

1 FIELD SQUADRON GROUP

'FOLLOW THE SAPPER'THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS
QUEENSLAND INCORPORATED

Website - www.1fieldsappers.org
email: info@1fieldsappers.org

* Christmas Truce Western Front 1917
Angus McBride

Greetings fellow Sappers and Friends.

Many of us will have spent a Christmas or two away from loved ones. Times were so different then. I recall my first Christmas away from home. The year was 1966. I was serving on the LSM – AV1356 Clive Steele. We were in Vung Tau at the time. The Peter Badcoe Club had not yet been built. The favored 'watering hole' was a US Military bar known as the Beachcomber. It was close to the beach I think. Christmas Eve was a very merry time for this young POGO. I was severely led astray by fellow crew mates and some Sapper mates from 17 Construction Squadron, probably planties. LBJ was President of USA at the time. I recall, nursing a skin-full, standing on a table and toasting LBJ. One of the Yanks who was probably equally nursing a skin-full, joined me on the table and was toasting Queen Elizabeth II. He probably didn't know who our PM was let alone know the phrase, 'all the way with LBJ.' Harold Holt was the man but toasting the Queen was cool.

I think after much of this 'toasting' stuff, young POGO began to feel the impact. You know that feeling – room spins and one is not so steady on ones' feet. My mates got me safely back on-board and I slept that merry Christmas off. So Christmas Day – our cooks bunged on a great spread. They could work miracles with very little resources. The POGO was not up to consuming this festive board. It was probably one of the best feeds to appear on the Clive Steele and I had to pass. Ah, the price one pays. The point I want to make here is that my mates, my fellow Sappers, looked after me. They protected me. They got me safely back to the ship. That is what we do, isn't it; protect those we care about?

Here we are in 2021. The silly season is upon us again. The commercialism of Christmas is thumping away on TV, newspapers and social media. We can reflect on 2021 much as we probably did for 2020 with the dominating conversation line – COVID 19. How that little word has turned lives upside down. It would be good to remember that as serving or ex-serving members of our ADF, we stood to protect our Nation, our loved ones and our values. With borders opening and countries becoming accessible again, the need to protect could not be greater. I know there has been much debate over the 'jab' but if having it is akin to wearing body armour while making safe some nasty explosive or mine, or simply getting your mate safely home after a night on the jump around juice, then surely such protection is plain common sense. Please keep all that you hold precious, safe. Get the 'jab'.

To all our members, family and friends, I wish you all a safe and wonderful Christmas. Let us all hope that 2022 will be a year when we can enjoy times together and freedoms, not only from COVID but all the ills that seem to have prevailed over these past couple of years.



Old Christmas cards from World War One including a Royal Engineer card.

Derek Smith OAM
Editor FTS

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Christmas Nativity Scene drawn by 9 year old Orphan from Vinh Son 1 Orphanage, Kon Tum, Vietnam. He is personally sponsored by Derek Smith and is now 22.

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:

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or
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facebook

Vale - 1 FD SQN GP RAE members:

The following list is of our brothers who have marched out since our last newsletter.

BRIG David Lindsay Howard BURING AM	.....	1 FD SQN GP 1966/67	Passed away 20 November 2020
CPL William Joseph HOLZWORTH	.....	1 FD SQN GP 1967/68	Passed away 13 July 2021
SPR Michael Patrick BERGIN	.....	1 FD SQN GP 1970/71	Passed away 4 August 2021
SPR Geertjan Thomas STEEN	.....	1 FD SQN GP 1970/71	Passed away 29 August 2021
LCPL Edward COMBEN	.....	1 FD SQN GP 1967/68	Passed away 4 September 2021
LCPL Edward (Ted) WAUGH	.....	21 EST 1968/69	Passed away 29 September 2021
CAPT Graham James MOON	.....	1 FD SQN GP 1966/67	Passed away 18 November 2021
CPL Herbert DITTMAN (PAWCZYNSKI)	.....	21 EST 1966/67 & 17 CONST SQN 1971/72	Passed away 15 December 2021.
LCPL Ross Edward COMBEN	.....	1 FD SQN GP 1967/68	

Our deepest sympathies to all those families of those we have lost.

On our sick list is Sandy MacGregor who commanded our first Sappers into Vietnam – 3 TP. We wish him a speedy recovery.



Pleiku Christmas 1966

Somewhere in Vietnam
US Army – during Vietnam War.

