



INFANTRYMAN

The Journal of the RAR Association SA
Keeping the Spirit Alive

December 2019

Calls for Royal Commission into Veterans suicide

The RAR Association supports any genuine initiative which would reduce veterans' suicide.

Suicide is a national tragedy and not just in the veteran community. Across the nation, there are more than 3,000 known suicides each year and probably more where the loved ones of some may not wish that information go out into the public space.

Many of these are young men in their 20s and early 30s, which is a tragedy for all concerned. They include farmers, athletes, police, ambos, firefighters, train drivers, people living in rural and remote areas affected by the current drought and so many others.

Young indigenous suicides are the second highest in the world, only topped by Greenland and this, on top of all others, is an alarming statistic.

To isolate veterans and focus solely on them tends to quarantine this issue, denying that we are an overall part of a major broader community concern. There would not be one person reading this missive who has not been touched in some way by suicide.

Members of the ADF recruited from the various socio-demographic and psychographic profile groups are the very communities where so many suicides occur and is the broader issue focusing Government.

The Federal Department of Health is addressing suicide with its many specific programs including veterans and their families programs, such as Operation Compass being trialled in Townsville. Veteran suicide has been a real concern and exposed publically in the seminal 2017 Senate Inquiry into suicide by veterans and ex-service personnel. Its 24 recommendations accepted by the Government's Report – The Constant Battle – Suicide by Veterans - and those programs are now in place or being implemented by the Departments of Defence and Veterans Affairs.

Although we are totally sympathetic and sensitive to the families who have suffered calling for a Royal Commission into suicide, a vociferous group, see this as the opportunity to pursue their own long-standing agenda into a Royal Commission into DVA, resisted, by this Association and many others due to the current and proposed improvements within the DVA.

Most importantly, we have just had the most intensive and probing investigation into DVA through the Productivity Commission Report and the Cornell Report into the future of advocacy and both reports have been tabled, discussed and accepted in principal as a positive way forward.

There are many positive recommendations in both reports to improve the delivery of services and processing of claims and entitlements, many already implemented, and a real concern is that this continuing process may stall for 12 to 18 months due to a Royal Commission.



I have been a member of the ESORT at DVA for some 10 years. Over that period, we have had five Ministers and three Secretaries of DVA, which does not inspire confidence

in continuity and progress. The changes, however, experienced at DVA in the last four years through the Veterans Centric Reform Lighthouse Program has been outstanding.

The findings and recommendations of the Productivity Commission and Cornell Report should be our focus to pursue those recommendations fervently to implement change for the better and, in particular, for those who may be struggling with their mental health and the claims process. I know there may be some within our Association who may not agree with my thoughts on this matter and that is everyone's prerogative and I will never denounce that. In my defence, however, sadly I have had exposure to 15 suicide attempts in the last two years, to help where I can and have had a modicum of success but sadly four of those attempts were fatal and although all devastating, one of them by a good young outstanding Special Forces NCO really knocked me about.

I still have his SMS on my phone, which I refuse to remove, as it is my touchstone and motivation to try to help where we can. We will never prevent suicide but we can try to make life a hell of a lot better in whatever way we can, utilising all of the ADF, DVA and ESO resources where ending one's life is less of a perceived solution.

We can all help, we know what the problems are - what we need is action not research, investigations or Royal Commissions.

**Michael von Berg MC OAM
President**



President Michael von Berg extends Festive Season Greetings to Members and their Families and wishes them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with good health and every success they look forward for themselves.

Right: Guests at service with the Governor in centre.



Below: Relatives of William Kunkel from Queensland The Australian Military Wives Choir.



Above: Relatives of William Kunkel from Queensland.

Above right: The Australian Military Wives Choir.

Right: John Jarrett, Don Beard and Peter Scott resting after the service.



Please be advised that since 2 December 2019 the number to contact the RARA SA is 0480 197 739. The current landline has been disconnected. You may also leave messages to this number and we will get back to you at the earliest opportunity. It will be monitored at least twice a week, as will the email contact address rar01@internode.on.net

Korean MIA Service at Hindmarsh - 12 October 2019

The Korean & South East Asia Forces Association of Australia Inc SA Branch held its annual service at the Hindmarsh Memorial to remember the 43 Australian Navy, Army and Air Force servicemen who were killed during their service in the Korean War.

In the presence of His Excellency the Governor of South Australia Hue Van Le about 40 guests participated in the service.

Relatives of 1/1641 Private William R Kunkel, who served in 1RAR and was posted missing on 16 November 1952, travelled from Queensland to participate and lay a tribute in his memory.

They were Lyn Smith, sister-in-law of William and husband Mick and niece Anne Mears.

There were four from 1RAR, two from 2RAR and 17 from 3RAR.

Eighteen were lost from RAAF 77 Squadron based at Iwakuni, Japan and then Pohang, Hamhung, Pusan and finally Kimpo in Korea. Mrs Merille Sharp laid a tribute in memory of her brother Pilot Officer Kenneth D. Smith.

Two pilots were lost from RAN Fleet Air Arm-805 Squadron.

The RAN, RAAF and SA Police plus members of the SA Government, President RSL, local councils, representative of the Korean Retired Officers Association and other service organisations were present and laid tributes.

The Catafalque Party (of very young cadets) was provided by the Legion of Frontiersmen. Members of the Australian Military Wives Choir sang beautifully to add musical accompaniment to the service. Refreshments were served at the Henley & Grange RSL.

FROM THE COMMAND POST

What has happened to 2019? Where did it go? Is it just me or is everyone in the same dilemma where before you know it we are all approaching Christmas wondering what happened to the rest of the year.

We would all remember being about 16 years old and waiting for your driving license and that time just never came, testing your patience, or more importantly waiting to turn 18 years of age in some States and 21 in others to have your first "legal" drink in a pub.

Then the magical keys to the door 21st also seemed to take forever; and in our later days on Operations or Peacekeeping in some far-flung country, counting those "wakey" days could not come fast enough.

Now it is as if someone has hit the fast forward button and sometimes whatever you were waiting for has passed or more than likely at our level of maturity we have probably forgotten. It must be an age thing or is it something more?

When we were young based on those previous experiences we wanted time to fly. Now in the twilight of our years we are all holding out for more time and we want to stop that fast forward button and get more into a slower deliberate replay mode but somehow it is not working.

Perhaps I should have been paying more attention in my physics and trigonometry classes of Einstein's theory of special relativity and questions about time, where he states that time is not absolute and time is a stubborn illusion.

An illusion we all share, by default, not physics, as we get older where we want time to stop but it will not and that is inevitable.

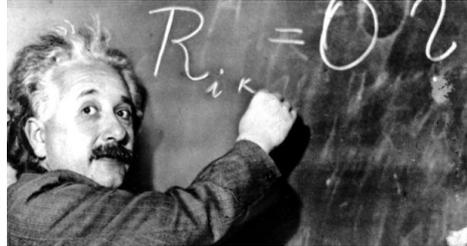
When we look at the age of the earth at 4.54 billion years and modern humans on the earth somewhere between 200,000 to 300,000 years, our time on this earth as individuals is incalculable to billionths of a Plank nucleon or nanoseconds, which is in theory non consequential.

So perhaps Einstein was right. Time is an illusion, so our time on this earth as individuals should not be time bound but based more on deeds and legacy.

We are all members of a values-driven organisation based on mutual respect and looking after each other in whatever way we can. That is just so important and that legacy which flows right throughout our individual members, in whatever they do either within the Association or externally throughout the broader community.

