

# THE LIGHTNING FLASH

Official Publication of The RAEME Association (Vic) Inc.  
PATRON: Brig C. Ermert ARMIT Msc FIEAust FAIM CPEng

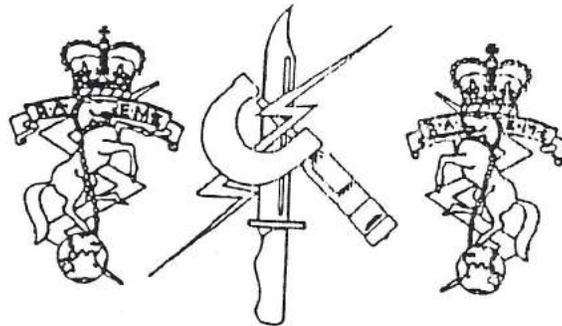
PRESIDENT: Bruce Williams (03) (9561 8354

SECRETARY: Jack Westernhagen (03) 9888 3359

Issue 17  
APRIL 1996

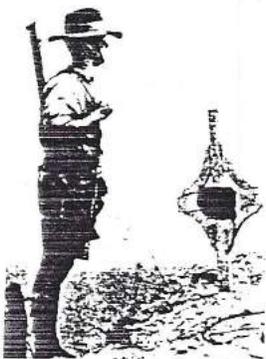
EDITOR: Jack Westernhagen

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SOLDIER and CRAFTSMAN

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CATEGORY 'A'



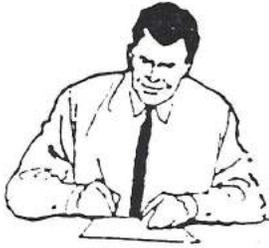
## LEST WE FORGET...

Anzac Day a time to reflect. ANZAC Day maintains a special importance to Australians of all generations because the themes it evokes help explain our history and

define our identity. It invites us to commemorate, in solemnity and honour, our dead in all wars. It is an opportunity to consider what it is Australians have died for, and sets us thinking about who we are as a people. Each anniversary - 1996 is the 81st - is both a remembrance and a measurement of nationhood.

The battle of Gallipoli, the first big test of Australians in a theatre of battle, has come to symbolise those themes. As federation in 1901 created Australia as a nation, but failed to deliver a true sense of nationhood. It was a constitutional entity with a spiritual void at its core. Many have argued that Gallipoli, 14 years later, provided the decisive moment when

Australians discovered they were fighting, dying and defending something that went beyond King and empire - and a small Turkish beach became the anvil on which Australia was forged as a nation. To justify the immense suffering of our soldiers it was necessary to attach deeper meaning to it, and inevitably a mythology sprang up over Gallipoli. Yet the spirit underlying real events - such as Simpson and his donkey - has been neither tarnished nor diminished through being embellished by myth. On April 24 1993, Australian Newspaper authors David Day, Gavan McCormack and Hank Nelson, had suggested it was plain, even after Gallipoli, Australians did not go to war to defend the idea of a distinctive Australia. They went because the British Empire was threatened, and if the empire was in danger, so was Australia's place in it. "The Diggers earned glory in the desperate gullies of Gallipoli fighting for empire, not Australia". But it was also in Australia's national interest to be involved. The course of the world was determined from Europe, our trade and investment were inextricably tied to London, and nobody doubted nobody doubted Australia would suffer if Britain lost. (Cont. on P. 10)



## THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Although belated a Happy New Year to all for 1996, I hope this Newsletter finds our members well.

Looking back to 1995 - "The 50th Jubilee of both the end of WW II and the RAEME Association", we had a busy year. Starting with a dance in March in conjunction with the Old Sappers Assn, a Widows and Life Member's Luncheon, a Theatre Afternoon, ANZAC Eve and Day functions, 50th Anniversary March through Melbourne in August, our Annual AGM, Cessation of WW II 50th Anniversary Ball at the Camberwell Civic Centre, the Dedication of a Memorial Garden at Oakleigh Barracks in November, cumulating with our own 50th Anniversary Dance at Chapel Street Depot to celebrate our own Jubilee.

Well, what a year. To all those members, their families and friends who supported any of those functions thank you! It is your support that helps to make our Association what it is today - strong and viable, when others are unfortunately disappearing.

This coming year won't be as busy except for our usual ANZAC Eve and ANZAC Day involvements. However, I should now warn members that a SPECIAL DAY will be held in November 1996 in conjunction with our Ordnance friends which we hope you will support.

A Commemoration Stone and Plaque is to be placed where the old Albert Park Barracks was located to commemorate the involvement of both Ordnance and RAEME from 1942 - 1975 at that site under the command of the Master-General of Ordnance (MGO) Branch.

Well, we obviously move on and ANZAC Day is once again almost upon us. Usual references will appear in other sections of this edition. However, please let us extend a personal invitation to all AEME/RAEME serving, and past members, this includes members of other unit Associations formed during WW II and other RAEME Olds & Bolds who had participated in any other conflict up to the present time.

We would be privileged to have your attendance at our Reunion on ANZAC Eve at Oakleigh Barracks - Sleeping arrangements can be made available by contacting our Secretary Jack Westernhagen, you will be made most welcome.

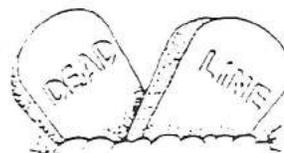
In closing this message from myself, let me say once again to all those members who supported functions last year, thank you and it is sincerely hoped your support will continue on.

Finally we congratulate, Major General John Kingston OA on his promotion and appointment to the position of Assistant Chief of the General Staff, Material - Army on 15 Dec '95. To Brigadier Ross Grant on his promotion and, who has moved to Canberra to take over as Director General, Material - Army from Maj Gen Kingston. To Colonel Bruce Amos, the new DEME-A, Director of RAEME.

The RAEME Association (VIC) Inc. wishes all senior officers well in your new postings.

Bye for now.

BRUCE WILLIAMS  
PRESIDENT



Material for the next Issue of "THE LIGHTNING FLASH" must reach the Editor not later than:

**15th JULY 1993**



## THE SECRETARY'S CORNER

**SEASON'S GREETINGS** - Firstly let me wish our many RAEME families and single members a happy New Year for 1996 and may it be a very prosperous and healthy year to you and yours for future years to come.

**ASSOCIATION WIDOWS** - To our Widows who are always in our thoughts, not only at Christmas time, to you the best of good health also. For those Widows who found time to send Christmas Greetings to all of our Association members through the Secretary, I thank You! It is always a pleasure to hear from you and to hear that you enjoy receiving your copy of "The Flash" which gives many of you pleasant memories and rekindles names of old friends you once knew appearing within its pages.

**1996 OFF TO A GOOD START** - Our calendar for the year began with a very fruitful and well attended Committee of Management meeting on 4th Feb '96 at Oakleigh Barracks. I thank all Committee members for your attendance on this day. We were honoured to have at that meeting the company of Mr. Milton Pearson, President of the RAEME Vietnam Association and Mr. Alan Gillispie of the same Association.

