



The Apprentice About

Newsletter for the Australian Army Apprentices Association Inc

Volume 2, Issue 5

February 2015

From the President

Firstly, our hearty congratulations to our Patron, Brigadier Andrew Mathewson, AM on his appointment this Australia Day as a Member of the Order of Australia for exceptional service in delivering aviation capability as the Project Director, Multi-Role Helicopter and Director General, Army Aviation Systems.

2015 brings about a lot of historical anniversaries: Gallipoli and the ANZAC beginnings, plus my own (20th Intake) 50th anniversary of joining the military at Balcombe, to name but two.

As I look forward into this exciting year, I am concerned that we, as Apprentices, need to do more to keep our rich heritage alive and not neglected. Our training offered us a rich experience and one which many took to heart as long term soldiers, whilst others returned to civilian life to grow their futures in other fields. I hope every one of us is proud of his or her contribution to the military and to society.

My message to you is one of growth; as you are aware, many of our early Intake Apprentices are reaching or have reached the end of their life spans, which means our newer (read Bonegilla) Apprentices are needed to step up and take on the reins of our Association.

Which brings me to tell you that we recently had the pleasure of appointing our new Events Manager, Otto Aberle to fill the big shoes left by Frank Maloney's resignation, reported in the last TAA. (contd p2)

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AUSTRALIAN ARMY APPRENTICES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

ACT Incorporation No A04404
GPO Box 2072, CANBERRA, ACT 2601

www.austarmyapprentice.org



Patron: Brigadier Andrew Mathewson, AM

Thanks Wally Rotow

President Barry Minster (right) presenting Wally Rotow (18th Radio Mech) with a Certificate of Appreciation for his many years of service as our historian at CARO.



RAEME Corps History Project

The RAEME Association (<http://www.raeme.org.au>) (via Ross Grant) reports on the progress of the Corps' new memoir, "With Skill and Fighting – Craftsmen of the Australian Army 1942-2014":

- "the book's layout work has been completed and BRIG Mathewson, Head of Corps RAEME, and I, are currently proof reading the final manuscript – cover to cover;
- the author, Max Carmichael, and I, will be visiting the publisher's office on 18 Nov 14 to discuss the final editing, as a result of that proof reading exercise, to correct statements of fact, syntax, punctuation and the layout of some photos and text; and
- I intend firming the final part of the schedule leading to distribution ... in the new year.

If you wish to place an order, please go to the "shop" and follow the prompts."

<http://www.raeme.org.au/index.php/shop>



From the President (contd)

Otto, a 21st Intake VM, spent 34 years in the Army, retiring as a LTCOL. He held several key command and staff appointments, principally associated with Army Aviation. After leaving the Army, Otto served in the APS at the Executive Officer level, associated with major Naval Aviation projects. He retired from paid employment three years ago but has continued with a Canberra-based organisation, where he has been the Treasurer for five years since moving to Canberra at the end of 2009. In 2013, Otto was intimately involved in organising that association's 75th anniversary celebrations, attended by people from all over Australia, so that experience will serve him well in his new role. Welcome to the Committee Otto. We wish you all the best and look forward to working with you.



In planning for the reunion this coming October, we are facing many issues (one less now thanks to Otto's appointment), but we will overcome them all and, for those who make the time and effort to attend Wodonga/Albury in October, I feel that they will be rewarded. We look forward to this event and hope to exceed our 2008 event, so make certain you put October 23rd to 25th into your diaries now.

I wish you all a successful 2015 and hope to see you getting involved.

Barry Minster (20th Radio Mech), President AAAA Inc
president@austarmyapprentice.org

AAAA Memorial

With the restriction on entry to Gaza Ridge Barracks at Bandiana, it has not been possible to visit either the Apprentice Memorial or the Apprentice displays at the Army Museum. Hopefully the concern about terrorism interference will be reviewed and normality returns.

Since the last Apprentice About, the dedication plaque on the RAE donated flagpole has been replaced and now better describes Apprentice involvement in the Corps.

Newsletter contributions

If you have any items of news or other suitable material for inclusion in [The Apprentice About](#), please contact a member of the Committee.

