

# THE LIGHTNING FLASH

SOLDIER and CRAFTSMAN

**October 2013**

**Issue 73**

The RAEME Association (Victoria) Inc. Incorporation Reg No. A 0022655Z ABN: 96 873 522 994

Patron: BRIG Konrad Ermert. MSc FIEAust CPEng (Retd)  
Colonel-Commandant: COL Brian Jones, CSC

**President:** MAJ John Boothroyd RFD.ED (Rtd)  
**Treasurer:** Aranka Illia  
**Editor/Webmaster:** Pat Marley  
16 Clematis Street, Glen Waverley 3150  
Phone (03)9802 0637  
email: [patmar@melbpc.org.au](mailto:patmar@melbpc.org.au)  
or [pat@patmar.id.au](mailto:pat@patmar.id.au)

**Vice President:** Allan Hawkins  
**Secretary:** Alan Rogers  
**Web:** [www.vic.raeme.org.au](http://www.vic.raeme.org.au)

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**Visit to Parliament House by Alkira Secondary College and Representatives of the  
RAEME Association, Victoria and other Veterans**  
(See Report and Parliamentary Hansard Extract Page 8)



**Battle of Long Tan - Vietnam Veterans Commemoration 18 August 2013 - Page 6**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Annual General Meeting was held on 15<sup>th</sup> Sept at the Clayton RSL and was attended by 34 members and although 38 indicated they would attend we catered for 40. This means that we had to pay for 40, so please if cannot attend after indicating that you will be there please let us know so that we do not spend your funds for little gain. The meeting went well and we are in healthy position, both in numbers and financially. The ballot returned the current committee and Alan Hawkins is the new Vice President.

We look forward to another successful year for the Association.

### LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Having received several nominations a secret ballot was conducted with Col John Lee as scrutineer and the result was that Pat Marley our Web Master was selected for 2013. The presentation was a complete shock to Pat and he was speechless, most unusual for Pat. Congratulations, it was well deserved even for a 12<sup>th</sup> Intake Apprentice .

### ACTIVITIES

The association was well represented at the Anzac Day Parade and the weather was much kinder to us this year.

The Presidents Lunch was attended by 40 members including several of our widows who are guests of the association, the meal served by the new caterers at the RSL did us proud.

Members of the committee have also attended functions conducted By other organisations associated with ex-service personnel . Long Tan Day at Heidelberg Repat. Shrine of Remembrance, Jewish Ex Service Assoc. Also our liaison with the Alkira Secondary College continues and involved both committee and members during the year.

### WEAPONS

The weapons which were located at the Oakleigh Barracks have been removed at the request of the Army as they posed a security risk under current orders for the storage of weapons. Arrangements were made to transfer them to the Light Horse and Artillery Museum at Nar Nar Goon conducted by Bernie Dingle. Once these are on display we will arrange a visit and conduct a social activity at the museum.

### ALKIRA SECONDARY COLLEGE

Our link to the college in conjunction with the Shrine has seen several members linked with students to produce a written history of their military involvement, which was presented by the students on a special assembly day at the college some with visual presentations some verbally. All participants received a printed copy of the consolidated histories. The College has applied for grant to establish a memorial garden and the RSL has provided a Lone Pine seedling tree for this garden.

My thanks to the committee and the members for your support during the past year and prior years and I look forward to another successful year as my final year as President of this fine Association.

### ARTE ET MARTE

**John Boothroyd RFD ED (Maj Rtd)**  
President

### Corps History Project

COL Ross Grant has produced an introduction to the Corps History Project (CHP)

This introduction can be downloaded from the Association's web-site "Notice Board":

[www.vic.raeme.org.au/html/notice\\_board.html](http://www.vic.raeme.org.au/html/notice_board.html)

I DUNNO BUT I'VE BEEN TOLD...  
SHOOTIN' THINGS IS GETTIN' OLD...  
KISS A BABY-HUG A TREE...  
SHOW SOME HOSPITALITEEE...  
SOUND OFF HUT HOO HREE HO..



SENSITIVITY TRAINING.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

We are now into a new year with the Committee of Management elected for the year 2013-14. Gus Allen stepped down as Vice President with Allan Hawkins nominating for the role of Vice President.

Our thanks to Allan for taking on the position. Our appreciation must go to Gus on his tenure as Vice President.