There are so many who contribute throughout Australia looking after each other's backs and in so doing keeping the spirit of the Regiment alive.

I was very honoured and privileged to speak at Kadina Memorial School Annual Remembrance Day



If you would like to know what Einstein's Theory of Relativity is check Google.

commemoration this year where as a part of the ceremony they commemorated Sgt Bernard Lyle Smith, an ex-student killed in action in Vietnam with 5RAR on their second tour. This was

attended by Bernie's widow, Jan, youngest son Edward and Bernie's sister. Unfortunately the eldest son, Maj Gen Stuart Smith (ret'd), could not attend as he had duties in Brisbane.

When I look at this incredible family, how they have coped in the loss of Bernie at a critical time of life and what they have all achieved is a wonderful legacy.

As we approach Christmas and another year passing it's time to reflect perhaps on the year which has passed all too quickly, in what we have done to make a difference for the better in whatever we have done individually.

No matter how big or how small as long as we have made a difference for the better in whatever we do. I thank our committee, the members and our supporters (too many to mention individually) of our Association for their loyalty and support.

Your deeds and actions around this club and Association and the tireless and sometimes sadly thankless work you do is a part of your legacy which supports our extended veteran family. This besides the legacy we all leave to immediate and extended family is the values-driven culture of our Association in looking after each other and keeping the spirit of The Regiment alive.

Duty First



First duty was to celebrate 70th in style

From left: Fred Prichard, Trevor Harvey, Ross McOmish, Jim Wallis, Peter Scott, Ian Heberly, John Ginnivan and Trevor Jamison at Ross's 70th birthday party at his home in Mylor on Saturday 2 November. All from 3RAR Second Tour of Vietnam. Peter is seen leading singing of 3RAR song. They were just a small group at a very large party.

EULOGY:

1411098 Sgt Walter Raymond Buckland 11.02.39 – 18.09.19

Even in the rapidly changing digital world we now live in we are still fortunate that genuine old fashioned characters live in our midst. Wally was such a character in both civilian life and his extensive military service. It would be fair to say he was an easy bloke to like and brought much happiness and laughter to those around him.

Wally was born in Young on 11 February 1939. He was the only child of his devoted parents John and Daphne who at the time were living at Bendick Murrell a small village close to Young where his dad was employed in the rural industry. In 1944 Wally commenced his schooling at Bendick Murrell Public School.

The family moved to Goulburn when Wally was about 7 as his dad had obtained a position at the Supertex Garment Factory in Goulburn. A house came with the job but it wasn't completed so the family lived at the Gordon Hotel for a period of time and then moved to 79 Chantry St. Wally was enrolled at the nearby Goulburn North Public School. He told me that he was a member of the school band. Wally's mother also worked behind the bar for many years and was immensely popular with the patrons.

Following completion of his primary education Wally went to Goulburn High School for 5 years completing his Leaving Certificate in 1956. Wally contributed to the wider school community whilst at Goulburn High School. He was a House Captain, Prefect and a Cadet Under Officer in the school cadets. He also played in the 1st Grade Rugby League team in both the forwards and backs.

It would be fair to say that Wally completed High School at a time when not everyone still did. The academic life after high school was not to be with him and probably to his parent's disappointment as Wally chose to wander the length and breadth of Australia and New Zealand obtaining work and enjoying himself wherever he could. He spent a lot of time in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area as well as other parts of Australia. In New Zealand he worked in the mining industry for 7 months. For a short time he also worked with a travelling circus looking after the elephants. Now that would have been a sight to see.

In June 1965 Wally's life would change forever when he enlisted in the Australian Army with a view of serving in South Vietnam where Australia's commitment was increasing rapidly. Wally did his 10 week basic training at 1st Recruit Training Battalion at Kapooka. At this time the first intake of re-introduced National Service had commenced so Kapooka was an extremely busy establishment. At the end of his training Wally elected to join the Infantry Corp.

After Kapooka Wally was then posted to the Battle Wing at Ingleburn and undertook his Infantry Corp Training before going on leave over the Christmas period. Upon return from leave he and his mates expected to be advised that they would be posted to Vietnam. To their disappointment they were told that they had not been in the army long enough so they had to re-do their

Corp Training again. After completion of training for the second time Wally then undertook vigorous training at Canungra and Shoalwater Bay.

Wally arrived in Vietnam on 12 March 1966 where he was posted to as a re-enforcement to 1 RAR which was then based at Bien Hoa airbase under the direction of the US 173 Airborne Brigade. He didn't talk much about his time there except that he loved the US rations which included chocolate which he loved immensely and he did not miss out on having a beer.

In June 1966 1 RAR had completed its rotation and was returning to Australia. Those fellows who had only been in Vietnam for a short period were to be transferred to 6 RAR which had arrived from

Australia. At this time the Australian Government had requested to the US authorities that they wanted to be given their own area of responsibility. This was agreed to and the 1st Australian Task Force was to be established in a rubber plantation at Nui-Dat in Phuoc Tuoy Province.

On 5 June 1966 Wally transferred to 6 RAR where he was allocated to 12 Platoon Delta Company. Delta Company was under the command of Major Harry Smith who insisted on extensive training over and above what normally would be expected. 12 Platoon was under the command of 2/Lt Dave Sabban who was then a young 21 year old National Serviceman. We are honoured that Dave is with us today and he is also a fellow whom Wally had the greatest amount of respect for as he also did for Harry.

In setting up Nui Dat in its infancy the troops were involved in a lot of hard manual work in establishing and securing the base as well as undertaking routine patrols in their area of responsibility so there was no time to be idle. The enemy were monitoring these activities with a view of making a strike when they were in a position to do so. This occurred in the early hours of 17 August 1966 when the enemy attacked with mortars and recoilless rifles.

B Company was the first unit to be sent out and located the firing positions. They were relieved by Delta Company at around mid-day on 18 August 1966. D Company, consisting of 105 Australians and 3 members of a Kiwi artillery unit, started following cart tracks away from the firing positions that were leading into the Long Tan rubber plantation. It was in this rubber plantation approx 4.5 kilometres from Nui Dat that the Battle of Long Tan took place.

Much has been written about this Battle and recently a movie has been released which sadly Wally was in no fit condition to watch. In summarising the Battle Delta Company engaged an enemy unit who far outnumbered them later figures given that they were outnumbered 10 to 1. The two enemy units were crack fighting forces and the small Australian unit consisted a sprinkling of experienced soldiers but also many young soldiers with little or no battle experience, many of whom were National Servicemen.

The Battle lasted for several hours during which time it



An easy bloke to like who brought much happiness to others

was necessary for the Australian commanders to call the artillery nearly on their positions, Torrential rain commenced to fall and Delta Company was running low on ammunition. A re-supply was made by helicopter under extremely difficult conditions given the heavy rain that was falling. When all looked lost a squadron of Armoured Personnel Carriers arrived and the enemy scattered right on night fall.

Delta Company remained at Long Tan overnight and the next day patrolled the battle field where there were bodies everywhere. Australian casualties were 18 killed and 24 wounded and there were about 240 of the enemy accounted for. The company remained in the field for a couple of days burying the enemy soldiers which can only be described as a gruesome task and one which they would never forget. Those of us who knew Wally are immensely proud of him and his mates for their service in the Battle.

Wally remained in Vietnam until 22 March 1967 when he returned to Australia as he had done a 1- month deployment, He stayed in the Army until June 1968 when he took a discharge as he had initially signed on for 3 years,

After his discharge Wally headed to England where he did some touring in Europe and for a period of time worked on a hops farm in Kent as tractor driver. At the end of the day all the workers would climb in his trailer and he used to convey them to the village pub. What a way to finish a day's work.

