# **NOTICE TO MARINERS**

# Newsletter of 32 Small Ship Sqn RAE Association Incorporating RAE Tn Patron: Colonel K.L. Duncan (Rtd)

# **President's Message**

The war in Afghanistan has been a tough lost nine Sappers and many wounded -Sapper Curt McGrath from 6 Engineer Combat Engineer Regiment on an Improvised Explosive Device blast. of his mates and an outstanding casualty suffered the loss of both legs. He's where he's recovering remarkably well.



challenge for RAE. To date we have some very badly. Earlier this year Support Regiment was attached to 2 operations when he was wounded in Largely thanks to the quick actions evacuation procedure he lived but currently in Royal Brisbane Hospital He knows the recovery process will

be long and hard but he's focused and very positive. The Defence community provides substantial support to wounded soldiers and families. However, there are always some needs that arise that are costly and not covered by the 'systems' financial support. On your behalf we have made a small donation to Curt to help offset some of his financial concerns.

The Hon. Secretary received some feed back on my message in NTM July 2012 reference ex-Army apprentices who served in the Squadron or RAE Tn units so here is a second go – Patrick Tanzer  $(4^{th})$ , Max Lockwood (8<sup>th</sup>), Philip (Eddie) Edstein, Frank Poole (10<sup>th</sup>), Allan Bensley (13<sup>th</sup>), Dan Goodall, Peter Perry, Glenn Roberts (15<sup>th</sup>), Gordon Clout, Brian Clulow, Anthony Willson (19<sup>th</sup>), Danilo Diklich (20<sup>th</sup>), Gerry Dunn (21<sup>st</sup>) and Carl Nobelius (22<sup>nd</sup>).

Some facts and figures from Wally Rotow (18<sup>th</sup>) who is in Central Army Records

Trades – 9,296 men and women enlisted into the Australian Army to serve as Army Apprentices. 1,783 were non-graduates which includes 25 apprentices who died whilst at AAS. Of these 446 non-graduates went on to serve in the Regular Army. There were 7,513 graduates.

Many Army Apprentices have participated on overseas operational service, both warlike and nonwarlike. Some have been on multiple operations – the number of individual Apprentices who have partaken in all twenty three operations totals 2,561 including Korea (34), Malaya (271), Borneo (198), Thai/Malay Border (39), Vietnam (1,125).

762 Army Apprentices have reached officer rank. This includes 36 non-graduates. There have been 6 padres (2 from 16<sup>th</sup>) and 711 WO1s and 765 WO2s. In the higher ranks there has been 1 x Lieutenant General, 5 x Brigadiers, 21 x Colonels and 109 x Lieutenant Colonels.

On behalf of the Patron and committee I would like to take this opportunity to wish all member and their families a merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

Ocka

JAMAIS ETRE REMORQUE





#### VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY - SCHOOL OF MILITARY ENGINEERING 18 August 2012

On Saturday 18 August 2012 the commemorative service for Vietnam Veterans' Day was held at the School of Military Engineering. it was the 46th anniversary of the battle of Long Tan. It was a fine and sunny day but still quite cold. There was a good attendance with about 80 people all up. Many ex-sappers were there as well as families and friends. The service was conducted by WO1 Peter Allen, OAM (Rtd) and supported by the CO of SME, Lieutenant Colonel Allan Hollink. SME provided the Chaplain and Catafalque Party, and the Australian Army Band - Sydney provided the bugler. Ingleburn RSL Pipes and Drums supplied a piper. Security at SME (and all bases in the Liverpool Military Area) is very restrictive these days but SME provided a plan to enable us access without too many problems.

The Guest Speaker was Lieutenant Colonel JHA (Paddy) Martin who was 2IC of 1 Field Squadron during its initial deployment to Vietnam in 1966.

Paddy spoke of the continual involvement in significant actions throughout the six years of service in Vietnam starting with the engineer support 3 Field Troop gave to the 1 RAR Group and the US 173 Airborne Brigade in 1965. He also mentioned the laying of the infamous Barrier Minefield in 1967 which was constructed against the advice of Engineer, Armour and Infantry commanders.

