



The word from the  
**Horse's Mouth**

The Newsletter of the RAEME Association of WA

**President: Ray Mizzi**  
Mobile: 0473 377 175  
Email:  
[president@wa.raeme.org.au](mailto:president@wa.raeme.org.au)

**Vice President: Peter Collins**  
Mobile : 0419 043 102  
Email:  
[president@wa.raeme.org.au](mailto:president@wa.raeme.org.au)

**Secretary: Perry Beor**  
Mobile: 0477 700 828  
Email:  
[secretary@wa.raeme.org.au](mailto:secretary@wa.raeme.org.au)

**Treasurer: Dick Fenton**  
Mobile: 0488932179  
Email:  
[treasurer@wa.raeme.org.au](mailto:treasurer@wa.raeme.org.au)

**Life Members:**

Clare Curtis  
Kaye Cooper  
Garry Wykes



**Social: Phil Pitchers**  
Ray Wharton  
Home: 93781586  
Mobile: 0403 34 2105

**Web Master: Alex**  
Smithers  
Mobile: 0408 625 553  
Email:  
[webmaster@wa.raeme.org.au](mailto:webmaster@wa.raeme.org.au)

**Property: Peter Sills-**  
Ohlsen  
Mobile: 0433 522 577  
Email:  
[property@wa.raeme.org.au](mailto:property@wa.raeme.org.au)

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

## What the Prez Sez

Welcome to the winter edition of the Horse's Mouth.

For me the year is progressing at a very quick pace in fact winter is nearing an end, another successful exercise - Austral Shield 24 was completed and even the Paris Olympics have just finished. The Association has had some well attended events (the Vigil, the March and the Get Together at the IBIS afterwards). Our Secretary, Perry has once again, provided some great stories in this edition (well worth a read) well done Mate!

If you are at a loose end on Saturday 31 Aug 24, then come along to the 13 Brigade OPEN DAY at Irwin Barracks, Karrakatta. I'll be there.

All the Best

Ray Mizzi

# *ANZAC Day and RAEME Vigil*

## The Vigil

The RAEME Vigil in Kings Park was again well attended with about 30 of us rolling up – including a number who cannot attend our other ANZAC Day events. As it is an exclusive RAEME event honouring those foundation brethren who were captured at Singapore and perished on Sandakan, it is always deeply poignant for those who attend, especially with Rob Reeves piping and Kim Kuchell as the padre. As you know, in an earlier life Kim was a diesel mechanic and is always available to support us.

## The March

The March was very well attended and our numbers appear to be growing every year. It is a testament that Spanners all, we always come through when the occasion demands.

## Après la Marche

Once again, the IBIS came through with over 80 people dropping in and out during the afternoon. The word has obviously got about as we had quite a large contingent from over the road. Even Ben Roberts Smith dropped past for a quiet one. Been a long time since a VC was seen at one of our functions! Can any of our older members remember when was the last time we saw one at a RAEME function in WA?



# *AGM*

We have booked the IBIS again for a catch-up and AGM starting at 1300 on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October to coincide with Veteran's Health week (i.e. to skive some funding). It will be a good chance to catch up and the IBIS always looks after us. Do not worry; we will be reminding you before then!

## *Corps Birthday*

Planning is underway for a "decent" function for the Corps Birthday. All suggestions welcome – provided they are not anatomically impossible!

## *Exercise Austral Shield 24*

A FRT from 113 recently attended Exercise Austral Shield 24 at RAAF Curtin (Derby). In the longest convoy the West has seen since the war, (though the Spiderman convoys to Karratha and Exmouth in the 1990s were slightly larger, they were 700km shorter).

84 vehicles made the trip to RAAF Curtin (2,550 km or 1,590 miles). We only lost two vehicles on the way up and one on the way back – having new vehicles rather than 20yr old Mogs and Landrovers helped. Of course, a week of driving around RAAF Curtin with fine pindan sand had its effect and the ASM decided that a number probably wouldn't make it back so the convoy down was a bit smaller than the one up, though some judicious loading (what dump truck?) meant we got everything back we were asked to.