**MEMBERSHIP** - Unfortunately, we have lost a few of our members towards the later part of '95 due to resignations for personal reasons, ill health or demise. It is very sad to hear of the passing of old Comrades, but heartening to know that, that member's family still keep in touch with the Association and are endeavouring to attend as many of our functions as possible in memory of their departed one. At the time of going to press our Membership now stands at 256 Financial Members and is slowly increasing all the time.

**SPECIAL EVENTS** - Please read of the proposed forthcoming functions your Special Events Sub-Committee have planned during 1996. Patronise them, offer your services (they may or may not be required, but you won't know unless you ask the Convenor (Peter Cartledge) if he needs any help from those with the appropriate know-how and expertise).

**NAME TAGS** - It is desirable that as many of our members and their families wear an Association Name Tag to all of our functions. So let us all make the effort, if not by our Annual ANZAC Eve Reunion, then at least by our 1996 A.G.M. to obtain and be wearing your Name Tag. Members are reminded that Association Name Tags are always available on request to the Secretary at a cost of \$10.00 ea. (Payable in advance - a delay in delivery can be expected as the Supplier requests that demands be in batches of 10 or more).

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS** - A very important item - this is the individual's own responsibility to keep the Secretary informed if you wish to be kept up to date on what is happening within the Association, in addition to receiving your copy of 'The flash'. You can't use the excuse that you didn't receive notification if you do not advise me in writing of any changes in your present place of residence.

**PROVISION OF A MEMBERSHIP NOMINAL ROLL** - As a result of many requests received from members asking for a Nominal Roll of members showing their latest Postal Address (less Phone No.) to enable them to contact old Buddies from the past - it is proposed in the July edition of 'The Flash' to send to all members an updated copy of this listing. If for personal reasons, a member does not wish to have his name and address listed, please contact me IN WRITING and your name and details will be omitted from that listing at the time of mailing.

JACK WESTERNHAGEN  
SECRETARY

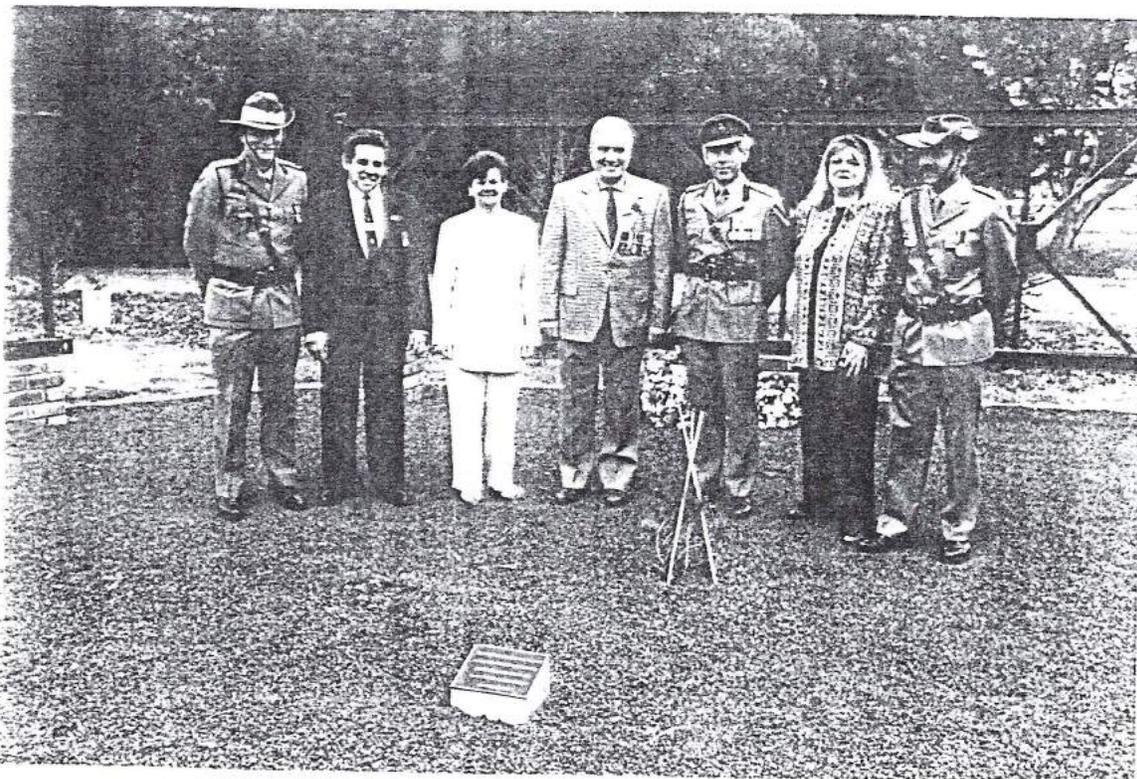


### SPECIAL EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

#### REMEMBERANCE DAY & DEDICATION OF A MEMORIAL GARDEN AT OAKLEIGH BARRACKS

On 11th November 1995, Remembrance Day, as part of this annual Observance, we saw the Dedication of a Memorial Garden at Oakleigh Barracks in tribute to our fallen comrades of WW I, WW II, Malaya, Borneo, Korea, Vietnam and other Conflicts since.

Brigadier Conrad Ermert was invited by the Commanding Officer HQ (LSF) Engineers Colonel H.R. Ellis RFD, to be the Principal Guest and to open the Memorial Gardens.



#### OFFICIAL PARTY

Left to Right. Colonel H.R. Ellis RFD, CO HQ (LSF) Engineers, Mr. Bruce Williams, President RAEME Association & Mrs. Williams, Colonel E.F. Wertheimer RFD, Colonel Commandant RAE Victorian Division, Brigadier Conrad Ermert, RAEME Representative Colonel Commandant, Mrs. Newbond & Major Mike Newbond OC 4 B.A.S.B. Fd Wksp Coy (105 Fd Wksp)

#### 50th JUBILEE DINNER DANCE

What a wonderful evening was had by all those who attended this historic event at Chapel Street Training Depot on 2.12.1995.

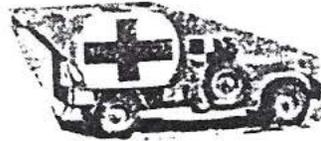
An attendance of 72 members, wives and friends gathered together in an informal joint celebration of 50 years since WW II ceased and the 50th Jubilee Anniversary of our Association.

tunes of that era past, an excellent 4 course Supper with a Bar set up in the 2/10th Medium Regt RAA Sergeant's Mess to replenish the thirsty dancers.

Many a tale was spun during the evening as memories came to mind of past unit activities and functions once held in this Drill Hall in bye gone years.

PETER CARTLEDGE

## SICK PARADE



**HAROLD CHAMBERLAIN** - Harold and his wife Glad, were both hospitalised at the same time just before Christmas and are now home recovering. Keep up the good spirits.

**MAX MOORE** - Is slowly recovering and is back at work once again. Max informs us that his proposed heart by-pass operation has been put on hold for the time being. Good news Max, we are all pleased for you.

**JENNY MOORE** - Max's wife, a strong supporter of this Association both on Committees and behind the scenes in support of her husband Max has developed a Melanoma on her right ankle which is proving very difficult to treat. Come on Jenny, put your best foot forward don't let this get you down and let us see you back on the dance floor once again tripping the lite fantastic.