Plans to hold a memorial service for Fred Millar (first Apprentice and Trustee) and Jack Westernhagen (Life Member) have had to be abandoned as a result of the restricted access mentioned above. Remembrance Plaques for the two have now been mounted on the Memorial Walls and framed photos of the plaques will be sent to Mary Westernhagen and Linda Millar.

The process has started to produce a plaque recognising the contribution of ex-Apprentice staff at ALTC Bonegilla in fabricating the Memorial gates and of the RAEME Association in contributing the material. There is already a plaque but it was suggested, quite correctly, that it does not satisfactorily recognise this very significant contribution. A suggested appropriate form of words is with the Memorial Sub-committee for comment before seeking agreement from the Association Committee at the next meeting.

The photo of the Memorial below is the latest and will feature on the Association bereavement cards that will shortly be put to the Committee. Bob Ludlow has been asked to come up with some suitable lines for inclusion in the card.

Again, thank you for those members who include a donation for the memorial in their renewals, they are greatly appreciated.

Frank Poole (10th Architectural Draughtsman)
Chair, Memorial Sub-committee
memorial@austarmyapprentice.org



Help wanted – IT support

A volunteer is wanted for a short term IT project with the Association's Website. We need someone to act in an advisory/consultancy role to assist our Website development team. If you have experience with WordPress, Genesis Framework, CSS, MySQL and PHP, and would like to help, please contact the Webmaster at webmaster@austarmyapprentice.org.



Membership Matters (as at 25th January 2015)

Current membership status:

- Ordinary Members 219
- Retired Members 236
- Life Members 2
- Total 457

Outstanding renewals:

- Sep 12 21
- Mar 13 34
- Sep 13 23
- Mar 14 62
- Sep 14 39
- Total 179

This is a reminder to those who may be being hesitant in renewing membership that, without continued strong support of members, the committee will be restricted in pursuing those aims and goals that have set our Association aside from many others. Might you be one of those who may have overlooked the renewal reminders? Need confirmation of your status? Please contact me and I will happily follow up for you.

Gary Byard (21st VM), Membership Secretary
membership@austarmyapprentice.org

New Association Website

Over the next few weeks we will change over to our new Association Website. There will be a short period when the site is unavailable as we close down the old one and start up the new one. We hope that you will find the new site attractive and easy to use. All the old features are there and we plan to add new features over the coming months. We look forward to your feedback and apologise for any inconvenience during the changeover.

Ian Morris, Webmaster

webmaster@austarmyapprentice.org

Canberra Region Report

We held our quarterly Regional luncheon on 17th December as a Chinese Christmas lunch, complete with bon-bons, hats, and 10 lucky prizes. Food was excellent and so much that a number took home "doggy" bags. The lunch was attended by 16 Canberra Region Apprentices and two from Sydney. Apologies were received from a further 24. I still have problems contacting Apprentices in the Region and have only the Association membership list to obtain email addresses and phone numbers for those without email. Added to this are a number of Sydney members who come down and I extend the lunch notice down as far as Albury, southern NSW and the south coast. I have tried to contact RAN and RAAF Apprentices but have not had any luck.



All Apprentices are welcome to attend our lunches and you need only contact me so I can add you to my list. The next luncheon will be on **Monday 16th March 2015 (note date change)**, venue to be advised.

I have not been advised of any local hospitalisations for this period but, if any member becomes aware of an Apprentice in hospital or in need, please let me know. I wish all Apprentices and their loved ones the very best for 2015.

Frank Poole, Canberra Regional Representative

frank.poole@grapevine.com.au



The Governor-General's Medal



Thanks to Basil Giffard, 3rd Intake Vehicle Mechanic, here is a copy of one of his 1951 bronze sporting medals. Basil reported that the medals were first presented at the graduation parade of the 1st and 2nd Intakes. This graduation ceremony, held in December 1951, was the first major event held on the newly completed oval, later named Mace Oval, after WO2 Mick Mace, RAE who was responsible for its construction. [Here](#) is a Web link to a Frankston Weekly, 1st Apr 13 newspaper article on the Balcombe camp, featuring Mick.

