



Porky Seven News



Edition 67 .. Newsletter of the 7th Battaion, The Royal Australian Regiment Association .. December 2024



7 RAR Association – President Report

Dear fellow Association Members, On the 3rd of December, the Seventh Battalion was linked with the Fifth Battalion for the second time in our history. This occurred on the parade ground of the 1st Brigade at Robertson Barracks, Darwin, the same location as when the delinking occurred 18 years ago. While none of us welcome this situation, we should be assured that the re-raised 5/7 RAR will take on key characteristics of the Pig Battalion as their identity, holding them alive and ready for the day when again we are returned to Army's Order of Battle.

This edition includes a letter from the Chief of Army that highlights the reputation and identity of the Battalion that was established for war and built by your hard won achievements through active service in both hard fought tours in the Vietnam War. For we later veterans of the Seventh Battalion, your example set the demanding standards we sought to attain in your image during our own active service in more recent conflicts. Both experiences combined will now remain central to the identity and character of 5/7 RAR.

A second document is the final Order of the Day from the CO 7 RAR, LTCOL Von Lambert that I trust you will agree is a fitting testament to our Battalion. Both Von and the RSM, WO1 Al Ashman, have led the Battalion through this transition in a highly positive and forward thinking manner to set the conditions that will see our identity and reputation preserved in the newly linked Battalion. On behalf of the Association, I have thanked them both for their detailed care and thoughtful approach to preserving our legacy of service in identity and the historical collection during the transition actions.

I am especially grateful for the very kind donation of \$3000 to the Association from their sales of Battalion whiskey and wine to mark the closure of this chapter of the Battalion's service. All ranks have been enthusiastic in their thanks for the support of the Association during their time in Adelaide as noted by the Commanding Officer:

"I am confident that the soldiers and officers who have served in the "Pig Battalion" and who go on to reinforce adjacent battalions will continue to benefit from their enduring connection to the 7 RAR Association. We believe this donation is a fitting way to honour our legacy and support the future generations of veterans from 7 RAR."

We can all be proud of the way the Battalion has conducted the transition to relinking, ably demonstrated by the excellent parade held in October to mark their departure from Adelaide. The very generous inclusion of Battalion veterans on marching off the parade was emblematic of the link between the Battalion and our Association. On behalf of us all, good luck to all ranks marching into new Units and thank you for maintaining the spirit and identity of the Seventh Battalion that will now live on again within 5/7 RAR.





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To the soldiers and officers, past and present, of the 5th Battalion, 7th Battalion, and 5th/7th Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment,

You collectively have a long and storied history.

The 5th and 7th Battalions were raised just six months apart in 1965, specifically to deploy to the Vietnam War.

This you did — twice each — fighting with distinction and honour in defence of the nation and its interests. Your battle honours are well eamed. We will always remember those brave soldiers who fell eaming them.

'Fighting spirit' has then marked you ever since. You have always been on the front line of the Australian Army, •whether as separate or combined battalions. This has been the case from East Timor to Baghdad, from Al Muthanna to Uruzgan. You have always put mission and mates before self. You have-always put duty first.

Today marks the next phase in this long and storied history. Just as your predecessors did in 1973, two proud Australian infantry battalions will come together, to make a whole that is all the stronger for the shared quality of its parts.

I have every confidence as the Chief of the Australian Army that you will lead the re-linked 5th/7th Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment to an even greater future.

Thank you for your courage, fighting spirit and professionalism in this challenging era.

Duty First,



11

Simon Stuart, AO, DSC
Lieutenant General Chief of Army

23 . November 2024



2

OFFICIAL



COMMANDING OFFICER, 7TH BATTALION,
THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT

ORDER OF THE DAY

LINKING OF THE FIFTH & SEVENTH BATTALIONS

Once again, the linking of the Fifth and Seventh Battalions will be marked with ceremonial occasion. As it was in 1973, and again through de-linking in 2006, today signifies momentous change and mixed feelings for us all. Our departure from Adelaide and closure of Horseshoe Lines represents the inevitable institutional evolution the Army must undertake to meet the forthcoming strategic challenges of this decade.

Born for war in Puckapunyal on 1 September 1965 and again in Darwin on 3 December 2006, the Seventh Battalion established a strong example of warfighting excellence which has wholly defined our tradition in the conflicts of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Our latter day commitment to operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor, as well as countless training missions with partner forces around the world and at home illustrates our fine story — one told in the lived experiences of our soldiers and officers who served faithfully in the Pig Battalion over the past 18 years.

