



Artillery WA



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Head of Regiment Order of the Day

By Brigadier D. J. Hill, AM

Presentation of the Banner of Queen Elizabeth II (1871-2021)

Today, the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery will be presented with the Banner of Queen Elizabeth II (1871-2021) by His Excellency, The Honourable, General David Hurley, AC, DSC (Retd) on behalf of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, our former Captain-General.

The Royal Regiment has the unique privilege and honour to have been presented three successive Banners by two reigning Sovereigns; the first having been presented over 110 years ago. Thus, the renewal of the original Queen's Banner, to mark the 150th anniversary of Australian artillery, perpetuates this proud heritage and connection to Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

The original Banner, known as the King's Banner, was presented in November 1904 on behalf of His Majesty King Edward VII in recognition of the Regiment's valuable service to the Empire during the Second Boer War (1899-1902). In 1970, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II approved the presentation of a new banner to the Regiment to coincide with the Regiment's Centenary on the 1st of August 1971. On that day, the Queen's Banner (1871-1971) replaced the King's Banner, which was then laid up in the Australian War Memorial on ANZAC Day 1972.

In 2019, Her Late Majesty approved the presentation of a new Banner, and for it to be coincident with the commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of Australian artillery on the 1st of August 2021. The presentation parade was scheduled for Saturday the 6th of November 2021, but unfortunately the COVID pandemic, and associated restrictions, necessitated a postponement.

In September this year we witnessed the end of an era for the Royal Regiment with the sad news of the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-serving British monarch having reigned for over 70 years; a very large part of which Her Late Majesty was our Captain-General. On the 19th of September 1962, Her Late Majesty not only decided to become our Captain-General but also agreed to the Royal Australian Artillery becoming a Royal Regiment. As Australian Gunners therefore, we had the honour of a very privileged relationship with Her Late Majesty for some 60 years.

Her Late Majesty's professional interest, dedication, and leadership as our Captain-General will be sorely missed by all Gunners. However, the new Banner of Queen Elizabeth II (1871-2021), to be presented to the Regiment today, will serve as a fitting reminder of our first Captain-General.

Ubique,

5th November 2022

Gunners: Accurate, Responsive, Dependable and Joint



NOTICE BOARD

Web Site: <http://www.artillerywa.org.au>

ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION IN ARTY WA

Items for inclusion, and which are regularly needed, should be submitted to the Editor Bob Arnold at 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.

RAAHS BUSY BEES

Last Saturday of each month excluding December

LEIGHTON BATTERY OPEN DAYS

Sunday 10am-3pm
Adults \$10, Children \$4.

OFFICE BEARERS

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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

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Fellow Gunners,

Happy New Year to all. The end of 2022 went off well with our two major events annually.

Gunner's Day 2022

Gunners Day 2022, was held on Sunday, 6th of November. Following an early morning thunderstorm we were lucky to have a glorious day for the celebration and we had a very good attendance including some 47 members of the Bessel- Browne family.

The parade was led by Ken Hepworth with the salute taken by BRIG Gerry Warner AM LVO, our Patron. Reverend Katrina Holgate was joined by Bishop Jeremy James to conduct the Memorial wreath laying service. Led by the Pipes & Drums from the Australian Army Band - Perth, Gunners past and present, serving Officers and Soldiers of 3 Battery RAA and members of the 56 Australian Cadet Unit (Fremantle) marched through Stirling Gardens where BRIG Warner took the salute. The parade then moved into position around the War Memorial for the wreath laying service.

This year we had the cadets from 56 ACU form a catafalque party around the memorial which was well done and well received.

Gunner's day 2022 was special for two reasons. The celebration of: □ 150 years of formed artillery in Western Australia; and the presentation of the "urn".

A more detailed report is contained separately. on page 5

Feast of Saint Barbara

The Feast of Saint Barbara dinner was held on 2nd December and was part of the 150th celebration of formed Artillery in WA. Unfortunately owing to floods in the East and a derailment the new Queen's Banner did not arrive in time. That said the dinner went was a great success.

We were fortunate to have the Commander 13 Bde, BRIG Brett Challoner accompanied by his wife Fiona and the CO 9 REGT RAA, LTCOL Philip Wong in attendance.

It was a magnificent night with music provided by the 51 ACU Pipes and Drums. Food provided by Prestige Caterers was again of a high standard.

