

THE EXHIBITOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ARMY MUSEUM OF SOUTH Australia



AMOSA

May 2024

VOLUME 14 ISSUE 1

Inside this issue



Volunteers and Morning Tea.....

The last Wednesday of each month, our volunteers gather for a morning tea and to celebrate with those members who have had a birthday in the previous month. The morning teas occur in various places including the Annex of the Officers' Mess, the garden outside the Museum Administrative Office or in building 34A. Attendance is usually 50—70 volunteers plus the GRes staff who support the operation and development of the



Museum. The morning teas have an important social and administrative function as it allows the staff to provide a briefing and work groups to mingle and talk about topics of mutual interest. Most of our volunteers are retired members of the ADF and bring to the Museum a broad range of military and civilian skills which are critical to the development of the



exhibits in the Museum. At our April morning tea, we celebrated the birthdays of two volunteers who had recently turned 88 years of age. Trudy and others prepared birthday cakes to help celebrate the occasion .



Our two Octogenarians are long standing members of our volunteer workforce having



Malcolm Simms and Barry Leon with Eddy Tanzer and David Edgar also celebrating their birthdays.

contributed some 37 years of service to the Museum. The Museum's most valued resource is its volunteers and we continue to work towards assisting them whenever possible.

By Nick Williams, Editor

<i>Saracen Display</i>	2
<i>Military Humour</i>	2
<i>Edged Weapons Projects</i>	3
<i>Austin Champ Restoration</i>	4
<i>A New Gres Staff Member</i>	5
<i>AMOSA at the Zoo</i>	5
<i>History Lunch 22 May 2024</i>	6

2024 ACTIVITIES

History Lunch 22 May 2024. Topic "Keswick BarracksPast and Present"

Numerous schools visits through the coming months



Saracen Display

A group of AMOSA volunteers led by Neil Wilson is currently undertaking refurbishment of the SAMRA Saracen, currently on loan to the Museum.

It is intended that the refurbishment will bring the Saracen to a similar standard as the Museum's very popular M113 display.

A push button panel will play up to 8 recorded messages, outlining the characteristics and history of this iconic vehicle. Brigadier Oscar Wayland, as an ex CO of 3/9 SAMR has already contributed a number of these

messages Interior lighting will be linked to the audio, which will show one or more appropriately dressed mannequins, to give some idea of the internal configuration of the vehicle.

Storyboards and photographs will be placed on the inside of the rear doors.

It is an exciting project to bring the old "can" to life, and similar projects are planned for the Ferret scout car and General Grant tank.

By Pete Tulloch, SAMRA Archivist



Interior display of the Museum's M113. The Saracen display will be similar.

The Saracen Armoured Personnel Carriers which were crewed by a Commander in the turret with a driver in the hull. It had the capacity to carry 10 fully armed troops. The commander in the turret manned a thirty-calibre machine gun. Behind him, in the circular hatch, another gunner manned a .303 Bren gun.

Dikko.....



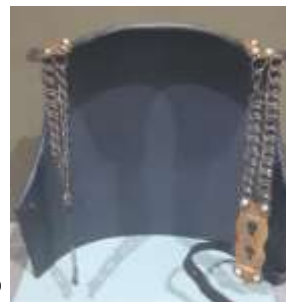
Edged Weapons Projects

AMOSAs, with its maze of buildings, is the ideal haven for hiding the "Backroom Boys" who do all the hidden work that the public can only see through the end results. Needless to say the Edged Weapons Group in Bay 1 of Building 8 is one of these. Although renowned for sharpening the odd blunt object these boys do a mite more than that. In essence the group is responsible for smaller artifact restoration, modification and restoration. The group is run by Barry Leon a professional carpenter and lecturer at TAFE till retirement led him to the field of Edged weapons. Barry is supported by Terry Izaat, the man who's done it all! Michael Cleary, our eccentric, ex accountant Irishman who just wants to use his hands, Colin Carati, our Mad Professor who not only restores old Citroens (have to be mad to do that), but also runs our computing side as well as delving into whatever else needs doing and finally Athy Kalatzis, an ex-sparky Engineer who just loves playing with sharp objects! Although Swords are the priority for the group the work that is carried out is varied. As an example of one commission the group took on was the restoration of a French Officers, Cuirass. When presented the Cuirass was suffering from extensive and very invasive rusting as well as degradation of the leatherwork.