The efforts of every single one of you made this battalion successful and each of you alone know what that commitment required. Be proud of your contribution now and in the years to come. We have lived our values under the banner of Duty First and I know so many of you will continue to do so in the 5th/7th Battalion as well as the other storied battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment. It is not an exaggeration to say they will need your skills and commitment to excellence more than ever. I know you will not let them down and will acquit yourselves admirably. When the nation calls upon this battalion again — it will be ready.

It has been a privilege for us all to serve in the Seventh.

Duty First,

LJ Lambert

Lieutenant Colonel Commanding Officer December 2024







7RAR ASSOCIATION
COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT & STATE REPS

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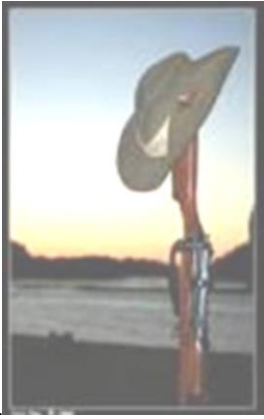


CONTENTS PAGE - CALENDER DEC 2024 TO APR 2025

Page/s

1. From The President.
2. From The Chief Of Army.
3. From The Commanding Officer 77RAR.
- 4-5. 5/7RAR Linking Parade Darwin 3 December,.
6. Committee Of Management & State Reps.
7. Contents & Calender Dec 2024 To Apr 2025.
8. Vale.
- 9-12. From The Editors Desk.
- 13-24. News From SA.
- 25-28. Pearls From Victoria.
- 29-40. The Best From the West.

Wed Dec 25:	CHRISTMAS DAY NATIONALY.
Thu Dec 26	Boxing Day.
Mon Jan 1	New Years Day.
Thu Jan 25	Australia Day.
Fri Apr 25	ANZAC DAY.



1

**“Rest ye oh Warrior, You will battle no more,
No longer to live the horrors of war,
Your duty was done with honour and pride,
Farewell oh brother, until we march by your side.**

**It is with deep and sincere sympathy that I report the death of former
Friends and Comrades in arms”**

**214845 Christopher O’Neil, Trackers 1st tour, passed away Tuesday 20
August.**

**3789913 Robert Anthony Fennell. B5 1st tour, passed away, Friday 29
November 2024.**





From The Editor's Desk

A paper by James Kuschert

Australian Army

9th Brigade

7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment

The hallways and offices may have less memorabilia, but the esprit de corps has not disappeared. As the 7th Battalion packs up and prepares to re-link with the 5th Battalion in Darwin, it is important for all members, past and present, to reflect on what the Battalion has achieved and what is still to come. The history of 7 RAR is one that has not been forgotten, from its raising in Puckapunyal, to its home in Adelaide, the times gone by will be a fond memory for all that have served in the Pig Battalion.

2023 saw 7 RAR deploy overseas on multiple operations. Small detachments were sent in support of 5 RAR's Operation KUDU. Charlie Company was deployed on Rifle Company Butterworth and Alpha Company on Joint Australian Training Team – Philippines. This was in conjunction with the continuous commitment 7 RAR had on Operation RESOLUTE. throughout the year.

7 RAR has had anything but a 'low key' programme for its last year. The Battalion has seen the deployment of two sub-units to the United Kingdom to train Soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) as part of Operation KUDU. This training of the soldiers, Junior and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers, and Junior Officers of the AFU is a commitment made by Australia to help them liberate their own country from Russian invaders. 7 RAR is still a trusted unit to provide premier training by its junior and senior NCOs, with support from their officers. The operation was an eye opener for all members of the contingent as to the brutal realities of a modern conventional war, and educated our war fighters on how to prepare for future conflicts.



These deployed experiences prepared the members of 7 RAR for Exercise RHINO RUN 24. This activity was a demonstration of the lethality and survivability Battle Group Boar can provide in a conventional conflict. The war fighter component



tested the skills of Battle Group Boar on mechanised manoeuvre warfare. It highlighted the tenacity and determination of all members of the Battle Group, from the lonely sniper pair in an observation post, to a Tank-Mech Combat team clearing a mounted platoon position. It exposed freshly qualified crew commanders to new situations including. navigating at night in thick fog that reduced visibility to 50 metres. It tested section commanders on their ability to operate in open plains, thick vegetation, and urban environments. Similar to PTE Barleif 'Leif' Harstad in the Battle of Suoi Chau Pha, the exercise forced



soldiers to step up into command positions and showcase their ability to perform above and beyond their qualified rank level.

