



Artillery WA



Official Newsletter of the Royal Australian Artillery Association of WA (Inc), RAA Historical Society of WA (Inc)
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Edition 3/25

October 2025

GUNNERS DAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2025 STIRLING SQUARE GUILDFORD





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ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION IN ARTILLERY WA

Items for inclusion, and which are regularly needed, should be submitted for the next issue by 10 December 2025 to the Editor Pat Bell at pbell35@hotmail.com

RAAHSWA MEMBERSHIP FEES

Annual Membership Fees become due and payable on 1st January each year.

Single Membership is \$25.00 per annum

Joint Membership is \$35.00 per annum

Payment may be made direct to the Treasurer –

by post : P.O. Box 881Claremont WA 6910

Direct Credit: Commonwealth Bank Acct 00903744

BSB 066 103

(Don't forget to include your name on the deposit so we can keep our records up to date)

WELFARE FUND OFFICER

John Blylevens is the Association's Welfare Officer. Anybody that needs to discuss any welfare funding can contact John via email info@artillerywa.org.au or telephone 043 869 5711. Access to funds can be made by applying in writing using the Welfare Fund Application Form which is available on request from the Treasurer. The Association reminds members that access to the Fund to help Gunners financially at a time of need is strictly confidential and all applications are treated as such.

RAAHS BUSY BEES FOR 2025

Last Saturday of each month

LEIGHTON BATTERY OPEN DAYS

Sunday 10am-3pm

Adults \$10.00 Children \$4.00



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (WA) PRESIDENT'S REPORT OCTOBER 2025



I'll start by passing on my apologies for not providing a Presidents Message for the June edition. My excuse is that my wife and I were on a 3 month off-road adventure into the NT and far north Queensland, with much of that time being out of mobile signal range. Of course the more tech savvy of our readers might be justified in saying "what about Star Link Andrew, then you could have had access to email"? Yes that would have provided a technology link with the world, but it would also have defeated part of the reason why we went off-road for 3 months in the first place!

During June, 13 Brigade undertook Exercise Arras Sprint 25, which saw the Brigade deploy various components of a Security Response Task Unit to the vicinity of Geraldton, focusing on homeland security, critical infrastructure protection and building community relationships.

It was pleasing to see the RAA showing their UAV capability at the recent Defence Force Open Day held at Irwin Barracks, with an estimated 4,500 people attending. The cutting edge technology on display was impressive to the public and I'm sure the Ukraine / Russia conflict came to mind as they were looking at the hardware.

The recent visit by the Head of Regiment, Brigadier Damian Hill to 3 Light Battery and the RAAHS WA Leighton Battery was a highlight for the year, with a visit of this type being very unique in the context of 13 Brigade.

There are two key activities later in the year to look forward to. Firstly, I encourage all former and current Gunners to attend Gunners Day on Sunday 2 November. Let's really get behind this important event again in 2025 to ensure we continue to honour the Gunners of the past.

To end the year, the Feast of Saint Barbara will be held on Friday Fri 5 December where we will recognise the Patron Saint of Artillerymen and have a general all-round good time catching up with old friends and colleagues. This year the dinner will be held at the RSL's ANZAC House at 28 St George Terrace, Perth. It will be fitting location for us to commemorate the Feast of Saint Barbara, with the venue overlooking Government House and the Swan River. Please send your money into Stan Davies and get your Gunner friends to come along!

Ubique.

Andrew Dunjey

LTCOL

President, RAA Association of Western Australia



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT'S REPORT SEPTEMBER 2025



Most readers are probably aware the Society has “hosted” Curtin University in utilising the Tunnels Complex and Surface Environment for their annual Survey Course at Leighton Battery over the past 6 years. In an exchange of recent correspondence, Professor Martin L Van Kronendonk, Head School of Earth and Planetary Sciences and Dr. Ivana Ivanova, Senior Lecturer, expressed their appreciation of the Society’s willingness to offer the facility for another Course to be conducted in April 2026. I am pleased Curtin University wishes to continue their association with the Society.

After several years “putting up” with the water-stained carpet in the Command Post at Leighton Battery Heritage Site it was agreed it should “GO”. On 5th August TKD Carpets installed industrial quality Plank Strips in a pleasing pattern that bears some resemblance to the familiar disrupted pattern clothing worn by members of the Navy.

