

NOTICE TO MARINERS

Newsletter of 32 Small Ship Sqn RAE Association Incorporating RAE Tn

Patron: Colonel K.L. Duncan (Rtd)

President's Message

3462 Brigadier Phillip Jamieson on 12 September 1925 and passed 2011. His funeral was held at the Queensland located between Association was represented by our

Brigadier Greville graduated from served with 2/8th Fd Coy and other in 1945-46 before attending Sydney during the war in Korea as Assault and was a POW from 23 August 1952 until released on cessation of hostilities. He served in various RAE appointments – DTn 1961-1965, Chief Engineer Eastern Command 1969-1971 and then held a senior appointment in Vietnam as Commander 1ALSG 1 September-2 October 1971.



Greville CBE was born in Victoria away in Queensland on 12 March chapel at Stapylton in southern Beaudesert and the east coast. The Patron, Colonel Ken Duncan.

R.M.C. in December 1944. He RAE units in Wewak and Rabaul University. He served with 1RAR Platoon Commander in 1951-52

Brigadier Greville then became Deputy Commander 1 ATF Unit on 2 December 1971 when he became A/Comd 1 ATF. His last appointment was Commander 4th Military District.

Brigadier Greville was a past patron (1978-1991) of the Association and was the official guest accompanied by his wife June at the Association's 25th Anniversary Reunion Black Tie Dinner held at The Mazda Gallery, Australian National Maritime Museum at Darling Harbour on 26 April 1997.

Due to a number of accidents and illnesses since the 25 Anniversary Dinner Brigadier Greville was unable to travel and was not able to attend functions the Association has conducted at the Australian War Memorial.

On 20th February committee members of the Association and their wives attended the Garrison Church at Millers Point for a commemoration service for the Australian Water Transport Association RAE AIF. Afterwards we had a pleasant lunch at The Hero of Waterloo Hotel organised by Cec Weekes, President of the AWTA.

Frank Larbalestier has stepped down as President of the Hunters Hill Sub Branch of the R.S.L. after a period in office of 15 years. The newly elected President is Ian Grant. He was born and raised in Hunters Hill and looks forward to building on the good work Frank has accomplished over the past 15 years.

Ocka



April 2011 Notice to Mariners

ANZAC DAY ACTIVITIES – MONDAY 25 APRIL 2011

I'm sure members check the details of ANZAC Day dawn services and marches in their own area so I'll just put in details for Sydney for those who are visiting or attending.

DAWN SERVICE – SCHOOL OF MILITARY ENGINEERING

A Gunfire Breakfast will commence at 0450 hrs in the vicinity of the RAE Monument. The Catafalque Party will mount at 0510 hrs and the service will commence shortly after. On completion of the service a breakfast will be available at the Other Ranks Mess followed by traditional ANZAC Day activities at the Peeler VC Club.

Note that this service is very popular so if you are attending please try and get there by 0430 hrs. Ample car parking is available.

DAWN SERVICE – GEORGES HEIGHTS

The service will be conducted on the parade ground of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust precinct commencing at 0530 hrs. Following the service there will be the traditional Gunfire Breakfast for those who require to be fortified by a beverage manufactured in Bundaberg, and also a light breakfast will be provided by the Mosman Lions Club for a nominal charge. Parking is available under the control of the SES.

ANZAC DAY MARCH – SYDNEY

Assemble on the corner of Phillip and Bent Streets in front of the Legal and General building by 1000 hrs. Step off time is usually around 1100 hrs which will give us time to renew acquaintances and take refreshment before the long march to Hyde Park. The Banner Party has been appointed in advance, and after it has formed up we will assemble behind it. Coat, tie and medals please.

ANZAC DAY REUNION AND LUNCHEON – SYDNEY

As usual the reunion will be held at the Hunters Hill RSL Sub-Branch Memorial Hall on the corner of Alexander and Ady Streets, Hunters Hill. A high quality buffet lunch will be served at 1400 hrs. Again we have managed to keep the cost down to \$45.00 per head which includes drinks. To put it on at this low price we need to know early the numbers attending, so please submit your return slip as soon as possible. Those who turn up unannounced the cost will be \$60.00 a head.

ANZAC DAY RAFFLE

The raffle is on again and your tickets will be mailed out to you. The prizes are:

First Prize: 3" ships clock and barometer

Second Prize: 6" ships clock

Third Prize: 3" barometer

These popular prizes are made of brass and mounted on polished hardwood. The tickets are still only \$1.00 each or ten for \$10.00.



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150TH ANNIVERSARY OF RAE

In October 1860 a delegation urged the Victorian Treasurer to accept the services of a volunteer engineer unit. Despite the Treasurer not seeing a great benefit from such a Corps, he was persuaded to support the proposal on the grounds that engineers were first trained as soldiers and then as engineers. In addition, he conditioned the approval of the Corp's regulations, and instruction in military engineering, by the Commanding Engineer in Victoria, Captain Peter Scratchley, RE.

Shortly after this meeting, a notice was published in *The Argus* (Melbourne) advertising the convening of intending Corps members to be held at the Duke of Rothesay Hotel, Melbourne on 7 November. At this meeting the Volunteer Engineers prepared a code of rules which was accepted at a second meeting held on 15 November 1860.

It is this defining event that precipitated the formation of the Victorian Volunteer Engineer Corps; the first engineer unit raised within Australia.

The Corps amalgamation with the Torpedo and Signals Corps in 1886 linked Army engineers to water transport; a tradition that has proudly continued for over eighty years (albeit not continuously) with RAE Tn.

