



Vol 1 No 6  
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# The WAURior

The official newsletter of the Western Australian University Regiment Association Inc.

## In this edition...

Look out for these items and more

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- ✓ **Member contributions**
- ✓ **Current Unit News**
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## Ramblings from the Secretary

With Michael Jenkin

For me, this year's ANZAC Dawn service at King's Park was extra special. It was a great honour to lay a wreath on behalf of the Association. Despite the solemnity of the occasion, it was not without an element of humour. In the darkness of the pre-Dawn, we were formed up into fours by those human sheep dogs, the RSL Marshals. The older hands seemed to know the drill and as they were jostled, gave as good as they were getting: "Yeah alright Clarry, keep you hair on", "Percy, I've told you before mate, don't touch what you can't afford", muffled giggles, shuffling etc. I was minding my own business, when I suddenly found my neat little group disrupted. It became clear that someone up the front had made the unforgivable error of making a five. As the other wreath layers moved back, it became clear that I was an unwelcome fifth. I retreated as discretely as I could and ended up at the back which actually turned out to be just as well. It meant that our wreath was laid at the rear of the Memorial, facing Mounts Bay Road which I thought was pretty appropriate! After the March (during which we actually got a plug on the ABC because Ernie Polis is a good mate of the commentator) members met for a few quieties out the front of Anzac House. Since the last Newsletter, the Association has been working steadily on a number of projects. We moved into our new home (the old OR's Boozer) on 7 May 2002. The additional space means we can set up a library, historical display and meeting area. We are very grateful to CO WAUR LT COL Bob Farrelly for permission to use this area and his continuing support for the Association's activities. Look out for new merchandise at the Sundowner, including ties, lapel pins, cuff links and tie bars. A lot has been happening on the history side too - see Shaun's report at page 15. See you at the Sundowner ...

## Contributions sought!!

Thanks to Dave Knight, Greg Smith, Bart Simpson, Julie Vitner, Kevin Bailey and Shaun Chapman for contributions to this edition. I would also like to thank those who have sent in feedback - so far, it has all been positive. Remember, if there is something you would like to see in **your** Newsletter, please let me know. As I said last time around, I would be delighted to receive contributions from other members as well!

Michael Jenkin (Ed)

★ **SUNDOWNER – 26 JUL 02** ★

The Association's next social function is the Mid-year Sundowner at ANZAC House, 30 St Georges Terrace Perth on 26 July 2002 from 1700 h. As usual, the first beer is free and food platters will be available. We intend to show the latest archival footage (along with the stuff we showed at the AGM) and there will also be a raffle. We also plan to have ties, lapel pins, tie bars and cuff links on sale. Dress is smart casual – See you there!

## Welcome to the Following New Members

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The Committee would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following members who have joined the Association since the last edition of The WAURior:

### **March 2002**

Ron Adams 1981-82 & 1989-92; Scott Arbuckle 1978-83; Simon Bodycoat 1983-?; Ian Cook 1955-60; Denham Helium ; Geoff Simpson 1967-71 & 1988-91; Ben Stewart 1981-85; Phil Sumner 1967-73, 1979-81, 1997-99.

### **April 2002**

Ian Esmond 1980-87.

### **May 2002**

Liam Boyd 1982-90\*; Lyndon Hopkins 1987-90; Jeff Murray (current RSM WAUR); Andrew Russell dates of service TBA.

\*Boyd is our first member resident in the US!

# Member Contributions

This in from a cynical Greg Willis:

1. If the enemy is in range, so are you.
2. Incoming fire has the right of way.
3. Don't look conspicuous: it draws fire.
4. The easy way is always mined.
5. Try to look unimportant, they may be low on ammo.
6. Professionals are predictable, it's the amateurs that are dangerous.
7. The enemy invariably attacks on one of two occasions:
  - a. When you're ready for them; or
  - b. When you're not ready for them.
8. Teamwork is essential; it gives the enemy someone else to shoot at.
9. If you can't remember, the claymore is pointed at you.
10. If your attack is going well, you have walked into an ambush.
11. Don't draw fire, it irritates the people around you.
12. The only thing more accurate than incoming enemy fire is incoming friendly fire.
13. When the pin is pulled, Mr. Grenade is not our friend.
14. If it's stupid but works, it isn't stupid.
15. When in doubt empty the magazine.
16. Never share a fox hole with anyone braver than you.
17. Anything you do can get you shot. Including doing nothing.
18. Make it too tough for the enemy to get in and you can't get out.
19. Mines are equal opportunity weapons.
20. A Purple Heart just proves that were you smart enough to think of a plan, stupid enough to try it, and lucky enough to survive.
21. Don't ever be first, don't ever be the last and don't ever volunteer to do anything.
22. The Quartermaster has only two sizes: too large and too small.
23. Five second fuses only last three seconds.
24. It is generally inadvisable to eject directly over the area you just bombed.



## Current Unit News - Unit Birthday

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Story by Shaun Chapman, Photos by Michael Jenkin & Colin Abbott

On Tuesday, 23 April 2002, WAUR celebrated its 53<sup>rd</sup> Birthday - although as astute members will know, the actual day the unit was raised was 22 April 1949. The Association was well represented with members meeting at the Association office before forming up at the Officers/Sergeants Mess for the final assault on the Officer Cadets Mess. A large crowd filled the Mess, a sight not seen in some time. CO WAUR, LT COL Robert Farrelly outlined the history of the Unit. This was followed by the traditional cutting of the cake ceremony with the youngest member of the unit, PTE Angel Donohue. As the night wore on, the other rank tendencies came out from some Association members, with a good old-fashioned song-fest and general rowdy behaviour - all of course with the greatest respect and good taste fitting to the occasion. The night was well organised with plenty of nibbles and beer, and congratulations are due to RSM WAUR WO1 Jeff Murray and the Officer Cadets involved. We look forward to the units 54<sup>th</sup> Birthday!



**CO WAUR and PTE Donohue prepare to cut the Unit's Birthday cake.**

[Note: former CO WAUR COL Geoff Simpson on LT COL Farrelly's right]



**Association members enjoy themselves**



**Members & guests listen to CO WAUR's speech**



Firstly, on behalf of all the Association members who attended the WAUR Ball, I would like to pass on our heartfelt thanks to the Regiment for extending us an invitation to attend. It was a fantastic evening enjoyed by all.

For those of you who have never attended a military ball, there is no other event that brings together the formality, history, tradition and splendour of military service. Every moment was a snapshot of the collective military memory, with Officers and Senior Non Commissioned Officers resplendent in mess kit and accoutrements, captured against the magnificent backdrop and history of Government House.

For me, the night was a reminder that some of the most important things obtained from military service are a sense of history and tradition, and a camaraderie that cannot be found elsewhere. The Ball was also an important reminder of the value and importance of members of the armed services socialising together.

Not just a few beers in the Mess, but a formal coming together of who we are and what we stand for, a tradition sadly missing in this day and age. WAUR is to be commended for recapturing an important military tradition, and celebrating and recognising the achievements of our newest officers.

To the night itself. I would like to say that the highlight of the evening was Kargo's speech and presentation of the Association's Award to the most outstanding officer cadet – Officer Cadet Allison, now Second Lieutenant. That is what I would like to say.

However, for me personally, the highlight of the event was the entertainment of the Pipes and Drums marching through the hall. Standing between an Infantry Corps Colonel and an Armoured Corps Captain as the bagpipes faded from Government House, I was waiting for someone to appear at the balcony and announce that all Officers and their staff were to return to quarters as some one had declared war and we were mobilising. The musty grip of history again.

It would be ill advised of me not to recall the reason for the evening - the graduating officers. On behalf of the Association, I would like to congratulate them all on their outstanding individual performance in training, their collective achievements and their worthy representation of Western Australia.

Finally, if I had one criticism of the evening - I would keep it to myself. It is not the place of a privileged guest to criticise their host, and again, on behalf of all Association members who attended I would like to thank WAUR, the Ball committee and Captain Field for hosting such a magnificent and important event.

PS - it would also not be worthy of me to have a go at Chook for breaking the trophy we presented so I wont, except to say that the Belligerent Loud And Cunning Keckers<sup>1</sup> Royal & Ancient order of the Toothpicks (BLACK RATS) were impressed.

