

"Sitrep, Over!"



OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC

Patron: MAJGEN Neil Wilson AM RFD

Secretary / Editor David Laing

JULY
2024

July 1st 1916 - Battle of The Somme

The **Battle of the Somme** also known as the **Somme offensive**, was a major battle of the First World War fought by the armies of the British Empire and the French Third Republic against the German Empire. It took place between 1 July and 18 November 1916 on both sides of the upper reaches of the river Somme in France. The battle was intended to hasten a victory for the Allies. More than three million men fought in the battle, of whom more than one million were either wounded or killed, making it one of the deadliest battles in all of human history.



The French and British had committed themselves to an offensive on the Somme during the Chantilly Conference in December 1915. The Allies agreed upon a strategy of combined offensives against the Central Powers in 1916 by the French, Russian, British and Italian armies, with the Somme offensive as the Franco-British contribution. Initial plans called for the French army to undertake the main part of the Somme offensive, supported on the northern flank by the Fourth Army of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). When the Imperial German Army began the Battle of Verdun on the Meuse on 21 February 1916, French commanders diverted many of the divisions intended for the Somme and the "supporting" attack by the British became the principal effort.

Things I've learned!

I can't believe I forgot to go to the Gym today! That's 3 years in a row!

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EDITORIAL

The last issue of "Sitrep, Over!" featured a story by our Padre Stephen Albrecht, which included a reference to "The Naked Gunner" of Darwin during WW2. For your peace of mind I've included the full story of that soldier on Pages 4, 5 & 6.

Once again the call goes out to support the RSAR Association by purchasing some of our brilliant Merchandise. The prices are very reasonable, and the items are very attractive. The price list is on Page 16 and the Order Form on the following page. Come on, do it!

I've just returned home after a short stay in Ashford for a service and oil change. Thank you for all the messages, emails, phone calls, cards, flowers and visitors. Special thanks to Padre Stephen Albrecht for his inspirational late night visit: to Des Hawkins for updating me on everything regimental, and to good mate Mark Blondell for the coffee and bag of grapes. You guys are real treasures and I value your friendship.

Long time member from Mildura, Peter Loveder has contacted Des Hawkins (RSARA Historical Officer) and donated a couple of unused Polo Tops from the early days of the Alberton Depot when it was E Company and later A Company. Des will ensure they are added to our Regimental Collection held at the Military Vehicles Museum at Edinburgh Park. Thanks Peter!



This is the final warning for the 2024 Annual General Meeting, to be held on 4th August 2024. The next newsletter will be published after the AGM, with all the photos and news of the day. Registrations are still very low, so please spare a couple of hours on the day to come along and interact with others from our past and present Battalions. All details are on Page 15, so please reserve your seats now.

That's it from me! Stay safe and we'll talk soon.

Cheers

David Laing

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The WW2 Naked Gunner

Wilbert Hudson was born on the 17th of December 1920. On leaving school, he was employed as a textile worker, and with the onset of the Second World War, he enlisted in the Militia Forces on the 5th of April 1940.

Posted to the 2nd Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery, Hudson was deployed with his unit to Darwin in November 1941, as part of the town's defences. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941, Darwin took on an urgent war footing, and prepared for possible attack.

With the combination of the harsh tropical sun of the Northern Territory and his normally dark olive complexion, Hudson was soon given the nickname of 'Darkie' by his mates. Based at Berrimah, Hudson was showering when the first air raid sirens sounded just before 10.00 hours on Thursday, the 19th of February 1942.

With the drone of the enemy aircraft increasing, Darkie had no time to dress and ran to man his 'battle station' dressed in nothing more than his helmet, boots and a towel wrapped around his waist. With the angle of approach by the attacking aircraft, 'Darkie' and his number two could not get an accurate bead to effectively engage the planes with their Lewis Light Machine Gun.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P02539.001

Wilbert Hudson after the Darwin Bombings

The team immediately redeployed into the open paddock and set up with 'Darkie' doing the firing and the gun supported on the shoulder of his mate. As an enemy Zero bore in on the pair, they stood their ground and poured a steady stream of fire into the fighter, sending it spiralling off in flames. During the action 'Darkie' realised that he'd unfortunately lost his towel and his modesty. For his courage and determination that day, Gunner Wilbert 'Darkie' Hudson was awarded with the Military Medal, which was the first to be awarded for action on Australian soil. His citation stating - 'he handled his Lewis Gun with great skill and tenacity'.

A mate remembers the naked gunner who defended Darwin

Unlike many World War II veterans, Basil Hackett never left mainland Australia.

Now 94 and living with wife Berenice in a quiet retirement village in Port Kennedy, Mr Hackett still vividly recalls his service in Berrimah in the Northern Territory, some 4,000km away.

"I was 19 years-old then. At the time, I hadn't fired the [anti-aircraft] guns at all," he said.

"Most of the gunners that went with us were volunteers. They had come from units around Fremantle. Some had only joined the army a fortnight before they had left. A few of them were 16 years of age, which was quite common in our unit."

The WW2 Naked Gunner

Mr Hackett enlisted in the Australian Army when he was just 17, with the approval of his parents. Eventually, he volunteered to go to Darwin, joining the 2nd Heavy Anti Aircraft Battery in 1942.

Unlike many military units, which assembled in the southern parts of Australia, the 2nd Heavy Anti Aircraft Battery was formed in Darwin.

