



The Apprentice About

Newsletter for the Australian Army Apprentices Association Inc

AUSTRALIAN ARMY APPRENTICES ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED (ACT Incorporation No A04404)

GPO Box 2072, CANBERRA, ACT 2601, www.austarmyapprentice.org

Patron: Major General Andrew Mathewson, AM

Volume 2, Issue 8

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Congratulations to our Patron!

Andrew Mathewson has been promoted to MAJGEN - our hearty congratulations Andrew.

From the President

By Harry Hoger 20th Radio Mech, President AAAA
president@austarmyapprentice.org

The future of this Association is in your hands, the membership. The Committee and I are committed to managing the Association's affairs and keeping it relevant and proactive.

To be an Army Apprentice and not give some support is not helpful, so please keep your membership current and visit your Website home page frequently. Our history is unique and worthy of recognition.

To celebrate our achievements, this Nation needs to know. What we have created and leave behind should be a recognised memorial to our scheme, similar to our UK brothers, www.armyapprenticememorial.org.uk. They have used a lectern in the round to educate the public in the benefits of education associated with military training. Please email us with your feedback on this concept. My sincere thanks to Otto Aberle and his team for the success of the Albury Reunion event.

I would also like to congratulate Ian Morris, our Webmaster, for his elevation to Life Member at the AGM held during the Reunion.

Look after your health.

20th Anniversary of the Closure of the Australian Army Apprentice Scheme - 23rd to 25th October 2015

By Otto Aberle, 21st VM, Events Manager
events@austarmyapprentice.org



On arriving in Albury for the Reunion, attendees were greeted by the Albury City Council's sign strung across Dean St (the main road in Albury) welcoming the Reunion to the city. This was a very welcome sight after a long trip as one immediately knew the Reunion was on. (contd page 3)

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End of an Era for Army Apprentices

Army College of TAFE Journal 1995

END OF AN ERA FOR ARMY • APPRENTICES

Saturday the 8th April 1995 saw the end of an era with the last parade of the Army Apprentices Battalion held at the Army College of TAFE, Bonegilla. Almost 300 staff and apprentices were on parade to commemorate the cessation of the Army Apprenticeship Scheme and the introduction of the Army Technical and Trade Scheme. The parade was attended by a number of senior officers as well as almost 2000 ex-apprentices and their families.

The weekend festivities began with a cocktail party and a reunion for ex-apprentices on the Friday night followed by the Apprentice Battalion Parade on the Saturday. The parade was reviewed by the GOC TRG COMD MAJGEN S.N. Gower, AM. The band was formed by ex-apprentice musicians from all over Australia and despite only having minimal time to prepare, performed to an exceptional standard. After the parade the College of TAFE was open for visitors to view the training facilities and the RAEME TRG Centre provided a display of Vehicles, Weapons and Equipment.

After reviewing the parade MAJGEN Gower paid tribute to the more than 6000 apprentices who had graduated from the scheme. MAJGEN Gower said that the apprentices from both the school at Balcombe and Bonegilla had achieved and maintained a very high standard in both military and technical skills. This achievement is highlighted by over 400 apprentices who had gone on to achieve commissioned officer status. He said that army apprentices had been the backbone of our ever increasingly technical army by maintaining the mobility and fire-power of our land forces. Our soldier technicians who have been trained under the apprenticeship scheme have always provided effective support to our forces regardless of where they were deployed and in most cases in very trying conditions.

MAJGEN Gower explained that due to reforms in civilian training combined with changing societal trends the army was no longer able to recruit enough capable personnel through the existing apprenticeship scheme. This has led to the introduction of the new scheme which will give the army a much larger pool of applicants from which to choose. MAJGEN Gower stressed that the standards set by past apprentices would not be diminished in any way under the new scheme and that all graduates would be more than capable of carrying on in the footsteps of their predecessors.

MAJGEN Gower also congratulated the 49th apprentice class which graduated from apprentices to trainees. MAJGEN Gower complimented the trainees on their achievements to date and stated that as the last apprentice class it was their responsibility to carry on the apprentice traditions which have served the defence force so well over the past 47 years.