Last month I was advised that Brigadier Damien Hill, AM CSC, Head of Regiment, was planning to visit Perth and wished to contact the Society and meet at Leighton Battery Heritage Site. This was the Brigadier’s first visit since his appointment and was focussed on a course being conducted by 3 BTY 9 REGT RAA to qualify members for a Defence Remote Pilot Licence.

On Tuesday morning 9th September, I had the pleasure of meeting Brigadier Hill and, assisted by Graham McKenzie-Smith, Phillip Rowson and David Carter escorted him on an extensive tour of the facility. After a two hour inspection the Brigadier thanked our Team for their efforts. His final comment was “It is the Gold Standard” - it doesn’t get better than that! The Brigadier has a great interest in restored Ordnance and spent time in Kings Park, St. Matthews Garrison Church and the Army Museum of WA.

Another link with our past occurred at the same time as the Brigadier’s visit – Colonel Joe Wheatley, Deputy Commander of the recently formed 10th Brigade based at Edinburgh SA, was visiting 3 BTY 9 REGT RAA’s Defence Remote Pilot Licence Course. He was joined by the CO 9REGT RAA, LTCOL Brin, on 11th – 12th September. Back in 2008 – 2009 Captain Joe Wheatley was the Instructor Gunnery 7 FD BTY RAA and was involved in the final Live Firing Range Practice conducted by the BTY at Lancelin Range. Since 2009, COL Wheatley has held numerous appointments – significantly, that of CO 8/12 REGT RAA.

10 BDE RAA is equipped with the National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System (NASAMS) and the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS). It currently comprises the 9th REGT RAA, the 16th REGT RAA, 54th BTY RAA (the first sub-unit of the soon-to-be-raised 14th REGT RAA). It has the capacity to engage targets beyond 500 kilometres.

Five years have elapsed since the signing of the Formal Lease Agreement with Defence recognizing the Society’s approval to occupy Building A0050 as its HQ and Building A0044 as the Workshop. A renewal of the Lease is in the course of preparation for signatures at the end of September. The Society is indebted to 3 BTY 9 REGT RAA who sponsor Society presence on the Irwin Barracks Base and appreciates the assistance received from Defence Base Support Staff.

With my kind regards,

Jim Archibald

President



NEWS FROM THE BATTERY

CAPT. Michael Rutherford, IG 3 BTY



Since July, 3 Battery has been actively engaged in a series of operations, training initiatives, and ceremonial duties that highlight our technical proficiency and commitment to tradition.

In August, the Battery went to the field for Exercise Hobbs Walk, supporting the Western Australia University Regiment's Subject 2 CPL course. Our Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS) teams provided real-time Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR), applying Joint Effects Targeting (JxT) tools and skillsets in a live environment. This exercise demonstrated the practical value of 9 Regiment's capabilities to local units and reinforced our ability to integrate advanced technology into operational scenarios.

In September, 3 Battery conducted a Defence Remote Pilots License Course to qualify UAS pilots from across 9 Regiment. Participants trained to operate multi-rotor UAS aircraft in compliance with Defence and civil aviation policies. Later in the month, the Battery delivered the King's Birthday Salute at Kings Park. The event coincided with a local festival, drawing an impressive crowd and showcasing our professionalism to the broader community. Collaboration with Kings Park Event staff ensured seamless integration and strengthened our connection with the public.

Looking ahead, the coming months promise exciting opportunities for 3 Battery. Our personnel will support Exercise AUSTRAHIND, a joint exercise between the Australian and Indian Armies that will reinforce international partnerships and interoperability. In December, we will honour our patron saint, St Barbara, with two celebrations. On 05 December, members of the Battery will attend a formal dinner with the Royal Australian Artillery Association. The following day, 3 Battery will join 13 Engineer Regiment for a combined celebration featuring friendly competitions between the two corps that share St Barbara as their patron. These activities will foster camaraderie and esprit de corps while honouring our shared heritage.

3 Battery continues to demonstrate adaptability, technical expertise, and dedication to tradition. As we look forward to international engagement and festive celebrations, our team remains ready to meet every challenge with professionalism and pride



Battery Members at the end of EX HOBBS RUN at Bindoon Training Area, WA

3 Battery conducts Kings Birthday Salute at Kings Park, WA





MOVING THE GUNS FROM ARTHUR'S HEAD TO LEIGHTON



From the War Diary of HQ Fremantle Fixed Defences AWM52 4/19/7

7 Jul 42 Approval granted to proceed with the preparation of the alternative site for Arthur's Battery

18 Sep 42 The slipway under construction on the south side of Fremantle Harbour has been completed. Obstruction caused by vessels receiving attention there causes a considerable reduction in the arc of fire of Arthur's Battery

24 Sep 42 Approval received from 3 Aust Corps for the shifting of the two 6-in equipments from Arthur's to a new site at Leighton. New battery will be known as "Leighton Battery"

28 Oct 42 Necessary survey for Leighton Battery carried out. Height and co-ordinates of gun positions, C.A.S.L emplacements, engine rooms, D.S to be calculated

8 Nov 42 Inspection of Leighton Battery by MGRA. This battery is in process of construction and will replace Arthur's Battery.