While he was in England Wally decided that he missed army life so much that went to Australia House and completed enlistment papers. He had booked on an overland tour to India which he did and then flew to Darwin and he finalised his re-enlistment on 24 June 1969. He then spent time at Woodside Barracks in Adelaide as a member of 3 RAR and returned to Vietnam in February 1971.

By this time he had been promoted to Corporal and was a Section Leader. He was in charge of many National Servicemen who greatly respected him as a soldier, section leader and a mate. They felt safe in going on patrols with him as he was always calm and did not abuse his rank. The soldiers under his charge also enjoyed socialising with him. On this tour he received an acid burn from a marker balloon. The injury was not life threatening but he had to be returned to base and his father received a telegram. The 1971 tour was initially programmed to go for 12 months but it was shortened as the Government had started to withdraw most troops from Vietnam. He returned to Australia in October 1971.

Upon his return to Australia Wally stayed on in the Army based at various establishments including Duntroon, Ingleburn, Holdsworthy and Singleton. In 1973 he served a period of time in Papua New Guinea assisting an Army Survey Team who were undertaking surveys prior to independence.

In July 1986 Wally left the army for the second time. He did seasonal work in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area and travelled overseas extensively when he could. It would be fair to say that he has travelled more than the average Australian which included many boat cruises. He also used to take his parents on holidays. He had a

small van and he and his father used to sit in the front and he would strap a lounge chair in the back for his mother to sit in. Where there is a will there is a way.

In addition to work and travel Wally was also sport minded. He played golf and table tennis as well as snow skiing, white water rafting and scuba diving. He also enjoyed going on fishing trips to Grabine with his Uncle Lawrence and other relatives. There was always a social side to these activities. His mother and father were very sociable people and held many a gathering at home in Dally Street where they had moved to in the early 70s. Daphne passed away in October 1999 and she was greatly missed by both Wally and John. John's health started to deteriorate and Wally became his carer as John's eyesight was failing. It did not, however, stop the boys from having a beer and trying to sing in the company of the record player. The neighbours had many a laugh and often had to close their windows to keep out the noise.

John passed away in 2004. After finalising all his affairs Wally headed to England where he did a boat cruise around the Falkland Islands and other parts of South America. After the passing of his parents life became lonely for Wally and he did not look after himself properly. Several years ago he was found at home suffering from hypothermia and near death, He was admitted to Goulburn Base Hospital ICU where he stayed for 5

weeks. Following this he was transferred to Bourke St Health Service and then to Waminda Nursing Home. He was eventually allowed to come back home following representations by Les Reko to the Gerontologist. Les has an extensive nursing background and has been a dear friend to Wally for many years. Les assisted Wally to access the services of Baptist Homecare Services who visited Wally on a daily basis. The Service provided great assistance to Wally. Les accompanied Wally on medical appointments and also did many a domestic chore. Any shopping that Les did had to include a long neck, cigarettes, chocolate and dog food for Kelly.

At this time Wally was diagnosed with dementia, He was required to surrender his driver's licence which he found trouble coming to terms with. He also had trouble with simple tasks like using a microwave and TV remote. He cherished the companionship of his dog Kelly who is still living and missing Wally terribly.

In addition to Les a few close friends such as Helen and Peter Corby, Grahame Cave, Ron Smith, Wayne and Lyn Liggins and myself visited Wally on a regular basis. In the last 12 months Bob Tetley has also been a regular visitor to Wally at Waminda. Bob drove one of the Armoured Personnel Carriers that came to Delta Company's rescue in the Battle of Long Tan. Ron Smith and Grahame Cave have predeceased Wally so a good time will be had by all when he travels through the pearly gates. People have remarked that Wally was lucky to have such friends. This is maybe so but we all helped because we loved the bloke. Dementia can only be described as a wicked illness and our mate certainly suffered especially remembering things and looking after himself, although he never forgot how to swear.

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Walter Buckland. Photo: Virtual War Memorial Australia

Continued from page 5

In October last year it was necessary for Wally to be hospitalised again and this time permanently. He eventually was allocated accommodation at Waminda Nursing Home where he remained until his passing. While at Waminda he was immensely popular with the staff who showed great respect for his war service. This particularly applied to the younger staff members who were born after the Vietnam War. I know many of them have been to see the movie "Danger Close" and they have done this out of their respect and love for Wally.

Earlier this year Wally turned 80 and the celebrations went on for weeks including receiving numerous cards, visits from serving army members and Major Gen Jim Molan. Jim recently stated Wally exemplified the idea that the best soldiers in the world are ordinary people who act extraordinarily and he spent a good hour talking one to one with Wally who was reasonably focussed given his delicate condition.

Jim is not able to be here today but Mrs Molan is in attendance and we thank her for being with us. Wally also received cards and emails from all over Australia and overseas. It was a great occasion.

I thank all of you who have attended Wally's last parade in particular those whom he served with and have travelled long distances to be here.

Decision time at 8 RAR lunchtime AGM and National update

The AGM was held on Wednesday 8 August 2019 at the Morphett Arms Hotel. The meeting determined we would operate with a State Coordinator and a Treasurer in the near future. Thanks to all those members who have served on the committee in the past to facilitate the running of the SA Branch.

The Treasurer is Adrian Coles and Ted Forward will be the State Coordinator.

After the AGM the Battalion Birthday Lunch and Commemorations were held and all present appeared to enjoy the fellowship and the lunch.

The Christmas Lunch on November 29 at the Birkenhead Tavern was great with such a good roll up.

The National Reunion in February 2020 on the Gold Coast is set to be well attended with currently 270 registrants. Based on history we could justifiably expect about 300 attendees.

Details of events /links for attendance forms are available at website: www.8rarassociation.org. Those not be attending the Reunion but wish to attend our Long Hai Day Ceremony in Adelaide need to contact Ted Forward: adrienne.ted.forward@gmail.com.

goulburnpost.com.au Friday October 04, 2019 GOULBURN POST 5 NEWS

'True patriot' remembered

IN MEMORIAM
BY NEHA ATTRE

FRIENDS and family members of Vietnam veteran Walter (Wally) Raymond Buckland paid their last respects at Craig's Hill Chapel on Tuesday.

The funeral service began with his platoon commander in the Battle of Long Tan, Dave Sebhan, carrying medals as Nancy Sinatra's *These Boots Are Made For Walking* was played.

In his eulogy, Wally's close friend, Howard Bye, said he had been an "easy bloke to like."

"He brought happiness and laughter to those around him," Mr Bye said.

"Those of us who knew Wally are immensely proud of him and his service in the battle.

"I would like to thank all those who attended Wally's last parade, in particular those with whom he served and travelled long distances to be here."

Bidding farewell to his mate, he said, "To Wally, I say rest easy, old soldier.

"You have done your duty well and we are immensely proud of you.

"We are all fortunate to have you as a mate."

Wally's cousin John McCaskie called him an "amazing person" and a "true patriot."

"He loved his country. He lived a good life and he did it well," Mr McCaskie said.

Family friend Vicki Jensen remembered Wally as someone who lived an extraordinary life. "Even though he had a family, the Army was his family and life," she said.

"He and my dad were best of mates and went on many fishing trips together.

"Unfortunately, when dad passed away four years ago, life wasn't the same for Wally.

"Once he lost his best mate, a part of him died also.

"They had a special bond that could never be broken.

"We will always remember Wally."

Mr Buckland was believed to be Goulburn's last surviving veteran of the Battle of Long Tan.