This year the Association's award for the "Most Outstanding Soldier" was presented to GNR Gemma Ryan.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our Functions Sub Committee Tom Arnautovic, Roger Harrison, Brad Pearce and Stan Davies for assisting in the planning and organising the dinner.

Put a place holder in your diaries for Friday 1st of December 2023 for the next Feast of St Barbara.

I would like to thank the RAA Association Committee for all their work during last year. It is greatly appreciated.

Ubique

Bob Farrelly
LTCOL (Ret)
President, RAA Association

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT HEADING INTO SUMMER

Dear Society Members,

In October I had the pleasure to represent the RAAHS at a ceremony on Rottnest Island commemorating 80 years since the "Girls" of the AWAS arrived there to do their duties. The hosts were the Rottnest Island Authority and the Rottnest Voluntary Guides Association. After the various addresses, I toured the sites where AWAS members carried out their military tasks. One such site was Signal Ridge. It occupies the highest point on the island and I was immediately struck by how exposed all personnel would have been in 1942 to strafing Japanese naval aircraft. At Kingstown Barracks an excellent photo and artifact display was mounted. One HQ document seen there stated that if women and children were to be evacuated from the island, the AWAS members were to remain on duty there!

While awaiting our 5.25" replica to arrive, there continues to be time spent on research towards the display items that will occupy the ammunition recesses around the gun floor. (Rather like that duck moving serenely across the pond- but unseen its little feet are paddling fast! These things go on behind the scenes). My thanks to our V/P who is "ringmaster" for this complex project.

Our Treasurer is pleased that he has been able to achieve a very high rate of Membership payments for the year to date. I thank all members for their subscriptions.

In November, Society curator Don Rae and I had the pleasure of hosting Major General (ret.) Tim Ford through the Leighton Battery complex. He had indicated his interest in our site at the Gunner's Day service on the 6th. He was impressed with our site development!

I had the pleasure of presenting the RAAHS's top award (for services rendered) to Daphne Sanders and family in November, on behalf of her husband John (dec.). John was our long-term photo archivist and had endured a tough time with his health for a number of years.

The public will now see our gun profile beside Stirling Highway with a new sub-sign reading "Visitors Welcome". (It replaces the "Now Open" sign).

In early December contractors completed the sealing of surface cracks on the original outside concrete of the 5.25" (which will stop leakage into the gun floor) in preparation for the turret installation. The turret is now at the paint shop for priming and top coating.

I wish all members a happy festive season for 2022 and an enjoyable new year.

David Carter.

President 2022.

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Gunner's Day 2022 -

Gunner's day 2022 was special for two reasons. The celebration of 150 years of formed artillery in Western Australia and the presentation of the "urn".

Western Australian Troop of Volunteer horse Artillery

On 1 July 1872 the Union Troop of Western Australian Mounted Volunteers commenced parading as the Western Australian Troop of Volunteer Horse Artillery. The official gazettal followed on 21 January 1873 when the change appeared in the Government Gazette of Western Australia with redesignation of the Troop to an artillery unit.

Whilst the historians may argue which is the official date, 1 July 1872 has always been acknowledged as the BTY Birthday in WA and we take the opportunity this November and December to celebrate the 150th anniversary. This is a significant milestone .

The Urn

The Urn contains the ashes of an Australian Blue Ensign, presented to Major A. J. Bessell-Browne, DSO, before he departed for Active Service in the Middle East in November 1914. He commanded 8th Battery, 3rd Field Brigade, Australian Field Artillery.

The Ensign, or as it became known - The Banner - was first flown at Blackboy Hill Camp (in Guildford) during pre-embarkation training and later at Mena Camp Egypt and, then at ANZAC Cove Gallipoli. Later, it was flown on the Somme in France in 1916 and then, in early 1917 at Ypres Salient. It was returned to Perth at the cessation of hostilities.

Prior to and after World War 1, Guildford was the hub for training Artillery and Light Horse Units and the Anglican Church of Saint Matthew was considered the Garrison Church of these units. After demobilization, Brigadier General Bessell-Browne was keen to retain the strong link with Saint Matthews Church and to observe the British custom of laying up colours in a Garrison Church. Church Elders accepted the Banner which was unveiled on Sunday, 21st September 1919 by the 8th Battery's first Commanding Officer, now Brigadier General A. J. Bessell-Browne, CB, CMG, DSO, VD

The Banner was hung from ceiling rafters in the Church until the 1970's when it was damaged during renovations to the building. Due to the rigors of time and service it disintegrated and efforts to have the remnants conserved were unsuccessful and were stored safely by the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society of WA.