“When Pearl Harbour happened, and Singapore fell, we knew the Japs were getting pretty close to Australia [but] we didn’t know exactly where they were,” he said.

“We just carried on as normal until the morning of February 19, 1942. Rumour had it the American Air Force were going to come to Darwin in a very large strength so, when all these planes started to come in from the south, we were standing there looking at them for a while. Until someone realised that they had Japanese insignia on their wings.”



A Darwin AA Gun crew

Mr Hackett said the Japanese had already started dropping bombs on Darwin by the time the alarms sounded.

Mr Hackett spoke of his mate, Wilbert Hudson, nicknamed ‘Darkie’, who was in the shower when the alarm sounded.

Darkie grabbed only his tin hat, boots, and a towel, and ran for his machine gun.

As Japanese planes strafed the battlefield, Darkie ran out into the open with another soldier, who was known as Tex. The pair propped the machine gun on Tex’s shoulder, allowing Darkie to shoot down a Japanese dive bomber.

“As the action got a little bit more intensive, Darkie lost his towel. So there was Darkie with his tin hat and boots going like hell,” Mr Hackett said.



A newspaper article of the action in Darwin.

Wilbert ‘Darkie’ Hudson became the first Australian Army serviceman to be awarded a gallantry medal while fighting on the mainland of Australia.

“After the war, we used to say to Darkie, ‘now come on Darkie, we want to know the truth; did you actually shoot that Japanese plane down, or did the pilot look over the side, see you, and die of fright?’”

Mr Hackett said the situation got tougher as resources became scarce in the aftermath of the bombing. Rationing was implemented and soldiers received just one scoop of uncooked rice each day.

“Years later, at reunions up in Darwin, we found out that it wasn’t rice at all really,” he said. “It was cattle fodder. They were feeding the cattle with it.

“We were able to go out and shoot wild goat, pigs, and we tried wild buffalo but gave that away because it had a disease in it, so we lived off the land practically.

“We also had some indigenous fellas with us as gunners. Lucky we did have them, because they were local fellas, Larrakeyah tribe, and they knew the bush.”

The WW2 Naked Gunner

Many of the gunners slept in small, damp 'dugouts', just a few metres from their anti aircraft guns.

"Eventually, most of the gunners' clothing rotted. I have got photos here of the gunners and they were reduced to wearing just sandbags around their waist," Mr Hackett said.

Mr Hackett said he would immediately look to the skies when he heard a plane. Japanese planes often approached with the sun behind them and, as a result, Mr Hackett suffered solar damage to both of his eyes and is now almost completely blind.

But he said he didn't mind telling his story because young people rarely heard about the attacks on mainland Australia.



Mr & Mrs Hackett in 2002

"There was more aircrafts coming off the carriers over Darwin than what was over Pearl Harbour," he said.

"The weightage of explosives dropped on Darwin was bigger than Pearl Harbour. The only thing that wasn't bigger was the loss of life, but fortunately Darwin escaped that one, mainly by good luck."

A total of 243 people died in the Darwin bombings, while another 300 to 400 people were wounded.

After the war, Mr Hackett met his future wife. Mrs Hackett said she first met her husband at a dance at a small hall in Safety Bay.

"There used to be quite a few dances. That's when we met more or less," she said.

Apparently, Mr Hackett knew how to cut a rug.

During their 68 year marriage, the couple has raised three children and now has seven grandchildren.

"I say, 'God, it is about time I got a great grandchild'," Mrs Hackett said.

Wilbert Hudson MM holding a Lewis Gun similar to the one he used during the defence of Darwin. Photo from 1998 at the Australian War Memorial



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P02539.006

Padres' Ponderings

From Padre Stephen Albrecht - Chaplain 10/27 Battalion RSAR

There are many television series I enjoyed watching when I was growing up. Now, at the risk of showing my age, let me highlight ten of my favorites: “Knight Rider,” “The A-Team,” “The Flying Doctors,” “Magnum P.,” “Count Down,” “Hey Hey It’s Saturday,” “CHiPs,” (California Highway Patrol) “Kingswood Country,” “Ask the Leyland Brothers” and one of my all-time favorites, “M*A*S*H.”

M*A*S*H was based around a ‘Mobile US Army Surgical Hospital’ 4077 and featured the wise-cracking main character Hawkeye Pierce, who was inspired by a real-life surgeon. The TV show M*A*S*H helped the nation come to grips with the harsh and occasionally hilarious realities of war. The concept of M*A*S*H was simple: these hospitals were located close enough to the front lines to serve wounded soldiers but far enough away to avoid bombs and direct combat. Life in a M*A*S*H unit was gruelling, with constant stress from warfare, long hours in surgery, and frequent relocations—usually at least once a month.

During my first week of this year’s Rhino Run Exercise, I, along with two other chaplains, was positioned with the army’s new capability, the ‘Role 2 Basic.’ Manned by the 3rd Health Battalion, this light and manoeuvrable surgical facility can provide lifesaving care until patients can be evacuated. It comprises of four low-profile tents that can be pushed forward to where they are needed most and can be operational in just three hours.