He had a 20-year-long Army service and undertook two tours of duty in Vietnam in 1966-67 and 1971.

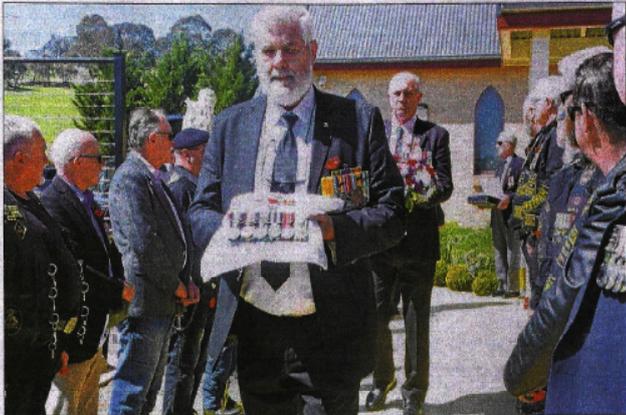
He was born in Young, but grew up in Goulburn.

He attended Goulburn North Public School and Goulburn High before working in various jobs in Australia and New Zealand.

He had dementia and was a resident at the Gill Waminda Nursing Home.

Ex-servicemen, friends, family members and Major Jim Molan's wife, Anne Molan, attended the funeral service.

PAYING TRIBUTE: Walter (Wally) Raymond Buckland's platoon commander in the Battle of Long Tan, Dave Sebhan, carrying his medals at the funeral service. Photo: Neha Attre




Mates are like that especially remembering an unforgettable character such as Wally. I also acknowledge the presence of other ex-service people who are here today and thank them for their service including our Chaplin Lt Col Haydn Swinbourne who has had active service post-Vietnam. Haydn also spent some of Wally's last hours with him on the day that he passed away.

To Wally I say: "Rest easy old soldier, you have done your duty well, we are immensely proud of you and we are all fortunate for having you as a mate."

Lest we forget.

Once Ted has an idea as to how many will be here he will organise the day.

From the 8 RAR National President:

Unfortunately some ex-members of the RAAC are claiming access to the Cross of with Palm awarded to 8 RAR as part of the Meritorious Unit Commendation awarded by the Government of South Viet Nam for 8 RARs full tour of duty in Viet Nam.

They also believe they should be the main organisers of a National Ceremony in Canberra to mark the 50th Anniversary of Operation Hammersley.

They want prior decisions made by Dept. of Defence overturned to allow the awarding of the Cross of Gallantry with Palm to Armoured Corp Units that participated in Operation Hamersley. This claim also extends to the award of a battle streamer and unit citation that they claim was awarded to 8 RAR.

The matter is on-going but it is hoped these issues will be resolved soon.

Enjoy the Festive season, and if you are out and about, safe travels, the Reunion awaits us all.

- Jim Stopford, Secretary

A story of camaraderie and love every Australian should read

My grandson Regt No 8507844 Pte Michael Davidson was a member of the team which carried Luke Worsley out. He found the following article on Facebook which he forwarded to me. Michael said it's from his old Quarter Master Darren Peters SOTG V who served with us in Afghanistan in 2007.

- Peter Scott

Michael said: "It was a long day that day - even longer carrying Luke out. Although I had forgotten some of the details, I think most of this is correct, the 3km he wrote isn't 3km, it was between 6-8km from what I can remember.

The close air support rocket he talked about was due to an insurgent ambush they had planned for us and who were looking to ambush us on our way out carrying Luke.

We were lucky the air support saw them as we had the moon just over the ridge line and with night vision goggles would have made it impossible to see them in time."

** * **

This is a story by an Special Operation Task Group digger all Australians who are old enough should take time out to read. I have read many and this one made me take stock of the great life I have as an Australian. This life we all have, has been and still is, due to courage of our armed forces. The ANZAC Spirit still lives on today.

The 23rd of November has just passed. For some it's just another day. Unfortunately for others it is not. I was there on the ground that day when one of our finest, Luke Worsley from 4 RAR Commando, was knocked. We were out in the middle of the Afghanistan Dasht and a long way from Australia. This story from within the SF community needs to be told to the Australian public but most of all the parents, wives, sons, daughters and family.

What the boys from Bravo Company 4 RAR (now 2 Commando Regiment), Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) rotation V (Roman numeral for 5), did for one of their own over an 18-hour plus period is something I will never forget. His mates did everything they could for him and then some.

We harboured up the vehicles, created the Vehicle Drop off Point (VDO) and the decision was made to move in on foot. Harboured the vehicles was no easy feat as there were Land Rover SRVs, 4 and 6 wheel All-terrain Vehicles, Bushmasters and the Mother Ship. The Mother Ship was an up armoured 4 x 4 Mercedes Unimog which looks like something out of Mad Max. It had a pintle (what does pintle mean?) mounted 50cal HMG mounted on top and a 7.62 Mag58 LMG mounted for the passenger.

The boys took off around dusk and started the stomp of about 3km (3.5hrs) over the mountainous terrain to the objective. Overwatch was established over the village and the boys went in. All seemed to be going well until the call of TIC (Troops in Contact) came over the radio. Echoes of rifle and intense machine gun fire could be heard across the valley.

Then we heard the words no one wants to hear. Just after midnight on the 22nd and going in to the early

morning of November 23, I can remember hearing over the radio that we had a man down. All of us who were listening to the contact over the radio couldn't believe we were waiting to hear who it was.

The call sign of the soldier was sent over the radio and eventually we worked out it was Luke.

We were in our harbour securing the vehicle. A few of us started to prepare to roll in and give them a hand. We could still hear the heavy fighting going on. Thankfully the boss made the call not to send us forward as we found out later on the vehicle route into the village had been mined with IEDs.



Darren Peters with a photo of Luke Worsley

The boys had been on target for about 8 plus hours and dawn was not that far away. So the call was made to move out and that they would have to stretcher carry Luke back to the VDO some 3km away.

In this paragraph I'm trying to give you some idea of the mindset and some of the setbacks the boys faced and overcame.

We also had Close Air Support, more commonly known as CAS. The boom and the shock wave from the explosion was massive. It broke the silence and even lit up our valley. When the CAS was called in we were in the VDO 3km away and we thought the boom and the shock wave from the explosion was massive. The main group was still in the vicinity of the village, only 700m to 900m away when the missile hit the target.

Choppers were called in to come and pick up Luke. The Chinook, along with Gunship support, had to come from TK Airfield and were provided by the Dutch. They were requested to pick up Luke from the village and take him back to TK Airfield for processing. As it turned out, we were told the chopper was on its way from TK. Then the call came over the radio informing us it was being diverted to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Anaconda for another task.

We were then told it was not coming directly to us from FOB Anaconda but now diverted to Kandahar. Once again we were then informed that the chopper did not have enough fuel to come to us from Kandahar, so it returned to TK airfield then finally on to our location.

Back to the story: I can remember standing there listening to the Company who were coming back, calling in and updating their position. Once we knew they were about 20 to 30 minutes out from the VDO, I told every spare body to go around to the vehicles, dig out the gas bottles and stove and boil some water. This was so they would have hot water for a brew when they returned.

Then I saw the first of two things that day I wish every Australian could have seen.

I can remember looking up and seeing the first member of the Company coming over the hill, then another and another. Then the rest of the boys who were carrying Luke on the stretcher.

Every man wanted to carry Luke. They had been at it for over 12 hours by now they were all tired and they were hurt but in true Grunt fashion they were not bloody beaten and at no time would they give up.

