of Army vessels to South Vietnam. In April of 1966 the LSM "Vernon Sturdee" and the Army cargo vessel "John Monash" departed Sydney for South Vietnam, mainly laden with Sapper plant and equipment for the development of the Task Force Base at Nui Dat. From then on our ships shuttled between Australia and Vietnam for the duration of our involvement and always we retained one LSM on station in Vietnamese waters.

By 1974 the LSM fleet had reached the end of their economic life and all were disposed of, while at the same time reorganization within the Army saw our remaining watercraft capability transferred to the new Corps, The Royal Australian Corps of Transport.

But now, coming right back to this Long Tan Day, we must always remember that our soldiers fought a monumental battle at Long Tan, with extreme bravery, in the face of a numerically superior and a well-trained enemy. But also on this day we must remember all who served in Vietnam, regardless of the tasks and roles which they performed. We remember as well as the Sappers, our Infantry, the Armour, the Artillery, the Signallers and of course "The Team", as well as all the support services.



On this day, the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, let us honour and commemorate all those who served in Vietnam, particularly those Australians who died, but as well our comrades who were wounded, injured or have become ill as a result of that conflict.

And, in conclusion, on this our commemoration day, let us give thought to the young men and women of today's Armed Forces who are, on this very day, going in harm's way in many parts of the world honouring our Nation's commitments to our allies and to our treaty obligations.

Lest We Forget.

Publisher's Note: Kevin 'Brownie' Taylor told me he had his 15th birthday in Tobruk and like Len Sproule they both received a fortune when they bought back their DFRB at 5.5% of their wartime salary.



Colonel Ken Duncan delivering 'Thank You' cards to choir members of Wattle Grove Public School

Those from 32 who attended were:

Ken and Dawn Duncan, Jack and Carole Peel, George and Judith Cosis, Brian and Val Waites, Cec Weekes (President AWTA NSW), Ross McMurray, Keith Devine, Peter Atkinson, Frank Poole (also representing the Army Apprentices Association) and Norm Mason.



VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY AT DONGARA DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

This is an extract from an article the Principal wrote in the Dongara (WA) District High School's newsletter of 18 August 2016 sent by Carrol Spindler.

“Dongara District High School was honoured to be invited to give the key note address at the Dongara RSL Sub-Branch to commemorate the Battle of Long Tan. Year 10 students Raynne Hohn, Ainslie Masotto and Jordan Ferguson prepared the speech with Ainslie speaking at the service. On short notice Jordan read a poem. The girls were fantastic ambassadors for the school and we are proud of our partnership with the RSL.”



**Some of the '32' veterans at the ceremony with the year 10 students.
From the left: Ross Davies, Ainslie Massotto, Tony Harris, Raynne Hohn, John Spindler,
Bruce Levy, Jordan Ferguson and John Lalor.**

THE PORT LINCOLN TUNA TOSS

This year the Water Transport Reunion will be at Port Lincoln SA during 13, 14, 15 October 2016. The basic schedule is as follows:

Friday 13 October. Meet and Greet at the Port Lincoln Hotel for drinks and bar snacks.

Saturday 14 October. Dinner at the Port Lincoln Hotel.

Sunday 15 October. Veterans' Tuna Toss. There will be prizes for both male and female furthest throw.

Most of you would have already received news of this weekend but if you haven't or need more details contact the organizer, Mostyn Hetzel on 0428 195 659.



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CAREER OR FATE by Bill Culbertson

