



INFANTRYMAN

The Journal of the RAR Association SA
Keeping the Spirit Alive

April 2018

A Vital Step in Soldier Recovery or Transition



I was delighted to attend a briefing of the ADF at Edinburgh recently with Paula Dabovich, hopefully soon to be Dr Dabovich, having completed her PhD thesis on the effect of transition on Special Forces soldiers and observations which are being taken very seriously by SF and 2 Commando in particular.

Paula presented some of her findings to ADF members and to introduce the new Soldier Recovery Centre (SRC) which is now open for business and available to all ranks of the ADF.

These centres have been established in other areas around Australia where there is a high concentration of serving members. They have proved very effective in assisting the soldier, airman or sailor either towards a full recovery and back to work or, if unable to make the appropriate grade for re-employment, the transition process commences to make this sometimes emotionally painful process more accepting but with hope for a future in another calling.

We must be mindful that everyone who loves service life and with considerable success and achievements in the ADF has incredible inner struggles and psychological trauma in discharging.

They don't want to get out of the ADF but, due to matters outside of their control in being wounded, injured, ill or mentally not well, these individuals are high risk and must be managed very carefully.

This is a huge wrench and I must congratulate Defence in treating this matter very seriously because the suicide rate for those discharged involuntary is 2.4 times as high as those discharged voluntarily. Most importantly the suicide rate for ADF members with less than 12 months service aged between 18-39 is 2.3 times as high as Australian men of the same age.

At our local level with a top bunch of officers and NCOs managing this process with considerable empathy and understanding at the SRC, hopefully we can all assist in reducing the suicide levels of this very vulnerable cohort.

Adding to this support another very appreciated and vital facility recently established by the State Government is the Defence Hub just 50 metres from the Jamie Larcombe Centre which, hopefully through good management and links, will be a seamless extension of the SRC and the Jamie Larcombe Centre, where individuals and their families in a relaxed and pleasant surroundings will be able to discuss their issues and concerns they may be experiencing in confidence.

To have these three units all operating together in some way seamlessly with the individual if assistance is required is a tremendous boost in support for individuals who we know are struggling in their transition.

It may not be perfect because we are all on a massive learning curve but through time and experience and most importantly assisting many in a successful transition, this will give us all confidence we are on the right track and contributing in a very important area to reduce individual's anxiety, fears of uncertainty, the loss of tribe and mates, which leads to over-dependency on drugs and alcohol, leading to a downward spiral and potentially, for some, a sad end.

One suicide is one too many and if we can save one, we might be able to save two, and who knows three, which would make all of this effort and the resources allocated extremely beneficial and morally and spiritually very rewarding.

It was made very clear that this SRC will not only assist in recovery and transition if warranted but importantly if we get it right, we will save lives. Let's give it our best shot!

Michael von Berg MC OAM
President



61712 WO 2 Peter John Fyfe DCM 9 September 1946-28 December 2017

Peter was laid to rest during a grave side service in the Huon Lawn Cemetery, Huonville on Wednesday 3 January 2018. I asked Duane Poke ex 10 PI D Coy 3RAR 1971 from Wynyard, Tasmania to represent the battalion (3RAR Vietnam 1971) which he did without hesitation.

Pictured is Duane laying the 3RAR wreath on Peter's grave during the service. Many other floral tributes were laid including one from 'The CO and Soldiers of 3RAR' (Townsville), 3RAR SA Association, all members of 5 PI and one from all members B Company from Ivan Cahill.

Peter had already served one tour of Vietnam in 3RAR during 1967-8 (which included Battles of Coral and Balmoral) and returned to Woodside with the unit but wanted a change and was posted to HQ Broadmeadows Area in October 1969. He became frustrated and returned to 3RAR on 19 January 1970 and became my driver. Shortly after a minor misdemeanour resulted in him being posted to 5 PI B coy. He and Lorraine were married in 1970 and rented a house near the Toll Gate, Glen Osmond.

Peter travelled to Vietnam with the 3RAR Advance Party arriving on 12 February 1971.

Early in the tour B Company was located at the Horseshoe. Trevor Sharland, who was also badly wounded during the battle on 7 June, was a member of Peter's section and relates this story on their escapades at the Horseshoe.

"Hi Peter, here is my recollection of going AWOL to Dat Do, Lance Corporal Peter Fyfe [God bless him] told us that just down the road from the Horseshoe was a little village of Dat Do and on his last tour of Vietnam he snuck out of the Horseshoe into the local village and had a few drinks, so we rounded up the usual idiots, myself, Robert Farnes, Richard Bounds, Fyfe, TJ Swanton from 4 platoon and one more who I cannot recall and headed out down the wire to Dat Do armed to the teeth, guns, grenades, the works only to find everything had changed no drinks, no girls, nothing so back we go to the Horseshoe, at the end of the village was an ARVN ambush and we walked straight into it, someone yelled 'ukdaloy' or whatever the Australian word was and Fyfe said "Yes, Australian" so we went up the wire back to the gun picket at the Horseshoe only to be confronted by 'Snowy' Wright our sergeant, who was incredibly angry and out of control, he threw me to the ground and grabbed a soldier out of his tent and made him cock his rifle and point it at my head and said: "If he moves shoot him".

From there we were thrown in a hole in the ground with galvanised roof, very hot, no water, John Gorton (Prime Minister) was visiting the Horseshoe the next day (March 21) so they decided we couldn't be there so we were told we were going out to do an ambush until he left.

Not long after he was sent home and we got Sgt Desfontaines, fantastic man, we would have done anything for him. We all received a month's loss of pay and no R and C leave for the next break and we had to work in Nui Dat, and that, Peter, is the story of the Dat Do dogs."

In June 1971 3RAR as part of 1 Task Force conducted an operation against the 3/33 NVA Regiment and suffered heavy casualties of which Peter Fyfe was one. I had the pleasure of writing the following citation which resulted in his being awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

Here is the citation: On 7 June 1971 during Operation Overlord Private Fyfe was an acting section commander in 5 Platoon, B Company of the battalion, when the platoon came under heavy and accurate fire from an enemy bunker system.

Two members of the left forward section of the platoon were seriously wounded in this engagement and Private Fyfe was ordered to bring his section forward to bring fire on the enemy to allow evacuation of the wounded.

Without hesitation and with complete disregard for his own personal safety, Private Fyfe lead his platoon forward, positioned them and then moved himself to within ten metres of a bunker from which heavy machine gun and small arms fire was being received. Private Fyfe threw a number of grenades at the bunker and directed his sections fire to neutralize the bunker and thus allow evacuation of the wounded.

Private Fyfe was wounded in the foot early in the action, which lasted for more than four hours, but he refused medical treatment and continued to direct his section's fire against the enemy. During this period, Private Fyfe constantly exposed himself to enemy fire in his efforts to command his section and effect redistribution of their ammunition.

Private Fyfe's outstanding leadership, his complete disregard for his own personal safety and his insistence on remaining on duty during the battle although wounded, ensured such a measure of aggressiveness within his section as to be instrumental in allowing the platoon to successfully evacuate all the wounded and maintain the platoon perimeter during the long engagement against a numerically superior enemy force."

Peter was evacuated to Australia on 16 June 1971. He became eligible for the Surfers Paradise Convalescence Scheme and enjoyed the hospitality with his wife Lorraine.

During his holiday he presented a cheque for \$1000 to the scheme on behalf of 3RAR in Vietnam.

After his recovery he continued to serve in a number of units in Tasmania and Victoria, mainly relating to transport and movement, and completed 23 years service on 5 September 1986 retiring as a Warrant Officer Class 2. During his service Peter was awarded the following Honours and Awards:

Distinguished Conduct Medal, Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp Vietnam, Vietnam Medal, Defence Force Service Medal with First Clasp, National Medal, Australian Defence Medal, Vietnamese Campaign Medal, Infantry Combat Badge and Returned From Active Service Badge.

When he retired he and Lorraine moved to Bruny Island then to Gove where they bought ten acres and a house on the hill where Peter could see anyone coming. There Peter was committed to his garden and his chooks. Next and last move was to Huonville and he built a hot house for his plants.

He became involved in Veterans welfare interviewing them in his lounge room while Lorraine sat outside. Finally they swapped and when the Huon RSL bought a building he moved to 'the office' (RSL Huon) as it was called and continued his advocacy work. He retired from this task about eight years ago. His catch cry was "you must prepare" to which his two boys took very keen notice.

Rest in Peace, Peter, you have served your country well and all those of us who have served with you salute you and will always remember your bravery, friendship and mateship.

Peter Scott, Tuesday, 6 February 2018



FROM THE COMMAND POST

Best help is to find jobs for our veterans

One of the most important mental health aspects for the men and women of the ADF during the transition process from the military to civilian life is gainful employment.

Individuals discharge from the ADF for various reasons - their time is up, wounded, injured, or physically or mentally no longer capable and, of course, our normal administrative discharge of trouble makers, and I won't linger too long on that latter group.

Many who discharge are still young with young families and the attendant responsibility which can only be satisfied through a well-paid job and that is where there has been considerable focus by ex-service organisations, the Government and the private sector.

Separating for some is a traumatic time which raises the anxiety levels and the fear of the unknown and in particular a younger person who enlisted at 17 years of age and has never experienced the upheavals from time to time and the uncertainty which can be experienced in normal civilian life.

In the ADF almost everything is done for you and suddenly you're on your own! For that individual it can be a bit traumatic and that trauma and anxiety can be alleviated greatly through a decent job.

