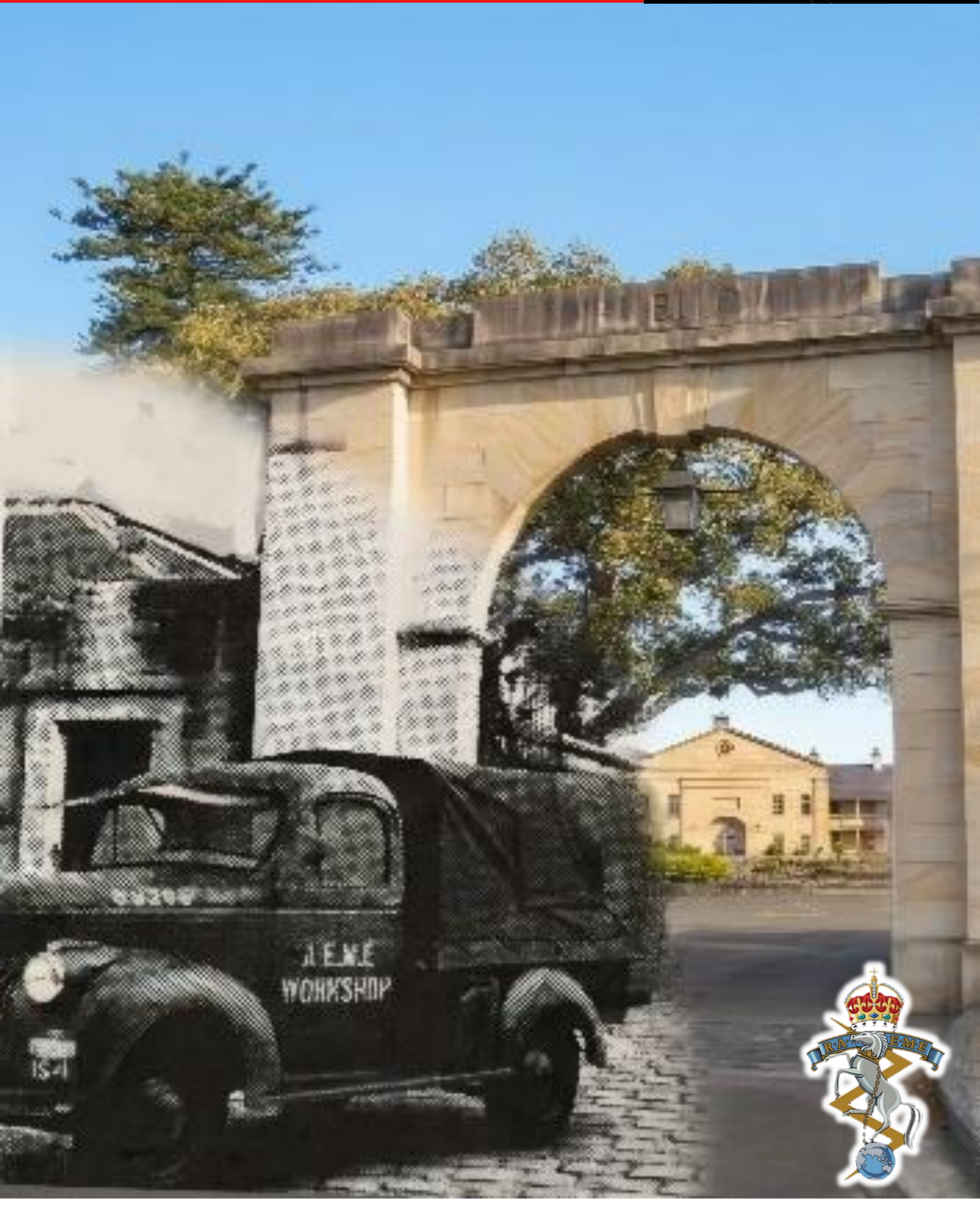
MAINTENANCE MATTERS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS
EDITION 10 – NOVEMBER 2026





VICTORIA BARRACKS SYDNEY

Maintenance in the Army's Family Home

For generations of Australian soldiers, technicians, and craftsmen, Victoria Barracks in Paddington has been far more than a military installation or a collection of 19th-century sandstone buildings. It has been the traditional family home of the Army's technical corps—a living, breathing workspace where the intangible traditions of military engineering were forged, tested, and handed down from one generation of tradesmen to the next. While iconic parade grounds and sweeping drill fields often capture the public imagination, the true heartbeat of the Barracks has always echoed from its workshops. Long before modern, sprawling logistics hubs dotted the Australian landscape, the foundational capability of the Army relied entirely on the ingenuity, sweat, and expert craftsmanship of the men who manned the benches, lathes, and forges at Victoria Barracks Sydney.



The Early Anvils: Forging a Heritage (1890s–1900s)



1849 Tracing of Victoria Barracks, showing the archaeological investigation area, circled red. (Source: NSW State Archives: NRS-138886-1-[X760] – Volume 5 Park 2-27)

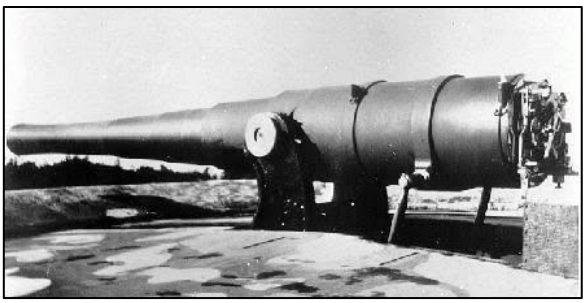
The military history of maintenance and technical support at Victoria Barracks Sydney stretches deep into the colonial era. Construction of the Barracks commenced in 1841 by the British Board of Ordnance on Paddington Ridge, chosen specifically for its strategic views overlooking Sydney Harbour and Botany Bay. Initially occupied by British regiments, the site transitioned to house the New South Wales Artillery as Australia's first permanent military force following the withdrawal of British troops in 1870.

As the defence needs of the colonies expanded, official plans for a dedicated military workshop were drawn up in 1891, opening its doors at Victoria Barracks Sydney by 1893. Life in those early workshops was defined by raw resourcefulness. Historic records, such as the *Log Book of the Corps of Armament Artificers* (see extract below) which began recording work done in January 1902, reveal an era where factory-fresh replacement parts were virtually non-existent.



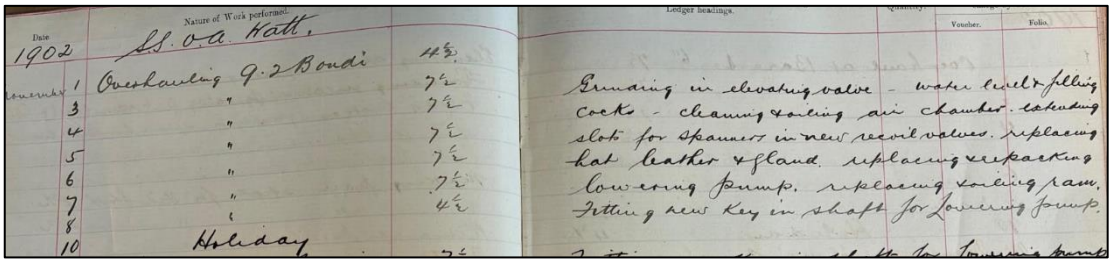
(Above) *Example NSW Arty Artificer uniform that SSGT Breakspear may have worn*

If a coastal defence gun—such as the heavy 6-inch or 9.2-inch Breech Loading (BL) disappearing guns (right) guarding Sydney Harbour—required a component, the artificers did not simply order it from a catalogue. Instead, they forged, cast, machined, and fitted every piece directly from raw metal.



9.2-inch Breech Loading (BL) disappearing gun

These early workshops maintained and serviced a remarkable array of equipment. While heavy coastal artillery remained a primary focus, the artificers also serviced field batteries, machine guns, and even minor infrastructure elements like local fire alarm systems, lawn mowers, and chaff cutters. So important was this work that as late as 1964, machinery and hand tools special to the heavy coastal artillery of the 1900s was still in Victoria Barracks and on Workshop accounts. Figures like Staff Sergeant (later Lieutenant) J.F. Breakspear anchored these early years. Breakspear managed the complex mechanical overhauls of garrison ordnance while navigating the unique administrative trials of establishing a unified Commonwealth defence force. These pioneering tradesmen were not merely fixing equipment; they were laying the cultural, procedural, and technical DNA of what would eventually evolve into the Corps of RAEME.



(Right) *Extract from "Log Book of the Corps of Armament Artificers (1902–early 1904)" showing work completed by SSOA Hatt. Kindly provided by the RAAHC Cutler Research Centre (SB00108)*

VICTORIA BARRACKS SYDNEY

Supporting Australia's Conflicts

Victoria Barracks Sydney served as the vital staging and support ground for troops deploying to many major historical engagements, including the Boer War and the First World War. Units raised and mustered within the Barracks relied heavily on their workshops and armourers to inspect, modify, and prepare their weapons, saddlery, and field equipment before embarking for overseas service.

In 1914[1], the Workshop was named as the 2nd Military District (2 MD) HQ Wksp and in 1916, as the 2 MD Ordnance Wksp. Victoria Barracks also housed a small arms range for proofing of weapons as well as the Commonwealth Artificial Limb Factory which supported injured veterans.



Boer War Veterans returning to Victoria Barracks

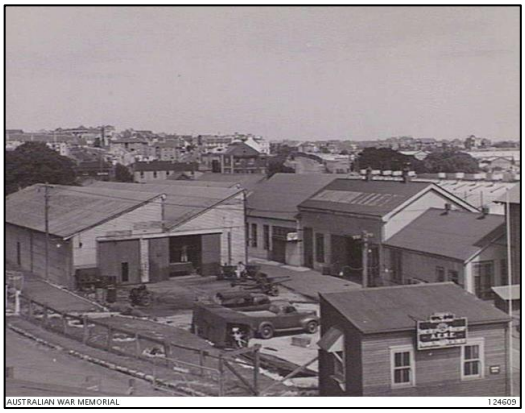


(Left) *Images captured from an Australian War Memorial Archived Repatriation Film.*

This film includes footage of artificial limb manufacture (left), arrival of amputees (right) and fitment of limbs at Victoria Barracks, Sydney during.