This is a series of American pictures from a good friend from USA – Janette Maring. She has allowed me to use them . . . Editor



Children from the Vinh Son orphanages in Kon Tum celebrating Christmas 2018.

Great Cycle Challenge

Our erstwhile Association Treasurer of many years, Jim Weston has submitted the article below for publication. I put his story up on my Facebook page and shared with many who I hope supported his efforts. Well done Jim.

This October, I took part in the Great Cycle Challenge to fight kids' cancer! Because right now, cancer is the largest single killer of children from disease in Australia – over 600 children are diagnosed with cancer every year and sadly, 3 die every week. It is personal for me as my sister lost her only son to a brain tumour.

I also have a great mate whose granddaughter who is only five months old and suffering from Leukemia has already endured many chemotherapy sessions and is booked in for a bone marrow transplant in January.

Kids should be living life, not fighting for it.

And so I rode 1005 km and raised \$5,566.14 to support the Children's Medical Research Institute to continue their work into the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and finding a cure for childhood cancer.

Thanks for the financial support I received from many of my Sapper brothers to give these kids the brighter futures they deserve.



Jim on his trusty bike and then with his Grand-daughters Liv, Evie and Elle.

Some stats from the Challenge, 12,592 riders rode 3,401,484 km and raised \$6,973,156.

I apologise for the photos of an old Sapper in Lycra, if you have been affected, a couple of sedatives, a cuppa tea and a lie down will help. Others may need a good stiff drink to recover. I will be going around again next October and will be looking for sponsors again, hope I can rely on some of you again. Together, we can save little lives.

Thanks for your support.

Jim Weston.
Follow the Sapper. (Even if he's on his bike)

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1 Field Squadron Group Web Site

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We acknowledge photos marked with * are from AWM, ADF Media or Wikipedia
All others are from private collections and in some cases source is unknown.

President's Report December 2021

Cancelled Reunion 22, 23 and 24 October 2021

It is with regret that we had to cancel the reunion for 2021 due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions that were in place for visitors entering Queensland from NSW and Victoria.

AGM 2021

The Annual General Meeting for 2021 was conducted by teleconferencing on 15 November 2021. The Association committee bid farewell to Bob Pfeiffer as our Vice-President after numerous years of service in the role, and welcomes John Pritchard as our incoming V-P. We also congratulate Tony Andrews on upgrading from committee member into the role of Association Secretary. The full list of committee members is available further in this Follow The Sapper.

Engineer Monument to WWI Sappers in France

Our memorial bridge in Amiens France has been rescheduled for Sunday 7 August 2022. All the arrangements as previously advised for the construction and dedication of it remain the same except moved forward to Sunday 7 August 2022. The Amiens City Council will confirm arrangements with us in February 2022 – However, the design of the bridge has been changed to a factory-made Single-Single Bailey pedestrian bridge available from the Mabey Company of the UK. An outline design of the bridge is given in this edition of Follow The Sapper.

Funding for this monument has been requested from the Federal Government. But. We have not received a response to our requests from the Federal Government for financial assistance of A\$120,000 to pay for it. It is the intention of this Association to deliver this bridge in 2022 and to this end, we will re-boot our crowd-funding campaign with a promotion in December 2021.

Please help us get the word out there that financial assistance is needed to turn this monument into a reality. A flyer with the appropriate information on it including the fact that we are a registered charity for taxation purposes will be circulated soon.

More information on travel and accommodation suggestions in France for August 2022 will be promulgated in our next edition of Follow The Sapper.

Meritorious Unit Citation for 1 FD SQN

We have appealed to the Minister for Defence, Mr Peter Dutton through his Deputy, Mr Andrew Hastie, requesting that he direct the DHAAT to conduct a public enquiry into our submission that 1 FD SQN be awarded the MUC. We await a response from the Minister for Defence.

Visit to 1 CER in February 2022

This Association has been invited to visit to Robertson Barracks from 2 to 5 February 2022. We will be represented at 1CER by myself and Joe Cazey (Major [Retd]) who was the officer-in-charge of laying the Barrier Minefield in Vietnam. We will deliver a couple of presentations on the history of the SQN, some experiences of our sappers during the Vietnam War and a promotion of our monument bridge in Amiens France.

