



Royal Australian Armoured
Corps Association Inc.
(Victorian Branch)

Web: <https://raacvic.weebly.com>

TRACK

December 2021



AdvanceAustralia

PATRON:	Brig P.A. Acutt (Retd)
PRESIDENT:	Peter Branagan, OAM
VICE PRESIDENT:	Werner Golla
SECRETARY:	
TREASURER:	Andy Clark
WEB MASTER:	Peter Axton
EDITOR:	Peter Branagan, OAM

Cambrai Luncheon an Outstanding Success



Following her outstanding presentation, Guest Speaker Mrs Honor Auchinleck was presented with a bouquet of native flowers by President Peter Branagan.

The move of the Cambrai celebration from Puckapunyal to Greensborough RSL proved to be an outstanding success with over 80 members and guests sitting down to a great lunch and availing themselves of the sub branch's first class facilities and hospitality. Many thanks to President Lee Webb for his support.

The **President and committee** would like to take this opportunity **to wish all members, families and friends very best wishes for the Festive Season, and a New Year that hopefully will see things somewhat restored to normality.**

The following members and guests enjoyed the 2021 Cambrai Luncheon:

Ted Acutt	Alleyne Walsh	Stan Rydel
Anita Rynne	Bryce Phillips, AO	Joy Rydel
Honor Auchinleck	Richard Hermon	Godfrey Camenzuli
Elizabeth Branagan	Susan Helmore	Kerri Marshall
Peter Branagan, OAM	Maggie McGeever	John Hopkins
Joan Finlayson	Tyrrell McGeever	Sue Hopkins
David Finlayson	Greg Sheppard	David Holloway, OAM
Carolyn Knaggs	Fred Coucher	Karen Holloway
Bill Houston	John Baines, RFD	Rod Jones
Will Anderson	Diane Baines	Pat O'Hanlon
Bill Anderson	Rod Westgarth	Graham Douglas
Mary Greenshields	Sharon Westgarth	Trudie Pratt
Doug Caulfield, OAM, RFD	David White	Jenny Clark
Mary Hornsby	Colin O'Dell	Andy Clark
Allan Sedgewick	Anne O'Dell	Peter Farrugia
Craig Burn	Peter Axton	Russell Cameron
Mark Auchinleck	Geoff Swan	Niall Waring
Peter Swinfield	Glenda Swan	Nick Collett
Chris Fing	Ian Laurie	Graeme Perkins
Mark Montague	John Coulthard	Mike Fogarty
Andy Zsolt	Karl Liffman	Benny Lonnborn
Ian Tregenza	Ken Tsigotis	Ted Plastow
Mark Holmes, AM, MVO	Justin Powell	Peter Duncombe
Peter Coutts, CSM	Lee Webb	Glenys Duncombe
Ian Smith	Rob Toy	
Vin Brennan	Peter Wold	
Dot Brennan	Shireen Wold	

The winners of the on line raffle were:

1st prize: Peter Swinfield, 2nd prize: Noel McLaughlin, 3rd prize: Peter Coutts, 4th prize John Bellfield, 5th prize: Mick O'Brien and 6th prize: Niall Waring. **Thank you all for your very generous support.**



Guest speaker Mrs Honor Auchinleck with husband Mark



(Andy Clark)

Mike Fogarty enjoyed the company of Joan Finlayson. Behind them are Mary Hornsby, Alan Sedgewick, Mary Greenshields, Will Anderson, Elizabeth Branagan and Mark Holmes.



(Andy Clark)

Glenda and Geoff Swan enjoyed the luncheon with Ted Plastow and Peter Axton (behind) Ian Laurie and Greg Sheppard.

