

1 FIELD SQUADRON GROUP  
THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS  
QUEENSLAND INCORPORATED

## 'FOLLOW THE SAPPER'

Webpage - [www.1fieldsappers.org](http://www.1fieldsappers.org)  
email: [info@1fieldsappers.org](mailto:info@1fieldsappers.org)



**Follow The Sapper**

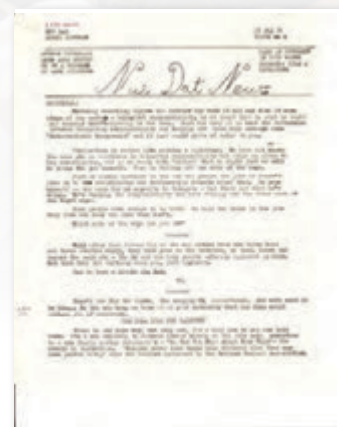
December 2013  
Edition 21

Greetings fellow Sappers and Friends.

This is my first production of the 1 Field Squadron Group newsletter. One thing you will notice of course is that we have made a name change. We figured that this production was not really a 'Reunion Communiqué' but rather a 'newsletter'. The icons of "Follow the Sapper" and the bursting bomb with the numeral 1 in the centre have been approved by CO 1 CER as available for use by our Association. We've done that and the current day 1 FD SQN is delighted that we are now formally linked in such a manner.

My Dad, who also was a proud Sapper, always told me to never volunteer for anything. Sage advice indeed, but I am afraid I failed to follow it so here I am, your new editor. For me, occupying this position has a sense of déjà vu. I was editor of the 1 Field Squadron Group newsletter – Nui Dat News (NDN) – in 1969 and again in 1971. I sent all my copies of the NDN to our Corps Museum. I hope they have been preserved.

It may be of interest to readers that the very last edition of NDN can be found on the Australian War Memorial web site at [www.awm.gov.au/collection/records](http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/records). It forms part of the Squadron War Diary 1-31 October 1971. I have taken the liberty to reproduce extracts of that final edition herein on Page 3. I hope you will enjoy it.



"Our Corps has produced quite a number of localised newsletters over time. Some I know of and have been directly involved in are 'The Hairy Goat' which was produced by Kel Gealy (dec) who was with 21 Support Troop as Orderly Room SGT in 1968/9 and who I replaced. Kel went back in 1971 to 55 EWPS where he got the Hairy Goat going. We used to exchange jabs to each other via the NDN and Hairy Goat. Great for morale. In 7 FD SQN in 1968 and whilst working on roads at Shoalwater Bay, we had the Xin Loi Sun, and in 3 FD ENGR REGT in 1974/5 whilst working at High Range we had the High Range Marauder. All these 'rags' aimed at giving the troops a good laugh and getting across the odd bit of news as well.

I do recall that one edition of the NDN was actually banned. I think we got a slap on the wrist from the 1 ATF Commander. I have tried to remember what we had included that caused that, but time has eroded some of the grey matter. It must have been bloody good though."

To all our readers, as the Editor, I am sure there are lots of good stories out there that are worth sharing. If you can rake up some of these yarns from your time in 1 FD SQN GP, please drop me an email and we can include it in our publication –censored of course.

Regards  
Derek Smith  
Ph. 07 4773 5104  
[dsmith@ozemail.com.au](mailto:dsmith@ozemail.com.au)

### Contact Details

**Please ensure your mail and contact details are correct!**

If you have relocated or your contact details have changed please message our Hon Secretary directly at:

[info@1fieldsappers.org](mailto:info@1fieldsappers.org)  
or  
PO Box 703 Warwick. Qld. 4370

**facebook**

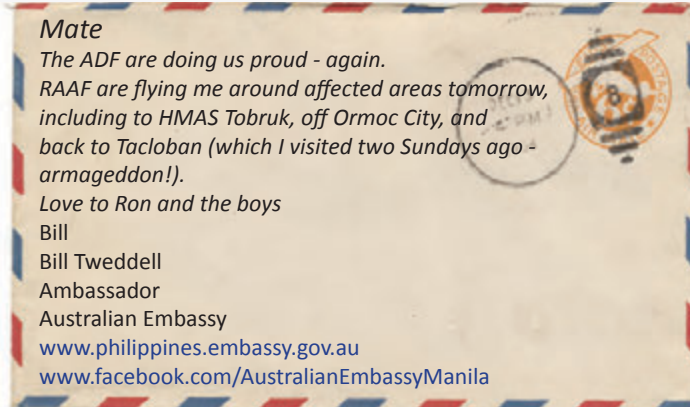
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## News Update

