ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY BAND ASSOCIATION

THE POSTING

ISSUE NO 9, SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER2024

EDITORIAL: Errol Hatch

Welcome to our combined September and October edition of our newsletter. With the reunion now behind us, all the preparation and execution have now past and we can give you a detail report.

Launceston was a long time coming and anticipated by those that had committed to attend. We were not disappointed as the weekend was excellent weather wise and event wise.

Brian, Kerry and the volunteer crew at the Launceston RSL put on splendid functions and the Veterans band finished the weekend with a wonderful concert for the Salvation Army appeal.

There is plenty to write in the following pages.

WAY BACK (PAST EDITIONS)

OCTOBER 1996

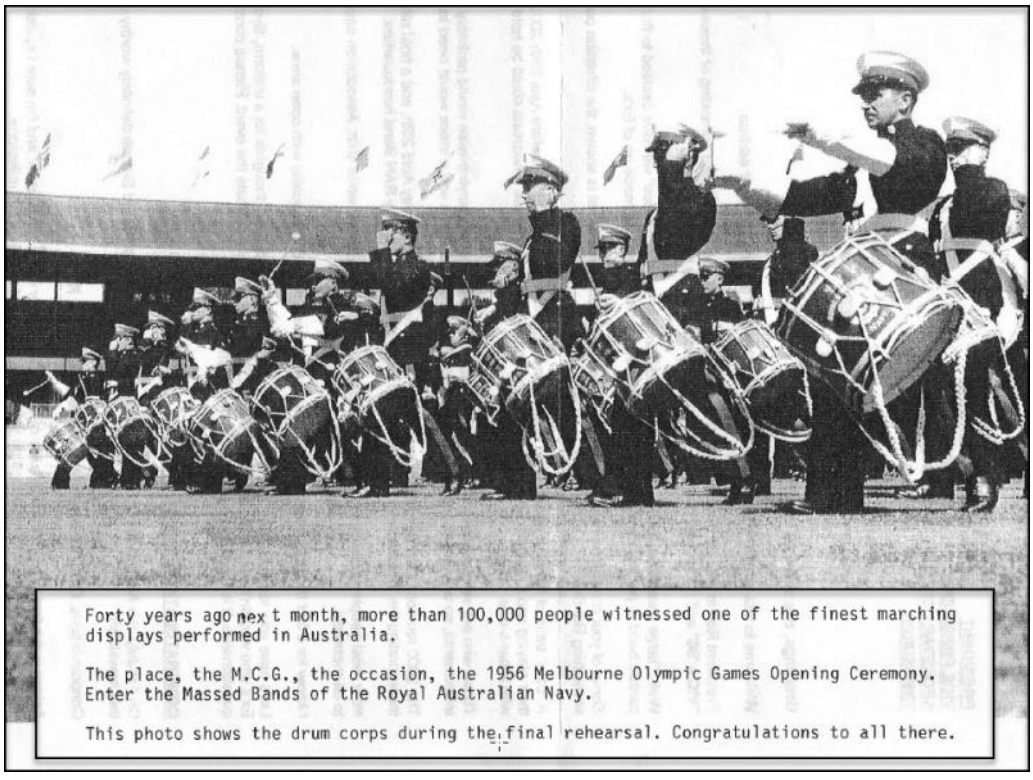
This edition celebrates the 40th anniversary of the 1956 Olympic games and in the previous June edition the President drew up a theoretical parade band of those that attended the Victorian 1996 reunion. Well this led to the proposal in this edition of forming a parade band for the 2000 Sydney Anzac Day march and we know how that went in the end.

A detailed account of the 1956 games was written by the late Doc Mcleod and is interesting reading. Some great photo's were also in this article. (One below)

This edition also acknowledges the promotion of Ashley Greedy (Dec) to the rank of commander who was our first Director of music with that rank.

The Directors report had a couple of interesting snippets with one being the Cerberus cinema complex not being ready for the band before the end of 1996 and mentioned an extensive recruiting campaign for new members to the band branch.

The edition also has plenty of photo's of the Victorian 96 reunion. I will actually attached the edition to the end of our newsletter making it easier for members to get to.



