

1/15 Royal New South Wales Lancers Band, Parramatta, New South Wales, Australia

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The Royal New South Wales Lancers are the oldest Cavalry Regiment in New South Wales. Being established as part to the NSW Cavalry Reserves on 3 January 1885 with Troops forming in towns throughout the Colony. On joining the Corps one had to purchase their uniform, and provide one's horse, the equipment issued was sabres, rifles, bridles and saddle cloths.

The Troops were usually identified by a locality name, one of these at West Maitland, on the Hunter River, was known as the Maitland or the Hunter River Troop. In 1888 an unofficial Band was formed and operated with that Troop. The following year, the Reserves were reorganised and the NSW Cavalry Regiment, was formed later allocated a Band. The Brass Band associated with the Hunter River Troop, became the NSW Cavalry Band, Mr F. Fitness being the initial Bandmaster.

The Band became mounted and were mounted on greys, purchased by the officers and used for training purposes when not required for band use. It was unusual in those days for horses to be maintained by a regiment. The Band establishment was initially 21 including one kettle drummer. Recruitment of 24 was permitted to provide for casualties. An initial clothing allowance of £2 per Bandsman was paid when the uniforms were issued on 4 June 1891. The instruments from Potter & Co. London cost £297.5.3. The GOC NSW Military Forces authorised a payment of £100 from the No. 2 Band Fund, part of the balance being provided by members of the Regiment and donations. A consequence of this financial shortfall the Band began fund raising ventures to ensure its survival.

The NSW Colonial Government in 1891 authorised an annual Band Subsidy of £50; this was later increased to £250. In 1903, when the Regiment passed to Commonwealth control it was reduced to £150. It was further reduced to £75 in 1914. The Australian financial year commences on 1 July with the Budget being introduced in mid August. World War I had started and Australia had declared war before the 1914-15 Budget was introduced.

The Band wore the same uniform as the Regiment, NSW Brown, with the tunic being fitted with a red Plastron, on their breeches a white stripe, whereas the Regiment wore a red stripe. The Regiment wore cock's plumes on their slouch hat, which had a

puggaree of red with two white folds. A white pouch belt with silver mounted black pouch was worn over the shoulder, plus a red and yellow girdle. Collar badges were also worn.

In 1903 on becoming the 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment (New South Wales Lancers) the uniform was changed to that authorised for the Australian Light Horse, although the Band was permitted to wear the NSW uniform plus the white stripe on the breeches. Nickel shoulder titles (1 ALH NSW Lancers) were also worn.

Bandsmen's pay was subject to an annual appropriation which was set in 1894, the pay was full day 1/24th, half day 1/48th and evening band practice 1/96th, subject to the Efficiency rate of the annual rate being met. The Efficiency standard was gazetted the next year, being 2 of every 3 full days, 9 of 12 half days and 6 of 8 practices.

In 1894, the Regiment was renamed the New South Wales Lancers and the following marches were authorised, Walk - The Dragoon Guardsman, Trot - The Cavalier, Gallop - Bonnie Dundee.

The Dragoon Guardsman and The Cavalier were always played when the NSWL passed a saluting base and all three marches were played at Inspections, Tattoos and when the NSWL gave a mounted display, where there was sufficient space for the horses to gallop.

On 25 August 1895, the Peace & War Establishments were reviewed and the Band in the P.E. was 1 Band Sergeant and 18 Bandsmen. In the W.E. the bandsmen were to be stretcher bearers allocated four per Squadron.

1897 was an eventual year. It was decided that the Band would transfer to Parramatta, where the RHQ was to be located.

The Barracks, designed by Lt John Watts, 46th South Devonshire Regiment in 1818 under instructions of Governor Lachlan Macquarie and completed in 1820. The Barracks were renamed the Lancer Barracks and are listed in the National Historical Buildings Register. The RNSWL is still located there.

Before the Band moved, Regimental officers helped the bandsmen who were prepared to transfer in finding employment in the Parramatta district, plus the design and construction of their homes. On moving to Parramatta a new Bandmaster Mr W. Watters was appointed. New bandsmen were recruited from the 3rd Infantry Regiment, and the Parramatta Town Band.