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

I have received via email this message from my good friend and our Ambassador in the Philippines, Bill Tweddell. This is a good and current issue. As you probably know, 16 Sqn of 3 CER has deployed to the disaster area. Although it is not 1 FD SQN stuff, I am sure it is something our readers would like to know; that Sappers are doing great things in many different places. - Editor



Picture of myself (Derek Smith), Bill Tweddell when he was Ambassador to Vietnam, and my wife Rhonda. It was taken at the Long Tan Memorial near Nui Dat on Vietnam Veterans Day 18 August 2008.



Australian Army Officer Major Ken Golder, O.C. Recovery Support Force, shows The Australian Ambassador to the Philippines, Mr Bill Tweddell, the Cogon Central School in Ormoc where Australian forces and Filipino locals are helping to rebuild following the devastation left by Typhoon Haiyan.



Captain Chad Marsh and the Commander Officer of 1 Combat Engineer Regiment Major Golder with the headmistress and teacher from Cogon Central School.

### Abbreviations used in this Edition

**RSM** is Regimental Sergeant Major, the most senior of the non commissioned ranks in the Army.

**FD SQN** is Field Squadron ie; 7 FD, 1 FD etc.

**CER** is Combat Engineer Regiment.

**Retd** is retired.

**AO** is Officer of the Order of Australia.

**AM** is Member of the Order of Australia and is below AO in precedence.

**CSC** is Conspicuous Service Cross, an award given to officers.

**SOG** is Studies and Observation Group which was part of Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) – all US Forces stuff. These guys were a bit like our SAS (Special Air Services) and were mainly doing recon work which took them deep behind enemy lines and often involved contact with the NVA (North Vietnamese Army), and hot extractions up a rope into a helicopter, usually under fire. They were small teams of about 7 or so men. Scary stuff.

**Montagnards** is a generic term used for the ethnic minority tribes of Vietnam.



This Newsletter is produced for the members of the 1 Field Squadron Group, The Royal Australian Engineers, Queensland Inc. It is written with care, in good faith and from sources believed to be accurate at the time of writing. However, readers should not act, nor refrain from acting, solely on the information in this newsletter about financial, taxation or any other matter. Readers should consult the relevant authorities or other advisors with the expertise in the particular field. Neither this auspice, it's Executive Committee, Committee Members or Editor, accepts any responsibility for any actions taken, or not taken by the readers.



## Editorial:

As NDN rambles into its twelfth edition and happily, its last in Vietnam, I would like to thank all who have contributed in any way to making NDN what it has been over the past few months. Hopefully the rag of 1 Fd Sqn Gp will continue on in Australia, but even if it doesn't, as long as it has given you a bit of a giggle when all else has seemed blue, NDN has achieved its goal, for one thing none of us can afford to lose is our sense of humour.

To all NDN readers, I wish you a safe return home, a merry Christmas and a most prosperous new year. ----- Editor.

### A FAREWELL TO VIETNAM BY THE OC

This is the last edition of the Nui Dat News to be written in Vietnam. It is also the last edition before the bulk of our Squadron Group disperses, some to civil life and some to other units in RAE.

It is therefore opportune for me to tell you of some of our achievements in 1971 and to congratulate you on your efforts in attaining these.

In the main you are young men. We hear a lot of criticism of today's young men – that they are irresponsible, that they are permissive and that they have not developed that grit and determination characteristic of their fathers and grandfathers. I think the truth lies closer to the fact that they are presented with a bewildering variety of opportunities in every conceivable area of endeavour and that, true to human nature; they feel they must sample each variety before making a final selection. The selection was easier for their fathers and grandfathers as the choices were fewer; moreover the recent dramatic changes in technology have necessarily re-modelled some of those personal characteristics considered so important by the previous generations.

Your performance while I have commanded 1 Fd Sqn Gp has but confirmed a strong belief of mine – that Australia's young people are as able or more able than their fathers and grandfathers in all those activities important in a society. What you must have, however, is guidance to make that final selection of opportunities and it is the essential responsibility of those a little older than you to give you this guidance with honesty, courage and lack of prejudice.