Continued page 8

and encourage others to read and tell still more people

Continued from page 7

Before Luke was to be taken off the battlefield by chopper he was placed in one of the Bushmasters.

Everyone from the Company had the opportunity to go in, pay their respects and say goodbye, which they all did.

I personally, I held his hand and said a prayer, Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. I also told him that one day we will all be reunited in Valhalla and that he would not be forgotten.

In addition to this there was a young Mortarman. He was one of the boys who had just been out all night.

He helped carry and was good friends with Luke. Unfortunately he could not bring himself to go in to the Bushmaster and say goodbye. I tried to convince him at the time that it was the right thing to do; however, he still could not bring himself to do it. I said to him that I completely understand. Thirty minutes later at around 9 or 10ish we received the call that the evac chopper was inbound.

Finally, we could hear the sound of the Chinook off in the distance. At this point I picked myself up and went over to where the Mortars were. As I approached him I said: "Mate this is the last chance you will get to say goodbye". He was also a religious man so I told him, this is the last chance to go in and say a prayer for him.

To his credit we both walked to the Bushmaster together and I told him I would be right outside. He went in and farewelled his mate. Once we were back in Camp Russell, he came up to me and thanked me for what I had done.

So we loaded Luke on to the Chinook and made sure everything was good to go. This is where I saw the second thing the Australian public should know about.

I was facing the Chinook with the company spread out behind me in the defensive position spread out over approximately 500m on a slight hill was running up from where we were. The CSM pointed behind me and said "Hey Dazz, have a look at that". I turned around and this is what I saw.

I looked up and I could see the whole company, all standing to attention. They were next to their cars, some were standing by themselves, some were standing on Bushmasters. This was truly an amazing site. These boys were paying their respect to a mate they would never see again but would live on in their memories.

On our return to Camp Russell we had a service and we were allowed a few beers. We were all in the building which is normally used as a recreation room and one of the blokes, whose name I cannot recall, played the Dire Straits song "Brothers In Arms". Every one stopped what they were doing and there was complete silence. Everyone banded together and paid their respect to Luke in their own way.

Once the Dire Straits song was finished a young man grabbed his guitar and went up the front of the recreation room. He was a strapping young lad who was already a legend within Bravo Company and 4RAR (2 Commando Regiment).

Now you have to remember this is in November of 2007.

This man and his guitar started to play a song, a song that, funnily enough, still haunts me today. The song was "I hope you had the time of your life" by Green Day.

It was a pretty good rendition of the song which would give any musician a run for their money.

A few months after the events of the 22nd to 23rd this man with his guitar was awarded the Medal For Gallantry for his actions on that fateful night. A few years after that in 2013 this man went on to become a legend.

He went on to become forever immortal.

The man with the guitar was Cameron Baird VC MG and he is the 100th recipient (pictured) of the Victoria Cross. A man truly worthy of this honour.

The same spirit the ANZACs took with them to the shores of Gallipoli is still alive and well today. Up until now this story of the boys was just a personal memory which now will be hopefully told to the Australian public, but most of all the parents of these brave young lads.

- Anyone who reads this can share it as much as possible. Cheers

Darren Peters SOTG V

BIOGRAPHY:

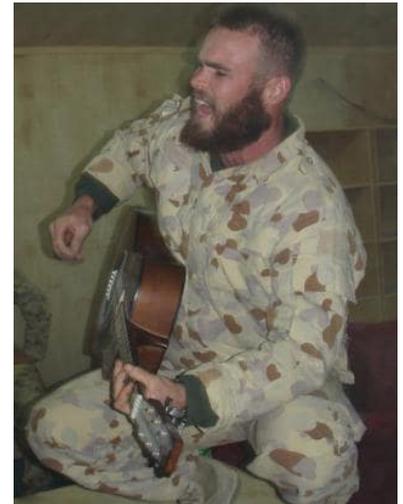
Private Worsley, 26, from Sydney, was killed by small arms fire while participating in a planned and deliberate attack by our forces against Taliban leaders and their supporters in Uruzgan Province on Thursday, 23 November 2007

Private Luke Worsley enlisted into the Australian Regular Army on the 23 October 2001. After completing his Recruit Training he was allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and commenced his Initial Employment Training at Singleton, New South Wales on 15 April 2002. At the completion of his Initial Employment Training, Luke was posted to the 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. During his service with 1 RAR, Luke deployed to East Timor as part of Operation Citadel, providing security to the people of East Timor.

After two years of service with the 1st Battalion, and looking for more of a challenge, Luke applied for selection with the 4th Battalion, (Commando) The Royal Australian Regiment. He was successful in his attempt, and Luke went on to complete the Commando suite of courses, becoming 'beret' qualified in 2004.

Luke deployed with Delta Commando Company Group to Afghanistan in 2006. Upon return from his rotation, Luke was posted to Bravo Commando Company Group and deployed with them to Afghanistan in September 2007.

For his service in East Timor and Afghanistan, Luke was awarded the Australian Defence Medal, the Australian Active Service Medal with clasp East Timor the United Nations Medal with the United Nations Transitional Authority East Timor Ribbon, the International Coalition Against Terrorism Clasp, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Infantry Combat Badge and the Return from Active Service Badge. Luke was also awarded the Unit Citation for Gallantry for his service with the Special Operations Task Group in 2006.



Battle of Long Tan and Vietnam Veterans Day - 18 August 2019

Address by Michael von Berg

Not wishing to be disrespectful but in today's address I will not talk about The Battle of Long Tan which has been recalled many times over the last 53 years and now a film depicting the battle has also been produced.

Unfortunately too little has been said of the men who served at that time and the conditions in which they experienced the sounds, the smells, the fears of the Vietnam War.

So in today's commemoration speech I will concentrate more on what makes the men and women of our Army so unique and, most importantly, what drives these ordinary Australians to perform extraordinary things in times of war.

The quotation I am about to read is an excellent quote from Maj Gen Michael O'Brien, an ex 7RAR platoon commander in Vietnam as it could also relate to an artillery battery, a tank or APC Squadron, a Squadron of Engineers, a Chopper Squadron, or any other unit or sub unit that served in Vietnam.

“Australian Soldiers identify with their Battalion. It's indeed their family: it leads, feeds, clothes, directs and exhausts them. Its veins are its Sections and Platoons, its limbs the companies. It has the capacity to inspire their actions, to drive them beyond exhaustion, at times to subordinate their loved ones and to provide a depth of male comradeship rarely achieved elsewhere.

“This exclusive club has demanding rules of entry and offers few amenities. It seems to revel in adversity and prosper in challenge. It has fickle moods: a sense of purpose may be cemented by a mascot or nickname while, in contrast, wide dissatisfaction can be spread by a single remark from the Commanding Officer. It has a formidable capability that is derived from the action of 800 men with shared aims and esprit de corps.”

Much has been written about the battles, the incidents, the terrors, death and horrific woundings suffered during the Vietnam war but sadly not much has been written about the oppressive and stressful conditions our young soldiers had to endure, by day and night for almost a full 12 months tour of duty. And many went back to that hell hole more than once.

Most of our war in Vietnam was in the jungle. The jungle can be your friend in terms of concealment. It can be your friend in terms of finding a place to hide in a LUP or a night harbor but it also offers the same level of concealment to the enemy.

It mostly in parts has an abundance of water except in the dry season, some falling as much as two inches in one hour which are monsoon conditions. It is a unique and difficult terrain in which to engage in war fighting and, due to the oppressive conditions at times, difficult to lead and importantly to maintain morale.