The first time that I saw one, was a very important day,
The day I joined the Army, it was tied up in Watson's Bay
Just sitting there all quiet, the strangest thing I'd ever seen
Blunt at both ends and rusty, with a coat of funny green
"What's that?" I asked the sergeant, an upright looking man
"That's a landing ship" he answered, "They sailed it from Japan"
So heading off to Balcombe, to get a trade for me
I left my memories of Sydney, and those things that go to sea.
I thought my instructor crazy, when he reprimanded me
"Don't use a spirit level mate; you might end up at sea."
"I joined the bleeding Army" I said, trying not to gloat,
"And 'cause I joined this Army, I'll never be afloat."
Graduation and a big life change, with a course at SME
Bridges, bombs and minefields, I passed my FE3.
Charlie Gouldson was the master, rather tubby, but quite tall
He had all our training records, and he interviewed us all.
He offered some this, he offered some that and some just wouldn't say
Looking over the top of his spectacles, he muttered, "You to Chowder Bay."
Bobby Metcalf with his waxed up "mo", ran an interesting course
About fire pumps and generators and things by Fairbanks Morse.
The first trip to sea, the sea was up; the sky was dirty grey,
Out of Sydney's Heads northwards, destination Tin Can Bay
After three days sailing that way, with a rolling on beam swell
With my stomach always emptied, and my body feels like hell.
With five tanks onboard, jacked up, chained down
Sailed back still sick to old Brisbane town
That town was still rocking, and at the Lennons I think,
Managed to fall off the bar stool, without having a drink.
It was the last time I was sea sick, I can proudly proclaim,
I never want to go through that discomfort, and feel like that again.
Thinking back on that first trip, many thoughts fill my head.
How many days feeling that way, before you wake dead?
Ship mates that I sailed under taught me many a skill.
Like Pat Scott, Ian Craig, and that second called Phil.
And now that it's over, and I'll try to explain,
If the cards fell the same way, I'd do it again.



Editors Note: Thanks Bill. Well done! Bill is a 16th intake Army Apprentice fitter and turner. He served in Vietnam as a marine engineer on AV1356 Clive Steele in 1966 and 1968, and aboard AS3051 John Monash in 1968 / 69. He also did many trips to Papua New Guinea aboard LSMs.

30 TERMINAL SQUADRON REUNION – 2017

Craig Ingram has been organising 30 Terminal Squadron reunions for a number of years. Next year will be the 75th anniversary of the trade and he is organising a big reunion in Sydney during 17 – 19 November 2017. Unfortunately, he has lost the contact details of members and ex-members and would appreciate it if details could be forwarded to him. Also could you pass this on to any current or ex-member.

You can contact Craig at:

Craig Ingram
5 / 28 Lowth Street
ROSSLEA QLD 4812

Phone: 0407 173 321

Email: craingram@westnet.com.au

Further information about the reunion will be given in newsletters in 2017.

SICK PARADE

Mike Priest of Newtown TAS (not the other Mike Priest of Essex UK) is having a battle with lung cancer. However, he says he is a bit slow moving but is beating it. We hope so mate. Stay strong!

Graham Berry is still not travelling well. He's still living at the ANZAC Village at Collaroy Plateau NSW. He had a stroke about six years ago which left him in a bad way. He was also bitten by a white tailed spider which did a lot of damage to his leg. He then had crystals forming in his knees which is ongoing and restricts his movements. He also has diabetes and has recently got shingles. He says apart from that, he's fine!

The Value of 'Notice to Mariners' by Michael Schultz

“As an avid reader of NTM and after consuming the excellent archival July 2016 issue, I thought it worth saying a few words. I was a CMF member for some 22 years from September 1958 two months prior to my 18th birthday and located at lower Georges Heights and Woolwich Dock. I mucked about in Army Vessels out of Chowder Bay and Woolwich Dock. In typical form of Great Coats on and off again my Corps was RAE(Tn), however the unit name changed over time from 33 Small Ship Sqn, 33 Port Sqn, 32 Small Ship Sqn, 5 Water Transport Tp., then we moved out of the marine area to RACT and 3 Transport Coy, 3 MCU and 33 Terminal Sqn.

During my training and work in the marine side I associated always with the ARA Members (you guys) working with you and being guided and trained by you. I admired your patience and good will. I thoroughly enjoyed myself and my length of service proves it. Remember I was only 18 at the beginning and you were all big guys and, may I add, “Men of the World” it was good for me. Reading the information in NTM especially the July issue, I recognise the value of the publication



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and your various functions that contribute to holding together the Association and its members in many different ways for each of us. My thanks go to all involved doing the hard yards to achieve this.

Knowing most of the names around my era in the CMF, always makes NTM interesting reading. It was sad to read about Wally Blumenfeld's crossing of the bar, but pleased that he had achieved a full life. I remembered him well and what a great picture of him in his SES gear up a tree doing community service. Reading the various crew lists I note with sadness those listed as crossed the bar, Murray Neville was one I recall that I really upset, by spilling the port during a Sergeants Mess Formal. He gave me a furious serve later; you will all know how furious that would be. Although I was not in the ARA I was privy to the stories after the event from gossip in all three messes, so reading the reports and memories of others in NTM especially July issue brings back lots of memories to me.

