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RUSI VIC NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Martin Holme

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RUSI VIC Council 2010

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RAAF Assoc 'Williams Foundation
www.williamsfoundation.org.au

Defence Reserves Association www.dra.org.au

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LUNCHTIME ADDRESS

Victoria Barracks – St Kilda Road

1200hrs – Shedden Auditorium

Thursday, 29 July 2010

Group Captain Rick Keir AM CSC

Director RAAF Air Power Development Centre

Issues for Modern Air Power

Rick Keir enlisted in the RAAF Active Reserve in 1987 and later transferred to the Permanent air Force where he was commissioned as an Intelligence Officer. He has since studied Imagery and target analysis in the US and UK and completed Command and Staff College in Canada. Following staff tours in Canberra and deployment to the Middle East he was appointed as the first Director of Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance and was deeply involved in the re-formation of No 87 (Air Intelligence) Squadron.

Group Captain Keir was promoted to his current position in 2009. He was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia in 2003 for exceptional service on Operation FALCONER; and awarded a Conspicuous Service Cross for outstanding achievement as the Commanding Officer of No 87 Squadron.

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

Admission: Members and Guests: \$5.00

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

For security reasons please advise the Office of your attendance and the names of your guests by email to martin.holme@defence.gov.au or phone 9282 5918 by 5pm Tuesday 27 July. These names are provided to Security to issue Access Passes. If your name is not on the list, you will experience a delay in gaining access.

Remember to bring a photo ID with you.

From the Secretary: Captain Martin Holme

We are half way through the year already which is frightening. The Office is ticking along and with the cataloguing of the Library nearing completion, now is a good time for Members to visit and explore the many new additions to our magnificent collection.

Since the last Newsletter, we have had some excellent speakers at the Lunchtime Lectures – MAJGEN David Morrison brought us up-to-date on the new Forces Command structure of which he is the inaugural Commander, and BRIG Bill Sawry delivered an interesting talk on the future prospects for East Timor. On the historical side SQNLDR Hugh Dolan gave a spirited talk on the achievements of Balloons and Airships as tools of reconnaissance at Gallipoli, and prominent military historian Professor David Horner outlined our Peacekeeping operations and their place in Australian military history.

The future program is listed underneath. You should note that the Annual General Meeting will be on 28 October and that we hope to hold our inaugural Annual Luncheon in November - more about this at a later date. The Annual Christmas Drinks will be on 8 December.

Our new President, CMDR Warren Kemp is leading a review and revision of our 2005-09 Strategic Plan. Your Council will address this issue in the coming months.

The Council is temporally depleted, as Leave of Absence has been granted to Immediate Past President, BRIG Ian Lillie, who is working on a logistics project in Dubai; COL Doug Knight, who is on a mission with the United Nations in Haiti and COL Marcus Fielding, who is on a Senior Officers course in Canberra. We have appointed Marcus as our Ambassador to Canberra! They all should return at the end of the year.

Future Program Dates

29 July	GPCAPT Rick Keir Director, RAAF Air Power Development Centre <i>Issues for Modern Air Power</i>
26 August	BRIG Damian Cantwell Director General Army Operations Army Headquarters
30 September	TBA
25 October	TBA (AGM prior to talk)
25 November	TBA (possibly followed by a Luncheon)

8 December Christmas Drinks Party

Vale

We record with deep regret the passing of:

MAJ R.S. (Bill) Billett
LEUT W.J. Braden RAN
MAJ N.W. Hall OAM ED
MAJ J. Perkins MBE ED
Mr D. Ruddick
CAPT A.G.S. Todd

New Members

Since our last issue we welcome the following new Members:

MAJ E.D. Bedggood; LTCOL D.J. Butler; Mr C. Collins;
Mr J.D. Cooper; Mr R. Howell.

Geelong Branch News

Following eight years of successfully conducting the Dinner Meetings at Capri Receptions in North Geelong the Branch relocated to Dromoland House, formerly Berkeley Lodge, at 258 Packington Street, Geelong West for the June Meeting. This facility is in the same ownership as Capri, and we shall continue to hold Dinner Meetings there from now, on the third Monday of the month.

The Annual General Meeting of the Branch is to be held on Sunday, June 18 at the Geelong RSL Sub Branch, followed by a Luncheon on location.

Dinner Meetings are to resume in August and a variety of Guest Speakers are being organized for the remainder of the year.