Smithy

**[Ed: The trophy was an officer with sword at the carry. Chook managed to break the sword off about an hour before it was to be presented.**

<sup>1</sup> Keck 1. to retch: be nauseated. 2. to feel or show strong dislike. The Macquarie dictionary n. 966.

## Current Unit News - Unit Ball

Photos by Michael Jenkin & Shaun Chapman

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**David Allison is presented with the inaugural Association award for excellence by John Kargotich**



**Ray Galliot (now on full time service) cuts a dashing figure in Winter Mess dress and is seen here watching the entertainment.**



**The Gregors enjoy the ambience of the Government House Ballroom**



**Greg & Vanessa Smith stand watch over the last bottle of Red...**



**The Chapmans enjoyed the Ball**



**Army Reserve Pipes & Drums Perth put on a fantastic display**

The Royal Green Jackets Association now have an online magazine called "The Green Machine". The blurb below gives some background to a new feature of the mag called "The Cog". The Green Machine is well worth a look and can be accessed via the RGJ Association's website at:

<http://www.rgjassociation.org.uk/Green%20Machine/Current/Index.htm>

Welcome to "The Cog" so named as it forms a small part of the "Green Machine" portfolio of publications. It is attached as a small PDF (portable data format) file which can be read using Acrobat Reader version 4 or above. "The Cog" is a preview of the forthcoming "Green Machine", the online magazine of The Royal Green Jackets Association. Some of you may be unaware such a publication exists whilst others may be only occasional visitors to the RGJA website and not have noticed the link on the left hand side. It came into being as a result of lengthy e-mail and video conferencing discussions amongst the website team of Ken Ambrose (Webmaster) and his 2 deputies (Keith and Kevin Stevens). The website has been in existence for over 2 years now and during that time the home page has received over 130,000 hits alone. The actual hit rate if calculated for all the pages would be well in excess of 2 million. The "Green Machine" since it was launched in September 2001 has received over 6,000 hits with total hits for all its pages adding up to over 20,000. However we felt we might still be missing our target audience therefore conceived "The Cog" which is designed to be posted out to all addressees approximately 7 days in advance of the beginning of each month and will highlight the main stories/features being covered. Although not designed to be printed but read on your PC a test print completed today with very favourable results. Once you have looked through "The Cog" you can visit the "Green Machine" or the main website by clicking on either of the cap badges. This will open your web browser and take you straight to these sites. Of course you will need to be on line at the time!! You will notice your address does not appear in the header to this e-mail. This is because I have blind copied everyone as an added security feature. With over 700 e-mails being sent out in bulk there are going to be a few e-mail addresses that people will wish to keep private. Blind copying resolves this problem. Also it may be possible you will receive this e-mail twice. Whilst I have tried to eliminate all instances of duplication some people will have 2 or more e-mail addresses which when looked at do not appear to be connected. If you do receive this more than once please e-mail me and I will remove the extra e-mail addresses from my address book.

Finally, we welcome your feedback. We are always looking for ways to improve both the website and the "Green Machine". We are also always looking for stories and pictures to include. If you have a story then please send it to Keith at:

[editor.greenmachine@rgjassociatin.org.uk](mailto:editor.greenmachine@rgjassociatin.org.uk)

<mailto:editor.greenmachine@rgjassociatin.org.uk>

and for pictures (please read the FAQs on the website and in the Green Machine regarding size and file format) please send them to Ken at:

[webmaster@rgjassociation.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@rgjassociation.org.uk)

<mailto:webmaster@rgjassociation.org.uk>

We hope you will like this new addition to the Green Machine and website. Regards to you all, Kevin Stevens (Website team member and Deputy Deputy Webmaster The Royal Green Jackets Association).





The 2002 Dawn Service at the State War Memorial, King's Park attracted a crowd estimated at between 20,000 - 25,000. In the cool darkness of the pre-Dawn, the crowd waited, silent and respectful. This year saw the introduction of giant video screens so that those further back could see what was happening. Prior to the service starting, the screens were filled with images from Australia's involvement in conflicts stretching back to the Boer War. The service started with the playing of the Still. Wreaths were then laid by the Governor and members of the official party. After this, further wreaths were laid by representatives of 76 Unit and ex-Servicemen's Associations. Amongst them was Association Secretary Michael Jenkin, who laid a wreath on behalf of the Association. The inscription on the card read: "This wreath was laid on behalf of the Western Australian University Regiment Association Inc. in memory of all those who died in the service of Australia. Anzac Day 2002. Lest we forget." The Secretary said he was honoured to have been able to lay the wreath on the Association's behalf and added: "In a happy quirk of fate, our wreath was laid at the back of the Memorial, so that it faces out towards the site of the old Mounts Bay Road Depot, a place familiar to many of us."

Following the Dawn Service, another large crowd (estimated at over 30,000) lined St George's Terrace (3 deep in places) to watch the March. Once again this year a contingent from the Association marched with the Defence Reserves Association. On "parade" were: Colin Abbot, Trevor Arbuckle, Scott Arbuckle, Shaun Chapman, Charles Crouch, Greg Evans, Jamie Hislop, Michael Jenkin, Ken Keesing, David Knight, Viktor Komarari, Tas Nolan, Ernie Polis, Grant Thompson, Paul Tubman, and Greg Willis. Other Association members seen either marching with other contingents or just generally participating included Ossie King, Steve McCarthy, John Horvarth, Dean McAuliffe, Tony Lambe, Bart Simpson, Craig Barrell, Ray Galliot, Greg Evans and a couple of others who asked to remain nameless. Following the March, members gathered outside Anzac House for a few quiet ones. Various smaller groups speared off to Karrakatta, Perth Hotels and family functions. As can be seen by the photographs, Association members cut a certain dash, and managed to keep in step, notwithstanding various difficulties. A larger roll-up is anticipated for 2003 with talk of an organised "Gunfire" breakfast.



**The Association wreath (front)**



**The Association wreath (top)**



**This fine body of men is the WAUR Association contingent for the 2002 ANZAC Day march in Perth.**

[Note: Association member John Horvarth marched with the Gulf War Vets contingent but agreed to appear in the pic to boost numbers!]

## Staff Cadets News

Unfortunately it appears that pressure of work prevented any contributions from the Staff Cadets for this edition. We look forward to publishing something in the next edition of The WAURior.



## Association Merchandise

### Ties, Lapel Badges, Tie bars & Cuff links

We are hoping to offer the following editions to our stable of merchandise at the Mid-Year Sundowner: Association ties, lapelbadges, cuff links and tie bars. The lapel pins will be about 19 mm in diameter and feature the Unit crest in gold. The cuff links and tie bars will be of similar design. The Association ties are modelled on the original Unit tie in a silk blend material - we are grateful to Scott Arbuckle who loaned us his old tie as a template.

### Stubby Holders

Quality Association stubby holders are still available at the bargain price of \$7.50 each (or two for \$12.00). This item will make a stylish addition to any home and is constructed of the finest materials available. Thanks go to Association stalwart and Treasurer Shaun Chapman for his hard work in organizing this project. To get hold of an Association stubby holder, either come along to a monthly meeting, or order by post. If ordering by post, send your cheque to the Association at PO Box 317, Kalamunda WA 6926, adding \$2.00 postage. The stubby holders are made of dark green wetsuit material. They have the Unit crest on one side and perhaps not surprisingly, the words: Western Australian University Regiment Association" on the other. Get in quick, at this price they wont last!

Part of the ARES 2LT package concerns Customs of the Army. After exhaustive instruction in this area the original (the one and only!) Officer Conversion Course was invited to the Officers Mess formal dinner in January camp 1981 to observe and put into practice that which we had so carefully absorbed. The evening started off as any other formal dinner might pre-dinner sherries with the guests (amongst whom were such perennial characters as Brig I D Stock (Hon. Colonel), Col. N Anderson (CO 5 TRG GP), Capt. L A Stewart (former QM)). After an undisclosed amount of dinner sherries had been consumed Mr Vice informed the assembled mumbling hordes that dinner was now prepared. Into the dining room the party filed -following Mr Prez's lead. Down sat the party, following Mr Prez's lead. (This was to be the form of things to come: a game of "follow the dining prez".) Anyway, back to the plot.