15 Nov 42 Official Photographer took photographs of Leighton Battery constructions

1 Dec 42 Erection of concrete pedestal for D.R.F in C.P Leighton commenced by Fortress Engineers.

8 Dec 42 Advised that no new equipment will replace 6-in guns when they are moved to Leighton

11 Jan 43 Moving Ordnance School under Lt Hoffman commenced. Pres to carry out shift of 6-in guns from Arthur's to Leighton

25 Jan 43 No 1 Gun Arthur's Battery placed out of action for move to Leighton Battery

30 Jan 43 No 1 Gun in action at Leighton Battery.

1 Feb 43 No 2 Gun Arthur's placed out of action to enable movement to Leighton Battery

6 Feb 43 No 2 Gun being shifted from Arthur's, in action at Leighton

8 Feb 43 Two 6-inch B.L Mk VII guns, ready for action Leighton Battery

9 Feb 43 Operation Order No. 17 Issued: Handing over of Arthur's to Leighton Battery.

Extract from OO 17

3. (b) A minimum of 1 Officer and 25 O.R.'s will be available in the vicinity of Leighton Battery continuously. Manning to be at short notice.

3. (c) C.P. Leighton will be manned continuously, one telephonist being always on duty. The above manning will operate from 1200 hours Saturday 6th February, 1943 until hutments are ready at Leighton and F.C. Standing Orders amended.

11 Feb 43 Approval granted by LHQ to expend three rounds per gun for proofing of Leighton Battery

23 Feb 43 Proofing of mountings Leighton Battery 6-in Mk VII equipments carried out

Submitted by: Graham McKenzie-Smith



150 YEARS AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY 1871 2021



UBIQUE 150 – RAA Regimental History Committee Product No. 8a The Gunners' contribution at Long Tan, 18 August 1966

Wall of Deadly Steel

In 1966, in a major battle near the village of Long Tan, in Phuoc Tuy Province, South Vietnam, Australian, New Zealand and US field artillery batteries, under the direction of a New Zealand Forward Observer, delivered a 'wall of deadly steel' that sustained an Australian infantry company for several hours and almost certainly saved it from being overrun.

The battle began just after 1600hrs on 18 August 1966, when the leading platoon of D Company 6RAR, patrolling in the Long Tan rubber plantation a little over five kilometres from the Australian base at Nui Dat, was engaged and then attacked by elements of 275 NVA Regiment. In the first phase of the battle, fire from three field batteries landing close to the platoon broke up the enemy attack, while fire from an American 155mm battery was applied in depth. Fire was then lifted temporarily to allow an airstrike, unfortunately ineffective because of the weather, before being applied again to the south of the company position in support of a second platoon attempting to reach the first. That fire was lifted in turn to permit RAAF Iroquois helicopters, in darkness and driving rain, to drop small arms ammunition to the company. At this time the company was able to regroup, and in the final thirty minutes of the battle withstood a major assault, protected again by danger-close artillery fire. Each of the eighteen 105mm howitzers was firing at rates of five and six rounds per minute for at least half this time. The 155mm guns again engaged depth targets.

The battle ceased at 1900hrs when reinforcements from 6RAR, some in APCs, arrived. Throughout the succeeding night the guns applied harassing fire along the enemy's likely withdrawal routes.

Artillery fire during the battle was delivered with dramatic effect in gathering darkness and appalling wet weather, which at the gun positions prevented the dispersion of nauseating propellant smoke and fumes. The Commanding Officer of 6 RAR estimated that the artillery had killed at least half of the enemy.

Accurate and timely fire from Australian, New Zealand and American artillery dramatically increased combat power at Long Tan. The outcome demonstrated the effectiveness of the Gunners' largely invisible, yet sophisticated and effective, international command and control systems. Gunners at all levels were able to play their part in coordinating fire through close liaison with the infantry, purpose-designed headquarters, and reliable communications.

