

# THE ARTILLERY NEWS.

MARCH 2008 - MAY 2008



Official Correspondence.  
R.A.A Assoc. of Tas. Inc.

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R.A.A. Association of Tasmania Inc.

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The ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA INC.

*"HAPPY 8<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY"*



Royal Australian Artillery Association of Tasmania  
Initial Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> March 2000

On 18<sup>th</sup> March 2000, the formation of the R.A.A.A.T. was officially ratified by the successful combination of several Artillery groups into one Association which participates in supporting Artillery projects and all aspects of Artillery history and, particularly, the Gunner fellowship.

All serving or non-serving Artillerymen and women, plus friends of the Artillery, are openly invited to join our Association by applying to our Secretary for an Membership Application Form and details of annual subscription rates.

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## R.A.A.A.T. NORTHERN HISTORICAL WING.

The first informal meeting of 2008 was held at the QV Museum & Art Gallery, Railway complex, on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February commencing at 2.05p.m.

Those in attendance were: Trevor Giles, Gunter Breier, Rick Wood, Norm Andrews, Harold Mullins, Marc Smith, Graeme Petterwood and Bevan Filce.

An apology was received from Des Salter who wife was ill.. Frank Stokes and John McIntee also sent apologies.

We generally discussed Anzac Day and, those who can, agreed to meet at the Cenotaph at the appropriate time and decide if we wanted to go to the Barracks or elsewhere afterwards. Many of us are no longer able to march the full route - and even the walking distance between Cenotaph and Barracks has got longer this year. Some suggestion was made about checking out reserved seating availability with the RSL..

We were advised that our current patron, **Governor William Cox** will be attending a Civic Farewell - which will be his last Official visit to the North - at the Albert Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2008, prior to his retirement.

Attendance will be *'By Invitation Only'*.

A further Gunner's function for Governor Cox will be held in the south at the RSL Lindisfarne on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>. March. **Cost \$20.00 per person.**

**Harold Mullins**, in his other 'hat' as **Secretary** of the **6<sup>th</sup> Field Gunners**, has advised that a Committee meeting of that organization - of which many of us hold dual membership - which was to be held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>. February at Ray Tilley's home, had been canceled due to Ray's ill-health and the inability of several other key committeemen to attend on the day.

As the Editor of the *'Artillery News'* had been kindly invited to attend - a report of appropriate items listed at the Gunners' Committee Meeting was to be forthcoming to the Association in our next newsletter. At time of writing, no rescheduled date for the Gunner's meeting had been set.

One item listed due for discussion would concern the future of the Gunners as an individual group and the Tasmanian Artillery brotherhood as a whole.

Both major groups average age is now in the mid 70's, *at least*, and as more of our older friends 'stand down' for the last time the Gunners need to consider the future once again and the inevitable prospect of amalgamation. The current Battery personnel are not enthusiastically availing themselves of either Artillery associations' membership and this needs to be addressed.

After discussing the perceived need for new venue for our May function - and arranging a small group to look the place over (see notification) - afternoon tea was enjoyed by all.

The bi-monthly meeting for the Northern Branch of the Artillery Assoc. will be held in the Friends Lounge  
QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM & ART GALLERY - INVERESK

**On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> APRIL '08 - 2.00pm**

*Please note meeting date changed for this month only*

The final arrangements for the  
Launceston Volunteer Artillery Corps

**148<sup>th</sup> Birthday Dinner**

will be discussed over a cuppa.

Please bring a small plate of food to share.

**FORTHCOMING DINNER - MAY 31<sup>ST</sup> 2008**

**KINGS MEADOWS BOWLS CLUB**

*The South Launceston Football Club checked their roster, and advised our Social Committee that, due to a football match being held, at home, on that Saturday, there would be no readily available guest parking within the grounds near the clubrooms. As some of our members need easy access, we decided we would need to look at other alternatives for this important Winter Artillery function.*

**NEW VENUE - Kings Meadows Bowls Club**

The R.A.A.A.T. Social Committee have been shown over the facilities and the KMBC can provide what we need for a successful evening.

**TIME - Starting time will be 6.00 – 6.30 p.m.**

R.A.A.A.T. members and our guests will be hosted in a private, enclosed function area. Traditional toasts and ceremonies will be undertaken during the evening. Several choices of meats and desserts will be available. Club prices will apply if members wish to avail themselves at the private bar.

