



SENSOR

Promoting National Security and Defence

RUSI of SA

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IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As we were unsuccessful in identifying a nomination to replace me as President at the September AGM I will continue to provide a report for each edition of 'Sensor' until such time as that occurs.

As I write the world seems as far removed from 'peace' as ever. Israel and the Palestinians in Gaza are on the brink of war and the unrest in Syria shows no signs of abating. Bombings continue in Iraq, internal struggles feature daily in Somalia and of course we have the biggest challenge of all in Afghanistan. Is there any good news? Well, on the basis that our troops are withdrawing from Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands in the next 12 months or so, we can assume that these missions have been achieved and security has been brought to these small nations, at least for the time being!

China features very heavily in any discussion about regional security. A recent media report quoted the former Liberal Prime Minister, John Howard, as backing the Gillard government's policy on relations between the United States and China and praised President Barack Obama's decision to base 2,500 marines near Darwin. He has also come out strongly in favour of allowing Chinese investment in Australia and said Chinese state-owned enterprises *"should not be a barrier to accepting their investments"*.

In a swipe at another former Prime Minister, Paul Keating, and other critics of the training of US marines near Darwin, Mr Howard said the argument was based on the assumption of *"likely"* conflict between the US and China, and Australia having to *"make a choice"* between the two, or the US *"power sharing"* with China. *"I find much of this argument both muddled and lacking in a proper understanding of the forces at work, both in the bilateral relationship between China and the United States, as well as within the Asia Pacific region,"* Mr Howard said. *"Australia will always be closer to the United States than China because we share common values, institutions and history. We should continue to maximise our links with both countries."*

Mr Howard said Australia *"should not lecture China to change her system, nor should we blink when China's authoritarian approach would collide with our Western liberal tradition"*. *"Foreign capital flows remain as vital to Australia's future economic growth as they have been to the past economic development of our country,"* he said.

Locally, family, friends and fellow soldiers have commemorated the life of Corporal Scott James Smith, in a moving military funeral service recently held in the Barossa Valley. Twenty-four year old Corporal Smith, a Combat Engineer with the Special Operations Engineer Regiment, was killed in action when an Improvised Explosive Device detonated during an operation in northern Helmand province on 21 October 2012. Local residents, dignitaries and members of the Australian Defence Force stood side by side to pay their respects to Corporal Smith as his coffin was marched into the funeral service by his Regimental mates. Mourners were told of the unit's motto 'Inter Hastas et Hostes' translated to mean 'between spears and enemies', highlighting the vital and dangerous work Corporal Smith and his fellow combat engineers undertake on operations, leading the way for others to execute and complete the mission.

"He was the guy who others relied on. He paved the way and he saved the lives of countless people, through his immense courage, bravery and professionalism," his Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Corrigan said at the funeral.

While we sadly note the passing of Corporal Smith we also recognise the bravery of a soldier who lived through conflict. Corporal Daniel Alan Keighran VC has been invested as the recipient of Australia's 99th Victoria Cross by Governor-General Quentin Bryce during a ceremony at Government House, Canberra.

His citation reads: *"For the most conspicuous acts of gallantry and extreme devotion to duty in action in circumstances of great peril at Derapet, Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan, as part of the Mentoring Task Force One on Operation SLIPPER on 24 August 2010"*.

At the time, Corporal Keighran was a member of the 6th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, which was deployed to Afghanistan with Mentoring Task Force One. Corporal Keighran is only the third recipient of the Victoria Cross for Australia, which in 1991 replaced the British or Imperial Victoria Cross awarded to 96 Australians. He is the first member of the Royal Australian Regiment to receive the country's highest military honour.

The Chief of the Defence Force, General David Hurley, congratulated Corporal Daniel

Keighran, VC on being awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia.