Basil also reported that the 1st Intake graduation parade had been delayed for six months to allow the 1st Intake to complete their training; they had been seriously disadvantaged due to them being heavily involved in the building and formation of the AAS. Basil received two medals for his sporting achievements whilst at the School. The inscription in the image on the left reads: "ATHLETICS – AWARDED TO – JAVELIN Under 17 – B.G. GIFFARD – 1951". Basil's other medal was for Under 17, 120 (yard) hurdles. Thanks Basil.

Also, John (Jack) Gamble, 4th Intake Carpenter and Joiner (C&J) reported that his mate Kevin Williamson, 2nd Intake C&J received a trade medal and also the Governor General's Medal. Jack himself received a silver medal for building trades and a bronze leadership medal. John stated, "Ray Gillespie (4th Intake Plumber) clipped me for the GG'S Medal, so I was led to believe."

This other (gold) image on the left shows that the medals were still being presented in the 1990s when the School was the Army College of TAFE in Bonegilla, which, as we know, was renamed to that in 1991.

Association merchandise

The Association has the following items for sale:

Order form and contact details are on the Association Website: <http://www.austarmyapprentice.org>

- A clearance sale of DVDs from the "60th Anniversary 2008" and the "Balcombe Commemoration 2013" is now on. Get in quickly to secure your copies at these special prices before they are all sold.

• Association tie		\$25.00	(+\$7.50 P&H)
• Lapel badge		\$10.00	(+\$1.00 P&H)
• Car sticker		\$5.00	(+\$1.00 P&H)
• Plaque		\$45.00	(+\$10.00 P&H)
• Baseball cap		\$12.50	(+\$7.50 P&H)
• Key ring (old Association badge)		\$5.00	(+\$1.00 P&H)
• AAS flag (School badge)		\$175.00	(+\$9.50 P&H)
• 60th Anniversary (2008) DVD **PRICE REDUCED!**		\$10.00	(+\$7.50 P&H)
• Balcombe Commemoration (2013) DVD **PRICE REDUCED!**		\$15.00	(+\$7.50 P&H)
• SPAASSM Collection DVD		\$25.00	(+\$7.50 P&H)



SPAASSM Collection DVD



Most Balcombe inmates will remember this building, opened on 22nd February 1958. Who was sent there in their first week to buy a brush to paint the last post, or a “long weight”, or a “duff tart”? But what was its name? The sender of the first email I receive correctly identifying the name of the canteen, officially opened by the son of the George Cross and Military Cross winner after whom it was named, wins a copy of the SPAASSM DVD (Committee Members excluded).

It appears that the musicians pictured in the last Newsletter were not actually Apprentices as I stated, but were students of the Army School of Music. Thanks to Eric Andersen, 26th Musician.

MUR/73/259/SC

AUG 73

WE don't know the tune -- but Defence Minister Mr Barnard obviously appreciated the thought. He received the unusual farewell when he left the Army Apprentices School in S Comd after taking part in the school's 25th anniversary celebrations.



The last SPAASSM competition was really not that hard. But we still had no correct answers! **Come on! What's wrong with you guys?** The clues were: “Balcombe” and “1972-75”. The “deduction” was simple, 1973 minus 1948 = 25. Yes, it was the 25th Anniversary of the Army Apprentices School. Jeff Heron (21st Radio Mech), Website Forum Moderator moderator@austarmyapprentice.org

Upcoming and recent events

APPRENTICES REUNION - 23-25 OCT 2015 - by Otto Aberle, 21st VM, Events Manager

As previously advised, we are planning a Reunion in October in the Albury/Bandiana area. The broad outline is:

Friday 23rd October:

1500 – 2000 hrs. Registration and Meet and Greet function at the new Albury Arts Centre in Dean St, which is currently under construction. Finger food to be served 1700 – 1900 hrs. Inclement weather could be a problem here as we would be partially outdoors. The Albury Council Events Manager is keen for us to use this new facility as it will help showcase the facility. Cost is not yet available as the contractor has not yet been appointed.

Saturday 24th October:

1030 – 1130 hrs. A march in Albury following the same route used at the 2008 Reunion with speeches etc in the same location. Band to be organised. Medals and Association caps to be worn. Reviewing officer to be confirmed.

1300 – 1600 hrs. Visit Latchford Barracks to view trade wings at ASEME and Banner at the Chapel.

TBA pm hrs. Annual General Meeting (if required) and time available for individual intake groups' networking.