The Woolwich Dock history, I was always disappointed that the caisson once floating up the end then sank and still there, was not rescued and a new pump installed. The various Vietnam voyages and the fact my civvy jumper did a round trip there on board John Monash, I only tossed it out last year. My own LSM voyages along the NSW Coast, noisy things, a 6-hour stint on the helm, that unromantic joy stick, because my fellow CMF crew were all feeding the fishes.

Painting the Tug Mollymawk's Bulwarks out at sea between Port Stephens and Sydney, silly boy! Cruising Port Stephens on board John Monash under command of Warren Barsley and a fabulous small launch trip up into the Myall Lakes.

Happy Memories, thanks 32! These days I enjoy carrying on my maritime interests as a volunteer Governor and Director of the Sydney Maritime Museum, T/A Sydney Heritage Fleet".

Thanks to you too, Michael for the assistance and support you have given to the Association over many years - Ross.

A Christmas Tale by Jack Madden

I had the misfortune to be chosen by the RSM TN Centre, Murray Neville to be the duty officer over Christmas, 1967. I was only a Sergeant then. Christmas Day – absolutely dead. No Sappers, Sergeants Mess closed just me watching TV on A Deck.

Along comes Tommy Crompton; probably to do a foreign order in the workshops. Tom was a Captain then. Anyhow, after a bit of persuasion he dragged me into the Officer's Mess for a Christmas Drink. This was nice, a real comfortable situation. Well it was until Ron "Two Thumbs" Tanner arrived. There was talk of me and Courts Martial for dereliction of duty but Tom eventually calmed Two Thumbs down.

So, what happened? When everyone returned to work I fronted either Col Laughlin or the Angry Ant – cannot for the life of me remember. 30 Days extra duty officer. All the Junior Officers and Senior NCOs loved me. But I had the last laugh! Joe Pioli was the SQMS on *John Monash* and was selected to do his WOs Qual at SME and I was given three days to become the new SQMS on *John Monash* and sail for Vietnam. Never completed my 30 days' extra duty officer. Don't know what happened to Tom Crompton but next time I saw him he was a Major driving a desk up at 1 Terminal Group. Bet he didn't like that job!



VALE – JOHN BONNETT
1935 – 2016

Lieutenant Colonel John Thomas Gurney Bonnett RAE / RACT passed away on 18 November 2016 after a long battle with cancer. His funeral was held at Norwood Park Chapel, Mitchell ACT on 25 November 2016. The service was conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Kath McQuarrie AM (Rtd). Over 100 people attended including the following 32 members:

Ken and Dawn Duncan, John and Elizabeth Bryant, Mike and Val Heal, Dennis and Margaret Collins, Peter and Robyn Morgan, Brian and Maryanne Goodes, Helen Blumenfeld, Bruce Glossop, Ross McMurray, Warren Barsley, Paddy Martin and Bruce Reilly.

Warren Barsley gave one of three eulogies and he concentrated on John's service life. Like Warren and a number of other deck officers John enlisted in the UK to alleviate a shortage of officers after Australia had purchased the four LSMs and *John Monash*. Warren highlighted two of John's notable trips on the *Vernon Sturdee*; the first was a trip to Norfolk Island delivering heavy plant equipment for the construction of an airstrip by 21 Construction Squadron. This was recorded in our newsletter of November 2015. The second was John's command of the *Vernon Sturdee* when it accompanied the *John Monash* on their inaugural trips to Vietnam in 1966. A joint presentation was delivered by Warren Barsley and Ken Duncan (in John's absence) on ANZAC Day this year at the Hunters Hill RSL Hall – 50 years later. These presentations were recorded in the July 2016 edition of 'Notice to Mariners'.

Shortly after returning from Vietnam John was posted to Brisbane as the ARA cadre officer for 34 Water Transport Squadron, a CMF unit. He was only there a short while as in April 1967 he was posted to Canberra to serve in the Directorate of Transportation.

In 1971 as a student he attended the Army Staff College at Fort Queenscliffe near Geelong. After graduating he was posted back to the Directorate of Transportation in early 1972 and served there until 1977 when he was posted to the Directorate of Movements, still in Canberra.

On 1 June 1973, along with other specialist maritime officers and personnel, John was reallocated to the newly formed Royal Australian Corps of Transport.