On patrol the breathing needs to be quiet but with the humidity and the stress at times you have difficulty in catching your breath in particular if you are ascending a 1 in 2 gradient fully loaded. Every step can be a challenge

due to the slippery slopes and tiring of legs and the pumping of adrenaline that is coursing through your body watching for signs of the enemy.

You must remain alert and positive but the conditions seem to make your mind wander at times where you are worried more internally about your discomfort than externally and the likely enemy threat. The key for any commander in that environment is not to set an unrealistic or dangerous pace to ensure if confronted by the enemy the soldiers are in a state of readiness and capability to fight.

The sweat drains all over your body so you are cocooned in your hot wet sweat. The worst, and in particular in a forward scout environment, is the sweat running into your eyes and causing a distraction. No amount of patting your eyes dry with your sweat rag seems to make a lot of difference and where after a while you just put up with it like swimming under water with your eyes open without a face mask or goggles.

The spiders, the snakes, the bugs, the ants, the leeches and, from time to time, some bigger creatures are all a part of the jungles biodiversity. We were wary of them but we got used to them.



The Bergen or backpack full of rations, water, ammo, batteries, and sundries is heavy and in the jungle with an ill-fitting Bergen it's very easy to get a rash and in the humidity and wet just so slow to heal.

Your clothing and boots (no jocks or socks) are saturated and your feet are getting water logged with each step becoming more uncomfortable and painful but you have no

choice. You simply must push on.

A monsoon downpour makes it very difficult to maintain contact and communicate with the man in front through hand signals - but you must. The rain is coming down so hard where you know that the enemy won't necessarily see or hear you but you won't be able to see or hear them either; not an ideal situation.

In fact it's frightening. We come across a growth of "Wait a While" too broad a front to circumnavigate so we all need to cut our way through as carefully as we can with secateurs. But no matter how well you cut you spend an enormous amount of time and energy to disentangle from this hideous and debilitating vegetation and at all times potentially being exposed to the enemy.

(Wait-a-While rainforest vine hangs from the canopy of the rainforest with prickles on its thin stem. Initially it may look harmless, it's only when you get tangled in it and try to walk away that you realise how it got its name.

Wait-a-while vines have hooked spines on them so if your skin or clothes get caught on it as you walk past it literally hooks onto you. So the best course of action if hooked up is to stop walking, 'wait-a-while' and disentangle yourself.

If you keep walking it can scratch your skin and rip clothes.

This hanging vine (also known as the Lawyer Vine) can sometimes be tangled among other plants or hanging vines so its a tricky little plant that's often difficult to see.) Continued page 11

Battle of Long Tan and Vietnam Veterans Day - 18 August 2019



Photos: Bruce Forster



Continued from page 9

At times with the rain, the foliage, the sweat in your eyes is like being in a fog of war. So easy to lose concentration and when you do that you or your mates are dead. The sweat rash in your crutch and on your waist is starting to burn from the salt in your sweat and you can't wait to give it all a bit of an airing.

The heavy sense and pressure of the energy draining humidity is compounded by the jungle canopy where the heat and the steam is exasperated by the rotting foliage underneath from which there is no escape.

In some places just extracting your boots from ankle-deep mud and slush is a chore adding to your fatigue and the risk of losing concentration. Losing concentration will also lead to tripping, stumbling and falling which further drains your energy and can also give your position away.

Bamboo clumps you are forced to travel through are like a vegetable slicer where coming out the other side you're bleeding from various parts of your body which is a magnet for the leeches and your clothing in parts is in shreds. Jungles by nature are hilly with much defined creek lines but they can also be very flat and oppressive with water underneath. You can go days patrolling without seeing the sky, sun or moon except for a haze between the canopy vegetation. At the end of a day's patrol thankfully without incident you are looking forward to harboring or lying up and

enjoying a bit of a meal. A bit of shut eye interspersed with picket duties and after moving off at first light to another location and light breakfast the whole previous day's experience of patrolling in the jungle starts all over again. This routine is relentless and many times our mates in support from our gun battery, mortars and engineers were also subjected to the same conditions. The boys in Armoured may have been slightly more comfortable and were always good for some water or a brew but they lived in constant fear of RPGs, mines and IEDs. After a period of time operating in these oppressive conditions "you get comfortable in being uncomfortable" where any discomfort is just accepted as a part of our role as an Australian soldier who has lived with jungle warfare since WW2. Leadership and maintenance of morale and a sense of humour is essential in a jungle warfare environment and there is never a lack of humour among Aussies even in the most dire of circumstances. The jungle is your friend providing you observe all the tactical training you have had. It is the most grueling of all war fighting so you must be very fit to fight and you must fight to get fit. The hardest emotional memory we all have of Vietnam is not being able to mourn our war dead. Due to the nature of the war, the vegetation and terrain the memories we share of our war dead is a body bag containing one of our mates being winched up through the jungle canopy to a hovering chopper. No time to mourn, no time to reflect, safety catch off and back into search and destroy mode, where self-preservation mode over rides any thought of sorrow or mourning.

And many wonder why for years we were non-tactile, cold and difficult, in particular with family and friends. This is very much our war through the eyes of us on



the ground doing the hard yards with our supporting arms or any others who had to endure these oppressive conditions on a daily basis. It is now some 46 years since the last troops came home from Vietnam and its superfluous to engage in the political dialectic about the pros and cons of the Vietnam War. But what I can say is that the many young men and women who went off to that far-off place full of hope, pride, and seeking to make a difference did so with valor, determination and a certain apprehension but never did I see them waiver or falter in their mission.

Many of us have memories about our times in Vietnam. In my case I am not consumed by the bad memories which I tend to quarantine in a safe place. I am more focused on the good times and there were many, of watching ordinary young people from different backgrounds working together as a team, enjoying each other's company and, very importantly, looking after each other's backs.

People often ask me what I got out of Vietnam to which I respond quite unashamedly that it made me a better person in character and spirit. It made me look at life a bit differently and made me focus on what is important in life and my values. Working and sharing the events of that war with the most incredible people who have become brothers for life. Some people have great difficulty in understanding bonds that have been forged through war and the spirit that exists within these men and that unbreakable bond, sharing those similar values. Values now considered by some being old fashioned and dated but in the minds of these men and women who served, their values are timeless and sacrosanct.

That is what today is about. You can have your battles, contacts and incidents but you can't have them without people. People who are prepared to put their bodies on the line fighting for something they believe in. And that fight goes on today with so many fighting for the veterans and their families and many other voluntary pursuits, be it CFS, SES, sport, Legacy, RSL and so many others.

Although this presentation today was about our war, I can confirm that the young men and women of today's Army are doing it just as tough in different circumstances, in a different war in a very hostile environment and when it comes to our young men and women in that war the spirit, the values and the mateship is just as enduring. Sadly some families today will be mourning for those who did not come home and others who have since passed. Today like Anzac Day there would not be one person in this room who has not been touched by war and its after effects in some capacity. It is this which brings us together here today. To remember and respect all who have served in whatever capacity from the Boer War, WW1 and WW2, Korea, but in our case the lot of the soldiers in the jungles of Vietnam and, more recently, the years of peacekeeping which should be more appropriately termed lifesaving in the lives they preserved, to the desert and mountains of Iraq and Afghanistan and in particular to honour and remember those that did not return. Lest we forget.

Michael von Berg MC OAM President

ADELAIDE ANZAC DAY MARCH 2020

Introduction

The Adelaide ANZAC Day March is a solemn commemoration of the sacrifice of nearly 103,000 Australian service personnel who have lost their lives in the service of the nation, and reflects a procession of service men and servicewomen to the graveside, following a funeral service.



