



# COMMENTARY NEWSLETTER

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARMoured CORPS ASSOCIATION WA Inc  
4/2023 EDITION July

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### President Robert Gesmundo

A number of events, articles and information has come to hand thus the need for a special edition on Commentary. A return to Cambrai House for a social event was successful and is covered in this edition.

On the home front my health is improving and I hope to be back in action with RAACA by our next committee meeting.

All the best

Robert

## Nungarin Heritage Museum and Army Museum

### Road Trip

Let's take a trip to Nungarin, have a leisurely drive? You can carpool or take the Family.

You could travel back to Perth or Better still stay the weekend in the location of your choice.

The Museum is open from 10am to 3pm. They are willing to stay open longer for us if needed.

Nungarin accommodation at the ... Nungarin Hotel, McCorries, Woolshed Hotel

Merriden accommodation at the ... Tourist park, Merriden Motel Gumtree restaurant, with several B&B's - they say the Treasury is the best.

**DATE....Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> of October.....**

this happens to be a market day WITH more to look at, 8am to 12pm

Visit... [Nungarinmuseum.com.au](http://Nungarinmuseum.com.au)

The Committee needs confirmation that you will be going to confirm numbers, by the 12<sup>th</sup> of September.

Dedication  
Korean War Memorial  
Cnr Saw and May Ave-  
nue Kings Park  
10.45am 27th of July

Black Hat Coffee  
Morning  
10am to 12n  
3rd of August Thursday  
31st August

ANZAC HOUSE  
VISIT AND  
LUNCH AUGUST  
DETAILS TO FOLLOW

NUNGARIN MERREDIN  
WEEKEND  
W/E 1ST OF OCTOBER



## Western Australian Korean War veterans to be honoured at Kings Park

### Memorial

10.45 am 27th of July

Cnr May Drive and Saw Avenue Kings Park  
WA

Veterans who were born or enlisted in WA and served in the Korean War will be honoured at a new memorial in Kings Park where their names will forever be etched in bronze. A ceremony will take place on July 27, 2023 to unveil the Perth Korean War Memorial which marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Armistice of the Korean War.

There were 1,916 Western Australians veterans who served in the War between 1950 and 1953 or with the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the years following until 1956. Sadly, 34 of those men lost their lives during the War and now only 88 remain, all aged in their 90's.

Perth Korean War Memorial secretary Peter Heeney said it would be a very emotional day for the veterans and their families. "I had a call from a veteran who could not thank us enough for getting this memorial," he said. "They are so proud and so excited, some of them cry when they ring and their families are the same. It is so emotional and we wanted the memorial to be emotional too."

The project to erect the memorial began in 2018, when members of the Perth-Korean community approached the Royal Australian Regiment. Mr Heeney said there wasn't a memorial site in WA and the Korean community were calling out for one. "I was invited by the Korean community to attend the opening of a Korean War Memorial in Melbourne, where the Ambassador to Korea tapped me on the shoulder," he said. They planned to have a Perth memorial opened in time for the 70<sup>th</sup> Armistice, which received huge support here in Australia and in South Korea.

The memorial received funding from not only the Australian and State Governments but also the South Korean Government and the County of Kapyong, which donated the centrepiece. "The Kapyong rock weighs five-tonnes and the top of it looks like the Kapyong Mountains," Mr Heeney said. "The rock comes from the battlegrounds of the Battle of Kapyong, it is quite significant. "They are so appreciative of Australians who fought in the Korean War, there are about 20 dignitaries coming out from Korea to the unveiling.

"They reckon the Australians saved them and that

the Battle of Kapyong saved Seoul from being invaded. "The Republic of Korea believe that the Australians saved them from communist rule." Paving at the memorial site has been shaped in the Rose of Sharon, which is the national flower of South Korea.

The public are welcome to attend the unveiling which will take place from 10.45am on Korean Veterans Day in the POW precinct of Kings Park (off May Drive). Cnr May Drive and Saw Avenue A flyover will take place at 11am and the ceremony will be attended by Premier Roger Cook and the South Korean Ambassador Wan-Joong Kim.

