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Keeping the Peace - Egypt 1919

Dr Michael Tyquin

power to them at the end of the war, Egyptian nationalists fermented a widespread anti-European revolt. Their cause was helped by a number of grievances which were incorrectly laid at the feet of the occupying power. Troops of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps Mounted Division, particularly men of the 3d Light Horse Brigade, played a key role in quelling the uprising. Civil conflict and efforts to contain it are commonplace nowadays and Australia continues to play its part in this important Defence role across the globe. It is worth remembering, however, that Australian



troops were a critical part of an early and little known episode of peacekeeping shortly after the end of World War I. In the post-Great War era, political cultural niceties and the almost universal respect for human rights that we take for granted today were not part of the social inheritance of Australian Diggers. They were nurtured in an imperial Anglo-Saxon mould that gave expression to the White Australia policy. Both official and unofficial writings and documents of the day are rich in the condescending terms of the day; and 'niggers', 'wops' and other non-whites were regarded with disdain. This was certainly the case in Egypt in 1919. It was this attitude that lay behind the cavalier, almost detached, attitude that Diggers showed through out these months of what was a serious policing operation.

.....continued on page 3

This is a little known account of early Australian Army participation in civilian conflict during the Egyptian Rebellion of 1919. Bitterly disappointed at Britain's refusal to hand over

troops were a critical part of an early and little known episode of peacekeeping shortly after the end of World War I. In the post-Great War era, political cultural niceties and the almost universal respect for human rights that we take for granted today were not part of the social inheritance of Australian Diggers. They were nurtured in an imperial Anglo-Saxon mould that gave expression to the White Australia policy. Both official and unofficial writings and documents of the day are rich in the condescending terms of the day; and 'niggers', 'wops' and other non-whites were regarded

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Wanted

Articles, photos personal stories or experiences.

This is your chance for immortality.

All submissions will be considered

Coming Events



1 February, 2011	RAACA NSW General Meeting	Gallipoli Club, Loftus St, Sydney
5 April, 2011	RAACA NSW General Meeting	Gallipoli Club, Loftus St, Sydney
25 April, 2011	ANZAC DAY Post March	FUP Civic Hotel —cnr Pitt & Goulburn
7 June 2011	RAACA NSW General Meeting	Gallipoli Club, Loftus St, Sydney
26 November 2011	Annual Cambrai Day Dinner	Royal Automobile Club Inc
29 May 2011	Boer War Day	The Shrine Hyde Park

Armoured Vehicles Australia 2011

Date: 17-19 May 2011, National Convention Centre, Canberra

Enquiries: Defence IQ, Tel: +61 2 9229 1000; Email: registration@iqpc.com.au;

Web: www.armouredvehicles.com.au

Armoured Vehicles Australia will provide an opportunity to engage with senior military decision makers from Australia and beyond on survivability, C4I, power, lethality and manoeuvrability solutions for current and future armoured vehicle acquisitions. The senior speaking panel shall profile key armoured vehicle programs and analyse force requirements post-Afghanistan. Speakers will address specific issues relating to vehicles currently in-theatre, including the Bushmaster, LAV III, MRAP, Stryker and also provide feedback on future upgrades and program requirements.



The New Year is upon us and it already promises to be a year of change our feature article seems to bear out the saying that history repeats itself. We can only hope that the situation resolves itself without too much bloodshed.

Closer to home any organization is only as good as the individuals that make it up. We need your ongoing support, so take pen to paper and write to us of your army experiences.

John Haynes, President

Background to the Uprising

Until November 1914, Egypt was still nominally a province of the Turkish Empire, despite being administered by Great Britain. Then, on the outbreak of war, Britain declared Egypt a protectorate. After the Armistice in 1918, Pasha Zaghul formed a new Nationalist Party aware of United States President Woodrow Wilson's wish for self-determination for many former colonies and protectorates. Zaghul declared an independent Egypt and absolved Egyptians from recognising British authority in their country. The British Government, however, took



Pasha Zaghul

another view, and when an uprising broke out in 1919, it used Australian troops to crush it.

How did this scenario come about? Zaghul could capitalise on anti-British feeling which had come to a head immediately after the Great War, for there were good reasons why this former supporter of British military operations in the Middle East became the new enemy.

Firstly, there was a large pool of well-educated, capable and ambitious young Egyptians who found themselves with little hope of employment in the new world order. All key government appointments were held by British officers or appointees. Secondly, during the war, through nepotism and corruption, village mayors (Omdahs) had seen to it that villagers who did not pay them exemption fees were forced to work in the many labour battalions that were a critical part of the British war effort in Egypt and Palestine. Thirdly,