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150 YEARS AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY 1871 2021



Following the 'Gunner Creed' of disciplined action on the gun line, no matter what the conditions, the Gunners consistently landed in total nearly 3,500 rounds on target after target.

Gunners take great pride in the lifesaving and battle-winning power they contribute in combat. Long Tan is a testament to disciplined courage of D Company, and also to the power of the guns.

Participating Australian and Allied Force Elements:

Manoeuvre Forces

6th Battalion RAR
 D Coy, 6th Battalion RAR
 A Coy, 6th Battalion RAR
 B Coy, 6th Battalion RAR
 3 Tp, 1 APC Sqn

Fire Support Forces

1st Field Regiment, RAA
 103rd Field Battery, RAA
 105rd Field Battery, RAA
 161st Field Battery, RNZA
 Battery A, 2/35 US Artillery Battalion
 No. 9 Sqn RAAF

Contributions: John Cox, Paul Stevens, Kevin O'Brien, Nick Floyd

John Cox, Chairman RAA Regimental History Committee, July 2021

j3cox@bigpond.net.au | 0409 394 497 | 45 Cobby Street CAMPBELL ACT 2612



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

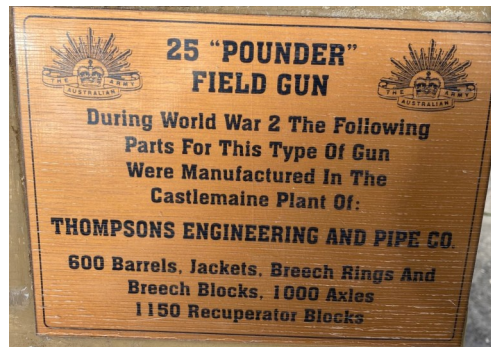
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VIETNAM VETERANS COMMEMORATIVE WALK SEYMOUR, VICTORIA



Our intrepid reporter, Richard Ball, has visited the Castlemaine RSL, at 36 Mostyn St, Castlemaine in Victoria. In addition to a 25 pounder field gun, they have a number of trophy guns from WW1. The RSL can be contacted via their Facebook page.





The Australian Artillery Calendar Dates of Historical Significance September

Mr. Phillip Rowson has sent in this article from www.australianartilleryassociation.org. This calendar of events is only a proposal but maybe it will be carried on for future Months of the year.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------|------|---|
| 70 th | 1 Sep | 1955 | 105th Field Battery RAA embarked for service in Malaya, commencing the first of two-year operational rotations of an Australian field battery as a component of 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade Group, and later 28th Australian, New Zealand and United Kingdom (ANZUK) Brigade, finishing on 9 January 1974 with the return to Australia of the final elements of 106th Field Battery RAA. |
| 86 th | 2 Sep | 1939 | The Citizen Military Forces are called up for War Service. The heavy artillery immediately began manning the coast defences. All units commenced extended camps of continuous training and began to assimilate conscripted Universal Service Personnel. |
| 140 th | 8 Sep | 1885 | School of Gunnery established as a permanent training establishment of the NSW Military Forces. |
| 139 th | 10 Sep | 1886 | Tasmanian Permanent Artillery raised. |
| 126 th | 13 Sep | 1809 | The effective date on which Victoria acted to change its artillery permanent force designation to the Victorian Regiment Royal Australian Artillery – Premier's Office letter dated 13 September 1899. The Queensland and NSW Regiments had been established with effect on different dates in August. |
| 72 nd | 13 Sep | 1953 | The last regular Army coast artillery unit, Headquarters 25th Coast Regiment RAA, is disbanded after serving continuously since it was raised as the Regimental Staff, New South Wales Artillery, on 22 August 1876. |
| 171 st | 14 Sep | 1854 | first volunteer artillery corps raised in South Australia. |

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76 th	15 Sep	1949	The Royal Australian Artillery Regiment and The Royal Australian Artillery (Militia) are amalgamated as The Royal Australian Artillery. The privilege of Right of the Line over the Australian Light Horse lapses by the same
19 th	18 Sep	2006	The first of two Joint Offensive Support Teams from 8th/12th Medium Regiment deploying as part of approximately 400 personnel forming the Australian Reconstruction Task Force – 1 Operation SLIPPER, arrive in Afghanistan. Batteries on rotation provided support to subsequent task forces. This commitment changed to
63 rd	19 Sep	1962	Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II grants the Royal Australian Artillery the formal title The Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery, with the short title of Royal Australian Artillery. On the same date HM notifies her desire to be known in future as the Captain-General of the Regiment in lieu of her former title of Colonel-in-Chief.
60 th	14 Sep	1965	105th Field Battery moved to South Vietnam, commencing an ongoing rotational RAA operational deployment in support of 1st Australian Task Force that expanded to a field regiment and a detachment, divisional locating battery, on 22 April 1966, and ended with the return to Australia of 104th Field Battery on 20 December 1971.