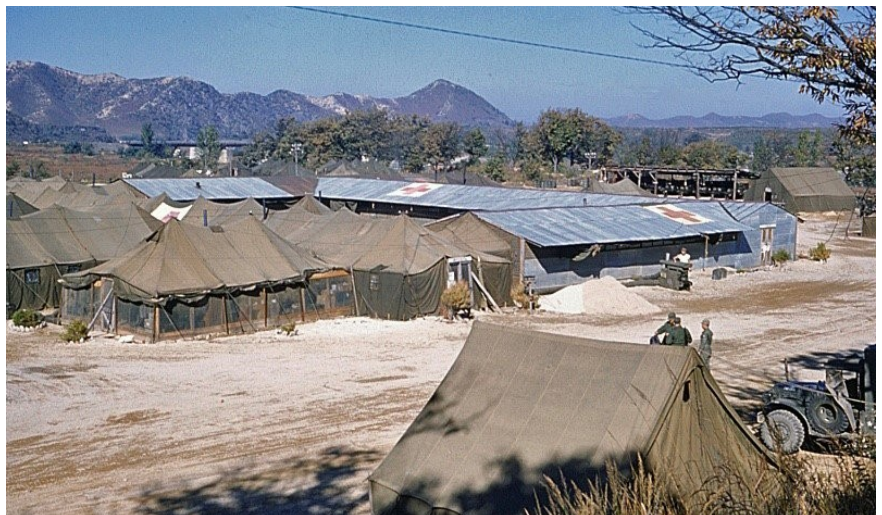
Unlike the series M*A*S*H, this modern facility has real-world capabilities, offering an extra level of care for anyone in the field and significantly enhancing our healthcare provision in challenging environments. This new setup is a testament to how far military medical care has advanced, ensuring that soldiers receive the best possible treatment even in the most demanding situations.

My experience with the Role 2 Basis during the Rhino Run Exercise highlighted the importance of adaptability and quick response in military medical care. Just like the fictional M*A*S*H units, our modern facilities are designed to move quickly and set up rapidly to provide critical care where it is needed most. It reassured me that, despite the differences between the TV show and real life, the spirit of M*A*S*H caring for those in need amidst the chaos of war lives on.

Stephen Albrecht

Chaplain

A MASH Unit in South Korea during the Korean War



'Mateship meant everything'



Ninety-eight-year-old Bill Grayden knows all too well about the horrors of war.

He served as a lieutenant during the Kokoda campaign in the Second World War; his uncle was a major with the 10th Light Horse in the First World War; and his father, Leonard Ives, was left for dead after he was shot through the chest less than a week after landing on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915.

Leonard Ives was working as a mining clerk at Meekatharra in Western Australia's remote mid-west when the First World War was declared and was one of the earliest to enlist, joining up on 21 September 1914.

"He wasn't on Gallipoli very long," Grayden said in an interview with the ABC ahead of the centenary of the Gallipoli landings.

"He was a corporal and was carrying a despatch back from the front line to his headquarters ... and he was shot through the chest by a Turkish sniper. He was left virtually for dead, but somebody saw his hand move and he was extricated, and fortunately there was a hospital ship leaving the following day, and he was evacuated on that."

Ives lost a lung, but survived the war, and went on to marry and have three children.

Like many veterans, he never talked about the war, and the only time Grayden ever heard his father mention it was when he overheard him talking to two fellow veterans at a hotel.

"I happened to be in the hotel and he met two of his friends who were in the army with him, and they were laughing about how the three of them were drawing straws on Gallipoli," he told the ABC. "They were in a trench facing the Turks and they were drawing straws to see who would put his head up next and look for a Turkish target."

Ives's remarkable story of survival had a profound impact on his family, and when the Second World War broke out in September 1939, his eldest son was determined to enlist.

"I was 19, and I was doing a mechanical engineering course," Grayden said while visiting the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. "So I made an application, but they rejected it."

Not to be deterred, Grayden changed his first name from Wilbur to William and "William Grayden" was finally accepted in 1940. His mother had already changed the children's surnames to their stepfather's name when she remarried. And Grayden's younger brother David enlisted the following year at the age of 17 and went on to serve in the Middle East and New Guinea.

"You had to be 20, so I just put my age up a year in order to get in," Grayden said with a laugh. "You took it for granted. It was just what you did ... My father was in the 1/16th Battalion ... so when the war broke out, I naturally joined the 2/16th."

Grayden was appointed lance-corporal within a week of going to a naval base for training, and was soon promoted to full corporal in charge of bayonet practice. He was then chosen to attend Officer's Training School at Bonegilla in country New South Wales, and graduated as a lieutenant before sailing for the Middle East on the *Queen Mary*.

"We were in the Syrian campaign against the Vichy French forces and the French Foreign Legion, but we actually had a very enjoyable time in Syria."

The weather though presented its own challenges. "One thing I can recall ... is that about four days before Christmas, even though we were only about eight miles from the Mediterranean in an olive grove, they had

'Mateship meant everything'

three feet of snow,” he said in an interview for the 2/16th Association.

“I woke up in the morning, and made my way to the surface because every tent had collapsed during the night... The troops were in Australian summer clothing, [and] they were too cold to do anything about it. They simply propped up the canvas with their rifles and continued sleeping, so when I looked out, it was a snow scene in an olive grove – not a sign of any tent or any individual – and very shortly heads began popping out of the snow...

“But we defeated the Vichy French and the French Foreign Legion – they were established way back in about 1833, and had fought in wars all over the world; and we came from Australia and came up against them and defeated them.

“We were actually digging in on the Turkish border because they thought the Germans would come down and attempt to take the Suez Canal. And then when Japan entered the war they decided to bring us back home – and just as well.”