The Wartime Crucible: The AEME Paddington Detachment

When the outbreak of global conflict in 1939 plunged Australia into total war, Victoria Barracks transformed into a hub of mobilization and technical adaptation. As mechanization accelerated and specialized equipment flooded into service, the scope of the Barracks workshops had to evolve. The Victoria Barracks-Headquartered Eastern Command Ordnance Workshop was established in Dec 1941[2]. Assuming command of workshops in Leichhardt, Liverpool and Newcastle, in 1942 the workshop was renamed as the NSW Lines of Communication (L of C) Area Ordnance Workshop.



Sydney Area Workshop (AEME)

On the raising of AEME in 1942, the unit's name was shortened to the NSW L of C Area Workshop and then in October 1943, it became the NSW Area Workshop. It took command of several workshops from around NSW. The workshop also established three mobile armourer sections. In July 1944, Sydney Area Workshop (AEME) was formed and assumed control of even more units, including 3 Aust AA Workshop and Fortress Workshop, Sydney. Sydney Area Workshop was reformed as part of Sydney Workshop Company in 1973. In a period of transition, Sydney Workshop Company elements relocated to Randwick and then to Mascot, Botany Bay and Banksmeadow. In 1974, the Service Station moved to Banksmeadow. The workshop facilities in Victoria Barracks were removed or repurposed in 1979. In 1994, the workshop became a sub-unit of Sydney Logistics Company which formally closed in December 1995. This closure followed the merger of Army's Logistics Command with other Service logistics elements into Support Command Australia[3]. The Workshop's functions were then integrated into the Defence National Storage and Distribution Centre.

Whether teams were steam-cleaning grease from heavy iron, spray-painting anti-tank guns, or fabricating custom replacement parts under immense pressure, the Paddington Detachment proved that Victoria Barracks Sydney was the indispensable technical heart and home of Army maintenance during all conflicts since the late-1800s. Although unit names may have changed, the Victoria Barracks Workshop was the longest-standing permanent workshop in Army history.



The expansion and continued employment of skilled tradesman came at a cost during WW2. The Australian War Memorial's Roll of Honour records 217171 Sergeant Donald Frith Aitchison, and N201784 Craftsman Arthur Marie Jones, both members of Sydney Area Workshop, who died on 5 June 1945 and 01 Jun 1944 respectively. Both men were buried with full military honours at Rookwood Military Cemetery. Lest we forget.

[1] Historical records of the individual workshops and their titles vary, hence this account should not be considered as authoritative.
[2] Graham R. McKenzie-Smith, *The Unit Guide: The Australian Army 1939-1945*, 2018 Vol 5 of 6 (AWM 940.541294 M156u)
[3] Australian Army Occasional Paper, *Transforming Australian Army Logistics to Sustain the Joint Land Force*, October 2017

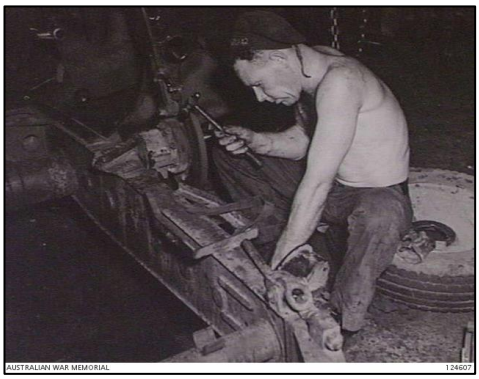
VICTORIA BARRACKS SYDNEY

Our people and equipment

Photographic records captured in the 1940s and preserved by the Australian War Memorial, immortalize both the NSW Line of Communications Workshop and later the Sydney Area Workshop in full swing, turning the historic courtyards and workshops of Victoria Barracks into an active production line of technical survival.S



Lieutenant P. Johnston *(NX103023), Detachment Commander of the AEME Paddington Detachment, managing workshop operations and administrative support*



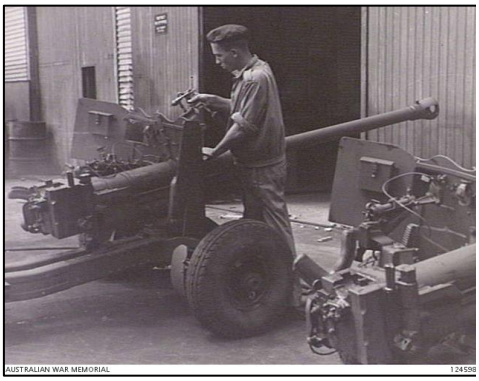
Craftsman J. Morgan *(NX92589) removing ball races from the axle stub assembly of a short 25-pounder gun.*



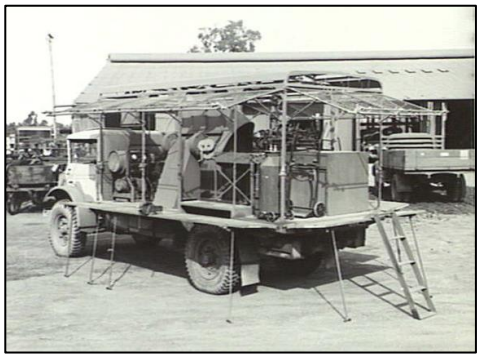
Craftsman R.C. Millett *(NX180729) utilised universal grinding machines and micrometres to ensure microscopic tolerances were met.*



SSGT M.F. Christie *(1),* ***CPL L.E. Gardner*** *(2)* ***and PTE E.M. Chidzey*** *(3) of the AWAS, alongside* ***LCPL L.F. Dyson*** *(4), coordinating repair orders in the Indenting Office.*



CFN P.W. Bowley *(NX206060) operating a spray gun to apply a protective finish to a quick-firing 6-pounder anti-tank gun..*



AEME Workshop mobile repair truck in Sydney, June 1943.



SGT W.G. Woolley *(NX103454) scraping paint from the barrel of a short 25-pounder gun prior to overhaul in the workshop*



CFN William John Thomas Walton *(NX139159)— operating a heavy lathe to fabricate vital repair parts.*



CFN P.W. Bowley *(NX206060) using a spray gun to apply a protective finish to a quick-firing 6-pounder anti-tank gun in the courtyard workshop at Victoria Barracks*

VICTORIA BARRACKS SYDNEY

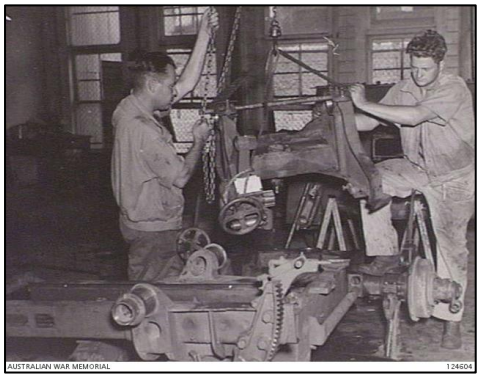
Our people and equipment continued



CFN Norman McNevin *(NX180476) using a micrometer to measure a diesel engine crankshaft main bearing on a 12-inch lathe.*



SGT Gamble *(NX108640)* ***and CFN Biddle*** *(NX150208) carefully dismantling the sight bracket of a 2-pounder anti-tank gun.*



SGT W.H. Edwards *(QX45402)* ***and CFN W. Amy*** *(NX171717) dismantling the saddle of a short 25-pounder gun.*



CFN Stafford John Andrews*(N156698) manufacturing a watch part on a jeweller's lathe at the NSW LoC Wksp (July 1943)*



SGT Malcolm Clyde Hendricks *(N186518) assembling a 3.7 anti-aircraft predictor at the NSW LoC Workshops (July 1943)*



SGT Maurice Alfred Rogers *(NX140141) checking and repairing electrical instruments at the LoC Wksp (July 1943).*



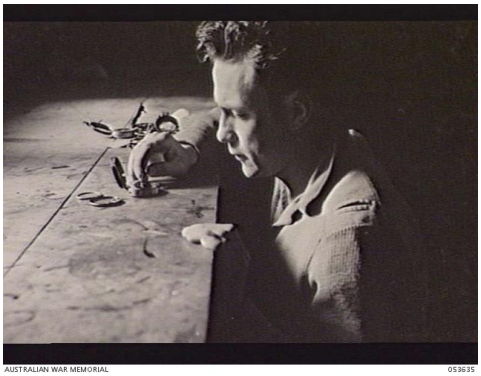
CFN Stanley B. Woods *(N261134) checking an oil unit of a Bofors gun at LoC Wksp*



CPL Reginald Kenneth Edwards *(N144600) manually calibrating a theodolite*



CPL Kenneth Coleman *(N237013) checking and assembling a No. 7 dial sight*



CFN Robert James Symons *(N24631) repairing compasses at the NSW Lines of Communication Workshops ((July 1943).*



SGT James Thomas Townsend *(NX143174) collimating binoculars after repair at the NSW LofC Workshops (July 1943).*



COL R. W. C. Campbell *(NX112065), Deputy Director of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (DDME) (Oct 1945)*

VICTORIA BARRACKS SYDNEY

The Living Memory of the Workshops

For the maintenance personnel who walked the grounds through the decades following the Second World War, Victoria Barracks possessed a distinct, irreplaceable working culture. UNSW-led oral histories known as the "Australians at War Film Archive" preserved memories of post-war servicemen. These records provide a vivid window into the Barracks during the 1940 through to the 70s



James "Jack" Vandam – **Vehicle Mechanic**. Following his service in field units and Light Aid Detachments (LADs), Jack Vandam found himself stationed at Victoria Barracks Sydney during the late 1950s as part of the Sydney Area Workshop, where his unit was tasked with vacating some of the historical spaces to restore the barracks to its traditional footprint. He recalled a mishap involving the corner of a desk which punched a hole straight through the back wall, uncovering a hidden storeroom sealed since the Boer War. Inside lay an untouched cache of historical artifacts, including old horse shoes, lancers' spears, wheelwright tools, and cannon hubs. Jack remarked "*Somebody in the dim dark ages didn't want to have anything to do with it. They just put a wall in*." He went on to state "*So Army audit came around because you know there was quite a lot of stuff in there. You know they wanted each and every horse nail counted and everything like, yeah like bloody hell. So, we donated everything to the museum before all that could take place and I finished up!*"



Sybil Spall – **Radar Mechanic**. Sybil Spall (née Oaks) enlisted in the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) in Jan 1943, shortly after turning 18. This followed an initial stint as a rural school teacher. Driven by a desire for adventure outside her small country town of Port Fairy, she volunteered for a rigorous six-month technical course in Sydney at Ingleburn Camp to learn radar physics and equipment maintenance. Despite initial anxieties and the gruelling nature of rookie training, she successfully qualified and went on to serve as a radar mechanic across various sites, including Victoria Barracks. During her time in Victoria Barracks, Sybil's horizons were vastly broadened through exposure to city life, cultural experiences, and lifelong friendships with fellow servicewomen. Reflecting on her transition from an inexperienced teenager to a technically skilled service member, she recalled: "*Instead of being called private, we were called craftswoman. And we had... a little tool badge, and they crossed over... we became members of the AEME... or RAEME*". She viewed her wartime service as a crucial, eye-opening chapter that fundamentally educated her and shaped her independence.



