

CONTENTS IN THIS EDITION

1. Contents/Editors notes.
2. Vale/Notice of thanks from Robyn & Blue Spruce.
3. 7RAR Patrons & Committee of Management.
4. Kokoda Track activity 2008.
5. AGM Notice.
6. Nomination form.
7. Proxy form.
- 8/9. ANZAC Day details.
10. Pictorial History order form.
11. Order form for painting.
- 12/13. Mew members.
14. Army Combat Badge info.
- 15/16. 2009 Reunion info.
- 17/19. 5/7RAR unlinking parade.
- 20/24. 7RAR first tour thoughts from COL Eric Smith.
24. Apr to Aug 2007 calender.
- 25/29. The Best from the West.
- 30/33. Pearls from Victoria.
33. Murphys lesser known laws.

REFERENCE SKYPE

The message in the Dec issue of Seven News about SKYPE should have included the advice that this is only available to those members connected to BROADBAND INTERNET, apologies for the incomplete info.

Tony Keech XO/ED



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I am still frustrated by the number of members who have not renewed their membership from as far back as 2000. Please check your address label and if your membership has expired and you have a RED sticker on you label please renew your membership ASAP. Being un-financial places the burden of paying bills for the everyday running of the Association on the shoulders of all financial members.

There are also a number of members who have outstanding accounts for the Pictorial History, please finalise these ASAP. If you have paid for any Association accounts by means of the direct deposit method please advise the XO when this method is used. There are some deposits into the Association's bank account without any identifying references, i.e. the name, invoice number or any other identifiable reference, this makes it impossible to link the payment to the individual who has made the payment.

Please ensure that if you are in the Sydney Metro area during the ANZAC Day activities you make maximum effort to attend, otherwise this day will pass and we will lose credibility as an Association.

Tony Keech XO/ED



Vale

***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 our former comrades in arms:***

***Terence John Hobbs, Recon Pl 2nd tour, passed away 26 Dec
2006.***

***Raymond Ensley (Robie) Robinson, MID, CSM B Coy 1st tour,
passed away Feb 2007.***

***Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family of the
following:***

***Julia Jacob (Sister of Paul Navarre KIA 2nd Tour) who lost
her husband Marc in early Dec 2006.***

***John Cutbush (1st tour) lost his wife Margaret in early Jan
2007.***

NOTICE OF THANKS FROM ROBYN & BLUE SPRUCE

We would like to thank the President and Members of the Association for the kindness shown to us following my, (Robyn) accident prior to Christmas. However with the help of good friends and neighbours Norm was cared for during my stay in hospital. Now that I am home we are getting on with things. Thank you to Ross, Ted and Julie and everybody else who sent their love and best wishes.

Robyn & Norm (Blue) Spruce

*7TH BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED (QLD)*

*Patrons: MAJGEN R.A. Grey, AO, DSO - Colonel Eric Smith, DSO -
Lieutenant Colonel Shane Gabriel, CO 7RAR.*

Committee of Management:

<i>President</i>	<i>Mr Ross Ellis</i>
<i>Senior Vice President</i>	<i>Mr John Press</i>
<i>Vice Presidents</i>	<i>Mr Don Cruden</i>
	<i>Mr Rod Lyons</i>
	<i>Mr Doug Gibbons, AM</i>
	<i>Mr Ted Lewis</i>
<i>Secretary/Webmaster</i>	<i>Mr Kevin Gillett</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Mr Bernie Cox</i>
<i>Executive Officer/Editor</i>	<i>Mr Tony Keech, OAM</i>
<i>Historian</i>	<i>MAJGEN M. O'Brien, CSC</i>
<i>Hon Auditor</i>	<i>Mr Mark Moloney</i>
<i>Hon Legal Officer</i>	<i>Mr Peter Morrison</i>

*Postal Address: Mr Tony Keech, OAM
7RAR ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 8143
WERRINGTON COUNTY
NSW 2747*

*Ph (02) 4721 4349
Mobile 0418 624 211*

*Email: porkyseven@bigpond.com
Website: <http://www.7rar.asn.au>*

KOKODA TRACK ACTIVITY AUG 2008

"Calling for expressions of interest for a trek in PNG along the Kokoda Track in August 2008. Ideally for ex 7RAR diggers, but open to other like-minded troops".

The recent Channel 7's "Kokoda with Heart" documentary was the motivator behind this proposed trip.

A story of three intrepid adventurers (2 male, one female) mid 50's early 60's age group, who between them had had 13 heart by-passes, & who took on & conquered the challenge of Kokoda.

We plan to keep costs to a sensible minimum without compromising the trek; using expert local guides & legends of the Kokoda experience, to ensure a successful trip.

Anyone interested please register your interest with our XO/ED Tony Keech.

*Rod Lyons
(1 Pl A Coy 7RAR, 2nd Tour)*

ps.

From all reports, at our age(s) for many of us this will entail a serious get-fit program, starting no later than end January 2008! It would be advisable to have a medical check up prior to commencing any get-fit program.

You can begin by reading Paul Ham's book "Kokoda". Paul's a friend of 7RAR & a noted author currently about to publish his book on the Vietnam War."

**2007 AGM - 7th BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REG-
IMENT 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 2007 Annual General Meeting and election of Officers of the Committee of Management will be held at:

**THE STATESMAN HOTEL, CURTIN, CANBERRA, SATURDAY
19 May 2007**

COMMENCING AT 2.00PM

**NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION TO THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
ARE TO BE SUBMITTED, IN WRITING SIGNED BY THE NOMINEE, HIS
PROPOSER AND SECONDER, TO THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NOT
LATER THAN 12.00PM, MONDAY 30 APRIL 2007.**

BUSINESS

Any points for general business are to be submitted in writing to the Executive Officer not later than close of business, Monday 30 APRIL 2007.