50th Anniversary of Operation Ivanhoe – the Battle of Nui Le 20 September 2021

The 50th anniversary memorial service to Operation Ivanhoe including the Battle of Nui Le was intended to be held in ANZAC Avenue Canberra on 20 September 2021. The event was cancelled due to the COVID-9 situation in the ACT and replaced by a DVA virtual service conducted using recorded data over the DVA website and ABC information services. This military engagement was the last action by Australians with the enemy during the Vietnam War. 1 FD SQN Association in collaboration with Councillor James Mackay of the Walter Taylor Ward in Brisbane and

the 4RAR Association conducted a memorial service at a newly named 'Operation Ivanhoe Memorial Garden' in the suburb of St Lucia in Brisbane on 28 October 2021. There were some 40 people who attended the service, mainly ex4RAR veterans. An address on the Operation was delivered by Colonel Bob Sayce CSC who was the 4RAR Intelligence Officer during Operation Ivanhoe. A plaque commemorating the event has been placed on a sandstone block in the garden.

Sapper John Kimmorley Appeal

The fund-raising campaign that raised \$22,000 recently to help this struggling 1 FD SQN Vietnam veteran assisted his daughter Brooke Denholm to complete the renovations required to re-house John back into his home. His relief at not being forced to leave his home and seek institutionalised accommodation is as palpable as Brooke's satisfaction of looking after her dad. Her resolve and determination to see the project to a successful outcome is remarkable and shows that the Sapper DNA probably does flow down to our kids.

Christmas 2021

Another year has been achieved as we move on to 2022. Your committee wishes you every happiness, success and good health for Christmas and all of 2022. Stay healthy and keep on the safe side of the pandemic. If you haven't already – please get vaccinated if you are able to receive it.

G. H. Hulse

Follow the Sapper
George Hulse OAM
President

15th Dec 2021



Princess Mary Gift Fund 1914

Christmas 1914 saw almost every sailor afloat and every soldier at the front, receive a brass box containing cigarettes, tobacco, a photograph of Princess Mary, a Christmas card from the Princess and from King George and Queen Mary. No doubt some have one of these brass boxes. I do. It belonged to my Grandfather. I am something of a hoarder.



Picture shows 17 year old Princess Mary, only daughter of King George V and Queen Mary. Princess Mary was born 25th April 1897.

The Brigadier Charles Foote CB CMG Award



Brigadier Charles Foote CB CMG.

Brigadier-General Cecil Henry Foote, CB, CMG (1876-1942), was an Australian regular army officer. He was born on 16 January 1876 at Bourke, New South Wales and educated at Toowoomba and Brisbane Grammar schools and later qualified as a mechanical engineer.

Foote was commissioned at the rank of Second Lieutenant into the Queensland Militia Garrison Artillery in March 1895 but joined the Queensland Permanent Artillery in September 1896 and promoted to Lieutenant.

In 1902 Foote transferred to the Australian Army Engineers but remained in Queensland as staff officer of engineer services. He went to England for technical training in 1908 and on returning was staff officer and commander, Australian Army Engineers, Victoria in 1909-10. Promoted to the rank of Major in August 1909, his next posting was to Army Headquarters Melbourne, where in 1910-11 he was Director of Works and in 1911-12 Director of Engineers.

In January 1915, at the rank of Major, Foote joined Major General (Sir) William Bridges' 1st Division, Australian Imperial Force, as Deputy Adjutant and Quartermaster General. He served in the Gallipoli Campaign and was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. He is credited with inaugurating the Waterloo Dinner when Watson's Pier was completed on 18 June 1915. He was decorated for his work at Gallipoli with a high British award - the CMG.

Foote arrived on the Western Front in early 1916 and worked in the role of Senior Administrative Staff Officer of the Australian 1st Division. He was transferred to A.I.F. depots in Britain in July 1917, and in March 1918 was promoted to Colonel and posted to Lieutenant-General Sir William Birdwood's Australian Corps in France as Chief Engineer. When General Sir John Monash took over as Commander of the five Australian Divisions, Foote was promoted to Brigadier-General and became Monash's Chief Engineer. In July 1918, Foote held a conference where he encouraged the need for all Australian sappers to consider themselves as members of one Corps (they had been recruited and trained by individual units and had bonded more with their unit than that of the Corps). It was while Foote was in this role that he visited 8 FD COY AE at Bayonvillers on 8 August 1918 in the forward areas of combat to personally congratulate the unit on its successful capture of numerous enemy maps and stores lists of engineering interest.

At the end of WWI, Foote filled the role of Deputy Director General of Repatriation and Demobilisation AIF on the Western Front. Foote returned to Australia in November 1919 after an eight-year absence and his A.I.F. appointment ended in February 1920. In October 1920, he joined the newly formed Australian Staff Corps, then in 1922-25 served as a Colonel in various posts at Army Headquarters.