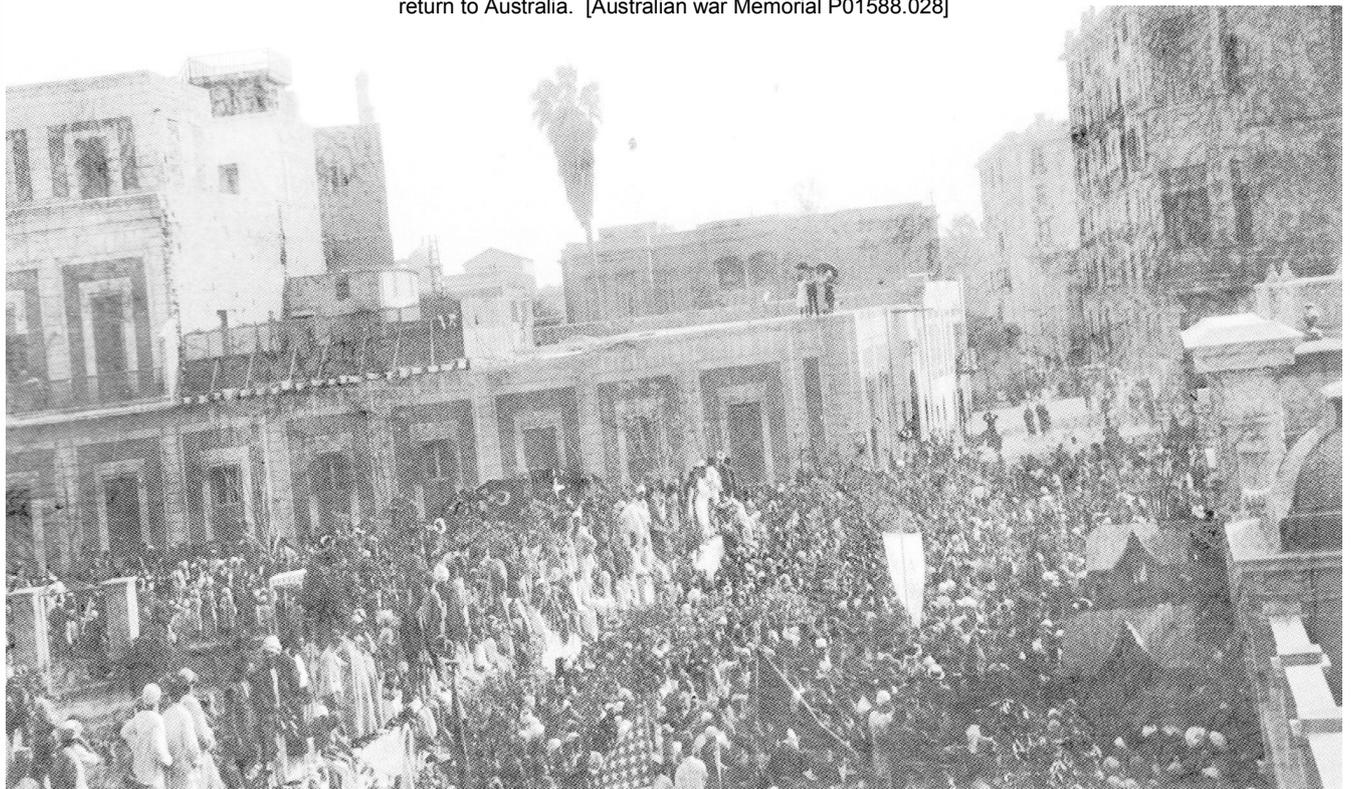
again through corrupt practices, Omdahs had collected grain from farmers but they failed to pass on what the British Government paid for it. In 1919, Zaghul could conveniently blame the British for all these problems, whereas Britain was directly responsible only for ignoring the professional aspirations of the indigenous population.

Consequently, by early 1919, there were a large number of dissatisfied Egyptians of all classes who could be easily swayed by local propaganda. Zaghul had no difficulty in capitalising on this dissent. His move to incite rebellion was premature, only by a month, but with sufficient time to enable the uprising to be put down effectively and brutally. Had Zaghul bided his time a little longer, the only troops left in Egypt would have been a few British and Indian battalions on garrison duty at various prisoner of war camps.

The Uprising

In March 1919, however, when they did rise, the nationalists failed to take into account the presence of four complete Australian mounted brigades and a part of the New Zealand Mounted Brigade. These troops had been making the last preparations for their long awaited repatriation home. When unrest broke out, all Australian soldiers were placed on immediate alert, ordered to resume patrol work and told to be prepared to stay on in Egypt indefinitely. A number of troopers left their hospital beds to bring units up to strength. The rebellion began with a concerted attack on Egypt's communication system – telephone, telegraph and rail. This was accompanied by a wave of attacks on British troops, Christian churches, Armenians and the first trickle of post-war European tourists. There were a number of outrages on those unfortunate to be caught in the streets alone or unarmed. At the time, Egypt had a population of approximately 15 million.

Angry crowds in Cairo during the Egyptian rebellion in March 1919. The riots were suppressed by the ANZAC Mounted Division before its return to Australia. [Australian war Memorial P01588.028]



Recognising the need for decisive action, the British Government appointed General Sir Edmund Allenby, at that time the Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, High Commissioner with absolute powers. The reasons why Britain was not prepared to withdraw were enumerated during a secret brief given to British and Australian officers on 1 April 1919 by Captain Wooley, an intelligence officer attached to General Headquarters, Egypt. While recognizing that popular grievances were genuine, he emphasised the strategic imperatives behind the operation. He made it clear that Britain "could not see another power gaining Egypt and incidentally the Suez Canal". He also made reference to Britain's huge investment in the local cotton industry, something that it would not give up lightly. He finished his address by an admonition that: "Firing on mobs, except when in absolute self defence, was forbidden." There were no other rules of engagement.

