

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

RAEME Association Queensland members – welcome to Edition 3/17 of Spanner News, the last edition for 2017, in RAEME's 75th Anniversary Year 1942 -2017.

2017 rolls on and the members of the RAQ have enthusiastically and proudly participated in all of our activities to date. I recently had the pleasure of attending the RAEME Reserve Reunion and met many RAEME Reserve diehards. It was a great turn out and my only disappointment was that John Parfitt, and his lovely wife, Lyn, were suffering ill health from the Flu epidemic, and could not be there. It was a "Great Afternoon", and may I offer my congratulations to the organisers, who were clearly pleased with the numbers in attendance – some 90 people. It was a most enjoyable event.

I would also like to commend the convenors and venues for both the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast Lunches. Two different formats, the Gold Coast very relaxed at the Mermaid Beach (AEME) SLSC, and the Sunshine Coast, which was a little more formal at the Maroochy RSL. Both activities were well attended and good value for Financial Members – the RAQ and RAEME Corps Fund footing some of the expenses for financial members.

Our Annual Luncheon is drawing close and will be held on Sunday 5 November. I hope that you and your partner can attend the lunch at the Port Office Hotel Restaurant where the hospitality and food are always excellent – this is "Top Notch" venue. As the final

activity for the RAQ for 2017, this will be an excellent occasion and financial members, plus one other, will once again receive a discount. The RAEME Corps Fund will also cover some costs. Please go to the RAQ Website and register for the function – tables are filling fast.

Again, the success of our association is due simply to your participation – our dedicated committee and function convenors will do all they can to make everything fall into place, but nothing succeeds without you the RAQ membership being a part of our activities.

All the best to you and your families for the forthcoming holiday season, and I look forward to serving you again in 2018 as your Chairman.

Best wishes,

Jeff Maurice
Chairman RAQ
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chairman@qld.raeme.org.au



FROM THE COL COMDT

Greetings everyone. Off the back of Exercise Talisman Sabre many of you have no doubt received your next posting order and so are in the midst of preparing for the next step in your career. Now would be a good time to reflect on your achievements during your current posting, not to mention, the experiences and the friends that you have made. Take all the good lessons that you have learned into your new posting and your new unit will be all the better for it. No two jobs are the same, that is the beauty of the Army and the diversity in your jobs will continue to be fulfilling and highly rewarding.

As we move towards the end of our 75th Anniversary year, I wish to thank all of you in QLD who have made it a truly memorable year. Since the last newsletter in July, I have attended two RAEME functions: the NQ RAEME celebrations co-hosted by 102 Fd Wksp and the NQ RAEME Association in Townsville in August. Over 150 local RAEME people attended, and I wish to thank MAJ Michael Fry, formerly OC 102 Fd Wksp, and his team for organising the events and looking after me. The second event which I attended was the CMF/RAEME Reserve annual reunion at the Sherwood RSL in Brisbane. Another successful day with a record crowd in attendance. Again, I wish to thank the organisers for their hard work.

I also wish to say what a privilege it was for me and our REP COL COMDT, BRIG McGahey, to be able to present medals to Mr Robert Fry recently. Robert had never formerly acquired, nor had he been presented with, his Anniversary of National Service Medal and Australian Defence Medal. Somewhat belatedly, we formally presented them to Robert, with his family present. It was a pleasure to do so and it was great day for Robert and his family.



***Mr Robert Fry following presentation of his medals by
COL Borg***

Arte et Marte,

Tony Borg
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INTRODUCING THE NEW HEAD OF CORPS – BRIG ANDREW FREEMAN, DG LAND/ARMY G3

Brigadier Freeman was born on the 5th December 1967 in Rockhampton, Queensland. He attended Yeppoon State High School before enlisting in the Australian Army on the 7th January 1985 as an Electrical Fitter Apprentice. On completion of his apprenticeship he attended the Royal Military College Duntroon in 1990. Upon graduating to the Corps of Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1991, he attended Long Term School in the UK studying Aircraft Engineering.