Left: Looks like the late Len Nurse on the Tenor Drum.

VETERANS BAND

Welcome to our Veterans Band roundup.

Launceston was the final Concert for this year and we were able to raise $1200 for the Salvation Army Red Shield appeal.

I would like to thank the members and associates who travelled to Tasmania to play in the Band, the music we performed was of an excellent standard. I am sorry that we were a bit squished on the stage, but the mixed aroma was like sitting in a flower garden.

I would like to apologize for the upheaval during the Rehearsal on the Saturday, it should not have happened and it has never happened before.

I will still be acting as Manager/Co-Ordinator for the Veterans Band for the future, unless old age creeps up.

The RAN Veterans Band has performed in it's present form since 2000, travelling to Singapore, Malaysia, Anzac Day at sea with P&O and most States in Australia. We are supported by Donations from various means and will continue to perform as long as the assistance continues.

The Band relies on the support of former RAAF and Army musicians and civilians from Bands that have members of the Association playing, this is required as every Band that performs is different and needs to be a balanced group.

I hope everyone has a happy Christmas and I will see you all next year.

Ralph.

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The time has come when I relinquish the position that I have thoroughly enjoyed in my tenure. My replacement and I have worked very closely in the past, Errol and I have similar ideas and always put the Members first when making decisions.

On the 29th April 2014, I received Navy Office official approval to use the words ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY in our Association and RAN Veterans Band. I have worked very hard to keep the Association on an even keel and have over the years received wonderful advice from members, but sadly a hell of a lot are no longer with us. In the past 30 years this Association is still surviving, this is not the same as many ex-service associations, which have folded through lack of support and drive to continue. We as members should keep supporting the new/old team in keeping the wonderful association we have live on forever.

In my sincere opinion we should work together with the Unofficial Face Book Page to join with the Official Face Book Page, as we need to work as one, as we need to attract new members as they leave the Regular Navy Band and look for a pathway to civilian life. As I mentioned earlier, the association is the only one who can legally use the name Royal Australian Navy Band.

I will keep popping up with the Veterans Band. Thanks for your support,

Ralph.

Ralph,

On behalf of all the members of the association I would like to thank you for your tremendous input into the association to make it what it is today.

With your direction the association and the Veterans Band is recognized by Navy as an integral part of its image to the general public and that is a direct credit to you. Thanks also goes to Cheryle who has been there with you and provided vital support on all our ventures here and overseas.

Thank you.

2024 REUNION IN DETAIL

By Errol Hatch

The majority of this edition will be devoted to the reunion just held in Launceston on the 18th to the 20th of October.

The members who attended were welcomed with some extraordinary weather which made the weekend so much more pleasurable to those that ventured out to see the city and its surrounds.

The weekend started off with the traditional meet and greet and as I was unable to attend I've asked Jim Henshaw to give us a report on the evening.

FRIDAY the 18th of October

Meet & Greet

The Meet and Greet was held at the Launceston RSL which was to be the base for all events over the weekend. It was a well attended affair and the volume increased as each guest arrived and was firstly recognized by members and greeted by old friends. There were familiar faces that regularly attend the reunions and some new faces. The Bar soon became the go to point as the evening wore on and the food flowed from the kitchen served by volunteers of the club.

Brian, Kerry and the team were excited to have a large number in the club and the atmosphere was vibrant.

Saturday the 20th of October.

Annual General Meeting

Our first function for the day was the AGM again at the RSL but with less of a vibrant feel as the evening before. Numbers started to arrive and by the time the meeting started we had what was probably the best attendance for a long time.

President Ralph Daines welcomed all to the meeting and laid out the schedule of the meeting. Ralph gave a bit of history for us to finally arrive at this reunion and how the executive were thankful of the hard work put into it by Brian, Kerry and the team. Ralph did mention in his opening remarks that Adelaide had been selected for the next reunion in 2026.

Apologies were acknowledged and the previous order of business was covered.

