



## RAN RADIO MECHANICS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER NO. 69 – 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2009

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### EDITORIAL

In this newsletter you will find:-

- News about a proposed 2010 Reunion and a Survey Form for you to complete and return
- A discussion about the future of our Association and how it is under threat due to lack of volunteers to take over the key roles.
- Brief notes on the sad loss of a number of our colleagues.
- News from some of our groups.
- Some items of general interest.

Quite a number of our members have noticed the absence of newsletters and enquired as to what has been happening! The absence of newsletters has not been intentional, it has simply been a set of circumstances that has compounded into a delay for longer than we expected might be the gap between Newsletter, No. 68 and this Newsletter, No. 69!

As you are aware our Association is a voluntary Association and is subject to personal requirements vying with the time available for other activities. John Saywell found that in 2008 Association requirements were more than totally consuming all of his time let alone his “available time”. This led to a massive personal backlog for John – he wasn’t complaining but the situation had to be addressed and this was the first delay. In succession, followed a number of other events of two lots of overseas visitors on long stays with us (we are obviously popular and we enjoyed the time with our visitors); an extensive interstate trip to friends and relatives – most enjoyable, took up more time. John celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with prolonged parties – full of gusto and acquired a couple of OBE’s as presents i.e. “Over Bloody Eighty” medallions. Moira had an operation in hospital – she has recovered and is now hale and hearty. There were also other things getting in the way and Newsletter No. 69 was struggling to get to the top of the pile in the “To Do” list!

Next, John had a spell in hospital – not life threatening, but an infected foot and leg; antibiotics and time fixed that infection, however, the hospital gave him an infected right arm where the antibiotic drip feed was inserted. This required more antibiotics and time! We won’t bore you with the rest of the story but that is why Newsletter No. 69 is delayed.

Have you ever heard of the comedy skit about the Irishman, Paddy, who sent a note to his boss with the punch-line “*And that is why Paddy won’t be in at work today?*” Paddy sent the note to his boss following an altercation he had with a barrel of bricks on a multi-storey building site. He had rigged up a rope and pulley arrangement, but, things went wrong with Paddy and the barrel “Yo-Yoing” up and down. Paddy collided with the barrel when he or the barrel was half-way up or half-way down with Paddy grimly holding on to the rope.

Well my story isn’t as humorous as Paddy’s but you get the drift – I hope? Poor Paddy ended up in bigger trouble after the barrel of bricks hit the ground and split, spilling the bricks and he then met the empty barrel halfway up when he was halfway down. He ended up on the pile of spilt bricks and was capped off by the empty barrel when, in agony, he had let go of the rope! Is there a parallel in that to why the newsletter is late? Well, maybe! I’ll get off the Paddy theme and get back to reality and Newsletter No. 69.

Traditionally we have a comment about the weather and so we will stick to tradition. We’ve had four seasons since the last newsletter so there is plenty of scope!

The first quarter of 2009 was the driest quarter ever, in recorded history in South Australia! There were also high temperatures and things looked diabolical. April wasn’t looking good but things turned for the better and we got more than average rainfall! You little beauty! May, June, July, August and September also performed well with respect to rainfall and the reservoirs have ended up with a 91% total fill with some reservoirs at 100%. Most of the farmers in the grain growing areas are smiling – they haven’t smiled for years! Unfortunately, the Murray River valley is still screaming for water and we don’t know when that will be coming. Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert at the downstream end of the Murray are in their death throes! The dairy farmers around there aren’t dairy farmers anymore!



## **OUR PROPOSED 10<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL REUNION**

Our Queensland Convenor, Ron Hobba and Deputy Convenor, John Macartney have advised the National Committee that they are prepared to organize our 10<sup>th</sup> National Reunion in the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, during October, 2010. The National Committee is extremely pleased with this commitment on the part of Ron and John; however, we now need to conduct a survey of our members to gauge your support for the event!

A Reunion Survey Form is enclosed with this newsletter and we urge everyone to complete and return the completed form to us, as instructed on the form without delay. Even if you are unable to participate we prefer that you tell us that, so that we are able to gauge, more accurately, the support for the reunion. The better the feedback from you, the more accurate will be the outcome!

For some time, Ron Hobba and John Macartney have been active exploring the Sunshine Coast venues, accommodation and attractions to assist them in coming up with a proposal.

At this point in time Ron and John propose that the reunion will be held in Maroochydore, Sunshine Coast, Queensland from Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2010 through to and including Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2010. The core events would be:-

### **Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2010**

- Registration/Collection of information package
- Meet and Greet – drinks and finger food

### **Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2010**

- Official Dinner – an evening event with a Guest Speaker.

### **Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2010**

- A Farewell BBQ
- **Tours/Attractions**  
It is proposed that local tours/attractions will be included in the program and available for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
- **D.I.Y. Tours**  
A list of local tours/attractions is intended to be compiled so that attendees who wish to combine the Reunion with an extended stay will be able to arrange some activities to make their visit more enjoyable.