In 1926 he was posted to Queensland where he was given, for the next four years, three command appointments including that of Commandant, 1st Military District. In 1936 he was officially placed on the retired list as a Brigadier-General. He received the high British distinction of an award of the CB for his work during WWI and his continuing military roles after the war. He was Mentioned-In-Despatches seven times.

Charles Bean (the official Australian Military Historian for WWI) described him as 'a man of educated tastes and fine intellect' and 'an officer of great ability' who became 'one of the notable figures in the Australian Imperial Force'.

Today's Corps of Royal Australian Engineers commemorates this brilliant officer by awarding the prestigious RAE award to one person each year for rendering outstanding and significant service to the Corps of Royal Australian Engineers. It is entitled 'The Brigadier-General CH Foote CB CMG Award'.

Additional content from the Editor.

As mentioned, Charles Foote attended the dinner on Gallipoli in 1915. Some of us would have been fortunate enough to attend a Waterloo Dinner at SME in 1984 where the Guest of Honour was LTCOL Stan Watson, CBE, DSO, MC, ED (RL). Images of the original Gallipoli menu and the 1984 menu are pictured below. Some will also have been fortunate enough to have attended the 100th Anniversary Waterloo Dinner, on the Gallipoli Peninsula in June 2015. This Dinner was hosted by BRIG Wayne Budd. In attendance was Mr. Bill Watson, grandson of Stan Watson. Sadly Bill was tragically killed in a vehicle accident in 2019.

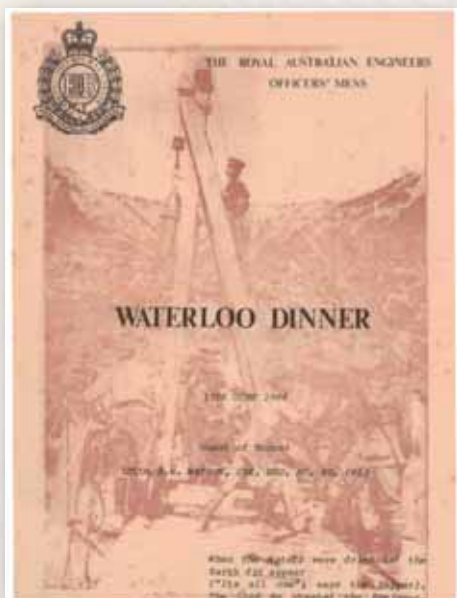
Very early in his military career, in 1964 your erstwhile Editor attended a dinner in Brisbane. It was the 41st Reunion of the 5th Light Horse Regiment AIF. My Grandfather was an original of the 5th and fought at Gallipoli and the Middle East. He may well have met Charles Foote and Stan Watson. What was particularly significant to Derek Smith here was that also at the dinner were his Dad, Don Smith 1st Aust Para's WW2, and of course his Grandfather's mates commenting on the close resemblance of we three. It was a great honour for me to share company with so many brave men of the 5th.

The recipients of this award are:

2019 - Colonel John Wertheimer AM RFD (Retd);

2020 - LTCOL George Hulse OAM (Retd),

2021 - WO1 James Davis (Retd).



THE RAE WATERLOO DINNER

Dr C.E.W. Bean recorded in the Australian Official History of ANZAC, that the chief facility at the Anzac base, Gallipoli was a pier constructed by elements of the 2nd Aust Pz Coy under Lieutenant S.M. Watson, RAE of the 1st Aust Div Sig Coy.

On 18th June 1915 when the "Warrior" were gathering for their belly custom of "kaleidoscope" or "puffin house" in the RA and QMG, 1st Aust Div dugout (then LTCOL later BRIGGEN C.M. Fort, RAE) it was initiated by MAJ Mackworth, RE TOC, 1st Div Sig Coy that the pier, the first of serviceable capacity of Anzac, had been completed.

LTCOL Fort called attention to 18th June 1915 being the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo and suggested that a dinner be held in his dugout that evening to celebrate both the Waterloo Anniversary and the pier's completion.

A menu to suit the occasion was drawn and designed by Sapper (later Sergeant) G.T.W. Beach who was aided by LTCOL Fort. The dinner was titled "Australian Engineers Annual Corps Dinner".

During the dinner MAJ Mackworth proposed that the pier be named Watson's Pier after the builder, and produced a small board notice posted to that effect.

