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**GUN FIRE**  
**VOLUME 17 NUMBER 3**  
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Published to advance knowledge in the fields of strategy and tactics where possible; to explain the role of artillery throughout the State of N.S.W. and to provide the necessary medium for reunion between all retired and serving members of the Royal Australian Artillery.

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**Editors: Major R.H.E. Harvey (RL)**  
**Mr. A.R. Owens, BEM.**

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**CONTENTS**

|                                            | Page |
|--------------------------------------------|------|
| EDITORIAL                                  | 2    |
| THE RAA HISTORICAL SOCIETY                 | 3    |
| ARTILLERY HERITAGE DAY                     | 4    |
| ASSOCIATION COMING EVENTS                  | 5    |
| FORT MACQUARIE                             | 7    |
| RAA ASSOCIATION - OFFICE BEARERS 1980-1981 | 9    |

**COVER:**

*FORT MACQUARIE 1819 to 1886*

**(see article Page 7)**

Contribution, correspondence, photographs are most welcome  
and should be forwarded to The Editor, 'Gun Fire',  
GPO Box 576, Sydney. N.S.W. 2001

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## EDITORIAL

### ARTILLERY HERITAGE

The preservation of the Regiment's heritage has always been a major objective of the RAA Association (NSW). Consequently, the recent announcement by General Whitelaw, our Representative Colonel Commandant, concerning the formation of the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society must bring a great sense of achievement and satisfaction to all members and in fact, to all gunners.

Despite the untiring efforts of many dedicated historians over past years, we are faced with a massive task of bringing up-to-date almost two centuries of the Regiment's history, in addition, as the generation of history is everlasting, we need to establish the means whereby our future history is correctly recorded and published as it is created.

To mark the formation of the RAA Historical Society and as part of the NSW Heritage Week, the 29th March, 1981 has been declared Artillery Heritage Day.

Members and their friends are requested to participate in some activity associated with Artillery heritage; in particular, to attend the inaugural meeting of the RAA Historical Society to be held at the School of Artillery, North Head, Manly on 29th March, 1981, commencing at 3 p.m.

Full details of the Heritage Day activities and suggested visits to historical sites are set out in this issue.

The support of all members is sought in making Artillery Heritage Day a great success.

## THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At Kurnell, Botany Bay, stands a restored cannon from Captain Cook's Endeavour but it is seen by few ....

In Hyde Park, Sydney, stands a Smooth Bore 24 Pounder (1806) which came from Fort Macquarie at Bennelong Point ....

At Bradleys Head are three 68 Pounders similar to those installed in the Fort in 1871, but the oak carriages are beginning to rot away for the lack of care and a coat of paint ....

The old Forts at Middle Head, Georges Head, South Head and many other sites throughout Australia are gradually being eroded by the ravages of both man and the elements ....

Few of these guns or forts are properly maintained, while fewer still display any record of their origin or the part they, or the men that served them, played in our history.

There is, therefore, an urgent need to preserve such of our historic artillery relics as still exist.

To meet this need the Director of Artillery has initiated the establishment of the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society with the following objectives:

- a. to foster and maintain the history of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery;
- b. to collect, acquire, preserve and display forts, sites, weapons and other material that relate to the history of the Australian Artillery;
- c. to prepare and publish articles, documents and magazines on subjects of historical interest and to provide a source of reference and historical record for approved institutions, societies or individuals;
- d. to identify places and weapons that may be considered suitable for inclusion in the National Estate and to advise the appropriate authority of the details of such places and weapons;
- e. to make arrangements for the administration and control of property acquired by, given to, or bequeathed to the Society.

The Society as envisaged is to be established on a national basis with some office bearers being appointed by the Regimental Committee and others being elected.

The inaugural meeting of the Society will be at 3 p.m. on Sunday, 29th March, 1981 at the School of Artillery after a tour of historical gun sites in the Sydney area as a particular Gunner endeavour in conjunction with the NSW Heritage Week.

The Society will need the strongest support possible if it is to achieve its objectives - so become a member now and help to preserve our National Heritage.

### The Society fees are:

Annual Membership - \$ 5.00

Life Membership - \$50.00

An application for membership is included in this issue.

Enquiries may be made to:

Major R. H. E. Harvey (RL)

Telephone: Business (02) 406 6733

Private (043) 41 8326

Major P. N. Steen E.D.

Telephone: Business (02) 237 2565

## ARTILLERY HERITAGE DAY

The first Heritage Week to be conducted within New South Wales is to be held during the period 23rd to 29th March, 1981. A Planning Committee, comprising representatives of the National Trust, The Royal Australian Historical Society and the Heritage Council of NSW has been established to co-ordinate and promote a wide range of activities throughout the State.

The proposed Heritage Week presents an excellent opportunity to foster the history of the Royal Australian Artillery and to bring to the attention of members, their families and friends, the existence and condition of the many historic artillery sites in the Sydney area. Consequently, Sunday 29th March, 1981 has been declared Artillery Heritage Day.

