



Follow The Sapper

1 FIELD SQUADRON GROUP
'FOLLOW THE SAPPER'
THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS
QUEENSLAND INCORPORATED

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December 2022 - Edition 39
SOUVENIR EDITION

Greetings fellow Sappers and Friends.

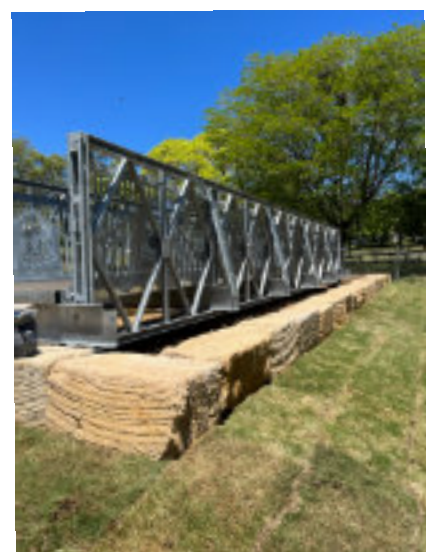
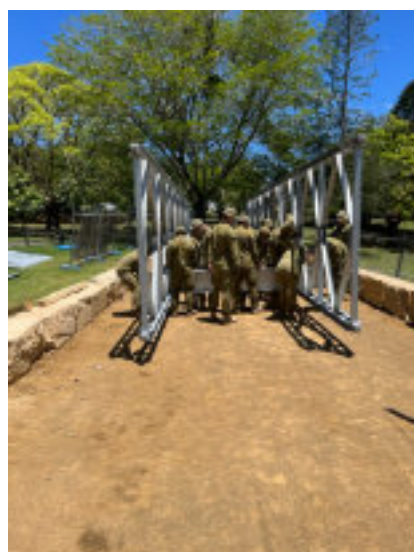
Yes, your Association can claim a truly amazing FIRST; in fact a number of first's. Our reunion was a success and contained four major segments: the bridge dedication, the reception afterwards, the commemorative service and the reunion dinner. It was a huge action-packed weekend. It was also the 120th Anniversary of RAE. This special edition of FTS gives you a synopsis of the events with plenty of pictures I do hope you will enjoy the read.

To wind back just a little, our bridge – The Bridge of Friendship – arrived at the Port of Brisbane on **20th October 2022**. None was more relieved than George Hulse. It was transported to 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment (2CER) Enoggera on **31st October**. The bridge was then moved to ANZAC Park site and was constructed on **2nd November**. Personnel involved were – technical supervision: RSM 2 CER WO1 Ben King, technical supervision: WO2 Craig Townsend, practical construction commanded by SGT Stenhouse (7 CE Squadron). WO1 King and WO2 Townsend were the only serving RAE members of that Regiment with qualifications on the Bailey Bridge from the maker, Maybe Bridge Company, Lydney, Gloucestershire, England. The working detail consisted of both male and female Sappers.

A number of reconnaissance's of the site at ANZAC Park were carried out with the bridge transported there and erected on **2nd November 2022** and all done without any mechanical handling devices. Well done the team from 2 CER.

The pictures show firstly, George showing my son, Michael, the site for the bridge, then are images of the bridge construction team from 2 CER hard at the job.

The names of the bridge constructors appear on a plaque that is attached to the bridge. They are Sergeant Trevor Stenhouse, Corporal Kobie Rogers, Sapper Matthew Arthur, Sapper Isaac Austin, Sapper Anthony Channing, Sapper Dale Crompton, Sapper Aron Curtis, Sapper Connor De Losa, Sapper Elijah Espino, Sapper Logan Kocbek, Sapper Dasun Kurupparachichi, Sapper David Lee, Sapper Maddison Lewis, Sapper Marley Mam, Sapper Zacharia Macdonald, Sapper Blake McMillan, Sapper Kristy Scott, Sapper Diana Spano and Sapper Zachary Williams.



We are now at **10th November**. The ‘Meet and Greet’ is under way with old mates spinning yarns. Jim Weston, Bev Hulse and Carol Pfeiffer were beavering away selling merchandise at a cracking pace. Tasks for the Committee are confirmed. We have some serious VIP’s to look after including the Ambassador for France, His Excellency Monsieur Jean-Pierre Thebault, his Military Attache Naval Captain Jean-Marc Quilliet, and two French Officer Cadets from their college in St Cyr, France. Our other VIP’s were our Representative Colonel Commandant, MAJGEN Stephen Day DSC, AM, our Head of Corps and Patron of the 1st Field Squadron Group Association, BRIG Michael Say DSC and his RSM, representatives from Queensland Government, Brisbane City Council and RSL Queensland and Toowong. To any smart Sapper, a piece of cake. Well, not quite.

