

# Army Museum of Western Australia

## THE MAGAZINE



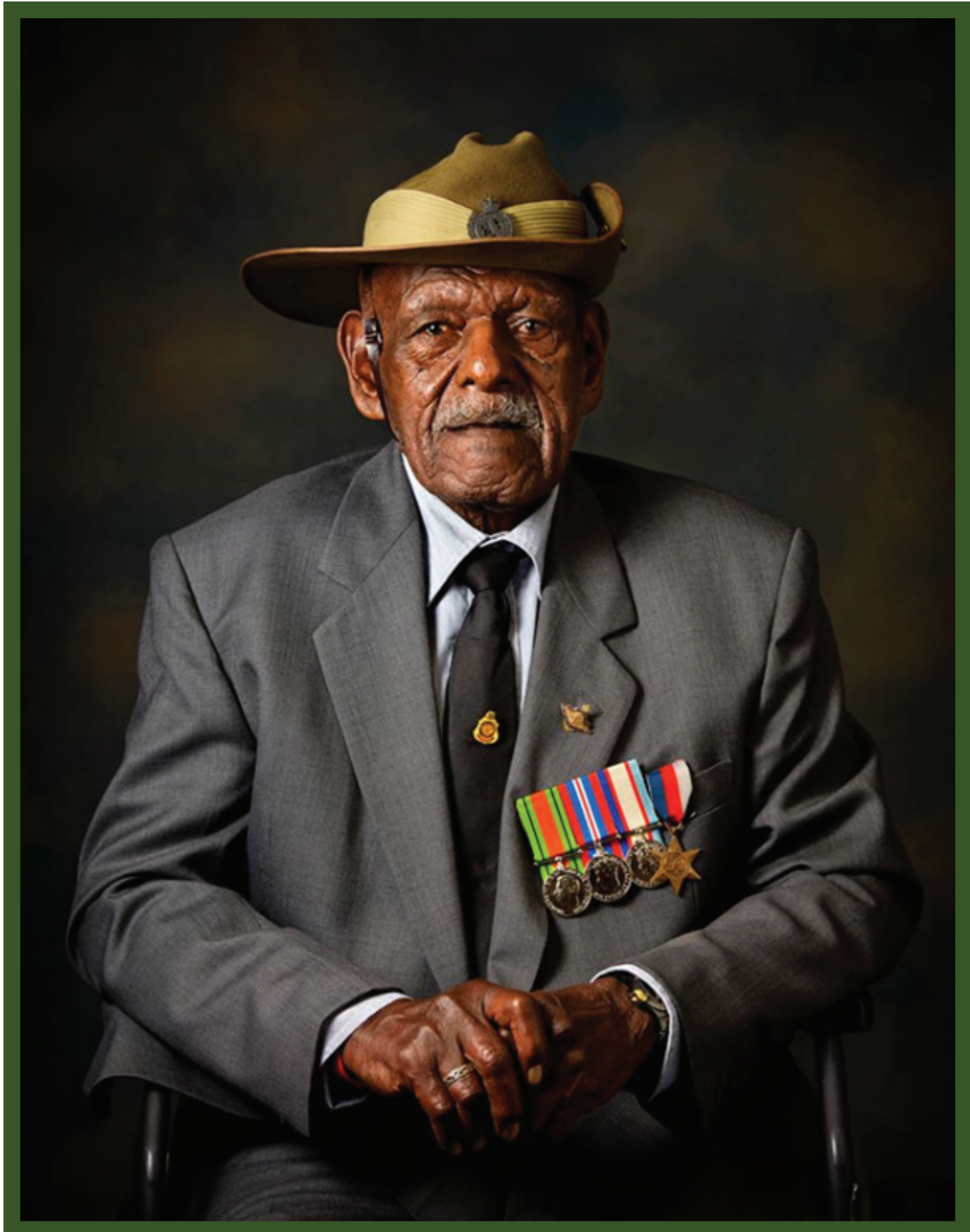
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Issue No. 14



This is 95 year old Bamia who was enlisted with the Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion in 1942 and is one of only three surviving members of the battalion.

Baima's son Eddie says "He joined the Army in 1942. When this happened he saw it as a call of duty. He was honoured to be a part of it and do the service. Before he joined the Army, they lived in the dark by kerosene lamp. When he joined the war, he saw the light - electricity. War introduced them to modern society.

