



Australian Army Apprentices Association

Skills creation - the wealth of a Nation



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The Association

- ✧ Incorporated* on 12th Apr 2006
- ✧ Formed on 22nd Jul 2006
- ✧ For the purpose of fostering the interests of all Australian Army Apprentices
- ✧ Membership is open to all Australian Army Apprentices
- ✧ Others may be admitted as Associates.

* ACT Incorporation No A04404





Association objectives



- ✧ Enable constant communication between members to promote the interest of members through the Association
- ✧ Promote the welfare of members and partners
- ✧ Promote the maintenance of:
 - ✧ the Army Apprentices Memorial at Bandiana
 - ✧ the Marine Gates and plaques, Mace and Citation Ovals and the Parade Ground at Balcombe
 - ✧ the Apprentice Active Service Memorial and the intake trees at Bonegilla
 - ✧ the Apprentice Governor General's Banner
 - ✧ the Apprentices School collection at the Army Museum at Bandiana
 - ✧ the products of the SPAASSM project
- ✧ Create a record of the members' history, and that of the Schools
- ✧ Support any related museum and relics
- ✧ Recognise the contribution of Army Apprentices to Australia and the Army.



Memorial “Marine” Gates

- ✧ The Gates were erected by the Australian Army and dedicated on **24th Nov 1954** to commemorate the contribution by the 1st Division USMC in WWII to the defence of Australia and to demonstrate appreciation of the USMC for the friendship and cordial hospitality extended to the officers and men of the 1st Div USMC by the people of the area. The Gates and nearby Mace Oval and carpark also mark the location of the Balcombe Army Camp, a significant historical landmark in the Mornington/Mount Martha area
- ✧ **2013** marked the 71st anniversary of the 1st Div’s repatriation to Balcombe, after its successful Guadalcanal campaign. On **4th May 2013**, the 71st anniversary of the start of the Battle of the Coral Sea, a commemoration was held to unveil and dedicate new plaques and story boards that tell the history of the major units that were the 20th century tenants of Balcombe Barracks.



Photo by Jeff Heron



Mace Oval and carpark

In **2000**, the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council recommended that: *“Council acknowledges the historical and heritage importance of the Balcombe Memorial Gates, carpark (Parade Ground) and adjoining playing field (Mace Oval) at the entrance to the former Balcombe Army Camp at Mount Martha and the need for these ... to be retained at their current site in perpetuity.”*





Project SPAASSM

- ✧ Project SPAASSM (Special Project for Arrmy Apprentices School Special Material) started after the discovery, at the Army Museum at Bandiana, of a vast quantity of historical material relating to the Army Apprentices Schools
- ✧ The material was wasting away in a warehouse, not available for viewing. Items include **7,300 photos**, **750 x 35 mm slides**, negatives, **30 video tapes**, a movie film, and **10,000 pages** of various journals, graduation booklets, standing orders, handbooks and histories
- ✧ The material, in **about 20 boxes**, was relocated to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and, with the AWM's support, has been digitised
- ✧ The longer-term objective is to make the material publicly available via the Web and to enhance the catalogue records
- ✧ A DVD containing some of the material may now be purchased from the merchandising page on the AAAA Website.



Important dates



- ❖ **2nd Aug 1948**: Army Apprentice Scheme commenced; School raised at Balcombe
- ❖ **Dec 1951**: first graduation
- ❖ **24th Nov 1954**: Memorial Gates at Balcombe dedicated
- ❖ **16th Jan 1959**: first Apprentice died on operations
- ❖ **21st Feb 1967**: first Apprentice killed in action
- ❖ **2nd Aug 1969**: AAS granted Freedom of the Town of Mornington
- ❖ **30th Aug 1969**: Governor-General's Banner presented
- ❖ **Jan 1983**: AAS moved to Bonegilla
- ❖ **25th Sep 1983**: AAS officially opened at Bonegilla
- ❖ **Jan 1984**: first female Apprentices commenced at AAS
- ❖ **2nd Aug 1986**: AAS granted Freedom of the City of Albury
- ❖ **1st Jan 1991**: AAS renamed Army College of TAFE
- ❖ **8th Apr 1995**: Scheme ceased; Banner layed up in the Chapel of Saint Peter, Bonegilla
- ❖ **1996**: Army Logistic Training Centre (ALTC) formed, including Bandiana and Bonegilla
- ❖ **12th Apr 2006**: Australian Army Apprentices Association incorporated
- ❖ **22nd Jul 2006**: Association inaugural meeting
- ❖ **24th-26th Oct 2008**: 60th Anniversary and first national reunion in Albury/Wodonga
- ❖ **26th Oct 2008**: Australian Army Apprentices Memorial dedication at Bandiana
- ❖ **4th May 2013**: rededication of Balcombe "Marine" Gates, Mace Oval and carpark
- ❖ **23rd-25th Oct 2015**: reunion to Commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Closure of the Australian Army Apprentice Scheme in Albury/Wodonga.