He also spoke of the involvement of other RAE units including 17 Construction Squadron, 30 Terminal Squadron, 32 Small Ship Squadron, 55 Advanced Engineer Stores Squadron and 11 Movement Control Group. He acknowledged the sapper input at various headquarters and units including 1 Australian Civil Affairs Unit and the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam. He also thanked the wives, girlfriends, partners and families who provided incredible support for the soldiers who were deployed overseas.

After the service we headed to the Peeler Club for lunch and a chance to meet up with old mates over a couple of drinks. Members and guests of our Association who attended were:

Graham and Anthony Murray, Ken Duncan, Cec Weekes (President AWTA), Ken Pountney, Bruce Reilly and Rina Ross, Norm and Joan Mason, Brian and Val Waites, Ross and Jenny McMurray, Jack Peel, Allan and Deborah Hyde and their friends Ken Eaton, Bob Baker, Harold Dennis, Geoff Lewsam and Bill Lottey, Peter and Sue Tierney and their friends Richard Korff (ex 1 Fd Sqn) and his wife, Jenny, John Sahariv and Bert Hagel.

Full marks to the CO, RSM and staff at SME who made a big effort to ensure that all present experienced a dignified memorial service and an enjoyable afternoon. Well done!







Guest Speaker, Lieutenant Colonel Paddy Martin



Jenny McMurray, Peter Tierney, Sue Tierney, Richard Korff and Jenny Korff



December 2012



Jack Peel after laying a wreath on behalf of AATTV



Ocka Murray after laying a wreath on behalf of 32 Small Ship Squadron





#### **OLD MATES**

A few old mates got together in Brisbane recently to have lunch and a couple of beers with their wives to discuss Campbell Newman, religion, sex, Campbell Newman and politics in Queensland (I made that up - I don't have a clue what they discussed).

Anyway, they would have a lot to talk about because they haven't seen each other for about 40 years. The last time they were together was on *AS3051 John Monash* at varying times in Papua New Guinea, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

The reunion consisted of Jock Balfour, Pat Riley, Len Ramsay (all National Servicemen), Carl Nobelius and Gerry Dunn (both Army Apprentices) and their ladies.



Gerry Dun, Pat Riley, Carl Nobelius, Jock Balfour and Len Ramsay



December 2012

#### COMMEMORATION OF THE DEPLOYMENT TO BORNEO

Between 1962 and 1966 Indonesia fought a small undeclared war with Malaysia. Australian units were committed to defending Malaysian territory against external attack in 1964. On 5 May 1964 *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* and *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee* left Woolwich for operational service in Borneo. The two LSMs were loaded with heavy plant and equipment for 7 Field Squadron. The main body of that unit along with its vehicles and stores would depart Sydney on *HMAS Sydney* two weeks later.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of this deployment there are two functions proposed in 2014. One will be a Commemoration Service and Anniversary Dinner in Sydney on 24 and 25 May. This will be organised by the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association and it is proposed to be held at Garden Island. If any Borneo veterans wish to attend this function please contact me and I'll send you a registration form.

The other one will be a Commemoration and Plaque unveiling near the Point Danger Light House at Tweed Heads. This will be organised and coordinated by Bob Modystack in conjunction with the Gold Coast City Council and with assistance from our Association. It is proposed that this function will incorporate the 2014 Water Transport Reunion and will be held in early May.

Further details of both functions will be advised in future newsletters.



Vernon Sturdee (bottom left) coming alongside Harry Chauvel at Tawau, Borneo in 1964





#### WATER TRANSPORT REUNION 2013 - UPDATE

The reunion in 2013 will be held in Townsville on  $6^{th}$  to  $9^{th}$  September. 35 Water Transport and 30 Terminal Squadrons have agreed to host the reunion dinner on Saturday, 7th and present a capability display on the afternoon of  $6^{th}$  September with LCM/LARC rides.

Our members will host a BBQ on the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> September, attended by serving members of the above units and their spouses/partners. It is hoped that others, such as movers and 9 Transport Squadron members may be represented. The venue will be the picnic/BBQ area opposite Rowes Bay Caravan Park with a view to Magnetic Is.