To detail your achievements for 1971 would take far too long so I will merely list the most obvious results of your efforts; those efforts of each and every member of 1 Fd Sqn Gp.

#### Combat Support to Other Arms

Number of bunkers destroyed -----800  
Tunnels destroyed -----5 (total of 7000 meters)  
Mine incidents and booby traps involving field engineers  
a. Located and destroyed -----22 (all by Sappers)  
b. Detonated by APCs -----32 (30 Sappers WIA)  
  
Number of FSB/NDP constructed --50

#### Mechanical Mine Clearing

Number of minefields cleared or partially cleared -- 21  
Number of mines and munitions destroyed  
a. M16 ----- 3000  
b. M14 ----- 150  
c. Miscellaneous items----- 500

#### Land Clearing

Total area cleared -----3668 acres  
Names of areas cleared-----AO Mango,  
Tanh Ru, Route 327, Route 23, Long Green, Nui Dat

#### Defence Stores

Tonnage of stores supplied ----- 1000 short tons

#### Maintenance of 1 ATF Base

Total water supplied @ 80,000 gals/day ---21,600,000 gals  
Mileage of road maintained----- 7 sealed  
----- 28 formed

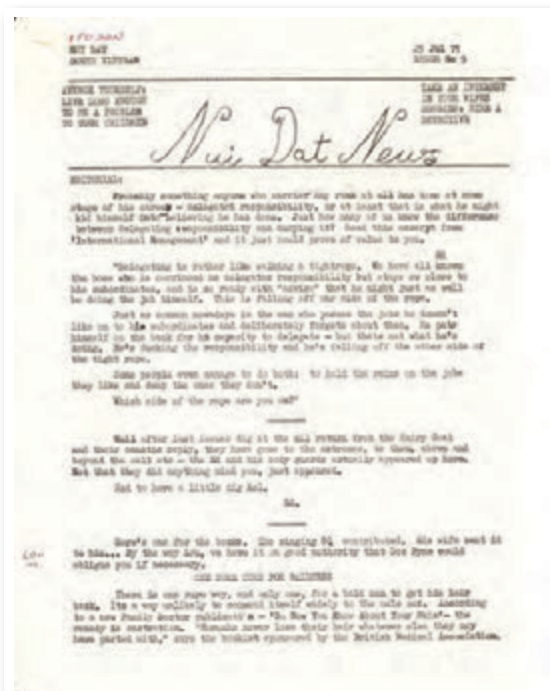
#### Miscellaneous Tasks

Reconstruction of Province roads-- 5000 meters  
Construction of Command Posts for Sector HQ  
Value AUD \$42000  
Man hours 11200

Thank you. You have done well.

Signed Phil Kudnig, Major, Officer Commanding

**There was sure a lot achieved in 1971 and indeed right from the beginning of our commitment. All who served in 1 Field Squadron Group can be justly proud while never forgetting the sacrifice made by our comrades who did not return.**





1 Field Squadron Group  
Royal Australian Engineers Qld Inc.  
28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> August 2015

## 2015 FAMILY REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

### Personal Details

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 'Nickname' or

Preferred Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Partners Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Required for ID Tags at Reunion)* *(Required for ID Tags at Reunion)*

Other guests attending - Number ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) Preferred guests names: \_\_\_\_\_  
*It is preferred by the Executive Committee that all Members Guests are over the age of 18 years.*

### Cost of Events

**Cost: \$150.00 per person.**

Covers all events, Friday Meet and Greet, including Saturday Memorial Service and  
Saturday Evening Family Reunion Banquet and Sunday Luncheon

### Payment Details

#### Please accept my Registration for:

Number attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment:  Cheque.  Money Order.  Direct Deposit into account.

When making a Direct Deposit, ensure you mark it '**Reunion**' and then you're '**Family Name**'  
Heritage Building Society: **BSB 638-070. Account No: 10045570.**

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make cheques, money orders payable to: **1 Fd Sqn Gp RAE Qld Inc.**

**All registrations to be pre-paid by Friday the 14th August 2015**

(This is a huge catering event. Much goes on behind the scenes, therefore

**'No Late Numbers will be taken—DEFINITELY.'**)

Please send this Registration Form to:  
2015 Reunion Treasurer  
1 FD Sqn Gp RAE Qld Inc.  
P O Box 703 WARWICK QLD. 4370.  
e-mail: info@1fieldsappers.org

#### DONATION FORM

AMOUNT: \_\_\_\_\_ Receipt required: Yes  
No  
NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION**

## The 2013 Reunion

Well done to those who made this reunion such a memorable occasion. It was my first reunion with the Group. My wife, Rhonda and I had a terrific time. I reckon that if anyone didn't enjoy it, they could not have been there. It was so pleasing to see so many members renewing old mateship's and recalling those heady years when we were all a bit younger.