The dinner was consumed as dinners mostly are, with little outstanding action (except of course for a somewhat secretive postal communication between two of the better known Lt.'s???) This was followed by the usual port decanter (not touching the table on its way around) and cigars. It was shortly after I had lit my cigar that I noticed a large blob of foam (AFFF to the technical) consuming the space between the wall and my end of the table with alarming speed. Upon being ordered to locate and destroy the source of this outlandish event (quote "kill, maim and injure the aforesaid source")

I strode into the now enormous blob of foam followed by (General) Joe Russo. In the kitchen was to be found the RSM skilfully manoeuvring the end of a large flexible tube about 3 feet diameter from which the aforesaid. foam was exuding. The RSM's first line troops put up only token resistance and soon I found myself outside facing several guilty parties and a fire tender. On returning to the fray, I found the enemy completely demoralised and withdrawing - General Joe had saved the night by lying across the tube, causing all the foam to exude from the source end.

The Duty Officer for the night (an unnamed W02) came to investigate the "disturbance outside the Officers Mess", found, and I quote from the Duty Officer's log (with a bit of poetic license) "on investigation I found a fire tender in attendance, with foam generating apparatus in use". In his best judicial form, he informed the CO who reassured the Duty Officer, informing him that he "thought the mess was too hot and required cooling down".... (Cunning investigation later revealed that the fire people swore they could fill the room in approx. 30 seconds!!). Anyway, I digress...Once the defeated enemy had withdrawn, a Kangaroo Court was convened by the Subalterns. Senior members were charged by the Court with scurrilous and dastardly deeds and although provided with a first-class and very able defence, all were convicted and sentenced to various punishments (eg. a certain Adjt who after being convicted of a heinous crime, was sentenced to wear an item of ladies underwear... I leave the rest to your imagination...) A Captain was also sentenced to drinking his first four stubbies with a restraining device ie. a babies teat! All the court frivolity completed, we all then joined the rest of the members and guests in polite discourse. This was not to last long as the ever-astute Subalterns, having noticed the bar crowded by a number of senior members (Captains), decided to free the bar from their oppressive grip. A charge, second only to the great Charge of the Light Brigade (well perhaps also to the Charge of Nanga) and fierce battle ensued. Only after many acts of individual heroism etc., the forces of good withdrew, leaving the bar in the hands of dark and evil Captains and the civilian who had closed the shutters. More battles were to follow.

No-one noticed the absence of Lt. JOPPEK ( 1OLH) (and assistant) Some time later however, even the voices of 10 OC members and about half a dozen Subalterns couldn't hide the sound of an M113 APC thundering up and stopping extremely suddenly on the first step of the Mess. Duty Officer's Log: (Quote loosely) "I heard a loud rumbling in the direction of the road. Upon further investigation, I saw an APC moving at speed (probably exceeding the camp speed limit) between one of the F huts and the civilian canteen. it approached the Officers Mess and attempted to climb the steps. A watery battle ensued. The Duty Sgt. and I decided not to investigate further..." From the depths of the APC was produced 1 x fire-fighting knapsack sprayer and numerous water pistols which were put to good effect in the "watery battle". A senior guest (as yet unidentified) captured our main armament drenching all and sundry until he was courageously overpowered by Mr Vice. I think the battle was a success with greater than half of the water over the enemy. Several games of Mess Rugby ensued with, naturally, Subalterns winning. (I can't remember who, if any, was in opposition). Captain Johnstone was the ball! To round off the evening, things miraculously calmed down with OC's leaving the mess (after CO and visitors of course) in a condition slightly worse for wear. All fronted the next morning with vigour, zeal and a whole lot of other good words, agreeing that the night before was an experience worthwhile, and not to be missed.

All in all, a good time was had by all, with little ill effects????!!!!



Its not every day that you get the opportunity to get up close and personal with the Air Force's top of the range training aircraft the Hawk Mk 127 but that is exactly what happened recently when two-thirds of your Committee\* (namely Shaun Chapman and I) paid a visit to Association member and RAAF legend, Flight-Lieutenant Dean McAuliffe. Dean is posted to 79 Squadron as Adjutant. The Squadron is based at RAAF Base Pearce. Dean gave Shaun and I a fantastic tour of the Base and the Squadron including the Flight Line, Air Crew Briefing areas and the amazing "Sim" or flight simulator, (more on that shortly).

79 Squadron has what PR types might call an "interesting" history. The Squadron motto is "Born for action" and this has certainly been reflected out by its campaign record. It was originally formed at Laverton in Victoria in April 1943 and deployed to Goodenough Island two months later. At that time, the Squadron flew Spitfires and conducted fighter sweeps and bombing escorts for the rest of the year scoring 3 confirmed enemy "kills".



**Hawk leaving the flight line**  
Note: "Essendon" line



**FLTLT Dean McAuliffe & Shaun "Goose" Chapman**

In 1945 the Squadron shifted to Darwin and was involved in action on Morotai. The Squadron later moved to Queensland and disbanded on 12 Nov 45. The Squadron was reformed in 1962 and stationed in Ubon in Thailand where it was expected that it would be used to resist North Vietnamese troops. This threat failed to materialise although the Squadron's Sabres were fully operational. After a further five years, the Squadron again disbanded, only to be reformed again 18 years later and stationed at Butterworth, Malaysia. By this time, the Squadron was flying Mirages, following 3 Squadron's return to Australia for equipping with the then, brand new FA-18 Hornets. Shaun and I saw the tail fin from a Mirage fighter jet which dates from the period that the Squadron was operational at RAAF Base Butterworth in Malaysia. In fact, 79 Squadron which participated in numerous air defence exercises at Butterworth, represented the RAAF's last permanent fighter presence in Malaysia. The Squadron disbanded for the last time on 30 June 1988 and was reformed in 1998 at its current home at RAAF Base Pearce!



**Tail fin from a Mirage fighter jet – note the Squadron's badge**

The Squadron's primary role is to run Lead In Fighter conversion courses for newly graduated pilots from No. 2 Flight Training School, as well as pilots converting to "fast" jets from other RAAF aircraft. It also provides air support for Navy operations and close air support to the Army. The Squadron has 14 Hawks and Shaun and I watched three of these mighty beasts take-off. The Hawk is a two seater lightweight fighter and advanced weapons system training aircraft. Each aircraft is worth around \$20 million dollars so it was sobering to be told that the average age of flight crew these days is 23 years. The technicians or "techos" as they get called are even younger, with an average age of only 19 years. Perhaps it is just as well that the Army never saw fit to let us loose with more than the odd GPMG, SLR or Unimog!

The Hawks we saw were lined up under an outdoor hangar that looks like a giant carport. About 70 metres in front of the aircraft is a line on the ground called the "Essendon" line (it has a black stripe with two red stripes on either side). Non-aircrew types like Shaun and I are not allowed to cross the Essendon line unless escorted. I am not sure what happens to you if you do cross the line, but the threat of being impaled by the nose probe on the front of the Hawk (and the fact that I am an Eagles supporter) was enough to keep me firmly on the right side of the Essendon line. As we watched, (ear protection firmly in place of course) three Hawks thundered past on their way to take-off for a training exercise.

As the pilots passed us they gave us a friendly thumbs up, probably mistaking us for yet another pair of rubber-neckers from Canberra. The power of the Hawk is impressive and they seem to trundle along the runway for a few yards before hurtling upwards at phenomenal speed. Back from the flight line we had the chance to get up close to several Hawks in the huge Squadron hangar. The Hawk is a great looking aircraft, but not nearly as large as you imagine it is going to be. The wing span is between around 11 to 12 metres (depending on which variant you are looking at) and they have a take-off of between 4 to 5 tonnes. We were able to have a look inside the cockpit of one of the Hawks and conditions are cramped to say the least. Putting technical ineptitude to one side for a minute, the only way Shaun would be able to fly a Hawk is if they bolted the bell tower onto the cockpit. We were told that these babies are capable of a maximum speed at altitude of around 550 knots - which sounds fast enough to be going on with. Next to the bay in which each aircraft sits whilst in the hangar, is a large blue tool board. All the tools have to be physically sighted on the board before any of the aircraft can be moved. This process is assisted by the fact that the silhouette of each tool is painted on the board - I reckon even Shaun and I could get it right. It was quite a sobering thought that the high-tech multi-million dollar machine in front of us could still be brought to a grinding halt by the absence of a tiny spanner.



