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RAA and RAAHS AGMs

Sat 9th March 2019

The Annual General Meetings of the RAA A WA and RAAHS-WA were held at the Alf Adams Pavilion Mosman Park Saturday morning 9th March 2019. Both ran smoothly with an average turnout of members despite the inclement weather. A morning tea was held afterward with some fond memorising and tall tales. Below are some photos of the event:



NOTICE BOARD



Edition	Collation Period	Deadline to Editor	Editing and Preparation	Final Edition	Mail Out
2/19	1/4/19 to 7/6/19	13/6/19	13/6/19 To 20/6/19	27/6/19	27/6/19
3/19	1/7/19 To 5/9/19	11/9/19	11/9/19 To 18/9/19	25/9/19	25/9/19
4/19	1/10/19 To 5/12/19	12/12/19	12/12/19 To 19/12/19	19/12/19	19/12/19

To ensure that the printing deadline is met please observe the dates listed above. Items on any subject, or topic for inclusion in the newsletter are welcome and should be emailed to:
Bob Arnold on arnold353@bigpond.com

WELFARE FUND OFFICER

John Blylevens is the Association's Welfare Officer. Anybody that needs to discuss any welfare funding can contact John via email info@artillerywa.org.au or telephone 043 869 5711. Access to funds can be made by applying in writing using the Welfare Fund Application Form which is available on request from the Treasurer. The Association reminds members that access to the Fund to help Gunners financially at a time of need is strictly confidential and all applications are treated as such.

For those who need a reminder—subs are due on the First of January each year

RAAHS BUSY BEES FOR 2019

26 Jan 23 Feb 30 Mar 27 Apr 25 May 29 Jun
27 Jul 31 Aug 28 Sep 26 Oct 30 Nov 28 Dec

LEIGHTON BATTERY OPEN DAYS

Leighton Battery Heritage Site is open on a regular basis every Sunday of every month from 10 AM to 3 PM with tours of the tunnels commencing every half hour.

**THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Actions from AGM 2018

The AGM endorsed a new Constitution to comply with the "Associations Incorporation Act". This has been registered. Our objects and purpose do not change.

As an action item to seek to improve membership I was to write to serving gunners about joining and offering new gunners their first years membership for free. This has been done and is to be circulated within the Bty.

As the position of Secretary and Treasurer must be held by different people, we are still looking for someone to take on one of these appointments.

Visit by CO 9 Regt

The new CO LTCOL Lachlan Searle and RSM, WO1 Reg Grundell visited Perth 26 to 28 March and I along with other Committee members attended a morning tea to meet them.

Anzac day 2018

We had good weather and for once, a band in close proximity. What a difference it makes being able to be in step rather than dancing down the Terrace! Apart from some confusion where the Artillery was to form up, all went well. The new format with the service after the march being held in the Concert Hall seemed to work well.

Battery Birthday/Regimental Dinner

The BTY Birthday/ RAA Regimental Dinner was held on Saturday the 7th of July. The dinner was attended by some 80 past and serving members and their partners. There was great food, camaraderie and once again great entertainment by the WA Army Cadet Pipes and Drums - a great credit to themselves and the cadet organization.

The Association's Annual Award for the most outstanding soldier was presented to GNR John Paton.

Gunner's Day

Gunners Day marked the centenary of the end of WWI and was a great success with larger numbers in attendance than in recent years. The CO, 9 REGT RAA LTCOL Lachlan Searle and RSM, WO1 Reg Grundell attended. The service was conducted by Bishop Jeremy James and the Reverend Katrina Holgate. The Bishop's Father and brother were Gunners and he has indicated a desire to be involved in future years. They did a great job with the service.

Feast of Saint Barbara

The St Barbara's Dinner 2018 was a great success again with past and present gunners and other corps who have served in gunner units invited to attend. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our Functions Sub Committee, Stan Davies, Tom Arnautovic and Peter Rowles for planning and organising the dinner. This team have already commenced planning for this year's dinner. Put a place holder in your diaries for Friday 7 December.

Mr Ewan Puckle Hobbs, a descendent of LT GEN Talbot Hobbs who commanded the Australian Corps at the end of WWI flew from Singapore for the day. We were again ably supported by the Army Pipes and Drums Band – Perth and Cadets from 56 ACU Fremantle.

Vale

It is with some sadness I advise the passing of the following members: Steve Caple, Bob Glyde, Dennis Atherton, Doug Coughran, Lew Grimes, Alan Cusworth.

2019

The 2019 Feast of St Barbara will held on Friday 6 December. Stan Davies has already commenced planning for this year's dinner.

It behoves us all to reach out to members past and present to join the Association and participate in its activities.

THE AIMING POST

Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The First for 2019

Dear Member,

I hope the festive season was an enjoyable one for you and your family.

This year will be extra busy for the Management Committee members and the Busy Bee stalwarts, due to the commencement of work on the 5.25" site. This will be a real bonus for all concerned as it will ultimately replicate the Leighton Battery site from 1944 to 1962. Society V/P Graham Mackenzie-Smith will be the point of contact between us and the T.O.M.P. The project is a complex one, and not cheap- to that end I am pleased to inform the membership that our application to LotteryWest was successful – we have been awarded almost \$67,000 towards the engineering works for the 5.25" roof and the stairwell entrance into the gun floor. Once the pit is weather proofed, work will commence on the ventilation and electrics, and once the spaces have dried, in come the painters.

So a lot has to be sorted throughout 2019- we will have to plan what we want to place in the various spaces that will become available in the gun floor rooms. The matter of Guides also needs thought.