Plans were in hand for the NSWL to send a Detachment together with NSW Mounted Rifles and the Royal Australian Artillery to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, in the United Kingdom. A Promenade Concert was held at the Sydney Town Hall to raise funds for the expenses. The Colonial Governor attended the Concert. The Band came from West Maitland 157 km from Sydney, the Australian Artillery - NSW Regiment Band,



*New South Wales Lancers
Band, 1926.*

now the 2nd Military District Band, Australian Regular Army, the NSW Naval Brigade Band, now the Royal Australian Navy Support Command Band, HMAS *Penguin*, and NSW Police Band combined for several items. This was the introduction of the NSWL Band to events in NSW, and the continuing relationship between the NSWL and the other bands.

The next day the Band led a parade through Sydney of the NSW Contingent to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations to their embarkation. The NSWL Troop paid their own fares.

Early in 1898, the Band moved to Parramatta and some new instruments were purchased. These included two tympani for use on the drumhorse. The Band was increased to 25 and this was confirmed in the revised P.E. of 6 July 1990, which also provided for two trumpeters per squadron.

The Band was heavily involved in the Commonwealth of Australia inauguration ceremonies in 1901. It led a Section of the Parade through Sydney, culminating at Centennial Park, where the inauguration ceremony took place.

The following evening, the NSWL Band with 21 other Bands including 7 British, one Canadian, one Indian and one New Zealand participated in the Commonwealth inauguration Tattoo. Late in the evening paraffin lamps were used to illuminate the march cards. The attendance was 30,000 the largest at any gathering in Australia until that date.

A squadron of the NSWL went to England for training in 1899, and the Band led the squadron through Sydney before its departure. On their return journey most of the Squadron disembarked in Capetown to serve in the South African War 1899-1902. Many officers and men were to serve in South Africa, either

in the NSWL or other Colonial units, which were formed, or subsequently in the Commonwealth Units formed after Federation on 1 January 1901.

Several trumpeters went to South Africa. The Band did not although individual members may have.

In 1900, a half-squadron was formed at Newcastle, 83 kms from Sydney. Mr E. W. Tryell, Wallsend, NSW wrote the NSW Lancers March, which was dedicated to the initial officers of the Newcastle Half-Squadron. This march and the NSW Lancers Waltz by Mrs C. Dalton, were played at each regimental ball. There was also an annual ball at each of the four Squadrons, located in the greater Sydney area every year until 1914. Copies of these two pieces of music are on display at the Regimental Museum, Linden House, Lancer Barracks, Parramatta.

After the Great War, sub-unit balls were resumed and held on an irregular basis until 1937 when they were held annually until 1939. The Band played at the Balls held at Parramatta.

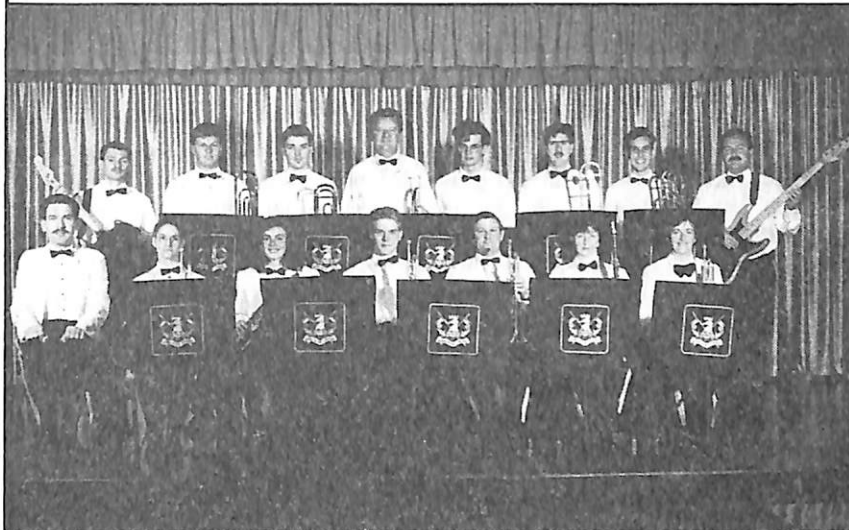
On 16 May 1906, the Band combined with the 3rd ALH Band to play at the Dedication of the South African War Memorial Tablet at St Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney. The Bands subsequently lead a Veterans' Parade through Sydney.