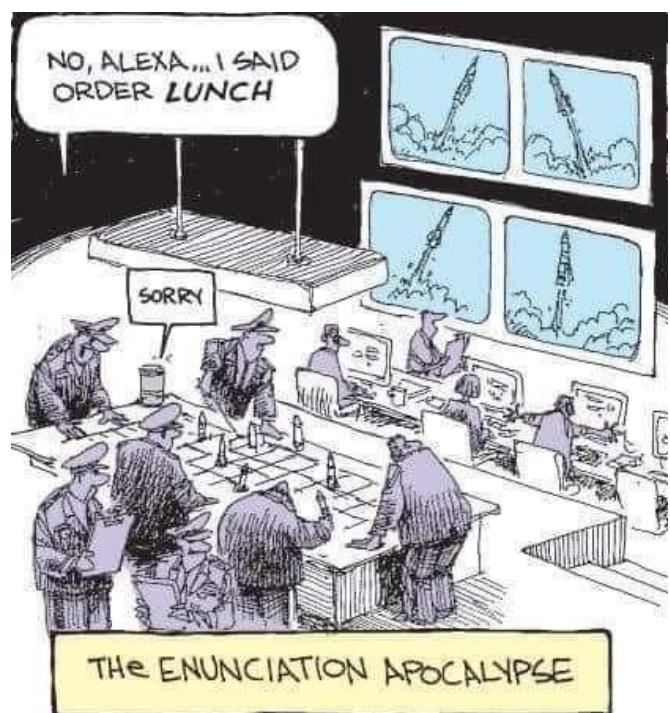
If you would like any further information about the unveiling please contact Mr Heeney by emailing [pheeney@smartchat.net.au](mailto:pheeney@smartchat.net.au)

or phoning 0417 559 973.

I was fortunate to meet with a veteran of the Korean War when starting work in the early 60s. Joe was a laconic man who's persona hid his feelings and the health problems he suffered during his life after the war.

Like another conflict that followed those that returned did not feel they and those that paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country were supported and acknowledged as perhaps they should have been. Joe died quite a few years ago, both to you and your mates thank you and hopefully on the day you will all be acknowledged for your contribution by a grateful nation in line with the Korean population here in Australia .

Editor



## BBQ CAMBRAI HOUSE

Members, partners and friends of the Association enjoyed an BBQ at our HQ. Unlike the 4th Test we enjoyed wonderful weather, good company and the chance to talk military and otherwise about the events of today and dare I say it past service with those present and the escapades of years gone by.

Many thanks to Dick Jones who brought some radio gear down from past to the very modern and gave an interesting talk on the development of hand held radios from large to those that fit in the palm of your hand or connect to your laptop with a many times greater reception.

Thank you also to Colin Davies and Barry Carson for setting up prior to the event and ensuring the house and grounds were in good order.



# ACTIVITIES 2023 RAACA WA

KOREAN VETRANS  
70TH ANNIVERSARY ARMISTICE DAY  
NEW PERTH KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL  
SAW AND MAY AVENUE KINGS PARK  
10.45AM 27TH OF JULY

Black Hat Coffee Mornings  
Last Thursday of the Month  
July change to AUG 3RD

AUG 31ST  
10am at the Dome Deepwater Point 100 the Esplanade Mt Pleasant  
All black hats welcome no bookings just come along bring some memorabilia if you like.

Committee Meetings  
2nd Tuesday of the month 1pm  
At Cambrai House Irwin Barracks  
AUGUST 8TH  
Any member welcome please contact Secretary who will organise entry into the barracks.

ANZAC House Visit inclusive of Lunch at ANZAC Club  
Detail to be advised.

Meriden and Nungarin Bus Trip inclusive of overnight stay  
W/E 1st of October.

Merredin Military Museum  
Nungarin Overnight Stay  
See full detail in this edition.

