

"Sitrep, Over!"

Official Newsletter of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc



Editor - David Laing 0407 791 822

OCTOBER 2016

Changes to the way we do business

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As of now, certain tasks and duties have been divided amongst various members of the Association to enable Office Bearers to carry out allotted tasks as required. Also, there is to be a change of role in the Secretaries position. David Laing will stand down as Secretary on December 31st 2016, and will become General Secretary as per the following outline.

All enquiries, questions or requests for information should be directed to the person filling the relevant role:

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PRINTER REQUIRED

Since 2009 our newsletters have been printed free of charge by a benefactor, but that will now end from this edition. The Murraylands Mens Shed have previously printed some editions for a donation, but if we can find someone to print out **ONLY 12 copies** per month, we can retain our finances. If you know of anyone who has a 1st class printer who would be willing to print out our newsletters, please let the Editor know **ASAP**

We understand that some folk don't take kindly to change, but, being Infantry soldiers we are more than ready to adapt, improvise and overcome, so I'm sure these small changes can be adhered to.

Plan A. Please direct your query to the person who can best answer your question, and when in doubt, refer to Plan A. Thanks

David Laing - Editor

FIND US ON



2016 End of Year BBQ



The End Of Year BBQ will be held once again at the Kibby VC Club at Keswick Barracks . As in previous years the RSAR Association will provide all the meat, bread salads and desserts. All you have to bring is yourself and your wallet for a few drinks. The Kibby VC Club bar will again be offering beverages at vastly reduced prices. This is the last opportunity of the year for you to socialise with other members, so please come along and enjoy yourselves.

Please let us know if you'd like to attend (for catering purposes) by contacting our Functions Officer **Norm Tregenza** on 0412 804 779 or email of normlyn@bigpond.com

Date: SUNDAY 18th December 2016

Where: Kibby VC Club. Keswick Barracks (Where it was last year, Stemmy)

Timings: 1100 hrs - 1500 hrs

Dress: Yes

did You Know?

In the late 1700's, many houses consisted of a large room with only one chair. Commonly, a long wide board folded down from the wall, and was used for dining. The "head of the household" always sat in the chair while everyone else ate sitting on the floor. Occasionally a guest, who was usually a man, would be invited to sit in this chair during a meal. To sit in the chair meant you were important and in charge. They called the one sitting in the chair the 'chair man.' Today in business, we use the expression or title 'Chairman' or 'Chairman of the Board.'

Howard Hendrick DFC

From Veterans SA "Think Piece" newsletter.

Howard Hendrick, born on 2 October 1923, attended primary and secondary school at Renmark in South Australia's Riverland. At the age of 18 he joined the RAAF with early training at Victor Harbor, Parafield and Deniliquin. Having obtained his 'wings' he was posted to England to replace lost Australian pilots. Although Howard had been trained as a fighter pilot, he saw that the need now was for bomber pilots to fly Lancasters and Halifaxes in the European war zone, so retrained as a bomber pilot. Seconded to the RAF, and attached to 460 Squadron, which was made up of Australian pilots and crews from the Dominions, Howard completed 30 raids (a tour of ops) with the same crew. His next role was as a Flying Instructor until the end of the war. After the war, wanting to keep flying, Howard completed further training to become a commercial pilot with British Airways where he flew scheduled routes between London and Johannesburg and Sydney. After four years with BA, Howard returned to Australia to take up a Soldier Settler block in Loxton, where he and his family worked and resided for more than 60 years. Finally retiring at aged 86 Howard is a regular guest speaker at Loxton High School, and has had his recollections recorded on ABC Radio, with these oral histories part of the South Australian State Library collection. On Australia Day this year, Loxton Waikerie District Council named him Loxton Citizen of the Year 2016. At 92, Howard still enjoys a monthly Jabiru solo flight (with the relevant 'restrictions') at his local Aero Club.

Father and Son



'Mademoiselle from Armentieres parlez vous? Mademoiselle from Armentieres parlez vous? And 'Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile, smile, smile'...

These were the popular pieces I remember my father singing as he worked on his fruit block at Renmark in South Australia. Often the lyrics changed to whistling as the familiar strains of 'It's a long way to Tipperary' echoed over the rows of vines.

My father had not long returned from the devastation of WW1, when he set up a Soldier Settler block in the Riverland, along with countless other returned servicemen. His memories of Gallipoli and the battlefields of the Western Front were still vivid, and the marching tunes sung by AIF men still came often to the fore back in Australia. Soon too he had a young English bride to care for, and in the fullness of time, three young children. The newly established vines needed constant attention, the horses needed care, and the house was gradually being added to, as the children grew. So the life of Tom Hendrick was a busy and productive one.