Below is the French Ambassador with his Senior Military Attache enjoying a beer with Derek Smith, Jim Weston and Mick Augustus, then George Hulse greeting the VIP’s, then MAJGEN Stephen Day DSC, AM chatting with French Navy CAPT Jean-Marc Quilliet, then the Banner Party marching on the Corps Banner.



So to the big day – **11th November**. George tasked your erstwhile editor to be at the Western Districts Rugby Union Football Club to meet the Ambassador and his group and to ensure they got to the bridge site at ANZAC Park in ample time. The group was expected to fly in from Canberra about 2PM. I was at the Club at about 1.25PM. Ah, did we take into account daylight saving? No. His Excellency and party were already there. With much bowing and scraping, I sincerely apologised. *“It is quite alright. Please do not worry. Perhaps we should have a beer, and please do call me Jean-Pierre.”* So all was ok and we did have a cold beer. The group, thanks to Jim Weston’s transport, were on site on time. Friendly greetings exchanged and the Bridge of Friendship Dedication is under way beginning with the March on of the RAE Banner – Banner Ensign LT Alex Jackson, Banner Escorts SGT Karl Booth and SGT Jesse Hall, all from 1 FD SQN Darwin.

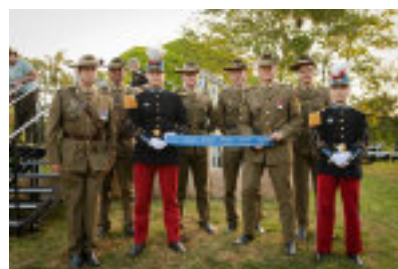


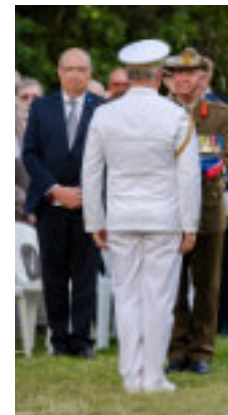
The National flags of France and Australia were at full mast. The Master of Ceremonies was Major Andrew Coburn RAE who had served in the French Foreign Legion. He spoke French to our French dignitaries at various stages during the ceremony. Chaplain of 2 CER, Madre Cindy Waugh led all with the Royal Australian Engineer Prayer. BRIG Michael Say DSC and HOC, gave an address. This was followed by a wonderful musical interlude performed by the band of the Queensland Academy of Science, Mathematics and Technology, and the choir from Chantefique Alliance Francaise. They performed It’s a long way to Tipperary, Hurrah for the CRE and We are the Engineers. The attendees joined in the last piece and without any dodgy words. Now how did that happen?

His Excellency the French Ambassador then gave the commemorative address, followed by the bridge dedication and ribbon cutting. Madre Waugh then blessed the bridge. All were then entertained by another wonderful musical interlude. The choir gave an amazing rendition of the French folk song, Aupres de ma Blonde (French for ‘Next to my Girlfriend.’) This piece can be found on the internet. Bugler SGT Ben Cobden from the Australian Army Band Brisbane played The Sunset Call.

Madre Waugh then gave the benediction followed by the singing of the French National Anthem and the Australian National Anthem. The Australian flag was lowered by two Sappers of 1 FD SQN. The French flag was lowered by the Officer Cadets from France. The French flag was presented to MAJGEN Day, AM, DSC and the Australian flag was presented to the French Ambassador. The Banner party marched off The Banner Party marched off with the Band playing a stirring rendition of our RAE Corps march – *“Wings”* and so ended the dedication of the Bridge of Friendship between France and Australia in memory of all Australian Engineers who served in World War One. The MC announced that the Amiens Bridge in France will be dedicated in 2024.

Pictured below are MC MAJ Andrew Coburn, BRIG Michael Say DSC, French Ambassador His Excellency Monsieur Jean-Pierre Thebault, Padre 2 CER Madre Cindy Waugh, the Official Party cutting the ribbon, members of 1st Field Squadron and the two French Officer Cadets at the Bridge of Friendship, the choir from Chantefique Alliance Francaise, the National flags of France and Australia being folded, BRIG Say presenting the Australian flag to the French Ambassador and French Military Attache Naval CAPT Jean-Marc Quilliet presenting the French flag to MAJGEN Day.





We are now at the Reception in Figs Restaurant, **11th November 2022**. The Ambassador was not able to attend as he had to fly back to Canberra, however the other guests and many others attended. Drinks were served along with light snacks. Good conversations followed. Yet more 'firsts' for the Association occurred. Our Reception was chosen as the occasion for VIP French Naval captain and Senior Military Attaché to the French Embassy, CAPT Jean-Marc Pierre to award the French Legion of Honour to 93 year old Mr. Franz Hagar who had served as a Legionnaire.

