

EDITION 3-22

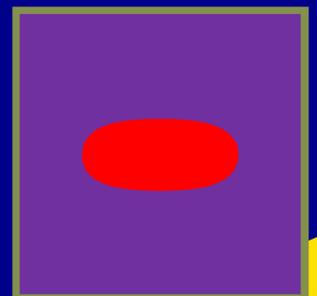
SPANNER NEWS

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CHAIRMAN'S PARTING WORDS

After 10 years as RAQ Chairman I have stepped down. May I say how pleased I am with the position of the RAQ as I depart, and as we celebrate the Corps' 80th Birthday. RAQ has 600 plus Life Subscribers and 30 Annual members; it is in a sound financial situation; and future growth looks very positive.

The success of any venture or activity is directly proportional to the effort put in by executive members, but also our loyal membership supporting our many activities and events. The RAQ across Queensland has been, and remains, hugely successful because of these two factors.

Much has been said about my time as Chairman, mostly good, but I started from a very strong base, thanks to Ray Norman OAM, who was the previous Chair. Ray and I were well supported by our Patron, Ross Grant AM, who remains very active as a committee member – the contribution Ray and Ross have made and continue to make is very much appreciated.

In my time as Chairman, I have also been fortunate to have worked with several Executive Committees, whose members included Gary Sargent, Ian Leabeater, Tony Borg, Angela Langdon, Reid Ossington, Shad Marsh, Stephen Howells – and the incoming Chair, Pete Matthews. Thank you all for your outstanding efforts and loyal support.

To Brian Robb, Doug Merry, Tank Pontifex, Mick Harris and the rest of the Townsville team, may I congratulate all on revitalising the NQ Association. Mick Harris has moved on and Jase Ballard is now onboard, so to the "Five Amigos", great job, and thank you.

May I say "Job well done and thank you" to our current committee – in no particular order, Bruce Hermann, Kingsley Pocock, Adrian Butcher, Barry Shipway, Brian Daley, Ray Norman. Also, a big thank you to Max Walker for representing the RAQ at the ANZAC Day Combined Committee meetings, ensuring all requirements are met so RAQ members, whatever their needs, can march and fully enjoy our famous after-march activities. Thank you also to our Regional Reps/Conveners who do such a wonderful job with their respective RAEME gatherings: Mike Prain, Eddie Bevans, Barry Skinner, Peter Pile and Rob Sawford.

I am very pleased to see Pete Matthews assume the Chairman's role and welcome Paul Gibbs, Ty Bodle and Mick Patman as the new RAQ Executive, I wish them every success.

Arte et Marte

Jeff Maurice Retiring Chairman RAQ



RAEME Association Queensland – What we are about?

The purpose of the RAEME Association Queensland (RAQ) is to promote and reinforce the spirit, reputation and image of the Corps through its past, present and future members. The RAQ goals are to:

- promote the Corps' identity and reputation,
- recognise and celebrate achievements of members of the Corps, and
- provide a focal point for Corps activities.

To gain RAQ membership benefits, join for \$10/year, or upgrade to Life Subscription for \$100. All proceeds support and promote the goals of the Association.

MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CHAIRMAN

The RAQ AGM was held on 5 Oct 22 at the Kelvin-Wavell Services Club. My purpose here is to update our membership on some of the outcomes of the AGM. Much more detail was provided in the minutes of the AGM distributed via Friday Files on 21 Oct 22.

The executive position nominations and ballots were held with the following folks being elected:

- Chairman – Peter Matthews
- Deputy Chairman – Paul Gibbs
- Secretary – Ty Bodle
- Treasurer – Mick Patman

On behalf of the incoming Executive, I want to thank everyone who voted for the team, and giving us the honour and trust of leading the RAQ, as we take the Association into the future. I believe we have a good balance of Corps experience in the Executive, as well as commercial and business acumen. I will introduce these new folks in future editions of Friday Files.

I particularly want to thank Jeff Maurice, Gary Sargent, Steve Howells, and their partners, for their contributions to the success of the Association over a long time. They have all provided outstanding leadership and have achieved Life Membership status within our Association. All remain active members and I thank them for their long and loyal service.

The transition of the Executive team duties has already started. There are many key elements to work through, including maintaining routine communications, continued website improvements and modernising our financial management systems. I have asked the team to transition these responsibilities and processes by mid-November.

I want to assure all members that the Association activities will continue to function as normal during this time. This is especially important as we have our busiest period coming up with the celebrations of the Corps 80th Birthday in December. I'll continue to update everyone via Friday Files.

Again, thank you on behalf of the Executive Team. We look forward to working with our membership to promote the Association and seek exciting and new opportunities.

Arte et Marte

Peter Matthews
Chairman RAQ

chairman@qld.raeme.org.au



MESSAGE FROM OUTGOING HEAD OF CORPS RAEME – BRIG JAMES ALLEN

This will be my final message as Head of Corps (HOC). I will be retiring from the full time Army service at the end of the year and handing over the reins as HOC. I have been honoured to serve in this important position and will remain engaged with the Corps into the future through the RAEME National Network (RNN).

Reflecting on the brief period I have been HOC, I note many significant events have occurred during my tenure, which will shape the future of our Corps and indeed the Australian Defence Force.

I stepped into the role on the back of the worst bushfires the country has experienced in living memory. The fact that the Governor General enacted a compulsory recall of the Reserves is testament to the severity of the situation. From a RAEME perspective, there are many stories of our soldiers performing great deeds from an all Corps soldiering and Defence Aid to the Civil Community perspective. More impressive, in my opinion, are the accounts I have received of RAEME trades using innovation and technical expertise to repair, maintain or modify water pumps, generators, vehicles and all sorts of other civilian and military equipment to ensure vital equipment and capabilities were readily available to fight the fires and look after the welfare of our nation.

As soon as the bushfires finished, we were hit with the global pandemic known as Covid. As a nation we took extreme measures to “latten the curve”, and prepare ourselves as best we could, to prevent mass outbreak and potential deaths. The media featured the ADF in support of police, medical staff and contact tracing, but our well trained and motivated people will also be remembered for our specific contributions to repairing mask manufacturing machinery, repairing and maintaining medical equipment and a host of other behind the scenes essentials items. Again, the innovation and technical expertise of our RAEME soldiers was proven as second to none and the unofficial motto of “improvise, adapt and overcome” became reality.

The pandemic remains an ongoing, but now manageable, concern for us all and it resulted in lasting changes in the way we do business and go about our everyday lives. Who would have thought that face masks would become an everyday fashion accessory in Australia, or that hand sanitising stations would be a feature in the foyer of every building?

For obvious reasons, we could not conduct a Corps Conference last year and I was delighted we were able to pull together a Corps update with people dialling in from virtual venues around the country. It certainly wasn't ideal but it enabled key messages to be passed and updates on strategic issues from AHQ and FORCOMD to be quickly communicated.

Another monumental and sad event for our Corps was the passing of our Colonel in Chief, HRH Prince Phillip the Duke of Edinburgh. He has been a constant for all of us in the Corps throughout our careers and will be missed enormously. At this stage, I have written to my counterpart in REME and ascertained the exact steps we would need to undertake to follow their lead and request the Countess of Wessex as our Colonel in Chief; however, we also have an opportunity to break with tradition and perhaps appoint an Australian dignitary to the role. Before embarking on either option, I intend to gauge the sentiments of the Corps at the forthcoming Corps Conference before making a recommendation to the Chief of Army. It is an interesting time for us all!

As I write, the news headlines are dominated by the Russian invasion of the Ukraine and the global manoeuvring of China and the USA. The Ukraine is demonstrating to us the power of technology and how “improvising, adapting and overcoming” can be a force multiplier on the modern battlefield. Whatever the Ukrainians call their equivalent of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, those men and woman are doing a sterling job of modifying civilian drones to be lethal weapon systems, reverse engineering Russian equipment to be used as Ukrainian assets, and probably also modifying and upgrading western systems to integrate or federate with Russian platforms. This war is proving the core skills of RAEME are essential in a major conflict and can be a decisive factor in delivering battlefield capabilities.

In addition to my handing over as HOC, our Honorary Colonel, BRIG(Retd) David Creagh will also be handing over at the end of the year. I’ll take this opportunity to thank Dave for his guidance and for the work he has done to support the traditional functions of the Corps during some very testing times. I’m sure Dave will remain affiliated and active supporting the Corps into the future.

I am looking forward to the Corps Conference being held over the 2nd and 3rd November at Enoggera in our 80th year. It will be good to return to a traditional format and have a central gathering, including a BBQ and a dining-in night. May I wish you all continued success in your careers and a most enjoyable Festive Season with family and friends in a few weeks’ time.

Arte et Marte

James Allen
BRIG
HOC



INTRODUCING THE CORPS LATEST TWO STAR – MAJOR GENERAL JEREMY KING CSM

MAJGEN King enlisted in 1989 and was commissioned into the ARA to the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Corps. Throughout his thirty years in the Army, MAJGEN King has held a range of staff,

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capability development, career management and command appointments.