Over the past 32 years Brigadier Freeman has gained extensive command, operations, personnel management, logistics, Army Aviation and staff work experience, having been appointed as Deputy Assistant

Adjutant Quartermaster (DQ) Headquarters 3rd Brigade, Staff Officer Grade One Logistics Headquarters 16th Aviation Brigade, Commanding Officer of the 3rd Combat Service Support Battalion, MA to Commander 1st Division, Director of Logistics – Army (Army G4), Director General Land (Army G3) and will assume command of 17 Combat Service Support Brigade in October 2017.



Operationally Brigadier Freeman deployed to Kuwait in 1999 with the 101st Airborne Division, East Timor in 2001/2 as a Commander of an Aviation Workshop Detachment, to Iraq in 2007/8 with the British Army as the Staff Officer Grade One Plans on their Divisional Headquarters (Basra), and to Afghanistan in 2014 for 12 months as the CJ4 Director at NATO Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan. Brigadier Freeman was awarded a Commendation for Distinguished Service in the 2016 Australia Day Honours and Awards for his contribution to the NATO's Special Operations Command in Afghanistan.

Academically Brigadier Freeman is an Aircraft Engineer having studied at the School of Aeronautical Engineering – UK (1992), has a Bachelor of Social Science Degree from Southern Cross University (1998), has attended the Australian Command and Staff College (2003) and the Centre for Defence Studies (2015) achieving Masters Degrees in Defence Studies from the University of Canberra, and in Strategic Studies from Deakin University.

Brigadier Freeman is married to Jane, who is a very supportive and an understanding wife, and they have four children; identical twin girls Stephanie and Jenna (21) and two boys Ben (19) and Sam (15). Brigadier Freeman's interests include maintaining a high level of fitness, fishing, golf and socialising.

HEAD OF CORPS NEWS

Address to the RAEME 75th Anniversary Memorial Service - 11th August 2017. The following edited speech was delivered by BRIG Ed Smeaton, DG Land Vehicle Systems, LSD, CASG, on behalf of the HOC, BRIG Andrew Freeman, at ASEME, Bandiana, on 11 August to commemorate the service of those that have gone before us, and launch the national celebrations of the 7th Anniversary of the establishment of RAEME.

"Welcome to this milestone occasion as we officially launch the Corps 75th Jubilee celebrations. As we gather with members past and present, along with friends and supporters of the Corps, we can be immensely proud of the foundation that has been laid in the preceding three quarters of a century and be truly excited about the opportunities that lie ahead."

It is fitting that we gather here on the lawns of the Craftsman Memorial, Bandiana, a poignant reminder that people are the fabric of our Corps, and of the sacrifices many of our ranks have made. The theme for our 75th Anniversary is, "Reflecting on the past to maintain the future".



BRIG Smeaton addresses the gathering as the Corps RSM, the ASEME Padre and VTW WSM look on.

RAEME was formed during a time of war and was born out of necessity. Tradesman and artificers have been an essential component of Australian forces since the Boer war, serving initially as blacksmiths, armorers and

soldiers. During the First World War, these trades expanded to include motor mechanics and electricians. However, it was the increasing logistical and organisational demands faced during World War 2 that saw the Corps of Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, or AEME, raised on 1st December 1942. At the time, some 43 trades were transferred into the new Corps.

Many AEME units saw service in the New Guinea and South West Pacific Campaigns. Against a backdrop of appalling conditions, fatigue, disease and enemy action the Corps reputation for ingenuity and tenacity were cemented. As Sergeant Doug Brazier of the 113th Field Workshops serving in New Guinea explains, "we had two enemies, the Japanese and the environment. Heat and humidity sapped your energy and promoted disease, while torrential rain greatly impeded work. The 113th Field Workshops were required to counter Japanese infiltration and maintain their own security and on many occasions unit personnel came into contact with "the enemy". For these reasons the importance of both technical skill and military proficiency has always been a bedrock of the Corps - and it is this careful blend of soldier and tradesman that continues to set us apart.