"Corporal Keighran acted with exceptional clarity and composure that spread to those soldiers around him, giving them confidence to operate effectively in an extremely stressful and dangerous situation," General Hurley said. *"His actions identified and suppressed enemy firing points and turned the fight in our favour. Corporal Keighran joins an esteemed group of Australians revered for their courage in combat. The official citation will show that 'his valour is in keeping with the finest traditions of the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force,' but perhaps the greatest honour comes from one of his comrades who said 'I would fight to serve with Corporal Dan Keighran in the future'".*

As we sit down for Christmas lunch in the near future, spare a thought and pray that we have our security strategy correct but, more importantly, that our service men and women come home from their deployment.

See you in 2013.

Tim Hanna
Immediate Past President

LITERATURE

It was noted with regret that Eric Lomax, author of "The Railway Man" died recently at the age of 93.

Eric was a prisoner of war who worked on the "death railway" in Thailand and wrote the book based on his experiences there. The book, which is held in the RUSI-SA library has recently been made into a film. For more information go to

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-19878770>

and

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2012/apr/27/colin-firth-nicole-kidman-railway-man>

Vale

It is with regret that the recent deaths of members

Hugh Rhodes
Mr John Devaney
Mrs M Mitchell
GPCAPT W Spinks and
Mrs Stella Guthrie

were announced.

The Members of Council extend their condolences to their families and friends.

Monthly Luncheons

Monday 3 December 2012

Speaker: **Dr Pamela Schulz**, lecturer at the Magill Campus in the School of Communication, International Studies and Languages

Topic: **'Who is defending Defence? Defence and the Discourse of Disrespect in War and Peace'**.

Monday 4 February 2013

Speaker: TBA

Topic: TBA

Please note that there is no luncheon in January, 2013

All members are invited to attend our luncheons. Indeed you are encouraged to invite partners, friends and colleagues to join us and, if they like what they see and hear, to nominate them for membership.

The dress code for the luncheon is coat and tie. We assemble in Building 34A, Keswick Barracks, Keswick, at approximately 11.30 am for drinks and good fellowship. Members are asked to be seated by 12.00 noon when our President welcomes members and guests and lunch is served. The cost of the buffet is \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members, which includes wine and soft drinks. We also conduct a raffle to help cover expenses. Our caterer has agreed to provide vegetarian meals and sweets for diabetics, but these must be ordered before midday on the Thursday before the lunch.

For those who do not have time to enjoy lunch, but wish to hear the lecture, chairs are provided around the perimeter of the hall. Please be seated before 12.55 pm. The address is of about 30 to 35 minutes duration with 15 minutes for questions, after which coffee or tea is available. We aim to complete the program by 2.00 pm.

Cancellations must be advised to the RUSI-SA Office by midday of the Friday before the lunch. Subsequent cancellations will attract a fee of \$25.

MONTHLY GUEST SPEAKERS - OCTOBER

On Sunday 7 October 2012 the monthly Luncheon was a combined function with the South Australian Mounted Rifles Association.

Speakers were:

Lieutenant Colonel Reg Williams (Retd), previous Officer Commanding of A Squadron, the 3rd/9th Light Horse and former Commanding Officer of 10th/27th Battalion of the Royal South Australia Regiment and

Captain Gregg Dunthorne, Operations Officer at the 7th Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment, based at Edinburgh.

Their topic was **'The 95th Anniversary of the Battle of Beersheba: A Contemporary Perspective.'**



Lieutenant Colonel Reg Williams (Retd) gave a historical description of the Battle of Beersheba and described the connection of the Light Horse to today's armoured corps units.

Captain Gregg Dunthorne is a career infantry officer who has seen operational service in Afghanistan. Gregg described how mounted infantry operations are conducted today.

For a description of the Battle of Beesheba, see the "Defending Victoria Website" at <http://users.netconnect.com.au/~ianmac/bersheba.html>

SUNDOWNER



Another successful Sundowner was held early evening on Friday 23 November at the Naval Military & Air Force Club, Adelaide with 42 persons attending.

The weather was good and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, mingling and mixing in the Club's front bar area with a wide variation of finger food.

On Monday 5 November 2012, CMDR Alan Williams ADC, RAN, Commanding Officer, Naval Headquarters South Australia gave an update on current Naval operations and, particularly, highlighted the many areas in which RAN personnel serve in South Australia.



