



The word from the
Horse's Mouth

The Newsletter of the RAEME Association of WA

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What the Prez Sez

Welcome to the spring edition of the Horses Mouth. We have a lot going on in this one.

Firstly, a report from Stino's Annual Spanner fest, the highlight of which was a tour of Garden Island incorporating HMAS Stirling and the WWII Scriven Battery. Many thanks to Mark Sweetman who was in fine form. His knowledge of the island, its infrastructure, flora, fauna and the best fishing spots is unsurpassed.

Once again the banner flew at Vietnam Day and there is information on this year's Corps Port and another batch of Rum and Bourbon as well as news of a RAEME officer taking over the next CO of 13 CSSB.

Of course, the recent accession of King Charles has a few implications for us and finally we have our next RAEME Get together at the IBIS during which we will be having our AGM

Enough from me, see you at the IBIS in a few weeks.

Stino's Spannerfest

Stino and Kerri outdid themselves this time

We started off with a great meal and games night at the Pinjarra RSL on the Friday night. Great night and great people including Baden Jefferies – who did two tours of Vietnam – firstly as a VM and secondly as a Padre! (that does say something about 106 I think)



Saturday morning was off to Garden Island to visit the first settlement in WA at Cliff Point, the Z Force memorial and a good stickybeak around the rest of the Island and the 9.2" Scriven Battery



Back to Stino's for the Footy and a few quieties around the fire



And off to the Waroona for the All Australian Car Day and Vintage Machinery Rally

ALL AUSTRALIAN + The VINTAGE MACHINERY RALLY

Brought to you by the Lions Club of Waroona

ALL DISPLAY VEHICLES IN PLACE BY 10 AM

Brought to you by the WA Just Cruizin Street Machiners

DISPLAY CARS WELCOME FOR A GOLD COIN DONATION

FEATURING • Wine & Gourmet Hall • Vintage Stationary Engines • Vintage Cars, Trucks, Tractors & Motorbikes • Tools • Toys & Antiques • Homemade & Handmade Crafts

The lads were impressed with the 225 V8 fitted to the Ferguson - 110hp rather than the 20hp originally fitted



Vietnam Veterans Day

Once again our Banner was in pride of place at the Vietnam Veterans Day activity held on 22 Aug just after the 56th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. Unfortunately there was no march as a band was not available. With the passing of time, numbers were down on the day Also the tradition on veterans placing a poppy in the trunk was made difficult by dignitaries milling around after laying their wreath. Rest assured that our Banner will fly there while we have anyone left and probably beyond.

RAEME Get Together and AGM

We will be repeating last year's very successful occasion and will be having a RAEME get together at the IBIS on Saturday 29 October, commencing at 1300. Drop past at any time to catch up with friends old and new. Like last year we will end up with an AGM at around 1500 – and try to beat last year's record time of 22 minutes!

Anyone who wants to nominate for a committee position is more than welcome to – we need fresh blood more than Dr Frankenstein!

See you on the 29th at the IBIS

Corps Birthday

We have booked the Bayswater again on 2 December from 1730. Same format as last time – just roll up and buy what you want. More to follow on this.

RAEME Spirits and Port

We are looking at doing another run of Bourbon and Rum for the 80th anniversary – and may also include a Gin this time. Graham Coles is also looking at doing another Port. We should have more details at the AGM

CO CSSB

It is with great delight I can confirm that the next Commanding Officer of 13 CSSB will be a RAEME Officer - Lieutenant Colonel Shaun Fenn. Shaun takes over at the end of the year and was one of my LTs at 113 (at least I must've done one thing right) Congratulations Shaun, we wish you all the best for your stint as the Boss.

“New” Badge



With the release of the new royal cypher we see the return of the “King’s” or more correctly the Tudor Crown which has been used for in all the Royal Cyphers between Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II, who both used the St Edward, or “Queen’s” Crown.

The Tudor Crown was first mentioned in 1521 and replaced a simpler medieval crown. With the execution of Charles I in 1649, it was broken up and sold for £1,100.



A replica of the crown, was however, made in 1992 by the retired royal jeweller Harry Collins, using authentic Tudor metalworking techniques with 344 pearls and gemstones and is exhibited in the Royal Chapel at Hampton Court Palace.