A memorial service will be held on the Sunday afternoon followed by an informal function, again at Rowes Bay.

Suitable caravan park/holiday village and motel venues have been selected. Townsville Enterprise has provided rates for points of interest such as The Barrier Reef Aquarium, Military Museum and Magnetic Island.

As we age and disabilities accelerate, I urge everyone who served in maritime and movement units as well as RACT units in the later parts of their careers to make the most that this opportunity will offer. For some, it may be the last, not only to enjoy the company of those with whom we served but to establish a link and relationship with those who carry the traditions and experiences that we and our forebears developed over the last few generations.

I recently attended another Termite Reunion and there was strong interest from the generation that followed us to also attend. This means we will have three generations of water transport/termite members and ex-members in attendance.

It is also suggested that after a long trip to North Queensland, members may wish to continue to the Far North and enjoy all that Cairns and the surrounding district has to offer. We have a close contact in the tourist industry who will arrange discounted rates to venues such as the Great Barrier Reef, Daintree, Skyrail, and Atherton Tableland. Others may wish to visit the veterans' retreat at Pandanus Park on Cape York.

Costs and other details have only recently become available and a detailed proforma will be snail mailed/emailed during the Christmas/New Year period. If you do not receive the proforma, please advise John Purcell at Johnpurcell4@dodo.com.au or 9 Maynard Close, Mt Sheridan, QLD 4868 Phone 07 40363026





#### **EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY**

DVA has been participating in exercise physiology for some time. I think the reason is that it is cheaper to get veterans as fit and healthy as possible than have them sick and in constant medical care. Exercise physiology can contribute to the management of:

- \* diabetes
- \* cardiovascular disease
- \* osteoporosis
- \* arthritis
- \* cancer, and
- \* muscular conditions of a chronic nature

If you have a DVA gold card they will pay for these services through DVA arrangements that meet your clinical needs.

If you have a DVA white card (specific conditions) DVA will pay for exercise physiology services that are required because of an accepted war or service caused injury or disease, where a white card has been issued for:

- \* malignant cancer
- pulmonary tuberculosis
- \* post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD, or
- \* anxiety and /or depression (whether war caused or not)

DVA will provide treatment for clinical needs related to these conditions.

To get access to these services you must be referred to an exercise physiologist who treats members of the veteran community by accepting the gold or white card. The referral should come from a doctor.

Further information can be obtained at the DVA offices or at their website at www.dva.gov.au or you can phone DVA for the cost of a local call on 133 254 or 1800 555 254 for country callers. You can also send an email at generalenquiries@dva.gov.au and don't forget you can get more help at any DVA office.





#### VALE - JAMES BROUGHTON 1928 - 2012

Jack Madden recently reported the passing of ex-WO1 James Broughton, RAE in Queensland. Jim was well known in the Corps and was a popular and respected Warrant Officer. He served in New Guinea during World War II, after which he served continuously until 1974. This included service in the 2nd AIF, Interim Army, CMF and ARA.

Units in which Jim served in were: 13 Army Troops, 3 Garrison Engineers, 78 Deputy Commander Royal Engineers (Works), 3 Field Squadron, 16 National Service Training Battalion, 23 Construction Squadron, 20 Field Park Squadron, 22 Construction Squadron, 3 Field Engineer Regiment, Headquarters 3 Division, 32 Small Ship Squadron and RSM of School of Military Engineering. He served on *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* in Vietnam in 1967/68.

#### VALE - JEFFREY MURLEY 1938 - 2012

Geoff Freeland advised that ex-LCPL Jeff Murley, RAE died on 22 August 2012. He had been ill for some time with respiratory problems. Jeff served with 32 Small Ship Squadron in Borneo in 1964 aboard *AV1353 Harry Chauvel*. He also served in 30 Port Operating Squadron, 30 Terminal Squadron, and 6 Water Transport Wksp Troop. In 1967/68 he served with 21 Engineer Support Troop in Vietnam.