Ron and John have had discussions with the SALT organisation that helps organise reunions and are able to

arrange accommodation at Corporate Rates. SALT, of course, does more than just arrange accommodation at competitive rates; they are funded from the Royal Australian Naval Central Canteens Fund (RANCCF). There is a SALT Vacation Club – for current and Ex-naval personnel there is no joining fee.

So, Ron and John are exploring how we can work with SALT to come up with benefits for our proposed 10<sup>th</sup> National Reunion, 2010 attendees. At this time our proposed 10<sup>th</sup> National Reunion, October, 2010 is listed in the SALT Calendar of Events for 2010. The relevant Website is:-

SALT [www.salt.assn.au](http://www.salt.assn.au)

Details about the RANCCF can be found at:

[www.navy.au](http://www.navy.au)

**So, please fill in the Survey Form now and return it promptly to:**

John Saywell, 5 Almond Court, Vale, Park, SA 5081  
or

Email: [jssaywell@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jssaywell@optusnet.com.au) or

Tele: (08) 8344 1554

## **THE FUTURE OF OUR ASSOCIATION**

For quite some time we have been pleading for younger members of our Association to take a turn at the helm without any success.

It appears that while-so-ever everything is rolling along with whatever expected happens that no one feels a need to step in and take a turn. However, if others don't take over so that the Association progresses in an orderly, controlled manner the inevitable crash will come and nothing will happen. Our pleas for help with the NSW Convenor and Deputy Convenor roles has gone virtually unanswered and we now have had the Deputy Conveyor's position vacant ever since Tony Ramsay passed away. George Stevens – our Founder, Vice President and NSW Convenor, now in his 80s has deteriorating health and is in urgent need of a replacement! Please let's have a couple of volunteers.

John Laughton our Victorian/Tasmanian Convenor, now 81 years of age is in need of a replacement having been active in his role for many years. Someone please step up and volunteer for this role! If you want to know about the job please phone John Laughton (03) 9704 7799. You won't have to pay any income tax on the magnificent salary that goes with the job.

We have previously "flagged up" the need of a younger group of people to replace our National Committee which is normally comprised of:

- National President/Chairmen
- National Treasurer
- National Secretary
- Newsletter Editor
- 2 x National Committeemen

The above duties can be combined to reduce the numbers involved and a State Convenor and Deputy Convenor could say fill the roles of the National Committeemen.

Our present National Committee members are all resident in Adelaide. For ease of functioning it is considered desirable that any future National Committee members would all live within reasonable distance of each other so that they have the ability to meet face-to-face. An alternative method of operation could be to use telephone and computers – however, face-to-face meetings produce faster, sound resolutions with everyone involved experiencing the true interaction and reaction of the others.

What is important is that sound, timely outcomes are achieved by whatever operational methods being used to function.

All of our present National Committee want to be replaced for a variety of reasons e.g. health problems, spouse's health problems imposing more demands on their time and age.

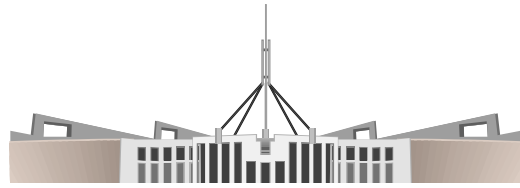
Your National President, John Saywell, has been continuously in that role since the inception of our Association in 1992. John is now an octogenarian and is in urgent need of a break so that he can attend to other personal matters that have long been side-lined and need to be attended to. John recognizes that he isn't as "speedy" as he was when he was fully involved in 1991/1992 organising our 1<sup>st</sup> National Reunion, in Adelaide!

John Saywell announced at the last National Committee Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2009 that he was now only prepared to continue as National President until the completion of the 10<sup>th</sup> National Reunion in 2010. At that meeting John expressed his disappointment at the lack of volunteers to take over the running of the Association.

The National Committee agreed that if there were not adequate volunteers forthcoming by October, 2010 that we could well have to wind-up the association and/or explore an alternative way to keep the Association functioning in association with a kindred organisation.

**SURELY, THE CAMARADERIE WE HAVE DEVELOPED SINCE 1991 IS WORTH PRESERVING AND CONTINUING INTO THE FUTURE? YOUR ASSOCIATION NEEDS YOU NOW!**

**Please discuss this request for volunteers with your mates and contact John Saywell – Telephone: (08) 8344 1554 or Email: jssaywell@optusnet.com.au**



## **OUR 9<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL REUNION, 2008 IN CANBERRA, 2008**

The 9<sup>th</sup> National Reunion held in Canberra from Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 through to Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2008 was most successful, full of enjoyment and entertaining. Overall there were approximately 140 participants who had a fabulous time with the wide variety of events comprising the reunion programme.

The highlight of the Reunion was the Official Dinner held in the De Vine Function Centre, Kamberra Winery on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2008. Our Guest Speaker was Commodore Drew McKinnie RAN – a fellow "Greenie" who had everyone rapt with his interesting and entertaining talk providing an insight for us "Oldies" into the modern day Navy. We had 136 participants booked for the dinner – it was a great evening!

We are particularly thankful to Ros and John Crawley for their hard work prior to and during the Reunion and their generosity was exceptional.