LT Woods, WO2 Roberts and SGT Bosselman with the Prince Phillip Banner

From those early days, women from the Australian Women's Army Service, joined the ranks of AEME and saw service in operational areas such as Lae in PNG. This inclusiveness and a willingness to be guided by trade skills, competence and an individual's contribution to the team continue to be a strength of the Corps and have built the diverse group of people that represents the Corps today.

Over this time, the Corps has evolved and adapted, through successive wars, including, Korea, Vietnam and the modern conflicts of Iraq and Afghanistan. While many of the foundations are enduring, the Corps has morphed to meet the changing demands of technology and the nature of war. Just as we no longer have typewriter mechanics, vulcanisers or saddlers, the Corps of tomorrow will not be the Corps as we currently know it.

Modernisation has been a perennial challenge RAEME has faced. Machine replacing horse, artillery replacing cannon, digitised replacing analogue. Over the next 25 years this will be no different and there will be substantial changes to our trades and maintenance practices to keep in step with new systems and equipment introduced into Army. To add to this complexity there will likely be a need to maintain legacy fleets. As Director General EME, Brigadier A.D. Powell, wrote in edition 1 of the 1978 Craftsman, 'No matter how successful are the planners, it will always be fact that the larger part of the inventory will be made up of old and used, often well-used, equipment. RAEME must span this technological gap – like the Colossus of Rhodes we must place one foot in the camp of the new whilst retaining the other firmly in the old'. This observation still is true 39 years on.



**L to R: CO RAMS - LTCOL Nelson, CSM, DGLMS -
BRIG Smeaton, CO ASEME - LTCOL Bouloukos,
CSM**

In order to address this modernisation challenge, your Head of Corps would like to offer three conceptual pillars that will generate discussion for the basis of our adaptation for the next 25 years - A Unified Maintenance Concept, Professional Military Education and Reform and Reassessment of RAEME base trades. How these pillars are developed and taken into the next two decades is not yet defined. This is because we do not have all the answers and we rely on you as

members of the Corps to collectively develop the path towards the future. I will pose a number of questions to you that the Head of Corps would like you to consider over the next twelve months. I encourage you not to limit your thoughts but instead use these themes as a basis for and meaningful discussion.

A Unified Maintenance Concept addresses the reality that our maintenance responsibility is shared with civilians. BRIG Martins who was the fifth Head of Corps, noted that civilians constituted over 40% of the Commonwealth EME elements at the end of World War Two. Civilians repairing military equipment is not a new concept, but the formations and organisation under which they are employed may have changed. One of the key questions under this pillar that we need to address is who should do our maintenance and where the maintenance should be done. What functions must be performed by a uniformed tradesman with the survivability skills to provide repair and recovery support in combat and what functions could be provided through other means. If we understand and define what our roles and responsibilities are under a Unified Maintenance Concept, this will guide a strong foundation for the following two pillars of Professional Military Education and the Reform and Reassessment of the RAEME base trades.



The cutting of the RAEME Birthday cake

Professional Military Education is an important facet and ensures our Corps remains current and relevant. It is an ongoing process that needs to be embedded as part of the professional development for both officers

and soldiers. For many of you, your current attendance at ASEME or ASLO is the start of this journey.

The final pillar is Reform and Reassessment of the RAEME base trades. The considerations under this pillar directly relate to the changing nature of the equipment that will be introduced to Army over the next 25 years. In order to support the introduction of these new capabilities a detailed and systematic analysis of future workforce requirements is essential. This analysis will inform the skills, qualifications and experience required to provide effective maintenance support. We, as Corps members, need to be open in our thinking, not be bound by current paradigms and develop a unified direction for the future of the Corps.