The meeting was handed over to the Treasurer (yours truly) for his report on our current finances of the association. I handed out a summary of our 2023/2024 financials and pointed to our positive position of our association to members. As part of my presentation I put forward a proposal that suds to our association be suspended going forward as we are not spending anywhere near the amounts we have in past years. This is actually due to the digital and online presence of our association. Our cost are confined to fees to these services and a way to increase our membership is by enticing those out there to be apart of us without the burden of a financial commitment.

The floor voted and seconded that the subscription of $30 a year be deferred until we meet again out our next AGM. We all agreed that a donation system be implemented for unforeseen costs to be put forward as the need arises. When reunions are costed a small surcharge to be part of the bookings to cover any expenses incurred for that specific event. There was a unanimous vote on this motion.

The current President took the chair and outlined the current situation with the Veterans band and the weekend ahead for the band. The President then opened the floor for nominations to executive positions. For President there was only one nomination and that was Errol Hatch (yours truly again). The vote was taken and there was a majority of I's for the vote. There were questions on the position of President and Treasurer being held by the same person and Ralph pointed that our constitution allows for it. Our out going Secretary Roger Downton was convinced to retain the position and we thanked him deeply and our current Vice President Geoff Bunce happily accepted the position again. Our public officer will be retained by Ralph Daines for our NSW registration and Ralph will also be Administrator to the Veterans band.

State representatives have been enhanced to include:

Queensland: Geoff McIlroy/John Lennon

South Australia: Roger Downton

Victoria: Terry Ekin

Western Australia: Ted Tait/Bill Farrell

New South Wales: Ralph Daines

Tasmania: David Hardstaff

General business at the meeting had Bill Farrell put forward a proposal to make a donation to the HMAS Perth (1) Memorial to be erected in Fremantle in the near future. It was agreed to donate $500 to this worthy cause.

The meeting was officially closed. Members enjoyed Coffee and tea before those in the veterans band made their way to rehearsals at the Salvation Army Headquarters.

Veterans Band Rehearsals

The Salvation Army headquarters has a modern auditorium which was where our concert to raise funds for the Salvation Army Appeal was to be held. Rehearsal finally got underway about 11.30am and as always it took a few opening minutes to blow the cobwebs out and establish where we all fitted in. Volume was a curse and with so many players (pleasing as it was) certain sections had to be curtailed to get back to a reasonable balance. This time around we had the pleasure of vocalists and Pipes and Drums to add to our limited rehearsal time so there was no mucking around.

From where I sat the afternoon progressed (as they say shit rehearsal good gig) with a few technical issues but we know the boys and girls always step up to the occasion. With the ending of rehearsal we were to meet on Sunday before the concert to sound check and run through pieces with the pipers.

While we were rehearsing the Ladies and non playing members were taken on a Gourmet tour of the region returning to the army headquarters ready to prepare for the official dinner.

RAN Band Association Dinner

It was a full house at the RSL for our official dinner and all places were filled and the bar was running hot. The ladies from the RSL (All volunteers) distributed a 3 course meal over the evening and there was plenty of hungry souls to devour the splendid meals.

The evening had very few speeches leaving the members to enjoy the company of each other. The official raffle was held and there was some leaning to certain tables who were winning constantly but were gracious to have redraws. With the draw over we were off our chairs and mingled amongst each other.

We were entertained on the evening with a 3 member from the Tasmanian Navy Band consisting of keyboards, Bass, Guitar and vocals. As they hadn't played together as a 3 piece the music was excellent and vocals and harmonies were exceptional, congratulations to them on a job well done.

All the photo's are from the dinner and are a small selection of what was taken. Members in the photo's include,

Jim Hawkins
Ray Mills
Doug & Lyn Drysdale
Gary Searle
Paul & Mary Jo Cottier
Iain & Sheila Morrison
Gabe & Sue Kicsak
Terry & Lorraine Ekin
Steven & Karen Cottier
Ned & Chrisi Kellas
Peter & Lorraine Martin
Mel Thatcher
Doug Antonoff

Rob & Ann Bull
Bill Farrell & Sally-Ann
Jim Henshaw
Garry & Christine Sander
Roger & Claire Downton
Blue & Gail McNally
Geoff Dawson
John & Rose Ezergailis
Ron & Judy Arnott
Graeme & Diane Johnson
Geoff & Belinda Bunce
Ralph & Cheryle Daines
Ken & Pam Monk