He's my father. I'm honoured he's my Dad and has given me this world. He stood up and believed what he did was right. I just want to cry."

The photograph was one of many captured by voluntary Members of the Australian Institute of Professional Photography for the 2015 ANZAC commemorations where around 10,000 living Servicemen were captured in studio photographs.

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## Farewell to three volunteers

A sad time for the Army Museum of WA with three of our best known and highly regarded volunteers leaving us including two of our World War Two veterans; Cyril Allender, Jack Connolly and Dave West.

The AMWA Army staff and all volunteers thank them most sincerely for all that they have done during their time as volunteers – they have made a difference and succeeded in ensuring the best museum experience to our visitors.

They leave in good standing and are always welcome back at any time to "have a chat over a cuppa".

## Cyril Allender

Our oldest Volunteer at 96 years of age has decided to retire this year after 14 years service to our Museum.

Cyril is one of our World War Two veterans and served in the Australian Army from 1941 to 1946. He enlisted in WA's 2/16TH Infantry Battalion and was a reinforcement to the unit while it was in the Middle East. The unit was part of the 7th Australian Division and was recalled to Australia to fight the Japanese in New Guinea. As only the Army can manage, he was then allocated to Victoria's 2/14TH Infantry Battalion!

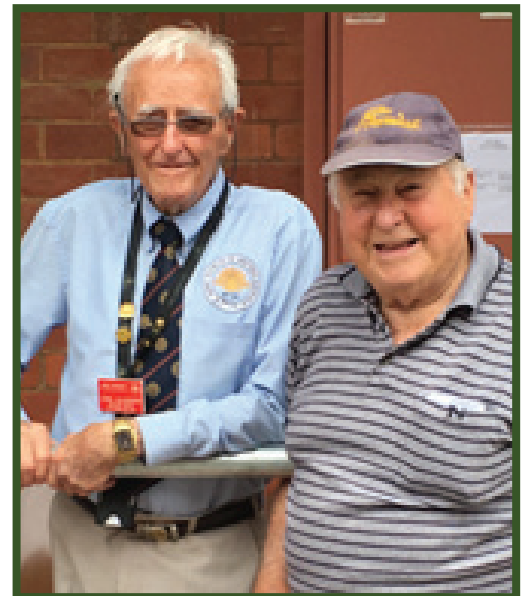
He first fought the Japanese during the Kokoda Track campaign where he became one of the many walking wounded; taking some 13 tough days to walk back to Port Moresby during Brigadier Arnold Potts' famous fighting withdrawal. He had also contracted deadly scrub typhus during this period and it was largely due to the skill and dedication of the hospital staff in Brisbane that he is still here today.

After his recovery, he rejoined his unit back in New Guinea, where he fought during the Ramu-Markham Valley campaign including the fierce battle of Shaggy Ridge. Cyril will tell you that he believes this was harder fighting than the Kokoda Track campaign.

Cyril was only one of six World War 2 veterans to be selected by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to commemorate the 70TH Anniversary of the Beach Head Battles in 2012. On this occasion he was introduced to Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall and as we know, Cyril is something of a "ladies man" so he thoroughly enjoyed this encounter.

In 1998, Cyril made a visit to Kokoda, including a helicopter flight to the battlefield at Isurava, with his former company commander and other veterans of the Kokoda campaign.

This year, along with Jack Connolly, he was a guest of the RSL at the commemoration services marking the end of Pacific War in 1945 held in Brisbane.



World War Two mates & highly regarded AMWA volunteers, Left to Right: Cyril Allender and Jack Connolly

## Jack Connolly

Another of our World War Two veterans and former butcher, Jack (91 years of age), has been with the AMWA for 8 years as a Volunteer Gallery Attendant and Tour Guide.

Jack served in the Australian Army from 1942 to 1946. Initially enlisting in the 25TH Light Horse Regiment he was subsequently joined WA's 2/28TH Infantry Battalion (9th Australian Division). After various training duties both here and in the Eastern States, Jack saw hard service in the later New Guinea campaigns and then again during the 9th Division's fighting during the Borneo campaign.

To remember his father's service, Jack has visited the Western Front battlefields on two occasions. This year, along with Cyril, he was invited by the RSL to attend the 70th anniversary commemoration services marking the end of the Pacific War in 1945.