Franz now lives on the Gold Coast. This award is the highest French order of merit, both military and civil and was established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte.

Your Association was indeed honoured to host such a prestigious event. Pictured below show the French Officer Cadets holding the medal, CAPT Pierre making the award and Mr. Franz Hagar being very duly acclaimed.



Yet another great privilege for our Association was the validation of the award of the Distinguished Service Cross to COL John Kemp AM. Gaining the much deserved award has taken about 54 years. John was Officer Commanding 1st Field Squadron Group at FSB Coral in 1968. He led the Squadron with distinction.

This was a momentous occasion for John and all present. Well done Sir. Pictured below are COL John Kemp AM, DSC with George Hulse announcing the award of the DSC, MAJGEN Stephen Day AM, DSC chatting with John Benningfield OAM and Paul Ryan, then BRIG Michael Say DSC and Councillor James Mackay of Brisbane City Council.



The next duty for our President was to present all who supported the event, with a gift set including a certificate of appreciation, a plaque in a wooden box as a memento of the occasion, a specially minted coin as a further memento and a book titled **First In – Last Out, The Australian Combat Engineers of World War One by Lieutenant Colonel George Hulse OAM (Retd)**. This was our way of saying a huge ‘thank you’ to all who gave such valued support. There are too many to name here but they know who they are.

However we can single out three. First is CPL Daniel O’Sullivan of 1st Field Squadron. Daniel organised a triathlon between the soldiers and officers of 1st Field Squadron as a way to raise money for our bridge.



Now there is a bit more to Bailey Wagner’s story. One of our members, Adrian Huggins, had returned to Wodonga after the reunion. He took his 15 year old son to check out the Wodonga TAFE open day. They were exploring future career options. During their visit one of the teachers approached and commented on Adrian’s 1 Field Squadron sticker on his car. Seems this chap had also served in 1 FD SQN, 2 Troop, in Darwin. Of course Adrian told him that he had just returned from the reunion and bridge dedication.

The event was called the Katherine Ultra. The soldiers, just by the way, won the day. Seems the officers howled “fair go fellers.” Apparently one of the officers scored a flat tyre in one of the bike legs Ah, so sad. Now we must wait for the next ultra to see what goes down.

We must mention SPR Bailey Wagner also of 1st Field Squadron. According to his story, he chose not to hit the town for three months, thus saving money, all of which he donated to the bridge – a whopping \$5000. Then we must acknowledge the Officer Commanding 1st Field Squadron who ensured this all came together. MAJ Peter Witcomb also worked with the Committee throughout this whole project. Well done to all. Pictured below are CPL Daniel O’Sullivan, SPR Bailey Wagner and MAJ Peter Witcomb, receiving their presentations.

“Well” said the teacher, “my son was involved in that. I am Nicholas Wagner. My son is Bailey. He donated \$5000 to the bridge.” According to Nicholas, Bailey had a good night at the casino. I prefer Bailey’s story but who is to know. Whichever way one looks at it, he is a very generous young Sapper. The future is in good hands. Adrian reckons the SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION is alive and well.

So concluded the reception which was enjoyed by all.

The Morning of 12th November 2022. The Association held its Annual General Meeting. Reports were delivered and duly passed. The committee stood down with our president George Hulse not seeking re-election. All other committee members were returned. The Association has a new president – Major Jamie Twidale. Jamie was not able to attend as he was attending Staff College. We will ensure a resume of Jamie will be published shortly. One motion that was put and voted on unanimously was the award of life membership for George.

The Afternoon of 12th November 2022. The Association held its RAE Memorial Service at the Toowong Soldiers Memorial. MC George Hulse welcomed all. The Catafalque Party, provided by Sappers from 2 CER, mounted. Chaplain Madre Cindy Waugh gave the Homily then BRIG Michael Say DSC gave the address. Wreaths were laid. Our traditional Flag Ceremony followed with the names of our fallen from Korea to present time including our explosive detection dogs, were read out by WO1 Sean Chainey DSM, OAM. The Ode was recited, Last Post played, a minute silence observed, Rouse played then our

National Anthem sung. The Catafalque Party dismantled and so the ceremony concluded. Guests returned to Figs Bar for light refreshments. This is such an important part of our reunion where we pause to honour our fallen comrades. Lest We Forget.

The Evening of 12th November 2022. The Last Hurrah. All gathered at Figs Restaurant at 6.30PM for the reunion dinner. After enjoying an excellent meal and perhaps the odd ale, some short addresses were made followed by toasts. Derek Smith proposed the loyal toast to the King – King Charles III. This was followed by WO1 Benjamin King, RSM 2 CER proposing the toast to the Corps then Major Bob Pfeiffer (Retd) proposing the toast to 1st Field Squadron Group. George’s plan would have this signalling the end to all things official. Not quite. You see George celebrated his 80th birthday on 10th November so a suitable cake was produced with all present singing ‘Happy Birthday’ to George. Safety prevented having 80 candles but cake was enjoyed by all with coffee. Below are pictures of the Certificates, book and coin, plaque and presentation box.