We also have another grant application through D.V.A. to offset the cost of the replica turret and barrel that will be fabricated off-site and erected above the gun floor. The turret interior will not be accessible to the public.

Our 6" tunnel spaces continue to evolve- lighting has been altered in certain areas. Visitors to the first aid room will now see a surprisingly lifelike mannequin dressed in period tunnel drillers clothes, with his arm in a sling, awaiting attention! Curator Don Rae is thanked for his original concept and arranging the final product with the help of Neil Lodge.

I gave Dr David Honey-MLA Cottesloe- a tunnel tour late last year – and low and behold, we have now been given a good mention in HANSARD.

Curtin University's Geophysics Dept. has supplied us with the ground probe radar results for our site. All rather technical, however the results confirm no other tunnels exist. The centre 5.25" concrete monolith shows

up about a metre below the present ground level- but just what condition it was in on its burial is still unknown. It lies just outside our lease border. T.O.M.P's Mayor has unofficially mentioned to me his interest in perhaps exposing the surface of it. It was buried as part of the developers landscaping task about 1985. I would be rather interested in the contents-if any- that might remain on the walls of the three interior rooms- cabling/ instruments etc- that if excavated, could be brought across to the soon to be renovated 5.25" site. Watch this space.

In late January I signed off on a letter inviting our Federal Member-Ms Julie Bishop- to tour our tunnels complex. (As of March- perhaps her replacement?)

In mid February, the Councillors and the Mayor of the T.O.M.P. enjoyed a private tour of the tunnels. They are our landlords and it makes sense to keep them up to date with our activities there.

Late February also saw the re-commencement of the cement paths around the battery site- the delay stretched to five months! I am sure the end result will be worth the wait.

I would like to give a sincere vote of thanks to the Committee Members, Wednesday action men and to the Busy Bee members who have given up plenty of time to keep the Society's operations working smoothly in 2018-2019 also acknowledge the on-going support of the wider membership who contribute their subs but through circumstance, cannot be as active as they would like.

To our Guides and Cashiers- thank you for your good humour and safe escorting of the public!

My best regards,

DAVID CARTER.

Geraldton Historical Society

SEARCHLIGHTS - BLUFF POINT – 1942

In the early months of 1942, Australia stood practically defenceless. Its army was in the Middle East. The ill-fated 8th Division had been overrun at Singapore. The Japanese Army had occupied a large part of Papua New Guinea, the whole of the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) and Timor, Darwin and Derby, Broome and Onslow in WA had been heavily bombed. One partially trained Infantry Brigade and some small mobile units defended the vast coastline of WA including some small mobile units. Coast Artillery was emplaced in strength around Fremantle only. There was already evidence on the northern beaches of reconnaissance parties landing from Japanese and German submarines and it was generally considered that a Japanese landing in reasonable strength could be expected between Geraldton and Derby in the Kimberleys.

In December and January, Fremantle harbour and its approaches were packed with shipping from all nationalities – caught in the Indian Ocean as the Japanese swept south – dozens of ships being anchored in Gage Roads. They were hurriedly bunkered victualled and sent further south to Adelaide and other ports. Land Headquarters (LHQ) speedily set about moving the 2nd 4th and 1st Armed Divisions to WA to from three Aust Corps. Even now it is not generally realised that train moved over 50,000 troops with artillery, tanks and vehicles to the West across the Nullarbor Plain and by the small amount of coastal shipping then available during 1942. Against this background, it was decided in early 1942 to provide Coast Artillery protection to the port of Geraldton, some 400 kms north of Perth. Two United States Navy 4" guns were procured and speedily emplaced on a hillside at Bluff Point just north of Geraldton.

The Geraldton Fortress Engineer Section was formed and given the task of siting and emplacing two Aust 90 cm searchlights on the beach between the guns and the sea. The site was poor, dead flat, with the only available ground between the sea and a railway line, which skirted the coast for some two kilometres. Any type of building would stand out conspicuously and no amount of camouflage netting would disguise it adequately. A novel solution to the problem was arrived at. Why not disguise the two lights as fettler's stores? Two timber sheds were built right next to the railway line with a platform leading out to the line itself. Rails were mounted on which sat several gangers' hand driven line trolleys

'borrowed' from the Midland Railway Company. The space under the two platforms – about four feet high – was fitted out as sleeping quarters for the manning details. Having decided on the design the next problem was to obtain large supplies of planks and heavy timber. These were no longer available from conventional sources. However, with typical engineer ingenuity, a friendly visit to a nearby fertiliser factory resulted in the 'gift' of a 20 HP electric motor and a large circular saw blade also suddenly made its appearance. A saw bench with trolleys etc was set up next to the railway line and out Sgt Mechanist climbed a light pole and connected the saw bench to the town electricity supply. For several days, logs arrived by truck from parts unknown and were broken down and turned into planks, sleepers and a variety of timber sizes. Some timber was also reluctantly made available to the gunners.

The fettlers' sheds were quickly erected in a very professional manner and really looked the part. Aerial photographs revealed that they were part of the railway installation. There was no doubt it! The sawmill disappeared as quickly as it had arrived. The searchlights were installed. The mobile Ford V8 generators hidden in the bush, well behind the lights and the cable buried and camouflaged. The project was 'Top Secret'. The Unit was paraded and told that no mention of the guns and searchlights was to be made to anyone. On the first leave into Geraldton, the hotel bar staff were found to be well informed on every aspect of our activities, even to the approximate range of the guns.