We had lined up the various Speedways on the trip up and back as overnight stops and were looked after a treat. Only one night on the trip back necessitated a night loc in a truck park to effect some repairs, but strangely enough the fridge truck with meat packs and the BBQ were on hand. I will leave it there!

## *Avon Descent 2024*

The Corps had two competitors in the race this year – MAJ Rob Reeves (currently 2IC WAUR but due to get back to the wksp next year) and BRIG Amanda Williamson of 13 Bde.

BRIG Williamson, in a team with her brother Todd (Two Williamson's – 166), finished 4<sup>th</sup> overall and 4<sup>th</sup> in her category of 10hp Sports, with an average speed of 52.4 km/hr.

Rob in a team with Liam Walton (Aqua Bogans - 020) finished 23<sup>rd</sup> overall and 8<sup>th</sup> in his category of 10hp Super Standard, with an average speed of 27.1 km/hr. He did however lose a few places by stopping off at Bell's Rapids to help a mate who was in trouble.

Congratulations to both of them, who reckon they can improve their placings next year and have shown what the Corps is capable of. It may be game on....



## *RAEME Corps Shop*

RAEME HOC Merchandise

The Head of Corps Shop is fully operational. Here you will find a range of RAEME products. 100% of all proceeds of this shop go directly to supporting activities for RAEME Personnel through the Corps Committee.

<https://raeme.org.au/index.php/shop>

## *2024 RAEME Corps Port & Whisky*

The 1st Aviation Regiment is proud to have the opportunity to present the 2024 RAEME Port, and, for the first time offer a 2024 RAEME Whisky.

The theme that they have chosen for the port this year is 'The Sundowner'. The Sundowner holds a special place in the hearts of the craftsman that serve amongst the Regiment and they find it fitting with the circumstances 1 AVN currently finds itself in. With 1 AVN beginning its move to Townsville next year the theme sits well, the Sundowner bar has followed the Regiment around Australia throughout its many relocations.

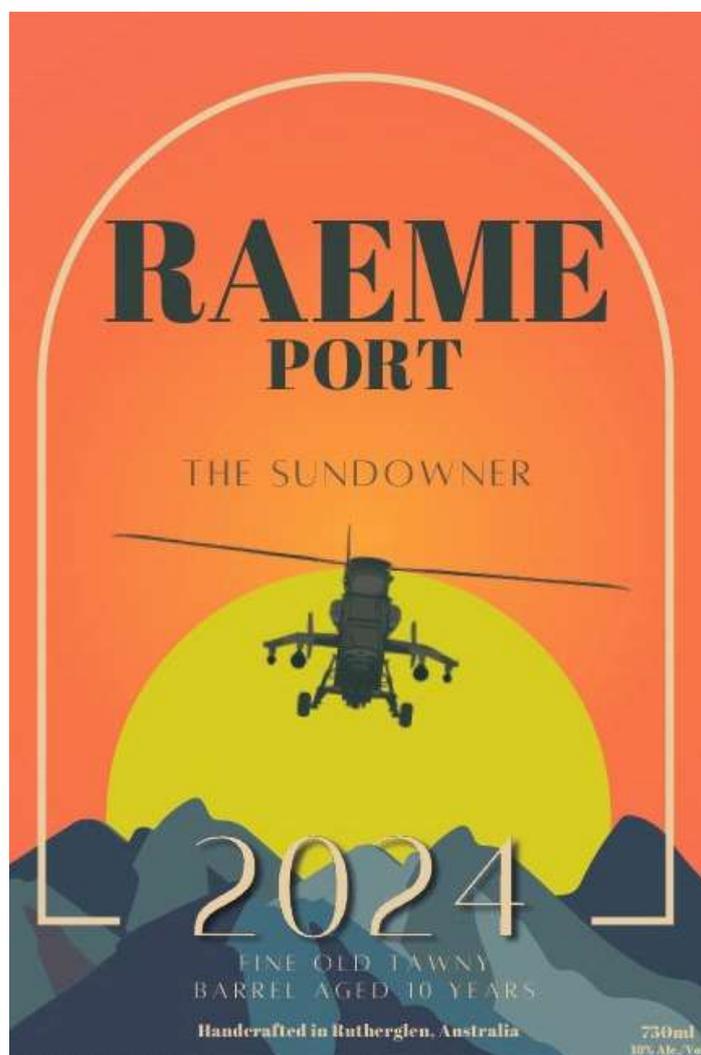
Buller Wines (Rutherglen, Vic) has kindly taken on the job to supply this year's port, and is well up for the task as they've supplied the RAEME port many times over the previous years. We've chosen a beautiful Old Fine Tawny this year. 2024 RAEME Port is valued at \$30.

