



# SAPPERS ASSOCIATION (NSW) INC

ABN: 62 163 057 132

NEWSLETTER

## UBIQUE



Patron: Colonel Sandy MacGregor MC RFD (Retd)

December 2018

### Preview of 2019 Calendar Highlights

- Wed 6 Feb – Sappers Quarterly Luncheon – York Club
- Wed 13 Mar – Executive Committee Meeting – Burwood RSL
- Sat 13–Sun 14 Apr - Sappers' Autumn Slosh (notice attached)
- Wed 25 Apr - ANZAC DAY
- TBA - Blue Mountains Memorial Hike
- Wed 1 May – Sappers Quarterly Luncheon – venue TBC
- Wed 12 Jun – Executive Committee Meeting – Burwood RSL
- Wed 7 Aug – Sappers Quarterly Luncheon – venue TBC
- Sat 24 Aug Annual General Meeting – Burwood RSL
- Sep TBA – Executive Committee Meeting – Burwood RSL
- TBA - 45<sup>th</sup> Sappers Annual Dinner
- Wed 6 Nov Sappers Quarterly Luncheon – venue TBC



### President's Message

G'day and welcome to this Summer edition of the Newsletter.

2018 has certainly been another busy year for the Association, where our membership has been involved in a number of activities that have promoted the Sapper *esprit de corps*.

I am grateful to all those members who have supported and contributed to the various Association activities throughout the year.

I am particularly appreciative of my fellow executive members John Hanley, Sjouke Havenaar, Jeff James, David MacLaurin, Warren Page and John Ray (and Joe Zahra until the AGM) for their unfailing support and guidance in the planning and conduct of a variety of events in 2018. These events have included the Sydney ANZAC Day march, the final Sydney Reserve Forces Day parade, Sappers Annual Dinner and

Sappers' Quarterly Luncheons. The Luncheons are coordinated by John Pritchard – thank you, John.

Our September 2018 Newsletter announced the appointment of WO1 Geoff Kidd as the new Association Sergeant Major. As promised, please refer to WO1 Kidd's profile, elsewhere in this publication. We are lucky to have someone of his calibre to serve in the ASM role.

A number of you may have had the opportunity to attend events associated with the Invictus Games in Sydney. I certainly had the pleasure of being a spectator to various sporting events and the closing ceremony on 27 October 2018. It was with pride that I observed members of the 5<sup>th</sup> Engineer Regiment performing various security and hospitality tasks around the Games precinct. I was especially impressed by one of our Committee members, LCPL David MacLaurin, who assisted our Governor General distribute Games medallions to competitors during the closing ceremony.

We have been very fortunate to have John Hanley liaise with the command group of 5<sup>th</sup> Engineer Regiment to arrange several Regimental Dinners during 2018 (a first). John has always applied much dedication, time, energy and expertise to arrange these successful events over many years. A separate report on the Dinners is located elsewhere in the Newsletter.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Engineer Regiment exercised its Freedom of Entry to the City of Penrith on Remembrance Day 2018. The Commanding Officer, LTCOL Renee Kidson, led an impressive troop formation which upheld the high standards of the RAE throughout this ceremonial event. Congratulations to the CO, RSM WO1 William Lynch and all the participating members of the Regiment for such a wonderful display of Sapper skills, witnessed by thousands of spectators at the Penrith Paceway. During the Penrith commemorations, a moving poem titled "The Armistice Bell" was

recited by its author, Mr Tomas Hamilton. The poem is reproduced later in this Newsletter with Tomas' kind permission.

Our executive would very much welcome younger and serving Sappers' future contributions to the Association's management and activities. We rely on you for the Association's long-term viability.

Please feel free to forward this Newsletter to others you think might be interested in the Association or our upcoming activities and events.

I would like to wish each of you and your loved ones a Joyous Christmas and Peaceful 2019, whether at home or abroad.

Don't forget the reason for the season.

Sincerely, Brian Malouf

## From the Treasurer's Desk

Over the past few weeks our annual Sapper's Dinner and Regimental Dinners have been held in Sydney, Canberra and Newcastle.