**Jenks & \$20 million worth of Hawk**



**Only one owner maaaaate....**

After a look around the hangar it was on to the "sim". The flight simulator struck me as a pretty good idea. For a fraction of the cost, it is possible to train pilots all day, whatever the weather. You also get the chance to weed out those who might be prone to sticking the aircraft's nose probe into hangar doors, or become hysterical when the aircraft pulls a few g's.

The "sim" is basically a fully fitted out mock-up of the front half of the Hawk surrounded by a curved projection screen. The graphics are amazingly realistic and we took the advice of the Flight Instructor and grabbed hold of the rail when a trainee pilot (who I will call "T") taxied for take-off. T took us on a little jaunt up the Avon Valley and put the Hawk through its paces. You find yourself ducking when the aircraft goes upside down and the steep banking turns make you glad you only had a light brekkie. T then did a very impressive fast approach and "landed" in fine style. I guess in doing so, T satisfied the definition of a good pilot - that is, someone with the same number of landings as take-offs. He didn't seem to mind his morning instructional flight being interrupted by a couple of gawping tourists. Apparently if you do crash when flying the sim, there is a loud bang, the screen goes black and the words "CAREER OVER" flash up in large red letters. I might actually be making that last bit up.

After the experience of the "sim" we got to try on some spare pilot's gear, including survival vests, G suits and some very stylish "bone-dome" helmets. By this stage I think Dean was beginning to wonder if he would ever get rid of us, but after he let Shaun and I pose in the gear, he finally managed to get us out of the flight crew area and shepherded us back to the Officers Mess for that time honoured service custom - a brew. On the way, we saw the latest graduating class practising for their parade later in the day. I have to say that but for the fact they were all in step, looked pretty fit and were all aged less than 25, they could have been the Association contingent on Anzac Day!

After a coffee in the sensational surrounds of the Officers Mess [Ed: any chance of a couple of Chesterfields for the Association's rooms Dean?], it was time to bid RAAF Base Pearce farewell and let Dean get back to some real work. It was a fantastic tour and Dean was the perfect host - he even said he had enjoyed showing us around! In a fit of generosity (which he may yet come to regret) he indicated that it might be possible to organise an Association tour of the base, probably a little later in the year. **If you are interested in a tour, please contact Shaun or I and we will keep you posted.**

[\*Association President John Kargotich was unable to attend the Committee Tour due to a death in the family. On behalf of the Association, we extend our sincere condolences to John].



**A mighty Hawk on its way to take-off  
for a training exercise**



**Shaun "Goose" Chapman  
models the latest RAAF  
fashion gear**



Member and former A Coy food processing plant Brett Greensil is stunned to announce the birth of twin boys Mitchell (7lb 5oz) and Nathaniel (6lb 10oz). Mother is doing well, Father is.....well, you can imagine how the father is.....

**[Ed: the "warry" looking shot of Brett supplied with this article wouldn't print]**



Natasha Peterson at 3 weeks old – sent in by adoring parents Jeff & Julie Peterson

One of our inter-state members Ian Cook over from Manly, New South Wales attended the March Association meeting at Artillery Barracks. He is pictured right with Association members Geoff Simpson (left) and Ken Keesing (right) re-using an engraved pewter tankard for the first time in 30 years. It was great to see Ian and we look forward to welcoming other inter-State visitors.



This article about member and RSL State President Bill Gaynor, appeared in the Kalamunda Echo on 24 April 2002. Bill was posted to WAUR over the period 1981-1983 & 1992 - 1994).



Training Ship Challenger cadet, Emma Brown, Woodbridge Primary School student, Brett Reinholdtsen, and Returned and Services League State President, Mr Bill Gaynor, OAM, RFD.

## Woodbridge shares Anzac spirit

The message of soldiers and service personnel who gave their lives during times of war was conveyed during a special ceremony at Woodbridge Primary school.

Anzac Day - April 25 - was commemorated at the school last week, with a special ceremony and speeches.

"The message is that the Spirit of the Anzac lives on," State RSL President, and career army reservist, Mr Bill Gaynor, OAM RFD, said. "It's a day that recognises the sacrifice by soldiers in wars and conflicts of the past."

For the children of Woodbridge Primary School, the ceremony gave them a chance to reflect on the more than 102,200 Australians killed on the field of battle in both World Wars.



Members Colin Abbot, Tas Nolan and Bart Simpson made a day of it at the WACA witnessing Australia winning the battle, but losing the War (no pun intended) against South Africa not so long ago.

Bart looked resplendent in a moustache that would not have been out of place on a 70's porn star\*!

**\*[Ed: not that any of the staff of the WAURior would know about such matters]**



From the busy desk of Association stalwart David Knight, comes this edition's batch of websites to check out.

[www.defence.gov.au/army/traditions/university.html](http://www.defence.gov.au/army/traditions/university.html)

From this web address you can get all the University Regiment badges in GIF format.

[www.goarmy.com](http://www.goarmy.com)

The web site of the US Army. Includes an overview of their basic training (heavy on the isn't this great fun), profiles of people and developments in the US Army.

[www.schoolfriends.com.au](http://www.schoolfriends.com.au)

Register yourself and where you went to primary and secondary school and University/TAFE/other for contact with people in your classes.

[www.users.aol.com/threatmstr/ptwserg.html](http://www.users.aol.com/threatmstr/ptwserg.html)

Reviews of Russian military equipment, small arms, anti tanks systems, AFV's, engineering equipment and stuff.

[www.winstonchurchill.org](http://www.winstonchurchill.org)

Everything you have always wanted to know about the great British PM and War Leader. His famous "Iron Curtain" speech can be found at:

[www.nationalcenter.org/ChurchillIronCurtain.html](http://www.nationalcenter.org/ChurchillIronCurtain.html)

[www.ulrc.com.au](http://www.ulrc.com.au)

Ever wondered whether that story that you have heard a million times is actually based on fact? Well this is the site for you.

Got any other interesting, unique, weird, odd or strange web sites? Send them to [dsKnight@bigpond.com](mailto:dsKnight@bigpond.com) for consideration in this column,

Thanks, David Knight.

## **Bart Simpson sent in this effort:**

Three peacekeepers in Afghanistan were sitting around a camp fire and discussing the courage of today's military officers. There was a Brit, Yank and an Australian. The Brit began by recalling a heroic soldier in the Balkan's who lost half his guts from a mine, but after having the medic put back what remained and stitching him up, fronted up for parade next day.

The American cited an incident from the Gulf where a US marine was hit in the head by a sniper, lost half his brains, and he too fronted up for parade next day after the medic stitched him up.

The Australian replied saying that such events were common among Australian soldiers. The Brit was amazed and the American asked how is this so? The Australian said we have a place in Canberra called Duntroon. It is full of officers with no brains and no guts and they turn out for parade every day.

**[Ed: don't blame me, I only typeset this crap...]**

**Updates:** The unit history project is steaming along with over 1800 images scanned so far and several old film reels put to VHS tape. Tim Mazzoral handed in 58 photos and 11 rolls of super 8 film which were processed by me, as were Geoff Simpson's officer mess invites - a gold mine of information on the early officer courses, Paul Tubman has completed the mammoth task of scanning the officers mess visitors book from 1955 to 1986, Grant Thompson found a lost WAURior which Mike Jenkin is scanning.

**History Requests:** We have several background projects on the go at the moment. Trevor Arbuckle has tracked down a Glockenspiel banner brought by WAUR in the early 1980's for the band that was part of WAUR back then. The original banner is still with the Army band and pending a official request from WAUR will be handed over to us. (before you ask what the F@#! is a Glockenspiel a future WAURior article will explain all - be patient!!). Grant O'Neil is working on the Unit march Sons of the Brave and Nacht Lager in Grenada which was adopted by WAUR from the Ox Bucks upon affiliation. These will be up on the Website as soon as Grant has worked his magic. Trevor Arbuckle handed in 60 slides which are being scanned by Ray Galliot these will also be up on the Website when available. Viktor Komaromi is putting extracts of the various films we have to play on the Website the technology of which totally mystifies me - however once we solve our Website space problems we should be up and running with clips of past events.

**Website:** Of all our 90 plus members the person who dedicates the most time to the association is Bart Simpson. The Website takes endless hours of his time and we should all appreciate the effort that goes in to it. The members area is up and running - you may have noticed a Simpson innovation - if you scroll over a photo the full name of the photo subject - (if known) - will appear. Now whilst we are good (bloody good in fact) there may be some errors - please if you spot a mistake in name, spelling or any other photo details please E-mail me with the correction. All these extra pages on the Website have used our quota of space. We have made a conscious decision not to go down the path of a sponsored site or one of the "free" Hotmail/Yahoo deals because the price you pay is annoying pop up boxes and junk e-mails. We have matters hopefully in hand and will continue to expand the site rotating photo's so there is always something new to discover.