It was decided that the remnants be "consumed by fire" and the ashes retained for posterity. and sealed in the Urn. In 2020 it was suggested it be offered to the St Mathews Garrison Church and the offer was accepted



LT COL Bob Farrelly presented the Urn to Bishop Jeremy James during the Church Service on Gunners Day

History of Australian Appliance Manufacturing Industry.

Most of us who are of middle age, or older, will recall that on purchasing products manufactured in Australia we accepted that our clothes would last several years, appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines and dishwashers, many years, but this is very rarely the case today.

Local manufacture has struggled with challenging operating conditions due to strong import competition over the past ten years. Import competition affects the entire industry, from the low end of the market being satisfied by countries with lower manufacturing costs to high-end industry goods from Germany, Italy and Japan. Pressure from overseas manufacturers has negatively affected a large number of industry operators, with many domestic firms unable to compete with low-cost producers in China and other Asian countries.



BUSHMASTER.

Protected Mobility Vehicle – Medium (PMV-M) is sustaining jobs in Australia and saving lives on deployment in dangerous environments.

This locally produced vehicle can rapidly deploy up to ten battle ready troops in all environments and is blast resistant. Its innovative cabin design gives it the flexibility to serve many roles.

Troop support

The Bushmaster is built to carry and sustain a nine man infantry section, with room for one more passenger. It is fully air-conditioned and can sustain itself for a period of up to three days.

Run flat tyres - The Bushmaster carries one complete spare wheel and all fitted wheels have run flat tyre inserts and a central tyre inflation system allowing them to continue travelling with punctures.

Operational range: 800 kilometres

Maximum speed: Over 100 kilometres per hour

Armament: Gun ring for 5.56 millimetre and 7.62 millimetre machine guns

Mine and improvised explosive device protection

The Bushmaster uses an armoured v-shaped hull to protect its passengers from landmines and other explosive devices. The sloped sides on the bottom of the hull act to deflect blast upward away from the vehicle.

Armour

The vehicle's welded one-piece shell is designed to protect troops against all small arms fire. Windows carry similar ballistic protection. The Bushmaster's fuel and hydraulic tanks are positioned outside the vehicle.



BOXER A PROVEN ASSET

The Boxer is being delivered from Rheinmetall's factories in Redbank, Queensland, and Germany, with support from many Australian companies.

"Australia has a reputation for building high-quality military vehicles. The Boxer will build on this established national industrial expertise," Lt-Gen Stuart said..

"This project is a great example of the way Defence and industry work together to deliver large-scale and complex capabilities."

Australian industry will continue to benefit from the multibillion dollar Boxer project.

Rheinmetall's 420 Australian staff will build five different variants of the vehicle, with a total of 211 scheduled to be built by 2027. Rheinmetall will also continue to deliver upgrades and conduct repairs at the Redbank facility.

"This combination of variants and ability to upgrade them here in Australia makes the Boxer an incredibly adaptable vehicle that our modern Army needs," Lt-Gen S (*With thanks to the Army Newspaper for the Article.*)

BEREAVEMENT

HARVEY JAMES EVERETT – 10.02.1933 – 29.10.2022

Regimental Numbers – NS 5700527 – CMF/ARES 510766

Harvey joined the Society on 16th August 1994, bringing with him exceptional skills as a Fitter and Turner – acquired from his apprenticeship and life service at the Midland Junction Railway Workshops. He immediately identified with the Society Restoration Workshop at IRWIN Barracks and was, in the main, responsible for the restoration of Artillery Field Guns on behalf of Municipalities, R&SL Memorials and ex-Service Organizations along with the considerable pieces of Ordnance in the Society's Colonel J. O. Clough Collection. He was truly a Master Artisan.

Harvey was conscripted into the first National Service Scheme – 1951 – 1960 and after his initial training was allotted to the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineer Unit, 113 Field Workshops. Given the opportunity, at the conclusion of his NS Obligation, to take his Discharge, Harvey volunteered to join the Active Citizen Military Force (CMF) and Continued to serve with the Field Workshop until appointed to 3rd Field Regiment RAA Light Aid Detachment as second in command with the rank of Warrant Officer. A dedicated Army Reservist and a dedicated Society Member Harvey will be missed by all with whom he came in contact.