Sunday 26th of November  
Cambrai Day Parade and Luncheon

*Please note details of each event will be provided when developed.*



**"No, no, no! Two is load...  
THREE is fire!"**



# 10 Facts About the Victoria Cross and the George Cross

The Victoria Cross and the George Cross are the highest medals awarded in the United Kingdom to military personnel and civilians for acts of bravery in wartime or peacetime. Many of them are displayed at the **Imperial War Museum** in Lambeth, South London. Below are 10 facts about the Victoria Cross and the George Cross.

## The Victoria Cross

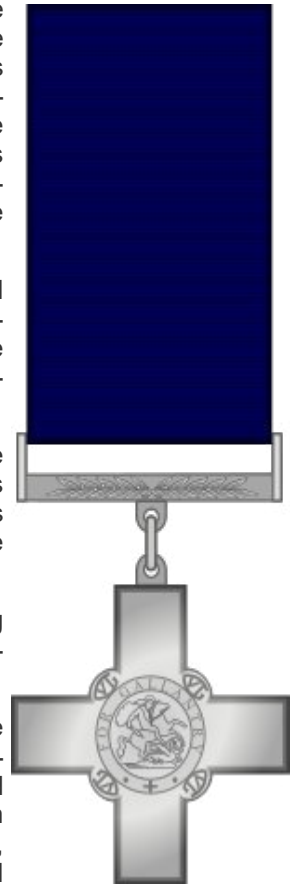
1. The Victoria Cross was created on 29 January 1856. It recognises acts of bravery carried out under enemy fire. It is often referred to by its initials 'VC'.
2. 1,354 people have been awarded the Victoria Cross since its inception.
3. The Cross is hand-made, traditionally using bronze taken from a gun captured in the Crimean War. It was deliberately intended to have little monetary value.
4. The inscription on the Victoria Cross is 'For Valour'. Queen Victoria turned down the first suggestion, 'For the Brave', explaining that all her soldiers were brave.
5. An act that leads to someone being awarded the Victoria Cross must be seen by several witnesses. The award is then sent for approval by the monarch.
6. The two youngest recipients of the Victoria Cross were Thomas Flinn in 1857 and Andrew Fitzgibbon in 1860. Both were fifteen years and three months old. The oldest recipient of the VC was sixty-nine-year-old William Raynor who defended an ammunition store in Delhi for five hours in 1857.
7. Three fathers and sons have earned the VC, including Charles Gough in 1857 and his son John Gough in 1903. Four pairs of brothers have also earned VCs, including Major Charles Gough and Lieutenant Hugh Gough in 1858. One set of brothers has each received both a Victoria Cross and a George Cross: Captain Derek Seagrim was awarded the VC in 1943 and Major Hugh Seagrim was given a George Cross in 1944.
8. Only three people have received the Victoria Cross twice: Surgeon Captain Arthur Martin-Leake in 1902 and 1914, Captain Noel Chavasse in 1916 and 1917, and Captain Charles Upham in 1941 and 1942. The medals of Charles Upham form part of the Imperial War Museum collection but are on long-term display in New Zealand.
9. Since 1902, when it was first awarded posthumously, the Victoria Cross has been awarded to 295 people who died while performing acts of bravery.
10. The Victoria Cross has been awarded to three sol-



diers for bravery in Afghanistan: posthumously to Corporal Bryan Budd of the Parachute Regiment, also to Corporal Bill Henry "Willie" Apiata of the New Zealand SAS, and Trooper Mark Donaldson of the Australian SAS.