This year the Reserve Forces Day at the Shrine was attended by 20 members of the Association which was down on numbers from previous years, hopefully the attendance will increase this year.

Nomination for Association Life Membership this year was awarded to Pat Marley, a well-deserved honour, for members who aren't aware Pat has is the editor of the Lightning Flash.

### 2013-14 Committee of Management Association Office Bearers

<b>President</b> John Boothroyd	<b>Vice President</b> Allan Hawkins
<b>Secretary</b> Alan Rogers	<b>Treasurer</b> Aranka Illia

#### Members

Rules & By-Laws	John Boothroyd Alan Rogers
Membership	Gus Allen
Welfare & Betterment	Mike Newbond
Heritage	John Boothroyd
Social	John Boothroyd
Merchandise	Aranka Illia
Internet	Pat Marley
Editorial	Pat Marley
Kindred	Gus Allan
Unit/Army Co-Ord	Allan Hawkins
Reserve Forces	John Boothroyd Alan Rogers
Spanner Pack	Alex Birrell Allan Hawkins
Spanner club	Tony Minitti Alex Birrell

#### Chapter Representatives

Bandiana Andy Turner	Victoria Barracks Alex Birrell
Seymour Dave Maddick	Vietnam Veterans Dennis Clarke

**Alan Rogers**  
Secretary

## VICTORIA BARRACKS CHAPTER

The Victoria Barracks Chapter has progressed through its first annual membership renewal process very successfully with 32 members renewing their membership.

During the Chapter's Annual General Meeting held in July, the Victoria Barracks Chapter President and WO1 Paul Gibbs addressed the meeting in relation to the Corps History Project. Paul described the large quantity of information (stories and anecdotes) that have been received as submissions for consideration to be included in coffee table book being produced by the Corps History Project. Much of this information will unfortunately not make it into the book.

The National Association is willing to fund a website previously run by Bob Thompson ([www.raeme.info](http://www.raeme.info)) that would be ideal for use as a Corps online library and the promotion of Corps values.

The Victoria Barracks Chapter members voted unanimously to engage with the National Association to offer our services to setup and then maintain an online Corps library.

The Victoria Barracks Chapter has continually met, since its formation, at the Southern Cross Hotel in Cecil Street, South Melbourne. Unfortunately, the company operating the venue recently went into receivership. As a result the Chapter is currently seeking a new venue. More information on the venue for the future will be promulgated soon.

**Alex Birrell**  
Chapter Secretary/Treasurer



## LEST WE FORGET



**MAJ Kenneth Leckenby (Rtd)**  
11th Intake Army Apprentice Fitter & Turner  
14 September 2013, aged 74  
Result of accident while visiting Vietnam

**LTCOL Colin Campbell (Rtd)**  
25 August 2013, aged 83.

**James (Joe) Hill**  
13th Intake Army Apprentice Vehicle Mechanic  
4 August 2013 Aged 72

**S/SGT Alex Andrews**  
15 Field Regiment LAD  
24 September 2013 Aged 79

## BLUEBELL VIETNAM VETERANS SOUTHERN

Our last general meeting was held at Glenroy RSL. Requests were made regarding supporting the VVAA with request for the Vietnam Veterans to lead the ANZAC Day March in 2016 as it will be the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Vietnam War. The AATTV would be the first of the Units to lead.

Tom Clayton suggested a bus trip to Seymour Commemorative Walk. We could stay overnight, which would enable us to see it under illumination and daylight.

A twelve day cruise around New Zealand in conjunction with other RAEME Unit Associations from interstate, has also been suggested. We are getting some costs worked out regarding this tour. Maybe some contact with our RNZEME could be arranged.

### **ANZAC Day 2014 will be led by the Peacekeeping Force Veterans.**

In 2015 descendants of WW1 veterans will lead the parade. We form up on the south east side Collins Street, where we used to congregate with other Vietnam Units.

We are in desperate need of a band for the March, as it lacked atmosphere without one. If anyone has a band member contact could they please inform one of the Committee. We cannot rely on the ANZAC Day organizing team to do this for us. We need to be pro-active and supply our own band. I have a list of the bands who currently attend the ANZAC Day March.

### VVAA BIKE RIDE

A Major Bike ride has been proposed for in 2016. Get on your bike and keep fit.

### **17 Construction Squadron Workshop Re-Union**

A most successful week consisting of a Monday evening meet and greet with some forty odd people in attendance. ANZAC Day was a bus trip to the dawn service at the Shrine followed by breakfast.