Over the last 75 years our Corps has demonstrated that we are able to adapt to meet the needs of Army. In our current state, we are fortunate to have the focus and resourcing for continuous improvement through activities such as Plans Pelican and Centaur. However, these alone will not be enough to drive the change required in the coming decades. By embracing the three conceptual pillars of Unified Maintenance, Professional Military Education and Reform and Reassessment of RAEME Base Trades, proposed by your Head of Corps we will develop a Corps with soldiers and officers that are prepared and skilled to embrace the challenges that lie ahead.

I encourage you to think about how you can contribute to the Corps. Reflect on the past to maintain the future, that is the theme for our 75th Jubilee celebrations and I challenge you to understand our past, the lessons learned and consider how you would develop a pathway to take RAEME into the next 25 years. Importantly too enjoy the opportunity too, be a part of this milestone year for the Corps.

With Skill and Fighting: Arte et Marte."

**BRIG Ed Smeaton
DGLMS CASG
On behalf of the Head of Corps
BRIG Andrew Freeman**

MEMBERSHIP/TREASURER'S REPORT

Firstly, I'd like to welcome a new Assistant Treasurer, Mr Kingsley Pocock. Kingsley enlisted in the Army Reserve as a RAEME soldier on 24 September 1987 and was posted to Brisbane Water Transport Unit, later 34 Water Transport Squadron. In 1991, he was

posted to 104 Field Workshops on promotion to Sergeant. In 1994, Kingsley was posted to 7 BASB Field Workshops as a Sergeant Fitter Armourer. He later served with 13 Field Battery, 5 Field Regiment as the Artificer. He discharged on 01 July 1999. In civilian life, Kingsley was a Chief Prison Officer, a Senior Firearms Instructor and Armourer with Queensland Corrective Services. Since his retirement in 2014, after 26 years with Corrective Services, he has volunteered at the Army Museum South Queensland as the Assistant Registrar and Armourer and retains that role to this day. Welcome to the RAQ Executive, Kingsley, and thank you for volunteering.



Mr Kingsley Pocock – RAQs New Assist Sec

On the membership side, we continue to grow and we have had a number of new members since the last Spanner News as you can see below:

- Upgrade to Life – Laurie Wolters.
- Life Subscription – Paul Angell, Malcolm Norrie & Geoff Coulter.
- Annual Subscription – Joe Murphy, Ron Drummond, Steve Williams, Andrew Gorine, Bruce Meiklejohn, Brian Jacombs, Davin Hayes, Wayne Robinson, Jason Kennedy, Alan McDonald and Kieran Murphy.

**Steve Howells
Membership/Treasurer
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QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2017 HONOURS LIST.

Award of the Conspicuous Service Medal (CSM) to Warrant Officer Class One Lawrence James WALLACE, NSW, for meritorious achievement as the Artificer Sergeant Major of 20th Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment throughout the period January 2013 to July 2016. His citation reads: "Warrant Officer Wallace has demonstrated consistent meritorious achievement as the Artificer Sergeant Major of Combat Service Support Battery, 20th Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment. His outstanding service and commitment has ensured the success of the maintenance element and entire Shadow 200 capability, identifying him as an exceptionally professional Warrant Officer." Congratulations from the members of the RAQ.



WO1 Lawrence Wallace Awarded CSM for services to 20 STAR



CORPS HAPPENINGS – PLAN CENTAUR



Plan CENTAUR Update – Stage 2 begins. Following on from the success of Phase 3 Stage 1 of Plan CENTAUR, Stage 2 commenced in late August, comprising eight projects designed to deliver lasting maintenance improvements. Stage 2 projects include:

- Development of an Army Maintenance Strategy by the end of November, improving Army's ability to articulate its maintenance requirements and enhance effectiveness.
- Development of an Activity Based Equipment Management model, concentrating on Bushmaster PMV (initially), leading to improved demand forecasting and resource efficiency.
- Delivery of a Statement of Work for ASEME's new Technical Trade Contract for Army.
- Enhancement of Vulcan dashboards to include equipment demand data from ACMS to improve data-driven decision making by unit personnel.
- Review of current M1A1 maintenance practices with recommendations to improve operational availability and realise Life of Type savings.
- Productivity projects including LEAN and Productivity Enhancement Training to improve production and workshop effectiveness.