The dinner was attended by:

BRIGGEN July de Lathauere	CAPT V.A.V. Sturdee, RAE
LTCOL C.A. Fort, RAE, AGHQ	CAPT R.M. Gault, RAE, Sign
LTCOL W.A. Leslie, RE, AGHQ	LT G. Gordon, RAE Sign
LTCOL G.H. Prichard, RE, ANZAC	LT R.J. Hamilton, RAE, Sign
LTCOL F.W. Moxley, RE	LT S.M. Watson, RAE, Sign
MAJ C.W. Macgaffey, RE	LT R.A. Ramsey, ADC
MAJ H. Mackworth, RE, DSO	

An original menu (held in the RAE Museum) was signed by those attending excepting LT Watson who stated later "I did not sign the Menu Card as it would have made 13 signatures (over the superstition vs the No 13 - objections by all)".

The first known RAE Waterloo Dinner to be held after 1915 was held in Melbourne in 1924. At this time COL C.M. Fort was on the QMG branch staff in Melbourne. After COL Fort was appointed Director of Engineers on 1 Jan 25 other States were encouraged to celebrate Waterloo Dinners.

A review of Dinner Menus used over the years reveals considerable variation in title and in toast detail. Dinners have commemorated Waterloo Day, Waterloo Dinner, Annual Dinner and Corps Dinner. Toasts have been proposed to "The Day We Celebrate", "RAE" and "The Corps". One generally common feature has been to toast or stand in silence in memory of fallen comrades.

Since 1924 the Dinner has been celebrated annually at various venues both in Australia and overseas. A point of interest is that in 1948 the Engineer-in-Chief, BEIG Semple indicated that there was no recognized connection between the Royal Engineers and the Battle of Waterloo, nor is the Battle of Waterloo even mentioned in association with the Corps dinner. He further stated, "There is no objection to the holding of the RAE Corps dinner in any State on 18th June if that day is convenient. However, it is undesirable that such dinners should be referred to as 'Waterloo Dinners'.

At the 1915 Dinner four of the RAE Officers and one of the RE Officers was a Signal Engineer. For many years, even after the formation of the Aust Corps of Signals in 1921, the Dinners were held as Engineer and Signal Officers' reunions. The tradition of having the Signals Corps represented at Dinners is still observed, a reminder of the close association between RAE and RA Sig.

Royal Australian Engineers can be proud of their Waterloo Dinner tradition - a purely Australian event stemming from that recognized birthplace of Australia's military tradition, Gallipoli.

BIOGRAPHY OF LTCOL S.M. WATSON, CBE, DSO, MC, ED, (AUS)

24 Oct 1887	1	Born.
18 Mar 1912	1	2LT Engr and Sig Staff Corps.
19 Aug 1914	1	LT, Appointed to the A.I.F.
20 Oct 1914	1	Embarked for overseas with 1st Div Sig Coy.
20 Jul 1915	1	Transferred to 3rd Div Sig Coy.
3 Nov 1915	1	Promoted Captain.
18 Apr 1916	1	Attached 2nd Div Arty HQ.
6 Jan 1917	1	Promoted Major.
6 Jan 1917	1	Reappointed to command 2nd Div Sig Coy.
23 Nov 1918	1	Returned to Australia.
22 Jan 1919	1	Appointment terminated.
1 Jan 1927	1	Promoted Lieutenant Colonel.

Waterloo Dinner Menu SME 1984.



Menu from 5th Light Horse Regiment Dinner 1964 and picture of LT. Arthur Vincent Smith.



To add a bit to this story, one will note the Sam Browne belt my Grandfather is wearing. Taking a closer look you can see it has two loops on the top of the actual belt. Back in those days, the Sam Browne had cross over straps. Mr. Google tells me that The Sam Browne belt is named after Sir Samuel James Browne, VC. Browne found the standard belt ungainly with his left arm missing, and devised an external belt, supported on the left-hand (sword) side by a shoulder strap. The belt had two shoulder pieces when a pistol was added.

I am proud to say that I still have that Sam Browne and wore it on many occasions. It shines up a treat and would be one of the finest items of leather I have ever seen. The picture below is of yours truly laying a wreath at Redcliffe ANZAC Day Service in 2008 and of course, wearing my Grandfather's Sam Browne. I had marched on a few ANZAC Days back when I was in Cubs and Scouts, once carrying the Australian flag. It was a great honour to be the Reviewing Officer in 2008.



Bill Watson, Josh Funder & Derek Smith at site of Watson's Pier - Gallipoli 2015.