## The George Cross

1. The George Cross was created on 24 September 1940. It recognises acts of extreme bravery carried out in peacetime when facing the perils of ordinary life and in wartime away from the heat of battle.
2. The George Cross is made from silver by the Royal Mint. The inscription on the George Cross is 'For Gallantry'. The words surround an image of St George slaying the dragon. Many details on the George Cross were personally designed by King George VI, after whom it was named.
3. 406 people have received George Crosses (86 posthumously). Collective medals were awarded to Malta and to the Royal Ulster Constabulary.
4. 143 George Crosses have been awarded to civilians (excluding police officers). This represents 35% of all the George Crosses awarded.
5. There are fourteen living George Cross holders, with seven residing overseas.
6. The youngest recipient of the George Cross was fifteen-year-old John Bamford who rescued his brothers from a house fire in 1952. The oldest was John Axon, a British Rail engine driver aged fifty-seven who died trying to stop a runaway train in 1957.
7. The Albert Medal was created in 1866 and named after Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, it was awarded for great bravery while saving someone else's life either at sea or on land. 570 Albert Medals had been awarded by 1971 when it was decided to change (or 'translate') them into George Crosses.
8. The Edward Medal was created in 1907 and named after King Edward VII, it was awarded to people who risked their lives to help or save others caught in industrial accidents, particularly in coal mines. 584 Edward Medals had been awarded by 1971 when they were translated into George Crosses.
9. Eleven women have received the George Cross. The most recent was Barbara Harrison, an air stewardess who died rescuing people after an air crash at Heathrow in 1968.
10. The George Cross has been awarded to four soldiers for bravery in Afghanistan: posthumously to Corporal



*(Continued on page 6)*

(Continued from page 5)

Mark Wright of the Parachute Regiment and to Sergeant Olaf Schmid, Logistic Corps. It was also given to Lance Corporal Matthew Croucher of the Royal Marines and Staff Sergeant Kim Hughes of the Royal Logistic Corps.

Source:  
<https://www.guidelondon.org.uk>  
Author:  
Augusta Harris  
20 June 2022

## Museum honours nurse who is only woman to have 'won VC'

**Elizabeth Webber Harris** (1834–1917) was given a replica VC with Queen Victoria's permission, as women were not eligible for the medal at the time

The remarkable story of a woman who nursed soldiers in India during a 19<sup>th</sup> century cholera outbreak and the medal they gave her in gratitude is to go on display in London.

For her "indomitable pluck", Elizabeth Webber Harris was awarded a replica Victoria Cross, as women were ineligible for the country's top bravery award itself during her lifetime.

Her medal will go on display at the Imperial War Museum from next month, in the wake of International Women's Day last Sunday.

It will be in the Lord Ashcroft Gallery, which is dedicated to objects and artefacts belonging to those awarded the Victoria Cross or the George Cross.

Born Elizabeth Matthews in Bexleyheath, Kent, in 1834, Mrs Harris travelled to India with her husband, who had been made commanding officer of the 104th Regiment (Bengal Fusiliers).

In 1869 a cholera epidemic moved across India from Calcutta – modern day Kolkata – and by August had reached the regiment's location in Peshawar on the country's north-west frontier.

Members of the regiment and their families soon became infected and died. On 17 September the remainder of the regiment marched into the countryside to try and contain the disease. Elizabeth Harris was the only woman to go with them, despite having recently recovered from fever herself.

For three months, she lived among the troops as they moved through the Indian countryside. As they set up camp, men died. After they were buried, the following morning the survivors moved on.

Life on the edge of the North-West Frontier outside Peshawar was also dangerous. On one occasion, Mrs Harris was attacked late at night by two tribesmen who seized her horse, which she later described as "an alarming incident".

When the regiment returned to Peshawar after the end of the epidemic, Elizabeth Harris was widely praised for having worked selflessly under dangerous conditions to both treat the sick and keep up the spirits of those who survived.



For her months of selfless devotion, the regiment's officers felt that she had lived up to the traditions of the Victoria Cross. After obtaining "special permission" from Queen Victoria, they had a gold VC made to reflect "her indomitable pluck, during the cholera epidemic of 1869".

Women have only been eligible to receive the Victoria Cross since 1921 and there have been no female winners since then. As a result, the medal given to Elizabeth Harris, although informal, is the only "VC" to have been awarded to a woman.

Mrs Harris later wrote: "It is a most beautiful ornament and will always be my most cherished possession."

Mrs Harris died in London in July 1917. Her ashes were buried next to those of her husband, Major General Webber Harris, who had died 14 years earlier.

Her medal was displayed for many years at the Royal United Services Institute in Whitehall and then the National Army Museum.

