

**Victoria Barracks**  
Ground Floor 'H' Block  
256-310 St Kilda Road  
Southbank, Victoria 3006

Phone: (03) 9282 5918

Fax: (03) 9282 5857  
Email: [rusi.vic@defence.gov.au](mailto:rusi.vic@defence.gov.au)

ABN 46 648 764 477

# RUSI VIC NEWSLETTER

Volume 8 Issue 3 – August 2009

Editor: Martin Holme

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RUSI Whitehall [www.rusi.org](http://www.rusi.org)

Dept of Defence [defence.gov.au](http://defence.gov.au)

Aust Strategic Policy Institute [www.aspi.org.au](http://www.aspi.org.au)

Australia Defence Association [www.ada.asn.au](http://www.ada.asn.au)

RAAF Assoc 'Williams Foundation'  
[www.williamsfoundation.org.au](http://www.williamsfoundation.org.au)

Defence Reserves Association [www.dra.org.au](http://www.dra.org.au)

Defence Force Welfare Association

[www.dfw.org.au](http://www.dfw.org.au)

## **LUNCHTIME ADDRESS** **Victoria Barracks – St Kilda Road** **1200hrs – Shedden Auditorium**

**THURSDAY, 27 AUGUST 2009**

**COMMODORE RICHARD MENHINICK CSC RAN**

Director General Navy Transformation & Innovation

### **The New Generation Navy**

Commodore Menhinick has had a distinguished career in the RAN after joining the RAN College at Jervis Bay in 1976, aged 16. After graduating, he spent much time at sea on TORRENS, DERWENT and PERTH. Seconded to the Royal Navy, he served in the Persian Gulf and later, on BRISBANE during the 1990/91 Gulf War. After shore-based duty he commanded ANZAC frigate WARRAMUNGA and later the ANZAC, during which, as part of the Northern Trident deployment, he attended the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gallipoli landings and the International Fleet Review in Britain, marking the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar.

After a posting as Director General Military Strategy, he returned to the Navy in his current role in which he is responsible for facilitating the New Generation Navy. It will be a most interesting talk.

**Time: 1130 hrs (Tea/Coffee) 1200 hrs Address**

**Admission: Members and Guests: \$5.00**

Lunch may be purchased from the adjacent "Barracks Bistro" afterwards.

**Security issues require that you advise the office on 92825918 (email – [martin.holme@defence.gov.au](mailto:martin.holme@defence.gov.au)) by 24 March.**

**If you or any guests are attending. Remember to bring a photo ID with you for ease of access.**

## **From the Secretary: Captain Martin Holme**

We are tackling life in the office without Neville Wright with nervous resolve and miss his years of dedicated experience. Ian George is proving to be a worthy successor and we look forward to a happy continuation in his role as Treasurer, though it is doubtful that he will emulate his predecessor's quarter centenary in the role! Please visit the Office and Library and welcome Ian, if you do not already know him.

Our Lunchtime Lectures continue to draw excellent numbers, despite the wintry weather. Recent speakers have included Dr Andrew Davies who gave an excellent talk on the Defence White Paper. The June speaker, Brigadier David O'Brien brought us up-to-date on the progress of the next generation of land vehicles and Major General Duncan Lewis gave a fascinating talk on his role as National Security Adviser, which drew a crowd of well over a hundred. We were lucky with our timing, as he is now deeply immersed in the latest terrorist saga, which would have prevented his attendance.

Your Secretary is spending much time organizing the arrangements for the RUSI National Council Annual Meeting which we are hosting in mid-September. Our Patron, the Governor Professor David de Kretser AC is kindly hosting a reception in their honour. Amongst other things we plan to show off to our interstate colleagues, our splendid Library, if we can battle our way through the door and over the piles of books that we have recently inherited or have received by donation from generous members. (It has been politely suggested that I also tidy my desk to mark this historic visit!)

It is always sad when members pass away, many having been with us for a long time. It would, however, be remiss not to mention two stalwart figures who have died recently – Major Martin Clemens AM CBE MC and Lieutenant Colonel Sir John Holland AC. Both contributed to the RUSI cause with distinction, over many years and were community leaders of the highest calibre.

