

# NOTICE TO MARINERS

## Newsletter of 32 Small Ship Sqn RAE Association Incorporating RAE Tn

*Patron: Colonel K.L. Duncan (Rtd)*

### President's Message

In April 1966 AS3051 *John Monash, Sturdee* sailed from Sydney to Control Group also arrived in April Squadron arrived in June with the 1967. Thus next year will be the Transportation service in Vietnam.



accompanied by AV1355 *Vernon* Vietnam. Det 11 Movement and elements of Det 30 Terminal main body arriving in January 50th anniversary of RAE

To mark this milestone a number of are listed elsewhere in this Day, after the Sydney march, it is proposed to have a 'special' reunion lunch. It will still be pretty well low key as usual but we might have a guest speaker for this occasion.

activities will be planned. Some newsletter. Firstly on ANZAC

It is also proposed to manufacture high quality anniversary plaques for sale to members. They are still in the design phase at present but it is hoped that they will be ready for sale on ANZAC Day.

Many members have asked about reprinting Dave Perham's book, "Rolling Through 32". Our committee has been looking at this and it seems that there is a good chance it will happen.

As most of you are aware there is a Commemorative Walk in the town of Seymour Vic, recognising the service of all who served in Vietnam. The centrepiece of the walk is a wall made up of plexiglass panels with the names of every serviceman and woman who served. There are also sets of pavers with details of units who served there. Associations can buy these pavers and have details of their service depicted on them. Some of our members have suggested that we participate in this scheme. The committee is looking into it and would appreciate any comments you may have about this. If you do then please contact Ross McMurray and let him know your thoughts.

Finally, later in 2016 it is proposed that the Association will provide a bronze plaque at Woolwich Dock, outlining the ten years of service 32 Small Ship Squadron had when it was based there. For those who are familiar with the revamped site it is intended that the plaque be mounted on a steel plate at the end of Clarke road, at the steps leading down to Woolwich Dock wharf.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to wish you all the best for a safe Christmas and new year.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY - SCHOOL OF MILITARY ENGINEERING

On Tuesday 18 August 2015 the RAE Vietnam Memorial Committee commemorated the 49th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan at the new location of SME at Holsworthy. The different location meant a different format than previous years. Fortunately the weather was much nicer than last year where we had 84mm of rain during the outside service and wind gusts of over 30 knots! This year it was all blue sky and no wind.

It was a very moving service with over 130 people in attendance, and as usual the Wattle Grove Public School Choir gave a sterling performance and being the 100th anniversary of the battle of Lone Pine during WW1 they gave a fine rendition of "Keep the Home Fires Burning" as a tribute to those who fell.

SME provided the Catafalque Party, supported by a bugler from the Australian Army Band - Sydney, and Pipe Sergeant Peter Jakobsson from Ingleburn RSL Pipes and Drums.

The initial part of the service was held in the new RAE Chapel where we were welcomed by the Commanding Officer of SME, Lieutenant Colonel Ken Martin, and his Regimental Sergeant Major, WO1 David Harvey.

The Guest Speaker was Lieutenant General Frank Hickling AO CSC, the Representative Colonel Commandant of the Royal Australian Engineers, and a former Chief of Army. During his speech he recalled that this year was the 50th anniversary of the deployment of 3 Field Troop to Vietnam in support of 1 RAR Group. They were the first formed body intended to provide combat engineer support to the infantry. He said..."Just like our predecessors who served in all the other wars of the 20th century, our ranks are thinning as time takes its toll. This Memorial will serve future generations of sappers by reminding them that, just like all others who went before, these men did their duty. It seems to me that none of us can or should expect higher praise than that".

He then unveiled a bronze plaque, rededicating the Memorial to its new home, and said, "On behalf of all members of the Royal Australian Engineers and in particular those who served in Vietnam, I hereby rededicate this Memorial to those of our fallen comrades who served in that war. May they never be forgotten" .

John Sahariv laid a wreath on behalf of our Association and Frank Poole laid one on behalf of the Army Apprentices Association.

After a buffet lunch many guests inspected the new RAE Museum. It's well set up and is a credit to the Army History Unit and its Curator, Sebastian Spencer. Ken Duncan and Cec Weekes deserve praise for their considerable efforts in setting up the Water Transport collection.

Our Association and 32 were represented by Jack Peel who is the Chairman of the RAE Vietnam Memorial Committee, his wife Carole, Tony and Dalveen Harris, Allan and Deborah Hyde, Ross and Jenny McMurray, John and Carrol Spindler, Lance and Lynne Northey, Brian and Val Waites, our Patron Ken Duncan, Cec Weekes (President AWTA), John Sahariv, Ken Pountney, Keith Devine and Norm Mason. I think that's about all who attended. I apologise if I've missed anyone.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**



**Jack Peel and Ken Duncan**



**Keith Devine**



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**



**Brian Waites and Ken Pountney**



**Deborah and Allan Hyde**



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**



**Dalveen Harris, Tony Harris and John Spindler**



**Norm Mason**



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## DONATIONS

We recently received donations from David Walker and Jim Creighton. Thanks fellas.