Later, in 1979 John was posted back to the Directorate of Transportation where he remained until his retirement in 1985 after 20 years' service.

During his extended service in the Directorate of Transportation he held a number of positions where he was involved in policy making in respect to Army water transport and the career management of both officers and soldiers. This also included the development of the LSM Mk 2. This project was undertaken with John Bryant who managed the engineering aspects and a civilian naval architect, Noel Riley. The ship was completely designed and plans and specifications were completed by a UK firm. However, the Navy was against the Army having such a ship (a similar story with the LCHs) and the project stalled and was never resurrected.

As stated earlier, 32 Small Ship Squadron RAE Association commemorated the 50th anniversary of the first Vietnam voyage for the *John Monash* and the *Vernon Sturdee* on ANZAC Day this year and we missed John's presence as unfortunately he was not well. However, he forwarded his recollection of that trip which was presented by Ken Duncan.

Our condolences go to John's wife, Kath and their children, Kevin and Jonathan.





John and Kath Bonnett at a dinner in Canberra in 2009 commemorating the 50th anniversary of the delivery of the LSMs from Japan.



John Bonnet



VALE – DON ELPHICK
1932 - 2016

WO2 Donald James Elphick RAE died on 24 September 2016. He served in 32 Small Ship Squadron aboard AS3051 *John Monash* in Vietnam in 1966, and with Headquarters Australian Force Vietnam in 1969 / 70. His funeral was held in Canberra and attended by many sapper mates. Speedie Sahariv represented 32.

VALE – DON WEIMER

Captain Donald Henry Weimer RAE died on 31 October 2016. He enlisted in 1954 and served with 2 Inland Water Transport Squadron, 32 Small Ship Squadron and 34 Water Transport Squadron. Don was a crew member on AV1353 *Harry Chauvel* during Operation Taipan which brought two LSMs from Japan to Brisbane in 1959. His funeral was held at Mount Gravatt QLD on 8 November 2016

VALE – ALEX KUNNING
1944 – 2016

Sadly, we wish to advise that Sapper Alexander John Kunning, RAE passed away earlier this year. Alex served on AV1356 *Clive Steele* in Vietnam in 1970. We do not have any other details.

VALE – JOHN BRYDEN
1949 – 2016

Phil Cannane reported the death of Sapper John Frederick (Rowdy) Bryden RAE. Rowdy died on 4 July 2016 after a short illness. His funeral was held on 15 July 2016 at the Maryborough Crematorium.

It was attended by about 60 people including many from the Central Queensland Vietnam Veterans' Motorcycle Club of which Rowdy was an esteemed member. Ross Vickers, President of the club said Rowdy was the most fair dinkum bloke he had known. This sentiment was echoed by others who knew Rowdy.

John enlisted in the Citizen Military Forces in 1965 and served with 51 Battalion, Royal Queensland Regiment for two years. He was called up national service in 1969 and served with 1 Recruit Training Battalion, School of Military Engineering, Transportation Centre and 32 Small Ship Squadron. He served in Vietnam in 1970 and 1971 aboard AV1356 *Clive Steele* and in Singapore in 1971. He elected discharge in October 1971.





John Bryden



Garry (Pianoman) Edwards and Phil Cannane at the funeral

VALE – GEORGE BAGNALL

1939 – 2016

Dazz Graney advised that Corporal George Henry Bagnall RAE passed away after a long illness on 8 September 2016 at his home town of Inverell NSW. His funeral service was held at Inverell Crematorium on 17 September 2016.

Dazz attended, representing our Association. He reported that a large number of family and friends attended and gave a Eulogy for George. The service was assisted by Inverell RSL Sub-Branch. George is survived by his wife, Connie, son Tom and two sisters. Tom is a veteran of the Gulf War.

George served in Vietnam on *AS3051 John Monash* in 1969 and on *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* in 1970. His other postings during his 20 year career were: 1st Recruit Training Battalion, Infantry Centre, School of Military Engineering, Transportation Centre, 30 Terminal Squadron, 32 Small Ship Squadron, 40 Water Transport Squadron (Heavy), 10 Terminal Group, 1st Recruit Training Battalion (as an instructor), 1 Amenities Unit and District Support Unit Singleton.



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VALE – DICK GRANT
1924 – 2016

Lieutenant Richmond Fraser (Dick) Grant RAE passed away on 22 September 2016.