So much for secrecy and denying information to the enemy. The searchlights were tested and worked perfectly. The first shoot to 'proof' the guns was a disaster! No. 1 gun recuperator mechanism blew up and disappeared down the hill. An 'Emu Bob' with the Unit spread out in a line, located all the missing parts. New parts were machined in the town and all reassembled. It was found that the wrong type of oil was used in the hydraulic system. There were no ordnance handbooks supplied with the guns. The first real shoot was a gala affair. The Command Post usually held the Battery Commander, two Range takers on the Depression Range Finder (DRF) and telephonist, as well as the Searchlight Officer and his telephonist (the writer). Brigadiers, Colonels and staff Officers arrived by the bus load and all wanted to get into the Command Post. The searchlight

(Continued on Page 6)

(Continued from Page 5)

officer and his telephonist were forced outside and made camp on top of the Command Post with a mobile phone telephone set connected to the harassed Battery Commander and to the two searchlights. Despite these problems, the 'shoot' was a resounding success – the 'target' effectively neutralised and all present voted it a 'jolly good show'. The searchlights were doused and the Battery Commander provided a 'keg' for the enjoyment of the 'other ranks'. Shortly afterwards, morse code was detected flashing from the sea. The vessel towing the target was lost and could not find the entrance to the harbour. The lights were again exposed until the vessel was safely inside the harbour – then all again adjourned to the festivities.

Gunners and Fortress Engineers manned the Geraldton Coast Battery until January 1943. Most of the personnel were then drafted to the new 'Letter Batteries' and Coast Artillery Searchlights sections – to such places as Milne Bay, Oro Bay, Buna, etc and the equipment was handed over to the Volunteer Defence Corps who were trained by a small cadre of 'experts'. All the equipment was withdrawn in 1944. On a recent visit to Geraldton, no trace of the fitters sheds or gun replacements could be found, nor did the City Council know anything about them

Bluff Point is now an old suburb – the house owners unaware of their own backyards – or the activities of the 90 sappers and gunners who occupied their suburb during this critical period in 1942.

Mr. Reg Kidd, who served with the Geraldton Battery

(With thanks to Wendy Mahoney)

Addendum:

Geraldton Fortress

Equipment 2 Ordnance QF 18pdr Mk I I guns on Carriage QF 18pdr Mk I I PA.
 2 Ordnance QF 4 in Naval Mk IX gun.
 2 CASL's

The date that the Geraldton Fortress was so designated is not known, however, it is believed to have been in 1942. The 18 pdr guns were already emplaced by 1 September 1942 and the 4 in guns would have been emplaced after this date.

Geraldton was an important port due to the oil installations. These serviced the large airbase east of the town, the 1 Armoured Division stationed along the coastal strip between Geraldton and Perth, as well as providing alternative bunkering facilities in the event of Fremantle being temporarily put out of action.

The Fortress was manned by a detachment of 3 officers and 40 other ranks from the 19 Australian Garrison Battalion.

An Army paper on coastal and other defences, dated 31 August 1944, indicated that the US Navy 4in guns were to be replaced by British built 4in MKV I I naval guns.

On 16 December 1944, the Geraldton Fortress was disbanded, the readiness status of the unit was reduced to 4 other ranks to man the equipment, to be supplemented by Volunteer Defence Corps members as required.



A Beautiful Scottish Love Story

An elderly Scotsman lay dying in his bed. While suffering the agonies of impending death, he suddenly smelled the aroma of his favourite pan fried drop scones wafting up the stairs.

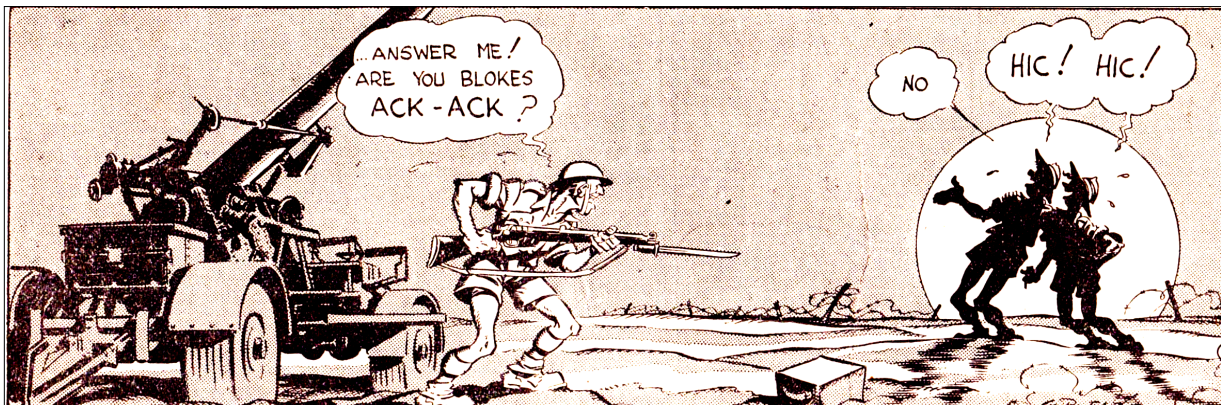
He gathered his remaining strength and lifted himself from the bed. Leaning on the wall, he slowly made his way out of the bedroom with even greater effort. Gripping the railing with both hands, he crawled downstairs. With laboured breath, he leaned against the door frame, gazing into the kitchen.

Were it not for death's agony, he would have thought himself already in heaven, for there, spread out upon the kitchen table were literally hundreds of his favourite scones.