Ros & John provided considerable material for "stuffing" the souvenir satchels such as to make them outstanding mementos of the Reunion. As if that wasn't enough Ros & John provided superb items as prizes for a raffle to help raise funds. Lo and behold Ros & John also provided gifts of wine packages for the MC, the Guest Speaker and the President of our Association! This was outstanding generosity from Ros and John Crawley and added greatly to the ambience of the occasion.

So, many thanks and accolades go to Ros and John Crawley for their outstanding effort!

As well, we particularly thank Ron Rowe who did a magnificent, entertaining job as MC – thank you Ron.

Our grateful thanks go to Jim Little, as the ACT Convenor, for his co-ordinating role and behind-the-scenes organising activities as well as Transport Co-ordinator – thank you Jim.

John Bannister once again handled the Reunion Treasurer's role and kept a tight control on the purse strings and had many "runs" to the bank in Canberra throughout the Reunion. Also John Bannister had to deal with the paper trail and clear the bills following the Reunion. We did clear our costs for the Reunion – which is always the aim. Thank you John.

Also, behind the scene activities were provided by Moira & John Saywell. Moira provided a lot of secretarial services and we can be grateful for her superb uncomplaining efforts that help very much to keep the wheels of the machine running smoothly. Thank you Moira.

As for John Saywell's behind-the-scenes efforts he accepts that as being "Par for the Course". His reward is seeing everyone enjoying themselves and being immersed in the atmosphere of wonderful camaraderie existing throughout our reunions.

Thanks also go to all of you who participated and made it a great occasion – without you it would have been very lonely!

***The vote was – a fabulous reunion!***



### **DONATIONS**

Since our last newsletter we have received donations from those named below:-

***Ron Akeroyd, Bob Allen, Ray Brown, Ron Bullock, Lloyd Cheatham, John Clarke John Cleary, Bill Cooper, Russ Corben, Norma Devereaux, Rina Donald, Don Duncan, Bob Flett, Mick George, Les Gronow, Gil Harrington, Alf Haurat, Roy Jewell, Ern (Ned) Kelly, Alison Kerr, Chris Lambert, Errol Lyon, John Marsh, Bert Matthews, Jim McClure, Reuben McDonald, David Mowatt, Hilary O'Connell, Mike Olden, Jim Preston, Ken Pryor, CR (Doc) Rice, John Rogers, Graeme Russell, Keith Taylor, John Wade, Russell Watson, CA (Rocky) Winters, Frank Wulff***

***Thank you everyone for your generosity, it is very much appreciated.***

We keep our costs to an absolute minimum with our volunteer organisation bearing personally a measure of the running expenses. For this we are grateful for their dedication and generosity.



### **ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS/ ADDITIONS**

When advising of your address changes it is of great assistance to us if you also advise of changes to your telephone/fax/mobile telephone/e-mail addresses as well - if not known initially then

please let us know as soon as possible. It all helps to make life a little easier! Recent changes/additions of address notified to us are:-

**Joe Charlton** –his address has changed but he is still at the same lovely abode in Tasmania!

**Colin Cook** – has moved from North Nowra to seaside Kiama, NSW.

**Russ Corben** – moved from Suffolk Park to Byron Bay, NSW.

**Steve Griffiths** – has had a huge move from Mount Isa to Gawler, South Australia.

**Ross Hewitt** – has moved from Bicton to Bridgetown, WA.

**Val Poppins** – has had a big move from North Croydon, Victoria to East Albury, NSW.

**Kath Porter** – moved locally from Sarsfield to Bairnsdale in Victoria.

**Les Sykes** – has changed his address in Nowra, NSW.

**Jack Thompson** – has moved from Wadsworth, Illinois to Blythville, Arkansas, USA.

***Please keep us informed of your changes of addresses, and also update us with your telephone numbers, Fax and Email etc. If you note any incorrect details on our mailing labels please inform John Saywell.***

### **MAIL RETURNED/NON DELIVERY**

Unfortunately a number of Newsletter mailouts are returned for a variety of reasons. Sometimes this is simply because the addressee has overlooked informing us of a change of address. On other occasions it has more ominous overtones—we are always concerned if we are unable to determine the reason behind the return of mail. So, please keep us informed of address changes. We will welcome any help in locating or learning more about the people subject to mail returns.

We had three "mail returns" from the Newsletter No. 68 mail out.

**Betty Gillespie** We had a letter returned from her address in Mollymook, NSW

**Ross Hewitt** Listed in Newsletter No. 68 as being a "Mail return" was resolved with a change of address – now in Bridgetown, WA.

**Audrey Ivory** Returned from Graceville, Qld. .





## **NEW FINDS**

We are always pleased to advise of some “New Finds” and we welcome them “back to the fold” and hope they will enjoy the renewed contact with old mates.

**Lionel Lyn Amos** - was a Nirimba Apprentice, O/No. R42252. Served from 02.01.1959 to 01.01.1971. Was a Chief Systems Artificer.