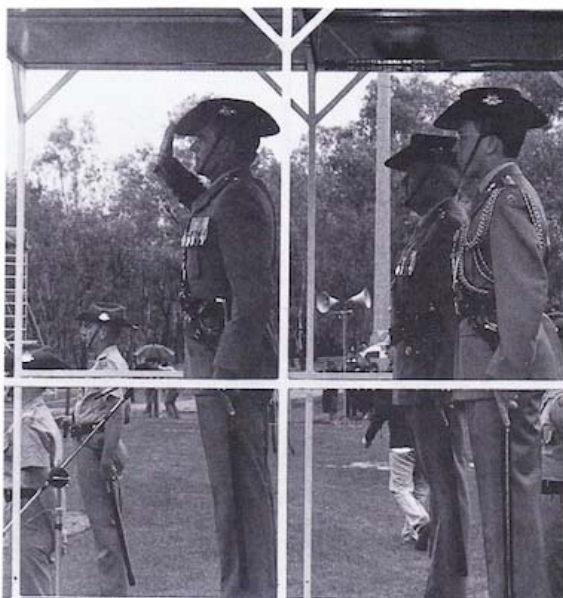
The Army Apprentices School was established in 1948 at Balcombe, some 70 km from Melbourne on the Mornington Peninsula. On the 20th August 1948, the Minister for the Army, the Honourable Cyril Chambers, MP, officially opened the school.

The first intake of apprentices numbered 63 and they received instruction in eleven different trades. Since 1948 over 6000 apprentices have graduated from the college and some 400 of

these have subsequently gained commissioned rank as army officers.

The last graduation parade at Balcombe was held in December 1982. The school then moved to the current location at Latchford Barracks Bonegilla.

On the 1st January 1991 the Army Apprentices School was renamed the Army College of Technical and Further Education to more accurately reflect the expanding role of the college to include pre and post vocational training for adult trainees.





AAAA Reunion 2015 to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the closure of the Australian Army Apprentice Scheme - 23rd to 25th October 2015 (contd from page 1)

By Otto Aberle, 21st VM, Events Manager events@austarmyapprentice.org

The Reunion commenced with the now familiar Registration and Meet and Greet (M&G) function, in the Albury Entertainment Centre. Attendees were welcomed by the familiar friendly faces of Jeff and Jan Heron, who have been the welcoming party at numerous previous reunions. Attendees were given their show-bags containing a "Welcome to Albury" kit courtesy of the Albury Information Centre, the Reunion program and mugs & stubby holders for gentlemen and an inscribed plate for the ladies. Mugs from a previous reunion were offered as 'extras' and were eagerly snapped up. The M&G was very convivial and attendees soon gravitated into their intake groups. Brian and Barbara Daley did a roaring trade on the raffle sales whilst Richard Pike also had a strong demand for AAAA Memorabilia. The RAEME representatives were present to provide attendees the opportunity to purchase the recently released Corps History Book. When it came to the formalities and some attendees continued their own conversations, they were smartly brought into line by the Albury City Mayor who had a voice any RSM would be proud of. The response that was received when attendees were advised that the intake signs for the Saturday morning's Street Parade were to be returned after the Parade indicated that it was highly unlikely many would ever be seen again, let alone returned. A number were seen again at subsequent Reunion events over the weekend as rallying points for various intakes. By now, I'm sure they are scattered far and wide around Australia.



Parade Marshall Kevin Noon,
14th Musician

Saturday morning began with the AGM, which was very well attended. There was some initial concern that the AGM might run over-time and impact on the Street Parade. However, the AGM finished early, as I suspect attendees really did not want to miss the Parade. The Parade was led by the Australian Light Horse Association riders followed by the Australian National Flag, the Army Apprentices School flag and the flags of RAE, RASIGS and RAEME, being the three Corps that received most graduating Apprentices. When it was announced at the M&G the previous evening that transport for those unable to march could not be organised, the Mayor stepped in and offered to arrange suitable transport and assured us that one or two vehicles would be available next morning. A convoy of five vintage jeeps appeared for the Parade and provided transport for those unable to march. Once the intake signs were distributed, the attendees decided that they were going to march by individual intakes, rather than in four contingents as had been planned.