In the Band for the first time was Frederick James (Jim) Heapy (1881-1945). Jim had previously served in South Africa as a Trumpeter. he was a member of the Band for 32 years after playing several instruments, playing the 1st trombone, 2nd trombone, bass trombone, finishing on eb tuba. He retired as Band Sergeant, the only NCO in the Band apart from Bandmaster A. E. Taylor.

He started a family tradition. He persuaded his brother William (Bill) to join, his son Ernest Neil (Dadda) Heapy (1909-1979), his nephew Edward (Eddie) Bill's son followed. Dadda joined as a learner in 1926 and played without pay until he enlisted in 1934. His instruments were tenor and brass trombone. The Band was the first Army Reserve Band to attend the then Army School of Music, Balcombe, Victoria, where the Director of Music stated that E. N. Heapy was 'one of the finest bass trombone players he had heard'. Major V. Newman was not the only Bandmaster to compliment Dadda on his playing.

The Band returned to the Army School of Music in 1961, 63, 65, 68, 74, 76 and 1982. Subsequently, the Army School of Music was transferred and integrated as the Australian Defence Force School of Music, Simpson Barracks, Watsonia, Victoria.

Jim's grandson Neil Frederick (Heap) Heapy (1935-) joined the Band in 1953 after National Service, when W.O. O'Donnell was Bandmaster. Like his grandfather and father, Heapy also played the trombone, until 1968, when he joined as a regular musician the Australian Army Band Corps, where he served in the Royal Australian Engineers Band and Eastern Command Band, now the 2nd Military District Band.



*Royal New South Wales
Lancers Band, July 1991.*

Jim, Dadda and Heap were all awarded the Efficiency Medal.

The United States Navy sent a fleet on a world circumnavigation voyage in 1908. The fleet arrived in Sydney, at the conclusion of the annual Light Horse training exercises, which were extended by one day so that the ALH could form part of the Review Parade in which the American sailors also took part.

On 12 March 1913, the Canberra Commencement Ceremony, took place. [Canberra is the Capital of Australia.] The 3rd Australian Light Horse Brigade who had been holding their annual camp in the Canberra area were present and the ceremony concluded with a marchpast of the Brigade, the salute being taken by the Governor-General Lord Denman. The Brigade comprised, the 7th ALH (New South Wales Lancers), 9th ALH (NSW Mounted Rifles) and 11th ALH (Australian Horse) Regiments, in Review Order at the Walk. The Regiments were renumbered in 1912. The Brigade was lead by the NSWL Band.

The Australian part time forces were recruited for Home Defence, and on the outbreak of WWI, large numbers of the NSWL joined the Australian Light Horse Regiments of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). The 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment was raised in NSW, included the NSWL and the AH Bandsmen in its dismounted Band of 19, the Band Sergeant being J. H. Calthorpe of the AH. The instruments were purchased with donations by the regimental members, country supporters and a ladies group in Sydney. The ladies group also contributed funds to purchase instruments for two infantry battalion bands.

The War was to have an impact upon the Band and it became dismounted in 1915. The Band contributed to recruiting and other war effort campaigns in Parramatta and Sydney.

In 1918, and 1921, there was a further renumbering of the ALH Regiments, which were linked to the ALH Regiments of the Great War, in 1921, the NSWL Band, became the 4th Cavalry Brigade Band, although it remained at Lancer Barracks and was administered by the 1st Light Horse (LH) and continued to be known as the Lancers Band.

In 1921, the NSWL Band commenced its annual participation in the Anzac Day march through Sydney on 25 April to remember the Gallipoli campaign of 1915.