MAJGEN King’s operational experience includes as a Troop Commander on Operation BEL ISI II and Operation TANAGER, and as Officer Commanding the maintenance element in support of Chinook operations in Afghanistan. He also deployed on Operation ASLAN as the Chief Logistics Officer for the United Nations Headquarters in South Sudan.



His regimental experience includes service with 4 Fd Regt, 162 Recce Sqn and 6 Avn Regt, culminating in command of 7 CSSB from 2012-2014. He has also served as a Program Manager, Project Director and a Director General within Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group (CASG). On promotion to Brigadier in 2017, he was appointed as Director General Army Aviation Systems Branch in CASG. In 2020 he was posted to AHQ as the Director General Platforms responsible for the Dismounted Combat, Land Mobility and Support and Land Combat Vehicles Programs as well as the Land Training and Simulation capability. In August 2022, he was promoted to Major General and appointed as Head Land Capability.

MAJGEN King holds a Bach of Elec Engr and a MBA. He also completed a Masters of Engr Science (Elec) from the UNSW and was appointed a Fellow of the Institute of Engineers Australia in 2015 and was appointed as a Chartered Engineer in 2004.

FEATURING 3 COMBAT ENGINEER REGIMENT OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SQUADRON

Operational Support Squadron. 2022 has been another high tempo year for Operational Support Squadron (OSS) providing logistic support to the 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment (3 CER). This has generated many opportunities for members of both the Logistic Support Troop (LST) and Technical Support Troop (TST) to enhance their technical and logistic subject matter expertise (SME) supporting exercises and other activities at Squadron, Unit and Brigade level. Beyond unit training, OSS also enabled Op Flood Assist, BDE WFX and Sea Series. At unit level, TST supported the 3 CER DINGO exercise series and our International Engagement (IE) activity with PNG, Exercise Olgetta Warrior. To better prepare our supply, transport and maintenance elements to assist the Unit and wider BDE, the Squadron has also conducted internal training through the ATLAS series of

exercises, which encompassed amphibious training, field training and live fire practices. The TST manages a large, broad and ageing equipment fleet to support the full spectrum of combat engineer operations. Despite its small size, 21 personnel, TST has performed very well meeting the necessary maintenance and governance requirements to sustain our parent unit. Below is an overview of activities undertaken by TST this year.

Exercise DINGO FURY. Dingo Fury was the OSS's first exercise of the year, exposing the unit to basic field craft. In preparation for Dingo Fury, TST had been conducting field craft training during the normal battle rhythm of the squadron. The week of battle preparation saw more of a focus on individual to section sized field craft and a "crawl/walk" implementation of logistics training in the form of FRTs and DPs. With the culmination of basic field craft and logistics tasks, TST was now ready for Dingo Fury.

Unfortunately, Dingo Fury was reduced from a two week activity to five days, owing to abnormally hot climatic conditions in NQ. As the combat engineer elements deployed to the training area for Dingo Fury, an FRT was deployed forward of the CSS Main Body, with a sub-elements of supply, forming a logistics node in support of their activities. Once the CSS Main Body arrived, the TST also conducted more "run-style" field craft and logistics training, while supporting the Combat Engineers activities. This incorporated section sized clearances, navigation, urban clearances and VCPs. TST also assisted with the conduct of DPs providing maintenance support to the Combat Engineers when needed. The requirement for repair and recovery was reduced in scope due to shortened timeframes and staffing; however, our tradesmen still found themselves busy working on radios, generators and weapons systems as problems arose.

Operation FLOOD ASSIST. While Dingo Fury was underway, back in barracks, 3 CER was preparing for Op Flood Assist. At this time, 3 CER was still online as the Brigade's High Risk Weather Season (HRWS) Contingency Force Element (CONFEE). As the floods worsened in the South-East Queensland, all elements of Army were called upon for assistance and 3 CER responded and the Ready Battle Group (RBG) comprising a squadron sized Engineer Element, which was sent south to Lismore to aid their local community.

TST provide a FRT comprising of two VMs, a Tech Elec Sys and a Fitter to assist the RBG. The RBG got off to a disappointing start when a PMV broke down soon after departing Lavarack Barracks. The PMV was recovered back to 3 CER Wksp – fortunately the incident didn't have a significant impact on the RBG. The rest of the convoy pushed on to Lismore to conduct its humanitarian relief tasks.

In Lismore, the FRT integrated quickly into the local community undertaking relief tasks where necessary, performing maintenance on a range of C-vehicles, (see below) small engines on chainsaws and 16 KVA generators.



The FRT, and wider RBG, also set up camp in the local area, experiencing firsthand how to adapt to flood relief and difficult flood conditions.



Exercise ATLAS RAGE. Once Dingo Fury and Flood Assist concluded, TST returned to the routine in-barracks battle rhythm. The next major exercise for TST was the amphibious exercise, Atlas Rage. For the last two years, OSS has been running Atlas Rage at Cowley Beach Training Area, leveraging off 35 Water Transport Squadron and 16 Combat Engineer Squadron to complete combined amphibious tasks and training.

The first few days of Atlas Rage were spent learning the theory behind logistics operations when deployed in theatre. TST then started conducting FRTs and DPs in the field environment making up for vital logistics tasks which were missed during Dingo Fury. Due to heavy rainfall within the CBTA region, many of the beaches and routes in the training area were not available. This resulted in TST conducting dismantled activities, with a focus on DACC serials to add an additional layer of complexity.

Towards the end of the training exercise, TST was able to conduct amphibious training serials with 35 WTS and 16 CE SQN. 35 WTS had two LCM8s conducting land to sea embarking serials off the shore of CBTA.



Members of TST were given the opportunity to embark 40M Trucks onto the LCM8s, which proved to be a challenging experience. Concurrently, members of TST were also conducting watermanship tasks with members of 16 SQN using zodiacs and OBM's to perform drills.

Exercise BROLGA RUN and Exercise BROLGA SPRINT. The 3 BDE WFX Brolga Run and Brolga Sprint saw the Combat Engineer SQNs attached to 2 CAV and 3 RAR Battle Groups as part of the Blue and Red Force. However, during the conduct of Brolga Run, the Engineer Element experienced issues with the Dry Support Bridge (DSB) while conducting rehearsals and prelim shakeouts. A request was sent to TST HQ for an FRT to provide maintenance support. Several VMs, who had completed the DSB maintainer course early in the year, were deployed with the necessary tooling and parts to repair the DSB. Their efforts as part of the FRT enabled the Engineer Element to successfully deploy the DSB for other activities within the Battle Group.

TST was also able to offer up a Recovery Mechanic, CPL Colin Drewitt, to 1 RAR as part of Sea Series. He had the opportunity to watch the PMVs embark onto LHCs at the CBTA. CPL Drewitt was part of the dedicated recovery capability, and although recovery tasks were few and far between, he gained experience in the conduct of amphibious operations involving logistics element.

While these two major exercises were taking place, a FRT was despatched to assist 5 AVN REGT on Exercise Helicon Look. Their efforts focussed on making sure the Striker were serviceable and correctly postured to support Helicon Look was especially noteworthy. The Striker is part of our Combat Rescue Troop and is the primary fire-fighting vehicles that support tasks around air strips in RAAF bases or airports.

Exercise OLGETTA WARRIOR. Members of 3 CER were given an opportunity to go to PNG as part of Ex Olgetta Warrior, as part of a deployed RAEME element. These tradesmen were expected to assist with maintenance support to the Forward Operating Base, assisting with engineering tasks and conducting maintenance training for members of the PNGDF. The consensus from these tradesmen was that the international engagement activity provided a valuable

experience working closely with partners, conducting maintenance while immersing themselves in a rich culture, and reinforcing the long-held military ties between the ADF and PNGDF.

The initial planning of Exercise Puk Puk, which is part of Olgetta Warrior, saw a busy period for the Tech Elec Sys tradesmen and Fitters within TST. They worked tirelessly to ensure that the equipment required for the Exercise was available, the electrical planning was feasible and all necessary parts and equipment was readily available for the training program. The efforts of the tradesmen were highlighted by the Combat Engineers, and the unit as a whole, as their efforts enabled the Combat Engineers to achieve their mission.

LT Andre Coppenrath
Tech Support Troop
3rd Combat Engineer Regiment



NEWS FROM ABROAD

OP ASLAN (South Sudan). As a RAEME – aircraft maintenance officer – CAPT Dael Liddicoat recently deployed on OP ASLAN, the ADF's contribution to the UN Mission in South Sudan – this is his story.