Daniel & Ann-Marie Lukic
Andrew Sansom
Kevin & Elaine Hillier
Geoff & Kathy Shew
Shane & Elizabeth Urquhart
Tony & Suzanne Younglove
Paul O'Hara
Alan & Annette Lanham
Brian & Kerry Ellis
Guy & Cath Scrutin
Sno Cronan
Bob Bentley

Sunday October the 20th

With the morning free most members had a relaxing few hours in the CBD before the concert. I enjoyed a breakfast with Geoff and Belinda Bunce chatting over things going forward with our association and after a I took a quick trip up the Highway and visited George Town which was splendid under the still sunny weather.

The Concert

With a 12pm run through with the pipers we were all in our splendor ready for the big occasion. Our conductor for the concert was Brian Ellis and his librarian extraordinaire Kerry were looking forward to a successful day. The auditorium started to fill and by 2pm we had a nearly full house.

The concert opened with “You can’t stop the beat” and from there on it was all go. Jim, Kerry and Anne Marie provided some excellent vocals and the pipers came to the fore with “Amazing Grace”

Other highlights was the performance of “Once Navy always Navy conducted by the composer Martyn Hancock who also played tuba in the band.

The concert concluded and all felt we had again pulled it together on the day. With over $1200 raised at the door the day was definitely a success.

Members BBQ

Heading back to the RSL from our concert for our final commitment for the weekend, the bar again was a welcomed sight on a quite warm afternoon. The volunteers had prepared a wonderful BBQ for the members before we concluded the social events and headed on our way.

A big congratulations to Brian, Kerry and the team and a special thank you to the outgoing President and Cheryle for terrific behind the scenes input to a great weekend.

We look forward to our next reunion and details will be forthcoming when location and dates have been finalized.

Errol.

Above: Garry Sander, Rod Coughran-Lane, Jeff McIlroy and Gary Searle.

Right: Kerry Ellis, Jim Henshaw and Kerry’s sister Anne Marie the amazing vocalist for the concert.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

I'm honoured that I took on the role of President although I was surprised at being the only nomination. It was a sort of aligning what the future of our association needs to be to you its members and that by bringing the traditional style executive into the new technological age it will be easier in the managing process of an association .

We still have a Vice President and Secretary to help run a very important association and look after the well being of it and it's members.

The outcome of the monumental decision to abandon the subscription base to be a member has opened up the association to expand its membership. As Treasurer I will give you my thoughts financially on this but just at a member level we remove any constraints for those not to join. All we ask for is their email address, Mobile number and my "Who are we " questionnaire. With the email address we can send more personal information regarding the association and leave the social media sites and the website to be our general face to future and current members.

I look forward to getting into expanding our base and providing a platform for us to report on social gatherings, financials and other important events to you.

Along with Geoff and Roger and our State reps we look forward to representing you in the years ahead.

MEMBERSHIP

After our reunion and the special AGM ruling on subscriptions the executive will focus on membership. As we know from past experience, members fade in and out of the association. This could be from little info being sent to members or feeling that there is no connection with what the association is there for.

The new category "Well being" is a buzz word probably over used just lately but does have a position in our association.

The past newsletter I just reported on page one had the exact message from Col Harkin back in 1996 where he felt there is a bit of disconnection because he didn't recognize names anymore or the articles don't have any meaning to his past history in the band, our aim is to rectify this.

If we talk generational changes there is a big gap but I'm sure the later generations are interested in what happened previously and visa versa we are interested in knowing what later generations are doing.

One common thread exists, we are bandies with unique experiences in serving in a great branch of the Navy. OK, where do we go from here. Let's mention to our mates who we keep in contact with to join our association. Benefits are a more personal contact with other members and updates to social functions. Facebook has a place in our association and should be used as a resource for locating ex-bandies.

Ed.