After the successful completion of the war fighter component, the Battle Group commenced what it does best, live fire. TTPs and SOPs were tested under realistic conditions that had been developed and established following learning points from 7 RAR deployments. Both Platoon and Section commanders were put to the test. Section commanders' ability to conduct an integrated mechanised section attack, or night time clearance of an enemy trench system were assessed. Platoon commanders were put under pressure to conduct a Platoon mechanised attack with Tanks and Mortars in direct



support. Combat team commanders were tasked to conduct a clearance of multiple enemy positions and two trench systems. Finally, the Battalion conducted its final live fire as Battle Group boar from a defensive position, seeing a symphony of explosions, rockets, and trace rounds dance around the backdrop of the Cultana hills.

Following the one-month exercise in Cultana, the Sections of the Battalion were again tested in the Battalion's Section Competition. Members of

7 RAR endured countless kilometres of pack marching, stores carry, general knowledge tests, live fire section attacks and ambushes, obstacle courses, and combat shooting stands all while being sleep deprived. It was a test of character and will power with a section from the reconnaissance platoon taking the win.



At the conclusion of these events, the Battalion commenced its pack up. Decades of gifts, pictures, flags, trophy's, and memorabilia were taken down and preserved for presentation at the museum in Darwin.

7 RAR was eager for one last exercise. In September, 7 RAR sent a company to assist in Ex SOUTHERN TIGER 24. Alpha Company in collaboration with other units within the 9th Brigade worked together to create a training exercise for the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF). 7 RAR ran a series of live fire activities for the MAF, from dismounted attacks, to section mechanised clearances, to using non-lethal training ammunition for a force-on-force urban assault. Not wanting to miss out, the Alpha Company members got the opportunity to conduct additional training too, culminating in a platoon mechanised attack by night with high explosive weapons.



By this time, our soldiers had started to upskill and relocate to continue soldiering in their new posting locations. Training was scaled back in order to close our Q-stores and armouries.



The soldiers and officers, disappointed to leave the life and identity they had built, looked at their future with a bittersweet taste in their mouths.

7 RAR is more than just an infantry battalion; it is a family. Soldiers started their careers in 7 RAR, returning as sergeants and warrant officers. Officers marching in as lieutenants, returning as OCs and even the CO. Families have followed in each other's footsteps through the doors of 7 RAR. My own uncle joined in 2006, and I soon followed in his footsteps joining the 7

RAR legacy in 2023.

The 7th Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment was born for war on the 1st of September 1965, It has executed its duty diligently, having linked and de-linked with 5 RAR and moving its home interstate. However, the pursuit of professional mastery is an enduring trait for every individual that has bled maroon. In the beginning the soldiers and officers prepared for war and at the very end, they are still, preparing for war.



Duty First
James Kuschert
LT PL COMD K11



Ex 7RAR digger awarded VC

Army private *Richard Leslie Norden* has been posthumously awarded Australia's highest military honour, the Victoria Cross, for "most conspicuous acts of gallantry" during the Vietnam War.

Richard served with 7RAR 31 Jan 1968 to 09 Apr 1968.

Hey all, Karl Metcalf still has 50 copies of the book, *Porkys People*. Cost \$200 plus postage, if you need a copy please advise me on the following contact tkeech38@gmail.com, phone 0418 624 211 or mail to PO Box 8143 WERRINGTON COUNTY, NSW 2747, and I will provide contact and paying instructions.

HI, to all members please note there is no requirement to pay any money to the Association for your membership. The total number of all class members will remain on the database until the Committee advise all members the information dealing with the 7RAR Association in the near future.