The most highly anticipated day of the year at Renmark was ANZAC day. This day was celebrated by the entire town. The children of Renmark delighted in watching their fathers march proudly in their hundreds, medals gleaming and jangling, along the main street of Renmark. Then the famed bicycle races were held. The main race, the RSL Wheel Race, was the highlight, with 10 laps of the oval, and prize money of 5 pounds.

The bikes in the '20s and '30s had no gears and no brakes, and could not freewheel, so the frequent crashes of bikes added to the excitement for the young watchers.

In the local river towns, settled by a vast majority of servicemen, it was to be expected that when WW2 broke out, many young men and women would volunteer, as their fathers had done 25 years earlier. When I reached my eighteenth birthday I enlisted, although my father strongly advised me against joining the Army! I also had heard enough to know the drawbacks of life as a soldier. The Air Force, however, appealed to me, having read as a boy the W.E. Johns' Biggles books and having been fascinated by the heroic pioneering flights of aviators like Kingsford Smith and Amy Johnson, as well as being caught up in the famous London to Sydney Air Race which captured the nation in 1936. It wasn't long before I left Renmark with many of my mates, to begin

training with the Royal Australian Air Force as Air Crew.

And so I come to some extraordinary and remarkable coincidences. Due to the first and second World Wars, my father's life and mine ran parallel over many years.

At the age of 18 my father volunteered and joined the Australian Army. I too, twenty five years later at the age of 18 volunteered, but joined the RAAF.

At 19, my father was sent to Gallipoli. Again, twenty five years later at 19, I was sent to England for further training as a pilot.

At 20, Dad, having survived Gallipoli, was sent to the battlefields of France to help repel the German army. At 20, as a Lancaster pilot I was part of Bomber Command, targeting military installations in Germany.

At 21, my father was awarded the Military Medal for Gallantry at Bullecourt in France. At 21, twenty five years later, I too was awarded the DFC for 'Consistent Gallant Conduct.'

At 22, my father, sent on a course to England, met and fell in love with a young girl from Bristol, and later married her when she came out to Australia. At 22, I met a WAAF girl while in England, and later married her. She too came to settle in Australia.

Both my father and I took up Soldier Settler blocks in the Riverland, bringing up our children in the peaceful environment there; enjoying the lifestyle on the land.

While to me there are almost incredible parallels, our wartime experiences had some significant differences.

Enduring the most confronting situations was my father's lot in life for 4 years. Eating a poor diet for months on end, sleeping in often muddy, rat ridden dugouts, with a constant barrage of explosions, took its toll on the bravest. The fighting was conducted man to man, with rifle and bayonet. In contrast, my wartime daily life was more comfortable as we lived in a house, were fed well, even with wartime restrictions, and enjoyed some social life.

For me all flying operations were dangerous with flight durations being anything from 4 to 9 hours, mostly at night. Over enemy territory, constant watch had to be kept for enemy aircraft, ground gunfire, search lights, and to avoid collisions with our own bombers. To add to the danger, all craft had to fly in total darkness. The sight of Lancaster bombers on fire, and spiralling downwards, added to the fear and sense of uncertainty. But, along with the necessary skills, there was always a certain amount of luck involved in surviving.

On reflection I realise my crew of seven, who trained with me and flew with me throughout the war, supported me and enabled us as a crew to survive; so too dad's mates in the platoon were crucial to his wellbeing and chances of survival.

My dad and I were both very fortunate to survive the wars, and, like my father, I became a soldier settler in the Riverland. My family tells me they could hear me singing as I pruned the vines, 'This is the Army Mr Jones', and 'I'll be comin' round the mountain', and at times whistling Glenn Miller's 'In the Mood' – off key, so my wife told me!

Lest We Forget.



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From LTCOL Graham Goodwin in Afghanistan

A 15-year-old girl, who was in eighth grade, was allegedly shot dead by her brother after attending the birthday party of a friend, local officials said Sunday. Badakhshan police said the mother and brother of Chamman Gul were both arrested immediately after the incident. The incident took place in Kishm district in Badakhshan after Chamman Gul returned home from the birthday party. "The reason behind the killing of Chamman Gul was that she attended the birthday party of her friend and she reportedly danced there," said Zakir Aryan, a member of Badakhshan provincial council. Meanwhile, Badakhshan Ulema (religious scholars) Council criticized the act, saying that the perpetrator should be punished in order to prevent such incidents from happening again. "This [attending in a birthday party] is not a big sin. This teenage girl participated at the birthday party of her friend. Government should order capital punishment against the brother, who is the main suspect in the death of the teenage girl," said the head of the council Sadullah Abu Aman.