### ***Vietnam: LOOKING BACK AT THE AMERICAN FACTS***

- \* Prior to 1965; US Advisors and AID only.
- \* 1965 - 1967; Buildup of US Forces and logistical supply bases, plus heavy Fighting to counter Communist North Vietnamese Invasion.
- \* 1968 – 1970; Communist “insurgency” destroyed to the point where 90% of the towns and villages in South Vietnam were free from Communist Domination. As an example: By 1971 throughout the entire populous Mekong Delta, the monthly rate of Communist insurgency dropped to an average of 3 incidents per 100,000 of population. In 1969 Nixon started troop withdrawals that were essentially complete by 1971.
- \* Dec. 1972; Paris Peace Agreement negotiated and agreed by North Vietnam, South Vietnam, the southern Vietnamese Communists [VC, NLF/ PRG] and the United States.
- \* Jan 1973; All four parties formally sign Paris Peace Agreements.
- \* Mar 1973; Last US POW released from Hanoi Hilton and in accordance with Paris Agreements, last American GI leaves Vietnam.
- \* Aug 1973; US Congress passes the Case – Church law which forbids, US Naval forces from sailing on the seas surrounding, US ground forces from Operating on the land of and US forces flying in the air over South Vietnam, North Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. This at a time when America had drawn its Cold War battle lines and as a result had the US Navy protecting Taiwan, 50,000 troops in South Korea and over 300,000 Troops in Western Europe[ which has a land area, economy and population comparable to that of the United States], along with ironclad guarantees that if Communist forces should cross any of those Cold War Lines or Soviet Armour should role across the DMZ in Korea or the Iron Curtain in Europe, then there would be an unlimited response by the Armed forces of the United States, to include the use of nuclear weapons. In addition these defense commitments required the annual expenditure of hundreds of billions of US dollars.

Conversely, in 1975 when Soviet Armour rolled across the international borders of South Vietnam, the US response was nothing. In addition Congress cut all AID to South Vietnamese and would not provide them with a single bullet.

\* In spite of the Case – Church Congressional guarantee, the North Vietnamese were very leery of US President Nixon. They viewed him as one unpredictable, incredibly tough nut. He had, in 1972, for the first time in the war, mined Hai Phong Harbour and sent the B-52 bombers against the North to force them into signing the Paris Peace Agreements. Previously the B-52s had been used only against Communist troop concentrations in remote regions of South Vietnam and occasionally against carefully selected sanctuaries in Cambodia, plus against both Sanctuaries and supply lines in Laos.

\* Aug 1974; Nixon resigns.

*To be continued.*

## RESERVE FORCES DAY 7 July 2013



## UNIT REUNIONS

1 Field Squadron Workshop  
Adelaide Final Date TBA 2016  
Contact Don Grieverson

17 Construction Squadron Workshop 13<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup>  
September 2013  
Clare Valley South Australia  
Contact Garry Whykes H 08 9276 1920 M 0411  
810077  
[gwhykes@gmail.com](mailto:gwhykes@gmail.com)

1 Armoured Regiment LAD  
Mudgee 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> October 2013  
Contact: Russell Cunningham H 03 5766 2413 M  
0437 834089  
[bungie12@bigpond.net.au](mailto:bungie12@bigpond.net.au)

1 Div S&T / 5 Coy Workshop  
Darwin 15<sup>th</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
Contact: Trevor Smith H 08 8985 4116 M 0408  
033380  
[trevor.smith13@bigpond.com](mailto:trevor.smith13@bigpond.com)

106 Field Workshop  
Wrest Point Casino Hobart 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> October 2014  
Contact: Patrick Downey H 03 244 2508

**Dennis Clarke**  
**President**  
**Vietnam Veterans Chapter**

## BIRTHDAY DINNER 30 November 2012



**Vietnam Veterans  
Commemoration Day  
18 August 2013**

**Anniversary of the  
Battle of Long Tan  
18 August 1966**



## MEMORIES

by Dave Challons

*13th Intake Army Apprentice Blacksmith*

Is it just me, or the age that I am at, but sometimes I see something, or hear something and somewhere in the back of my brain there is a little "click" and the mists of time roll back and there I am, back in my twenties, not long out of the Army Apprentices School, full of wonder and off to see the world (at the taxpayers' expense, of course!)