Jeff was a boilermaker/welder by trade and after he left the Army he installed and maintained boilers and mechanical equipment in hospitals. He lived at Raymond Terrace NSW. Laurie Mills attended his funeral and reported that the service was conducted by the Raymond Terrace RSL Chaplain and there was a good crowd to see him off.

#### VALE - BARRY BAILEY

#### 1941 - 2012

Ex-Sergeant Barry Bailey, RAE passed away as a result of a heart attack on 20 September 2012. Units Barry served in were: 24 Construction Squadron, Tropical Trials and Research Unit (Tully), 35 Water Transport Squadron, Brisbane Water Transport Unit and 32 Small Ship Squadron on all four LSMs. He served in Vietnam on *AV1356 Clive Steele* in 1970-71. He was Bosun on *AS3051 John Monash* in 1971 when it sailed from Singapore to Sydney after a major refit.

Barry retired from the Army in 1984 and he and his wife, Rosemary, and moved to Bangalow NSW where he built a 16 foot cabin cruiser from scratch. They moved to Ballina in 1991 where they bought a 36 foot houseboat. He also became a curator of the Ballina Naval and Maritime Museum and acted as skipper on local charter boats.

In 1996 they moved to Laurieton. Whilst living there they often visited the Newcastle region which they liked and eventually moved to Medowie in the Port Stephens hinterland. Barry joined the local Sailability Club which operates from Grahamstown Dam and lent his expertise





in operating the rescue boat as well as the sailing. He also joined the Medowie RSL Sub-Branch and enjoyed participating in functions and meetings.

Barry's funeral service was held at Raymond Terrace, NSW which was attended by many friends and relatives including representatives from Medowie RSL Sub-Branch. Our condolences to his wife, Rosemary, daughter Cathy and son David.



**Barry Bailey** 

#### SICK PARADE

**Graeme McKenzie** was recently in hospital with heart problems. He had a double bypass operation but is still having difficulties.

**Des McDonald** has been in and out of hospital this year with back problems. He had eight vertebrae removed and had artificial ones and rods inserted. He's now much improved.

**Merv Ballans** was diagnosed with cancer in March. He's had extensive chemotherapy and now seems to be OK.





#### VALE - JOHN MERRICK

Lieutenant Colonel John Merrick, a long time identity of RAE (Tn), passed away in Canberra

on 6 August 2012 after a battle with cancer. A graduate of the first course at The Officer Cadet School Portsea, in June 1952, John was one of the early Regular Officers to be posted to the then expanding Transportation Service.

His early career included postings with National Service Training Battalions and regular RAE Units, before attending the then "Long Transportation Course" at Chowder Bay. As a "Trainee Navigator" he was a member of the commissioning crews of the first two LSM's in Japan and the subsequent passage back to Australia. Various Water Transport postings followed, including a short period as Master of "AV Tarra" in the waters of Papua New Guinea and OC of 4 Water Transport Troop.



In 1961 – 62 he served with the US Army Transportation Corps at Fort Eustis Virginia and also in Hawaii and later was very proud of his posting as OC 30 Terminal Squadron. He made a couple of trips to South Vietnam with a detachment of 30 Terminal Squadron, on-board HMAS Sydney, trying very hard each time (unofficially) to gain a US Army request to Australia for his unit to be deployed permanently into the theatre.

In due course John was posted to HQ AFV in Saigon, as the DAQMG (Movements) in 1969-70, returning to Canberra and several postings within both Army Headquarters and the Department of Defence. He retired from the Army in early 1978, remaining in Canberra with civilian appointments at both The Australian War Memorial and the new Parliament House.

Always a lover of travel, good food and good wines, in retirement he pursued these interests to the full. He played a significant role within the RSL, where he was an active member of the Campbell-Russell Sub Branch and a past ACT RSL Branch President. John was a very active member of the Rotary Club of Canberra North, where he enjoyed working with the community on a number of worthwhile projects and fund raising ventures. He was a Past President of his Club and also a Paul Harris Fellow.