The employment seeking through the appropriate employment platforms, newspaper advertisements, knocking on doors or referrals is sometimes frustrating. But it can be made a lot easier through the development of a good curriculum vitae and supporting documents and it's those documents which are very important and an area the ADF is looking at right now to facilitate a smoother transition.

Individuals transitioning sometimes underestimate the qualities and qualifications they bring to the table because many of their skill sets and training are military qualifications without a civilian equivalent.

There are charlatans out there who will charge thousands of dollars to transfer those military skills to a civilian equivalent, which is a burden the discharging individual should not be forced to carry because it can all be done by the ADF before discharge and that is what is going to happen.

Every course or training which an individual completes while in the ADF will at that time be accredited with the civilian equivalent qualification so at time of discharge the individual has the necessary documents and accreditation for civilian employment which is a great move by the ADF and must be applauded.

This is not hard. It's just never been raised, so let's get on with it. We have a great bunch of men and women discharging from the ADF who deserve a chance and that can be enhanced through a quality CV and supporting documents that a potential civilian employer can relate to and that is just so important.

Going from a full on active military career to

unemployment causing anxiety and despair is the start of a downwards spiral which can lead to drug and alcohol dependency, a feeling of helplessness and potentially some serious outcomes. We talk about early intervention in mental health issues and the best early intervention that we can all do is to help our veterans find a job. Everything thereafter you will find falls out more positively.

Michael von Berg, MC, OAM, President



TRAIN THE TRAINER

"I know after this camp I will be on a high and I know it won't last forever, but I do know I can adjust and learn to work with my demons." Trekker 2017



On the weekend 24 and 25 February, 21 past trekkers and staff gathered from places far and wide for a weekend of learning and assessment at Keswick Barracks. This was the second such course conducted in the past two years.

The aim of the training was to continue to identify and train individuals who have the skills and credibility to become facilitators.

These selected individuals have been "through the mill" and are willing and keen to become involved in the continuation of the project as staff.

The impact which these people have on the trekkers by way of the formal presentations and counselling round the fire is a continual source of amazement to me.

All report on the drained emotions which are experienced following the 6 days in the bush. But universally they feel good about contributing to the recovery of the trekkers who have done the hard yards, in some cases for many years.

Moose Dunlop OAM, Chairman

ANZAC DAY 2018 - Situation and Challenges

This year our situation within Group 9, RAR Battalions and the Australian Special Air Service Regiment (ASASR) is very similar to 2017. The major change is that the ASASR, after leading Group 9 in 2017 as it was their 50th Anniversary of formation as a regiment, will drop back to their traditional position at the last unit association in Group 9. The major change from 2017 is that the North Terrace eastern tramline extension should be in place as will be the extension north down King William Road as far as the Festival Plaza. This will present several challenges for us including:



1. The raised concrete strip between the two sets of tram tracks will be a trip hazard unless fencing per the Grenfell Street median strip east of Gawler Place is installed.
2. If it is wet the tram tracks will be slippery and even if it is dry wheel chair wheels may be caught in the tracks unless care is taken.
3. Our frontages will be confined to the left side of the roads in the vicinity of the tram tracks.

Assembly Area, Order of March, Time March Commences, March Route and Dispersal Area

Our Assembly area is unchanged from 2017 and will be on the eastern side of Pultney Street between North Terrace and Rundle Street. This is shown in the diagram below/opposite:

This diagram shows administrative matters such as toilets, vehicle access blockages and Vehicle Entry Points for authorized vehicles.

We will be marching as a group of battalion associations with the ASASR with the Order of March of:

President's Party

1 RAR

2 RAR

City of Onkaparinga Pipe band

3 RAR

4 RAR

All Group 9 Vehicles

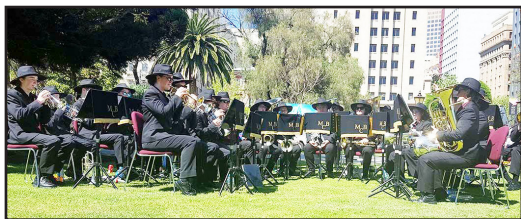
5 RAR

6 RAR

7 RAR

8 RAR

Marion City Band (pictured)



9 RAR

2/4 RAR

5/7 RAR

ASASR

Based on the 2017 timings the ANZAC Day March starts at 9.30 am and we can expect to step off around 10am.

The March Route will be the same as 2017 along North Terrace, King William Road and then along Sir Edwin Smith Drive to the **corner** of Pennington Terrace **before halting and dispersing**.

Dress

Dress should be decorations and medals with neat attire. Headdress should be removed at each saluting point.

Banners and Group 9 Vehicles

The RAR Assoc. SA van or vans will be available to take banners and flags to and from the March and may be used by disabled veterans during the March.

Banners brought from the RAR Assoc. SA club rooms will be laid out along the length of our Assembly Area at the head of each unit.

After dispersing unit banners not required at reunions should be carried forward to our vehicles and loaded into the vehicles accordingly.

Family Members of Veterans

Family members of veterans should march in the Descendants Groups; Groups 16 to 18; towards the rear of the March.

RAR Assoc. SA Post March Function

The post March function for the RAR Association will be at The Lion Hotel, Melbourne Street, North Adelaide.

Other details of the March

Other details of the March such as confirmed timings will be advised to battalion association as they become available. They will also be posted on our website.

Adrian Craig, Ceremonial

Membership Report April 2018

Although I have been your Membership Officer for the past couple of years, I am still finding it a challenge to not only contact Members but getting Members to renew. Despite reminders via phone calls, emails and the post there are still several members who failed to renew their membership during the 2017-2018.

Unfortunately, aging and illness are catching up with some Members who felt they didn't want to renew. As such, I am now calling on you to continue to support your club by renewing your Membership. As of November 2017 we still had about 18 who had become unfinancial, although some have already renewed their Membership since then. On ANZAC Day I will be around at the Form-up area for the RAR and afterwards at the Old Lion for a couple of hours, so I can help with renewals at both areas.

As we are now sending the Infantryman via electronic means, if you have a working email or via post to those who don't, I will be including a Renewal Form with both for those who are due. I ask that you fill this in ASAP and send back either by post, via email with your details, or by electronic payment via online banking. If you do wish to pay via electronic banking, could you please provide your Membership Number, and your name.

Banking details:

Payment type – Please Circle Cash / Cheque / Visa / MasterCard/ Money Order/ Net Banking.

Card No:/...../...../.....

Name on Card :

Card Expiry Date:/.....

Internet Banking:

Acc. Name: Royal Australian Regiment Assoc. (SA) Inc.

Bank - ANZ **BSB**. 015 237. **Acc. No** 484328191

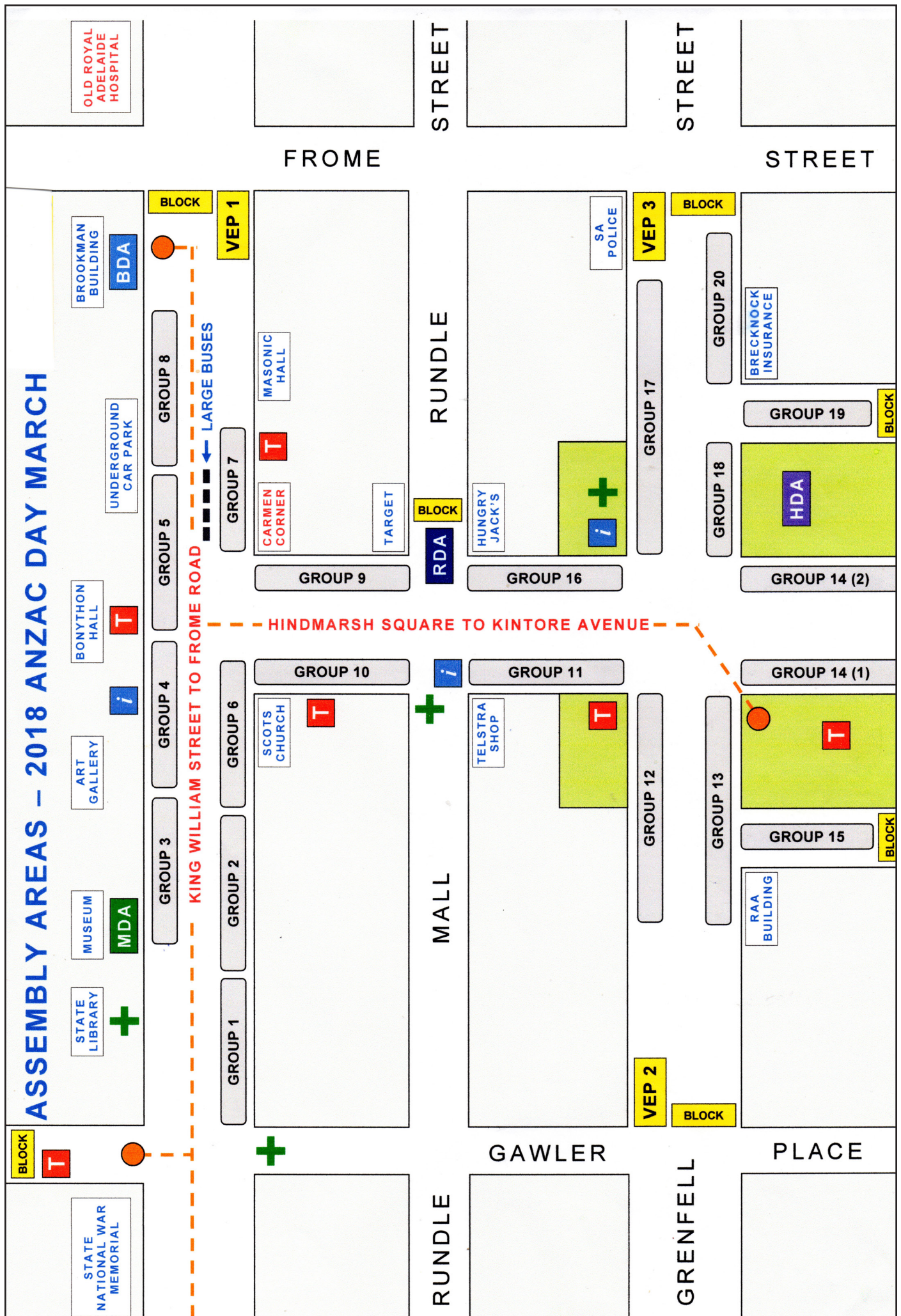
Net Banking: Please provide full name & Membership No.