For many years Jack has been on the committee of the 2/28TH Infantry Battalion Association and also took it upon himself to visit sick veterans in hospital and at their homes. Jack was a tireless worker within the ex-service community and clearly had the same dedication as a volunteer with the AMWA.

## Dave West



Dave West has retired this year after 10 years volunteering with the AMWA. He initially started as a volunteer with us when he saw the then recently arrived, sad and sorry sight of the neglected Centurion tank.

Being a former tank driver from way back, he was eager to work on this Centurion and restore it to its former glory. He was the driving force behind this project which took many years and the museum owes much to him for the tank we have today.

Dave West served in the British Army from 1954 to 1966, mostly in the famous 17th/21st Lancers (the Death or Glory boys as he is quick to tell you!) with overseas service in Hong Kong, Aden, Qatar and Germany. One of his "claims to fame" was living (more like surviving!) in a Centurion tank for six weeks as an experiment in biological warfare – not a particularly pleasant experience one would suspect.

After leaving the British Army, Dave worked for the European Commission installing and maintaining generators in embassies through most of Africa and he tells many interesting stories about his days there especially in the Sudan.

As a licenced electrician, Dave proved very valuable to the museum in this field over the years. In addition to his outstanding contribution in the Workshop he was also a dedicated Duty Officer and Gallery Guide.

## Artists in Residence

Peter Dailey and Michele Eastwood were Artists in Residence at the Museum during the year. They are recipients of a grant sponsored by the Department of Culture and the Arts, the RSL and the Army Museum itself. The AMWA has created the former museum entrance and passage into the Temporary Exhibitions Gallery. Their completed works are now installed in this new gallery. Their brief was to create art works inspired from research conducted on the artefacts, books, photographs, uniforms, and textiles of the 11th Battalion held in the Army Museum. This research started in November 2014 and in early May this year they set up temporary studios in the purpose built galleries. Peter's art practice encompasses sculpture, painting and drawing and Michele works predominantly in textiles. The art works will be on display until 30th April 2016



Wayne Gardiner is seen advising a member of the public who brought an object in for the popular RSL's Militaria Antiques Roadshow held at ANZAC House recently. Henry Fijolek and John Burridge also gave their time as valuers on the day.



# MANAGERS NOTES

2015 was a busy year for the Australian Army Museum of Western Australia (AAMWA). The commemorations of WW1 started in earnest and stretched the manpower resources to the maximum with a great effort from all at the museum. I must make mention of the Curator Robert Mitchell and his team that had not only to answer the many enquiries and support requests that flooded in but also to finalise the Pre 1914 and Traditions Galleries. The finalisation of the galleries marks the end of the gallery refurbishment project, a task that was first planned back in 2007.

2015 also marks the museums 20th year at Artillery Barracks this is a significant event that has largely gone un-noticed. The museum has seen a lot of changes during that time and many a volunteer has come and gone. The effort of those volunteers and the volunteers of today, firstly to establish a museum, create a vision and then carry that vision to fruition is to be commended.

The Artillery Barracks Officers Mess kitchen modernisation which was funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs

(DVA) has progressed well and will be finished in mid January 2016. The kitchen has been fitted with all modern appliances, new cupboards with stone tops, new flooring and a re-paint. It will certainly be used a lot more in the future than it has in the past.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to wish all volunteers at the museum a happy Christmas and thank them for their efforts. They are the people that make the museum what it is today.

**Major Henry Fijolek**  
**Museum Manager**



## After Eight Years, Still Standing and Almost on Target

In 2007, the Army Museum of Western Australia Foundation began consideration of a major project to re-present the museum and its collection as its contribution to the centenary of World War One and ANZAC. The Gallery Redevelopment Project commenced in 2009 with a tentative target date for completion of the largest development project undertaken by the Army Museum being April 2015. Eight years, six major galleries, 4 exhibition areas and entrance together with considerable coordinated effort in the form of documentation, exhibition development, fundraising, training, education services, information technology and community engagement; the 2007 vision has been achieved. Significantly, the Army Museum stayed open to the public during all those years of gallery redevelopment without adversely effecting visitations especially for our core business - school student tours.