K9 THUNDER

Self-Propelled Howitzer



The Morrison Government has announced a \$1 billion defence contract for new Self-Propelled Howitzers for the Australian Army has been awarded to Hanwah Defence Australia.

The contract signing was witnessed by Prime Minister Scott Morrison and President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea today.

Based in Greater Geelong, the contract will procure Self-Propelled Howitzers and Armoured Ammunition Resupply Vehicles, under the LAND 8116 Phase I project. The Government committed to this project in May 2019.

“Our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with the Republic of Korea is underpinned by our joint commitment to defence and security cooperation. The contract with Hanwa demonstrates the value of industrial collaboration in supporting our defence spending to its lowest level the Second World War.”

Minister for Defence, The Hon Peter Dutton MP. Said this initial contract covers 30 Self-propelled Howitzers, 15 Armoured Ammunition Resupply Vehicles, and weapon locating radars that help find enemy artillery, collectively referred to as the Huntsman family of vehicles.

“The Prime ability of the new vehicles is to fire and move quickly, avoiding enemy counter-attack. This project will mean a sufficient increase to the level of firepower and security for Australian artillery capability,” Minister for Defence Peter Dutton said.

“We are committed to keeping our region safe, while protecting our interests in a rapidly changing environment.

The Self-propelled Howitzer capability, including strengthened industrial base, is one of several projects that will modernise the Australian Army, ensuring it continues to maintain a capability advantage now, and into the future

This new capability will give our soldiers the best possible chance of completing their missions and returning home safe to their families.

Minister for Defence Industry Melissa Price said investment in Australia’s domestic industrial base enhances our ability to sustain critical defence capabilities and further positions Australia’s next order of military equipment and technologically technology to our allies.

“The new facility will create hundreds of local jobs and become a national asset for military capability supporting land combat vehicles for the Australian Army,” Minister Price said.

“Australian industry will play a vital role delivering and sustaining the Huntsman capabilities at the new facility. The announcement of this significant contract at the future facility is tremendous news for Victoria and working Australians as well as defence companies across the country.”

BENEFIT OF A GOOD VOCABULARY

I recently called an old Engineering friend of mine and asked what he was working on these days?

He replied that he was working on “Aqua-thermal treatment of ceramics, aluminium and steel under a constrained environment.”

I was impressed until, upon further enquiry, I learned that he was washing up with water under his wife’s supervision.



LIEUTENANT COLONEL PHILIP WONG

9TH REGIMENT RAA

Born and raised in Sydney, Lieutenant Colonel Wong joined the Australian Army Reserve in May 1998 through the University of NSW Regiment (UNSWR) before graduating in 2001 from the Royal Military College Duntroon from the Part - Time first appointment (PT-FAC) to the Royal Australian Artillery and posting to the 23rd Field Regiment. Lieutenant Colonel Wong's Regimental postings include Troop Commander, Joint Offensive Support Team Commander and Battery Commander with the 11th Field Battery, 23rd Field Regiment.

His training and staff appointments have included positions as instructor and Officer Commanding at UNSWR, SO2 Evaluation at the Australian Defence Force Welfare Centre, CI MIC Team Officer-in-charge at 21st Construction Regiment and Headquarters Second Division Honorary Aide-de-Camp to the Governor of NSW and SO1 Exercise Support, Director of Training at Headquarters Forces Command.

Lieutenant Colonel Wong deployed on Operation Anode in 2010 where he served as the Civil Military Liaison Commander / S 9 of the military contingent to Regional Assistant Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in 2021 he deployed to the Middle East on operation OKRA serving as the JTF633 Liaison Officer to Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve CJTFOIR and United States Army central (USARCENT) and the Deputy Senior National Representative for the Australian embed contingent.

Lieutenant Colonel Wong is a graduate of the Canadian Forces College, having completed the Canadian Armed Forces Joint Command and Staff programme (JCSP) by distance learning over two years in June 2020.

In civilian life, Lieutenant Colonel Wong is a Director at an operations management consulting practise. He holds a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmacology and a Master of Medical Science from the University of New South Wales. He is married to Michelle, a Property Manager on Sydney's Lower North Shore, and together they have an 11 year old son Lucas and a 5 year old daughter Laura.