Tony Keech, OAM

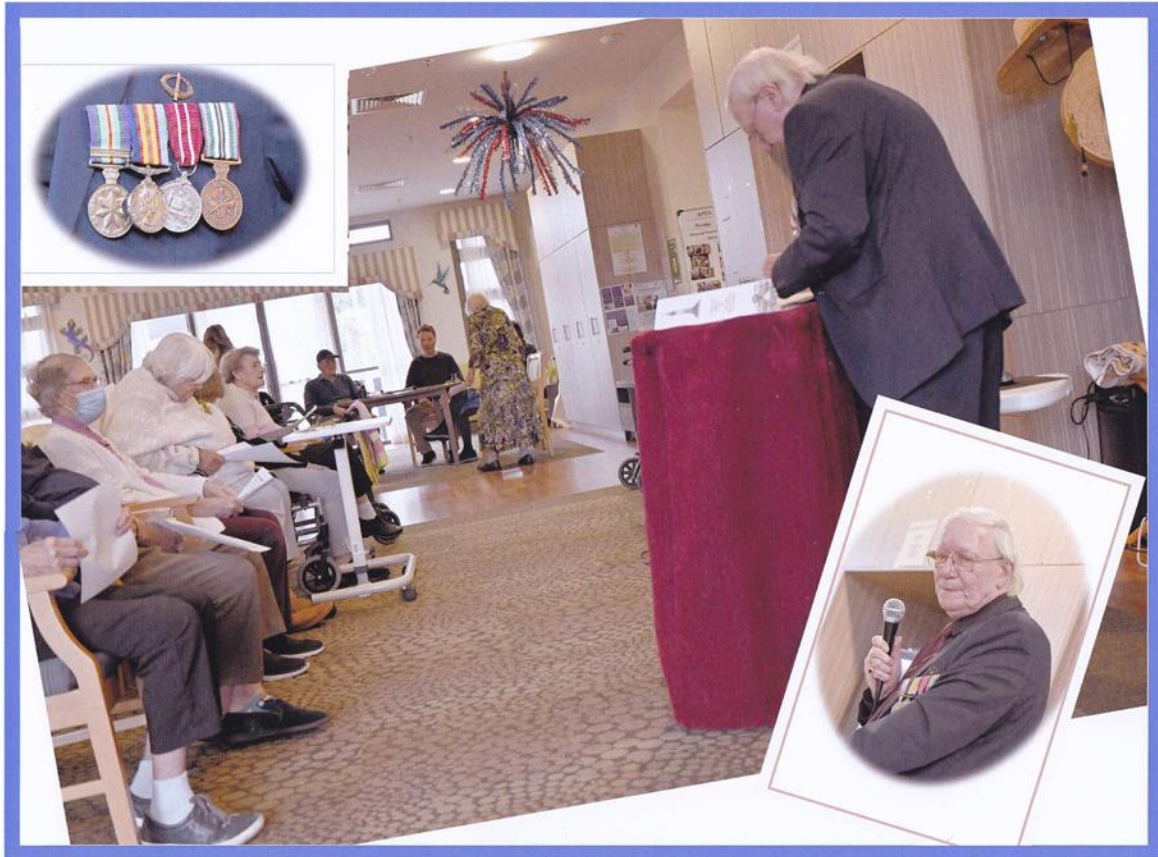




News from South Australia

In the previous Porky7 News I mentioned attending the ANZAC Day Service at the Oaks Aged Care facility in Mount Gambier – I have now the pictures from that event





The photos and artwork are the work of Desmond, a resident of the care facility, who is nearing 90 years of age ... well done that man!

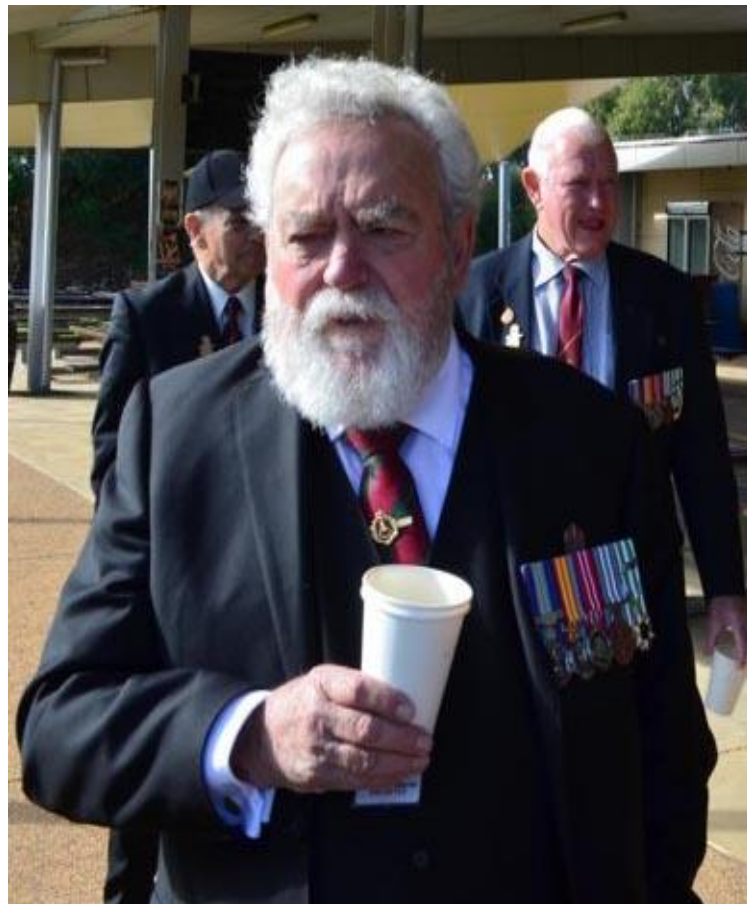
Suoi Chau Pha service

On the 6th August we visited 7RAR at the Horseshoe Lines to attend the Suoi Chau Pha service ... as visitors we were signed in at the gate and then permitted to drive, escorted, to 7RAR's Horsshoe Lines. Morning tea was available prior to the service.