Field Marshal Lord Allenby, visited Australia in 1926 and arrived in Sydney on 20 January. He was met at the Sydney Central Railway Station by a Guard of Honour formed by the NSWL which included Officers and men who had served with or under the F.M. in South Africa and Palestine. The Band was also present. The next day at Parramatta, a tablet was dedicated at St John's Parramatta, to members of the ALH who fell in the Great War. The Band led the NSWL to the church and played at the service.

Guidons were consecrated at the 4th Cavalry Brigade Camp on 2 April 1928. The Band and the 1st LH (NSWL), 6th LH (NSW Mounted Rifles), 7th LH (Australian Horse), and 21st LH (Illawarra) were present. At the conclusion of the Parade, the Regiments passed in review, at the Walk, the Trot and the Gallop, with the Band providing the music.

The Band entered the Palings Shield in 1929. Palings were a music house in Sydney. The Shield was for competition by Brass Bands, the Band won the competition. It entered the competition again in 1932, 1935 and 1936 gaining a prize on every occasion.

The Sydney Harbour Bridge was opened in 1932, the NSWL provided the Governor's escort and the Band were present, they received little mention. One Captain De Groot, a member of a semi political organisation, The New Guard, planned to cut the Ribbon and deny the Premier, Mr Lang, the opportunity of doing it by the Police. The incident was witnessed by the NSWL escort and the Band.

The NSWL and the Band were pleased to discover and duly emphasised that De Groot was not using an army saddle. This served to dispel the allegation that De Groot was a member of the LH contingent at the Ceremony.

1935 was an important year on 5 March, the Band led the NSWL through Parramatta for the 50th Anniversary Church Parade. It later took part in the Royal Review held to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of H.M. King George V. The King granted the title of Royal New South Wales Lancers.

The Band was also involved with the Tattoo held as part of the Jubilee Celebrations.

Late in the year Lt A. E. Taylor, Bandmaster, retired after 44 years service in the Band and was the last original member having joined in 1891 to leave the Band. He continued as an Honorary

Instructor, until shortly before his death in 1941. The Band at this time wore the current Australian Army uniform plus the accoutrements referred to earlier.

The next year, the Band was invited to Canberra to play for the opening of Parliament following the accession of H.M. King George VI. After the formal opening, photographs of the Band were taken on the steps of Parliament House, including one with the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Joseph Lyons. Mr Lyons invited the Band to play in Kings Hall, inside Parliament House. Capt A. E. Taylor, Senior Officer present declined on the basis that as the Band was both non-political and non-secretarian, he could not permit the Band to enter Parliament House.

However, it can claim to be the first Band that played at the New Parliament House, opened by H.M. Queen Elizabeth in 1988 for the Band played on its site in 1913 on Canberra Commencement Day.

A Sequi-Centenary Review was held in Centennial Park, on 26 January 1938 in which the RSWL and Band participated. A Tattoo was held at Cumberland Oval, Parramatta on 27 October, the Band was accompanied by the Kings School Cadet Corps Band and the Australian Broadcasting Commission Military Band, 7000 attended the Tattoo.

The Band remained in New South Wales as the 4 Cavalry Brigade Band until 1942. The RNSWL was disbanded in January 1946.

In 1948, the RNSWL and its Band, were reestablished, when the CMF was reconstituted. The establishment for the Band was 28 and former members of the Band rejoined, W.O. Dale being appointed Bandmaster. The Band wore the standard Army uniform with a Black Beret. The Black Beret replaced the Slouch Hat in 1944, when the RNSWL became an armoured unit.

On 12 June 1951, the RNSWL contingent and the Band returned to Canberra to participate in the Services Marchpast, with the Salute being taken by the Governor-General the Rt Hon W. J. McKell, following the opening of Parliament, which took place on the 50th anniversary of the first Federal Parliament in Melbourne. The next time in *The Canberra Times*, which reported these events mentioned that as the Parade formed up in the Assembly area there was a heavy downpour. It also mentioned that a Canberra resident present at the 1913 Marchpast complained that there was only one Band in the parade and no horses. There were lots of horses in 1913. The complainant seemed unaware that the Armoured vehicles in the parade and the Band belonged to one of the Regiments on parade in 1913. There was Heapy in the Band on each occasion and probably another Father and son amongst the other members of the Lancers on parade.