Patron's Christmas Message



*Brigadier Ted Acutt (Retd)
Patron RAACA – Victorian Branch*

Last year in my message I talked of the disrupted 2020 and the hope we could return to normal in 2021. Well, I got that wrong. This year has brought its own challenges and difficulties. There was a bright side, however, with restrictions being lifted and allowing the Association to go ahead with our Cambrai Lunch. What a success. The decision to go with a lunch at the Greensborough RSL was an excellent one. The venue is top notch with its private dining room. The turn-out was the best I have seen, and the enjoyment level was high. We all love Puckapunyal, but the evidence points to this formula going forward. I commend all those involved with a great day.

In the last 12 months I have been appointed the Honorary Colonel of 1st Armoured Regiment. A great honour that I was very pleased to be offered. As a result, I was able to attend the virtual Corps Conference conducted in October. I can report that the RAAC is in great shape. Significant investment will be spent on new equipment over the next decade that will replace almost all of our aging equipment. The current soldiers and officers are also highly professional, and I was impressed how they conducted themselves. The RAAC is in good hands with a bright future.

Now I hope I am getting it right this time in forecasting a return to normality for next year. I think COVID will be with us for a long time, but the vaccine rollout will mean we can conduct our lives as we had. We still need to be vigilant, however, and keep our guard up. It will be outstanding to get back to the annual calendar of events we enjoy. The spirit and turnout of Cambrai Day points to a special 2022.

For some states the restrictions leading up to Christmas are not easing as many of us would like. I hope as many of you as possible can get together with your families and enjoy this special season. This is a special time as we take a break and look forward to the next year. My thoughts and prayers are with you, and I hope to see you all next Cambrai Day. Merry Christmas.

Our Guest Speaker Mrs Honor Auchinleck generously gave her permission to publish her presentation in full:

The Battle of Cambrai: Challenge and Change

Thank you, Peter, for your kind introduction and thank you very much for inviting me to be the guest of honour and the first woman to provide the annual address at your Cambrai Commemorative Lunch. It is a special day not only because it marks the 104th anniversary of the Battle of Cambrai beginning on 20 November 1917 and the introduction of tanks or 'curious monsters' as some described those early tanks, but because we are at long last able to gather and enjoy one another's company once again.

The town of Cambrai and the surrounding area has been fought over since Roman times so conflict is not new. The Germans occupied it during the First World War and with the Luftwaffe hitting it during the Second World War, the damage and town's subsequent reconstruction is perhaps better remembered than the 'curious monster' tanks! Unfortunately, we haven't visited Cambrai to hear a little about the creative way the French speak about their former enemies! Suffice to say, different people remember historical events differently.

The hallmarks of the battle of Cambrai in November 1917 were **challenge and change** just as we, in a totally different way have met challenges and we've had to accommodate change through the 2019-2020 fires and Covid. History and everything that we have experienced over the last couple of years has given us all a bond and shared memories - the very glue of those who serve, and of communities, perhaps particularly in regional areas.

More recently we have seen the role of Defence broadening. It was soldiers from 5/6 Royal Victorian Regiment in Melbourne and from the Engineer Regiment in Brisbane who came to help our communities in the immediate aftermath of the Black Summer fires in January last year. Those soldiers who came to the Upper Murray turned their hands to anything that needed doing; they were self-sufficient, well disciplined, well organised, well-motivated and they simply got on with the job. They tore down burned fencing, cleared fallen trees from roads and piled huge quantities of burned wire. Importantly they brought with them their good spirits and a can-do attitude and they did it well. Lamingtons seemed very popular at morning tea! Only a few days later in early February 2020, Majors Peter Branagan OAM and John Baines came to help take down more burned fencing and I have a photograph of them sitting in the tractor bucket, having morning tea (cake provided by Major Baines!) and both wearing great big smiles and black soot from the fires like camouflage paint! You might imagine it was a great day for Mark and me. Throughout history farmers and the Light Horse have had a close relationship with stockmen from the Upper Murray enlisting in the Light Horse and then returning home on their final leave to help their families with the harvest and other farm jobs. The letters country boys wrote from the front are often full of concern for how the family was managing back on the farm. Loss of life and war injuries after both World Wars changed the face of farming and change continues.