Reading through the July issue of the "Lightning Flash" and spied an article by the Colonel-Commandant, and up popped a name from 1964 - Larry Foley.

Early in that year I had decided that I had been at 3 Base and 105 Medium Workshops long enough, and applied for a posting to Northern Command. In those days, the Command was fairly small and was sometimes referred to as the "Queensland Army" and inward postings were fairly hard to get.

However, my luck was in. 1 General Troops Workshop at Bulimba needed a blacksmith so in November I headed north with my wife and baby son to our new home. I marched in to Bulimba and met my new boss, Lt. Larry Foley and soon settled in as part of G.E. Platoon. The unit was a pretty mobile outfit, part of the Field Force and most of our equipment was mounted on good old 6x6 Studebakers (flat out at 42mph in overdrive!) We spent a lot of time out bush, usually up around Tin Can Bay.

The boss was always thing of things and gadgets, and came up with the idea of a light weight, portable mounting for the 50-calibre Browning machine gun. He designed it, and the fitters, the coach trimmer and the welder (me) made it.

Working back on the project one night, I was welding away with the help of a couple of the guys, and using a low home-made floodlight for illumination. I finished my weld and straightened up and found the boss right beside me, observing. He was fairly tall, and he stood up right under the flood-light, shattering the bulb with a loud BANG! Fortunately, he was wearing his cap, but the result was quite spectacular! Of course, we "Crafties" dissolved into helpless laughter. He muttered something to the effect that "It wasn't that bloody funny!" to which one of us quipped "No sir! But you're not standing where we are!"

Anyway, the manufacture of the mount was completed and we piled into a couple of Land Rovers and went off to Tin Can Bay to try it out. On the Tank Range there were the vast open spaces of 1000 yards or more, with lots of old cars and truck bodies that made good targets. A series of firings took place, and each of us had a turn. I must say I was pretty impressed with the way you "walk" the gun up to a distant target with a couple of sighting bursts then just about destroy a vehicle with a sustained burst.

Movie footage was recorded and plenty of still photos taken, but I never did find out if anything came of the boss's invention as I left shortly afterwards for Vietnam.

But there you are. As I said at the start, sometimes you just hear, see or read something and the old brain goes into overdrive, and the memories come flooding back. There must be a lot of you out there with better stories than mine. Jot them down, send them in, and share them with the rest of us.

My regards to the boss, and any of the old team who happen to read this!

Cheers!

**Dave Challons**

### **The Ghan's ANZAC Tribute Train**

Next ANZAC Day, the legendary Ghan will undertake its fourth ANZAC Tribute Journey in 2014, commemorating the sacrifices of Australian servicemen and women.

Departing Darwin on 23 April 2014, The Ghan will venture through the heart of Australia across four unforgettable days, stopping in Alice Springs to observe a traditional Dawn Service atop Anzac Hill.

Itinerary and details can be downloaded from the Association's web-site "Notice Board":

[www.vic.raeme.org.au/html/notice\\_board.html](http://www.vic.raeme.org.au/html/notice_board.html)

## ALKIRA COLLEGE STUDENTS AND VETERANS HONOURED AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

On Thursday the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, the Year 11 VCAL students of Alkira Secondary College had the opportunity to visit Parliament House in Melbourne.

We were all very excited as the VCAL students, veterans and teachers got mentioned for our "Following In Their Footsteps" project by our local State Member, Judith Graley MP.

"It was great to get recognition for our hard work and to have the experience to be shown around Parliament House alongside our peers, veterans, teachers, Andrew Haining and Judith Graley." By Amy Hanks



"The trip to Parliament House was great, full of art and busy politicians. I had the privilege of taking a tour around Parliament House which was an interesting experience."

By Terrence Leveque

"When all our work was recognised in Parliament House, I was excited to know that the work I did about the veterans was recognised." By Teagan Bennett

*Extract from Victorian State Parliamentary Hansard, Legislative Assembly, 27 June 2013*

[Ms GRALEY \(Narre Warren South\)](#) -- Present today in the gallery are Australian war veterans and students from Alkira Secondary College. I met many of them when I attended the moving and memorable Anzac Day service at Alkira college recently. As part of a Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning project called "Following in their Footsteps" the students researched and wrote the biographies of 22 war veterans, a fantastic and thoroughly worthwhile achievement.