The Army Band Kapooka attended the Parade and provided excellent marching music to help everyone to keep in step. As the marchers came past the saluting dais, where LTCOL Andrew Hodgkinson, the last CO/CI of the Army College of TAFE took the salute, it was very evident that everyone was extremely proud to be marching behind their individual intake signs – their backs were straight, chests were puffed out and heads held high.

In the afternoon, Reunion attendees had the opportunity to visit Latchford Barracks to view the trade wings and today's training methods. I understand from various attendees that these visits went very well.

On the Saturday evening, it was off to the Commercial Club Albury for the Reunion Dinner, which was attended by over three hundred people. A number of people subsequently said to me that, on entering the room, their first thought was – WOW! The décor of the room combined with the table settings were excellent and indicative of a very good night ahead. Many attendees also advised me they thought the meal was excellent.

The placemats designed by Jeff Heron were also a big hit and provided a memorable souvenir of the night. The Army Band Kapooka provided an ensemble, which played light music for the dinner, greatly appreciated by all.





LTCOL Hodgkinson provided his reflections on what it was like to bring the Army Apprentice era to a close, and provided numerous anecdotes including the significance of the Duntroon Bell to the last Crab Night. The last RSM, WO1 Brian Hatfield, in his reflections of 1995, addressed as to how he handled the matter of the Duntroon Bell that appeared at Latchford Bks that night and that, later, as the RSM at Duntroon, he kept a very close eye on the Bell.



The Sunday morning began with a very moving Memorial Service at the Australian Army Apprentices Memorial at Gaza Ridge Barracks led by Rev Alan Kelb OAM. The Service was followed by a visit to the Army Museum Bandiana and an excellent BBQ lunch provided by Redback Mobile BBQ.



Our Trustee Jim Hislop's response and Requiem included an excellent reference to a poem "The Dash" by Linda Ellis. The dash is the "very important" small mark between one's dates of birth and of death.

Based on the feedback received, all enjoyed themselves immensely and were able to catch up with old friends and also to make some new ones. The weekend must have been a success, as I didn't get any "pokes in the chest"! Overall, the weekend is best summed up by one response received, "I am sure everybody who attended had a great time and those that didn't make the effort are the poorer for not attending."

In closing, I would like to pay tribute and say thank you to the whole organising committee, but especially to Jeff and Jan Heron, Richard Pike and Rev Alan Kelb OAM who all contributed enormously, both before and during the Reunion itself, to help make it the success that it was.

Membership matters

By Gary Byard, 21st VM, Membership Secretary membership@austarmyapprentice.org (as at the AGM - 24th October 2015)

Current membership status:

Financial members:		Outstanding renewals:	
• Ordinary Members	228	• 2012	26
• Retired Members	240	• 2013	41
• Life Members	2	• 2014	80
• Associates	5	• Mar 15	58
• Total	475	• Sep 15	46
•		• Total	251

One of the highlights of the year has been the increase in membership, particularly by the "junior" Intakes. It is this spark of interest that will see our Association continue for some years to come. Naturally we, as a group, are limited by the date of the passing out of the final Intake, and the Association will only prosper with the interest and participation by the youth of the graduated. Naturally the interest

generated by the October Reunion has generated membership enthusiasm, and I believe the Committee will be pleased to see the new members renew at the end of their current membership period. Unfortunately it is the failure to renew/or late action on renewals that has a negative impact on the overall membership. If you are reading this and have yet to "take action", for the sake of the Association, please do. A breakdown of outstanding renewals, by state, was presented to the last Committee meeting for distribution to the Regional Reps for follow up action. A list of all new members will be made available on the Association Website. [A warm welcome to all new members.](#)

Event report

10th Intake Reunion - Albury/Wodonga 21st to 23rd October 2015 - [pics page 8](#)