Was it heaven? Or was it one final act of love from his devoted Scottish wife of sixty years, seeing to it that he left this world a happy man?

Mustering one great final effort, he threw himself towards the table, landing on his knees in rumped posture. His aged and withered hand trembled towards a scone at the edge of the table, when it was suddenly smacked by his wife with a wooden spoon

She said..... "F... off, they're for the funeral."



90 years

32,858 days 788,400 hours 47,304,000 minutes

Don Rae 24 February 1929

Bob Arnold 4 March 1929

CONGRATULATIONS

TRIALS ON FOR FIRST INDIGENOUS LONG RANGE 155 MM GUN



Vismal Bhatia / TNN

Jaisalmer: India's first high-capacity indigenous long-range 155 mm gun and Dhanush's supplement gun ATAGS (Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System) trials began on Saturday at Pokhran Field Firing Range in Jaisalmer district. These will go on for five days. The gun in its last trials in August 2018 had fired up to 47.2 km distance.

The ATAGS is being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on two parallel tracks – one prototype in partnership with Tata Power (Strategic Engineering Division) and another with Kaveri Group. The prototype that broke the record was the Tata Power (SED) gun.

Defence sources said the indigenous 155 mm/52 calibre ATAGS gun is being used at the firing range in Jaisalmer and targets at various distances which are approximately 60 kilometres away. The firing capacity is being checked on different parameters and these guns are performing as per the expectations. The ammunition is also being checked. To strengthen the firing capacity of the Army, the ambitious gun is being checked and in the coming days many senior officers of DRDO

and Army have come to Jaisalmer. The gun has world's longest hitting capacity.

Source said DRDO is developing 155 mm /52 Cal Advanced Towed Artillery Gun system that will upgrade the 155mm/45 Cal Dhanush in the future. The ATAGS, India's first indigenous 155 mm/52 calibre towed artillery gun, will be a joint project of two private sector corporations. This

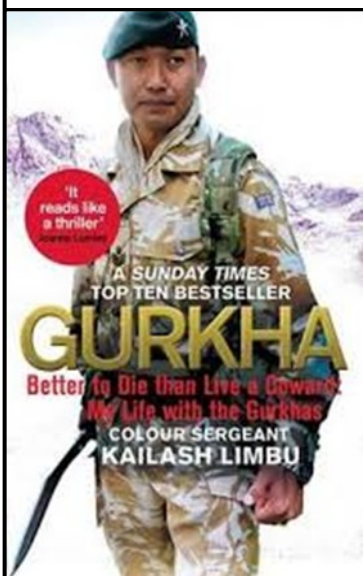
is a reversal of the usual practice of giving only state owned companies these kinds of price orders.

Official said that a prototype with a new range of 50-60 kilometres, will also undergo trials, testing its abilities in different climates and the rain, along with the range accuracy. The ATAGS is the world's only gun with a six round "automated magazine" that fires a six round burst in just 30 seconds. Most other existing 155mm 52 calibre guns have three round magazines, which must be reloaded after firing three rounds. Source said since most casualties are caused by artillery in the initial burst of fire, when enemy soldiers are caught in the open (and not after they dive into their trenches), a high "burst fire" capability is an important attribute. The ATAGS specifications also require it to fire 60 rounds in 60 minutes in the "sustained fire" mode.

Sources said after the gun successfully completes development and firing trials, the army is likely to procure at least 2,000 ATAGS.

(An extract from a September 2018 issue of the Delhi Times with thanks to Neil Lodge)

GURKHA



GURKHA—their very name conjures up terror in the enemy as the recent Falklands conflict demonstrated. Originally stout antagonists of the British in India, these soldiers from the Kingdom of Nepal joined with their aggressors to form an association unique in military history.

Now in Gurkha there is a book as vivid as their military history and traditions. Their fighting prowess, courage and relish of war are legendary, but this book makes it plain why their professionalism and determination in close combat are admired and feared by soldiers around the world.

(In your library, the book Gurkha, plus almost three thousand others, many of which would undoubtedly be of interest to you, await your reading. For further information please call me on 92694544 any Wednesday morning to organise your visit, which will also need to be on a Wednesday.)

Bob Arnold
Editor



**NO DRONES
ALLOWED AT THE
RAAHS**



**CAN'T SOMEONE ELSE
JUST DO IT?**

The secret of enjoying
a good wine:

1. Open the bottle to allow it to
breathe.



2. If it does not look like it's breathing
give it mouth-to-mouth.

"Fools say that you can only gain experience at your own expense, but I have always contrived to gain my experience at the expense of others." — Prince Bismark



The Annual Feast of St Barbara's Dinner (now All Ranks) was held at Hobbs Artillery Park Karrakatta on the 12th of December 2018, traditionally the first Friday in December.

This year we not only Honoured the Patron Saint of Explosives, but also remembered the Centenary of the signing of the Armistice to end World War. The special Guests at the dinner were Mr Edward Hobbs, the Great Grandson of LT GEN Sir Joseph John Talbot Hobbs KCB KCMG VD. He was one of 3 Australian Generals who came through the ranks to lead Australians, and soldiers of other Nations throughout World War 1.

The other special Guest was the Minister of the Garrison Church St Matthew's Guildford, the Reverend Katrina Holgate. The Garrison Church St Matthews was the church that the soldiers who were training around Guildford and at the Blackboy Hill Camp, before, and during World War 1, would attend on Sundays. The Garrison Church St Matthews is also the church where the Silk Ensign that was presented to the Battery Commander of 8 Battery RAA, MAJOR Bessel Brown by Mr J Frederick in 1914 was hung until 1982 when it fell and disintegrated.