George "Rod" Goater – **Vehicle Mechanic**. Rod Goater returned to the Sydney Area Workshop following his return from Vietnam and his post-leave period in 1966. After driving back to Western Australia and then coming back east, he took on roles including running the vehicle floor and managing the Workshop's service station. He did so on promotion to SGT where he was responsible for servicing staff cars. His duties also included working on vintage Harley-Davidson motorcycles for the military police, often road-testing them around the scenic circuits of Albert Park Lake. Life at the barracks was not without its lighter, more opportunistic moments. Rod recounted an instance where an officer asked him to "bodgy up" a spark plug and scatter dust over a staff car that was about to go to auction. This would make it sound like a "chaff cutter" when started so the officer could successfully snap it up for a cheap price. Rod would also buy other vehicles from the vehicle in search of a profit. He stated: "*There used to be a car auction up the road and we used to go and buy up these second-hand cars for cheap Charlie and spend a bit a time on 'em, mainly cleaning them up and things like that like at the army service station and we'd tizzy 'em all up and shove 'em back in the following week's auction and make a 100% profit on 'em in most cases.*" He clarified *"I suppose there was the odd little bits and pieces of Army we might a been using but not a lot because I had to account for all the gear anyhow. But it was just the time because I was able to make my own time."*



Robert "Tommo" Thompson – **Armourer**. Following the completion of his tour in Vietnam, Tommo Thompson worked with the workshops at Warradale before being posted to Victoria Barracks Sydney, specifically to handle technical defect investigations. Drawing on his extensive engineering background, he was tasked with troubleshooting equipment, vehicle parts, and aircraft systems across the command. Tommo described being brought in to investigate a persistent ammunition issue plaguing the Air Force's Mirage fighter jets: "*The boss came and seen me, he was a Colonel. And come and seen me and said, 'They are having an ammunition problem and it should be right up your alley.' He said that they were getting a hell of a lot of stoppages in the Mirages and I knew they had Gatling-type guns in the Mirages. Any rate, and he said, 'I want you to go out to Maribyrnong and see if you can sort it out. It appears to be ammunition.' When I went out there I got all the measurements and everything like that and I measured all the ammunition up and the ammunition was all over sized. They are fired electrically, and what happens is they wipe around each barrel, and they just rotate and fire the weapon. And what was happening was that they would jam after they got a little bit warm because the base was too thick. So, I don't know how many rounds they dumped out on that. Sorted that out.*"

VICTORIA BARRACKS SYDNEY

Guarding the Barracks



Prior to Barracks security being managed by civilian contractors, RAEME members were regularly called upon to form parts of the Victoria Barracks Guard.

In 1960, the late Claude Palmer was a 101 Fd Wksp Pl Comd when his team were on guard duty. Claude recalled in a submission to the Corps History Project in 2013 that on one occasion, the Guard Commander was servicing his car at a vehicle ramp adjacent to the Officer's Mess, when an officious Duty Officer (RAInf) approached and admonished the (then) Lieutenant for being incorrectly dressed. Now the Standing Orders simply stated 'dress of the day'. The Guard Commander had taken the precaution of wearing his issued overalls, complete with pips, and responded that this was his RAEME 'dress of the day'! The following Saturday, the same Duty Officer phoned the Guard Commander and advised him to remove sheep from the Officers' Mess garden as they were eating flowers. The sheep took one look at the 101 diggers heading in his direction, and took off straight up the steps and into the dining room of the Mess! When asked what they should do, the Guard Commander replied: '*Carry on, our orders are to remove the sheep from the garden!*'. And so it happened that shortly after, the Guard was "invited" into the Victoria Barracks Officers' Mess, in hobnailed boots, to help relocate the sheep!

On another day, two children who were playing near the Guard Room failed to move when directed to do so by the Guard Sergeant. The SGT then persuaded them to enter the Guard Room to inspect the cells. Thus secured, the kids thought the whole thing a great game! Shortly after, a car pulled up at the gate. The driver was BRIG Tim Vincent, who asked if the Guard had seen his children. The Guard Commander replied that the Guard had persuaded them to play in the cells. "*Good*", said the BRIG, "*leave them there, my wife and I need some peace!"* Some 15 years later, the Guard Commander, now a LTCOL, when an Army Aviation Lieutenant appeared at his door. He was one of the children. He advised the Colonel "*Your troops were the best sitters we ever had!*"

Whenever the Corps' Colonel-in-Chief was in Sydney, RAEME personnel from the 2nd Base Wksp, were called on to mount the Victoria Barracks guard. During one Royal Visit in the early 1970s, then CFN Jeff Heron was on guard during a visit by Prince Philip. He was responsible for opening the Prince's car door on arrival to the Barracks. Jeff recalled "*The car was a bit too close to me when it pulled up, but I opened the door anyway, pulling it to my chest. This exposed my spit polished boots so that when Prince Philip exited the vehicle, he stood on one of them, making a mess of the shine. He was most apologetic! I was speechless – which was probably a good thing!"*

Whilst on duty as the Guard Sergeant in 1982, Chris Dufflield fondly recalled mounting the catafalque party at Martin Plaza and then marching through the city again at Hyde Park War Memorial. This was a regular activity that placed the Guard members on show to the people of Sydney. One memorable event from the actual guard duty occurred one night when a guard arrested an intruder. This unexpected visitor was subsequently handed over to the AFP! Chris also recalled a local chap who was colloquially known as "Curtsy Charlie". He would pass by the front gate several times each day, each time approaching the guard individually and bowing to them in an almost regimental manner. Curtsy Charlie's visits were always welcomed by the guard members.

Stories such as these reinforce the deeply personal connection Victoria Barracks members of all ranks have expressed.

RAEME Association NSW

The roots of the original AEME organization trace back to 02 Nov 1944, when a well-attended meeting in Melbourne established the Melbourne Division of the AEME Association. Although some viewed this as putting the cart before the horse since no federal body existed at that time, this was officially rectified on 03 Jan 1945, in Victoria Barracks Sydney with the founding of the Provisional Federal Council of AEME. However, the association subsequently struggled in the 1940s and 1950s as soldiers strongly identified with their individual wartime units rather than the Corps. Furthermore, as the Corps' title changed to RAEME in 1948, a perception grew that the older AEME Association name tied it strictly to World War II, leaving the NSW branch largely ineffective after 1946.

Decades later, Victoria Barracks Sydney served as the historical site for the NSW Association's revival when a public meeting was held in "P" Block on October 22, 1972. This saw the successful reactivation of the NSW Division of the RAEME Association. BRIG Cecil Jillett OBE (retd) was appointed President of the New South Wales Association. BRIG HLC Martins OBE (retd), Hon Col RAEME Eastern Command, chaired the meeting. Other office bearers elected were Vice President LTCOL Dave Black, Hon Secretary MAJ Dick Wearne, Treasurer WO1 Lionel Cunningham. Committee members included LTCOL Roley Wiltshire, WO1 George Jacobs, and SSGT LH Lawrence. The resurrected NSW Association grew steadily to 160 members by early 1974, expanding its activities across multiple units and messes.

"P" Block was symbolic because its walls have encompassed elements of RAEME over many years since the adjacent Artificers workshop came into being in the early 1900's. Victoria Barracks held also strong symbolic significance, as "L" Block's walls had housed RAEME elements, including HQ 2 EME Group.

VICTORIA BARRACKS SYDNEY

A contemporary workplace

Although the physical workshops have been removed, RAEME personnel maintained a presence in and connection with Victoria Barracks Sydney through a series of postings, courses, detachments, guards, conferences and many other Defence-related. With its deep historical roots, the barracks served as a backdrop for life's most significant milestones, from solemn funerals and memorials to celebratory events such as weddings and receptions.

Retired Major Ian Cook mounted guard at the Barracks as a Craftsman in 1990, but his service at Victoria Barracks continued when he was posted there as a junior officer in the early 2000s. In his posted role, Ian was responsible for managing the introduction of the Technical Regulatory Framework (TRF) into Land Command, Training Command and Special Operations Command. This role required him to travel extensively to units and sub-units in every part of the Nation for TRF implementation training, assessment of engineering change proposals and quality system auditing. Ian recalled "*Every time I returned to the Barracks, it truly felt like coming home. Serving at Victoria Barracks, Sydney, provided a profound sense of belonging. There was a sense that by serving there, you weren't just doing a job, but weaving your own story into the historical fabric of the modern military.*"



***CFN Ian Cook** on the Victoria Barracks Parade Ground between guard duties, 1990*

Ian's commander at that time was then-LTCOL Andy Adams. Andy was in command of the Maintenance Advisory Service (MAS) teams that were located in Sydney and Brisbane. Andy's posting to Victoria Barracks allowed him to coordinate operational and training requirements with the Land Command Logistics Branch, with whom he was collocated. Although the MAS teams were positively received by unit commanders, Andy received multiple invites to visit both the teams and the units during the MAS reviews to discuss the merits of their findings with unit commanders. Together, Ian and Andy worked to shape maintenance policy and standards for Land Command. What was clear then and presumably remains the case today is that equipment husbandry is a key capability enabler. Achieving a balance between military and technical training (individual and collective) and maintenance/repair tasking will remain an ongoing challenge for all involved.

