Band of the Royal Military College Duntroon

The Duntroon Bugle

ISSUE 20 APRIL 2010

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From the Editor

What an action packed couple of months! Since our last newsletter the Band of the Royal Military College has been flat chat, and there's no sign of it slowing down any time soon. With Music at Midday next week and ANZAC Day the following weekend, nobody can afford to get sick! In this edition we'll hear from the podium, Second In Command - Captain Dave Thompson, get reports on our concerts from Yass and Batemans Bay and the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, and welcome Angus as our 'raving' reporter with the most recent installment in our 'The History of...' segment. So, grab a cuppa and enjoy the read!

Farewell and Welcome

Only a select few can achieve over 50 years in uniform. With such a long and distinguished career as a Warrior, Officer and Diplomat during his Army service, being appointed Honorary Colonel of the Australian Army Band Corps seemed to be destined as the natural progression to Statesman.

Now, after 16 years in this position, we farewell Brigadier Ian Hearn, AO and welcome the new appointment of Brigadier Mark Bornholt, AM, effective from 1 March. Brigadier Bornholt brings to the appointment a wealth of experience, a genuine passion for the work of our Corps, a love of music and a particularly limited vocal talent!! Sir, we look forward to working with the energy and zeal you will bring with you!

BRIGADIER M.D. BORNHOLT, AM

HONORARY COLONEL

AUSTRALIAN ARMY BAND CORPS

From the Podium

Captain Dave Thompson playing with the RMC All-Stars Big Band in the annual Chief Ministers concert during Senior Citizens Week

Hello Ladies and Gents and welcome to yet another installment of the Duntroon Bugle.

As you would expect, the band has been very busy these last few weeks. We've had the guys and girls experience everything from meeting Australian legends of rock 'n' roll to jumping out of perfectly good aeroplanes.

You'll read first hand accounts of the RMC Band's involvement in this year's Edinburgh Military Tattoo and we are also featuring a supporting article describing the fascinating history of the Army musicians second home, the Parade Ground. All this is in addition to the various supporting roles we play to Government, Defence and the Canberran community.

Officer Commanding, Major Geoff Grey CSM, has made various inroads into getting the band into the recording studio for the first time in many years, the results of which will be released to coincide with the Royal Military College Duntroon's centenary celebrations in June 2011. This is quite an exciting venture for the band as it not only records a recent historical snapshot of our lineage, but will provide our friends and fans with a part of the current band that they can take home to enjoy.

We have met some fascinating people over the last few weeks with our commitment to supporting the office of the Governor General, and as you would be well aware, we also nearly met one very prominent world leader whose picture will eventually (so I'm told) make a grand addition to the band's photo album.

I trust you'll enjoy this edition of the Duntroon Bugle and please take note of our upcoming concerts. Be sure to say 'hi' when you see us next.

Captain Dave Thompson

Tasty Catch in Batemans Bay

The weekend of 27 –28 March saw the Band of the Royal Military College on the road in a whirlwind of tour-like performances. Two long days with late nights, as we travelled here, there and everywhere, were well worth the effort as the local communities turned out in full force. The Yass Memorial Hall on Saturday night and the Batemans Bay High School on Sunday afternoon both sold out to capacity.

A rendition of 'The Bare Necessities' for two tubas and piccolo starring Sergeant Bjorn Pfieffer, Musician Gabriel Mears and Warrant Officer Wendy Kehoe brought the house down, as did Musician Dave Andrews' adaption of Paul McCartney's 'Blackbird', sung with Musician Lorelei Williamson.

There was extended applause and a standing ovation combined with many of the audience members so gracefully offering comment on the performances of the day that supported the Yass Music Club and the Batemans Bay Rotary Club. One reporter included the word *delicious* in an article promoting the concert and I think it is safe to say we delivered a very *tasty* performance!

It's a bird, it's a plane, it's the BSM?!

On the 11th and 12th of March, Band Sergeant Major (BSM) Warrant Officer Simon Renfrey, Corporal Adam Corning and Corporal Tony Barker took part in a solo skydiving jump from 10,000 feet over the beautiful coast of Moruya, approximately three hours from Canberra. The activity was organised as part of the Army's Adventurous Training Program and when some vacancies opened up this trio of daredevils 'jumped' at the chance to take part.

This type of training activity is designed to provide the participants with the skills and knowledge to take control of a situation and shape the outcome. They are then required to put this training into practice doing something completely outside their comfort zone, ultimately preparing soldiers for battle.

The activity started with a full day of training. Safety drills needed to be practised until they became second nature. The jump on the second day included a 45 second freefall followed by a five minute glide to the ground. Two qualified instructors fell alongside each of our members as they left the plane to stabilise and reassure the first time skydivers.