On 13 November 2010 an exhibition at SME entitled *from humble beginnings* hosted by the Australian Army Museum of Military Engineering commemorated the 150th anniversary of the formation of the Corps, and the event's important role in the evolution of the Royal Australian Engineer Corps which we identify with today.

Over 100 people attended the exhibition opening in the main Museum building, including Federal and State Members of Parliament. The Mayor of Liverpool, the Chairman of the Army History Unit and past Commanding Officers of SME. Our Association was represented by Ken and Dawn Duncan, Allan Reading and Margaret Davidson, Peter Tierney, Ross McMurray, Les Muras and Cheryle Bushnell, Neal and Margaret Vansleve. Cec Weekes, President of AWTA, RAE, 2nd AIF (NSW Branch) was also there.

It must be said that without the time and effort put in by Ken Duncan and Cec Weekes with the Water Transport collection the exhibition would not have been the success it was. The exhibition certainly was a great display and included field engineering, EOD equipment, bridging, surveying and many other types of engineer equipment.



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WALLY BLUMENFELD

Warren Barsley recently sent this photo and article from the "Canberra Times". It's good to see Wally Blumenfeld's voluntary work with the State Emergency Service is rewarded with the third clasp to his National Medal. Most of us would know about Wally's service with 32 Small Ship Squadron - but for those who don't... After service with the Merchant Navy and RANR he joined the RAE as a Skipper in 1964. During that year he served on *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* in Borneo and later that year he took *AV1354 Brudenell White* up the Sepik River to the May River junction in PNG: a distance of 595 km which is still a record. He also served in Vietnam on *AS3051 John Monash*, *AV1356 Clive Steele* and *AV1354 Brudenell White*.

He left the Army in 1973 and then worked for the Commonwealth Department of Transport and also the Australian Maritime Safety Authority in various capacities involving maritime safety until his retirement in 1994.

From all of us Wally, congratulations for your third clasp and well done. We hope you continue your good work with the SES for many more years.



SERVICE STALWART: Walter Blumenfeld, who at 80 is still an active SES volunteer, has been acknowledged for his many years of service. Photo: MARINA NEIL



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From the "Canberra Times" of 10 November 2010.

SES like family for honoured veteran

By Christopher Knaus

For 80-year-old Walter Blumenfeld, the State Emergency Service has become like family during his 30 years of service.

Joining the ACT Emergency Service, as it was then known, at the age of 49, Mr Blumenfeld has worked through storms, floods and disasters across ACT and the NSW, including the disastrous 2003 Canberra bushfires.

Mr Blumenfeld, who lives in Holt, received his Third Clasp of the services' National Medal to recognise 45 years of service, which includes his 15 years in the army and the army reserve.

"It becomes a sort of a family, I suppose," Mr Blumenfeld said after receiving the award yesterday. "People come and go, but there's quite a few people that you've known for a long time, and it's just one of those things [that keeps you] going year after year," he said.

Mr Blumenfeld was just one of 28 emergency service workers from the ACT SES, the ACT Fire Brigade, the ACT Rural Fire Service and the ACT Ambulance Service to be recognised for their service and long dedication at an award ceremony held at Old Parliament House yesterday.

The National Medal is awarded to emergency service workers for 15 years of service. They then receive a Clasp for each additional 10 years.

Despite his age, Mr Blumenfeld still manages to pass the fitness testing required of SES workers.

"I go to the gym, I ride a pushbike, I've got a kayak and I paddle in that, and I do quite a bit of walking," he said.

The National Medal was established in 1975 and has grown into a distinguished tradition within the ACT emergency services.

Police and Emergency Services Minister Simon Corbell presented the awards to the emergency service personnel yesterday, handing out 14 National Medals, 12 First Clasps, one Second Clasp and one Third Clasp.

Mr Corbell thanked all of the recipients for their continued dedication to the territory.

"It's particularly gratifying for me as a minister to be asked to assist at these ceremonies, because it's a very simple way, but a highly symbolic way, in which, on behalf of the Canberra community, I can communicate the thanks of the community," Mr Corbell said.

"Our community expects our emergency services to be there in their time of need. But for the emergency service personnel, it's just another day," he said.

"For that reason, I think it's very important that we acknowledge the significant commitment and dedication that our emergency service personnel demonstrate each and every day they go to work."



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SICK PARADE

Ken Shannon is not well. His health has been steadily declining over the last two years and he is now living at the RSL ANZAC Village at Narrabeen, Sydney. He was wrongly diagnosed with Alzheimers dementia some years ago. He actually has Progressive Supranuclear Palsy which is a rare form of Parkinson's Disease.

His wife, Kaye, has cared for him constantly since his health started to deteriorate. In mid January he was admitted to Westmead Hospital after suffering a minor stroke. His condition did not improve while there, so Kaye had him transferred to Narrabeen where he has improved steadily. He has a single room and is now comfortable, calm and stable. We all wish him well for the future and hope that he remains happy and comfortable.

Kaye has been attending to the property aspects of the Association since Ken's illness and wishes to continue with it. The Committee is deeply indebted to her for the time and effort she contributes.

George Bagnall is still recovering from an operation he had for bowel cancer nearly two years ago. His wife, Bonny said that it was picked up from a blood test for prostate cancer (which came back negative). It was lucky that George had the blood test, otherwise it would not have been discovered. Anyway, he seems to be recovering OK. Hang in there mate.

