



Reserve Forces Day Council Inc

RECOGNISING THE VALUE OF RESERVE SERVICE TO THE NATION ON JULY 1

ARBN 098 991 970 CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING ACT CFN 16628

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Media Release

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Coo-ee leads the call in the 2005 Reserve Forces Parade in Sydney

The celebration of the 90th anniversary of the Coo-ee March, the first of the great recruiting marches of the First World War, will be the highlight of the 2005 Reserve Forces Day Parade, Sydney, on Sunday 3 July.

The descendants of the original Coo-ees as well as volunteers from each of the towns from along the original route from Gilgandra to Sydney and community and service organisations will celebrate the arrival in Sydney of the original Coo-ees. They will join with present day Australian Navy, Army and Air Force Reservists members of Unit Associations, The National Servicemen's Association and Reserve Units from the United States, New Zealand and Hong Kong for a parade of great pageantry which will also include military and civilian bands.

Major John Gallagher, a long serving Reservist and great grandson of Bill Hitchen will lead the Re-enactment Battalion of Coo-ees in the 2005 parade. The Coo-ees will be dressed in working man's civilian clothing of the era and will be accompanied by a Light Horse squadron and an AIF Infantry platoon of re-enactors in WWI uniform.

The 2005 Parade will retrace their original route along Macquarie Street to the Domain, where similar to 1915 the Coo-ees, marchers will be saluted with an archway of roses.

The Inaugural Reserve Forced Day Parade was held in 1998 and since then parades have been held on an annual basis across the nation.

Speaking at the launch of the NSW 2005 Reserve Forces Day Parade at Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney, Convenor Lieutenant Colonel John Moore said Reserve Forces Day will be a chance for all Australians to remember the contribution of generations of 'citizen soldiers' to the security and defence of Australia.

"Reserve Forces Day is an opportunity to thank Australian men and women who have put aside their civilian activities for service in the Australian Defence Force as well as their families and employers for their ongoing support," Lt Col. Moore said.

Lt Col. Moore said holding the launch at Hyde Park Barracks, the civilian barracks that housed Bill Hitchen's Irish immigrant mother and convict father during their first years in Australia, acknowledged the humble origins of many of the Coo-ee Marchers.

"The Coo-ee Marchers were just ordinary fathers, brothers, husbands, sweethearts and sons who came from all walks of life and backgrounds to support their mates on the front line. Their actions triggered further recruiting marches throughout NSW and Australia and went along way towards forging a stronger sense of nationhood," Lt Col. Moore said.

For details on how to participate in the 2005 parade as a Coo-ee re-enactor please contact Bob Joseph on 0418 215 182 or bob.joseph@bigpond.com by 15th June 2005.

The 2005 Parade will also acknowledge the 90th anniversary of the formation of the Second Division of the 1st AIF and the 60th anniversary of the formation of Commando Companies. For details of all Reserve Forces Day activities please go to www.rfd.org.au.

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