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paddy@iswright.com.au

(mention 7RAR when dealing with Paddy O'Brien)

Below : A typical sight in Vietnam, bikes parked on the footpath by the hundreds.



PRESIDENT'S pre - ANZAC Day Message

THE YEAR'S MILESTONES AHEAD

The year moves along at a terrific speed, or so it seems as we grow older! We have a fairly full calendar as we go to press with our first Newsletter for 2012. Easter falls early from 6th-9th April, with Anzac Day just over 2 weeks away mid-week on Wednesday 25th April.

Our AGM follows in Sydney on the 20th May (all welcome!) and then the London Olympics Opening Ceremony is scheduled for Friday 24th July, and the Closing Ceremony on Sunday 12th August. More importantly our 2012 Melbourne Reunion kicks off on Friday 3rd August through Tuesday 7th August with our Battalion Dining-In Evening at the Sebel Albert Park also commemorating The Battle of Suoi Chau Pha on Monday 6th August.

REUNION 2012

With less than 6 months to go most of us should by now have registered for the Southern Reunion. If not and you are planning to head south, please give the lads in Victoria a break and send the info and rego funds asap. No need to tell you that our ranks are thinning on a monthly basis and these meetings with old comrades are extra special. We welcome the younger soldiers from 7RAR (post Vietnam) who will carry the banner long after we've passed on.

70th ANNIVERSARY -THE BATTLE OF THE JAVA SEA & AREA

A naval experience - my wife, her father, (Malcolm Stening) and I were fortunate to participate in the commemorative service at the Cenotaph in Martin Place on Friday 24th February to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Java Sea and Area; and in particular the Battle of Sunda Strait (in the Java Sea between Sumatra and Java) when the Australian light cruiser HMAS *Perth* and the United States heavy cruiser USS *Houston* were amongst allied ships lost in this WW2 battle on the high seas.

There were 74 ships and submarines from 5 allied navies involved: the Royal Australian Navy, Royal Navy, US Navy, Royal Netherlands Navy and the Royal Indian Navy; along with the Merchant Navy, Tankers and one Troop Ship. Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, AC, CVO, Governor of NSW presided over the moving 'naval' service with representatives from our armed services and diplomatic representatives from Great Britain, the USA and The Netherlands.

At the end of the service, National Anthems of all those allied navies were sung - a memorable moment.

My father-in-law a Surgeon Commander in the RAN and RN in WW2, and a veteran of The Battle of The Coral Sea & the Landing at Guadalcanal in HMAS *Australia*, and co-incidentally 100 years old in August this year, was moved by the service as his brother Sam, also serving as a naval medical officer, was in the *Perth* and survived this his second sinking (previously in HMAS *Waterhen*) only to spend more than 3 years as a POW of the Japanese until the end of the war.

I mention this naval experience of mine as not many of us ex-army understand the psyche of naval warfare; although many of our members enjoyed the courtesy of a free trip on the converted aircraft carrier HMAS *Sydney* from Garden Island to Vung Tau in SVN, in what was then known as "*The Vung Tau Ferry*"!

In the service I was moved by the NAVAL ODE:

"They have no grave
But the cruel sea.
No flowers lay at their heads,
A rusting hulk is their tombstone.
Afast on the ocean bed."

And following the Last Post, this lonely Ode:

"There are no roses on a sailor's grave
Nor wreaths tossed upon the storm tossed waves
No last post from the band
So far away from their native land.
No heartbroken words carved in stone
Just shipmates' bodies there alone.
The only tributes are the seagulls' sweeps
And the teardrops when a loved one weeps."

We take our hats off to the men and women of the navy who help to defend our freedom.

After the Cenotaph we trekked some 200metres up to the Occidental Hotel in York Street where, with the Governor Marie Bashir and a room full of Admirals and notable Australians, we attended the launch of Dr Ian Pfennigwerth's biography of Sam Stening who survived 2 sinkings in WW2 and was the only RAN POW doctor in WW2. The navy on parade that day made us all very proud.

A FALLEN 7RAR SOLDIER

Along with other servicemen from the morning's Cenotaph ceremony and book launch, I attended the funeral of an ex-7RAR soldier at the nearby St Patrick's Hill Church, Grosvenor Street in the city in the afternoon. I did not know John Stranskye, OAM, OLJ, RAAMC well enough to really do him justice here, but in the service there were many glowing tributes. John was a medic in our second tour in SVN.

The Winner "Well Done Those Men"

For my part it is **well done those voters**. Your efforts resulted in Barry's book "Well Done Those Men" being listed on the National Year of Reading list.

In October last year I became aware that Barry's book was in the race for National listing and decided to do my bit to get the book the recognition it deserves. After all, it is part of 7RAR history, part of the history of the blokes who were conscripted and part about my service in the Army. I know that many Veterans feel it is their story too.

It was my job to phone members of the 7RAR association and ask them to vote for the book.

What a response I got! Over 100 former colleagues or their wives offered to ring family and friends to pass on the message on how to vote or simply to turn on the computer and vote for the book themselves.

Like so many Vietnam Veterans I want all Australians ,particularly the young, to read the true story of the war and the appalling treatment received by the troops on our return home, in the hope that it never happens again.

During this ring around I also caught up with many friends I hadn't talked to for many years. Some for over 45 years. There is no doubt about it when you have shared an experience like we did, you never forget the other guy.

Only once did I have to ask the guy who was telling a story to "tone it down a bit" [and it was nothing to do with the war] because my wife was in hearing range.

I must say that some of the stories seemed to have grown a bit, but hey, it made them sound better than the original tale so who am I to complain. It was just great to catch up.

During these calls some of us were able to make a commitment to get together at the Reunion in August which will make the dinner much more special. I am also aware a hard cover version of the book, together with an audio tape and other special enticements, will be available at the Reunion which will make a great memento of our army service.