The remains were burnt in the Military Tradition and placed in an Urn, the Urn is now located in the Underground Chapel of the Leighton Battery Tunnels.

The Members at the Dinner were also able to welcome one of the oldest World War 2 Gunners in Western Australia, Gunner Ronnie Roach (Ret'd) served at the Buckland Hill Anti-Aircraft Battery and other Anti-Aircraft Batteries in the protection of the Port of Fremantle.

63 Serving and Retired Members of RAA and one Carer attended the Dinner, 6 were First Timers and there were 25 Apologies, many of whom had attended previous St Barbara's Dinners.

The Functions Organising Sub Committee of the RAA Association Inc greatly appreciated the support and assistance provided by the SMIG, WO2 Joseph Millington and his team of Soldiers from the Battery.

The 51 Australian Cadet Unit Swan Regiment Drums and Pipes greatly assisted the evening with their music, marching and professional rendition on many of the popular Military Tunes

The meal and service provided by the Prestige Caterers was of their usual high standard and was appreciated by all.

Many memories were recalled with the showing of the slide show before the Dinner and the Movie of some of the Batteries Activities, put together by Jim Archibald, after the Dinner

While the evening is only for 5 hours, this gave those attending the opportunity to meet up with friends made while serving with the RAA, or making new friends at the Dinner.

Tom Arnautovic — Peter Rowles — Stan Davies

Ubique





RSLWA

ANZAC Day Commemorative March Protocols

The Dawn Service, Gunfire Breakfast, ANZAC Day Parade, and ANZAC Day Commemorative Service are the prime opportunities to remember those who gave so much for our country—especially those who are no longer with us.

In respect of participating in the ANZAC Day Commemorative March, participants should be aware that the consensus of the returned servicemen and women, who form the body of this March, is that they be allowed to retain the integrity of their individual units for as long as possible. While they recognise the importance of, and respect the participation of next of kin (NOK), they request the following guidelines be observed by all participants:

- *All marches should conform to forming up and marching four abreast.
- *Veterans should march directly behind their unit banner and, accompanied by one carer if needed. That carer should be of an age where they directly assist the Veteran.
- *Veterans having difficulty completing the March are encouraged to use the transport provided, but must remain in the vehicle until the March is complete
- *If a veteran must fall out of the March, he/she should be directed to a Marshall for assistance. Unit Associations should continue so as not to disrupt the movement of the March.
- *NOK should march behind the veterans and be old enough to march the full distance without assistance. **Please note baby prams are not permitted.**
- *NOK representation should be restricted to one per veteran. Attire should be neat and tidy out of respect to the fallen (torn denim, sporting attire, dirty joggers etc are not acceptable standards).
- ***Carrying pictures of relatives is not supported.**
- *NOK are to wear medals on the right breast (left breast is reserved for the original owners).
- *Media services have been advised not to conduct interviews 'on the move' during the March.
- *Veterans are requested not to join or leave the March other than at the Assembly or Dispersal points.
- ***Only recognised National Flags are to be carried in the Parade.**
- ***Please note that it is not a cultural Parade but a March for ADF, and Ex-Service personnel and National Dress and NOK not wearing medals is not supported.**

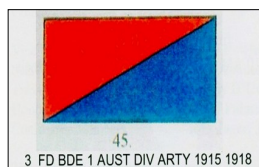
We would be grateful if you adopted these guidelines and by doing so you will not only honour your fallen comrades and forebears, but you will also help maintain the ANZAC tradition we are all so proud of.



"Just as I thought, filthy boots"



This young soldier, injured in the line of duty awaits treatment. See him on your next visit to the tunnels as he stoically and patiently looks forward to being the RAP Corporal's next patient



(Continued from Artillery WA 4/18)

8 Battery has the longest continuous history of any other unit in WA; it can trace its antecedents back to 19th July, 1870. In WWI 8 Battery became the only complete WA artillery unit to deploy at Gallipoli and the Western Front as part of 3 Field Artillery Brigade, 1 Australian Division. Many WA artillerymen served post WW2, in one or more of 7, 8, 9 and 103 batteries as part of 3 Field Regiment RAA.

Only four guns could be manned thereafter. Two of these were relocated to Plugge's Plateau (300ft sheer rise from the beach). Numerous redeployments were made to 21 and 26 Bty mountain guns between Plugge's Plateau, Walkers Ridge in the north, the lower end of Shrapnel gully and south to a spur on Bolton's Ridge.

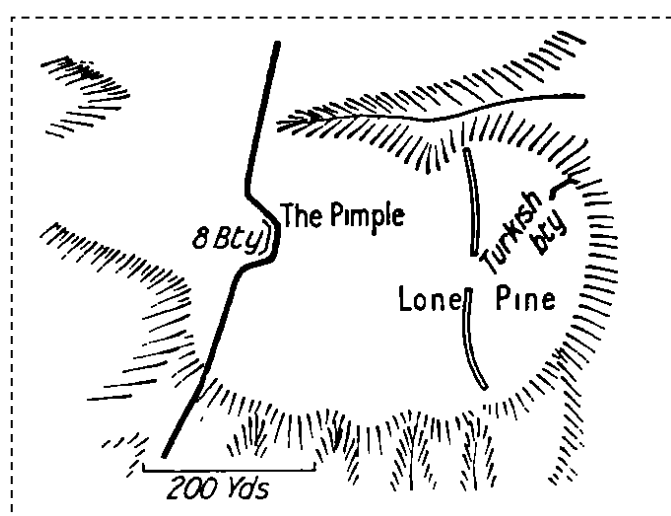
The eventual deployment positions were thus:

21 Bty	2 guns on Bolton's Ridge.	In support of 1 Division.	Firing Sth, E or Nth.
	4 guns on Shrapnel Gully.	In support of NZ and A Division.	Firing Nth or NE.
26 Bty	2 guns on Walkers Ridge.	In support NZ and A Division.	Firing Nth or NE.
	2 guns on Plugge's Plateau	In support NZ and A Division.	Firing Nth or NE.
	2 guns on Bolton's Ridge.	In support NZ and A Division.	Firing Nth or NE.