Des McDonald hasn't been too well lately either. He has had problems with his back and had to have surgery to correct it. He is hoping to get a cochlea ear implant soon so he can hear what people are saying about him. He and his wife, Elizabeth have an alpaca farm for sale at Grabben Gullen NSW. I think this is near Crookwell. Des and Elizabeth plan to live near Newcastle so they can be closer their grandchildren.

Jack Peel has had a bit of a fight with a barbecue. Apparently he was putting it together for a neighbor when the spanner slipped and he cut his hand pretty badly on a piece of stainless steel. This resulted in tendons in his fingers being severed and he had to have micro surgery to repair them. He is recovering OK but he has his hand in a splint and can't do much.

Oeka Murray recently had a knee replacement. His right knee has been troubling him for the last few years and it got to the stage where he was in constant pain and could barely walk. He still uses a stick but should be quite mobile in a month or so.

WORKBOAT PHOTO REQUEST

Les Dennis recently visited Chowder Bay and talked to the shipwright who now uses the old slipway in his business at the Chowder Bay boatshed. Les mentioned that we used to slip Army workboats there. He asked if it was possible to get a photo of this to hang in the boatshed as recognition of the presence of Water Transport and its place in the heritage of Chowder Bay. So, if anyone has such a photo could we borrow it and reproduce it for the shipwright? Thanks.



BORNEO REUNION

2014 is the fiftieth anniversary of the deployment to Sabah, Borneo of Australian troops during the Indonesian Confrontation. In 1964 *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* and *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee* delivered earthmoving plant and equipment to 7 Field Squadron which was the initial RAE unit to serve there.

To mark this occasion Bob Modystack is organizing a reunion and service in the Tweed Heads / Coolangatta area in May 2014. Also, it is intended that a plaque be unveiled at Point Danger to commemorate the deployment. Bob Gunn and Geoff Freeland will assist Bob in organizing this event. All members, ladies, wives, children and friends will be welcome (not just those who served in Borneo) and we will try to locate the members of 30 Terminal Squadron, 11 Movement Control Group and 4 Troop who served there.

Updates and details will be given in future newsletters, so keep in mind May 2014.

30 TERMINAL SQUADRON REUNION

The 'Back to Middle head Reunion' is on again. The reunion in 2009 was a great success and it is going to be repeated over period 11 – 13 November 2011. It is open to all who served at Middle Head and Chowder Bay, such as 30 and 33 Terminal Squadrons, 10 Terminal Regiment, 1 Terminal Group, Army Maritime School, 11 Movement Control Group and any others.

To start with there will be a meet and greet at the Buena Vista Hotel, Mosman at 6.00 pm on Friday 11 November 2011. On Saturday, starting around 10.00 am there will be a walk around the old unit sites to re-acquaint everyone with their former places of work. That evening a dinner will be held at Mosman RSL Club – 6.30 for 7.00pm. Sunday's events are still being worked out but the details will be in the next newsletter. For more information please contact the event organizer, Craig Ingram at craigingram@westnet.com.au or mobile 0407 717 3321.

PHOTOS FROM THE PAST



AV1354 on 'PIR Prestige Patrol' PNG from Charlie Bawden's (Decd) Collection



April 2011 Notice to Mariners

AT1520 COMBARA

John Bryden was searching the internet recently and came across this old ex-Army tug for sale in Melbourne. It is *AT1520 Combara*, a 45 ft wooden tug which was one of many that were built for the Army Water Transport during World War II. In fact the “Australian Army Watercraft – The Unknown Fleet” reports that 65 vessels were ordered during the war for Army use plus another 12 for the Navy. By the end of the war 62 tugs were under construction or delivered. 115 of these tugs were built in Australia for the US Army.

These sturdy craft remained in Army service until the 1960s. The last Navy 45 ft tug (ex Army tug *AT1536 Dooen*) was paid off in 1993. Several examples remain in civilian use, particularly on Sydney Harbour, and at least one in Melbourne.

Some specifications on these tugs are: Length overall 45 ft, Breadth 14 ft, Depth 7 ft, powered by an assortment of engines such as the Gray 64HN9 marine diesel developing 225 bhp. It had a range of 500 miles and a crew of four. Its armament was one .303” twin Vickers machine gun.



The ex *Combara* for sale in Melbourne



AT1520 Combara laid up in Middle Harbour, Sydney with *AB20 George Peat* behind her.

A few words on *AB20 George Peat*...At the outbreak of World WarII *George Peat* and her sister ship *AB442 Francis Peat* were requisitioned into the Army and employed as powered lighters and served in Australian and New Guinea waters.

Typical loads could comprise 14 three ton vehicles or 50 jeeps at a speed of six knots over 4000 miles. They had bow and stern ramps for roll on / roll off operations. The vessels were defensively armed. After discharge from their Army service both vessels were sold to New Zealand and employed as vehicular ferries from 1946 to 1959. Eventually both were superseded by a road bridge and in 1960 were sold to the Transport Commission in Hobart. Since 1961 *George Peat* was used on the run between Kettering and Bruny Island, south of Hobart and from the early 1980s as a standby ferry.



VALE – BRIGADIER PHILLIP JAMESON GREVILLE, CBE

12 September 1945 - 10 March 2011

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Brigadier Phil Greville on 10 March 2011. He had been in poor health with kidney and heart problems for a number of years. He was a good friend and a great supporter of 32 Small Ship Squadron and our Association. In fact he was our Patron for 14 Years from 1978 to 1991. He always had a soft spot for the unit and went in to bat for us on many occasions.