At the 2015 Waterloo Dinner Gallipoli Peninsular. BRIG Wayne Budd, John Raddatz and wife Christine.

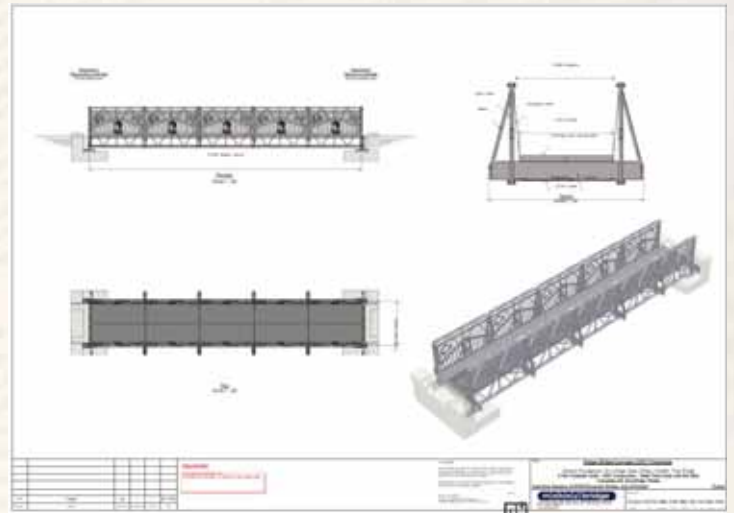


Brief Description of the Amiens Bridge

Our memorial bridge to be assembled in Amiens in France will be a Single/Single Bailey Bridge manufactured by the Mabey company in the UK. The bridge is a standard commercially available footbridge with a 2.1 metre walkway (allows two wheelchairs to pass each other going in opposite directions). It will be 15.24 metres long crossing the Somme Canal where it will provide a useful crossing into the Botanical Gardens from the CBD. The entire bridge is to be manufactured in hot-dipped galvanised steel with the decking for the walkway being covered in a special slip resistant material.

As a protection against dogs and children falling through the Bailey panels into the Somme River, a special safety barrier has been produced which is 1.2 meters high and runs the length of the bridge. Called "Smartedge" by the Mabey company, this steel protective barrier is capable of being laser inscribed with such images as the RAE bursting bomb (with Follow The Sapper inscribed beneath it), kangaroos (to make our bridge an unmistakable Australian monument), information panels and the Coats of Arms of Australia and France. Nothing has been decided about which images will be cut into the Smartedge but that will be up for discussion later in the project.

This bridge will be an outstanding monument to our Sappers of WWI and at the same time it will provide the citizens and visitors to the city of Amiens with a valuable and useful piece of infrastructure that will serve its purpose for many generations to come.



Mabey Pedestrian Bridge Design

Australian Engineer Sacred Ground

There is a patch of real estate in France that is like sacred ground to the Corps of Royal Australian Engineers. It starts at the city of Amiens and moves eastwards along the Somme River, goes through St Quentin and ends up at Montbrehain. This area is also a place of enormous significance to the Australian digger and to Australia in general.



Then came the allied offensives starting in April 1918 and maintained the initiative right to Armistice Day of 11 November 1918. New tactics, new equipment, new thought processes and determined resolve on the part of the soldiers coupled to bring the "war to end all wars" to an end. But wars did not end there. New wars have come and gone since 1918 and new wars are yet to be fought. The point is that many of our modern-day philosophies about fighting a large scale war were born in 1918 and reinforced along that patch between Amiens and Montbrehain for Australians.

So impressed by the stunning success of the Australian units in the Battle of Amiens commencing on 8 August 1918 that the Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes used the very first wireless transmission from the UK to Australia to broadcast his belief in keeping the combat units battle competent. His words have been enshrined in the following plaque* -->



To the Australian Army engineers, this patch of real estate constitutes the one place where more decorations were awarded to sappers over a period of the final 100 days of WWI than the total for the entire war previous to that time. We Australian sappers honour our original combat engineers and engineer support units by dedicating a memorial bridge in the city of Amiens in France. We acknowledge their resilience, intelligence and devotion to duty that is indelibly written into the DNA of every Australian sapper who follows them.