As an individually deployed officer on one of the few UN Peacekeeping missions to which Australia contributes, I was afforded a unique operational experience. Working for the UN in a workforce of 425 multinational staff officers from many nations, as one of 15 deployed ADF members, all working in different cells for different commanders, we were vastly outnumbered. Whilst we weren't deployed as a formed body, the Australian spirit, culture and professional approach was "alive and well", and it didn't take long to realise the Australian military had a reputation for being hard-working, competent and approachable. It also didn't take long to realise that this internationally held belief was not misplaced, with the work ethic and initiative we've come to expect from each other at home a force multiplier in UN force headquarters. "If there is an Australian in the section, they will always end up running the section" was quoted to me by the Indian LTCOL, Chief Logistic Officer in HQ Sector Juba, on his last day in the mission, as he discussed with me the Australians, he had worked with during his 12 month tour in UNMISS.

My "day job" as a staff officer in UNMISS was exciting and unpredictable. Sector Juba was home to 14 units from China, India, Rwanda, Bangladesh, Nepal, Ethiopia, Thailand and Cambodia and as the G4 staff officer in a headquarter lead by a Bangladeshi Brigadier, duties varied markedly. From conducting operational readiness assessments of newly joined units, facilitating and monitoring the construction of perimeter security fences, patrolling through the base with a Chinese platoon in search for local hideaways, assisting in ammunition rotation, attending local KLE activities, to representing HQ in many national celebrations, there were many opportunities to contribute outside the duty statement whilst experiencing the unique international community that is the UN.



HQ Juba - LTCOL Koudelka (RAINF) & CAPT Liddicoat

Unfortunately, the mission in South Sudan exists for a reason. The country suffers from widespread corruption, regular violence, extreme poverty, disease and extreme weather. The main base, UN House, exists on the fringe of one of the largest internally displaced persons camps in Juba, and witnessing the lives of those people still affected by severe instability, was a daily occurrence. In the coming years, it is hoped that democratic elections will be held and a president who is devoted to serving the country is elected. In the meantime the UN remains present with 13,253 troops, 1,411 police, 425 staff officers and 2,268 civilians to ensure the safety and security of civilians.



LTCOL Allen & CAPT Liddicoat enjoying some RAEME merchandise

On a positive note, LTCOL Rodney Allen and I were fortunate enough to receive a Spanner Pack mid-way through the trip thanks to Raymond G Norman OAM from the RAEME National Network (RNN). As a junior officer on my first deployment it was fantastic to experience such a long-held tradition and feel part of the RAEME family from afar. I appreciate the efforts Ray and the RNN/RAQ went to on our behalf during our tour of duty in South Sudan.

**CAPT Dael Liddicoat
RAEME**

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Army Helicopters Conduct Drive-by in Oakey. On 17 Sep 22, a particularly bizarre site was seen in the Oakey township; two aircraft, an MRH and a Black Hawk, being towed through the main street. For a town that is used to routinely seeing aircraft flying overhead, it was a strange sight to see aircraft drive through the main street! No notice was given to the town about the move; however, it didn't take long for news to travel. Soon, what appeared to be the entire population of the town (8 people, three kids, and a dog) came out for a look, and of course, take a video record.

Ostensibly, this was a community engagement exercise, however, if someone really dug into it, they might find the CO of the RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School (RAMS) was crazy enough to believe a bigger bang could be achieved towing aircraft through town versus flying over it. The trip from Swartz Barracks to the High School is only around four kilometres, but it took almost an hour to complete. In that hour plenty of traffic was held up, but no-one seemed to mind.



Something you don't see every day in Oakey – Black Hawk and MRH90 Taipan training airframes being towed through Oakey

The aircraft were put on display in the school carpark for students and onlookers to view and get a 'hands-on' learning experience. In the local press the CO RAMS LTCOL Trent Groves, explained the aim of the initiative was to strengthen ties with the school and the local community, and give students an opportunity to learn about possible career paths in Army aviation. "It's about showing kids there's more than just pilots in Army Aviation," he said.



Oakey State High School students eager to get an up-close look at the Army Aviation displays

After students observed the aircraft displays in the carpark, they made their way to the school oval where they waited in anticipation for the arrival of yet another aircraft the ARH Tiger. Flying in, the ARH Tiger helicopter landed on the oval on time at 1.00 pm, where crews completed a typical training exercise for the students to see.



The ARH Tiger lifts off from the school oval for a return flight to Oakey Base

While the Tiger flying into the school was a hit, the town had by now realised that the other aircraft would have to be towed back to the barracks. So when the convoy returned Campbell St was lined as if the Carnival of Flowers parade was coming through. Even the residents of the QWCA nursing home were wheeled up to the main street to witness the return trip.

Once back on Swartz Barracks a snap After Action Report was held with the local Oakey Police who escorted the convoy. Led by Senior Constable Ken Cahill, police were quick to note the good mood of the town during the return trip to the barracks. Normally, they advised, the only time people would acknowledge the Police driving through town was when someone took the time to give them the middle finger salute, but during the convoy everyone was out and waving to them.

The community engagement was a success, but will it happen again? Time, and the incoming CO of RAMS, LTCOL Rick Watling, will make that decision. For those of you that would like to get into Rick's ear about what he may do next time, you can come and talk to him at the RAEME Birthday dinner held at the RAMS hangar on Fri 02 Dec 22. Or you could get your ideas across at the RAEME Corps Conference in November in Brisbane.

Story supplied by CO RAMS from the "Garrison Catchup" and images by Bradley Richardson.


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Report From 106 Fd Wksp Coy, 7CSSB. 2022 has been a busy year and it is some time since you last heard from the 106 Fd Wksp Coy – and much has occurred. This is a summary of a busy 2022.

EX Echidna Walk saw the Coy deploy to SWBTA for a short exercise period, but with the almost constant rain, the recovery mechanics were the busiest trade on that exercise.

The Larapinta trail was 7 CSSB adventurous training activity this year. It was rewarded to the unit's exceptional performers. Seven members of the unit covered approximately 260km over 17days, thus completing the course. By all accounts this was a challenging yet enjoyable experience.



SGT Clune, LTCOL Thomas & CFN Jenkins representing with a tri coloured walking staff

Another keystone event in any workshop is the ASM Golf / Bowls day. This year 7 CSSB ASM (WO1 Malcom Goldner) invited all Coy members to join him for an afternoon of lawn bowls at the Grove Sports Club. Merriment abounded and the competition was hotly contested between teams as they played off for a place in the finals. A controversial win by a VM team left the runner up Recov Mech team feeling a little hard done by.

7 CSSB 25th Birthday was celebrated and the workshop company joined other sub-units to participate in a ceremonial parade. Many former CO and RSM attended as the unit was presented the Theatre Honour Streamer IRAQ 2003 – 2011 by MAJGEN Jason Walk, during a United Drum Head Service Parade. All adjourned to the Borlace Club following the parade to enjoy a meal, refreshments and of course a piece of celebratory birthday cake.



Multi denominational blessings during the Drum Head Service.

Following the CSSB Birthday, Wksp members were involved in the parade where the GG officially opened the 2022 Royal Queensland (EKKA) Show.

EX Combat Echidna is the CO's MIL Skills competition. Each Coy entered 3 sections (1 PL) pitting themselves against each other and vying to be the best. Over three days, sections completed a round robin military skills activity culminating with a gruelling 3hr mixed combat PT activity on the third day. The 106 sections performed well placing 2nd and 3rd out of the nine sections entered. From this activity the BDE Mil Skills team was selected. The workshops was represented by CFN Renger in this team.

More recently, 106 members supported the Great Endeavour Rally which saw our tradespeople repairing the various vehicles that participated in the event as contestants raced around QLD. The event also served as a promotional activity for the RAQ. With 106 members sharing information and distributing promotional merchandise which was generously supplied by the RAQ.



Working Late



The crew, after washing the rally competitors cars for charity donations at Airlie Beach



Pot of gold at the end of the rainbow

As I compile this article, our fitter/armourers are assisting Mr Kingsley Pocock from the Army Museum South Queensland with removal of wheels on a 25 pounder gun.

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CPL Boehm getting serious with wheel nuts

As can be seen, a lot has happened on top of the workshops regular and busy productive schedule – looking ahead, the year still has a lot more to offer. Up-skilling our tradespeople continues with members attending various courses from M88 to CPL. EIR Section is in possession of a robotic dog which will be brought along to every workshop activity whilst we have it. October sees the workshop deploy on another exercise around SE-QLD, and on return, we will attend 2022 first and probably only Spanner Club, which is being hosted by 6 RAR. November brings with it the Corp Conference which this year is being held at Gallipoli Barracks.

Immediately after the Corps Conference, 106 Fd Wksp Coy will host the SE QLD region 80th RAEME Birthday celebrations. This year's birthday celebration is shaping-up to be the biggest RAEME activity in 2022. Activities will include the traditional Spanner Toss, Tug of War, Rank Relay (Iron Gut), and the always entertaining, Cart Race. Raffles, trade vendors, food vans, and AAB-Brisbane will keep everyone entertained. If you are able to attend, all RAEME personnel are welcome. This event, along with the constant churn of maintenance work on the Brigade's equipment, will close-out 2022 and lead to a well-deserved break for all unit members. We look forward to RAQ involvement with some of the upcoming activities and continued engagement with the workshop in the future.



