



THURUNKA

January 2025

Newsletter of the
Royal Australian Signals Association (NSW) Inc.
Remembering
Aust. Lines of Communication Signals Association



President and Secretary
MAJGEN R P (Paul) Irving (Ret'd)

Treasurer:
Mr Keith Roberts

Editor:
Mr C D (Chris) Johnson

Mobile: 0412 284 550
Paul.kaaren@gmail.com

Mobile:

Mobile: 0417 262 984
cdjohnson@mac.com

Association website: <http://www.rasigsassociationnsw.org>

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SIGNALS ASSOCIATION (NSW) Inc.

Association Matters

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Certa Cito 100

Happy New Year and welcome to 2025.

On 14 February 1925, Australian Army Order 71 was issued stating that "Approval has been given for the Signal Engineer Units of the Citizen Forces to be formed into a separate Corps, designated the Australian Corps of Signals", that later became the Royal Australian Corps of Signals.

This year, we celebrate a century of service by generations of Sigs who have served our nation in war and peace with great distinction.

Certa Cito 100 gives us an opportunity to commemorate on the proud history of the Corps and to reflect on the legacy of all those Sigs who have served over the last 100 years.

In NSW, we will launch Certa Cito 100 at the North Bondi RSL, 118-120 Ramsgate Avenue, North Bondi on Friday 14 February 2025 from 6.00pm to 11.00pm.

Thanks to the assistance of North Bondi RSL, the launch will consist of a cocktail function that includes a three-hour drinks package, with a range of canapés, for a modest price of \$58.

Dress code is cocktail attire and tickets are first in, best dressed, open to all members, their partners and all RA Sigs veterans.

So, book now by clicking on [Cocktail Function](#) or using the QR code at the end of this column.

Also on 14 February 2025, a Ceremonial Parade and Commemorative Service will be conducted at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne (<https://rasigs.org/event/certa-cito-100-launch/>)

NEXT ISSUE

Copy for the next edition of THURUNKA must be in the hands of the Editor, Chris Johnson by 5 March 2025

All submissions to be via email at thurunkarasigs@gmail.com

For the Sydney 2025 Anzac Day march, RA Sigs will march at the front of the Army contingent, behind the Commander Forces Command. This will involve current serving personnel from all RA Sigs units in NSW, plus the RA Sigs Association and former members of the Corps.

In mid-October 2025, we are planning on holding an all-ranks function for serving and former serving Sigs in Sydney.

There will be a Corps Parade held in **Victoria Barracks Sydney** on **Sunday 9 November 2025** with representatives from all RA Sigs units across Australia. This will be the major parade to celebrate our 100th birthday. All former RA Sigs personnel as well as current serving personnel in NSW who are not on the parade will be invited to attend the parade.

On Monday 10 November 2025, there is likely to be a service at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

There will also be an RA Sigs 100th Birthday Reunion held between 10-18 November 2025 in Healesville, Victoria. The reunion includes a visit to the Simpson Barracks Open Day and a formal dinner on Saturday 15 November 2025 – for further details, click on [RASigs 100th Birthday National Reunion Healesville Victoria 10-18 Nov 2025](#).

And on Sunday 23 November 2025, we will be holding our Annual Memorial Service at Signal Hill Reserve, South Head Road, Vaucluse at 1100 hours.

Please put these dates in your diary now. We will keep you updated of Certa Cito 100 events through *Thurunka*.

For our Centenary, the Corps has partnered with a veteran owned distillery to produce a Centenary Whisky, Port and Gin. Details are set out on page 4 or go to:- <https://www.chiefsson.com.au/product-category/defence/certa-cito-defence/>.



Transfer of the Defence Force School of Signals

On 20 January 2025, the Chief of Army issued an Order of the Day transferring the Defence Forces School of Signals, the Defence Force School of Intelligence, the Defence Force School of Policing and the Defence Force School of Music from the Australian Army to the command of Joint Capabilities Group (JCG). Joint Capabilities Group will be renamed as Joint Training Command.

The transfer of these training establishments is considered to be an important milestone in achieving the transformation of the Australian Defence Force, as directed by the 2024 National Defence Strategy.