As you receive this newsletter, the finishing touches will have been made in the Traditions Gallery, which joins the Post 1945, World War Two, World War One, Prisoner of War and Pre 1914 Galleries as the focal points of the Army Museum redevelopment initiative. Through the collective efforts of volunteers, our Army staff, the Australian Army History Unit, Army, Defence, Lotterywest and our generous patrons and stakeholders; the vision of 2007 has been delivered.

The general state of the Barracks after the Army Museum became the sole occupant is hard to recall now. Instead of

semi-derelict office and canteen spaces with false ceilings and walls, we now have a suite of galleries in the historical context of a turn of the century (for most us that still means 19th to 20th century) Coast Artillery Barracks. The stories of the Army in Western Australia and Western Australians in the Army unfold in a coordinated but period distinct manner. Working with our designers and contractors, the Army Museum now presents these stories with a unique look and feel for each period with display cases, interpretation, lighting and maps reflecting some of the mood and social impact of the periods.

Formal recognition of the Museum's re-development achievements will be presented in February 2016. At that time the collective input and contribution of all involved with the project will be acknowledged and celebrated. Sadly some of those who contributed are no longer with us. Appreciation is also expressed to all museum volunteers for their patience and understanding during this wonderful yet challenging and demanding era. We remember as well, our founders and predecessors whose vision and fortitude created the Museum and brought it to Artillery Barracks. As we face new challenges and opportunities, we salute and remember with respect all of those on whose shoulders we stand.

**Robert Mitchell**  
**Curator**



Museum guide, Van Panotidis with his group of Ladies from the Red Hat Society of Perth.

## ANZACs of the Year



Left to right: Graham Edwards AM, President of RSL WA, Anne Leach OAM and Wayne Gardiner.

Anne Leach was a founding volunteer at the AMWA in 1977 being with us until about 1997 and Wayne Gardiner is the Assistant Manager of the AMWA. They each received the RSL's National award of the 2015 ANZAC of the Year.

Mrs Leach was named at an inspirational Sunset Service for nurses on 23 April, when the Kings Park crowd rose spontaneously to their feet to applaud her. Her award was announced by the National President of the RSL Rear Admiral Ken Doolan A.O. "In recognition of her exceptional courage and devotion to victims of armed conflicts or natural disasters and her pioneering spirit in the areas of public health and nursing education".

Capt. Gardiner, received the award for "his years of sustained and enthusiastic commitment to the community through his involvement with many community organisations, and in particular through his fostering and understanding and remembrance of Australia's military history".

His voice may be better known than his name because Capt. Gardiner provides the expert commentary for ABC TV's coverage of the ANZAC Day march through Perth. He has for many years been contributing to the RSL, ABC, Perth Legacy, the Army Museum of WA and the Military History Society of Australia (WA Branch).

## The Emu Plume



Slouch hats worn by members of the Armoured Corps are adorned with Emu plumes, a tradition that originated with the Queensland Mounted Infantry during the great shearers' strike in Queensland in 1891. During this time, the Queensland Mounted Infantry were called out, as soldiers to aid the Civil Power.

As time permitted, the soldiers would participate in a sporting activity where they would ride their horses alongside the emus, plucked the breast feathers, and placed the feathers on their hat. The Gympie Squadron was the first to wear the feathers, a fashion soon followed by the regiment.

The Queensland government permitted the Regiment to adopt the plume as part of its uniform in recognition of its service. In 1915 then Minister for Defence Sir G. F. Pearce granted all units of the Australian Light Horse permission to wear the plume, which they refer to as 'Kangaroo feathers'.

Emu tufts of approved design and dimensions are now worn by all members of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps as an item of dress. All Royal Australian Armoured Corps personnel were given authority to wear Emu plumes in the slouch hat, brim up or down in 1996, this was extended to all personnel serving in the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Regiment in 2000. I wonder how our Service Personnel captured their very splendid plumes. From a push bike? I know that back in 1964 (10th LH) the plumes were rationed out and we were only allowed a tuft behind the beret insignia.



## 2 Pounder Anti-Tank Gun

The museum's 2lb gun has a hazy past in that it joined the museum collection during its formation period. No one really knows its past, but then again what is the history of the Australian manufactured 2-Pounder Anti-Tank Gun.