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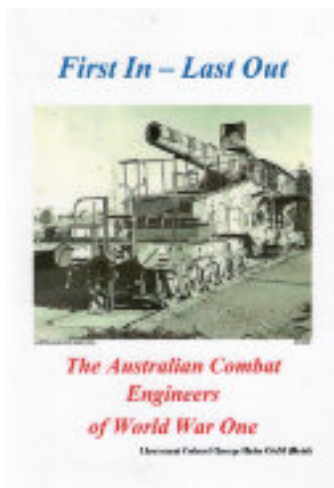
1 Field Squadron Group Web Site

is maintained by John Robertson at
Visreal Productions - Ruakaka NZ.
Mob. +64 21 430 166
Email: visrealproductions@gmail.com

Many photos in this edition were kindly provided by Dr. Lily Zhu, photographer for the Toowong RSL Board. See more at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1OGBdqN9OyLOYWlkD767pUaXUhKqW70Fk>



Readers will be interested to know that the plaque is made from aged Rosewood. The timber etching was done by computer using a laser engraver. The presentation boxes are made from normal three-ply timber sourced by the Men's Shed at Kenmore. One unique feature of the boxes is that the hinge was designed by the Men's Shed so as not to need a hinge made from outside Australia. Nothing on the box or plaque is from outside Australia. These are a 'one off' with the date being the determining factor – 11th November 2022. It took the folks from the Men's Shed at Kenmore three months to get the job done for 50 plaques and 25 presentation boxes. Chances are these items will become collector's items in the years to come.



The book *First In – Last Out, The Australian Combat Engineers of World War One* by Lieutenant Colonel George Hulse OAM (Retd) was a most appropriate gift to be included in the presentations to our guests.

To wind up, here are some more pictures from the Dedication on 11th November 2022.



Pictures above show the guests at the Dedication, the Banner Party at the Bridge, more guests at the Dedication, and on the next page the French Officer Cadets with George and members of 1st Field Squadron Darwin, more ribbon cutting images, Derek Smith chatting with BRIG Say DSC and CAPT Jean-Marc Pierre, CAPT Pierre chatting with MC Major Andrew Coburn, CO 2 CER LTCOL Craig Bury chatting with WO1 Sean Chainey DSM, George Hulse with his wife Bev chatting with guests, then good friends enjoying the Reception.



Thus ended our 2022 Reunion. It was indeed a huge success by any measure.



President's Report December 2022

Patron of 1 FD SQN RAE Association Inc – Brigadier Michael Say DSC

The Association is very fortunate to have the Head of Corps of RAE, Brigadier Michael Say DSC, as our Patron. Brigadier Say's background is described on our website and it is a pleasure to welcome the Brigadier back to the fold of 1 FD SQN members. Brigadier Say is a 1 FD SQN veteran.

Engineer Monument to WWI Sappers in Australia

Our beautiful bridge is now installed as a monument to our forebears of WWI in ANZAC Park, Toowong. This Association can pride itself in providing the biggest monument to that era of Sappers in our 120 year history. This will be a landmark forever. The team that brought this project together spent hundreds (perhaps thousands) of hours of hard work until we pushed through a number of bitter reverses and got the job done. I am so proud to have been associated with such a fantastic crew of my fellow engineers in this project.

The reunion weekend 10 to 13 November 2022 started as a bridge dedication and then morphed into a reunion. We asked our attendees to subsidise the costs by helping pay for two meet and greets and a farewell venue, a bridge dedication, a reception, a commemoration service and a dinner. The cost for all this worked out at \$200 per head and the members who put their hand in their pocket and came to Toowong to witness our work are to be heartily congratulated. The committee divided the four major events into the \$200 and it works out that all members who paid, contributed \$50 per head to each event. The Board (aka Committee) thanks every one of you for helping to subsidise the cost of this weekend..

Engineer Monument to WWI Sappers in France

As a consequence of COVID-19, our memorial in Amiens France has been rescheduled for 24 April 2024. All the arrangements as previously advised for the construction and dedication of it remain the same except moved forward to 2024. The Board will advise members of finer details when they are confirmed with the Amiens City Council during 2023.

The reason behind nominating 24 April 2024 (not 25 April) is because all the official Australian entities involved in ANZAC Day events are way too busy to engage with our bridge on that day. But, they are available on the day prior to ANZAC Day 2024.

George Hulse will continue in his role as the Association Project Officer for the Amiens bridge. Our reunion at the bridge opening on 24 April 2024 will be a simple affair. Just booking a venue that has a bar, food servery and tables. We book a table and our members order and pay for food and beverages. No registration or lanyards etc.