**WO2 Marcellin Chee
Artificer - Mech Ground**

RAQ REGIONAL REPORTS

Report on CMF / ARES Lunch Indooroopilly / Sherwood RSL Club – 20 Aug 22. Again, we were able to reunite this year with 55 members attending the annual reunion at the Sherwood Indooroopilly RSL. The RAEME spirit permeated the day and many old memories flowed. We were pleased to see a lot of members return this year after extended absences. There was a major change in the event organisation this year. Two dedicated members of

the Sub-Branch, John Hogan and Phil Kyle, volunteered to not only cook for the function but purchased the food and condiments. This took a huge load off the committee, particularly Glen Dixon, who for many years has handled the supply and purchase of most items. John and Phil's efforts greatly enhanced the day. Many thanks to all.

We are thankful for the raffle donations from Westside HQ, formerly Sherwood Services Club, who always support us properly. Fred Neilson once again donated a RAEME cane for a raffle prize, which was won by Treasurer, Noel Myler.

During the afternoon proceedings John Hague, a long standing RAEME stalwart, presented the Sherwood RSL with three weapons, one being a beautifully encased WW2 Japanese machine gun. These were accepted on behalf of the Sub-Branch by the Chairman of our Reunion Committee, Ian Leabeater.



L-R Ian Leabeater with John Hague presenting weapons to the Indooroopilly / Sherwood RSL

Another event for the function was the viewing of the video of the Presentation of the Prince Philip Banner to the Corps of RAEME in 1986. MAJ "Chip" Gorman, as Parade Major, had prominent role in the ceremony. Chip and his wife Judy, who are both very active members of the Sub-Branch, again volunteered to "man" the bar for the day. The cake was cut by Glen Dixon an ex-OC of 104 Fd Wksp. With the support of all these volunteers, another successful function finished, and we look forward to welcoming even more members next year.

Arte et Marte

**John Parfitt
Convenor**



Report on RAQ Function Townsville. Around 120 personnel gathered at the Rydges, Townsville, for the 2022 NQ Region RAEME All Ranks Function on 26 Aug 22. Hosted by 3 Bde ASM, EME WO and 3 CSR ASM (WOI Dean Goninan, WO2s Brian Strow and Marty DeHaan respectively) and OC 102 Fd Wksp (MAJ Mick Gordon), the event was well supported by local industry representatives with strong RAEME connections.

Rydges staff provided excellent food and service on the night and the 1 RAR band (trio) kept us entertained with some soulful jazz music in the background. It was great to

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see so many RAQ members in the crowd as well as some up and coming RAEME young guns and Regional CFN of the Year Nominees in attendance.



CFN Lyons (10 FSB), CFN Dunnett (10 FSB), CFN Shefford (2 CAV), CFN Sanders (2 CAV), CFN Ashley (10 FSB), CFN Williamson (5 AVN), CFN Teague (10 FSB), PTE Cook (2 RAR)



L-R - WOI Aaron Writer, Rowena Ferrarotto, Glenn Ferrarotto, WOI Tim Costin & WOI Jason Peterson

Some quality door prizes were on offer and were well received by those lucky door ticket holders. A special mention goes out to the following local industry icons who sponsored the evening, in no particular order:

- AEV – Mick McMillan
- DC Services – Danny Cincotta
- Haulmark Trailers - Kevin Flanagan
- Ironside Resources - Glen Ferrarotto
- RGM – Brent Griffin
- Jason's Heavy Repair (JHR) - Jason Gullison
- SSAF – Mathew Beetham



L-R - Mr and Mrs Don de Tardynski, Graeme Ferret Unmack, Bob Lauro, Kerry and Mick O'Brien

We are already looking forward to the 2023 function.

Robert 'Tank' Pontifex

RAQ Nth QLD

north@qld.raeme.org.au



Report on RAQ Gold Coast Lunch 27 Aug 22. The annual RAQ Gold Coast lunch was held at the Mermaid Beach (AEME) Surf Life Saving Club (MBSLSC) on 27 Aug 22. A very warm welcome was extended by the MBSLSC management with Club veterans, and brothers, Clive and Stuart Burrows, joining us for lunch and acting as official hosts.

That said, we were well down on numbers from the previous six years where we have averaged 55 to 60 people attending; however this year, we maxed out at 26 which included partners. Given every downside has an upside, we had plenty of room and time to mill around and catch up with everyone. As with previous years, we “cracked-it” for perfect sunny day – and nothing beats sitting on the front balcony of the club on an late winter’s afternoon in August overlooking the sparkling Pacific Ocean, in good company, and with good food and service.



L to R. David Grant, Graeme Morrissey, Fred Baker, Kay Bevans, Lyn Morrissey, Helen Long, Charmaine Johnson, Terry Johnson, Brian Roach and Lindsay Morison



L to R. Claude Palmer, Cheryl and Joe Owens



L to R. Kay Bevans, Lyn Morrissey, Helen Long and Charmaine Johnson

It was a great afternoon with the Surf Club Management and staff diligently looking after us. Hopefully in 2023, we will get back to our normal numbers. so keep an eye open
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as I will start stirring people with emails for the 2023 lunch which will be in August at a date to be confirmed.

As we found out, our Club hosts, Stuart and Clive Burrows, have been involved with the club for a long time, and value its history and strong links with AEME, later RAEME. Stuart is a Club Life Member and joined the Club in 1958 which was only 13 years after Brisbane based AEME soldiers formed the club in WW2. Clive is the President of the Clubs Old Boys organisation, and both are very keen to maintain the strong foundational roots established by WW2 AEME. Clive spoke to everyone about his pride in the club and its AEME roots which continue through its current strong links with the RAQ. Another proud boast is that the Club is the only surf club now operating that was formed by soldiers.

Regards,

**Eddie ‘Beans’ Bevans
Convenors MBSLSC Lunch**



Report on RAQ-DD Lunch – 11 Sep 22. I would like to thank all those that attended our lunch on 11 Sep 22 – I gained the impression that all 26 attendees had a good time and enjoyed the catch-up.

I’d especially like to thank everyone for using the new function booking system, which has been implemented by RAQ across all the regions. It appears to have worked very well, with only a few minor issues. I’d like to remind our local members that only financial RAQ members, who have registered via the website, are eligible for the RAQ Member discount for future events. Please let me know if anyone had an issue with the registering system so I can provide feedback to the RAQ Executive. Enjoy the following photos of attendees – most importantly, please let me know what you thought of the venue.



1st Row: Philip Daly, Clarrie Sanders, Pete Pile

2nd Row: (Kneeling): Ian Johnson, Rob Boughen, Gary Watson, Ross Grant, Dave Williams

3rd Row (Standing): Shannon Boughen, Stephen Beck, Liz Fitzgibbon, Dennis Dowling, Sharon Flanagan, Lynn Sanders, Wendy Dowling, Sandra Pile, Maxine Williams

Rear Row: Doug “Scotty” McIver, Dennis Flanagan, Leonie Grant, Darryl Burley, Anne-Marie Burley, Phil O’Sullivan, Marie O’Sullivan, Alf Vanderhorst

It was great to see first time attendees Dave and Maxine Williams, and Doug “Scotty” McIver. I hope you enjoyed catching up with old mates and meeting new ones. I also thank Ross and Leonie Grant for making the trip “up the hill”, and for Ross giving an update on the Corps 80th celebrations and the Royal Toast to King Charles III.



Phil Daly, Gary Watson, Liz Fitzgibbons, Doug (Scotty) McIver and Clarrie Sanders

Please note the following dates for your diaries:

- 27 Nov 22 – RAQ-DD RAEME Birthday Lunch (MTF)
- 2 Dec 22 – RAMS RAEME Birthday Dinner
- 3 Dec 22 – RAQ RAEME Birthday Lunch at the Port Hotel, Brisbane.

More information can be found about the above events on the RAQ website and Friday Files.



Dave and Maxime Williams

Once again, thank you for your attendance, and I look to catching up again in the next few months.

Regards,

Pete Pile
RAQ-DD Representative
M: 0493 268 868

southwest@qld.raeme.org.au



Report on RAQ Sunshine Coast Annual Luncheon 1 Oct 22. The 80th Anniversary of the formation of the Corps of the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers was suitably recognised at the Annual RAQ Sunshine Coast Chapter Lunch held at the Maroochy RSL on Saturday 01 October 2022. After three years of COVID affected attendance figures, we initially had 86 sign up for the lunch this year, but with late withdrawals due to health and other reasons we finished up with 81 attending on the day, a 24% increase on last year. It was pleasing to see a number of new faces in attendance.

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The Colonel Commandant, Queensland, COL (Rtd) Steve Evans, again ably hosted the lunch, and as has become the practice, BRIG (Rtd) Ross Grant AM took care of the MC’s responsibilities.