The ANZAC Day Dawn Service represents the funeral, and the service at the Cross of Sacrifice, which follows the March, represents the gathering at the graveside of those who have made the supreme sacrifice.

Order of March of Units

The Order of March of units is by chronological of conflicts and within each conflict by seniority of Service with the Allies for each conflict marching at the end of each Service within each conflict grouping.

For example the Allies air forces of WW 2 march behind the RAAF WW 2 and the Vietnamese Army march behind the Australian Army Vietnam War units.

An exception to the above is Group 9; RAR and ASASR; who at our request; because we cover so many post-WW 2 conflicts march as a group which is behind the Vietnam War Conflict Groups.

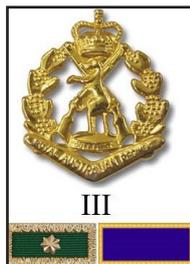
Dress Code

In recent years the dress standard of those marching in Group 9 has improved.

3 RAR SA

We finished 2019 with:

- A commemorative service for the Battle of Maryang San on Friday 4 October at the RAR Association.
- SA clubrooms.
- A Quiz Afternoon on Sunday 20 October at the RAR Association.
- SA clubrooms.
- Monthly lunches at the Lord Melbourne Hotel on the third Friday of the month and our Battalion Birthday/Christmas Function on Sunday 24 October at the same venue.
- In the first half of 2020 we plan to:
 - Continue with our monthly lunches at the same venue with the first on Friday 17 January.
 - Conduct the following commemorative services at the RAR Assoc. SA clubrooms:
 - o Battle of Kapyong on 24 April.
 - o Battle of Fire Support Base Balmoral on 26 May.
 - Conduct our AGM on Saturday 22 March.
 - Conduct a Quiz Afternoon on a date to be determined



- Adrian Craig, 3 RAR SA

We should dress according to the solemn purpose of the March.

Group 9. RAR and ASASR

In 2020 within Group 9:

- The Order of March will be:
 - o RAR Assoc. SA President & party.
 - o RAR battalions in order of seniority with bands between 2 RAR and 3 RAR plus 8 RAR and 9 RAR.
 - o ASASR.
 - o Group 9 transport vehicles.
- The Assembly Area will be the same as in recent years on the eastern side of Pultney Street between North Terrace and Rundle Street.
- The Dispersal Area is also unchanged from recent years with Group 9 proceeding along Sir Edwin Smith Avenue to the corner of Pennington Terrace before halting and dispersing.
- Requests for Transport for the disabled will be called for early in March 2020 with requests addressed to the Ceremonial Manager RAR Assoc. SA.

Future Marches

It is anticipated that some of the units of earlier conflict will be removed in the next few years and Group 9 may move from its recent Assembly and Dispersal Areas.

Adrian Craig,
Ceremonial Manager RAR Assoc. SA

Retirement of 6RAR mascot - welcome to newcomer



MA 505 SGT
Ridgleigh Blue111
was formally retired
farewell on a Battalion
Parade on November
27 having earned a

welcome retirement on a Millicent property. MA 1901 Recruit SGT Ridgleigh Blue1V is currently completing his recruit and corps training with his handler PTE Jared Little at 2 Combat Engineer Regiment. Initial reports are he is one of the most responsive dogs the Regiment has trained and it is expected he will do very well.

There is no indication yet as to when he will graduate and take up his duties with the Battalion.

Pictured: SGT Ridgleigh Blue 111 with five-month-old Pte Ridgleigh Blue IV after the parade.

NATIONAL REUNION: A reminder that the National Reunion will be held in Brisbane from June 5 - 7. Registration and full details on 6rarassociation.com



Avoca Hotel lunch guests on October 30 (seated from left): Alex Mohl, Bill Wallace, Rodney & Lyn Graham, Alan & Margaret Potter, Helen Perkins, Lynette Wallace, Janette & Bill McIver, Paul & Moira Coppock. Standing: Pauline & Leigh Floyd, Peter Hoskin and P.C. & Rose Smith.

Members' Christmas drinks with expressions of appreciation



Armano Verdiglione, RARA SA President Michael von Berg and David Monceaux, husband of Burnside Mayor Ann Monceaux.



RARA SA President Michael von Berg addressing the gathering. 9RAR member John England responded to his message thanking him on behalf of everyone for whom he works so enthusiastically to which everyone applauded.

Lynn Graham farewelled

After 11 years and about 132 committee meeting minutes, Lynn Graham has signed off as the RARA (SA) minute secretary. Lynn has done an outstanding job not just in documenting the records and resolutions of these important meetings, but at times controlled us all in being on our best behavior. Lynn was recognised for her outstanding service on the family night when President Michael von Berg presented her with a bouquet of flowers and a bottle of Fine Cru Moet Chandon. Lynn proposes to pursue her new found musical career but will continue to be an active member of the club and its social activities.



Ann Dennis, Jan Allen, Michael von Berg, Denise Rowe, Linda and Robert Whinnen



RARA SA Secretary Jim Stopford and his wife Bronwyn, Burnside Mayor Anne Monceaux and her husband David, and 9RAR's John England and his wife Huyen. More news from them in 2020.



David White, Malcolm Allen, Ken Duthie and Errol Moretti and Bill Wallace.



Kitchen duty: Club Manager Greg Dwiar, Arthur, Carol Van Der Peet and Michelle Gelberg



Craig and Ray Vadeikis and Jill & George Szczurko.



Left: Dr Donald Beard, Carol Van Der Peet, Peter Scott and Penelope Forster.
Below: Jeff Barratt with Michelle and Arthur Gelberg.



9 RAR SA AGM IN STRATHALBYN

Consensus: Mini trip to the country should be repeated

A country meeting was requested by members and, as a trial, the first meeting was on 5 September 2019 in the Strathalbyn RSL Clubrooms, Strathalbyn Football Club precinct.

Strathalbyn RSL President Cate Goodall welcomed the group and explained how the new RSL facility was recently created in conjunction with the Strathalbyn Football Club.

A delicious morning tea was served in the spacious Long Room overlooking the picturesque oval, followed by the meeting in the RSL Clubrooms and a jolly lunch at The Victoria Hotel, Strathalbyn.

The group consensus was that this mini trip to the country was most enjoyable and recommended another country meeting in 2020.

9RAR SA AGM AND LUNCH NOVEMBER 13

A convivial group of 36 from the 9 RAR family met at the Buckingham Arms Hotel for the AGM and lunch generously provided by 9 RAR SA.

The venue was well chosen with a private room enabling privacy for the AGM. This was conducted by Bob Plummer with the usual amount of banter and was over in a short time.

The election of Office Bearers saw the following elected for the 2019 – 20 year:

Mick Mummery elected as President, to be the 9RAR Rep at the RAR SA Meetings

Bob Plummer retained as Secretary/Treasurer

Vice Presidents to be carried forward to the first meeting in 2020.

Members were reminded those who attend the 9RAR Committee Meetings are eligible to vote on all matters.



Male members of the 9 RAR Association SA at the AGM

OUTGOING PRESIDENT DAVID STACEY'S REPORT TO THE AGM

This is my last report as President of 9 RAR SA as I am not standing for re-election in 2020.

Since my diagnosis each year has been a bonus and I thank every member for their support during my time as President and especially during the last four years.

I feel my role as President has been to help steer a course with the members harmoniously resolving issues as they have arisen.

This could only be achieved with the respect of members.

The 50-year graveside commemorations for 9 RAR's 10 war dead buried in SA have been well attended, meticulously organised and given enormous respect by all family, friends and veterans.

The Anzac Day Parade in Adelaide has changed in the 50 years 9 RAR has been eligible to march.