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

054402

Bill Grayden leading troops of the 2/16th Battalion at Mount Garnet in Queensland

When the Japanese attempted to capture Port Moresby overland via the little-known Kokoda Trail in the Owen Stanley Ranges in 1942, the 2/16th Battalion were sent to New Guinea with the rest of the 21st Brigade to meet the enemy.

“It was completely different,” Grayden said. “It was an arduous campaign, a constant process of slipping and sliding, and it was a very mountainous region. It rained every night, so people were sodden, and it was terribly hard, especially with the wounded, all of whom had to be carried.”

They were given “six days’ rations” and “50 rounds of ammunition only”.

“That’s why we could never think in terms of wasting a bullet,” Grayden said in an interview for the 2/16th Association. “You see what’s happening in the Middle East with people firing into the air and all that sort of thing – but we had

50 rounds and we never knew when we were ever going to have supplies renewed. We had 50 rounds and we had five tins of bully beef and five packets of what we called dog biscuits, they were very nutritional, but they were just dry, just like a dog biscuit ... and that had to last us for five days.”

Grayden remembers the first time he saw the Japanese near Alola. “At brigade headquarters, I looked across [the valley] and there was a very clear area on a hill, say a thousand yards away,” he said. “It had been a native garden ... and suddenly I saw about 30 people surge out of the rainforest and start frantically digging.

“We had no binoculars and we thought they were Papuans, obviously ravenously hungry trying to dig out sweet potatoes in this particular patch. We were on a slight ridge, a very exposed ridge, just standing up watching ... and [very shortly, brigade headquarters] started calling out to us to get down.

“What they’d done was they’d dug in a heavy machine-gun and were firing at us, and the bullets were hitting behind brigade headquarters, and we didn’t realise this until they called out, so we got down, and very shortly brigade headquarters asked me to send out a section of my platoon, that’s about 10 men, to silence the machine-gun. But that was my first sight, and they turned out to be Japanese...

“[After that], it was all very close contact, 20 yards and all this sort of thing, and it went on for weeks. There were lots of casualties of course, especially at the beachheads, but also on the Owen Stanley campaign. The 2nd/14th was badly mauled and they just joined our battalion. Then the 27th battalion was brought up

'Mateship meant everything'



from New Guinea, and ordered to make a stand on an exposed hill. They were wiped out in one night ... and it took them a month to get their wounded back to Port Moresby."

: "You had to be 20, so I just put my age up a year in order to get in." Photo: Courtesy Bill Grayden

He remembers the slightest movement could invite a burst of machine-gun fire, and that it was impossible to lie down at night because of the relentless rain; they had to sleep sitting on their steel helmets, back to back for support, and with one ground sheet between two men. Marching in single-file in the pitch black of night, they would tuck a piece of phosphorescent fungus into the back of their belts to help the person behind follow them.

One morning, Grayden awoke in bright sunlight to find the whole platoon sound asleep. Exhausted from days of fighting and the gruelling trek over the ranges, the sentries had fallen into a deep sleep and failed to wake the next shift up. Looking over a log that was lying across the track, Grayden was even more horrified to discover the brigadier, Arnold Potts, also sound asleep.

"During the night they must have all fallen asleep," he said. "It must have been about seven o'clock or something and I looked around and the whole platoon is sound asleep. There was a log across the road two feet

above and I looked over the log and here's Brigadier Potts – the brigadier, in charge of three battalions – lying with this ground sheet around him, nothing else, sound asleep ... apparently confident in our diligence. And we were the only troops between the battalion and the Japanese.

"Now being a lieutenant, I thought it was advisable to wake the platoon up before I woke the brigadier. He went back to brigade headquarters ... [and] about less than half an hour later, two Japanese came, not walking up the track, but trotting, and very shortly after, we got the order to withdraw to a higher position."

The battle proved to be one of numerous close calls for Grayden.

"Oh, constantly," he said. "It was just a constant process. We were in contact with them for weeks, and because they outnumbered us, and because they had superior weapons, [we] had to adopt different tactics all together. You didn't just make a stand ... you fought a strategic withdrawal [where] we'd go back on to a ridge, they would attempt to attack, and we'd inflict casualties on them..."

"They would attempt to surround you once they had fixed you down, so when our scouts indicated that they were coming around, we'd withdraw to the next ridge again. And that went on from every ridge, all the way back, so we were in constant, daily contact, every day, for weeks.

"Then by the time we got back, we made a stand on Ioribaiwa Ridge, about 60 miles out of Port Moresby, and they shelled us for a week. They wouldn't attack us, but every day, on an exposed ridge, the shells would burst in the trees above.

Part 2 next month.

Titirangi Memorial Service

I received this email from member Hank Ramm. "You may remember the biography of Chaplain Olds, NZ Armed Forces. Attached is the address he recently gave to those involved with the Titirangi Church memorial service. You may be interested in reading it and possibly providing a copy to Padre Albrecht. Your call." I've chosen to publish it here.

Opening Prayer

Nou e te Atua te tai timu te tai pari e rere ana . . .

Ko te tīmatanga tae noa ki te mutunga . . .

Ko te mutunga tae noa ki te tīmatanga hou . . .

I runga ia tātou katoa . . .

As you were in the ebb and flow . . .

As the beginning becomes the ending . . .

And the ending the new beginning . . .