ATTENDANCE

Members attending please advise the Executive Officer not later than 12.00pm Wednesday 9 May 2007. If you cannot attend and wish to appoint a proxy please complete the form on page 7 and return to the Executive Officer not later than Wednesday 9 May 2007. In view of lack of attendance at some of the previous Annual General Meetings, it is advised that members appoint a proxy, of their choice, to ensure the day to day running of the business of the Association is not disrupted by the lack of attendance at the Annual General Meeting.

In accordance with the Rules of the Association a minimum of 21 members must be present to constitute a quorum, if not the meeting must be adjourned to the next week at the same time and place. In view of this if you cannot attend please appoint a proxy to ensure the meeting can proceed at the time and place advised above, please appreciate that the Members of the Management Committee give their time freely and any adjournment of a meeting is a great inconvenience to those who travel to these meetings.

7TH BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION INC (QLD)

NOMINATION FORM

I.....hereby nominate.....
for the position ofon the Committee of
Management of the 7RAR Association for the period of commencing
April 2005.

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

Acknowledged by the nominee.....date.....

7TH BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION INC (QLD)

NOMINATION FORM

I.....hereby nominate.....
for the position ofon the Committee of
Management of the 7RAR Association for the period of commencing
April 2005.

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

**FORM FOR APPOINTMENT OF PROXY for 7RAR
ASSOCIATION**

*I.....of,
Being a financial member of the above named Association,
hereby appoint.....of.....Or failing
him.....of.....as
my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the (annual*) general
meeting of the Association to be held on theday of
.....2007 And any adjournment thereof.*

Signed this.....day of.....2007

Signature.....

This form is to be used in favour/against* the resolution.*

(Strike out which is not desired. Unless otherwise instructed,
the proxy may vote as he thinks fit. To be valid the proxy
nominated must be present at the meeting).*

*A list of the Committee of Management is detailed on page 3 of
this Newsletter.*

ANZAC DAY DETAILS 2007

Sydney

Dawn Service : 0430Hrs Cenotaph

Wreath laying at Regimental Square, breakfast at Fortunes of War, Church service at Garrison Church 0800hrs. Form up for march cnr Castlereagh and Market street 1000hrs to 1030hrs, look for banner, dress coat, tie, medals. Lunch will be at Fortune Village, (situated inside the Bowlers Club of NSW) 95 York Street. Members intending to be in the city for these activities should contact Tony Keech Ph 4721 4349 or 0418 624 211. (Maximum attendance if you can make it)

Melbourne

See notice in Pearls from Victoria on page 32.

Canberra:

Dawn Service: *Stone of Remembrance, front of Australian War Memorial.*

March: *Form up on ANZAC Parade behind RAR Banner, see press for timings.*

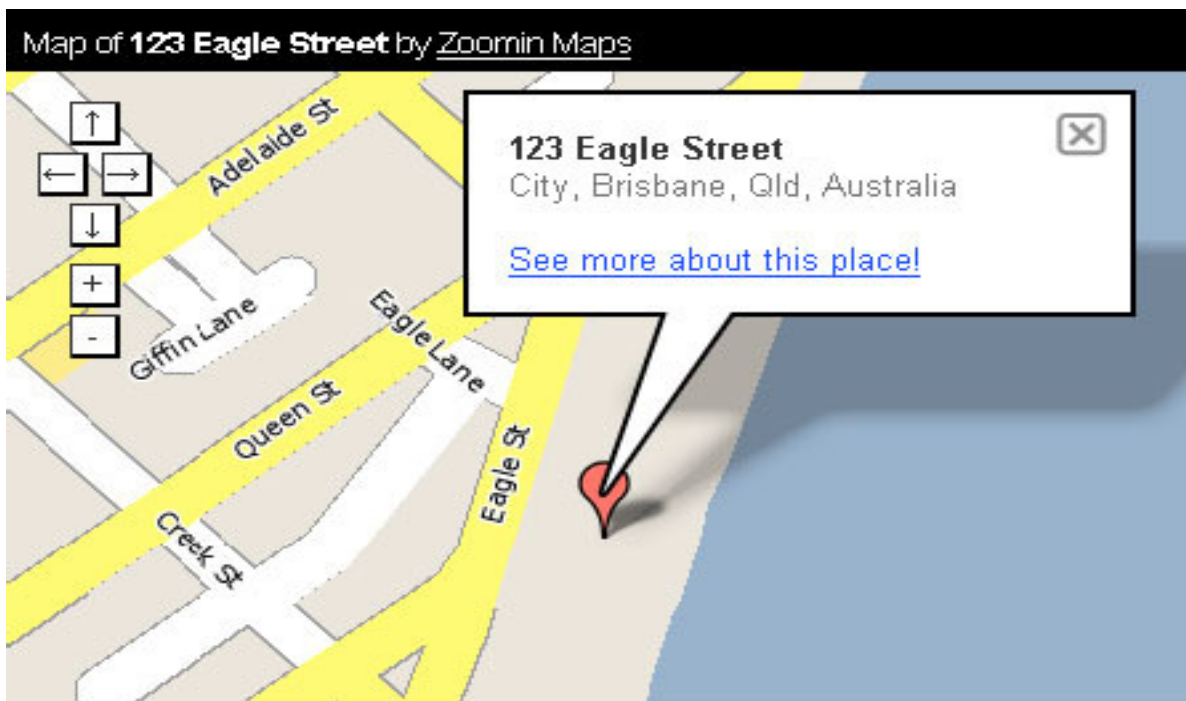
DARWIN (Not Confirmed, this was last years detail)