After the last mailout or email, a number of returns were received, so if you have changed your email or home address please notify me.

If you need help with Membership, please contact me.

Carol Van Der Peet
0415 242 084
carolvanderpeet@gmail.com
RAR Club: rar01internode.on.net

ASSEMBLY AREAS – 2018 ANZAC DAY MARCH



Presentation at RSL Scottsdale, Tasmania

By Dr Harley Stanton

Thanks to Bruce Scott for the invitation to this occasion. It's an honour for my wife Judith, Ron's sister, and me to be here and to speak for a few minutes about

Vietnam, Pilot Officer Ronald William Betts (0118325), and the experiences people share at such times of loss.

Since the beginning of time we have been combative, and humanity seems prone to expose the underbelly of human nature in war. Vietnam was no different. The Chinese and the French had sought to subdue the Vietnamese over long periods, but there is a striking and intense nationalism among the Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese called it, **"The American War"**.¹ The Americans called it the **"Vietnam War"** and Paul Ham wrote about **"Vietnam – The Australian War"**. It highlights the perspective that we all bring in dealing with conflict.

But it should not diminish the struggle and courage that individuals gave on behalf of their country, **some conscripted, some volunteers**. The Australians who went gave distinguished service for their nation and **came home to a deeply hostile reception befitting that of traitors** with some even being spat upon as they disembarked or marched.

War always leaves its **debris**. According to the former director of the Australian Army Medical Services the stress levels in Vietnam were 200 times greater than the levels in World War II.² The infantry were **months in combat zones** - far longer than previous wars; they were fighting **an invisible enemy** in heavily mined areas and bunker systems; and **high incidence of accidental civilian deaths** resulted from the greater willingness to shoot to kill.

The **debris** from that time was evident when on two occasions we visited Canberra as part of Vietnam services. The first was for the opening of the National Vietnam Memorial on Anzac Avenue in 1992. I remember seeing those who had returned: they **were men in wheelchairs, men with walking sticks, and men with the slightly stiff gait** of those who were wearing prostheses. Some were transported in vehicles, unable to walk, and **all bore the scars of battle either in mind or body**.

At that time in 1992 the Australian Newspaper published a Weekend Special Edition that summarised the lives of the more than 500 Australians who gave all for

their country in Vietnam. For Ronald William Betts the newspaper insertion read:

"Ronald W. Betts, 23, Launceston, Tasmania. Pilot Officer Betts was co-pilot of one of two Bushranger gunships called in to give support to Australians from 3RAR, who were pinned down by fire from enemy-held bunkers on March 20, 1971. The gunships flew low and close to the enemy who were only 30m from the Australian platoon's position. Two Australian soldiers were lying wounded between the bunkers. Betts was killed when 20 rounds of enemy fire struck the gunship, forcing it to land at a nearby support base. He was the first RAAF pilot killed in action in Vietnam."³



The role of the Iroquois helicopters in Vietnam was **very pivotal** and they flew roughly **50,000 hours** mostly for the air force but also some for the navy. There were about **25 crew** and **some 80 critical support staff** that maintained the fleet of Iroquois often with around 90 percent operational capability, **a quite incredible feat**. They were involved in Visual Reconnaissance (VR), in Patrol Insertion (PI) and Patrol Extraction (PE). They gave Logistic Support (LS) and as well had Special Tasks as a Sniffer (SPEC) which used sniffer mechanisms to detect the sweat and body odour of the Viet Cong at distances greater than rifle range.

Ron left Australia early July 1970 and had his first orientation in Vietnam on Iroquois UH-1H A2-711 on 25th July. On 4th of August 1970 there was an incident where crew were not willing to fly A2-110 due to a 5 ft 6 in snake that had parked on board. Ron flew as best I've been able to ascertain 194 flights in Vietnam, around 536.45 hours and just on 1500 sorties. He had qualified as Captain and spent 143 hours in that role. In early March 1971 Ron had been made a 'Unit Test Pilot'. On 20th March Bushranger 71 was attempting a smoke resupply to an area known as YS648786 to a platoon of 3rd RAR when the aircraft was hit by 50 calibre fire from close range.⁴ Co-pilot Ron Betts was wounded and Medevaced to REDEARTH and then the 24th EVAC Hospital.⁵ Details of the fire fight that took Ron's life have been vividly portrayed in the book Shockwave by Peter Haran.⁶ During March 1971 six Iroquois were damaged by enemy fire and four required Chinook lift recovery.⁷

At the 1992 Vietnam Memorial Dedication in Canberra I attended the dawn service where Brigadier Colin Kahn,

3. The Weekend Australian Special Edition, October 3-4, 1992, p.4.

4. Royal Australian Airforce, 9th Squadron, Unit History Sheet, No 219-220, 16 – 23 March 1971.

5. Don Barnett; Jody Foss. Lest We Forget, Part II, The 24th Evacuation Hospital, 1946-1972. This was the US Forces Hospital at Long Binh.

6. Peter Haran, Shockwave – An Australian Combat Helicopter Crew in Vietnam, New Holland, Sydney, 2004.

7. National Archives of Australia, Report the Month of March 1971 of the Activities of the RAAF in Vietnam, 12 April 1971.

1. Lindsay Kiang, Johanna Branson, Huynh Phúông Đông – Visions of War and Peace, Saigon Cultural Publishing House, Vietnam. 2007.

2. Paul Ham, Vietnam – The Australian War, Harper Collins, Sydney, 2007, p 635

Vietnam Veterans' Day 18 August 2017

DSO spoke of Vietnam in these words:

"It was a time when nurses, after a night time of tendering the wounded **waited in anticipation of the wail of the siren warning of the arrival of dust-offs, or casualty helicopters bringing wounded diggers to the pad at VUNG TAU**. A time to be ready to cut through more boot laces to get to the wounds, the time to listen again to the call of the wounded – **"don't worry about me, look after my mate"**."

"We learnt that... it was a war that was predictably the same as most other wars, in the contrasts that the War seemed to throw up in the starkest of relief. For we experienced **cruelty**, but the same time **unbounded compassion and love; fear, yet unequalled courage**; the realisation of the **fragility and impermanence of life**, at the same time the **desire to preserve one's own life**. We learnt **aggression**, but **unashamed tenderness**, particularly towards each other. We saw the comparisons of other ways of life with our own, and the realisation that despite our imperfections, Australia really was God's own country."⁸

"We learnt that it was **not a sign of weakness to show kindness and love**; that selfishness had to be transcended at all times by team work, a team work that has been aptly described as the, **"barbed wire bonding of men under fire:"** and **we learnt that when we called for help, we knew it would come."**

That help often came in the form of an Iroquois helicopter. We listened to the words of those who were there and experienced **the most momentous event in their lives** – that of surviving the Australian War in Vietnam. Out of the debris of the years some significant steps of healing have come, though some scars will remain.

The second moment of meaning and understanding for us in Canberra came when in 2010 Tony Cox from the 3rd Royal Australian Regiment (3rd RAR) invited us to attend their 40th year Anniversary Battalion Reunion at the Vietnam Memorial. On this occasion 3rd RAR honoured those who gave so much in support of the Battalion in 1971. In particular Pilot Officer Ronald Betts was honoured and remembered by the Battalion. Tony has been the Reunion organiser for 3rd RAR and was a member of the platoon involved in the contact when Ron was killed. The platoon commanding Officer 2nd Lieutenant David Paterson was severely wounded in this contact but continued to provide encouragement and direction to two other wounded who lay near him in the killing zone. David died shortly after on the battlefield.

Their courage and selflessness is difficult for us to empathise with today.

Tony came to Launceston in 2016 and spent time with us for Remembrance Day at Kings Park. Tony suggested that Ron lost his life seeking to save the platoon of which

he was a part on 20 March 1971. Tony indicated that the platoon missions would not return to Nui Dat base for several weeks after this event and there was no time to grieve on the day. He spoke of his own struggle since those days in 1971 and the resulting PTSD from those past events. He found he wasn't alone. Many veterans suffered the same fate. While 521 died in Vietnam, many more came home to live with the trauma of their experience.

Tony has always felt the cause was honourable in helping a democratic country struggling to survive. Australian Servicemen and Women were called upon to risk all that those who live in other lands might enjoy similar freedoms to those we enjoy today.

In 1997 when I was reflecting on the meaning of ANZAC for me I wrote down three words or phrases:

- Scarring and pain – we have spoken of that
- Loyalty – we have reflected on the bonding that occurred and still occurs
- Sacrifice – that supreme gift often without any reticence as a gift to us who remain.