Paul Irving
President

Corps Matters

Wartime. Official Magazine of the Australia War Memorial. Issue 106. Autumn 2024. Page 9.

DARING DEEDS Captain Lionel Matthews

On 2 March 2015, the Memorial accepted the donation of a George Cross which had been posthumously awarded to Captain Lionel Colin Matthews for extreme and selfless courage while a prisoner of war. The George Cross is ranked just behind the Victoria Cross and is awarded for acts of extreme bravery performed by civilians and military personnel when not under enemy fire. It is no longer awarded to Australians, as it was superseded in 1975 by the Australian Cross of Valour.

Matthews was already serving in the Australian Military Forces (AMF) when war was declared in 1939, having served with the Civilian Military Forces from 1935, followed by the Royal Australian Navy Volunteer Reserve and 3rd Division Signals, AMF. On 28 July 1940, he was seconded to the Australian Imperial Force and transferred to 8 Division Signals as a lieutenant. There, he was personally selected by Lieutenant Colonel Thyer to command the Wireless Operating section, known as 'Eddy' Section, which was responsible for artillery brigade communications. 'Eddy' Section and the rest of the division embarked aboard *Queen Mary* on 2 February 1941, bound for Malaya. 'Eddy' Section was moved to Malacca on arrival in Malaya, and was responsible for communications back to the Divisional Headquarters for 2/10 Field Regiment.

During the Japanese invasion of Malaya in December 1941, Matthews earned a Military Cross for maintaining communications while under heavy fire and bombardment at Gemas. He was promoted to Captain just before the surrender in February 1942 and was among more than 15,000 Australian soldiers who were captured and imprisoned at the fall of Singapore. The ribbon of the Military Cross – a spare belonging to a fellow internee



Clockwise from left:
Captain Lionel Colin Matthews, 1942; Medal group of Captain Matthews GC; Mr David Matthews donates his father's medal group to Memorial Director, Brendan Nelson, 2015.

– was presented to him at a ceremony in Changi prisoner of war camp on 10 May 1942.

Prisoners were soon dispersed to other regions in work parties. On 8 July 1942 Matthews became part of 'B' Force, a work party of almost 1,500 men which was sent by ship to Borneo and imprisoned at Sandakan. Soon after arrival, Matthews was chosen as Intelligence Officer and began to direct an underground intelligence organisation from captivity. Through connections with sympathetic locals and by maintaining a secret radio, he was able to co-ordinate the provision of medical supplies to the camp, weapons deliveries from the Philippines, escapes, and readiness for an uprising against the Japanese. In July 1943, the intelligence network

was betrayed to their captors. Although Matthews had a plan of escape and a chance to flee, he chose to remain with his men and submit to arrest. Over the following months, he was subjected to brutal interrogation but never gave away his mates. On 2 March 1944, he was brought before a Japanese military court in Kuching and sentenced to execution. In an unusual offer, possibly a sign of grudging respect by the Japanese, he was permitted to select his own means of execution. He chose firing squad and was executed the same day.

Captain Matthews was buried at Kuching but was reinterred at Labuan at the end of the war. His full Military Cross was handed to his 11-year-old son David by the Governor General in 1947, and now accompanies his George Cross and service medals.

KATE JOHNSTON
Assistant Curator, Military Heraldry
and Technology

Signals Centenary Commemoration Libations



Celebrate the Signals Centenary with an Exclusive Whisky Release – Ex-Tawny Cask 44% ABV (700ml)

To mark a century of excellence, we're thrilled to present two exclusive offerings from the Chief's Son Distillery:

- **Signals Centenary Bottle**
OR
- **Signals Centenary Pack**

Celebrate the Signals Centenary with an Exclusive Gin Release – 40% ABV (700ml)

To mark a century of excellence, we're thrilled to present this special edition bottle. Whether you're adding to your collection or celebrating with friends, these exclusive releases are a testament to a century of quality and dedication. Cheers to 100 years of signalling.