l-r Johanna Eichner, Carol and Barry Leesue



Bob Whinnen





**I-r Michael Grech, Bob Whinnen,
Carol and Barry Leesue**



Battalion Dinner - 7th August

The car from Battalion picked up Tony Carr and myself from our respective addresses and we arrived in time for introductions and pre dinner drinks. The dinner commenced and multiple toasts and address by the Commanding Officer ensued. We then moved to the lounge area. We left the base at 2330hrs. Both of us had a great time.



Battalion Ball – 31st August

There were about 500, of all ranks, who attended the Battalion Ball which included presentations of several achievement awards to members of the Battalion. It was an excellent evening. There were two good rock bands which played 70's and 80's music which ensured the dance floor was filled to capacity. The comedian (an ex 7RAR digger) had a good routine. Jenni and I stayed at the Oval Hotel and had excellent meals in their dining room. As this was Jenni's first week away from her nursing work in four years we then travelled to Mildura to visit her daughter. It was during this trip that I was advised of Chris O'Neil's funeral ... sadly I could not attend ... Doc

Vale: Chris O'Neil

The Goolwa sky was overcast on 6 Sept. as we said farewell to our mate Chris who served with 7 RAR on its first tour of Vietnam. Chris was well known throughout the Battalion as he and his team of tracker dog handlers spent time with all units out on the front line. Chris's life was celebrated at the Goolwa RSL where he had been President for several years. The RSL was full with many of Chris's family present. Reflecting the 20 plus years of his military service the hall was packed with ex-military personnel.

Chris's father, a member of the UK forces, was killed in WW2 when Chris was six. As a child in Scotland and Australia Chris frequently moved between foster and family care.

His Army life commenced when he was conscripted into the Army in the final intake of the fifties National Service. From there he joined the CMF then transferred to the regular army where he served for 20 years gradually rising to the rank of Warrant Officer Class 2. In that time he did two tours in Vietnam and spent time with PNG forces.

At the conclusion of the service Chris's medals and the Australian flag that had draped his coffin, were handed to his grandson.

The following photo features some members of the 7RAR family address by the Commanding Officer ensued. We then moved to the lounge area. We left the base at 2330hrs. Both of us had a great time.

The following photo features some members of the 7RAR family in attendance. From left to right they are: Steve Csorba (Fire Assault 1st tour), Sergeant Hayes (7 RAR 2024), Noel Biggins (1 Platoon then 9, 1st tour – also past President 7 RAR



Ass SA) & Bob Lloyd (Pioneers 2nd tour). They were among the fifty ex-military personnel who had resumed the “at ease” position after the cortege bearing Chris’s body had past taking him to his final Parade Ground.



from left - Callan Rice, Daniel Glover, Jarrah Frahn, Steve Csorba, Lindsay Kealy, Tony Carr, Bob Lloyd



The above article and picture were submitted by Chris Ashenden who also attended the funeral service

September Lunch



October Lunch

There were over 30 at this lunch at the Cumberland Arms Hotel, including the 7RAR CO, RSM and Adjt., as well as ex 7RAR veterans who travelled from interstate and some of our members wives.



Lyall Clayton and Tony Carr





**I-r Adjutant, Captain Matt Wylie,
CO LTCOL Levon Lambert, and Lindsay Kealy**





**I-r Linda Whinnen, Anne and Geoff Chandler,
Janet Clayton**

Farewell Parade

It was a fine day for the Parade with a maximum temperature of 27c and light cloud cover. The Parade commenced at 1000hrs in front of a good-sized invited group on the parade ground which included 7RAR Veterans from the 60's through to more recent times. Around the perimeter of the parade ground the spectators were often 6 deep.









Prior to the parade the CO had requested that all Veterans from the many years of 7RAR join the last stage of the parade.