So 47 years on from that fateful day I am reminded of the lines:

**"They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them or the years condemn,
From the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."**

We thank you for remembering Pilot Officer Ronald William Betts, **not as he would be, but as he was**, an easy going yet caring person, in the full life of youth, **a joyful and fun-loving young man** who would tinkle the ivories of a piano if one was around. His picture on the pilot's seat of the UH-1H A2 – 295 Iroquois in Scottsdale is a reminder to us of his gift of loyalty and sacrifice and for that we thank you. **Ronald William Betts – RIP**

Dr Harley Stanton

In 1987 Harley Stanton graduated with a Doctor of Public Health from Loma Linda University in California and set a goal of "enabling the children of Asia Pacific to grow up in a healthier smoke-free environment".

He has spent much of the last 30 years working in tobacco control, particularly with the World Health Organisation.

He was particularly challenged by the problems of tobacco use in Asia-Pacific and worked to enable all countries of the Western Pacific Region to sign and ratify the global treaty known as the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. He and his wife, Judith, Ron Betts' sister, live in Grindelwald, on the Tamar River near Launceston in Tasmania. They pictured on the north west coast of Tasmania in early March.



8. Address by Brigadier Colin Kahn, DSO, Dawn Service, Dedication of the Australian Vietnam Veterans National Memorial, Canberra, 3rd October 1992 pp.2-3.



Bob hands over 3 RAR reins to Jeff after eight years in the chair

Front from left: Sandra Craig, "Mrs Ceremonial"; Carol Van Der Peet, Secretary; Jeff Barrett, President. Back from left: Kingsley Pau Neville Cooper, Merchandise; Ken Duthy, Schools Military History Officer; Neil Nichols, Social Officer; Adrian Craig, Ceremonial and Treasurer; David White, Assistant Membership Officer; Peter Scott, Patron; Russell Campbell; Des Ross, Pipe Major; Jim Litchfield; Bob Whelan, Immediate Past President; David Munro-Ford; Penelope Forster, Infantryman Editor. Photos: Bruce Forster.

Dear Members: This will be my 8th and last report as your President as I am stepping down at this AGM to let someone else have go, fresh mind fresh ideas.

As I look back to where we started to what we have achieved up to date my mind boggles.

To what was an idea in Lex Grant's mind in 2009 when he started a website association and a quick meeting at Torrens Training Depot on Remembrance Day 2009 to go through the mechanics of forming an association to our first AGM on 19 March 2010 with people jumping in just to fill the positions like myself with little or no experience away we went to where we are today here today when we were ably assisted by the late Noel (Mad Dog) Smith OAM and Ken Duthie in these procedures

With some giving us no hope and strong opposition and others through the RAR Association SA giving us all the help and mentoring we needed we have managed to become one of the most active Battalion Associations in SA and arguably in all of Australia.

Since then we as an association have been assisted by a hard working committee with:

Vice Presidents Ken Duthie, Russell Campbell OAM and Jeff Barrett.

Secretaries Neil Nichols, Jeff Barrett and Carol Van Der Peet.

Treasurers Doug Paterson and Adrian Craig, the latter also Ceremonial Officer.

Membership Officers David White and Keith Wells.

Web Masters Lex Grant and Keith Wells.

Social Officer Neil Nichols.

Merchandise Neville and Margaret Cooper, who along with Neil Nichols have been our main organisers of our fund raising sausage sizzles.

Committee members including Ray Vadeikis and Heather Zammitt.



All this would have been unachievable without the support and organising skills of our wives with the barbecues and the food after our commemorations at the clubrooms. So girls you know who you are and we are forever grateful.

We have been guided by our Patrons Laurie Lewis AM and Peter Scott DSO.

Achievements have include:

- Establishing our own website.
- Dedicating our own memorial in Adelaide.
- Increasing our membership so we now have members in all states and territories with SA based veterans of the Battles of Kapyong and Maryang San becoming life members.
- Conducting commemorative services for our post Korean War war dead in SA plus for the Battles of Kapyong, Maryang San and Long Khanh.
- Raising funds through sausage sizzles, raffles, sales of merchandise and quiz nights and afternoons.
- Monthly lunches in Adelaide.
- Purchasing banners for use by 3 RAR members in states other than SA.

So you can see we have been a very busy association and we are by far the busiest of the battalion associations in South Australia.

We have new leaders coming up through the Committee and I know I can leave the management of our association in their hands although we still need new members on the Committee to augment and replace some who are struggling with health problems. I hope to be remaining on the Committee in a non-executive role.

I wish you all well in your futures.

**Regards,
Bob (Wheels) Whelan
President 3 RAR SA**

Army Reserve General Service Officer Training

The Part Time General Service Officer First Appointment Course (PT GSO FAC) commissions general service officers for the Army Reserve.

It is delivered in five individual training blocks and a series of non-residential modules to reduce the complexities faced by Army Reservists in balancing their officer training requirements with their other commitments, such as civilian occupations.

Most officer cadets complete their training in 12 to 24 months before being posted to an Army Reserve unit in their locality with the rank of Lieutenant.

The university regiments (Sydney University Regiment; Western Australian University Regiment; University of New South Wales Regiment; Adelaide Universities Regiment; Queensland University Regiment, Melbourne University Regiment and Monash University Regiment) operate through the Royal Military College of Australia and conduct all part time officer training for the Army.

Training blocks

Training Block 1: Military Foundation Skills is also known as the Reserve Recruit Training Course and is conducted at the Army Recruit Training Centre, Kapooka, near Wagga Wagga in NSW. Qualified soldiers who are selected to become officers may be granted recognition for this training and would normally commence the PT GSO FAC at Training Block 2. This training block is 35 days long.

Training Blocks 2-4: During these training blocks, candidates progress from small military team leader theory through to team command, leadership and management. Each is 16 days long and all are delivered by Sydney University Regiment in NSW.

Training Block 5: This block, known as the All Corps Army Reserve Platoon Commander course, is 28 days long and is conducted at RMC-D in Canberra. This training block confirms candidates have all the attributes, skills and values to become an officer in the Army Reserve. It also confirms that they have the leadership, management, operational skills and knowledge required for a junior officer to command a platoon on peace and stability operations.

Each University Regiment has the same basic structure. The Regimental HQ acts as the unit's command and control element. Within the HQ is the Training Development Cell. The Training Development Cell is responsible for developing and implementing the training modules to the members of the Staff Cadet companies who are both university students, privately employed and members of the Army Reserve. The HQ also contains the Operations Cell which amongst other things is responsible for maintaining the support and provision of resources within the regiment. Also within the HQ is a dedicated Recruitment Cell, which actively seeks candidates for the Army Reserve Officer training program within the higher education facilities of Australia and the general public.

In addition to the Regimental HQ element, there is a dedicated Training Company that delivers the actual



training to the staff cadets. Within the Training Company is a weapons training team, an infantry skills training cell amongst others, and these contain various ARA and Ares instructors from primarily Combat Arms and the Royal Australian Army Educational Corps (RAAEC)

Each University Regiment has a company of Staff Cadets. Within the Staff Cadet Companies there may also be regionally detached sub-units. For example, the Beersheba Staff Cadet Company (Adelaide) has a regionally detached sub unit in the Northern Territory.

Finally, some units also contain a Recruit Induction Company which supports their parent Brigade to manage and support new recruits through the recruit cycle.

Major J.T. O'Hanlon
Student Australian Command
and Staff College
Hampstead Barracks
Greenacres

The **ARMY MUSEUM OF SA** will open a
NEW EXHIBIT on
WEDNESDAY, MAY 9,

from 10am - 11am commemorating
the **50th Anniversary of the Battle of Fire
Support Bases Coral and Balmoral.**

The event will be held for three days before
the major service at Torrens Parade Ground
on Saturday May 12.

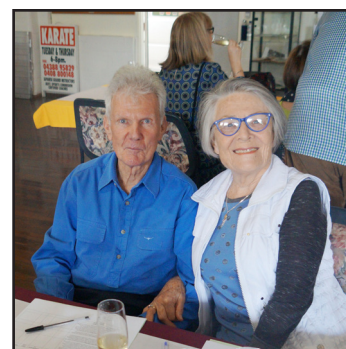
Former members of 1RAR and 3RAR are
invited to attend. Medals to be worn.

Followed by morning tea -and a few
surprises. Attendees may also tour AMOSA
The exhibit will on display for 12 months at
the Army Museum of SA Keswick Barracks.
Entry through main gate off Anzac Highway.

RARA SA Wine Tasting 25 March 2018



Left: Errol Moretti,
David's son
Andrew, David
White, Rod White,
Martin White, Peter
Thorn and Ken
Duthy
Below: Laurie and
Di Lewis.



Eating, drinking and making merry with wonderful friends



A toast to the success of the day by (from left) Brenna Chia, Denise Rowe, host RARA SA President Michael von Berg, guest of honour William Smidmore and his wife Nilda. Photos: Bruce Forster.

What a great afternoon of eating, drinking and generally making merry with wonderful friends along with our two very learned wine experts in William Smidmore and Mike von Berg.

Of course not without the wonderful team of workers who made it all happen and come together and, of course, the caterers who did a fabulous job making life a little easier for the team. If I mention names then sure as eggs somebody will be left out and we cannot let that happen.

At the end of the afternoon during the clean up I managed to collect 20 sheets with five of them with completed points, two half completed and 13 fully completed with comments.

The result was Hardy's Siegersdorf Riesling with 189 points followed by Cat Amongst the Pigeons Shiraz with 173.5 points, the St Hilaire Blanquette de Limoux which is sourced from the oldest sparkling wine producing region on the planet with 171.5, and the Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir at 118.5 points.