Digitisation of the RAE Museum Data

Every member of the 1 FD SQN GP Association warmly welcomes Brigadier Michael Say DSC as our Patron. Brigadier Say served in 1 FD SQN and commanded 1CER during his career. He is concurrently the RAE Head of Corps and the Commander 7th Combat Brigade based in Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera. His bio and photograph are on the Association website.

Meritorious Unit Citation for 1 FD SQN

1 FD SQN, including its iterations as 1 FD COY (and for a brief period 28 FD COY), is the most battle-hardened unit in the RAE. It has an awesome military history with an inescapable link to major battles spanning more than 105 years. 1 FD SQN is deserving of recognition of its historical significance in the ADF particularly during both World Wars, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq.

A writing team comprising Major Matthew Scot, Major Derek Smith OAM, Sapper Jim Weston, Sapper Robin Farrell and myself finished the submission and posted it to the Directorate of Honours and Awards in Canberra. The Directorate did not support our submission and passed it on to the Chief of Army who also did not support our submission. We expected that. We approached the then Deputy Minister for Defence, Mr Andrew Hastie, to ask the Minister to direct the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals tribunal to hold a public hearing into this matter.

He did not do that. The submission is now in the Minister for Defence Personnel's office awaiting further consideration. We wait and see.

More to follow.

Follow The Sapper Newsletter

The Association continues to produce two editions of this newsletter per year with the next one coming out close to Christmas this year.

I thank all those who contribute to this newsletter's success, particularly Derek Smith OAM who is the person who cobbles the project together and works in concert with Tony Andrews and other members of the Board to keep this publication going.

Visit to 1 CER 25/26 February 2022

Two representatives of this Association visited the sappers of 1 FD SQN for presentations in February this year.

Conclusion

As your outgoing President I thank everyone who helped me along my journey. It has been a delight to work in a role that I truly love. My interaction with the committee members, particularly the treasurer and the secretary have been fun and at times entertaining. I wish the Association every success going forward and would be delighted to see more members join our ranks who are among those of the post-Vietnam War era.

I hand over to Major Jamie Twidale who has a personal passion for this Association and wish him every success going forward.



Follow the Sapper
George Hulse OAM
President

12th November 2022

Vale - 1 FD SQN GP RAE members:

The following list is of our brothers who have marched out since our last newsletter.

SPR Russell Bayden MACKIE 21 EST 1970 55 EWPS 1970/71 Passed away 24 July 2022

Our deepest sympathies to all those families of those we have lost.



VETERAN'S RETREATS

Australia has some great places out in the bush where veterans and friends can escape the frantic pace of urban living. One well known example is Pandanus Park up in Far North Queensland. The Retreat covered below is definitely worth a visit.

It is known as Adavale Veterans Retreat. The information was provided by Trevor Shelley. They have a web site at www.adavaleveteransretreat.org. On the "About Us" section of the web site we are informed of the following. Trevor kindly sent these two images. Looks like another top place to catch your breath.

Adavale Veterans Retreat was originally conceived by a small group of Veterans who purchased an acre plot of land with an old, dilapidated, derelict, corrugated iron hut on it, which had been built nearly 100 years ago, to use as an escape for themselves.



With the demise of Alaric Homestead as a retreat they decided to donate the land to the charity that had been established.

The now ACNC registered charity is called ADAVALE VETERANS RETREAT and is fully run by unpaid volunteers and is currently manned from 1st March to 1st December every year closing only for the extreme summer months.

Units have a septic system plus hot and cold water. Solar power with lithium batteries (to reduce power costs) plus a storage donga to keep all equipment etc under cover.

The original Hut is being used as a kitchen/dining area with plans made to install another kitchens/dining donga, and continue restoring the Hut to be used as a gathering place and display area for memorabilia.

The current volunteer caretakers carry out planned work projects, so there is an appeal for anyone who can give us some of their valuable time to come out and help us with the restoration, work projects and maintenance.

Volunteering at Adavale Veterans Retreat is a fantastic way to support our ex-service community.

We are looking for volunteers to step up for *Management and Regular Committee Positions*, as well as a wide range of volunteering opportunities that will complement the skills and experience you bring, from working in *Fundraising, Administration, Maintenance and Veteran Support*.



All donations are greatly appreciated to help with ongoing projects and running costs.

Adavale Veterans Retreat Inc is a ACNC Registered Charity - All donations are tax deductible.