<i>0500hrs</i>	<i>Gunfire breakfast at Darwin RSL, Cavanagh Street.</i>
<i>0545hrs</i>	<i>Veterans march leaves Darwin RSL for Cenotaph.</i>
<i>0600hrs</i>	<i>Dawn Service starts at Cenotaph, The Esplanade.</i>
<i>0700hrs</i>	<i>Breakfast at Darwin RSL, Cavanagh St and North Darwin RSL Batten Road, Marrara.</i>
<i>0800hrs</i>	<i>ANZAC Day Mass at St Mary's Cathedral, Smith Street.</i>
<i>0945hrs</i>	<i>Form up for ANZAC Day Parade, The Esplanade.</i>
<i>1000hrs</i>	<i>ANZAC Day March begins.</i>
<i>1045hrs</i>	<i>Reunion gatherings at Darwin RSL and North Darwin RSL.</i>

BRISBANE

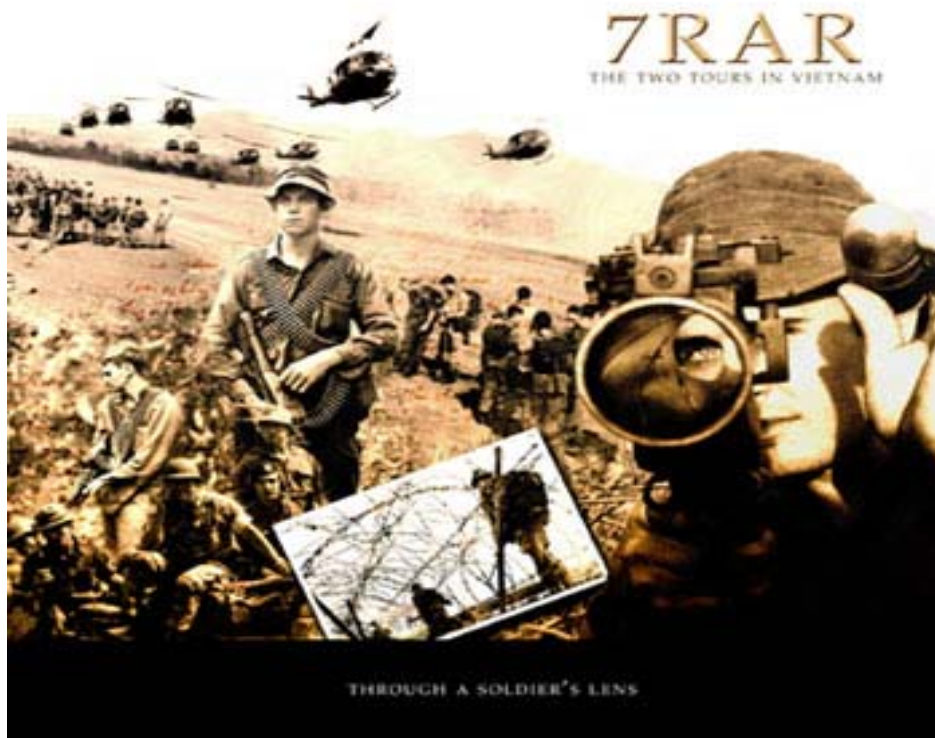
Parade. This year SASR are leading due to it being their 50th birthday. 7RAR will follow 6RAR in order as always. Just turn up at the Assembly Point and look for the 7RAR Banner.

Reunion. We have gathered at the Victory Hotel for years but management's continued refusal to apply for a license to be open at the end of the parade detracts, along with the noise and crowding due to it being a Yuppie Pub. With this in mind, this year, we are gathering at 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.



Kev Gillett Brisbane

No other State details available at time of publishing.



OR-

DER

FORM

Price: \$90.00 each for 7RAR Association Members OR \$140 for non-members plus postage and packaging.

Please supply me with _____ copy/copies of the above mentioned book. Mail orders to 7RAR ASSOCIATION, PO BOX 8143, WERRINGTON COUNTY, NSW 2747.

Name _____ Membership No: _____

Address _____

_____ State _____ Post Code _____

Please send your order without any payment, I will invoice you with the delivery of the book. P & H varies greatly to locations all across the country, this will allow correct charges to all.



This is a copy of the photograph on the cover of "Seven in Seventy". Adrian Wiseman the son of Russ Wiseman, 10Pl D Coy 2nd tour has hand painted this unique photograph and copies are for sale.

The painting is 16" x 20" and the cost is \$200 each plus P & H. You can order your copy from Adrian at the following address.

*Adrian Wiseman
9 Tarwhine Street
MANLY WEST
QLD 4179
Ph (H) (07) 3348 7564
(M) 0403 010 328*

Be aware that it takes Adrian about forty hours to complete the job. Please discuss the method of delivery with Adrian or Russ when enquiring about the painting.

Tony Keech XO/ED

NEW MEMBERS

*Fin 2007 MBR No: 1361
Daniel Bernard Williams
26 Max Henry Crescent
Macarthur ACT 2904
Son Mick Arty 1ST
Ph (h) (02) 6292 9556*

*Fin 2007 MBR No: 1362
Christopher Geoffrey Edge
31 Greenwich Place
Mardi NSW 2259 B5 2ND
Ph (h) (02) 4351 6051
chris-edge@amp.com.au*

*Fin 2010 MBR No: 1360
Brendon Charles Dodd
72 John Fawkner Drive
Endeavour Hills VIC 3802
C7 1ST Ph (h) (03) 9708 0408
(m) 0419 174 651
bdo14500@bigpond.net.au*

*Fin 2007 MBR No: 1363
Wayne Spratt
2241 Pipers River Road
Pipers River TAS 7252 A2 1ST
Ph (h) (03) 6395 4310*

*Fin 2011 MBR No: 1364
Jeffrey John Kirkman
168 Oakes Road
Griffith NSW 2680 A3 1ST
Ph (h) (02) 6964 4822
(m) 0427 552 802*