Brigadier Greville was educated at the Royal Military College, Duntroon and was commissioned in 1944. After service in the South West Pacific area in World War II he attended Sydney University graduating in civil engineering. He later attended the British Army Staff College at Camberley and the Long Transportation Course at Longmoor and Marchwood, United Kingdom.

He served with the First Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment in Korea in 1952 where he was captured. He was repatriated in September 1953. He then served in a wide array of units in regimental, staff, service and instructional appointments. He was the Director of Transportation from 1961 to 1965, during which time he had technical responsibility for the operations of 32 Small Ship Squadron. He was also Chief Engineer, Eastern Command from 1968 to 1971 where he had local administrative and Corps responsibilities for the squadron. Finally, in Vietnam, as Commander of the First Australian Logistic Support Group and later as Commander First Australian Task Force, he was able to use the capabilities of 32 Small Ship Squadron to assist in the back loading of Australian Forces from Vietnam. During this long association with the unit, he learned to respect the squadron's achievements in many situations in war and peace.

Brigadier Greville had a distinguished career. He retired from the Army in 1980 after 37 years service. At that time he was Commander of the Fourth Military District. He moved to the Gold Coast in 1988 accompanied by his wife June, and their three children.

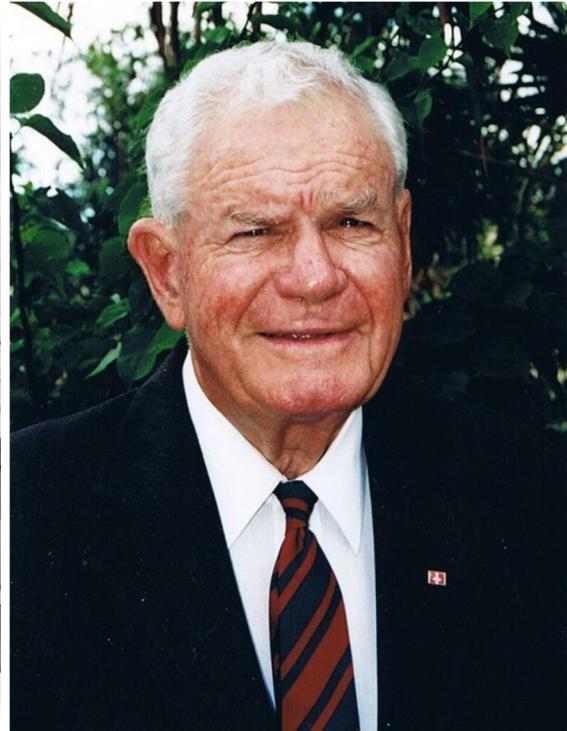
In 2002 he wrote the fourth volume of the History of the Royal Australian Engineers, "Paving the Way" which describes the events of the years 1945 to 1972, the end of the Corps involvement in the Vietnam War, and covers the various activities of the Corps during this time.

Brigadier Greville's funeral service was held at Newhaven Crematorium, Stapleton in South East Queensland on 15 March 2011. Many senior officers attended including our Patron, Colonel Ken Duncan. Ken reported that the Service was delivered by the Regular Army Chaplain of 8/9 RAR from Enogerra and the Eulogy was delivered by Phil's younger brother, Lee (also a retired Brigadier) and covered his birth at Queenscliff in Victoria where their father was serving, to the range of schools he attended, university and his military service with the emphasis on his service in Korea and his imprisonment.



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Ken said that it was a long and sincere service with lots of family involved. The setting at Newhaven was very rural, almost on the edge of sugar cane fields. It is picturesque with glass walls in the Chapel showing lush tropical gardens from the entry which evolve to an Australian bush setting. It was a moving service and one which paid tribute to a very distinguished member of our Corps and an honourable and loyal Australian.

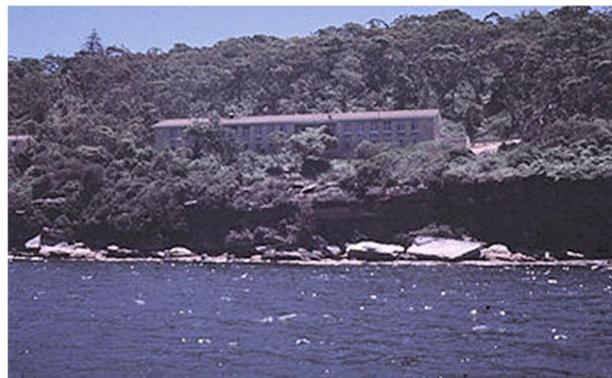


Captain Phil Greville, 1 RAR after his imprisonment in Korea, 1953.

A photo of Brigadier Greville at Helensvale, Qld, 2008

PHOTOS FROM THE PAST

Sergeants Mess Chowder Bay, taken in 1967 from 6 Water Tpt Wksp Tp's runabout – a Mk1 Assault Boat with 2-40HP Johnson with a cut stern transom. D Engrs Canberra looked at this as a potential modification to the Mk 1 Assault Boats (deHaviland Hercules) boat. Good for checking illegal cray pots in the Navy's Oil Berth restricted area.



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VALE – JEFF BEACH

1 June 1943 – 25 October 2010

In the last newsletter we advised that Jeff Beach passed away on 25 October 2010 after a long battle with leukemia. He was part of the delivery crew of *AS3051 John Monash* in 1965 and also sailed on its first voyage to PNG in the same year.