The mystery wine received no totals but a couple of comments including "Good lunch wine", "very very nice" and "drinkable".

Some of the comments: St Hilaire – "not a fan", "good number of bubbles...", "very crisp to the pallet", "lovely". The Riesling – "nice", "clean, crisp,"



"fabulous", "smooth finish well liked, best of a good bunch", "yummy", "always a good reliable favorite".

The Pinot Noir – "disappointing", "wouldn't drink again", "wouldn't buy", "left me with a lingering taste of crushing disappointment", "nope". The Shiraz – "nice wine enjoyed this but I'm a red wine drinker", "lovely smooth (old vines?)", "very smooth, good aroma, 2016 bit young", "full bodied, lovely", "yum, and smells like blackberries".

So a great day had by all. Cheers.
Mrs Vice.



Tet 50th Anniversary a reminder of III Corps' significant role

By Centurion

The 50th Anniversary of the Tet offensive in Vietnam has come and gone. However, these extracts from the **Second Edition of A Duty Done** (to be published mid-2018) serve to remind us that The Regiment and its support arms had a significant role in the defeat of that enemy offensive in III Corps.

Background

Tết is short for Tết Nguyên Đán, meaning 'Feast of the First Morning of the First Day' and marks the beginning of the Lunar New Year which in 1968 ran between 27 January and 3 February 1968. It is widely recognised that the 1968 Tet Offensive while a substantial military loss for the North Vietnamese and VC forces, was nevertheless a turning point in the war for the people and Administration of the United States.

Unlike previous conflicts in say WWII and Korea, in the war in South Vietnam there was no clear 'front line' and the enemy operated in both remote regions and in the populated areas. It was consequently considered by the US High Command that a strategy of attrition would be the way to win the war ie, if the number of Communist troops eliminated exceeded the numbers recruited or replaced, then the US would win the war.

By 1967 public support for the Johnson Administration's prosecution of the war was on the wane. Despite assurances that the war was being won, increase in casualties and rising costs had created scepticism and indeed some serious opposition to the war. This occurred despite assertions in late 1967, by the Commander US Military Assistance Command Vietnam (USMACV) (Gen WC Westmoreland), when he said: *"the communists were unable to mount a major offensive and that whereas in 1965 the enemy was winning, today he is certainly losing. We have reached an important point when the end begins to come into view."*

In early 1967, the Communist leadership in the North had recognised it could not compete in a conventional war with the Americans but was aware of growing discontent in the US. However, the Politburo was having its own share of political problems. There was conflict between moderates (led by General Võ Nguyên Giáp) who favoured reunification through political processes and militants (led by Communist Party First Secretary Lê Duẩn) which supported a military solution. In the end the Politburo settled on a plan developed in mid 1967 by General Nguyễn Chí Thanh the head of the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), the Headquarters in the South.

The plan, *General Offensive General Uprising* assumed the people from the South would rise up against their unpopular Government and that many of the ARVN units would defect to the North. The plan also involved a preliminary phase with diversionary attacks in border areas to draw American attention and forces away from the cities. Following that, simultaneous attacks would occur, mainly by VC forces, against allied bases and urban areas including Saigon and Hue.

In late 1967, the NVA launched several large scale

offensives in the northern border regions of South Vietnam. This included the well documented clash at Dak To in I Corps between the 1st NVA Division and the US 4th Infantry Division and 173rd Airborne Brigade. This prompted Commander USMACV to reinforce I Corps, especially as he believed the USMC Base at Khe Sanh was under threat.

In the south however, Lt Gen F Weyand, the Commanding General II Field Force Vietnam (IIFV - the Corps Headquarters based at Long Binh), was suspicious of enemy activities and called for an additional five Infantry Brigades to deploy around Saigon. There was however, an air of non-concern mainly because of a seven day truce for the Tet holiday. CG IIFV attempted to have the truce cancelled for all military units but was thwarted by the South Vietnamese President, most likely because the latter might have lost face!

Thus at 3am on 31 January 1968 the offensive began, running into several days and involving some 80,000 VC and NVA troops supported by local guerillas. All major centres were attacked but the enemy met with heavy losses and was eventually forced to withdraw. There was also no 'uprising' or 'defections', so in a military sense the plan was a failure. However, the extent of the attacks surprised the Americans and this led to an unintended outcome, ie the shock it caused, to the American people and Government, aided and abetted by a rampant media, created an almost immediate loss of credibility in the ability of US Forces to win the war. Thus, the scene was set for the US to hand the war to the South Vietnamese (Vietnamisation) and to eventually withdraw from it, together with its allies such as Australia.

1st Australian Task Force Operations

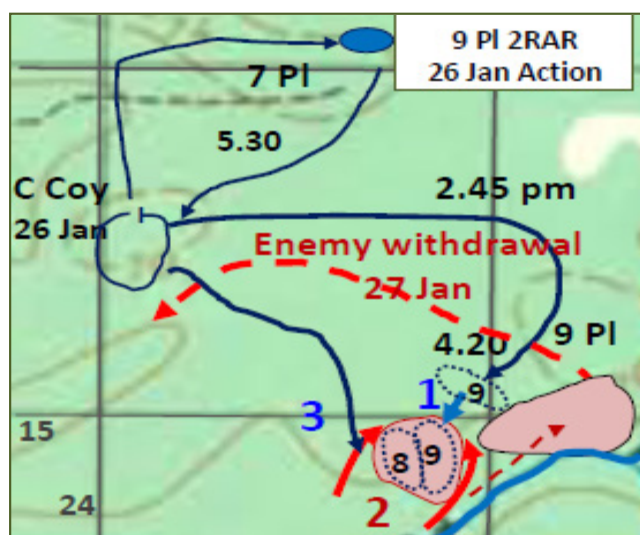
There were two significant involvements by Australian Forces in Tet 68, ie

- Operation Coburg, involving 2RAR, 7RAR and ultimately 3RAR; and
- Operations by 3RAR in Phuoc Tuy Province, notably in the capital Baria.

Operation Coburg was the first deployment of 1ATF outside Phuoc Tuy Province and was part of a IIFV operation to prevent the movement of enemy forces from the Dong Nai River to targets during Tet and specifically, to prevent enemy rocket attacks against the Long Binh - Bien Hoa Base complexes. At various stages, three battalions were involved in the operation at a cost of some 15 killed and 60 wounded, most of whom were subsequently medevaced to Australia.

The operation was an important combat experience in that while earlier operations had passing engagements with NVA and VC Main Force 'regulars', Coburg had frequent contact with the well-trained enemy over a considerable period, including with many elements of 5VC Division. Junior leaders were to recognise the enemy had substantial capabilities requiring tactical skills and perseverance at a level perhaps not previously envisaged. This put enormous pressure on the soldiers, especially as fatigue set in, which then required a level of diligence by junior leaders for which they might not have been fully prepared

There were a number of serious contacts and three are briefly described in this article. The first was with 9 Platoon 2RAR (2Lt B Course) which on 26 January was sent, somewhat unwisely it must be said, on a patrol a kilometre from the company base. After some two hours the Platoon located an enemy position and because it remained undetected conducted an assault (1).



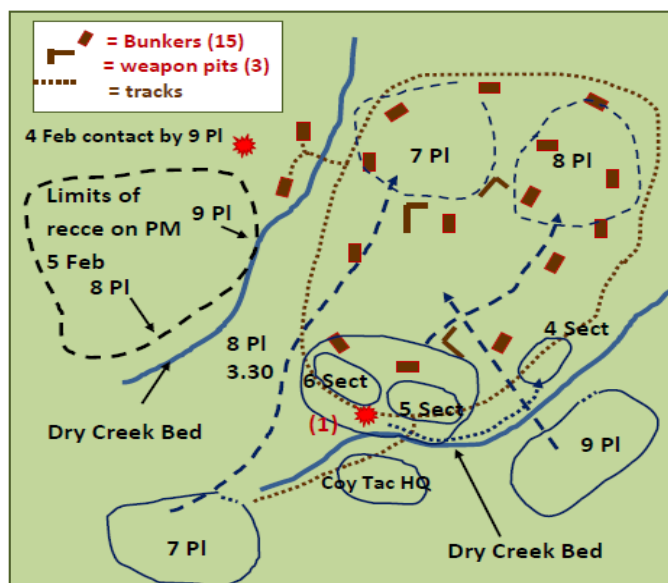
The enemy then reorganized and returned a few minutes later to counter attack the flanks of 9 Platoon with automatic weapons and light machine guns (2). While the Platoon remained steadfast in front of these attacks, clearly it needed help. After about an hour 8 Platoon (Lt AG George) joined 9 Platoon (3). The group was then subjected to further attack, during which a 9 Platoon Section Commander (Cpl GL Norley) was killed.

The following morning the enemy resumed its pressure with an attack on 8 Platoon resulting in a sentry being wounded. The Medical Orderly (Pte WJ Davison) who had repeatedly taken great risks to treat wounded men, was himself mortally wounded as he treated the sentry. As the CSM (WO2 RL Jones) organised evacuation of the wounded, the Dustoff helicopter took ground fire wounding a crew member.

With the support from artillery and a Light Fire Team the enemy was forced to withdraw taking several casualties. Captured documents indicated the enemy was from 274 VC Regiment and was most likely part of a larger, battalion-size force which didn't want to be held up in its approach to Long Binh and had used counter attacks and sniper fire to prevent interference by the much smaller Australian force.

The second action involved 8 Platoon 7RAR (Lt MA Moloney) on 7 February 1968. On 4 February C Company (Maj GK Chapman) had redeployed to search for an enemy defence (bunkers) position which was most likely a staging post for enemy units withdrawing from the attacks on Bien Hoa and Long Binh.