Our Association was the collection point for the dinner fees. Attendance numbers at these 3 functions totalled well over 200, which is a very pleasing result.

At the time of writing this, not all accounts have been presented for the dinners, so I am unable to comment on the final financial result but suffice to say all indications are that costs will be covered.

I only attended the Sydney event which was a great night at the new venue Brighton Lakes Recreation & Golf Club.

On our membership side it is pleasing to report we gained 2 new members since our last Newsletter.

Several of our member's attended the November Sapper's lunch at the Redfern Continental restaurant organised by John Pritchard. An informal get together, good company, good food and cold beer. A very enjoyable afternoon.

## Annual Sappers & Regimental Dinners

### 5 ER 1<sup>st</sup> Regimental Dinner – Sydney

The Sydney dinner combined the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Sappers Dinner with the first of the 5 ER Regimental Dinners. It was held at the new location

of Brighton Lakes Recreation & Golf Club in Moorebank. From all accounts this was a great success with 92 people attending.

At the dinner the Brian Malouf thanked Ken Duncan for his distinguished service in the role of ASM, which after many years of service, he has handed over to WO1 Geoff Kidd.



As is customary, the Annual Sappers Excellence award was presented to this year's very well deserved winner SGT La Rosa by our Patron COL Sandy MacGregor.



### 5ER 1<sup>st</sup> Regimental Dinner - Canberra

This dinner was held at the Ainslie Football Club, and the dining President, MAJ Chris hosted a fantastic night. Great venue and great people. It was really well supported by the serving members within the Canberra Region.



There was a number of farewells conducted, which were celebrated by the REGT. The people thanked for their service and who are moving on were:

MAJ Chris Conwell. Posted to UNSWR.

WO2 Jim Davey. Posted to SUR.

WO2 Luke Burden. Posted to SME.

### 5ER 1<sup>st</sup> Regimental Dinner – Newcastle

This dinner was held at the Mixed Spice Thai Restaurant which is located within the Newcastle United Club in Adamstown.



A total of 67 people attended this function which was a great success with a good time being had by all.

## Sappers' Quarterly Luncheons

These luncheons are organised by John Pritchard and are a wonderful opportunity for Sappers to get together for a yarn, meal and some liquid refreshment.

The next luncheon is:  
Wednesday, 6th February 2019 12:30pm  
99 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Phone John (0411 107 445) to let him know if you are planning to attend.

## Sappers' Autumn Slosh

Brian Malouf has again offered the use of his Blue Mountains semi-rural home on Sat/Sun 13/14 Apr 2019 for members to get together for a BBQ, campfire, sing-a-long, camp-over and, of course, the obligatory game of Slosh.

Everyone is welcome. Please refer attached flyer.

## Membership

We have great pleasure in welcoming Adam Davis and Miles Foster to our membership. Please join us in extending a warm welcome to them!

## Freedom of the City of Penrith

On the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month, 2018, 5 ER exercised their right of entry, entrusted to them by the mayor of Penrith, Ross Fowler, to march through the city of Penrith, banner flying.



From the Paceway, the column marched to the Mayor Ross Fowler's rostrum, only stopping once in order to respond to the ceremonial challenge by the armed civil authority of the NSW Police force.



On returning to the stadium at the Paceway, at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, the significance of the moment was encapsulated by a reading of a poem by Tomas Hamilton:

## THE ARMISTICE BELL

We all lay down our tools of trade, to become the stuff of lore

The first time as a nation, we sailed away to war  
We'd all be home for Christmas, we had no cause to fear

But what they didn't tell us, was Christmas in what year

Gallipoli came and went and months turned into years

While back at home our memories, were recalled with loved one's tears

We buried comrades where they lay, under foreign sod

A tragic epitaph that said, "A soul known only to God".