Looking forward, our next Lunchtime speaker will, as per the front page, please not only those with a Naval background but be of great interest to our wider membership. I hope to see you then – and please come and view and browse in our greatly expanded Library.

## **Program Dates for 2009:**

- 27 August Lunchtime Lecture  
– Commodore Richard Menhinick CSC RAN
- 24 September Lunchtime Lecture – Speaker TBA
- 29 October Lunchtime Lecture and AGM  
– Air Vice Marshal John Harvey RAAF
- 26 November Lunchtime Lecture  
– Major General Mike O'Brien CSC
- 9 December – RUSI Christmas Drinks

Since our last issue we have sadly lost some Members. We have also gained some new ones. For the record, their names are listed below:

### **Vale**

We record with deep regret the passing of:

Flight Lieutenant J.K. Aitken  
Captain J.R. Anderson MC  
Captain H.P. Braddock  
Lieutenant Colonel C.H. Brown  
Major W.M. Clemens AM CBE MC  
Captain F.L. Devine  
Mr H.M. Gilbert  
Lieutenant Colonel Sir John Holland AC

### **New Members:**

We welcome the following new Members:

Wing Commander W.M. Atkin  
Lieutenant Colonel J.F. Henry RFD  
Mr J.J. Metrikas  
Mr J. Ryan  
Mr R.T. Whybro

## **Book a New Member**

We are always looking for new members who share our interest and concern for Defence and National Security.

To provide a tangible incentive to existing members who sign up a friend or colleague, Council has decided to offer a small reward.

Recruit a new member and select a book from our excess stock of duplicate volumes. In addition, be in the draw for **a mystery prize!**



## **From the President: Brigadier Ian Lillie**

Congratulations to Honorary Life Member, Major Ian Barnes RFD, ED, of the Geelong Branch on his award of the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the recent Queen's Birthday Honors list.

It doesn't seem that long ago that we distributed the May 09 Newsletter I would like to thank Immediate Past President, Mike Rawlinson, for his assistance to Martin Holme, the Editor. If any of you have interesting articles that might be suitable, please contact Martin.

Of course the Defence White Paper has now been delivered. We were very fortunate to have Dr Andrew Davies from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute to speak to us on the implications of the new paper. He is an expert in the Department's budgetary processes and capability development.

I took two key issues away from his presentation: Firstly, this is a very long range view of the strategic environment and our defence capabilities to cope with this environment. And as Andrew pointed out, many of the projects proposed in the 2009 White Paper will not come to fruition for many years. Of course, in this time frame there will be other white papers, several elections and possibly a change of government or two before all of the capability forecast in this White Paper is delivered, and therefore plenty of scope for changes.

Secondly, there is the issue of the realistic availability of funding for these capabilities. There are no clear and guaranteed funding lines for all of the proposals and so one always has to wonder whether they will actually come to pass at all or whether or not the shape again changes considerably from what has been forecast today. Equally, there is the spectre of a target of \$20B in savings from the Department over the next 10 years, which is \$2B per year. These savings are to be reinvested back into new capabilities but it does beg the question, what happens to the equipment program if the savings are not achieved. And going on past performances, it is indeed a steep savings target.

A week ago, I with Secretary Martin made an official call on our Patron, the Governor of Victoria, Professor David de Kretser AC during which we briefed him on the role played by RUSI Victoria in encouraging and promoting discussion and knowledge about National Security and Defence matters. We also discussed the forthcoming visit of the National Council. The Governor has kindly offered to host a cocktail party at Government House for the National Council. Preparations for the National Council Meeting in Melbourne are proceeding well.

The meeting is scheduled for Thursday 10 and Friday 11 Sep in the Victoria Barracks' War Cabinet Room.

Martin has been working very hard on the protocols, lists and other details to make this event happen. Martin, as always does an excellent job with these sorts of things. While numbers have been restricted, Government House will be sending invitations to the National Council, our own Council and some of our Counsellors Emeritus and partners. The members of National Council and the RUSI VIC Council and partners will then adjourn to the Melbourne Club for dinner.

On the Speaker program, apart from Dr Davies' excellent review of the Defence White Paper, we have had an update on Project Overlander by Brigadier David O'Brien which was very well received especially by the many members of defence industry. In July, we have been very fortunate to have Major General Duncan Lewis (Retired) the National Security Adviser in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet talk to us about his role as National Security Adviser. We had a full house for the presentation and it was a well presented and fascinating insight into this new and key role in our government structure and security apparatus.