An Irreplaceable Legacy

For over one hundred and thirty years, while strategy was drafted in high offices and headlines recorded the grand sweeps of military history, a quieter, essential pulse beat through the workshops, bays, and parade grounds of Victoria Barracks. Maintenance has never been a discipline of fanfare; it is a trade of devotion. It lives in the smell of grease and warm steel, the sharp ring of a hammer against iron, and the quiet expertise of tradespeople who measure duty in tolerances, reliability, and readiness.

Every piece of equipment that passed through the Victoria Barracks gates—from horse-drawn ordnance and early colonial field guns to modern armoured systems and complex electronics—carried with it an implicit contract: that those who went forward into harm's way could trust their gear because of the invisible hands that serviced it. They were the maintainers, the armourers, the technicians, the artificers, and the officers—the stewards of capability whose work was rarely written into battle diaries, yet made every victory possible.

To stand at Victoria Barracks Sydney today is to tread upon a foundation built not merely of sandstone and bluestone, but of generations of shared effort, mentorship, and quiet pride. Buildings can be reassigned, and operational units can be physically relocated to modern industrial parks, but a true family home carries an intangible soul forged by the people who lived, worked, and mastered their trade within its walls. The legacy of Victoria Barracks Sydney is etched into every lathe mark, every hand-forged bolt, the enduring memory of every craftsman who ever swung a spanner, every artificer who ensured our Army's equipment was operational, and every officer who supported our Corps' future within the Barracks.

More than a workplace or a strategic post, Victoria Barracks became a family home for generations of tradespeople and soldiers, binding them in a shared stewardship that extends far beyond bricks and mortar. As maintenance professionals looking back across more than a century of technical heritage, we are reminded that the true capability of the Australian Army has never resided solely in equipment specifications or paper logistics.



Victoria Barracks Sydney has always lived in the hands, hearts, minds, and character of those who kept the wheels turning—making the Barracks not just the spiritual home of our Army, but the family home of our Corps, as it will be, forever and ever.

OUR NEW CORPS PAINTING

On the 5th of November at the home of the Craftsman in Bandiana, ASEME proudly unveiled the framed edition of the new Corps painting during the annual Soldiers' Dinner. It was a remarkable experience for everyone in attendance, particularly our most junior Corps members.



Commissioned to bring our visual heritage into the 21st century, renowned artist Mr. Barry Spicer—who shares a long-standing affiliation with the ADF—took a foundational vision and our original Corps painting, *AFV Repair in the Light Green – Vietnam 1969* by Ken McFadyen, and created a powerful companion piece: *The Repair in the Mountains*.

While McFadyen's original work captured field repairs during the Vietnam War, *The Repair in the Mountains* pays homage to that legacy while depicting modern maintenance operations within a Middle Eastern operational landscape.

The inspiration for *The Repair in the Mountains* stems from the following poem:

The Repair in the Mountains
A Poem for the RAEME Corps Painting

Beneath the mountains, stark and high,
Where desert dust met burning sky,
A convoy paused upon its way,
Its fate dependent on that day.

A generator, spent and still,
Had halted strength and tested will.
The mission waited, time stood fast,
Until skilled hands could mend the past.

Around the vehicle gathered men,
Masters of repair, as always then.
With crane and cable, tool and care,
They faced the challenge waiting there.

One guided loads through dust-filled air,
With steady signals, calm and clear.
Another deep within the hull
Worked every fitting, checked each pull.

Above them traced a watchful flight,
A helicopter circling light,
Its shadow racing o'er the sand,
A silent guardian of the land.

The desert sun beat harsh and long,
Yet resolve remained unbroken, strong.
Hour by hour the work pressed on,
Through heat of day and nearing dawn.

Then came the sign all engineers know,
A thumbs-up from the depths below.
The engine answered with a roar,
Its voice rebounding shore to shore.

The mountains echoed iron song,
Proclaiming they could move along.
The convoy lived, the mission stood,
Because good soldiers did what they should.

No cheers were raised, no victory claimed,
No deeds recorded, none proclaimed.
Just knowing smiles and quiet pride,
From those who keep the force supplied.

As rotor blades turned westward bound,
And wheels cut tracks across the ground,
The desert settled, calm once more,
Its fleeting drama passed and o'er.

Yet in the sand and mountain light,
Remains the memory shining bright:
That every mission's path is paved
By those who repair, restore, and save.

Author Unknown

The newest version of our Corps Painting will be housed next to our current painting, being in the Officers' Mess, South Bandiana.

The Corps Shop will be making prints available, both framed and unframed, in the very near future. Further announcements will follow when these prints become available.

Mr Spicer will also have selected prints available via his website.

Please note that the image shown above is not for reproduction outside of the Corps.

OUR CORPS TODAY

The following report was extracted from an email provided by the Corps RSM on 21 Oct 2026. Additional information for serving Corps members may be found on the RSM's page on the Defence Protected Network (Objective number: fBQ17265966).

Points addressed in this report include:

- End of my tenure as Corps RSM
- Farewells
- St Eligius Competition
- Corps Conference – Heavy (outcomes/photos)
- Corps Awards
- Course Information

End of my tenure as Corps RSM

This is a lot harder to write than I believed it would be. Honestly, it has been my absolute please to be the RAEME Corps RSM for four years, it was all I ever wanted to achieve since I was a CPL. I truly hope that people can see the genuine effort I placed into every activity, every brief to courses and the general improvement to the Corps.

Nothing is achieved as an individual though and I think it is extremely important to thank numerous people that have helped me achieve my life's ambition:

Career Managers (as a JNCO & SNCO):

LTCOL Tony Venables, gave the vision to remain focused on my career goal, even as life went upside down.

LTCOL Richard Hayes had to convince me that my posting would align to Corps RSM if only I maintained the faith in his plan (which I stuck to, to the letter).

COs:

LTCOL Tim Soper allowed me the freedom to spend my initial years as an RSM to place a lot of my time into the Corps. This set the foundation for a great few years.

LTCOL Porada made the transition to the Corps RSM being moved away from the AWMA an easier process than it could have been. He allowed me to continue the work (courses, parades, etc) often at Battalion expense. His freedom allowed me to continue the four years.

MAs:

WO1 O'Leary, bloody hell what a stalwart of the Corps. Paddy also completed four years as the MA 235. He also took on the role of working through the Corps pages (droopal and sharepoint), which has allowed the Corps to reach out to each other more effectively than ever before.

WO1 Munro, a great friend. Someone I could always reach out too. For those not aware, Ben took on the entire organisation and running of the link with Matt Stone Racing, often working insanely long hours. The success has been catastrophic though, with the highlight being embedding technicians within MSR for the entire Bathurst 1000 race week.

WO1 Chambers, legend of RAEMEAVN. Pete took back on the role of MA this year after an unfortunate departure; he did so with no hesitation. He has also be instrumental in having Corps awards (MA, etc) recognised as an Honour and Award.

Honestly, I could go on forever, but I would lose you. Trust me, there so many influential people throughout my time that should be recognised, but I will write to them individually to thank thank them.

Farewells

We farewelled numerous members from the Corps at the Corps Conference and Cocktail party. I truly hope this is something that can be maintained into the future.

- BRIG Damien McLachlan
- WO1 Adrian Gray
- SGT Joe Vu
- WO1 Will McGavin
- WO1 Matty Fergusson
- WO1 Mark Ledinek
- WO1 Duane Maggenti
- WO2 Jason Ballard
- WO1 Ash Neilson
- WO2 Jamie Carrol
- WO2 Dan O'Connell
- WO2 Mitch Reeves

Thank you to everyone involved in making the farewells a success and recognising our members in a manner they deserve.

Maintenance Matters

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Submissions

Submissions for inclusion in future editions of the Newsletter may be entered online at:
https://raeme.org.au/publications/newsletter/article-submission

Submissions from serving members may also be sent through your Regional Corps Representative for review, collation and on-forwarding.

Disclaimer

This Newsletter is published monthly by the RAEME Association National Network (RNN) for RAEME members, be they serving or otherwise. The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in this Newsletter belong solely to the author of each article. They do not reflect those of the RNN, ADF or any part of the ADO, the author's employer, the editorial team, any association, committee, or other group or individual.

St Eligius Competition

St Eligius Competition was held over the period 12 / 13 Oct in Sydney. This year was the first time the completion was held outside of the AWMA, and I will be honest, it was bloody fantastic. When I look back at the idea LTCOL Soper had in 2023 after listening to a radio show describing a technician from Toyota winning the trade world cup to what it became this year, the technical and soldierly mastery shown by the participants fantastic.

The competition had five teams participate this year (in no particular order):

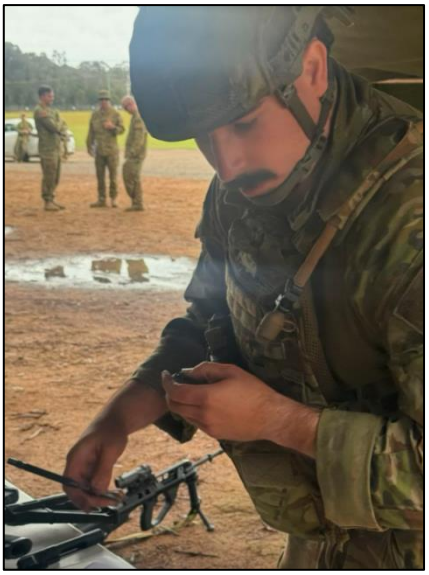
- 1st Brigade
- 7th Brigade
- 3rd Brigade
- Special Operations Command
- 17th Sustainment Brigade (plus attachments)

This year, the competition comprised of the following activities:

- 0430h start for Battle Pt as a pre-fatigue activity (all mbrs were assessed for their soldierly attributes from the start)



- Live fire range practices; group and zero, followed by RP3A which was cancelled due to the range having no power (in great RAEME fashion a new plan was implemented on the run and new shoots conducted on the class range)



- This year vehicles were provided for the teams to move around the training area, receiving emfixes them required them to navigate obstacles, IEDs and complex tasks.
- Trade stands run by the MAs, this year including RAEMEAVN members embedded in each team (task ranging from the mundane to the extremely complex)





A massive shout out to the MAs 411/412 WO1 Chambers and WO1 Breen put a huge amount of work into getting this incorporated for the first time in the competition's history.

