



# 'THE MAGAZINE'



Artillery Barracks  
Burt Street, Fremantle, WA 6160  
Open 11 am - 4 pm  
Wednesday - Sunday

Phone: (08) 9430 2535  
Fax: (08) 9430 2519

Email: [info@armymuseumwa.com.au](mailto:info@armymuseumwa.com.au)  
Web: [www.armymuseumwa.com.au](http://www.armymuseumwa.com.au)

Autumn 2012



## IN THIS EDITION

- Ron "Specs" Fuller retires - Page 2.
- AMWA contributes to special WA Museum exhibition commemorating East Timorese help to Australian diggers in Ww2 - Page 8.
- Film honouring WRAAC and RAANC members scheduled for premiere at Campbell Barracks in April - Page 5.

Museum volunteer Wes Olson's latest book was launched at the Army Museum, before a large crowd of veterans, family and friends. Pictured above left are 2/11th Battalion veteran Gordon Williams (centre), his wife Joy and fellow veteran Gordon Arthur Leggett (right).  
Story and more pictures Page 3.

## MUSEUM FOUNDERS LOOKING FORWARD TO YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT AT AMWA

The founder of the Army Museum of WA, Brigadier Bill Jamieson, and his wife Norma, who founded the museum's women's auxiliary, are looking forward to seeing the result of the current development work at the Artillery Barracks. Bill retired as Commander, 5th Military District, in 1978, but not before he had set the wheels in motion for the establishment of the museum, originally at Dilhorn, in Perth. The

museum moved to Fremantle in 1995 and was reopened in August of that year. The upgrades taking place this year are outlined by AMWA Foundation Chairman George Sulc on Page 6.

Pictured left: Bill and Norma Jamieson in the garden of their Dalkeith home this week and, below, in 1994 with Norma's commendation from the Chief of the General Staff for her dedicated service to the women's auxiliary, which provided much-needed funding for the establishment of the museum. There'll be a detailed account of their work in the next edition of *The Magazine*.

## What is that?



Clue: It's the pointy end of the modern version of an ancient weapon, in our Post-45 Gallery.  
Answer: Back page.





# Birds of a feather . . . oops . . . plume!

## Former cavalrymen farewell "Specs"



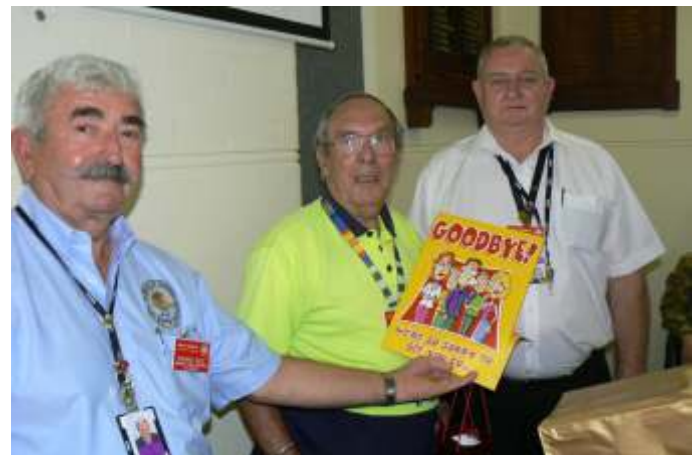
**V**eteran QuarterMaster Ron "Specs" Fuller has retired from the Army Museum, after seven years running the museum QM store and inventory.

Ron (aged 71) spent 35 years in the Australian Army, mostly in the armoured corps, and served overseas in Vietnam and Singapore. His last posting was as QM of the 10 Light Horse Regiment at Irwin Barracks. His QM qualifications and experience served him well when he joined the Army museum, which was restricted in its access to the Australian Army's inventory and stores system. Ron set up the museum's own system, which earned him the thanks and respect of the museum manager, Maj Henry Fijolek, as well as that of the staff and volunteers. Changes to the Army's system of ordering and indenting stores, which now must be done through Canberra, helped Ron to decide it was time for him to pursue other interests.

"When you've spent 35 years in the army and you get out, you don't

appreciate it running your life again," he said. "I want to enjoy myself."