Recently I read on the 7 News website about the workers needed - particularly in Western Australia - and scores of ex-servicemen and women have already expressed a desire to help "fellow Australians in trouble".

An idea came to retired Lieutenant Colonel Garry Spencer as he sat in his Melbourne home watching a TV program about the plight facing growers across the country - something he says borders on "a national emergency". I understand Garry launched Operation Grain Harvest and apparently remarked on the ABC's Landline 'If you can drive a tank, why not a header!' Garry's words caught my attention, but he isn't alone with prime mover Major General Gus McLachlan and many others who are helping with the harvest.

More recently we have seen the Army on the streets assisting authorities, policing and encourage people to remain indoors during lockdowns. Unlike some I like to see military people in our communities and I find it reassuring that we have armed forces personnel who are able and trained to carry out tasks we can't do ourselves. Many tend to forget that defence is also about civil defence and defending our population and assets in natural disaster as well as conflict beyond our shores. Defence and the farming communities have a long history in the Anglo European traditions. The yeomanry were men from small landed families, who in many instances knew what it was like to defend their own properties. The term goes back to Medieval and Elizabethan times in the late sixteenth century. The yeomanry came to the fore when it was feared that the French Revolution would incite civil violence and even Revolution in England. I hope it never comes to civil unrest here in Australia. The British yeomanry have a strong cavalry association and are like the Australian Light Horse in so far as both tend to be resourceful, versatile and adaptable to almost any task. They are people who think 'outside the box', a quality that is as relevant today as it was in the earliest days of both the yeomanry and the Light Horse.

While in country areas the relationship between civilians and the Defence Forces has benefitted due to the help of military personnel during the fires and subsequently during Covid, other challenges are developing. Australia is becoming increasingly factionalised and over time factions have been empowered by the combination of the recognition of minority rights and freedom of speech. Social media seems to be providing relatively uncontrolled multiple platforms for the expression of opinion, anger and disparaging personal remarks, to say nothing of that expression so beloved of Donald Trump – ‘fake news’!

The need for the protection and representation of individual and minority rights has a long history with a growing profile after the First World War when various countries were persuaded to accept obligations to minority groups living within their boundaries as a condition of entry to the League of Nations. The Polish Minorities Treaty signed in 1919 became a template for other treaties. As the atrocities against the Jewish people and other minority groups during the Second World War became known, the rights of individuals and minorities received urgent and renewed attention and were eventually enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights published 10 December 1948.

While undoubtedly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is vital for the protection of individuals and minorities, it seems that it has also been open to abuse and has possibly led to the empowerment of violent minorities and individuals determined to exercise their own wills as we have seen recently on Melbourne’s streets to the detriment of the majority and the distress of many.

Recently I had a phone call from a gentleman advocating the promotion of Monash and Chauvel to Field Marshal as a way for revitalising an Australian unity. I suppose I didn’t really give the gentleman concerned an opportunity to ask if I might support the cause, before I asked him what dead Field Marshals could do from the grave? I pointed out that there would be an element in the community who wouldn’t even know who Chauvel and Monash were, let alone want to find out or care. Other people might question the commemoration of ‘dead white men’. Disparaging comments could well become another focus for angry posts on social media and we don’t need another source of controversy. While I have the greatest admiration for my grandfather General Sir Harry Chauvel and General Sir John Monash and I honour their memories and those men who served with them, we need to stand up to our own challenges, just as generations have had to do before us.

With our ADF personnel under pressure from both home and abroad, I have become increasingly concerned about the effect on our returned service personnel of the profile given to mental health. With manpower such a crucial asset, it seems that we have something akin to another form of ‘social emergency’. It seems there is a growing public expectation that those who have served, particularly on overseas operational postings, will return with some mental health problems. While undoubtedly many of our returned service personnel need help, they don’t need some of the accompanying labels that impact on their relationships, their ability to find future employment and a plethora of other aspects of their lives. In some instances, the help they receive is not the help they so desperately need. Having spotted the problem, we need to find a solution. Just as ADF personnel have come to our aid during the fires and Covid, now it is our turn to give something in return.