The activity was concluded with the LTs back briefing LTCOL Hamilton, LTCOL Palmer and the HOC on their involvement, the critical risks they encountered and how they would conduct the activity if they found themselves in a similar situation again (even the LTs were continually assessed, which went to the overall points in determining the winning BDE / formation).

The completion was fiercely fought with 7 BDE coming out on top. I spoke with the MAJ Alex Schmidt post the announcement, 7 BDE / 7 CSSBs intent is to send the (available) members from the winning team to New Zealand to represent at the Farriers Cup Competition to be held early 2028.



Pictured – COL COMDT BRIG Ed Smeaton, HOC BRIG Gabrielle Follett, RSM-A Warrant Officer Brad Doyle & the winning St Eligius team (7 Bde)

Corps Conference – Heavy

The Corps Conference – Heavy was conducted over the dates – 14 / 15 Oct 26 within Holsworthy Barracks. This year's theme was aimed at the future of technicians, their training, what will a maintenance activity look like in a contested battlespace, an update on the littoral manoeuvre group, adaptive manufacturing, BHP update (secondments), Aviation Command and linking the current serving members to the community through the RAEME Associations.

Day one commenced with an outstanding S2 brief on the potential of conflict and how we as a Corps may be involved. We as a Corps were extremely privileged to have the RSM-A Warrant Officer Brad Doyle OAM follow on as the Keynote Speaker, discussing training and the future of technicians (a great speech, which highlighted his time as an Apprentice Vehicle Mechanic prior to joining the Army).

The conference then moved into Training liability – OJT v OJE Authorities, Officer Training Continuum; GSO/LEO/Engineer. Delivered jointly by LTCOL Hamilton, LTCOL Porada, LTCOL Palmer, MAJ Neilson.

COL Hodda (Battel Lab) briefed after lunch on day one, focusing on Emergence / innovation and integration of UAS and Counter UAS and Maintenance activity in Battlefield recovery and clearance operations.

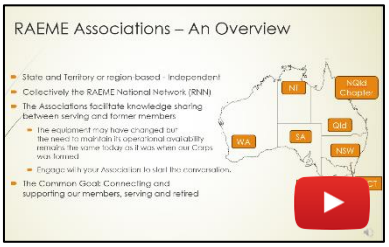
This was followed by Repair lines of effort LDSS – defining Maintenance. What is RAEME's role in the Battlespace? Presenters included; HOC, LTCOL Armour and ASM-L. Current updates on policy were presented, what will maintenance facilities look like in the future and what should be the Corps Philosophy of maintenance. The forum was then broken into small groups to discuss before members were asked to back brief the presenters on their outcomes.

Day Two commenced with COL Hale and LTCOL Viggers presenting an update on all things littoral, including ECN 222 and possible employment. LTCOL Hindmarsh from DLOG-Plans gave an amazing presentation of Adaptive and Reductive manufacturing, extremely well received.

BHP provided a great brief on the linkage between the civilian enterprise and the ADF. A massive thank you to WO1 Matty Brooks for arranging two presenters to participate in the conference (and Cocktail Party); Mr Matthew Cohen-Cramp (former Corps member) and Mr Kartik Sumbaly. The way BHP do business and how we as a Corps could conduct maintenance activities was a key talking point.

DHC-A, LTCOL Porada provided a detailed brief on Aviation Command, the way training is conducted for AVN technicians and how maintenance is conducted within the organisation. To say it was eye-opening to the majority forum would be an understatement (until you have been involved within it, it's hard to grasp the concept, but makes a lot of sense once you have). Land-based establishments could take a lot away from this brief.

The HOC and LTCOL Hamilton discussed 'Divestment' as a topic, with ASEME (Latchford Barracks) being the hot discussion point. Unfortunately bar stating the move will come eventually, it was made clear to all, that no move will occur until the infrastructure is in place, there is no point building something that is 'not fit for purpose' 'can't expand if required'.



Lastly, we wrapped up the conference with the link to the community through a presentation from the RAEME Associations. Mr Ian Cook put together a great slide show that provided context to the associations and what they can provide.



LTCOL Hamilton announced that a range of framed presentation gifts have been made available to be purchased, the framed gifts represent the 40th Anniversary Parade held in May this year, with the linkages back to the original parade in 1986. Each gift will be numbered, if you wish to purchase one, please email the RAEME HOC Cell raeme.hoccell@defence.gov.au with your preferences.

We announced the key positions within the Corps at the conclusion of the conference; please welcome the following members into their roles:

- HOC – to be confirmed by Chief of Army (be patient)
- DHOC-L – LTCOL Adon Cadona
- DHOC-A – MAJ Harry More
- SO2 Corps – MAJ Katelyn Thorne (assisted by MAJ Perry Boer)
- Corps Warrant officer – WO1 Brian Vaughan
- Master Artificers:
  - ECN 222 – WO1 Jason Peterson
  - ECN 235 – WO1 Todd Ryan
  - ECN 418 – WO1 Brad Sanderson
  - ECN 229 – WO1 Richard Holden
  - ECN 412 – WO1 Kent Herrmann

The Conference was concluded with a Cocktail Function held at Victoria barracks, Sydney (may be the last time an event is held there). The function was designed to be an informal way for friends and colleagues to intermingle and share great stories of times past. We were privileged again to have RSM-A present at the event, he mingled with all members of the Corps and indeed took the opportunity to get into so many photos.

We concluded the night with an announcement very dear to my heart (those that know me will know it's been something I've been chasing since I took on the role of Corps RSM).

OUR CORPS TODAY

Corps Awards

This year was the first year the Corps has undertaken recognising people in the correct rank doing their actual allocated job function. It has been very successful in my opinion, with numerous nominations being received within all categories. The Annual Corps Award Winners for 2027 are:

- Peter Jennings Award – LT McCoy Harper-Zerna (1 CSSB)
- Artificer of the Year – WO2 Phillip Javens (3 CSSB)
- Brigadier Martins Award – SGT Adrian Berrow (1 CSSB)
- JNCO of the Year – CPL Michael Kukas (3 RAR)
- ARA CFN of the Year – CFN Joe Waddell (1 CSSB)
    - Will also receive the Soldiers medallion for Exemplary Service from the HOC
- ARES CFN of the Year – CFN Michael Lorenzo (13 CSSB)
- ARA SQ CFN of the Year – CFN Samuel Walsh (8/9 RAR)
- ARES SQ CFN of the Year – CFN Anthony Lamb (11 CSSB)
- ARA NQ CFN of the Year – CFN Tobias Clarence (3 CSSB)
- ARES VIC/TAS CFN of the Year – LCPL Jaak Dixon (4 CSSB)
- ARA NSW CFN of the Year – CFN B (6 AVN REGT)
- ARA SA CFN of the Year – CFN Trent Ellis (16 REGT RAA)
- ARES SA CFN of the Year – CFN Brayden Paver (9 CSSB)
- ARA WA CFN of the Year – CFN Ben Sandercock (Pilbara Regiment)
- ARA NT CFN of the Year – CFN Karl Mortlock (1 CER)

A massive congratulations to all the award winners, the trophies will be sent to the Regional RAEME Representatives with an arrival date prior to RAEME Birthday celebrations.

Course Information

Course information is available on the DPN version of the RSM's report.

Conclusion

I truly hope everyone has a fantastic Christmas break, comes back refreshed and seeks more challenges in order to take the Corps even further into the future.

All passion is now over to you.

Arte et Marte

WO1 Jon Tynan
Corps RSM, RAEME
jon.tynan@defence.gov.au

St Eligius Trophy Competition Photos

Defence recently published the following images from the 2026 St Eligius Trophy Competition. Click here for more images or click here for the *Army News* story. The author and photographer was former RAEME member, CPL Michael Rogers.



OUR PEOPLE

Welcome to the family



The Palmerston Lions club recently congratulated their "Lion Cub," Jason Curyer, on his march-out from Kapooka and entry into the Australian Army. Jason has been a volunteer with the club since he was a small boy. He is now commencing his new career with RAEME as a Marine Technician.

Welcome to the RAEME family, Jason!!

Congratulations for outstanding academic achievement



The University of NSW recently approved the admission of former RAEME officer, Keirin Joyce, to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

After 17 years (on and off) of research and plenty of coffee, Keirin was thrilled to share that he was able to finalise his doctoral thesis, titled: 'First Person View to Autonomous Collaborative Platforms: Forecasting the maturity of aerial drone technologies'

In short: the research investigated emerging technology prediction methodologies, developing a model that was tested and can now be used by Defence departments to adopt new tech more effectively.

Undertaking higher-degree research alongside professional commitments was demanding, but deeply rewarding. To anyone currently deep in the draft trenches with their PhD or those who are thinking of commencing one, keep chipping away—the finish line comes faster than you think!

If you would like to read Keirin's thesis, please visit: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.4/109075

Congratulations, Dr Joyce!

Driving for Hoff – Kate takes on the rally he always dreamed of



Alex 'Hoff' Hoffensetz served 17 years in RAEME and was deeply proud of his Corps. Hoff passed away on 13 August 2023 after four years of living with cancer. To his wife, Kate, and children, Mason and Taylor, he was a much-loved husband and dad whose loss is felt every day. Among the things Hoff always wanted to do was the Shitbox Rally. He applied but never had the opportunity to take part. Now Kate is preparing to make that journey for him.