**Peter Batchelor** – was a WW2 Hostilities Only Petty Officer Radio Mechanic. Joined the RANR with O/No. B3688 on 12 June, 1942 then completed the Radio Mechanics Course at the Melbourne Technical College and at Belconnen Transmitter Station, Canberra and was then transferred to the RAN with O/No. 26670. He served HMAS Ladana (Madang/Milne Bay, Papua-New Guinea), HMAS Lonsdale, HMAS Magnetic and was Demobilised at HMAS Moreton on 11.02.1946.

*Peter would welcome contact from any of his vintage; now lives in Ekibin, Qld.*

**Bruce (Jack) Desmond Campbell** – was an FND ‘L’ School era entrant, served from 29 June, 1962 until June, 1974; O/No. R59106 and was a Petty Officer Electrician Communications on completion of his RAN service. Bruce is currently living in the Falkland Islands – for the past 2 years. He and his wife Sandra (Sandy) find it a good jumping off place to visit South America! Bruce did mention that the average temperature in the Falklands was 5 degrees!

**James (Jim) Davis** – was an FND ‘L’ School era entrant and served from 1955 to 1984; O/No. R51415 and was a Chief Petty Officer Air Technical Communications at completion of his RAN Service.

**David (Dave) Victor Goodrich** – served in the RAN 1964 to 1973; O/No. R63397 and was a Petty Officer Air Technical Communications at completion of his service.

**Michael (Mick) Power** – served in the RAN from 1963 to 1972; O/No. R62393 and was a Leading Electrical Mechanic Air Communications when he completed his service.

**Ron Williams** – served in the RAN FAA during the 1960s/70s as a “Birdie Tiffie” – awaiting further details.

**Con Zarubin** – was in the first Intake of RAN Junior Recruits on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1960 at age 16 years and given O/No. R93077. Con went through the Junior Recruit School at HMAS Leeuwin before going to the ‘L’ School at HMAS Cerberus emerging as a Radio Electrical Mechanic 2<sup>nd</sup> Class. He then served in a number of ships and establishments including in the USA where he was in HMAS Brisbane’s Commissioning Crew. There were a number of “Title Changes” through Con’s span of Service as the Branch changed its name. At his time of Paying off Con was a

Chief Petty Officer Electronic Technical Services (CPOETS) in July, 1980.

*We are following up on a number of leads that should locate more of our “missing” Radio Mechanics.*

Please, any of our readers, if you are able to provide contact addresses, leads, names, preferably with given names/initials of “ex Radio Mechanics” please pass this information on to John Saywell - his contact details can be found at the head and tail of this newsletter. In the end, we will respect anyone’s wish as to whether or not they choose to be involved with us - we simply want to be able to make them aware that ‘we’ exist!



## **IN MEMORIAM**

**It is with regret we report the sad passing of a number of our colleagues:**

- **Brian Archer** on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2009, was not on our membership list but was noted as being listed in “A Last Farewell” in the FAA Ass’n of Australia magazine, Slipstream, Vol 20, No. 2. 2009. Brian was an Ex CPOATC.
- **Donald (Don) Frederick Dickson** belatedly, we learn, during 2005 in Victoria; Don joined the RAN on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 1952 for 6 years service with O/No. R45450 and was from the FND ‘L’ School era, becoming a Radio Electricians Mate. Later, in the 1950s there was a “Title Change” to Radio Electrical Mechanic. On completion of Don’s 6 years service he joined the Royal Australian Fleet Reserve for continuous service until 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1960.
- **Shirley Margaret Fulton** nee Renton – on Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2009 at almost 80 years of age. Shirley was the wife of Bill Fulton, a Torrens era Radio Mechanic – they had been married for 62 years!
- **Peter Gillespie** on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2008 in Milton Hospital, NSW. Peter joined the RANR on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1943 during WW2 and was allotted O/No. PA4117. After completing a Radio Mechanics Course at Melbourne Technical College he was transferred to the RAN on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1944 with O/No. 27092. During his RAN Service Peter was included in the first LORAN Course ever conducted in the RAN. At the time of his Demobilisation on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 1947 he was a Petty Officer Radio Mechanic.
- **George McIntosh (Dutchy) Holland** on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2009 at age 88 years. O/Nos. S7806 and 26882; served in WW2 RANR & RAN, 1<sup>st</sup> February, 1943 to 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1946. George completed his RAN Technical Training at the Melbourne Technical College and at the RAN Radio School/HMAS Watson in Sydney. When Demobilised he was a Petty Officer Radio Mechanic (W). George was a very successful businessman in later years.