Jeff enlisted into the Army Apprentices School on 9 January 1959 as a 14th intake apprentice fitter and turner. He graduated three years later and was posted for a short period to 17 Construction Squadron. He was then posted to 32 Small Ship Squadron and served on *AS3051 John Monash* in PNG and Vietnam and *AV1354 Brudenell White* in PNG. He also served on *AV1356 Clive Steele* in Vietnam.

In 1970 Jeff was posted to Headquarters Logistics Command, Melbourne where he catalogued and identified equipment and parts for Army watercraft. He elected discharge in 1971.

Jeff was a stalwart member of our Association. For many years he would turn up to ANZAC Day dawn services, marches and reunions, often accompanied by his mate, Paddy Butterworth.

Jeff's family had a private funeral service. Our condolences to his wife, Sandra and children, Matthew and Cherie.



Murray Neville on the left with Jeff Beach, ANZAC Day Sydney 2007



VALE – GRAHAM ROGERS
3 April 1945 – 7 February 2011

Brian Waites advised that Graham (Buck) Rogers passed away on 7 February 2011 in Tamworth Hospital from pancreatic cancer. He had been ill for about six months and had fought bravely and kept his spirits up until the end. At the time of his passing he was on his way to Queensland and it is thought he contracted an infection brought about by chemotherapy. His funeral service was in Tamworth and was attended by family and friends.

Over the years he had kept in touch with many of his mates who served with him including Brian and Val Waites, Ivan and Helen Greenbank, Derek and Rhonda Smith and Stuart Mulligan. In fact last year Buck had assisted Derek Smith in a MiVAC project in Kon Tum, Vietnam. Derek said Buck made substantial donations to orphanages in Vietnam and the work he did there made a difference to the lives of the disadvantaged young people in remote areas of that country.

Buck was a school teacher and had taught in Canada where his children, Adrienne and Natalie were born. While in Vancouver he met his partner, Tum, an anaesthetist who originally came from Thailand. Buck and Tum were to attend the Water Transport Reunion in Hobart in March but sadly they now won't be there. Tum has since returned to Thailand after attending Buck's funeral.

Buck was a National Serviceman who served in the CMF with Adelaide University Regiment before being called up. He then served with 4 Water Transport Troop and 32 Small Ship Squadron. He served in Vietnam in 1966 / 67 aboard *AV1356 Clive Steele* and *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee*.



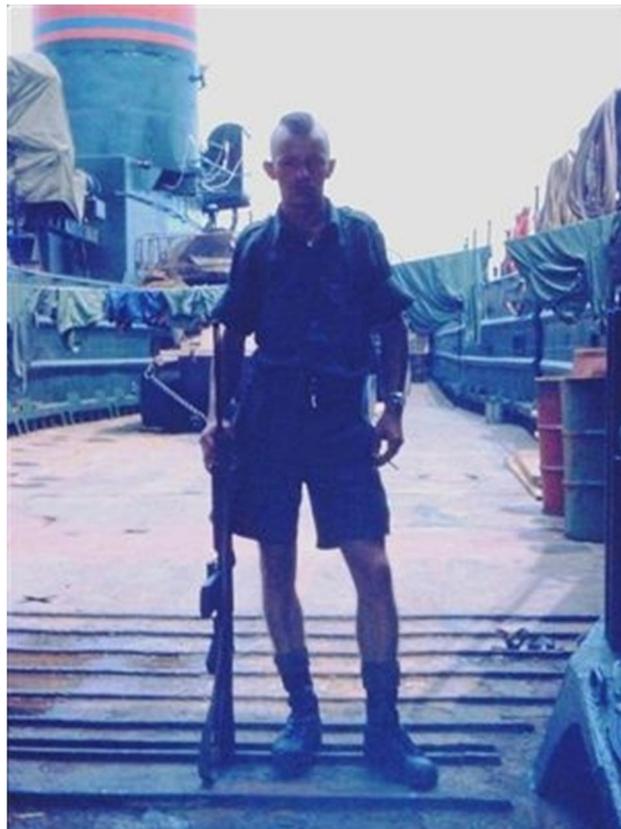
VALE – RICHARD THIRKELL

29 July 1946 – 5 November 2010

Maurie Roberts reported the death of Richard Thirkell. He passed away in his sleep with heart problems associated with pneumonia. He also had emphysema. He served with 30 Terminal Squadron in Vietnam in 1969/70. He also served aboard *AV1356 Clive Steele* in Vietnam in 1969.

Dick was in the Merchant Navy before being called up for National Service. After discharge from the Army he was employed by the Maritime Services Board in Newcastle Harbour. He lived in Newcastle with his son. He also had two daughters.

His funeral service was held at Glendale, Newcastle and was well attended. His two brothers, Shorty and Selvy were in attendance as were his children. Shorty served in Vietnam with 1 RAR and Selvy with the RAN. Our Association was represented by Maurie Roberts, Kevin Abrahamson, Geoff Linwood and Mike Bromhead.



Dick Thirkell aboard AV1356 Clive Steele, Vietnam 1966



April 2011 Notice to Mariners

**IN MEMORIAM – SAPPER GRAHAME JOHN MASSEY
28 March 1945 - 24 June 1968**

Many of us remember Grahame Massey who served on *AV1356 Clive Steele* during all of 1966. Firstly to PNG for six months and after a couple of weeks break in Sydney was sent directly to Vietnam until the crew was rotated in November. Geoff Summergreen has been in contact with his family who provided this interesting account of Grahame's life.

“Grahame was born in Milton NSW and was 3rd Son to Reginald Jack & Myra Jane Massey, prawn fishermen from NSW South Coast. From 1945 to 1950 the family moved from Norah Head to Coff's Harbour then to Deagon, Brisbane in 1950. The Family continued to build and operate many prawn trawlers during this time.