We thought of home so far away, for our families we did yearn

Little did we realise, sixty thousand would not return

And those of us who had been spared, would shun our future fame

For deep down in our souls we knew, we'd never be the same

We battled on from Pozieres, to the quagmire of the Somme

At Passchendaele, we asked ourselves, how much longer we could go on

We were stunned and shell shocked, from the thunder of the guns

As we stumbled on through history, a nation's tragic sons

We were different denominations and many a prayer was said

But we had been forsaken, the wounded, sick and dead

Still we fought right through the gates of hell, and into the demon's den

And when at last peace was restored, we were down to half our men

We haven't learned from past mistakes, to one thing we are blind

Man can conquer seas and mountains, but can't live with his own kind

If you learn this lesson, only time will tell

As our ghosts recall, the mates who died, to the toll of the Armistice Bell

TOMAS HAMILTON 5/9/2017

A poignant way for Sappers to remember the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conclusion of the Great War.

## Presenting our New Association Sergeant Major

Warrant Officer Class One Geoffrey Kidd enlisted into the Australian Army Reserve RAE corps on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 1977, 1 Troop 5 Field Squadron 4 Field Engineer Regiment at Monash Road Depot Gladesville. Completed Basic Recruit Training November 1977.



Promoted to Lance Corporal 14<sup>th</sup> October 1978 and on completion of promotion courses was promoted to Corporal 14<sup>th</sup> August 1985.

4FER was disbanded to form 8 Combat Engineer Regiment 1<sup>st</sup> July 1995 and moved to Dundas.

On 11<sup>th</sup> September 1995 was posted to the School of Military Engineering Moorebank, on promotion to Sergeant, to Field Engineering Wing, moving to Operations Wing and Mine Warfare Wing.

In 1998 posted to 6 Troop, 26 Combat Engineer Squadron, 8 Combat Engineer Regiment.

Promoted to Warrant Officer Class 2, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2001, on completion of Subjects for Warrant Officer was posted to Sydney University Regiment 16<sup>th</sup> January 2006 as Company Sergeant Major, of A company, 2001.

In 2009 posted back to 8 Combat Engineer Regiment to 6 Combat Engineer Squadron as Squadron Sergeant Major.

In 2013 was posted to the Career Management Army, Career Advisory Group - Eastern Region as Career Advisor for RAE.

On 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015 promoted to Warrant Officer Class One, posted to 8 Combat Engineer Regiment, at Bullecourt Barracks, Adamstown as S7. In November 2017 8 Engineer Regiment was combined with 5 Engineer Regiment to form one Engineer Regiment in NSW.

Works at Taronga Zoo Sydney. He is married to Karen Linda Kidd.

## 10 Years Since 'Vic Fires Assist'

The 7<sup>th</sup> February 2009 also etched into our minds as 'Black Saturday', is widely regarded as the most aggressive bushfires in Australia's history.



Victoria, already suffering from severe drought, the land dry and parched, was best described by locals as a tinderbox waiting to blow. In the preceding days that lead up to Black Saturday, Victoria recorded consecutive extreme temperatures reaching up to 46°C, which were the highest since records began in 1859.

In total 173 deaths were recorded, 120 of which from a single firestorm with 2,030 homes & 3,500 structures destroyed. As many as 400 individual bushfires were recorded as burning on Saturday the 7<sup>th</sup> February.

In response to this event, the Army, led by 4<sup>th</sup>



Brigade established a Joint Task Force (JTF) known as JTF 662 – Vic Fires Assist. As a Sapper formerly with 8 ER, (now 5ER) I, like many felt compelled to help out in whatever capacity I could when I received the call. In all, about 200 Reservists from all over the Eastern states of Australia came together at short notice in order to render aid to Victoria's Police Force who were tasked with the gruelling job of individually checking the status of every affected abode in the wake of the fires.

As an Engineer, it wasn't long before our skills in Search, combined with experience in MOP 4 (CBRND suits) became a valuable asset to the effort, and we were often called upon to help train and advise on specific taskings.

Unfortunately, the reality of a find often brought with it mixed emotions at the grim discovery of an unfortunate soul who couldn't leave the area in time.

As a Reservist and an aspiring Visual Arts student, I was compelled to quite literally draw from my experience in Victoria, having returned with

sketchbooks and images of my time searching the ashen remains, I produced a series of watercolours for my final year at the National Art School.

The Paintings along with the sketchbook produced on deployment are now in the care of the Australian War Memorial, with some images also available to view online.

February 2019 marks 10 years since that dreadful day, and a time to reflect on what occurred during our time in Marysville, Kinglake, Healesville and other fire affected areas of Victoria.