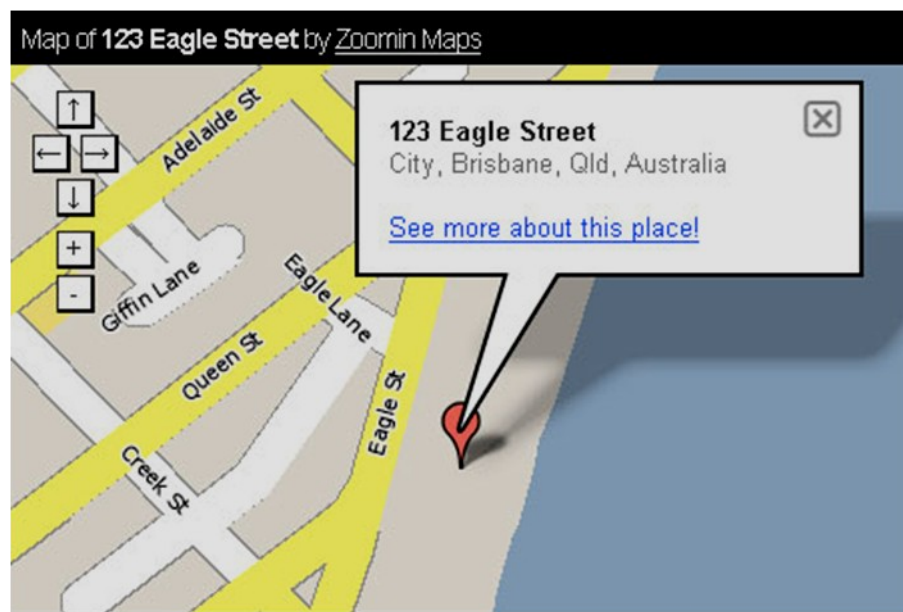
Thanks to the voters,
David [Blue] Howlett

REUNION

Location: The Pig 'N Whistle at Eagle Street. They will be open at the end of the parade and are situated just a short walk from where we are dismissed. Members are reminded to fit in with the Qld Liquor Licencing laws we need to purchase some food to go with drinks for about the first hour - up to 13:00.

Enoggera Barracks

Secretary RAR Qld has invited us back to Enoggera early afternoon. The 8/9RAR mess is planning "Pig races". Consisting of eight races with a Calcutta running. They are also catering for the Crown and Anchor and Two-up crowd if you need other avenues of donating your hard earned cash.



I understand SASR and 9RAR Associations are also going to the Pig 'n Whistle after the march.

Kev Gillett
Brisbane

EX PLATOON COMMANDERS 6PL B COY 2RAR BOTH TOURS VIETNAM

From: Mike Dean to Gavin Rodie:

I have been contacted by the current Platoon Commander of 6Pl B Coy 2RAR who wants to liaise with former 6 Pl Commanders for both tours in South Vietnam.

I have known him since childhood and his reasons for doing this is to introduce some "lived history" into his platoon, specifically from the Vietnam War era.

If you are still out there and willing to help, I can put you in touch with him.

Regards, Brian

Brian McKenzie

T: 03 6245 1717

M : 0439 030 429

He returned to Australia and spent the rest of his life serving his country with the Australian Federal Police and the Army Reserve in the Medical Corps, only to leave us before his 62nd birthday.

Commissioned in the Army Reserve Medical Corps, Major John Straskye's farewell service was impressive with hundreds of his mates present in this beautiful church. It was a moving tribute to one who served many for many years in both Australia and foreign lands, and who was held in such high regard by all. A massive guard of honour of ex-servicemen formed outside the church as a final farewell.

"FIGHTING TO THE FINISH" - BOOK LAUNCH

A recent article in early March in Sydney's Sunday Telegraph announced the launch of "Fighting To The Finish", written by the Australian War Memorial's senior historian, Ashley Ekins - this official history casts doubt on the veracity of senior army officers and politicians who would not admit to us losing the war in Vietnam. The controversial article goes on to quote Warrant Officer Ray Simpson VC when writing to a comrade as saying: "Charlie (the VC) still controls the greater part of the country..... and now I believe he just doesn't give a damn who wins. This 'Vietnamisation' is far too late. The bastards have beaten us mate. And it's just a matter of time. This place will be his, with all the roads, wells, windmills and schools our mob's built." Sounds like an interesting read before making any comment.

OUR PATRONS

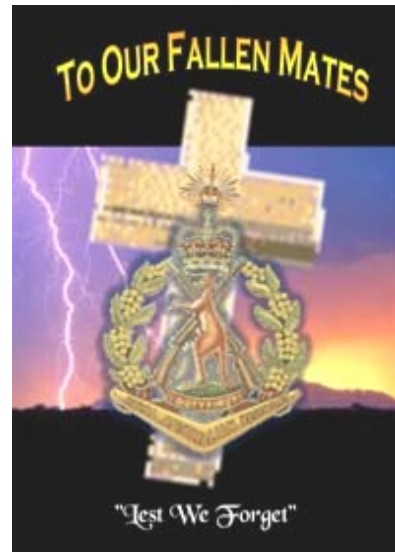
General Ron Grey is well and we hope to see him in the near future, maybe even in Melbourne should he be enjoying the best of health in August. Colonel Eric Smith and his wife Bette recently returned from a trip to the UK returning via the Panama Canal, describing the canal transit as the pinnacle of their trip away. And General 'Sandy' Pearson (2nd/7th) is in good health at the War Vets Narrabeen and heading towards his 94th birthday in August.

LEST WE FORGET OUR COMRADES IN ARMS!

As we approach Anzac Day, let's make sure we don't neglect those of our comrades who are in some way needy. We are all guilty of neglect of friends and family at times, so let's make that special effort to: "Say G'day to a mate, before tomorrow when maybe it's too late."

All the best for Easter, our Anzac Reunions, Melbourne Reunion 2012, and for happy days!

Cheers & best regards, Rod



VALE

It is with deep and sincere sympathy that I report the passing of former friends and comrades in arms.

39747 Graham Alexander Collins, B5 2nd tour, passed away 2 Dec 2011.

2791806 Peter Norman Rastall, D12 2nd tour, passed away 4 Jan 2012

5716702 Raymond Alexander Lamont, B6/CHQ 2nd tour, passed away 9 Jan 2012.

3788941 Robert John Carey, F/Aslt 1st tour, passed away 18 Jan 2012.

217421 John Straskye, OAM, D Coy Medic 2nd tour, passed away 15 Feb 2012.

2412360 David Ross Jack, B4 1st tour, passed away 29 February 2012.

3793343 Anthony Eric (Toby) Shaw, D12 2nd tour, passed away 2 February 2012.

2789234 John Edward Spencer, 2nd tour, notified in March/April issue of Reveille.

218692 Robert James Wall, 2nd tour, notified in March/April issue of Reveille.

4410203 Michael Coleridge, WAR photographer, passed away 10 Jan 2012, (see opposite eulogy)

BRISBANE - ANZAC DAY 2012

DAWN SERVICE

All are invited to attend the Dawn Service at the Contemplation Building, The RAR National Memorial Walk, Lavarack Parade Gallipoli Barracks. I will be there and will lay a reef in commemoration of 7RAR soldiers lost in battle.

Dress:

Coat & tie or smart casual plus medals.