On 5 February, 9 Platoon (Lt KT Lewis) had located the enemy position and killed a sentry. Attempts by the company to move on the position were beaten back. Reconnaissance on 6 February was unsuccessful and on 7 February 8 Platoon had discovered a fresh track and



while 6 Section (Cpl GL Griffiths) was investigating it, saw and killed a VC. The Section was then engaged by three light machine guns and two heavy machine guns, see Sketch (1). After Cpl Griffiths neutralised a bunker with a hand grenade, the platoon withdrew with the rest of the company to a firm base to allow artillery, mortars and airstrikes on the enemy position.

By mid afternoon, the company returned to the enemy position and deployed, see sketch. 8 Platoon began to advance into the bunker system with 4 Section (Cpl PJ Hope) moving via a creek bed to a flank. Almost immediately the enemy, who had waited for the Australians to enter fire lanes, opened fire with machine guns and RPGs wounding several men including the 5 Section Commander (Cpl ES Czerwinski). The enemy fire not only pinned down 8 and 9 Platoons but also kept 7 Platoon's heads down from overshoots. The company's artillery Forward Observer (Capt JH Phillips) called in artillery using delayed fuses and, despite being seriously wounded in the head, his signaler (Gnr MB Williams) maintained the flow of fire orders to the gun line.

The OC 8 Platoon (Lt MA Moloney), although wounded many times from RPG shrapnel and while exposed to heavy fire, organised his men to move to safer positions thereby saving many lives; he then evacuated his casualties and at great risk he attempted to neutralize enemy fire from a bunker, first with grenades, then with M72 rockets and finally with an M79 grenade launcher, where he was successful.

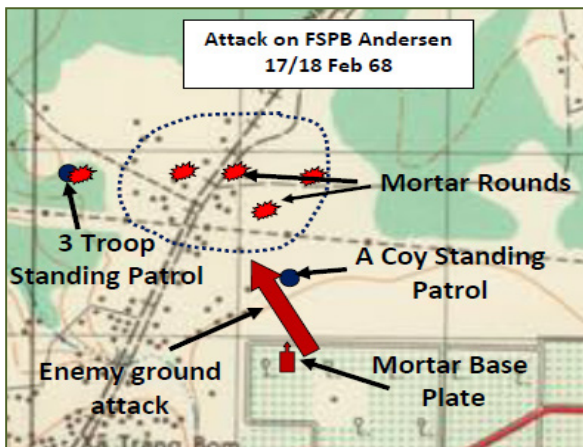
A Light Fire Team then engaged the enemy position, together with more artillery, much of it danger close. After some two hours, the enemy withdrew in good order, overwhelmed by the superior firepower and leaving evidence of several casualties. Incredibly, no Australian was killed, no doubt due to their superb battle skills. However, fourteen men were wounded, half of whom were medevaced to Australia (Pte H Baayens, LCpl TJ Clarke, Pte AJ Hughes, Pte PJ O'Dea, Pte JP Sargent, Pte AJ Smith, Pte AJ Turner and Gnr MB Williams).

Tet 50th Anniversary a reminder of III Corps' significant role

The third action in this article is the attacks on **Fire Support Patrol Base Andersen** on the night of 17/18 February 1968. At the time units at FSPB Andersen included 3RAR (Battalion HQ, A Company and Mortar Platoon), Troop APCs, 161 Field Battery, 2/35 Medium Battery, 3 Troop 1 Field Squadron.

Late on 17 February, 3RAR received credible information from the Liaison Officer at IIFFV that the NVA High Command had given orders for the next phase of the Tet Offensive to commence in the early hours of 18 February. A short time later at about midnight, a large green flare was fired over FSPB Andersen from the south-east.

About an hour later a combined 82mm mortar and RPG bombardment hit the FSPB, killing two 3RAR soldiers from A Company (*Pte JA Doherty and Pte TJ Devries Van Leeuwen*) – [see Map](#). A ten man Standing Patrol from 3 Troop, which had deployed for the second night running to a knoll to the west of the FSPB was hit by two mortar rounds killing four Sappers (*LCpl JE Garrett, SSgt CW McLachlan, Spr AG Pattison and Spr DJ Steen*) and wounding another three, one seriously (*Spr RN Creek*). With the patrol's radio destroyed, one of the surviving members of the Patrol (*Spr MC Walker*) took command



and then a short time later ran the risk of being taken for one of the attacking enemy when he went back to get aid.

The Radar detachment from 131 Div Locating Battery also lost one man killed (*LBdr JL Menz*) and one seriously wounded (*LBdr M Van Driel*) while a US soldier from B Bty 2/35 was also killed.

A few minutes later a ground attack from the south-east occurred by an estimated two VC companies in two echelons against the US Artillery and the 3RAR Mortar Platoon which was busy firing a counter bombardment mission against the enemy mortar base plate position; the fire was directed by a 3RAR Standing Patrol (*Sgt HE Little*) which had pinpointed the enemy mortars. Its position was relayed to the mortar platoon by the Section Commander who took over command of the Patrol (*Cpl PK Williams*). The enemy assault was stopped but a further probing attack and mortar attack followed which was halted with the aid of a Light Fire Team. A further eleven 3RAR men were wounded, four seriously who were medevaced to Australia (*Pte GC Atkinson, Cpl RK Duthie, Pte GL Hogan and Pte ME Lowe*).

A further attack occurred on the evening of 19 February when at about 9pm movement was detected by C Company 3RAR which had moved to the FSPB to strengthen its defences. Under covering fire of a heavy machine gun, the enemy attempted to breach the south-east perimeter but was driven off by small arms, APC machine guns and mortar fire. Further probing attacks took place into the wee hours of 20 February. On 28 February, the enemy moved an 82mm mortar to the east of the FSPB and at about 1am fired 20 rounds before being forced to withdraw by mortar fire from 3RAR.

Tet in Phuoc Tuy

The VC Tet attacks in Phuoc Tuy Province mirrored those that occurred throughout the country. *D445 VC Battalion* had been given the task to attack Baria and Long Dien and in late January had concentrated in the Nui Dinh and Nui Thi Vai. It moved to an assembly area south of Baria on the night of 31 January and at dawn on 1 February 1968, attacked Baria, initially with at least two companies.

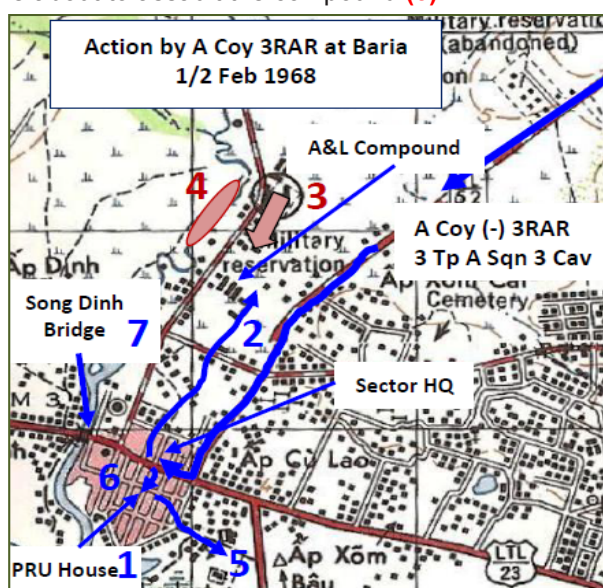
A Company 3RAR (*Maj BW Howard*) was the 1ATF Ready Reaction Company, though one of its platoons, 1 Platoon (*2Lt D Dick*) had already deployed to the west of Nui Dat to check on suspected enemy movement.

At about 8am, A Company with 3 Troop A Squadron 3 Cav (*2Lt RLM Tingley*) was directed to deploy to the US Sector Headquarters in Baria and to drive an estimated VC company out of the town ([see map enlargement opposite](#)). Minor contact was made with the enemy on the way to Sector HQ and, on arrival, the company split with Coy HQ and 2 Platoon (*2Lt PH Fraser*) fighting their way to a US and Australian Advisers area near the Provincial Reconnaissance Unit's (PRU) building (1); 3 Platoon (*Lt HJ Clarsen*) deployed to the ammunition store at the Administrative and Logistics (A&L) Compound (2) but less two sections which had inadvertently moved with the Coy HQ group!

2 Platoon's initial task was to recover three US Advisers from a house where they had been under siege for several hours; as it crossed a road to secure the house the platoon was engaged by enemy small arms, seriously wounding two men (*Cpl JHC Strain and Pte JW White*). Both were dragged into a spoon drain by the Acting Platoon Sergeant (*Cpl PK Williams*) and a rifleman (*Pte AL Lee*) where they were joined by the Company Medic (*Cpl JJ Davis*) and the Platoon Medic (*Pte LR Potter*). Cpl Williams then took command of Cpl Strain's Section to secure the area while the Platoon Commander and the Rifle Group entered the house just as six VC were entering from the rear. The enemy were killed or wounded and the Americans rescued. The 2 Platoon wounded were moved by APC to Van Kiep where they were evacuated by a Dustoff helicopter (*Cpl Strain, Pte White and three US personnel*).

