



# Artillery WA



Official Newsletter of the Royal Australian Artillery Association of WA (Inc), RAA Historical Society of WA (Inc)  
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## **A MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER GUNNER ST JAMES'S PARK LIEUTENANT GENERAL SIR ANDREW GREGORY KBE CB DL ARTILLERY DAY**

**- 26 MAY 2021**

I wish to extend my personal greetings and best wishes to all 'Gunners' of the Royal Regiments of Artillery, serving and retired, and their families, across the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth on this year's Artillery Day, 26 May 2021.

Having said at Christmas that, '2020 will go down in history as a most unusual year', that reality has now crept well into 2021. While vaccines offer a light at the end of the tunnel, globally there is still some way to go until we are freed from the constraints we have had to live with for over a year. The pandemic has continued to cause many members of our Regimental communities personal sadness, distress and difficulties. But despite that, our Regiments across the globe are busy both fulfilling their normal operational roles as well as participating in the protracted battle to manage the continuing COVID virus. That is something in which we should all take great pride and is a credit to our officers and soldiers. As an example, I would highlight the fact that the Royal Canadian Artillery have 'taken the battle' to the pandemic by flying inoculation teams and vaccine, by Chinook and Twin Otters, into the remoter northern parts of Canada. That is terrific work.

For those struggling for whatever reason, this is also when our Regimental charitable networks come to the fore. It does not matter how long somebody has served; the timeless adage, 'Once a Gunner, Always a Gunner', should never be forgotten and we must all look after our Regimental 'family' when crisis looms. Short of general war, there is unlikely to be such a worthy purpose for our Charities than during and in the aftermath of COVID.

I remain hopeful that I will still be able to travel overseas and to participate in the two major milestones this year. These are the 150th anniversaries of the formation of the Royal Canadian Artillery and the Royal Australian Artillery. I look forward very much to both.

I therefore wish all Gunners, serving and retired, home and abroad, and their families, my very best wishes for Artillery Day on 26th May. Keep your guard up stay safe and continue to honour our motto

*"Quo Fas Et Gloria Ducant"* - "Where Right and Glory Lead"



## NOTICE BOARD

### ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION IN ARTY WA

In the last two issues, Graham McKenzie-Smith has provided articles for the newsletter "The Army Reorganises Again", and "The Army in WA In 1914" both of which have been of much interest.

To ensure that the ideal number of pages -12, were filled in the last issue an article titled "Morse Code — The internet of it's day" was sourced from another newsletter with the approval of the editor.

Items for inclusion, and which are regularly needed, should be submitted for the next issue by 16 September 2021 to the Editor Bob Arnold at [arnold353@bigpond.com](mailto: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@artillery-wa.org.au](mailto:info@artillery-wa.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.

### RAAHS BUSY BEES FOR 2021

31 July, 28 August 25 September, 30 October, 27 November.

### LEIGHTON BATTERY OPEN DAYS

The Tunnels are currently closed due to Covid 19 Restrictions.

### OFFICE BEARERS

#### RAA ASSOCIATION

##### President

Bob Farrelly

##### Vice President

Peter Mahoney

##### Secretary

John Blylevens

##### Treasurer

Stan Davies

#### Committee Persons

Wendy Mahoney

Raymond Kennedy

Ken Hepworth

Robert Coales

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#### RAA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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##### Secretary

John Blylevens

##### Treasurer

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#### Committee Persons

Mathew Adams

Phillip Rowson

James Archibald

##### IT Consultant

Stan Davies

##### Curator

Don Rae

For those who need a reminder—subs are due on the First of January each year and may be paid directly to the treasurer or may be made direct to the Bank Accounts:

RAA Historical Society—BSB 066 103 Account No 0090 3744

RAA Association— BSB 066 163 Account No 0090 2583

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

## Fellow Gunners

**I** was pleased to see that WA proposes to move to Phase 5 easing of Covid restrictions which is as close as getting back to normal pre Covid as we can hope for. Nevertheless, looking at what has happened in other States we need to be vigilant as new cases can occur without warning.