**KERRY BRINDELL** - Is about to undergo further surgery on her legs to enable her to walk properly once again. She said the waiting for surgery is very tiring as each operation prepares her for more advanced treatment. Kerry, your many friends in the Association are always asking after your health and they keep you constantly in their prayers and thoughts.

**BRUCE WILLIAMS** - Our President Bruce, was admitted over night to hospital during the month of February with Tendon problems in his right arm once again. Not too much Lager lifting from now on Bruce.

**GEOFF MAGGS** - Will be going into hospital shortly for a hip replacement operation. I know that all our members wish you Geoff, the very best and hope you have a speedy recovery we look forward to seeing your smiling face at our functions once again.

**JACK WESTERNHAGEN** - At the time of putting this newsletter together ready for printing, our hard working Secretary and Editor of "The Flash" entered Cabrini

Hospital, Malvern on the 4th March '96 and underwent a major operation on the 5th March for Cancer of the Prostrate and will be on the Convalescent List for about 3 weeks thereafter. Jack, we look forward to your quick recovery and to see you back behind your Secretary's desk as soon as you are well enough to take up your duties once more.

\* \* \*

To all you members mentioned above, on hearing of your admittance to hospital or having taken ill at home, rest assured that our members do show concern about you and wish you all a speedy recovery and return to your home and loved ones especially those that are hospitalised.

**REG COX**  
WELFARE OFFICER



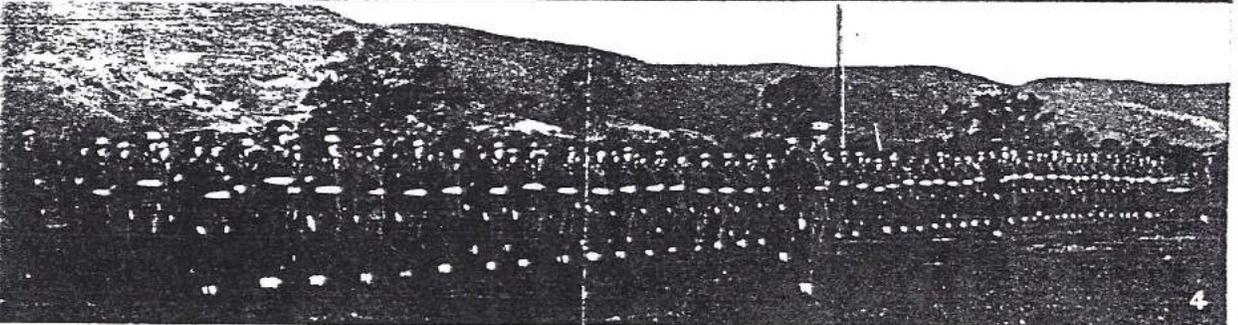
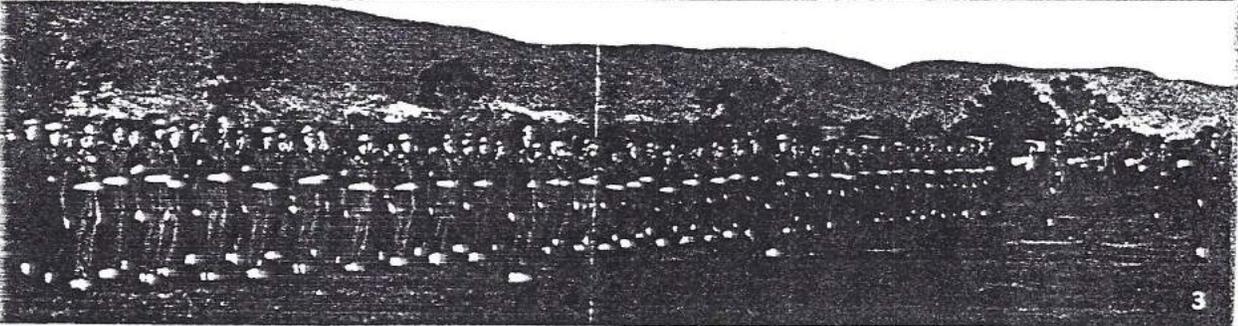
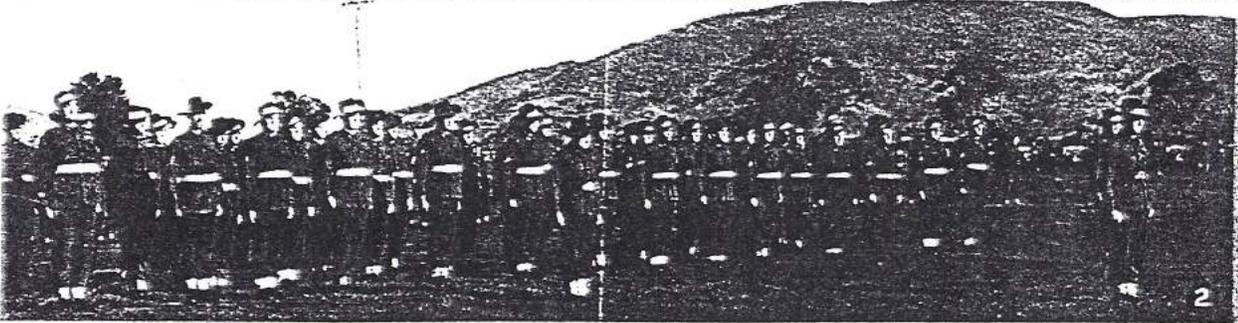
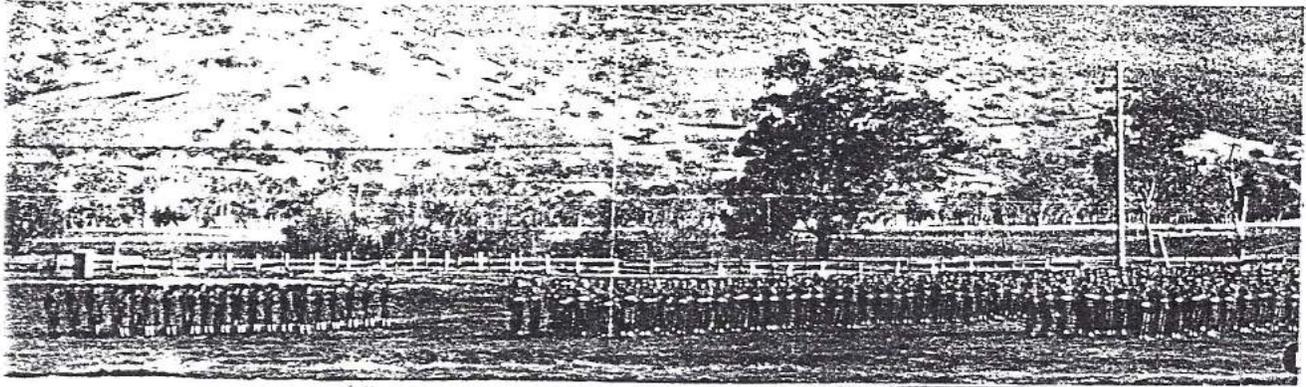
Conrad MIRTSCHEIN - 30th JAN 1996

The President and Executive Committee of the RAEME Association (Vic) Inc. respectively inform members of the sudden passing of our esteemed Colleague.

