

TATTOOED



WORDS AND PICS BRIAN HARTIGAN

One of the world's biggest ever military tattoos went off with a bang in Sydney in February with barely enough room on the Sydney Olympic Stadium football field for the more than 1500 performers.

Approximately 280 ADF personnel were among those who participated in the Edinburgh Military Tattoo as it toured Australia for only the second time.

It has only toured outside Scotland on three occasions.

The tattoo was a spectacular, colourful, loud performance choreographed to military precision, featuring Commonwealth and other international bands and display teams.

Marking the 60th year of the world-famous Edinburgh Military Tattoo, performers this

year were *Celebrating 60 Years of Valour, Mateship and Glory*.

ADF contributions to the spectacle included personnel from the Federation Guard, the Navy, Army and Air Force bands, as well as liaison officers for the international bands. Australia's involvement in the performances also included a ceremonial saluting role by Australia's Federation Guard and a display by the massed bands of the ADF.

RAAF's Sergeant Adam Schlemitz, drum major for the ADF massed band, said it was great to perform in his first ever Tattoo in Australia and that the ADF's contribution had been outstanding.

"For a musician in the ADF, the tattoo is like our Olympics and I felt proud to be an Australian representing my country," he said.

"The ADF put together a display that reflected the character of the Aussie servicemen and women, as well as demonstrating the extraordinary range of talents in the three service bands."

The tattoo also included 17 massed pipe bands from the UK and Australia, the band of the Moscow Military Conservatoire, 96 highland dancers from Australia and 24 from Scotland, the New Zealand Army Band, Middlesex County Volunteers from the USA, the People's Liberation Army of China Band, NSW Mounted Police and Band, the Top Secret Drum Corps from Switzerland, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Steel Orchestra, the King's Guard of Norway Band and Precision Drill Team, and the UK Armed Forces massed bands.



A small wooden cannon donated to the Anglesea Barracks Sergeants' Mess in 1956 by the HMAS Wagga Petty Officers' Mess has returned home after travelling the world for nearly 60 years – and listed as missing for the past 10.

Regularly 'liberated' – for a fee that was donated to Legacy – from its Tasmanian home by members of Australian and allied ships, squadrons and units, the cannon has gained a unique history.

It has cruised the seas onboard the USS Carl Vinson, circumnavigated the globe with USS Missouri, transferred between nuclear submarines USS Aspro and USS Queenfish while submerged under the Arctic ice cap. HMAS Westralia took the cannon to war on a tour of duty in the Persian Gulf in 1991.

The cannon visited the Antarctic in 1995 and also completed a tour of duty in East Timor aboard HMAS Anzac in 1999.

Not all the liberations were conducted by navies, though, with the Red Berets parachute display team, a New Zealand MP unit and a RAAF unit possessing it at various times.

The cannon and its base – itself made from decking timbers from the USS Missouri – are covered with small plaques detailing its many travels.

Following the war tour in East Timor, the cannon spent a short time at home before it was noticed missing without the customary permissions or liberation fees being paid.

After a desperate world-wide search, and nearly 10 years later, the cannon was found to be in jail! – or at least the Yeoman Warder's Mess at the Tower of London.

The story goes that the cannon was taken by HMAS Sydney to London, where Yeoman Warder 'Jimmy' James spied the trophy



HOME IS THE TRAVELLER

PICS PHIL PYKE

during a visit to the ship and 'liberated' it from the Australians, taking it to the Tower of London.

Ten years later, on 25 February 2010, two Yeoman Warders, Jimmy James and Crawford Butler, marched with the cannon into Anglesea Barracks, Hobart, and presented

it to Regimental Sergeant Major 12th/40th Battalion, Royal Tasmania Regiment, Warrant Officer Class One John Stonebridge in front of assembled mess members.

The Yeoman Warders, who were assisted in returning the cannon to Australia by Qantas, paid a fine of \$400 to Legacy.