Follow the Sapper
George Hulse OAM
President

It was April 1918 and was the place where the first world war changed combat tactics and strategy going forward. It was the inauguration of modern combat tactics on the battlefield where mobility, firepower, and well planned military manoeuvre was coupled with a combined arms combat power designed for specific operations. This was the birthplace of combining infantry with tanks with artillery with engineers with intelligence with air power with advanced medical evacuation with efficient administration and logistics. And the lessons came hard. Up until then it appeared that both sides just worked at atrophying the other side down with human meat-grinder tactics.

The German Operation 'Michael' offensive in early 1918 put the military world on notice that bypass operations and combined arms combat teams were the way to overcome pockets of enemy resistance. The plan worked well up to a point but ran out of steam when the German Stormtroopers went too far too fast.

Final Battle for the Australian Corps occurred at Montbrehain on 5 October 1918 at which time all Australian Divisions were withdrawn from the front line for a rest.

However, the 1st Tunnelling Company AE, some Australian Artillery units and the Australian Flying Corps continued to fight. Four of the six last Australians to be KIA in World War One occurred at Molain Bridge about 20 kms to the north-east of Montbrehain on 4 November 1918. The four were Sappers of 1st Tunnelling Company AE.

* See PM message on page 7

More Bridges

As your trusty Editor has previously written, he tends to be a bit of a 'collector/hoarder'.

US Army Engineer Officer . . . This print shows a US Army Union Officer showing the way for the Artillery and Infantry who are advancing. The year is 1863 – Civil War USA – Western Theatre. Derek has a few such images that were given to him during a visit to Fort Belvoir US Army Engineering School in 1976.

And the next image . . .

This picture was in an album that belonged to his Grandfather, Arthur Smith who served in the 5th Light Horse. It shows a pontoon bridge, somewhere in the Middle East during World War One and presumably constructed by the Sappers who were attached to the Light Horse. They, like us, were Following The Sapper.



*The First Direct Wireless Messages from the United Kingdom to Australia

On 22nd September 1918 direct wireless messages from England were received in Australia, creating considerable public interest and causing a political controversy. The messages were transmitted from the big Marconi station at Carnarvon in Wales and were received at the home of Ernest Fisk, the Managing Director of Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited (AWA). Two communications were sent, one from the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. W.M. 'Billy' Hughes, who was in England trying to raise enthusiasm for the Australian war effort in Europe because public support was waning and the disastrous English military leadership of the Australian forces was under serious question. The second message was from the Minister for the Navy, Mr. Joseph Cook, who accompanied Hughes. Australia's efforts to sell its farm produce to England were being frustrated by the English farmers and unions, which explains the jingoistic tone of the wireless messages of Hughes and Cook. As it happened, Germany capitulated soon after this event and both men then took part in the Peace Conference and negotiations in November 1918.

Here is the reported text of the Prime Ministers message:

'I have just returned from a visit to the battlefields where the glorious valour and dash of the Australian troops saved Amiens and forced back the legions of the enemy, filled with greater admiration than ever for these glorious men and more convinced than ever that it is the duty of their fellow-citizens to keep these magnificent battalions up to their full strength. W.M. Hughes, Prime Minister.'



These plaques are on a monument in the suburb of Kuring-gai, Sydney NSW. Source for the info on the memorial is from Naval Historical Society of Australia at www.navyhistory.org.au



A MESSAGE TO ALL READERS FROM YOUR EDITOR:

Members, this is my eighth (8th) year as Editor of FTS. I am very keen to know how you as the reader find it. Is the content ok by you? After all, you are the member and if it is just codswallop, then I need to make changes. What do you think of the Editorial I put together. I really am wanting feedback/comments so don't hang back with any criticism.

Do not hesitate to flick me an email with any comments you can make.
You will find me at
dvsmith@ozemail.com.au
so please do get in touch.

Now a big concern I have is getting content. I really need your stories and pictures. I know you must have stuff stacked away. If you are happy to share your stories, please send me stuff. I often have to dig through my own pictures and tales and I do not want to be seen to dominate our – Your newsletter.

So how about it fellers??? Please give me some stories and pictures so we can share in our next edition.

Cheers and UBIQUE
Derek Smith OAM Editor



* See "Australian Engineer Sacred Ground" on previous page.

Incidentals

The images in this section have been shared with the kind permission of fellow member Bob Ihlein.

Many will recall some of the images, particularly of our 1 FD SQN GP area and boozier.

Thanks Bob for sharing.



21 EST tent lines, Nui Dat, Vietnam



Front end loader and a 1 FD SQN Mark 5 truck at Nui Dat, Vietnam



HQ 21 EST, Nui Dat, Vietnam.