In the fifties and sixties, Grahame's Father Reg pioneered the trawl fishery in Brisbane, up to Bundaberg and as far north as the Gulf of Carpentaria. Over two years, 1965 & 1966 Reg sailed the then vessel 'Rambler' for 28 days to Shark Bay in Western Australia where he operated the vessel two years running in the Shark Bay Prawn Fishery.

On 8th October 1967 the vessel 'Tijuana' was launched. It was built by Reg and his eldest son Kevin and was a 'state of the art' vessel well ahead of its time. When asked why the vessel was called 'Tijuana' Reg responded - "because it cost plenty of brass". In the vicinity of \$60,000 which was quite a substantial amount of money in 1967.

Grahame served both in Vietnam and Papua New Guinea through 1966 only to return home from the perils of war and head to sea on the family vessel. On the 23rd June 1968 the ill-fated 'Tijuana' left the Port of Brisbane on its maiden voyage bound for Cairns and then on to the Gulf of Carpentaria for the fishing season. On board the vessel were Reginald Jack Massey aged 58 years, a very experienced fisherman, and his two sons Grahame John aged 23 years, and Anthony William aged 16 years, who were also experienced fishermen.

On the morning of 24th June 1968 it was reported that the vessel had capsized in Moreton Bay off Tangalooma and was spotted floating upside down. Tragically everyone on board lost their lives that night. Reg and son Grahame's bodies were recovered but Anthony was never found.

The vessel was salvaged, towed back to the Brisbane River and re-floated. A Coroners inquest was held into this tragic accident and it was found that the vessel was seaworthy, extremely well constructed and that the design and stability of the vessel were flawless.

Unfortunately no one will ever know what happened that tragic night in Moreton Bay.

In memory of Reg, Grahame and Anthony and for the family's contribution to the Fishing Industry in Queensland, The main street of Karumba, situated in the bottom of the Gulf of Carpentaria, was named 'Massey Drive'. A monument was also constructed so the memory lives on. Grahame was one of nine children to Reg and Myra Massey - Kevin Reginald; Gordon Claude; Cynthia Anne; Rhonda Kaye; Lorraine June (Deceased); Anthony William (Deceased); Douglas Peter; Pamela Maree.

Grahame, Anthony and their Father Reg were laid to rest in Redcliffe Cemetery - MacDonnell Road Redcliffe where they were also joined by Mother Myra in 1988 and sister Lorraine in 1998.

May they Rest in Peace”.



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PROGRESS ON STEPHEN BANNISTER

In our last newsletter we reported that Stephen Bannister had been attacked by five men, armed with guns and machetes, while he was working at a coffee company in the Eastern Highlands district of Goroka, PNG. He suffered serious injuries to his hands which included severed tendons, and a broken finger. The police have arrested some of the attackers.

He had an operation and is still undergoing medical treatment, including physiotherapy. His right hand is healing well but his left hand has been somewhat slower to recover because it suffered the most damage.

Stephen is talking with his company and looking at an alternative posting. The company he works for, Ecom Agroindustrial, has been very helpful to Stephen (and rightly so). It has kept him on full pay and covered all his medical expenses. He has a very positive outlook and he is determined to make a full recovery.

His mother, Shirley, has looked after him throughout his ordeal and deserves a lot of praise for her efforts. The last few months have been hard on both of them and it's good to report that there's a bit of light at the end of the tunnel.

Some background comments... After Stephen's father, Mike, lost his life in the 1998 Sydney to Hobart yacht race in 1998 Stephen finished high school and with some assistance from Legacy attended TAFE College for two years where he gained an Advanced Diploma in Accounting. He began working with Ecom shortly after this in Sydney before undertaking night studies at Macquarie University for three years where he gained a Bachelor of Commerce degree. He recently completed further studies to become a Certified Practising Accountant.

So, it seems that Stephen has taken on some of his father's perseverance and tenacity and has strived hard to overcome serious difficulties. We wish him all the best in his endeavours to get back to work. We also hope that justice is served to those who were responsible for the assault.

PHOTOS FROM THE PAST



Not every trip on John Monash was a pleasure cruise! Photo Jack Madden



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SUPPORT TO LEGACY

In our last newsletter we reported that the Association had donated \$1000 to Legacy in the form of gift vouchers to mothers and children who attended the Legacy Holiday House at Moss Vale NSW. This money was largely made available from the sale of Dave Perham's book, "Rolling Through 32". It was Dave's wish that profits from book sales would go to Legacy.

Fifteen mothers received gift vouchers and all of them wrote to the Association thanking us for our donation. Typical letters were;

"My family and I were overwhelmed when we received the confirmation about our stay at Moss Vale. Since my husband died it is difficult for me to organize a family holiday and I am very grateful to our Albury Legacy who helped and guided us through difficult times. Thank you also for allowing us to have this delightful experience."

"What a lovely surprise. Thank you so much for your kind donation. We have had a great time here at Legacy House. Our voucher will be used to purchase something for my children".

"I would like to say thank you very much for the kind donation of our gift cards. I am a young widow and have three children, Carissaa 11 years, Dillin 9 years and Blake 3 years. They love coming here as they make new friends and it's also a way for me to build on new friendships with other widows in my situation. Thanks again!"

All the letters were in the same vein and it is good to know that our small donation was appreciated so much. Dave would have been pleased.