## 150th Anniversary Commemorations

The 1st of August 2021 will be the 150th anniversary of the establishment of a permanent Australian artillery capability. This is a significant milestone for both the RAA and the Army. 3 BTY will be conducting a gun salute in King's Park as part of a coordinated gun salute across Australia. We will also acknowledge this important anniversary at Gunner's Day and the Feast of Saint Barbara.

That said, the 150th anniversary of artillery in WA is in 2022 when we will celebrate more and we are hopeful of obtaining the Queens Banner for Gunner's Day 2022. We wish the Regiment every success for the celebrations.

## Anzac Day

As we all know, ANZAC Day 2021 was cancelled for a second year due to Covid 19. like many I celebrated the day with the driveway Dawn Service and I was still please to see a number of people in our street doing this as well.

Hopefully ANZAC Day 2022 will be third time lucky and go ahead.

Gunners Day 2021 , will be held on Sunday, 7th of November at Guildford as normal.

Put a place holder in your diaries for **Sunday 7th of November 2021.**

## Feast of Saint Barbara 2021

Planning is well under way and we have requested support again from 51 ACU Pipes and Drums. Food will again be provided by

Prestige Caterers.

Put a place holder in your diaries for **Friday 3rd of December 2021.**

Given the importance of this year to all Gunners please contact those who served and encourage them to attend both Gunner's Day and the Feast of Saint Barbara.

## Congratulations to LTCOL Rob Coales

Congratulations to Rob Coales who will become CO of the Western Australian University Regiment (WAUR) from January 2022. WAUR provides first appointment training for new officers and all corps training and performs an important role. Rob will be the fourth Gunner to command the Regiment in the past two decades. Well done Rob and we wish you every success.

## RAA Association membership

A reminder that the first years membership with the Association is free to current serving members. Members of 3 BTY should contact CAPT Wes Sutton.

It is also timely to remind serving members that the first year membership to the RSL is free for serving Members (both ARA and ARES)

**Ubique**

Bob Farrelly

LTCOL

President

## THE AIMING POST

### Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society

#### Greetings

**M**embers may note that my quarterly report comments continue to be presented chronologically over the three-month span between Aiming Posts.

Early in March the Society sold at auction furniture (ex 6" shell room) surplus to our needs. The proceeds netted \$657.75.

The re-elected Management Committee was pleased to have member Ian Randles sit in as an observer beginning with the March meeting. We were equally pleased to hear Ian indicate his willingness to join the Committee. Ian is a long term member and brings a wealth of business/ political knowledge .

At the AGM in March I had the pleasure of awarding long service badges from amongst our volunteers. I visited our most senior member, Mrs Ronnie Roach, at her home to present her badge. Ronnie was very pleased to receive it, and to catch up on the latest happenings within the RAAHS.

In late March your V/P and I represented the RAAHS at the launch of the W.A. Military Digital Library Website. The venue was the W.A. Army Museum. A large amount of our State's military history is now available for the community to view electronically. We may be able to use that data source to detail military service from Mosman Park citizens and employ it as display material in the 5.25" spaces.

Consider these numbers for a moment. There are several members who have been able to achieve the following valued input to our busy-bee sessions- For a person to attend say, 11 of the 12 monthly dates, and was on-site for 5 hours. That equates to 55 hours a year. Multiply that figure by the 30 Year badge achieved recently and it records 1,650 hours of volunteer input. And that is for one member! RAAHS is very lucky to have people like this in its ranks.

With the Social Distancing rules likely to be around for the near future, the Society has had to formulate a revised visitor format for tunnel tours. The Treasurer has indicated the substantial hit to our finances being closed for over a year has caused.

A plan has been placed before the Committee and has been accepted. It will eliminate Guide contact with visitors in the tunnel spaces. Tour groups of up to 10 will leave the CP every 15 minutes rather than the current 30 minute departures. A tour will receive maps, listen to an electronic introduction in the CP, and will then be led by a Guide via the two anti-aircraft gun sites to the 6" gun floor, where that weapon's role be explained.

They will then be directed to the stairway and be moved through each room via a sound and light arrangement activated by the lead visitor passing a movement beam at each of

the rooms. All passageway lights will remain fully lit.

Tour parties will see signs with the Room Number and the next Direction Arrow. Several strategically sited closed doors will channel tours at junctions.