John Merrick is survived by his daughters Lee and Simone, his three grandchildren and two Great grand-daughters. His wife of 53 years Beryce, pre-deceased him in October 2007.

John's funeral service was held at the Chapel at the Royal Military College, Duntroon. Rob Vickery, Dan Foch, Ken Duncan and John Sahariv attended. Thanks to Ken Duncan for providing this information about John.







Rob Vickery, Dan Foch and Ken Duncan at John Merrick's wake.



Major John Merrick of Lyneham, ACT, Officer Commanding Detachment 11 Movement Control, assists Brigadier (Brig) W. G. Henderson (left) on his arrival at Tan Son Nhut, while Military Policemen Corporal Noel Duckwitz of Geebung, Qld, salutes. Brig Henderson will take up his post as Commander of the 5000 strong 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) base at Nui Dat. June 1970





#### VALE - GEOFF GALLAGHER 1945 - 2012

We are sad to announce that one of our popular members, Ex-Corporal Geoffrey Francis Gallagher, RAE passed away on 13 November 2012 .He was conscripted in 1967 and served in Vietnam with 11 Movement Control Group in 1968. Geoff lived at Coombabah on the Gold Coast. His obituary will be in the next newsletter.

#### VALE - LAURIE KENT 1927 - 2012

Phil Cannane recently advised the passing of ex-WO2 Laurence William Kent, RAustInf, RAAOC and RAE on 18 November 2012. Laurie served as an infantryman during the Korean War in 1951 and 1952 with 2 RAR, 3 RAR and later with 4 RAR. He also served with 5 Central Ammunition Depot, 4 Base Ordnance Depot, 1 Ordnance Field park and 32 Small Ship Squadron.

During his service with 3 RAR in Korea in October 1951 he fought in the battle of Maryang San where the battalion casualties were 20 killed and 89 wounded. This was decisive action against numerically superior and well trained Chinese soldiers. Colonel Tom Daly (a future Chief of the General Staff) said 3 RAR and its supporting arms is believed to have accounted for two enemy battalions.

#### **NEW WELFARE OFFICER**

We haven't had a Welfare Officer since Phil Cannane pulled the pin and moved to Queensland some years ago. We are pleased to announce that Bob Freeman has volunteered to take up this position and is looking forward to contacting anyone who may need assistance with DVA claims or anything else. He is an accredited Advocate with many years experience and a life member of the Vietnam Veterans Federation. Phone him after 6.00 pm on 02 6882 2864 or post any documentation to him at 29 Victoria Street, Dubbo, NSW 2830.

#### **BRUCE REILLY'S NEW QUALIFCATION**

I know you all have been waiting to hear this. Bruce has been attending Newcastle TAFE to gain a Watchkeeper Steam Endorsement to his existing qualification of 1st Class Foreign Motor Chief Engineer. This means he is now authorised to operate steam propulsion plant and associated systems on steam vessels.. You will recall that Bruce is heavily involved with the Sydney Heritage Fleet, along with Michael Shultz, and helped restore the 1902 steam tug *Waratah*. Looks like he can now officially drive that too. He is also the Assistant Chief Engineer on the WW II Liberty Ship, *USS Jeremiah O'Brian* in San Francisco where he spends a lot of time. Well done mate!





#### VALE - GREGORY ATKINSON 1946 - 2012

John Spindler recently advised us of the death of ex-Sapper Gregory (Toby) Atkinson, RAE. Toby was a National Serviceman who served in 4 Water Transport Troop, 35 Water Transport Squadron and 32 Small Ship Squadron. He served on *AS3051 John Monash* in Vietnam in 1968 and 1969.

After Toby left the Army in 1969 he settled in Queensland and held several jobs. He was a Ramset salesman for a while but because he liked driving he spent a lot of his time working as a courier and taxi driver.

Toby passed away on 28 September 2012 at Kallangur, Queensland after a long illness. His funeral service was held at Redcliffe and our Association was represented by John and Carrol Spindler (who provided this information), and Dazz Graney. Also in attendance were the President of Redcliffe RSL with a number of members, and Queensland Sappers Association.