Construction of Hobart Class Air Warfare Destroyers (AWD)

A keel laying ceremony was conducted on 6 September 2012 at the Common User Facility, Techport, South Australia. This is the start of the consolidation phase of the project. Modules of the ship are now being consolidated in what is referred to as grand blocking.

The keel laying is an important shipyard and naval tradition which involves securing a newly minted coin under the keel of the ship and constructing over the coin to bring good luck through the build phase and the life of the ship. (A commemorative medallion was issued to all ASC staff to commemorate the Hobart Keel Laying – see images of both sides of the medallion).

The public were able to view the hull at the Navy Open Day on 14 October 2012 seeing the progress that has been made since the keel laying, with two additional modules having been added.

New Canberra Class Landing Helicopter Docks (LHD)

The first LHD hull, destined to become HMAS *Canberra*, arrived in Australia on 17 October 2012. The hull was transported from Spain on the MV *Blue Marlin*.

At full load, HMAS *Canberra* will displace 27,850 tonnes. Our last aircraft carrier, HMAS *Melbourne*, displaced approximately 20,000 tonnes, making the new LHDs the largest ships to serve in the RAN.

Canberra will be accepted into service in 2014, followed by her sister ship HMAS *Adelaide*, the year after.

Acquisition of HMAS *Choules*

HMAS *Choules* is Australia's newest commissioned ship; a Bay Class Landing Ship purchased from the Royal Navy last year. The vessel was built as Royal Fleet Auxiliary *Largs Bay*, being named after Largs Bay in Scotland.

At the end of 2010, *Largs Bay* was marked as one of the vessels to be removed from service under the Royal Navy Strategic Defence and Security Review. After modifications to make her more suited to Australian operating conditions, the vessel was commissioned in December 2011 as HMAS *Choules*, named after Chief Petty Officer Claude Choules, who was the last WWI combat veteran. He died on 5 May 2011 at the age of 110.

HMAS *Choules* can accommodate two large helicopters, 150 light trucks and up to 350 troops.

Collins Class Submarines

At a time when there are a lot of headlines regarding cuts to Defence, the current budget provides around \$189 million in additional sustainment monies for HMAS Ships *Success*, *Tobruk* and the submarine fleet.

In addition, there is an allocation of \$214 million to conduct a range of future submarine studies, and \$100 million to contribute to submarine capability by enabling the transition to the first performance-based contract for the upkeep of the submarine fleet since acquisition of the Collins Class.

Personnel on board our submarines include Canadian Navy personnel on exchange, and female sailors. Women have been a part of the Australian Submarine Service since 1998. Australia was the fourth country in the world to include women in submarines.



South Australian Operations

Navy Headquarters South Australia is part of Fleet Command, and is primarily responsible for providing administrative support to RAN personnel in South Australia, and representing Navy in the local community.

RAN personnel are serving in a range of areas across South Australia. These include:

- **Keswick Barracks.** Navy Headquarters South Australia.
- **Techport.** The Air Warfare Destroyer Alliance and Collins Class submarines.
- **Adelaide CBD.** Defence Force Recruiting.
- **RAAF Edinburgh.** Joint Electronic Warfare Operational Support Unit (JEWOSU), 1 Radar Surveillance Unit (RSU), Headquarters 92 Wing, 87 Squadron, Defence Science and Technology Organisation, and Health Centre.
- **Port Wakefield.** Proof and Experimental Establishment.
- **Various universities.** Undergraduate students.

The Headquarters staff look after all of the personnel issues and represent Navy in the community, while our members at Techport are involved with AWDs and submarines. These things you are aware of. You may not be as familiar with our other locations and roles.

In the city, we have one officer and a number of sailors working in Defence Force Recruiting. They provide school presentations, displays, interviews and information to prospective candidates. CO NHQ-SA does inductions once a month.

The largest concentration of Navy personnel in South Australia is at RAAF Edinburgh. Here we have Electronic Warfare sailors at JEWOSU, Radar technicians at 1 RSU, a Naval Liaison Officer at 92 WG, Imagery Analysts at 87 SQN, Combat Systems specialists at DSTO, and a medic at the health centre.