Dick grew up in Hunter's Hill. After finishing school he did an apprenticeship as a ships joiner at Darling Harbour. In 1943 he joined the RAAF and served as a boat crew member in Milne Bay, New Guinea.

After the war he took on a number of occupations. He started a building company in Sydney, went to the UK and worked in a drawing office at a Scottish ship yard, learned to play the bagpipes, studied to become an understudy to the second mate on a South American cargo vessel which eventually landed back in Sydney. He then worked as a building supervisor with QANTAS after which he joined CSR where he worked in various capacities for 25 years. His final job was a ferry master on Sydney harbour.

Dick joined the CMF in the early 1960s and served with Sydney Port Squadron at Georges Heights. He was an instructor in cargo handling and seamanship. He was also a training officer with the Naval Reserve Cadets in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Dick's wife Margaret passed away in 1998. He is survived by his son, Ian who is a past President of Hunters Hill RSL Sub-Branch.

LOOKING FOR KEN MOORE

Private Kenneth Edward Moore, RAustInf, served on *AV1356 Clive Steele* in Vietnam in early 1970. If anyone knows of his whereabouts could you contact me please? Thanks.

LOOKING FOR GARY DUNN

Robert Creek (ex-1 Field Squadron) is looking for his mate, Gary Dunn who served on *AV1356 Clive Steele* in Vietnam in 1968. If anyone knows of Gary's whereabouts could you contact Robert at robertcreek45@gmail.com or give me a phone call. Thanks.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST

Warren Barsley recently advised that ex-2nd Lieutenant Anthony (Tony) Beddison, 35 Water Transport Squadron 1969/70 has been awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for "eminent service to the community through leading roles with national and international charitable organisations, as an advocate for corporate social responsibility, philanthropy and business innovation, to children's health, and to business". Well done Tony, and our congratulations.



A PLEA FROM OUR TREASURER...

More than ten years ago I volunteered to be the Association Treasurer. The work load, particularly at subscription (and our lunch) time, is quite demanding of my time particularly since for your convenience we now have direct payments to our bank account. This has created extra work for me particularly when some members fail to return the subscription form to match up with the payment.

In fact, this year there have been a few members who have failed to give detail on the bank transfer and failed to return the subs form and the ticket butts. Those three anonymous payments are now treated as donations. Thank you. I do NOT fill in raffle butts if you choose not to do it. Please return the subs form for me so I know what you want and so Ross can update change of address or other comments.

I have suggested to the committee that someone else may enjoy this job. Strangely I had no volunteers. I will keep this job for the immediate future because of the enjoyment I get working with our Secretary and many things that have been achieved by this committee. I ask you to remember that we are volunteer positions of YOUR Association. We give of our time. Please work with us.....

Long life and good health to all members and their families.

Kind regards, Peter Tierney

DONATIONS

Des McDonald, Dazz Graney

NEW MEMBER

We would like to welcome on board Terry Craike who served in 32 Small Ship Squadron on *AV1356 Clive Steele* and *AS3051 John Monash*. Terry lives at Green Head, WA.

A PLEA FOR LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Although it is mentioned on the second-to-last page of every Notice to Mariners the editor would like to remind everybody that he is always looking for articles for the magazine.

Doesn't matter if it is funny, sad, technical or personal; if necessary names will be deleted to protect the innocent or hide the fact of what some of us really got up to.

Look forward to hearing more from you. Contact details are on the second-to-last page



DEREK SMITH'S BOOK

Derek Smith served in 32 Small Ship Squadron and did five trips to Vietnam aboard LSMs and *John Monash*. He also served in Vietnam with 21 Engineer Support Troop, Headquarters Australian Force Vietnam and two tours with 1 Field Squadron. He has written a book about his experiences titled "A Twist in the POGOs Tail". He has emailed me the following two items that will be of interest to members:

