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United Service

Informing the defence and security debate since 1947

LETTER

The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria



Greetings to our New South Wales colleagues. The Defence presence in Victoria has declined over the last 20 years, with a severe contraction in Melbourne. This has not helped our membership. We currently have about 450 members, with the predominant service represented being Army.

Thank you for access to your journal, *United Service*. It is a splendid publication. Several issues have now been distributed to our members, who are most appreciative. The availability of a high quality journal enhances the professional standing of the Institute, and furthers our aim of raising public awareness of defence and national security issues.

The United Service Institution of Victoria, as it was then called, was founded in 1890 by Major-General Sir Alexander Tulloch, Military Commandant of Victoria. As a lieutenant, General Sir John Monash was a foundation member and an early secretary. Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey was vice-president during the 1930s. From a start in Victoria Barracks, the Institute has had offices at various city locations over the years, including a close association with the former Naval and Military Club. We returned to Victoria Barracks in 2006.

Following World War II, the Institute had branches in most major regional cities in Victoria. Today, only the Geelong Branch remains active and conducts monthly dinner meetings at the Geelong Club.

Please pay us a visit at Victoria Barracks, St Kilda Road, Southbank, if you are in Melbourne. While our library is not as grand as yours, we think we have the best library of military books 'south of the border'. It is certainly worth a browse as we probably have some titles that are unobtainable elsewhere. The collection is fully catalogued for library computer access. Call our secretary, Martin Holme, on (03) 9282 5918 before you visit to ensure admittance to the Barracks.

Our monthly lecture programme gives similar emphasis to Navy, Army, Air Force; defence, foreign affairs, industry; history, current operations/programmes and future forecasts/insights. Lectures are held on the last Thursday of the month in the Defence Plaza Building, 661 Bourke Street, starting at 1200 hours. We charge \$5.00 admission and offer complimentary coffee and tea. Many attendees lunch afterwards in one of several bistros close by. You are most welcome to join us. Please give our secretary prior notification for security processing and bring photo ID with you.

Warren Kemp

President, Royal United Services Institute of Victoria
5 May 2012