Submitted by SPR Alexander Stanuga 1 Troop 5 ER

Links to the artwork at the Australian War Memorial:

<https://www.awm.gov.au/advanced-search?query=stanuga&collection=true>

<https://www.facebook.com/608262392543975/posts/1786521011384768/>

## Invictus: Unconquered 2018

What makes a warrior? Is it proficiency in the weapons of his trade? Or physical fitness and endurance? Or is it the use of aggression to succeed in the mission? All of these are components of what we imagine when we think of a successful warrior. But what happens when one of those is taken away? A Rifleman on the top of his game loses a limb in combat; a Seaman suffers a serious crush injury to his legs; a Pilot suffers PTSD and is unable to fly. Do these people lose their status as a warrior? In these cases, they cannot perform their previous roles. Without their bodies and minds doing what they tell them, they cannot be the warrior they were. These are the result of injuries sustained in the profession of arms: either in war, training, or civilian accidents. And too many of our veterans struggle with these issues daily.

During the month of October, a number of Engineers from the 5<sup>th</sup> Engineering Regiment, myself included, were able to participate in the

running of the Invictus Games held in Sydney Olympic Park.

### What are the Invictus Games?

The brainchild of His Royal Highness Prince Harry, the Invictus Games are an international Paralympic style competition for service personnel who have become wounded, injured or ill during, or as a direct consequence of, their service. 2018 was Sydney's turn to host, and over 500 athletes from 18 different nations and thousands of family and support staff descended on Olympic Park to compete in 12 different disciplines.

A veteran himself, Prince Harry realised that key components were missing in the rehabilitation of injured service personnel; a competitive goal to strain towards and the inclusion and mateship intrinsic to military service these veterans had been missing. The aim of the Invictus Games is to give a venue for recovering personnel to show that they are not bowed by their injuries despite the difficulties they bring and to be strengthened by the bond between fellow veterans.

### Joint Task Force 646

JTF 646 was the Operational name given to the members of Army, Navy, and Air Force who were supporting the running of the games. And honestly, the experience was better than any of us could have imagined. The chance to be there and support the competitors regardless of country and to meet and talk with such a wide variety of people from so many countries is a once in a career opportunity. This, we took with both hands. Every day the majority of the task force was out at Olympic Park cheering on competitors at events, talking and interacting with families and representatives from other armed forces, and presenting the medals to the winning competitors.

The medal presentation team was at the 'pointy end' of the operation. We were dealing daily with event staff, presenting medals to winners and escorting VIP guests. Sports stars, Members of Parliament, Royalty, 99 yr old WWII veterans, all



passed through our hands. However, across the two weeks the greatest experiences were with the competitors. Meeting and talking with them, realising that many are just like us. Seeing the courage and willpower of a triple amputee to run, row, and swim. Seeing the competitors cheering each other on to finish, pushing themselves to do things everyone said they would never do again.

They showed us the true spirit of what it means to be a warrior: to be resilient, to never give up, and to drive yourself to achieve the mission whatever the odds. It was an utter privilege to serve on this operation, and one I will never forget.

Submitted by SPR Stephen Baylis 6 Troop 5 ER

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Commemorative Hike

Early next year, several current and ex serving Sappers are planning to investigate the 'Engineers Track' around Mt. Victoria and Blackheath in the upper Blue Mountains.



Apparently in the 1850's there was an expedition lead by our forebears in the Royal Engineers over the mountains in order to investigate a possible rail line. The Zig Zag railway is one physical manifestation of the expedition, while other parts of the track may be in existence further to the East.

We will spend one night at the bottom of the escarpment near Govetts Leap before deploying to the 'Engineers waterfall' and rendezvousing at a pub in Mt. Victoria. You may wish to join us for all or part of the walk.

The last part of the walk from the Engineers waterfall to Mt Victoria may be appropriate for the less mobile. Our hike last year was in April, however, that month is looking very busy in 2019 for association members, so stay tuned for dates.

Contact David MacLaurin:  
[dmlaclaurin@gmail.com](mailto:dmlaclaurin@gmail.com) if you'd like to join us.