On 13 August 2027, four years to the day after Hoff's passing, Kate and her friend Simone plan to begin a 3,600-kilometre journey from Albury-Wodonga to Mackay as team "No Right Turn". Heading north towards Ayr, where Hoff grew up, gives the journey another personal connection. Kate said, "*In a way, we're finishing the trip he never got to take.*" The team is raising funds for cancer research, a cause Kate knows made a difference to their family. Kate went on to say, "*Cancer research meant we had Hoff around longer and we were able to build more memories with him.*"

Kate hopes the story will reach Hoff's former colleagues and mates throughout the Corps. Alongside donations and offers to help organise a fundraiser, she would love to hear their memories and see photographs from his Army days. "*If you're able to give or share, it would mean the world. And if you have a story or photo of Hoff, I'd love to see it.*"

Her message to those who knew him is simple: "*Thank you for serving alongside him.*"



The RAEME family can help by sharing Kate's journey, supporting the fundraising or reconnecting with a story about Hoff. Members can also look forward to welcoming Kate and Simone across the finish line in Mackay in August 2027.

Support Kate and Simone by donating to No Right Turn or sharing their fundraising page.

To share photographs, memories or offers of fundraising assistance, please email newsletter@raeme.org.au. The *Maintenance Matters* team can put you in touch with Kate.

OUR PEOPLE

Ever Vigilant



After 11 years of dedicated service, SGT Michael Bond recently completed his final day with NORFORCE.

Michael will be greatly missed in the workshop, and it certainly won't be the same without him.

The CO NORFORCE thanked Michael for his commitment, hard work, and contribution to the team.

Enduring Service Recognised

On 05 Nov, WO1 Robert Minato was presented his Federation Star by MAJGEN Duncan.

The presentation was rightly made in the Army Museum, Bandiana, a place WO1 Minato holds close to his heart.

Joining the Army on 09 Jan 1976, WO1 Minato and his family were recognised for 40 years of loyalty and commitment to the Army.

His 40 years of service represent more than just time served; they reflect a lifetime of dedication, sacrifice, leadership and unwavering commitment to our nation.

Congratulations WO1 Minato what an incredible achievement!





Certificate of Appreciation

Warrant Officer Class One Robert Benjamin Minato

WO1 Minato enlisted in the Australian Army on 09 January 1976.

At the completion of initial training, WO1 Minato was allocated to the corps of the Royal Australian Electrical & Mechanical Engineers. WO1 Minato has performed a wide range of duties across a number of units and served operationally in the Solomon Islands.

Congratulations on being awarded the Federation Star for your commitment and dedication to the service of our Nation within the Australian Army. I thank you for your sustained devotion to duty throughout your 40 years of service.

Dated this twenty-second day of May 2026.

Simon Stuart, AO, DSC
Lieutenant General
Chief of Army

Farewell to a couple of Corps Legends



WO2 Jason Ballard and WO1 Duane Maggenti (pictured with WO1 Mick Waters) were farewelled at the Corps Cocktail Party during October's Corps Conference., recognising their significant service and contributions to RAEME.

For Jason, the evening marked the conclusion of nearly 40 years with the Corps. Sharing the occasion with former classmates, fellow Army Apprentices and colleagues made it particularly meaningful.

"*Humbling to share it with two classmates, a bunch of other Appies and those who I've served with over the nearly 40 years,*" Jason reflected. "*A great way to see out my career with RAEME.*"

Both Jason and Duane have given dedicated service to the Corps, building lasting friendships and connections throughout their careers. Their farewell provided an opportunity for colleagues and mates to acknowledge that service and wish them well.

Well done to both Jason and Duane for your contribution to our Corps and our Army. We wish you and your families every happiness in the next chapters of your lives. Enter this phase with confidence that you have both made a positive difference to our Crops and its enduring future as a modern, capable force.

A proud family moment at ALTC



CFN Eamon Pirard recently graduated as a Weapon Technician from Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering and will now post to Darwin to undertake on-the-job training. For his father, WO1 Serge Pirard, RSM Army School of Logistic Operations, attending his son's graduation at Latchford Barracks was more than just a proud parenting moment. It was the continuation of a family legacy of service spanning generations.

"*To see the next generation carrying that legacy forward fills me with immense pride,*" WO1 Pirard said. "*Our family has a proud history of military service, with family members having served in every conflict Australia has been involved in since World War 1.*"

For the Pirard family, the values of service, sacrifice, commitment and mateship run deep.

Congratulations CFN Pirard on this significant milestone
and for proudly carrying the family tradition forward.

OUR PEOPLE

Moving on up!

The Recovery Team had a great morning earlier this month as the school welcomed Recovery's newest SNCO Jon Robdawg Robson.

A very special mention to Jarrod Clune who received his Warrant the same morning.

Congratulations to both members!





Outstanding service to the nation



The Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel, the Hon Matt Keogh, recently announced that RAEME's own Glenn Keys AO has stepped down from the Australian War Memorial's Council after nearly 6 years of dedicated service. The Minister intends to recommend to the Governor-General, Her Excellency Sam Mostyn AC, the appointment of the Hon Peter Dutton as a member of the Council of the Australian War Memorial in place of Glenn.

Over six years of dedicated service on the Australian War Memorial Council, Glenn Keys has made a significant contribution to preserving and promoting Australia's military history and commemorative traditions. His leadership, insight and unwavering commitment have helped guide the Memorial through a period of growth and change, ensuring it continues to honour the service and sacrifice of Australian men and women in uniform. We thank Glenn for his distinguished service, his passion for veterans and defence families, and the lasting impact he has made on one of our nation's most important institutions.

Thank you, Glenn, for helping to preserve our most sacred military memories. For more details, click here.

Recovery Mechanic Hails and Farewells



The Recovery team in Bandiana recently took the opportunity to farewell SGT Paul Adams as he hangs up his chains and dons his civilian attire. Anyone who has had the privilege of working alongside Paul will agree that he is one of the most passionate, knowledgeable and skilled Recovery Mechanics we have had the pleasure of working with. His dedication to the trade, professionalism and wealth of experience have made a lasting impact, and he will be greatly missed by everyone across the Recovery community. Paul, we wish you all the very best as you move on to the next chapter.

Paul, thank you for your contribution, commitment and everything you have given to the Army and the trade.

To fill the gap left by Paul, the School recently welcome the Army's newest recovery mechanics…..10 of them plus one additional kiwi!

Congratulations to SN0048 on a great course. Hard effort has paid off, which is a credit to yourselves and instilled by your recovery staff. Well done to all the staff involved, solid effort - your long hours, dedication and resilience does not go unnoticed (within the confines of the compound of course.



Honourable mentions

Student of Merit – CFN Donoghue

Most improved – CFN Axiak

Receipt of Instructor Recovery Badge – WO2 Clune - Course Manager - solid course, as always!

Well done, one and all!

IMPENDING EVENTS

Planned RAEME gatherings across Australia for the next few months are summarised below. For further details on any events shown, either click on the link within the listing below or contact the relevant State or Territory Association as required.

To provide an update to this list, including any new events or events that have changed, please pass details to the Newsletter editors as follows:

- **Serving members:** Send details through your Senior Regional Representative who will be able to inform the Newsletter Editors to confirm details and on-base access requirements as applicable
- **Former-serving mbrs:** Send details through your State or Territory Association Representative for on-forwarding to the Newsletter Editors.
- **Other members:** Please send details directly to Newsletter@raeme.org.au or upload them to the submission portal at: https://raeme.org.au/publications/newsletter/article-submission

Note: Significant Events that require considerable advance planning, including reunions, may be highlighted below, as are days of national significance.

November

Sun 15th	Toowoomba	RAQ Darling Downs Luncheon	City Golf Club from 1200h
Sun 22nd	Sunshine Coast	RAQ Gathering Sunshine Coast	Brightwater Hotel from 1200h
Tues 24th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h
Fri 27th	Brisbane	Women in RAEME (WIR4)	The Ship Inn, corner of Sidon and Stanley Streets, South Brisbane from 6.00–8.00 pm **Tickets**: $25 per person Click here to register.
Sat 28th	Ingleburn	NSW Association Corps Birthday BBQ	Memorial Gardens, Ingleburn RSL Sub-Branch
	Canberra	ACT Corps Birthday Spanner Club	RMC Golf Club from 1600h
	Adelaide	SA Association AGM and Corps Birthday	West Adelaide Football Club, 57 Milner Rd, Richmond, from 1000h for AGM and 1200h for Corps Birthday Celebrations
	Melbourne	RAEME Birthday Muster – Melbourne	Warragul RSL from 1630h. POC is Paul Turner – 0402-013-137. Guest speakers: • John Burke and Mark Bain – Recovery Mechanics with deployment stories. • Dennis Clarke – A vehicle mechanic conscripted to serve in Vietnam • Danny Hayes – A contracted recovery mechanic in Iraq and Afghanistan
Sun 29th	Brisbane	RAQ All Ranks Luncheon	Port Office Hotel

December

Tues 01st	Nationwide	RAEME's 84th Birthday	Details on the following pages
Fri 04th	Perth	RAEME Birthday Cocktail Party	ANZAC House from 1900-2200h $30 per person
Wed 09th	Canberra	RMC Lanyard Presentation	Olims Hotel from 1800h
Sat 12th Dec	Townsville	N-Qld RAEME Gathering	Vale Hotel
		10 Term Workshop Reunion	Vale Hotel from 1200h

RAEME BIRTHDAY PLANS

RAEME's 84th Birthday Celebration Plans

Whilst the plans for RAEME Birthday are still being locked in nation-wide, the following is provided for planning purposes. Individual RAEME Associations or Regional RAEME Representatives should be contacted to confirm final details for each region.

ACT - Canberra

Date: Fri 27 Nov

What: RAEME Birthday Spanner Club and Sausage Sizzle

When: 1600h for 1630h

Where: RMC Golf Club, Calculus Lane, Duntroon

Who: All Association members, visitors and guests

Cost: Self-funded drinks. Sausage sizzle by donation only

Details: Click here for more info.

NSW – Ingleburn

Date: Fri 27 Nov

What: 84th Birthday BBQ

When: 1200 for 1230h. BBQ to commence at 1300h.