The highlight of the day is to be the inaugural meeting of the RAA Historical Society at the School of Artillery.

Sites open for inspection are as follows:

### **BARE ISLAND (BOTANY BAY) - Established 1885**

This site is now under the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Service and is open for inspection each day. Partial restoration of the Fort has been carried out.

### **BRADLEYS HEAD (SYDNEY HARBOUR)**

This site is also under the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Service and is open for inspection daily.

Construction of the lower emplacement commenced in 1840 but was never completed (placements below mast of HMAS Sydney).

The upper fort was completed in 1871 and fitted with three 68 Pounders. These were replaced by 80 Pounders Rifled Muzzle Loaders in 1873.

### **FORT DENISON (SYDNEY HARBOUR)**

Construction of the Fort was commenced in 1840 but was discontinued shortly thereafter. The defence plans were reviewed in 1853 and on the orders of Governor Denison the Fort was completed and became the key to the defences of Sydney until 1871.

Inspection of the Fort may be arranged by contacting the Maritime Services Board Telephone 2 0545. Unfortunately visits are only permitted on Tuesdays through to Saturdays.

The following sites are not available to the public and in general are in a very poor state of preservation:

**Middle Head - established 1871**

**Georges Head - established 1871**

**Georges Heights (Army area) - Various battery sites**

**South Head - Inner and outer battery positions (Army and Navy areas)**

**Cape Banks - 9.2 Inch (1937) Battery position.**

**In a very bad state of repair - still under control of Department of Defence.**

**Henry's Head - Botany Bay**

## COMING EVENTS

SUNDAY  
**MARCH**  
**29**

### HERITAGE DAY

School of Artillery  
North Head  
10am to 3pm

- Tours of North Fort
- Bar B 0 Facilities - BYO - Food
- RAA Historical Society Inaugural Meeting 3pm

**OPEN TO ALL**

SATURDAY  
**APRIL**  
**25**

### GUNNER GATHERING

after march  
Bowlers Club NSW  
York Street, Sydney

\$3  
Early bookings requested  
or pay at door

**ALL GUNNERS & FRIENDS**

FRIDAY  
**MAY**  
**22**

### BUFFET SOCIAL

School of Artillery  
North Head  
7.30 to 8pm

**\$20 DOUBLE**  
Book by Monday 18 May

**MEMBERS & THEIR GUESTS**

SUNDAY  
**MAY**  
**31**

### OPEN DAY

23rd Field Regiment RAA  
Field Firing  
Holsworthy Range  
Commencing 10am

Details phone  
Adjutant - 587 6623 or 587 3918  
5

**OPEN TO ALL**

## COMING EVENTS (continued)

TUESDAY

**JUNE**

**9**

**ANNUAL  
GENERAL MEETING**

Imperial Service Club  
York Street, Sydney  
8pm

***ALL MEMBERS***

SATURDAY

**AUGUST**

**8**

**GUNNER DINNER**

School of Artillery  
North Head  
7pm for 7.30pm

**\$14 per head (approx.)  
Book by Monday 3 August**

***MEMBERS & THEIR GUESTS***

FRIDAY

**OCTOBER**

**16**

**BUFFET SOCIAL**

School of Artillery  
North Head  
7.30 for 8pm

**\$10 per head (approx.)  
Book by Monday 12 October**

***MEMBERS & THEIR GUESTS***

SUNDAY

**DECEMBER**

**6**

**ANNUAL  
CHURCH SERVICE**

Holy Trinity  
Garrison Church  
Millers Point  
10.30am

***ALL WELCOME***

ALL ENQUIRIES TO BE DIRECTED TO SECRETARY

**977 4499 or P.O. Box 576 G.P.O. Sydney 2001**

## FORT MACQUARIE

(see front cover)

The first attempt at fortifications in Sydney Cove was made at Bennelong Point in July 1788, when Lieutenant Dawes was ordered by Governor Phillip to construct a redoubt on the east side of the Cove. It was completed in November 1788, a flagstaff erected and two pieces of ordnance (two 6 Pounders) placed in position.

On the departure of Lieutenant Dawes, Governor Hunter appointed Captain Abbott of the NSW Corps as Engineer and Artillery Officer for the colony with instructions to repair the forts on the east and west sides of the Cove.

In a report submitted by Abbott in October 1800 it was stated that Bennelong Point had four guns mounted, the fort being formed of wattle casks and earth and in a state of total decay.

It was not until December 1817 that Governor Macquarie laid the foundation stone for a new fort at Bennelong Point, which subsequently bore his name. Captain John Gill of the 46th Regiment was appointed Engineer and Artillery Officer and the work was carried out by him. The fort was situated at the extreme end of the point and was completed in November 1819.

Fort Macquarie in 1820 was a square redoubt, three faces of which were washed by the waters of Sydney Harbour. At each angle there was a raised circular bastion for the purpose of supporting a 24 pounder gun mounted on a traversing carriage, while the northern face supported a six-gun embrasure.