The Apprentice Governor-General's Banner

- ✧ From the days of early man, some sort of insignia has been employed to distinguish families, tribes and nations. The first military organisation to adopt a unit device was the Roman Army, the units of which carried a bronze or silver eagle mounted on a staff. The first traces of the Banner were found in the British forces at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 which were in the form of Bayeux tapestry.
- ✧ Before being presented, the Banner is dedicated at a religious ceremony on parade when God's blessing is asked. This dates back to the Battle of the Standard in **1138** when Yeomen of Yorkshire fighting the Scots, took with them, the consecrated banner of St Peter of York, St John of Beverley and St Wilfred of Ripon. They fought so fiercely to save these banners that they defeated heavy odds.
- ✧ Banners embody the history, spirit and tradition of the unit to which they belong. They are highly valued, carefully guarded and treated with great respect.
- ✧ The Governor-General's Banner was presented to the Army Apprentices School by His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Paul Hasluck G.C.M.G., K.StJ. on **30th Aug 1969**. The Banner pays compliments to Her Majesty and the Governor-General only. On **8th Apr 1995**, the Australian Army Apprentice Scheme ceased and the Banner was layed up in the Chapel of Saint Peter, Bonegilla, Victoria.



The obverse of the Banner depicts the Standard of the Governor-General of Australia and is a symbol of loyalty to the throne.



The reverse depicts the badge of the Army Apprentices School.

Army Apprentices fast stats *(as at 27th May 2014)*



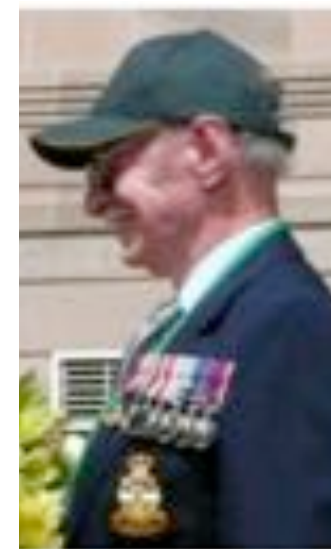
- ✧ **9,297** young men and **115** young women enlisted as Apprentices
- ✧ **1,782** did not graduate (**49** females), including **24** Apprentices who died whilst at AAS
- ✧ **7,515** Apprentices graduated into the following trades: Architectural Draftsman - 12, Blacksmith - 61, Bricklayer - 52, Carpenter and Joiner - 781 (1 female), Clerk - 120, Electrical Fitter - 335, Electrical Mechanic - 365, Electrician - 88, Fitter & Turner - 1213 (5 females), Musician - 385, Plumber - 287, Radio Mechanic/Electronic Tradesman - 1584 (32 females), Vehicle Mech - 2224 (28 females), Welder - 8
- ✧ **2,563** have seen operational service, warlike and non-warlike, including multiple operations, and including 145 non-graduates, partaking in 205 operations: Afghanistan - 288, Balkans - 8, Borneo - 198, Bougainville - 255, Cambodia - 138, Iraq - 227, Ethiopia - 2, Kashmir - 3, Korea - 34, Malaya - 271, Middle East - 18, Mozambique - 3, Namibia - 131, Pakistan - 7, Rhodesia - 5, Rwanda - 40, Sinai - 29, Solomon Islands - 94, Somalia - 43, Sudan - 2, Thailand - 10, Thai/Malay Border - 30, Timor - 678, Vietnam - 1125 (71 non-graduates), Western Sahara - 12
- ✧ **767** Apprentices have been commissioned (including 34 non-graduates): LTGEN - 1, BRIG - 5, COL - 21, LTCOL - 115, padre - 6; 3 female officers: MAJ - 1, CAPT - 2
- ✧ **74** Apprentices have qualified to wear the SAS beret
- ✧ Today, **502** Apprentices remain in uniform – 317 ARA and 185 ARES.