We extend our sincerest sympathy to his wife Rosalie and family.

*We cannot bring back the old days  
When we were all together  
But wonderful memories of you  
Will always be in our hearts.*

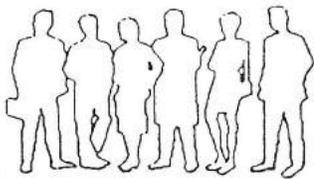
# 2/4th Army Base Workshops A.E.M.E.



1. 2/4th Army Base Workshops A.E.M.E. 2. Headquarters, Research and Reclamation Coy.

This photograph was taken sometime early in 1945 during a Battalion Parade at Bandiana.

The above photograph of 2/4th Army Base Workshops AEME was supplied by one of our AEME members Vin McNamara who was on parade that day in Tank Coy.



# ANZAC-EVE REUNION

24 APRIL 1996



As in the past years the main Social activity for members of this Association to which we have looked forward to with eager anticipation, has been our Annual Reunion on ANZAC Eve.

By popular demand, we have returned this Social function back to the evening before the ANZAC Day Commemoration March in the city - **SO GIVE US YOUR SUPPORT!!!**

Take this opportunity to have an ale or two with those mates you have not seen for some time - better still, give them a ring and organise to bring them, and other AEME/RAEME members with you, maybe a family member could pick you up.

**DATE:** WEDNESDAY 24th APRIL 1996

**TIME:** 7.30pm to 11.30pm.

**LOCATION:** OAKLEIGH BARRACKS (Offr/Sgt Messes)  
1318 North Road,  
SOUTH OAKLEIGH (200 yds from Huntingdale Station)

**ENTRANCE COST:** \$ 10:00 per head (this includes Finger Foods and a Complimentary Door Prize Ticket)

**DRINKS:** At Mess Prices.

**OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION:** All members (both city and country) intending to sleep over and attend the Dawn Service at Oakleigh Barracks or the Shrine. Sleeping Accommodation has been organised for both MALE and FEMALE members. **DON'T FORGET TO BOOK A BED EARLY THROUGH THE SECRETARY, JACK WESTERNHAGEN (03) 9888 33596 FIRST IN BEST DRESSED.**

**DAWN SERVICE OAKLEIGH BARRACKS:** The RSM, 4 B.A.S.B. (WO 1 Mike LIDDELOW) has organised a moving Dawn Service followed by the usual "GUNFIRE BREAKFAST". Numbers for purposes of Catering are to be advised to the Secretary, Jack WESTERNHAGEN (03) 9888 3359 not later than 1000 hrs. TUESDAY 16th APRIL 1996.

**DISPLAY THIS ON YOUR NOTICE BOARD SO YOU WON'T FORGET**

## ANZAC DAY 1996 DAWN SERVICE - OAKLEIGH BARRACKS

- 0500 hrs. REVEILLE
- 0515 hrs. RETURN STORES TO STORES OFFICER
- 0530 hrs. ISSUE OF COFFEE/TEA/RUM WHERE DESIGNATED.
- 0555 hrs. Unit Associations to Assemble in mass under an ex-Servicemen's March Leader's control on the roadway outside of the Barracks "Q" Stores/Messes known as Sir Clive Steel Close.
- Spectators not marching are requested to form up on the WESTERN side of the Parade Ground where limited suitable seating will be provided.
- 0600 hrs. The Catafalque Party and Associations march onto the Parade Ground on the NORTH side facing the gymnasium where a Memorial Wall has been provided below the Flag Base.
- 0605 hrs. The Catafalque Party is mounted - then the Memorial Service will commence - this will include Wreath laying by respective Associations (who are to supply their own wreaths). There will be a Lead Singer again this year (it is suggested that battery torches be carried by those attending the Service to read the Service & Hymns.
- 0630 hrs. The Catafalque Party is dismounted - the Catafalque Party and Associations march off to the Dismissal Area (i.e. Assembly Area in Sir Clive Steele Close.)
- 0645 hrs. GUNFIRE BREAKFAST - Will be served in the gymnasium at NO COST THIS YEAR.
- 0750 hrs. Associations are to assemble in SWAN STREET near the Main Gate of Oakleigh Barracks prior to embarking on buses to the City.
- 0800 hrs. Troops of 4 B.A.S.B. participating in this year's ANZAC March as a full unit will be transported to the City by train. All RAEME Association members and their families are to board the Association's hired bus departing for our Assembly Area in the City for the 1996 ANZAC Day Commemoration March.
- 1200 hrs. (Approx) The Association's hired bus clearly identified will depart from Birdwood Drive after our Association has completed the March for the return journey back to Oakleigh Barracks for a Light Luncheon.

# CEREMONIES & TIMINGS

Extract from the INSTRUCTION covering the procedure during the Commemoration March and Ceremonies. Issued by Brigadier P. Davies AM, Chief Marshal



## ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATION MARCH AND CEREMONIES

MELBOURNE — 25th APRIL, 1996

### THE DAWN SERVICE WREATH LAYING THE ASSEMBLY THE COMMEMORATION MARCH THE COMMEMORATION SHRINE CEREMONY

#### DAWN SERVICE (6 a.m.)

**TIME TO BE IN POSITION** — 5.45 a.m.

**PLACE** — Within the barriers, facing the Shrine, on the northern side.

#### WREATH LAYING

1. Private Wreaths — 6.30 a.m.—8.15 a.m.
2. Official Wreaths — 8.15 a.m.—8.30 a.m.
3. Unit Wreaths — Progressively during March.

#### THE ASSEMBLY

**TIME** — Not before 8.15 a.m. at which time all traffic will cease.

**PLACE** — As shown on map overleaf.

#### THE COMMEMORATION MARCH

**LEADERS** Air Commodore Keith Parsons CBE DSO DFC AFC  
Wing Officer Doris Carter OBE

**START POINT** — Corner of Swanson Street and Flinders Street.

**START TIME** — 9.00 a.m.

**METHOD** — His Excellency, The Governor of Victoria, will view the March from a dais on the Forecourt of the Shrine.

- (1) Frontage — Ten abreast unless otherwise directed.
- (2) Route — St. Kilda Rd., through the Forecourt to the Dispersal Area between the flagstaffs and Birdwood Ave.

**COMPLIMENTS** — Special tributes will be paid to the memory of fallen ex-servicemen and women:

- (1) On reaching the top step of the entrance to the Forecourt, you are asked to march at ATTENTION.
- (2) Eyes right (and banners lowered) to the Eternal Flame.
- (3) Males in civilian clothes will remove headgear and carry over the left breast. Officers in uniform salute.

#### THE COMMEMORATION SHRINE CEREMONY

**TIME** — On arrival of the rear formation (approximately 12.00 p.m.)

**DURATION** — Not more than thirty minutes.

**ADDRESS** — A short address is to be given by His Excellency, The Governor of Victoria.

**MEDICAL** — St. John Ambulance Australia, in conjunction with Ambulance Service Victoria, will provide Aid Posts in all areas covered by the Assembly, March and Ceremonies.