## BILL CLIFFORD

In our last newsletter we wrote a short introduction about Bill Clifford, a new member who now lives in Ireland. I asked him for some more details about his interesting time in the Army and this is his response:

Hi Ross,

I did my Corps training at Casula before going to Chowder Bay for the seamen's course in 1972, from where I went to 40 Water Transport Squadron (Heavy) and the *Balikpapan*. Les Dennis was skipper and Ocka Murray was chief engineer. I did a couple of trips to PNG .

At the end of a long survey op we brought back WW2 relics from Buna and Gasmata, New Britain. On my second trip with Snow Hider as skipper and Dave Clarke as chief engineer in 1974, we went up the Fly river as far as Kiunga, which probably equaled Wally Blumenfeld's trip up the Sepik in the Shovel.

We did a few trips to Lord Howe Island as well. In 35 Water Transport Squadron the biggest memory was the LCM 8 convoy to Hobart to ferry essential services from Lindisfarne across the Derwent to where the Cenotaph Park is now, as the bridge got into a tiff with a ship called the *Lake Illawarra*.

Meanwhile I married an Aussie lass and have an Australian daughter who lives in Texas USA but the marriage didn't last the distance. I transferred to 5/7 RAR in 1975 and did a trip to Butterworth and made a try at SAS but wasn't successful. I was discharged in 1978 and got a job with Jubilee Shipping and joined 1 Commando Regiment straight away and stayed for about a year before I broke my ankle badly at work .

I returned to Ireland in 1980, had a few years at sea with Roebothams (tankers} got married again with a bit more success as we're still together after 35 years , have a son and daughter(pigeons clutch), I retired 3 years ago and sail as often as the wind blows in a 22 footer.

Ian Power, Toby Tidyman, Rabbi Burns, Dave Walker Wayne Rush, Kiwi Millar and Joe Byrne were shipmates . I had a couple of great mentors in Les Dennis, John Gadd and Bob Modystack from upstairs. Thanks for the back NTM,s , I will let you know as soon they arrive.

Regards Bill.

Thanks for the interesting story Bill. You certainly packed a lot in during your short time in the Army. Stay well.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## A LETTER FROM PHIL CAMERON

We received this letter from Lieutenant Colonel Phil Cameron OAM (our Auditor) earlier this year. He mentions a few articles in the March 2014 newsletter, such as:

"Glen Geddes - Unattended or Not" by Hugh Waldren.

"The Night Express to Penang" by Bill Moncur.

"30 Terminal Squadron" by Tony Jones.

He also mentions Corporal Ralph Todd, the Movements NCO allotted for duty at Fire Support Base CORAL in Vietnam in May 1968, and what a wonderful job he did there.

Here's Phil's letter:

Dear Ocka,

I have meant to commit to writing to you following a number of issues of 'Notice to Mariners', but being old and retired I found reasons not to do so. I thoroughly enjoyed all the matters and members reports from far and wide, and these caused me to write.

I was working in the Director of Transportation (DTn) office when Jim Young commenced the design process for the replacement of the LSMs when it was realised that the original concept for the LSM Mk2 fell to hard times. The fear that the Navy would take over LSM Mk2 really led to the LCH concept. Pity to find out that the Navy wanted commands for more junior officers and took over the LCH. To find that the LCH Balikpapan had been in service for 41 years brought me back to reality. How time flies.

It was great to hear that Eugene Harley received an OAM.

What a story Tony Jones had to tell. Still waters run deep. The elderly Lieutenant at Central Station may well have been Allan Beaver.

As a matter of interest the LSMs carrying engineer equipment to Borneo were placed under the command of the Navy contingent, a suggestion from Phil Greville (DTn). As you know loading continues to the last minute with LSMs and during loading the Admiral in Charge, Otto Beacher, made an inspection and was horrified to find that the LSMs were "not shipshape" just prior to departure. His displeasure was eventually handed to Phil Greville for a report. It was short "The report is just a beacher umbrella". Phil was reprimanded for his flippancy.

Tony mentioned Arthur Tange. Phil Greville foresaw a USA McNamara style of Defence in this country being developed by Sir Arthur and wrote to the papers about his concerns. He also wrote a very long and well documented report upon the possible direction and effects of other countries following that approach. You can probably understand the differences between a Lieutenant Colonel and a Defence Secretary and therefore understand the pressures brought to bear on Phil. The final outcome was on one evening when Sir Arthur Tange's driver arrived at Phil's house seeking to speak to him personally. Following negotiations with June, Phil's wife, Phil appeared. The driver said Sir Arthur wished Phil to see a Press Release that Sir Arthur was



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

planning to issue the next day. The driver was instructed to wait until Phil had read the Press Release and produced a reply to Sir Arthur before he could leave.

