



The word from the
Horse's Mouth

The Newsletter of the RAEME Association of WA

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**Colonel Commandant
 Western Region:**
 Colonel Mark Sweetman

What the Prez Sez

Welcome to the summer edition of the Horse's Mouth for 2024. For all those who attended the cocktail party last year I hope you enjoyed it. It's now your task to spread the word...

Our first Committee meeting was held on 7th of February, in which we firmed up the first of our activities for the year. No surprise that it will be our RAEME Vigil in Kings Park followed up by the ANZAC Day march and get together at the IBIS.

I look forward to catching up with you then

RAEME Vigil

The RAEME Vigil will be held as usual at the Sandakan memorial in Kings Park on ANZAC Eve. We will meet up in the car park at the back of the tennis club at 1900 and move forward from there, under the direction of our Piper – Rob Reeves and the Padre - Kim Kuchil.

Remember this is our "RAEME" event commemorating the foundation members of the Corps who were captured at Singapore and perished on Sandakan. The four Craftsmen and one Corporal are the only members of the Corps commemorated with plaques at Kings Park and it is our duty to remember them. Details of where we will retire are to be decided.

ANZAC Day

We still have not received our notification on our position in the March, but it is expected to be much the same as last year. Once we get the information we will let you know.

All RAEME Association of WA members and families are however invited to attend the after march function in the Rubix Bar and Restaurant at the IBIS Hotel, 334 Murray St. Please note a special license will be obtained (subject to approval) to open at 1000 h.

Cost: As per last few years - Free for members (Fees can be paid on the day) and \$20 for guests, Food will be available.

RAEME Cocktail Party

The year ended with a RAEME Birthday Cocktail Party at ANZAC House in Perth in lieu of the usual pub get together. It was a great night and we hit capacity for the venue (3 hrs of free grog and food tends to bring members out). The location was superb overlooking Government House and the Swan River and having the floor and balcony above the Dropshorts celebrating St Barbara's Day was an added bonus. Mention must be given to Dale Whelan who thought "Cocktail Party" rather than "RAEME Birthday" – nice tux

As the Senior Spanner, 4th Intake Apprentice George (Pud) Armstrong, ASM of 102 Fd Wksp at Vung Tau did the Corps Toast and retiring members Graham Coles, Greg Clark and Mark Vincent were presented with their Certificates of Service from HOC. A number kicked on but that is a tale not to be put into print.



RAEME Officer Makes Good



Brigadier Amanda Williamson is the Commander of the 13th Brigade and commenced this role in December 2023. BRIG Amanda Williamson was raised and schooled in Perth, WA. She graduated from the Royal Military College in 1994 and was appointed to the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

During her career, BRIG Williamson has commanded soldiers at all levels, domestically and overseas, in both full-time and part-time capacities. BRIG Williamson has served in a range of logistics and staff appointments including as part of the capability team responsible for the inaugural raising of the Tactical Assault Group (East) and a subsequent secondment to the 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando) to support the raising on a new Company in 2004. In 2005, she served as the Staff Officer to the Deputy Special Operations Commander Australia, for which she was awarded the Special Operations Commander Commendation for outstanding service.

In her part-time capacity, some of her career highlights have included 12 months service as the Military Assistant to the Director General Special Operations Capability, SOCOMD, and a 12 month deployment as the NATO representative of the Special Operations Forces Liaison Element (SOFLE-S) Kandahar. This opportunity saw her responsible for the oversight of Special Operations effects in Southern Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. For her service, she was awarded a United States Bronze Star and Lithuanian Medal of Merit (equivalent to a Commendation for Distinguished Service) for service to ISAF and Lithuanian Special Forces.

A graduate of the Australian Defence Force School of Languages (Indonesian), she has served as an ADF interpreter for numerous agencies including a diplomatic role in Jakarta and hosting official Indonesian delegations in Australia.

In a civilian capacity, she has worked at the Federal government level for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) where she was appointed as the inaugural Australian COL Williamson has had two opportunities to live and work in Jakarta. Firstly, based in the Australian Embassy Jakarta working for both the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and on a subsequent occasion, she was appointed by DFAT as the inaugural Australian Co-Director of the Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction (AIFDR) – a joint Australian-Indonesian \$70M Government initiative, aimed at reducing the impact of natural disasters in Southeast Asia.

BRIG Williamson holds a Bachelor of Asian Studies, a Master of International Relations, Master of Defence and Strategic Studies and tertiary qualifications in leadership and emergency management. She is a graduate of the Royal Military College, the Defence Force School of Languages, the Australian War College suite of courses, and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Congratulations, Ma'am!

Future Social Functions

The committee is looking at the possibility of some additional social functions for the year. These include:

- A visit to the SASR Museum.
- A visit (and possibly lunch) to RAAF Museum to see new Ex RAF Tornado and Ex RAAF Hornet once this is on display

??Did You Know???

Now that Goffa run would be interesting



War Alert - Perth - March 1944

By March 1944 the field force in WA had been reduced considerably with only 1 Armd Bde Gp at Moora and the remnants of 2 Inf Div at Chidlow. The coast and AA defences were manned by a core of full time soldiers to be supplemented by members of the VDC and the garrison battalions were under-strength.