- **Louisa Iris Hylton (nee Davis)** on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2009 at age 84 years in Adelaide. Louisa had been known as Iris most of her life but preferred to be known as Louisa in later years. Iris married (22<sup>nd</sup> July, 1947) Maxwell (Max) Eric Hylton who was a WW2 “Hostilities Only” Petty Officer Radio Mechanic (O/Nos PA2568 and 26343). Max had predeceased Iris on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2003.
- **Ronald (Ron) Joseph Lukies** on 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2009. In WW2, joined 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1942 RANVR, O/No. PM/V104 becoming a “Bailey Boy” and completed a Special Radio Physics Course at Sydney University; was then transferred to the RANVR Special Branch as a Radar Officer. Ron was a Lieutenant (Sp) at Demobilisation on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1946.
- **Errol Bertrand Lyon** on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2009 in Queensland. Errol served in the RAN from 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1958 to 19<sup>th</sup> June, 1967 with O/No. R54471; he was an Electrical Mechanic (Power) from the FND ‘L’ School era.
- **Vincent (Vince) James McCabe** suddenly on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 at age 76 years and 11 months. Vince joined the RAN on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 1950 with O/No. R39209 and was in the very first Radio Electricians Mate’s (REM) Course at the FND Electrical School. Later Vince became Rated Chief Radio Electrician and then completed a number of years full-time service in the Royal Australian Fleet Reserve and finally was discharged from the RAFR on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1963.
- **Ronald (Ron) Leslie Melville** on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2008 at Burnie Hospital, Tasmania. Shortly before his death, Ron had contacted us to confirm that he would be attending our 9<sup>th</sup> National Reunion in Canberra, however, his medical status changed and sadly he was unable to attend!  
  
Ron Joined the RAN on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1958 with O/No. R54795 and became a Radio Electrical Mechanic (Air) in the FND ‘L’ School era. Ron extended his RAN Engagement so as to complete 15 years continuous service at which time he was a Petty Officer Electrician Air Communications.
- **Alexander (Alex) Compson Richardson** on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 at age 86 years and 10 months. During WW2 Alex joined the RANR (O/No. PA3459) on 5<sup>th</sup> January, 1943 and completed a Radio Mechanics Course at Melbourne Technical College; he was then transferred to the RAN (O/No. 26815). When Demobilised on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1947 Alex was a Petty Officer Radio Mechanic (W).
- **John Francis Scanlan** at 83 years unexpectedly, on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 in Greenslopes Hospital, Brisbane. John joined the RAN on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 1946 as an Ordinary Seaman (Radio Mechanic) with O/No. 33065 and then completed his technical training at the Adelaide School of Mines & Industries (billeted at HMAS Torrens – Port Adelaide) and then at HMAS Watson (Sydney). He was Rated Leading Radio Mechanic (Radar) and then off to sea. John’s RAN engagement ended on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1957 when he was entered into the Royal Australian Fleet Reserve (RAFR) for 5 years service. However, John’s RAFR was completed on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 1960.  
  
John had been our Queensland Convenor for a number of years and always had the Association at heart. The National Committee valued the work done by John during the years he held the Queensland Convenor’s role!
- **Nancy Joyce (Nan) Sharp** peacefully, at home, on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2009 at age 79 years. Nan was married in 1950 to Greg Sharp, a Torrens Era Radio Mechanic.
- **Robert (Bob) Thomas Slatyer** on 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2008, 21 days short of his 89<sup>th</sup> birthday. Bob, who had a B.Sc Degree, joined the RAN during WW2 on 6<sup>th</sup> January, 1942 with Official No. 25726 as an Ordinary Coder, in which he was fully qualified by 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1942. Bob was soon selected to do a Radio Physics Course in Sydney University becoming a “Bailey Boy”. On completion he was Commissioned in the RANVR as a Sub Lieutenant Radar Officer in the Special Branch and saw service in HMAS Hobart and HMAS Shropshire. When Demobilised on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1946, he held the Rank of Lt (Sp) RANVR.
- **Geoffrey (Geoff) Arthur Witten** on 2nd July, 2009, in Tatura, Victoria at age 85 years. Geoff joined the RANR during WW2 on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1942 with O/No. PM5320. Initially Geoff served as a Seaman becoming an A.B. while serving in HMAS Shropshire. In early 1945 Geoff was selected for Radio Mechanic Technical Training at HMAS Watson and joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> Class of “complete” training to be processed through HMAS Watson which by then was conducting “complete courses” in W/T and Radar equipments. At the time of Geoff’s Demobilisation on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1946 Geoff was a Leading Radio Mechanic. Returning to “Civvy Street” Geoff became a successful Dairy Farmer in Victoria.

*We extend our deepest sympathy to the families.  
Lest we forget!*

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GROUP NEWS**

The rain has been pelting down here in the South West of WA. 96mm fell in Mundaring during the week and our farmers in the wheat belt have had good falls. With some sunshine and follow-up rains in September, they could have a good year.



The rain did not deter 20 fine upstanding REMs who mustered at the Swan Yacht Club for lunch on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August. The chefs did justice to 20 fine steaks, during a short break in the showers and their efforts were roundly cheered by the consumers.