*Fin 2012 MBR No: 1342
Mrs Valerie O'Brien
78 Unnaro Street
Hillman WA 6168
Sister Noel Crouch 1ST Tour
Ph (h) (08) 9527 7343*

*Fin 2011 MBR No: 1368
Leigh Christie
11 Tibrogargan Drive
Beerburrum QLD 4517
A2 2ND
Ph (h) (07) 5496 0583
Leigh.christie@bigpond.com*

*Fin 2007 MBR No: 1369
Michael Ernest Walsh
2 Bradley Place
Ruse NSW 2560 A2 1ST
P (h) (02) 4626 2828*

*Fin 2012 MBR No: 1371
Raymond Jeffrey (Stumpy) Royston
PO Box 202
Nanango QLD 4615 PNRS 2ND
P (m) 0429 867 564*

*Fin 2012 MBR No: 1370
William Keith Lewis
18 Wilkinson Street
Gosnells WA 6110
D/CHQ/ADMIN 2ND
Ph (h) (08) 9490 1686
keith.lewis@iinet.net.au*

*Fin 2011 MBR No: 1365
Michael Lambley
65 Park Street
Scone NSW 2337 F/ASLT 1ST
Ph (h) (02) 6545 1440
athene@hunterlink.net.au*

*Fin 2011 MBR No: 1366
James Walding Langler
Myola Street
Paterson Lakes Vic 3197 C7 1ST
Ph (h) (03) 9772 2603
jlangler@aapt.net.au*

*Fin 2007 MBR No: 1359
Eric Robert Henry Tickner
79 Stingaree Point Drive
Dora Creek NSW 2264 C8 1ST
Ph (h) (02) 4973 2970*

*Fin 2007 MBR No: 1344
Joseph Gordon (Bluey) Ward
4/180 Kennedy Drive
Tweed Heads West NSW 2485
A2/ADMIN 1ST
Ph (h) (07) 5536 6512*

*Fin 2010 MBR No: 1358
Mrs Barbara Newman
26 Tulkara Street
Manly West QLD 4179
Widow Duncan C7 1ST
Ph (h) (07) 3893 4275*

*Fin 2007 MBR No: 1367
Robert Charles Shipton
17 Kirami Close Windale
NSW 2306 QM PL Both
Ph (h) (02) 4947 2218
exseven@dodo.com.au*

*Fin 2008 MBR No: 1372
Joseph Maiurano
18 Luculia Avenue
Baulkham Hills NSW 2153
A/CHQ 1ST
Ph (h) (02) 9639 7881*

*Fin 2012 MBR No: 1373
Graham John Carey
184 Pratten Street Warwick
QLD 4370 MOR 1ST
Ph (h) 07 4661 3119
mkcarey@hotmail.com*

*Fin 2008 MBR No: 1374
Ronald William Mitchell
22 Dalton Crescent Kingsley
WA 6026 D10 1ST
Ph (h) (08) 9309 5517
mitch510@ozemail.com.au*

ARMY COMBAT BADGE

The Army Combat Badge (ACB) is awarded to any member of the Australian Regular Army (ARA) or Army Reserve (all elements) on Continuous Full Time Service (CFTS) or other Reserve member in exceptional circumstances, for service in warlike operations or situations. This award does not replace the Infantry Combat Badge (ICB).

The purpose of the ACB is to recognise any member of the Army who was force assigned to an infantry, armour, artillery, aviation or combat engineer based combat team/battle group or similar unit/sub-unit, and who served for a specified period of time on warlike operations, in exceptional circumstances, service on operations whilst serving in other warlike activities, such as peacekeeping operations, or for units outside those designated above, may be recognised with the award of the ACB.

Eligibility: *The award of the ACB is retrospective to Malaya 1948.*

PRIOR TO 1989

Corps Associations have been requested to provide the respective HOC with a list of eligible persons for endorsement, noting the requirement for the list to contain members of all corps who served with the appropriate unit. All non infantry members of the Association who have not been awarded the ICB are to advise the XO with the following details: Regt No: Unit, Corps, dates attached to 7RAR in the theatre of operations and any other detail that will expedite the award of the ACB. The cut-off date for response to this request is 30 June 2007. If you have any questions about this award and have access to the internet you can check it out at :

<http://www.army.gov.au/PUBS/pubs.htm>

Tony Keech, OAM XO/ED

Figs in Paradise in 2009

At a recent meeting Queensland and National Committee members decided to conduct the 2009 Reunion at the Twin Towns Services Club Coolangatta over the period 30 Aug - 4 Sep 2009.

The Coolangatta/Tweed Heads area is a tourists Mecca with ample choices of accommodation, only a \$10-12 cab fare from the Coolangatta/Gold Coats Airport, splendid beaches, a host of tourist activities and is a gateway to the mountain hinterland with rainforests, rivers, waterfalls and views over most of South East Queensland.

Historically, in September, the start of spring, the area has warm sunny days and cool nights between 13 and 24 degrees. It rains on an average of only seven days during the month.

Reunion Dinner

The dinner will be held in the Showroom on Tuesday the 1st of September, the battalions 44rd birthday. The Queensland Committee believe that combined food and drink packages disadvantages the non or light drinker thus the meal will cost in the vicinity of \$50.00 per person and there will be a cash bar available with a good wine list and a large choice of beers and spirits at Service club prices.

Accommodation

Prices in the area suit all budgets and standards. From a choice of two Caravan Parks to dozens of motels and Holiday Apartments through to the Twin Towns Resort itself - all within a kilometer or two of the Twin Towns Club.

The Queensland Reunion Committee will negotiate discounts for us but to give you an example, the most expensive suite at the resort is \$235.00 per night. Offering a view of never ending beaches through to the Gold Coast these apartments have three queen size rooms and two en-suites. Three couples could share, have privacy and only pay about \$80.00 per night per couple!