Anti-tank guns occupied a high position on the 1940 lists of the Australian Army's requirements. The main British weapon then in use against tanks was the 2-pounder, a rapid-firing high-velocity gun which went into production in Britain just before the war. The decision to make the 2-pounder anti-tank gun in Australia was taken early in 1940, and the Ordnance Factory immediately began to make preliminary plans and to obtain manufacturing information, all of which it handed over to the Ordnance Production Directorate. Within a short time, the directorate placed an order for 1,000 guns with General Motors-Holden's, Woodville, South Australia, which was appointed major coordinating contractor.

Having taken a specimen British gun to pieces, General Motors-Holden's, in conjunction with the Ordnance Production Directorate and the South Australian Board of Area Management, called in potential sub-contractors to view the various components and select those they thought they could make. General Motors then assumed responsibility for making the parts no other firm would undertake. Few firms were so experienced as General Motors-Holden's in the layout of factory processes, the manufacture of tools and gauges, the marshalling of raw materials (some 90 different kinds were required to make the 4,000 parts of a 2-pounder anti-tank gun) and in the coordination of sub-contractors so that components would arrive at the assembly line on the appointed time.

The Ordnance Factory at Maribyrnong instructed engineers from General Motors in some of the techniques of making guns, and provided opportunities for them to study production methods peculiar to such work. The Ordnance Production Directorate did not rely on the government factories and laboratories alone for its technical information. By sending its engineers abroad it arranged for a constant flow of up-to-the-minute information on the latest developments. Occasionally there was too much zeal in this direction, as for instance when the directorate introduced Magnaflux equipment for the detection of cracks and flaws in metals. In this method a liquid consisting of fine iron particles dispersed in kerosene was poured over a steel component resting in a magnetic field. Cracks or flaws invisible to the naked eye were quickly revealed by the disposition of the iron particles.

The method was tried out on the forged breech - blocks of the 2-pounder after they had been machined. To the astonishment of many engineers, including those of Army Inspection, nearly every breech-block so tested revealed numerous fine flaws and irregularities. This brought production almost to a standstill until it was discovered that the breech-block from a sample gun sent out from the United Kingdom showed just as many flaws.

When the question was taken up with Woolwich Arsenal, the authorities there explained that although Magnaflux equipment had not been in use when the 2 pounder gun was being designed, the designers had been aware that forgings of the kind used for the breech-block carried many fine flaws

and folds, and they had therefore provided extra thickness of metal to give sufficient strength and to allow for possible weaknesses arising from such flaws. These were many problems to be solved in fabricating gun steel; new practices in drop forging and machining had to be adopted. The barrel of the 2-pounder was the "monobloc" type and did not require to be autofrettaged. *"Which is a metal fabrication technique in which a pressure vessel is subjected to enormous pressure, causing internal portions of the part to yield plastically, resulting in internal compressive residual stresses once the pressure is released."*



The main challenge to engineers in manufacturing the gun was to meet the exacting specifications for the heat treatment of the steels and to attain the necessary high degree of precision in the bore, rifling and traverse and laying mechanism. The company itself thought the gun was no easy job: "... the first of the weapons we produced was one of the most difficult placed in quantity production and this has been generally agreed to by those in other countries where this weapon has been manufactured." In spite of difficulties the gun was produced with remarkable speed: the sample gun from Britain was examined by General Motors Holden's in Adelaide in June 1940; the first gun passed proofing tests in April 1941. When plans were made to manufacture guns in Australia they were drawn up on the assumption that all the optical equipment needed for fire-control could be imported from the United Kingdom. This assumption proved wrong, and for a time the first 100 Australian-made 2-pounder guns were without sighting telescopes. No sooner had the 2-pounder guns begun to come off the assembly line than operations in the Libyan Desert showed that the gun was unable to penetrate the armour of German tanks; steps were already being taken in Britain to meet such a challenge. The first answer was the 6-pounder, or 57-millimetre gun. Designs were sent to Australia. General Motors-Holden's, beginning manufacture in July 1941, did not lag far behind Britain: the first Australian 6-pounder was delivered in July 1942. Although this gun was a great improvement on the 2-pounder, it could do little more than dent the armour of the heaviest tanks then in use. (1)

From page 5

Over 1000 of these guns were issued to the Australian Forces of which 892 were locally made by GMH Woodville, South Australia. It appears the museum's 2 pounder anti-tank gun "CARR of 2PR Mk III, Reg No CA 5342" was manufactured at Woodvale, South Australia late 1941 or early 1942. This cannot be confirmed as log books or serial numbers, allocation dates/ranges for most artillery pieces manufactured by GMH were stored in warehouses in NSW and unfortunately about twenty years ago, it was alleged that there was a government request to clear out "retired" military stocks of equipment, weapons, log books, manuals and other obsolete items. As a result, a lot of potential valuable historic information was destroyed.

