

THE ARTILLERY NEWS.

SPECIAL NEW YEAR EDITION 2009



Official Correspondence.

R.A.A Assoc. of Tas. Inc.

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LEST WE FORGET



66753 S/SGT ERIC WILLIAM RYAN BEM(M).

It is with deep and sincere regret that we advise that, on 24th. November 2008, another illustrious name was added to the long list of gunner comrades who have gone on before us.

Eric William Ryan was admired by all who knew him as a personal friend - he was a respected Foundation member of our organisation - and a stalwart of local business in Launceston for well over half a century. He was – always - a thorough gentleman – another one of the good blokes - and he will be sorely missed by his many friends.

The following note was received from our RAAAT Secretary, Norman Andrews, when advising us of Eric's death during the early hours of 24th November, 2008.

Norm put into words a few things that some of us may have forgotten about Eric's dedication and service to the Artillery.

"It is my sad duty to advise that 66753 Staff Sergeant Eric William RYAN BEM; passed away early this morning at Mt Esk Aged Care Home.

Eric's ARMY service started with 18 National Service Battalion from 24 Apr 1956 then in "R" Battery 6 Field Regiment RAA, followed by 112 Field Battery RAA, and 16 Field Battery RAA – finally retiring on 30'11/1994.

Eric was a Foundation Life member and Treasurer of the Royal Australian Artillery Association of Tasmania and before that time he was Treasurer of the Launceston Artillery Old Comrades Association and The Artillery Historical Trust of Tasmania, his cheerful personality will be sadly missed

May life perpetual shine on Eric, and may he rest in peace."

The late Eric William Ryan received the Mass of Christian Burial for the repose of the Soul at Mt. Esk Nursing Home Chapel on November 26th 2008 prior to burial at Carr Villa Cemetery.

The nursing home's small circular-shaped chapel was completely full - well over 100 people had crammed inside.

The local 16th. Field Battery - Royal Australian Artillery, supplied a cortege-party - plus the Colonel-Cmdt. of Tasmania, Colonel Steve Carey, was in attendance to read the special Artillery Prayer and add some personal observations of their mutual time in the Tasmanian Battery. Many former high ranking officers plus many of Eric's NCO peers from an earlier era were also present to show their respects.



l. to r. -: MAJ Graeme Howard; SGT Scott Beatson; SGT Stephen Denman; WO2 Susan Sefton; SGT Tim Stewart.

Also present -: COL Steve Carey; LT Tony Cordwell.

Funeral Director -: Mr. Tim Foley (near hearse) assisted by Mr. Denis Foley

This proved to be an 'important' funeral for me personally, and I am glad that I was able to participate with so many others who had obviously cared about Eric.

The officiating priest also told us that Eric had received a Papal blessing shortly prior to his death - for his 50 years of service to the Catholic Church. He was one of the few amongst the laity who willingly volunteered to transport priests out into remote areas in Tasmania and he often assisted in the offering of Holy Communion. He did this for years, without fuss or fanfare, just out of the goodness of his spirit..

Eric had also been awarded the British Empire Medal (Military) on 12th. June 1982 a for services to the Artillery - a fact that not a lot of his other colleagues even knew about until recently.

Eric was a good man and won't be forgotten by his mates.

The Ryan family asked that our Secretary, Norm Andrews OAM., pass on their Heartfelt Thanks for the kindness they were extended at Eric's funeral.

"On behalf of 66753 SSGT Eric Ryan's family I would like to thank all those who attended Eric's funeral this afternoon.

The family members did sincerely appreciate what was done in the past and what was said today. End of Mission for Eric."



**Eric at an Artillery Historical Trust of Tasmania meeting
29th Jan. 2000 (Photo. Courtesy - Norm Andrews OAM) -
Eric with Tasmanian Governor William John Ellis Cox, AC, RFD, ED, QC.
4th May 2005**

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF ERIC - 'EK' - RYAN

6/705682 Sgt. Graeme E. Petterwood.

As an old personal friend of Eric, I also had many memories to draw upon - and my involvement started prior to 1954 when I knew both Eric and his twin brother Tony - when we were all 'callow youths' just out of school and knew many of the same people. I even worked with Tony for some years. However, it was Eric and I who shared some of the same life experiences - we both did 'Nasho' together in 4 Platoon, 18 National Service Battalion in 1956; we both did our training with the old R Battery, 6th Field Regiment R.A.A.; we both became Sergeants at the same time; we were both involved in the clothing industry in the civilian sphere - he with Routley's Menswear, and I with several wholesale organizations who supplied them over the years.

In later life, in our retirement, we both were members of the same Artillery associations - past and present - and we remained firm friends all our lives. We had a lot of mutual memories - that I now hold alone.