Statistics supplied by Wally Rotow 18th Intake, Central Army Records Office

“The first Army Apprentice” (LTCOL Frederick William Millar RIP)



- ✧ Prior to WWII, except for light repairs to military vehicles and some signals equipment, repairs were carried out by Ordnance Corps Workshops. In **1939**, Army expanded these workshops and adopted the British Army “Boy Tradesmen” scheme, with Tasmania selected for a trial. Assessment of applicants comprised practical engineering and general knowledge tests. Fred Millar was selected and enlisted as an “Army Apprentice”, to Anglesea Barracks wksp, Hobart, on **10th Jul 1939**, aged 16.
- ✧ From **1939-45**, having transferred to the AIF and then the PMF, Fred had postings to 10 MT Wksp; 9 Watercraft Wksp, Milne Bay and Tas Comd Wksp. In **1950**, he attended courses in UK, was posted to 7 Armd Div, Germany and then partook in atomic tests on Monte Bello Islands.
- ✧ In **1953** Fred was commissioned as a LT and posted in succession to RTC Ingleburn, PI Comd 18 National Svc Bn, 2IC Tas Comd Wksp, OC Area Wksp, Seymour, 101 Inf Wksp, BEME 28 Bde British Ghurka Div, followed in **1960-62** as OC Eng Wing RTC, OC A Coy/Veh Wing AAS, DADEME Central Comd, and OC Central Comd Workshop. He invented the Millar Bridge for vehicles to cross obstacles using steel wire ropes – adopted by the Australian and British Armies and the Geological Svy Dept in Guadalcanal to replace bridges destroyed in WWII.
- ✧ In **1969**, he retired as a LTCOL, remaining in the CMF for two years. As a civilian, Fred was a stock broker, merchant banker, MD of two companies, Vic/Tas service manager for Mazda Aust, owner/manager of a take-away food business and management consultant. He held patents for water purification technologies.
- ✧ Fred was indeed a unique character and a strong and loyal supporter of the Association, being Honorary Trustee for five years. Sadly, Fred passed away on **26th Feb 2014**. His funeral service was in Frankston on **3rd Mar 2014**.



*Fred at Wreath Laying
Ceremony Apprentices
Together 2011, Canberra
Photo by Jeff Heron*



Association Constitution [\(Find it here\)](#)

- ✧ Drawn from the “Model Rules” in the ACT Associations Incorporation Regulation **1991**, its major parts are:
 - ✧ 1.1 Introduction: name, objectives and definitions
 - ✧ 1.2 Membership: qualifications, applications, classes, entitlements, cessation, resignation, fees, liabilities, and disciplining
 - ✧ 1.3 Committee: powers, composition and membership (annexes – term of office, election, sub-committees, duties, and management, Army Apprentices Memorial management)
 - ✧ 1.4 General meetings: (annex – AGMs, general meetings, notice, procedures, quorum, decisions, voting and proxies)
 - ✧ 1.5 Miscellaneous: funds, alteration of the Constitution, the common seal, the books, notices, property, winding-up and social media policy.

Memberships and Associates

- ❖ Ordinary Member
- ❖ Retired Member
- ❖ Life Member
- ❖ Associate

Association fees

- ❖ Joining fee – \$10 for all
- ❖ Annual subscription:
 - ❖ Member – \$25
 - ❖ Retired Member – \$20
 - ❖ Life Member – nil
 - ❖ Associate – \$20.





Contact details

- ✧ **Mailing address:** Australian Army Apprentices Association Inc.
GPO Box 2072, Canberra, ACT 2601
- ✧ **Committee:**
 - ✧ Refer to the Website
- ✧ **Website/Facebook:** www.austarmyapprentice.org
 - ✧ Members' area (contact Webmaster for login and password)
 - ✧ Notices & FORUM http://www.austarmyapprentice.org/forum_phpBB3/
 - ✧  <https://www.facebook.com/groups/172835502751919/>
- ✧ **Email addresses:**
 - ✧ president@austarmyapprentice.org
 - ✧ secretary@austarmyapprentice.org
 - ✧ membership@austarmyapprentice.org
 - ✧ webmaster@austarmyapprentice.org
 - ✧ merchandise@austarmyapprentice.org