In 1949 the writer and his sister had their photograph taken playing on a 2lb gun abandoned on the side of the road in the Northam area and note the blister on the barrel, a blister which the museum gun has. Could this be the same gun?

(1) Mellor, David, Australia in the War of 1939 – 1945, Series 4 – Civil, Volume V – The Role of Science & Industry (1st edition 1958) Bruce Hamling

The Museum 2 pounder anti-tank gun will be relocated to the Gunpit big sandpit in the area of the Officers Mess and the rear toilets. Graeme Smith and Bruce have been happily reliving their childhood in creating the rear defences with a little help from an obliging mechanical digger. But we won't tell them that we know that little secret. Thank you Bruce for the valued contribution.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

During the year just past there have been many changes in the Museum, particularly to the entry requirements under Safe Base Charlie conditions.

The new arrangements are now working well and result in an enhanced visitor experience.

Of particular note during the year we,

- Entertained a large number of school visits mainly focusing on the Gallipoli campaign and WW1 in general
- Received two new external exhibits, a Unimog used by the Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan and a Medium Reconnaissance Vehicle (MRV) having the British Scorpion turret on an M113A1 body.
- Practically completed the gallery redevelopment program, opening the Pre 1914 and Traditions Gallery, albeit as works in progress. This was done to ensure our visitor received as much value from their visit as possible and to show what is involved in creating new displays. From the feedback we have this has been much appreciated by both visitors and staff. These galleries are now practically complete with the weapons to be mounted on the 16th/17th December. There will still be some work to be done but it is of a minor nature.
- Participated in the very successful WASO ANZAC concert attended by the Governor as our guest, during which the original Martin O'Meara VC was displayed to great acclaim from the concert goers.
- Participated in the annual Len Hall Football match at Subiaco Oval and collected a considerable boost to our funds.
- Worked with the City of Fremantle in their ANZAC commemorations and established good relations with the City managers which will stand us on good stead for the future
- The curatorial section assisted many outside organisations with planning and advice for their various commemorative events and provided items on loan to enhance displays.
- Hosted the launch of Andrew Pittaway's book Fremantle Voices of The Great War detailing the 853 men and women of Fremantle men who were killed in the first war. The launch was a great success attended by many prominent local and federal politicians.
- Identified a number of significant items in our collection and received a number of very significant donations including 2 related to the actions of 10LH at the NEK.
- Hosted the Artist in Residence program with Peter Dailey and Michel Eastwood. Their 11 art works are now on display in the old entrance area known as "The Temporary Exhibitions Gallery". This exhibit will remain until 30th April 2016
- Operated a very successful Facebook and Trip Advisor page and started the development of a new Web page. For this work I must thank David Ammon and Ken Carter who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to bring these items to fruition. The new Web site should be launched early in 2016.
- Redeveloped the Officers Mess kitchen with a grant from the Dept. of Veterans Affairs.



Looking to the future, in 2016, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme (especially Western Australians at Fromelles, Pozieres and Mouquet Farm), we will include a public display of Martin O'Meara's original VC. The Foundation is working on enhancing our web site to include a "members only" section accessed by a password to enhance and simplify our communications with all volunteers.

In closing a BIG thank you to all volunteers for their support and time during the past year, without your efforts we would not have what is considered by many as the best regional museum in AAHU network. I must also thank the Army staff for their support and encouragement and the AAHU for supplying much needed conservation supplies and environmental monitoring equipment, which otherwise would have been funded out of Foundation funds.

I would also like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Board to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

**Richard Bennett**



**Army Museum of Western  
Australia Foundation  
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Major Henry Fijolek**

**Museum Assistant Manager  
Captain Wayne Gardiner**

**Museum Curator  
Mr Robert Mitchell**

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