Timings for audio talks, and movement between rooms have been considered- a typical tunnel tour will last nearly an hour. The electronic audio talks last for 2- 3 minutes apiece- there will be about a dozen stations experienced during a tour.

A guide will be stationed at the south tunnel exit door to thank tour groups and then secure the door. When the 5.25" display is ultimately ready, that guide will invite the tour group to inspect those rooms. The displays will be self-explanatory and visitors can take their time there.

We intend rotating the 4 guides from CP to 6" site, then across to southern tunnel, then to 5.25" rooms, then back to CP, (security for Cashier and tea break).

In the words of your Vice- President;

"After an interesting approval process with TOMP the replica turret for the 5.25" gun is under construction at Spearwood and is scheduled to be installed at Leighton in June."

The Society's busy-bee members are continuing to split their time between preparing the 5.25" rooms (for professional painting) and re-wiring the 6" spaces for the Audio/Light electronics.

In early May I represented the Society at Irwin Barracks to attend a talk by Professor Stephen Smith titled "The Importance of the Indian Ocean Rim to W.A." The audience comprised senior officers from 13 Bde and Association representatives. You may re-call Smith's time as Minister of Defence, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Trade.

In mid- May the Committee saw fit to recognise V/P Graham Mackenzie-Smith's heavy (and productive) workload in the re-development of the Battery. I presented him with the engraved Plaque- which is your Society's highest award. Congratulations Graham!

That's your lot for now!

*David.*

***Go the Demons!***

*What a moving poem by one so young—the painting is also by Joshua. He was tasked at school to write a poem for Remembrance Day.*

**ONE THOUSAND MEN ARE WALKING**

One thousand men are walking, walking side by side  
Singing songs from home, the spirit as their guide.  
They walk towards the light milord, they walk towards the sun.  
They smoke and laugh and smile together no foes to outrun.  
These men live on forever, in the hearts of those they saved.  
A nation truly grateful for the path of peace they paved.  
The emerald grass un trampled, a reward for what they gave.  
The dream of those they left behind and know the dream of them.  
Forever in those poppy fields there walks one thousand men.

Lest we forget  
Joshua Dyer (aged 14)





## THE STORY BEHIND THE URN



**A**t the outbreak of WW1, Mr. James Fredericks, a Perth Citizen, presented a Blue Ensign to Colonel Kyngdon, Commandant 5<sup>th</sup> Military District, requesting that he, in turn, present it to an Officer Commanding a West Australian Unit about to embark for service overseas. Colonel Kyngdon presented the ensign to Major A. J. Bessell-Browne, DSO who commanded 8 Battery 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Brigade Australian Field Artillery. It was gratefully accepted and became the Battery Banner.

The Banner was first flown at Blackboy Camp during preliminary training. Then, at Mena Camp Egypt during intensive training, in the field at ANZAC Cove Gallipoli, and later taken to France and flown on the Somme in 1916 and early 1917 in the Ypres Salient. It was then safely stored until the end of the War.

After demobilization, it was decided to deposit the Banner in St. Matthews Church Guildford for safe keeping following the custom in Garrison Churches in England. Guildford, prior to and after WW1, was the Remount Depot for Artillery and Light Horse Units. On Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> September 1919, the Banner was unveiled in St. Matthews Garrison Church by the 8<sup>th</sup> Battery's first Officer Commanding, Brigadier General A. J. Bessell-Browne, CB, CMG, DSO, VD.

In 1928, the Artillery Comrades' Association (today's RAA Association – WA) proposed, with the cooperation of the Church and the Municipality of Guildford, to hold the first ceremony of Gunners' Day on the nearest Sunday to 8<sup>th</sup> August – the date in 1918 when Australian Forces broke the line at Villers Bretonneaux. Apart from the WW2 interval, Gunners' Day has been celebrated annually at St. Matthews Church since 1928, more recently on the first Sunday in November.

By 1992, the Banner had disintegrated and was removed from the Church and handed to the RAA Association - WA for safe keeping. Following another Gunner tradition, the remnants of the Banner were "consumed by fire" on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1992, the ashes being consecrated by Army Chaplain Bianchini in the presence of Ian Bessell-Browne, (Patron RAA Historical Society WA) son of the Brigadier General, John Talbot Hobbs, (then President RAAA-WA) grandson of Lieutenant General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs, and representatives of the RAA Historical Society of WA.