The Maroochy RSL again excelled with their financial support for the lunch by waiving the venue hire fees and providing a \$10 per head subsidy. The five-star fine cuisine and the superb table and bar service provided by the catering staff ensured an outstanding time was had by all in attendance. The feedback we have since received has confirmed this.

Our guest speaker, RAEME MAJ (Rtd) Glenn Keys AO, the Founder and Executive Chairman of Canberra based Aspen Medical, provided an enlightening presentation addressing his time in the Corps and accrediting it for the success he has had in business since leaving the Service. Glenn gave us an outline of the type of activities Aspen Medical provides across the full spectrum of healthcare in Australia and abroad and detailed his company’s significant contribution to the wellbeing of Australia’s isolated Aboriginal communities with the provision of eye care and other endemic disease treatment.

Glenn also briefly touched on his being the founder and Chair of Project Independence, a housing initiative for people with intellectual disabilities, which was officially launched in Canberra in February 2015. Glenn would have to be the most inspirational and an assuming guest speaker we have had to date.



MAJ (Rtd) Glenn Keys and BRIG (Rtd) Ross Grant

We look forward to seeing you again on the Sunny Coast in 2023.

Ross Grant & Mike Prain
Lunch Convenors
RAQ Sunshine Coast Chap



RAQ COMING EVENTS

The following social events will happen in and around Queensland in the remainder of 2022. For further details on any events, please contact the RAQ Functions Officer at: functions@qld.raeme.org.au or check Friday Files each week.

EVENT	DATE
RAEME 80th Birthday	1 Dec 22
RAEME Birthday NQ - Townsville	1 Dec 22
RAQ All Ranks Luncheon - Brisbane	3 Dec 22
RAQ Townsville Gathering	10 Dec 22

ARMY APPRENTICES NOTICES

Army Apprentices Report – South East Queensland. 2023 will be a momentous year for the Annual Army Apprentices Reunion South East Qld. As the Army Apprentices School celebrates its 75th Anniversary. **Please note, the reunion will be held on the second Saturday in June, Saturday 10th June 2023, not the traditional first Saturday.**

The reason for this change is that 4 June 23, will be my 80th Birthday, therefore, this weekend will be devoted to celebrating this special occasion with family and friends.

The 2023 Army Apprentices Assn South East Qld reunion will be held on 24 Jun 23. This reunion has been held for the last few years at the Bulimba Memorial Bowls Club, as we no longer have access to the Bulimba Barracks Quarry Club, nor the Bulimba Barracks Sergeants Mess.

Most importantly, the time has come for me to step down as convenor. My mind thinks I can still do many things, but my body contradicts! This is an initial call for interested apprentices to put their hands up to take over the organising and running of the annual Army Apprentices Reunion South East Qld.

My contact details are below, and I am eager to hear from any interested parties. But be aware, I am still happy to support the new organisers in any way. The convenor's job has given me great pleasure, where over the years many army apprentices, some who had not seen each other since they left the School, have gathered together regularly and renewed mateships.

Regards,

Brian Daley OAM
Ph. 0412 721 761
bjdaley14@gmail.com



REPORT TO 2022 CORPS CONFERENCE BY COORDINATOR RAEME NATIONAL NETWORK – BRIG (RTD) ROSS GRANT

Introduction. I have been the Coordinator of the RAEME National Network (RNN) for 20 months. I continue to concentrate on supporting the various association executives around Australia and maintaining the flow of communications to and from them. I can see

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clearly that all associations remain busy; most have newsletters with articles relevant to their membership; and I note with pride the effort committees put into organising a wide range of events and functions for their local membership. On your behalf, I offer my congratulations to all Associations and their hardworking teams and encourage you to seek them out in your localities via <https://raeme.org.au>.

Growth in the RNN. I am not sure how successful the various associations have been growing their regional memberships, this year, but all realise the importance of continued growth if they are to survive. This issue has been front of mind in the RAQ for some time. In recent years, they have taken over the remnants of the 106 Fd Wksp (Vietnam) Association, which was struggling to maintain its membership. Fortunately, the RAQ has experienced substantial growth over the last 12 months mainly in Townsville and on the Darling Downs – its newest two sub-associations. Growth is a constant theme and will focus the new RAQ executive elected on 5 Oct 22 over the coming years. The RAQ also attributes its success to high-quality and persistent communications' platforms – making use of the RAQ/RNN website, their weekly newsletter, Friday Files, their more voluminous newsletter, Spanner News and LinkedIn. They are also lucky to have close and vibrant relationships with many local HQ staff and unit commanders and staff across Qld, who support events when they can.

RNN IT System. I'd like to firstly thank Richard Legge, ex-RAEME, and owner of PrerequisiteIT, <http://www.prerequisiteit.com.au> for hosting and maintaining our national IT. I also want to thank the RAEME National Network Support Team (RNST) ably led by Alex Smithers in WA, and his team of distributed webmasters, in most state locations – it takes significant commitment to keep the system fit for purpose, secure and accessible.

For your information, the RAEME National IT Network is built on Windows server technologies and Joomla content management. The Joomla system is made up of different modules and extensions providing file storage, image galleries, event and membership management and our online merchandise shop. The system also has email services providing an important backbone for our communications infrastructure and has recently been upgraded. We strongly encourage each Association to use the system fully.

Other Activities. The following topics continue to feature in the life of the RNN:

- **Roles of the RAEME National Network and Associations.** For those who may not be aware, the RNN exists to encourage all state based associations, in their own way, to achieve their role and responsibilities to:
 - promote the Corps' identity and reputation,

- recognise and celebrate the achievements of the members of the Corps, and
- provide a local focal point for Corps activities.
- **Membership.** May I urge all attendees to consider membership before you leave the service, but if not, soon after you enter civilian life. There are many benefits, but most importantly, an ability to retain a connection with your old Corps and the many fine people with whom you served and networked. May I again commend the regional associations to all and encourage you to support their local activities.
- **Spanner Pack.** Just when we thought Spanner Pack would fold, up pops a few more disparate RAEME folks in PNG and the South Sudan. So once again Ray Norman, the Convenor of Spanner Pack, last week despatched another six packages to soldiers in PNG. Total despatched packages now number 4792 since the programs' inception. My thanks to Ray for his efforts over another trying period in his life. If you have soldiers on overseas deployments at any time, let us know, and Ray will guarantee they receive at least one Spanner Pack while they are away from home. Please be aware, the RNN is always looking for new and popular items to put in the pack and appreciate feedback on the contents, particularly from younger soldiers. **Equally important, donations to Spanner Pack can be made by visiting www.qld.raeme.org.au the "SHOP" page and the donation field.**
- **Heritage Initiatives.** You may have seen coverage on a wonderful initiative to produce a book of RAEME humour. Two members of the Corps, Ian Cook and Peter Shefford "Sheff", have published a highly successful first edition, and are working on Edition 2 which they aim to release early 2023, so they need stories ASAP. Please send them to FunnyStories@raeme.com.
- **Funding Support.** I get many queries about funding support for important Corps activities. Just a reminder to Associations and unit members that the Corps Committee may subsidise some important Corps events, IAW Corps Instruction No 3 "RAEME Corps Fund Charter" – it is worth a read on the availability of funds or otherwise.
- **Appointment of a new COL in CHIEF.** Folks across the RNN are generally aware the HOC is working hard to identify a new COL IN CHIEF – including conducting an important discussion at the Corps Conference on a preferred course of action by members of the Corps. We look forward to a final resolution in 2023.

I always look forward to the opportunity of speaking at the Corps Conference, but most importantly, catching up with many "old" friends. It is good to see so many of you ageing gracefully! If you have any ideas for improving membership of the RNN, or connectivity with our various

associations, please get in touch at the address below. I also want to say how grateful for the support I receive from COLs COMDT across Australia and their work with the associations. Special thanks to BRIG Dave Creagh as he steps down – it has been a pleasure to work with you.