On the night of May 1st, the New Zealand and Australian Division was to attack Baby 700. To support this, on that previous night, 2 guns of Bessell-Browne's 8 Bty were manhandled by 160 men on drag ropes up slopes of 60 degrees to just below the crest of the 400 Plateau near where the Indian 26 Bty had suffered severe casualties on the 25th April. The position was named Browne's Dip. In two days Browne's battery sustained 22 casualties. One gun wheel was splintered and two 77mm projectiles pierced the shield of the same gun. By 3rd May two guns of 8 Bty 3 Bde were in continuous action on Bolton's Hill near 7 Battery. (Rosenthal, 1920)

On his daily visit to this front, Bridges noted a nearby position (The Pimple) a salient which penetrated 150 yards across the summit of 400 Plateau towards the new earthworks at Lone Pine. A sunken road known as Gun Lane was built to the gun pits on the Pimple. Five days and nights of nonstop digging and dragging to get the four guns into position. Two guns were laid to the north and two to the East enabling them to fire onto enemy trenches at ranges from 75 to 900 yards.

Diagram showing 8 Battery guns at The Pimple forward trenches/Lone Pine proximity

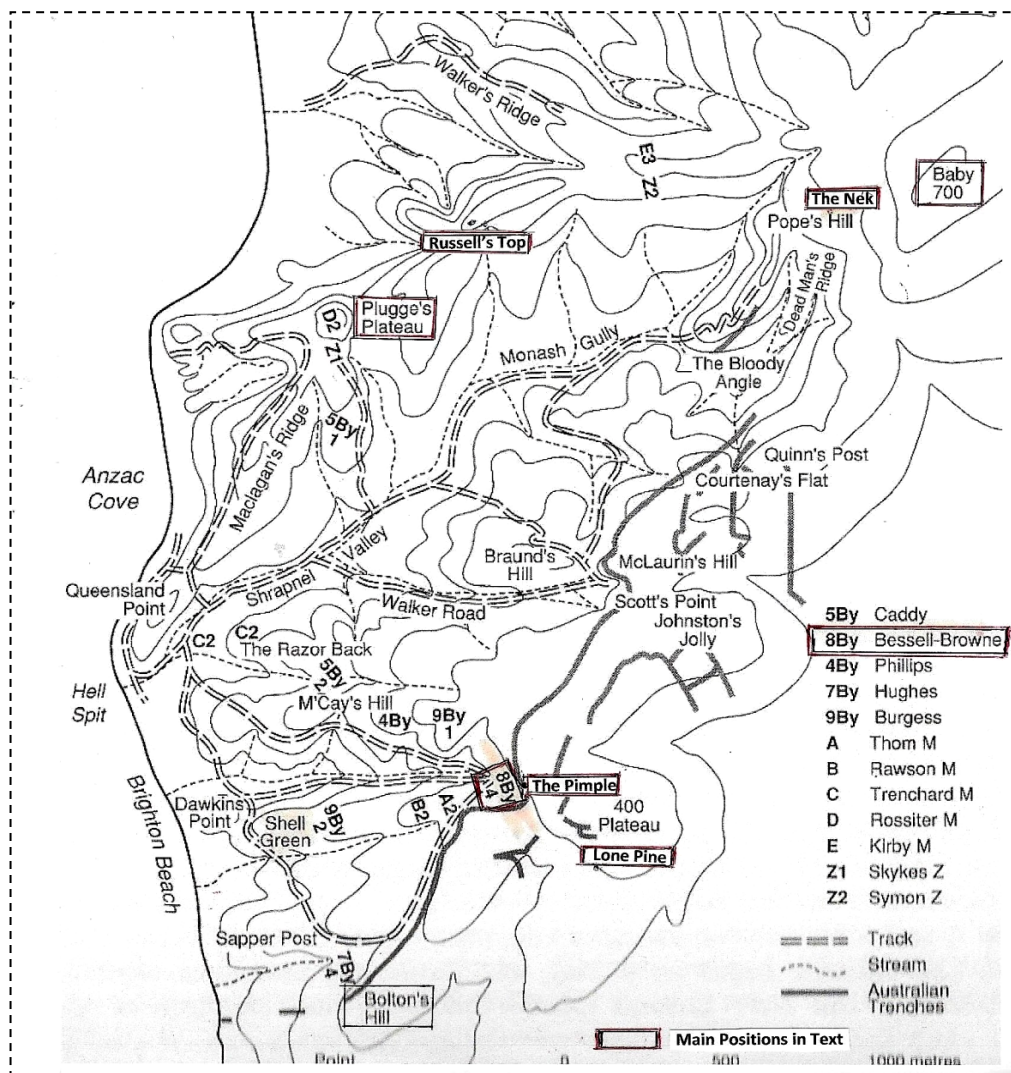


(Bean, 1941, p. 67)

(Continued from Page 12)

Against Hobbs' advice, on May 4th, the 8 Bty guns were run forward into the infantry trenches at the Pimple. Daylight saw these guns in full sight of the Turkish lines. They were hastily covered in bushes to hide them. That night the guns were withdrawn to Browne's Dip.