Celebrate the Signals Centenary with an Exclusive Tawny Port Release – 17% ABV (700ml)

To mark a century of excellence, we're thrilled to present two exclusive offerings from the Chief's Son Distillery:

- **Signals Centenary Bottle**
OR
- **Signals Centenary Pack**

700ml bottle of Chief's Son Tawny Port, 17% ABV and two crystal Glencairn glasses etched with Jimmy, presented in a Signals Commemorative Presentation Box.

Whether you're adding to your collection or celebrating with friends, these exclusive releases are a testament to a century of quality and dedication. Cheers to 100 years of signalling

Details on the website

<https://www.chiefsson.com.au/product-category/defence/certa-cito-defence/>

A variety of other Centenary related merchandise is available through the following outlets:

RA Sigs Corps Shop <https://rasigs.org/corps-shop/>

Centenary2025 Shop - <https://www.redbubble.com/people/Centenary2025/shop?asc=u>

Corps Website:- The Signaller.

For those members who have not yet discovered it the Official Corps Website can be found at:

<https://rasigs.org/>



SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DEFENCE AND VETERAN SUICIDE

Earlier this year I gave evidence during the final hearing block of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. For three years, the Royal Commission has heard evidence from serving and former-serving members, and their families. The Royal Commission has examined extensive data and sought expert testimony.

The Royal Commission has noted that for most Soldiers¹, service in our Army is a positive aspect of their personal and professional lives. This is an important point to acknowledge but that is not what this Royal Commission is about.

It is about those for whom service has been a negative experience, the effects of which have been life-long, life-altering and in the worst-case life-ending. The Royal Commission has heard of many such experiences, historic and recent. Our failings — whether institutional or individual — have had terrible consequences for those we have failed.

The evidence is compelling. Since 2017, for example, we know we have lost 30 serving Soldiers either suspected or confirmed to have died by suicide². Many more have been lost across our wider community.

This is not acceptable. We must do more. These are our people, members of our teams and our Army. To fight and win in war our teams must be built on the foundations of trust, respect, and cohesion.

Last year we identified and brought home the remains of Australian soldiers who were killed in the battle of Fromelles in 1916. This reminds us all that 'Lest we Forget' is not rhetoric, it is a promise. We continued the search for our soldiers for over a century, a commitment of which we ought to be proud.

Now is the time to apply the same approach and effort to the challenge of suicide and suicidality among our people. We will not leave our mates behind, fallen on their own personal battlefield.

This Royal Commission presents us with a once in a generation opportunity to reduce the incidence of suicide and suicidality in our community. To make a step change rather than incremental improvement. It is both our individual and collective obligation to do so.

I am ultimately accountable for Army's people, culture, mission and resources, but like everything we do — it requires a committed team effort if we are to be successful.

We need not wait for the Royal Commission to publish its findings and recommendations before we act. The opportunity exists today, and we must act on it today.

We will focus on three outcomes: achieving a measurable reduction in the incidence of suicide and suicidality amongst Soldiers; building our individual and collective resilience; and strengthening our culture. When we achieve this, we will have a stronger Army, an Army that is more capable and better able to fulfil its mission.

We must move on this effort together, as one team, and we must stay together. We train and fight in teams. Trust among our teams is our main effort.

I am grateful for all that you and your families do in service each day. I am proud to serve in an Army that owns its failures; an Army that is genuinely determined to learn from the past and committed to improving our future.

Our Army's future begins today — with each of us reflecting our values in our thoughts, words and actions today and every day.

¹ 'Soldier' — refers to all whom have worn and wear our uniform today, regardless of rank.

² This figure is according to statistics compiled for the Defence suicide database. While I acknowledge that this number does not represent the entirety with a connection to Army who are either suspected or confirmed to have died by suicide, this number does provide a sobering reminder of the impact that suicide and suicidality have had, and continue to have, on those who serve in our Army and their families.



Simon Stuart, AO, DSC
Lieutenant General
Chief of Army.