Ancient Wisdom Distillery (Pakenham, Vic) has offered a lovely Australian Whisky aged in Tawny Port barrels which is a captivating expression that marries the robust qualities of the whisky with the luxury of fortified wine casks. 2024 RAEME Whisky is valued at \$70.

Please use the following link to secure yourself a 2024 RAEME Port and Whisky;

<https://www.trybooking.com/CUCVK>

The sales event will finalise 19 Oct 24, to allow for delivery by RAEME Birthday.



## *VX 104343 BRIG Bert Barker*

It is with great sadness we advise of the passing of a true legend of our Corps BRIG Bert Barker, on 15 June in Melbourne, aged 102.

Until recently was a resident in aged care at Banora Point on the Gold Coast, moving back to Melbourne to be closer to family, he was focused on making sure his wife Nona was settled in the Victorian retirement village with their daughter. They would have celebrated their 80th wedding anniversary on the 15th July and Nona herself, a WWII veteran, turns 100 on the 31st of October this year.

BRIG Bert belongs to a rare cohort of servicemen because he was an original member of our proud Corps at our foundation in 1942. He served in WWII on operations in PNG and through his many postings, his various commands, training and staff appointments over 33 years' service, it is clear he made a huge contribution to the Corps, the Army and the ADF. He served as Colonel Commandant 1 Military District from 1980 to 1984 before retiring.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

AWM2017,520.1,3268

## *??Did You Know???*

### **Two Spanner Tours**

Recently a couple of our brethren were roped in as Subject Matter Experts for the Rottnest Volunteer Guides Assoc. on a trip around the more obscure military sites on Rottnest. There remains a lot more there than the general public is aware of. A couple of the better ones follow.

Before we go into that, has anyone got any knowledge of the “underground hospital” to the south of the airport?

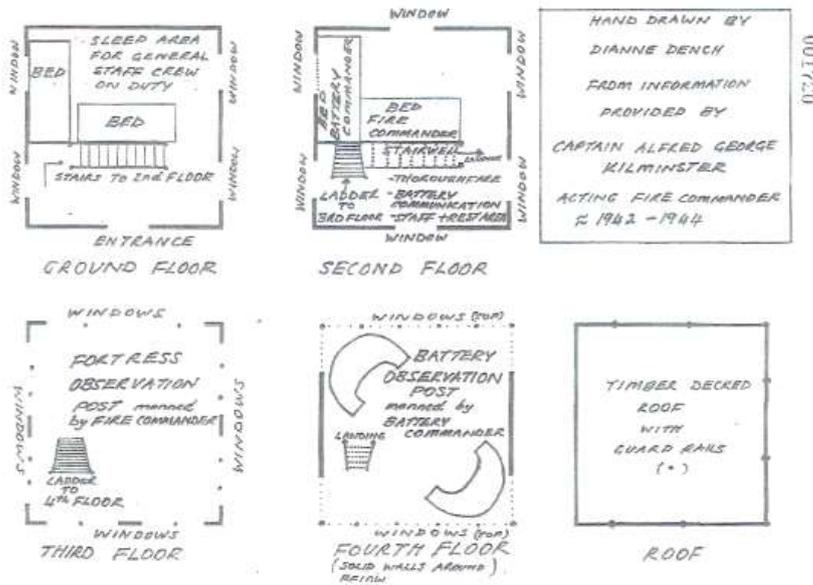
Supposedly there were two parallel tunnels dug along the ridgeline with a couple of access points and cross passages, something like this (of course it could be entirely wrong)