**TOILETS** — See signposts in Dispersal Area.

**REFRESHMENTS** — Tea, coffee and biscuits supplied by Bushells will be prepared and dispensed by the Salvation Army from the Dispersal Area at the Shrine, from 9.30 a.m. until the conclusion of ceremonies.

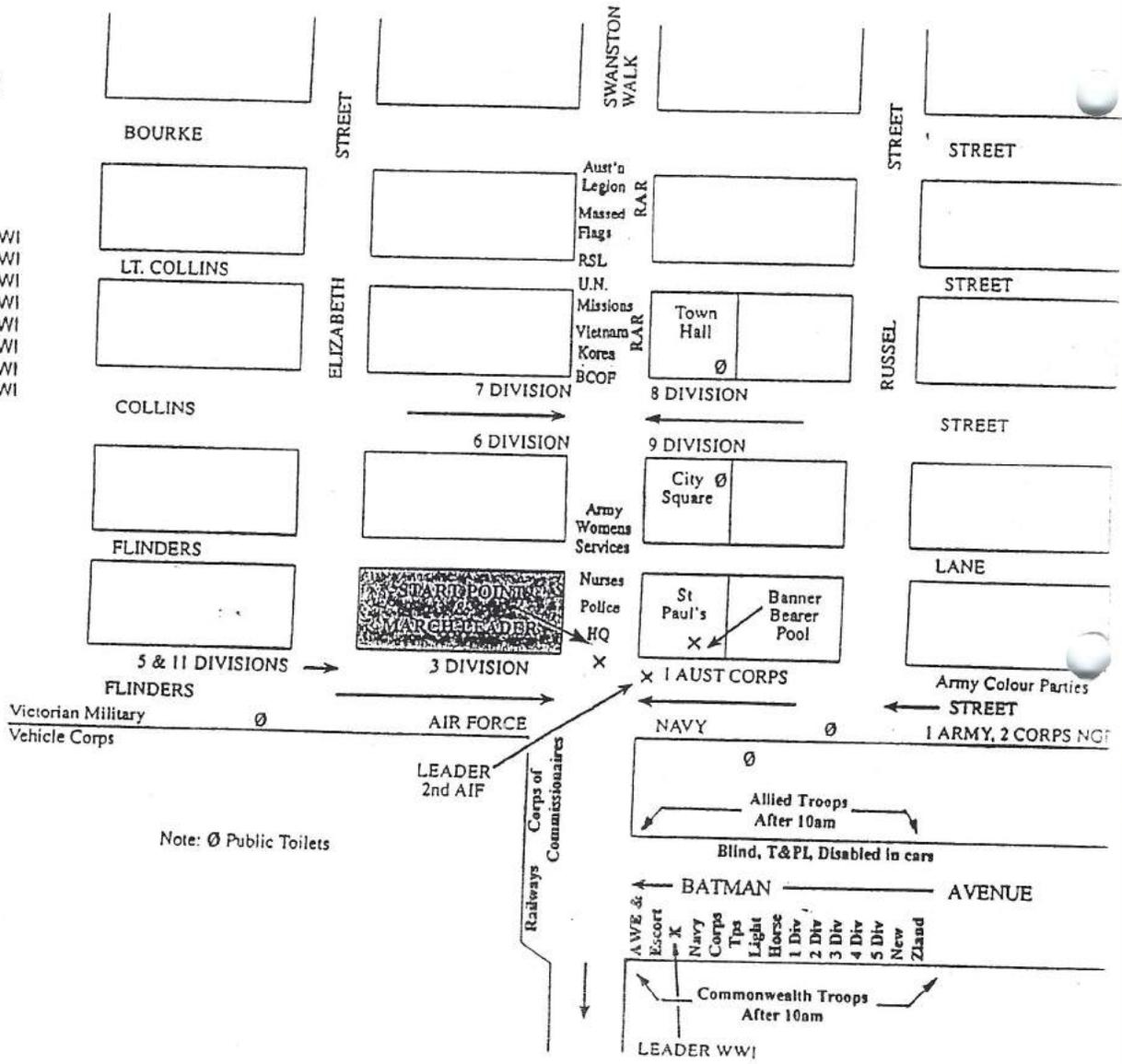
#### WEAR A HAT!

**CANCER** — Exposure to the sun can cause skin cancer. Our Fathers knew that apparently, as they invariably wore a hat. It's our Anzac legend we seem to have forgotten. Protect yourself and at the same time set a good example to your Grandchildren when they see you in the Anzac March BY WEARING A HAT.