Eulogies were given by his son, Vince and also by John Spindler. John spoke warmly about Toby's two years in 32, and his friendship with him that lasted for more than 45 years; firstly when they undertook Corps Training together, and serving on the ships at 32, and the many years after that when through their deep friendship they kept in touch with each other.

He said..."despite the majority of Nashos' having no sea going experience prior to entering 32, as a bunch of young Australians we always managed to get the job done with determination and good humour". (Very true John).

John emphasised that.." being in 32 Small Ship Squadron there was a sense of belonging to a family rather than having a job and he believed that this sense of family remains with us today". He also said that Toby's partner, Robyn was introduced to everyone at the Water Transport Reunion in Brisbane in 2005 and she then became part of the family.

Our condolences go to Toby's partner, Robbie, his son Vince and daughter Michelle, along with their partners and grandchildren. The photo below of Toby and Robbie was taken at the Brisbane 2005 Water Transport Reunion.









Dazz Graney and John Spindler at Toby's funeral



Some of the crew of *AS1351 John Monash* in 1969. Standing left to right-???, Dazz Graney, Max McClymont, George Baker, Fred Owens, Front Row left to right -Toby Atkinson, Ian Porteous, "Scouse" Rimmer.





#### **DUBBO DASH**

Bob Freeman reported that the Dubbo Dash Mini Water Transport Reunion was a great success. It was held at Dubbo (obviously) during the week-end of 26 - 28 October.

The events started on Friday night with a 'meet and greet' function in the Big Four Caravan Park. It was a good turnout with over eighty ex- members, friends, relatives, wives and children attending. On Saturday Bob organised a bus tour of the Western Plains Zoo and a tour around the Dubbo township. That evening a dinner was enjoyed at the West Dubbo Bowling Club. During the night John Purcell spoke of the Water Transport Reunion in Townsville in 2013 and Bob Modystack gave details of his proposal of having a 50th commemoration of the trip to Borneo by *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* and *AV1355 Vernon Sturdee*. It was a great night and there were people who hadn't seen one another for over 40 years. It was a night of renewed friendships and storytelling.

The week-end was organised by Bob Freeman and Ray Bailey. However, Bob said most of the organising was undertaken by Ray's wife, Robyn, who worked tirelessly to ensure that everything happened according to plan. Well done to Bob, Ray and Robyn. A photo and the local newspaper article of the week-end follow.



Here's a shot of some of the crew of *AV1356 Clive Steele* in 1970 in Vietnam. Fred Turnbull, Brice Rowe, ???, Ken Loadsman, Terry Hinch, Bob Freeman, Steve Monk, Kevin Morley, Rob Gaylard, Dave Jupp and Peter Atkinson. They're not in the correct order...sorry.







Article reprinted with acknowledgement to Dubbo Photo News Dubbo NSW

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#### **DAVID BRIGGS**

Sergeant Dave Briggs was the Bosun on AV1356 Clive Steele in Vietnam in 1966 / 67. Whilst there he contracted an illness which he did not recover from and passed away a few months after the ship returned to Woolwich. Dave will always be remembered as a hard working, popular and respected member of the unit who had a great sense of humour. His one failing was that he barracked for the Balmain Tigers Rugby League Club and he was far from happy when St George beat them in the 1966 grand final.

Dave's daughter, Pam, has asked us to see if she can make contact with anyone who knew him, whether in Vietnam or elsewhere. So if anyone who served with him and would like to discuss it with her please contact her at pamcourtney@live.com.au or 0400 170 175. In February 2013 she will travel to Vietnam and hopefully visit some of the areas where the ship operated. She will contact us on her return and let us know her thoughts on the visit.

Here are a few photos of Dave and mates:



Dave With Robbie Robinson (didn't win)

Dave on the right (on Harry Chauvel)



Dave on the left and Bruno Butler on the right but who's in the middle?





# **Property for sale**

Ties (new stock now arrived)	\$25.00	LSM Lapel Badge	\$12.00
Association Book	\$30.00	Collar Badge	\$6.00
25thAnniversary 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 it doesn't have to be typed or in electronic form (although that helps). 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!





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