The Stanczyk sisters with Bob Gillies, Sid Thomas, Greg Shepley, Michael Grech 'Doc' Russell, Lindsay Kealy





After the Farewell Parade a plaque, recognising the Battalion's time South Australia, was unveiled on the Pathway of Honour



... and then it was time for some of us to go home and others to go to the Griffens Hotel for the “wake”





After the Parade ... the "Wake"

I thank Virginia, Chris and the Battalion for contributing the additional images in this issue from South Australia.

And so, as another year is coming to a close, we in South Australia wish all members and their families around Australia a Happy and Safe Christmas and a really great New Year.

"Doc" (Ian M Russell) Secretary, 7RAR Veterans, South Australia



PEARLS FROM VICTORIA

I missed the deadline for the last Newsletter so this will give readers a chance to find out what has been happening in Victoria this last year.

Anzac Day 2024



Numbers seemed to be down this year but that was possibly due to several mini-reunions taking place elsewhere. We still managed to put on a show even though we had the almost traditional confusion at the start whilst the various Battalions worked out where we were to line up. We had a couple of willing cadets from Melbourne High School carry our Banner for us and their efforts are much appreciated – especially if there's a bit of headwind. Full marks to these young men and their fellow cadets who also help out where required.

Bell's Hotel continued to look after us after the March and we had quite a crowd by the time we all gathered with representatives from 7AIF, 2/7AIF and 7Bn (39-45). We also had 3 younger 7RAR veterans join us and it was great to see them. I lost their names so if you recognise yourself please give us a call as it would be good to catch up again.



7th Battalions Shrine Pilgrimage (11 August)



This simple ceremony gives us all a chance to remember the service the various 7s have given to Australia. We are lucky having MAJGEN Mike O'Brien to coordinate proceedings as well as providing an insight into aspects of Australian military history. The ceremony is live streamed and available afterwards through the Shrine's website.



www.shrine.org.au



As usual several of us headed off to Bell's hotel to have a good meal and talk over old times with a couple of drinks or three.

Afghan Memorial, Yungaburra, Queensland

I recently had the chance to visit FNQ and on the way back to Cairns I took the opportunity to see the Afghanistan Avenue of Honour developed by the Yungaburra community.

It's a living memorial to the 42 fallen soldiers from the Afghanistan campaign. The Honour Board is adjacent to the monuments - which are lit during the night hours. CPL Matthew Hopkins' plaque is located 3 from the left and 2 down.

A full description of the memorial can be found by searching for 'Yungaburra Avenue of Honour'. A follow-up on PTE Ben Chuck who was the inspiration for the development of this acknowledgement of our long involvement in Afghanistan.

Remembrance Day (11 November)



Over 200 people attended the Keilor East RSL's Remembrance Day Service on Monday 11th, The Catafalque Party provided by 5/6 RVR and two local schools also participated (pictured are students from Sydenham PS, students from Keilor Heights PS also laid wreaths). The full program covered important points of commemorating 106th anniversary of WW1. 'In Flanders Field' was read by our local Federal member Bill Shorten and John Johnson (President and ex-7RAR) out Pre-Federation and Australia's many overseas deployment covering everything from the Anglo-Maori Wars (1863) to Afghanistan (2021). service concluded with Ms Amanda Stevenson singing both the New Zealand Australian National Anthems.



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and

60th Anniversary of Formation of 7RAR

In Newsletter 1 we mentioned that we had received a suggestion that we should celebrate the battalion's 60th Birthday – on 1 September 2025, a Monday.

The initial thought was that it might be possible to do something to take in an AFL game, and we've discussed other ideas, including a function at Bell's Hotel or at Puckapunyal and the Seymour Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk. We want to hear how you'd like to celebrate this significant birthday, so we're still looking for input so if you could send an expression of interest to either Peter Kerley (pjkerley@optusnet.com.au), Ian Dunn (dunn@techinfo.com.au) or Bill Anderson. Wed appreciate your comments.:-

2025 Dates for information

More details to come in the first 2025 Newsletter but the activities will have a 7RAR presence

Sunday 23 March - Annual Pompey Elliott Commemoration Ceremony



Sunday 20 April – Wattle Park pre-Anzac Day Service

**Friday 25 April – Anzac Day March and Lunch. Details to come but likely .
early again**

Christmas is coming

**On behalf the Victorian committee we'd wish all our fellow Pigs and their family
a Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year**

Parting Shot

**Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to
teenage boys.**

P.J. O'Rourke

Bill Anderson

0419-877-463

lastwill@hotkey.net.au

THE BEST FROM THE WEST

**Christmas greetings to PIGS everywhere, wishing you all a very
merry Christmas and peace, prosperity and good health for you and
your loved ones for 2025.**