Dawn Service

0430 Assemble for Gunfire Coffee

0500 - 0600 Dawn Service.

After the Dawn Service all are invited to a gunfire breakfast at 8/9RAR mess.

BRISBANE CITY MARCH

Order of March.

This year 7RAR are last in order of march.

Medals. Full size medals are to be worn NOT MINIATURES. Medals worn by NOK are to be worn on the right breast.

Assembly

Assemble at the FUP (Crn George and Charlotte St) at 1000hrs Step off at 1100 hrs (subject to change).

Transport to FUP own means but remember public transport is free when wearing medals. The FUP has been flexible in the past so if in doubt, look for the banner.

Dress

Coat & tie or smart casual plus medals.

CURRENT LIST OF REGISTRATIONS FOR REUNION (CONTINUED)

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Keneth Boyd | Daniel Kelly |
| Leonie Leslie | Kevin Liddell |
| Keith Connell | Ronald Lyons |
| Peter Gurr | June Lyons |
| Helen Gurr | Kevin Morrison |
| James Fitzsimon | Janice Morrison |
| Lorraine Fitzsimon | Graham Nix |
| Harold Hayes | Kerry Nix |
| Peter Cheshire | Ronald Northcott |
| Jocelyn Cheshire | Barbara Northcott |
| Geoffrey Clarke | Peter Saville |
| Leonie Fay Clarke | Gary Seton |
| Greig Ball | Janice Collins |
| Michael Berry | Max Storey |
| John Devine | Helen Storey |
| Kim Devine | Peter Vlachou |
| Douglas Fieldhouse | Sandra Vlachou |
| Roger Gentle | Rod McRae |
| Christine Gentle | Margaret Ince |
| Andrew Gilmore | Gayle Rastall |
| Denese Gilmore | Kerriene Rastall |
| Denis James | Tiffany Howarth |
| Jack Kasiniak | Renee Rastall |
| Zofia Kasiniak | Rod Lyons |

ADDITIONAL VALE

Information received from 1RVR news. 3129453 LTCOL William Norman Lunn, died September 2011. Served 7RAR 25 Oct 67 to 24 Nov 67. Served in 7RAR as acting OC of C Coy during Operation Santa Fe.

Message received from Bill Fogarty.

Mike Coleridge, Australian Vietnam War photographer, 1933-2012.

Michael (Mike) Coleridge will always be remembered for the photograph he took on 26 August 1967 of a group of soldiers of 5 Platoon, B Company, 7RAR, waiting for an Iroquois helicopter to land and take them back to Nui Dat at the end of Operation Ulmarra. This photograph has become an Australian icon of the Vietnam War and is graphically featured on the Vietnam National Memorial on ANZAC Parade in Canberra. But this is just one of 558 still photographs and 54 films taken in Vietnam by Mike Coleridge in the Australian War Memorial's collection.



Mike Coleridge, Members of 5 Platoon, B Company, 7RAR waiting to board an Iroquois helicopter to return to Nui Dat, 26 August 1967 Coleridge was born in Slovenia on 11 July 1933. At the end of the Second World War his parents' marriage failed, and he accompanied his mother to Austria, before migrating to Australia as an unaccompanied 16-year-old. As a young man, he worked in a range of manual jobs in Sydney, always struggling to make his junior wages cover his expenses.

At 18 he found work on a property in rural New South Wales, where his circumstances improved and his life assumed some degree of normality. A young man looking for adventure, he eventually found his way to Darwin. Life in the Northern Territory was exciting, and during this time he learnt to fly and was awarded a private pilot's license.

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(THE FOUR MIDDLE PAGES, MERCHANDISE LIST - ORDERS CAN BE PLACED INDIVIDUALLY APART FROM THE REUNION ORDERS IF YOU WISH AND HAVE THE MERCHANDISE DELIVERED TO YOUR HOME ADDRESS OR PICK UP AT THE REUNION)

CURRENT LIST OF REGISTRATIONS FOR REUNION

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Kevin Harker | Robert Penington | John Stimpson |
| Mary Harker | Brian Maguire | Kevin Claydon |
| Mindy Sutherland | Sheryl Maguire | Cathy Claydon |
| Lester White | Kenneth Ward | Philip Littler |
| Robert Murdoch | Betty Ward | Kay Littler |
| Trish Murdoch | Glen Preston | Anthony Keech |
| Ian Sherrington | Winifred Preston | Terry Howard |
| Cathy Sherrington | Chris Read | Lesley Howard |
| Anthony Earl Kelaher | Angela Read | Brian Edwards |
| Margaret Kelaher | Ray Greenwood | Colleen Edwards |
| Garry Philp | Suzy Greenwood | Kevin Stephens |
| Lorraine Philp | Lyall Clayton | Loris Stephens |
| Narelle Lockwood | Janet Clayton | Murray Withers |
| Robert Brett | Klaus Behrand | Vivienne Withers |
| Barbara Malt | Raymond Campbell | Kenneth James |
| Robert May | Edie Campbell | Graham Bellete |
| Lyn May | Fred Smith | June Bellete |
| Edward Von-Paleske | Noel Biggins | Kerry Eichner |
| Sharron Von-Paleske | Beverly Biffins | Johanna Eichner |
| Richard Hylard | Peter Farrell | Peter Kerley |
| Jeannette Hylard | Kay Farrell | Gail McKenzie |
| David Evans | Graeme Haywood | Alan McGuinness |
| Maureen Evans | Dorothy Haywood | Janice McGuinness |
| Greg Miller | Roger Randall | Maurie Burton |
| Pamela Miller | Carol Randall | Robyn Burton |
| Chris Morrow | Don Bryan | Patrick Goggins |
| Narelle Morrow | ?????? | Edward Malcolm |
| Ron Osler | David Howlett | Tess Malcolm |
| Lorraine Osler | Chris Edge | Lloyd Venz |
| Don Cruden | Linda Edge | Sheila Venz |
| Margret Cruden | Athol Donegan | Paul Venz |
| Andrew Thompson | Veronica Donegan | John Cutbush |
| Ana Faleironj | Allan West | Michael McMillan |
| Robert Curry | Graham Colton | Peter Prior |
| Barbara Curry | Julie Colton | Chris Wark |
| Robert Hill | William Fogarty | Jan Wark |
| Yvonne Hill | Joan Fogarty | Ken Bladon |
| Christopher Ashenden | Daryl Christensen | Stephanie Bladon |
| Robert Lloyd | Carol Hurn | Graeme Gutteridge |
| Leonie Lloyd | Geoffrey Brophy | Helen Gutteridge |
| | Irene Brophy | |

MELBOURNE REUNION - WA BANNER

If there is anyone travelling be it car or caravan to Melbourne for the reunion and they can fit in the WA Banner, please give Don Cruden a call on 08 9374 0014, much appreciated if you can help.