Colonel Sahib, I said, what do you think of this incident.

Quite clearly, he replied, she should not have gone to the party, the parents should be punished for allowing her to go!

Where do I start!

Well its that time again, I try to start off with something interesting and original in my letters but admit it is getting harder and harder. The above article and incident highlights the great divide between us and the locals. We are seen as the infidel and our views on life, death and everything in between are very different. It is very surprising to hear the Afghan views on life and death, often they say 'inshallah' (god willing or if god wills) it is very matter of fact. You have to expect bomb blasts, they say, *this is Afghanistan*.



I guess when you have been fighting wars for as long as they have Inshallah sums it up pretty well!

Well mid September and about 6 weeks or so to go. Hard to believe in some respects, all you seem to do is either welcome people or farewell them. Overwhelmingly everyone is glad to leave and as I have previously looking forward very much to getting home. The weather is starting to turn with the mornings being a little cooler but the days still warm. Doubt if I will see snow again on the mountain tops but you never know. The weather in AMAB (Dubai) apparently has been incredibly hot so all the great chocolate and stuff everyone has been sending has been slaughtered on the tarmac there. But no worry, a blob of Haighs Chocolates still goes down the same way!

It has been a very busy period here, they say there is about 6 weeks left of the fighting season so all sides are trying for some wins and strategic advantage. It revolves around the weather and as I said it has started to cool down a little. One we are deep into winter the snow will slow down movement within the hills and everyone effectively takes a few months off. Having said that it has been very busy with a few attacks within the city of Kabul. I will let you read about them all in the media, but the toll on the civilian population has been great. Fighting in the south is also not going well, particularly around Tarin Kot, this area like so many others has been defended for so long and now appears to be lost to the enemy. As I said above, the level of acceptance is difficult to understand, and something that the locals will need to address if they want to live in a peaceful country.

I have been getting out a bit lately doing the work that I do. It is interesting but again frustrating. There is not a lot I can say in

relation to these areas but its interesting to see the difference between the Russian and Western trained people. It is not a good mix but we continue to push hard on the way we do business. Hopefully some of it will rub off at some stage as I am not sure how long there will be an appetite to stay in this country.



The coalition forces are also taking a few casualties of late, very sad and sobering in a lot of respects. The Taliban continue to prove themselves and arguably we also need to be getting a bit smarter with the way we do business.

I attended a 'Independence Day' Parade the other week. It was a great spectacle and got to stand out the front and congratulate those that were recognized. One within my group was promoted so several people presented him with a bright necklace of flowers in celebration. Their fondness of flowers (most have very large bunches of plastic flowers in their office) is interesting considering they want to kill everything else! One of the things they did at the parade (apart from very impressive Russian

drill!) was to swear allegiance to the country and then with their certificate held

high above their head face the crowd and shout 'life' several times. I guess that's better than shouting death!

The young soldiers and officers remain the best hope for the military and other security forces. Some that I have met have been incredibly impressive but they are too few and they have a massive job ahead of them. The patronage system is also very much alive and well here so those that are not connected often find themselves in Helmand or Kunduz!

Jen sent over some toys for the children of the interpreters. One has a handicapped child so it is not going to be a good life for her or the family. Anyway, shared the toys around which were a big hit. I guess the people we deal with are the lucky ones, they just need for the Coalition to stay around so they remain employed. I remember when the UN left East Timor, the impact on the local population was quite dramatic and disappointedly very underestimated.

We are now in the grips of the Eid al-Qurban also known as the 'big Eid'. It appears to be very similar to our Christmas holiday/celebration where, after the Hajj people sacrifice an animal and have a big celebration. Everyone on the Afghan side of the house has been looking forward to this celebration very much. I guess it also signals getting closer to the end of the fighting season which I have spoken about. The issue is that it often results in large crowds which present big targets for those that want to cause havoc. A fine line between being defiant and living your normal way of life, as opposed to succumbing to the threats and staying away. A big issue here. Also when you see the Facebook posts after incidents it is clear that those that use this medium are looking for a better way of



life, some as I have spoken about previously have only ever known war to which there is a degree of acceptance, most are sick of it.

The Chief of Army was here the other week and lucky enough to have a chat and give my perspective of the world. Needless to say he was fascinated but was good to see him and the RSM, even if it was for only a brief moment.

Anyway, I still struggle to find things to write so that's about it. I guess I will have lots to tell when I get home to cover for the areas of lightness in the conversation. This is an incredibly complex place but what is clear is that we cannot buy our way out of this one, someone at some time is going to have to stand up and do some heavy lifting, just not sure who that person is going to be.