On 1 March intelligence indicated that the main Japanese fleet had moved from Truk with half of it appearing at Singapore possibly as a prelude to a Japanese raid into the Indian Ocean.

Instructions were given that Fremantle Fortress should be placed on heightened readiness and that maximum possible heavy AA should be concentrated in the Fremantle docks area.

On 4 March orders were issued to reduce the period of warning for the VDC to man their AA and coast defence stations from 24 hours to 6 hours.

Intelligence reports were received that two Japanese battleships had left Singapore and on 7 March submarine reconnaissance that reported the movement of an enemy convoy of two or more large ships passing through Lombok Strait. 10 March was to be a full moon so ideal for an air attack.

The period 7 to 14 March also saw a cyclone develop off the north west coast and move south, about 100 miles offshore, severely limiting the seaward searches. On 8 March, General Bennett returned early from a trip to Melbourne and all units were placed on six hours' notice.

Five submarines left Fremantle to patrol to seaward and instructions were issued to clear the harbour of all shipping by 10 March. A USAAF heavy bomber group was moved back from New Guinea to a base south of Darwin, ready to move to Cunderdin. Two squadrons of RAAF Spitfire fighters flew from Darwin to Perth to supplement air defences, arriving on 11 March.

RAAF Kittihawks, Beaufighters and Mitchell bombers were flown to Exmouth with aircraft landing at Kalgoorlie every ten minutes.

On Rottnest Island the coastal guns were fully manned and the garrison occupied their battle stations. Troops took station around Leighton Bty, Swanbourne Bty, Pt Peron and the Crawley flying boat base with a composite company in mobile reserve at Melville.

Suspicious continuous radar interference on 11 March and more apparent aerial sightings led to 10 LH Regt being sent to establish coastwatch posts between Wreck Point and North Point. Abating weather allowed better reconnaissance and with decreasing potential for a raid, most units were stood down on 12 March, except the AA and coast defences of Fremantle Fortress. All units resumed normal duties from 14 March.

Bickley Battery Firing Instructions

Earlier this year one of the Rottnest rangers was over at the Bickley Battery to check the rubbish and graffiti and found instructions for the guns stuck behind the doors - **after 80 years**

It's partially damaged, but seems to say:

"Co-Ordinate Converter. No. 2B. 111.
Scale. 1-inch to 1500 yards

PREPARATION FOR ACTION

The following preparation for action will be carried out at 0815 daily or at time set down for full counter bombardment preparatory for action daily.

Tests are to be made on the following test points:-

1st: Test Point.

Block. Square. 00. Point. 00

Range. Yards

Bearing. 27' 27"

2nd: Test Point.

Block. 36. Square 00. Point. 00.

Range. 29958 yards.

Bearing 3089 13"

3rd : Test Point.

Block. 42. Square. Point. 00.

Range. 25264 yards

Bearing. 2129 12'

Look-Out Range and Bearing

Block. 34. Square. 71. Point.

Range. 16000 yards

Bearing. 270

Tests will be made under the supervision of the B.C.A and checked by at least by two persons. Error over the prescribed tolerance of 25 yards will be reported to the inspecting officer on inspection.

(NOTE.) After completing the test at 2nd; test point

Instrument to look-out range before attempting to place on 3rd test point.

This will be done mechanically.

After completing test at 3rd test point, run instrument to look-out range and bearing with power

When moving the instrument mechanically, it wai

Range hand wheel, hold bearing had firmly prevent end of range arm lifting and vice versa.

Under no circumstances place the palm of the hand on the upper roller paths of the range arm to set it.

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CO-ORDINATE CONVERTER, No. 21, M. 111.
SCALE: 1" to 1500 yds.

PREPARATION FOR ACTION

Following preparation for action will be carried out at 0845 hours (or at time set down for full counter-bombardment preparation (action daily)).

Tests will be made on the following test points:-

1st: TEST POINT.
BLOCK. 30. SQUARE. 00. POINT. 00.

RANGE. 2700 yards.
BEARING. 271° 27"

2nd: TEST POINT.
BLOCK. 30. SQUARE. 09. POINT. 00.

RANGE. 29958 yards.
BEARING. 308° 13"

3rd: TEST POINT.
BLOCK. 42. SQUARE. 00. POINT. 00.

RANGE. 25264 yards.
BEARING. 3120° 12"

LOOK-OUT RANGE AND BEARING.
BLOCK. 34. SQUARE. 71. POINT. 54.

RANGE. 16000 yards.
BEARING. 270°

Tests will be made under the supervision of the B.C.A. and checked by at least by two persons. Any error over the prescribed tolerance of 25 yards will be reported to the inspecting officer on inspection.

(NOTE.) After completing the test at 2nd test point, instrument to lock-out range before attempting to place on 3rd test point. This will be done mechanically.

After completing test at 3rd test point, run instrument to lock-out range and bearing with power.

When moving the instrument mechanically, if using range hand, hold bearing hand wheel firmly to prevent end of range arm lifting, and vice versa.

Under no circumstances place the palm of the hand on the upper roller path of the range arm to steady it.

When mechanical hand wheels are not in use, the handles MUST be in the 12 position.

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