**Above: Ron Fuller (left) with AMWA Manager Maj Henry Fijolek, Assistant Manager Capt Wayne Gardiner and volunteer Monte Montefiusco and the museum's Leopard tank. The four were members of the 10th Light Horse Regiment. Below: Foundation Chairman George Sulc and Graham McLure after a farewell presentation to "Specs".**



**T**hank you for passing this edition of The Magazine to your family, friends and neighbours.

### Army Museum of Western Australia Foundation Management

#### *Museum Manager*

Major Henry Fijolek

#### *Museum Assistant Manager*

Captain Wayne Gardiner

#### *Museum Curator*

Mr Robert Mitchell

### AMWA Foundation Board Chairman

Mr George Sulc

#### *Deputy Chairman*

Mr Ken Walker

#### *Treasurer*

Mr Alan Jennings

#### *Directors*

Mr Joe McKenna

Mrs Carole Temple

Mr Tom Goode

Company Secretary:

Mrs Dale Olson

Editor, The Magazine  
Graeme Hunt

Please send all letters and contributions to the editor, [graemeh@bigpond.com](mailto:graemeh@bigpond.com)



"We take the King's shilling,  
we do the King's bidding!"

## OLD MAXIM CATALYSES WORK ON HISTORY OF THE 2/11th BATTALION

**A** line from an old Scottish folk song was the catalyst needed for museum volunteer Wes Olson to bite the bullet and start work on a project he'd been planning for some time.

Wes, who has now written three books on Australian military history, including a substantial tome on Gallipoli that was published last year, had long contemplated a definitive history of the 2/11th Battalion - "Battalion into Battle - the history of the 2/11th Australian Infantry Battalion 1939 - 1945". The 2/11th was the first Western Australian battalion raised for service overseas during the Second World War. Its formation began with the appointment of its first commanding officer on 13 October 1939 and by 7 November it was assembling at the Northam Camp to begin training. It formed part of the 6th Australian Division of the Second Australian Imperial Force and saw action in Libya, Greece and Crete in 1941.

A large number of the battalion's personnel were killed or captured on Crete and it was rebuilt in Palestine at the end of 1941, before returning to Australia in 1942 to help fight the Japanese. For a time the battalion was assigned to the 2nd Brigade, a formation made up largely of soldiers from the Militia, carrying out defensive duties in Western Australia, however, it was later transferred to the 19th Brigade in Queensland and in 1944-45 it took part in the Aitape-Wewak campaign before being disbanded at Puckapunyal on 7 December 1941.

At the launch of Wes's book, he spoke of the immense amount of research needed to gather facts for this and his other books. He found that old military books were often a source of information that supported his research in more prominent repositories, such as the Australian War Memorial and the Army Museum of WA's library and archives. And one of the sources of such books is the Save the Children's Fund old book

sale.

Wes and his wife Dale, the museum's administration manager, acquired three old books at an SCF sale.

"People used to put money in books, so I decided to have a quick look through these," Wes said, "and in one of them was a 1966-mintage £10 note – the Queen's shilling!"

The book was previously owned by a 2/11th veteran, Jack Mott.

It was enough to inspire him to action and he threw himself into the task of researching and writing the battalion history.

"The book provides a much fuller framework, from the time the battalion was formed to the time it broke up," Wes said.

"My story - and the reason for the book - starts in the Army Reserve as a 17-year-old in the 11th



Author Wes Olson, above right, with Willagee MLA Peter Tinley, who launched the book.

Independent Rifle Company at Karrakatta.

"It had links with the 11th Battalion of WW1, as well as the 2/11th in WW2," he said.

Wes paid tribute to the help he received from a range of organisations and individuals, including the Australian Army History Unit, Department of Veterans Affairs, the Army Museum of WA, fellow military historians Neville Browning and Ian Gill and Steve Little, of Quality Press. The book is available from the Army Museum Shop.

### *The King's shilling*

*Oh my love has left me wi' bairnies  
twa*

*And that's the last o' him I ever  
saw*

*He's joined the army and he  
marched awa'*

*He took the shillin'*

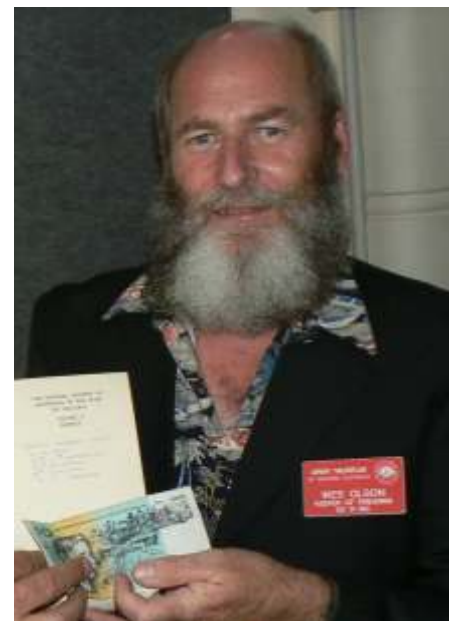
*He took the shillin' and he  
marched awa'*