What am I looking forward to when I get home. Well apart from reintroducing myself to my family, the following;

- Going to Heritage Wines and kicking the cellar door open and consuming the latest vintage (under the pretence of a tasting of course-but Steve is happy for anyone to do this)
- Going to the beach and seeing some water for a change.
- Cooking and eating some real food.
- Catching up with friends (Steve and John book the table at the club)
- Eating some good desert (Angela dust off the cook books)
- Going to Cols house and drinking his beer, then going to Gardes house and doing the same thing
- Going to the army museum, some good friends there
- Catching up on all the news
- Cheers

Part 2 of Graham's report will be published next month.



72 KGS. But who's counting?



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Royal South Australia Regiment Association

Final 2016 Luncheon



Special Guest Speaker for the final Luncheon for 2016 is to be RSAR Association Inc Patron Major General Neil Wilson AM RFD.

MAJGEN Wilson enlisted in the Citizen's Military Forces in March 1965 and after initial training at Adelaide Universities Regiment was commissioned into the Royal Australian Infantry in 1968.

In July 1986 he was posted on promotion to Lieutenant Colonel as Commanding Officer of the 10th and subsequently, the 10/27th Battalion, Royal South Australia Regiment.

He was promoted to Brigadier and assumed command of the 9th Brigade on the 10th January 1998. Promoted Major General in 2001 and appointed as General Officer Commanding the 2nd Division where he served until December 2002.



On 1st April 2004, he was appointed as Assistant Chief of the Defence Force Reserves and Head Reserve Policy.

In this position he was the principal adviser to the Parliamentary Secretary, the Chief of the Defence Force and the three Service Chiefs on all matters related to Reserve policy. He will talk about changes to the Army Reserve in Australia over the past 40 years

Major General Neil Wilson AM RFD

Bookings Essential to Norm Tregenza on normlyn@bigpond.com or his mobile of 0412 804 779

Let's end the year with a good luncheon. All welcome.

RSVP Not Later Than Friday 21st October. LIMITED SEATS

The room was full of pregnant women with their husbands. The instructor said, "Ladies, remember that exercise is good for you. Walking is especially beneficial. It strengthens the pelvic muscles and will make delivery that much easier.

Just pace yourself, make plenty of stops and try to stay on a soft surface like grass or a path."

"Gentlemen, remember -- you're in this together. It wouldn't hurt you to go walking with her. In fact, that shared experience would be good for you both."

The room suddenly became very quiet as the men absorbed this information. After a few moments a man, name unknown, at the back of the room, slowly raised his hand.

"Yes?" said the Instructor.

"I was just wondering if it would be all right, if she carries a golf bag?"

Brings a tear to your eye, doesn't it?



Private Gomad reckons.....

An Australian stopped at a local restaurant following a day roaming around in Madrid. While sipping his wine, he noticed a sizzling, scrumptious looking platter being served at the next table. Not only did it look good, the smell was wonderful.

He asked the waiter, 'What is that you just served?'

The waiter replied, 'Si Senor, you have excellent taste! Those are called Cojones de Toro, bull's testicles from the bull fight this morning. A delicacy!' The Australian said, 'I will have the same please.' The waiter replied, 'I am so sorry senor. There is only one serving per day because there is only one bull fight each morning. If you come early and place your order, we will be sure to save you this delicacy.'

The following day he returned, placed his order, and that evening was served the one and only special delicacy of the day. After a few bites, inspecting his platter, he called to the waiter and said, 'These are delicious, but they are much, much smaller than the ones I saw you serve yesterday.'

The waiter shrugged his shoulders and replied, 'Si, Senor. Sometimes the bull wins.'

I asked a friend of mine what he was doing. He told me he was working on the Aqua - thermal treatment of ceramics, aluminium and steel under a constrained environment.....

I was extremely impressed.

On further probing, I learnt that he was washing dishes with hot water....under his wife's supervision!



pppst.com

NEW MEMBER

Our newest member is James (Jim) Parsonage who served with 10 Battalion as Officer Commanding HQ Company when the then Major Neil Wilson was OC of Bravo Company. Jim remembers many of the names in our Members List, so no doubt, many of you will remember him. Please make him welcome.

Welcome Jim.

CONTACT US ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER!-

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RSAR
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RSAR

LM denotes LIFE MEMBER

SM denotes SERVING ADF MEMBER

BAND denotes serving 10/27 Band member

Denotes NEW MEMBER

225 members

as at 1/9/16