Over the next few months our speakers will be Commodore Richard Menhinick on 'The Future Generation Navy' in August. I hope to have Neil James from the Australian Defence Association speak to us in September. Neil is something of regular at RUSI but we haven't heard from him for some time. He is always thought provoking and sometimes controversial so it will be great to hear his views on recent activities particularly the White Paper. Air Vice-Marshal John Harvey will talk to us in October on the New Air Combat Capability, the title for what we know as the Joint Strike Fighter Project. Our last speaker for the year will be our very own Vice President, Major General Mike O'Brien who will talk to us in November about the activities in Fromelles.

Finally, I would also like to pay tribute to Flying Officer Neville Wright, who retired as Treasurer and long time Council Member of the RUSI of Victoria. Neville has been a stalwart of RUSI for well over 20 years and we are deeply indebted for his contribution, good humour and willingness to take on many and varied duties. We will miss his smiling face at the door at each lunchtime talk but he has assured us he will attend from time to time on the presentations. Well done Neville and thank you on behalf of the many members you have helped over the years. And I thank and welcome to Lieutenant Colonel Ian George who has stepped in to the Treasurer's role with enthusiasm.

Regards,

**Ian**

## 'the Eagle has landed'

Since our last issue we have passed the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of man's first landing on the moon (20 July). Former astronauts Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins of the Apollo 11 mission are all still in good health and on the anniversary made some insightful comments on their experience for the media. One aspect I picked up on was their observation that in the US, society had become more 'risk averse'. They advanced risk aversion as a reason for a loss of momentum in the space program and lack of progress towards the goal of a manned Mars landing.

In support of their 'risk averse' claim, the Astronauts referred to one of the Goodwill messages they left behind on the moon's surface in the area known as the 'Sea of Tranquility'. The Messages are from leaders of 73 countries around the world, and are inscribed on a silicon disc about the size of a 50-cent piece. The messages congratulate the United States and its astronauts and welcome a new era of peace and prosperity for all mankind.

I have read all the messages. You can easily find them on the internet. The US cold war adversaries are noticeably absent. The messages express similar sentiments, with several dictators being particularly eloquent. However, the message from John Gorton, Prime Minister of Australia stands out as it explicitly recognises danger, and the opportunity for individuals to engage in risky pursuits. Well said, from a former WWII RAAF fighter pilot who flew Spitfires, Hurricanes and Kittyhawks and had a number of crashes! I like his message very much. It is quintessentially Australian, but uniquely Gorton.

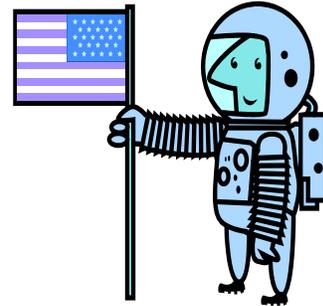
*Australians are pleased and proud to have played a part in helping to make it possible for the first man from earth to land on the moon. This is a dramatic fulfillment of man's urge to go always a little further; to explore and know the formerly unknown; to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. May the high courage and the technical genius which made this achievement possible be so used in the future that mankind will live in a universe in which peace, self expression, and the chance of a dangerous adventure are available to all.*

*John Gorton, Prime Minister*

While the former Astronauts may be right regarding risk aversion, they did not mention the Challenger and Columbia disasters, the high opportunity cost of space exploration, and the slower pace of international cooperation as opposed to the frenetic activity of the cold war space race.

Nevertheless I think it most unlikely that either our current Prime Minister or his predecessor would have mentioned dangerous adventure had they authored the message.

**Mike Rawlinson**



## Geelong Branch News

Congratulations to the Branch Senior Vice President, Major Ian Barnes RFD, ED, on his award of the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours list.

The Branch Office in Newland Barracks became a reality on 4 June with the return of our library books, furniture and equipment from Colac. They had been held in storage since the premises were vacated in 2002 at the time of redesigning and refurbishing the then Artillery Depot. The library is the first area to be reinstated, and the Branch is grateful to Major Ian and Mrs Margaret Barnes for their endeavor to implement this measure. The Committee will now continue to hold monthly meetings at the Barracks.