1830 – 2300 hrs. Sit-down dinner in the Auditorium at the Commercial Club, Dean St Albury, limited to 400 – first in, best dressed. Dinner cost not expected to exceed \$50 pp; drinks at Club prices to be purchased by individuals. Waiter service for both food and drinks. Participants would need to sign-in under normal Club rules and normal Club facilities available to participants as required. Guests for the dinner to be confirmed,

Sunday 25th October:

1030 – 1130 hrs. Memorial Service at the AAS Memorial, Gaza Ridge Barracks, Bandiana.

1130 – 1400 hrs. Final BBQ and refreshments in the BBQ area adjacent to the Museum. This will include admission to the Museum. Catering organisation to be confirmed and costed.

1400 hrs. Official conclusion of the Reunion.

Notes: All timings detailed above are subject to final confirmation. (contd p6)



Upcoming and recent events (contd)

October Reunion (contd). Friday and Saturday events are planned at venues within easy walking distance of suitable accommodation venues. Those choosing to use these accommodation venues should not need to use their cars on these days. Registrations should open late April/early May 2015. All members will receive separate notification for the Reunion once details have been finalised. Those receiving the Newsletter electronically will be requested to use an on-line registration system. Separate arrangements will be made for those receiving the Newsletter by mail. Full payment will be required concurrent with registration in order for it to be confirmed. Preferred method of payment will be EFT or direct deposit into the Association's bank account. Watch this space and the [Association Website and Forum](#) for more details as plans firm up. **There won't be much time for registrations so, when they become available, please respond quickly to make it easier for the organisers.**



20th Intake 50th Reunions: Elec Trades, 11th Feb 15; and Motor Mechs, 13th - 15th Feb 15

At left, past Patron Brig Dave Luhrs, CSC, (35th Carpenter & Joiner) receives a presentation of a miniature AAS flag in recognition of his service as Patron of the Association from 2011-2014 from President Barry Minster. This occurred during the 20th Intake, C Company, Electrical Trades 50 years since joining reunion, at Frankston RSL on Wednesday 11th February 2015.

The 20th Intake Motor Mechanics celebrated their 50th Reunion at Howlong, NSW from 13th-15th February 2015.

Kokoda Trek – ANZAC Day 2015

Reid Ossington, 49th VM is trekking Kokoda with other RAEME old boys (young at heart) from 17th – 26th April 2015, with ANZAC Day at Isurava Battlefield. Due to cancellations, limited spots may still be available (there were some in December 2014). If you are interested (and feeling lucky – Ed.), contact Kokoda Spirit for further details: Email: enquiries@kokodaspirit.com Web: www.kokodaspirit.com

10th Intake Reunion – Albury/Wodonga 21st to 23rd October 2015

21st - 1630 - 1900 Meet and Greet at Rydges Hotel; 22nd - 1000 - 1530 Coach tour of Albury area with lunch at a winery (not including the Army Museum); 22nd - 1900 - 2230 Dinner at a private room in the Commercial Club; 23rd - private time and Meet and Greet for the national Association event at the Army Museum Bandiana. A Skype hook-up to intake dinners/lunches to connect with tennies around Australia is being investigated by Barry Teal - more to come. Contact Frank Poole, 10th Architectural Draftsman, Frank.poole@grapevine.com.au

21st AAS Intake – 50 Year Reunion – Return to Balcombe 19th to 21st February 2016

A plan is being put together for a reunion of the 21st Intake to celebrate the 50th anniversary of enlistment; eg: 19th, 1400-1600, meet and greet, Dava Hotel Mt Martha; 20th 1200-1400, Balcombe wander and memorial plaque dedication (subject to approvals); 20th 1830-2200, restaurant TBA; 21st 1130-1530, farewell BBQ TBA. Contacts: Richard Pike - pike.richard@bigpond.com.au, Jeff Heron - moderator@austarmyapprentice.org, Peter Thompson - thomperi@tpg.com.au; or write to AAAA, GPO Box 2072, Canberra, ACT 2601 and your letter will be passed on.