The Committee would strongly recommend members consider the Resort Towers for accommodation due to it's close proximity and closed air conditioned walkway from the club to the rooms.... only a 2 minutes walk.

Make the Reunion a part of your 2009 holidays and shout yourself some luxury. This month gives you 30 odd months to save and time to dream of a holiday in Queensland with all it has to offer.



Kev Gillett

P.S. It is never too early to commence planning for the next Reunion, as soon as more information becomes available you will be advised via the Newsletters, also for those of you who have access to the internet regular checking of the website will keep you up to date.

Tony Keech XO/ED

5/7RAR UNLINKING PARADE SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER 2006

The parade was small (keeping in mind the number of troops on operations overseas) but very impressive. The advance of the APC's and support vehicles across the Parade Ground, then the soldiers dismounting to form up in inspection order was a sight to gladden an old diggers heart. The Colours were marched on for the last time with General Kelly inspecting and then addressing the troops on Parade.

The original 5/7 RAR Mech then split and drove off the Parade as 5 RAR and 7 RAR force elements. An all ranks function was held at the Garry Holmes Club. Where, I must admit original 7 Bn members were out numbered by 5 Bn. I spent some time speaking with the CO and the RSM. It is evident that the Bn is in good hands.

The Infantry element of the last march out from Kapooka (8th Dec) will go straight to 2 RAR for Corps trg, bypassing the Inf Cntr. I was hoping to be able to arrange for my God Son to join 7RAR. John Press.



Above: 5/7RAR Colour Party on parade prior to unlinking.



Above: Colonel Paul Greenhalgh, AM last CO 7RAR with new CO 7RAR LTCOL Shane Gabriel.



Outgoing Colour Party leaves parade with CO 5/7 RAR LTCOL Peter Short.



Above: 7 RAR Division on parade.



Above L to R: CO 7RAR, LTCOL Shane Gabriel, John Press Snr VP 7RAR Association and WO1 David Allen RSM 7RAR.

**A BLAST FROM THE PAST - THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN DUTY
FIRST - FEBRUARY 1972**

**7 RAR - SOME THOUGHTS FROM THE FIRST
COMMANDING OFFICER**

Colonel E.H. Smith, DSO

When I was asked to write an article on 7 RAR I wondered how I could do so in a way that would not be boring to the reader. After all, everything or just about everything, that relates to Vietnam has already said, and it does seem as though any article on any battalion would have to follow pretty much the same pattern as any other. However, I do appreciate that the readers of "Duty First" do have a professional interest in reading articles such as this, exactly as they have had in reading accounts of the other battalions which have been published previously. So I'll do my best to avoid something that approximates to a Staff College précis or alternatively producing several pages of facts and statistics. Well, then how do I begin and follow through in a fashion that will tell you as much as you would like to know about 7RAR - its raising and its first tour in Vietnam - and present it in such a fashion that it's reasonably acceptable . . . Well, I'll try . . . First, I'd like to say a few words about the raising of the battalion, and how it came to be.

7 RAR was raised in Puckapunyal in September 1965. For quarters it was given a set of tired old iron buildings - probably the worst buildings existing in the Army at the time. There was insufficient accommodation, very poor messes for the soldiers and nothing existing at all resembling officers or sergeants' messes. Needless to say, there was no canteen for the troops. Ultimately, one of the tin huts was turned into a canteen of sorts, which in due course, played an important part in the battalion's history. More about this later.

The hard core of the battalion came initially from 3 RAR and had just finished a tour in Borneo - about 350 unmarried members of 3 RAR had been sent to Puckapunyal to form the basis of 7 RAR. As you can appreciate, coming straight from an active situation and a formed unit to a place as cold as Puckapunyal in the winter, into tin huts of dismally low standard, without proper messing or canteen facilities, they were not very impressed with their new unit. So in the beginning there was a certain amount of antipathy from the men, expressed in various ways - it became a hobby and a weekend pattern for large numbers of them to proceed to the neighbouring towns of Seymour, Shepparton, Bacchus Marsh, Benalla and other towns within a 50-60 mile radius of Seymour, and there to living it up in no uncertain terms.

This continued for about two months, and whilst it may have satisfied some to a degree, and no doubt gave them an outlet for their pent-up feelings, it precipitated much trouble for myself and the unit. On one particular pay weekend I recall a group passed the hat round for a collection in the canteen to pay staff to stay open all weekend. The result was that on Monday morning the place was ankle deep in broken glasses, and quite a few soldiers were in a pretty bad state of health. It was a real mess. I believe, at the time, the phrase I chose to describe it was a "pig sty". I had lined up the entire battalion on parade, told them they had acted like pigs and had turned their only facility - their - canteen - into a pig sty. For this I put the whole battalion on Confinement to Barracks and on the dry.

As so often is the case, this particular incident proved to be the turning point for the unit during its formative stages. Soldiers began to see a little humour in their situation. Local pigs became captives and appeared tied to posts in the camp bearing inscriptions like, "I'm a pig from Porky Smith's pig sty". The standard greeting in the battalion, in place of the usual "Hello" - was a grunt and a honk. Thus, the stirrings of unit spirit began to appear, and in time, the motive, Pork Pig, came to be adopted by the original members of 7 RAR.

After two or three months the battalion filled up with National Servicemen in about equal proportions to Regulars, and a very active period of training began. This was designed initially to get the unit to operational standard after about eight months for possible use in confrontation: but before this period of training finished, confrontation itself wound up. However, the training cycle continued since we had been warned to take over from 5 RAR in Vietnam in April 1967. Thus, the unit underwent a very protracted period of intensive training, which was later to stand us in good stead. Sufficient about the training. There were many humorous incidents and much hard work. Many people contributed at that time to the basic foundations of the unit - tremendous skill, energy and dedication were shown which have proven of value since.

