

# ***ENROLLED PENSIONER GUARD***

## **SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP BEGINNINGS**

In mid 1999, **Lloyd Stuart** of Myaree inserted a piece in the "West Australian" Can You Help column, asking for contact from other descendants of Enrolled Pensioner Guards in W.A. Many responded and met at Lloyd's house to discuss their ancestor, but no further meetings were organised. However, that meeting did show there was sufficient interest in the Pensioner Guards to investigate forming a Group.

**Phillippa Ward and Lawrence Doran** were the moving force behind discussions to establish a new Special Interest Group. using the rules under WAGS guidelines. A number of interested members met to discuss the formalities necessary, and Phillippa and Lawrence set about implementing the process.

Paragraphs in the "West Australian" Can You Help Column brought a big response and in February 2000 47 people attended a recruiting meeting, when the aims of the Group were set out:

- to develop a register of members of the Enrolled Pensioner Force and the members researching their Pensioner Guard;
- to encourage members with common interest research to share information;
- to compile resource files to assist members with their research;
- to invite speakers with an interest in the Enrolled Pensioners or their era to address meetings;
- to compile and distribute a Quarterly Newsletter.
- Frank Broomhall's "The Veterans a history of the Enrolled Pensioner Force in Western Australia 1850-1868" was accepted as the main resource for the Group.

**The first official meeting of the Enrolled Pensioner Guard Special Interest Group was held at the Western Australian Genealogical Society on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2000.**

**Lawrence Doran** became Convenor, and **Phillippa Ward** took on the role of Editor as well as the position of Deputy Convenor.

**Terry Carroll** has been a constant supporter of the Group, and was quite prepared to fill the role of Deputy Convenor when requested. Terry also assisted with computer input and the Group's entry on WAGS website.

**Jack Herbert** was instrumental in organising the first muster of descendants of the "Scindian" Pensioner Guards at the Claremont Museum in June 2000, the 150<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary of the arrival of the ship. Jack Herbert's ancestor, Henry Herbert had arrived on the 'Scindian' and was granted land at Freshwater Bay, where his wife Ann set up a school. That building is now part of the Claremont Museum. More than 100 people attended on the day, and many were happy to share their ancestor's history.

**Ray Hartnett**, *Convenor of the Irish Group*, had been in contact with **Sue Baddeley**, *Military Historian based in London for assistance with his own military research, and at his suggestion contact was made with Sue. Her interest in the Military in Western Australia and in particular the Enrolled Pensioner Force proved to valuable to the Group. When Sue returned briefly to Perth in 2000, she spoke to the Group about military research in the British Army and the East India Company, giving sources for members to use for their own research.*

**Sue Baddeley's** notes on Sources for Researching an Enrolled Pensioner Ancestor in Western Australia and Beyond (1996) is well used as a reference, and her contributions on the Royal Marine Enrolled Pensioner Guards, the Tercentenary of the 31<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Foot and extracts from her extensive data base to name just a few, have proved invaluable to members.

**Derrick Prall** designed the badge adopted by the Group. He used an original EPG Belt Badge from his own collection as his pattern. Derrick has always shown an interest in the group,

and has since donated to the Group a boxed set of 2 Bayonets as used by the Pensioner Guards.

## MARCHING ON

The Enrolled Pensioner Guard Special Interest Group now has its own signature Banner depicting the Badge, machine-embroidered in gold stitching by a teacher of the Embroiderer's Guild of Western Australia. The Badge sits on a royal blue background with gold - stitched name of the Group.

A second outside meeting was held at the Claremont Museum in 2001 bringing more people together whose ancestors were Enrolled Pensioner Guards.

A display set up and explained by members of the Committee at the National Archives in Victoria Park in 2002 generated much interest and gave the Group a better idea of the type of information being sought by the descendants of the EPG.

Another small display at the Woodloes Historical Homestead in Canning also gave the Group an opportunity to show and explain to the public about that era of Western Australia's early history, often neglected by early historians.

**Paul Bridges**, Deputy Curator of the Army Museum of Western Australia has been most supportive of the Group and has loaned part of his own collection of Pensioner Guard artefacts for display after bringing them to a meeting to explain their significance. Paul's other interest in the Bassendean area and the involvement of the EPG

has brought to the notice of the Group the existence of the only remaining Pensioner Guard cottage in the area and the importance of having it preserved.

At the invitation of the Army Museum, the Enrolled Pensioner Guard Group organised a Meeting in October 2002 for members to attend the opening of a display depicting the involvement of the Pensioner Guards in the Fremantle area. That display, co-ordinated by Committee member Jeanette Lee, has continued to generate interest.

**Regular three monthly meetings** are held with guest speakers invited in a continuing endeavour to add to our understanding of the role played by the Pensioner Force in the early history of Western Australia. Meetings at WAGS premises in Bayswater have continued to be well attended and previous speakers have helped to expand our knowledge.

We have been fortunate to include among our visiting speakers such interesting people as:

**Professor Geoffrey Bolton** who has spoken on two occasions. His knowledge of Western Australian history is extensive, and his comments on the social and economic impact made by the presence of the EPG proved most informative.

**Derrick Prall spoke** on the Royal Engineers and their important involvement in the early Swan River Settlement development.

**John Kelly** spoke about his considerable research on Lighthouses, in particular the Lighthouse at

Geraldton where his ancestor Pensioner Guard John Kelly, was a Lightkeeper.

**Nicholas Reynolds** Keeper of Photographs at the Army Museum, gave a most interest talk on the importance of conserving and preserving old photographs and their importance in the visual history of the State.

All members appreciated the gift by Ron Benton and the Fitzpatrick family of an original Opalotype photograph of their Enrolled Pensioner Guard ancestor, Michael Fitzpatrick. As a consequence of the gift, it was decided to apply to the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia for a conservation grant. A detailed application was prepared with supporting evidence, under the Cultural Heritage and Conservation criteria, which has proved successful. Greg Manzie, Conservator of Glyde Conservation Gallery, Mosman Park will conserve the photograph.

Interest in the group from outer areas has resulted in invitations to speak at Historical groups at Mandurah and Rockingham. **Jack and Lyn Hammer** of the Toodyay Historical Society were most informative hosts when they arranged a tour of the original Pensioner Guard land grants for members of the Committee. The old Newcastle area and the present Toodyay townsite still have evidence of the involvement of the Enrolled Pensioner Guards in the early settlement days, including still existing cottages in the main street, now built around or altered.

Journalist, **John Clydesdale**, author of 'Pioneer of the Road" gave members at the General Meeting a resume of his research into the first self-powered vehicle to arrive in Australia. The machine was used in the Greenough/Port Gregory district to construct the first stone roads in the area where early Enrolled Pensioner Guards were stationed.

**Carol Cahill**, lately of the Geraldton area, gave members at a later General Meeting a brief resume of the Enrolled Pensioner Guards who were granted land in the Greenough area. Many of the families intermarried and continue to live in the district.

Interest continues to grow in the role of the Enrolled Pensioner Guards in the early history of Western Australia and their involvement in the economic growth and social stability of the struggling colony.

The 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of the Swan River Colony will no doubt generate further interest in researching and recording those early years.

Jean McDonald  
Convenor  
Enrolled Pensioner Guard Group  
2003

---