The Proof and Experimental Establishment at Port Wakefield specialises in medium to large calibre dynamic testing of explosive ordnance, with specialist Navy technical staff.

Active Reserves accounted for more than 4,200 days last year and have an important role in the integrated workplace. They included the Navy Band, Dive Team 9, Legal Panel, and many other roles. Unlike the other two Services, Active Reservists predominantly come from the Permanent Navy as, on separation from the Permanent Navy, all personnel are transferred to the Royal Australian Naval Reserves.

There are seven Australian Navy Cadet units in South Australia, three metropolitan and four regional.

A E W and C

The Airborne Early Warning & Control (AEW&C) Wedgetail aircraft has achieved Initial Operational Capability, providing Australia with the most advanced air battlespace management capabilities in the world. .

The achievement follows close collaboration between the Royal Australian Air Force, the Defence Materiel Organisation, Boeing and their subcontractors.

The Wedgetail aircraft can fly 10,000 metres above the earth's surface and maintain surveillance over a surface area of 400,000 square kilometres at any given time. Over a 10-hour mission the Wedgetail can cover over four million square kilometres.

Since 2011 Wedgetail has participated in Exercise Bersama Lima in Malaysia, Exercise Cope, North Guam, Exercise Bersama Shield, Exercise Red Flag, Alaska and most recently Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC).

The project was approved in 2000 with a budget of \$3.45 billion to procure six 737-700 commercial aircraft which were then fitted with an advanced multi-role electronically scanned radar and ten mission crew consoles.

Initial Operational Capability is the minimum standard required by Defence to operate the fleet and takes into account not only the aircraft itself, but also logistics, sustainment, as well as training of aircrews, ground crews and technical support staff.



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The above information was taken from Defence News at

<http://www.defence.gov.au/defencenews/stories/2012/nov/1120.htm>

FLANDERS POPPY

The RSL, in conjunction with the Royal Australian Mint, has issued a \$2 Remembrance Poppy coin. This is the first coloured coin issued in Australia for circulation and is obtainable exclusively from the RSL.



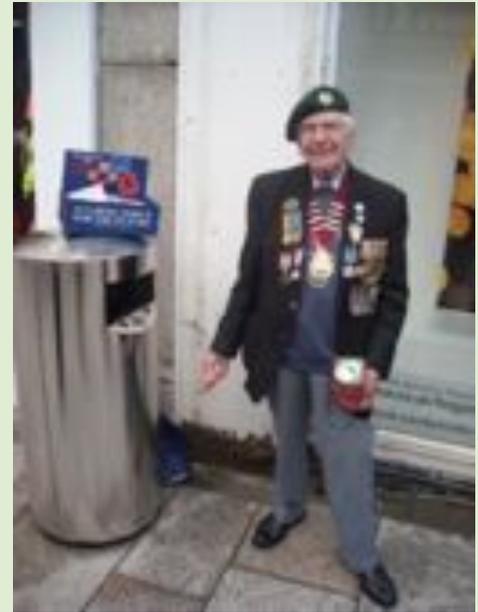
The \$2 coin with a Certificate of Donation is available in limited supply for a \$10 donation from the RSL-SA State Branch and participating RSL Sub-Branches.

Maximum five coins per purchaser. See the ORDER \$2 COIN online system at

http://www.rslsa.org.au/site/index.cfm?fuseaction=display_main&OrgID=1113

for coins to be purchased and posted. Registered Post for 1-5 coins is \$5 per donation.

During their recent overseas holiday, Ann and Michael Gorroick purchased their Remembrance Day poppies in St Astell, Cornwall from 87 year old war veteran Harry Billinge. He has been selling poppies on this site every year since 1950.



As a young man, Harry participated in the first wave of the D-Day Landing, on Gold Beach, Normandy.

More information about him can be found at

www.staustellvoice.co.uk/news/0/article/3975/

The Members of Council wish all members
and their families a happy, healthy and
peaceful Christmas