*Sadly, we have lost more valuable servants of the Corps and Country...Information provided by Adam West.
sigsdb@netspace.net.au*



VALE

1201626 Noel Joseph NEVILLE

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam 23/04/69 - 16/04/70

VALE

VALE

242176 Ray HOLMES

WO1 Technician

VALE

1201806 Trevor James GORDON

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam 22/04/1969 - 16/04/1970

VALE

57179 Michael (Titch) HARDING

1972-1981
133 Sig Sqn
104 Sig Sqn

VALE

1201806 Trevor James GORDON

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam 22/04/1969 - 16/04/1970

VALE

Lyn Thompson (Chenoworth)

VALE

25608 Godfrey WILLIAMS

28 Bde Gp Sig Sqn

VALE

25608 Godfrey WILLIAMS

28 Bde Gp Sig Sqn

VALE

47025 Maxwell John LEMON

Headquarters, Australian Force Vietnam (Army Component)
17/04/1969 - 05/12/1969
110 Sig Sqn Vietnam 06/12/1969 - 22/01/1970

VALE

315826 Raymond William (Lunny) LUNDBERG

2 Sig Regt
135 Sig Sqn
6 Sig Regt
108 Sig Sqn
School of Sigs

VALE

1731718 Brian Keith (Sully) SULLIVAN

104 Sig Sqn Vietnam 26/04/1967 - 21/12/1967

VALE

4720168 Peter Robert MAGOR

School of Sigs
1 Sig Regt
800/PNG Sig Sqn
139 Sig Sqn
4 Sig Regt
615 Sig Tp
2 Sig Regt
School of Sigs
7 Sig Regt

VALE

242176 WO1 Ray HOLMES

OFFICIAL

Military History

Demolition of the old School of Signals: 1970 – 2024.



Thanks to Michael Ricks for the pictures.

OFFICIAL



**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN CORPS OF SIGNALS
OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF CORPS**

**Defence Force School of Signals, Simpson Barracks, Victoria 3085,
Australia**

A message from Head of Corps.

As 2024 draws to a close, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude for the commitment of our serving members across the year. This year, our 99th as a Corps, has once again demonstrated the outstanding dedication, innovation, and excellence that each of you bring to our mission and purpose. You have excelled in an environment where change is the absolute constant. I would also like to acknowledge the excellent work of our Associations, Colonel Commandants and the broader Signals veteran community. It has been impressive to see the esprit de corps evident across the Signals family this year.

I would like to recognise those who will remain on duty or at short readiness, both within Australia and abroad and thank you for continuing to serve through the reduced activity period. As many others prepare to take a well-earned rest with family, friends, and loved ones, let us reflect on some of the remarkable achievements accomplished together.

The Cyber Domain has been recognised as a warfighting domain this year, highlighting the growing need for our people and capabilities across the five warfighting domains (Land, Maritime, Air, Space and Cyber). Cyber Command was established on 25 March 24 in Joint Capabilities Group as the multi-domain Group comprising of Space, Cyber and the Defence Networks. Many from our Corps have contributed to the establishment of Cyber Command, which now also includes 138th Signals Squadron transferred from the 7th Signal Regiment.

On 4 July 2024, Lieutenant General Susan Coyle, AM, CSC, DSM was appointed as Chief Joint Capabilities, the first RA Sigs 3 Star Officer. Headquarters Joint Operations Command also raised the Joint Force Cyber Component this year to plan coordinate, control and execute effects from and through the Cyber Domain in support of Theatre Operations.

20 September 2024 was the 25th anniversary of the first deployment to East Timor with the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) mission. I was pleased to commemorate the milestone and contributions with a number of others with 1st Signal Regiment.

Our training continues to evolve with the transfer of the Defence Command Support Training Centre including the Defence Force School of Signals to Joint Capabilities Group from January 2025. The new Defence School of Space and Cyber will subsume the Space and Cyber College, centralising Cyber Domain training and support for all Groups and Services.

A new Army G6 and staff function was established within Army Headquarters providing Signals advice and direction. This year also saw the development of an Electronic Warfare spine, enabling Army to better leverage these asymmetric capabilities.

From Exercise Mercury Run through to respective Brigade War-Fighter exercises this year, our people performed extremely well. This included both operational and exercise activities.

In response to the National Defence Strategy, Army has raised the 10th Brigade in Adelaide, creating demand for more signallers in that formation. The resulting review of the Corps' structures will see reinforcing of 1st Signal Regiment, 145th Signal Squadron and support to 10th Brigade.