Plan CENTAUR Director General, BRIG Dave McGahey, said that Stage 2 projects will bring rapid and substantial benefits to Army and the broader maintenance system. "This new stage of the program represents the chance to deliver projects that will very quickly make an impact," BRIG McGahey said.



He went on to say, "Projects such as the Army Maintenance Strategy and the Activity Based Equipment Management implementation will improve maintenance system effectiveness, while Productivity Enhancement Training early next year will train Combat Brigade personnel in immediate changes to improve their maintenance planning capability.

We are firmly in the delivery phase of the program, and the CENTAUR team is keen to gain feedback from RAEME personnel – it's the future of your profession and we need your input to get it right."

CENTAUR Stage 1 concluded in June and the new Stage was approved by the Army Resourcing and Capability Management Committee that month. For more information on CENTAUR projects and to get involved, contact the team via email to plan.centaur@defence.gov.au

Regards,

BRIG D.F. McGahey
Program Director General
Plan CENTAUR



COMING EVENTS

Corps 75th Anniversary Parade and Gala – Canberra.

RAEME 75th Anniversary activities have been occurring all around the country throughout the year and will culminate in a Parade, Plaque Unveiling and Gala Dinner to be held in Canberra at the Australian War Memorial on the Corps 75th Birthday, 1 December 2017.

The RAQ is expecting a number of members to attend and is therefore looking at putting a few tables together. If you wish to be seated with other RAQ members, once booked, let our Treasurer/Membership Member, Steve Howells know and he will organise it.

Click on the link below to take you to the booking page:

<https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?eid=313074&>



The Australian Army Apprentices Association (AAAA) 70th Anniversary Reunion Canberra 2018.
A reunion to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the formation of the Army Apprentices School will be held in Canberra over the period Tuesday 24 – Friday 27 April 2018.

The two major highlights of the reunion are the ANZAC Day March in Canberra, where our Association has been invited to lead the National march. This is a huge honour and we will be looking for a substantial contingent to make us all proud. The second highlight is the Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial on 26 April 2018 where an Army Apprentice will be honoured.

The broad concept, at this stage, for the reunion over three days commencing Tuesday 24 Apr 18, includes: a meet and greet; a Gun Fire Breakfast on ANZAC Day, followed by the national ANZAC Day Service and March at the AWM; and finally, on the 26 Apr 18 a bus tour of some parts of Canberra, the AWM, followed by a Reunion Dinner Venue for a number of activities are still being finalized. We are currently endeavouring to obtain a group/corporate booking at the Narrabundah Abode apartments. This venue has accommodation for about 250 people in 2, 3 or 4 person apartments, a large car park and an adjoining large room, which would be suitable for the Meet & Greet function. We are planning to use buses to/from the Australian War Memorial (AWM) on ANZAC Day itself. Costs have not yet been finalized, but place these dates in your diary now, as it sure to be a memorable event, not to be missed.

Forms for registration for 2018 Anzac Day Reunion in Canberra will be on the AAAA website soon. Further detail will be sent by email to members of the AAAA, so if you miss this, keep an eye on the Apprentices site. Registration will also be via email, but there will also be facilities to register via ordinary mail.