Donations to your Library Fund are Tax Deductible

Help to maintain the Institute's Library as the best collection in Victoria on defence and military related subjects by donating to your RUSI VIC Library Fund. The RUSI VIC Library Fund is a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) approved by the Australian Taxation Office, and monetary gifts to the Fund over \$2 are tax deductible by the donor.

Please make cheques to the 'RUSI VIC Inc Library Fund'. Receipts will be provided.

From The President: Commander Warren Kemp



Activities at RUSI Victoria have been very busy during the last few months, as we were informed in November that our accommodation space was to be reduced in January, along with that of the adjacent Defence Library. This involved re-organization of the space in our quarters and loss of storage at the rear of the Defence Library, where we had access to four compactus cabinets. We also inherited a large quantity of surplus Library books at that time, which put a considerable strain on the space that we had available. Nevertheless, this enabled us to improve our collection and dispose of many boxes of duplicate books, mainly to our Geelong Branch, but also quite a few desirable volumes to Members present at our monthly lectures.

The Library Committee has been hard at work during the last two years since we returned to Victoria Barracks, entering our collection onto a computer programme and changing the catalogue to the Dewey system. This valuable work should be completed during the next few months, to the great credit of those Councillors who have worked so diligently to accomplish this important project.

Our premises are now in much better shape, under the direction of our capable Secretary, Captain Martin Holme, and I would encourage you to make a visit and see the present arrangements for yourself.

This activity has drawn attention to the overall structure and "raison d'être" for RUSI Victoria, so it is a very suitable time to review the strategic plan that was drawn up in 2005 and amend this where necessary. There will be a special meeting of Council in August to consider these matters and to formulate our policy for the coming years, noting that 2015 will be a very important year, not only the Centenary of Gallipoli, but also the 125th anniversary of the foundation of RUSI Victoria.

The main aims of RUSI Victoria continue to be the encouragement of the discussion of national security and defence matters and to improve public awareness and understanding of defence issues.

Lastly, we have been invited to distribute to our Members the RUSI NSW publication "United Service", which should become available shortly. There are some back copies in our Office, and I think that you will agree with me that they contain many articles of interest.

I look forward to meeting you at our next monthly lecture.

Yours Aye,
Warren

Memorable Quotes:

Forethought

Excessive forethought and too great solicitude for the future are often productive of misfortune; for the affairs of the world are subject to so many accidents that seldom do things turn out as even the wisest predicted; and whoever refuses to take advantage of present good from fear of future danger, provided the danger not be certain and near, often discovers to his annoyance and disgrace that he has lost opportunities full of profit and glory, from dread of dangers which have turned out to be wholly imaginary.

Francesco Guicciardini: *Storia d'Italia*, 1564, Mencken
(*Italian historian and statesman – a friend and critic of Machiavelli, he is considered the father of modern history*)

AND

It is a mistake to look to far ahead. Only one link in the chain of destiny can be handled at a time.

Winston Churchill

Check Your Bookshelves

Do you have any RUSI Library Books that you have forgotten to return? Let's have them back so that others can read them.

Do you have any of your own books on defence and military related subjects that you would like others to read? Why not donate them to the RUSI Library? They will be gratefully accepted, well cared for, and made accessible for members and scholars. All donations will be acknowledged in the Newsletter.

Major John Edwardes MBE GM - My First Company Commander

By Captain Martin Holme

This is the third occasional article about interesting characters I have met. I served with John Edwardes for about a year – most of it on Active Service in Cyprus. We became life-long friends.

I was commissioned into The Royal Scots Fusiliers in 1958. While on Commissioning Leave, the 1st Battalion Commanding Officer, a great friend of my father, rang and told me to forget about Leave and report for duty soonest, as the battalion was departing on Emergency Deployment in 48 hours for Cyprus and he had a platoon for me. I was posted to 'C' Company whose Company Commander was John Edwardes, a tough soldier and character extraordinaire. I doubt I can do him full justice:-

John Edwardes was gruff, tough and brooked no nonsense. He was unconventional, to say the least; he was fun, skating sometimes on thin ice, but above all he was a war hardened officer who inspired fierce loyalty – 'Charlie' Company adored him and willingly followed his sometimes eccentric approach to soldiering in Cyprus. The CO was often but not always blissfully unaware!. He was unique and it was a privilege, as a newly commissioned Subaltern, to serve under him.