The task of remembrance is crucial to our community, and what the students have accomplished contributes to honouring those who have sacrificed so much. The memory of these brave men and women's actions is extremely fragile and subject to erosion over time. Their deeds and words do not survive unless they are remembered, and it is this very remembrance which saves their sacrifice from futility.

As students, you have learnt a great deal, but you have also contributed to honouring the deeds and actions of those who have come before you and have also preserved the memories of past actions as a source of instruction for those in the future. I hope this task has nurtured in you a profound sense of admiration, duty, respect and indeed a sense of purpose which you will carry with you throughout your life.

This project could not have been made possible without the tremendous work of teachers mention all the students involved, but time will not permit. Again, my heartfelt thanks for your tremendous work Nicole Scott, Samara Varker and David Mockridge from Alkira Secondary College; people from the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Victorian branch; the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Association; and the Cranbourne, Dandenong and Noble Park RSLs. Above all the students deserve recognition and praise for their achievements. The Anzac spirit lives on.

RAEME Association (Vic.) Inc.  
Inc. Reg. No. A0022655Z

# Bandiana Chapter

# ANNUAL



# DINNER

## Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2013

Venue:	Commercial Club Albury, Stanley C Room
Timings:	7.00 for 7.30pm
Cost:	\$35.00 per person, guests welcome
Dress:	Coat and Tie
RSVP:	Return below by 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2013

RAEME Members, partners and guests are invited to the RAV-B Spring Dinner. The Colonel Commandant for Victoria and Tasmania, Colonel Brian Jones, will be in attendance.

This three course dinner will be a great opportunity to come together for the many RAEME members, both serving and ex-serving who live here in the Albury / Wodonga area. It will also be a great excuse for members living further-a-field to re-visit their old stomping ground.

Any enquiries please contact our Secretary: Mr. George Reid (02) 60593153  
e-mail: [reidysnr@inet.net.au](mailto:reidysnr@inet.net.au)

**The Secretary**  
RAEME Assoc. (Vic.) Inc. - Bandiana Chapter  
P.O. Box 231  
WODONGA 3689

I..... will be attending.

Address: ..... City: ..... PC: ..... Phone :  
.....

My guests' names are: .....

Seating Preferences:.....

Enclosed is a Cheque for Total amount of \$ .....

or,

A Direct Deposit of \$ ..... Has been made to **BSB: 633 000. A/C No. 127901593** Bendigo Bank,  
RAEME Assoc. Bandiana (remember to include your name in a direct deposit transaction)

## THE RAEME ASSOCIATION (Vic) Inc.

PO Box 2118 Fountain Gate Vic 3805

### COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

#### President:

MAJ John Boothroyd RFD.ED (Retd)  
☎ (03) 9704 6625

#### Vice President:

WO1 Alan Hawkins  
☎ (BH) (03) 9282 6926  
Mobile: 0409 662 916  
[allan.hawkins@defence.gov.au](mailto:allan.hawkins@defence.gov.au)

#### Secretary & Public Officer:

Alan Rogers  
☎ (03) 9704 6700  
Mobile: 0422 8 88 851  
[raeme.assn.vic@bigpond.com](mailto:raeme.assn.vic@bigpond.com)

#### Membership:

Gus Allen  
☎ (03) 9802 5460  
[gus.allen@bigpond.com](mailto:gus.allen@bigpond.com)

#### Treasurer/Merchandising/ Promotion:

Aranka Illia  
☎ (BH) (03)9566 9468  
☎ (AH) (03) 9796 4794  
[aranka.illia@police.vic.gov.au](mailto:aranka.illia@police.vic.gov.au) (W)  
or [sm2aranka@optusnet.com.au](mailto:sm2aranka@optusnet.com.au) (H)

#### Welfare & Betterment/Almoner:

MAJ Michael Newbond  
☎ (03) 9799 8048  
Mobile 0411 769 980  
[mn31050@bigpond.com](mailto:mn31050@bigpond.com)

#### Rules & By-Laws:

Alan Rogers / John Boothroyd

#### Membership

#### Kindred Associations and ANZAC House:

Gus Allen  
☎ (03) 9802 5460  
[gus.allen@bigpond.com](mailto:gus.allen@bigpond.com)

#### Editor / Web Master:

Pat Marley  
☎ (03) 9802 0637  
Mobile: 0407 056 298  
[patmar@melbpc.org.au](mailto:patmar@melbpc.org.au)  
or [pat@patmar.id.au](mailto:pat@patmar.id.au)