MELBOURNE REUNION - ACCOMMODATION TIPS

Guess a crew is going to Melbourne this year, I have already booked, saved a heap by using TPI magazine contacts with Choice hotels., may be helpful to know there are other events on at the same time and accommodation is going to be at a premium. All the best. Don Bryan

NEWSLETTER - WA MEMBERS

Remember, the newsletter is only as good as the contents, so please contact Geoff Murray if you have anything to report, no matter how trivial. Geoff can be contacted on:

| | |
|--------|--|
| Home | 08 94483109 |
| Mobile | 0432253043 |
| Email | geoffandlorraine@yahoo.com.au |

Cheers - Geoff Murray

Below: A typical family mode of transport in HA Noi, Mum, Dad children with shopping on the Vesper Motor Scooter, there are 28 Million of these in Vietnam.



A new innovation initiated by the boys from WA, a car flag with window attachment, they come in two sizes:- small 300mm x 200mm and large 400mm x 300mm. Costs are small \$10.00 plus postage and packaging, large \$15.00 plus postage and packaging. The WA branch already has a supply remainder can order from the OX, address on the back cover.

I still have a great supply of these items if you want to show them off at the reunion then please order promptly.

LOOKING FOR

Ken (Bozo) Eaton is looking for anyone who may know the whereabouts of Maurie Callanan, he was WIA 2nd tour. Any information please contact Ken on, Ph (02) 9725 5260 or (M) 0437 798 628.

NEW MEMBERS

| | |
|--|--|
| Mr Garry Gallagher Son Bill 2/7th Bn AIF | Mrs Lois Matthews Widow Don Everymans 1st tour |
| Mr Alexander McLean FO Party B Coy 1st tour | LTCOL Lachlan Mead 7RAR Battle Group HQ 2008/09 |
| Mrs Gayle Rastall Widow Peter D12 2nd tour | Mr John Cutbush SPT/CHQ 1st tour |
| Mr Glen Kuschert XO 7RAR 2008/09 | Mr John Smith SIGS 2nd tour |
| Mr William Lewis A2 7RAR 2012- | Cameron Spencer B Coy 7RAR 2012- |

UPDATE ON LIBYA WAR GRAVES

The Australian Government has confirmed an official from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has completed a visit to the Commonwealth War Cemetery in Benghazi, Libya to inspect first-hand damage to Australian headstones.

Following the visit, the Government has now revised the number of Australian headstones damaged from 50 to 52. The two additional headstones damaged belong to Private Stanley Frederick Hale and Private Julius Cecil Widerberg.

The Office of Australian War Graves is contacting families with relatives buried at Benghazi, however with next of kin records more than 70 years old, families are encouraged to contact the Office of Australian War Graves on 02 6289 6474 for more information.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is yet to finalise the total number of graves damaged in last month's attack on the cemetery.

All damaged headstones will be replaced by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Media inquiries:

Minister Snowdon: Lidija Ivanovski (02) 6277 7820 or 0407108 935

Department of Veterans' Affairs Media: (02) 6289 6203

VIETNAM MEMORIAL IN CANBERRA - FAMOUS PHOTO

We are all familiar with the famous 7RAR photo from the 1st tour of the 7RAR guys waiting to board a chopper, used on the Vietnam memorial in Canberra. Well there has been some conjecture regarding the identity of the helipad marshal in the picture, turns out to be Ray Gould from Cuballing in the south-west of WA. (source: Australian War Memorial, Canberra.)

NAMETAGS (Note: For BOTH Men and Women)

Our NAMETAGS are available in two sizes, the original size and the version which is half as big again. Each small tag costs \$13, with the larger tag at \$18, both prices include delivery to anywhere in Australia.

To order, contact Geoff Murray as per details below and provide the correct name to be included on the TAG and the correct postal address. To ensure prompt delivery, pop a cheque (made payable to Geoff Murray) or money order in the post when you place your order, delivery is about three weeks.

Geoff Murray
30 Bouvardia Way
GREENWOOD
WA 6024
geoffandlorraine@yahoo.com.au
Home 08 94483109
Mobile 0432253043



Very life-like all sitting at a table. At Sentosa Island, which we reached by a cable car, is a waxed display of the signing of the Japanese surrender, and also where cannons were kept looking out to sea. We saw a great display of the Titanic for it's 100 Anniversary.

One of the best displays. You feel like you are actually on the ship. They have :- a flyer, (a high wheel which takes an hour to rotate) after dark in the zoo. (which we missed out on this time!) The Marina Bay Sands, the Casino and the highest look out, consisting of 3 x 57 storey buildings connected on top with a boat like building which is the viewing station and the Hotel's swimming pool. Universal Studios, for next time. The Art-Science Museum, where the Titanic display was, although this building looks like an open lotus flower. So, still more to see on another visit, 8 days wasn't enough.

Of course the Raffles Hotel was a lovely old area, but very expensive for a couple of drinks, but once only. Then on Thurs. after our return there was a plaque being unveiled for the civilians who escaped, or tried to. It was held around the corner from us in Stirling and organised by a 72yr. old lady whom Noel met in Sing. and who is from England.

She and her Mother left on a ship, but were bombed, survived and picked up by a U.S. boat only to be sunk again. But eventually they got to England! So that is all that we did and saw. Humid weather, just like Perth's was when we left. A bit cooler now. We're both glad we went, and would go back to finish sight-seeing.

Cheers Patricia Bell

WA MUSEUM RECOMMENDATION

2/2 Independent coy "sparrow force" Timor WW2 exhibition is now on at the WA Museum until mid May 2012 and the exhibition is well worth a visit, over at least 1 hr duration.

ANZAC DAY WA - MARCH DETAILS

The head of the march will form up in St Georges Terrace on the corner of William Street heading EAST - therefore we will be in St Georges Terrace from William St back around King St - remember units form up in rows of 4 across the roadway. We march up to Barrack St - turn right and head towards the river - LEFT into Riverside Dr then a few more yards left into Supreme Court Gardens where the service will be held. For more details, be sure to look in the West Australian a few days before Anzac Day. Afterwards we will congregate at Rigby's as per usual.

7th BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT INC (QLD)
Incorporated in Queensland - No 1A - 13547
ABN No: 35 124 126 574
Application for *Membership and/or *Renewal of Current Membership
(* Delete where applicable)

SURNAME... .. GIVEN NAMES... ..

