



Royal Australian Armoured
Corps Association Inc.
(Victorian Branch)

TRACK

March 2019



Advance Australia

PATRON:	Brig P.A. Acutt (Retd)	
PRESIDENT:	Peter Branagan, OAM	
VICE PRESIDENT:	Vacant	
SECRETARY:	Peter Axton	0428 335 406
TREASURER:	Andy Clark	
EDITOR:	Peter Branagan, OAM	0428 576 004

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Life Member Honoured at Eltham



(Elizabeth Branagan)

Former long serving Treasurer/Membership Officer **Godfrey Camenzuli** was deeply touched when the President surprised him at the kid's Christmas party at the Diamond Valley Miniature Railway **on Sunday, 16 December** with the presentation of a **Peter Wren Memorial Certificate of Merit**. He served as **Treasurer - Membership Officer from 1985-2002 and 2007-2015**. In his comments the President stated that 'Camel' epitomised the meaning of service and dedication to a cause and it was entirely appropriate to make the presentation in the presence of his family and many friends.

'Camel' had previously been honoured for his dedicated service with a **presentation of Honorary Life Membership** of the Association at the **Cambrai Dinner in November, 1996**.

2018 Kid's Christmas Party

An overcast day greeted 90 members, friends and families at the 2018 Christmas Party on **Sunday 16 December**. Numbers were down a little, possibly due to the threat of rain keeping some faint hearts away! **Santa arrived on time at 1300hrs on his own special Tait cars set** and our two dedicated trains were fully booked out. **A special mention to Ed Plastow** for his raffle ticket selling efforts and **to prize donors particularly Lindsay Christensen, Ian Smith, the Westgarth, Rydell and Finlayson families.**

Many thanks to **Rod and Sharon Westgarth** for their time and dedication, as always they ensure this activity is a premier event in our calendar. Thanks also to Santa's two new helpers **Chantelle Branagan** and **Sophie Crosbie**. Rumours abound that Santa's long term helper **Lauren Westgarth** may return next year with a brand new addition!



(Meaghan Johnstone)

Santa held no fears for Alexis Purcell

The following members and guests registered their attendance:

Peter and Elizabeth Branagan. Chris, Simone, Chantelle and Nathan Branagan with Ryan Everest. Tim, Kim, Ethan and Keira Branagan. Ian Smith. Glen and Meaghan Johnstone with Hunter and Alexis Purcell. Fiona, Matthew, Samuel, William, Amelia, Winsome and Colin Glenn with Xavi Materell. Shane, Lisa, Jared and Sophie Crosbie with Rhianna Nunn. David and Joan Finlayson with Caroline Knaggs. Rod and Sharon Westgarth. Adam, Sally, Gemma and Ava Westgarth. Ted, Val and Zoe Plastow. Andrew, Jenny and Charlie Clark. Bob Dacey with Samantha and Ruby Ker. Rod, Beverley, Ashley, Taylor and Hayden Jones. Godfrey Camenzuli and Kerry Marshall with Ella, Andrew and Damien. Chris and Lisa Morris. Kate, Samuel and Annastazia Innocenti. Mark, Andrea, Amelia and Rhys Foley. Jeff, Nicole, Ayla, Ryder and Indigo Coxford. Maree, Ren, Carol and Angela Proietto with Sandy Gittens. Stan and Joy Rydell. Andrea, Brett, Heath and Ruby Clancy. Abbey, Suzi, Corey and Ryder Rydell. Adam, Sally, Angus and Oliver Friend.

Former Secretary Honoured With Peter Wren Memorial Certificate of Merit



(Andrew Clark)

John Paterson who coincidentally took over the role of acting Secretary in 1984 when the incumbent – Peter Wren was struck down with a fatal heart attack; has been awarded the RAACA Certificate of Merit named in honour of his predecessor. At the AGM in February 1985, John was formally appointed as Secretary: a post he held continuously until his retirement due to ill health at the AGM in February 2017.

In concert with fellow long serving executive members Daryl Pinner and Godfrey Camenzuli; John served some 32 years in the role that is the lynchpin of any organisation. John's sterling efforts were also recognised at the Cambrai Dinner in November 1996 when he was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Association by then Director of Armour - Colonel Gordon Jones, AM.

On Friday 23 November 2018, President Peter Branagan and committee members Ian Smith, Andrew Clark and Rod Westgarth visited 'Patto' and his wife Deidre at their new home in Craigieburn to make the presentation.

Mark Your Diary.....