**Historical Display:** Having been given use of the old OR's Boozer by WAUR, work is starting on a world beating display on WAUR. A master plan is being drawn up at present but to whet your appetite, here are some of features you can expect to find once up and operational: Photo boards from the various eras with A4 size prints from the many scans we have, interspersed with the history of WAUR; Copies of past WAURiors and mess invites; trophies, plaques, banners and flags; Photo albums with hundreds of donated photos from our members; Shop dummies in various uniforms from the different decades; A computer to browse the wealth of scans and hopefully the Website and a TV and video to show historical footage. All this plus information on our sister regiment, The Royal Green Jackets and the current WAUR workings. Also a Library of sorts where members may borrow items to view in their own time which may expand into a mini book exchange as a members service. But wait there's more....Tea / Coffee, Bar Fridge and a pool table - what more could a WAURior ask for!!

Those who have items they wish to loan the Association should contact me ASAP, further down the track a wish list will go out to members to help stock the room, you will be kept posted of all new developments.

**Shaun Chapman**

The Colours are banners awarded by the Monarch to Guards Regiments and Infantry Regiments of the line only. They embody the spirit and tradition of the Regiment to which they belong. Colours are consecrated during presentation and when uncased receive high honours. In earlier times mighty deeds of valour and bravery were done to protect them in battle. The colours were borne in the fore front of the fighting and their presence there was a source of inspiration to all who saw them. In 1879 at the disaster of Isandhlwana during the ZULU Wars two young subalterns fought to the death to save the Colours and for this, brave and heroic stand each officer was awarded, posthumously, the Victoria Cross. The Colours were last carried in Battle at LAINGS NEK in 1881.

Since then have served to inspire and sustain the high ideals and, endeavours of the men of the Regiment to which they belong. Since 1751, Regiments have been allowed two Colours only, the Queen's Colour and the Regimental Colour. The Queen's Colour is a reminder to all ranks of their loyalty and duty to their Sovereign and their Country.

The Regimental Colour is the symbol of Regimental tradition and of the duty owed by each member to the Regiment. Battle Honours are emblazoned on the Regimental Colour. Before the Colours were presented to the Unit, they were be consecrated, blessed and dedicated. This solemn ceremony invested them with the significance and dignity of sacred emblems. Old Colours are never destroyed or stored away, but are laid up in a Cathedral or Church so that their symbolism and associations may be preserved for all time.



**Don't forget that your Association website is up and running! Check out the new Members only section**

**[www.waurassociation.iinet.net.au](http://www.waurassociation.iinet.net.au)**

## **Editor's Note of Deep Regret**

**[This is about as sincere as an apology from me gets]**

**It has been brought to my attention that several of the photographs attributed to Ken Keesing in the last edition of WAURior were in fact made available by Ossie King. As your humble editor, I would like to unreservedly apologise for this unaccountable error and to say, quite sincerely, that if this oversight caused anyone any offence, upset, difficulty, inconvenience or discomfort, distress or concern....tough.**





Unit members enjoy another gourmet creation (?circa 1960's)



This is a retouched print of a shot member Bill Hawthorn sent in. It shows the Unit's 1962 parade at Rottnest Island and has been added to the 1,800 odd scans amassed by our Hon Treasurer, and history buff Shaun "Chook" Chapman.



...Later, in the Sunken Garden, officers and their ladies had the opportunity of meeting Sir Charles Gairdner with a little less formality over afternoon tea.

FOOTNOTE ON THE REGIMENTAL MARCH. *"Sons of the Brave" was selected quite early in the life of the Regiment, but when the Unit was granted affiliation with the Ox. & Bucks, "Nacht Larger in Grenada", their march, was chosen. For some little known reason "Soldiers of the Queen" attracted musically minded ears and patriotic hearts, so that at the time of the Colours parade, this was regarded as our official Regimental quick march. Some time later, officialdom placed down its heavy hand, reminding the Unit of its original choice, and so "Sons of the Brave" was back as the one and only quick march of WAUR. "Nacht Larger in Grenada" and "Soldiers of the Queen" however, must have a place in the Regimental repertoire. The ironic thing is that in actual fact, the regimental March was not played the day we received the Colours!*

Early in June, the Regiment hold its first all-ranks Ball in the Stirling Highway Drill Hall. This was a most pleasant occasion and was highlighted by the arrangement of our new Colours which had been most effectively mounted on the saluting dais used at the Presentation Ceremony. The Colours were brilliantly spot-lit and banks of pot plants grown by our horticultural Regimental Sergeant Major set off the green, gold, scarlet and blue splendidly. In 1959 serious consideration was given by the Government to the advisability of continuing National Service. In Britain it had recently been discontinued, making for an all-Volunteer Regular and Territorial Army. The result was that on 30 June 1960 the obligation for young men serving under the National Service Act would cease with the termination of the Act and the Citizen Military Forces would once again be conducted on a wholly voluntary basis.

Another great change to be seen in these years was the reorganisation to the PENTROPIC scale. This had its basis in the American PENTOMIC structure of five component parts instead of three. The Brigade formation would cease to be and there would emerge five Infantry Battalions to an Infantry Division. This entailed considerable modification to the CMF structure in Western Australia and will be dealt with more fully hereunder. As a result of these changes the Regiment moved into a new home in the heart of the City and new faces came and old faces went.

After the presentation of Queen's and Regimental Colours, the way of life in the Regiment returned to a steady pace of weekend bivouacs and Tuesday night parades. One scheme put forward by the commander of the Assault Pioneer Platoon, Sergeant, later Lt. J.A.E. Oldmeadow, was to aid the Claremont civic authorities to beautify Lake Claremont by removing the dead tree trunks vehicle today still mark the spot. This was to be done by the jolly pioneers practicing their skill at explosive demolition! The plot came to naught, so they carried out another exercise in theoretically demolishing the Railway bridge at the Claremont Subway.

On the social side both Officers' and Sergeants messes held functions from time to time. After a period of command of only twenty-five months Lt. Col. A. McD. Coward relinquished his appointment when his civilian employment called him to the Eastern States and in his stead was posted Major I.G. Medcalf, who assumed the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and command of Western Australian University Regiment with effect from 1st August, 1958.

...Later in the year Captain J.J. Le Tessier returned to the Regiment to command the Mortar Platoon. He had been seconded to Headquarters, 13 Infantry Brigade as Third Grade General Staff Officer (Intelligence) and during this time qualified as an Army parachutist at the School of Land/Air warfare, Williamstown, New South Wales. Major J.R.C. Fisher had been the first member of the Regiment to gain his wings at the School some twenty months earlier. Captain D.H. Wallace was transferred from 5 Field Dressing Station on 1st October to take in duties as Regimental Medical Officer. He replaced Captain J.M. Lubich who had transferred to the Reserve of Officers some seven months previously. Before Christmas of 1958 three new subalterns had gained their Commissions, Lts S.L.G. Morgan, M.J. Dilworth and J.A.E. Oldmeadow.

Camp 1959 was a change from the normal run and an experiment to cut down home training commitments so that University students would have less interruption from their studies. The Camp was of 3 weeks' duration, but most unfortunately coincided with some very hot weather and an outbreak of an old Army ailment URTI! This infection of the upper respiratory tract struck a heavy blow, particularly against the commander of the Support Company Major S.B. Blanchard who marched his men down to the hospital for a check up and returned somewhat bewildered with mere healthy soldiers. The RMO, Captain Wallace, decided that, to combat the outbreak, a gargle of a weak solution of permanganate of potash would do wonders for sore throats. It did! Unfortunately the dispenser made the brew stronger than the average footbath. The officers were lined up in front of the troops to give a demonstration of how to gargle and still keep the last meal in its proper place. This caused much mirth to the soldiery, until their turn came to gargle. At least the officers mess had something to kill the taste afterwards and following two or three days stoicism a gentleman's agreement was made with the Doctor which enabled the troops to taste a weaker solution and the Officers, neat Scotch (at their own expense!)