The Australian Response

Those Australian units still in Egypt (awaiting repatriation) were immediately deployed to three main areas. Seven Light Horse Regiments were still at Australian Headquarters in Zagazig; two others were almost 100 kilometres way at Damanhour, near Alexandria; while another regiment was deployed on the Nile, just north of Cairo. The activities of the 3'd Light Horse Brigade, namely the 8'h, 9'n and 10'n Regiments, which had only just arrived in Egypt from Syria, are the focus of this narrative. These men were commanded by a Queenslander, Brigadier-General Lachlan Wilson. This brigade was alerted on Thursday, 13 March 1919, to prepare

for trouble. Subsequently, three officers and 50 men of the 10th Light Horse Regiment were despatched to secure key installations in the town of Minet El Qamh on 16 March. On the following morning, a mob of about 1000 rioters stopped a small group of Australians. The latter, fearing for their safety and joined by an aeroplane of the Australian Flying Corps, fired on the crowd. Thirty-nine locals were killed and 25 wounded, while 40 men drowned trying to escape across an adjoining canal. The Australians sustained one casualty.

On subsequent occasions, whenever a machine gun was used against rioters, every eleventh round was removed from ammunition belts to break automatic firing. This measure forced the gunner to deliberately start again, if required, after every tenth shot. This measure was an attempt to control nervous gunners and to prevent unnecessary killing. On 27 March, an Australian mounted patrol was escorting a railway construction train involved in repairing torn up tracks near the town of Zagazig. It came across thousands of Egyptians breaking up the railway line. While under no immediate threat to themselves, the troopers immediately opened fire, killing 30 as the crowd fled. Elsewhere, another, larger mob was burning down a railway station. A few Light Horse troopers, who had manhandled a railway trolley across broken up sections of track, soon found themselves face to face with the another angry crowd. To disperse them, they used a Vickers-Maxim machine gun, inflicting 50 casualties as locals fled for the safety of the town.

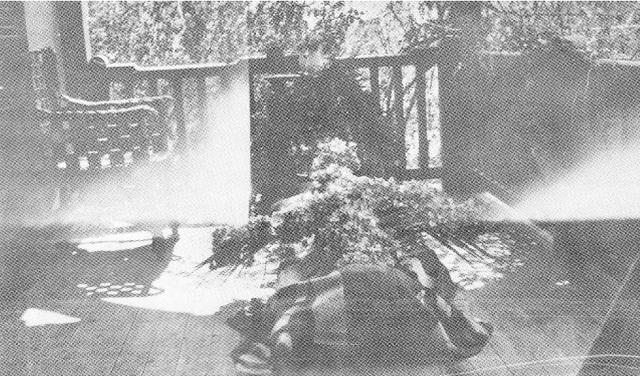
A patrol of the 15th Australian Light Horse Regiment leaving Mit Ghamr. The patrol had occupied the town following rioting by the Egyptians. [Australian War Memorial J06013]



Despite this tough response, the railway and telegraph network which criss-crossed the country continued to be targeted during the rebellion. Bridges and telephone lines were also destroyed. Numerous small clashes followed and the Australians' success must be explained by the lack of modern firearms in the civilian population.

No doubt the infamous 1915 "Battle of the Wazza" in Cairo's red light district, was still fresh in the memory of old timers among the troopers and their behaviour to the local population was generally exemplary - part of Allenby's "hearts and minds" information operation. But when called to action, they were brutal in putting down any displays of mass violence or vandalism. Where railways and telegraph posts had been torn up, the local people were forced at gunpoint to repair or return them. This was always done without demur, which was just as well for officers reported that Light Horse troopers consistently refused to take the rebellion and its dangers seriously. Overall, the Australians sustained 20 casualties during this operation.

As Allenby made concessions to the Nationalists, Egypt became quiet again, so much so that, by July, the last Australian Diggers were on their way home - some for the first time since 1915.



The Author: Dr. Michael Tyquin is a Canberra-based writer and historian, with a special interest in Australian military, social and medical history and is also a serving Army Reserve officer. His latest work, *Not a branch in the limelight - the Australian Army Veterinary Corps 1906-1946*, is due to be published later this year. He received a Chief of the Defence Force Commendation for an earlier book, *"Little by Little"* - the history of the RAAMC, which he published in 2003 to commemorate the centenary of the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps.

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Coffin containing the body of R272 Lance Corporal James Maxwell Ferguson, 10th Light Horse Regiment, resting on the verandah of the 3rd Light Horse Field Ambulance's hospital. Lance Corporal Ferguson enlisted in 1914 and served right through the war until he was set upon in Zagazig on 19 March 1919 by a group disguised as a wedding party, who battered him with sticks. He died of wounds on 21 March 1919

[Australian War Memorial P01668.011]

THE VASEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION – NSW

Vasey Housing is named after its founder, Mrs Jessie Vasey, the widow of Major General George Vasey who was killed in WW11. As a war widow, Mrs Vasey fought for the rights of all war widows, many of whom were living in, or near to poverty on a miniscule pension. It was almost impossible for these ladies to gain even modest accommodation and it was only by Mrs Vasey's personal efforts and fund raising that 'Vasey Housing' was born. The Association has been very successful over the decades having expanded its accommodation range and scope to assist with anyone with Service connections. Now Vasey self-contained apartments are available to both single men and women with Military Service connections over the age of fifty-five years who wish to pursue an independent and dignified lifestyle.

The Vasey Sydney properties are located at Maroubra, Hunters Hill, Lane Cove, Epping and Waitara, all in picturesque garden settings within a reasonable distance of amenities and transport.

An elected Board of Directors, most having a Military Service background, exercise control over Vasey. The day to day management of the villages is carried out by a small staff. Compliance with the necessary Government Acts and Regulations is assured

The Vasey Housing Association maintains a 'not for profit' status and continues to offer great value, comfort and security to all of its residents.