*Come laddies come, hear the  
cannons roar*

*Take the King's shilling an'  
we're off tae war*

*Come laddies come, hear the cannons roar*

*Take the King's shilling an' we're off tae war*



Above: author Wes Olson and the "Queen's shilling"

From an old Scottish folk song.

# BUILDING AND DEVELOPING A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

By Robert Mitchell, Curator

In the hustle and bustle of our daily routine as museum volunteers, we sometimes overlook just how much things have changed over the past year. As we near the end of a well deserved break over the holiday season, it is perhaps timely to reflect on what has been achieved in the vision of the Army Museum of Western Australia as a centre of excellence for Army history.

In November, I attended a dinner at which the Museums Australian Gallery National Awards (MAGNA) were announced. The Army Museum of Western Australia's Post 1945 Gallery was a short listed finalist. Among the other institutions nominated for the awards were the Australian National Maritime Museum, the Powerhouse Museum, the Art Gallery of NSW, the Australian War Memorial and the Jewish Holocaust Centre – honourable company indeed. This reflects the standard of achievement of the Army Museum when its efforts are judged at a national level.

The Post 1945 Gallery does not stand alone as a curatorial exercise. The Gallery would not work without attendants and guides to animate the exhibits through stories, insights and commentary. As a Museum team we can be justly proud of the fact that our training programs have kept pace with gallery development. A standardised course has ensured a consistent and accurate presentation across all of the galleries.

## Support programs add value

With the establishment of an

education team, support materials and programs have been developed to add value to learning and school visits. Working with the Research Centre, reference documentation has been selected to provide a direct interaction with the themes and individual stories presented in the galleries. Our

and convey that understanding in a way that excites or challenges. The ongoing curatorial work of our keepers focuses on just that and records the information through object data sheets and our Australian Army History Unit supplied EMU collections management software



education and learning programs have credibility because they are the “real thing” and meet the needs of teachers and students, as the recent attendance of more than 30 teachers at an in-service program demonstrates. Behind the scenes in the Conservation Workshop, our large technology objects are being conserved through a planned program. New additions like the Leopard tank continue to expand the collection. One of the papers presented at the recent Museums Australia National Conference outlined how large technology items added a dimension of scope and scale to the gallery presentations. Provenance and significance are key to our understanding of collection objects and the stories associated with them. If our objects are to engage with visitors, we must understand them

which is currently being updated. In this way the Army Museum is keeping current with evolving standards for museums and collection care.

## Improving the experience

On arrival at the Museum, visitors are given an orientation with an up to date brochure and guide. On departure they are able to purchase memorabilia and publications relevant to their gallery experiences. All of these elements reflect a coordinated approach to providing the best experience possible for our visitors. It is an experience that continues to improve as new galleries are planned and brought on line and existing support and services are upgraded. It is something in which we all can participate and add to the achievement.



## FORMER WRAAC AND FILM MAKER JOIN FORCES TO CAPTURE "FASCINATING STORIES" OF WOMEN IN WARTIME AND PEACE

A locally-made documentary, "Lady Soldiers", which was inspired by the 60th Anniversary of WRAAC and RAANC members last year. is scheduled to premiere at Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne, in April.

Former WRAAC and teller of "ordinary people's" stories, Lyn Kane Dale, and Samantha Bergersen, cinematographer, are making the documentary.

In February this year Lyn was one of 450 former WRAAC and RAANC members who attended the 60th anniversary, at the former WRAAC School in Sydney, commemorating the founding of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps. Lyn made a quilt to mark the anniversary and presented it to the WRAAC Association of NSW. Hundreds of women signed it on the back to mark the occasion.

Lyn handed out flyers asking women to contact her and tell their army stories. More than 30 responded and eventually she recorded the memories of 16 women whose army stories will be told in the film with their voices in the background, and, on the screen, photographs and other memorabilia interspersed with some film taken at the reunion in Sydney in February.