Meanwhile, 3 Platoon with only Platoon Headquarters and one section (*LCpl JV Didsman*) had a harrowing start when on arrival, an ammunition store exploded sending a burning White Phosphorous flare over the compound wall and down through the hatch of the Platoon Headquarters APC. The occupants hastily evacuated and during the excitement the APCs returned to US Sector HQ including

with the Platoon radio! Lt Clarsen was now dealing with a number of enemy who had occupied towers in the A&L compound and as the Platoon gradually worked through the compound two men were badly wounded (*LCpl JH Norwood and Pte ZV Dyrinda*). The Platoon Commander was able to commandeer a radio from a group of ARVN soldiers huddling in a corner of the compound and arranged for a US Army Dustoff helicopter to evacuate the wounded (*LCpl Norwood and Pte Dyrinda*). The enemy in the compound were seen off, due in part to accurate and sustained fire by a section machine-gunner (*Pte KA Youd*). However, villagers from a hamlet a 100 metres to the north advised the Platoon that a large group of enemy were about to assault the compound (3).



Fortuitously, a US Air Force Fighter Bomber was on hand and immediately strafed the enemy assault which caused the enemy to withdraw; however, another enemy group was detected by the pilot about to attack the compound from a creek 100 metres to the west (4) which he attacked with napalm destroying them. At this stage the missing sections joined the Platoon and further accurate airstrikes were made against two towers still occupied by VC causing the enemy to withdraw under accurate fire from 3 Platoon.

It was now clear the enemy strength had been seriously underestimated, as at least three company size groups had been engaged. A Company was advised that a VC company was about to attack from the west and deployed 2 Platoon to the town picture theatre (5). However, the platoon had to return to the Advisor's area because it came under attack and the VC then positioned a heavy machine gun (HMG) on the roof of the theatre which was cause for concern. The HMG was eradicated by a US Army Light Fire Team with the pilot of one aircraft acting as bait (*Capt SF Cherrie*) while the other aircraft (*WO2 L Miller*) engaged the machine gunner. (**Note 1**)

2 Platoon was reacted to the CIA House, some 200 metres west of the earlier fighting (6), to rescue the CIA operative. The Platoon, less one section, deployed in two APCs and, as the Troop Commander's vehicle entered the house compound, the other was hit by an RPG wounding both crewmen. The Troop Commander engaged the enemy with the APC's machine gun and, with the CIA operative and the AATTV Adviser (*WO2 A Parrello*) on board,

moved to the stricken APC to retrieve the wounded; as it did so it was hit by an RPG killing the CIA operative, mortally wounding *WO2 Parrello* and wounding the APC Troop Commander (*2Lt RLM Tingley*). The Troop Sergeant (*Sgt JP Murphy*) then assumed command to organise the evacuation of the wounded. The APC crew then moved under covering fire from 2 Platoon to the CIA House, which was secured by 2 Platoon but was under heavy enemy fire. Meanwhile, the company medic (*Cpl JJ Davis*) had on several occasions tended the wounded while under fire, including the dying *WO2 Parrello*.

An attempt was made to extricate 2 Platoon by an ARVN Ranger Company but it bogged down, suffering several casualties. A Company now called for a Light Fire Team and moved 3 Platoon to cover 2 Platoon's withdrawal which was successfully achieved. The company then occupied a night position near the Song Dinh Bridge (7) but was very low on ammunition, having expended about two first lines during the day (including one carried by the APC Troop). That night, two seriously wounded men from 2 Platoon (*Cpl JG Butchart and Pte RA Watson*) needed evacuation, however the area was too small for a Dustoff Iroquois to land and it couldn't hover because of enemy small arms fire. An Army Sioux Helicopter (*Capt JL Coggan*) came to the company's aid and, under fire, evacuated the men, one at a time.

During the night, the enemy withdrew having suffered hundreds of casualties from the aggressive fire and movement tactics by A Company and the APC Troop.

Next day an exhausted company returned to Nui Dat knowing that as its first action in Vietnam it had done a very good job in unfamiliar tactical circumstances for which it had received no prior training, ie urban warfare. It was also established later that the whole of *D445 VC Battalion* reinforced by *Local Guerilla Units*, with a strength of about 600 had been A Company's opponent during the 24 hours of battle and that it had suffered some 100 casualties.

Note 1

Twelve years later in February 1980 Hori Howard, now a Colonel, was on the Directing Staff at the British Army Staff College at Camberley. One of the students, a US Army Major, held a celebration party for his promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. His name was Stanley F Cherrie and during some late party conversations Hori discovered that he was the very brave pilot of the LFT which had destroyed the Heavy Machine Gun on the Baria Theatre! Hori presented him with a well worn slouch hat. SF Cherrie retired as a Brigadier General.

2018 MAJOR RARA EVENTS

Tuesday April 22	Kapyong Club - barbecue
Friday May 4	Greek Night
Saturday June 23	Regimental dinner - catered
Sunday July 8	AGM - Sausage sizzle
Saturday August 28	Long Tan Service - sausage sizzle
Friday October 12	Italian Night
Friday November 23	Regimental Birthday - catered
Friday December 7	Christmas show for members

ANNEX F: INFANTRY BATTALION COMMENTS ON WEAPONS ALLOCATION

In late February 1968, after the Task Force had been in operations in Phuoc Tuy Province for nearly two years and had only recently completed some of the tough fighting resulting from the Tet '68 offensive, Brigadier R.L. Hughes, commander 1ATF asked the commanding officers of his three infantry battalions to prepare papers commenting upon each weapon currently in use. He noted that each battalion in the Task Force

has a different mixture of personal weapons and each battalion has had varying experience with other weapons such as the M72, M79, 90mm MAW, claymores, etc. In addition to experience I find at times an emotional liking or dislike for a weapon.¹

He also asked his COs to provide comments upon the ideal allocation of weapons for the infantry battalion. He noted that apart from the weapons currently available, there were others such as the 84mm Carl Gustaf anti-tank recoilless rifle and the 60mm mortar with which Australian battalions had had previous experience.

The three battalions responding to Hughes' call were 2RAR, 3RAR and 7RAR. Of these, 2RAR and 7RAR had the most experience of operations in Vietnam. 7RAR had been in-theatre since 18 April 1967. 2RAR had arrived in theatre on 18 May 1967. But 3RAR had arrived in theatre on 14 December 1967 and so had been in country for less than 3 months. However, in that time 3RAR had endured some major engagements including the stiff fighting in Baria, the Province capital, during Tet '68. Brigadier R.L. Hughes, the commander 1ATF, did not consolidate these infantry battalion comments into a Task Force document until mid-May 1968. This gave the CO 1RAR the opportunity to add his comments to the report.²

The responses to Hughes' request form a unique assessment of the value of Australian infantry battalion weapons and are all the more significant for being provided by the commanding officers of three infantry battalions which together, amassed considerable combat experience. We have tabulated the battalion responses below.³

A very abridged version to allow publication. Anyone wishing to have a copy of the CO's full comments please contact Peter Scott pscott@kern.com.au

Weapon	Unit	Comment
Pistol 9mm	3RAR	This was a convenient personal weapon for officers and certain admin staff in base, and also as a personal weapon for some soldiers such as some mortar crewmen, radio operators and pioneers, who need two free hands to perform their job.
	2RAR/NZ	No comment
	7RAR	No comment
Rifle, L1A1 7.62mm	3RAR	A suitable and popular weapon. Some users would prefer a larger magazine.
SLR	2RAR/NZ	"Although heavy in comparison with the M15 [sic] this weapon is popular because of its stopping power and the fact that all soldiers are thoroughly trained in it."
	7RAR	"An excellent rifle. There is no need for a carrying handle."
	1RAR	"This weapon does not need a carrying handle."

1 AWM103, item [R1000/1/8](#), [Headquarters, 1st Australian Task Force (HQ 1 ATF):] Weapons - General - Review of infantry weapons (1968), letter, Brigadier R.L. Hughes, Comd 1ATF to COs 2RAR, 3RAR and 7RAR, 28 Feb 68 titled 'Infantry Weapons'.

2 1RAR replaced 7RAR in March 1968.

3 AWM103, item [R1000/1/8](#), [Headquarters, 1st Australian Task Force (HQ 1 ATF):] Weapons - General - Review of infantry weapons (1968), letter, Brigadier R.L. Hughes, Comd 1ATF to COs 2RAR, 3RAR and 7RAR, 28 Feb 68 titled 'Infantry Weapons', letter, LTCOL E.H. Smith, CO 7RAR, to Comd 1ATF, 7 Mar 68, titled 'Infantry Weapons' and letter, LTCOL, CO 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) bn to HQ 1ATF, 16 Mar 68, titled 'Infantry Weapons'

ANNEX F: INFANTRY BATTALION COMMENTS ON WEAPONS ALLOCATION

SMG 9mm, F1	3RAR	3RAR had trained with this weapon in Australia but it was replaced with the M16 in South Vietnam. "However no member now carrying an M16 wants to go back to the F1, as the M16 is considered to be more lethal".
	2RAR/NZ	CO 2RAR/NZ was the only one of the three COs to support the continued use within infantry battalions of the F1. This weapon (redesigned if possible) still has a role in the battalion."
	7RAR	"This weapon is reliable and in theory should be useful in ambushes because of its automatic capability and high rate of fire.
	1RAR	These should be available for cordon and search ops where their limited effective range and penetrating power would make them useful for firing into the cordoned village.
Rifle 5.56mm M16	3RAR	Suitable weapon which replaced the F1. A good weapon to replace the pistol for those who carry one in base.
	2RAR/NZ	"This weapon is misunderstood in its role and characteristics. It is by US definition a lighter replacement for the M14 (SLR equivalent) and is an automatic rifle.
	7RAR	"This weapon is needed for the forward scout.
MG 7.62mm M60	3RAR	"Suitable weapon. Heavy to carry but excellent hitting power."
	2RAR/NZ	It is heavy but then it is a General Purpose gun with a dual role and should always be included in the inventory."
	7RAR	"This is a reliable effective weapon which has proved very satisfactory on active service.
M79 40mm Gren launcher	3RAR	Suitable weapon, and is carried one per section as a second weapon.
	2RAR/NZ	"A new weapon to troops in Vietnam. It is popular in its immediate effect but unpopular from the point of view that the carrier needs another weapon for self defence.
	7RAR	No comment
M72 66mm LAW	3RAR	"This ammunition [item] has been carried on the scale of one per section. Used to advantage in village fighting.
	2RAR/NZ	"I asked for this weapon in the absence of any portable anti-bunker type weapon in the company. "
	7RAR	"This is proving a useful weapon and is now being used more and more as experience shows its worth."
Claymore mine	3RAR	"An excellent mine. Adequate numbers can be obtained. No set scale required.
	2RAR/NZ	"This has the deadliest effect of all the munitions we use.
	7RAR	No comment.
M26 hand grenade	3RAR	No comment.
	2RAR/NZ	No comment.
	7RAR	"A useful grenade but rather small.
Shotguns	1RAR	Shotguns should be available for use in ambushes. 1ATF-Doubtful.