Frank Poole, 10th Architectural Draftsman frank.poole@grapevine.com.au

On 21st - 22nd October in Albury, the 10th Intake celebrated 60 years from first marching into Balcombe, immediately preceding the National Reunion, with 24 attending from all states (except WA) and NZ. Age, medical condition of both Apprentices and partners, fiscal considerations and prior commitments really cut into attendance with many expressing a desire to attend but unable. It is an eye opener to realise that a known 41 of our Intake are no longer



with us: about a third who passed through the gates that 10th January 1955. The reunion was organised with a meet and greet on Wednesday late afternoon where a memorabilia glass mini-sculpture was handed out along with a compendium for the event. On Thursday we took a coach trip with morning tea at Yackandanda, lunch at Beechworth and finished with a visit to Pfeiffers Winery at Rutherglen. Evening saw a Thai banquet with the Ode and toast to absent classmates, finishing at about 11pm. Some of us got together for breakfast on Friday. All agreed it was a great success and \$460 was donated to the Association Memorial fund. Next reunion will be in 2017 in NZ.

Upcoming events

46th AAS Intake - 25th Year Reunion - Australia Day weekend 2016

Contact Paul Gibbs, 46th Fitter & Turner

The RAEME National Association reports that the 46th Intake is having a 25th year reunion, Australia Day 2016. If you are a 46th, check out <https://www.facebook.com/events/596118533825010/> to register your interest in attending.

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

Contacts Peter Thompson, 21st VM thomperi@tpg.com.au, Richard Pike, 21st VM pike.richard@bigpond.com.au or Jeff Heron, 21st Radio Mech moderator@austarmyapprentice.org

Registrations are now open. Events planned are: Friday 19th, 1400-1600, meet and greet, Dava Hotel Mt Martha; Saturday 20th 1200-1400, Balcombe wander and memorial plaque dedication (subject to approvals); Saturday 20th 1830-2200, restaurant TBA; Sunday 21st 1130-1530, farewell BBQ TBA. If you don't have Internet access, 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

Contacts Keith Lowe, 22nd F&T keith_lowe@optusnet.com.au, mobile 0416 765 921 or Nobby Clarke, 22nd VM bob@clarkecoaches.com.au, mobile 0407 941 366

All members and families are invited. Please contact other 22nd Intake Appies you know who might be interested.

With Skill and Fighting - Craftsmen of the Australian Army 1942-2014

RAEME history book launch, Jeff Heron, 21st Radio Mech, Editor with input from Harry Cole, 7th VM

The new RAEME Corps history book was launched at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) on 9th September 2015. The event followed the regular AWM Last Post Ceremony, which included a reading by MAJ Ian Cook, RAEME, son of the late Clyde Cook. The reading featured WW1 soldier LCPL Hector Merton Cornish, 31st Bn, who died of wounds in France on 13th March 1917, aged 21. Ian's mother Heather also attended the event. The Ceremony included the laying of a number of wreaths, with Des Kiernan representing RAEME. It was all quite professionally done and in perfect weather.



The Book Launch was held in the AWM Courtyard Gallery and was well co-ordinated by Head of Corps RAEME (and AAAA Patron) BRIG Andrew Mathewson, and BRIG (retd) Ross Grant who was the Project Manager and major driving force behind the very successful production of the book. An amazing number of serving RAEME officers (including Reserves) holding the ranks of MAJ, LTCOL, COL and BRIG were at the AWM ceremony and book launch – as there had been a RAEME Corps Seminar on the same day. It was a good chance to talk to them and, in some cases, renew friendships with a lot of the retirees also attending.

Ross Grant reports that the launch of the Corps history book “was a very successful event. It was a wonderful evening, regardless of whether you were participating, or a member of the audience of some 150 plus enjoying the hospitality provided. Chief of Army (LTGEN Angus Campbell, DSC, AM) made a most appropriate speech and told the gathered Bluebells what he really thought of the Corps – most generous in his praise – and an excellent choice of person to launch the book. I am extremely grateful for everyone's support and assistance throughout, especially those who provided me with the occasional 'morale boosting talk' during the journey! I understand there are a few folks who are yet to receive their books, but they will come – the HOC is doing its best with limited resources. If you haven't ordered your book and wish to do so, please don't delay – it is unlikely that further books will be printed.”