As was earlier mentioned, the Camp lasted three weeks, which accounted for a certain amount of home sickness on some peoples part, but it was the commanding Officers Batman who came to learn that crime (AWOL type) does not pay. He had selected a line of escape from Camp which unwittingly took him into an area where the Assault Pioneer Platoon was engaged in demolition practice. As Lt. Oldmeadow was very enthusiastic in his work he produced some very big bangs - just at the time when our cardboard hero came on the scene. The runaway hastily re-appreciated his situation and for some time, the story goes, was convinced that the CO was "on to him" and was having him mortared.' The mortar platoon, in actual fact, did not fire High explosive in camp but came down to Swanbourne Rifle range to fire. In this, expert help was given by Sergeant Hagan of the Special Air Service mortar Platoon.

During the period of Camp Major Blanchard's share of ill-health was complicated by pneumonia which demanded his evacuation to Hollywood Repatriation General Hospital and he returned only for the last day or two of Camp and then transferred to the reserve of Officers on the 18th March. On 5 March between 0900 hours and noon the first swimming Carnival was conducted in the new Northam Olympic swimming Pool. No spectacular results were obtained and only two or three photographs of the occasion exist, but those present will probably remember the wit the commentator (...why eat at "B" Company's kitchen, come to "A" Company, fifty thousand flies can't be wrong...) and the "Joe Brown" type commentary on some of the races by another member...

...The position of senior Major in the Regiment, now vacated by Major Blanchard was filled on 16 April when Major R. N. Walker was appointed as Second in Command of the Unit. Major Walker was to see some old familiar faces, for he had been a member of the Officer Cadet Training Unit Cadre instructing at the former depot in 1951-53.

During 1959 two more members were commissioned, they were Lieutenants N. Zorbas and John R. Marum. As in previous years, weekend bivouacs were held. At one the Band came out to the Avon Valley site to play to the lads and participate in a barbecue. In February 1960 Lt. K.B. Keesing was commissioned, he was to continue serving with the Regiment for a further six years until transferred to the Royal Western Australia Regiment in February 1960.

The 1960 Camp was at a later period of the year than was usual with the regiment. The first quarter of the year had always been, and still continues to be, the most suitable time in order that no clash occurs with University tuition, and that the vacation period also allows for some members to help with pre-Camp preparation. Because of the forthcoming reorganisation of the Australian Army, the dates were changed to 21 May - 5 June and was one of the best attended despite the news that no disciplinary action would be taken against absentees in view of the forthcoming: termination of National Service.

Records for the Camp indicate that 528 all ranks, Regular Army and Citizen Military Force members attended. This was certainly the last CMF camp in Western Australia when National Servicemen honouring their obligation under the Act attended. It is probable, but not confirmed, that this was also the last National Service Camp in the Commonwealth, though further investigation is needed to confirm this. For training, all rank and file formed a "Composite Company" under Captain J.F. Hoare, with Signals, mortar and machine gun elements from the old Support Company. Additional Regular Army Warrant Officer Instructors were available for limited use to assist training, they were WOs Class II D.J. Martin, A.V. Tomkins and R.A. Brandy. WO C. Curtis continued to render wit and assistance in the matter of orderly room procedure.

A number of officers were in Camp with us at this time. Captain Driscoll of the Royal Australian Army Pay Corps (CMF) was attached to advise on pay and assist the Camp Paymaster, Captain B.J. Silbert. (To relieve his mind of those heavy matters, he also assisted in the gathering of mushrooms for the Officers mess formal dinner). On Sundays Chaplain 4th Class J.P. Kirby (C of E) conducted Church Parades and Chaplain 4th Class J.P. Chauncey (RC) was present for the whole Camp. This officer became known by the sobriquet "The Mad Monk" for his enthusiastic participation in Mess joviality's. We were restricted in the matter of medical advice to Doctor J.M. Formby present from 29-31 May and Captain J.A. Hill for 1-2 June.

The Citizen military Forces Member of The Military Board, Major General I. Dougherty visited the Regiment on 26 May and two days later the team chosen to compete in the R.S.S. & A.I.L.A. rifle shoot conducted the practices on the rifle range.

**TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT EDITION OF WAURior....**

## **Acknowledgment**

*Set out below is Part 1 of an account of the Royal Green Jackets involvement with a Glider assault on the Benouville (Pegasus) and Ranville bridges as part of the D-Day assault. The text and photos were provided by Keith Stevens the Editor of the 'Green Machine', The Royal Green Jackets Association Online magazine. The Text itself was put together by "The Rifleman". Some minor editing and presentation changes have been made. The WAUR Association Inc. would like to thank Keith and "The Rifleman" for providing us with such a vivid and entertaining account of this remarkable event.*

## **Introduction**

*On D-Day, 6 June 1944, the greatest combined assault landing of World War 2 took place in Normandy, France. The British Canadian campaign from D-Day to meeting the Russians and the German surrender was divided into four phases.*

- 1. June/July 44-The Landing and Bridgehead battles.*
- 2. July/August 44-The advance to the River Seine and Paris.*
- 3. August 44-March '45-Belgium, Holland and the advance to the River Rhine*
- 4. March/May 45-Rhine crossing and advance to the Baltic Sea.*

*Green Jacket battalions, 43rd, 52nd, 1 BUCKS, 2KRRC, 12 KRRC, 1RB and 8RB were in action in each phase. In this article we tell the story of the 52nd an Airborne battalion which landed in gliders some hours prior to any other Allied Forces setting foot on French soil. It is remarkable that in June of '42 this battalion started it's training for the role it was to undertake in two years time. Alamein, some say the turning point of the war, was in October some months away. The Divisional Commander had issued an order in June '42 "that a very high physical, mental and moral standard was to be inculcated and those unable to reach this standard were to be posted elsewhere". It is easy to understand that from standards such as these how finely tuned they must have been for their tasks on the night of 5/6 June '44.*

## **The Rifleman**

## **THE PLAN AND ORDERS FOR D DAY**

On the 24th February 1944, the 6th Airborne Division was placed under command of I Corps for the operation. The I Corps plan was to land two assault divisions (3rd Canadian Infantry Division and the 3rd British Infantry Division) between Craye-sur-Mer and Ouistreham, and the task given to the 6th Airborne Division was as follows:

### **Primary Tasks**

- (i) The capture of the bridges (intact if possible) at Benouville and Ranville and the establishment of bridgeheads on each side of the obstacle.*
- (ii) The destruction or neutralising of the battery position south of Merville by civil twilight minus 30 minutes.*

### **Secondary Tasks**

As soon as resources permitted, but without prejudice to the success of the primary task, to develop the operation east of the River Orne in order to:

- (i) Mop up and secure the area between the Rivers Orne and Dives, north of the road Troarn- Sannerville-Colombelles.*
- (ii) Having secured a firm base east of the River Orne, operate offensively to delay any reserves attempting to move towards the covering position from the east and south-east.*



In order to assist the division in carrying out this task, the 1st Special Service Brigade was to be placed under command of the 6th Airborne Division after it had landed by sea. Initially the task of seizing the bridges at Benouville (over the Caen Canal) and at Ranville (over the River Orne), which required a rapid concentration of effort if they were to be seized intact, was allotted to the 6th Airlanding Brigade; moreover, the defensive nature of the task of holding the bridgehead would be better carried out by airlanding battalions with their heavier armament, whilst the more dispersed tasks towards the east were allotted to the 3rd Parachute Brigade. The 5th Parachute Brigade was to be brought in on a second lift of aircraft. Air photographs received in mid-April, however, disclosed that the Germans were obstructing all available glider-landing areas with poles. The plan had therefore to be adjusted and parachute troops landed before the main glider force in order to remove sufficient of the obstructions to make the landing of gliders a reasonably safe proposition. The assault on the bridges was allotted to the 5th Parachute Brigade, under whose command a small glider-borne coup-de-main force was placed for this purpose. This coup-de-main force was composed of D Company and two platoons of B Company of the 52nd, with a detachment of Royal Engineers.

Besides the capture of these two bridges the 5th Parachute Brigade was ordered to:

- (a) Secure and hold the area Benouville-Ranville-Le Bas de Ranville.
- (b) Capture or neutralise the battery east of St. Aubind'Arquenay.
- (c) Clear obstructions from the glider-landing zones north of Ranville.