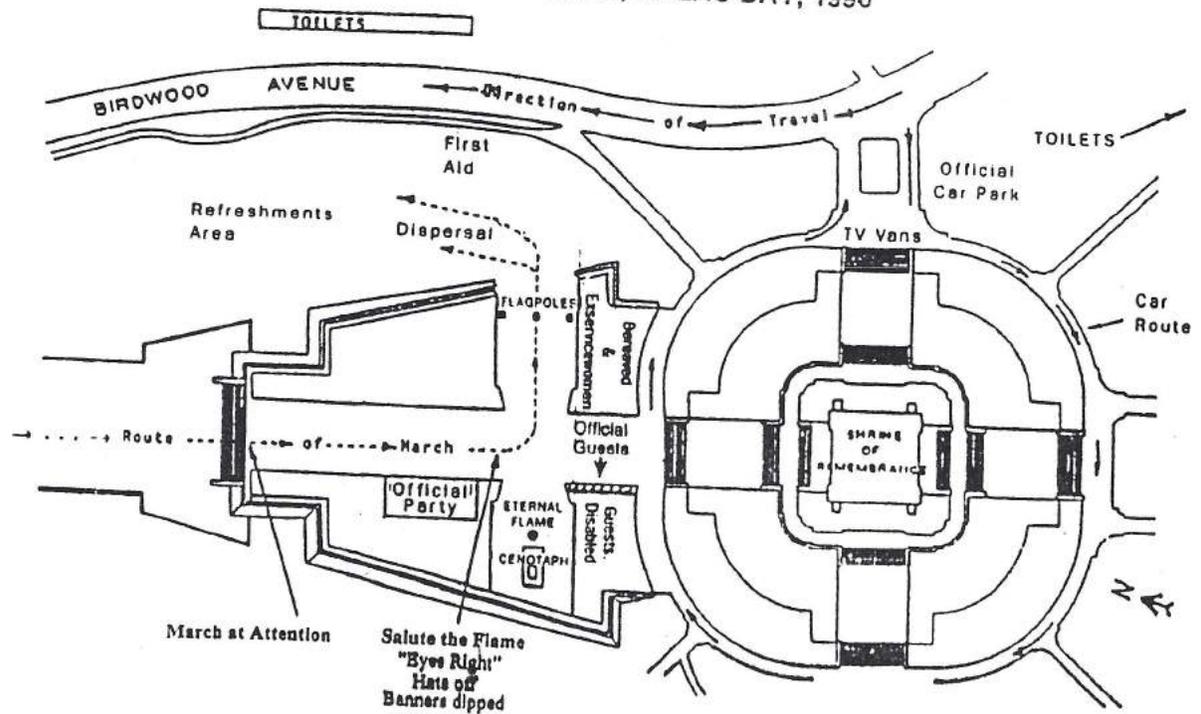
# ANZAC DAY - ASSEMBLY PLAN - 1996

## ANZAC DAY 1996 ORDER OF MARCH

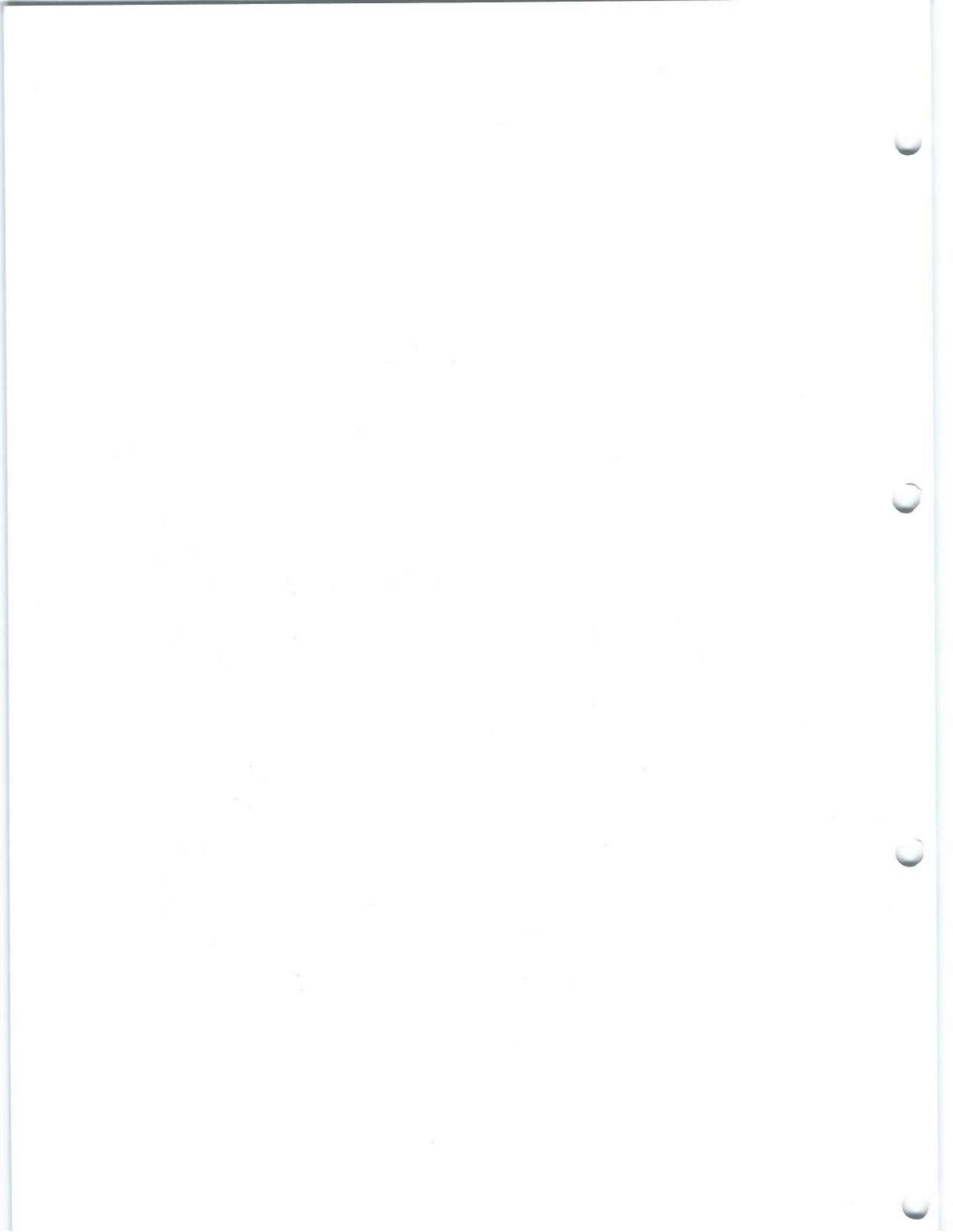
- Headquarters
- Police Ex-servicemen
- Blinded Ex-servicemen
- Disabled in cars
- Australian White Ensign
- Royal Australian Navy
- Corps Troops, incl AFC
- Light Horse
- 1 Division
- 2 Division
- 3 Division
- 4 Division
- 5 Division
- New Zealand Section
- Army Women's Services
- Railways Ex-Servicemen
- Corps of Commissionaires
- 21 Squadron RAAF
- RAAF & WAAAF
- Army Colour Parties
- 1 Corps HQ & Units
- 9 Division
- 6 Division
- 7 Division
- 8 Division
- 3 Division
- 5 & 11 Divisions
- 1 Army, 2 Corps, N.G.F.
- RAN, MN & WRANS
- BCOF
- Korea & South East Asia
- WRAAF
- RAAF Vietnam
- Army Vietnam
- RAN Vietnam
- United Nations Missions
- Returned & Services League
- Massed Australian Flags
- Australian Legion
- Commonwealth Forces
- Allied Forces
- March Staff
- Victorian Military
- Vehicle Corps