Derek Smith with Brian Florence and his book .

One of the high lights was the launch of Colonel Brian Florence's book, History of 1 Field Squadron Group, Royal Australian Engineers, South Vietnam 1965 to 1972. I am told that sales have gone very well and a re-print is being considered.

The Memorial Service was indeed a moving occasion as we all paused to remember all fallen Sappers. George Hulse was the Master of Ceremonies and ensured the occasion ran like clockwork. Parade management fell to Bob Pfeiffer who seemed to be very comfortable back in his RSM skin. We were honoured to have a Catafalque party provided by members of 7 FD SQN, 2 CER and musical accompaniment from the Australian Army Band, Brisbane. Reverend John Reid gave the opening homily.

Our Patron, Lieutenant General Frank J. Hickling. (Retd) AO. CSC gave the formal address which was followed by the laying of wreaths and a flag parade for every member of our Corps that was killed in Vietnam and Afghanistan.

I am sure the hairs stood up on the backs of many necks as we marched off from the Service to "Wings" our Corps march.



Dennis Pegg with Brian's book



Paddy Martin and Col Browne at the Reunion



A fine collection of 1 FD SQN GP members

That evening all enjoyed the Reunion banquet at the Stars Showroom of the Twin Towns Service Club. George Hulse was our MC. Addresses were given by Dennis Pegg and Major Jason Mildon who was OC 1 FD SQN in 2012. Colonel John Kemp, AM proposed the Loyal toast and Bob Pfeiffer made the toast to the Corps. I suspect many wild yarns were told during this wonderful evening.

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### 1 FD SQN name to remain unchanged

"Our patron, LTGEN Frank Hickling AO CSC was in Canberra speaking with the Chief of Army (CA) LTGEN David Morrison AO recently. One of the discussions General Hickling had with the CA was the re-naming of 1 FD SQN to 1 Combat Engineer Squadron (1 CE SQN). General Hickling advocated that the squadron name NOT be changed to 1 CE SQN. The CA agreed to this and so, the unit title of 1 FD SQN remains unchanged. The sappers there are delighted with that and so are we in the 1 FD SQN Association"

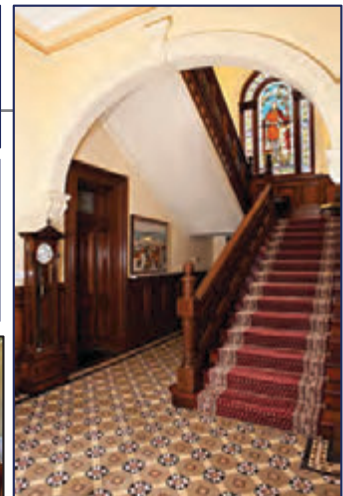




## Celebrate Australia Day at Government House

The Governor's Standard

The Governor of Queensland  
Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC and  
Mr Stuart McCosker invite you to an  
Open Day at Government House to celebrate  
**Australia Day** on  
**Sunday 26 January, 2014**  
**168 Fernberg Road, Paddington**  
Gates open 10.00 am to 3.00 pm



Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to visit stately Government House, "Fernberg" :

- Walk through historic Government House, with Volunteer Guides on hand to answer your questions (obtain your free ticket from the signposted ticket booth on arrival);
- View the informative displays in the Investiture Room;
- Guided tours of the wonderful gardens and surrounds at 10.45am, 12 noon and 1.30pm;
- Stop and appreciate the musical entertainment throughout the day;
- Refreshments will be available for purchase (sausage sizzle and drinks); or
- Bring a picnic to enjoy on the lawns;
- Free parking available at Norman Buchan Park (cnr Baroona and Rainworth Roads, Paddington);
- Regular free shuttle service from Norman Buchan Park to Government House;
- Strictly no on-site parking.