TREASURERS REPORT

The 2023/2024 figures were tabled at the AGM and showed a positive result as to the state of the association. With the balance of funds in being the bookings for the reunion this will be adjusted in this financial year but will leave a substantial credit in our account. As the AGM agreed to suspend subscriptions there will be a lesser income stream but our email, website and social media platforms will carry our message to you our members for minimal to no cost. Donations will be called on when the need arises and this will be requested only through our association emails to our membership. Our only requirement to be a member is your email address that's it, and of course you are a ex-bandie of the perms and reserves or a widower of a deceased member. I and the executive will only communicate financial and delicate info and requests this way. Social media will be exactly that, the social and commentary aspect.

I look forward to keeping you up to date as the months progress and look forward to a exciting year.

Treasurer.

Our newest member and our oldest, Gabe Kicsak and Jim Hawkins at the farewell BBQ. Apparently both went to the same school (different times of course), Hurstville Public school and also only lived a few hundred metres away from each other.

"Looks like Jim had left a few bread-crumbs for me to follow and join the band years later", Gabe suggested.

WHERE TO NEXT

South Australia was selected as our next location for our 2026 reunion. A committee has yet to be formed but our members in SA will be given plenty of time to take in the task ahead and formulate a plan for the weekend. Reunions are a major event on our associations calendar and more so than ever looked forward to by our members.

Congratulations South Australia we look forward to an amazing event.

VICTORIAN REPORT

After a 4 year delay, the Tassie reunion in "Lon"-ceston was a great catch up, especially with some that I have not seen for, dare I say it, decades. Lonny contributed with good weather for the entire weekend, then unleashed her cold face afterwards. And for those of us that ventured across on the ferry, or is that boat, Bass Strait behave itself also.

It was mentioned to me during the official dinner they had heard the Victorian chapter/Mexican Ex's was dying but I can assure those interested, it isn't yet. We get together about 3 times a year with generally a good turn out. Onwards and upwards in true Mexican style.

Terry.

Terry Ekin and Gabe Kicsak (our newest Victorian member) enjoying a welcomed drink at the official dinner. Terry and Gabe along with Dale Granger play in the very busy Casey concert band. Gabe is a handy musician to have around playing Clarinet, Bass guitar and keyboards.

PRE REUNION CATCHUP

Some of our members made their way to Launceston a little earlier before the official events and Jeff McIlroy got some great happy snaps of them enjoying a drink or two at a few of the local venues.

Thanks Jeff.

Above: Jeff McIlroy, Smoky Dawson, Steve Cottier, Paul Cottier, Blue McNally, Rod Coughran-Lane, Guy Scrutin, Paul O'Hara, Taffy Thatcher, Doug Antonoff and the loveable Geoff Shew. Dale Granger joined them at the bottom location.

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VIC: Terry Ekin
QLD: **Jeff McIlroy/**John Lennon
SA: Roger Downton
TAS: David Hardstaff
WA: **Ted Tait/** Bill Farrell

RAN Veterans Band/Events Manager:
Ralph Daines.

Public Officer
Ralph Daines

Web: www.ranbandassoc.net

WHO ARE WE

This column highlights association members with a brief history in the Band Branch.

RAY MILLS

JOINED:
1975 Adult Entry
INSTRUMENT:
Violin/Piano moved to Flute/Piano
SHIPS/DEPOT's SERVED ON:
HMAS Cerberus, HMAS Stalwart, HMAS Penguin, HMAS Melbourne.
MATES WHO JOINED ABOUT THE SAME TIME:
Jeff McGuiness, Jeff Riddle, Ross Johnson, Larry Haliday.

INDELIBLE MEMORIES:

- Joining the Navy Band
- Serving with great mates

DOUG ANTONOFF

JOINED:
1973 Junior Musician
INSTRUMENT:
Clarinet/Sax
SHIPS/DEPOT's SERVED ON:
HMAS Cerberus, HMAS Stalwart, HMAS Penguin, HMAS Lonsdale, HMAS Jervis Bay, Keswick Barracks.
MATES WHO JOINED ABOUT THE SAME TIME:
Ekin, Wilkinson, McIlroy, Bekendam, Johns, Humble, Granger.
INDELIBLE MEMORIES:

- Silver Jubilee 1977
- Opening of the Tokyo Dome
- Chief Adelaide Reserve Band
- Watsonia 1994—1995