**Those present were:** *John & Judith Cleary, Norma Devereaux, Reg, Margaret & Lee Doran, Jack & Jenny Duperouzel, Max & Eileen Garth, Allen & Elaine Hoskins, Roy Jewell, Steve & Margaret Llewellyn, Betty Marshall, Jim and Maree Preston, Ron & Barbara Rowe.*

Apologies were received from: *Artie Boyd & Wendy, Colin & Bev Benporath, Don & Barbara Duncan, Brian & Jill Evans, Bob Flett, Kev & Val Gleeson, Trevor & Jan Leggo, Denis & Maree Norris, Bill McAllister, Diedrie MacNish, Ross & Heather Hewitt, Frank & Lyn Hollingworth, Vic & Gwenda Rann, Keith & Doris Taylor.*

The Benporaths are in Frankfurt for three weeks, the Boyd's are sunning themselves with their caravan club, Don & Barb Duncan were working, Lyn Flett was receiving a well deserved award from our State Governor, the Norris's were travelling down south and the Taylors were in Tassie. Nice to get away when you have the chance and we hope they all enjoyed themselves. Congratulations to Lyn Flett who has worked tirelessly among young people over many years.

Val Gleeson is still fighting the good fight against that most dreaded of diseases. The latest sitrep from Kev tells us: *Val is coming along quite well and we hope that she will be allowed to come home from the Hospice later in the week. The Community Hospice at St John of God Murdoch is a lovely place to receive the care and attention required to regain a better state of health. The staff and facilities are tops.*

We are looking forward to the return of Vic and Gwen Rann from Eastern shores. They have been away for about 3 months visiting "rellies" in Queensland. Vic is maintaining pretty good health and we need him to organise things, take our money and cheer us up with his ever smiling face.

The cooks, Roy Jewell and Allen Hoskins were most ably assisted by many onlookers offering useless advice about all and sundry. It's a credit to their skill we got to eat at all.

The door prizes: Judith Cleary won a mystery prize donated by Jenny Duperouzel. Margaret Doran took home the mugs; Allen Hoskins won a bottle of wine, Ron Rowe won the red (a worthy cause), wine donated

by the Llewellyns and Jim Preston rounded up the chocolates. At the rate of one a day, he has enough to last a month. Many thanks to our donors.

Our last Luncheon date for the year is our Xmas function as follows:



## **WA BBQ LUNCHEON**

**Sunday, 22nd December, 2009  
1130 for 1200 -1430**

SWAN YACHT CLUB, EAST FREMANTLE  
REMEMBER TO WEAR YOUR NAME TAG  
USUAL FARE - RSVP

**Vic Rann – Tel: 08 9354 5529 or email  
vicandgwen@optusnet.com.au**

or

**Ron Rowe – Tel: 08 9295 0851 or email  
rower@tadaust.org.au**



## **SA/NT GROUP NEWS**

The SA/NT Group had another very successful Luncheon on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2009 at the Hampstead Hotel, Collinswood. There was much conversation whilst catching up with each other's news. Present were:

***Ron & Janice Akeroyd, John Bannister, Ken & Jo Bryant, Thelma Cunneen, Pat & Julie Delavia, Isobel Downie, Sylvia Fielding, Alison Kerr, Chris & Doris Lambert, Glen & Barbara Lewis, Tom & Dulcie Palmer, Bill Russack, John & Moira Saywell, Brian & Val Sweeney and Myra Tindal.***

Apologies were received from:-

***Joy Bannister, Rod & Marlene Bannon, Kevin & Joan Bonney, Michael & Kathleen Cain, Sheila Campbell & Ron Hill, Nadean Egan, Gil & Laura Harrington, Norma & Doug Hawke, Richard & Bev Kirkman, Sid & Joan May, Archie McArthur, Greg & Nancy Sharp and Colin & Nan Shillabeer.***

**The next SA/NT Group Luncheon is scheduled for Sunday, 22nd November, 2009 with the venue, once again, being the very popular Hampstead Hotel.**

Assemble at 11.30am for lunch at noon. For those unfamiliar with the Hampstead Hotel, you will find it located at the junction of North East Road and Hampstead Road. There is plenty of off-street parking, the main entrance to the Lounge Bar and Restaurant is located at the rear car park.

**Bookings are essential and it would greatly assist your organisers if you would please telephone:**

**Kevin Bonney (08) 8337 3051**

**John Saywell (08) 8344 1554**

**or email jsssaywell@optusnet.com.au**

***We look forward to seeing you there – make it a maximum attendance day!***



## QUEENSLAND GROUP NEWS

Ron Hobba and John Macartney have been very busy investigating venues, accommodation and tours/attractions etc. in the Queensland Sunshine Coast with regard to our proposed 10<sup>th</sup> National Reunion in October, 2010.

### **Contacts:**

**Convenor: Ron Hobba**

7 Bloomfield Place, Carina, Qld 4152

Tel. No. (07) 3843 2207

Email: [ronandfred@bigpond.com](mailto:ronandfred@bigpond.com)

**Deputy Convenor: John Macartney**

PO Box 689, Childers, Qld. 4660

Tel. No. (07) 4126 3445

Email: [jrmaca@bigpond.com](mailto:jrmaca@bigpond.com)



## NEW SOUTH WALES GROUP

### NEWS

**Reuben McDonald will celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday on the 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2009! Congratulations Reuben!**

We have pleaded in the past for volunteers in NSW to step forward to assume the role of Group Convenor and Deputy Convenor, but, to date, not one volunteer! Please, "We Need You Now!" even more than ever. So, please volunteer to keep us on a steady course!