The 3rd Parachute Brigade was ordered to:

- (a) Silence the enemy battery south of Merville one and a half hours before the first landing craft was due to beach.
- (b) Demolish a series of bridges from Troarn to Varaville.
- (c) On completion of the above, to take up a position on the high ground north of Troarn to Le Plein to deny the enemy the use of the roads from the east to the Ranville area.

The 6th Airlanding Brigade (less the 12th Devons and the coup-de-main party) were to land at 2100 hrs on the 6th June in landing zones N (north of Ranville) and W (east of the Caen Canal north of Benouville) with the task of occupying and holding the area Longueval-Ste Honorine-Escoville-Le Bas de-Ranville, in order to deny to the enemy the southern and eastern approaches to the river and canal crossings at Ranville and Benouville, and to provide a firm base from which the 6th Airborne Division could operate offensively in the area between Rivers Orne and Dives. In order to carry out this task 1st Royal Ulster Rifles were to land on landing zone N, and concentrate and on orders from brigade headquarters to seize and hold the area Longueval-Ste Honorine. One parachute battalion the 5<sup>th</sup> Parachute Brigade in the area south of Le Bas Ranville to come under command of the 6<sup>th</sup> Airlanding Brigade until relieved by the 12th Devons (by sea) on D plus 1. The 52nd were to land on landing zone W, concentrate and then move forward on orders from brigade headquarters via Benouville and Ranville to occupy Escoville, the coup-de-main party having rejoined in the concentration area. The divisional air plan was as follows:

- (a) 0020 hrs, 6TH JUNE: Pathfinders on all dropping zones. Coup-de-main party (three gliders on each bridge). Advance parties of parachute brigades.
- (b) 0050 hrs, 6TH JUNE: 3rd and 5th Parachute Brigades.
- (c) 0320 hrs, 6TH JUNE: Divisional headquarters. 4th Anti-Tank Battery, R.A.

(d) 0430 hrs, 6TH JUNE: Three gliders to land on battery south of Merville.

(e) 2100 hrs., 6TH JUNE: Headquarters, 6th Airlanding Brigade. 52nd (less coup-de-main party). 1st Royal Ulster Rifles. 211th Light Battery, R.A. Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment.

## PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR THE OPERATION

The canal bridge at Benouville was thought to be held by a garrison of about one platoon occupying well sited and constructed positions which included at least one pillbox, a flak tower, entrenchments, wire and possibly mines. The improvement of these defences progressed rapidly as the date of D Day approached and it was possible to watch the various improvements through the frequent and excellent photographic cover. Included in the improvements was the clearance of fields of fire; a Nissen-type hut was removed from the south side of the road early in May and a two-storeyed cottage overlooking the canal north of the road vanished two weeks before D Day. It appeared also that the wire was being thickened. The bridge over the river appeared to be defended by entrenchments only, and from the lack of activity visible in the photographs it was thought that this would not be defended in strength. In spite of these preparations there could be no doubt that with the forces available the bridges could be secured. The problem was to prevent their destruction during the capture. It was known that both bridges were prepared for demolition. The ground west of the canal and east of the river was very suitable for parachute landings. It would also have been suitable for glider landings but for the obstructing poles-Rommel's asparagus-which had been put up to prevent such an attempt. The ground between the river and the canal consisted of grass fields surrounded by hedges and usually marshy. There were only two possible glider landing places in this area: an oblong field close to the river bridge, and a triangular patch leading up to the canal. Both these landing places were extremely small and only adequate for three or four gliders. The German forces likely to be engaged consisted of the 736th Infantry Regiment; miscellaneous troops were thought to garrison Ranville, but there was little information about their strength. Various posts on the northern outskirts of the village were known to be in use and thought to be garrisoned from the 736th Regiment. The 21st Panzer Division moved to the neighbourhood of Caen during May, and this city in addition had a miscellaneous garrison of local defence troops estimated at two battalions.

In addition to the troops in static defences in the neighbourhood of the bridges and in Ranville it was thought that counterattack would first develop from the reserve battalion of the 736th Regiment. Counter-attacks were to be expected on the scale of battle groups consisting of one company of infantry with perhaps a few tanks and self-propelled guns. It was thought that the 736th Regiment was too much committed to its coast defence role to counter-attack on a larger scale. Strong fighting patrols were all that the Caen garrison were thought likely to send north. It was estimated that no appreciable force would be committed from the 21st Panzer Division until reconnaissance had taken place and the general situation in the Caen sector clarified. An armoured attack was therefore not expected until three hours after first light at the earliest. If the bridges already prepared for demolition were to be secured intact, speed in the assault must obviously be a vital feature of the plan. This could best be achieved by landing glider-borne troops close beside the bridges and to rush the bridges in the form of a coup de main. The force considered necessary to secure the bridges in this manner was two platoons for each bridge. A further two platoons would provide insurance against non-arrival of or other mishap to any of the gliders.

It was agreed by the air officer commanding No.38 Group, R.A.F., that this number of gliders could safely be landed in the space available and without previously placed ground navigational aids. Although six platoons referred to above would be sufficient to secure the bridges, it was clear that they would not be able to hold their own against determined counter-attack. It was important, therefore, to land the main force as soon as possible afterwards. This force had to be a parachute force because of the anti-airlanding poles. Navigational aids would be required to bring them in, and the independent parachute company would need a minimum of half an hour to set them up. If, therefore, its detachments came down at the same time as the coup-de-main party the main force could be brought in half an hour later.



**The capture of Benouville and Ranville Bridges by D Company and two platoons of B company, 52nd, in the early morning of the 6th June, 1944**

As has been stated, armoured counter-attack was expected three hours after first light. It was essential, therefore, that gliders carrying the anti-tank guns should arrive before first light. To allow the safe landing of these gliders, strips would have to be cleared of poles by the parachute troops. The gliders thought necessary numbered seventy-two, which carried, in addition to the anti-tank guns, wireless sets and jeeps for the brigade. Advanced divisional headquarters was also included. It was estimated that two hours would be needed for the clearing of these landing strips.

## THE WONDERFUL AIR OF DAWN

A few minutes after one o'clock in the morning of June 6th, 1944, Monsieur Georges Gondrée, a Norman innkeeper, was awakened by his wife. "At that time we slept", he explained, "in separate rooms, not because we wanted to, but because that was the best way of preventing German troops from being billeted on us". She said to me, "Get up. Don't you hear what's happening? Open the window." I was sleepy and it took me some little time to grasp what she meant. She repeated, "Get up. Listen. It sounds like wood breaking." I opened the window and looked out! The window which Gondrée opened was on the first floor of a café on the outskirts of Benouville. It is situated a few yards from the western end of the steel swing-bridge which there crosses the Canal de Caen and which by decree of the French Government will always be known as 'Pegasus Bridge.' "It was moonlight," he continued, "but I could see nothing, though I did hear snapping and crunching sounds." A German sentry was standing at the bridgehead a few yards away and Gondrée, whose wife is an Alsatian and speaks excellent German, suggested that she should ask him what was happening. She leant out of the window and did so, while her husband observed his face, clearly visible in the moonlight. His features were working, his eyes wide with fear. For a moment he did not speak, and 'I then saw that he was literally struck dumb by terror. At last he stammered out the one word "Parachutists!" "What a pity", said the wife to her husband. "Those English lads will be captured", for they both thought at that moment that what the sentry had seen was the crew of a bomber baling out.