Be with us ever present God . . .

Amine

Commemorations

One of the greatest privileges of my military service has been the opportunity to attend to participate, to lead in commemorative services, some, like this, local events, intimate events recognising the extraordinary contribution of local communities considering the cost, again, extraordinary to local communities, of service in periods of conflict and war.

Others, have been events of an altogether different scale, National Anzac Day commemorations. At Pukeahu, the National War Memorial. Dawn Services at Anzac Cove and New Zealand commemorations at Chunuk Bair where thousands have gathered to do the same, to remember, to count the cost, and to, at once, deeply grieve and be deeply grateful.

I've stood in the humid Timorese jungle with a handful of fellow soldiers at the site where New Zealand's Private Leonard Manning was killed on 24 July 2000, and under the Menin Gate with complete strangers from literally all parts of the world for the daily Last Post Ceremony, honouring the 54,395 casualties whose names are inscribed on that memorial.

That ceremony has been held every evening since July 2nd 1928, aside from the period when Belgium was under German control during WWII. 33,236 Acts of Remembrance.

There is a strong link between this memorial and the Western Front for it's there, if my research is correct, that eleven of the thirteen names inscribed on the original Honour Role of this Memorial Chapel lost their lives.

The youngest, 21350 Clarence Victor Tarlin was killed in action on 22 February 1979, and now lies in Lille Southern Cemetery, France. He was 19 years old . . .

There are the brothers 23294 Second Lieutenant John and 54813 Private William Bishop. They died eight months apart on different battlefields, and rest, now in different countries.

William, aged 21, in Euston Road Cemetery, France, and older brother John, with no known grave who's name is listed along with 1175 fellow New Zealanders in the New Zealand Apse at Tyne Cot Cemetery, Belgium. He was 24.

2/1252 Sergeant John Rankin, DCM, survived the Gallipoli campaign before being killed on September 20th 1916 during the first Battle of the Somme, and is now buried in Thistle Dump Cemetery, Longueval, France.

56092 Sergeant Major John Cullen Burns is buried just 15 Km from here at St. Andrews Church Epsom, he died in a training accident in August 1918, age 33, his wife Irene, who died six years later, is buried alongside him.

I visited his grave yesterday. Sometimes you need to see more than just a name I guess.

Titirangi Memorial Service

These are the simply the facts of their deaths, but each has a story that is so much bigger than these details. They all do

NZDF Commemorations

Over the four-plus years marking the 100th anniversary of the period of the First World War, 2014 – 2018, the New Zealand Defence Force sent contingents to the Western Front to commemorate each significant military action, and each Anzac Day.

Throughout those activities we visited every known location where New Zealand soldiers and sailors are buried or have their names recorded.

Commonwealth War Graves, Local churchyards, sometimes just one or two graves, often, as with Tyne Cot or Caterpillar Valley, they numbered in the thousands.

Commonwealth War Graves are scattered right across the Western Front, small and large . . . each immaculately tended, and the war itself, though more the 100 years past is only 450mm deep. The remains of soldiers are still being found, and laid to rest with a care and a dignity they were denied in death.

Those visits impacted me in a way that I struggle to put into words in a way that I hadn't even considered might be possible, and I count myself lucky in them, to have been the recipient of two huge gifts. First, the opportunity to live, as I can, in this place, in these conditions, with this degree of freedom and opportunity.

And second, the gift of being in such a role and at such a time that I was able to be there, something I might otherwise never have been able to do, and of being confronted by the sheer magnitude, of the loss, and the horror of war.

Conclusion

That's why places such as this, and the continued efforts to encourage public engagement with them, in them, round them, to keep them alive is so important.

The unfamiliarity, the distance, our disconnection from the places where our people served, where they died, where they lay.

Cassino. Gallipoli. Passchendaele. Les Quesnoy. Messines. Sinai. Kabul. Bamiyan. Dili.

The sheer magnitude of the numbers. Almost 60,000 NZ casualties in WWI alone, more that 18,000 of them deaths, all make it too difficult to comprehend, and, strangely, therefore too easy to disregard.

But this, on the other hand this is right here, these are local people, ordinary, everyday, on our doorstep, this is us.

Closing Prayer

God of our past of the path we have walked together . . .

God of our present, of this place , and of us your people . . .

God of our future , of potential, of promise, of peace . . .

We give you thanks for those

who so generously gave of themselves, in the shaping of our shared story, and for this place . . .

a place to pause, and to remember , to consider, again . . .

the enormity of their gift to us

May we . . . in all our diversity,

in our triumphs . . . our travails . . .

in our hopes and in our dreams

in our very lives . . .

honour their memory.

Be with us today . . .

Titirangi Memorial Service

*With us in all that has been said . . .
all that has been done . . .
greet us . . . guide us . . .
teach us . . . and nourish us . . .
make us . . . today . . .
better that we were yesterday . . .
and point us toward our shared tomorrow.
and now . . .
may the Lord God . . .
who makes all things holy and whole . . .
make us also holy and whole . . .
knit us together body . . . soul . . . spirit . . .
and keep us in peace*

Amen.