A man who had been a Prisoner-of-War of the North Koreans who was called to the Bar of the Senate to give reasons why Wilfred Birchett, a War Correspondent who assisted the North Koreans and had visited Phil in his hole in the ground, should not be granted an Australian Passport, was a man of steel. Tackling what he saw as an attempt to change the culture of Defence in Australia was something he could not avoid.

Bill Moncur's story about Sapper initiative reminds me of the stories my British boss in Singapore, 1960 to 1962, told me about his various trips in the same role as Bill, but not so hectic. However, he, Ray Sandy, did have one skirmish when the lead locomotive was derailed by the CT (Communist Terrorists). He lived to tell the tale and many more. Incidentally Ray Sandy acted as father of the bride at Mary's and our wedding in 1962.

The story of Glen Geddes brings back many memories. Hugh Waldren was a typical sapper when granted some authority (Movements armband superseded rank and was jealously guarded). I was on HQ staff at Rockhampton as the Movements "man on the ground". Bruce Fletcher provided manning of various terminals. As my job was liaison with a number of organisations Bruce decided I needed a Call Sign and quite without authority allotted me "Contractor". That title stayed with LSF (Logistic Support Force) for many years.

I think that has exhausted my memory unless I get prompted by some other article. As a matter of interest Phil Greville's history of "The Royal Australian Engineers 1945-1972" contains a section about Transportation (largely provided by Ken Duncan) and Movements (largely provided by myself). A lot of facts but some political manoeuvring by the author. Pages 356 to 358 tells of an unusual Movements deployment and the initiative displayed by another Sapper (Ralph Todd, a recent convert to Movements from an LSM crew member). Shows the power of the Movements Armband and sapper initiative.

Regards (to ensure I do not get carried away any further),

Phil Cameron

## WORKSHOP WOES

This is a short tale about the fire and flushing pump on the 56ft Steel tug Joe Mann.

The fire and flushing pump was sending water everywhere except where it was supposed to and on stripping it down it was found the ceramic shaft seal had packed it in. Adelaide Steamships, the builder, must have dug up the Pomona pump from their archives as nobody had heard of that model nor were any parts available. Eventually a seal of the right diameter was located but it was too thick.

So a Sapper was assigned the wonderful job of lapping the ceramic seal down to the correct thickness. Two days later the job was finished and the Workshop WO1 was 'micing' it for correctness. He dropped it with disastrous results and it was the first time I ever heard a Sapper swear profoundly at a WO1 ....and get away with it!



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## **PETER CLISDELL FUNDRAISING FOR THE ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE**

One of our members, Peter Clisdell, ex-11 Movement Control Group, recently entered the Steadfast Outback Air Race to raise funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The race, held every three years, is a GPS based navigation time trial through the outback. Some 60 competitors in 30 aircraft entered the event. Peter, his wife Helen, and friends Jim and Vanessa Driver travelled in Peter's Cessna 210 turboprop aircraft. They were the highest fundraiser for the event and raised nearly \$50,000 from various sponsors including our Association, 11 MC Group and Blackmores. Overall, \$430,000 was raised towards outfitting RFDS aircraft with essential medical equipment.

The race started in Esperance WA and finished at Hamilton Island Qld, (although Peter actually started and finished at Bankstown Airport NSW). Stops included Forrest WA, Yulara NT, Alice Springs NT, Birdsville Qld, Winton Qld, Karumba Qld and Cooktown Qld.

Well done, Peter! You are to be congratulated for raising funds which will assist in the essential operations of the Royal flying Doctor Service.