In 2013 it was acquired by the Lord Ashcroft Collection of British military decorations, which is permanently housed at the Imperial War Museum in Lambeth.

The medal stands as an "eloquent testimony" to all the women who lived with the British Army in Victorian India, said the museum..

Source:  
<https://www.nursingtimes.net>

## RAACA WA BITES

### Nungarin and Merredin Museum W/E event

Committee members John Riley and Tony Beekwilder are working up the details of a proposed trip to the Museums located in Merredin and Nungarin. Rough outline at this stage travel to Merredin own or shared means visit Museum, shared Pub Meal, accommodation own selection in town. Breakfast at the Museum in Nungarin followed by visit. (Once a month on Sunday morning is the Nungarin markets and fair which is another option for the day)

### Web Site Links

Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association WA Inc [www.raacawa.org.au](http://www.raacawa.org.au)  
RAAC Corporation [www.raaccorpltd.org.au](http://www.raaccorpltd.org.au)  
DVA Veterans Support [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)  
Army Museum Western Australia [armymuseum.com.au](http://armymuseum.com.au)  
You may be interested in visiting the above sites

### BLACK HAT COFFEE MORNINGS

Last Thursday of the month at the Dome 100 The Esplanade Mt Pleasant –Deepwater Point

All past serving members of the CORPS or associated entities welcome to attend. Partners and friends welcome

### POLO SHIRTS

The committee is establishing what level of interest there is from members who wish to purchase a polo shirt with the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Western Australia logo. A separate information sheet has been sent to all members. Should you not have received one please advise the Treasurer John Dwyer at [jadanne14@gmail.com](mailto:jadanne14@gmail.com) or 0419694549



LT COL Tom Edmondson RSM Arthur King LT COL Ted White Tenth Light Horse Regiment

## Rheinmetall begins local production of Boxer CRVs

Rheinmetall today struck the arc on the first weld of materials for the first Australian Boxer Combat Reconnaissance Vehicle entering production at Rheinmetall's Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence (MILVEHCOE) in Ipswich, Queensland. This vehicle will be the first to enter the production line together with initial vehicles from Germany currently being assembled at the site.

Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk visited Rheinmetall for the milestone event, joined by Deputy Premier Dr Steven Miles, Australian Industry Partners including Bisalloy, Marand, Intellidesign and Rheinmetall's 600-strong Queensland workforce.

Rheinmetall says the start of production realises the company's goal to support Australia's Defence Force and its allies with an industrial base in the region.

"This is a very proud day for Queensland's defence manufacturing capabilities, as our association with Rheinmetall on the \$5.2 billion Land 400 Phase 2 project delivers locally built Boxer CRVs," Premier Palaszczuk said.

"Through the delivery of Land 400 Phase 2 and its other projects, our partnership has already created 600 jobs at the Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence, which will be contributing more than \$1 billion to the Queensland's economy in its first 10 years of operation.

"The facility is now the most advanced military vehi-

cle manufacturing facility in Australia.

"Our partnership's continuing success provides long-term certainty to the current workforce, and greater opportunities through the entire supply chain which impacts many SMEs right across Queensland."

Rheinmetall has commenced production of the second batch of Boxer Combat Reconnaissance Vehicles for the Australian Defence Force.

"Rheinmetall has delivered a first batch of 25 Boxer CRVs to Australia," Nathan Poyner, Managing Director of Rheinmetall Defence Australia commented.

"These initial Boxers were built in Germany, and finalised at MILVEHCOE, joining the more than 2900 HX Trucks that were finalised and are today sustained from the facility.

"This striking of the arc event represents the first of 186 Boxer CRVs that will be built at MILVEHCOE, providing jobs, training and new opportunities for Australians working at Rheinmetall and in the more than 200 Australian Industry Partners across the nation."

The Boxer Combat Reconnaissance Vehicle is an advanced, armoured 8x8 vehicle in service with nations including Australia, the United Kingdom and Germany.

Source:  
ADM 20 March 2023