The Next Dinner Meeting is to be held on Monday 17 August, at Capri Receptions, 55 Separation Street, North Geelong. Time is 1830 for 1900, Dress is Lounge Suit, and at a cost of \$35 per head with drinks available at bar prices. The Guest Speaker will be Major Robert Charles RFD, currently Manager of the Fort Queenscliff Museum, who will talk on the Combat Training Centre.

On Monday 21 September the Branch will be conducting the traditional Ladies Night Dinner, also to be held at Capri Receptions. The Guest Speaker will be Mrs Cheryl Timbury from the First Fleet Commemorative Association. The event is a formal occasion- Mess Dress, Black Tie or Lounge Suit with miniatures worn. Time is 1830 for 1900, cost is \$35 per head with drinks at bar prices.

Prior bookings are required to these events. Contact Major Ian Barnes or Mrs Margaret Barnes on 03 5243 9569.

## An Adaptability Culture

Australia towards the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is part of a globalised world which faces unprecedented challenges – population growth, the impact of developing countries increasing their standard of living, environmental degradation, species extinction, toxic pollution, peak oil, food, resource, energy and water shortages, terrorism, instability, civil strife, wars, the use of WMD; as well as Climate Change. While uncertainty surrounds these challenges, there are also unknown challenges and the likelihood of tipping-points associated with climate change and other surprising and rapid changes.

We have already survived the millennium bug, a SARS Pandemic, the Bali Bombing, some extreme weather events and (it seems) the Global Financial Crisis. In our globalised world, the difference from 20 years ago is that even though not directly affected, we have felt the effect of all of these crises indirectly through the media, prices, the availability of goods and services, and world economic conditions.

In a globalised world, everything is connected to everything else, and even the most benign actions anywhere on the planet, may have unintended consequences that affect us. The 'tyranny of distance' no longer isolates us from troubles that beset the rest of the world. World economic growth and cheap international air travel, have brought us tourists, immigrants, refugees, and drugs as well as diseases affecting plants, animals and humans.

Because of globalisation, most of the threats to world stability have a direct or indirect impact upon Australia's interests and implications for national security and the employment of the ADF.

In dealing with the future, our society has only a short time horizon. We prefer ignore 'sleeping' problems and sequentially deal with crises as they arise, or are sensationalised by some research findings in the media, or films by a former US Vice-President.

The solution to most problems, improvements in the way we do things or introduction of new technology, requires change of some sort, and we are faced with adapting to the new environment.

In some areas Australians adapt readily. The take up of computer, internet and mobile phone technology has been rapid. Recycling household rubbish is now an accepted part of suburban culture, and we have learnt to live with water restrictions. On the other hand, air conditioning has permitted us to build houses that are less suited to the climate than they once were, but as the price of energy

increases this trend will probably reverse. We readily react to price signals, and can anticipate some strong electricity and water price increases, associated with emissions trading and desalination.

Slowly we are coming to terms with the implications of an ageing population, older retiring ages and changed lifecycle employment patterns. Necessary changes to the way of life in our rural areas are also occurring, but at a slower pace.

As many more changes in our environment are in the offing, the ability to adapt readily has a definite advantage. What we need as a nation is an adaptability culture. In this respect, all Australians, individuals and organizations can learn from the example and experience of the ADF, which has close parallels with the situation of the nation.

Since the 1950s Australia has been a middle ranking power with a small defence force. While operating under the nuclear umbrella of the ANZUS Treaty the ADF has never had a broader remit than it does at present, with Australian governments that are not reluctant to deploy the force in support of our interests.

Because high-end defence capital equipment, particularly ships and aircraft, are extraordinarily expensive and have long acquisition lead times, long services lives and are subject to technological obsolescence; the formal planning process for defence takes a long-view and tries to address all contingencies in the formulation a defence strategy and underlying force structure. For a small defence force that must be able to handle contingencies across the full spectrum of military operations this leads to the conclusion that as well as other key characteristics, our defence force must be flexible and adaptable.

The ADF is a highly flexible organisation that can be used to meet national objectives in many ways. ...'The continuing challenge for the ADF is to position itself so that it can adapt to whatever conditions eventuate.'