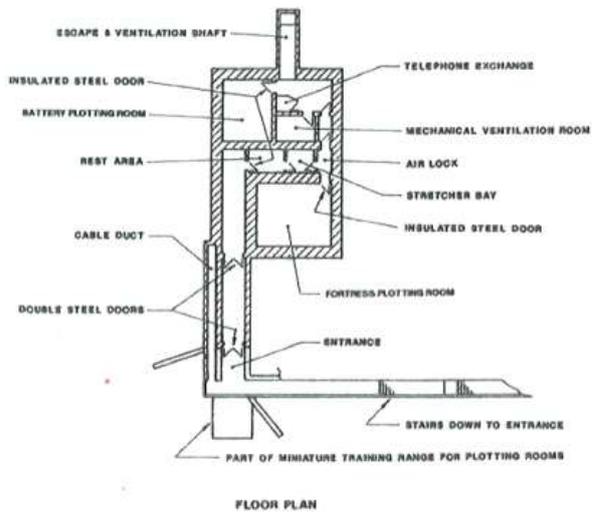
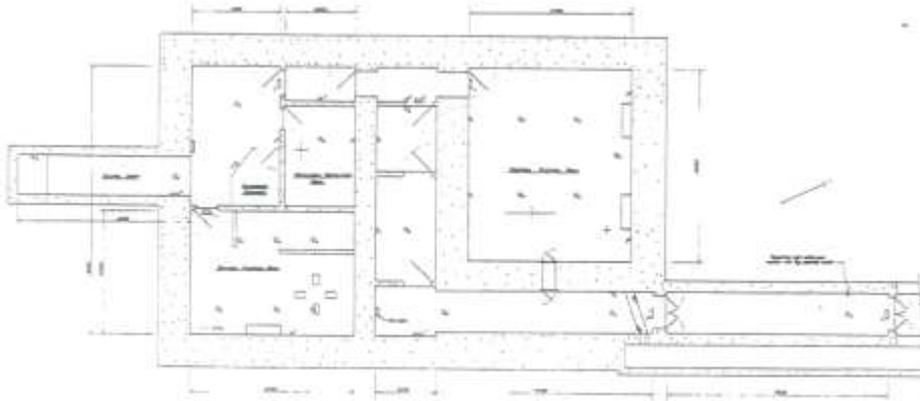
Back to the tour:

Fortress Observation Post – Near lighthouse)

*THE FORTRESS AND BATTERY COMMAND POST - ROTTNESST-W.A.*



## Oliver Hill H2 Gun and Battery/Fortress Plotting room







## Stripping down the Engine from a Tiger Tank

**The Tank Museum's Tiger 131's famous Maybach engine is to be removed and stripped this summer as part of a maintenance programme to assess wear-and-tear on the 80-year-old machine.**

It's the first time the engine has been fully disassembled and examined since it was last rebuilt in time for the first ever Tiger Day event in April 2012.

Since then, Tiger 131 has been run sparingly for audiences at the bi-annual event – but has still managed to rack up more operational hours here than it did during the entirety of its service with the German Army.

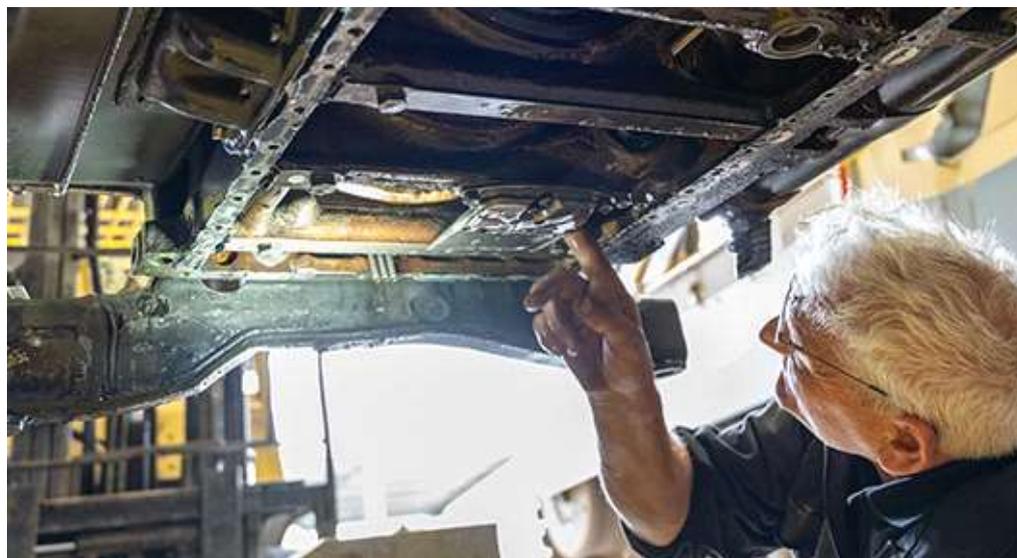
Head of Marketing, Nik Wyness said; "We all know that Tiger 131 needs delicate handling due to the known frailties in its engine and transmission.