Order details for the book are provided on the RAEME Website, www.raeme.org.au.

Harry Cole estimates that perhaps 50% of the senior officers attending were from the latter intakes of Army Apprentices. Harry also reports that he was fortunate to meet up with some of the previous members from 101 Fd Wksp and HQ 2EME Gp, with whom he had lost contact some years ago.

One complaint is that it was an all standing-up affair, and many were finding their bodies starting to suffer the ravages of wear and tear.

BRIG (now MAJGEN) Andrew Mathewson

BRIG (ret'd) Ross Grant



Brendan Robertson, President, NSW RAEME Association did a great job in getting NSW members' names registered to allow them to attend and, yes, they did check our names off before we were allowed entry into the venue. Those there from the NSW group were Harry Cole, Kerry Tunbridge, Brendan, Stefan Hreszczuk and his wife, Win Coles, Harry Hoger and his wife Judith, and Richard Pike, plus several other Association members from other states.

As an aside, and prior to the afternoon's activities, Kerry Tunbridge and Harry paid a visit to COL Max Tinkler (Comd 2EME Gp in the 1980's) and his wife Irene for about an hour before they proceeded to a restaurant at Philip where the AAAA ACT Region held its quarterly luncheon. There was very tasty Chinese food and good company and it was a pleasure to have Brendan Robertson joining us as well. The lunch was, as usual, organised by Frank Poole.

Harry reports that, all in all, he thinks it was the best event that RAEME has held this year.

SPAASSM Collection DVD

Jeff Heron, 21st Radio Mech, Editor and Website Forum Moderator moderator@austrarmyapprentice.org

The competition in the August edition asked, for this photo from 1962, "Which Intake graduated and what was the location of the Graduation Parade?" The answer, correctly provided first by Bob Keach, was the 15th and Mace Oval. Congratulations Bob; your SPAASSM DVD has been forwarded.



There is no SPAASSM competition for this edition, to allow room for the report on the October Reunion.

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.



Welfare Officer's report

By Damien Tyrrell, 40th ET welfare@austarmyapprentice.org

Eligibility via DVA

As a former member of Australia's Defence Force, you may be eligible to claim compensation for any medical condition related to your service. If your condition is related to service prior to 1 July 2004, support is available under the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (SRCA), Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) or Defence Act 1903. If your condition is related to service on or after 1 July 2004, support is available under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA). Please seek out the advice of a trained advocate, via one of the many ex-service organisations, to assist you in the process.

The Right Mix

The Right Mix Website has been enhanced to provide better support for Veterans and serving ADF members in order to help them manage their alcohol consumption. It also provides information on the best ways to gain online support for people who want to change their behaviour. www.at-ease.dva.gov.au/therightmix

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service

VVCS and Veterans Line can be reached 24 hours a day across Australia for crisis support and free and confidential counselling. Phone 1800 011 046.

Vale

217277 Leon (Lee) Arthur MORRIS, 26 Oct 15, 22nd F&T; 242513 Harold Joseph FRUNKS, 30 Aug 15, 2nd Welder; 58519 George David HODGINS, 22 Aug 15, 3rd F&T; 58777 Ronald Leslie THOMSON, 22 Aug 15, 17th C&J; 1201756 James "Skippy" HOPKINSON, 18 Aug 15, 23rd F&T; 342756 Barry Noel GREENGERGER, unknown, 11th Bricklayer; 18705 Robert Joseph SMITH, 08 Aug 15, 16th F&T; 18802 Edward Francis "Whopper" HAIDLEY, 25 Oct 11, 18th VM.

LEST WE FORGET

Australian Army Apprentices Memorial

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

I would like to reiterate part of my Annual Report presented at the AGM in Albury two weeks ago, where I gave thanks to Greg Mulcahy, Jim Hislop and Charlie Myhill for their invaluable support and to those who added a donation to their membership renewals, with particular thanks to the 10th Intake who donated \$460 to the Memorial Fund. I welcome the new Heritage Officer Harry Cole to the Memorial Sub-Committee as our Secretary.