#### Social Conveners:

MAJ John Boothroyd RFD.ED (Retd)  
☎ (03) 9704 6625  
Alan Rogers  
☎ (03) 9704 6700  
Mobile: 0422 8 88 851  
[raeme.assn.vic@bigpond.com](mailto:raeme.assn.vic@bigpond.com)

#### Unit Representative & Military Adviser:

WO1 Alan Hawkins  
☎ (BH) (03) 9282 6926  
Mobile: 0409 662 916  
[allan.hawkins@defence.gov.au](mailto:allan.hawkins@defence.gov.au)

#### Chaplain:

John Brownbill

#### BANDIANA CHAPTER

President Andrew Turner  
☎ (02) 6056 1946  
Secretary: George Reid  
PO Box 231  
WODONGA Vic 3689  
☎ (02) 60593153  
[reidysnr@inet.net.au](mailto:reidysnr@inet.net.au)

#### SEYMOUR CHAPTER

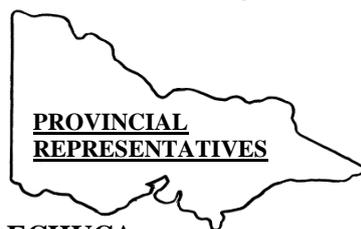
President David Maddick  
☎ (03) 5793 8396  
[muffettsplum@bigpond.com](mailto:muffettsplum@bigpond.com)

#### RAEME VIETNAM SOUTHERN

President Dennis Clarke  
☎ H (03) 9848 6757  
Mob 0409 518744  
[eastern.auto@optusnet.com.au](mailto:eastern.auto@optusnet.com.au)  
Secretary Dennis Meek  
☎ H (03) 9798 3452  
[dennis.meek@bigpond.com](mailto:dennis.meek@bigpond.com)

#### VICTORIA BARRACKS CHAPTER

President CAPT Tony Minniti  
☎ Mob 0431 546 337  
[Tony.Minniti@defence.gov.au](mailto:Tony.Minniti@defence.gov.au)  
Secretary Alex Birrell  
☎ Mob 0419004 337  
[alex.birrell@defence.gov.au](mailto:alex.birrell@defence.gov.au)



#### ECHUCA

Dom Pontelandolfo  
☎ (03) 5482 1035  
[dpontelandolfo@msn.com](mailto:dpontelandolfo@msn.com)

#### SHEPPARTON

Mark Ryan  
☎ (03) 5823 1022  
[stay@sheppark.com.au](mailto:stay@sheppark.com.au)

#### BALLARAT/DAYLESFORD

George Hepburn  
24 Junction St. BALLARAT 3350  
☎ (03) 5331 3153

#### BENDIGO/CASTLEMAINE/ HEATHCOTE

Jack Balsillie  
147 The Outlook Bendigo Village  
Mandurang Rd.  
Spring Gully 3550  
☎ (03) 5443 4803

#### HOPPERS CROSSING/GEELONG

Rex Foord  
598 Thompson Rd,  
NORLANE 3214  
☎ (03) 5275 1728

#### WARRNAMBOOL & DISTRICT

Brian Driscoll  
☎ (03) 5595 4273

#### BERWICK/PAKENHAM WARRAGUL/ MORWELL/ TRARALGON & SALE

Alan Rogers  
☎ (03) 9704 6700  
Mobile: 0422 8 88 851  
[raeme.assn.vic@bigpond.com](mailto:raeme.assn.vic@bigpond.com)

#### CRANBOURNE/KORUMBURRA & WELSHPOOL

Kevin Moon  
1 Hawkins St,  
KORUMBURRA 3950  
☎ (03) 5655 1545

#### ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION

This magazine is produced by the members, for the members, and is not to be solely one-way communication.

How do you find out what is happening in and around the RAEME ASSOCIATION, or in fact RAEME? through 'The LIGHTNING FLASH' of course.

#### DISCLAIMER

The views and articles expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of this Association.

**Let's hear from you!**

**Deadline for January Flash  
Monday 6 January 2014**

**Items to Pat Marley:**

[patmar@melbpc.org.au](mailto:patmar@melbpc.org.au)

or

[pat@patmar.id.au](mailto:pat@patmar.id.au)

**THE LIGHTNING FLASH**

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