"Due to its significance as the only running example in the world, we have to take great care of these parts with regular inspections to ensure that all is as it should be."

During one such inspection, an oil leak was traced back to a fissure in the sump – which could only be repaired following careful removal of the engine from the tank.

“This offered us an opportunity to look more carefully at the condition of the entire engine,”

With assistance from visiting Maybach engine specialists Armytech, the HL230 V-12 petrol engine was disassembled and examined for the first time in 12 years.



Sump pan removal and internal inspection of the Maybach engine.

“With their help we were able to identify wear to one of the bearings, but also to diagnose a cooling problem we had previously been unaware of. Unchecked, this would have been highly damaging to the cylinder heads.”



Con rod dimensions being measured to check the clearance on the bearings.

The Museum’s Workshop team will be undertaking repairs on the engine over the next few weeks, before returning the engine for testing ahead of its next public outing at Tiger Day in September.

“Maintaining and preserving vehicles in the Museum’s collection is a complex challenge for which we remain grateful for the support we receive from our partners and the public,”

# Crossness Pumping Station

For the black trades amongst you, recently one of our members got to spend an afternoon with the Crossness Engines Trust at their partially restored Principal Wastewater Pump Station on the Thames.

This station was one of two (the other being at Abbey Mills on the opposite side of the Thames) which were the final step in Joseph Bazalgette's scheme to totally modernize London's (then) medieval sewerage system following the Great Stink of 1858 – a job he did so well that only earlier this year that any substantial augmentation of this system has been introduced.

Crossness was a steam driven station which lifted all the raw sewerage from London south of the Thames, some 30 to 40 feet (9–12 m) by the application of four large steam driven pumps of enormous size and power for the time. They were built to Bazalgette's designs and specification, and were named "Victoria", "Prince Consort", "Albert Edward" and "Alexandra".

At 11 revolutions per minute, 6 tons (approximately 1,500 imp gal or 6,800 L) of sewage per stroke per engine were pumped up into a 27-million-gallon (120,000 m<sup>3</sup>) reservoir, and was released into the Thames during the ebbing tide.

In 1913, the triple expansion steam engines were replaced by diesel engines and by 1956; the steam engines had been decommissioned. (Prince Consort having been temporarily put back in steam in 1953 to assist with draining the great floods of that year)

The great engines were then left, with the rest of the ironwork, to rust and to vandals. All was not lost as the pumping station became a Grade I listed building in 1970 and was placed on the Heritage at Risk Register for restoration as the four pumping engines are thought to be the largest remaining rotative beam engines in the world, with 52-ton flywheels and 47-ton beams.

The Crossness Engines Trust was formed in 1987 to oversee the restoration project. As Prince Consort was the last steam engine decommissioned, in 1953, it is this engine on which the restoration activity has been concentrated. After fifteen years of effort, by 2003 the engine was in working order again and is run on the open days organised by the Trust. Work has since begun on the restoration of Victoria.



Victorian “Thrones” – they took their “conveniences” seriously.



The “Octagon” in the centre of the pump station



They don't make them like this anymore!





Flywheel and Rotative Beam for "Prince Consort"



"Replacement" 1913 Crossley Diesels



Alas the doorway got partially covered up, with a “new” gantry crane in 1913.