A further \$250 was given to Junior Legatee Melissa MacCulloch who sailed on the "Young Endeavour" from Sydney to Melbourne. Our donation went toward the provision of specialised clothing and equipment required for the voyage. Led by members of the RAN, each 11 day voyage offers young people from all over the country the opportunity to push themselves outside their comfort zone and work as a team to sail a tall ship along the Australian coast.





“Young Endeavour”

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome aboard **David Walker** who served in 32 Small Ship Squadron on *AS3051 John Monash* and with 10 Terminal Group on *L126 Balikpapan*. David lives at Thevenard SA.

GLENORCHY GATHERING

The Water Transport Reunion was held in Hobart over the week end 4 – 6 March. Dick van Leeuwen organized it and said that it was a great success. 175 people attended the full week end and most of them spent time before and after travelling around Tasmania.

Friday was devoted to ‘meet and greet’ with a barbeque. It was great to see so many people; many of whom had not seen each other for over 40 years. Saturday saw the troops off to Salamanca Markets and the Mona Museum which is a private enterprise set up by a local and is very popular. It has various kinds of old and new art. Dinner that evening was a spit roast with lots of liquid refreshments and a good deal of reminiscing.

On Sunday morning a short memorial service was held for departed comrades, followed by a traditional shot of Negrita and a farewell barbeque. The next reunion will be held in 2013 in Townsville hosted by John Purcell.



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Looks like John Purcell standing on the right and Bruce Levy with the stick. Not sure who the others are, but they're enjoying themselves.



Pat Scott, James Brown and Iris Preston

EXERCISE CARBINE

This article was sent to us by ex-Sergeant Brian Borland, RASigs, who served with 32 Small Ship Squadron in the early 1960s. We published another of his stories in the newsletter of December 2007. We'll do some more in following issues.



Circa 1960's and I'm serving on the Australian Army Landing Ship *AV1354 Brudenell White*, also known as The Broody Hen or Chook skippered by Captain Tuna Webb together with our sister ship *AV1356 Clive Steele* AKA the Stainless Steel skippered by Major 'Two Thumbs' Tanner. We are 1000 tons of fighting steel with WW II United States Navy battle pock marks to prove it – 70 metres ([200ft) long, painted Jungle Green and named after Australian Generals. We are attached to provide communications; mainly Naval, as well as Army and Merchant Marine.

The morning is fine and a typical sunny 78 deg (26c) Queensland October weather. We are waiting for "Exercise Carbine" to begin. This is the third in a series of exercises we are having; the previous two were "Icebreaker" and "Nutcracker". We are training for "The War we are Not going to. (Vietnam)"* We are also, Not going to have conscription of non-voting 19 year olds (until after the next election.) Exercising with the Army is the ex aircraft carrier *HMAS Sydney*, still Navy, but used to transport army materiel, destroyers, frigates, two Army sea going tugs (the Joe Mann and The Luke) and the RAAF. We are drifting, very slowly, off the South Queensland coastal town of Bagara (near Bundaberg}. We lost our anchor this morning and the Skipper; Merchant Marine Army Captain Tuna Webb is really pissed off. We carry two spares, as well as two spare propellers (which came in handy when we struck that reef – but that's another story). 'Queen Bee' [destroyer *HMAS Queenborough*] sent over three divers to look for it, but they had no luck. The deckies are now rigging the new anchor and catching up on their suntans. Because we are tactical i.e., restricted radio, all comms (except Bells Broadcast, {auto morse 22wpm} *HMAS Harman*, Canberra] are visual i.e., flashing light [two Bridge mounted 300mm search/signaling lamps], semaphore, flag hoists etc. Because this is the first time we will be unloading off an Aircraft Carrier, I'm explaining to the Deck Watch Officers, how naval maneuvering signal flags work. It's like this says I, "the letter 'I', 'India' flag is hoisted by them (*HMAS Sydney*) at the dip (two metres below close-up) on the yard arm i.e., on the port or starboard side, which indicate what side they wish us to come alongside. It basically means, prepare to come alongside, 'indicated' side. When we are ready, we hoist India flag at the dip on the side we will be putting alongside. They hoist India close-up meaning 'come alongside'. We then hoist India close-up meaning 'we are coming alongside now.' After 25 times they get it right, (only joking). They are actually very competent.*



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High Noon comes! The Umpire blows the whistle and the war is on. Over the horizon, two sleek grey Battle Class destroyers - *HMAS Anzac* and *HMAS Tobruk* - greyhounds of the sea, strut their stuff sending bow wave plumes ten metres high into the air. With White Ensigns board stiff they chase submarines at 35 knots (70kph) and fire their 120mm guns at each other. Our LSM is waiting, almost stationary, 'inshore', 'standing out like a country toilet' when the 'Blue Orchids' arrive! In a pre-arranged sequence, Sabre and Mirage jet fighters pop up in a split second, from behind low scrubby coastal hills and come in from different directions with an instant thunderous eardrum smashing roar and shocking, pulsating, downdrafts – which instinctively make us duck and frightens the shit out of us. Side on, their pilots eyeball us from 50 metres and then they're gone, silver darts flashing out over the sea. After a number of sorties, the one sided battle is over and the Umpires decide that (except for diarrhoea and deafness) we have suffered no casualties and we 'carry on'.