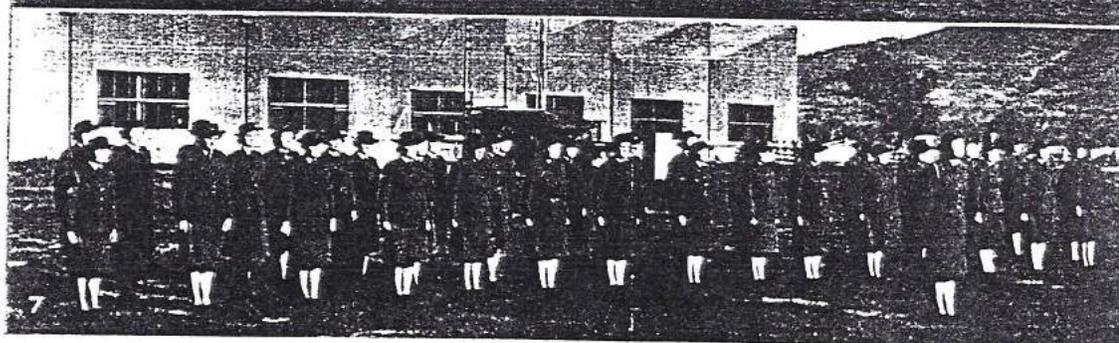
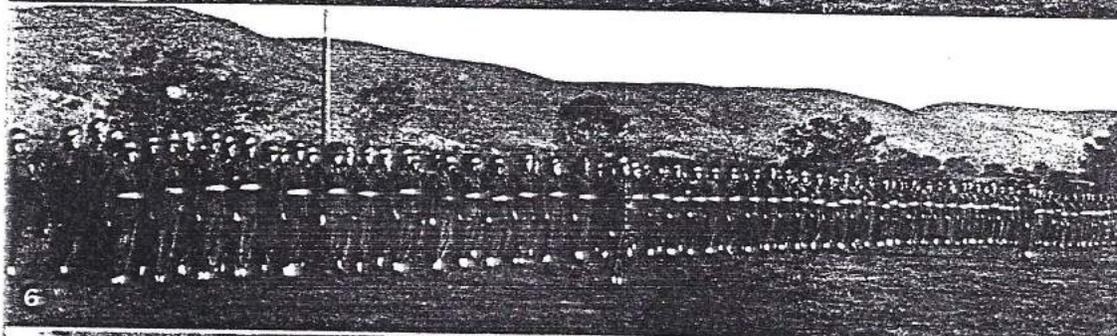
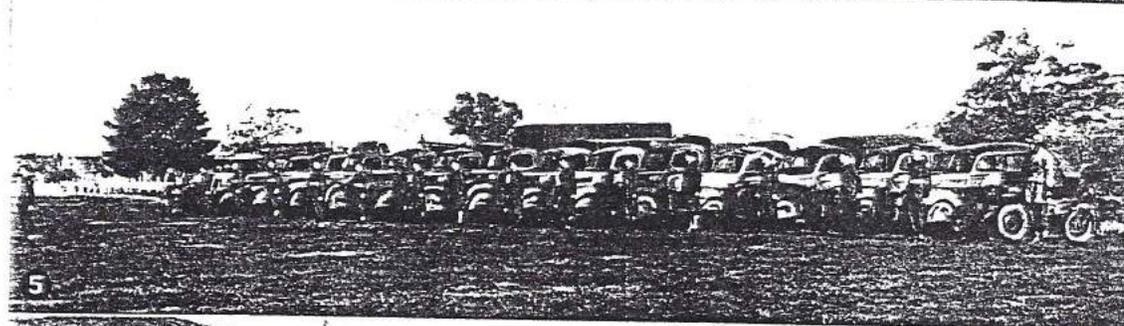
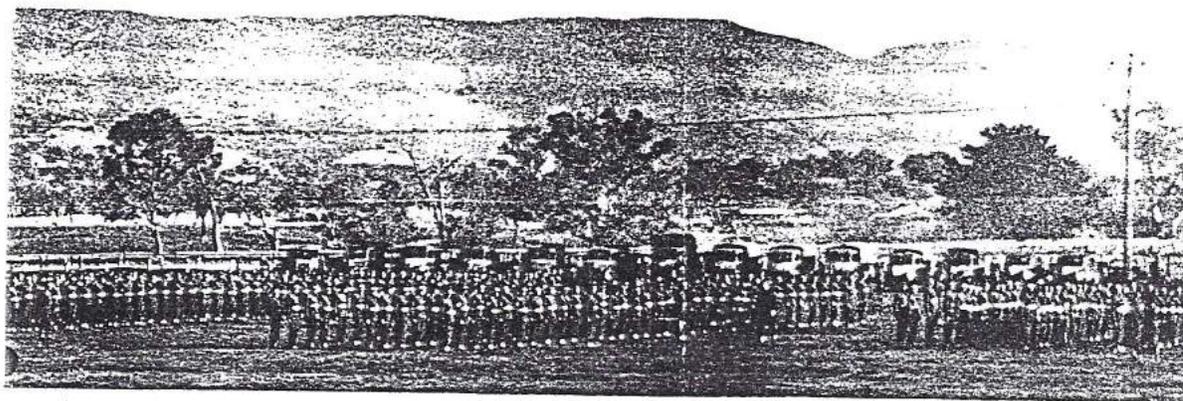
## SHRINE AREA, ANZAC DAY, 1996







# BANDIANA 1945



3 A and B Coy 4 Tank Coy 5 Transport 6 Vehicle Coy 7 A/W A C

Photograph is by courtesy of Cpl Frank Speed who was attached to HQ 2/4th Army Base Wksp and to Cfn Keith Davis owner of the photograph and the Unit Photographer. Keith later transferred to the Historic Photographic Unit with the rank of Sergeant.

Member's  
Profile



ELIZABETH ANN COLDICUTT  
(Nee LACEY VF 508771)

Elizabeth was born on 9 April 1924 in Ringwood to her Montessori trained Kindergarten teacher mother, Helen Harper (nee Hughes) and her father ex-Captain C.L. Lacey M.C., 29th Infantry Battalion, 8th Brigade, 5th Division A.I.F. a WW1 Soldier Settler ("cocky-farmer": wheat and sheep in the Southern Mallee, 2 miles from Watchupga).

Elizabeth's childhood was very happy. Already able to read and write when she began to ride to school, aged six. Elizabeth enjoyed her Primary schooling at State School No. 3380 Watchupga initially in what is now year 8 - in a one-teacher school with an enormous enrolment of about 14 students, from Grades I to VIII.

In Grade VIII, Elizabeth won a Junior Government Scholarship, an R.S.L. Scholarship, and three Residential Scholarships - to Girton (Bendigo), Fintona, and Anglican C.E.G.G.S. Firbank as a Boarder for four years. On Matriculation, in 1942, Elizabeth won both a Free Place (unbonded in any way) to the University of Melbourne (Victoria's only University then) and again, a major Residential Scholarship - this time to Janet Clarke Hall, (Women's Section of Trinity).

At the news of the loss of H.M.A.S. "PERTH", (months after the actual event, 28.2.1942), Elizabeth aged 18 years and at the end of her Fresher Year Examinations,

joined the Australian Women's Army Service (A.W.A.S.) After a mere two-weeks 'Square-Bashing' at the Initial Training camp (A.W.A.S.) at Darley (near Bacchus Marsh) VF 508771 Lacey joined the Second Intake of female Radar Mechanic Trainees, of which there was a total of only 48 girls. There were two Intakes a year apart, with 24 Entrants in each Intake, 4 girls from each of the 6 States (in those days, the Northern Territory wasn't counted as a State. 6 months training at East Sydney Tech, Ultimo, there they were trained by civilian teachers, finishing on what they called Transceivers or Tank Sets, which were the forerunners of what are now call CB radios.

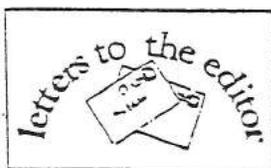
This was followed by another 6 months at Ingleburn N.S.W. where they were trained by British Army Dunkirk veterans from R.E.M.E. During 1943-45 Elizabeth was posted to Cairns, to her delight - it was as close to hostilities as non-Nursing female personnel could be sent at that time. Her responsibilities were the Ack-Ack Battery's G.L's, and the Searchlight Stations. Searchlights were scattered in the bush, and all positions designed for maximum protection of the vital Cairns Airstrip.

In 1945, at her own request, Elizabeth trained as a 3-ton truck driver, and again, alone, nearly lost her vehicle (a 12 CWT Ute) in the Brisbane River on V.P. Day since the over excited civilians decided so small a driver could be intimidated and military vehicles weren't needed any more, anyway, since "the war was over".

Before the Academic Year began in 1946, Elizabeth was posted South and spent some months as the Broadmeadows A.E.M.E. Wksp's C.O's driver before her discharge, and returned, under C.R.T.S. to the University of Melbourne, graduating in Philosophy and English at the end of 1947.