With a historic item like this one from around 1854 there is an endless debate on how far to go with restoration and what should the end item look like. Being French officers could have their Cuirass looking highly polished or else a "blackened look". The little exposed sections which weren't as badly affected by the rust indicated this was probably one of the latter so the decision was to remove as much of the active rust as possible and to return the surface to appear similar to its original blackened state. Some sections of the item were starting to show severe pitting from the rust so leaving it in its present state would have resulted in ongoing decay until total destruction of the artifact. The first stage was rubbing the surface with brass brushes and tools to remove as much of the rust as possible but not digging into the base metal. There were no real secrets here - it was just elbow grease and determination. With the loose rust removed, it was decided to use a chemical to neutralise the remaining rust but this caused a lot of consternation in the group as the result was

a complete whitening of the item, making it look anything but authentic.



So, a slight backward step to remove all the whitening which was actually neutralised rust particles. Again, more elbow grease! When this stage was over the consensus was that the cuirass had been cleaned sufficiently so what remained was to preserve the surface and protect it from further oxidation. A proprietary wax/rust inhibitor was applied that would melt into all the pores and protect the surface from further oxidation. The final step was lubricating the leather items and repairing them where they had hardened and broken over the years, cleaning the brass straps and re-assembling the links as they should have been and finally assembling the complete unit:



Would have made any French Officer delighted, particularly as the ding on the front plate shows it stopped a musket ball. When compared to a picture of a period painting the end result looks totally appropriate.

This little project is only a sample of what the group takes on. Polishing badges is a regular item, repairing and restoring firearms, helmets etc all complements our underlying interest in Swords.

By Athanasius Kalatzis



A surprise visit from a piper posted to 3 RAR, Townsville. Back in Adelaide to present a painting/photo to the RAR Association at Linden Park.

The Austin Champ Restoration.....

The following is a brief summary of the Austin Champ vehicle, much more information is available by accessing on-line references & search engines.

Following the end of World War 2 the British Army wanted a vehicle of their own to equal the then famous US Army 'Willys Jeep' and so work commenced on the design and build of a ¼ ton general service vehicle which became known as the Austin Champ. In broad terms the British Army wanted a vehicle capable of being fitted with wireless equipment or with stretcher frames. One prototype underwent trials fitted with the 106mm recoilless anti-tank gun – the outcome of those trials is not known, but I am not aware that this variant ever went into service. One prototype was fitted with the Rolls Royce B40 engine, while two others were fitted with the Austin A90 engine – following a wide range of trials the decision was made to proceed into production of the Champ using the Rolls Royce engine. In 1953 a prototype was sent to Australia for trials and eventually 400 vehicles with the Rolls Royce engine were ordered for the Australian Army. Although the vehicle was found to have very good cross-country capability, it was not popular with many drivers, some of whom thought it over-complicated, difficult to service, while others felt that it was unstable over rough terrain, and unstable if cornering a high speed. I am told by our Armoured Corps colleagues that 3/9 South Australian Mounted Rifles were equipped with a number of Austin Champs back in the 1960's.

Some of the interesting characteristics are:

- * 2.8 litre petrol engine
- * Fuel tank capacity of 91 litre
- * 24-volt electrical system
- * All synchromesh gearbox of 5 forward gears and 5 reverse gears

All Australian variants were fitted with a snorkel, enabling the vehicle to ford water obstacles to a depth of 2 metres with minimal preparation. It was eventually found that the vehicle was quite difficult to maintain in the field, and the purchase price was roughly twice that of the Land Rover, which arrived in the 1950's – these two aspects led to the demise of the Champ and the Australian Army has disposed of all of them by the mid-1960's.

