



**Royal Australian Armoured  
Corps Association Inc.  
(Victorian Branch)**

# TRACK

**September 2021**



**AdvanceAustralia**

PATRON:	Brig P.A. Acutt (Retd)	
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## **STOP PRESS: Cambrai Dinner to Leave Pucka**



**Greensborough RSL**

*(David Finlayson)*

Since 1993 our annual Cambrai Dinner has been conducted at Puckapunyal on the nearest Saturday to the 20th of November. However like all good things, it has come to an end, mainly as a result of the ability of the ageing convenors Messrs Baines and Branagan to traverse the bureaucratic problems concerning dealing with multiple agencies at the Base and generally the generational changes that have occurred over the past 28 years. It has been a great ride and we are eternally grateful to Army, particularly the School of Armour, the Army Tank Museum, the various support agencies on Base and in the early days, before they left for Darwin, the 1st Armoured Regiment.

We have decided to change the dinner to a luncheon which opens it up to many of our members who were unwilling or unable to travel 120 kms or more to attend an evening function which invariably involved an overnight stay or late night return journey.

The traditional commemorative activity that we have conducted each year on the Saturday afternoon in the Army Tank Museum's World War Two Armoured Memorial will be transferred to our Autumn Picnic on the last Sunday in March. This activity was initiated by members of the 2/6th Armoured Regiment Association including Bunny Austin and Doug Spinney in 1999. They would come down from Sydney each year for the Cambrai weekend. It eventually embraced all WWII armoured units.

# The Cambrai Dinner Down the Years.....

Prior to the move to Pucka in 1993, the annual Cambrai Dinner 'enjoyed' a variety of venues. These included for many years The Victoria Hotel in Little Collins St., The Science's Club in Carlton, 4/19 PWLH RHQ in George St Fitzroy and the Richmond Football Club Social Club. Some of the Guest Speakers in those days included: Col Sir Bernard Callinan, Lt Col John Dixon, Mr. Ian Jones, Brig John Grey, Col Peter Monaghan, Lt Col Gordon Jones, Col Roger Kershaw and Lt Col Gordon Barwell.

In 1993 and 94, courtesy of then CO Lt Col Mick O'Brien, the dinner was conducted in Cambrai Hall, Robertson Barracks, which was the upstairs area of the Jacka Club. In 1995 we were at the 3 RTU Officers Mess and in 1996 we made the move courtesy of then CO/CI Lt Col John Langbehn, to the School of Armour Officers/ Sergeants Mess. For the interest of the readership and to preserve the detail for posterity; I have listed below the Guest Speakers who graced our dinners in Puckapunyal:

1993 Lt Col Mick O'Brien	2007 WO1 Don Spinks, OAM
1994 Lt Col Greg Molyneux	2008 Lt Col Roger Symons
1995 Col Gordon Jones, AM	2009 Maj Gen Craig Orme, AM, CSC
1996 Col Gordon Jones, AM	2010 Brig Mark Holmes, MVO
1997 Col Mick O'Brien, AM	2011 WO1 Brad Dunn
1998 WO Peter Rosemond, OAM	2012 Maj Darren Rosemond
1999 Lt Col John Crossman	2013 Col Bernie Richards, CSC
2000 WO1 Percy White, DCM	2014 Col Mick Chadwick
2001 Lt Col Peter Jarratt	2015 Lt Col Andrew Abbott
2002 Col Steve Salmon	2016 Maj Peter Branagan, OAM
2003 Lt Col Joe Martin	2017 Lt Col Josh Gillman
2004 Maj Dennis Malone	2018 Lt Col Josh Gillman
2005 Lt Col Tim Renshaw, US Army	2019 Brig Ted Acutt
2006 Col Michael Annett	2020 No Dinner (Covid Restrictions)



*Cambrai Dinner 2003, Andy Zsolt (left) is listening intently to Tubby Brooker whilst Barry 'Shorty' Wade, MBE is completely oblivious!*



Another enduring and significant part of our annual Cambrai celebrations is the memorial service conducted in the Army Tank Museum's World War II Armoured Memorial on the Saturday afternoon of the dinner. It was originally convened by our friends from Sydney, **Kevin 'Bunny' Austin** and **Doug Spinney** of **2/6th Australian Armoured Regiment Association**, and has more recently been expanded to include all the WWII armoured units. Pictured above is the Corps' Historian **Major John Baines, RFD (Retd)** conducting the service at the Divisional Cavalry Memorial.

As a result of our movement away from Puckapunyal with the Cambrai Dinner; this important Remembrance activity will be celebrated at our Autumn Picnic in the Tank Museum on the last Sunday in March.

## From the Archives.....



Obviously enjoying each others company at the 2003 Cambrai Dinner in the RAAC Officers Mess are (L to R) **Phillip 'Spic' Cornish**, **Walter 'Wally' Ovenden** and **Peter 'Bushy' Coutts**.