2019 Autumn Picnic Sunday 31 March 2019 1030 hrs

This popular event will be held again at the **Australian Army Tank Museum Puckapunyal** on **Sunday 31 March 2019**. Bring the kids (from eight to eighty) along for a great day. Bar-b-que facilities are available and **Rod Westgarth** will be applying his well honed cooking skills to bangers and trackpads. **Soft drinks for kids will also be provided**. There is a good chance that the Easter Bunny may pay us an early visit, so kids don't forget a basket to gather up all the Easter eggs that may be scattered around the tanks and guns!

Remember your photo ID for admission to Puckapunyal Army Base

2019 Kid's Christmas Party Sunday 15 December 2019 1030 hrs

Rod Westgarth has booked **Meadmore Junction** again for this year's party at the **Diamond Valley Miniature Railway**. Come along and enjoy the fun and the bar-b-que at **this premier location in Eltham**.

Annual General Meeting 2019

The AGM was conducted at our current home – the **Preston/Darebin RSL** on **Monday 25 February 2019**. Incumbent **President Peter Branagan** was re-elected unopposed as was **Secretary Peter Axton**. The President will also continue in the role of **Track Editor**. **Andy Clark** has put his hand up for the **Treasurer's job**.

Rod Westgarth will continue in the important role of **Family Liaison Officer**, with **Rob Toy** continuing as **Membership Officer**, whilst stalwarts **Trevor Watts, Icky Smith, Diesel Perkins, David Finlayson** and **Pat O'Hanlon** will continue to serve. Joining the committee for the first time is **Bob Neate**, welcome aboard.

President's Report 2018

Monday, 26 February 2018 witnessed a new look for the Victorian Branch. At the AGM a swathe of new blood was injected with Peter Branagan elected as President, Peter Axton taking on the roles of Secretary and Treasurer and Rob Toy taking up Membership. Some new faces in Pat O'Hanlon and Andy Clark were welcomed to the committee along with old stagers Ian Smith, David Finlayson, Diesel Perkins, Trevor Watts, John Snelling and Rod Westgarth who were re-elected unopposed. IPP Daryl Pinner, OAM has taken over property whilst Lew Postlethwaite remains as Webmaster. Rounding out the team are Patron – Brigadier Ted Acutt, Auditor – Roy Arnott, OAM and Honorary Legal Officer Colman Moloney.

The matter of changing the constitution to allow for a new category of membership - *Affiliate Member* was put to the attendees at the AGM via a Special Resolution and was carried unanimously. So far seven dependants have availed themselves of this new membership category.

I attended the RAAC Corporation AGM in Brisbane in mid October where I presented the annual Brigadier F.B. Hinton Memorial Scholarship report. I am now the Senior Trustee with Ian Smith and Rod Westgarth filling the other vacancies.

On the social front it has been a mixed bag with activities such as the 2018 Cambrai Dinner, the Kid's Xmas Party, and the Autumn Picnic well supported whilst the Branch birthday, AGM and Reserve Forces Day languished somewhat. In fact Reserve Force's Day has now been discontinued.

Our membership numbers have remained steady, around the 200 mark. Rod Westgarth organized 20 Christmas hampers to be delivered to worthy recipients last December and will back up again this year.

I sincerely thank my small but energetic committee for the work they did in 2018 to make it a successful year. In particular I congratulate Peter Axton for the significant effort he devoted to the roles of Secretary and Treasurer. He has streamlined and simplified those positions; particularly that of Treasurer where he is now confident to hand over that position to a worthy volunteer.

On behalf of our committee and members, I wish all members and their families a successful 2019.

P.G. Branagan, OAM
President

The following members registered their attendance: Peter Axton, Peter Branagan, Icky Smith, Peter Coutts, Kevin Fox, Ted Acutt, Andy Clark, David Finlayson, Pat O'Hanlon, Roy Arnott, Rob Toy, Bob Burke, Jim De Francesco, Bob Neate, Ian Murphy, Robyn Gibson, Colman Moloney, Rod Jones, Ray Babarikas and Stan Rydel.

Apologies: A. Zsolt, C. Burn, M. O'Brien, J. Baines, J. Snelling, D. Pinner, S. Bird, A. Sedgewick, L. Toy, G. Piper, R. Westgarth, B. Tiligadis, C. Carrington, N. McLaughlin, T. Cuthbert, R. McConnell, J. Watts, B. Lewis, D. Caulfield, P. Swinfield, D. Holloway, R. James, L. Bourke, E. Plastow, G. Barnett, M. Carson, V. Brennan & G. Camenzuli.