For those with caravans, I have been advised that the Canberra Show Grounds has considerable van accommodation. Contact the manager at (02) 6205 5230. Further detail is contained in the AAAA magazine "The Apprentice About" at: <http://austarmyapprentice.org/newsletters/>

Otto Aberle
Events Manager
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REPORTS ON RAQ EVENTS

RAQ Sunshine Coast Chapter 75th Anniversary

Lunch – 2 Sep 17. This recent lunch held at the Maroochy RSL for the Sunshine Coast RAQ Chapter, celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of RAEME in style. 87 locals and folks from Brisbane and the Gold Coast were treated to a wonderful talk about Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) from LTCOL Keirin Joyce, SO1 Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) from AHQ.



LTCOL Joyce explaining how UAS is impacting on the ADF of today

Attendees were entertained and educated about the various UAS in service today, and potentially, those which will enter service in a few years. LTCOL Joyce brought two examples of unmanned aerial vehicles for attendees to feel and touch – both of which came in his briefcase. He went on to talk about the range of UAS available, their place on the battlefield in the hands of a trained user, the type of people and their skill-sets who operate them and the types of UAS being considered by the ADF to improve the versatility, lethality and effectiveness of its fighting systems. He also introduced attendees to the logistic uses of UAS that may eventuate in the next few years.

The attendees also heard from the COLCOMDT – QLD, COL Tony Borg, who explained the role he was now playing in the Corps most important project – Plan CENTAUR. He explained that CENTAUR is considering how best to restructure the Corps to meet the challenges resulting from changes to Army's operational scenarios and complex technologies accompanying new equipment acquisitions.



LTCOL Joyce demonstrating how easy it is to assemble a small drone in public!

Attendees also enjoyed a fine meal and service from the Maroochy RSL, whose staff once again organised a very enjoyable afternoon.

May I thank all attendees for their support – it does make the organisers' efforts worthwhile. May I also thank the HOC for subsidizing the event thus allowing us to celebrate in style with many good friends and colleagues. And finally, may I personally thank Mike Prain, for his efforts in many areas, but specifically, keeping the costs in check and ensuring we didn't run at a loss – well done, Mike.

Finally, we look forward to seeing everyone at next year's lunch – more detail on timings and location to follow.

**Ross Grant & Mike Prain
Co-Convenors
RAQ Sunshine Coast Chapter**

RAEME NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Operation Spanner Pack. Recently, several packs of magazines were sent to our soldiers on operations, and reports back to me indicate that they were very pleased once again to receive them. Our next delivery is scheduled for late October, when a further fifty Spanner Packs of groceries and RAEME merchandise will be delivered to our RAEME Staff in various areas of operations.

Donations to help run the program are being sought to allow the Spanner Pack team to continue sending packs to our brothers and sisters on operations with a good range of products. One way to donate is to visit the RAEUME Queensland website: www.qld.raeme.org.au and visit the shop where you will find a donation area. You can also contact the Operation Spanner Pack Manager at: rgnorman1944@gmail.com

RAEUME National Association (RNA) Restructure. A proposal has been put forward to the RAEUME membership nationally, including the Head of Corps (HOC), by the RAEUME Association NSW Inc to restructure the RNA into a simpler network of all RAEUME Associations nationally to facilitate improved communication and coordination.

The new structure is supported by RAQ and others and does not require a Constitution or Strategic Plan, but rather a set of guidelines, for all to operate within. This structure does not require incorporation. The proposed restructure would be known as the RAEUME National Network (RNN) and would draw a representative from each State/Territory. It would be managed by this group of representatives, one of which would be the Coordinator known as the RAEUME National Network Coordinator (RNNC), who would be elected by the other representatives.

Each State/Territory and HOC would have one vote only through their Representative. The current RAEUME National Website and Facebook would be maintained and amended accordingly to meet the new guidelines when adopted. The aim of the RNN is to support all members of RAEUME past and present and to assist, when requested, the State/Territory Associations and HOC organisation through the SO2 Corps.

A meeting of the RNA full Committee will be held soon to consider this restructure and RAQ will advise of the outcome of this positive proposal.

