

The Horse's Mouth

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RAEME Association WA - NEWSLETTER - September 2012 Edition

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RAEME 70th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST - Our birthday celebrations this year will be held in the Swanbourne area on **Saturday 27th October 2012**. Numbers are strictly limited, so please inform the Secretary of your interest if you would like to attend at wasecretary@raeme.org.au. Or on 0416199187. The function will include afternoon activities (with light snacks) from 1530 to 1800. This will be followed by a smorgasbord "Black Tie" dinner at 1830.

This is a satisfaction guaranteed celebratory function and is heavily subsidised. At \$20.00 per head it is a genuine Not To Be Missed function. The corp RSM, WO1 Jason Ballard, will be in attendance along with the Prince Phillip Banner.

Contact your friends and make up a party group, but be quick.

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD is a psychological response to the experience of intense traumatic events, particularly those that threaten life.

Traumatic stress can be seen as part of a normal human response to intense experiences. In the majority of people the symptoms reduce or disappear over the first few months, particularly with the help or caring of family members and friends. In some however, the symptoms do not seem to resolve quickly and in some cases, may continue to cause problems for the rest of the person's life. It is also common for symptoms to vary in intensity over time. Some people go for long periods of time without any significant problems, only to relapse when they have to deal with other major life stress'. In some cases, the symptoms may not appear for months, or even years after the trauma.

In an attempt to cope with the unpleasant symptoms, many people turn to alcohol or other drugs. Around 50% of males and 25% of females with chronic PTSD also have a major problem with alcohol and/or drugs; the figure for veterans is even higher.

PTSD is not the only psychological response to trauma. People may develop a range of other problems that can affect their quality of life, their ability to relate to other people or their capacity to work. These problems may occur on their own or as part of the PTSD. Anxiety, depression and alcohol/drug abuse are the most commonly associated problems.

PTSD symptoms are not usually constant in their intensity. Rather, they tend to fluctuate and there may be times when they "flare up" or worsen. Although this can occur at any time, it is most likely to be triggered by things such as an anniversary of the traumatic event or other reminders.

Treatment

To obtain appropriate treatment for PTSD, first the person has to accept that something is wrong and see the benefit of seeking help. Secondly, it is sometimes difficult to find a professional who understands PTSD and to whom you can relate and trust. You can start by talking to your Gen-

eral Practitioner, community health centre or veterans' organisation. Your local DVA office can also assist you.

For further information or assistance you can contact **The Australian Centre For Posttraumatic Mental Health**.

Locked Bag 1,
West Heidelberg, Vic. 3081

Tel: (03) 94962922

Email: acpmh-info@unimelb.edu.au

Web: www.acpmh.unimelb.edu.au

VALE

Ted Spargo

It is with the deepest sadness that we announce the passing of 53325 Ted Spargo. Ted, aged 75, passed away on 2nd September 2012 at the Murray Valley Private Hospital, Wodonga, Victoria after suffering from prostate cancer.

Ted was a committee member of the RAEME Vietnam Association here in WA when it was first formed. He served as a sergeant Recovery Mechanic with C and B squadrons in Vietnam in 1969.

Another digger has gone.

John (Chips) Shay

It is with great sadness that I have just been notified that 20th Intake Vehicle Mechanic 18922 John (Chips) Shay passed away at 0930 hr this morning (20th Sept) in Brisbane after a long battle with cancer. His funeral will be held in Cooktown on either the 1 or 2 Oct. Could you please forward this information to all the RAEME Associations.

Regards

Blue Magill

Ex App 20th VM



PLAYER PROFILE

DONALD DOUGLAS HORSLEY

When we talk of RAEME, there is one name that is synonymous with our great corp and that is **Don Horsley**. Don is a well known and respected character within the corp and has spent many of his retirement days looking after veterans and ex service personnel. Those who served with Don say - "he is RAEME".

Don was born on the 14th January 1929 at the Box Hill General Hospital, Victoria. He began his apprenticeship with John Danks as a turner and fitter making windmills and hand operated water pumps. After twelve months Don was moved by the Apprenticeship Commission to Electro Mechanical Products where he converted manual knitting machines to automated machines and at the age of twenty he completed his apprenticeship and decided to fulfil his life-long ambition and join the army.

Don joined the Citizens Military Forces (CMF) on the 29th June 1948 and was the first Recruit Minor (in those days you did not become an adult until you turned 21) taken into RAEME since the second world war. Don says "I loved every minute of it, especially being allowed to take your rifle home. I can still remember how proud I was getting on the tram in my uniform carrying my rifle".

Don applied to join the regular army and enlisted on the 25th February 1949. After recruit training he was posted to 1 Base Workshop at Bandiana, Victoria. He thought this was near Melbourne, so was very surprised to find himself being told to disembark the train at 0100 hours at Albury, NSW and taken by truck to the middle of nowhere.