Association merchandise

By Richard Pike, 21st VM, Merchandise Officer merchandise@austarmyapprentice.org

The Association has the following items for sale. Order form and contact details are on the Association Website: <http://www.austarmyapprentice.org>

- The clearance sale of DVDs from the "60th Anniversary 2008" and the "Balcombe Commemoration 2013" is still 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)
• 60 th 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)



Canberra Region report

By Frank Poole, 10th Architectural Draughtsman, ACT Regional Representative memorial@austarmyapprentice.org

The last quarterly luncheon was held on 9th September at the Golden King Restaurant with 26 attending, including some RAEME Apprentices from interstate who were in Canberra for the launch of the RAEME History Book, and we also welcomed a couple of partners. Included in the interstater was Harry Hoger, the Association President, who gave a brief overview of Association doings. The Ode was recited and the usual raffle conducted. It was decided unanimously by diners that we would invade the Golden King for all lunches in future as we were well looked after, the food was well received, the price was right, they were licensed and BYO with a good bar, and parking was convenient. This will save me a lot of time looking for different suitable venues for each lunch.

Our Christmas Lunch will be held on Wednesday 16th December and all Service Apprentices are welcome to attend and partners are always welcome; email me if you will be joining us.

I had no sick calls or funerals of local Apprentices notified to me this quarter.

AAAA Committee

Welcome to all members of the new Committee for 2015/16. Those **newly elected (or renewed) members** taking up the cudgel after the October AGM are **shown in green**.

Management Sub-committee, comprising:

Office Bearers:

President - **Harry Hoger, 20th Radio Mech**

Vice President - **Greg Haggett, 40th Plumber & Gasfitter**

Secretary - **Neil Bennett, 13th Veh Mech**

Treasurer (and Merchandise Officer) - Richard Pike, 21st Veh Mech

And:

Membership Secretary - Gary Byard, RFD, 21st Veh Mech

Public Officer - Ray Wilson, 15th Plumber

Welfare Officer - Damien Tyrrell, 40th ET

Events Manager - **Otto Aberle, 21st Veh Mech**

Memorial Sub-committee Chair - Frank Poole, 10th Architectural Draughtsman - **Life Member**

Other Committee Members:

Heritage Officer - **Harry Cole, 7th Veh Mech**

Webmaster - **Ian Morris, 12th Radio Mech - Life Member**

Member - **Joanne Cornelius, 43rd Veh Mech**

Member (and Newsletter Editor and Forum Moderator) - Jeff Heron, 21st Radio Mech

Member - **Lucas McGann, 35th Elec Fitter**

Member - **Craig Malcolm, 31st ET**

Member - Frank Maloney, 13th Veh Mech

Member - **Barry Minster, 20th Radio Mech**

Appointees:

Honorary Trustee - Jim Hislop, 9th F&T

Chaplain - Rev Alan Kelb, OAM, 25th F&T

Chaplain - Rev Craig Potter, 38th F&T

Auditor - Michael Farrar, 17th Veh Mech

Legal Adviser - **Vacant**

Regional Representatives:

NT - David Cooper, 24th F&T

NQld - David Young, 30th Fitter Maint

SQld - Brian Daley, 14th Veh Mech - **Life Member**

NSW - Richard Pike, 21st Veh Mech

ACT - Frank Poole, 10th Architectural Draughtsman - **Life Member**

Northern Vic - Jim Hislop, 9th F&T

Southern Vic - Matt Bouma, 30th C&J

Central Vic - Mark Ryan, 33rd Motor Mech

SE Vic - Neil Bennett, 13th Veh Mech

Vic Metro - Lucas McGann, 35th Elec Fitter

SA - David Miller, 22nd Elec Fitter

Tas - Gary Byard RFD, 21st Veh Mech

WA - Tom Esze, 36th Motor Mech



10th Intake Reunion, Albury 21-22 October