AMOSA's Austin Champ was donated in memory of 4718041 Trooper Kenneth William ROBINSON, who served in Vietnam between 9 Feb to 6 Dec 1967. Following the Museum's very successful Open Day in October last year it was felt that our Champ was in need of 'tender care', so it was moved to the vehicle restoration bay for attention by members of 'the A Team' (Peter Jarrett, Gary Robinson, David Williams, Richard Sutherland, Peter Jasson [known as 'Pete the Welder'], John Black & Geoff Laurie.



Our vehicle was in reasonably sound condition so the restoration plan has focussed on removing light surface rust in a few areas, removing or sanding back the existing paintwork, adding a new primer where required and applying 2 coats of new top coat. On completion of the project, the 'icing on the cake' will be to affix 2 new 'tac signs' before returning it on display. The photos below show an 'in-service' Champ in pristine condition, together with AMOSA's Champ as the restoration nears completion.

By Geoff Laurie



A New GRes Staff Member

My name is LCPL Eamonn McGarry, born 17 Sep 1967 (age 56 years). Enlisted in the Australian Army Reserves in Aug 1984, and was posted to 5PI, B Coy 10 RSAR. Served for a year, then discharged to enlist in the ARA. Formally joined the regular army in Dec 1985. In Jun 1986, I was posted to C Coy, 2/4 RAR. In Oct 1987, on completion of the Assault Pioneer course, was selected to join the Assault Pioneer Pl, 2/4 RAR. In 1988, joined the 2/4 RAR Cameleers, and



participated in the 1988 Bicentennial Camel Race, as both support crew and as a camel rider. Discharged from the Army Dec 1989.

Re-enlisted in the Australian Army Reserves in Oct 2002, and after Kapooka, and Infantry training at Puckapunyal, was posted into B Coy, 10/27 RSAR as a Rifleman. In 2005, in the first Talisman Sabre exercise, was part of the largest contingent of Australian soldiers carried by the US Navy (USS Boxer) since the Second World War. In 2007, participated in OP DELUGE, the security operation for the APEC conference held in Sydney. Later in the year, I was deployed on OP ANODE, the mission to provide peacekeeping and security duties in the Solomon Islands. Upon return from deployment, took a posting to AUR, as part of the STT (Soldier Training Team). In 2012 I was posted back into 10/27 RSAR. In 2014, acted as a boarding-team commander on OP RESOLUTE, serving on both the HMAS YARRA (MHC – Minehunters Coastal), and HMAS CHILDERS (Armidale-Class Patrol Boat). In 2020, participated in OP BUSHFIRE ASSIST. Posted 5PI B Coy 10/27 RSAR, as of 25 Mar 2024 under secondment to AMOSA.

I am suffering from skin cancers due to chronic UVR exposure, with a medical review coming up in May. Hence the beard!

By LCPL McGarry

AMOSA at the Zoo

The Defence Members and Families Support (DMFS) organisation annually hold a 'Welcome to SA' twilight event at the Adelaide Zoo to welcome all Regular Force newly-posted families to the state. All defence related support organisations are invited to set up a table or stall. It is a good night for both Defence families and stallholders to engage with each other and be aware of the various services available. For the second year running, AMOSA was invited to set up a display on 9 February for this event. As we had done this event before, layout and setting up was very similar to previous and went smoothly.



View of display mannequins and Vietnam Roll of Honour



Dane Davis, Rolf Sellentin and JB at the stall

AMOSA Lunch and Talk 22 May 2024



Army Museum of South Australia

History Lunch

22 May 2024 from 12—2pm

Join us for lunch and a talk about

“Keswick Barracks..... Past and Present”

A two course meal with drinks available for purchase from the bar. Three exciting speakers for the talk after lunch.



The buildings, the site development and use, and the people are an integral part of our military history.

Our speakers include: Helen Meyer, Annette Summers AO RFD, John Spencer OAM RFD and James Bateman to talk about their experiences and research into the history of Keswick Barracks.

For a booking and a seat at a table with your friends please go to:
<http://e.mybookingmanager.com/E11562613180558>

Cost for the lunch and talk is \$30 for attendees and a fee of \$25 for volunteers at the Museum.

Please book early to avoid disappointment—this year will be seating for 100 people.