At Bandiana, Don was trained by a civilian by the name of Jack Jones, Jack and Don got on very well until one particular Monday Don spotted one of the office girls walking to the office. Don recalls telling Jack "Gee, I would not mind going to bed with her..." Jack replied that Don had better not as the young lady was Jack's daughter. As it turned out the young lady was Olwen Jones who became Don's wife on the 29th July 1950. Don says "For some reason, Jack never trusted me while Olwen and I were courting".

In the early 50's Don undertook the task of constructing a mobile iron lung to be used to transport a twenty-one year old lady who had contracted polio and could survive for only seven minutes outside of the artificial lung. The purpose of this construction was to transport the lady 300 miles to the infectious disease hospital in Melbourne. This had never been done before and Don recalls that after construction of the lung, it had to be tested over many miles of made and unmade roads before it was passed as a viable entity. After that it was continual practice on dummy patients to get them from a permanent iron lung into that of the mobile unit. Finally it was successfully performed and the lady was transferred in five and a half minutes.

Don's next big move was a posting to Korea as a sergeant and embarked with the battalion advance party. After taking charge of all of the battalion technical equipment, Don was also given responsibility for the recovery of all Australian vehicle casualties.

From Korea, Don was to transfer to Brit Com Base Workshop in Japan as a staff sergeant, here he was responsible for the engine rebuilding line.

Finally, after eighteen long months away from home, Don returned to Oz and was posted back to Bandiana.

In 1957 Don was posted to 3 Base Workshops in



With my ailing memory, I'm thinking of changing my password to "incorrect" That way, when I log in with the wrong password, the computer will tell me..
"Your password is incorrect"

PLAYER PROFILE

DONALD DOUGLAS HORSLEY Cont.

Broadmeadows, Victoria and in 1958 joined a team to go to the Antarctic. The team consisted of two amphibious vehicle operators and an engineer (Don) who doubled up as the emergency vehicle operator. Part of the expedition was to map some of the uncharted lands in the Antarctic. "At the time, I believed that explorers were not all together normal, but when I first placed my feet on land and realised that I was the first person on earth ever to stand on this spot, I jumped up and down yelling 'I am the first, I am the first' I could never explain just how much of a thrill it was" says Don.

After mapping the coastline, the expedition returned to Australia via Hobart where they were given a Civic Reception.

In 1961 Don was given an opportunity to carry out trials on the British FV432 and the US M113 Armoured Personnel Carriers, Don was sent to England for three months training on the equipment and bring back two FV432 APC's to Australia. Ultimately, the M113 was selected by the Australian government.

After spending the next four years in Australia Don was given the task of listing the equipment and spares for a small force in a hostile environment. Don explains "I did not know at the time that the force would actually leave for Vietnam in May". Don was however, disappointed as the force was leaving without him. After their arrival in Vietnam the ASM was injured and medivaced back home. Don was sent as his replacement and arrived on the 15th August 1965, this was a full twelve months before the battle of Long Tan.

The twelve month tour went very quickly for Don, he was so busy that he never had time to take the R & R due to him.

When Don returned to Australia after his tour of duty, he came home in an RAAF Hercules. Accompanying him was fifteen wounded soldiers. "We had three stops on the way home, Butterworth, Pearce and Richmond and at each stop the wounded had to be removed from the plane, treated and reloaded" said Don.

In 1998, Don was finally presented with the American Army Commendation Medal for meritorious service, this was some thirty three years af-

ter he was initially awarded it. The Australian government, at the time, refused to allow Don to accept it. Don was also awarded the American Presidential Unit Citation making him, not the highest, but the **most decorated** RAEME soldier from the Vietnam war.

In 1968 Don received his commission and in 1969 was promoted to Captain. In 1974 Don was distraught when told by the Prime Minister of the time (Gough Whitlam) that the years of work and collecting of information that Don had put into a particular project, was to be destroyed. Don then resigned his commission in disgust after twenty-five years of service.

After his retirement, Don stayed heavily involved in all things RAEME. He was the inaugural Secretary of The RAEME Vietnam Association WA, was a member of the RAEME Corp Committee and spent many hours as a Pensions and Welfare Officer with DVA before taking over the role of TIP Co-ordinator with DVA.

There are many people who have been touched by Don Horsley and are the better for it. It will be many, many years before the great corp of RAEME will see anyone come anywhere near Don as a soldier and committed member of the corp.

An Extract from the Weekend West Sep 8-9

The man of the house won't get a vasectomy. He says he doesn't have the balls.

I know he's been traumatised because years ago in

Queensland, not three days after his sister gave birth to her second baby, he took his brother-in-law to get the snip. For some reason, they decided to ride their bikes to the clinic. Only one of them managed to ride the whole way home.

Was this man totally stupid or did he not understand on which part of the body a vasectomy takes place - They walk among us.