**Contacts: George or Shirley Stevens:**

Tel. No: (02) 9456 4007 email: [gws@pacific.net.au](mailto:gws@pacific.net.au)

## VICTORIA/TASMANIA GROUP NEWS

Our luncheon was held on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2009, at the Dandenong RSL. This was a most enjoyable get-together with fifteen members attending:



*Bruce & Sally Alston, Bill Burne, Mick & Phil George, Tim & Phyl Gloury, George Howell, John Laughton, Kevin & Nina Mills, John Owens, Ken & Marie Pryor, Ian Shackleton.*

Apologies were received from:

*Lofty & Sue Watson, Lorraine Laughton, Jim Lane, Dean Penglase, Wal Bennett, Bryan Smith, Lofty & Peg Duncan, Ailsa Holman, Jo Mowday, Jack & Winsome Cations, Margaret Bail, Peter & Millie Barnes, Ken Clarke, Ray Brown, Joan Burne, Helen Charlton, Pat Hollywell, David & Josie Innes, Charlie Morris, Michael Novak, Dennis Campbell, Jeanette Dickson, Les Murfett and Peter Glover.*



**Our last luncheon for this year will be held on  
18<sup>th</sup> November, 2009  
at the Dandenong RSL Club  
at 11.00am**

**and it would be wonderful to have a good turnout. Please put this date in your diary and come and join us for a great lunch. Please advise your attendance to the contacts below by 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2009:**

### **Contacts:**

**John Laughton**, 36 Tamarisk Road, Narre Warren, Vic. 3805. Tel. No. (03) 9704 7799; Mob. No. 0417 336 423; Email: [johnfl@aapt.net.au](mailto:johnfl@aapt.net.au) or

**Ian Shackleton**, 254 Lawrence Rd, Mt. Waverley, Vic. 3149. Tel. No. (03) 9802 7694

**Mick George**, 10 Bruce Street, Laverton, Vic. 3028  
Tel. No. 03 9369 5805; Mob No. 0401 853 319

Email: [rickgeorge@optusnet.com.au](mailto:rickgeorge@optusnet.com.au)



## ACT GROUP

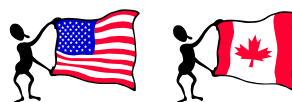
### NEWS

We have a vacant position for a Deputy Convenor – any volunteers? Contact Jim Little.

### **Contact:**

**Convenor: Jim Little, Tel. No. (02) 6288 7462**

**Email: [jlittle@actewagl.net.au](mailto:jlittle@actewagl.net.au)**



## USA/CANADA GROUP NEWS

**Contact: Les Figg, 583 Valeri Ruth Court,  
Santa Clare, California, USA 95050**

**Email: [les\\_igg@comcast.net](mailto:les_igg@comcast.net) or  
[lfigg@alacritech.com](mailto:lfigg@alacritech.com)**





## **UK GROUP NEWS**

Tommy Joyce, our UK Convenor reported that the UK Group 2009 Reunion in Leicester, Leicestershire during June, 2009 was a great success. Tommy gave special thanks to Nicky and Reg Thacker for organising their reunion. John and Dorothy Bruce visiting from Australia also participated in the reunion – both John and Dorothy are ex RN “Birdie” Radio Mechanics while John also served in the RAN FAA during the 1950s.

The UK Group Reunion incorporated a visit to the Senior Service Club in Leicester – that club is full of Navy memorabilia. While at the Senior Service Club, “Tots went down in true Navy tradition!”

The UK Group is now planning to hold their next reunion in Keswick, in the Lake District of Cumbria.

### ***Contacts:***

***Convenor: Tommy Joyce, 16 Foxton Avenue,  
Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne, U.K. NE32AR  
Telephone No. in the UK: 01912 843512  
Email: thomas.joyce@o2.co.uk  
Deputy Convenor: Ted Strauss  
Telephone No. in the UK: 01453 542566  
Email: ted\_strauss@btinternet.com***

## **HMAS SYDNEY 2 SAGA**

Recently a Christmas Island memorial was dedicated to the unknown sailor, believed to be from the WW2 HMAS Sydney, cruiser, whose body was washed ashore in a Karly float on to Christmas Island. A cairn was established and dedicated nearby to where the sailor had been originally buried on Christmas Island.

The inquiry into the loss of HMAS Sydney was told that the sailor could have survived for a number of days after the cruiser had sank. His body is believed to be the only crew member found after the loss of all 645 crew on board!

Efforts are continuing to identify the unknown sailor using DNA techniques. Counsel assisting the HMAS Sydney inquiry, Commander Jack Rush QC, said the number of personnel who could be the unknown sailor had been narrowed to 89.

The HMAS Sydney 2 Commission of Inquiry has been concluded and a report has been issued to the Government as well as being released to the public on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2009. This, hopefully, will be the final chapter in the 68 year old mystery which had its beginnings when the WW2 Cruiser, HMAS Sydney, made contact with the German Raider, HSK Kormoran on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 1941.

The Commission of Inquiry was extensive and should put to bed the many myths that have grown over the years. However, there will be some people who will not accept the truth in spite of whatever convincing evidence is presented to them!