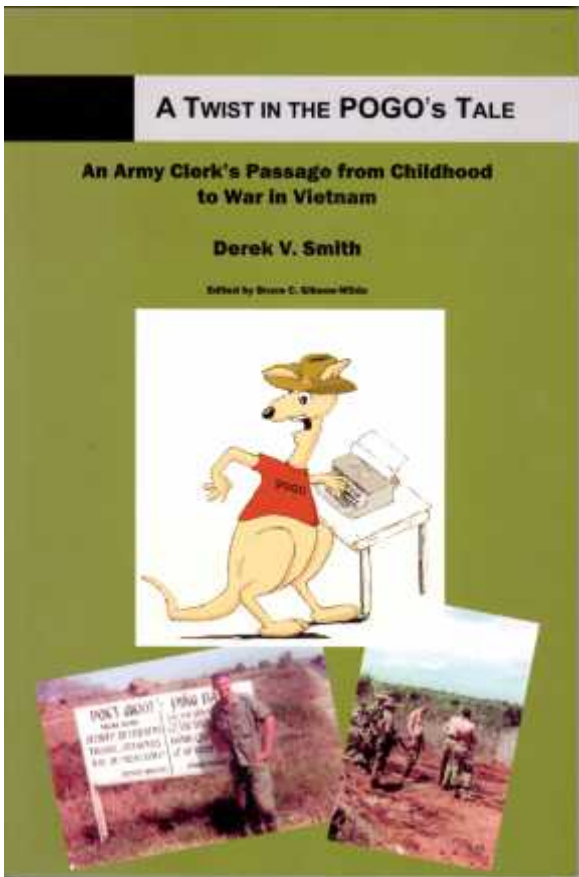
"The first is about our late ship mate Graham (Buck) Rogers. He came over to Vietnam with me in 2010. Also on that trip were Neill Garland and his wife Terry. Graham gave wonderful support for my works in the orphanages in Kon Tum. He was suffering with his cancer then and despite the pain I think he enjoyed every moment of this trip. We visited Phoenix airfield which is west of Dak To. There was a lot of heavy fighting up there during the war. We were picking up M60 links, fleshettes and .50cal rounds. Graham and I had walked to the site of our culvert, near a village called Kon Katu. We had had a lot of rain so the track was muddy as hell. We spotted a heavy rain squall coming so took shelter in a huge box culvert. Inside were a couple of Montagnard men. I cannot imagine what they thought when we joined them. Crazy bloody round eyes. As you know Buck passed away the following year.

In March Rhonda was reading the QLD RSL magazine and saw in the lost and found medals section, medals found with the name of 4718046 Graham Stanley Rogers. They were the Vietnam set and had been found in Bundamba after the cleanup of the 2011 floods. This was our Buck of course. I contacted QLD RSL and after some correspondence, including contact with one of Buck's daughters, Adrienne who lives in Canada, the medals were returned to her. If my wife had not spotted Bucks name in the magazine, the medals would have been lost forever. He was a great mate.

The second bit is that this crusty old sapper has written a book and it is now in print. I have attached pics of front and back cover. The title as you can see is 'A Twist In The POGO's Tale'. The foreword has been written by LTGEN John Sanderson AC (Rtd). It covers my earliest memories of growing up and things that may have influenced me in joining the Army. It then covers time at Balcombe, Small Ships and the Field Squadrons. It concludes in 1971 which was my last stint in Vietnam. I kept diaries while on the Ships and in 1 FD SQN so I have relied on these for accuracy of my stories as well as numerous other references. I have related some of the humorous episodes experienced such as our old ship mate Bob Gunn peeing on me when I was having a dip between the bow doors and ramp; a card game in the mess on the *Clive Steele* when Jack Elliott emerges from his bunk, slightly under the weather and thinks the mess table where our cards and heaps of change abound, is the heads. Made a damp sight indeed.

Anyway Ross, I hope the story on Buck can get a mention and perhaps the Newsletter will promote my book. I self-published and have pledged all profits to the orphanages in Kon Tum and to the needs of the Montagnard villagers there. I am selling the book for \$25 and add postage and packaging it is \$31.20. I have plenty of pics and maps in the book and am getting good feedback from those who have read it so far. I am having a launch in Townsville at the RSL on 25 August and another in Brisbane in October. George Hulse is doing that one for me. Mate I have also attached my latest newsletter from my last visit to Vietnam".





Front and back covers of Derek's book.

Much detail for this book has been drawn from diaries that Derek kept, particularly in 1966/67 and 1969/70. There are numerous other references noted in the footnotes. There is a list of abbreviations in the back of the book and it contains many photographs.