The stories are fascinating. The women tell of the excitement at being away from home for the first time and



Above: Lyn Kane Dale, with a WRAAC quilt she made to celebrate the 60th anniversary.

the great adventure for West Australians of flying all the way to Sydney from Perth, the difficulties of adjusting to army life and homesickness in the early days. They talk of doing jobs that they loved, learning to live in barracks with complete strangers, making great friendships, many of which endure today, and being given responsibility at a very young age, which they appreciated. A nurse tells of her experience working with medevac patients during the Vietnam War, another young woman worked in Signals in Singapore in the 1970s. Others were scattered all around Australia and they tell of interesting, funny and sometimes sad times. One young woman's husband died of malaria in Vietnam without ever seeing his baby daughter who was born 2 days after he left Australia. His 24 year old widow was left to bring up their child on her own. She has never remarried. The women talk of romances and marriages and sadness at having to leave the army when they wanted to marry. Some tell of being army wives and going on overseas postings with husbands and children to Malaysia, problems being married to Vietnam veterans, marriage breakups and life after the army. The common thread running through their stories is that they had to stand on their own two feet. All express gratitude that the training and experience they had in the army led them to much better jobs after their discharges.

Of the 16 women Lyn interviewed 14 will be flying in from all over Australia for the April premiere of "their" film.

As one commented "Who'd have thought we would be film stars at our age!"

By Dale Olson

## D Coy 11/28th Battalion RWAR tours Army Museum

Twenty members of D Company, 11/28th Battalion, led by their Officer Commanding, Major Gary Bailey, visited the AMWA in December.

Museum Assistant Manager, Captain Wayne Gardiner, and AMWA Foundation Board director and gallery guide, Graham McEwan took their Army Reserve visitors on a two and a half hour tour.

Most had never been to the museum before and were unanimous in their praise of the quality of the displays, especially the new Post 1945 Gallery. They also appreciated the opportunity to see the current World War Two Gallery before it closed in preparation for the new gallery to be opened in August.

At the end of the tour, Capt. Gardiner, on behalf of the AMWA and the Australian Army History Unit (AAHU) presented Maj. Bailey with a set of the AAHU Campaign series publications for the 11/28th Battalion and each member who visited also received the AAHU publication "The Australian Army – A Brief History."

### CORRECTION

In our Christmas edition, we referred to the launch of the book "Gallipoli to Tripoli - the unit history of the 10th Light Horse". The book was launched by Major Geoff Craggs the Officer Commanding A Squadron 10th Light Horse and not by Captain Wayne Gardiner. Capt Gardiner's role was as the Master of Ceremonies for the launch.

Captain Gardiner has not acted as a consultant to the 10th Light Horse Unit History Collection (UHC) as this collection is not part of the Australian Army History Unit, however both Major Henry Fijolek and Capt Gardiner have offered guidance and advice to the UHC over the years when asked by 10 Light Horse to do so.

We regret the error and apologise to those involved.

# Tenders called for next phase of upgrade

By George Sulc, Chairman

There have been several advances in the past few weeks.

Firstly, tenders for phase three of the museum upgrade, the redevelopment of the colonial, POW and WWI gallery, have been called. The closing date for tenders is 5 April 2012 and we are looking for quality tenders that will further enhance our standing as a world class facility.

A meeting has been held with senior representatives of Lotterywest to view progress of the WWII gallery and to outline to them the concept plan for the phase three redevelopment.

Our patrons and members of the board viewed the concept plan developed by BKAY Design and outlined future plans for the museum. We hope Lotterywest will consider further funding for the museum.

A meeting has recently been held with representatives of the Fremantle Dockers to make arrangements for the Len Hall football match. This year the game will be held on Friday 27 April 2012, not ANZAC Day as it was last year. We will be calling on volunteers to assist with fund raising prior to the game. Each volunteer assisting will receive free entry to the game. Last year the proceeds of fundraising were over \$5,000 and we hope do better this year.

Planning for this year's concert is well under way. The Concert Hall has been booked and a meeting has been held with the bandmaster. James Morrison has also been booked for what will be another successful concert. We hope that as

many volunteers as possible will attend what promises to be another sellout event.