The Captain of HMAS Sydney 2 was deemed by the Commission of Inquiry to have made a fatal error by coming within range of the disguised German Raider, HSK Kormoran. That error resulted in the Sydney coming under a deadly barrage from Kormoran resulting in Sydney becoming mortally damaged and on fire. The Sydney broke in two as a result of the damage and would have sunk rapidly.

So lethal was the surprise attack by Kormoran, once the German ship dropped its disguise as a Dutch freighter, that about 70% of Sydney’s crew was either killed or disabled in the first five minutes of battle. Captain Joseph Burnett probably died in the opening fusillade which destroyed Sydney’s bridge.

The inquiry found that any of Sydney’s crew who may have survived and got clear of the sinking ship only had a remote chance of survival – “If they did, their chance of survival without access to lifeboats was negligible.”

All 645 of Sydney’s crew were lost as a result of that action.

### ***LEST WE FORGET!***

The HMAS Sydney 2 Virtual Memorial will be found at:  
- <http://www.sydney memorial.com>

## **POST ARMISTICE SERVICE IN SOUTH KOREA**

The Federal Government announced that Post Armistice Service in South Korea is now recognized as having been Active Service for those members of the Australian Defence Forces who served in South Korea for 30 days between 28 July, 1953 to 19 April, 1956.

Those who served in this period in South Korea for 30 days will be entitled to a Returned from Active Service Badge and a new medal, yet to be approved and produced – the Australian General Service Medal – Korea (AGSM – Korea).

It could be up a number of months before the medal becomes available. Applications are being accepted now and the RAS Badge will be issued to veterans, still living, with the medal to follow automatically, when available to approved applicants. The RAS Badge will not be awarded posthumously.

## GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF CLARKE COMMITTEE ANOMOLIES

There have been 470 plus submissions received for the Federal Government Review of Anomalies arising out of the earlier Clarke Review recommendations not acted upon by the Howard Government. 307 of the present submissions relate to Australian Participants in the British Nuclear Tests in Australia.

Of some relevant interest was a recent British High Court landmark decision (June, 2009) concluding that Australian Servicemen probably were used as human guinea pigs during a series of atomic tests in the 1950s.

The decision found the British Ministry of Defence did have a case to answer – that it unfairly exposed servicemen from Australia, Britain, New Zealand and Fiji to Atomic fallout during the series of tests in South Australia, Western Australia and off the eastern coast on atolls in the Pacific Ocean.

The Australian Government has stalled for years on whether to pay compensation stating it was waiting for a British High Court ruling because the tests were done by the British Government.

The turning point in the case for the recent High Court ruling was a 2006 New Zealand study that found “chromosomal aberrations” in veterans who had been exposed.

In earlier hearings, the Court heard the British Government and military administration withheld details of the dangers of atomic testing from the 25,000 servicemen who took part and also the Australian Government of the day!



### SICK BAY

There are a number of our colleagues who have not been faring well of late and we send our special wishes for their well being and recovery.

*We wish all our colleagues who are on the “Sick List” a quick and full recovery; we are all thinking of you!*



## NEW EMAIL ADDRESSES

We would appreciate learning of your Email address and any subsequent changes. Our current Email listing contains 310 addresses, whereas our Mailout List currently contains 607 addresses. So, please advise John Saywell of your current Email address/update.

John’s contact details are shown at the newsletter header and in the organisation contact details at the end of this newsletter.

### THE NATIONAL ORGANISATION

#### PRESIDENT:

**John Saywell OAM** (08) 8344 1554  
Email: [jssaywell@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jssaywell@optusnet.com.au)

#### VICE PRESIDENT:

**George Stevens** (02) 9456 4007  
Email: [gws@pacific.net.au](mailto:gws@pacific.net.au)

#### TREASURER:

**John Bannister** (08) 8298 1855  
Email: [johnban@adam.com.au](mailto:johnban@adam.com.au)

#### SECRETARY:

**Moira Saywell**

#### NEWSLETTER EDITORS:

**Moira & John Saywell** As above

#### CONVENORS & DEPUTIES:

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Deputy: **Vacant**

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Deputies: **Ian Shackleton** (03) 9802 7694  
**Mick George** (03) 9369 5605  
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A.C.T. **Jim Little** (02) 6288 7462  
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#### USA/Canada

**Les Figg**  
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**RAN RADIO MECHANICS ASSOCIATION**  
**10<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL REUNION, SUNSHINE COAST, QUEENSLAND**  
**FRIDAY, 29<sup>TH</sup> TO SUNDAY, 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER, 2010**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Full Name: .....

Address: .....

..... Email: ..... Tel. No: .....

Please tick all boxes applicable:-

- I wish to attend the Reunion
- I will probably attend the Reunion
- I will not be able to attend the Reunion
- There will be ..... people in my Reunion group
- I will combine a DIY holiday in the Sunshine Coast Area with the Reunion

*Please return by 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 to John Saywell, 5 Almond Court, Vale Park, SA 5081  
 Telephone: 08 8344 1554 or Email: jssaywell@optusnet.com.au*



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