**PARKING - Carr Villa Car Park - Kings Meadows.**

Opposite the C.T. Finney Funeral Chapel – access from Nunamina Avenue.



**R.S.V.P. - BOOKINGS WILL BE NECESSARY TO ASCERTAIN NUMBERS.**  
**ALL R.A.A.T. MEMBERS, GUESTS AND FRIENDS OF THE ARTILLERY ARE WELCOME**  
**SO - REMIND A GUNNER FRIEND!**

**DONATIONS** - Gifts to be used as 'GunCrew' Raffle/Lucky Door prizes are always welcomed as usual on the day - or items may be delivered for collation prior to the function to: **4 Stoke Street, Ravenswood. 7250**

**FUNCTION MEAL COST - \$20.00** per person. Please enclose full payment with your postal notification of Booking (see below). Cheques, or money orders, should be made out to the Association

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

Hon. Sec. Mr. NORM ANDREWS will be unavailable during the early part of May due to a mainland commitment, so please forward booking information and arrange payment in this instance:

**Royal Australian Artillery Association of Tasmania Inc.**

C/- Graeme E. Petterwood. (Editor – 'Artillery News').

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# LEST WE FORGET!



**61552 (TX 706) - Captain Max Frost OAM ED  
October 11<sup>th</sup> 1919 - February 1<sup>st</sup> 2008.**

**Max Frost** passed peacefully away at Calvary (St. Vincent's) Hospital on **Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008**. Those of us who knew him well, realized that Max had many health problems in his later years, but he rarely complained - and he could still make a joke of his frailties. However, he had recently commented that he wasn't feeling up to his usual self - but the sudden onset of his last bout of illness, and its ultimate outcome, was a blow to his many friends and colleagues.

Those of us who had maintained a close relationship with Max since the old 6<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment days – and, later, at our regular get-togethers at his unit at Peacehaven - are particularly suffering a deep loss.

Our '*Number One*' has gone – but right up until the last, Max was an inspirational friend and mentor with a hundred tales to tell.

Frosty! We shall miss you more than you can know! You accepted the future, seemingly without fear, and used to joke about it with us - but it is the end of an era in which you certainly played your part - and we pray you are now at peace reunited with your loved ones..

Max was a Foundation Life member of the ***Royal Australian Artillery Association of Tasmania*** and, before that, he was a committee member of the ***Launceston Artillery Old Comrades Association*** and ***The Artillery Historical Trust of Tasmania***, and his cheerful personality will be sadly missed by his associates and his friends

Max served, mainly, in the **Launceston Artillery** from 1934 until 1966 - he saw service in the following units:

16 Fd. Bty. AFA. - 2/5<sup>th</sup> Fd. Regt. RAA. - 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Anti Tank Regt.

110 Tank Attack Regt. - 2/24<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion. - 6 Anti Tank Regt.

6 Fd. Regt. RAA.- 112 Fd. Bty. RAA.

**'Ode of Remembrance'**

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

**25 POUNDER**

They wait like soldiers back there in a row,  
Purpose ordained and ready to go.  
'Bubble, Line, Bubble' - do it again,  
'Bubble, Line, Bubble' - are words in my brain!

The *clunk* as one goes hard up the spout,  
But how can I think when the gun crew gives shout?  
A grunt as the breech is violently locked,  
And the click as the gun is instantly cocked.

The bang of my palm on the lever so hot,  
It's sweaty and shiny - to pull or to not?  
The Tannoy crackles and comes into play,  
The voice disembodied - *what did it say?*

I tremble a bit but I obey the command  
Sweat in my eyes - a shake in my hand.  
A roar and recoil that shatter my brain  
But, 'Bubble, Line, Bubble' - I do it again!

**(6/705682) former Sgt. Graeme E. Petterwood  
'F' Troop, 'R' Battery. 6 Fd Reg. R.A.A.**

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*From time to time, we receive little bits in our email box that come from friends in the wider military community. Most have messages that deserve to be passed on. Here is another - it is not Australian - but it well could be. At this time, as we count our own recent losses, it is most appropriate.*

**Soon To Be Gone**

**Written by: CPT. Stephen R. Ellison, M.D. US Army.**

"I am a doctor specializing in the Emergency Departments of the only two military Level One-Trauma Centers, both in San Antonio, Texas and they care for civilian Emergencies as well as military personnel. San Antonio has the largest military retiree population in the world living here. As a military doctor, I work long hours and the pay is less than glamorous.