Digger Wombats Humour

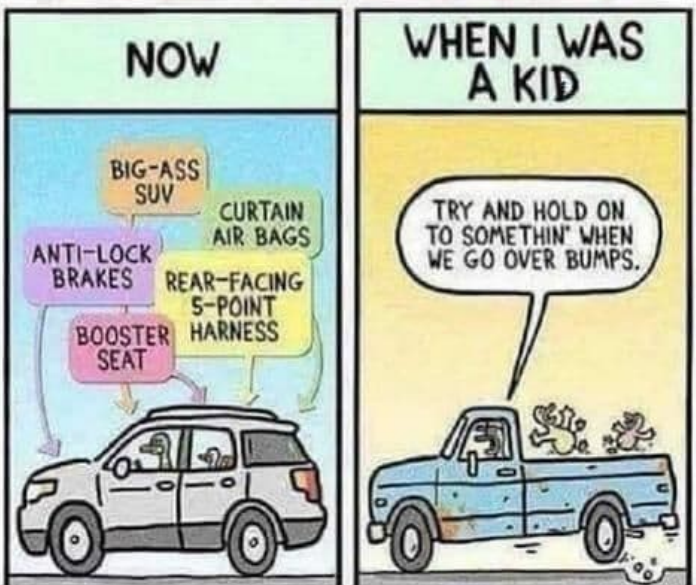


We never really grow up....we just learn how to act in public!

IF VEGETABLES ARE SO GOOD,
EXPLAIN TO ME WHY VEGANS
ARE ALWAYS TRYING TO MAKE
THEM TASTE LIKE MEAT.

TAKE YOUR TIME. I'LL WAIT.

CAR SAFETY FOR CHILDREN



Always make sure
SOMEONE in the
relationship has
good credit. That's
why it's called
SIGNIFICANT other.
Sign/if/I/can't.

Follow me for more
marriage tips

MY DOG WILL EAT
LITERALLY EVERYTHING,
UNTIL YOU PUT A PILL IN IT

THEN HE'S GORDON RAMSEY



Knowledge, is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.

**IF AT FIRST YOU
DON'T SUCCEED,
SKYDIVING IS
NOT FOR YOU.**

**I've found marriage to
be very educational.
For example, I had no
idea there was a wrong
way to put milk in the
fridge.**

**PEOPLE WRITE
CONGRATS
BECAUSE THEY
CANT SPELL
CONGRAJLASHINS**

**IF YOU CAN'T THINK OF A
WORD, SAY "I FORGET THE
ENGLISH WORD FOR IT".**

**THAT WAY PEOPLE WILL
THINK YOU'RE BILINGUAL
INSTEAD OF AN IDIOT.**

**Having a teenage
daughter is like
having a cat that only
comes out to eat and
hisses when you try
and be nice to it.**





The last thing I want to do is hurt you.....but it's still on my list!

Posing for a picture



There's something between my boobs that wasn't there when I was younger.

What is it?



My belly button.

As I fold my third load of laundry, I contemplate becoming a nudist.

Then I remember what I look like naked, and keep folding.



"I sure feel my age, I ache all over."

"I feel like a newborn, no hair, no teeth, and I just peed my pants!"

Harold William BIRD

Service Number: 417330
Enlisted: 25 April 1942, Adelaide, South Australia
Last Rank: Pilot Officer
Last Unit: No. 77 Squadron (RAF)
Born: Glanville, South Australia, 3 August 1915
Home Town: Port Adelaide, Enfield, South Australia
Schooling: *Ethelton Primary School*
Occupation: Clerk
Died: Flying Battle, Netherlands, 17 June 1944, aged 28 years
Cemetery: Terschelling (West-Terschelling) General Cemetery, Netherlands Grave 119



Memorials: Adelaide WW2 Wall of Remembrance, Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour , International Bomber Command Centre Memorial

Son of David and Hilda Emily Bird; husband of Joyce Emily Bird, of Hilton, South Australia.

Brother of Muriel Hilda Bird, Arthur James Bird, Clement John Bird and Gwenda Elvie Bird.

Harold Bird was born 3 August 1915 the son of David and Hilda Bird, at Ethelton in South Australia and was employed as a clerk for Goldsborough Mort & Co, a wool and stockbroking firm. He married Joyce Emily on 18 November 1939. Harold enlisted in the Reserve on 23 September 1941 and then the Citizens Air Force on 25 April 1942. He received his flying badge on 5 February 1943. Listed among the planes he flew in Australia were Tiger Moths, Ansons, Oxfords and Whitleys. He embarked for the United Kingdom on 6 March 1943 arriving there 17 April 1943 after various postings around England he arrived at 77 Squadron on 8 May 1944 after having completed time at 17 OTU and 41 Base. Commission to Pilot Officer 20 February 1944.

On 17 June 1944, whilst on a mission to Sterkrade in Germany to bomb a synthetic oil works, Halifax Mk545 was hit by flak and ditched in the North Sea. Pilot Officer Bird's body was recovered from the sea and interred in the General Cemetery at West Terachelling, an island off the coast of Holland. Following exhumation after the war his body was formally identified and re-interred in Grave 119. The grave was adopted by a local girl, Jannie Buren, who maintained the site until the Commonwealth War Graves Commission took over the task. A temporary cross was erected at that time. Three Australians were members of the crew of Halifax Mk545 -Pilot Officer Harold Bird; Flying Officer Stuart Mackay, Air Bomber and Flight Sergeant Robert Warren, Wireless Operator. The other members of the crew were -Sergeant R A Castle-Hall, Flight Engineer; Sergeant A Freemantle, Navigator; Flight Sergeant F A Meegan, Air Gunner and Sergeant J A Lauder, Rear Gunner. All crew members perished.