During 1948-51, Elizabeth was employed as a Film Librarian at the Melbourne State Film Centre with Realist Film Association (1948-55).

Elizabeth joined the RAEME Association (Vic) Inc. in 1993.



TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350

7 Aug 1995

Dear Jack,

Just a few lines to let you know I am just about settled in sunny TOOWOOMBA, QLD. I am working at Army Logistics Management Squadron at Oakley, which is about 30 k's West of Toowoomba.

My wife Merrilyn and the kids are enjoying the new life style, which is relaxed and country. No Friday night shopping is a bit of a shock.

I have received the "Lightning Flash" and had a good read (3 times). Nice to see some names of old friends and remember old times. Please say hello to all the ladies and gents of the Association.

Bye for now.

Allen FREETH

\* \* \* \*

BALLARAT VIC 3350

2 Nov 1995

Dear Jack,

Have just finished reading the latest "Flash" and it brought back some memories.

First was Barbara Trelloggen's letter that took me back 15 years.

It was a Training Night and the Cadre Staff used to have an hour or two for Tea Break, then back to the Depot for the Reserve Element. As I was walking up Chapel Street I caught up with Tony 'Troggs' and we got into conversation about the Church next to the Depot.

We noticed that the wrought iron front gates had been hit by something and was at an angle, so we decided to fix it.

it whilst I tightened up the hinges with a spanner I had with me, (Doesn't every Bluebell carry a spanner?). That was the last time I saw him. He went on a course to Pucka a week or so later . . .

Second memory was Alf Keever's letter. For that we have to go back over 40 years, which is more than 4 Decades in the old currency. Joe Higgins dozing on the Bull Dozer, myself with about 50 or so Potential Tradesmen slaving in the dust and heat, shifting rocks and barrow loads of dirt, under the watchful eye of the RSM from the Sgt's Mess window.

I think we all dreamed of the day when we could be allowed through the hallowed portals of the 'Snake Pit'. It must have been naked ambition the kept us going.

Yours,

Tiny HEPBURN

\* \* \* \*

HOPPERS CROSSING Vic.3029

5 Dec 1995

Dear Bruce,

This short note is to let you know how much we at Table 9 enjoyed our afternoon at Chapel Street on 2.12.95. In fact all those whom I spoke to at the function agreed it was an A1 turnout and hopefully one that could become an Annual event.

Ken KERMONDE

Life Member

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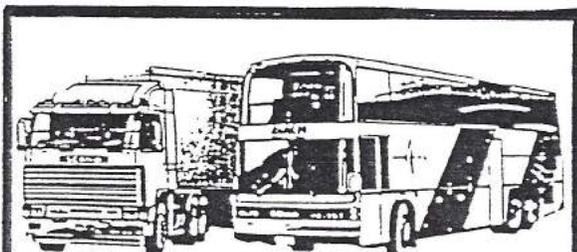
ANZAC Day a time to reflect (Cont. from P. 1, Col 2.)

Australia would suffer if Britain lost.

The reasons for our entry into WW II were almost precisely the same, although they changed as it became apparent Australia could not rely on the Empire for its security. There, too, Australians became aware of themselves as having developed beyond Colonialism. Yesterday (23.4.1993) the Prime Minister Mr. Keating, launched McCormack and Nelson's book, which argues the Burma Railway shaped the Australian State just as Gallipoli had. Australian POWs met and dealt with Asian peoples (not just the Japanese) as no other Australians had, were themselves changed by the experience and returned to Australia with an outlook that could only be called Australian. "The Australian prisoners seem to have been beneficiaries of those characteristics of nationalism they most hoped would transfer from the Diggers of World War I to themselves," the Authors wrote.

Enlarging on this theme, Mr. Keating said the POWs "also saw the British Empire as few Australians had ever seen it, and it led a lot of them to conclude that we Australians had evolved into a different race". ANZAC Day is a fitting time to reflect on that continuing evolution.

(Courtesy of AUSTRALIAN April 24-25, 1993.



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## ROVING REPORTER'S JOTTINGS . . .

SENIOR NCO'S & WO's DINNER - Recently I attended the Senior NCO'S & WO's Dinner at the Bandiana Sgt's Mess, and had a great time. I was accompanied by John Lee, Jack Westernhagen and Peter Cartledge. The official guests being Colonel (now Brigadier) Ross Grant and Brigadier Conrad Ermert.

During various addresses by both gentlemen they talked about many changes about to take place with the Army and more particular RAEME in general during the coming years. We will keep our members abreast of changes as we see various reviews coming through.

The most apparent review recently was for all W.O. Class 1 positions in the ARA. We have been informed that this review was conducted in 3 phases.

FIRST - A desk audit was carried out with the intention of identifying W.O. 1 positions requiring more detailed justification, the process identified 356 Army positions - of these positions 69 were RAEME.

SECOND - Involved Heads of Corps, units and Commands - reviewing positions in detail and justification on positions that should be retained.

THIRD - This phase involved a meeting at which all 'Stake Holders' presented their justifications and final recommendations were made.

How did RAEME end up? Of the 69 positions identified - DEME-A recommended that 8 be downgraded and 1 be Civilised. Therefore our nett loss is 9 W.O. 1 positions. Fortunately, within this review RAEME suffered relatively lightly, the Director being pleased with the outcome.

This is only a brief extract of the overall review and as mentioned RAEME at this point, would appear from various reports and writings, fared well. RAEME soldiers will continue to have significant opportunities to achieve the rank of W.O. 1. However, some trades will appear to have reduced promotion opportunities as a consequence of this review. Nethertheless, it is important that we are not complacent, as further reviews are certainly on the horizons with progression of time.

\* \* \* \*

CLOSURE OF STURT STREET RACT DEPOT - During December '95, my wife Sandra and myself attended a reunion at the RAASC (now RACT) Depot in Sturt Street, Sth Melbourne. I joined RAASC in 1958, later transferring to RAEME. The reason I mention this is that many RAEME soldiers and officers served in this Depot over many years as Workshop or RAEME Attached personnel.

This Training Depot was established in 1902 as a Service Corps unit. The first training there being "Hathe Tractor" Courses. Sturt Street Depot was the first AASC Centre, before it moved to Puckapunyal. Sturt Street Depot became the hub of all AASC/RAASC/RACT activating in the Melbourne Metropolitan area. The last RAEME units left this Depot in 1970, the units were 15 & 33 Tpt Coy RAASC Wksp's respectively, both of these units I served with prior to returning to Chapel Street in the early '70's.

It was a sad day for many as the Depot officially closed in February 1996, to make way for the new underground City By-Pass. Thank you to the RAASC/RACT Association for organising that memorable day.

\* \* \* \*



On April 21st 1996, Melbourne's magnificent REGENT THEATRE will finally reopen its Box Office after almost 30 years.

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Reserve Tickets are available to Group Bookers for performances Monday to Thursday at 8pm, for Wednesday Matinees at 1pm and Saturday Matinees at 2pm. Further details on costs will be made available on the 24th April 1996 at our Annual Association's Reunion and repeated in the July edition of "The Flash".