Watch the skies as most of the members that took part in this adrenaline filled activity said that they would definitely do it again!

On stage with the RMC All-Stars Big Band

The History of The Parade Ground

By Musician Angus Charlton

If the amount of research material on parade grounds is a reflection of the level of curiosity they invoke, I would be surprised if anyone has read this far. However I know that this article's readership not only thinks in- and out- side the square, but OF the square. The parade ground may stir differing feelings, awe, pride, dread, honour - initially come to mind. But in this world of noise and reason, how could an otherwise quiet expanse, defined by white edging and often protected by guns long fallen silent, not inspire the question even in the least initiated – Why?

Finding a starting point for a parade ground historically would be akin to finding a starting point for language. Across the breadth of cultures, and even within other animal species, examples can be found, as some of the unifying traits inherent in us animals is; herd mentality (national identity), ceremony (display, ritual), and warfare.

More recent lineages of our parade ground ancestry can be equally grounded in both its function and form. From the perspective of function, the Commanding Officer's Parade exemplifies the pragmatic. The Australian Army website harkens to parades of the 17th and 18th Century -

> "...when a regiment marched into a town or any location where it was going to be quartered, a place of assembly was decided upon which might be the market square, the street outside the senior officer's lodgings or any convenient open patch of ground."

Itinerant troops would be accounted for and, dress and drill, a reflection of training and discipline, is inspected. At Duntroon the C.O.'s parade was held every weekday morning up until 1988. From 1989 it was held on a weekly basis, but has slowly become more as a rehearsal leading to significant events such as the Queens Birthday Parade, and Graduation Parade.

From the perspective of form, differing points of its genesis merge, but are typically rooted again in function. The following extract explains why today the parade ground can not be used as a thoroughfare for what it represents. A soldier is also required to march across it, if not performing a particular drill manoeuvre.

> "After a battle, when retreat was sounded and the unit has reassembled to call the roll and count the dead, a hollow square was formed. The dead were placed within the square and no-one used the area as a thoroughfare. Today, the parade ground represents this square and hence, a unit's dead."

Form and function are of course integral in the performance of a parade. The focal point of any parade ground is the flag station. Positioned front and centre, it represents who we are as a nation, pays honour to our nations figureheads, and homage to those who have died in our nations service. At the corners of any parade ground some artillery is positioned facing outwards, serving so as to 'Hold fast' this sacred ground. Curiously, General Bridges had the guns of the Duntroon parade ground facing inwards. No records explain this idiosyncrasy, however, if they were facing out, the top guns would be pointing directly into the wall. Also, as the (then) Brigadier General Bridges was an Artillery Officer, and founding Commandant of the RMC, who was to argue?

Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2010

In February, Corporal Tony Barker and Musician Darren Ormsby were given the honour of attending and contributing to the Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Sydney. With bands attending from Scotland, London, Trinidad and Tobago, Russia and China, this was the largest number of participants in an Edinburgh Tattoo ever.

The Australian contingent was made up of a tri-service band combining the talents of members of the Australian Army Bands of Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and RMC, the Sydney detachment of the Royal Australian Navy Band and the Royal Australian Air Force Band from Melbourne.

The Australian display proved to be one of the more challenging displays due to the sound and lighting requirements, not helped by some of the heaviest rainfall Sydney has ever seen. A wet weather plan was quickly formulated with the contingent adapting and overcoming this hurdle to give a spectacular performance on the world stage.

Well done to all involved for such a great effort!

PHOTOS TAKEN BY CORPORAL TONY BARKER

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BECOME A FRIEND OF THE BAND

If you have received this Newsletter then you probably already are one, but if you know someone else who would like to become a Friend, then here's what they should do:

Simply email us at

RMCband.publicaffairs@defence.gov.au

or fill in one of our yellow flyers when you come to Music at Midday.

If you no longer wish to receive these updates or if you are changing your email address please let us know so that we can amend our records.

Down the Track

A large number of the Band's tasking includes engagements at Government House, Parliament House, The Royal Military College, Blamey Square and for a variety of organisations in the Canberra region. Our forecast public program is below.

APRIL 18

ABC Classic FM
'Sunday Live'
Llewellyn Hall, ANU
3pm

APRIL 20

Music at Midday
Canberra Theatre
11am & 12:30pm

APRIL 25

ANZAC Day
Commemorative Services
Australian War Memorial
Dawn Service 5.30am
Parade 9.45am

MAY 8

Braidwood Community Concert
Braidwood Anglican Church
Duntroon Brass
2.30pm

JUNE 12

Queen's Birthday Parade
RMC Parade Ground
9.50am

JUNE 13

Merimbula Jazz Festival
RMC All-Stars Big Band
2pm

JUNE 15

Music at Midday
Canberra Theatre
11am & 12:30pm