Inside the redoubt was situated the two-storied stone tower, measuring 90 feet in circumference, which was utilised for a dual purpose, as an ordnance store and guard-room, while in its basement was a magazine whose capacity was 350 barrels of gun powder. It was in this tower that the garrison of one officer and 12 gunners had their quarters, the officer being the chief artillery officer of the colony. Here also was quartered the Commandant of the Governor's bodyguard of cavalry.

Originally Fort Macquarie and its adjoining area of 3 acres and 20 perches was administered by the Home Government; but in 1850 it was decided to transfer all the ordnance, lands and buildings to the Colonial Government. On hearing of this suggestion, the Lord of the Admiralty asked for possession of the fort to utilise it as a Naval Depot. He was no doubt influenced in making this request by virtue of the fact that up till this time all H.M. ships had used Fort Macquarie for their periodical overhauls when in Port Jackson, at the same time utilising the redoubt's tower as a quartermaster's store. As was only to be expected, the local military authorities objected to sharing the fort with the navy. A deadlock resulted. However, in 1860 an agreement was reached; the military were to retain Fort Macquarie and a naval depot was to be constructed on Garden Island.

In the early fifties this redoubt was utilised as a parade ground for the first volunteer company of artillery raised in the colony. It was also about this time that the defence of Port Jackson was very seriously considered by the Home Government. Three years later, in 1854, saw the outbreak of the Crimean War, with its consequent moral effect on the outposts of the Empire and material gain to the fort; in other words, additional guns were added.

On 13 October 1856 the 7th Battalion Royal Artillery arrived by the "Nimrod" from England, and a detachment of them in 1858 was garrisoned in the fort.

The year 1870 saw the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, and in March 1871, five 42 pounder guns were added, and the fort for the last time manned by fifty gunners. From 1871 to 1901 it was utilised by the Naval Brigade as a training centre; and the cannon which for many years had been idle, was last fired in 1886 during an exercise.



Fort Macquarie during the latter years presented an appearance quite different from its original. Extensive reclamation works for the extension of Circular Quay and the filling of reefs and rocks placed the fort some distance from the water which originally lapped its base.

Bennelong Point (Fort Macquarie) has witnessed many historic and ceremonial activities. It was originally our first Governor's domain. It has been the landing place of all our Colonial Governors since Lachlan Macquarie; it has always been the private landing place of our admirals and distinguished visitors. Here it was that the Prince of Wales landed in 1921, the Duke of York in 1927 and the Duke of Gloucester in 1934.

Fort Macquarie's guns, like those of Dawes Point, were never fired upon an enemy; nevertheless, they have fired salutes on many auspicious occasions. Her guns signalled the fall of Sebastopol in the Crimean War, and the accession to the throne of Queen Victoria. They also fired salutes on authorised days, and returned the compliments of many a visiting foreign man-o'-war.

In 1900 the fort was partly demolished to make way for the erection of the tramway sheds, portion of the fort being incorporated in the building. Subsequently, the tramsheds were completely demolished and the Sydney Opera House erected on the site.

#### Editor's Note:

Two 42 pounder guns have recently been discovered at Coogee Beach and the local council has agreed to present them to the RAA Historical Society. Although positive identification has not been made as this Issue goes to press, it is believed that the guns were originally part of the armament of Fort Macquarie.

# ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (NSW)

## OFFICE BEARERS 1980-1981

**Patron:** Lieutenant General Sir Frank Berryman, KCVO, CB, CBE, DSO

**President:** Lieutenant Colonel L. D. McLaughlin, ED

**Immediate Past President:** Lieutenant Colonel F. McAskill, MBE, (RL)

**Vice Presidents:** Major R. H. E. Harvey (RL)  
Captain W. Liddell, OAM

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Brigadier Sir John Pagan, CMG, MBE, C St.J, ED  
Brigadier A.G. Hanson, DSO, ED  
Colonel M.C. Crawford, MBE  
Colonel M.W.L. Fairless, ED  
Colonel R.G. Fay, ED  
Lieutenant Colonel G.T. Salmon  
Lieutenant Colonel R. Smith, ED  
Lieutenant Colonel A. F. de B. Sollett, ED  
Lieutenant A.W. Quinn

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**Honorary Treasurer:** Lieutenant P. Buckland

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Warrant Officer Class 1 D. Donkin, MBE  
Captain B. Perdriau  
Mr. A.R. Owens, BEM  
Warrant Officer Class 1 J. Pollock  
Lieutenant P. Chapman  
Captain J. Harding  
Major G.S. Staziker, ED  
Captain R.O. Tickner (Registrar)

# APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

## RAA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**To:** The Secretary  
RAA Historical Society  
PO Box 42  
MANLY NSW 2095

1. 1 wish to apply for Life/Annual Membership of the RAA Historical Society.
2. Enclosed is \$.....being my subscription for Life/Annual Membership.

NAME .....

RANK .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

*Would you please make cheques payable to "RAA Historical Society".*

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