Raymond G Norman OAM
RAQ RNA Representative
For Chairman RAQ



VALE

It is with deep regret that we advise of the following:

- **Jervis**, Ronald Vincent (15th VM), was admitted to hospital and suffered a heart attack on 16 Jun 17.

- **Keihne**, Des, had been fighting bowel cancer, but suffered a heart attack on 28 Jun 17 and could not be revived.
- **Ross**, Mick, passed away on the morning of 17 Jul 17 in Canberra Hospital. Mick was Adjutant at 102 Fd Wksp in 1967-1968.
- **McKeown**, Jim, passed away I Jun 17. A Memorial service took place on 24 Jul 17 at Vietnam Veteran Park, Bribie Island RSL.
- **Lewis**, Leigh, passed away on Friday 28 Jul 17. He saw service with 102 Field Workshop Vietnam 1970- 71.
- **Jones**, Ed, passed away around 13 Aug 17. Ed suffered from high blood pressure and died of a heart attack. His service was held at the Albany Creek Crematorium on 24 Aug 17.
- **Zacny**, 'Zac' Jurgen, passed away suddenly at home in Canberra on 24 Sept 17. He was 68 years.

WELFARE

- **Maloney**, Frank, is recovering from the effects of stroke and radiation therapy for a tumour on his spine.

Please remember to contact me if you hear of one of our RAEUME folks is unwell or in distress.

Barry Shipway
Welfare Officer
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DFWA INFORMATION

National President, David Jamison, resigned in early September after 10 years at the helm. In that time, he has worked tirelessly for the Defence Community and was instrumental in bringing closer co-operation amongst the ESO community, especially with the formation of the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO). In this time, we have seen things that have not happened previously, e.g., improved indexing in DFRDB superannuation for at least some recipients and government U-turns of the Workplace Remunerations Arrangement for ADF Pay. There are now working groups established to further expand and improve collaborative working at national level of ESOs, including importantly, the RSL. David continues as Immediate Past President. Kel Ryan, DFWAQ VP for NQ is acting National President.

There are currently three cases before the AAT concerning the taxation of Class A and B Invalidity Benefits from DFRDB and MSBS. The ATO has offered funding under the Test Case Litigation Programme which will pay for the legal costs of the veterans, having decided these are important cases of public interest, potentially affecting about 12000 veterans in receipt of these payments. If the veterans win, it could mean refunds of tax going back to 1998 for some. Two of the veterans have accepted the offer, while the third has declined. These cases will be heard Jan-Apr 2018. Details are on Facebook sites “Veteran Clawback” and “ComSuper – Military Entitlements.” There is another case before the Federal Court addressing splitting of Invalidity Benefits as assets. These cases have all been brought by mainly younger veterans, with the support of the Australian Veterans Alliance and support from the RSL Qld, Peacekeepers and DFWA.

DFWA are anticipating legislation to introduce an Australian Military Covenant early 2018 with implementation by Nov 2018, 100 years after the end of WW1. It is expected that ADSO, RSL and Legacy will be involved in a working party to inform this. DFWAQ continue to lobby for a Qld Veterans’ Charter to complement the Covenant at the state “service delivery point” level and to introduce a Qld Minister for Veteran Affairs similar to other states. Such a post would represent Qld at the federally chaired Veterans Minister Round Table and improve delivery of co-ordinated services to veterans and provide consistent processes for gathering of important statistics related to suicide, homelessness, health and prisons etc, all state responsibilities.

John Lowis
President
DFWA(Qld)
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I have returned to my editorial duties after a few months away, but my responsibilities were in the sure hands of our COLCOMDT, COL Tony Borg, who published the July edition of Spanner News on time and rich in content. Thank you, Tony, your efforts were greatly appreciated.

Much has happened in our Corps' 75th Anniversary year and still more is to come over the next few months – see

page 7 for detail. I hope everyone has been able to get to at least one event and that others can get to Canberra for the final event celebrating our Corps' Diamond Jubilee.