## Latest Finlayson Memorial Scholarship Presented



*Young Jarryd McLean is the latest recipient of an Arch Finlayson Memorial Scholarship*

**Jarryd** is the grandson of member **Graeme ‘Diesel’ Perkins** and his wife **Joan**. He was a regular attendee at our functions particularly the Kid’s Christmas Party at Eltham. Jarryd’s apprenticeship is with Noy Builders of Bayswater. He is currently studying for a Certificate III in Carpentry at Swinburne University of Technology. **The \$500.00 scholarship will be used for the purchase of carpentry tools.**

## Welcome to the Crew

Dick Stanios Leigh Treyvaud Maj John Grant, US Army

## Vale

On Sunday morning 22 August, I received the news that old friend and comrade **Lewis Postlethwaite** had passed away peacefully at his home in **Tambo Upper, East Gippsland**. Lew had suffered ill health for some years but up until just recently he had acted as the Webmaster of our RAACA Website. He served for six years in the Corps mostly in 1st Armoured Regiment in the early to mid Seventies, mainly in A Squadron ending up as our squadron clerk. He was a fine sportsman and played cricket with the regiment and Eastern Hill Cricket Club (Seymour) and football with the regiment and Avenel. Lew had a wonderful friendly and outgoing demeanor, an infectious smile and laugh and related well with all. He is sadly missed. RIP mate.

Peter Branagan, OAM

# Mark Your Diary.....

## 2021 Kid's Christmas Party

**Sunday 18 December 2021**

**1030 hrs**

**Rod Westgarth** has booked **Meadmore Junction** again for this year's party at the **Diamond Valley Miniature Railway**. God (and COVID) willing, we are praying that we will be able to get back to some degree of normalcy by then!! Come along and enjoy the fun and the bar-b-que at **this premier location in Eltham**.

## Victorian Branch Birthday

**Sunday 6 February 2022**

**1400 hrs**

The **76th birthday** of the Victorian Branch will be celebrated at the **Shrine of Remembrance on Sunday 6 February 2022** with a gathering on the forecourt of the Shrine followed by a **short commemorative service** in the **Shrine Sanctuary** and afterwards the **usual sumptuous afternoon tea** will be enjoyed in the **western annex where the Shrine shop is located**.

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 Secretary David Finlayson by email [secretary.raacavic@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.raacavic@gmail.com) or 0409 256 765 to warn in for rations. **RSVP 29 January 2022**.



# **Cambrai Day Commemoration Luncheon**

**Saturday 20 November 2021**

**1200 for 1300 hrs**

**The ANZAC Room  
Greensborough RSL  
111 Main Street  
Greensborough Vic 3088**

**Guest of Honour**

**Mrs Honor Auchinleck**

**Author and Historian**

**Granddaughter of General Sir Harry Chauvel, GCMG, KCB**

**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

Andy Clark (M) 0431 708 576

David Finlayson (M) 0409 256 765

**Dress:** Lounge Suit or Reefer Jacket with Miniatures

Ladies equivalent

**Tickets posted out early September**

**RSVP by Friday 12 November 2021**

# Reserve Forces Day

4 July 2021

I am pleased to tender this report because the Reserve Forces Parade this year differed markedly from previous parades that I have attended. Factors that may have impacted on this year's parade in my view were as follows:

- a. On Sunday 01 July 2018 the Reserve Forces Day Melbourne Parade was significant for celebrating and commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the end of WW1, the Anniversary, 1948 - 2018 of the re-raising of the Citizen Military Forces/Citizen Air Force and service in the Australian Reserve Forces (Navy, Army and Air Force) as a member of a Reserve unit.
- b. Today, the Parade participants commemorated the centenary of the Royal Australian Air Force and Reserve Forces in general that have been formed to defend Australia from the 19th Century onwards.

That parade in 2018 saw large numbers attending at the Shrine. Today, the Air Force VIP were represented, the Royal Australian Navy had uniformed members from HMAS Cerberus in attendance, however, Army representation amongst the VIP contingent was sadly lacking. A small number from the National Service ranks attended, there were two RAAC former reservists, myself and LTCOL Doug Caulfield, OAM, his wife a former WRAAC member and Jude Pinkerton-Treloar, OAM representing AWAS/WRAAC.

I must emphasize the fact it was a cold morning in Melbourne, it did not rain and during the Parade the sun came out for a short while. The Master of Ceremonies did a splendid job, the guest speaker a RAAF Warrant Officer Class 1 spoke eloquently and for just the right length of time. The Army Band from Simpson Barracks were their usual very professional selves and the Bugler played a fine rendition of the Last Post. The Ode featured and our National Anthem was beautifully performed by the band.

The numbers may have been small but the feeling and dedication from all who formed the guard at the Eternal Flame and Shrine Guard were a fitting commemoration to be commended.

Werner Golla  
Vice President

## *Achtung Panzer.....*

The following contribution from **Lt Col Gary Spencer, AM (Retd)** - '*Operation Grain Harvest Assist*' is an initiative that has much merit and could be of immense assistance to our grain growers in particular and in a 'knock on' situation, with other primary producers. I believe there is a large amount of untapped talent out there in our retired Black Hat community who would be ideal to take up the cudgels in these very challenging times.