A weapon conspicuous by its absence from any of the battalion commanders or the Task Force commander's comments, was the bayonet. This would seem to be eloquent testimony to its irrelevance on the modern battlefield. Its main combat role in Vietnam was as a mine prod, but that task probably deserves a purpose-designed, non-conductive and lighter device.

BATTALION NEWS

8 RAR

Wednesday 28 February, Long Hai Day, saw a number of 8 Battalion members and partners gathering at the Memorial plaque on the Pathway of Honour to pay homage to those of our Battalion who paid the supreme sacrifice.

Once again we were blessed to have good weather and the attendance and participation by Catherine Lambert and the Terrace Singers.

After the Commemoration Service we adjourned to the Buckingham Arms Hotel for lunch which was enjoyed by all. Good company and good food made for a pleasant conclusion to a day which means so much to all of us.

The proposed Dolphin Cruise on the Port River on March 6 was cancelled as the proprietors of the cruise vessel were unable to provide a master for the boat. We will perhaps reschedule this event sometime in the future.

Upcoming events are:-

- Friday 1 June 2018 at 1300 hours. Tour of Coopers Brewery. Maximum number for the tour is 20. Cost is \$27.50 of which \$25.00 is donated to charity.
- Friday 20 July 2018 at 1200 hours. Lunch at the German Arms Hotel in Hahndorf.

If you wish to attend either of these events please contact me before the event. Numbers are limited and first in first served.

Ted Forward
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9 PL C Coy 3 RAR 1971 Reunion in Goolwa 2-5 February 2018

These two photographs were taken after a dinner at the Function Centre in Goolwa on February 3.

This platoon holds a reunion in February in a different location each year.

This one was based in the Goolwa Caravan Park, where many of the platoon had brought their caravans making a small caravansera.

On Saturday a group travelling in their cars visited various tourist spots in the lower Fleurieu Peninsula followed by the dinner at night.

On Sunday afternoon everyone gathered adjacent to the caravans for a game of bocce between the men and ladies. I was there for the first two games when the score was two points each. My enquiries with Trevor Harvey revealed the final result was a "draw after cheating by the ladies". Refreshments were enjoyed in the shade of a large tree. The reunion broke up on Monday and everyone headed home agreeing it was another very successful gathering.

I was welcomed by the friendship and comradeship of the members and their ladies at dinner and bocce as the photographs confirm.

Peter Scott



BATTALION NEWS

5/7 RAR

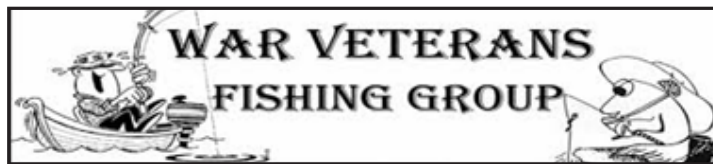
On Saturday 9 December 2017, the 5/7 RAR Association held its AGM at the Grand Central Hotel, Brisbane, the first time it had been held outside NSW.

A good turnout of more than 20 members was present.

After the meeting the association provided food and drinks for the members. It was an enjoyable occasion with some men reunited after 30 years.

The 5/7 RAR association now has 220 members an increase of 30% since 2015. Membership available online at www.57rar.com

Chris Shannon
5/7 RAR Association
Secretary



Since our last report in the Infantryman the WVFG has been involved with two group-organised fishing trips and numerous days arranged through the membership list for individual day outings.

There were two fishing charters arranged out from Balgowlan before Christmas, however, due to strong winds, both were cancelled, which resulted in no Snapper for the Christmas table.

Early in February the group had a four-day visit to the southern parts of Fleurieu Peninsular to fish the waters of Wirrina Cove.

The main species caught were Garfish along with a few squid. Once again the winds kept us off the water for two days, although more than 120 garfish and 20 squid made it a worthwhile outing.

In March we went to Myponie Point some 14km north of Wallaroo.

Two groups stayed in a beach house for three days, chasing blue crabs and squid in an under-fished part of the coastline. The crabs were in an abundance with the average daily catch of 50 crabs easily obtainable.

The squid had not schooled up properly for spawning which allowed only 60 squid to be caught over the six days. Our next fishing trips are to Port Victoria in April, Port Hughes in May and Moonta Bay in June.



RAR club manager Greg 'Spike' Dwiar with some of the crabs the fishing group netted at Myponie Point recently. If fishing is one of your pastimes and you enjoy the company of fellow veterans in a friendly and peaceful environment, then why not consider being part of it. We hold monthly meetings at TPI House, 171 Richmond Road, Richmond, on the last Friday of each month at 1000 hrs for an informal chat on our fishing activities and planning future ones. Contact our Secretary Jeff 'Gadget' Barrett for further details on gadgetbarrett@gmail.com or 0451 265 269

Royal Australian Regiment Association Committee 2017 - 2018

Patron Laurie Lewis AM

Elected Positions

President	Michael von Berg MC OAM	0411 870 055
	mvb@michaelvonberg.com	
Vice President	Rod Graham	0427 977 145
	rodg2@bigpond.com.au	
Secretary	Jim Stopford	0400 191 801
	jbstopford@bigpond.com	
Treasurer and Webmaster	Mike Bevan	0416 106 578
	mikeb3@netspace.net.au	

Appointed Committee Positions

Manager - Club	Greg Dwiar	0412 644 749
	gregdwiar@gmail.com	
Manager - Ceremonial	Adrian Craig	8263 4784
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Welfare Officer	Robert Whinnen	0413 189 558
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Membership	Carol Van Der Peet	0415 242 084
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Trojan's Trek Director	Moose Dunlop OAM	0408 088 886
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Schools Military History Officer	Ken Duthie	0418 806 172

Voluntary Positions

Manager - Bar	Chris Shannon	0414 797 250
Editor - Infantryman	Penelope Forster	0419 856 946
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4 RAR Chris Pepper		0406 830 228
5 RAR Mos Hancock	moswhan@bigpond.net.au	0414 566 212
5/7 RAR Chris Shannon	thinktank2002@hotmail.com	0414 797 250
6 RAR Vacant		
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8 RAR Ted Forward	adrienne.ted.forward@gmail.com	8235 1625
9 RAR Adrian Craig	as.craig9rar@bigpond.com	8263 4784

RAR (SA) RSL Sub-Branch

President	Rod Graham	0427 977 145
Secretary	Greg Dwiar	0412 644 749
Treasurer	Steven Roberts	0408 108 643

Headquarters and Clubroom

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Phone: (08) 8379 5771

Website: www.rarasa.org.au

Email: rar01@internode.on.net

MEAL & BAR ROSTER APRIL - AUGUST		
<u>MEAL</u>		<u>BAR</u>
<u>APRIL</u>		
Light meal	6	Craigy
FAMILY FRIDAY	13	Bob W
Light meal	20	Tank
KOREAN WAR DAY	24	3RAR
ANZAC DAY	25	CLOSED
Light meal	27	Spike
<u>MAY</u>		
GREEK NIGHT	4	Bob W
Light meal	11	Wheels
Light meal	18	Kara
Light meal	25	Craigy
<u>JUNE</u>		
Light meal	1	Tank
FAMILY FRIDAY	8	Bob W
Light meal	15	Spike
Light meal	22	Wheels
Light meal	29	Kara
<u>JULY</u>		
Light meal	6	Craigy
FAMILY FRIDAY	13	Bob W
Light meal	20	Tank
Light meal	27	Spike
<u>AUGUST</u>		
Light meal	3	Wheels
FAMILY FRIDAY	10	Bob
Light meal	17	Kara
Light meal	24	Craigy
Light Meal	31	Tank

Infantryman criteria

- Articles and photos are always welcome. Email to President Michael von Berg on mvb@michaelvonberg.com and Editor Penelope Forster at penelopeforster01@gmail.com for consideration.
 - Copy in 10pt Word. Photos separately as jpgs.
 - Subject line for article and photos should match, starting with Infantryman. i.e. Infantryman memorial.
 - Phone numbers: (08) 1123 45678 or mobiles XXXX XXX XXX - four numbers (space) three numbers (space) three numbers).
 - Numbers: 1 to 9 in words and 10 onwards in numbers. Also 1st, 2nd etc. Dates should include the day of the week.
 - Dates: Saturday March 10 - but Saturday 10 March 2018 so the numbers don't clash
- Thanks - Penelope Forster, Editor