**From left Helen, Peter, Vanessa and Jim with the Cessna 210.**

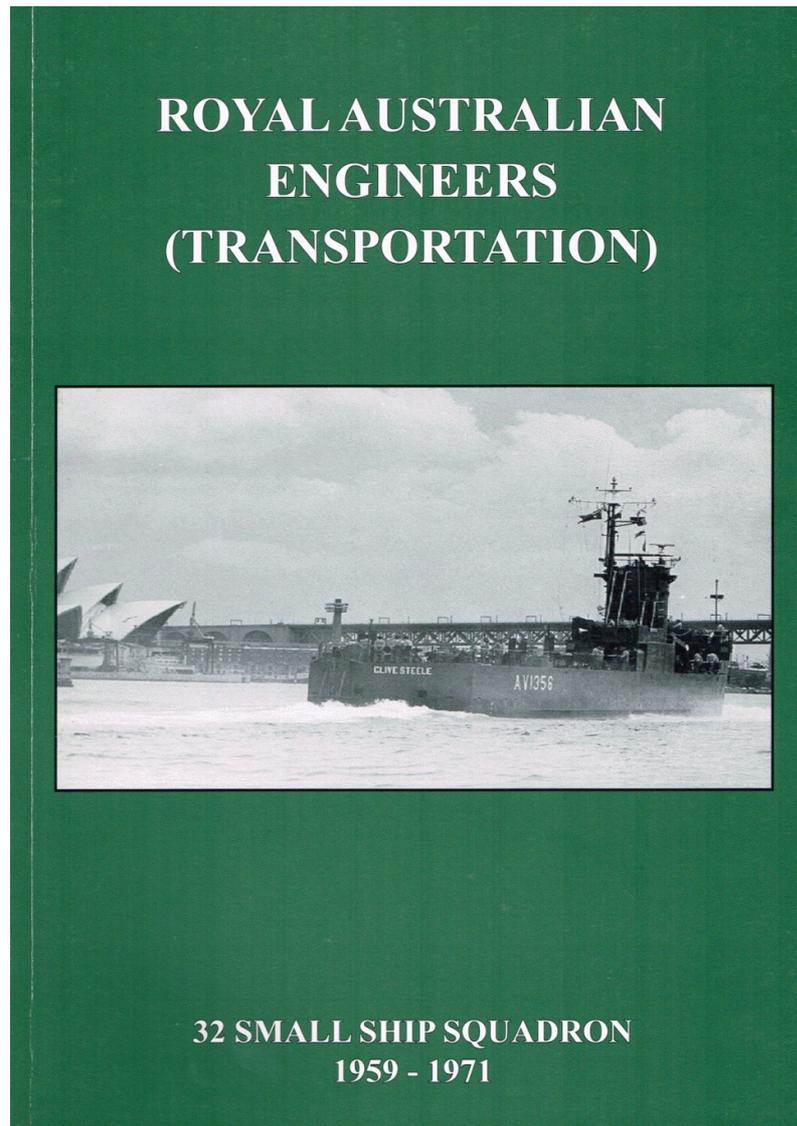
### **DIRECT DEBIT SYSTEM**

Our Treasurer, Peter Tierney has advised that the direct debit system we are using for subscriptions, stock, raffles, lunches etc is working pretty well. There were a few teething problems to start with but it has now settled down. To those who have used it - thank you for your patience and cooperation.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## HISTORY OF 32 SMALL SHIP SQUADRON



This book has been around for a few years. The author is Lieutenant Wade Morris, RAE who produced it as a thesis while studying at the Australian Defence Force Academy in 1998. It's a good history of the Squadron and to get an accurate story the author did considerable research with various government departments including the Australian War Memorial, Australian Archives and the RAE Museum. He also had many interviews with Association members. It's in black and white, A4 size with over 100 pages and has plenty of photographs.

It's been listed in the 'Property for Sale' section of our newsletters but is described as 'Association Book' which doesn't do it justice. From now on we'll list it as "History of 32 Small Ship Squadron". It only costs \$30 and you can order it on line or by contacting our Property member, Kaye Shannon or through the Q Store on the web page.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## LORD HOWE ISLAND

In the August 2015 newsletter I asked if anyone had details of the trip there in 1965 by AV1355 *Vernon Sturdee*. Warren Barsley replied with this great story...

### 1<sup>st</sup> Voyage – VERNON STURDEE

While learning to be an Army Officer at 32 SSS and getting to know my way about an LSM I saw an opportunity to get in some practical sea-time and experience of Army methods and operating system. The Tn Centre were conducting a Long Transportation Officer's Course and were at the stage of Marine Navigation. To put their studies into practice, they were to embark aboard the STURDEE and conduct an offshore navigation exercise.

The Master of the STURDEE was Pat O'Connor and I approached MAJ Wilson to see if I could go on the voyage for experience and he agreed. I think that there six (6) Officers on the course with two (2) instructors. The instructors set a series of points on the charts which the students were to navigate to, and if their navigation was accurate, after four days at sea we would arrive at Lord Howe Island (LHI). MAJ Wilson gave strict orders to Pat O'Connor that there was to be no shore leave at Lord Howe Island, it was just a navigation check point. We were then to sail on to Middleton Reef, north of LHI and back to Sydney.

The STURDEE departed Sydney on 18<sup>th</sup> September 65 and returned on 24<sup>th</sup> September 65. In the meantime the student navigators did a good job and we arrived at LHI on a Saturday morning and anchored outside of the reef on the lee side of the Island. We had only been at anchor for a short while when one of the local fisherman came out to the ship and enquired as to why we were anchored when, as a landing ship we could beach on the Island, and he was prepared to lead us in through a safe passage through the reef. Aware of his orders from MAJ Wilson, Pat decided that a crew break would be good for morale and so accepted the offer of beaching on the Island.

The STURDEE opened the bow doors and lowered the ramp to a horizontal position so that one of the ship's navigators could stand on the ramp and check for safety and coral nigger heads, on the way to the beach. The way to the beach was shown by our local fisherman, leading and the STURDEE following. It did not take long for the STURDEE to be safely beached on LHI.