Where: Ingleburn RSL Club, Memorial Gardens

Who: All members of the Corps past and present, their partners, friends and friends of RAEME

Cost: $15 per person

Dress: Smart casual

Details: Click here for more info, including payment details.

NSW – Holsworthy

Date: Fri 27 Nov

What: Cart race, spanner throw, tug of war, raffle, trade stalls, BBQ, freebies and more

When: 0930 – 1730h

Where: Holsworthy Barracks (Unit location TBC)

Who: Access for all serving members in the region is to be with the organising unit. Access by all civilian members is to be through the RAEME Association NSW.

Details: Further details will be provided when confirmed.



Qld – Brisbane

Date: Sun 29 Nov

What: All Ranks 84th Corps Birthday Luncheon

When: From 1130 for 1230h start until 1700h

Where: Port Office Hotel

Meal: Entrée, main course, dessert (cake), tea and coffee Drinks TBA

Dress: Smart Casual

Cost: RAQ members and serving soldiers, $50. All others, $60.

Details: Click here for more info and to RSVP.

Qld – Townsville

Date: Tues 01 Dec

What: Planned activities include volleyball, tug-of-war, chain-of-command relays, go-kart racing, displays, along with food and drinks throughout the day.

When: 0800-1600h

Where: 4 Regt, Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV) Workshop

Details: Click here for more info.

Qld – Darling Downs

Date: Sun 15 Nov

What: Luncheon

When: 1200-1600h

Where: City Golf Club

Cost: Self-funded

Details: Click here for more info and to RSVP.

Qld – Sunshine Coast

Date: Sun 22 Nov

What: Luncheon with lucky door prizes

When: 1200-1700h

Where: Brightwater Hotel

Cost: Self-funded

Details: Click here for more info and to RSVP.

RAEME BIRTHDAY PLANS

Qld – Oakey

Date: Fri 27 Nov

What: Dinner hosted by Rotary Wing Aviation Maint School

When: 1700-2359h

Where: CH-47 Training Hanger, Swartz Barracks

Cost: RAMs Trainees $60; Others $75 per person

Details: Click here for more info and to book tickets

Qld – Enoggera

Date: Fri 27 Nov

What: Car show, Tools & Equipment, Food Trucks, and more

When: 0900-1400h

Where: Duncan Oval IVO Band Hut

Details: Click here for more info.

WA – Perth

Date: Fri 04 Dec

What: Spanner throw, mini games, vendors

When: 1200-1600h

Where: Swan Workshops. Access details to be provided by the RAEME Association WA.

What: Cocktail Party

When: 1900-2200h

Where: ANZAC House

Cost: Food is being subsidised by the WA Association, with a Cash Bar.

Details: Click here for more info and to RSVP.

Tasmania – Hobart

Date: Sun 29 Nov

What: Luncheon with raffle of a 2025 RAEME Malt Whiskey.

When: From 1200 for 1230h.

Where: South Arm RSL

Cost: Lunch self-funded. Tickets will be available from 1 November 2026, priced at $2 each or 3 for $5.

POC: Contact Rolly via email (sadakr@gmail.com) if you can make it on the day.

Details: Click here for more info.

Victoria – Melbourne

Date: Sat 28 Nov

What: RAEME Birthday Muster

Events: Marching in RAEME and Australian Flags; lighting of a remembrance candle; Ode; formal welcome; Dinner service; Guest speakers on the East Timor, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan Conflicts.

When: From 1600h onwards

Where: Warragul RSL

Cost: $30 per person

Dress: Suit or smart casual for men, smart casual for ladies.

Details: Contact Paul Turner on 0402-013-137 for more info.

Victoria – Bandiana

Date: Tues 01 Dec

What: A variety of competitions, formalities and activities which may include: Siege Equipment Launch, Vehicle Display (Show and Shine), Tug-of-War, Volleyball, Spanner Toss, Bill-eKart Race, PT/Strength Challenge, Chain of Command Relay, Civilian food vendors and BBQ

When: Timings TBC

Where: ASEME at Gaza Ridge Barracks, North Bandiana

Dress: Wing / RAEME PT Attire or as directed by event OICs. Neat civilian attire for guests.

SA – Adelaide

Date: Sat 28 Nov

What: RAEME Birthday / AGM

When: AGM from 1000h. Birthday from 1200h.

Where: West Adelaide Football Club

Details: Click here for more info and to RSVP.

NT – Darwin

Date: Fri 27 Nov

What: Show & Shine, Spanner Throw, Littoral Challenge, Chain-of-Command Relay, Touch Footy

When: 0800h onwards

Where: Robertson Bks, Graham Oval

Details: Contact ASM 101 Fd Wksp or the NT RAEME Association for further details.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Support RAEME Member and Artist Matt Redwood in the People's Choice Award

We are proud to share that Matt Redwood has been selected as a finalist in the 2026 Napier Waller Art Prize for his powerful work, *Generations of Conflict*.



The Napier Waller Art Prize, presented by the Australian War Memorial, is open to current and former Australian Defence Force personnel. The prize encourages artistic excellence, promotes the transformative power of creativity, and raises awareness of the experiences and talents of service personnel.

Matt's artwork explores the enduring effects of military service across generations and reflects themes that will resonate with many within the RAEME family. Being selected as a finalist is a significant achievement, and all shortlisted works are eligible for the People's Choice Award, which is decided by public vote.



We encourage all members, veterans, families and friends of the Corps to take a few moments to view Matt's artwork and cast their vote in support of him. Supporting veteran artists is an important way to recognise the many talents, experiences and stories that exist within our Defence community.

Please consider sharing the link below with your family, friends and social networks. Every vote helps recognise Matt's achievement and supports the wider veteran community through one of Australia's most respected military art prizes.

Vote here: https://www.awm.gov.au/napier-waller-art-prize-hub/2026/generations-conflict

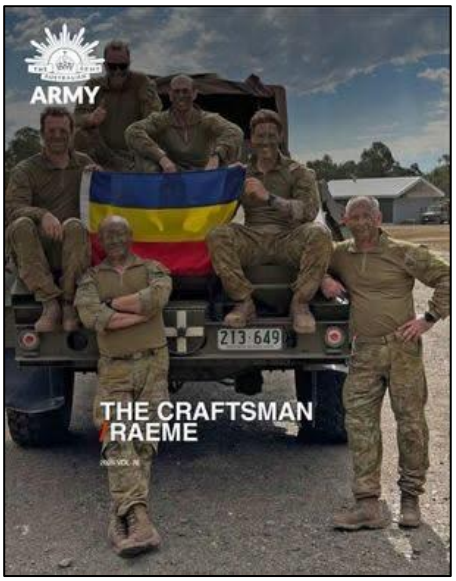






The RAEME Craftsman magazine – 2026 Edition – Call for Submissions

Work is now underway for the 2026 edition of The Craftsman, and we are inviting contributions from across the Corps, the wider Defence community, and our veteran network. This annual journal is one of RAEME's most important historical records, capturing the achievements, challenges, innovations and stories that define who we are. Every article, photo and reflection helps preserve our heritage and ensures future generations understand the depth and diversity of our Corps.



The editorial team will welcome submissions covering unit activities, capability developments, technical innovation, training achievements, operational experiences, Corps history, and personal reflections on service. Articles from all ranks and all ECNs are encouraged, as are contributions from associations and retired members. **If you have a story worth telling, a lesson worth sharing, or an achievement worth celebrating, we want to hear from you**.

To submit content, please send articles and images to raeme.hoccell@defence.gov.au or contact the Editor, WO1 David Clarke, directly. **The deadline for the 2026 edition is 11 December 2026.** Photos can be embedded in your Word doc. However, it is important that you also submit the photos separately as they lose resolution when added from a Word doc. DO NOT include photos taken from publications or the internet!

Your stories are the heartbeat of our Corps. Help us capture another year of RAEME excellence.

Click here to download the 2025 edition.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remembering Afghanistan Service

The Department of Veterans' Affairs held a national commemorative service at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra on 11 October 2026 to mark the 25th anniversary of Australian service in Afghanistan (2001–2021). Below is a link to a video of that event.



Beyond the battlefield: women reflect on their service in Afghanistan

DVA also recently posted a story about women who also served in Afghanistan. This explores how their experiences challenge traditional perceptions of war service, revealing not only courage under fire but also the profound personal impact of witnessing conflict firsthand.

Click here to view the full article.

Women-in-RAEME Reminder

Join the RAEME Association Queensland for an evening celebrating women across RAEME, Defence and industry. Everyone is welcome, including serving members, veterans, families, friends and supporters.

Hear from four guest speakers whose experiences span military service, technical leadership, motorsport, industry and veteran advocacy: Chontelle Anderson, Melanie Annand, Julie Fedorniak, Lieutenant Colonel Alison Lee CSM (Retd).

Date: Friday, 27 November 2026

Time: 6.00–8.00 pm

Venue: The Ship Inn, corner of Sidon and Stanley Streets, South Brisbane

Tickets: $25 per person

CLICK HERE TO BOOK YOUR SPOT

For Sale – One Owner – Low km – Great shape

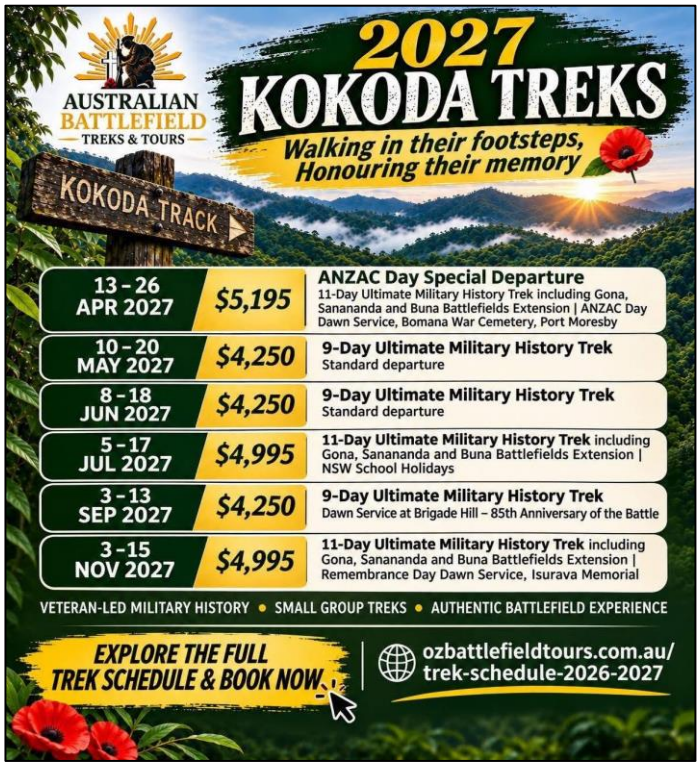
The time has come for the RAEMUS team to move on our multiple Queensland championship-winning Class 7 Pajero. The team are currently cleaning up a few things with the car prior to officially being for sale. The car will come with a huge number of spare wheels & tyres, a spare Pajero (not running) and other spares.