Now about the first tour.

I think, rather than laboriously wade through the operations in sequence, I would prefer to highlight the things I remember most. I'll try to put them in some sort of sequence, but it will be difficult because I'll jot them down as they come to me in reminiscing. Perhaps in that fashion it will be more appealing to you, the reader. Here goes:

I remember . . . The first operation the unit undertook in the Long Green, a patch of jungle so called because of its appearance on the map.

I remember . . . the black Labrador tracker dogs which we used for the first time, leading a patrol into an ambush. It was fortunate indeed the enemy could not shoot straight on that particular occasion, and although a few people got an awful fright, nobody was hurt.

I remember . . . in the same operation, Charlie Company recovering a number of prisoners, some of whom were shot by their guards a few minutes before recapture.

I remember . . . visiting Charlie Company and standing between two mines, one of which was a few inches from my foot. I can recall standing there for several minutes before the prongs for the mine were spotted by the sentries.

I remember . . . our first use of helicopters - and in fact their continual use in assaults, insertions and extractions, and how expert we quickly became in getting out of them on landing - 4 to 9 seconds.

I remember . . . the Pioneer Platoon finding and lifting 159 mines in one afternoon, none of them exploding. I can remember in the whole first tour that not one person was killed or wounded by a mine. No because they did not exist but because we were able to accept the challenge of their existence and were usually able to think where they would be placed.

I remember . . . total of thirty battalion and task force operations with 299 contacts, 8 of them major contacts, 16 killed and 137 wounded - and numerous company operations.

I remember . . . the unit arriving in Vietnam at a very interesting time when 5 and 6 Battalions had set up the Task Force area and had consolidated the position out to several thousand yards, leaving for us the great adventure of probing deep into the Province and moving the enemy out of the Province.

I remember . . . a night on the beach when a company sentry swore he saw somebody walking along out of the water, and he was desperate to open fire - which in the morning turned out to be a star picket.

I remember . . . the six week courses RSM Alex Thompson used to run for promotion, how keen the soldiers were to go on those courses and how they worked in the sweltering heat. I can remember that every single person who held rank from Corporal up was qualified for the rank he held.

can remember Sergeant Manson, then Corporal Manson, being paid as a Sergeant on HDA all year until he qualified at a course.

I remember . . . the difficulty of keeping platoons up to strength in operations, and how sickness and casualties and R and R all tended to reduce the strength of the platoons in the field. I can remember bidding for extra R and R places so that everybody could get off on a five day break. I remember, too, that we had to begin this almost as soon as we got into the theatre to get everyone through.

I remember . . . TET and the tremendous effort Task Force made in moving such a long, long way out of the Province on the first occasion. I recall the recces - I recall the smoothness of the whole move - I recall it was done within 24 hours. I can recall some of the desperation of the fighting in TET - and especially I remember the attack by Charlie Company and the 27 casualties that resulted. I can remember D Company seeing off a North Vietnamese Battalion. Lake O'Donnell on the river and Peter Stokes with his black panther, also the leopard man. I can remember using Napalm in desperation. I can remember when an enemy division advanced toward Long Binh and in so doing surrounded the unit so that patrols could not even get out 50 metre. I remember they kept going. I remember Don Patterson's ambushes in Death Valley and the whole unit waiting without stirring each morning until 8 o'clock - hearing the sound of machine guns. It seemed incredible that the same ambush should succeed morning after morning - but it did. I remember Doug Clively being trapped in a minefield with his Company at night and having to walk back along their own footsteps to get out of the minefield. Two mine were detonated and both failed to detonate.

I remember . . . evacuating 186 field workers in order to retain security in one of our early operations, and so flooding the facilities at the rear, and my indignation at finding them all returned next day, there being no place to hold them.

I remember . . . soldiers being winched out of operations to go on R and R and a week later being winched back into the same operation. I remember one time when a winch cable broke.

I remember . . . the summaries of the enemy SITREPS, the dismay of a lost patrol, the urgency of LOCSTATS, and the tremendous crash on the open fire of the guns.

I remember . . . Wally Brown's cheerful smile, the dust in Nui Dat, a chopper that took-off at exactly the wrong time, a storm out of Dat Do that nearly downed the chopper, the frustration of suspects returned after a cordon and search, and the only we were really sure we won the hearts and minds of the people when we took their rice in the morning and gave it back that afternoon.

In particular, I remember . . . the tremendous will to live of Jock Sutherland.

In conclusion, I think it would be fair to say that I could go back over the first tour and write at great length in an impersonal fashion about operations that were conducted and the lessons learnt, and in so doing I could make it either as interesting or as boring, as the interest of the particular reader varied. Whereas perhaps what I have said is enough to provide a picture for those who weren't there and recapture memories for those who were. It may even recall similar events to the minds of those who served in other battalions, either in Vietnam or in other places like Malaya or Korea.

Perhaps I may even provoke others to send the editor a few lines by way of recollections and anecdotes of theirs. At any rate, what I have tried to do is to dwell on the human interest side of life in the battalion, to enable some idea of the feelings which the Vietnam tour and preparation for it had on me and others in the battalion. To me this is what mattered most, and I make no apology for taking this approach.

2007 CALENDER

25 Apr 2007 ANZAC Day activities. Details pages

*19 May 2007 7RAR Association AGM, Statesman Hotel Curtin ACT
1400hrs.*

*6 Jul 2007 Cut-off date for articles for 2/2007 edition of Seven
News.*

30 Jul 2007 2/2007 Edition of Seven News due for release.

*6 Aug 2007 40th Anniversary of the Battle of Suoi Chau Pha, see
details of state activities in Jul 2007 issue of Seven
News.*

THE BEST FROM THE WEST

G'Day PIGS everywhere.