We were informed that as it was Saturday, there was a dance on that night and the ship's personnel were all invited, but as beer supply was limited, could we take our own beer. This was appreciated as we were on duty free beer at ten cents per can.

We did a bit of sight-seeing on LHI although there is not much to see, but the beach was beautiful for swimming and appreciated by all. The dance was great and again enjoyed by all. Apart from the ships personnel the dance was attended by local residents, holiday makers and employees of the holiday resorts. We were met, greeted and welcomed by dignitaries of the Island and made most welcome.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**



AV1355 BEACHED ON LORD HOWE ISLAND – 20<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 1965

We sailed on the Sunday morning to continue the navigation exercise. We reached Middleton reef and discovered a few fishing boat wrecks on the reef as well as one of Shaw Saville Lines, small liner's which went aground on route from the North of New Zealand to Brisbane a few years earlier. Fishing on the reef was very good and we certainly had copious quantities of fresh fish for a few meals on the way back to Sydney.

On the way back to Sydney Pat O'Connor assembled all on board and spoke about MAJ Wilson's orders not to go ashore on LHI. He then expected that one and all would support him and if any questions were asked, no shore leave was granted and we definitely did not beach, but anchored off LHI and fished for a day. The crew gave Pat their 100% support to keep quiet about our sojourn on LHI.

As sure as could be expected, MAJ Wilson, when casually passing a soldier would ask how was LHI, whereupon the reply was OK but would have liked to have gone ashore. MAJ Wilson tried this approach for a number of days after our return, receiving the same response. 100% behind Pat O'Connor.

Transport for residents and holiday makers to LHI was by seaplane from Sydney Harbour to LHI and supplies were delivered by ship and then ferried ashore by barge. There was no airstrip on LHI, much to the frustration of the local dignitaries and residents.

Some weeks after the return from LHI Maj Wilson summoned all officers that had been on the trip to his office, I was included. He quizzed us all about what happened at LHI and got the solid



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

response that we anchored off and fished and that there was no shore leave. He then surprised us all by producing a large aerial photograph of the STURDEE on the beach and it was an enclosure with a letter from The Right Honourable Robert Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia. For years the Government had been examining methods of getting construction equipment onto LHI to build an air strip, which the LHI Administration had been pursuing for some time. At Last the Australian Army had solved the problem and the Prime Minister expressed his thanks to the unit and especially to the Master of the ship. Well to say that we were stunned would be an understatement. MAJ Wilson then thanked Pat O'Connor on behalf of the Prime Minister and then gave us all a good kick in the arse for disobeying his orders.

LHI now has a landing strip and a regular airline service from mainland Australia thanks to 32 SSS and in particular Pat O'Connor and the VERNON STURDEE. While 32 SSS did not ferry the construction equipment to LHI, as the LSMs had been disposed of by the time construction was to begin, the RAN transported the equipment in their Landing Craft Heavy (LCH).



**Graham Inglis with his catch off Lord Howe Island, and a Sandringham flying boat landing. Photos provided by Les McFadzen who was also on that trip.**

**Editor's Note:** In 1974 Sappers of the 1st Field Engineer Regiment at Holsworthy constructed the 886m long runway and the long history of the flying boats was phased out shortly after.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## BRUCE REILLY GOES TO SEA

Bruce recently completed a 104 day world cruise, Sydney to Sydney, on the MV Sea Princess going to 40 countries. Among the passengers were 40 Vietnam veterans. They sailed to a lot of interesting ports spanning five continents. In June they anchored off ANZAC Cove and held a commemorative ceremony, and on 18 August they had a Vietnam Veterans' Day service. Sounds like a good trip but may be a bridge too far for me!

Bruce also spent some time with the USS Jeremiah O'Brien, a WWII Liberty ship docked at San Francisco. he is the Assistant Chief Engineer on her. Also there is the USS Pampanito, a WWII submarine that has four (yes four) Fairbanks Morse diesels charging the batteries - the same engines that powered our LSMs.



*USS Pampanito with USS Jeremiah O'Brien astern*



Two of the four Fairbanks Morse Model 38D-1/8 10 cylinder engines on the submarine.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## HUNTERS HILL RSL SUB-BRANCH DINNER

On 17 October 2015 the Hunters Hill RSL Sub-Branch held its 51st Annual Dining-In Night. It was attended by over 60 guests including Kaye Shannon, Ken and Dawn Duncan, Ross and Jenny McMurray, and Ian and Eileen Henderson.

The President, Roderick Stewart (a former Sapper) welcomed the guests including the Mayor of Hunters Hill and the Guest Speaker, Tim Fischer AC, a former Deputy Prime Minister. He spoke about various subjects including trains, politics, the Vatican, more trains and this year being the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli - General Sir John Monash. He said that Field Marshal Montgomery once described Monash as the best general on the Western Front. As you will recall, later Monash commanded the Australian Corps and said that the recapture of the town Villers-Bretonneux on 25 April 1918 as the turning-point of the war.