22nd AAS Intake – 50 Year Reunion – 27th – 28th January 2017

There WILL be a reunion of the 22nd Intake to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our enlistment. All members and families are invited. Please contact any other 22nd Intake Appies you know who might be interested. Contact Mal Campbell, 22nd Elec Fitter at malc@malbargroup.com.au or write to PO Box 176, Milsons Point, NSW 1565.



Where are they now? – Lieutenant Colonel D.C. (Don) Hughes

Don Hughes was born on 16th Sep 1957 in Kew in Melbourne and attended Mt Waverley Primary and High Schools. He entered the Army Apprentices School in 1974 and graduated with the Trade Medal in Carpentry & Joinery to the RAE. He graduated from the Officer Cadet School, Portsea in 1978 and, after young officer corps training, was allocated as Tp Commander to 21 Construction Sqn, Puckapunyal. As a 2LT, Don commanded Resources Tp, Plant Tp and a combined construction team that built the “All Saints Chapel” in Townsville.

As a LT, Don commanded platoons at 1 RTB at Kapooka before an exchange posting to the British Army where he commanded “Le Cateau” Tp, Depot Regt, Royal Artillery at Woolwich, London.

Returning to Australia, as CAPT, he undertook an Operations & Training Staff appointment on HQ 5th Engineer Gp in Sydney before being selected to command the RAE Apprentice Sqn at SME Casula, Sydney. Appointment as Adjutant 7th Field Engineering Regt at Ringwood in Melbourne followed, before selection as Admin & Training Officer, 12th Chief Engineer Works, Mendi, PNG in 1988. After 3 years, he returned to Australia (Wagga Wagga) on promotion to MAJ and was appointed OC B Coy at 1 RTB.

In 1993, he was appointed Operations Staff Officer with the Logistic Support Force Engineers based at Oakleigh and was “shadow posted” as the Engineer Staff Officer for the Logistic Support Gp Operational Deployment Force. MAJ Hughes was selected to command the Australian Service Contingent deployed to the UN Peacekeeping Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) undertaking demining operations. On return to Australia, Don became Chief Engineer for Southern Victoria before transferring to the Active Reserve in 1997 and commencing his own business. Active Reserve appointments include: OC 105th Construction Sqn, 2IC 4th Combat Engineer Regt and Staff Officer Operations HQ 4th Bde.

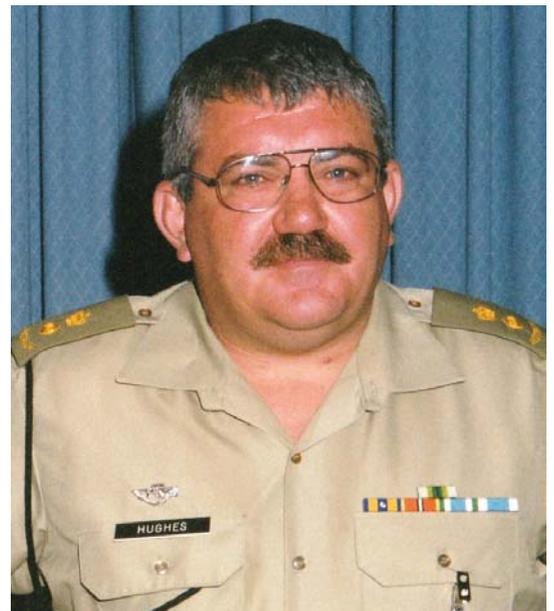
In 2000, Don was promoted to LTCOL and appointed CO 4th Combat Engineer Regt, deploying soldiers on Operation Gold in Sydney and Melbourne and also to the Joint Incident Response Unit. LTCOL Hughes then served on the Directing Staff of the Australian Technical Staff Officer Course (ATSOC) in 2002 (including honorary Visiting Military Fellow to the University of NSW). He also served on the Directing Staff of the Australian Command & Staff College (ACSC) at Weston Creek ACT until early 2005, when he transferred to the Standby Reserve. Don was the Military History and Maritime Operations Module Master and was involved in the Management Module with the University of Canberra (UCAN).

LTCOL Hughes has been a student at both ACSC Fort Queenscliff and Weston Creek, ACT. He is a graduate of the University of New England where he was awarded a Bachelor of Professional Studies (Management) and holds a Grad Dip in Defence Management from UCAN. Don is a qualified builder.