One tends to become jaded by the long hours, lack of sleep, food, family contact and the endless parade of human suffering passing before you. The arrival of another ambulance does not mean more pay, only more work. Most often, it is a victim from a motor vehicle crash. Often, it is a person of dubious character who has been shot or stabbed. With our large military retiree population, it is often a nursing home patient.

Even with my enlisted service and minimal combat experience in Panama , I have caught myself groaning when the ambulance brought in yet another sick, elderly person from one of the local retirement centers that cater to military retirees. I had not stopped to think of what citizens of this age group represented until I saw the movie '*Saving Private Ryan.*'

I was touched, deeply.

Not so much by the carnage, but by the sacrifices of so many. I was touched most by the scene of the elderly survivor at the graveside, asking his wife if he'd been a good man. I realized that I had seen these same men and women coming through my Emergency Dept. and had not realized what magnificent sacrifices they had made. The things they did for me and everyone else that has lived on this planet since the end of that conflict are priceless.

Situation permitting, I now try to ask my patients about their experiences. They would never bring up the subject without the inquiry.

I have been privileged to an amazing array of experiences, recounted in the brief minutes allowed in an Emergency Dept. encounter. These experiences have revealed the incredible individuals I have had the honor of serving in a medical capacity, many on their last admission to the hospital.

There was a frail, elderly woman who reassured my young enlisted medic, trying to start an IV line in her arm. She remained calm and poised, despite her illness and the multiple needle-sticks into her fragile veins. She was what we call a '*hard stick.*' As the medic made another attempt, I noticed a number tattooed across her forearm. I touched it with one finger and looked into her eyes. She simply said, '*Auschwitz.*' Many of later generations would have loudly and openly berated the young medic in his many attempts.

How different was the response from this person who'd seen unspeakable suffering.

Also, there was this long retired Colonel, who as a young officer had parachuted from his burning plane over a Pacific Island held by the Japanese. Now an octogenarian, he had a minor cut on his head from a fall at his home where he lived alone.

His CT scan and suturing had been delayed until after midnight by the usual parade of high priority ambulance patients. Still spry for his age, he asked to use the phone to call a taxi, to take him home, then he realized his ambulance had brought him without his wallet. He asked if he could use the phone to make a long distance call to his daughter who lived 7 miles away.

With great pride we told him that he could not, as he'd done enough for his country and the least we could do was get him a taxi home, even if we had to pay for it ourselves. My only regret was that my shift wouldn't end for several hours, and I couldn't drive him myself.

I was there the night in late November, 1998 **MSgt. Roy Benavidez** came through the Emergency Dept. for the last time. He was very sick. I was not the doctor taking care of him, but I walked to his bedside and took his hand. I said nothing. He was so sick, he didn't know I was there. I'd read his Congressional Medal of Honor citation and wanted to shake his hand. He died a few days later.

**Editor's note for those with Internet access**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roy\\_Benavidez](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roy_Benavidez)

<http://www.nightscribe.com/Military/benevidez.htm>

The gentleman who served with Merrill's Marauders, the survivor of the Bataan Death March, the survivor of Omaha Beach, the 101 year old World War I veteran, the former POW held in frozen North Korea, the former Special Forces medic - now with non-operable liver cancer, the former Viet-Nam Corps Commander. I remember these citizens.

I may still groan when yet another ambulance comes in, but now I am much more aware of what an honor it is to serve these particular men and women.

I have seen a Congress who would turn their back on these individuals who've sacrificed so much to protect our liberty. I see later generations that seem to be totally engrossed in abusing these same liberties, won with such sacrifice. It has become my personal endeavor to make the nurses and young enlisted medics aware of these amazing individuals when I encounter them in our Emergency Dept. Their response to these particular citizens has made me think that perhaps all is not lost in the next generation.

My experiences have solidified my belief that we are losing an incredible generation, and this nation knows not what it is losing. “

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***The Artillery News.***

*Graeme E. Petterwood. (Editor).*

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