Tim was a very knowledgeable and entertaining speaker. It was a very pleasant evening all round, made even more enjoyable by the friendliness and camaraderie of the Sub-Branch committee and members.



Tim Fischer AC



General Sir John Monash GCMB KCB



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## THE GEELONG GETAWAY

Brendan McCormack provided this article about the Geelong Getaway:

"As usual, amongst the 150 guests, a few forgotten faces turned up for the reunion, which always creates a little excitement, the reunion was held under blue skies alongside the Barwon River Victoria. The local RSL club exceeded all expectations and a great weekend was enjoyed by all. Hopefully the red roses becomes a tradition for the future reunions in memory of Bob Gunn who was one of the founding members. The raffles were a big success- raising money to be handed on for the next reunion to be held in 2017 at Port Lincoln in South Australia, with an intermediate gathering to be held at Geraldton W.A in 2016. Dave and Hellen Gray and their many helpers did a great job in making the weekend a great success.

Each year, as we get older, most seem to want to head home to bed by about 10 p.m...,unlike days gone by when by about 10 p.m. the first scuffle had just started, and the second slab had just been opened, the fun was just beginning. Those were the days! It's great to be able to get together for a few days - it was a time we all shared, and have memories of both good and bad, and hopefully we can all enjoy a few more reunions before we head off for the promised land, or the devils domain".

Brendan McCormack and Dave Gray organised this great event. Well done fellas! By all accounts it was great success thanks to you two.



**Brendan McCormack, Deb Dunn and Bob Modystack (Gerry Dunn photos)**



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**



**Gerry Dunn and George Scorgi**



**Len Ramsay, Pat Riley, John Purcell, Gerry Dunn, Darryl Crilley and Carl Nobelius**



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**



**Carl Nobelius, Len Ramsay, Paul Turner, Sandy McLean and Pat Riley**



**Gerry Dunn and Darryl Crilley**



**Deb Dunn, Bob Modystack and Jan Barrett**



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

**VALE - HANS KUMPEL**  
**1939 -2015**

Les Dennis advised that WO1 Hans Kumpel RAE died on 11 September 2015 and his funeral service was held on 18 September 2015. Les also provided details of the service, as follows:

"The Presbyterian Church at Balmain was filled to capacity with family, friends and colleagues on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September to celebrate the life and times of Hans Kumpel who passed away on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The service commenced at 2.00 pm conducted by the Pastor/ Minister Luke Pallistar who knew Hans as a personal friend and parishioner.

Eulogies were delivered by Hans' Son-in-law Mike Atila on behalf of the family and by Les Dennis on behalf of 32 Small Ship Squadron RAE Association, who also read a limerick penned by our resident wordsmith, John "Speedy" Sahariv. An RSL Tribute was presented by the President of the Balmain RSL, Danny Moore where Hans was the Senior Vice President, following which ex-service personnel paid their respects with the laying of poppies on the casket.

A guard of honour comprising all ex-service personnel present formed at the entrance to the church as Hans' casket was carried to the waiting hearse which then made its way to the crematorium. All present were invited to gather in the hall adjoining the church for afternoon tea." Those who attended the service, representing 32 and our Association were Graham Murray, Ken Duncan, Les Dennis, John McGregor, Ian Johnston BEM, Jim Brown, Lance Northey, Ian Henderson, Kaye Shannon with daughter Kylie and son Stuart. Hans leaves behind his partner, Monique, ex-wife Noreen and their children Thorsten, Clinton, Michelle and Chantelle, and their partners and grandchildren.

Les Dennis was asked at short notice to deliver a eulogy during the service. He did a great job of it and it is reproduced here:

**44582 Hans Frederick Kumpel**

Hans was born in Dusseldorf Germany on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1939 and joined the merchant navy as a young man, and in 1966 seeking a new life, came ashore in Port Adelaide. Contemplating what lied ahead, he joined the Australian Regular Army. After the usual training he was ready for posting to a unit. Not known for placing people in the appropriate positions, this time they got it right and Hans arrived at the Maritime Wing at Chowder Bay. He was just another seaman plying his trade and he first made an impression with us when promoted to Sgt. As with everything Hans did he took his responsibilities very seriously and mothered the seamen in his charge whilst honing their skills. He took great pains to instil in them the belief that near enough or half right wasn't an option and nothing short of the right way was good enough.

He particularly enjoyed his role as Bosun on the John Monash and was a hands on seaman, not afraid to get his hands dirty. He also served on the LSM's at various times. He totalled 151 days in Vietnam during the period from December 1968 until March 1971 on the John Monash, the Clive Steele and the Harry Chauvel. I am sure his ex colleagues here today have their own anecdotes in regard to Hans and with your indulgence I would like to share two.