## Executive Meetings

We welcome all members who may wish to attend the Sappers Association Executive meetings. The next meeting will be held at Burwood RSL, on Wednesday, 13 March 19 preceded by a meal and drink at the Restaurant starting at 1800.

If you are planning on coming please let the Secretary know so that he can keep you advised of any last minute changes.

## Our Office Bearers 2018/2019

President Brian Malouf (9839 6129 W)  
Vice President John Hanley (0424 841 581)  
Secretary Sjouke Havenaar (9624 7689 H)  
Treasurer Jeff James (9533 5238 H)  
Committee John Ray,  
Warren Page  
David MacLaurin

Note: Any opinion expressed by any contributor is not necessarily the opinion of the Association or its Executive Committee.

## In Keeping With the Season:



## Did you know?

Santa's elves are actually subordinate Clauses.

When they are making toys, they sing "Love Me Tender."

That's why we call them Santa's little Elvis.

**Please Note:**  
**CHISTMAS IS CANCELLED**

**Apparently, YOU told Santa that you have been GOOD this year ...**



**He died laughing**

## SAPPERS' AUTUMN SLOSH (SAS) 13/14 April 2019

The Sappers' Association of NSW is keen to promote social activities that develop and maintain *esprit de corps* amongst its Members. Brian Malouf has offered the use of his Blue Mountains semi-rural home for a Sappers' get together, enjoy good company and food, tell yarns and sing songs (with appropriate vocal cord lubrication) around a campfire, sleep under the stars (or hoochie/tent) and escape suburbia. There will also be a compulsory game of "slosh" (a fun pool table game designed to invigorate participants!)

**Date** Sat, 13 Apr 19 (say, 1200h) to Sun, 14 Apr 19 (say, 1200h)

**Location** 235 Chapman Parade (1km north of Norman Lindsay's Gallery and 200m north of Rita Ave), Faulconbridge, NSW.

### General Idea

Sat 1200-1700 – arrive, afternoon tea, familiarisation, pitch tents (extreme wet weather plan – camp in garage).

Sat 1700-1800 – bash and shave your beret – under Graeme Armour's direction

Sat 1800-2000 – BBQ dinner

Sat 2000-2359 – campfire, sing-a-long/yarns, refreshments, "slosh", lights out

Sun 0800-1100 – hot and/or cold breakfast, settle "slosh" technical points

Sun 1100-1200 – pack up, farewells and depart.

**Catering** Brian to supply all food and beverages (cost \$25/head).

**Member to Bring** Tent/hoochie, sleeping bag, air bed, stretcher, folding chair, etc, as required.

(Brian can assist Members who have no camping gear – see return slip below).

Drinks (non-beverage) in esky.

Singing/yarn voices.

Beret (if required).

"Slosh" skills (or a willingness to learn and enjoy).

**Contact Brian** Tel: (02) 9839-6129 (work) (02) 4751 3094 (home – msg after 10 rings) Mob: 0416 293 910 (on the day).

**Spouses** Should spouses wish to travel to the Mountains with their Sapper Member, they could (individually or as a group) stay at the Faulconbridge Motel (Tel: (02) 4751 2194 or 4751 2100), visit Norman Lindsay's Gallery, patronise local restaurants, attend local events (visit [www.bluemts.com.au](http://www.bluemts.com.au) for details) and then collect the Member on Sun.

**RSVP Fri, 5 Apr 19** - please confirm your attendance by telephone, smoke signal, email: [brianandgail1@bigpond.com](mailto:brianandgail1@bigpond.com) or posting the return slip (below) to:

Brian Malouf

235 Chapman Parade

FAULCONBRIDGE NSW 2776

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Please tear off and post  
**SAPPERS' AUTUMN SLOSH**  
(SAS)

I will be attending the SAS on Sat/Sun 13/14 Apr 19.

Please find attached \$25 cheque/money order payable to "Brian Malouf"

or.

I will pay on the day (delete, as appropriate)

**Name** .....

### Telephone

Home.....Mob.....

### NOK Contact Details

Name.....Tel/Mob.....

### Special dietary needs (nominate)

.....

### Camping gear assistance required (nominate)

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