Secretary's Report 2018

Members,

2018 was another busy year which started with finalising the details of the RAACA Vic Constitution, acceptance at the AGM and lodging it with Consumer Affairs Victoria. The culmination of a task that appears to have been started some three or more years ago. We haven't been rushed off our feet with applications, but we did enlist eight Affiliate Members by the end of 2018. We also welcomed back Brigadier Peter Alkemade who re-joined our numbers after a few years break and Noel McLaughlin (Chairman of RAAC Corporation), making that probably the largest increase in membership during one year in quite some time. With the new members, our total membership increased slightly to 199 even with the passing of 10 of our long-term members.

Numbers attending the usual activities during 2018 were reasonable but the final Reserve Forces Day Parade saw a few extras make the effort to be there and were rewarded with a certificate and photos to remember the day. Attendance at the Cambrai Dinner was down compared to the previous year where several groups of other associations had joined us. It also clashed with a 1st Armoured Regiment event in South Australia which lured some in that direction, but in 2018 we welcomed partners for the first time and this opportunity was taken up by many. All those involved felt it took nothing away from the traditions but enhanced the night.

Peter Branagan has managed to keep the information flowing to members through the regular publication of Track, but as I've said before, he can't be everywhere and know everything so if something is happening in your area, send in photos or information or both so it can be included, and we can all hear about it. Peter spent some time in the Q system, and we all know that is where everything comes from, but as my old QM, then WO1 Terry Bullock, once said on returning from a conference where the usual fanciful requests had been made, "I told them I'm God, not Father Christmas". So, help out and send Peter some information or send it to me and I'll pass it on.

During the past year the committee has been looking at the membership and the financial accounts structure and how we allocate the funds. The accounts are covered more in the Treasurer's Report but amongst the changes was to create positions within the committee for a Membership Officer and a Welfare Officer to ensure we had committee members formally delegated to the tasks. This has helped to ensure we have more complete information of our members, especially with many of us now well into our "mature years" and some of us needing a little contact from their old friends. As part of this, Rod Westgarth expanded the Christmas Hamper contact list and we caught up with a number of members for the first time. Their reaction was one of surprise as well as gratitude. In addition to that, Rod, along with the able assistance of his wife Sharon, has continued to arrange the autumn/Easter picnic at Puckapunyal and the Christmas party and train rides at the Diamond Valley Miniature Railway in Eltham and to ensure this continues, he has already booked the facility for 2019. On looking at the happy faces at the 2018 event, contrary to what I said before, maybe Peter Branagan is Father Christmas.

Lew Postlethwaite struggled a little during 2018 with health issues which has restricted his ability to keep up with his work as Webmaster but hopefully we can catch up with some of that during 2019. If you haven't seen the website, go to www.raacavic.com and have a look.

Finally, we would like to thank the Darebin RSL for their support and for providing rooms and assistance for our meetings through 2018 and look forward to their continued backing in 2019. Also, to thank our Patron, Brig Ted Acutt (Retd) for his support, the School of Armour regarding Cambrai Day and to Coleman Moloney, our Honorary Legal Officer. With the acceptance of the changes to the Constitution at the last AGM, we have not needed to call on his advice as much over this past year but we hope he will be available if needed during the coming year.

In closing I thank Peter Branagan for his encouragement and assistance during this past year. Although I believe Peter held the position of President for a year at some time previously, following on from the many years that Daryl was President would have been daunting but he handled it all well.

Thank you all for your support in 2018. I hope I can meet your expectations in this coming year.

Peter Axton
Secretary

Birthday Celebrations at the Shrine

Sunday 10 February 2019

On another **fabulous day in Melbourne**, a reasonable number of members and guests attended the **Shrine of Remembrance** on **10 February** to celebrate the **73rd birthday** of the **Victorian Branch**. Following introductions from MC **Daryl Pinner** and Shrine Manager of Ceremonies **Dale Capron**, the **Armoured Corps Prayer** was recited along with the **Ode to the Fallen** and a wreath was laid by **President Peter Branagan**. Retired musician **John Mansfield** was again in support and the Sanctuary reverberated with his outstanding renditions of **The Last Post** and **Rouse**.