Over the years we have marched with the Korean and South East Asia Veterans Association, the RAR SA Association and now behind our own 9 RAR Battalion banner as a separate identity in the Regimental group. Fifty years after 9 RAR served in the Vietnam war our numbers have been eroded by bereavement and disability, but many still front up in Adelaide or country towns to take part in the march.

Secretary/treasurer Bob Plummer has been diligent in organizing the upcoming reunion in Canberra from November 27-29 to commemorate 50 years since the battalion returned home after the tour of duty in South Vietnam.

A good number, more than 250, have registered for the reunion and it must not be forgotten that 9 RAR SA is the sponsor of this reunion.

Bob Plummer deserves a round of applause for instigating and implementing this project. Bob's volunteering role has been worth thousands of dollars and we thank him for his commitment to 9 RAR SA and 9 RAR National. We also compliment Vicki Plummer for supporting Bob in this endeavour.

Special thanks during my presidency to Patrons Laurie Lewis and Warren Featherby, my Vice Presidents Gene Costa and Michael Mummery and Jan Stacey for your support and encouragement. Without this team I could not have stayed in the position for as long as I have. Best wishes to the newly elected 2020 executive team. I am sure you will find it rewarding.

Enjoy good company here today, the reunion and the festive season and thank you again for your support.

CANBERRA REUNION 50 YEARS RTA

DAVID STACEY'S REFLECTIONS ON THE CANBERRA REUNION

The daytime events were a wonderful innovation. The venues were easy to locate with the help of GPS navigation, ignoring much advice from the back seat!

Wednesday 27 November: Thoroughbred Park, Canberra Racing Club, was a spacious and comfortable setting for the "Meet and Greet". As we chatted and renewed friendships, the food kept coming out as the afternoon drifted away on a beautiful balmy Canberra day.

The good thing about the reunion was we had time to visit the Australian War Memorial. After chauffeuring the Doc to his digs (accompanied by much hilarity from the back seat), the GPS took us past the Australian War Memorial. We decided the timing was perfect to attend the Last Post Ceremony.

This was a very moving occasion and the afternoon sunlight and shadows on the pillars, arches and plaques showed the memorial at its Byzantine style best.

LUNCH AT THE REALM HOTEL. THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER

Thanks to Bob for organizing Jan's birthday lunch – wonderful venue, delicious menu (chosen by Barb and Jan), and the most company she has ever had on her

At ACT daytime events wonderful innovation

special day. Formalities were kept to a minimum, Queensland was mentioned. Returning to our accommodation we noticed out to the east the sky was filled with smoke from nearby forest fires. The smoke did cause problems for those with respiratory complaints and reduced visibility in the city.



FRIDAY 29 NOVEMBER

March and Commemorative Service, Royal Military College Chapel, Duntroon, lead 9RAR National President Doug McGrath.

This was a first for our reunions to hold a commemorative service and this turned out to be a highlight for many. Thanks to Bob for organising buses from the city and Lyn for crowd control.

The march – in and out of step and up an incline - was led by National President Doug McGrath and preceded by drummers and a piper at a cracking pace.

A highlight of the Chapel service was the parade of flags representing the 35 war dead from 9 RAR. I was reminded of the parable of the loaves and the fishes when Bob used 10 flags to depict 35 flags. As Bob read out each soldier's name the flag bearers - accompanied by one of our ladies – processed down the aisle with Geoff Beottcher and Lyn Fisher parading Reg Phillips' flag at the memorial Service



I felt all present were moved by the number of war dead. Special thanks to the bugler, the Sing Australia Choir, Major Bill Mitchell, the Padre, Bob, for arranging the beautiful wreath and Betty, Vicki, Jan, Jill, Lyn and helpers for serving light refreshments. I did enjoy the half lamington I managed to scrounge at the end.

A number from 9 RAR returned to the Australian War Memorial later in the day and Bob and I were privileged to

take part in the daily Last Post Ceremony.

We were honoured to place the 9 RAR wreath at the pool of reflection immediately following the family of the soldier being honoured that evening.



David and Bob placing the wreath at the 5 o'clock ceremony at the AWM 9RAR's names commemorated at the AWM

POST REUNION

We returned to the AWM on the Saturday and were thrilled to see our wreath was placed on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Hall of Memory.

As I reflect on this reunion, I appreciate the amazing organisation by Bob so I was able to attend, meet up with old and new comrades, and travel safely. In closing, thank goodness for GPS which saved many a wrong turn!



9RAR's names commemorated at the Australian War Memorial



Remembrance Day crosses, in memory of the members of the Royal Australian Regiment who lost their lives in SVN, were placed on the lawns alongside the memorial on North Terrace by RAR RSL President Rod Graham assisted by Club Manager Greg Dwiar (pictures).



Royal Australian Regiment Association Committee 2019-2020

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

Appointed Committee Positions

Manager - Club	Greg Dwiar gregdwiar@gmail.com	0412 644 749
Manager - Ceremonial	Adrian Craig as.craig9rar@bigpond.com	8263 4784
Welfare Officer	Vacant	
Membership	Carol Van Der Peet 3RARSA@gmail.com	0415 242 084
Trojan's Trek Director	Moose Dunlop OAM moose@trojanstrek.com	0408 088 886

Voluntary Positions

Manager - Bar	Vacant	
Editor - Infantryman	Penelope Forster penelopeforster01@gmail.com	0419 856 946

Battalion Representatives

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2 RAR Malcolm Allen	mal@aladdco.com.au	0451 374 133
2/4 RAR Kim Porter	yrtnafni51@gmail.com	0417 468 186
3 RAR Adrian Craig	as.craig9rar@bigpond.com	8263 4784
4 RAR Chris Pepper	chrispepper73@icloud.com	0406 830 228
5 RAR Mos Hancock	moswhan@bigpond.net.au	0414 566 212
5/7 RAR	Vacant	
6 RAR Bill Wallace	wallace46@bigpond.com	0418 529 181
7 RAR Robert Whinnen	whinnens@gmail.com	0413 189 558
8 RAR Ted Forward	adrienne.ted.forward@gmail.com	8235 1625
9 RAR Mick Mummery	mmummery&chariot.net.au	0428 387 670

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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MEAL & BAR ROSTER DEC EMBER - APRIL		
DATE	MEAL	BAR
DECEMBER		
6	Light meal	Craigy
13	Light meal	Spike
20	RAR XMAS DINNER	Craigy/Spike
27	CLOSED XMAS	CLOSED
JANUARY		
10	CLUB REOPENS	Kara
17	Light meal	Jeff
24	Light meal	Craigy
31	Light Meal	Wheels
FEBRUARY		
7	Light meal	Spike
14	FAMILY FRIDAY	Bob W
21	Light meal	Jeff
28	Light meal	Kara
MARCH		
6	Light meal	Craigy
13	FAMILY FRIDAY	Bob W
20	Light meal	Kara
27	Light meal	Spike
APRIL		
3	Light meal	Wheels
10	GOOD FRIDAY	CLOSED
17	Light meal	Jeff
24	KAPYONG DAY	Kara
25	ANZAC DAY	CLOSED



- Next Committee Meeting Sunday 17 January.
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- Greek Night Friday 8 May – sorted with Tim Kara
- Regimental Dinner Saturday 20 June – MvB to contact caterers
- Wine Tasting (after AGM) Sunday 11 October - MVB or Greg to contact William Smidmore, same format as a couple of years ago
- Members Christmas Drinks Friday 20 December

SINCERE THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED PROOF THIS EDITION