Anyone seeking accommodation solutions at a modest cost is invited to contact Mr David Elkins, the CEO of Vasey on (02) 9299 3951.

Technical Notes & News

Gains in composite armour

Honeywell has announced that it has expanded its Spectra Shield II line of ballistic materials for hard armour applications, including breast plates, helmets and vehicles that are lighter, work effectively in high temperatures and keep mili-



tary personnel safer.

The new products, Spectra Shield II SR 3136 and SR 3137, absorb two to six times more energy than earlier-generation Spectra Shield hard

armour products, reduce impact trauma by 10 per cent, and have improved ballistic performance at high temperatures. Spectra Shield II is a composite material that incorporates Honeywell's super-strength Spectra fibre, which, pound for pound, is 15 times stronger than steel yet light enough to float. Spectra fibre is made from ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene using a patented gel-spinning process. The fibre exhibits high resistance to chemicals, water, and ultraviolet light. It has excellent vibration damping, flex fatigue and internal fibre-friction characteristics. It has up to 60 per cent greater specific strength than alternate aramid fibre.

Abrams in Afghanistan

A C-17 Globemaster III and its crew delivered the first of 17 M1A1 Abrams tanks to military forces in Afghanistan on November 25, marking the first time US-owned tanks have deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Richard P. Mills, commander of Afghanistan's Regional Command-Southwest requested the tanks, according to a US Department of Defense release. The RC-Southwest region lends itself to armoured operations with wide open areas and none of the mountainous terrain that

characterises Regional Command-East and the northern portions of Regional Command-South.

Officials emphasised that the movement of the M1A1s to Afghanistan did not represent an escalation of the conflict there.

"We're conducting full-spectrum combat operations today,

we'll be doing it tomorrow, we'll be doing it next month," Marine Col. Dave Lapan, a Department of



Germany orders Eagles

General Dynamics European Land Systems entered a US\$165 million contract with the German Federal Office of Defence Technology and for the delivery of 195 highly protected EAGLE vehicles. The new order is in addition to orders awarded between 2008 and 2010, and increases the German EAGLE fleet to a total of 473 vehicles. All vehicles for the German Federal Defence Force will be jointly manufactured by General Dynamics European Land Systems-Mowag in Kreuzlingen, Switzerland, and General Dy-



namics European Land Systems-Germany in Kaiserslautern. The EAGLE vehicle was selected in 2008 following two years of intensive evaluation within the framework of the public procurement of protected Class 2 Command and Function vehicles. This vehicle replaces a large number of existing unprotected and lightly protected Federal Defence Force vehicles on foreign missions. The EAGLE can be used for various missions by applying modular add-on kits.

IN THE NEWS

Leopards roar in Afghanistan



Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan received five of 20 upgraded Leopard 2 A4M CAN (Leopard 2) tanks between December 2010 and mid January 2011. The new tanks arrived freshly off the production line of Krauss-Maffei Wegmann (KMW) as part of the tank replacement project to replace some of the Leopard 2 A6M CAN tanks that have been deployed in theatre since 2007.

The deployment of the upgraded tanks will ensure Canadian soldiers continue to sustain ongoing combat operations and fulfil Canada's commitment to its coalition partners until the end of the mission in Afghanistan.

tions and fulfil Canada's commitment to its coalition partners until the end of the mission in Afghanistan.

Key upgrades on the Leopard 2A4M CAN include a general overhaul of the complete vehicle and 360 degrees of protection afforded by add-on armour. Other modifications include an all-electric digital turret, a digital central logic/main distribution system, a new commander system control unit, enhanced service brakes, an upgraded suspension and driver viewing aids. Environmental enhancements include chilled cooling vests for the crew and new camouflage nets. The new tanks undergo a commissioning process when they arrive in Kandahar before they are loaded for battle. Some of them have already been pushed forward in support of combat operations.



Photo of the month

This ship is obviously a tanker!



Message Board

The Chief of the Army has decided that the Black Beret (together with all other Berets except for Special Forces) is not to be worn except by permission on certain ceremonial occasions. As you know, the Black Beret is an important facet of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps's history and tradition, and as such this decision has been met with much indignation and disgust by many current and ex members of the RAAC.

If you are a member of the social networking website Facebook, you may wish to join your mates and join the "Save the Black Berets" page. This page was created to show public support for the Black Beret and it's importance to the RAAC.

Show your support today by joining us at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Save-the-Black-Beret/149306918422343>

We want to get over 5000 members!

And this ANZAC Day, 25th April, 2011 if you have ever worn the Black Beret during your service in the Australian Army, then please turn up to your local march wearing your Black Beret and medals. Lets have a sea of Black Berets this ANZAC Day and show the Army how important the Black Beret is to us.

Letters Received



The McLaren Vale RSL have just received their Leopard Tank, you can view the AFV at McLaren Vale Memorial Park located within the Gemmel Tasie Reserve, Valley View Drive.

This has now completed the delivery of all Leopards to RSLs.



From: Colonel Filtness – ex 1 Armoured Regiment - Re Hammersley issue 459

Hi, my name is Col Filtness, I am an Association member and the owner of the Centurion-mbt websites www.centurion-mbt.com I just finished reading the edition with your story. I must say I was most impressed.

As an ex 1st Armoured Regiment Centurion driver, that never saw any action, and did not serve in Vietnam, I find the value of articles like yours, a great help in understanding all that our chaps went through. I am also the Curator of Armour for the Vietnam Veterans Museum at Phillip Island, and have a large number of veterans that I know and associate with.