Present in the Sanctuary were Will Anderson and his Father Bill alongside Charles and Alleyne Walsh

The less than usual suspects included: Daryl & Frances Pinner, Peter & Robyn Axton, Peter & David Branagan, Charles & Alleyne Walsh, Andy, Jenny, Jean & Larry Clark, Jim & Gloria De Francesco, Will & Bill Anderson, Greg & Philomena Sheppard, Fred Coucher, Diesel Perkins, Roy Arnott, OAM, Rob Toy & Peter Wold, Bryce Phillips, Tony Peart, Bob Burke, Mike Fogarty and of course our resident bugler John Mansfield.

The following apologies were received: Rod & Sharon Westgarth, John & Ros Snelling, Michelle Carson, Doug Caulfield, OAM, Joyce Watts, Pat O'Hanlon, David Holloway, OAM, Stan Rydell & Colin Carrington.

Immediate Past President Honoured at 73rd Association Birthday Service at Shrine

Following the memorial service in the Sanctuary, we moved down into the Western Annex for the traditional sumptuous afternoon tea where a surprise awaited **IPP Daryl Pinner, OAM** and his wife **Frances**.

Daryl was presented with a **Peter Wren Memorial Certificate of Merit** and Frances a **sheath of flowers**. He was the final member of the former long serving executive committee to be formally recognised in the past three months.



Frances and Daryl Pinner with President Peter Branagan

Daryl Pinner, OAM joined the association in 1968 at a time when it was floundering and threatening to fold.

By the judicious use of his imposing size, great enthusiasm and organising ability, he was able to, with the assistance of several other like-minded individuals; breathe new life into the Victorian Branch. In 1977 he was elected to his first term as President and with only a couple of short breaks; served in this role until 2015. His early service was recognised with the awarding of **Honorary Life Membership** at the **Cambrai Dinner in 1984**. On **Australia Day 2003** he was awarded the **Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)** for his **service to veterans both in the RAACA and Legacy**. Along with his wife Frances, he has given unstintingly of his time and energy to improve the lot of our veterans. **A huge well done to you both.**

We Gratefully Acknowledge the Following Donors

Bruce Weaver, Rex Warren, Ray Babarikas, Peter Martin, Pat O'Hanlon & Joseph McGarry

The Arch Finlayson Memorial Scholarship

Application Form

Applicants for the Arch Finlayson Memorial Scholarship must complete this form and mail to the address detailed below. The Scholarship is available to 1st year apprentices and is valued at \$500.00

Name.....
(Christian name/names) (Surname)

Address.....
.....Post Code.....

Telephone.....

What is your apprenticeship?

Employer.....

Employer's Address

Contact Phone Number

Registered Training Institute or TAFE.....

Name of Financial RAACA Victorian Member

Address

Contact Phone Number.....

You will need to enclose copies of the following:

1. A brief supportive resume.
2. A copy of signed training agreement.
3. A copy of your enrolment at a registered training institute or TAFE.
4. A supporting letter from your employer.

After your application has been received, the three trustees of the fund may require you to attend a interview at a time, date and location to be advised.

Return this form together with all supporting documents to:

The Trustees
Arch Finlayson Memorial Scholarship Fund
RAACA – Victorian Branch
PO Box 547
COBURG VIC 3058

Vale – 25631 Lt Col John Williams

Born in 1931 in England, John Williams arrived in rural NSW with his family as a teenager. He joined the Citizen Military Forces, 6thNSW Mounted Rifles, in 1949 and then undertook the first regular officer training course at Portsea in 1952. As a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Australian Armoured Corps, 25631 John Williams was one of five officers attached to the British Army's 1st Royal Tank Regiment in November 1952 to gain relevant experience during the Korean War.

John recalled, years after, that he arrived back at Puckapunyal in March 1953 having spent his time in Korea on Centurion tanks. This had also just become the new vehicle for Australia's 1st Armoured Regiment. So, upon his return to Puckapunyal he found himself one of the few officers who already knew about this new equipment. A very busy time followed for this junior officer.

After a series of regimental postings, his later jobs included a staff posting at HQ in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, and as a student at Command and Staff College, Queenscliff.

John again deployed to a war zone in 1971, serving as a Major with the HQ Aust Forces Vietnam (HQAfV) in Saigon. His Republic of Vietnam awards included the Staff Service Medal 1st Class and the Armed Forces Honour Medal 1st Class.

He returned to Australia and by 1974 had left the Regular Army for family reasons. His civilian career subsequently saw him as a property developer and builder.

As a now available reservist, he attended the 1974 camp of 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment in Victoria as a supernumerary. He was later promoted and appointed to command the Regiment from June 1975-1978.