A BIT ABOUT PLANT OPERATORS

Some time ago I was passed items from Cul Hart that could be used in our FTS. Cul served in 1 FD SQN from May 1966 to June 1967. It will be clear that Cul was a Plantie. Cul had been chatting to another plantie and to many, a well known character in RAE – Dennis Ayoub (aka Arab). Dennis served in 3 Field Troop under Sandy MacGregor in 1965/66. I attended the 1975 Admin and Tech Officers Course with Dennis. He is sadly no longer with us but he had been communicating with Cul to get some stories for a book he was writing titled 'Just Dozin.' I am not sure if it was ever published but one bit that Cul sent to me is worth sharing. Most who knew Arab, knew him to be a real wag. If there was mischief to be had, Arab was sure to be there. Dennis opens with these words – "Field Engineers without planties would still be in the field". – He goes on to write:

"There are very few contemporary books about Sappers, let alone Field Engineers (FE's) and to my knowledge there are no books at all about Plant Operators (Planties). Without being unkind, it is perfectly understandable that there are so few books about FE's because it is well known that FE's have a great deal of difficulty writing anything at all, let alone researching, recalling and recording past events. On the other hand of course, it is understandable that there are no books about planties because they are well known for their modesty regarding their achievements and are normally too busy at their normal day to day work to spend time writing books. Additionally, because of their inherently sensitive nature they are generally very reluctant to commit their deeds and exploits to paper knowing that their brother Sappers, the FE's, have little if anything to record that could well be embarrassed."

Most old planties know most of the other old planties, but very few old planties know all of the old planties. However over the years they have heard enough about those that they don't know to feel that they indeed do know them, or to acknowledge that at least they are fellow planties . . .

So Cul, being one of those 'old planties' gave Dennis some stories. Cul wrote back to Dennis:

"Vietnam 66/67. In between Op's I worked the 966B and also the D4. The 966B had a mind of its own. When I was working it, it never got passed the NZ mob. They would always flag us down and want more gun pits dug. The 966B was forever drunk when we left their area. To this day I still don't know how we got back to our own lines each night.

I was pushing garbage around on the dozer, miles away thinking of the missus back home when out of the corner of my eye, noticed a lot of movement. Focussing as quickly as possible saw there was a mob of monkeys racing towards me, screeching and throwing their arms around. This frightened the shit out of me so I downed the tools, took off yelling and screaming myself. Next thing they were all around me, and we were all doing the same thing, yelling, screaming, throwing our arms around and heading in the same direction.

It finished as quickly as it started, with the monkeys heading off into the jungle and me standing there like a stale bottle of beer. If anyone had seen this happen they would have thought I was 'King of the bloody apes.' So with my head down and kicking the ground in front of me, headed back to the dozer and work."

Cul, thanks for sharing these yarns. And thanks to our late mate Dennis. His 'tongue in cheek' piece on the planties and FE's is a cracker. RIP Dennis.

1 FIELD SQUADRON GROUP

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS
QUEENSLAND INCORPORATED

(Including 1 Field Squadron Workshops and 21 Engineer Support Troop)

'NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION'

Mrs _____
Surname Ms _____ First Names _____
(Family Name) Mr _____ (Given Names)

Date of Birth _____ Wife/Partners Name _____
(Confidential if ticked) (Confidential if ticked)

Residential Address _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Private Phone () _____ Email _____ @ _____
(Confidential if ticked) (Confidential if ticked)

Veteren's Service Details or other appropriate information. (If possible)

Name _____ Service No. _____

Period of Service: From ____/____/____ To ____/____/____ Active Service: Yes NO

Unit/Units _____ Which Country Served for? Australia or Other _____

Which duties? (F.E, Plant, Mine Clearing, etc.) _____

Membership Year is 1st July to 30th June in each year. Fees are accepted until 30th September, in accordance with the Association's Constitution. Unfinancial members will not be able to vote at the Annual General Meeting.

New Member Entrance Fee \$ 10.00 (Once Only - Inclusive of Association Badge.) *Lost Badge \$5.00 each
Annual Subscription Renewal \$ 30.00 (Includes Newsletters)
TOTAL \$ 40.00

MEMBERS SIGNATURE _____ Date ____/____/____



MEMBERSHIP 'RENEWAL / UP-DATE' FORM

\$30.00 per year. (1st July to 30th June)

Name _____

Address _____

STATE _____ POSTCODE _____

Private Phone () _____ Email _____ @ _____

Wife/Partners Name _____
(Confidential if ticked)

EXTRA or 'LOST' Membership Lapel Pins Required, please tick - How many? \$5.00 each P&H included.

MEMBERS SIGNATURE _____ Date ____/____/____

Return application with Cheque/ Postal Order to PO Box 236 Raymond Terrace NSW 2324 or
Direct Deposit to Heritage Bank BSB 638-070 Account 10045570 with your details.

Ensure you mark it, 'Membership' and then your 'Surname' or 'Regimental Number' for identification.