In 1941, John aged 15, his parents in India, ran away from school in England to enlist in the Royal Marines. They rumbled him and turned him down. After working in a factory for a few months, he tried again, successfully and by 1943 was a commissioned Royal Marines officer in Burma, where he distinguished himself as a Beach Landing Officer at the Arakan. He also served in the Andamans, the Nicobars, Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Luzon, India and Ceylon.

After the war, he joined the Palestine Police, at the height of the troubles there. After disbandment, in 1948, John returned to England but swiftly departed for Cochin in India as Assistant Manager of a Tea Estate. His new wife did not fancy life in India and told him to get a "respectable job".

John joined the Metropolitan Police in London and while on patrol in Kensington High Street, he chanced on a "smash and grab" raid on a Jewellers shop. PC Edwardes hurled himself onto the bonnet of the speeding get-away car, smashed the windscreen with his truncheon and effected the arrest outside the well known watering hole of "The Kings Head and 8 Bells" pub. For this, John was awarded the George Medal.

Leaving the police because he found it dull, John joined the Army and was commissioned into the Gurkha Rifles, serving from 1952 – 1956 in Malaya during the troubles there and as an instructor at the Jungle Warfare School.

He was then offered a Regular Commission in the Royal Scots Fusiliers, serving in Cyprus, Libya and Aden. (I will return to this shortly). John aged 35, then joined 22 SAS, having passed the Selection Course in Wales which soldiers half his age found too tough!

John quickly became a legend in a Regiment that provided many – frequently crossing the border into Borneo during Indonesian Confrontasi, leaping out of aircraft at Fort Bragg far more times than were good for him, on operational tours in Aden and the Radfan, demonstrating a diet of fungi and hedgehog on combat survival courses (he once nearly died after eating poisonous mushrooms), or standing menacingly at parties with vodka in hand.

Then there were the snakes! He was a world expert and bonded with all snakes. At a party in Kuching, a woman ran out of his house screaming that there was a python in the bath! He presented several Mambas to the Poona Zoo. He claimed to have sampled over 100 Highland Malts and remembered them all. He was a class act by anyone's standards.

But back to Cyprus and my Edwardes initiation. John took me in hand and quickly put some mettle in me! 'Charlie' Company became famous and the envy of other Companies in the Battalion. He used to lead totally illegal all officer patrols after dark, in villages where he suspected EOKA terrorists were lurking. We would stake out the house and two of us would crawl across rooftops and fire into the base of the mud house, hoping to scare out the terrorists. We never succeeded and how Edwardes accounted for the expended rounds, I will never know. We captured a wanted man on one cordon and search operation – Edwardes stripped him naked and sat him on the bonnet of his Champ and gun in back, drove him through the village for all to see. I don't think this would be approved of in 2010!

On another occasion we had to carry out a comprehensive search of a large Greek Church. Such buildings were frequently used by EOKA to hide people and weapons. We found nothing but John decided to entertain the search party with a dramatic mock sermon from the pulpit – pipe in mouth, Glengarry on head, he was in full voice when the CO came through the door. John did not see him enter and carried on, while we cringed at the back of the church. The Colonel was unamused and finally bellowed with rage at the unsuspecting Edwardes. However, by evening he had cooled down and regaled us in the Mess with the story.

John was meticulously smart and shaving in the field was quite a ritual, not to be interrupted. I remember during one such occasion, the radio crackled into life – the Colonel was calling all Company Commanders for an immediate and urgent 'O' Group. Edwardes' ablution routines were not to be disturbed – he turned to me and said, "he can bloody well wait until I have finished".

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Lancelot Giles and the Siege of the Foreign Legations in Peking

By Colonel Marcus Fielding

I recently had the good fortune to be on tour in Beijing. As our group approached the entrance of the Imperial Palace our guide pointed out the former Foreign Legation Quarter to the east. My mind immediately replayed scenes from the epic film *55 Days in Peking* which depicted the 1900 siege of the Foreign Legations during the Boxer Uprising and their eventual relief.

Recalling that Australian forces served during the Boxer Uprising I returned to Australia and searched the Australian War Memorial website for some more information. Australia contributed naval brigades made up of personnel from New South Wales and Victoria. They sailed from Australia at the end of July and early August 1900 to join forces with the British contingent and contingents from seven other nations including Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Japan and the United States.



Group portrait of unidentified members of the Victorian Naval Contingent taken prior to leaving for China. (AWM A05439)

But the Australians arrived late and were not involved in any of the major battles of the campaign. They left China in March 1901 and returned home to a newly formed federal commonwealth. The Australian War Memorial has a roll of 569 Australians who participated in the campaign - including Able Seaman Michael John O'Neill who has the honor of having service number 1. Six Australians died of sickness and injury, and none were killed as a result of enemy action.