** The School of Artillery 140 Years On

- The School of Artillery has its origins in the NSW School of Gunnery, which was established at Middle Head, Sydney, on 8 September 1885 following the attachment of experienced Royal Artillery instructors to the Colony.
- The School operated between Middle Head and Victoria Barracks before moving to South Head in 1895. It became the School of Gunnery in 1902 and remained at South Head until World War Two.
- During World War Two, the diversity of capability and the volume of trainees saw the School split to ultimately form a Field, Medium and Survey School at Holsworthy, an Anti-Aircraft School at Randwick, a Coast Artillery School at South Head, and an Anti-Tank School at Puckapunyal. In 1945 the separate Schools combined once more into a single School of Artillery at North Head, Manly.
- The School moved to Puckapunyal in late 1997, starting courses in 1998, where it remains to this day.

**All Ranks, Past and Present of the Royal Australian Artillery (RAA)
Partners and Guests
are invited to the
FEAST OF ST BARBARA 2025**

TO BE HELD AT

The ANZAC House

RSL HQ, 28 St Georges Terrace Perth

FRIDAY, 5th OF DECEMBER 2025 AT 1900 Hrs. FOR 1930 Hrs.

COST \$99.00 PER PERSON.

**PAYMENT BANK TRANSFER or CASH OR CHEQUE PAYABLE TO
Royal Australian Artillery Association BSB 066 009 ACCOUNT No
00900870
(PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NAME)**

DRESS – Current issued Mess kit for serving embers (Retired OFFICERS and SENIOR NCO'S lounge suits).

GENTS - LOUNGE SUITS. LADIES - AFTER FIVE WEAR

POC **Bob Farrelly** bobfarrelly@live.com or Tel 0417 981 615

Book by Friday 21st of NOVEMBER 2025.

PRICE INCLUDES- Dinner - toasting port for each table.
OTHER DRINKS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE



ATTENDANCE SLIP REPLY PAYMENT

Email to STAN DAVIES stdavies@bigpond.com OR
FEAST OF ST BARBARA
POST OFFICE BOX 4112

MANDURAH NORTH WA 6210

I WILL / WILL NOT BE ATTENDING THE FEAST OF ST BARBARA 2025.

MY REMITTANCE FOR \$_____ IS ENCLOSED.

I WOULD PREFER TO BE SEATED WITH (IF YOU HAVE ANY MATES YOU PREFER TO SIT WITH)

NAME _____ RANK _____ POST NOMINALS _____

ADDRESS _____

Email Address _____

NAME OF GUESTS _____

Special dietary requirements _____





ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY
GUNNERS' DAY
SUNDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 2025



All Gunners, their families, guests and other interested parties are invited to attend the Annual Gunners Day parade and service at Stirling Square Guildford Sunday 2nd November 2025.

10:00am: RV at War Memorial (free parking at railway car park)

10:10am: Parade forms up on the path outside St Matthews. Guests and families seated at dais in front of memorial

10:15am: Parade steps off, follows the path past St Matthews, right past the saluting dais then right into memorial

10:25am: Wreath Laying Ceremony

10:45am: Gunner's Day Service in St Matthews Church

11:30am: Light Luncheon in the Church Hall

12.00pm: Camaraderie at the Rose & Crown Hotel Guildford

Parade led by Australian Army Band Perth, gunners past and present, serving Officers and Soldiers of 3 BTY 9 REGT RAA and Cadets from 56 and Guildford Grammar Cadet Units.

Service will be conducted by the Reverend Katrina Holgate.

Guests include BDE COMD 13 BDE, Members of Parliament, Local Government, R&SL and other Associations.

Enquiries to John Blylevens Hon Secretary Royal Australian Artillery Association Western Australia (Inc): info@artillerywa.org.au 0438 695 711

GUNNERS DAY has been conducted every year since 1928 in memory of those who fought and fell during WW1 (and subsequent conflicts). It is a special day for remembrance and a great opportunity to catch up with gunner colleagues.

UBIQUE



Do not go gentle into that good night
Dylan Thomas 1914-1953

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.