Peter Branagan, OAM  
President





## OPERATION GRAIN HARVEST ASSIST - STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

### Farm Labour Shortages is the Problem

- Australia is facing a chronic skilled farm labour shortage, following our International border closure and the nation's hard border stance during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic.
- Our Grains sector is at risk of reputational harm and market failure especially from a lack of skilled heavy farm machinery operators as well as truck and other farm workers, who are central to the proper functioning of the entire grains supply chain. Potential losses on some farms could be many \$millions, with \$billions at risk on a national level.
- Australia is at or close to the technical threshold of "full employment", putting the grains industry in the difficult situation of competing for workers in a very tight labour market, particularly with a booming mining economy that also requires workers with the same or similar skill sets.
- The industry, initially in WA, requires access to a suitable workforce by mid-September 2021 in preparation for the upcoming harvest season which begins in October 2021. The situation in most other States is similar, if slightly delayed as the grains in WA are the first due for harvesting. Please note the short lead time.
- Grain harvesting is an extremely short season (for instance 6-10 weeks in WA) but can be longer in the Eastern States. The entire Southern Hemisphere harvest their hay and grain during the same window.
- Australian broadacre agriculture urgently requires thousands of experienced heavy farm machinery operators and truck drivers as well as a range of other trades.
- It is vital to have these people, to ensure our grains sector remains globally competitive, and to avoid losing our markets to international competitors – this is a likely scenario if the required tonnages are unable to move into port to meet the needs of overseas markets.

### Proposed solution:

- Mobilise retired and former ADF servicemen and women, as the key focus for Operation Grain Harvest Assist, especially those with competence on complex machinery, to support farmers across the nation, as the key part of a program organized by former-ADF volunteers to meet a pressing national need.

- You will connect with farmers and contract harvesters via Facebook websites being established; you will then discuss potential employment and negotiate a suitable hourly rate and support package; guidance/advice on this will be provided by former ADF people in the role of volunteer State/Regional Coordinators. Contact details for these Coordinators will be provided on the Facebook website.

-Two Facebook sites are proposed – one for WA/SA and another for the 3 Eastern States. The Facebook sites are: **Operation Grain Harvest Assist -WA/SA** and **Operation Grain Harvest Assist – Qld/NSW/Vic.**

- The State/Regional Coordinators are there to advise former ADF people and to assist in Issue Resolution where required.

-It is intended that training, either before and after arriving on site, will be conducted, as a mandatory requirement. Duration on site will depend on your availability and the needs of the individual farmer/harvest contractor.

- Due to the challenges at present on moving across State borders, it is most likely that jobs will be within your State though Federal assistance is being requested to help work through the issue of cross-border movement.

**The type of people that farmers/contractor harvesters are after:**

- Experienced vehicle operators (A, B, C classes of vehicles)
- Vehicle and other mechanics, with ADF experience
- There are a wide range of other farm jobs available for those without the relevant ADF vehicle experience

**Typical jobs on the farms:**

Harvester and Header Drivers  
Chaser Bin Drivers  
Mechanic / Engineers  
Truck Drivers  
Spray Rig Operators  
Also Farm Hands

**Getting there:**

You would drive your own vehicle to site and can also bring your caravan and partner.

**Indicative rates:**

\$30+/hr depending on skill level, experience and on the job performance; suggest discuss all aspects of this with your State/Regional Coordinator before conducting negotiations with the farmer/harvest contractor.

R&Q is usually provided on site as is appropriate safety gear; though also suggest consider taking your own (if you already have it) as a backup.

**Garry Spencer, AM**  
**(Volunteer) National Facilitator**  
**Former Lt Col (Retd)**  
**RAAC**  
**0418 996 856**  
**garry@aql.com.au**



## 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:

RAACA Property Member PO Box 547 Coburg 3058

If paying by direct deposit:

Bank: Bendigo Bank

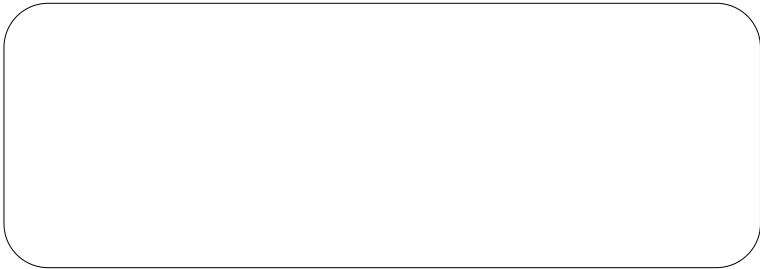
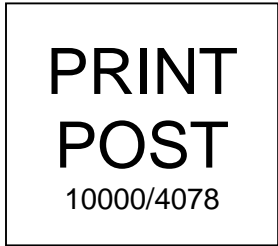
BSB: 633 000 Acc. No.: 163760515

Include your name and something to identify payment like "Q Store"



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(Victorian Branch)  
61 Gladstone Rd  
BRIAR HILL VIC 3088

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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:

**Secretary RAACA (Vic Branch) 61 Gladstone Rd BRIAR HILL VIC 3088**

Name: .....

Address: .....

..... Post Code: .....

Mobile No: .....

Phone No.: ..... E-mail: .....

PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS (EXCEPT FOR E-MAIL)