*Future Warfighting Concept, p21, 2003*

Adaptability is a key factor in The Vision of the Chief of the Defence Force articulated in *Joint Operations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, May 2007:

'My vision is for the Australian Defence Force to be a balanced, networked, and deployable force, staffed by dedicated and professional people, that operates within a **culture of adaptability** and excels at joint, insurgency and coalition operations' A.G. Houston AO AFC , Air Chief Marshal

*Continued Page Seven*

## Commander Arnold Green OBE DSC\* RAN "Hydraulic Jack"

*This is the first of an occasional series, in which the writer will recall some of the Service characters he has met in the past. In this instance his memory has been assisted by an article from the Naval Historical Review.*

During my time as ADC to the Governor of Tasmania, Lord Rowallan, I met many characters, none more colourful than the retired Commander Arnold Green, universally known as 'Hydraulic Jack' – a man with a good swallow, particularly if gin was involved!

Arnold had recently retired as Naval Officer-in-Charge Tasmania (NOIC TAS) and was then representing General Motors Holden, in that State – a role he filled with gusto, vigour and panache. As a young officer, I relished his company and his tales of yore – he was a valued guest at any dinner party.

This is his story, which highlights his sense of humour, his bravery, his kindness and his legendary disdain of higher authority.

He spent much of WW11 with the Royal Navy and a British Admiral informed the Australian Officers on his Staff that the Australian Navy was too small for a man of Arnold's talents, but in the Royal Navy he would have reached Flag rank. He had no fear of the enemy or of higher authority.

I treasure his memory and am privileged to have known him, if only briefly.

In 1940, while serving on HMAS *Stuart*, Green was lent to HMS *Nile*, as liaison officer with the Western Desert Force. He enjoyed life in the besieged Tobruk and in the day to day struggle for the amenities of life, soon became known as 'Hydraulic Jack', because he could lift anything – as a scrounger, he had no equal!

He also loved to play soldiers and wangled himself a place in many a patrol into the enemy lines. So it was with hardly a moment's hesitation that the Colonel allowed him to take command of one such patrol whose designated commander, a Major, had reported sick at the last moment.

Foraging for prisoners and loot far into the enemy's lines, Green's patrol came to a cave in the hillside. He marched up to the entrance, hoping to find hidden stores and peered into the darkness. In his best quarterdeck voice, he demanded to know whether there was anyone inside. Very much to his surprise, there was an immediate response to his demand and in the grey light of dawn came a shuffling line of Italian soldiers, each with one arm raised and the other waiting only to drop a rifle at Green's feet. The line of men grew into stream and then into a torrent as the rifles piled higher and higher. The total number of prisoners Green led back into the Fortress of Tobruk has been estimated at nearly five hundred. By any

standard the patrol had been most successful and the immediate award of the Military Cross was awarded to the Patrol Commander. There was however one problem that later worried the General. Clearly the MC could not be awarded to a naval officer, nor as it had been awarded, could it be retracted. In the end, the War Office consulted the Admiralty, and the Distinguished Service Cross was awarded to Arnold Green and the MC to the sick Major, who must have felt a trifle embarrassed at receiving it. The Army had no intention of allowing such a highly irregular occurrence to be repeated, so back Green went to sea.

Towards the end of the War, Green found himself an acting Commander, and once again playing soldiers, this time in Borneo, where he won a second DSC. But this time the announcement of the award took considerably longer and he was back in command of a destroyer when it came through. The signal about the DSC arrived just before Green returned from a trip ashore, and as he stepped onto the quarter deck, the First Lieutenant moved forward to greet him.

'Let me, Sir, be the first to congratulate you.'

'Congratulate me? What on earth for?'

'Your decoration Sir. A signal has just come in.'

'Oh, what did I get?'

'A bar to your DSC, Sir.'

'The bastards! They promised me a DSO!'

Commander Green then stomped below in disgust. He was probably pleased when he read the citation – 'For courage and devotion to duty whilst serving as liaison officer with the Allied Forces in the Far East. On ten occasions, Acting Commander Green landed with the first wave of infantry assault troops and thus secured information which proved of great value in subsequent assaults.'

He did not always emerge the winner in all his escapades and in some cases, must have known that retribution was inevitable. But on the whole, he won his battles with higher authority but was not always so successful with the Lower Deck.