IF YOU USE THE DIRECT DEPOSIT FACILITY PLEASE FORWARD THIS FORM AS WELL. NO CASH IN MAIL PLEASE.

AMIENS 2024

We have included below the itinerary that was intended for the Amiens event in 2020. As we all know COVID threw a spanner in that plan. However there will be an Amiens Bridge of Friendship tour planned for April 2024. Please watch future editions for more details.

We must stress, the itinerary below is not current but we are including it so readers can get a feel for what will occur in 2024.

Please give this some serious consideration. If the ANZAC Park/Reunion 2022 was a cracker, just wait for this event. You need to be there.

**Sappers - 1st Field Squadron Group****Western Front Battlefield Tour August 2020****Day 1. Friday - 07 August 2020**

For those members travelling on our group flights, upon arrival into Paris Charles de Gaulle you will be greeted by your Tour Director and expert battlefield guide and together, we travel to the World War One Somme battlefields and the city of Amiens. Located on the Somme River and overshadowed by the largest UNESCO world Heritage listed Cathedral in France, Amiens will be our home for the next few nights. Following check in and freshen up, the remainder of the day is free for you to rest or explore the city.

Overnight: The Campanile Hotel, Amiens

Day 2. Saturday - 08 August 2020

Today marks a very special day as we honor the Battle of Amiens and attend a special re-dedication of the Amiens Botanical Gardens and unveil The Memorial Bridge to all Australian Engineer units. Following the service there will be free time in Amiens, perhaps visit the historic Notre-Dame d'Amiens cathedral or the "House with the Tower", where Jules Verne lived from 1882 to 1900. Alternatively you may like to relax and dine at one of the many wonderful restaurants located on the picturesque canal waterfront.

Overnight: The Campanile Hotel, Amiens Meals: B

Day 3. Sunday - 09 August 2020

This morning we commence our Western Front touring of the Somme battlefields, beginning at the famous battleground of Hamel, under Sir John Monash, and the breaking of the Hindenburg Line. We go to the Australian Corps Memorial at Le Hamel, the Richthofen ('The Red Baron') crash site, and the 3rd Australian Division Memorial, before a visit to the Australian National Memorial at Villers Bretonneux, including a tour of the newly opened Sir John Monash Centre. We'll then stop for lunch in nearby Albert (own arrangements) and then make our way to Pozieres and Mouquet Farm, where the AIF suffered 23,000 casualties in several short weeks. We'll see the poignant Windmill Memorial with its chilling acknowledgement: Australian troops ... fell more thickly on this ridge than on any other battlefield of the war, the 1st Australian Division Memorial, and the remains of the "Gibraltar" blockhouse.

Other significant sites we will also visit are the Lochnagar mine crater at La Boisselle, Tommy's Museum and Thiepval, where the great British Memorial to the Missing of the Somme stands. We return to Amiens late afternoon.

Overnight: The Campanile Hotel, Amiens Meals: B

Day 4. Monday - 10 August 2020

Following breakfast we make our way to Lamotte – Warfusee, the start line for 'the Advance to Victory'. Making our way through Harbonnieres and Chipilly to Mont St Quentin, we stop at the famous 2nd Australian Division Memorial. Our lunch stop today will be in Peronne (own arrangements). This major town was liberated by Australians on 1 September 1918. We then proceed on to the Hindenburg Line to view the Bellicourt tunnel, the 4th Australian Division Memorial and, finally, Montbrechain where the Australians fought their last infantry action of the war.

Overnight: The Campanile Hotel, Amiens Meals: B

Day 5. Tuesday – 11 August 2020

Today we begin at the battlefields of Bullecourt, where the AIF suffered 10,000 casualties in April/May 1917. We visit the Jean and Denise Letaille War Museum and inspect the local memorials including the Bullecourt "Digger" and the Slouch Hat Memorial. We then leave the Somme region heading for Flanders and the ancient town of Ypres. On the way we make an important stop at Fromelles to see where the Australians fought the disastrous action on 19/20 July 1916. We visit the old battlefield and go to the "Cobbers" Memorial, VC Corner and the new Pheasant Wood Cemetery. We stop for Lunch (own arrangements) in Armentieres and then as we proceed to Ieper (Ypres, as it was known during the war), we travel via the Messines battlefield. Later upon arrival into Ieper, after settling in and freshening up, together we will attend the Last Post Ceremony at the nearby Menin Gate Memorial during which we will participate in the wreath laying. The remainder of the evening is free to explore our new surroundings.