The article will make contact with many people that were veterans and also many that were members but did not serve in Vietnam. But it's my belief that it should be shown to as many people as possible, including civilians and the younger generation.

Having said that I wonder if you would be able to give permission for me to display it on my website, which is viewed world wide. If it was possible (and I realise that there can be many reasons why it could not, so I would understand if it was not allowed) I would like to show it exactly as it appears, from start to finish, with full credit to both yourself and the Association.

Letter from Joffre Gilchrist whom many will remember from his long and remarkable service in the RAAC.

Dear John,

It's people like you who make it possible for people like me to be thankful for whoever it was that passed the information on to you regarding my age etc, and that I am still alive! But not quite as old as mentioned!! I was born on 12 September 1915 the second year of WW1, so that makes me 95 ½. Whether I will make the 100 I'm not quite sure, I have quite a few problems and of course the loss of my wife, Sylvia, didn't help much, but I'm managing.

I have had quite a few phone calls, especially that massive article in "Armour". I'm still driving, but my reading/writing vision is bad – as you can see!

It is also nice to know that the many who have contacted me over the years have all been so nice – I am really making a mess of this!-. In case there is a query about "Joffre" I was named after the French General Joffre, which is a story in itself! So thanks again John for your card, and for those who "Remembered".

Regards and Best Wishes to you all,

Joffre G. (Gillie)

Gillie's card was accompanied by an extract from one of the local papers showing a relaxed and be-medalled Joffre Gilchrist in pensive mode, and his added note "Photo taken last year, don't know if I can make it (the Anzac March) again this year. I seem to be the only one in step!! My advice to all oldies is NOT to have any more birthdays, because the more you have the older you get! JG



SOARMD 70th ANNIVERSARY BOOK

On 24 Feb 11, the School of Armour (SOARMD) will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the unit. It is intended to publish a book displaying a celebratory history of the School's achievements and members for release on the day of the anniversary.

The intent of the anniversary book project is not to write a definitive and documented history but rather to display its achievements and the personal stories of the personnel associated with the SOARMD over its 70 year history.

It is to be authored by a diverse range of current and past members from all ranks that focuses on personal recollections of changes, challenges, people, events and personal experiences using a period approach in a style and format similar to IRONSIDES. The generous use of photographs will produce a readable and enjoyable impression of the 70 years since the school was raised at Balcombe. Simply put, let the parts tell the story.

The deadline for contributions has now closed and we await the publishing of the book. For further information please contact; MAJ John Baines (03) 57357 459, john.baines1@defence.gov.au, or MAJ Peter Branagan (03) 57357 460, peter.branagan@defence.gov.au,



Pre-Order

To Fight and Do Our Best

Cate Clark is now accepting pre-orders for her publication *To Fight and Do Our Best: The 1st Australian Armoured Division In Gunnedah 1942-1943*. Go to www.writerightmedia.com.au to download an order form or contact Cate on 0408 425564 to have one sent to you. Cost is \$55 for each book plus \$12 postage to anywhere in Australia. Books will be forwarded immediately on coming back from the printers – late April 2011.

Lest we Forget
We regret to advise the passing of the following

Mrs R Robertson OAM

R Hogarth

HEARTY WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS
SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE

MAJ Murray Colin Stewart, 2 Cav Regt, 2/14 LH (QMI), 4/19 PWLH, 1/15 RNSWL
 Mr. Glen Eaves, 1/15 RNSWL, 2 Cav Regt
 MAJGEN W B (Digger) James
 Mr. G (Geordie) Clark, 1 AR
 Ms Cate Clark, 1 AR
 Mr DF (Desmond) Ferguson, 2/8 AR
 Mr J F Gurney, 10 LHR
 Mrs J Howard (widow of ex CO 10LH)
 LTCOL B Kilpatrick, 2 Cav Regt, 3/4 Cav Regt
 Mr K Kludas, 1AR
 Mr. M Leembruggen, RAEME
 MAJ T L Palmer, 1/15 RNSWL
 Mr J Sullivan, 3 Cav Regt
 LT W Van Tenac, 3/9 SAMR
 Mrs L Wilkinson

**We are extremely grateful for the following individuals and associations for their donations to
 the National Boer War Memorial project between 1 November to 1 February**

R J Burrows	Berwick RSL	I M Anderson	D O McMillan
Laurieton RSL	E L Hollway	D Ramsay	C Fenwick
Sherwood Services Club	Toowooba & Darling Downs Hist Soc	M Farmer	K C Swan
V O'Donaghue	K Jeffery	J W Leslie	AMP Retired Persons Assn
C E Hughes	L McIntyre	D Holloway	J F Lynch
Box Hill Uniting Church Friendly	E & M Tremewn	Scouts Assn Sale Scout Group	Glenloch Homes
P Rayson	C S & J R Lloyd	M Dorney	SE Vic Sub-Branch NSA
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K Linfoot	COL G O Thompson	COL D M Ramsay	Pymble Diggers Club
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R. Edwards	D E Hollway	K J Hill	J Hitchen
R J Mercer	D Supple	TE Hunt	S Adamson
M Carlisle	M B T Dorney	C Dawson	LTCOL D Deasey
B Moran	M R Evans	P Watson	B Ellis



NATIONAL BOER WAR MEMORIAL PROGRESS



The Boer War memorial Project is on track to have details of a winning design announced soon; timing depends on the National Capital Memorials Committee which is chaired by the Prime Minister.