Just to confuse things further, in Scotland the Royal Cypher uses the Scottish Crown which looks like the Queens Crown – but is a very different beast (and confusing the two may lead to a punch up with any Scots at the bar)

What this means for us is that it is highly likely that our badge will change to reflect the new reign and we will revert to the badge we used between 1949 and 1955. No doubt the HoC will advise in due course

An interesting side note was during WWII as enemy planes targeted London, the Crown Jewels were secretly moved to Windsor Castle. The most valuable gemstones were taken out of their settings by the Master of the Armouries and the Royal Librarian. They were wrapped in cotton wool, placed in a tall glass preserving-jar, which was then sealed in a biscuit tin, and hidden in the castle's basement. Also placed in the jar was a note from the King, stating that he had personally directed that the gemstones be removed from their settings. As the Crown Jewels were bulky and thus difficult to transport without a vehicle, the idea was that if the Nazis invaded, the historic precious stones could easily be carried on someone's person without drawing suspicion and if necessary buried or sunk.

New REME Colonel-in-Chief

As you may be aware, in March this year, Sophie, Countess of Wessex and Forfar, GCVO GCStJ CD (to use her full title) was appointed Colonel in Chief of REME

following the death of Prince Phillip (or as we called him, Colonel Mountbatten). It is likely that we will follow suit and duly appoint her as ours as well. Whatever you think of the Monarchy, having a member of the "Firm" as our titular boss does serve to link all the EME elements in the Commonwealth into one big family (albeit one which make your average Mafioso crime family look like amateurs)

Colonel Wessex married Prince Edward in 1999 and for while thereafter maintained her successful PR business. Recently (one guess why) she has taken up a much greater share of royal duties and with the return for BAU following the Queen's death visited REME HQ last month in her official capacity



??Did You Know???

9.2" Scriven Battery

As part of the 1938 review of Australia's fixed defences, it was determined that a second 9.2" Battery was required on Garden Island to supplement the one on Rottnest. The outbreak of WWII put these plans on hold but with the fall of Singapore and the bombing of Darwin in February 1942, Fremantle's importance however increased, with it becoming the largest submarine base in the Southern Hemisphere.

Work then recommenced on the 2 gun Scriven Battery on Garden Island. Built to a slightly more modern layout and mount to the Oliver Hill battery, it was fitted with the same Mk X 9.2" guns, which fired a 380lb (170kg) projectile up to 36,700yds (33,600m).

The engine room and magazine is still accessible for both guns (though Scriven North is much easier to get into) as well as the separate reserve magazine and OPs. The Command

Post Bunker is unfortunately still sealed under the sand and its exploration will have to wait for another occasion.







6" Point Peron and Challenger Batteries

It was decided not to bush bash through most of the northern half of Garden Island to view the Challenger Battery but visit the restored Point Peron Battery instead (the coffee truck with cakes in the Pt Peron carpark may have swayed us somewhat) Both are Panama type mounts

These were first developed by the U.S. Army in Panama during the 1920s to defend the canal. The mounts could be constructed as either full, 3/4 or half circles of steel rail set in concrete with a diameter of approximately 36 feet (11 m). A concrete column with a diameter of ten feet (3.0 m) was constructed in the centre of the circle to support the gun and carriage.

Traverse was accomplished with several men and prybars to move the trailing arms around the steel ring. The primary weapon of these mounts was the Canon de 155mm GPF, designated 155 mm gun M1917 (French-made) or M1918 (US-made), generally with two emplacement per battery.

The replica gun mounted in the emplacement was made by the same company which is currently completing the replica 5.25" turret for the Leighton Battery



7.5" Mt Eliza Battery

On our way out we went past the old Kings Park guns, which were that strange breed of artillery known as RMLs (Rifled Muzzle Loaders). These two guns were 7 inch (175mm) in calibre and fired a 50.8 kg shell to a range of about 3650 metres.

The two guns were manufactured by the Royal Ordnance Factory in England in 1866. They arrived in Fremantle on the SS Suffolk in 1881, and even then were considered obsolete. After lying on the beach near Fremantle for a number of years they were moved to storage at Karrakatta once colonial financial constraints allowed.

Finally in November 1905 the guns were moved to Kings Park, Perth and were mounted at Mount Eliza, overlooking Perth Water. However, in 1932, following the landscaping of the State War Memorial concourse, the guns were sold for scrap and dismantled. The mountings were removed but the guns survived and were buried between the State War Memorial and the first rotunda. They remained buried until 1966 when they were located using a magnetometer. After excavation, restoration and mounting on timber replica carriages was then undertaken. Successful completion was heralded by the firing of blank charges in a ceremony on 23 February 1969.

In October 2003, after further horticultural developments at Kings Park, the guns were subsequently relocated to HMAS Stirling where they remain to this day.

The largest ever RMLs were the two 17.75" (450mm) 100 ton guns manufactured for Gibraltar and Malta. These remain in-situ with the Malta gun being restored in 2005 and is fired annually.