Patron - MAJGEN Andrew Mathewson, AM



Head Helicopter Systems Division, Capability Acquisition & Sustainment Group

- ❖ **35th Intake Apprentice Fitter and Turner** – graduated in Dec **1981**
- ❖ Graduated from RMC Duntroon in **1987** into the Corps of RAEME
- ❖ In **1995**, completed a Master of Science (Defence Technology) at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham in the UK and subsequently worked in land weapons and armoured vehicle projects
- ❖ Graduated from the Army Command and Staff College in **1998** and served in Joint Logistics Command
- ❖ On exchange to HQ Land Command in Salisbury, UK, deployed to Kosovo with the 7th Armoured Brigade in 2001, then to Bosnia with the Multinational Division HQ at Banja Luka in **2002**
- ❖ On promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in **2003**, undertook the role of Acquisition Project Manager, Project AIR87, procuring the Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter
- ❖ After a year in Army HQ, returned to the UK in a military attaché role as Assistant Army Adviser at the Australian High Commission, London
- ❖ In **Jan 2008**, promoted to Colonel as Program Director AIR9000, Multi Role Helicopter
- ❖ On **1st Nov 2010**, promoted to Brigadier as Director General Army Aviation Systems, responsible for acquisition and support to Army's helicopter and unmanned aerial systems fleets
- ❖ In **Nov 2012**, appointed Head of Corps, RAEME
- ❖ On **26th Jan 2015**, appointed Member of the Order of Australia
- ❖ In **Oct 2015**, promoted to Major General as Head Helicopter Systems Division
- ❖ Andrew's other qualifications include Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering (1st Class Honours), Master of Business Administration (Technology Management) and Master of Defence Studies.





Services and other activities

- ✧ Helping with job opportunities for retiring and retired apprentices
- ✧ Encouragement and assistance with reunions, and regional and national functions
- ✧ Providing public liability insurance for Association-sponsored functions
- ✧ Welfare, including:
 - ✧ Supplementing advice available to members on welfare and other support from Commonwealth and State Government agencies
 - ✧ Liaison with other service bodies (eg RSL, VVF, VVAA, and TPIA)
 - ✧ Organising welfare training for Regional Representatives
 - ✧ Supported by Regional Representatives, and on advice of the death, hospitalisation, sickness or otherwise of members, ensuring that the NOK is supported where required
 - ✧ Approving entries to the Vale page on the Association Website.



Merchandise – now available

✧ Badged items:

- ✧ Association tie - \$25*
- ✧ Lapel badge (*free with membership*) - \$10*
- ✧ Car sticker (*free with membership*) - \$5*
- ✧ Plaque - \$45*
- ✧ Baseball cap - \$12.50*
- ✧ AAS flag (*School badge*) - \$175*
- ✧ Key ring (*original badge*) - \$5*

✧ DVDs:

- ✧ 60th Anniversary **2008** - \$10*
- ✧ Balcombe Commemoration **2013** - \$15*
- ✧ SPAASSM collection - \$25*.



For order form, go to: <http://www.austarmyapprentice.org/merchandise.html>

** Add postage and handling to prices above.*



Army Apprentices Memorial

- ✧ Dedicated at Bandiana on **26th Oct 2008** during the 60th Anniversary of the Army Apprentice Scheme, the Memorial provides a place for:
 - ✧ ceremonies, reunions and services
 - ✧ Memorial plaques on the wing walls, personal engraved pavers and plaques on the pavement and pit walls and ashes to be scattered in the Memorial garden
 - ✧ quiet meditation
- ✧ Dedicated to the nearly 8000 youths who trained at the Army Apprentices Schools from **1948** to **1995**, and who used the skills and values instilled in them to ensure the continuing high standard of technical efficiency of the Army, the Memorial particularly recognises those Apprentices who paid the supreme sacrifice whilst serving in Australia and overseas.



Photo by Frank Poole, Nov 2014

Today's Army Apprentices

- ✧ Today, four modern “Army Apprentices schools” provide trade training equivalent to the original Army Apprentices Schools:
 - ✧ The School of Military Engineering, in Holsworthy NSW, trains soldiers for the combat force, including expedient military engineering, command and control of engineer operations, and application of geospatial knowledge and engineering fundamentals and construction techniques
 - ✧ The Defence Force School of Signals, at eight Defence bases around Australia, trains and develops electronic warfare and information communications technology professionals for the ADF and the Chief Information Officer and Intelligence and Security Groups in support of land, maritime and aerospace manoeuvre
 - ✧ The Army Logistic Training Centre, Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, at Bandiana and Bonegilla, provides trade training and apprenticeships for Aircraft Life Support and Structural Fitters, Aircraft and Avionics Technicians, Carpenters, Electricians, Electronics Technicians, Fitters Armament, Metalsmiths, Plumbers, Electrical and Telecommunications Technicians, and Vehicle Mechanics
 - ✧ The Defence Force School of Music delivers professional music training for ADF bands and musicians from overseas defence forces and Australian emergency services and police organisations and is a nationally and internationally recognised and accredited training organisation.