As a Divisional Officer in a destroyer before the war, he paused while making his rounds to watch an Able Seaman leisurely chipping the rust off a steel deck.

'What are you doing?' demanded Green

Chipping the deck. Can't you see? 'responded the seaman without pausing in his work.

*Continued Page Seven*

'Stand up', ordered Green. 'Don't you know how to act when an officer speaks to you? Here, give me the hammer, and you come up and ask me what I'm doing. I'll show you what you should have done.' The exchange of jobs was made and Green squatted down to chip. The seaman walked off a few paces and then came back.

'What are you doing? The seaman demanded

'Chipping the deck, Sir' answered Green, at the same time smartly rising to attention and saluting.

'All right', replied the seaman. 'Just carry on. I'm going aft for a gin.'

Green had no fear of Admirals and many stories refer to his clashes with higher naval authority. One Sunday during the war, the destroyer he was commanding spent a few days in harbour in company with the ship flying the flag of Rear Admiral Destroyers.

The RAD noted with displeasure that whereas the rest of the ships were mustered for Divine Service, the men on Green's destroyer were busy washing the ship's side. A signal was quickly dispatched by the Admiral. 'Please explain why I do not observe your ship's company at prayers.'

The reply was quick. 'Cleanliness is next to godliness. We prayed last week.'

Hydraulic Jack's most outrageous story occurred at the time of the 1956 Olympic Games when Melbourne was inundated with visitors from overseas. Green was NOIC Tasmania. Four American destroyers were in Hobart on their way to Melbourne for the Games. Parties, excursions and hospitality had been lavished on the Americans who could be seen all over the city.

Green was driving passed a group of American sailors and noticed that they looked rather lost. He stopped and enquired if he could help, only to learn that they were off on a trip to visit some beauty spot, but their bus had not turned up. This was enough for Commander Green

At this moment, a municipal bus was passing, filled with passengers on their way to the city. Green stepped imperiously into its path and raised his hand in a stop-signal no driver could ignore. He then boarded the bus and ordered "Everybody disembark'. His quarterdeck tone brooked no refusal and the bewildered passengers promptly obeyed the order.

Turning to the startled American sailors Green gave another order. 'Now, gentlemen, please embus.' The sailors filed on board in amazement. When the driver had time to recover from his shock, he could only say, 'ere, wait a minute, mate. What's all this about?' 'My man, these men are due at the top of Mount Lookout in half an hour. Drive them there, wait while they are shown the sights, and return them to their ship on completion'.

The poor driver was shocked to the core 'But I'm on me regular run. The Transport Commissioner will be on to me for this. I'm due at the depot in ten minutes, and any way whose going to pay for all this?'

'The account is to be sent to the Premier by direction of the Resident Naval Officer Tasmania, announced Green,

who then turned to the new passengers. 'Well, gentlemen, I hope you enjoy your trip. The Commonwealth of Australia and the citizens of this city are proud to have you with us'.

Green watched the bus pull away and then strode to his car through the bewildered group of evicted passengers. What the American sailors thought of the whole business is not known.

A few weeks later, Green received a summons to visit the Premier, who waved under Green's nose the large bill for the unauthorised bus ride and demanded an explanation. 'Mr Premier,' replied Green, 'I observed these esteemed visitor-guests, Sir, of you and your State, standing forsaken on the footpath. I felt, Sir, that the good name of the State was at stake, so I asked myself, Sir, what would *you* do in similar circumstances. Knowing you to be a man of direct action, the answer, Sir, was obvious, so I acted accordingly.' Well done Green. Have a gin!' replied the Premier.

I know the response to be true as the Premier, Eric Reece, personally told me the story.

**Martin Holme**

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## **An Adaptability Culture** *continued*

An adaptability culture does not just happen, particularly in the military. Ready adaptability is based on flexibility of mind, cooperation and trust. You need to plan for it, organise for it, train for it and indoctrinate your people in it. Over the last three decades the ADF has done all of these things, in its evolution of a joint operations capability.

As a nation, to handle the challenges of the future, we need to take a longer view, and consciously develop a adaptability culture. A good start would be to achieve trust and cooperation between our levels of government.