Full details of the current situation can be obtained by viewing the Minutes of the Last National meeting on www.bwm@org.au or by calling the Office for a paper copy.

HISTORIC FEATURE.....Afghanistan past and present



Afghanistan: a brief history of recent land Invasions

The current conflict in Afghanistan needs to be understood against a background of five recent attempts by foreign powers to impose their will on Afghanistan, starting with Britain's invasion of Afghanistan in 1839.

By 1837, The Honourable East India Company had resolved to make Afghanistan the centre of a new Central Asian political system controlled by Britain. Russia formed an alliance with the Afghan king, Dost Muhammad, stimulating Britain to seek a similar agreement. This failed, and Britain resolved to replace Muhammad with its own king.

The Army of the Indus assembled at Quetta in 1839, advanced into Afghanistan via Kandahar and occupied Kabul where an unpopular Shah Shujah was installed as king. Erroneously, the Company then reduced the garrisons and failed to keep the Pathan chiefs in the Khyber bribed.

Increasing mob agitation in Kabul forced the 10,000 persons under British protection to quit the city mid-winter on 6 January 1842. The Pathans systematically over-whelmed the column in seven days before the British had reached the Khyber Pass. A wounded Surgeon Brydon reached Jalalabad, the only survivor of the First Afghan War. A fresh Company force was immediately assembled - the Army of Retribution - which seized Kabul in May 1842.

An uninvited Russian mission to Kabul in 1878, plus a failure of local tribes to allow British entry to the Khyber Pass, triggered the Second Afghan War. By 1879, Afghanistan sued for peace permitting Britain to control its foreign relations.

British vulnerabilities on the North West Frontier in 1919 tempted Afghanistan to launch an invasion of India. This Third Afghan War lasted three months, ending after British planes bombed Kabul. The 1919 Treaty of Rawalpindi proclaimed Afghan independence. The Soviet Union continued to occupy Afghanistan's immediate northern neighbour, Turkistan, and split the area into five ethnically based Soviet Socialist Republics in 1924. The year 1979 was a defining moment in contemporary Middle East history: an Islamic revolution swept away the Shah of Iran, Saddam Hussein seized the presidency of Iraq, and Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan and assassinated its president.

A civil war had earlier broken out in Afghanistan in 1974 leading to a military coup in 1978 bringing to power the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) which embarked on a programme of radical reform. The Soviet Union, initially sympathetic but later concerned with PDPA radicalism, in December 1979 invaded Afghanistan, killed President Amin and installed another faction of the PDPA led by Babrak Karmal. Karmal failed in government and seeded the disintegration of the army.

Local resistance to the new government strengthened. The resistance, the mujahideen, were rebel tribesmen, villagers and soldiers who fought independently in different areas usually under local warlords or tribal chiefs. By the early 1980s, the PDPA government ruled in the main cities of Kabul, Herat and Kandahar and large towns, but the mujahideen commanded the countryside. Soviet response to this stalemate was the introduction of more air power, especially the Mi-24 Hind armoured helicopter gunship.

By 1985, the United States (US) Central Intelligence Agency began covertly arming the mujahideen with weapons that would neutralise the helicopter threat - Blowpipe and Stinger shoulder-launched surface-to-air missiles. These were effective and, after suffering a total of 64,000 casualties, the last Soviet troops were evacuated in February 1989.

The years after the Soviet withdrawal were marked by incessant fighting among mujahideen warlords. In response, the Pashtun (Pathan) majority turned to a new force composed of religious 'students', the Taliban Sunnis, predominantly Durrani Pashtun, from south-eastern Afghanistan. The Taliban seized Kabul in September 1996, murdered President Najibullah and imposed a regime characterised by the strictest interpretation of Sharia law within the Islamic world. The new government provided a sanctuary for the Al-Qa'ida international terrorist organisation led by Osama bin Laden, which bombed the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998. In response, the US attacked suspected terrorist camps within Afghanistan with cruise missiles.

The Al-Qa'ida attack on America on 11 September 2001 precipitated a US demand on the Taliban to deliver the leaders of Al-Qa'ida. Their refusal to do so initiated military action on 7 October 2001. A US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organisation force, assisted by the anti-Taliban Afghan Northern Alliance, by December 2001 had driven the Taliban from Afghanistan, but neither Osama bin Laden or the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, were captured. Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun tribal leader, in December 2001 became chairman of the new Afghan Transitional Administration.

From Pakistani sanctuaries, the Taliban have regrouped and retrained and in the past three years have launched an increasingly successful insurgency war in southern and eastern Afghanistan. The insurgency is opposed by an International Security Assistance Force (including some 1550 Australian troops) which is supporting the Karzai government, training its army and police force, providing security and reconstruction in the provinces, and taking the battle to Al-Qa'ida and the Taliban, including their safe havens in Pakistan. The conflict currently is in the balance and its outcome unpredictable.

Bruce Short

(Reprinted from United Services September 2010)

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- Macrory, Patrick (1966) , Signal catastrophe: the story of the disastrous retreat from Kabul, 1842 (Hodder and Stoughton: London).

The RAAC Association's new website is now online and is located at the following link:

<http://www.black-berets.org.au/>

A word from our new webmaster Mick Martin

The website was created with a fresh new look to encourage RAAC member participation and to also attempt to get more of the younger generation of RAAC soldiers (and ex soldiers) to join the association.

