



THE MAGAZINE



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Autumn 2013



All hands on deck for museum guides

Some 350 Applecross Senior High School students, in two groups, visited the museum on two consecutive Friday mornings as part of their Australian History studies. It was a case of “all hands on deck” for museum volunteers, who guided small groups of the students around the galleries and exhibits. Above: Volunteer guide Graeme Smith explains the conditions experienced by troops in the trenches in World War 1. Pictures and story in Page 3.



Above: The Austin Motor Vehicle Club of WA comes to town. More pictures in Page 5.

Calling all volunteers - come and rattle the tin!

Ken Walker is seeking volunteers to attend the Len Hall Memorial football match to collect donations at each entrance to Patersons Stadium. The match starts at 5.40 pm and anyone who can help will be required from 4.30. Friends and family are also welcome to assist and get a free ticket. The annual event is a significant source of funds for the museum. This year’s match is on April 26 and the Fremantle Dockers’ opponents are Richmond. There is a list in the admin office to record your name if you can assist. Volunteers are granted free entry to the ground for the match. If you can help, contact Ken at the museum, 9430 2535.

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Galleries refurbishment project ahead of schedule

Notes from the Board

March finds progress on the WWI gallery well ahead of schedule by an estimated month and by the end of the month the curatorial team will be able to begin the fit out.

The back part of the POW Gallery is now closed and has been cleared so that refurbishment can begin. It was decided that the Japanese dioramas will remain available to the public for a few more weeks. The area of medical and camp display will stay open for some time after work starts on the back part of the gallery to

By George Sulc
Chairman



make sure that visitors can benefit from the experience before it too closes for refurbishment.

It is sad to note that our treasurer of some years, Alan Jennings, is hanging up his hat and has resigned from the position and from the Board for personal reasons.

Alan has done a marvelous job as treasurer and our books and finances are in good shape.

After a break Alan intends to return in a position of gallery attendant which is his original reason for joining the museum.

Fortunately a newcomer to the museum, Hans Bruitsman, has stepped up to the job to deal with day to day financial matters. Thanks Hans.

The museum also welcomes Phillipa Hamilton to its ranks. She has joined the curatorial department recently. She is very highly qualified in museum matters and has considerable experience working in the National Museum of New Zealand "TE PAPA".

Welcome Phillipa.

Landmark siege remembered in moving ceremony in Kings Park

The Siege of Tobruk was a landmark conflict that lasted 241 days.

Axis and Allied forces faced off in North Africa during the Western Desert Campaign WW2.

The siege started on 11 April 1941, when Tobruk was attacked by an Italo-German force under Lieut.-Gen. Erwin Rommel (later known as "The Desert Fox", and continued for 240 days up to 27 November 1941, when it was relieved by the Allied 8th Army during Operation Crusader.

The town and its harbour were vital for the Allied defence of Egypt and the Suez Canal, as this forced the enemy to bring most of their supplies overland from the port of Tripoli, across 1,500 km of desert, as well as

diverting troops from their advance.

Tobruk was the target of consistent ground assaults and almost constant shelling and bombing. The Nazi



propaganda called the tenacious defenders 'rats', a term the Australian soldiers embraced as an ironic compliment.

Australian Army casualties during the siege amounted to 776 killed in action or died of wounds, 2,112 wounded, 65 missing and 954 taken prisoner of war.

The total casualties of the Middle East Campaign amounted to 3,147 killed in action or died of wounds, 8,317 wounded, 442 missing and 6,086 taken prisoner of war.

Those who died were honoured at a moving ceremony at the Tobruk Memorial in Kings Park, held by Christ Church Grammar School for Rats of Tobruk veterans and guests, to mark the 72nd anniversary of the siege.

A pictorial coverage of the event is on Page 7.

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Editor, **THE MAGAZINE**
Graeme Hunt



Please send all letters, contributions and suggestions to the editor, Graeme Hunt. email: graemeh@bigpond.com



The visit of 350 Applecross Senior High School students illustrates the increased relevance of the Army Museum of WA to the Australian Schools Curriculum. Teachers, especially those in the SOSE disciplines, are taking advantage of the services offered by the museum's education branch. Manager Tom Goode said 2,425 students visited last year, accompanied by 168 teachers or carers, from 35 schools.