With special thanks to:  
Our supporter



Our Community



And our sponsors



Mr Graham McEwan



Nautronix



## THEN AND NOW

Pictured anti-clockwise from below:

Veterans of the 2/28th Battalion, Peter Salmon (left) and J.J. Wade, at a ceremony marking the 70th anniversary of the Siege of Tobruk at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra; the same duo ready for embarkation for the Middle East in 1941; J.J. Wade, president of the 2/28th Bn Association, presents a copy of "Tobruk to Borneo", the association's newsletter, to War memorial historian, Dr Karl James; and a captured German Braun 50mm cannon, restored and on display at the War Memorial.



## Search for pictures, memoirs and artefacts as veterans prepare for new edition of unit history

Members of the 2/28th Battalion and 24th Anti-Tank Company Association are seeking donations of old photographs and other memorabilia and official or personal letters and documents in the lead-up to a rewrite and reprint of the 2/28th unit history.

In a plea to members and families association president J. J. Wade said the original history, "The Second 28th", written by Brigadier Phil Masel, an original officer of the battalion, was first published in 1961 and had been reprinted twice. "It has served us well as a definitive history written by a soldier who was in the thick of battle in both Tobruk and Borneo," Mr Wade said.

"Phil Masel led 30 daylight and 15 night patrols, all in carriers, in Tobruk, which must have been a record for the siege.

"He served as the battalion's adjutant at El Alamein, and an instructor at LHQ Tactical School in Beenleigh, Qld, before rejoining the unit in Borneo," Mr Wade said.

He said the original history had been popular and the last edition, in January 2000, had been sold out long ago and it was time to look at an

updated and revitalised book. He said a sub-committee had been established to take on the task of assembling material for the new edition and to check the text for accuracy and anomalies that had come to light over the years.

One of the committee's first tasks is to review and complete the unit's nominal roll.

It would also investigate the availability of better-quality images and previously unpublished images and accounts of the unit before embarkation and in the Middle East. "I can assure all contributors their submissions will be treated with respect and returned to them after the book is published," Mr Wade said. Anyone who wishes to contribute should contact the association secretary, David Warren (davidwarren@inet.net.au), or





# Special exhibition marks 70th anniversary of exploits of commando forces in little-known East Timor campaign

**The Western Australian Museum's new exhibition *Debt of Honour: Australia's First Commandos and East Timor*, is open at the Perth Cultural Centre until May 20.**

Culture and Arts Minister John Day said the exhibition detailed the extraordinary efforts of the 2/2nd Independent Company in East Timor during World War II and the enduring friendships between the soldiers, their families and the people of East Timor. "This year marks the 70th anniversary since the campaign was spearheaded by 270 Australian soldiers, mostly recruited from WA," he said.

"Against all the odds, this courageous group of men undertook a hit and run campaign that successfully diverted more than 10,000 enemy troops from the Kokoda and Guadalcanal battles." Lacking supplies the soldiers relied on support from the people of East Timor who risked their lives to help the Australians, providing food, shelter and information. One soldier said if it wasn't for this assistance the 2/2nd would not have lasted a week against the more numerous Japanese forces. The relationship between the soldiers and the local youths was one of enduring mateship and respect and the soldiers of the 2/2nd felt they owed their lives to the people of East



Timor and many dedicated their post war years to repaying this 'debt of honour' Mr Day said.

He said this commitment to the people of East Timor had become an enduring legacy for many of the soldiers and their relatives who continued to provide assistance and maintain the friendships forged during the war.

"This is a remarkable group of men and this fascinating exhibition is a fitting tribute to their remarkable story," he said.

The Army Museum of Western Australia contributed part of its collections and advice to the WA Museum for this exhibition.

After the Perth season, the exhibition will tour museums throughout Australia.

Pictured Above: Director of Public and Regional Services at the Western Australian

## Your museum needs YOU!

The annual Len Hall football match, hosted by our community partners, The Dockers, will be played on April 27 this year, two days after ANZAC Day. We need volunteers to collect donations (rattle the tin!) at Fremantle Ova to boost the museum funds. If you can spare a couple of hours pre-match to help s out, you'll receive in return complimentary tickets to the match. Please contact us on 9430 2535 if you can help.



Museum, James Dexter, kneeling beside an exhibition panel of his father, David Dexter. David Dexter served in the 2/2nd Independent Company.

Left:

The Minister for Culture and the Arts, John Day with (from left to right) Alec Coles, CEO of Western Australian Museum, Paul Bridges, exhibition co-curator, Stephen Anstey and James Dexter, Director of Public

© Images courtesy of Western Australian Museum.



### What is that?

It's the business end of an 81mm mortar, part of our Post-45 Gallery collection.