ST/etc... .. Town/Sub... ..

State... .. Post Code... .. Ph (H)()... ..

(M)... .. Phone (W) or (FAX)()

Email... ..@

Wife/Partner's Name.....

Army No.:Unit... ..UnitPl... ..Coy... ..Dates... ..

Remarks/Hons/Awards/... ..

Do you object to any of the above information being published in the Association membership list which is distributed to other members.

Yes/No Signature... ..Date... ..

M'SHIP COSTS \$20 PER YEAR OR \$80 FOR FIVE YEAR, \$5 FOR FIVE YEARS FOR SERVING
MEMBERS OF 7RAR
(your dates for renewal will be shown on your membership card when issued)

Enclosed cheque/money order for \$..... being foryears membership or renewal.

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO: - MR TONY KEECH, OAM
7RAR ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 8143
WERRINGTON COUNTY NSW 2747
(02) 4721 4349 0418 624 211
Email: porky_seven@bigpond.com

BANK DETAILS FOR DIRECT DEPOSIT OR ELECTRONIC TRANSFER
BANK - ANZ BSB:- 012 429 ACCOUNT NUMBER:- 5303 13792

MBR No:.....Presort Indicator.....Receipt No:.....

Date received... .. /... .. /... .. Records Entered... ..

Membership Card Issued... .. Signature... ..



From the — ***EDITOR'S DESK***

Welcome one and all to this leap year and I hope you all had a great break from the drudgeries of the world over the Christmas New Year period. Bearing in mind this is the year of the Association's next reunion to be held in Melbourne. Further details of this event are

contained in the Pearls from Victoria report. As advised in the December issue I visited Vietnam for 15 days in March/April and have included some snaps of the visit on the following pages.

It was a most enjoyable trip and the reception by the Vietnamese was tremendous. There were thirty five in our touring party with seven Vietnam Veterans among the group, some infantry men, engineers and even a sub-mariner. Our guide was Gary McKay, MC, Gary was involved in the last major contact the Australian were involved in at Nui Le where he was awarded the MC. I would have no hesitation in recommending a trip back to Vietnam to all who served there, it is a wonderful place.

Moving on from the trip, do not forget the AGM to be held at Rod Lyon's home on Sunday 20 May 2012. If you can make it please follow the instructions on page 16 and advise the XO by the date shown in the notice.

Please support the reunion being held in Melbourne over the period 2-7 August. If you have not registered by now please rush your details to the Victorian organizers. Included in this issue is an amended list of merchandise available from the supplier, it is also of note that you can order this merchandise at any time as they have set up the production line to handle individual orders.

A final point to all members, please be prompt in advising me of any change to your situation, i.e. if you move or plan to move please let me know as I am still receiving newsletters returned to sender because the member has moved and not advised me. This all costs money.

Have a great ANZAC Day and I look forward to catching up with you all at the reunion.

Tony Keech, XO/ED

Regulars include: Peter Vlachou, Charlie Matheson, Geoff Lawson, Geoff Murray, Steve Chamarette, John Burrows.

Frank Rutherford Visit.

Frank was over in the west visiting his daughter, so we took the opportunity to go out for dinner and drinks. After we all arrived at the venue, there was no sight of Frank as he had been involved in an altercation with a hire car (don't worry, the car was OK). We had just started on the entrees when in walked Frank, complete with stitches to the head but appearing to be OK. A great night was had by all and those in attendance were: Colin and Caroline Tye, Gordon and Di Dickson, Gavin Rodie, Peter and Sandra Vlachou, Alan Leivers and Jane, Charlie Matheson and Pam, Geoff and Lorraine Murray, Brian and Joan Griffiths, Geoff Lawson and of course Frank Rutherford.

Great to catch up Frank and we'll see you next time.

Noel and Patricia in Singapore (by Patricia Bell)

Noel and I went to Singapore on the 11th of February, not having been there before, but found it clean, no graffiti and safe. Most speak English and are very helpful. On 15th Feb. 1942, Japan occupied Singapore. Many, many civilians were killed, especially Chinese. This is known as the Fall of Singapore and this was the 70th Anniversary of the Fall of Singapore.

We (there were 7 of us from Perth, 120 from Qld. and a group from Victoria) attended a ceremony at 7.30a.m. at Kranji War Cemetery, remembering the signing of the surrender to the Japanese of Aust, Indian, Chinese, Dutch and civilians. This was done at the Ford Motor Factory, one of the Memorials we visited later in the week.

9.30am. we went to the next venue for a service for Civilian Victims of the Japanese Occupation. Closer into the city, again there were 9 representatives of the 9 religions in Sing, who formed a line and marched up together to lay a wreath. Tolerance is taught in schools here. We returned for another ceremony at Kranji War Cemetery at 6pm. that evening.

The following day we went to the Changi Museum and read all the reports from kids and civilians on what life was like for the 3 1/2 yrs. They were held with little or no food and told to spy on each other. During this time my Dad was one of the Aust. troops who were captured, put on a ship, the Bot and taken to Thailand to build the infamous Thai-Burma railway and ended up in Saigon. We saw the Battle Box 9 meters below Fort Canning Hill where there are wax figures of General Percival surrendering to the Japanese.

THE BEST FROM THE WEST

G'Day PIGS everywhere. All the best for 2012.

VALE RAY LAMONT

Ray Lamont passed away on Monday 9th of January 2012 and was buried at Karrakatta Cemetery on Friday 13th of January. As was typical of Ray, he organised his own funeral down to the last item and it was a very dignified funeral. His coffin was escorted into the mausoleum draped in an Australian flag, with his medals, a slouch hat and a bayonet, with the pulpit adorned with the 7RAR gonfalon.

The last post and reveille were played and the ode recited, then the flag was folded and presented to Ray's widow Nola, along with a 7RAR sash and lapel pin. These are some of the many 7RAR attendees: Don Cruden, Doug Fieldhouse, Jock Henderson, Dave Ingles, Geoff Lawson, Gavin Rodie, Geoff Murray, Brian Griffiths, Charlie Matheson, Keith Battersby, Les Kail, Casey Epskamp, Dale Marshall, Don Paleske, Gary Williams, Mick O'Halloran, John Davies, Wally Kleszcz, Bob Cusack.

Sorry, I've probably missed a few, however there were a few of his mates from other battalions and corps, including Tony Butun, Phil Griffiths and "Chainsaw" McCulloch. Rest in peace Ray, Lest We Forget.