Corps Week was again a highlight with the Defence Force School of Signals taking out the Rugby and Caduceus Cup. This year's Lieutenant and Signaller of Year Award nominees

OFFICIAL

have shown our signallers and young leaders to be an inspiration and exemplification of the strong future for our Corps. Congratulations to all nominees. This year's awards went to Lieutenant Sam Darwell of 138th Signal Squadron and Signaller Tayler Gillies of 7th Signal Regiment.

While there were many successes this year, there were also sadness. In March, Lance Corporal Jack Fitzgibbon of 126th Signal Squadron tragically died following a parachuting accident. This year also saw the passing of both David and Shelia Matthews, long servants of the Corps carrying on the legacy of David's father, Captain Lionel Matthews GC. We think of both the Fitzgibbon and Matthews families, and all those families of the Corps who lost loved ones this year.

As our 99th year draws to close it is fitting to look to 2025 as we commence a year of celebrations. On 14 February 2025, the Centenary Launch Parade will be conducted at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne. I encourage all those who can attend to come along. For those who are unable to make it to Melbourne, there will be a series of events across the nation on 14 February 2025. The Corps' website - <https://rasigs.org/certa-cito-100/> is the best place to find out what is going on.

I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May the stand-down and Christmas period bring rest with family and friends ahead of what promises to be a very busy 2025. I look forward to celebrating our centenary with you all next year.



Deane Limmer, CSM
Brigadier Head of
Corps

// December 2024

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SIGNALS (NSW) ASSOCIATION INC.
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
17 NOV 2024

DRAFT MINUTES

LOCATION

Upstairs meeting room Paddo RSL
220-232 Oxford St Paddington NSW 2021

PRESENT

Chris Ballantine	Bob Eaglesham
Chris Denny	Barbara Edwards
Paul Hummerston	Paul Irving
Chris Johnson	Ken Myers
Keith Roberts	George Stockwell

1. OPENING OF MEETING

The President, Paul Irving, as chair of the meeting, confirmed the quorum was present and declared the meeting open at 1225h AEDT.

The President welcomed all.

2. APOLOGIES

The President noted apologies from Kevin Menzies and Carol Ward.

3. MINUTES

Moved and seconded that the minutes of the AGM held on 26 Nov 2023 be confirmed. (Paul Irving/Chris Ballantine).

Resolution carried.

Nil matters arising from the minutes.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

Nil correspondence related to the AGM.

5. REPORTS FOR YEJ2024

President's Report was delivered in accordance with rule 15 of the constitution and will be posted to the website.

Discussion included dates and nature of events in 2025 to mark the centenary of the Corps.

Treasurer's Report, financial statements and stocktake of assets were delivered in accordance with rules 15 and 21 of the constitution and will be posted to the website.

Discussion included withholding tax, use of reserves and distribution of car decals.

Auditor's Report was before the meeting as required by rule 17.a) of the constitution and spoken to by the Honorary Auditor, who noted comfort with the accuracy of the accounts but recommended payments by cheque cease and formatting changes to the cashbook.

6. ELECTIONS/APPOINTMENTS

Committee

The President noted that all current office bearers and members of the Committee had advised of their readiness to continue, that there were no other ~~contested~~ nominations, so no position was contested. The following were elected: until the conclusion of the 2025 AGM:

OFFICIAL

President:	Paul Irving
Senior Vice President	Paul Hummerston
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Keith Roberts
Treasurer	Keith Roberts
Member (Membership Officer)	Kevin Menzies
Member (Editor/Publisher <i>Thurunka</i>)	Chris Johnson.
Member	Carol Ward.

Auditor

Having confirmed his willingness to continue, the appointment of Chris Ballantine as Honorary Auditor was affirmed.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Matters raised and discussed were:

1. contact details for the Membership Officer on the website
2. health and welfare of several members and partners
3. need to remove names of deceased Members listed on website
4. need for various changes to the constitution of the Association
5. likely need for a bigger venue for the 2025 Anzac Day post march gathering.

8. CLOSING OF MEETING

There being no further business, the President thanked Members for attending and as chair of the meeting declared the meeting closed at 1253h AEDT.

.....
President