HMAS Sydney starts using 'Indian Sign Language' so away we go, with all the appropriate flags flying. For the first part of the exercise the winds are light, the waves low and all goes according to plan, unloading off *HMAS Sydney* and landing infantry, Land Rovers, and trucks etc, ashore. However, later on in the afternoon the wind comes up, the waves rise and things become difficult. LSMs are prone to be blown sideways onto the beach, which is why they drop their stern kedge anchors on the way in. Sometimes, in strong winds it doesn't hold and this can be serious, hence the Army tugs. Experience and instinct begets apprehension. Later, we are unloading trucks and although the carrier remains relatively stationary, the LSM is going up and down a metre. The carrier's crane driver was working like 'a one armed paperhanger with the crabs' sending the trucks up and down to match our rise and fall, whilst the deckies are really scrambling to unhook the slings. Whilst returning to the beach the Skipper tells me to flash a signal to the 'Sydney' telling them we are finalizing operations for the day. *HMAS Sydney* insists on one more unloading. Skipper says "Dickheads" (ex Merchant Marine officers dislike Navy).

By the time we had beached, unloaded and returned the wind has increased and so have the waves. Maneuvering around *HMAS Sydney* in high winds is like walking around a city block. Dead calm in one street - walk around the corner and you get blown over. So it was with us.



When maneuvering with ships, you always come into the strongest element i.e., tide, current or wind with power on. The Skipper is 'Gung Ho' by nature and 'Pissed Off' by circumstance. We expect he will do a long 'J' coming up wind hard, then going hard-a-starboard crosswind, across the bow of the anchored monolith, then into its lee, maneuvering full astern/ahead with both engines to get into the right 'possie'. And so he does.



But first: - A Law of the sea. The leeward of ships, draws ships together - the larger the ship - the stronger the wind and the closer the ships - the greater the draw. We broke the law and paid the penalty. Our plan was excellent - the execution is perfect - until we arrive at ' X ' marks the spot. The winds coming over and around *HMAS Sydney* are like the arms of a mother welcoming her long lost daughter or son, or a thirsty Digger grasping a cold schooner of Fosters. The magnetic like attraction is too much and we head straight for the towering grey wall. The Skipper shouts "Hard a port - full ahead starboard - full astern port - sound collision stations."

Longshot – Brudenel White 1965 – Bob Modystack photo.

All in one breath. "COLLISION!" Scream the Ship's Public Address System - three, three-second eardrum shattering siren warning blasts followed - again "COLLISION!" The Skipper shouts "GET DOWN " as 1000 tons of American Steel attacks 20,000 tons of British Steel. Quickly the propellers start to bite and the bow starts swinging around to port, but, we are too late - B O O O M - we hit, then glance down *HMAS Sydney's* side, nosing along, collecting the 'Shit Chutes' on our way accompanied by Bangs, Clangs, Screeches, Clatters, Booms, Yells from our deckies, Cheers from the Navy, Curses from our Bridge as we shorten their 'Outboard Refuse Disposal Pipelines 500 mm, troops for the use of,' by about seven metres and sail on out to sea.

We hove to. The Skipper turns to me and says, "Flash a signal to them that we have finished Ops for today and that a Formal Message follows." I do this. After a conference is held, I'm given a 'Formal Message 'that reads, " The Army accepts all responsibility for the damage and for the



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cost of the repairs to *HMAS Sydney*. No injuries were suffered by our crew.” I send the message. ‘Sydney’ acknowledges with a “wait out.” About ten minutes later the reply comes and I hand the written message to the Skipper who reads it out loud, “ I have received your Formal Message regarding the collision. I do not agree. We are Training for War. It was nobodies’ fault and I am completely disregarding it. In conclusion, I quote an old saying - “You Can’t Make An Omelette Without Breaking A Few Eggs.” Captain Jack Sparrow? RAN, HMAS SYDNEY.

The Skipper then says in a loud clear voice, “Typical bloody Naval Officer - every bugger wants to be a ‘Nelson’ ”

P.S: The messages and remarks are true as stated. P.P.S. Numerous injuries occurred during these exercises. Many were serious. Some soldiers died. Our sister ship *AV1356 Clive Steele* lost one soldier drowned on a night reconnaissance exercise.

I could not remember the Sydney’s Skippers name.

*Laos. See Sydney Morning Herald 2/11/90 Re Prime Minister Menzies invasion offer to U.S.A.

*Once we had UHF Fleet Tactical Primary installed we just used that.

PHOTOS FROM THE PAST



AV1354 on ‘PIR Prestige Patrol’ PNG from Charlie Bawden’s (Decd) Collection



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

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Contributions are welcome from members and their families of anything that is of interest to members. So, if you would like to contribute please have it typed in MS Word and 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**

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Committee Members

President:	Graham Murray president@32smallshipsqn.org.au	02 9634 3752
Vice President:	Ken Shannon property@32smallshipsqn.org.au	02 9871 4667
Hon. Secretary:	Ross McMurray secretary@32smallshipsqn.org.au	02 9403 1456
Treasurer:	Peter Tierney treasurer@32smallshipsqn.org.au	02 4369 2616
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer Vacant		
Welfare Officer:	Vacant	
Property Member:	Kaye Shannon property@32smallshipsqn.org.au	02 9871 4667
Social Member:	George Fisher	02 9876 4713
Committee:	Ian Johnston, BEM John Bryant elizabethandjohn@hotmail.com Bruce Reilly bruce@truckalign.com.au	02 9623 7948 02 9979 1197 02 4655 9394
Hon Auditor:	Lt Col Phil Cameron, OAM (Rtd)	
Editor NTM:	Ross McMurray	
Publisher NTM:	Jack Madden	
Chaplains:	Monsignor Eugene Harley Reverend Richard McCracken	
Web Address	www.32smallshipsqn.org.au	



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