These years saw large armoured reconnaissance exercises over vast distances in the Mallee desert scrub of north-west Victoria. They were followed by the times of government cutbacks, so John Williams turned to major ceremonial activities as a substitute, to boost morale and raise the public profile of the Regiment. The following year, we were back to the desert exercises, but that parade experience was again put to good use in the 1977 Queen's Silver Jubilee military parade in Melbourne. The Regiment's contribution was a full APC Troop of 16 x M113A1s.

Upon his (final) military retirement, John Williams continued to show a keen interest in the RAAC and particularly in 4/19 PWLH as a Trustee. Even this year, at the age of 86, he participated in a special Regimental Trustees tradition when he attended the Welcome Dinner for the incoming CO of 4/19PWLH - LTCOL John Pearse.



Feb 2018 - LTCOL John Williams is seated front left



Commanding Officer

Cambrai Day Commemoration Dinner

Saturday 23 November 2019

1900 for 1930 hrs

Hopkins Barracks Officers/Sergeants Mess

Puckapunyal

Guest of Honour

Brigadier Ted Acutt (Retd)

Patron RAACA Victorian Branch

Cost: \$60:00 per head for members

\$70:00 per head for non members/guests

Partners are very welcome

This function is our premier event for the year and as usual we will be providing a quality guest speaker for your enjoyment

All enquiries to:

Peter Branagan (M) 0428 576 004

Peter Axton (M) 0428 335 406

On Sunday morning enjoy a sumptuous cooked breakfast in the Chauvel Courtyard at the Officers Mess from 0800 hrs

Dress: Lounge Suit or Reefer Jacket with Miniatures

Ladies after five

Tickets posted out early September

RSVP by Friday 15 November 2019

Accommodation is available

Show Off Your Association

	Items for Sale	Postage	
RAACA Tie		\$32.00	\$4.00
RAACA Pocket Badge		\$15.00	\$1.00
RAACA Plaque (Victorian Branch)		\$40.00	\$6.00
RAACA Decal (specify Inside or Outside)		\$ 1.50	\$1.00
RAACA Lapel Badge		\$11.00	\$1.00
RAACA Cap		\$10.00	\$6.00
RAACA Stubby Holder		\$ 6.50	\$4.00
RAACA Polo shirt size S, M, L, XL, XXL		\$23.00	\$6.00
	<i>Colour Black, Green, Burgundy, Navy Blue</i>		
RAACA Black Beret (medium)		\$30.00	\$6.00
	<i>(Please include Beret size)</i>		
RAACA Rugby tops		\$35.00	\$6.00
	<i>Navy blue with denim collar and Association Logo</i>		
RAACA Chambray shirts		\$29.00	\$6.00
	<i>Long/Short sleeves, light blue with Association Logo</i>		
RAACA Brew Mug		\$10.00	Pickup Only
	With Association logo		
Eldridge Book (special)		\$30.00	Postage Paid

Please note:

1. Prices are subject to change when current stock runs out.
2. All items are inclusive of GST and subject to a charge for packing and postage.
3. Please include cost of Postage.



P.O. Box 547

Coburg Vic 3058

[Email: daryl.pinner@yahoo.com.au](mailto:daryl.pinner@yahoo.com.au)

RAACA SCHOLARSHIPS

One of the benefits your Association provides are the scholarships available to eligible children commencing or completing their Secondary education. Applicants must be the children of a financial member, unfortunately due to financial constraints, grandchildren are not eligible for either scholarship at this time.

The Victorian Branch Scholarship is currently \$150:00 per year for the first two years of secondary school. Applications should be forwarded to the Secretary with proof of attendance by 28 February in the first year of qualification. A follow up application is required for the second year. You must have been a financial member of the RAACA for a minimum of five years to apply.

The Brigadier F.B. Hinton, MC Scholarship which was a Federal Executive Scholarship is also administered by the Victorian Branch and currently provides \$500:00 for each of the final two years of Secondary School. Application including proof of intent to complete years 11 and 12 to our Secretary by 30 September in the applicant's year 10.

There are no scholastic results required, however proof of attendance must be provided on the relevant School's letterhead paper. **Applicants must be financial members.**

Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association Inc.
(Victorian Branch)
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Change of address

To change your mailing address, please fill in the new address below,
and return THE COMPLETE PAGE to:

RAACA (Vic Branch) Membership Officer, PO Box 547, Coburg Vic 3058

Name:

Address:

..... Post Code:

Mobile No:

Phone No: Fax No:.....

E-mail:

PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS (EXCEPT FOR E-MAIL)