At one time the John Monash responded to an emergency call to deliver fuel for the electricity generators on Lord Howe Island. The Monash could not enter the lagoon so two LARCs were on



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

board to ferry the diesel drums ashore. Hans and his crew prepared the Jumbo derrick and hoisted the LARC up and over the side. A close friend of Hans, Bomber Brown, was on board the LARC as it was swung outboard. Just as it was about to be lowered, a big wave hit the ship, sheared off a cleat securing the derrick and causing it to swing freely and wildly resulting in the LARC also swinging crazily in all directions with Bomber Brown clinging on for dear life. Hans quickly mustered his team, and sprung into action, arresting the swing and securing the boom.

He then lowered the LARC , as a matter of urgency into the water, thus averting what could have been a tragedy. Bomber Brown made his way back on board and everyone waited with bated breath for the confrontation as he and Hans came together. But a quick acknowledgement of the close call, a handshake and it was back to normal friendship.

Hans also left his mark in another way on the Monash. Arriving in Port Moresby, the ship tied up on the inside of the "T" wharf at the junction of the "T". In the engine room the telegraph rang to stop engines which was acted on by the engineer. After a pause the telegraph rang emergency full ahead to which the engineer responded. Straining at the lines the Monash attempted to climb on to the wharf and hit the "T" wharf at which point the engineer suspected that all was not quite right and stopped the engines. Then came a plaintive voice down the voice pipe as Hans explained, "I was ringing finished with engines but the bloody telegraph became stuck on full ahead both". The upshot of this saga was that the dent in the bow remained for a long time, reminding Hans, and others, of the trip to Moresby. But as far as Hans was concerned it was the dent in his professional pride that hurt the most.

Hans also enjoyed his time at Chowder Bay as an instructor in the Seaman and Navigation wing. He taught the theory of Radar to the advanced seaman class, a complex and at times boring topic, and took them to the Sydney Tech for their exam, as there were not the facilities to do so at Chowder Bay. They all passed with outstanding results. A testimony to his instructional skills. He also represented the Corps on a four and a half month exercise "Long Look" in the UK and then on a prestigious exchange posting to the US Transportation Corps at Fort Eustis in Virginia. In both cases he ensured that our Corps reputation and professionalism was held in high esteem by both our UK and US counterparts.

In all aspects of his service with Small Ships and Maritime Wing, Hans was always the consummate seaman who will be remembered as a friend, colleague and fellow traveler who took his profession seriously, but also loved to have a beer and a chat at every opportunity with his usual "long story short", and considered Soccer the only sport worthy of consideration. No doubt he will be enjoying his time on that great soccer field up above. He elected discharge in 1989.

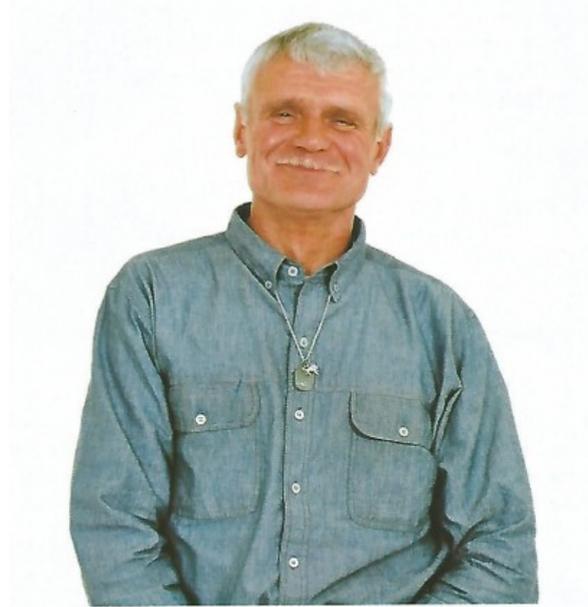
Someone once said that each of us is but a precious drop in the great oceans of the world. But I believe even a small drop can make an impression and in that context I would venture to say that as one of those precious drops Hans certainly made an impression. Farewell Mahout. R.I.P old shipmate. Hans enlisted in the Army on 5 December 1967 and elected discharge on 18 December 1987.

His postings during those 20 years were: 1 Recruit Training Battalion, School of Military Engineering, Transportation Centre, 32 Small Ship Squadron, 35 Water Transport Squadron, 7 Transport and Movement Group, 33 Terminal Squadron, 10 Terminal Regiment, 70 Water



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

Transport Troop, Army School of Transport, Australian Army Staff (Washington), and Army Maritime School. During his time in 32 Small Ship squadron he served in Vietnam on *AS3051 John Monash*, *AV1353 Harry Chauvel* and *AV1356 Clive Steele*.



**Hans Frederick Kumpel**

13.8.1939 – 11.9.2015

Note from Jack Madden...I had the privilege of serving with and enjoying the company of Hans during his time as Bosun on *AS3051 John Monash*. I was the SQMS and still remember Hans's request for a 'Japanese Signwriter'...Took me a long time to figure out he wanted a felt tip pen. Sad to see you go good friend.