Shortly after the Band began to suffer from declining numbers as the pre-war members retired, but it was resuscitated by recruitment from an Army Reserve Infantry Band.

On 24 November 1957, Guidons were presented at Cumberland Oval, Winter Uniforms were the Order of the Day. The temperature at 11 am when the Rehearsal took place was 100° F. When the Presentation took place in the afternoon it was 106° F. In an attempt to keep the instruments cool, cold water was poured into them and drained out through the water key. That did not prevent the slides sticking on the trombones and the valves in some of the other instruments sticking.

On 18 October, 1959, the Band led the RNSWL to receive the Freedom of Entry to the City of Parramatta and still leads the RNSWL when the Right of Entry is exercised.

In December 1968, the Band commenced a Beat the Retreat Ceremony at Parramatta, which continued until 1972.

As part of the 200th anniversary celebrations of the Discovery of Australia by Captain James Cook, H.M. Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia, officially declared open the restored Government House at Parramatta. The music for that occasion was provided by the RNSWL Band.

In December, 1971, the Band returned to Government House, the Band under W.O.II T. F. G. Nichols, 28 strong restoring the practice of giving concerts in the garden. The last Band to play 121 years before, had been the 58th regiment (Rutlands) now the Anglican Regiment in 1985, prior to returning to England.

The band played at the opening of the R.S.L. Club, Castle Hill, near Parramatta by the State Governor of 28 September 1974.

The Band also took part in the H.M. Queen Elizabeth Silver Jubilee Parade through Sydney, on 3 December 1977. It also performed the Beat the Retreat ceremony in the forecourt of the Sydney Opera House, in 1980.

The centenary year of the Regiment in 1985, meant the Band had a busy year, at which a Clydesdale, complete with the tympani as a Drumhorse, paraded with the Band. The tympani long held in the regimental Museum, were reskinned and their sound was heard once more. Unfortunately the original drum bannerettes had perished.


The Band also led the Regiment to Sydney Town Hall, where the Royal New South Wales Lancers were given the Freedom of Entry to the City of Sydney. It had led the Regiment in the Exercise of that Right. Several times since then it has led the regiment when it has exercised that Right.

The following year there was a disaster for the band. A fire in the Bandroom resulted in the complete loss of its instruments and Library. From this adversity, the Band drew strength and reorganised, obtaining new instruments, it became a military band and continued its support to the RNSWL and the local community. It was this spirit which enabled the Band to participate fully in the Australian Bi-Centennial celebrations in 1988.

In 1991, the Band celebrates one hundred years of military music. It has been reorganised many times, undergone several changes of name. The RNSWL Band was one of the first mounted Bands in Australia. When it became dismounted in 1915 it was the last military mounted Band of the Home Defence Force. There were several mounted Bands in the ALH component of the Australian Imperial Force.

The RNSWL Band is celebrating its 100th Birthday by playing at a Regimental Ball on 11 July and a Concert at Lancer Barracks, on 13 October 1991.

The Band, underwent several changes of name, was disbanded and reformed and then underwent a major fire. Despite these misfortunes, it follows Australian Army practices and has female musicians. They number three who play the tenor saxophone, 2nd trombone and side drum respectively. The Band stands at Attention, with instruments at the Ready. The Bandmaster's order **BAND AHEAD WALK MARCH** is now only heard when the Band plays for the Memorial Horse Troop. On the command, **BY THE CENTRE, QUICK MARCH**, the band steps off smartly with a distinct identifying sound into its second century.



Sources

Lt Col P. V. Vernon, History of the Royal New South Wales Lancers, 1885-1985, Historical Records, NSW Bands Assn, Canberra Times, Parramatta Argus, Sydney Morning Herald, past and present Bandmasters and Musicians.