Map showing positions in text, taken from Horner and modified.



Horner, 1995, p. 100)

Birdwood's chief artillery officer Brigadier-General Cunliffe Owen (until this time having been preoccupied with co-ordinating the naval gunfire, leaving the field artillery to its own devices) visited Browne and his 8 Bty guns and explained that the works on Lone Pine must be immediately bombarded. At 4 pm that afternoon, 5th May, in full view of the Turks to the North, "A" and "B" sub-section detachments used drag ropes to run the guns up a hundred yards on to the crest of 400 and into the trenches of the infantry. Sandbags were pulled down, the guns run up forward and at a range of 400 yds fired 14 rounds as rapidly as possible into the new Turks' earthworks. Rifle fire from the enemy and shrapnel from their guns was inaccurate. With the drag ropes reversed and lying flat the 8 Bty gun detachments hauled the guns back and sandbags were replaced. There were no casualties.

Bridges ordered a repeat of this which gravely concerned Hobbs for three reasons: Guns used like shotguns did not utilise the capability of indirect fire; secondly, Hobbs was fully aware that shrapnel rounds were unsuitable against Turkish trenches and guns in gun pits. The more appropriate HE rounds were not available until June. In addition, Hobbs knew that his 18 yr old son Athol was on one of the gun detachments, putting him in a vulnerable position. Bridges' determination and frustration is expressed by his order of 6th May, 1915:

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“Field guns are to brought forward into a more forward position.... A Turkish trench is being prepared within 400 yards of this salient (the Pimple opposite Lone pine) and it is imperative that this should be stopped.”

At the same time 4 pm on May 6th, the same detachments ran forward their guns. 20 rounds were fired without loss. (Bean, 1941, pp. 68-69)

Bridges ordered a third operation at sunset. This was done at 7:00 pm. By now the Turks had registered the gun position and by lying flat under heavy fire the detachments escaped with only two wounded (Sgt J.R. Braidwood from Kelmscott WA, and Gnr D.L. Lovell of East Perth WA).

The day before, on 5th May, Major William Burgess, BC 9 Battery, was ordered to bring his guns ashore. While he was searching for gun sites and observation posts, 8 Battery and 4 Battery 2 Brigade (On 400 Plateau) were involved in the first bombardments of Lone Pine – 400 yards away with direct fire and Baby 700- 2500 yards away perhaps using indirect fire. A Turkish battery well to the south fired on Hughes 7 Battery located on the Sth of Bolton’s Hill. Later discovered to be in the Olive Grove, this battery caused serious casualties on the beach. It was nicknamed “Beachy Bill” Of significance was that this new battery also fired HE for the first time at Anzac. Burgess noted the direction of this fire and reported to Rosenthal at his HQ. Both Rosenthal and Burgess were wounded when a HE round exploded in the former’s HQ dugout.

Despite the experimental use of artillery firing from trenches it became clear that artillery fire using shrapnel would have no effect on the extension of the earthworks on Lone pine, but the pressure to maintain this fire was not eased. Some gun fire was better than nothing. By now the Pimple gun site had been accurately registered by the Turkish guns which overlooked them. As soon as Browne’s guns moved into the salient a shell burst among the men of the detachment, killing one and wounding four. (Bean, 1941, p. 72)

Because Lone Pine could not be engaged by his own artillery, Hobbs enlisted the aid of the other Division, in particular the NZ howitzer artillery. A NZ observer located at the summit of Russell’s Top clearly saw a Turkish gun position on Lone Pine on the 9th May and targeted it with the howitzers; the effect of this fire was uncertain.

On May 10th the northern most gun of 8 Battery (probably one of those in The Pimple) opened fire on 200 Turks advancing towards Quinn’s post 700 yards away. A Turk counter battery fired a shell through its shield and three rounds in the gun pit. No casualties were mentioned in the Australian War Memorial report. (Bean, 1941, p. 72)

Whenever the advanced batteries on Bolton’s Hill or the Pimple were fired, they instantly drew answering fire upon themselves and the infantry around them. Occasionally for example upon the request of General Walker for a bombardment at dawn on May 27th -Browne’s guns opened fire on Johnston’s Jolly and Lone Pine, at 400 and 175 yards respectively. The reply was usually almost instantaneous. On the occasion mentioned the Turks three times hit the emplacements, fortunately just after the guns had been withdrawn, and two days later opened with a field-piece from their front trench at Johnston’s Jolly, putting one of Browne’s guns out of action for half the day. (Bean, 1941, p. 82)

The problems of command and control resulted in a new organisation at this time. The battle line was divided into four sections. All artillery was allocated to a particular section, each being commanded by a brigadier of infantry. Except with special precautions, a gun was never to fire at targets other than those on the front of the sector to which it was allotted.

Bessell-Browne’s 8 Battery in action at Browne’s Dip, was transferred from Rosenthal to Lt Col Johnson of the NZ and Australian Division. 8 Battery would support the other division which was further away. Similarly the divisions exchanged artillery so that I Division guns supported the NZ and Australian Division and vice versa. Lone Pine and the Australian line on 400 plateau was to be engaged by the NZ howitzer Battery located beneath Ari Burnu and the guns on Russell’s Top.