Next year will be quiet by comparison to this year, although for the Apprentices, don't forget the honour we have of marching at the head of the ANZAC Day Parade in Canberra – it is going to be a big event over three days culminating with pride of place on the parade.

I'd like to welcome, BRIG Andrew Freeman, as the new HOC and trust we get to meet him in Brisbane sometime in the new year. The RAQ is also looking forward to catching up with BRIG Ed Smeaton during our forthcoming lunch at the Port Office Hotel on 5 Nov 17. BRIG Smeaton will talk about what the 75th Anniversary means to the Corps as it goes through necessary change in the coming years because of operational imperatives and technology accompanying our new equipment acquisitions.

As this is the last edition of Spanner News before the holiday season at Christmas, please take time to recover from another busy year and enjoy time with your families.

All the best for the New Year.



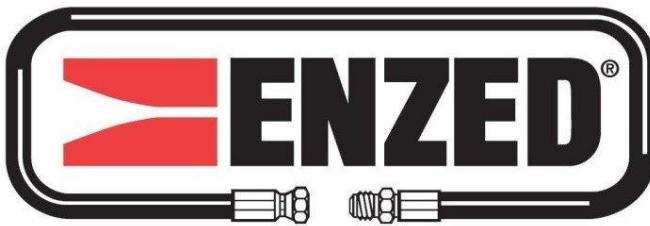
Ross Grant
Chairman Comms Committee
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2pm Saturday, 11th November 2017
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(Wises Road, Maroochydore)

\$15 including afternoon tea Pre-concert entertainment commences at 1.20pm

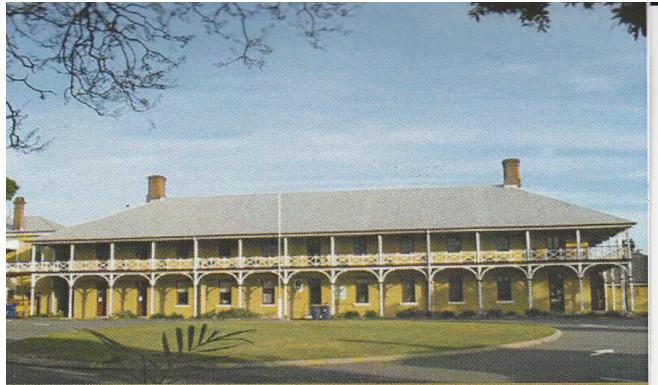
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For those yet to buy the Corps History book, here is a great gift for a friend in our 75th Anniversary year. The HOC Cell, Bonegilla, still has a reasonable quantity of hard cover (HC) versions available, at \$80.00 a copy. The SO2 Corps Capability, MAJ Perri Hobbs, and his small team are managing sales, so the best way to secure a copy, before they run out in our 75th Anniversary year, is to go to: <http://www.raeme.org.au>, click on 'Shop' and then click on the photo of the book's cover.

Please follow the instructions for payment shown on the website, and spelt out in part as follows. *To purchase a book, you need will need to make a deposit of \$80.00 by electronic transfer to the following account:*

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Once payment is made, please send an email to
RAEME.HOCCell@defence.gov.au and add the CC address of
MAJ Hobbs, perri.hobbs@defence.gov.au, together with
proof of payment (a scanned receipt of deposit), point of
contact details and an up to date delivery address. The HOC
Cell will distribute the book upon confirmation of payment.'*

Note: In the reference field of the electronic transfer and proof of payment, please include your surname and phone number.

Please retain a copy of the deposit transaction, or ask your bank for a receipt, and then send a scanned copy to:
RAEME.HOCCell@defence.gov.au.

In the email, please ensure you include your name, delivery address and contact phone number. Should you have any queries, please contact the HOC Cell directly on (02) 6055 4325, prior to ordering. Books should be despatched within 28 days of ordering and every effort will be made to inform you of despatch details.