Pictured, clockwise from top left: Volunteer guides are briefed by Tom before the visit; Dave West explains the development of tanks and armoured vehicles through the years; Ian Menzies describes the campaigns of WW2 in New Guinea; Frank Beardmore talks about the primitive conditions

in the make-shift hospitals and aid posts in the jungle areas of WW2; debriefing by Tom Goode at the end of the visit.

Pictures: Graeme Hunt



A strong start to 2013: Manager

As the year progresses the goals and objectives outlined in the Policy Directive for 2013 take hold.

The gallery development is on track, in fact it is 3 weeks ahead of schedule with work due to start on the POW Gallery within the next couple of weeks.



The Curator and his team now have the massive task of gallery fit-out and I urge all curatorial staff to lend a hand when called upon.

The annual Fremantle Dockers Len Hall

commemorative football match has been confirmed with the museum volunteers rattling the donation tins outside the Subiaco Stadium on the 26 April. The participation of the museum at the match not only raises revenue but also provides exposure to a large audience.

Defence has allowed a request from the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to establish an office at Artillery Barracks which will be located next to the Curators Office. The establishment of the DVA office will allow veterans to receive their counselling and conduct business without having to travel to the CBD with all its parking and traffic issues. DVA has already conducted two days of Men's Peer Health Training using the lecture room at the museum and has many bookings into the future. The housing of a DVA office will contribute to the museum's being seen as a home for the bigger Defence family.

In February the museum was visited by Brigadier Phil Bridie who is the Army Director General Reserves and who now controls the Australian Army History Unit. He was very impressed with the museum, especially the dedication and devotion of the volunteers, and asked many questions on how he can improve not only our museum but all Army museums. I am confident he

will try his hardest within the constraints of Defence.

The Education Section has started the year well with many large tours already conducted, seeing hundreds of school children visiting the museum.

The future of our museum relies heavily on the school visits. A special thanks to Tom Goode and his team and the gallery guides and staff who support the tours.

Defence Support has started work on the Officer Mess. The columns around the mess have rotted and are in poor condition and these will be replaced, along with the re-painting of the outside woodwork.

Due to the ill health of Graham McClure, Graeme Smith has been appointed as the new Volunteer Liaison Officer whose duty is to carry the voice of the volunteers to the management. If, as a volunteer, you have any points that you need to raise with management please channel it through Graeme who will bring the points to me. This will not only afford the opportunity for change but will also provide feedback to the volunteer raising the point.

Finally, as you are aware the commemorations of WW1 are fast approaching and AAHU has instructed me to make plans for the museum's participation in the commemorations. I will be setting up a working group to conduct the planning and ask for volunteers who wish to join the group, or participate in the planning, to come forward. Participation will require all members to actively work within the group. If you wish to nominate yourself please submit your nomination to me.

Thanks to all the volunteers for your hard work in getting 2013 off to a good start.

Major Henry Fijolek
Manager

Spanish troops called to action by ballot in the 17th Century



One of the most controversial decisions made by an Australian government was the introduction of national service, with young men being called up by birthday ballot, between 1964 and 1972. It was introduced by the Menzies government in November, 1964, and the drawing of numbered marbles to determine birthdates resembled a lottery.

But the idea wasn't new. Sets of lottery marbles (pictured above) are displayed in the San Carlos Castle Military Museum (see next page for more information and pictures) in Palma, capital of the Spanish island of Mallorca, in the Mediterranean.

Suspecting they were part of an early conscription ballot system, The Magazine editor Graeme Hunt asked military historian and author Andrew Rawson whether his guess was correct. Here's Andrew's reply: "My guess is similar to yours and here is my 'guesstimate'. You have two parts to the system on the photographs. At the top are two peg boards titled 'Recruits Box'.

Each peg represents a village on Mallorca (I can see one for Ibiza because the local command area was the Balearic Islands, Mallorca, Menorca and Ibiza).

(Continued in Page 8 . . .)

Pirates and barbarians were targets in Mallorca's 17th Century maritime defences



San Carlos Castle, Mallorca's military museum overlooking the main port, Porto Pi, was built between 1610 and 1612 to defend it from the attacks of pirates and barbarians that invaded the Mediterranean.

The construction cost was shared between the University of Mallorca, King Felipe III and the Mallorca School of Merchants.

The stone is mainly limestone and the marks of some of the artisans who worked on it are still visible today. The museum houses an intriguing collection of weapons and militaria ranging from the 17th Century up to World War 2, including relics of the Spanish Civil War.