The ashes were sealed in the brass Urn and for twenty eight years displayed at Leighton Battery Heritage Site, testimony to all Gunners who have, and are serving the Nation and for those who paid the supreme sacrifice.

In a symbolic gesture, the RAA Association Australia – WA Branch has offered the Urn to St. Matthews Parish Council to be suitably displayed within the Church, recognizing the exceptional link between the Garrison Church and the local Gunner Fraternity.

Final details will be announced later this year.

UBIQUE

## **LEIGHTON BATTERY HERITAGE SITE**

### **AN EXCITING NEW INNOVATION**

RAAHS has been dramatically affected by restrictions imposed by COVID-19 as there has been no income generated from visitors to LBHS since 16th March 2020. This represents a revenue shortfall exceeding \$25,000.00.

To allow LBHS to operate in the new COVID world the Committee is introducing a “Sound and Light”, motion activated audio system that would allow small groups of visitors to circulate throughout the 300 metres of Tunnels viewing the 14 Display Rooms.

At each display area a motion activated audio presentation is generated describing the function within the room, at the conclusion of which visitors are directed to the next location.

Guides will still describe the surface features of the site and with the self-guided component in the tunnels, the tour will still take about one hour.

The installation of the system was completed on 26th June 2021. A tour by a group of “visitor friends” who had not previously attended the Heritage Site was trialed on Sunday 27th June and it is pleasing to report that the system functioned smoothly with a little fine tuning necessary. With these changes it should be possible for LBHS to be operated during at least some of the milder COVID restrictions.

An introduction to the system for the benefit of our Guide and Cashier community was scheduled for 4th July, following which it had been planned is hoped to re-open the facility to the public on 11th July, subject to what happens with the latest COVID restrictions.

However with the 29th June lockdown this has been postponed for two weeks with the Guide/Cashier briefing now scheduled for 18th July before welcoming the public on 25th July

An excellent concept, Jim Archibald is to be congratulated for his skill and dedication to the implementation of a system and procedure that will allow for resumption of a form of “Business as Usual” at the popular World War 2 coast defense site.



In the heyday of sailing ships old warships and many freighters carried iron cannons. Those cannons fired round iron cannonballs. It was necessary to keep a good supply near the cannon. However how to prevent them from rolling about the deck? The best storage method devised was a square based pyramid with one ball on top resting on four resting on 9 which rested on 16. Thus a supply of 30 cannonballs could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon. There was only one problem...how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding or rolling from under the others. the solution was a metal plate called a 'Monkey' with 16 round indentations.

However if this plate was made of iron, the iron balls would quickly rust to it. The solution to the rusting problem was to make 'Brass Monkeys.' Few landlubbers realise that brass contracts much more and much faster than iron when chilled.

Consequently when the temperature dropped too far the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannonballs would come right off the monkey. Thus it was quite literally, 'cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey. (All this time you thought that was an improper expression, didn't you.)

If you don't send this fabulous bit of historic knowledge to any and all your unsuspecting friends your floppy is going to fall off your hard drive and kill your mouse

## **THESE GLORIOUS INSULTS ARE FROM AN ERA** **"BEFORE" ENGLISH GOT BOILED DOWN TO** **4-LETTER WORDS**

**A** member of Parliament to Disraeli : *"Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease.*

*"That depends, Sir, said Disraeli, "whether I embrace your policies or your mistress.*

*"He had delusions of adequacy." - Walter Kerr.*

*"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire." - Winston Churchill.*

*I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure." - Clarence Darrow*

*"He has never been known to use a word that may send the reader to a dictionary". Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway)"*

*More next issue - space permitting*



## GONE WITH THE GUNS

*By Les Emery*

On a recent drive through Perth's iconic Kings Park, I was surprised to see that the four 19<sup>th</sup> century guns that have for many years flanked the statue of Queen Victoria in Fraser Avenue had been removed. Hoping that this was not another case of political correctness at work I contacted the Kings Park Board office to find out the story.