Arte et Marte

Ross L G Grant AM
CHAIR RNN

rnn.chair@raeme.org.au



VALE

It is with deep regret that we advise of the following:

- **Digweed, LTCOL (Rtd) John Francis (OCS June 1962)** passed away 26 Jul 22 in **Toowoomba**. John served with 161 (Indep) Recce Flt from 25 Nov 69 until 2 May 70 and then 2 May 70 until 26 Nov 70 John as OC 3rd Cav Regt LAD. John's final posting was CO 5 Base Wksp Bn Oakey from Nov 1981 until Jan 1986. John had been in a nursing home in Toowoomba for some time with dementia.
- **Pooley, Harry** passed away on 5 Aug 2022 in Brisbane. He was a IRAR Korean veteran who later served with 2/14 QMI LAD and for many years vigorously supported the IRAR and RAEME Associations in Brisbane.
- **Howard, WO2 (Rtd) Terry "Bluey"** passed away peacefully on 31 Aug 22 at age 66, while in palliative care at the Atherton Hospital, surrounded by wife, Rae, and his daughters, Kathy and Kelly following a long battle with a brain tumour. Terry served as a RAEME Aircraft Maintenance Engineer for 21 years.
- **De Jong, Petrus (Peter)** passed away on 18 Sep 22 aged 81. Peter was a Recovery Mechanic and served with 1st Armd Sqn Wksp and then C Squadron Section 1 Armd Regt LAD from February 1968 to December 1968 in SVN.
- **Juers, Donald "Don"** passed away on 20 Sep 22 aged 94. Don served in SVN as ASM at the 1st Armd Regt from 29 Dec 1967 to 01 Feb 1968 and 1st Armd Sqn Wksp from 02 Feb 68 to 03 Sep 1968. Don served at Puckapunyal from about 1950 to his retirement in 1978 achieving the rank of Major at the then Puckapunyal Wksp. He became a councillor and served two terms as Seymour Shire President.
- **Kop, Richard "Dick" (34th F&T)** passed away on 6 Oct 22. Dick's funeral service was held at Chapel of Pinnaroo Cemetery - 285 Graham Road, Bridgeman Downs.
- **Lloyd, WO1 (Rtd) Mal** passed away on 3 Oct 22 after a long illness. No further detail provided.
- **Hausman, WO1 (Rtd) Walter 'Wal'** passed away on 18 Oct 22 and his funeral was held at Pinegrove Crematorium, Kingston St, Minchinbury, NSW.

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- **Kelly**, Jim has returned home after six weeks and in hospital. He is suffering from what is called a dropped foot where he has lost control of the muscle that lifts his right foot. He is not able to drive.
- **Maurice**, “Snow” was seriously injured in a motor cycle accident during a charity bike event. His Goddaughter has created a [GoFundMe page](#) and ride fundraisers have been organised to help Snow. He needs ongoing treatment and rehabilitation after his horrific crash in Central Queensland on 2 Sep 22.

As a reminder, please advise me of brethren and sisters in distress, or who have passed, with **pertinent and accurate detail of their situation**. Email details to the address below of welfare matters in Queensland.

Barry Shipway
Welfare Officer

welfare@qld.raeme.org.au



AUSTRALIAN ARMY APPRENTICES ASSOCIATION (AAAA) REUNION 2023 – ALBURY WODONGA AREA

The AAAA will be conducting a reunion to celebrate 75 years since the establishment of the Army Apprentices School at Balcombe, but later at Bonegilla. The reunion will be held in the Albury Wodonga area commencing on 20 Oct 23. Details are available on the AAAA website.

The Assn is seeking expressions of interest from potential attendees. This information will allow organisers to plan confidently, and they would appreciate advice on your intentions as soon as possible.

Contact email:

events@austarmyapprentice.org

RAEME HISTORY SEGMENT – A SPECIAL 80th ANNIVERSARY STORY

What’s Kept RAEME Busy Over the Last 80 Years? An initiative being led by COL COMDT QLD, COL Steve Evans, and being considered by the RAEME Corps Committee, is how to produce a new official Corps painting to replace the Vietnam era “In the Green” – see below. The Committee’s goal is to better represent graphically the efforts of our men and women who have been involved in contemporary warlike operations since the end of the Vietnam War.

“In the Green” depicts the Corps “at work” in South Vietnam (SVN). It is an iconic representation but is now 50 years old. Finding a suitable piece of art work to represent the modern era of the Corps is a difficult task.

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Much of the problem lies with the large number of warlike, non-warlike and peacetime operations the Corps has undertaken on behalf of the nation, over the last 50 years, which continues to this day.



Recently, I was reminded of this busy period from data revealed in an interesting book, “The Australian Army From Whitlam to Howard”, written by Professor John Blaxland, 2015, where he lists and discusses some 150 operations which have kept the Army “busy” in that period 1972 to 2007. Of course there is more that could be added to that list since 2007 to December 2022, when we celebrate the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the Corps.

One can assume, RAEME personnel and units were involved in most, if not all the operations on Professor Blaxland’s list, and many (but not all) of our stories have been encapsulated in both official histories of RAEME – the first published in 1992, and the second, in 2014.

But how do we depict our busy contemporary history in a single painting like “In the Green”? How many paintings would we need to record operational events in such far flung places as Namibia, Somalia, Cambodia, Bougainville, Bougainville, East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as peacekeeping operations and the provision of aid to the civil community which is now dominating our time?

While you ponder those important questions, let me outline a little of that proud record in a number of excerpts, taken from the most recent Corps history, “With Skill and Fighting - Craftsmen of the Australian Army 1942-2014”. The Editor, Max Carmichael, leads us through this busy period providing a glimpse of the Corps’ involvement on operations, as well as non-operational and transformational activities. All activities tested our Corps in different ways.

Chapter 12. Afghanistan – The Longest War. On 11 September 2001, using hijacked civilian airliners, terrorists attacked the United States of America, destroying the World Trade Centre in New York and damaging the Pentagon in Washington. In response, the United States and its allies, including Australia, formed the International Coalition Against Terrorism and invaded Afghanistan, the main stronghold of Al-Qaeda, the Islamic terrorist group responsible for the 11 September attacks.

Over the next decade Australia's contribution to this conflict evolved from Special Forces, to reconstruction, and more latterly a mentoring role to Afghani forces. Initially RAEME involvement within Afghanistan was limited to tradesmen who were organic to Special Forces or other Arms' Corps units, with heavier grades of repair and maintenance provided by Australian elements located in Iraq and the United Arab Emirates. However with the deployment of an Australian Battle Group, which included logistic and technical support elements, RAEME's role in and impact on the conflict increased.

2009 was a particularly busy and dangerous year in Afghanistan. Aside from the day to day political complications associated with operations in Afghanistan, national elections further complicated an already complex situation. To meet an anticipated attempt by the Taliban to disrupt the elections, the Australian Government agreed to participate in a 'troop surge'. An element of the surge was the upgrade of forty armoured vehicles at Tarin Kowt. The upgrade was principally managed by RAEME, Major Gary Couch, a RAEME Engineering Officer from HQ 1 DIV, who led the Afghanistan Election Surge A Vehicle Force Insertion Team (FIT).

As OC FIT, I was tasked with selecting the team and negotiating command release for the required trade skill sets. The first task was to select an ASM with PMV experience and fortunately for FIT, WO1 Nic Rees was released from the Bushranger Project. Coincidentally, 29 years ago, we began our Army careers together as 36th Intake Army Apprentice VMs.



CFN Butler during combat casualty training in Kuwait

The 23 members of FIT assembled and deployed into the MEAO during June 2009, when the planning phase front loading of upgrade kits into TK was approved so the team had some necessary stores to commence the task. The only thing missing was the vehicles. Delivery of the vehicles was planned using a combination of RAAF and US C17 aircraft and contracted air lift. Delivery of the first PMV was delayed so FIT turned to assisting MTF with maintenance and servicing of ASLAVs that had been delivered from Iraq for upgrade with a range of faults requiring correction.



Establishing the work area and raising the Tricolour

Eventually the PMV's started to arrive and FIT members were organised into specific teams for each upgrade based on skill sets. Junior NCOs, CPLs, managed teams to achieve the work plan, providing a great opportunity for younger CPL's and at times CFN to develop leadership skills when required to take the lead. As the OC, I observed with great satisfaction, RAEME tradesmen rise to the occasion when given responsibility and they did so by striving to achieve all aspects of the task; even going beyond specified tasks by supporting MTF colleagues in their areas of technical specialisation at every opportunity.

The original plan to upgrade 19 vehicles was expanded to 40 vehicles and an in-theatre extension was necessary. The team was divided by specific tasks. Two for spall curtain installation as this work required vehicle preparation and reassembling after installation. Protected Weapon Station (PWS) required particular trade skill sets including ASLAV Fitters' vehicle crane operators.



LCPL Little on the ASLAV Fitters' crane and CFN Marshall preparing a PWS Installation

Electronic upgrades were controlled by DMO representatives from the respective projects supported by tradesmen. There were two distinct teams for Blue Force Tracker and Electronic Counter Measures (ECM) and every vehicle received these upgrades. During the planning phase there was a push from DMO to provide all personnel for the electronic upgrades. This

was discussed with the ASM and the AHQ and JOC planning teams and to some degree resisted.



PWS Installation: CFN Marshall and CFN Van Brakel



CFN Butler installing Spill Curtains



CFN Terzo covering partially installed PWS

The FIT's resistance was primarily based in a desire to train tradesmen on the ground, who would be responsible for future work on the systems. A distinctly separate component of FIT tasking was to facilitate training of MTF and SOTG personnel on the systems installed in the upgrade. This included operator training for all systems and some maintenance training specific to the upgrades. A compromise was eventually reached. It involved the electronics upgrade being completed by DMO subject matter experts with support from RAEME tradesmen who had a mandate to train tradesmen on the systems. As the work progressed and processes became bedded down efficiencies were identified by team members leading to

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improved turnaround times for platform installations. This led to competition between teams, in typical RAEME fashion and inter-team challenges were heard as each struggled to be quickest.