7RAR Funeral Protocol

It is never easy to discuss our own mortality, however with the recent sad passing of Ray Lamont, Shorty Rastall, Tony Cook and Doc Straskye, it is probably as good a time as ever. It was described to me the other day that we are all "in the zone" as it were and I urge all members to take steps to ensure that in the event of our own departures, touch wood it's a long way off, we have things organised to minimise the discomfort of our loved ones.

I encourage all members to contact their local federal member of parliament and request an Australian Flag and pass it on to Don Cruden, to enable us to follow the 7RAR Funeral Protocol as mentioned for Ray's funeral.

Last Friday of Each Month - Lunch at RSL Club Perth

A group of 2nd Tour digs have started a lunch tradition and all are welcome to join them at the RSL club in Perth, on the last Friday of each month. Good tucker and cheap beer prices, what's not to like?



Above : NUI Dat hill looking from the East today, partly excavated for gravel.
Below : A new primary school at the western end of Luscombe Airfield.





Above : Two of the touring party laying a wreath at the Long Tan Memorial.
 Below : A VC Memorial overlooking the area of the R & C Centre at Vung Tau.



ANZAC DAY IN MELBOURNE 2012

Members should be aware that the ballgame has changed this year! The march has been shortened and the place we “Form Up” has been changed to Flinders Street WEST between Swanson and Elizabeth Streets adjacent to the Flinders Street Railway station and close to Y & J’s.

The ANZAC DAY Parade March Off is earlier too! 10.30AM. Plan not to be late and look for the Pig Banner

The after march function is at the Limerick Arms Hotel Cnr Clarendon and Bank Streets South Melbourne. The pub lunch is pretty good and three prizes including the ever popular meat tray have been donated for the raffle.

Special Authors Signing
 A special hard copy “collectors” edition of the Barry Heard (A Coy) novel “Well Done Those Men” is being produced. Barry will personally sign the book at the reunion.

This novel telling a soldier’s story of his 2 years’ service from recruitment through discharge and what it’s like in the service of your country is being offered a special price of \$30.00 per copy (normal retail \$40.00) buy at the reunion

Victorian Committee Members

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| President | Patrick “Go Go” Goggins | 0415 510 783 |
| V President | Rob Arnott | 03 9435 0142 |
| Treasurer | Alan “Roo” Dowley | 0408 556 975 |
| Secretary* | Peter Kerley | 0408 557 224 or 0450 568 138 |
| Ass Sec | John Gilmore | 0419 134 341 |
| Committee | Alan McGuiness | 0407 241 191 |
| | Jan McGuiness | 0448 612 170 |
| | Maurie & Robyn Burton | 03 9762 2088 |
| | Bill & Alva Anderson | 0419 877 463 |

Caravanners contact:-

David Wain & Pauline Diver 0403 455 977

*Email: pigsinvic@gmail.com

Call us if you need info and don’t forget that there’s plenty else to do in Australia’s most liveable city and we look forward to welcoming you.

Most of all we look forward to catching up with mates we have not seen for a while, have a dam good chinwag and demolish a beer or 15.

MERCHANDISE OFFER (cont):- For those members who are not computer literate we have a brochure Order Form detailing the merchandise offer. If his form is not included in this newsletter, Members should contact our merchandise team, Jan 0448 612 170 Alan: 0407 241 191 Pauline or David 0403 455 977 and either request the brochure or to place the order.

After we review your order you will be provided with the cost of the goods and the cost of postage. We will ask to send us a Money Order, Cheque, or arrange payment into the reunion account. When funds are received the merchandise will be packed and posted. Please note that the clothing items are NOT printed with the dates of the reunion so can be worn at any time, not simply stuffed in a cupboard and forgotten about. Members can if they so desire, elect to pick merchandise up at the reunion registration office. Note the merchandise offer closes on July 8 2012 the same date as the registrations for the reunion closes.

General Info

AFL GAMES Round 19

| Date | Time | Venue | Home | Away |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|------------|
| FRI Aug 3 | 7:50pm | MCG | HAW | GEE |
| SAT Aug 4 | 1:45pm | Etihad | WBully | NM |
| SAT Aug 4 | 7:40pm | MCG | COLL | St. Kilda |
| SUN Aug 5 | 1:10pm | MCG | MELB | Gold Coast |
| SUN Aug 5 | 3:15pm | Etihad | CARL | SYD |

GOLF

The SEBEL is across the road from the ALBERT PARK PUBLIC golf course and for those members not interested in going to Philip Island contact Peter Kerley on 0408 557 224 or peter.kerley@optusnet.com.au

And register your interest in playing the way I play these days ie. “FLOG” (golf spelt backwards)

CARAVANNERS:-

| | |
|--|--|
| Ashley Gardens Big 4 Holiday Village 129 Ashley Street BRAYBROOK VIC 3019 Ph 1800 061 444 | Melbourne Big 4 Caravan Park 265 Elizabeth Street COBERG VIC 3058 Ph 1800 802 678 |
|--|--|

Both these parks have offered a 10% discount when mentioning the 7RAR reunion.



Above : Some of our tour group climbing to the top of the Long Hai’s.
Below : Yours truly atop of the Long Hai’s with two Saigon Policemen.





Above : A Cut-away frontal view of the Cu Chi Tunnels.

Below : Yours truly standing in front of the HO CHI MINH Mausoleum HA NOI.



Dress for the Memorial Service is suit with tie with medal. PM will be an ideal time for sub-unit get-togethers. Although sub-units may make their own arrangements, the following tentative arrangements have been made on your behalf after the Reunion Memorial Service:-

A Coy & D Coy:- meet at the East Malvern RSL, Stanley Grose Drive
East Malvern MELWAYS REF. 60 A12
B Coy & C Coy:- meet at the Prahran RSL, High St Prahran
Admin BHQ & Support Coys:- meet at the St.Kilda RSL, Ackland St St. Kilda

Mon 06 August

For the boys a Special General Meeting of the National 7th Battalion Association will be held at the Prahran RSL 301 High Street Prahran at 10.30hrs.

MCG Tour: At 2.30PM a tour of the historic MCG is planned – tickets available at the Registration area. Tour should take about 1-1/2 hours. Great Tour!

7 RAR Battalion Dinner to be held at the Sebel Albert Park commencing at 1830hrs. A 3 course meal with beer & wine drinks included in cost.

Dress for the Dinner is VERY smart casual (no medals)

Tue 07 August

Visit and BBQ lunch has been organized to the Vietnam Veterans Museum on Philip Island. This museum is run by an ex pig and is a truly magnificent testament to all soldiers, sailors and airmen who served in Vietnam. New exhibits are being commissioned all the time and major extensions to the museum should be near completion in time for our visit.