While searching the Memorial's collection on line I came across the diary and medals of Lancelot Giles who was a junior civil servant in the British legation at the time of the siege. I wondered how Giles' diary and medals had come to be in the Memorial's possession.

To find the answer to this question I had to locate a book by Leslie R. Marchant published in Western Australia in 1970 and titled 'The Siege of the Peking Legations - A Diary Lancelot Giles'. Marchant was a senior lecturer in Chinese History at the University of Western Australia and a friend of Lancelot Giles' widow - Marjory. After the siege Giles continued to serve as a British civil servant in China until his death 1934. Marjory remained in China after his death and managed to avoid Japanese internment thanks to a well timed holiday in India. She later moved to New Zealand and then to Perth where in 1965 she made Giles' diary available to Marchant. Marchant added an introduction about Chinese anti-foreignism and the Boxer Uprising which provides tremendous context for Giles' diary in the second part of the book.



Lancelot Giles in 1900. (AWM A05965)

Giles' diary of the various forays between the defenders and the attackers is a cracking read. His first entry is on Monday 4 June 1900 as tensions build and news of the Boxer Uprising reach Peking. Accounts of Christian 'foreign devils' being murdered across the country arrive at the Foreign Legations and the first attacks in Peking begin on Monday 11 June. Thereafter the Legations - each with a small military contingent - progressively barricaded their quarters and made efforts to defend themselves. In all, the compound contained over one thousand men, women and children from Britain, Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Japan and the United States as well as many Chinese. An urgent call for assistance went out before the Boxers cut the telegraph lines connecting them to the outside world.

As the Boxer presence in the city grew they began looting and setting buildings on fire. Before long their attention became focused on the Foreign Legation Quarter and direct attacks commenced in earnest; on Thursday 14 Jun Giles' wrote

At about midnight some Boxers tried to rush our picket on the North Bridge. One fanatic was hit by a rifle bullet, a revolver bullet, and had a bayonet stuck into him, and was still advancing when the marine holding the bayonet pulled the trigger of his rifle and brought him down!

As the pressure from the Boxers increased the Legations consolidated and further developed their defences within a central compound. And in typical British fashion a seemingly desperate situation is tackled with good old fashioned organisation:

Great use has been made of missionaries and non-combatants who are housed here, by forming committees and sub-committees who superintend the policing of the Legation. Every Chinese man in the compound has to do two hours work a day for the general good. We have a General Committee; a Fortification, Sanitation, a Fuel Supply, a Water Supply, a Chinese Labour, a Fire Defence etc. etc.

All able bodied men began shifts manning the walls and loopholes. Giles as a student interpreter is hastily pressed into action and on 21 June:

I had a narrow escape today. I was firing over the top of some sandbags at some soldiers creeping along the top of the further wall of the Carriage Park. I had brought down one man, and was covering another, who was covering me. We fired almost simultaneously; his bullet cut the top of the sandbag within an inch of my rifle, and cannot have been more than a couple of inches off my head.

Boxer attacks came from several directions and in different forms; on 22 June:

At 4.20 p.m. the fire alarm sounded. The Chinese [Boxers] had managed to get quite close to our west wall...a huge fire was blazing away with a strong west wind blowing. Bullets were whizzing over the top of the wall which considerably increased the difficulty and danger of getting the fire under control. For two and a half hours we worked like niggers. I emerged at the end, dripping from head to foot with muddy water, but with the satisfaction of having tided over a very serious danger.

And before long civility began to be stripped away; on 25 June:

6.30 a.m. Our two Boxer prisoners were shot and their bodies chucked over the wall.

And the situation became a contest of chance and survival; on 27 June:

One of our corporals here, Gregory by name, has had three marvellous escapes. His cap was carried off his head by a bullet; the handle of his bayonet at the end of his rifle was shattered; and lastly, when he had his rifle at the shoulder ready to fire, a bullet went clean through his rifle just above the trigger, grazing his right thumb and cheek a bit. However, all comes to him who waits; he was shot through the instep some days later, and his foot may have to be amputated, poor devil.

The steady toll of dead and wounded became a feature of their existence; on 1 July:

Wagner of the Customs, a ripping fellow, and a great friend of mine, was shot through the head at the French barricade. This is our saddest loss so far as regards my own feelings.