Almost immediately firing broke out and tracers began to flash across the night sky. Having two small children, the Gondrées took refuge in the cellar, where they remained for some time listening to the spasmodic sounds of battle outside. Presently there was a knock on the front door and a voice in German called on them to leave the café and walk in front of German troops. This German version of 'Dilly dally, come and be killed,' did not appeal to them and they remained where they were until Madame Gondrée, clad only in her nightdress and shivering with cold, urged her husband to go up and see what was happening. Gondrée did so. "I am not a brave man", he said, "and I did not want to be shot, so I went upstairs on all fours and crawled to the first-floor window. There I heard talk outside, but could not distinguish the words, so I pushed open the window and peeped out cautiously...I saw in front of the café two soldiers sitting near my petrol pump with a corpse between them." Somewhat unnerved by this sight, Gondrée could not clearly understand the reply of the soldiers to his hail in French, but he thought one of them said: "Armée de l'air", and the other: "English.flieger". "I still thought", his account goes on, "that they belonged to the crew of a crashed bomber, but I was worried by the clothes that they had on and also by the fact that they seemed to be wearing black masks". This was scarcely reassuring, but the innkeeper, mindful of the danger in which he and his family appeared to stand, determined to continue his investigations. He went to another window, this one giving on to the canal bank which runs at right angles to the road crossing the bridge. Peering out he saw two more soldiers who "lifted their weapons and pointed them at me". By then there was a number of flares burning in the sky, so that I could see quite plainly. One of the soldiers said to me, "Vous civile?" I replied "Oui, oui" and added something else which I can't remember. The soldier answered, "Vous civile?" and after a moment I realised that these were the only words of French he knew. I was for twelve years a bank clerk in Lloyds Bank in Paris and I therefore speak good English, but I did not wish to let that fact be known at that moment, for I was not sure who they were. One of them then put his finger to his lips and gestured with his hands to indicate that I should close the shutter. This I did and went back to the cellar. Nothing more happened for some time till the Gondrées heard sounds of digging in their vegetable garden outside. They looked through a hole in the cellar and 'there was the wonderful air of dawn coming up over the land.' Vague figures were moving about. They seemed peaceful enough, and to Gondrée's astonishment 'I could hear no guttural orders, which I always associated with a German working party. I turned to my wife and said: "Ils ne gueulent pas comme d'habitude." The light grew stronger and I began to have serious doubts whether the people I could see were in fact the crew of a bomber; their behaviour seemed to me to be very strange. I told my wife to go to the hole in the cellar, listen and tell me if they were speaking German. She did so and presently said that she could not understand what they were saying. Then I in my turn listened, and my heart began to beat quicker, for I thought I heard the words "all right". "Presently there were further sounds of knocking, and this time Gondrée opened the door to be confronted by two men with coal-black faces. He then realised that it was paint, not masks, which they were wearing. They inquired in French whether there were any Germans in the house. He answered 'No' and brought them into the bar and thence, with some reluctance on their part, which he overcame by smiles and gestures, to the cellar. Arrived there, he pointed to his wife and two children. 'For a moment there was silence; then one soldier turned to the other and said: "It's all right, chum." At last I knew they were English and burst into tears. Madame Gondrée and the children at once kissed the soldiers and as a result were immediately covered with black camouflage paint. "Monsieur and Madame Gondrée were, in all probability, the first French civilians to see British airborne troops, harbingers of freedom and victory, when they landed by parachute and from gliders on the morning of the Allied invasion of Europe."



I SAW A KID MARCHIN' WITH MEDALS ON HIS CHEST.  
HE MARCHED ALONGSIDE DIGGERS MARCHIN SIX ABREAST.  
HE KNEW IT WAS ANZAC DAY – HE WALKED ALONG WITH PRIDE.  
HE DID HIS BEST TO KEEP IN STEP WITH THE DIGGERS BY HIS SIDE.

AND WHEN THE MARCH WAS OVER THE KID WAS RATHER TIRED.  
A DIGGER SAID “WHOSE MEDALS SON?” TO WHICH THE KID REPLIED:  
“THEY BELONG TO MY DADDY BUT HE DID NOT COME BACK  
HE DIED UP IN NEW GUINEA ON A LONELY JUNGLE TRACK”.

THE KID LOOKED RATHER SAD THEN A TEAR CAME TO HIS EYE.  
THE DIGGER SAID “DON'T CRY MY SON AND I WILL TELL YOU WHY,  
YOUR DADDY MARCHED WITH US TODAY – ALL THE BLOOMIN WAY.  
WE DIGGERS KNOW THAT HE WAS THERE – IT'S LIKE THAT ON ANZAC DAY.”

THE KID LOOKED RATHER PUZZLED AND DIDN'T UNDERSTAND  
BUT THE DIGGER WENT ON TALKING AND STARTED TO WAVE HIS HAND.  
“FOR THIS GREAT LAND WE LIVE IN, THERE'S A PRICE WE HAVE TO PAY.  
AND FOR THIS THING CALLED FREEDOM, THE DIGGERS HAD TO PAY.”

FOR WE ALL LOVE FUN AND MERRIMENT IN THIS COUNTRY WHERE WE LIVE,  
THE PRICE WAS THAT SOME SOLDIERS HIS PRECIOUS LIFE MUST GIVE.  
FOR YOU TO GO TO SCHOOL MY LAD AND WORSHIP GOD AT WILL  
SOMEONE HAD TO PAY THE PRICE SO THE DIGGERS PAID THE BILL.

YOUR DADDY DIED FOR US MY SON – FOR ALL THINGS GOOD AND TRUE,  
I WONDER IF YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THE THINGS I'VE SAID TO YOU.”  
THE KID LOOKED UP AT THE DIGGER – JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE,  
AND WITH A CHANGED EXPRESSION, SAID, WITH A LOVELY SMILE:

“I KNOW MY DADDY MARCHED HERE TODAY – THIS, OUR ANZAC DAY,  
I KNOW HE DID – I KNOW HE DID – ALL THE BLOOMING WAY “

**LEST WE FORGET**

The following letter was sent to the Premier recently. The Association is totally apolitical and does not generally make comments on matters in the public domain. However, your Committee felt that this was an important issue on which all members would agree. For that reason, it was decided that on this occasion, a letter was appropriate.

Hon Dr G I Gallop MLA  
24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
197 St Georges Terrace  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Premier

**ANZAC DAY**

In response to recent comments attributed to you concerning ANZAC Day, and in particular mooted proposals to replace Australia Day with ANZAC Day, the members of the Western Australian University Regiment Association Inc. wish to express their deep concern at any proposed changes.

In the Association's view, ANZAC Day is not, fundamentally, a day of national celebration. Rather, it is quite properly, a day of remembrance. A day to commemorate sacrifice of the highest order. This important reality must not be diluted by association with some other more general theme.

If ANZAC Day does bring Australians together and causes them to pause and reflect on what it means to be Australian, then this is to be supported and encouraged, but it is not the reason for the day. ANZAC Day stands alone in its National importance. It should be left alone.

ANZAC Day is not "Australia's" day. It is a day for soldiers fallen and remaining, past and present, Australian and New Zealand. It is a day which members of the public are privileged, and should be proud, to participate in.

The Association urges you to reconsider your comments Premier and to have due regard for ANZAC Day and what it stands for.

Yours faithfully

John Kargotich  
**Chairman**

Shaun Chapman  
**Treasurer**

Michael Jenkin  
**Secretary**

June 2002

# USI Dinner – Bruce Ruxton

The USI asked us to run this flyer

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The President and Members of the

**ROYAL UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE of W.A.  
for Defence Studies**

**INVITE YOU TO DINNER**  
and

TO HEAR A FAREWELL ADDRESS BY

**Mr Bruce Ruxton AM OBE**

Retiring President Victorian Branch of the Returned & Services League  
at the

**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION CLUB**  
Bull Creek Drive, BULL CREEK

6:30 pm for Dinner at 7:00 pm followed by the address at 8:00 pm  
on THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2002

**TICKETS :- \$28 each**  
**(includes pre-dinner drinks, 2 course dinner, table wines and/or squash)**

Mrs Joan Dowson MBE OAM

Convenor

3 Bay View Terrace, Mosman Park

Tel: 9384 6712

Commander Otto Pelczar RFD RD (retd)

Secretary RUSI of WA

Tel: 9311 2429 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Tues & Thursdays

E-mail: [otto.pelczar@defence.gov.au](mailto:otto.pelczar@defence.gov.au)

THE RAAFA AVIATION MUSEUM. As a special concession the museum, which adjoins the Club, will be open from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm so that guests may visit this superb facility before Dinner (free entry by courtesy of the RAAFA). Please have your Dinner tickets available.

TRANSPORT. It is suggested that guests may wish to avail themselves of a service provided by Swan Taxis. This company will pick up, up to 8 guests in close vicinity to each other and only charge one and a half the total mileage fare which can then be divided amongst all the passengers.

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**APPLICATION for TICKETS for RUSI DINNER 20<sup>th</sup> June 2002**  
(submit by 13<sup>th</sup> June 2002 please)

TO: Mrs Joan Dowson MBE OAM

Convenor

3 Bay View Terrace, MOSMAN PARK 6012

I wish to apply for \_\_\_\_\_ tickets at \$28 each and enclose \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_





YOUR  
CONTRIBUTION  
HERE