This enthusiasm for the task was one of their strengths and whilst some days were better than others the team supported each other well and formed a close bond

Chapter 13. To the 90s and beyond – Operations and Transformation. If anyone believed that the nineties would be a decade of stability and consolidation for Defence, they were to be sorely disappointed. Referred to by Time magazine as “The Decade from Hell”, change permeated every aspect of social, political, economic and military life. For the Australian Army, the relative operational quiet evident in the previous decade, and the early nineties, belied the period of high tempo and transformational change that was to follow. The deployments to Namibia, Somalia, Cambodia, Bougainville, East Timor and Iraq heralded the start of the longest continuous period of operational and humanitarian activity in the history of the ADF. A relentless cycle of “prepare, deploy, return, rest and re-deploy” was established across Army with many individuals deploying again and again.

The operational tempo inevitably led to reorganisation and change at home as the business of warfighting changed; this was equally true of the logistic support required on operations and in support of the civilian community. Large Corps-based organisations at all lines of logistic support (1st to 4th) gave way to rationalised logistic units, across Army, then the ADF. Political direction led to substantial growth, relocation and reorganisation for Army and favourable strategic funding, stimulated by the operation tempo and demands, led to a proliferation of complex, high technology equipment across Army. This new equipment was generally characterised by better design with improved production techniques and materials. This led to improved reliability with an evolving requirement to develop new diagnostic, materiel maintenance and maintenance engineering regimes. At the same time there was an increasing pressure to increase the operational “tooth to tail” ratio of Army force elements in order to obtain a bigger “bang for the buck”.

The impact upon RAEME was profound. It was thought at the start of the nineties that time was on the side of the Corps and that it was well placed to accommodate any change or upheaval that had to be faced. It could be argued that for the Corps, save for the formative years as a discrete Corps during World War Two, this period of time had no peer in terms of relentless restructuring and the demand for consistently high levels of productive maintenance work, that would test the Corps and supporting industry at all levels.

A constant requirement during this period was the provision of members of the Corps for deployment abroad to support a myriad of ADF operations. However, for those remaining in Australia, the Corp's structural basis was anything but

¹ The Australian Newspaper article “[Living in the Nineties](#)”

constant. Base workshops battalions were subsumed into logistic battalions and groups. 3rd Line units, including many Army Reserve units, were disbanded or integrated. Field workshops were absorbed into Brigade Administrative Support Battalions (BASB), and later transformed into Combat Service Support Battalions (CSSB). Integral units at 1st line were also restructured, retitled and re-focused to deliver maintenance support within in units with increased equipment dependencies incorporating new technologies.



Victims of the Corps' restructure – the last contingent of RAEME Clerks and Storeman to be trained. This group transferred to RAAOC with effect 1 Jan 95.

Critically Corps doctrine, work practices, business models and trade structures were modified. Some trades were reorganised or amalgamated and maintenance, repair and recovery techniques for new maintenance vehicles, equipment and tools were introduced.

In addition to overseas deployments and home based restructure, the Corps was required to respond to numerous domestic situations and Government requirements. One such government initiative was the Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Program (AACAP). This program consisting of on-going series of projects focused on the provision of infrastructure such as housing, water, sewerage and electrical services, primary health care, roads and airfields, to Aboriginal communities across Australia. While most of these projects primarily required RAE support, many others required construction, maintenance and training skills inherent to RAEME personnel.

The Corps also responded to several serious bushfire and flood disasters. The Army responded to these catastrophes, for example, under Op VIC FIRE ASSIST, a predominantly Army Reserve operation. RAEME elements deployed with their parent units and provided essential support with distinction.



3 Recov Coy elements – Op VIC FIRE ASSIST
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Exercises remained an almost constant backdrop for RAEME personnel in Land Command units, and at times, RAEME 'know how' was tested. This was the case in 2012 for the 7th Battalion, RAR (Mechanised (Mech)) recovery team deployed to the Shoalwater Bay area for Exercise Talisman Sabre. At the height of the exercise one of the infantry companies had two APCs bogged so badly that the Commanding Officer of the unit judged them to be unrecoverable. Sergeant Benny Hewlett, the unit Recovery Mechanic, slightly affronted by the lack of "specialist" consultation, determined that no vehicle could be bogged so badly that it could not be recovered.

After an eventful reconnaissance, in which the recovery vehicle threw a track, the location of the two "crocks" was confirmed – stuck in glutinous mud on a difficult and sodden slope. Scrub and fallen timber were cleared and the trapped vehicles prepared for recovery. With the assistance of scrounged towropes and tackle, the vehicles were eventually extricated from their muddy prison after a full day's effort and driven to safety to the relief of everyone especially the CO!



The unrecoverable meets the undaunted

In a slightly more pleasant environment, Captain Dean Kachab describes the work undertaken by the 1st Aviation Regiment's during Exercise Vigilant Scimitar, conducted at the Cultana Training Area, when the technical support troop, [while] providing maintenance and recovery support to eight of the Army's Armed Reconnaissance Helicopters, conducted a "field engine change" – the first for the regiment.

During the subsequent ground run as part of the post maintenance activities, the aircraft engine had a chip indication for a second time. Prior to start, however this time, an engine dry crank was conducted, and it became immediately evident that there was a 'metal on metal' sound emanating from the Oil Cooler Fan assembly.' Following further consideration and after consulting the relevant manuals, it was decided that the aircraft was to remain in its current location and an engine change would be undertaken in the "field" – a first for the ARH in Australia.



Members of TSS conducting the engine change. L to R, WO2 Chambers (ASM), CFN Cleggett, CPL Jessop, CPL Bryan

The sometimes concurrent demands of supporting operations, humanitarian relief, major exercises, exacerbated by a dearth of skilled tradesmen, placed great strain on finite Corps resources. Combined with the lessons emerging from continuous operations and a strategic plan to modernise Army, the Corps also became immersed in transformational change to meet the needs of a modern ADF, within an integrated logistic continuum.

In 1991, the newly appointed Corps Director General, BRIGADIER John Kingston AM, in his Craftsman Magazine message, warned the Corps that coping with change was one of the major challenges for RAEME. He noted that there was an ever increasing workload being placed on the Corps, and continuing pressure to reduce the size of the Army's "logistic tail" despite the fact that Army's inventory continued to expand; and so too, the associated maintenance liability for a new generation of equipment. BRIGADIER Kingston went on to say that the only way to address this problem was through superior leadership and the application of managerial and technical skills. He also expressed his confidence that the professionalism of the members of the Corps would prevail².

Pressure also came to bear on the functional delivery of maintenance engineering and the role of that iconic organisation, dedicated to delivering professional maintenance engineering outcomes, the Maintenance Engineering Agency (MEA) and its sister organisation the Engineering Design Establishment (EDE). While it is intuitive for engineers and maintenance personnel to understand the value-adding benefits of good maintenance, controlled centrally under a single subject matter expert for maintenance, this view was not shared universally across the Army and pressure came upon various controllers of MEA to take a different course and distribute the capability throughout the merging Army and later ADF Support Commands.

A number of related events occurred midterm of the nineties, which had far-reaching impacts on the management of Corps. These included a significant reduction in the size, composition and responsibilities of all Corps Directorates, their relocation to the geographic site of the Corps Schools and the demise of the Army Apprentices scheme after 49 years. The Directorates

became simply very "lean" organisations but still responsible for subject matter expertise on the capabilities and capacity of their Corps with an important focus on officer and senior ranks professional development and career management, trade structures, training development and specific Corps input to acquisition and through life support to the ADF's equipment and Corps heritage aspects. DEME-A relocated to Bandiana and collocated with the RAEME Training Centre (RTC) (now the Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (ASEME)

Other changes occurred; one example occurred on 1st December 2006 when the Aviation Support Group Workshop (ASGW) held its official disbandment parade. The Corps birthday was deemed an appropriate date to disband the unit, the only remaining independent RAEME workshop.



ASGW marches off into history

Inevitably, in such a climate of change and revision, Army Maintenance Engineering and even the very basis of the Corps, the RAEME Artificer, came under review. In support of the Chief of Army's Army Restructure Review (A21) which commenced in 1996, ACMAT-A, MAJGEN Kingston initiated a study in 1997 to address growing concerns regarding the effectiveness and efficiencies of Army's maintenance engineering arrangements. The study was titled Army Maintenance Engineering – 21 (AME 21). Part of the AME 21 study sought to redefine the meaning of a RAEME Artificer. The proposed revised definition saw the Artificer redefined as:

"a RAEME Sergeant, Staff Sergeant or Warrant Officer who, by virtue of his or her selection, education and subsequent experience, is competent to exercise independent technical judgement. The Artificer must have leadership skills and be prepared to assume personal responsibility for carrying out military and engineering tasks. Successful completion of an Artificer course confirms his or her potential for the highest non-commissioned rank. His or her education and training are structured so as to enable understanding and to remedy failures both in equipment covered by his or her engineering discipline and others for which he or she has received no formal training, using general engineering and quality principles together with established techniques. He or she performs duties at a higher level of responsibility than that of a technician either independently or under general direction of a RAEME officer. He or she needs the quality of leadership to command, train, administer and motivate those under his or her command. He or she must ensure that subordinates

² Craftsman Magazine Issue 24, May 1991, p 3

complete their military or technical tasks regardless of local circumstances and survive, fight and work in all phases of war. Intellectually he or she needs to be aware of current political, social, military and technical affairs, and will be able to represent them to his or her soldiers.”