Overnight: Novotel Centrum, Ieper Meals: B

Day 6. Wednesday – 12 August 2020

Today we concentrate on the Australian experiences in the Third Battle of Ypres where the AIF suffered over 38,000 casualties in eight weeks – its greatest losses of the war. We explore the battlefields at Hill 60, travel down the Menin Road to Polygon Wood, where the 5th Australian Division Memorial stands, and visit the Passchendaele Memorial Museum with its reconstructed trenches and dugouts and interesting collections from the battles of 1917 followed by time for lunch (own arrangements). Afterwards, we visit the enormous Tyne Cot Cemetery which contains over 11,000 burials including two Australian VC recipients. Then we'll visit the huge German war cemetery at Langemarke before returning to Ieper. This evening is free for you to enjoy a final Belgian beer or waffle in the lovely summer atmosphere of the town square.

Overnight: Novotel Centrum, Ieper Meals: B

Day 7. Thursday – 13 August 2020

This morning after check out, we visit the picturesque medieval city of Bruges, with its wonderful art, architecture, canals, chocolate and lace shops, perhaps enjoy lunch (own arrangements) or ice-cream and waffles in one of the many little cafes, or a scenic boat cruise along the canals. We then conclude our tour of the battlefields returning to Paris early evening. Upon checking in to the hotel, the evening is free to explore the cities many wonderful cafes & restaurants.

Overnight: Crowne Plaza Paris - Republique, Paris Meals: B

Day 8. Friday – 14 August 2020

Today is a Free Day in Paris for you enjoy 'the City of Light'. Perhaps Visit the famous sites of this beautiful city such as the Champs Elysees, the Arc de Triomphe, the Louvre (the largest art gallery in the world) and the famous Eiffel Tower.

Overnight: Crowne Plaza Paris - Republique, Paris Meals: B

*Itinerary subject to change due to prevailing circumstances.

Day 9. Saturday – 15 August 2020

The tour comes to an end following breakfast and for those tour members departing to Charles de Gaulle for the group flight, a transfer to the airport is provided (time to be confirmed by your Tour Director)

Meals: B

The tour proposed cost is \$3,345.00 per person, twin share (land only).

Tour Cost Includes:

- Accommodation (Please note hotels are subject to availability at the time of confirmation, and may vary due to final numbers).
- Meals as listed.
- Services of an Expert Australian Battlefield Guide for the full duration or your tour.
- Services of a Tour Director & Driver for the full duration or your tour.
- All Sightseeing as listed.
- Fully air conditioned coach transportation.
- Museum & Site entry Fees as listed.
- Tipping.



A BLAST FROM THE PAST

Over the few days of our 2022 Reunion it was great to meet many of our current serving members of RAE. There is no doubt that our Corps and indeed our ADF are in good hands. As your Editor, I was keen to hear the points of view of today's young soldiers. It caused me to reflect on words published in the very last edition of our Vietnam newsletter – The Nui Dat News, dated 19th October 1971. Here is an extract of what our OC at the time, Major Phil Kudnig (dec) had to say.

In the main you are young men. We hear a lot of criticism of today's young men – that they are irresponsible, that they are permissive and that they have not developed that grit and determination characteristic of their fathers and grandfathers. I think the truth lies closer to the fact that they are presented with a bewildering variety of opportunities in every conceivable area of endeavour and that, true to human nature, they feel they must sample each variety before making a final selection. The selection was easier for their fathers and grandfathers as the choices were fewer. Moreover, the recent dramatic changes in technology have necessarily re-modelled some of those personal characteristics considered so important by previous generations.

Your performance while I have commanded 1 Fd Sqn Gp has but confirmed a strong belief of mine – that Australia's young people are as able or more able than their fathers and grandfathers in all those activities important in a society. What you must have however, is guidance to make that final selection of opportunities and it is the essential responsibility of those a little older than you to give you this guidance with honesty, courage and lack of prejudice.

Such words are in my view, as applicable today as they were in 1971. Our young ADF members will take us forward with amazing new technology and techniques that are so alien to us, but we can share with them the lessons we have learnt over our years and pass along the wisdom of our era.

UBIQUE – Editor FTS.

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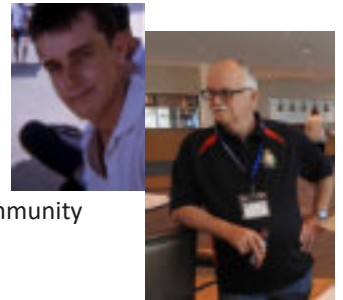
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Pictured is a young version of Bob in Vietnam in about 1969 and then a slightly older Bob at our 2019 reunion.



STOP PRESS:

What a great achievement. Well known member Robert Ihlein has been named as the recipient of the prestigious Brigadier C.C. Foot award for 2023 for his outstanding work with the Facebook group RAE Overwatch. Bob has done a super job with his initiative of RAE Overwatch. We believe he has provided extraordinary support to many veterans including some of our Afghanistan veterans through this platform. His Group provides an outlet for the Sapper community to stay in touch with others and share their issues in a like-minded atmosphere. Our sincere congratulations to Bob.



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