WA PIGS CHRISTMAS "PIGS SWILL" 2024

**Our annual 'PIGS SWILL" was held at "The Shoe" bar and restaurant
on Wed. 20 th Nov. and we had a full house of about 45 from about
1130 hrs who had a wonderful time. Festivities got under way with**



recitations of: Prayer of Remembrance – Steve Chamarette, 7RAR
Prayer – Geoff Brophy, reading of 1 st Tour Honour Roll – Allan West,
reading of 2 nd Tour Honour Roll – Mick O’Halloran, reading of
Afghanistan Honour Roll – Gary Williams, The Ode – Geoff Murray,
Grace – Ian McNee. Don Cruden welcomed us all and thanked all
those who had assisted throughout the year, with a big “thank you” to
Allan and Betty West for all the work they do with the raffles.

Well done Allan and Betty and thanks to all those who brought items for inclusion
as raffle prizes. Then we settled down to a delicious lunch of Rack of Lamb and
Roast Vegies with a vegetarian option, Apple Pie with Cream Tea and Coffee.

Amongst those in attendance were:

Don Cruden, Spunky Fieldhouse and daughter Lisa, Charlie and Pam
Matheson, Bruce Wallis, Ian McNee, Geoff and Lorraine Murray,
Steve Chamarette, John Davies, Garry Mills, Peter and Sandra
Vlachou, Gary and Kath Gibson(first time ever for Gary and Kath,
welcome and we hope to see you at many more), Val O’Brien, Mick
and Joan O’Halloran, Gary and Teresa Williams, Gordon and Di
Dickson, Les Kail, Allan and Betty West, Ross and Allison De Gray,
Peter and Ruth Hedrick, Chris and Jan Wark, Garth and Peta
Kennan, Judy Lankester, Geoff and Irene Brophy, Nicole Anderton,
Ted and Sharron Von Paleske, Bob and Barbara Curry, Dale and
Debbie Marshall.

Sorry if I missed anyone out, but it looked like a great time was had
by all, the last leaving about 1530hrs. After lunch, Ian McNee spoke
about Charlie Matheson’s 50 years of wonderful service with Legacy,
a very worthwhile cause so well done Charlie. Mick O’Halloran then
moved a vote of thanks and three cheers for the great and untiring
work that Don Cruden has done for the 7RAR WA Association and
continues to do each and every day.

Once again, RSM John Davies snapped a few photos, as shown



below:



Chris Wark



Peter "Pepe" Hedrick





Ted Von Paleske



Bruce Wallis

BATTALION 60TH BIRTHDAY 2025

With 7RAR turning 60 next year, the WA Association will be trying to celebrate the year in a couple of ways.

Firstly, we want an all-out effort from all members, particularly those from the Mandurah-Peel region and other country areas to join us in Perth for Anzac Day to try and make it the best and most memorable march ever, with a lunch and get-together afterwards.

Secondly, we intend to hold a Battalion lunch at the Mandurah RSL on August 30th 2025 to celebrate the battalion's birthday on September 1st.

More information will be forwarded when details become available but we really need your involvement to help us celebrate our wonderful battalion's birthday.

A COMPANY REUNION - ALL 7RAR WELCOME

Just a reminder to ALL PIGS that what started as an A Coy 2nd Tour Reunion, is now to include ALL PIGS and will be held at Busselton WA from the 14th - 16th October 2025. Multiple accommodation options are available in Busselton, including Caravan Parks, Airbnb holiday rentals, beach houses and Cabins etc. For those intending to travel west by rail, the Indian Pacific requires travellers to book twelve months in advance, so if that's you get in early.

Recently Jetstar announced that they are flying direct to Busselton from Sydney and Melbourne three times per week which may be a better option for likely attendees. Numbers will be fairly limited so please contact either Gordon or Phil as per below to register your interest:

Phil Clark: 0413 991 686. philipclark@y7mail.com
Gordon Dickson: 0418 943 729. waikikirooftiles@aapt.net.au

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY - PORT KENNEDY By Don Cruden

On Sun 18 Aug 2024 accompanied by my grandson Matthew, I attended a Vietnam Veterans Day at the Port Kennedy Memorial, which was conducted by Allan West with his wife Betty and daughter Melonie in attendance. Also attending was Val O'Brien (sister of Noel CROUCH KIA 2nd tour) Bob Waller, Teresa & Gary Williams and Glenda McKenzie (wife of Alex McKenzie A3 2nd tour) who at this time was having a hospital holiday. The weather before the event was rain but thankfully cleared so we had a well-presented service. Congratulations to Allan for his organising skills.