For LTCOL Hughes’ service in PNG, he was awarded the PNG 10th Anniversary of Independence Medal. He has also been awarded the UN Medal for Operations in Mozambique and the UN Special Service Medal for Humanitarian Demining operations.

In civilian life, Don has been awarded the “Silver Arrowhead” for excellent service to the Scout Association of Australia, a Baptist Certificate of Recognition for Exceptional Service in the Aged Care Industry and a Sir Robert Menzies Australia Day Award for community service in the Federal Electorate of Menzies.

Don is married to Michelle and they have three adult children. He was elected in 2014 as the Vice President of the RAE Association (Vic) Inc.





Welfare Report

The Welfare Officer seldom has good news but fulfils an important role for the Association and hopefully to members. The job relies heavily on being made aware of bereavements and hospitalisations or of the need for welfare advice by a member or spouse. So please, if you know of such a situation, let the Association Welfare Officer know. When a reportable incident is advised to the Association, the Welfare Officer endeavours to ensure that affected Intake members are aware and the Regional Representative asked, if appropriate, to attend the hospital or a funeral representing the Association. Appropriate letters may be written from the Welfare Officer and, at times, the President. In the event of a death, the Welfare Officer seeks collateral to confirm the information and then notifies the Webmaster for inclusion in the Vale lists. The Welfare Officer may also contact the NOK to determine any need for a Welfare Officer from the local RSL to visit or assist. The Welfare Officer may also provide advice. I have taken on this role until a member steps up to join the Committee as our Welfare Officer. I hope I am not kept too busy in the coming months.

Vale

This reporting period we have been notified of one member who has left us, Sapper David Michael Mapp, RAE, a 21st Intake plumber. David served in SVN with 17 Construction Sqn. David left us on 28th November 2014 but remains in the memory of his wife Sonia. LEST WE FORGET.

Frank Poole (10th Architectural Draughtsman)
Chair, Memorial Sub-committee
memorial@austarmyapprentice.org

AAAA Committee – we still have some vacancies. “Volunteers, one pace step forward, **MARCH!**” Contact the Committee if you have some spare time – the TV’s not that interesting anyway!

Management Sub-committee		Other Committee Members (contd):	
Office Bearers:		Member	Bill Mertin - 22 nd VM
President	Barry Minster - 20 th Radio Mech	Member	Vacant
Vice President	Harry Hoger - 20 th Radio Mech	Member	Vacant
Treasurer	Richard Pike - 21 st VM	Merchandise	Richard Pike - 21 st VM
Secretary	Neil Bennett - 13 th VM	Regional Representatives:	
Plus:		NT	David Cooper - 24 th F&T
Membership Secretary	Gary Byard - 21 st VM	NQld	David Young - 30 th Fitter Maint
Public Officer	Ray Wilson - 15 th Plumber	SQld	Brian Daley - 14 th VM
Welfare Officer	Vacant (Frank Poole acting)	NSW	Richard Pike - 21 st VM
Events Manager	Otto Aberle - 21 st VM	ACT	Frank Poole - 10 th Architectural Draughtsman
Heritage Officer	Norm Wells - 14 th VM	Northern Vic	Jim Hislop - 9 th F&T
Webmaster	Ian Morris - 12 th Radio Mech	Central Vic	Mark Ryan - 33 rd Motor Mech
Memorial Sub-committee Chair	Frank Poole - 10 th Architectural Draughtsman	Southern Vic	Matt Bouma - 30 th C&J
Other Committee Members:		Vic Metro	Lucas McGann - 35 th Elec Fitter
Member	Harry Cole - 7 th VM	SA	David Miller - 22 nd Elec Fitter
Forum Moderator	Jeff Heron - 21 st Radio Mech	Tas	Gary Byard RFD - 21 st VM
Member	Frank Maloney - 13 th VM	WA	Tom Esze - 36 th Motor Mech
Appointments:			
Honorary Trustee	Jim Hislop - 9 th F&T	Chaplain	Rev Bryan Nichols JP - 11 th VM
Auditor	Michael Farrar - 17 th VM	Chaplain	Rev Craig Potter - 38 th F&T
Legal Advisor	Vacant	Chaplain	Rev Alan Kelb OAM - 25 th F&T