And initiatives to use whatever means available saw the Legations jury-rig an old muzzle loading cannon into the line; on 8 July:

The old muzzle-loader, variously named 'Dowager Empress', 'Old Crock', and 'Boxer Bill', when fired for the first time, had such a recoil on it that it burst the ropes which lashed it to its hastily constructed gun-carriage. However, we now put in a much smaller charge of powder, and it acts splendidly. Colonel Shiba made use of it during the afternoon, charging it with scrap-iron.



'Boxer Bill'. (AWM A05880)

The difficulty of catering for prisoners gave rise to some brutal measures; on 9 July:

During the afternoon three Chinese were captured trying to set fire to the French Legation. They were cross-examined, but their answers were so self-contradictory that they were shot.

And yet despite the circumstances French and British rivalry prevailed; on 10 July:

The French Minister insisted that the Union Jack over the main gate was attracting fire, and wanted Sir Claude to take down the flag from its prominent position. This, of course, was promptly declined.

One month into the siege on 11 July the conditions are clearly becoming unpleasant:

The flies about the place are something ghastly, being attracted to the unburied corpses of the Chinese. The heat is very great, especially during the last few days when the thermometer has been up to 103 degrees in the shade. Add to this steaming heat, a few hundred buzzing flies, and you have my picture.

On the next day, 12 July, a close shave for Giles:

All of a sudden as I was looking through my loophole I became aware of the muzzle of a rifle being quietly inserted in my loophole!

Continued page eight

Demographics and the ADF (2) – Cultural Diversity

In the Demographics article in the April edition of the RUSI VIC Newsletter I argued that Australia's ageing population should not be an unsurmountable problem for ADF recruiting if recourse is had to female entrants and there is full representation from community groups with non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). In the past the ADF has had mixed results in recruiting entrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, and Australia's future population will have a more diverse ethnic background than at present.

Cultural demographics have changed significantly over the past five decades. In 1940 90% of the population was classed as Anglo-Celtic, but this figure decreased to 70% in 1999, and is predicted to fall to 62% by 2025.

Between 1999 and 2025 the percentage of persons with an Anglo-Celt heritage is projected to decrease by about 7%, The percentage with a European heritage is projected to decrease by 3%, while the percentage with an Asian heritage is projected to increase by about 3%. This trend will most likely continue, with the NESB groups representing an even larger proportion of the young adult 'recruitable' population.

Australians are proud of their multicultural country. We are a nation of immigrants. The chorus from the 1987 Bruce Woodley song 'I am Australian' says it all:

*We are one, but we are many
And from all the lands on earth we come
We share a dream and sing with one voice:
I am, you are, we are Australian*

Both major political parties are committed to a multicultural Australia - a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society, with community harmony and social cohesion.

These sentiments are reflected in the Howard Government's May 2003 policy statement that 'the government's aim is to build on our success as a culturally diverse, accepting and open society, united through shared future and a commitment to our nation, its democratic institutions and values, and the rule of law'. (Multicultural Australia : United in Diversity)

For a healthy multicultural democracy, all community groups should be represented in the uniformed occupations in numbers roughly proportional to their fraction of the overall population.

But immigrants with a non-English speaking background and their children do not tend to join the ADF.

Classified by ethnicity the ADF is mainly Anglo/Celtic. The 1993 UNISEARCH (UNSW) Report into the Ethnic Composition of the ADF found that 'persons from predominately non-English speaking countries are significantly under-represented in all the Services.'

Those born in Poland, Yugoslavia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon and Vietnam tend to be more poorly represented. In several Australian States these are comparatively large and well established communities. ADF interest is not so much in migrants who came to Australia as adults as they are preoccupied with settling in to a new country, but with their sons and daughters, whether born overseas or in Australia. While many cultural factors apply, research indicates that misgivings that parents and grandparents may have about the military, strongly influence younger members of NESB communities not to join the ADF.

Recruiting from the Anglo/Celtic majority of the population has adequately sustained the ADF to date, made easier by the downsizing of the combat support force and the recruitment of women. With the exception of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruiting campaign, no particular effort has been made to attract, train and retain young Australians with a NESB background.

In the future however, people with a non-English speaking background will form an increasing proportion of the 'young adult recruitable' population. We need to start encouraging NESB youth to join the ADF now.