1 FD SQN GP OR (other ranks) boozier at Nui Dat, probably taken in 1969.

The name of the bar is the Bowtell Bar, named after the first Australian Tunnel Rat (1 FD SQN) killed in Vietnam. He died on 11 January 1966 while searching a VC tunnel at Ben Cat, Vietnam.





RAAF Iroquois helicopter gun ship, Nui Dat, Vietnam.



A C123 US aircraft with a RAAF Caribou aircraft in the background. This is Luscombe Airfield, Nui Dat, Phuoc Tuy Province, Vietnam. The airfield was constructed by 1 FD SQN GP and was opened on 5 December 1966.

Small town Phuoc Tuy Province, Vietnam – could be Baria but not sure.



Two well destroyed buildings probably Baria, damaged from VC rockets and mortars.



'The American Soldier 1819. Engineer Officer, US Explorer, Infantryman and Indian.



The insignia for the US Army Engineer Corps is a Castle with the inscription "Essayons" which means "Let Us Try".

Christmas Variants.



This came from James Cook University. Here is the explanation - Christmas Tree Worm – *Spirobranchus giganteus*, commonly known as the Christmas Tree worm, is a small tube-building worm found throughout Australia's Great Barrier Reef and the world's tropical oceans. The Christmas tree worm's plumes are used for feeding and respiration, and come in a range of colours including red, orange, yellow, blue and white.



Here is another rather different Christmas Tree made of Heineken beer cans. What an unusual Christmas Tree spotted by your Editor in Ho Chi Minh City a few years ago. One assumes all the cans are empty but who knows?.

Here are several more Christmas shots. The first was taken Christmas 2018 by the editor in Ho Chi Minh City.

This is the Montagnard orphan Coi, who drew the Nativity Scene shown on the cover. He is in his final year of a Graphic Design degree in a university in Ho Chi Minh City.



The Vietnamese go 'all out' at Christmas even though the majority of the population are Buddhists.

The second Christmas lightshow is also taken by me in Ho Chi Minh City in 2017.

For those who have visited Vietnam, this picture will be recognizable. It is on Dong Khoi Street which used to be known as Tu Do Street prior to 1975.

The building is the Opera House. Beyond it is the Hotel Continental Saigon which was a popular watering hole for journalists during the Vietnam War. The magic of Christmas is well felt as the crowds show.



The next was taken in Kon Tum at Christmas time in 2009.

It is Christmas time at the Dak Bla Restaurant in Kon Tum, Central Highlands, Vietnam.



The Christmas tree can be seen in the background. Derek Smith with Son Michael, shared a good sing-song of Christmas songs and gifts, with the boss lady and the staff of the Restaurant.

All the girls are Montagnard as is the memorabilia on the wall and shelves. Some might spot the Boy Scout emblem on the book case. The owner, Mr. Van, was a Boy Scout before South Vietnam fell in 1975. Derek gave him some Australian scouting bits and pieces. Whenever they meet, they always shake hands with their left hand. Great fun as can be deduced by the smiles.

In 2017 Derek and Michael flew out of Ho Chi Minh City on Christmas Eve, mainly due to a flight delay. They took the time to walk around the streets in District 1, and absorb the Christmas spirit. One of the more bizarre sights was a utility with five Vietnamese chaps, all dressed as Santa, perched in the back of the ute. Most were smoking. Not quite the image of Santa.

Derek has a photo of this somewhere but was not able to track it down. Still perhaps the reader can imagine what it must have looked like. None of the smoking Santa's were round with a belly like jelly.

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Brigadier Matthew Galton DSC

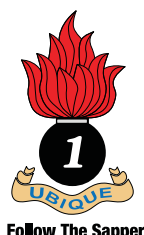
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A Bit from Committee Member Peter North

Peter sent me an email with some great pictures. Seems in 1987, just a couple of days after the 'Welcome Home March' in Sydney, Peter went down to Wollongong and marched in the Dedication Service for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, along with many Veterans from there and surrounding areas. In the march was one Glenn Defaveri who will be known to some of our members.

Glenn served in 1 FD SQN from April 1970 to April 1971. Here are the pictures Peter sent. Readers may recognize some of the marchers. Note that the Catafalque Party are in Battle Dress – kind of dates us a bit. Also note that the flag of South Vietnam is flying. That flag is no longer. Peter tells me that Glenn is bottom right on the picture of some of the lads at a reunion.



Peter also sent on this bit of humor. Enjoy. Thanks Peter for these additions to our Newsletter.

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