Admission, Bus & Lunch will be approx. \$50.00 per head to be paid at the registration desk. We have had an enormous response to this tour to date and we encourage all members, but in particular interstate members, to make this visit whilst they have the opportunity.

Reunion Merchandise (SEE ENCLOSED CENTRE PAGES)

A very broad range of merchandise is NOW available. The preferred method to order merchandise is through the link to our “merchandise shop” via the 7RAR website. Otherwise google “Flood Marketing” and follow the links through to the “7RAR MERCHANDISE SHOP”. All items are high quality and the order forms on this webpage include postage cost and credit card payment facilities. There are colour photo depictions for all the merchandise on offer including a size chart for the apparel / clothing, (keep in mind that Melbourne can be sometimes cold in August so make allowance for clothing to be worn underneath the jackets etc.).

PIGS IN VIC

7 RAR REUNION AUGUST 3-7 2012 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Registrations

Registration for the reunion event will close on July 8th 2012. We need to advise final numbers for the dinner attendance to the Sebel Albert Park the next day so you can see we are keeping it tight. Members intending to come to the reunion are requested to send in their Registration form as soon as possible now.

The Reunion to be centred around the Sebel Albert Park Queens Road. The Sebel is a 5 star hotel located in Queens Road between downtown Melbourne, St. Kilda and Prahran. The Sebel A.P. overlooks the Melbourne Grand Prix racetrack and the Albert Park Golf Course. Transport around Melbourne is easy as the trams run along St. Kilda Road with a tram stop a one minute walk away.

Accommodation

To date (Mar 09 2012), 108 rooms have been booked for 215 people over 500 nights. Keep in mind that The Sebel A.P. is offering rooms at very special rates and we encourage you to use this facility.

Reunion Programme

Programme outline is:-

Fri 03 August

We have an area for Registrations on the first floor where members can register their arrival, pick up merchandise orders, name-tags & tickets etc. Today the registration Office is open from 1600hrs to 1900hrs

Sat 04 August

Today the registration Office is open from 1000hrs to 1600hrs.

A "Meet and Greet" function will be held in the bar commencing at 1600Hrs. Drinks at "bar prices". Evening is free to begin sub-unit "Get-togethers"

Sun 05 August

Reunion Memorial Service (approx. 1-1/2hrs) to be held at the Shrine of Remembrance commencing at 11.30 hrs – the Shrine is centrally located and 10 minute walk from downtown Melbourne or the Sebel AP.

OUR OWN POPULAR MAJOR GENERAL C.M.I. 'SANDY' PEARSON AO, DSO, OBE, MC.

Born in Kurri Kurri in the Hunter Sandy moved regularly as a young boy while his Minister father served in parishes in South Australia and Sydney. Life settled down when he went to Newington College, a school he remains involved with today.



Photograph by Warren Alston

After completing an Army cadetship at Duntroon in Canberra, Sandy became Adjutant to the Service Corps, training men for the beginning of World War 2 and thus began a distinguished army career. He instructed at Puckapunyal before joining the 13th Armoured Regiment as Adjutant, and then served with the Second Seventh Battalion until 1945.

Time at Queensland's Staff College led to an Intelligence post in Perth before instructing at Queenscliff Staff College, and then being posted to the American Staff College in Washington. Back home he worked with the Defence Planning Committee, and a post as Director of Military Intelligence in Canberra led to his moving to Singapore and then becoming Australian Commander in Vietnam.

Back in Canberra he commanded the Military College at Duntroon before retiring in 1975, when he and his wife Marjorie moved to Sydney. He then ran the Royal Easter Show and presided over the Agricultural Society for 8 years.

Sandy had taken an interest in our Village for many years before his wife Marjorie became ill and the pair looked for caring accommodation to help. He says he loves the Village and appreciates very much the care and attention both he and his wife have received since coming here. The staff and the residents are lovely people—you couldn't want a nicer bunch to live amongst, he reckons.

Story in the local newsletter.

**2012 AGM - 7th BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN
REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC (QLD) No: 1A - 13547**

By direction of the Committee of Management and in accordance with the Rules of the Association, notice is hereby given that the 2012 Annual General Meeting and election of Officers to the Committee of Management will be held at:

**45 CORNWALL AVENUE, TURRAMURRA,
SUNDAY 20 MAY 2012 COMMENCING AT 1.00PM.**

**NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION TO THE COMMITTEE OF
MANAGEMENT ARE TO BE SUBMITTED, IN WRITING, SIGNED
BY THE NOMINEE, HIS PROPOSER AND SECONDER, TO THE
EXECUTIVE OFFICER BY NOT LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF
BUSINESS FRIDAY 4 MAY 2012.
(FORMS ARE ON THE PAGE OPPOSITE)**

BUSINESS

Any points for general business are to be submitted in writing to the Executive Officer not later than close of business, FRIDAY 4 May 2012.

ATTENDANCE

Members attending please advise the XO not later than FRIDAY 4 MAY 2012. If you cannot attend please appoint a proxy on your behalf using the form on page 18 of this newsletter and return to the Executive Officer not later than close of business, FRIDAY 4 MAY 2012. Please be advised that in accordance with the Rules of the Association a minimum of 18 members must be in attendance to constitute a quorum, this number includes signed proxy forms. To ensure the efficient running of the association please make the effort to attend, please appreciate that the members of the Committee of Management give their time freely and any adjournment due to the lack of numbers will necessitate the meeting to be adjourned and rescheduled to take place within ONE week of this date. (PLEASE MAKE AN EFFORT TO ATTEND THIS MEETING, FOR CATERING PURPOSES PLEASE ADVISE THE XO IF YOU WILL BE ATTENDING NOT LATER THAN FRIDAY 4 MAY 2012).

7 RAR ASSOCIATION (SA Inc.) REPORT

The serving battalion 7 RAR Mechanised continues to settle into Adelaide and is training hard for their forthcoming deployment to Afghanistan. As well the people of Adelaide have become very much aware of their presence amongst them, since the colours parade the battalion has also provided a guard for the opening of parliament and will have a very large and impressive presence when the full battalion marches at arms in the coming ANZAC Day march.

The 7 RAR SA Association is also going very well both in numbers of new members and activities. Our monthly lunches on the second Friday of each month are well attended both by old diggers and current serving members of the battalion. Our February lunch was attended by 1 Platoon A coy. March saw elements of 4, 5, and 6 platoons B coy.attend.