Historian Andrew Rawson, who has lived in Mallorca for the past seven years, has a keen interest in Spanish military history. He writes:

"The original Porto Pi Castle was a medieval style square tower. The name was changed to San Carlos Castle in honour of Viceroy Carlos Coloma de Saa, Marques of Thorn (1567-1637). Coloma was a distinguished military man who was commander in chief and Viceroy of Majorca from 1612 to 1617, the time when the fort was being improved.

Fifty years later the castle was updated again with earthen slopes to deflect incoming cannon balls, turning it into an up to date star shaped Vauban fortress. While the original tower was kept, these

changes meant that it was difficult to see the fort from out to sea. It still is. The new structure had corner towers, barracks, workshops and ammunition stores surrounding the courtyard; all of them protected by earth embankments.

The castle was hardly needed after the Spanish War of Succession ended in 1714 and in the 18th Century it was used as an isolation hospital before it was passed to the Corps of Artillery. In 1890 a new artillery battery and a munitions arsenal were added to the southwest corner of the fort. San Carlos Fort was next used as a military prison, particularly during the Spanish Civil war between 1936 and 1939.

In 1981 work started on turning the

fort into a museum and a consortium was set up in 1997 to run it. There are exhibits covering the men who garrisoned the fort and weapons through the ages. There is also a display about the

(Continued Page 8)



Gas mask designed for a horse and used by the Spanish cavalry





Car clubs are finding the Army Museum of WA a source of inspiration for members, who are dedicated to preserving and promoting their love of cars of a certain make or marque. The latest club to organise a visit to the museum by members and, of course, their treasured vehicles, was the Austin Motor Vehicle Club of WA. The Club was formed in October 1987, incorporated in January 1990, and is associated with the Council of Motoring Clubs of WA. The membership is involved in the continuing upkeep of the Austin line from the mid 1920's to the 1970's. Pictured on this page: Some of the Austin cars driven by club members are lined up on the parade ground.



Tobruk remembered



The 72nd anniversary of the siege of Tobruk was commemorated at a ceremony at the Tobruk Memorial in Kings Park. Four of the original Rats of Tobruk (pictured top right) were given VIP status. They were met by a guard of honour provided by members of the Christ Church Grammar School Army Cadets (top left) and the Swan Regiment Army Cadet Pipes and Drums (below right). Museum volunteer Jack Connolly, a surviving Rat, laid a wreath (above), as did services representatives (above right) and members of the Polish community (below left).
Pictures by Graeme Hunt



Conscription ballot an ancient idea

(from Page 5)

Each village was a different size and had a different obligation for providing a percentage of its young men during 'a period of obligatory military service' (as the small white label between the boxes says).

The pegs look as though they can flip up and down, like a light switch, and my guess is - full obligation and short obligation.

So when a new draft period came up, the recruiting office could see at a glance where they needed to draft from, rather than having to look through a list of 60 villages.

I can't see a reference on the photographs to the districts of Palma though. I know the Vietnam American system used draft limits for each voting district according to the census. It made the system fair (well as fair as you can when sending young men to war).

I do not know how the Mallorcan balls (numbered 1-100) worked or why there are more than one set.

The internet tells me Spain had conscription until 2001, after 230 years of it (it started in 1770 under King Carlos III). I remember working for a local guy who said most of his conscription time in the 1980s was spent sun-bathing at one of the gun batteries on the coast. They were stationed close to their village and could go home at the end of each duty period. So it wasn't too hard work!"

Visit Andrew Rawson's website at:

www.mallorcadaysout.com

FOOTNOTE:

Between 1964 and December 1972 when the Whitlam Government suspended the scheme, 804,286 twenty-year-olds registered for national service, 63,735 national servicemen served in the Army and 15,381 served in Vietnam.

Some 200 national servicemen lost their lives in Vietnam.

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Mr Graham McEwan



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life of Don Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau (1838-1890), notorious Governor of Cuba and Spain's Minister of War who had the nickname the 'Butcher' for using concentration camps to put down a rebellion in Cuba.

On the roof of the fort are a number of cannon dating from the 19th Century Carlist wars. There are impressive views from the gun ports across Porto Pi and the Bay of Palma; you can also see right along the southwest coast."



Military historian and author Andrew Rawson