Visit our website at [www.govhouse.qld.gov.au](http://www.govhouse.qld.gov.au)

## President's Report November 2013

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was conducted at Tweed Heads on 15 August 2013. The new committee includes: President - George Hulse, Secretary / Treasurer - Robin Farrell, Committee Members – Bob Pfeiffer, Peter Krause, Bob Austen, Jim Weston and Peter North.

As President, I thank most sincerely the previous committee members, particularly Gary Sutcliffe and Robin Farrell. Robin has been elected as the Secretary / Treasurer (again) and Gary has been elected on to the committee. I thank all members for volunteering their time for the betterment of our association. Please note that the current day 1 FD SQN has been officially redesignated 1 Combat Engineer Squadron (1 CE SQN). However, because of the strong reputation and history of the unit, the Officers, NCOs and Sappers will continue to call the unit 1 FD SQN. We are going to have some fun over the next two years or so. The committee is in the process of undertaking the following:



### Communication

1. Changing the style of the communication with our members - eg the newsletter. We have re-named it "Follow The Sapper" in line with the logo of 1 CER/ 1 FD SQN. The newsletter will contain surveys for you to indicate your point of view to the committee. We are also changing/introducing a blog page on our website. The association can thank Derek Smith from Townsville for compiling "Follow The Sapper" as our honorary editor.

### A Once in a Lifetime Opportunity for the Centenary of ANZAC DAY

2. We intend to do something special for ANZAC Day 2015 including:
- Visit Robertson Barracks where the present day 1 FD SQN is located.
  - Conduct a memorial service in the 1 CER lines. We will remember all our sapper heroes by reading out the names contained on the honour rolls of 1FD COY (WWI), 1 FD SQN (WWI), 2/1 FD COY (WWII), 1 FD SQN GP and in addition, all sappers lost to overseas service since WWII.
  - Take a look at current EOD equipment and Combat Engineer plant and equipment and the Abrams tank.
  - Attend the Dawn Service either in Robertson Barracks or the nearby city of Palmerston (transport considerations could affect this decision).
  - March with 1 FD SQN in Darwin. CO 1 CER (LTCOL Mick Say) has directed that all personnel of 1 FD SQN, in uniform, will march with us behind the association banner.  
The incoming OC 1 FD SQN (Major Ian Rainbow), has nominated his 2IC and the SSM to act as our POC for the organisation of this event. The march is in the Darwin CBD, form-up at The Esplanade, "quick march" at 0930 hrs and has a marching duration of about 15 minutes. Average temperature is 30 degrees C with high humidity.
  - Design a marching banner for 1 FD SQN which will invite all ex-members of the squadron to march behind it. In brief, the banner will be in Corps colours with a centrally mounted bursting bomb with the number 1 in its centre, the words "Follow The Sapper" beneath the bomb and the overseas countries in which the unit has served scrolled to each side of the bomb. A draft banner for your comment and approval will be posted on the website soon and presented in the next newsletter.
  - Design a polo shirt, capable of supporting a chestful of full sized medals. Also a hat to be worn for the Centenary of ANZAC Day march in Darwin and future marches of the association.
  - Further information, in detail, together with a registration form will be in the next newsletter.

### Reunion in August 2015

3. We intend to conduct our two-yearly reunion at the Twin Towns RSL on 28,29 and 30 August 2015. Details and a registration form will be in the next newsletter. The association has established a good relationship with the Twin Towns RSL and we receive significant discounts for using that venue. In addition, our association has a memorial service which is unique to the Corps and is conducted in the memorial park right next door to the RSL.

### Results of the Surveys Conducted at the Reunion Dinner - 24 August 2013

4. Questions about the future activities of the association were floated at our dinner on 24 August 2013. These are the results:
- Would you march with 1 FD SQN in Darwin on 25 April 2015? Yes: 65 No: 14
  - Would you agree to a change of marching banner?: Yes: 67 No: 12
  - Would you prefer a "hats utility" to a baseball cap?: Yes: 27 No: Nil - Members were not too concerned about the style of headwear.
5. As designs and prices become available, the committee will post these items on the website and in future newsletters for your consideration and commitment, before we place orders.

### Seasons Best Wishes

6. The association committee wishes every member a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May we all continue to enjoy our mateship and the pride we have of having served in 1 FD SQN.

### Follow the Sapper

George Hulse  
President 1 FD SQN GP RAE Association  
23 November 2013

## From 19 October 1971 Nui Dat News...

The little white haired spinster was rocking on the front porch of her home with her tom cat at her feet when a good fairy suddenly appeared and granted her three wishes.