FUNERAL SERVICE FOR BRENDAN HARLOND By Don Cruden



I attended the funeral service for Brendan HARLOND (A3 1st tour) along with Spunky FIELDHOUSE, Geoff BROPHY, Peter CURLEY and Alf and Lesley HOOPER (a day trip from country BUSSELETON). Regretfully we weren't offered the chance to say the ODE or present an Australian Flag to the family. Each funeral service is different. I only wish we could get more members at these funeral services to pay our respects not only for their service but for the fact that they were 7 RAR, doesn't matter which tour they served.

NEWS FROM THE TOP END By Keith Lewis

Not the best of photos (taken from a video by my bride of almost 55 years), but today I represented 7 RAR at a Long Tan Day function at Bees Creek near Darwin NT, held by Veterans Association Of Australia NT (formerly Vietnam Veterans Association Of Australia).

I carried the latest 7 RAR Flag supplied by Don Cruden and many former and more recent 7 RAR, 5 RAR and 5/7 RAR veterans recognized and commented on it - one even mentioned a striped pig presented by 5 RAR, which I'd never heard of.

They are fully aware of the impending arrival of 7 RAR for the re-amalgamation of 5/7 RAR in December.

5 RAR supplied the Catafalque Party.

A feature I'd never seen before was the laying of books as well as or in lieu of flowers, with a military (mostly Vietnam) theme, which would be donated to local schools. I thought that the reprint of Seven In Seventy might be a suitable donation if I make it back to Darwin next year, (if I could get hold of a copy). The function was held in the slightly cooler evening (34 C and less), march on of veterans being at 5:55 PM, and the whole thing was over about 7 PM, followed by light refreshments.

It was a very dignified event with representatives of Federal, State and Local Government, as well as top Navy, Army and Air Force Officers and RSMs.



This was the first time we'd attended here, despite spending 20 of the last 24 winters (dry seasons) in Darwin. I only became aware of it from a neighbour in the caravan park who was actually here for a Timorese celebration, having served there with the Bn, and chose that over the Long Tan Day function. An interesting evening was had by both of us, and we will definitely be attending in future years.

I thought this might be of interest to you,

All the best from the Top End,
Keith Lewis



The Memorial Plaque.





CHARLIE MATHESON LEGACY AWARD By Ian McNee

Just a note to advise members that at the end of the month, Charlie Matheson will be presented with an award for 50 years service with Legacy. What a great effort Charlie and such a worthy cause, well done mate.



7RAR LAST PARADE IN ADELAIDE

The only WA attendees were Steve and JoAnne Chamarette and Don CRUDEN, with his son in law Paul Graham for the Battalions last parade. Other State attendees were also very poor for such an event. The performance by those on parade was of an exceptional standard. I found the highlight being when we were “shuffled” (Marched) onto the parade ground to be acknowledged as “Veterans” of the Battalion. Marching with this group was the sister of Pte Henry Stanczyk, KIA 2nd tour and I believe she felt the same emotions as being acknowledged for her late brother.



Don with the Memorial Plaque



BRUCE ROCK By Don Cruden

Our members are certainly getting older judging by the numbers that did not get to the Bruce Rock November activity this year. We used to be able to welcome at least 10 but this year there was two of us, little Ole me and the stalwart, always in attendance, Keith Lewis.

Thankfully he and my grandson Matthew Graham carried the banner whilst I got other unattached members to get in behind our banner to give us some form of respectability. There was a Naval drumming band and members of the WA Police Pipe Band to assist us keeping in step. It is a good day's outing and much appreciated by the people of the town who turn out each year to acknowledge our military service.

OINK!! Don Cruden

5/7RAR RE-LINKING IN DARWIN

Received this from CO

AT this point of time a parade to relink the colours of 5/7 RAR on the 3rd Dec 2024 plus a BBQ lunch at the Gary Holmes Club on 4th Dec from 1200 till 1600 hrs, with accompanying displays of 5/7 Platoons and equipment. They also hope to have the new 5/7 Museum open.

JOCK HENDERSON PLAQUE

A plaque honouring Jock Henderson has been placed in the War Graves Cemetery and it is hoped to conduct a dedication service mid Jan 2025. More details will follow when all arrangements are finalised.



REMEMBRANCE DAY WITH DON

Here is Don modelling his Bunnings Mental Health shirt and holding his Remembrance Day flag.



HOW TO GET TO THE FRONT OF THE QUEUE?



They look like they've had their snouts in the trough.