(To be continued ArtilleryWA 2/19)

LONG SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS



Bob Farrelly 25 years



Muriel Vivoda 15 years



Andrew Dunjey 25 years



Barry Ellis 15 years



Neil Lodge 15 years

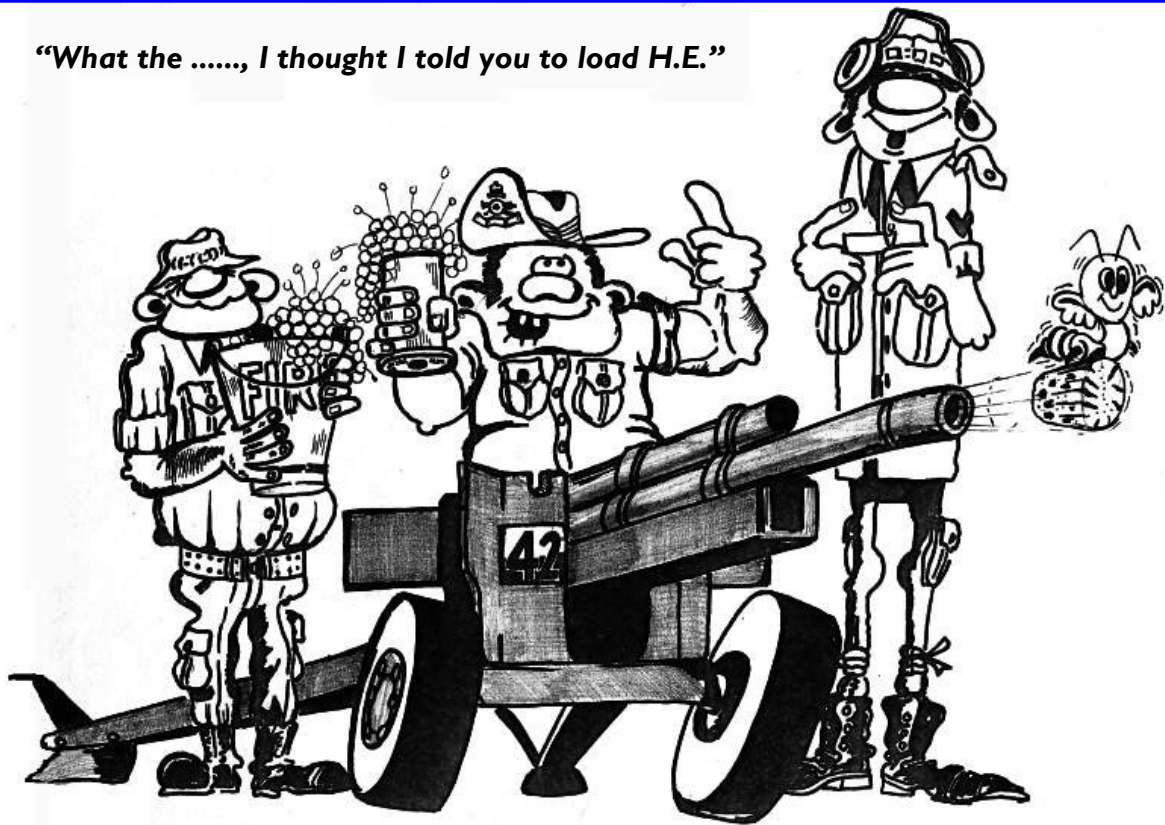


Matthew Adams 20 years

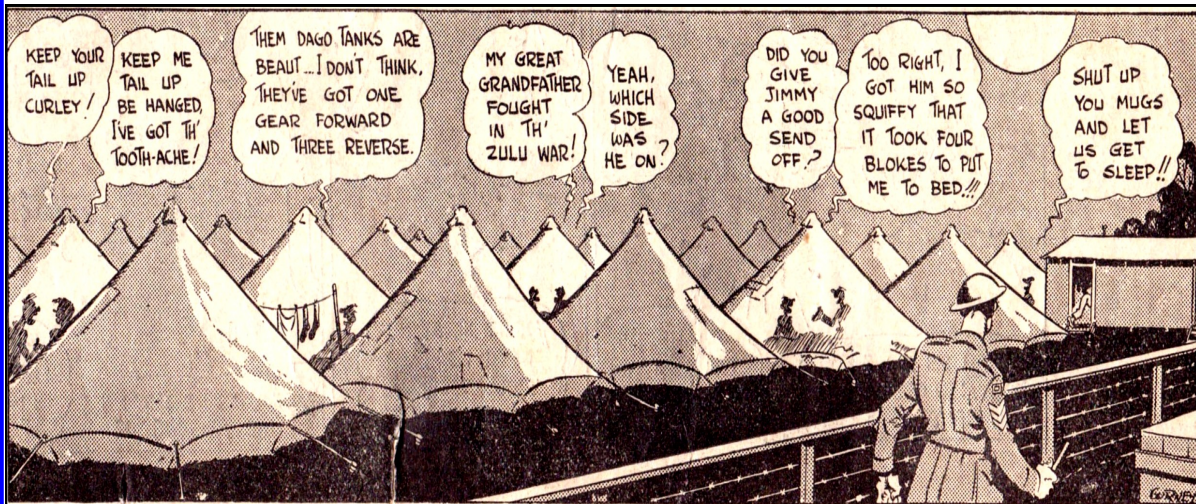


Craig Machin 10 years

"What the, I thought I told you to load H.E."



"SANDGROPER BATTERY"



**Great works are performed
not by strength but by
perseverance.**

Samuel Johnson