It contains a discussion forum, contact information for the RAAC Association and for all the other RAAC Regimental Associations (including website and Facebook pages) and also a brief history of each RAAC Regiment. I plan on having this site as the focal point on the internet for all matters relating to the Royal Australian Armoured Corps and as a place where people can go to to contact long lost mates or a place to find information about the Royal Australian Armoured Corps.

There will be digital copies of "Armour Magazine" available for download (and hopefully later on copies of other RAAC publications) and news updates from the RAAC Association.

I am also able to offer association members an external Black Berets email address from this website. eg mick@black-berets.org.au

This can then be re-directed to your private email address. If you are interested and want a free Black Berets email address then please let me know via email :mick@australian-armour.com

As many of you may already know, I am also the webmaster of Australian Armour, a website dedicated to the history of the RAAC.

It is located at:

<http://www.australian-armour.com>

In recent times this has taken a backseat to other things but 2011 should see more content and updates.

I am also working on a project to document the badges, patches and uniforms worn by the Royal Australian Armoured Corps, the Australian Armoured Corps of World War 11 and the Australian Light Horse (and a brief regimental history of each unit). If all goes well, I will be looking to publish it and make it available to Association members. To assist me, if anyone has pictures of badges, patches, uniforms, insignia or just information about them, I'd love to hear from you. All pictures used will be full credited and acknowledged.

My email address is mick@australian-armour.com.

DIGGERS TO GET AUTOMATIC ENTRY TO RSL AND SERVICES CLUBS ACROSS NSW

A NSW Liberals & Nationals Government will legislate to grant ex-servicemen and women who are full service RSL members automatic entry to all RSL and Services Clubs, without the need to sign in, NSW Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell and Shadow Minister for Hospitality, Tourism and Major Events George Souris announced today.

"The days of diggers signing into every RSL club they visit will end," Mr O'Farrell said. "This will allow the State's 55,000 RSL ex-servicemen and women Sub-Branch members to enter any RSL or Services Club and not have to sign the 'temporary members register'," he said. "Many former servicemen and women visit clubs in the RSL family when travelling – we owe them the right to access any of our 270 RSL and Services Clubs across NSW without having to sign in. "This is a mark of recognition and respect for those RSL and Services Club members that have served our country, and if we can make their lives a little bit easier, we should do so."

"This is a sensible and practical measure that will bring NSW into line with Victoria," he said.

NSW RSL State President Don Rowe and RSL & Services Clubs Association Chairman Bryn Miller welcomed the announcement which has been a long term goal of the Association.

"This is good news for our members who will be able to more easily access RSL and Services Clubs across NSW," Mr Rowe said.

Media: Brad Burden 0401 672 145 or Sam Fairlie-Cuninghame 0438 285 780

REPORT ON THE GOLD CARD FOR WW11 BLACK HATS

Repatriation Health Card – For All Conditions – Known as the Gold Card (GC) – Extensions of Entitlements for all WWII Service Personnel. The Associations GC Sub-Committee has continued to aim to achieve a favourable conclusion. The following schedule is a précis of our correspondence activity:

TO NAME	SUBMISSIONS RESULT: REPLIES RECEIVED
PM The Right Honourable Julia Gillard	Two letters (one requesting a reply). Reply Status Quo i.e. opening paragraphs usual PR Reply “the Government has No plans to change the current eligibility provisions and grant the Gold Card to all WWII Veterans”.
PM The Right Honourable Kevin Rudd	Two letters: 1. Original letter being factual to support our case. Reply by DVA Minister on PM’s behalf – Status quo. Final Sentence: - “as previously advised, at this stage the Government has no plans to change the current eligibility provision regarding the Gold Card”, 2. Second letter expressing our disappointment at his failure to respond personally to our original letter. Supplementing this letter various factors in support of our previous submissions written asking for his support.
DVA Minister The Honourable Alan Griffin	Three submissions – standard reply to all letters.
The Honourable Tony Abbott	Letter in keeping with our objects and aims. Reply by his Senior Policy Advisor was in keeping with the Government’s policies.
The Honourable Joe Hockey	Letter in keeping with our objects and aims. Reply – Joe sought the advice of his colleague Shadow DVA Minister. Thence reply was in keeping with the Government’s policies.
The Honourable Mrs Louise Markus	Election time – as Shadow Minister DVA – Association sought Liberal Policy and assistance to support our objects and aims. Reply from Senator the Honourable Michael Ronaldson – acknowledged letter to Mrs Markus. His reply was in keeping with past writers. No encouragement can be envisaged.
NSW - RSL State Branch	Action commenced via Chatswood Sub-Branch thence the Northern Metropolitan District Council – Thence to State Branch – request onto Federal Office
An Interview on Radio Station 2UE (Tracy Spicer)	With Colonel John Haynes OAM (RL): President RAAC Association (NSW Branch): Gold Card history partly covered.

A fresh submission has been prepared and forwarded to the new DVA Minister, Senator The Honourable Warren Snowden. This paper has been written to encourage him to **RE-EXAMINE AND RE-EVALUATE CLOSELY** the issue of the Gold Card to **ALL** WWII Veterans with “**A FRESH AND OPEN MIND**”. We summarise our aims and objectives:

1. WWII Veterans: Eliminate the two classes of veterans:
 - a. Those on “Active Service” and
 - b. Those with “Qualifying Service”.
2. The removal of the “**DISCRIMINATORY ASPECTS**”.
3. In this debate, a settlement for “a level playing field” for all surviving WWII Veterans.
4. **PERCEIVE**: all veterans of WWI were recognised in 1973 (55 years after the end of that war) without Qualifying Service. For WWII Veterans this time is now 66 years. 5. **FISCAL**: the ranks of WWII Veterans are **THINNING** rapidly. Therefore, the ‘**RESPONSIBILITY IS A DIMINISHING FACTOR**’.