What is required is not a big advertising campaign that will produce a NESB bulge in enlistment cohorts, but a genuine engagement with specific ethnic communities by authentic Service members. They need to demonstrate that the ADF is an apolitical, professional and compassionate force for good, which is a vital support for our shared democracy.

The best ADF advertisement to NESB communities is feedback from successful members who have joined the Services. Sensitively managed initial training, by 'culturally aware' training staff is essential. This may also include modification of some of our traditional practices and procedures which are unnecessarily steeped in our British heritage.

The ADF needs to embrace recruits from all backgrounds, who are willing to serve their country. They should feel comfortable wearing the uniforms of the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force, as we will be proud to see them.

Let's not overlook this fundamental imbalance any longer.

Mike Rawlinson

John Edwardes (continued)

Shirtless, he replied, on the radio with, "approaching your location now", his face covered with shaving soap lather!

The Battalion moved to Aden and one Edwardes incident went in to Regimental history. After a particularly hectic Guest Night, John decided to cool off with a late night swim – stripping off he dived into the pool which unfortunately was empty. Only John could survive such an incident with nothing worse than 'a bit of a headache'.

I could go on for ever – he was a character, a wonderful soldier, enormous fun but a strict disciplinarian when the occasion demanded – I was on the receiving end of some memorable and justly deserved dressing downs. He was inspirational for a young officer and it was a privilege to have served with and known a truly remarkable man. #

Lancelot Giles (continued)

I leapt to one side and the rifle blazed away into space. If the man had been a second quicker, my head would have been blown off! I then peered cautiously through the loophole and saw the brute quietly reloading. Without a second's delay I fired point blank at his head which was bent down over his rifle. He was silent after that, as you may imagine.

And accounts of how some tried to cope with the circumstances; on 2 August:

A Russian soldier very nearly died of strychnine poisoning. He had looted a bottle of the poison from some store, and had drunk it, thinking it was some alcoholic liquor. He recovered, wonderful to relate! It takes more than strychnine to kill a Russian.

News of a steadily advancing relief column under the command of Lieutenant General Gaselee began to raise spirits in the second week of August. Giles' last entry is on Tuesday 14 August 1900 where he enthusiastically describes the arrival of the multi-national relief column - some 55 days after the siege began.

At 3 p.m., amidst shouts and howls, a few of the 7th Rajputs entered the Legation, quickly followed by Gaselee and his staff, and we were actually at last relieved!!!!!!! It was a moment of a lifetime, and can be better imagined than described. Shakings of hands galore! Women in tears! Sikhs patted on the back! Grimy gunners hugged! It was magnificent that the British be the first to relieve us!

In all, several dozen foreigners were killed and over 100 wounded during the siege. The estimated number of Boxers killed or wounded was not recorded.

I took the opportunity to inspect Giles' original diary at the Australian War Memorial. It's a wonderful experience to hold such a piece of history in your hands. The pages have clearly been cut from an exercise book and his elegant handwriting cascades down the long pages. You can imagine Giles sat in a room with the windows sand bagged, a candle and quill pen fighting through his weariness to record the day's events. As the days and weeks progress Giles' handwriting becomes more ragged – no doubt reflecting his physical and mental fatigue.

In recognition of a lifetime of public service Giles' was awarded Companion of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George in 1928. Staff at the War Memorial advised that Giles' medals and diary were donated by Lancelot and Marjory's grandson - Giles Pickford - in the mid-1980s. Included with the diary are a series of news magazines giving various accounts of the siege and including a wide range of photographs.

Lancelot Giles' diary, medals and the news magazines are true treasures. #

The Last Word - Library Notes

If you have been following the progress of our cataloguing project you will know that the size of our collection is rapidly increasing. Over 10 700 volumes are now catalogued and available for borrowing. We are drawing close to the finish of our cataloguing process: it certainly represents singular dedication by our band of volunteers.

I am pleased to report that significant donations of new and previously-owned books are still coming our way. Many of these acquisitions are rare books on military subjects, and some are not held elsewhere in libraries.

In the last few months we have been given the publications of The Kokoda Foundation on a range of Australian defence and security issues. (www.kokodafoundation.org)

Another rare but recent book is a signed copy of *HMAS Kanimbla at War: Iraq 2003*, which was donated by its author, and member of RUSI VIC, Commander D.W.(Doug)McKenzie RANR. This book has remarkably good photo coverage of the war.

We still seek voluntary help in several areas. No expertise is needed but willingness is a prerequisite.

Mike O'Brien
Library Committee