RIP

Sadly, since the last newsletter, I have to announce that Marc Jacob passed away in early December after a long battle with cancer. Marc's wife Julia (sister of Paul Navarre, KIA 2^d Tour) and their family have been enthusiastic supporters of 7RAR in the west, marching with us every Anzac Day and carrying a flag for Paul. We extend to Julia and all the family our sincere condolences and hope to catch up with you on Anzac Day. We also extend our deepest sympathies to John Cutbush, whose wife Margaret passed away in early January 2007.

ANZAC DAY

Details are not yet finalised but I believe we will form up in St Georges Tce near London Court at 9.30-10.00am for the march, look for the banner. We then plan to meet afterwards at the 11/28 Bn mess at Karrakatta for lunch and a few coldies, however this is yet to be finalised and a letter will be sent out later confirming details.

IT'S A SMALL WORLD

WA president Don Cruden was stopped at lights when a guy knocked on his window, turned out it was Ron Mitchell, ex D10 1st tour who had seen Don's PORKY 7 sticker. Don promptly got his address details and sent him an application form to join the association.

CHINA & TIBET VISIT (by Noel & Patricia Bell)

We arrived in Beijing and were met at the airport by an English speaking guide and a Chinese driver. We were there four days and saw The Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, The Summer Palace and the Temple of Heaven and had a succulent Peking duck dinner.

The next day was a full day's drive to see the Great Wall, The Ming Tombs and a Beijing Opera show in the evening. Third day was the Beijing Zoo, the 'Hutong' (residential area) in a pedicab and to the Silk Factory. Next day we flew to Xian and to the Terracotta Warriors Museum and the Banpo Neolithic Village. Then from Xining to Lhasa for 26 hours on the new train with pressurized cabins and double glazed windows you then ascend to 5000mtrs. With scenery of jagged mountain peaks capped in ice and the permanently frozen Tibetan Plateau and pass by the highest Lake in the world. You have four days in Lhasa with a guide.

In total we travelled on 8 planes and the train, and had 3 meals per day in restaurants, and there was entertainment on some of the evenings. The accommodation was 4 star hotels, in Tibet also. At no time did we feel rushed and could recommend this trip to anyone. The co. was China Holidays, Hurstville N.S.W.

Regards Patricia and Noel Bell.

THE 7th BATTALION TRADITION - INDIGENOUS VETERANS (by Allan West)

In the Spring/Summer edition of the Western Veteran there was a segment on two very important men. A salute to WA's oldest indigenous veterans and what makes me bring this to notice is that they are both 2/7th Battalion diggers. Mr Ted Headland of Moora WA is 90 years old and Mr Henry (Snowy) Schnaars is 96 and lives in a nursing home in Bayswater WA. After these stories I felt proud to be in the 7th Battalion and keeping the battalion tradition going the way we do. To let both men know we are still going strong I sent them a birthday card with a pig on the front from all members of 7RAR.

What a great story, well done Allan, makes you feel proud to be a PIG doesn't it.

THE 7TH BATTALION TRADITION - GALLIPOLI 2015

On the 9th of August 1915, the original 7th Battalion fought in the famous Battle of Lone Pine on the Gallipoli peninsular where 4 Victoria Crosses were awarded to members of the battalion. On the 9th of August 2015, it will be the 100th anniversary of that famous battle and around that date it will also be:

- The 50th Anniversary of the raising of 7RAR*
- The 40th Anniversary of the end of the Vietnam conflict*

Vietnam Veterans Day

*It has been suggested that a group of PIGS should travel to Gallipoli in August 2015 to mark this auspicious occasion, what do you think?
If you are interested, contact Geoff Murray on (08) 9448 3109*

NAMETAGS

We have had requests for NAMETAGS for family members who may wish to march with us and attend functions etc, which is fantastic. To order the original size or the larger version, contact Geoff Murray as per details below and provide the correct name to be included on the TAG and the correct postal address. Each small tag costs \$10, with the larger tag at \$15; both prices include delivery to anywhere in Australia. To ensure prompt delivery, pop a cheque or money order, made payable to Geoff Murray, in the post when you place your order and delivery is about three weeks.

*Geoff Murray
30 Bouvardia Way
GREENWOOD
WA 6024
geoff.murray@mainroads.wa.gov.au
Work Tel (08) 9323 4579
Home Tel (08) 9448 3109*



KOKODA TRACK - INTERESTED IN A WALK?

John Davies is keen to get a group of PIGS together to walk the Kokoda Track. He is currently investigating companies which conduct tours of the track to try and find the most suitable timeframe, which he has targeted as late July/early August 2007. If you are interested or just want to find out a bit more about it, contact John on:

Work (08) 9346 6992 Home (08) 9279 3418 Mobile 0417 097 084

INDIAN LOGIC

An American Indian chief sat in the reservation smoking a ceremonial pipe, and eyeing two U. S. Government officials who had been sent to interview him.

"Chief Two Eagles, you have observed the white man for the last 90 years. You have seen his wars and technological advances. You've seen both his progress and the damage he has done". The Chief nodded and carried on smoking.

"In your opinion, where did the white man go wrong?" The Chief stared at them for a minute and then replied. "When white man came, Indians were running this place.

There were no taxes, no debts, plenty buffalo, plenty beaver, women did all the work, medicine man free. Indian man spend all day hunting and fishing, all night have sex. (smiling) Only white man dumb enough to think he could improve on a system like that!"