Expect to pay about $16,000 for the lot, which is way under the cost to build a class 7 using 2nd hand parts.

Genuine offers only, as being grumpy old combat veterans, the RAEMUS team don't suffer fools. If you are interested, drop them an email at: admin@raemusrover.com.au.

RAEME Kokoda – 13-26 Apr 2027



If you'd like more information, please have a look at the ABTT website or contact Scott Babbington on his Mobile: 0456 620 577 or email: admin@ozbattlefieldtours.com.au

RAEME NATIONWIDE

ACT End-of-Year Dinner

The ACT Association held their annual end-of-year dinner mid-November at Barker St Social, Griffith (formerly known as Gyphonn's Bar and Caffe).

The ACT Association traditionally holds no formalities at their end-of-year dinners as the evenings are intended for an opportunity to relax with family and friends however all were pleased to hear from Association President, Andy Adams, who had just returned from attending the annual soldier's dinner at Bandiana. We were also pleased to welcome new members, including Istvan 'Steve' Bartos who just moved to Sunny Canberra from Wodonga. It was great to have Steve and his wife Sheryle Ann join us.



Team Adelaide at the Guardsman

In early November, the SA Association team enjoyed another great gathering of its members and The Guardsman in the city. The Association choose The Guardsman for its great environment, delicious means and of course, beer that is cold and refreshing.

There were heaps of new faces at this gathering which is always fantastic to see. The group photo didn't capture all that attended as others had other commitments but wanted to pop in for an hour or so to catch up with mates.

The next SA gathering will be in March or early April next year.



RAEME BIRTHDAY 2026 PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



The Challenge

Capture an image that showed the RAEME spirit on the Corps Birthday 2026.

The Submission Process

Submit your photo(s) NLT 10 Dec through the *Maintenance Matters* submission portal:
https://raeme.org.au/publications/newsletter/article-submission

The Prize

$50 gift voucher plus bragging rights for being the cover image for the December Edition of *Maintenance Matters*.

BREAKING NEWS

Defence News

The following stories have been published by Defence in various forms, including Army News. Links to the full, original stories are provided where they are available.

Military trial outcome reporting

The service newspapers are resuming publication of outcomes of superior service tribunal proceedings to support transparency, accountability and confidence in the military justice system.

Summaries of future outcomes will be published in the newspapers and the service news sites on a rolling basis, as they become available.



For the full announcement, click here.

Full summaries from all recent cases of convicted members and further information regarding the hearings can be found by clicking here.

Pay and Conditions Updates

On 14 Oct 2026, a new Determination introduced changes that:

- Increased meal allowance amounts while in Australia
- Increased temporary accommodation allowance meal amounts
- Increased part-day travelling allowance rate
- Increased meals and incidentals rates for business travel longer than 21 days within Australia
- Updated travelling allowance accommodation, meals and incidentals rates and locations.
- Increased meal allowance rate when performing additional duty overseas
- Changed international meal and incidental allowances

Click here for more information.

DVA News

Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

National Military Training Memorial to honour ADF personnel

On 05 Nov, the Australian Government announced it will provide funding to support the concept development and design of a new Australian Military Training Memorial. The Memorial will honour Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel who have lost their lives during training and in preparations for operational service, recognising the hazards and sacrifices inherent in ADF service.

For the full story, click here.

Jail Time for DVA Fraud

On 3 November, a Perth-based exercise physiologist was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for defrauding the veteran support system of more than $140,000. He will serve six months in custody before being eligible for release.

For the full story, click here.

Open Arms

OPEN ARMS
Veterans & Families Counselling

Preventative self-maintenance

Open Arms offers a range of free group programs to help the serving and ex-serving communities, as well as their families, live their best lives.

Call 1800 011 046 to speak with an Open Arms staff member for assistance in finding the right program for you.

Click here to learn more about the training and support provided by Open Arms for Defence members and their families.

Australian War Memorial

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

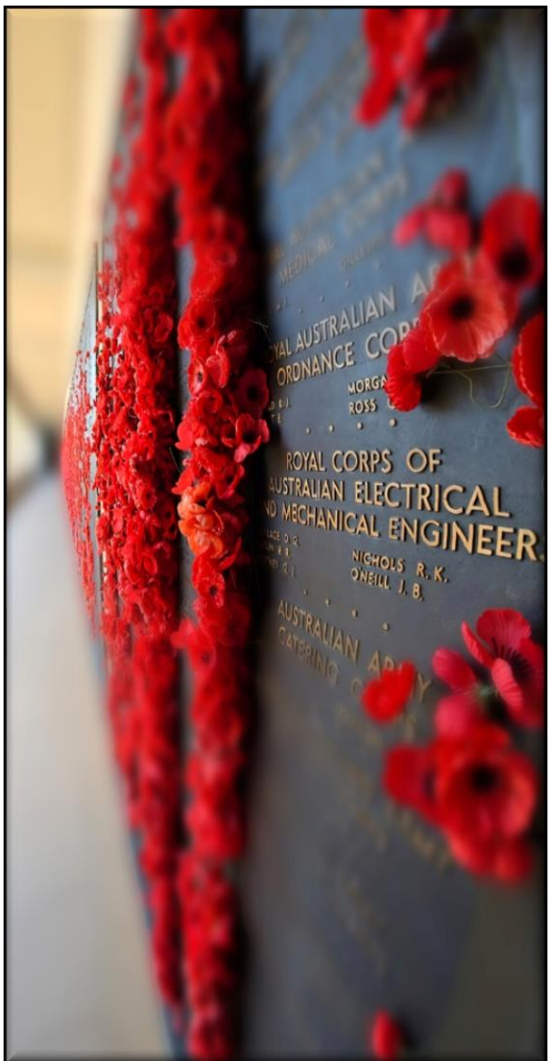
Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day was commemorated at the Australian War Memorial with a dignified and respectful National Ceremony that commenced at 1045h.

The ceremony featured Australia's Federation Guard on parade, supported by the Band of the Royal Military College. A formal wreath-laying ceremony, including members of the Diplomatic Corps, marked this International Day of Remembrance commemorating the Armistice that ended the First World War.

Lest we forget

Click here for Remembrance Day origins.



WELFARE MATTERS

Vale

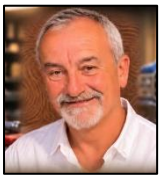
Our Corps has lost the following members in recent times. Full details of each member may be found at the RAEME Vale page.

4720996 Robert 'Bob' KILLORAN retd



Bob Killoran has passed away in early November. A vehicle mechanic by trade, Bob served as a National Serviceman, with 106 Fd Wksp in South Vietnam during 1970-71. He was a loyal SA Association committee member from 2003 until 2025. He was a 50-year member of the RSL, including former-president of the Blackwood RSL. Bob will be remembered for his dedication to veterans and the Corps. Further details regarding his funeral will be provided when known.

324667 Kenneth Wayne 'Kenny' RUNDLE



Kenny sadly passed away on 6 November 2026, aged 60, following a battle with cancer. He commenced Army Apprentice training with the 37th Electrical Trades Intake before graduating as a Vehicle Mechanic with the 38th Intake in 1984. Remembered as a great bloke and valued mate, Kenny will be sadly missed by his family, former apprentices and the wider RAEME community.

26959 MAJ Harold James 'Jimmy' HOLMES (Retd)



Jim passed away on 21 April 2026, aged 92. Enlisting in 1952, he served in Malaya with 100 'A' Field Battery LAD and in Vietnam with 101 Field Workshop in 1966. Commissioned in 1967, he retired as a Major in 1977 after 25 years. RAQ Member No. 625, Jim also dedicated 30 years to RSL Queensland, supporting veterans and their families.

43902 CPL Donald John 'Don' LESTER



Don's passing was reported in September 2026. He completed 21 years of Army service, initially with the Australian Army Catering Corps before transferring to RAEME. He served with D Company, 1 RAR, in Vietnam from March 1968 to February 1969, followed by service in Malaysia and Singapore. Don transferred to RAEME during the 1970s, serving for the remainder of his military career.

2786195 CFN Ross 'Winky' WINKLER



Ross passed away in Perth on 11 September 2026, aged 80. A National Serviceman and RAEME Vehicle Mechanic, he served in Vietnam with A Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment Light Aid Detachment, from March to December 1968. Originally from Broken Hill, Ross was also a former player, trainer and Life Member of the West Broken Hill Football Club.

SGT Peter Neil 'Phantom' OLIVER (Retd)



Peter passed away on 19 August 2026, aged 79, after spending several years in a retirement home. He served with RAEME as a B2 Store Sergeant during the 1970s. Peter will be remembered by his former comrades and those who served alongside him. In accordance with his wishes, a private funeral service was arranged.

Sick Parade



Karen CAIRNS. Karen Cairns had a stroke on 09 Nov and is currently in hospital for assessment. More details will be provided when they are available.

Rick COPE-PROCTOR. Rick had a heart attack that came from a blocked stent that caused a tear in a minor artery. He is resting at home now pending further treatment but as those who know Rick will understand, he is extremely positive and looking forward to returning to work.

How to provide welfare notifications

Should you wish to report the passing of a member or a change in health circumstances affecting you or another Corps member, you can do so by entering all known details on the RAEME Welfare Notification page.