DON McMILLAN
CONVENOR GOLD CARD SUB-COMMITTEE

Cockatoo Rise War Veterans Retreat

Greg and Anne Carter invite you to stay at our War Veterans Retreat, eligible people are Returned Service personal, their partners and War Widows (no children or pets). There is no charge but a donation is welcome to assist with the up keep.



27 hole golf course, FREE to play for those who are guests and ALSO any eligible people who are just visiting the area. Clubs, balls, buggies all available.

Also available is Croquet, Bocce, Fishing in the Gippsland Lakes and Sea, Veggie garden, playing with the horses, flower farm, bush walking and general relaxing.



Available are 2 caravan sites also camp sites.

Warm friendly, safe and secure place to share some time.



5 minutes from BAIRNSDALE on the Great Alpine Rd

Bookings essential tel Greg or Anne 0409418332



6th LIGHT HORSE – TRUNDLE TROOP *In association with* **RESERVE FORCES DAY PARKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Cordially Invites you to
'Return of the Last "Original" Light Horsemen' Reunion
95th Anniversary of the Battle of Romani

2-3 JULY 2011
Parkes NSW

If you have any Light Horse memorabilia such as photo's, trophies, diaries etc please bring them along for people to see.

Contact: Tom Lees

Ph: (02) 6861 1728 Email: Tom.Lees@csiro.au

Government to replace medals lost in natural disasters

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, Senator the Hon David Feeney, today announced that the Government will relax the policy on replacement of Australian Defence Force (ADF) medals so that medals lost during the Queensland and Victorian floods, the impact of Cyclone Yasi and the fires in Western Australia can be replaced.

Government policy for many years has been medals can only be issued to the ADF member who earned them, Senator Feeney said.

This usually means that medals cannot be replaced if they are lost or destroyed after the ADF member has died.

Where medals are lost in natural disasters, however, this policy may be relaxed. This was done following the Victorian bushfires in 2009.

While the Government is committed to maintaining the integrity of our system of military honours and awards, there are circumstances in which the Australian community rightly expects us to show greater flexibility in implementing the existing policy. I believe this unprecedented series of natural disasters is one of those circumstances, Senator Feeney said.

I have therefore decided that ADF medals may be reissued to the next of kin or other appropriate relative of deceased ADF members, if the medals have been lost or destroyed in the current natural disasters. Family members who have, in the course of these natural disasters, lost the medals of loved ones, may now make application for replacements.

Unfortunately, however, only medals dating back to the First World War can be replaced. Medals for conflicts prior to this war are no longer in production.

Applicants should use the application form and statutory declaration located on the Defence Honours and Awards website at: www.defence.gov.au/medals

Completed applications should be submitted to: Directorate of Honours and Awards Department of Defence, PO Box 7952, Canberra BC, ACT 2610. Enquiries may also be directed to Defence Honours and Awards toll free on 1800 111 321.

Media contact: Lorna Clarke 0408 345 730

Lost Souls

If anyone knows the where-abouts of the following members could they contact the RAACA Head Office

Name	Last Known Address
Ford. Mr B.	PO Box 166, Northmead, NSW, 2152
Austin, Mr K J	16a Dorset St, Epping 2121
Harris. Capt D.W. (Donald)	4/25 Alfred St, Ramsgate, NSW, 2217
Bowman Mr G L	18 Dalwood St, Carseldeine QLD 4034
Kennedy. Mr. J. (John)	30 Osbourne St, Umina, NSW, 2257
Currie Mr E K	125 Duntroon Rd, Lismore 2480
Martlew. MR. R.	PO Box 265, Millicent, SA 5240
Beasley Mr R R	4 Grande Tce, Monterey Keys QLD 4212
Pengilley. Mr C.M.	POBox 842, Orange, NSW, 2800
Buckingham REV A G	2/16 Illuka St, Currajong QLD 4812
Pentland. Mr. N.	Unit 6, 3 Redcliffe Street, Palmenston, ACT,2913
Danger LTCOL F	School of Armour, Puckapunyal
McClan COL G B	Guyra, NSW 2365
Ellis Mr E J	PO Box 66 Bungendore, 2621
Roughton. Mr. D.R.	12 Burrawong Pde, Urunga, NSW, 2455
Rodd, Mr M H	27/17 Tarraganda Ln, Bega 2550
Souter. Capt. P.A. (Peter)	2 Cav, Darwin NT 0820
Sheppard, Mr G	9 Furphy Cl, Romsey VIC 3434
Storer, Mr W J	PO Box 798 Charlestown NSW 2290
Waterworth Mr J	29 Como Rd, Oyster Bay NSW 2225
Weekes, Mr P F	PO Box 1605 Sunny Bank QLD 4109
Hemphill, Mr G	204 –270 Jersey Rd, Woollahra NSW 2025

Members are thanked for their response to the request to receive
Armour by email.

Due to that response with this issue we have sent Armour by
email to all email addresses we hold.

If this doesn't suit any one please contact the office and we will cross
you off the email list and send a paper copy.