For the last couple of years as a Chauvel Foundation Board member I have been working (within the constraints of the 2020 fires and Covid) on a Light Horse Trail, photographing and recording memorials and places of Light Horse significance. Through mapping trails and creating online and hardcopy brochures, the aim is to give our Light Horsemen their place in the spirit of Anzac. And on a more regional level to bring the Light Horse history alive as part of local histories and the identity we pass on to our children and to those who visit and come to live in regional Australia. We are encouraging descendants and those who are interested to come forward with photographs and stories, with the stories possibly becoming a part of the Chauvel Foundation’s online anthology and with links to the Trail. Where possible I would encourage returned servicemen to help us create the trail. My hope is that such an interest will give those who are struggling to find their way in civilian life an absorbing interest which takes them with a purpose out into regional Australia. Such a project could be a force for unity and be adapted to anything from projects in schools to works in men’s sheds, U3A series lectures and possibly associated local field trips. It could come to represent a new beginning for some. I hope local RSLs will be interested. I believe my grandfather might see the Light Horse Trail as an appropriate way to help those who are struggling and to recognise those who have served their community and country. Something similar could be done for General Sir John Monash. We have much to do and many Light Horsemen and the exploits of many to remember. We need help to record and commemorate, Lest we forget.

Mark Your Diary.....

Victorian Branch Birthday

Sunday 6 February 2022

1445 hrs

The 76th birthday of the Victorian Branch will be celebrated at the **Shrine of Remembrance on Sunday 6 February 2022**. Due to COVID restrictions, some changes are expected so full details of the gathering are to be confirmed. It is planned that this will be followed by a short commemorative service in the Shrine Sanctuary. It is hoped that this can be followed by the usual sumptuous afternoon tea but this will have to be confirmed closer to the event. Watch out for e-mails or check the association website for updates.

Our association flag, first flown in February 2014 will be flying from the flagpole in the Shrine forecourt. It is flown there on appropriate days during the year including **7 February (association birthday 1946) and 9 July (official Australian Armoured Corps birthday 1941)**.

All members and spouses are strongly urged to support this significant activity. The setting, adjacent to Melbourne's most famous landmark is outstanding and the opportunity to **renew your acquaintance with this significant Melbourne precinct is strongly encouraged.**

To assist the organisers with afternoon tea catering, please contact the Treasurer Andy Clark by email treasurer.raacavic@gmail.com or 0431 708 576 to warn in for rations. **RSVP 28 January 2022.**



Wreath laying in the Shrine Sanctuary

We Gratefully Acknowledge the Following Donors

Ian Smith, Brian Kesby, Peter Jarratt, Rex Warren, Niall Waring, Doug Caulfield, Alan Spenceley, Jenny Clark, John Hopkins, Shane O'Brien, William Gillis, Paul Manning, Karl Liffman Andy Zsolt, Bill Houston, Mike Fogarty, Will and Bill Anderson, Richard James, John Bellfield, John Snelling, Mick O'Brien, Ray Babarikas and Alleyne Walsh.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 20th February 2022

1130 hrs

Greensborough RSL Sub Branch

111 Main Street

GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088

Agenda

Apologies
Minutes of previous AGM
Business Arising
Correspondence
Reports

Election of Office-Bearers

Lunch in the bistro

Election of Office-Bearers

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Membership Officer
Webmaster
Editor - Track
General Committee
Honorary Auditor

Nomination and Proxy Voting forms are available on the RAACA (Vic) website. All nominations to the

Secretary RAACA Vic Branch

1 Ambleside Link

DOREEN VIC 3754

NOTE: You need to be financial to vote. The financial year begins on 1 January and fees for the year are due from that date. Many members have already paid but if you are in doubt, please contact the treasurer to confirm your financial status. Payment details are on the website.