Halifax 545 was one of seven aircraft from the Squadron that failed to return from the mission. It was later established that the aircraft crashed in the sea off the coast of Holland, and all the crew were killed. Pilot Officer Bird and Sergeant Castle-Hall are buried in the Terschelling General Cemetery. Sergeant Freemantle is buried in the Sage War Cemetery, Oldenburg, Niedersachsen, Germany. Flight Sergeant Warren is buried in the Texel Cemetery Noord-Holland. Sergeant Lauder is buried in the Vlieland General Cemetery, Friesland. Flying Officer Mackay and Flt Sergeant Meeghan have no known graves. Pilot Officer Bird is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial.

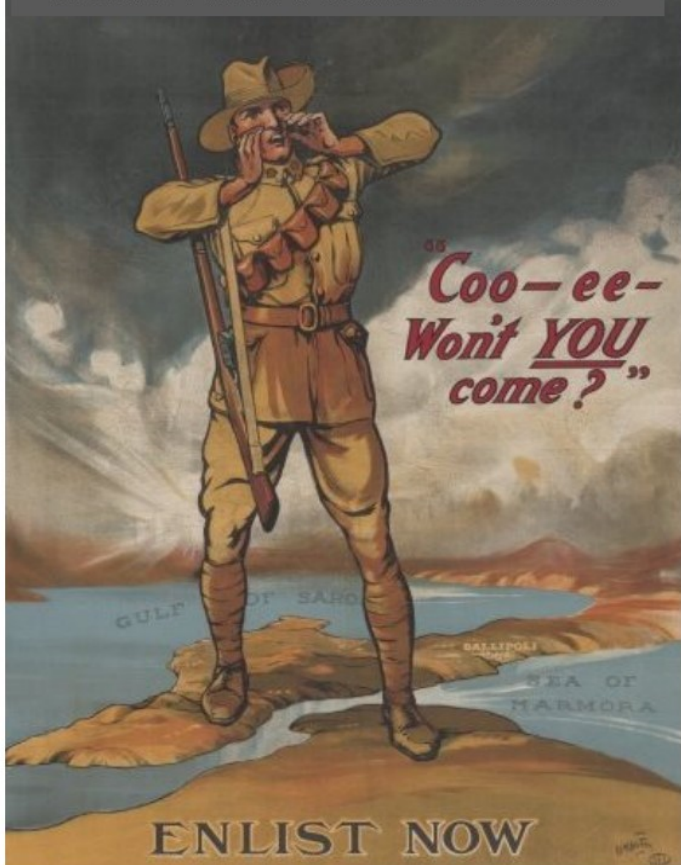
His wife remarried and was later known as Hilda Winker

LEST WE FORGET

Harold Bird is just one of the many thousands for ordinary SA blokes who signed up and did their bit during WW2. I didn't know him before, but I know him now. Editor

2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A CALL FROM YOUR ASSOCIATION



WHEN:

SUNDAY 4TH AUGUST @ 1100 HRS

WHERE:

AVOCA HOTEL SOUTH ROAD
CLARENCE GARDENS

AGM:

1100 HRS - 1200 HRS

LUNCH:

1200 HRS - 1330 HRS

DRESS:

NEAT, CASUAL

All Members, wives & partners are invited to attend the AGM and mix with friends whilst voting on changes to the Constitution.

All Committee positions will be declared vacant.

This is the MAIN event for the year so it is imperative for all members to attend and vote.

Please join us after the AGM for a meal, a couple of drinks and a chat.

Get to know the other members.

**SUNDAY 4th August 1100 hrs Avoca Hotel, South Rd
Clarence Gardens**

Reservations Required for Seating & Catering Purposes

NLT 30 July to

davidlaing49@outlook.com or 0407 791822

MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE



- A. Regimental Tie \$25
- B. Stubby Holders \$6 each or 6 for \$30
- C. RSARA Nameplate \$25
- D. RSARA Lapel Badge \$15
- E. Laser-engraved timber shield w/- brass look plaque \$45
- F. **NEW** Vinyl RSAR Sticker 70mm x 100mm
Only \$2 or 6 for \$10 FREE Postage.
- G. Hoodie w/- LOGO \$50
- H. Wine Cooler Bag \$25 plus postage

Allow \$10 postage for each item
Unless collected by member



POLO TOP \$45



2024 RSARA Merchandise Order Form

Each large item attracts a **MINIMUM of \$10 postage**. This is due to increases by Australia Post and is beyond our control. Please ensure you include this in your total.

I WISH TO ORDER THE FOLLOWING:- (Please insert quantity)

NAME PLATE \$25 - POSTAGE \$3

RSARA LAPEL BADGE \$15 - POSTAGE \$3

RSARA TIE \$25 - POSTAGE \$10

STUBBY HOLDER \$6 - POSTAGE \$10

ENGRAVED SHIELD \$45 - POSTAGE \$10

RSARA POLO TOP \$45 - POSTAGE \$10 (Include size)

RSARA HOODIE \$50 - POSTAGE \$10 (Include size)

RSARA CAP \$15 - POSTAGE \$10

RSAR WINE COOLER BAG \$25 - POSTAGE \$10

RSAR VINYL STICKERS 6 FOR \$10. FREE POSTAGE



NAME.....(TO BE PLACED ON NAME PLATE)

ADDRESS.....