A very helpful person there was able to put me at ease, explaining that the guns had been removed for some necessary restoration, as some of the wood in the wheels had rotted out and some of the iron fittings on the carriages were badly corroded. The process may take quite some time to complete, particularly the restoration of the wheels, as the Board is having some difficulty in finding a wheelwright who can undertake this work. It may well be that the job will have to be completed interstate, or even overseas given that this is becoming a lost art. Initially I did not find it easy to locate specific information on the guns, which it seems were used by Western Australia's colonial volunteer forces before being placed as sentinels for Queen Victoria's statue. After some further enquiries I was able to make contact with the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society of Western Australia (Inc.) and thanks to their Curator and Committee member Don Rae I was able to access some very detailed information. I understand that it was this organisation that raised the issue of the deteriorating condition of the gun's carriages with the Kings Park Board.

The first reference to these guns in Western Australia is on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1843, when the Perth Gazette reported "ARRIVED – On Friday, the 4<sup>th</sup> instant, the brig William Wise, Byron, from London and the Cape.[...] imports per William Wise from London [...] 4 guns, 2 mortars,..."



Two of the guns are 12-pounder, smooth bore Howitzers manufactured in 1843 by W. North. They are of a type that was used by British forces during the Crimea War (1853-1856), however as they arrived in the state well before this time they would not have been present in the Crimea. Their history of service after their arrival is vague, however it would seem that following service with the British

garrison troops they were most likely transferred to the Enrolled Pensioner Force when British troops departed in March 1863. Following the disbandment of the Enrolled Pensioner Force on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1880 these and other artillery pieces were either put into storage or used by other colonial military units.

The other two guns are 6-pounder, smooth bore howitzers, dated 1813 and 1814 were manufactured by H & C King and are of a type used by British forces during the Peninsula War, and later at the Battle of Waterloo. Some references suggest that this pair were actually present at Waterloo, however I have not been able to find any definitive confirmation of this. As with the 12-pounders these guns formed

part of the armoury of the colonial forces Another reference to the 6-pounder guns occurs when a reference is made following the establishment of the Fremantle Naval Volunteers on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1879, under the command of Lieutenant George A. Forsyth. They were equipped with amongst other items, 6-pounder smooth bore guns. The brass 6-pounder was designed by Thomas Blomfield and was in service as early as 1797. This gun became the standard weapon of the British Royal Horse Artillery until its replacement in the 1860s.

Following Federation, a report was prepared on the defences in each state. The Report of the Military Committee of Inquiry dated 1901 found that two 4.5-inch mortars, two 12-pounders and two 6-pounders were obsolete and were no longer required for defence purposes. They were recommended for disposal to local parks. As part of this distribution of obsolete artillery pieces two 12-pounders and two 6-pounders were made available to Kings Park, for placement around the statue of Queen Victoria.

The statue was unveiled with much fanfare by His Excellency the governor, Sir Frederick Bedford on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1903. It was reported



that the task of relocation of these guns was given to Colonel Ricardo, who was in charge of the military force at Fremantle.

In October 1939, the Kings Park Board received a request that the guns be removed from around Queen Victoria's statue, however given their historic significance it was decided that they remain in place. No reason for this request was reported, however it may well have been that the guns had at that time also fallen into disrepair.

Subject to the necessary restoration being completed, we can at some stage look forward to again seeing these guns taking their rightful place around Queen Victoria, to provide another insight into the State's colonial history.





**ARMY SPEAK 1907****British Army—India**

22nd December 1907

From: The Officer Commanding. 49th Punjabis

To:

The Assistant Adjutant-General

8th (Lucknow) Division

Naini Tal.

Sir,

I have been appointed to represent Dr. Rashni in our discussions on the Malaria outbreak etc.  
etc.etc

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signature)

Rank

Designation

\*\*\*\*\*

**ARMY SPEAK 2021****Australian Government****Department of Defence**

Defence Support Group

2021/1047090321

DPS 287/21

**Assistant Secretary International Relations**

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

CANBERRA ACT 2600

**REGIONAL SECURITY SEMINAR**

The seminar will take place in Room 106 Northbourne house on 23 November 2021 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. etc. etc. etc.

*Signed**R S JONES*

Director-General Business Management



QUIETLY READING AN  
EARLY EDITION OF —