UNFINANCIAL MEMBERS

If your membership has expired or is about to expire, please forward payments to:

*Mr Tony Keech
PO Box 8143
WERRINGTON COUNTY
NSW 2746.*

(Make cheques payable to 7RAR Association, subs are \$20 per year or \$80 for 5 years)

NEWSLETTER

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:

*(08) 9448 3109 at home and
(08) 9323 4579 at work, or email
geoff.murray@mainroads.wa.gov.au.*

*Cheers
Geoff Murray*

PEARLS FROM VICTORIA

DON MATTHEWS - 'Sally Man' - 1ST Tour

Last November a large number of 7RAR and other Viet Vets attended Don Matthews' Funeral in Ballarat. As a tribute to his contribution to 7RAR and the Veteran Community generally, the following extract from his Order of Service has been included in our report:-

"He looked out for ways in which he could serve others"



***THE PROMOTION TO GLORY** of Don Matthews on Wednesday November 8, 2006, marked the concluding chapter in a diverse, interesting, useful, action-packed and inspirational life spanning 82 years.*

"Promoted to Glory" is the term used by The Salvation Army for the passing of one of its soldiers or officers, and sums up for us, at this moment, Don's transition from his days of earthly pilgrimage to his heavenly reward. Don's life was largely characterised by his "soldier" involvement - a soldier of The Salvation Army, and as a member of Australia's military forces.

Don was born in 1924 in Invermay, Tasmania, and enlisted in the Second World War as a 17 year old by putting his age up. As Private Edward Donald Matthews TX 13062 he served as a Bren gunner with the 2/6th Battalion in New Guinea and returned to Australia in 1945 and was discharged from military service in 1946. In the following years he worked as a fireman on the railways.

As a married 28 year old, Don joined the "Intercissors" intake of Salvation Army cadets and was commissioned in January 1953 as a Lieutenant.

It was in the mid 60s during the disastrous bush-fires in the Dandenongs that Don made a name for himself as he worked tirelessly and skilfully as a Salvos emergency services operator ministering to the fire-fighters at the fir front. his ability in being able to relate to men in dangerous situations obviously came to the attention of his superior officers.

It was in early 1967 whilst Don was the Captain at the Shepparton Corps that Commissioner Hubert Scotney, the territorial commander, visited to open the new citadel and quarters. The Commissioner told Don that he wanted to have a talk with him. After the Sunday morning meeting he told Don that they needed a man to go to Vietnam as a Chaplain of 7 RAR. Don asked what qualifications were required and he was promptly told "You have them!" When Don asked when he needed his response, the Commissioner told him, "Tonight!" Later that day Don discussed the posting with his family and they agreed that he should go. The announcement was made in the evening meeting.

Captain Don 3590008, was quickly transferred to Puckapunyal and within a few weeks was in Vietnam, where he served with distinction between 1967 and 1969 as the 7 RAR Chaplain for their first tour. He was affectionately known as "Mr. Coffeepot" by the Australian troops. He would drive around the Army base at Nui Dat and even used a helicopter to take drinks out to the troops on patrol against the Viet Cong.

In 1988 Don moved to Buninyong where he became involved with the Ballarat sub-branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association as Chaplain and also doing welfare work.

His life as a Salvationist continued through his soldiership at the De-lacombe Corps where he was a member of the music sections and the Companion Club. Later, when he and Lois transferred their soldiership to the Ballarat Corps, Don was typical "Don Matthews": always on the look out for ways to serve others. Right up until illness dictated, he was doing duty as an Army chaplain in the Ballarat hospitals.

Don played a significant role in the life, activities and service of the Ballarat branch of Legacy, serving as Welfare Officer, then as Vice-President and President. In 2005 Don was the first person to be awarded Life Membership of the Ballarat sub branch of the Vietnam Veteran's Association. It was due to ill health that Don had to retire from the position of Chaplain in 2004.

Right up to the end the soldier spirit of Don was evident even although "confined to barracks". His interest in others, his friendship, and his joyous countenance will be missed but will remain as an inspirational memory for us all. We offer to Lois and every member of Don's family our expressions of sympathy and condolence".

ANZAC DAY ARRANGEMENTS - 2007

We've booked the Town Hall Hotel, South Melbourne for our Post-March activities again this year on the basis that it's not too far from the Shrine and members can still catch up with other mates after our own 7RAR ceremony. A special deal is currently being negotiated with the new owners but it should be the same as last year - a good roast meal for \$15 and \$10 jugs!

As usual timings are a bit vague and dependent on when the March concludes (and it seems to get later every year) - we should be at the Town Hall by 1300hrs (1.00pm, if you can't remember). Full details available on Anzac Day.

ZIPPO LIGHTER

Frank Frigerio (B5 1st) put in the highest bid virtually on the 'death-knock' and the lighter has been duly despatched to him in Bendigo via the safe hands of Geoff Leach. Frank tells me it will form part of their Company Reunion being held this year in Bendigo for Anzac Day.

SUOI CHAU PHA (Op Ballarat)

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Suoi Chau Pha (6 August 1967). Arrangements to mark this anniversary are still being worked out and will be advised in more detail in our next report. Probable dates at this time to be 4 & 5 August. Please take this as a 'Warning Order' (especially 'A' Company and 1st Tour) that the Victorian committee will be marking the occasion. Bob Arnott has volunteered (!) to co-ordinate arrangements.

PARTING SHOT

Everyone's crazy except you and me - and sometimes I worry about you.

Bill Anderson

MURPHY'S LESSER KNOWN LAWS

- 1. Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.*
- 2. He who laughs last, thinks slowest.*
- 3. Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.*
- 4. Those who live by the sword get shot by those who don't.*
- 5. Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.*
- 6. The 50-50-90 rule: Anytime you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there's a 90% probability you'll get it wrong.*
- 7. If you lined up all the cars in the world end to end, someone would be stupid enough to try to pass them, five or six at a time, on a hill, in the fog.*
- 8. If the shoe fits, get another one just like it.*
- 9. The things that come to those who wait will be the things left by those who got there first.*
- 10. The shin bone is a device for finding furniture in a dark room.*
- 11. A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.*
- 12. When you go into court, you are putting yourself into the hands of 12 people who weren't smart enough to get out of jury duty.*