Lieutenant Colonel Wong assumed command of the 9th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery on a full time basis on the 18th of December 2021

No one accuses the gunner of maudlin affection for anything except his beasts and his weapons. He serves at least three jealous gods – his horse and all its saddlery and harness his gun whose least detail of efficiency is more important than men's lives; and, when these have been attended to the never ending mystery of his art commands him.

Rudyard Kipling



OUR LAST STAND IN VIETNAM

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND TROOPS FOUGHT THEIR LAST MAJOR BATTLE IN VIETNAM. .

The last major battle fought by Australian and New Zealand troops in Vietnam took place at Nui Le on the 21st of September 1971.

It resulted in 5 Diggers killed and more than two dozen wounded. B and D Company's 4RAR/NZ fought 2 and 3 Battalions of the North Vietnam Army's battle hardened 33 Regiment of Northern Phuoc Tuy Province during Operation Ivanhoe, a reconnaissance –in-force operation.

Private Kevin Casson, the last surviving rifleman in his section, crawled forward into a fire-lane where casualties were lying and checked each of them was dead.

He recovered an M60 machine-gun under one of the bodies, gathered belts of linked ammunition and crawled back to his platoon. He was awarded an Mention in Despatches for his bravery and in 1999, a Medal of Gallantry While most of D Coy survived the battle, some didn't

While NVA losses were unknown, because they generally removed their dead from the battlefield, 14 bodies were found in the vicinity of the battle.

Three 105 mm guns from 104 Field Battery , firing at extreme range, were credited with saving D Company from being overrun. The battery fired 2074 rounds during the battle.

During the operation , APC crews from A Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment, also engaged in contacts with NVA, resulting in several diggers wounded.

Surrounded and on the verge of being overrun, a 2500 year old equation and guesswork by Forward Observer Captain Greg Gilbert, 104 Field Battery, helped save D Coy, 4 RAR, from oblivion.

On the night of the battle, he was formed up with D Coy in all round defence in an area about 35m across, surrounded by an NVA regiment. Captain Gilbert was initially prepared for D Coy to be wiped out.

Captain Gilbert didn't know their exact location.

"I had just got my map out to know where we were when we were attacked with a volume of small-arms fire" he said.

It was approaching pitch black under the jungle canopy, and he couldn't see anything on his map.

"The only lights were the green tracer rounds passing above my head." Captain Gilbert said.

To have any chance of survival, Captain Gilbert knew they needed to break up the enemy attack with artillery.

"I tried to remember the grid reference of the start point, which was from where we winched out some dead and wounded," he said with bullets flying over his head, he worked out distances using Pythagoras theorem.

Calculating in his head, Captain Gilbert came up with a grid reference for where he thought they were. Having no idea of direction, he used the points of a compass to adjust fire in as close as he could. "It had to be that close to counter the NVA tactic of 'grabbing us by the belt', close artillery couldn't be called in.

As rounds came in at danger close, Captain Gilbert was impressed by the skills of 104 Battery gunners, not only were they accurate in their laying, but they kept up a high rate of fire, which would have been exhausting. The smallest error could have the rounds falling on us.

Rounds fell about 25-30 metres from us when we started to get the shrapnel from the exploding shells falling on us," he said

It had to be that close to counter the NVA tactic of "grabbing us by the belt" - close artillery couldn't be called in.

Captain Gilbert left the Army early 1986 as a Lieutenant-Colonel, but there was a lot more to go following from his role at Nui Le.

In 2018 he was awarded a Distinguished Service Medal (DSM).

"I was very proud to be recognised, even after so long a time," he said.

"And it was great that I was president it by 1968 Duntroon Classmate Peter Cosgrove, who was Governor-General at the time."

THE SONG OF TIADATHA

A poem of 144 pages first published in 1919.

By Major Owen Rutter

I consider that this is one of the most enjoyable reads that any Member or ex Member of the Military Forces will find: (It is still in print)

On the Morrow came the Colonel,
 Came the Colonel of the Dudshires,
 Stern and terrible in aspect
 With his usual morning liver;
 Ran his eye along the front rank,
 Ran his eye along the rear rank
 Till he came to Tiadatha
 There's an officer he shouted
 Bellowed forth in voice of Thunder, "Holding up his blasted rifle
 Like a something something pitchfork"
 After which poor Tiadatha
 Thought perhaps he wouldn't mention
 Forming fours and simpler methods
 Had you asked my Tiadatha
 If he loved those days of training,
 Loved the sloping arms by numbers,
 Loved the musketry and marching, (More to follow next edition.)