The book contains 132 pages. It has 15 chapters, three appendixes and six maps. It has taken about five years to reach this point. Derek has 'self published'. He has pledged in the book to give all profits to the ethnic minority (Montagnard) orphanages that he and his family have been supporting since 2004. The orphanages are located in Kon Tum, Central Highlands, Vietnam. For more information on this please visit www.askatvso.com

To purchase a book it costs \$31.50 including postage and packing. Direct deposit to his bank – BSB: 06482 Acct No: 00530203. Email: dvsmith@ozemail.com.au or mobile: 0438 221 114

ASBESTOS SCREENING PROGRAM

The Defence Asbestos Exposure Evaluation Scheme (DAESS) is operated by the Department of Defence. I know we keep banging about this topic but it's done for a good reason: It may eliminate any concerns you have about asbestos related diseases. Most of us in our Association have been directly or indirectly exposed to asbestos. Here's a quick run-down on the process.

1. **Eligibility.** All Ex-Australian Defence Force personnel. (that is you).
2. **Screening.** Call the Defence Service Centre on 1800 333 362 to register your details. You will be given an asbestos registration number during the call. You will need to quote this number to Medibank Health Solutions (MHS) staff when making an appointment for assessment.



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3. **Process of DAESS.** When you register with the DAESS you will be sent a letter providing details of how to arrange an assessment with the MHS office, quoting your asbestos registration number. The letter will include details of the MHS office in your area.
4. You should make an appointment for an asbestos review examination with the MHS office, quoting your asbestos registration number.
5. MHS will send you a questionnaire for you to complete and bring to the assessment and then attend the MHS appointment at the time and location advised for an asbestos review examination.
6. You will be counselled by MHS medical staff and you may be transferred to a respiratory physician for further testing (depending on your medical condition), or advised to have a follow up examination in two to ten years.
7. You will receive an examination report that will include your questionnaire, medical assessment results, assessment category and, if necessary, a treatment plan.
8. If you travel more than 50 kms to your appointment, you are entitled to reimbursement for travel by the Department of Defence.

There you go. It's not very complicated and the staff will walk you through the process. Don't put it off - give yourself some piece of mind.

Also, if you do have an asbestos related disease, advise the Department of Veterans' Affairs. It is also recommended that you discuss it with your RSL or Vietnam Veterans' Association advocate before going to DVA. They can offer some good advice.

6 TROOP'S RUN-ABOUT

Following Kevin Lockwood's unfortunate death 6 Water Transport Workshops Troop RAE (possibly the smallest Engineer unit on the Order of Battle) was without an Officer Commanding. WO1 Mechanical Engineers were few and far between. But WO1 Len Sproule was languishing behind a desk in the Directorate of Engineer Stores in Canberra and he jumped at the opportunity to get his hands on the tools again.

Len arrived on D Deck at Chowder Bay and was amazed that a Water Transport Workshops didn't have its own watercraft. The British Mark 4 Assault Boats were being disposed of; to be replaced by the flat bottom, most unseaworthy Australian MK1 Assault Boats. Through his contacts in Canberra Len acquired one of the MK4s and received approval to modify it. The Army Johnson 40HP Outboards were a pretty poor example of Johnson's Marine Outboards but when tuned properly by 6 Troop fitters and two of them put on the modified stern of the MK4 Assault boat the whole rig went like the clappers and was very seaworthy.

Partial decking and a windscreen made the craft unrecognizable. 2 Commando Company, up on the hill at Georges Heights wanted one of these extremely fast craft but by then the last of the MK4s had been disposed of. But the MK4 re-appeared in service. The ship's boat on *John Monash* was a MK4 De-Haviland Hercules (civvy version) with a half cabin and a Perkins Diesel Z Drive.



Property for sale

Ties	\$25.00	LSM Lapel Badge	\$12.00
Association Book by Wade Morris	\$30.00	Collar Badge	\$6.00
Association Woven Patch	\$8.00	Car Stickers	\$6.00
Association Cap Navy Blue	\$15.00		
Association 50 th Anniversary Plaque	\$40 plus \$9 P & H		
Book "Rolling through 32"	\$25 plus \$15 P & H		
Association Polo Shirt (navy blue only) made to order	\$30.00		

Please contact Kaye Shannon 02 9871 4667 or property@32smallshipsqn.org.au or through the 'Q Store' on the Association Web page (www.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. If you have anything and you would like to contribute please email or snail mail it, preferably in MS Word form, to:

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!



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