"Go on," the little old lady said disbelievingly. "If you can grant me three wishes, let's see you turn this rocking chair into a pile of gold."

A wave of the good fairy's wand and the spinster found herself atop a pile of pure gold. Her face lighting up, she asked, "I get two more wishes right?"

"Yes," the good fairy assured her. "Anything your heart desires."

"Then make me into a beautiful voluptuous young girl," she ordered.

Another wave of the wand and her wish was granted.

"Now," she said, "make my faithful old cat into a tall, dark and handsome young man."

The good fairy waved her wand and disappeared as the third wish came true and a muscular swain stood where the tom cat had just been sleeping.

The young man approached the once old lady, took her in his arms and murmured gently, "Now aren't you sorry you sent me to the vet?"

## From 'On the Ground' by John Meyer and John Peters.

### These guys are American veterans who belonged to MACV SOG. ...

The essence of this true event is that the Americans were operating out of a Forward Operational Base in the north. The SOG guys were working with Montagnards whilst another group were operating with Cambodians. There was no love lost between the Montagnards and the Cambodians.

A film night was held and screening was "Custers Last Stand". The 'Yards were allowed to take their weapons to the viewing area. The Cambodians were not, which in itself was a sore point. When the crucial part of the action is in play, the 'Yards become fully immersed in the story and take sides; the Indians side; and open up on the screen. Pandemonium reigns and the Americans eventually retain some order in both groups. No one is injured but the screen is unserviceable.

After a bit, on the way back to the 'hootches', a Montagnard captured the full depth of the bewilderment and frustration when he tugged his American minder's sleeve and asked, "Trung Si (Vietnamese for Sergeant), why Custer no call gunships?" Why indeed.

## Executive and Committee Members 2013 - 2014

### Patron:

LT.GEN. Frank J. Hickling. (Retd) AO. CSC

### Executive Committee:

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Follow The Sapper

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Email: [info@1fieldsappers.org](mailto:info@1fieldsappers.org)

### 1 Field Squadron Group Web Site

is maintained by John Robertson at  
Visreal Productions - Warwick, Queensland. 4370

Phone 61-7-4661 5222

Email: [info@visrealproductions.com](mailto:info@visrealproductions.com)



# 1 FIELD SQUADRON GROUP

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS  
QUEENSLAND INCORPORATE

( Including 1 Field Squadron Workshops and 21 Engineer Support Troop )

## 'NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION'

Mrs  
Surname Ms \_\_\_\_\_ First Names \_\_\_\_\_  
(Family Name) Mr \_\_\_\_\_ (Given Names)

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Wife/Partners Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Confidential if ticked)  (Confidential if ticked)

Residential Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Private Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Confidential if ticked)  (Confidential if ticked)

Veteren's Service Details or other appropriate information. (If possible)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Service No. \_\_\_\_\_

Period of Service: From \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Active Service: Yes  NO

Unit/Units \_\_\_\_\_ Which Country Served for? Australia or Other \_\_\_\_\_

Which duties? ( F.E, Plant, Mine Clearing, etc. ) \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Year is 1st July to 30th June in each year. Fees are accepted until 30th September, in accordance with the Association's Constitution. Unfinancial members will not be able to vote at the Annual General Meeting.

New Member Entrance Fee \$ 10.00 (Once Only - Inclusive of Association Badge.) \*Lost Badge \$5.00 each  
Annual Subscription Renewal \$ 25.00 (Includes Newsletters)  
**TOTAL** \$ 35.00

MEMBERS SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## MEMBERSHIP 'RENEWAL / UP-DATE' FORM

\$25.00 per year. (1st July to 30th June)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

Private Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Wife/Partners Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Confidential if ticked)

EXTRA or 'LOST' Membership Lapel Pins Required, please tick - How many?  \$5.00 each P&H included.

MEMBERS SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Return Application with Cheque, Money Orders or Direct Deposit to:

Direct Depositing into account: Heritage Building Society. BSB: 638-070 Account No: 10045570

Ensure you mark it, 'Membership' and then your 'Surname' or 'Regimental Number' for identification.

IF YOU USE THE DIRECT DEPOSIT FACILITY PLEASE FORWARD THIS FORM AS WELL.

NO CASH IN MAIL PLEASE -