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.**

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 children and grandchildren of financial members. They must be 1st year apprentices and the scholarship 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 an 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
2 Marie Street
NAGAMBIE VIC 3608

Around the Corps.....



Our very own LTCOL Craig Burn receives his Federation Star for 40 years' Service from Canberra based member, BRIG Mark Holmes on 18 Nov 21.



Present at the funeral of Dave Walton on 24 Nov 21 were Rob Breddells, HENDY van de Duim, Peter Branagan, Phil Cornish, Wayne Ford and Dennis Austin.



Show Off Your Association

RAACA Q Store Order Form

Please contact the Property Member, Daryl Pinner to confirm availability prior to placing order. Ph: 03 9359 4520 Email: daryl.pinner@yahoo.com.au

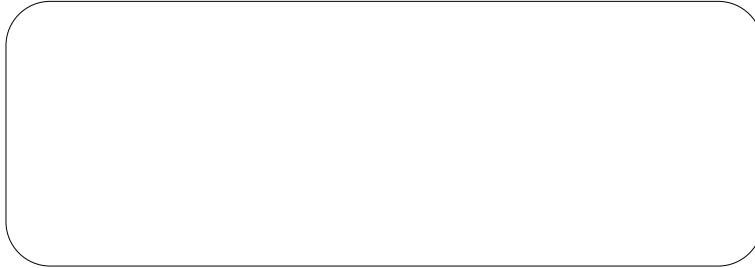
	Size	Colour/ Sleeve	Qty	Price each	Postage	Cost
Tie, RAACA				\$32.00	\$4.00	
Pocket Badge RAACA				\$15.00	\$1.00	
Plaque RAACA				\$50.00	\$10.00	
Decal (External) RAACA				\$1.50	\$1.00	
Decal (Internal) RAACA				\$1.50	\$1.00	
Lapel Badge, RAACA				\$12.00	\$1.00	
Cap, RAACA				\$10.00	\$6.00	
Stubby Holder, RAACA				\$6.50	\$4.00	
Brew Mug, RAACA				\$10.00	Pick-up Only	
Beret, black				\$30.00	\$6.00	
(Please insert beret size - S, M, L, XL)						
Polo Shirt, RAACA				\$25.00	\$6.00	
(Insert Size: L, XL, 2XL) (Insert Colour: Black, Green, Burgundy, Navy Blue)						
Rugby Top, long sleeve, RAACA				\$35.00	\$6.00	
(Insert Size: L, XL, 2XL) (Style: Navy Blue with denim collar, long sleeves & Association Logo)						
Chambray Shirt, RAACA		Long / Short		\$29.00	\$6.00	
(Please enter size: L, XL, 2XL, 3XL & mark Sleeve Length)						
(Style: Long or Short Sleeves, light blue with Association Logo)						
Eldridge Book (Special price)				\$30.00	Postage Paid	

Refer to the website (<https://raacavic.weebly.com/>) for photos of these items

Member Details:		Total Cost	\$
Name:			
Address:			
Contact Number:			
If paying by cheque, post payment to:			<input type="checkbox"/>
	RAACA Property Member 21 Elsa St FAWKNER Vic 3060		
If paying by direct deposit			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Bank: Bendigo Bank		
	BSB: 633 000 Acc. No.: 163760515		
Include your name and something to identify payment like "Q Store"			

If undeliverable, return to:
Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association Inc.
(Victorian Branch)
1 Ambleside Link
DOREEN Vic 3754

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Change of address

To change your mailing and/or contact details, please fill in the new information below,
and return THE COMPLETED PAGE to:

Treasurer RAACA (Vic Branch) 17 Birchwood Blvd HOPPERS CROSSING 3029

Name:

Address:

..... Post Code:

Mobile No:

Phone No.: E-mail:

PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS (EXCEPT FOR E-MAIL)