SUBURB.....PC.....

Members can order Association Merchandise by the following means.

Send this form **and a Cheque** to:-

*The Secretary David Laing
RSAR Association
Po Box 5218 Murray Bridge South
Murray Bridge SA 5253*

Or email order to davidlaing49@outlook.com

And pay via EFT to:-

**RSAR Association Inc
BSB 633 000
Acc. 1616 585 88**

(Include your name as an identifier)

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE ASSOCIATION WHICH SUPPORTS OUR SOLDIERS

Life Members		Members	A - M	Members	N - Z
Acton	Chris	Abel	Colin	New	Anthony
Beckett	David	Abraham	Michael	Normandale	Zachary
Benveniste	Sam	Albrecht	Stephen	Oakley	Andrew
Blackmore	Bill	Allison	Robert	O'Daly	Ryan
Boscence	Bob	Angus	Sebastian	Orrock	Alan
Brookes	Phil	Attenborough	Geoff	Parslow	Howard
Burnard	Trent	Baker	Craig	Parsonage	James
Burns	Wayne	Bampton	Michael	Pascoe	Michael
Carnachan	Ian	Barry-Orcales	Dianeever	Payne	Bob
Carpenter	Ian	Beames	Paul	Pearce	Philip
Cotton	Bob	Bedford	Travis	Pexton	Timothy
Dart	John	Bennett	Christian	Phillips	Colin Rex
Davey	Trevor	Blondell	Mark	Portakiewicz	Anthony
Elliott	Graham	Bras	Riley	Portakiewicz	David
Gaborit	Lyndon	Brophy	Ryan	Powell	Gary
Goodwin	Graham	Brown	Bruce	Preece	Brian
Harris	Lachlan	Burnard	Saxon	Pritchard	Chantel
Hawking	Don	Burton	Ray	Rado	Steven
Haynes	Malcolm	Buttars	Erik	Ramm	Hank
Higgins	Jonathan	Carlisle	Lesley-Anne	Ranger	Denis
Hogan	Mark	Chamberlain	David	Rijken	Paul
Hook	Alan	Cooke	Nat	Robertson	James
Hope	David	Cram	Kevin	Sailes	Adrian
Horseman	Ian	Dale	Andy	Sanders	Ashley
Hudson	Mick	Demosani	Tony	Sandhu	Zorawar
Jackson	Aaron	Denis	Emily	Schuh	Simon
James	Grant	Dew	Trevor	Scott	Rhys
Jeffrey	Scott	Domanski	Glenn	Sexton	Mark
Johnson	Paul	Donald	Thomas	Shephard	Daniel
Johnson	Barry	Duncan	Coen	Skapin	Corey
Klopf	Alex	Dunn	Bob	Slater	Ian
Laing	David	Dunn	Peter	Smith	Ryan
Lakin	Bruce	Eva	Keith	Sniedze	Julie
Marlin	Robin	Ewens	Mimi	Tasker	David
Meredith	Mike	Faquiri	Reshad	Tattersall	Geoff
Miller	Nick	Faunt	Joshua	Thomas	David
Moore	Peter	Flynn	Adrian	Thomas	Travis
Moore	Terry	Fortune	Nigel	Thomson	Jim
Moore	Thomas	Foy	Erin	Threfall	Kev
Paul	John	Gatley	Graham	Tran	Andy
Pollard	Barry	Genovese	John	Trezise	George
Richter	Sean	Ghanem	Paul	Tsoulakis	Christos
Salamon	Piotr	Gibson	Lindsay	Tucker	Belinda
Stewart	Robin	Gill	Graham	Turner	Garry
Stewien	Peter	Gordon	Frank	Vozelj	Blaz
Vella	Joe	Groffen	Renee	Weepers	Nicole
Waters	Ian	Harrington	Malcolm	Wheeler	Chris
Watters	Matthew	Harrison	John	Williams	Reg
Westover	Rhys	Harrison	Keith	Williams	Janelle
Wilson	Graham	Harrison	Nigel	Zuromski	Paul
Yorke-Simpkin	Reg	Hartshorne	Anthony		
		Hawkins	Des	Honorary Members	
Associate Life Members		Heath	Jonathon	Wilson MAJGEN	Neil
Elliott	Julie	Higgins	Kevin	Jackson LTCOL	Aaron
Field	Shirley	Hill	Max	Hannan WO1	Scott
Johnson	Sally	Hudson	Rick		
Laing	June	Hume	Matthew	Hon Member for Life	
Parkin	Audrey	Humphrys	Jesse	Beames	Rodney
Phillips	Heather	Jones	Brett	Associate Members	
Sanderson	Lorraine	Justin	Trent	Abel	Karen
Tregenza	Lyn	Koop	Joshua	Brown	Jenni
		Kovacs	Philip	Carnachan	Dom
		Laing	Selina	Dunn	Trish
		Leach	Thomas	Eva	Gail
Denotes	Serving Members	Lewis	James	Hawkins	Lynn
Denotes	Life Members	Loveder	Peter	Hook	Philippa
		Matchett	William	Hudson	Margaret
		McCulloch	Don	Johnson	Margaret
		McIver	Bill	Parsonage	Yvonne
		McKenzie	Kain	Pollard	Kay
		Migali	Michael	Toy	Jill
		Mitchell	Barry	Winger	Kathleen
		Morony	Frank		
		Mulroney	Dennis		