For some years, after having two massive strokes, Eric had been confined to Mt. Esk Nursing Home and, whilst his own physical mobility was impaired for much of that time, he still remained mentally as 'sharp as a tack' about the things he cared about. The main one was his gunner mates! When he was well enough, he used make the effort to attend the major Artillery functions in a maxi-taxi - with his wool-lined wheelie-bed and all - and he always joined in the discussion as best he could!

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

The next informal meeting of the R.A.A.A.T. Historical and Social Wing will be held at 2.00 p.m. on Thursday February 12th., at the Museum Friend's Room, Inveresk, Launceston.

All former or serving Artillery personnel, or friends of the Artillery, are invited to meet casually on the second Thursday of each even month to catch up on any Artillery news and chat with our gunner mates for an hour or so. We usually kick in a few cents each for a Museum 'cuppa'- tea or coffee- after our chat, and we all usually bring a few nibbles to share for afternoon tea.

Join us – you will be most welcome!

It had been a busy time over December for most of us - but some of our members have been even busier than usual. They have been following up on a few things that needed resolution. Some were mentioned at our last meeting in 2008.

One item, in particular, is worthy of a bulletin, in this special edition, to bring our members up to date with developments.

A 25 Pounder gun which had been stored, privately, in Launceston for many years, was picked up by the Artillery retrieval unit on 26th November 2008 and, over the last month or so, it has been undergoing its total decommissioning - and the start of a lot of necessary refurbishment by a few willing volunteers - prior to its ultimate journey and installation as a Memorial centre-piece.



Not the usual way to tow a grand old gun!



Volunteer RAAAT member Rick Wood with the 25PDR on blocks - complete with its travelling field platform - but minus its wheels.

British 25-pounder gun-howitzer Mark 2
 By the beginning of the Western Desert campaign this gun had replaced the 18-pounder field gun and the 4.5-inch howitzer as the standard British field artillery weapon.

<i>Calibre</i>	87.6 mm
<i>Range</i>	13,400 yards
<i>Elevation</i>	-5 to +40 degrees
<i>Traverse</i>	8 degrees (without travelling field platform)
<i>Weight</i>	7,335 pounds
<i>Muzzle velocity</i>	1,485 fps
<i>Rate of fire</i>	5 rpm
<i>Penetration</i>	2.52 inches at 30 degrees at 1,000 yards

**General description of the British 25-pounder gun-howitzer Mk 2
 Shown without optional traversing travelling field platform
 Modern Military Series – ARTILLERY by Curt Johnson – Octopus Books 1975.**

Annual Membership Subscriptions



Please remember

- To complete your renewal form (enclosed with this newsletter) and send it to Norm Andrews ASAP to confirm your interest in this RAA Assn of Tas, and to keep your contact details current and up-to-date
- The RAA Assn of Tas subscriptions are payable by **1st July each year** and are current until 30th June the following year. Annual Membership subs remain at a low \$10.00 per financial year
- Renew on time and avoid delays, and keep our record up-to-date
- Email contact is desirable if at all possible for members on email, so they get the info quicker

If it has slipped your mind about paying your Annual subs please rectify as a matter of urgency.

150 years

of Tasmanian Volunteer Artillery

service is coming up this year in Hobart and next year (6 June 2010)
Launceston claims *continuous* service.

The Artillery News.

Graeme E. Petterwood. (Editor).

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The printed copy of this newsletter is published with assistance from the office of:

**Mr. Peter Gutwein (Liberal MHA - Bass).
Henty House, Civic Square, Launceston 7250.**



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

*Form revised
1st Dec 2008*

ABN 53 049 033 834

Estb 18TH March 2000

Renewal of Annual MEMBERSHIP

I wish to renew my **ANNUAL- membership** of the RAA Association of Tas Inc (**\$10.00**) per year, each financial year
or change my membership to **# LIFE- membership** of the Association (**\$100.00 once only payment**)
Strike out non-applicable

Name: _____ / /

Block Letters (please complete given names with **SURNAME last**) **Date of Birth**

Partners/Spouse Christian – given name.....

Your Address: _____
Your Telephone Contact _____
Home _____
Work _____
Fax _____
E-mail _____ **Mobile Phone** _____

Military Rank: _____ **Army No.** _____

If your contact details have changed please indicate your previous details here.

I pledge myself to a cheerful obedience to the Constitution and Rules of the **ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION of Tasmania Inc.** and its By-laws and to observe all of the provisions thereof.

I would like to purchase **RAA Assoc Lapel badge at \$10.00 ea**
Packing and postage \$ _____

I enclose a donation of \$ _____ .00 Date / / signature _____



Please send this application and payment to :- Norm Andrews OAM,
Honorary Secretary & Public Officer , **ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION of TASMANIA Inc.**, TARA Room, **24 Robin Street, NEWSTEAD, Tas 7250**

Receipt No.....Treasurer..... Member notified.....Sec/Pub.Offr date.....