Another aspect of AME 21 was the need to reintroduce a contemporary Technical Regulatory Framework (TRF) to ensure Army once again had control of its engineering systems and could guarantee the technical integrity of all ground equipment. This control had been an unintended casualty of the change process instigated in the late 1980s. The result was that engineering decisions were being made by those who were neither qualified, nor authorised to exercise such responsibility. The decision to review this issue was not simply a matter of bureaucratic control – contemporary experiences showed that some unauthorised engineering modifications had compromised the integrity of platforms, systems and a range of equipment³. By 1999 the TRF had been re-established and operating to ensure that anything work carried out on equipment ensured it was fit for purpose, safe to operate and met contemporary environmental requirements.

Conclusion. In this commemorative article, I have attempted to give readers a small taste of the many things our Corps has been involved in over the last 50 years, but in reality, in the past of the last 80 years. We have always been a busy Corps and it will always be thus. But we need to fortify ourselves with the confidence we can cope with any challenge thrown at us – knowledge of our history is a good place to start. So get a copy of the most recent book – see the advertisement on page 22.

Finally, while you are reading the Corps’ history, in any form, and thinking about your part, please also think about the best way to depict the Corps recent legacy in art – you will be helping the COL COMDT and ensuring that those who come after you, have something on their wall to admire and be proud of – I pass that challenge is **over to you**.

Excerpts taken from “With Skill and Fighting – Craftsman of the Australian Army 1942-2014” – published 2014 by COORD RNN, BRIG (Rtd) Ross Grant.

³ A tragic example of unauthorised engineering modification occurred on HMAS Westralia which resulted in a fire that claimed the lives of four sailors. There were also several other incidents notably the sinking of an ASLAV and the electrocution of a tradesman on Bougainville that were due to unauthorised engineering modification.

FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK

At the recent AGM, outlined on page 1, I paid tribute to Jeff Maurice for his long service to the RAQ, as well as his longer-serving Secretary, Gary Sargent. I now want to include the third part of that executive team, our Treasurer of many years, Steve Howells. Steve had contributed mightily to the executive and the RAQ and

worked assiduously to facilitate the smooth running of the association and its continuous growth. As the RAQ Patron, I have watched with pride at the team’s hard work and commitment, including Steve’s, and wish to publicly thank them – well done, gentlemen.

In December we will celebrate the Corps’ 80 birthday. I believe the Corps has been involved in every operation/activity of significance in which the Army has been engaged over a long time – see the military history story on pages 15-20 – as a result we have a hard earned and highly-prized reputation. I invite you to participate fully in the coming celebrations and enjoy the moment as a member of our wonderful tribe.

In October, I was invited to attend a RAEME Corps/Defence Industry Networking event on the sidelines of the recent Land Force Event in Brisbane. Apart from the opportunity to catch-up with a large cohort of ex-RAEME men and women, who now work in industry, I also enjoyed the panel discussion on some of the manpower issues facing Army, the Corps and industry. They can be summarised in one sentence – skills shortages and high separation rates. I know the Corps is working hard to stem the exit of talented people and I observe the situation is much worse than at other times in our Corps’ history. Given the emerging security situation, there is a huge imperative to get maintenance systems right – we all have a part to play. I thank the HOC, BRIG James, and REP COL COMDT for the invitation to attend this important event.

Enjoy the forthcoming festive season and your time with family, friends and work colleagues.

Arte et Marte

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13 1905 > racq.com/batteries

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101 Workshop presents...

RAEME 80th BIRTHDAY

When: 0900-1500 Thu 01 Dec 22.

Where: Berrimah Defence Precinct, southern side of Belconnen Way.

Who: RAEME Corps members past and currently serving are invited to attend.

Dress: Unit PT gear for current members, casual & enclosed footwear for civilians.

Events: Spanner throw, Billy cart push, Touch football, Tug of war.



Arte et Marte

"WITH SKILL AND FIGHTING: CRAFTSMEN OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY 1942-2014".

For those yet to buy the Corps memoir, there are still copies available, detailed below is how to obtain a copy. It may be a great gift for someone who has served in the Corps.

Books are only \$40.00 plus postage.

To order a copy send an email to RAEME.HOCCell@defence.gov.au with the subject RAEME Corps History Book, include how many copies and your postal address details (so postage costs can be determined). The Head of Corps Cell will get back to you with full costs and payment details (preferred option is EFT) as soon as possible. Please be patient, there are only a couple of Defence Members in the HOC Cell and they have other tasks.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to drop us a line at RAEME.HOCCell@defence.gov.au.



Back

To

Bandiana



Did you attend an Adult Tradesman's course at the RAEME Training Centre, Bandiana, Victoria??

I am looking for any RAEME digger who may be interested in a "Back To Bandi" reunion.

At this point in time, it is a concept only. I am seeking interest from ex RAEME people who would like to catch up with their old mates.

If enough interest is generated, I will take the next step.

If you would like to submit an expression of interest please contact:-

Garry (Snowy) Whykes at gwhykes@gmail.com

Please supply the following:-

Your Name

Contact Details (email and phone number)

Course eg 5/65

If you are in contact with your mates, please let them know of this flyer.

Arte et Marte

STOP PRESS – WORK UNDERWAY TO IMPROVE THE RAQ WEBSITE

With the recent upgrade to the RAQ website, it is timely to reflect on the valuable asset our organisation has built and acknowledge the contribution made behind the scenes at local and national levels. The RAQ website does more than provide an online presence for the association. While representing who we are and what we do is a very important task, the website is also a collection of tools that assist the RAQ committee in managing and delivering services to the association members.

Our website is part of a RAEME National Network (RNN) of comprising many RAEME Association websites, built on Windows Server technologies and Joomla content management. The Joomla system is made up of different modules and extensions providing file storage, image galleries, event and membership management and our online merchandise shop. Adjacent to this, we also have our email services providing the backbone of our communications infrastructure.

We are very fortunate to have the tech support of the RNN. Their work largely goes un-noticed providing a regular schedule of system updates and patching. They are always on hand to assist to resolve technical issues that might rise and are a dedicated team lead by Alex Smithers in WA.

On a more local level our (RAQ) committee has taken advantage of the available features leveraging the technology to automate many processes. This includes registering and taking payments for membership, events and shop orders; and many communications that go out to members, sending out event tickets and order confirmations. Your committee is spared a lot of mundane work and makes organising our many events much simpler.

Each of our committee members is committed to continuing a strong online presence and are regular contributors through their administration of membership, sick parade and vale notices and store records. The front of the RAQ site is always kept fresh with new items of interest for members and those who might stop by our site.

Looking forward RAQ will benefit from the work completed by the RNN team to transition all association websites from Joomla 3 to Joomla 4 CMS. Joomla 3 had reached end of life and no longer supported, Joomla 4 provides us ongoing maintenance support, new security and access to new and emerging technologies.



ALL RANKS LUNCHEON - SATURDAY 3 DEC 2022 - BRISBANE - TICKETS SELLING FAST



An invitation is extended to all current and past members of RAEME and friends of RAEME to attend our Annual All Ranks Luncheon. This year we celebrate the 80th Anniversary of the establishment of the Corps and the luncheon provides an opportunity for all "Bluebells" celebrate our achievements. A flyer is attached.

- VENUE: Port Office Dining Room, Brisbane CBD (Port Office Hotel) Corner Edward and Margaret Streets.
- TIMINGS: 1130 hrs pre luncheon gathering for 1230 hrs start, finishing at 1700hrs
- MEAL: Entree, Main (3 way alternate drop), desert (cake) tea and coffee.
- DRINKS: Drink package included for the first hour once seated (after the first hour drinks are own expense)
- DRESS: Smart Casual - Gents Tie please
- RSVP: Registrations close Sunday 27 November. If you have any dietary requirements please let us know email the Secretary.

BOOK NOW

LIMITED NUMBERS TO A MAXIMUM 110 TICKETS. RAQ FINANCIAL MEMBERS AND UP TO ONE GUEST RECEIVE A DISCOUNT OF \$10 PER TICKET (MAX \$20 PER MEMBER).

Ticket	Price (Per Person)
Financial RAQ Member or Serving Soldier or one Member/Soldier guest	\$55.00
Email Affiliates, Non-Members & extra Guests	\$65.00

Please make up a table of RAEME friends and guests. Tables of eight to ten available or part thereof. If you wish to request specific seating or arrange a group table, please email the Deputy Chairman