### **WASHING MACHINES - UH HUH**

On board *AS 3031 John Monash* there was a Wilkins Service wringer type washing machine in the Sergeant's laundry. It couldn't handle the overalls from the engine room crew so a better one was needed. Remember *John Monash* was 220v DC. RAEME wasn't interested as washing machines were an Engr Stores responsibility. So the staff from Regional Engineers Forest Lodge decided that the Lightburn Concrete Mixer was the solution.

So, much money was spent on the conversion from AC to DC (new castings for the motors alone cost heaps). Delivery day...I was on leave and some body (?) said" This is 240V AC and immediately plugged it into the illegal 240V DC to AC rotary converter we had on board.

Instant disaster. The RE Staff had an epileptic fit and when they eventually calmed down bought another 220V Wilkins Service 220V DC washer and the subject was never mentioned again.

Then there was the replacement of the Vinyl floor tiles throughout the ship..but that's another story.....Jack Madden



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## **VALE - MICK RYAN OAM 1940 – 2015**

WO1 Michael John Ryan OAM RAE passed away on 25 October 2015 after a long battle with cancer. Although Mick never served with water transport units he had a strong regard for the "knee-deepers" as he used to call us. For those of us who knew him or served with him he will be remembered as a hard working and generous Sapper who gave a lot to the Corps. During the construction of the RAE Memorial at 13 Field Squadron, Karrakatta WA he was instrumental in having the Water Transport section added to it.

Mick was SSM at 22 Construction Squadron and 13 Field Squadron. He served in many units throughout Australia and also served in Papua New Guinea, Borneo and Vietnam.

Mick's funeral service was at Pinnaroo Memorial Park WA followed by a wake at the Ryan Club (named after him) at Irwin Barracks. Charlie Deans and Bruce Wiltshire represented our Association. Charlie said many people attended and it was standing room only at the service.

### **ROLLING THROUGH 32.**

Many people have asked if Dave Perham's book, "Rolling Through 32" will be reprinted. The committee has investigated another print run and if enough people are interested we might be able to make it economical to print. I'll make a few more enquiries to members and let you know what's happening in the next newsletter. I would welcome any comments you may have about this. Email, phone or drop me a note.

### **UNIT PLAQUE**

Next year will be the 50th anniversary of the major units of the Australian Defence Force involvement in Vietnam. Of course this includes us - 32 Small Ship Squadron, 30 Terminal Squadron and 11 Movement Control Group. To commemorate this milestone we will be producing Association plaques. More details on the design and cost will be published in the next newsletter.

### **WEB SITE**

Our Webmaster, Dazz Graney, is rebuilding the web site. For him to do this he is seeking photos of both 32 and Tn units. He doesn't want a physical print or slide but a scanned digital image in .jpg format no more than 750kb. Please include details of the image, ie, names, dates, location, activities etc. Then email them to him at [webmaster@32smallshipsqn.org.au](mailto:webmaster@32smallshipsqn.org.au)

### **SICK PARADE**

Les Dennis is recovering in hospital after having had a double bypass operation for a blocked artery. That went well but unfortunately he suffered a wound infection following the operation. His daughter, Suzanne, advised that he is now on the mend and was due to return home as we go to print.



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## Property for sale

Ties	\$25.00	LSM Lapel Badge	\$12.00
History of 32 Small Ship Sqn	\$30.00	Collar Badge	\$6.00
Association Woven Patch	\$8.00	Association Cap Navy Blue	\$15.00
Association Polo Shirt (navy blue only) made to order			\$30.00

Please contact Kaye Shannon 02 9871 4667 or [property@32smallshipsqn.org.au](mailto:property@32smallshipsqn.org.au) or through the Q Store on the Web Page ([www.32smallshipsqn.org.au](http://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. So, if you would like to contribute please email it to [editor@32smallshipsqn.org.au](mailto:editor@32smallshipsqn.org.au)

Our postal address is:

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

## Your 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!



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**

## Committee Members

President:	Graham Murray president@32smallshipsqn.org.au	02 9634 3752
Vice President:	Vacant	
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:	Bob Freeman 29 Victoria Road DUBBO NSW 2830	02 6882 2864
Property Member:	Kaye Shannon property@32smallshipsqn.org.au	02 9871 4667
Social Member:	George Fisher	02 9876 4713
Committee:	Ian Johnston, BEM John Bryant elizabethandjohnb@gmail.com Bruce Reilly bruce@truckalign.com.au	02 9623 7948 02 9979 1197 02 4655 9394
Hon Auditor:	Lt Col (R) Phil Cameron, OAM	
Editor NTM:	Ross McMurray	
Publisher NTM:	Jack Madden	
Chaplains:	Monsignor Eugene Harley Reverend Richard McCracken	
Web Address	www.32smallshipsqn.org.au	
Web Master	Dazz Graney webmaster@32smallshipsqn.org.au	02 6645 2379



**Notice to Mariners November 2015**