**Mike Rawlinson**

### **Memorable Quotes:**

During periods of discontinuous, abrupt change, the essence of adaptation involves a keen sensitivity to what should be abandoned – not what should be changed or introduced. A willingness to depart from the familiar has distinct survival value.

Peter F. Drucker

## The Last Word - Library Notes

If we were to estimate the quantity of our library holdings a good guess would now be 10 000 volumes. It is also an interesting exercise to put a value to our collection! This puts the RUSI of Victoria Library as perhaps the best military collection in this state and one of the best in the nation. Our cataloguing effort has processed 8500 of these items – there is some work still to be done but the groundwork has been solid.

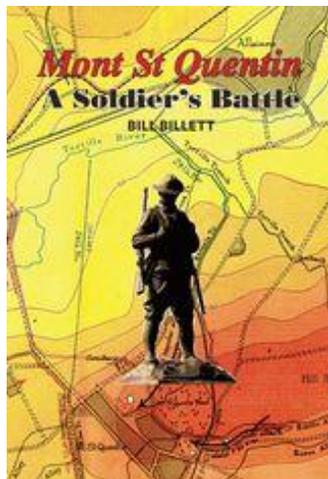
We have continued to attract significant donations. Our collection of books relating to intelligence is now very strong indeed. A particularly large gift to our collection (some hundreds of volumes) has included many titles on artillery from the earliest times to the present, including some rare and valuable titles not held in any other Australian libraries. Of course, we continue to seek and encourage other donations.

Specialised collections like ours are an asset for our members and an asset that we hope will attract members in the future. When computer cataloging is more complete we'll look at putting it on the internet (perhaps with the holdings of other state RUSIs) so that we're accessible to a wider audience across the nation.

Recent titles added to our collection include:

- Bill Billett, *Mont St Quentin: A Soldier's Battle* (reviewed below)
- The recent *Defence White Paper*
- Ronald Austin, *Cycling to War: the History of the AIF/NZ Cyclist Corps 1916-19*
- Robin Prior, *Gallipoli: the End of the Myth*
- Des Curtis, DFC, *A Most Secret Squadron: the First Full Story of 618 Squadron and its Special Detachment Anti-U-Boat Mosquitos*
- Ian Burch (ed), *History of the School of Artillery 1885 to 1996*
- Maj Gen J.C. Fry, *Assault Battle Drill* (1955)
- *Handbook of Artillery Instruments 1914*
- Bilton & Sim, *Four Hours in My Lai*

## Book Review



Bill Billett, *Mont St Quentin: A Soldier's Battle*, Dural NSW, Rosenberg Publishing (02 9654 1502), 2009 (\$32.95)

We are grateful for a publisher's review copy of this monograph on the Australian 2<sup>nd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Divisions' battles of Mont St Quentin and Péronne that

were fought from 30<sup>th</sup> August to 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1918. Here was a battle fought under Australian command for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Divisions were not only commanded by the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Corps but also by its new commander, General Monash.

There is renewed interest in the AIF's battles on the Western Front and a book like this, the first devoted to these battles, is a welcome addition to those who want to discover more.

The book draws on research that used the war diaries at the Australian War Memorial for every battalion and brigade that took part in the battle – the author has even checked them against the copies held at National Archives UK (which was once called the Public Records Office). Of course, the author's research was supplemented by C.E.W. Bean's *Official History*, some unit histories and much other useful material held at the War Memorial and Australian Archives. A surprising omission from the works he appears to have consulted is Peter Pedersen's *Monash as a Military Commander*.

The actions are well described at the operational and tactical level and, as we have rightly come to expect, are supplemented by the writings of soldiers involved in the battles. The author tends to place more emphasis on the location of artillery units rather than their fireplans: this may tend to lead to the view that artillery support played a role of lesser importance than it did.

Though the author is careful to examine the role of Monash in the design of this battle, his inclusion of a critique of Monash's earlier leadership (including that of the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade at Gallipoli) may seem out of place.

Two most useful maps are included on the fold-out covers. There is also an appendix on how to give map references using a First World War map. It is, to say the least, far from clear!

Bill Billett has written a clear and generally well-analyzed account of these battles in an approachable and readable style. If you want to understand the capability of the Australian Corps as it reached its peak military capability, this book is a good choice.

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