The striking thing about these young men is their maturity and commitment to excelling in all the tasks of an Infantryman. Not to mention their obvious level of physical fitness! We old diggers are proud of these young men. The whole of Australia should be too! We speak of ourselves as the "Old Pigs and the Young Boars" when we get together.

The Association is in the process of assisting several serving members with injury /compensation claims by directing them to the appropriately trained and registered people through the RAR Assoc. SA. We thank Mike Dennis and Lyn Fisher for the service they give in this particularly difficult and contentious matter. Also RAR Assoc. President Mike von Berg provides expertise in the area of preparation of resume` for those transitioning to civilian life.

In my capacity of RAR Assoc. SA Secretary I attended a social function at the 7 RAR Officers mess with my wife Linda and RAR Assoc. President Mike von Berg MC and his partner Denise to celebrate the occasion of the Australian Army birthday. We were hosted by the adjutant and other young officers for a delightful evening; I know the girls enjoyed the eye candy.

It would remiss of me not acknowledge that the South Aust. Branch would not be in the healthy state that is without the drive and commitment of our president Chris Ashenden, secretary "Doc" Russell, treasurer Jock McKay and committeemen Tony Carr, Kerry Eichner , Noel Biggins and Geoff Chandler.

Finally we pass on our best wishes to those on the sick list with special thoughts for Leanne Garraway and Jock Mc Kay.

Bob Whinnen Vice President 7RAR Assoc. (SA Inc.)

GUNFIRE BREAKFAST

For the past few years the guys have gone to the Mantra (western side of Hindmarsh Square) where they have enjoyed an "all you can eat" breakfast, or less if necessary, and caught up with mates. The dining area (inside and outside) can accommodate 90+, and yes, the bar will be open, but without the 'push and shove' of most pubs. The Mantra is very close to the Assembly Points for 7RAR (Mech) and 7RAR Assn SA and so, this year 7RAR SAB have made the Mantra the 'official' meeting point prior to the Assembly time.

ANZAC DAY MARCH

Commences at 9:30am and usually the RAR Contingent don't start to move until about 10am. The Assembly Point will be in the vicinity of Hindmarsh Square ... the Gunfire Brekky guys will obtain the exact location, so look for the 7RAR Association Banner to find us ... scouts will be roaming to find 'lost' Members

ANZAC DAY SERVICE

Commences at 11am and usually finishes about 11:30 at the Cross of Sacrifice, Pennington Gardens, North Adelaide. (a short walk from the end of the March)

AFTERWARDS

Some will go 'across the road' to Torrens Parade Ground to slake a thirst or three and then on to the THE LION HOTEL, 161 Melbourne Street, North Adelaide, for lunch and additional refreshments

FOR OTHER STATE ANZAC DAY INFORMATION CHECK OUT THE REPORTS FROM EACH OF THE STATES INCLUDED IN THEIR REPORTS THROUGHOUT THIS NEWSLETTER.

FOR THE TRIVIA BUFF

Notice in the Sydney Daily Telegraph, Saturday - 10 March 2012 , under the headline, On This Day:-

1965 The first birthday lottery to choose conscripts for military service is held with marked marbles and a Tattersall's barrel in Melbourne. The local Liberal federal MP, Don Chipp, presides.

This should bring back some interesting memories for all those involved.

7th BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT **ASSOCIATION INC (QLD)**

NOMINATION FORM FOR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

I.....hereby nominate.....

For the position ofon the Committee of Management of the 7RAR Association for the period of one year from the date of the Annual General Meeting as published in the minutes of that meeting.

Proposed by.....Seconded by.....

Acknowledged by the nominee.....
date

7th BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT **ASSOCIATION INC (QLD)**

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For the position ofon the Committee of Management of the 7RAR Association for the period of one year from the date of the Annual General Meeting as published in the minutes of that meeting.

Proposed by.....Seconded by.....

Acknowledged by the nominee.....
date

**FORM APPOINTING A PROXY FOR THE 7RAR ASSOCIATION ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING**

I.....Member Number..... Being a financial member
of the 7RAR Association hereby appoint.....Or in his absence
appoint..... To act as a proxy on my behalf at the
(Annual) General Meeting for the twelve months commencing May 2012.

The person nominated as my proxy is to vote (in favour of/ or against*) (one or
all*) of the resolution/s as indicated by me.

Signature.....Signed this.....Day of.....2012

Printed Name

(*Strike out that which you consider not applicable. Unless otherwise
instructed, the person nominated above may vote as he thinks fit. To be valid the
proxy form must be held by the Executive Officer and the person nominated to act
as the proxy must be present at the meeting).

A list of the Committee of Management is detailed below. (Members are
requested to consider nominating for the positions of Assistants to the Executive
Officer/Treasurer/Secretary/Webmaster to understudy these crucial positions).

7RAR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| President: - | Rod Lyons; |
| Vice Presidents: - | COL Shane Gabriel, DSC; |
| | Mr Jim Fitzsimon, MID; |
| Secretary/Webmaster: - | Mr Kevin Gillett; |
| Treasurer: - | Mr Bernie Cox; |
| Executive Officer: - | Mr Tony Keech, OAM; |
| Members | Mr Bob Murdoch; and |
| | Mr Brice Stokes. |
| Historian: - | MAJGEN Mike O'Brien, CSC; |
| HON Auditor: | Mr Bernard Walmsley, Addersens Accounting Services. |

ANZAC DAY IN SYDNEY

DAWN SERVICE

0430 hrs Dawn Service at the Cenotaph, be early or you will end up
not being able to see the Cenotaph.

After the completion of the Dawn Service assemble at
Regimental Square for our memorial service for the 7RAR
members.

At the completion of the memorial service at Regimental
Square, retire to the Combined Services Club for breakfast.
The Fortunes Of War does not serve breakfast since the bar
was converted into a poker machine room.

0800 hrs Memorial Church service at the Garrison Church the Rocks.

MARCH

1000 hrs Assemble in Bligh Street in order 1RAR to 9RAR look for
7 RAR New Banner. Step off time for march is 0900 hrs
so assembly time is approx only, God only knows what
the actual step off time will be. After march celebrations
will be advised at the assembly area prior to march off.

ANZAC DAY IN ADELAIDE

ANZAC DAY 2012

We have been advised that ALL of the Soldiers of 7RAR (Mech) will be marching
as a Battalion in Adelaide on Anzac day.

Timings and Assembly Points

DAWN SERVICE

Many of our Members attend the Dawn Service at the State National War
Memorial, Cnr North Terrace and Kintore Avenue, Adelaide. The Service
commences at 6:15am