

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*We are now heading at breakneck speed towards the Battalion's 42nd Birthday and of course Suoi Chau Pha Day is three and a half weeks earlier on 6 August. I know that several gatherings of members from both tours will occur on Sunday 5 August and I truly hope these reunions are great fun. Please see details in this edition of **Seven News** for state celebration details.*

*The Battalion is now at a strength of 171 and the facilities, equipment and armaments available to the men of Seven at Robertson Barracks are in the main, state of the art. On Thursday 14th June, the 7 RAR Colours were rededicated in a special church ceremony, after which a family gathering enabled the visiting members of the 7 RAR Association to meet the officers and men of the Battalion. Colonel Eric Smith and General Ron Grey spoke briefly about the previous life of 7 RAR and their addresses were warmly appreciated by the Battalion. It was a memorable occasion and all ranks went out of their way to extend super hospitality to their visitors. You will read about the Keith Downward Platoon elsewhere in this edition and I am pleased and thankful that Lieutenant Colonel Shane Gabriel, the Commanding Officer, has agreed to provide up-to-date summaries of the activities of the Battalion for this and future editions of **Seven News**.*

I have commenced gathering 8mm and 35mm movie films taken in Vietnam during the two tours of the Battalion and would be delighted if those who have such film could call me on 0412 122 330 to arrange how best I may be able to make copy of the film.

I would encourage you to commence planning for your trip to the reunion at the Twin Towns Resort on the Gold Coast in September 2009. The Queensland guys have set the foundations for a tremendous celebration of our friendships and it now remains for us to support them. Finally, thank you for continuing your close surveillance and support of your mates whom you may find in need.

The annual 7 RAR get-together in Canberra around Suoi Chau Pha Day will be held at the home of Ross Ellis (53/21 Biddlecombe Street, Pearce) on Sunday 5th August commencing at 12 noon. It will have the same format as for last year in that a BBQ will be provided. Guests are asked to bring whatever they would like to drink.

RSVP 1 August 02 6286 3797 (H)
0412 122 330 (M)

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7RAR - KOKODA TRACK TRIP 2008

MANY THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST VIA OUR XO/ED IN THE PROPOSED 7RAR KOKODA TRACK TRIP JUL/AUG 2008.

WILL HAVE SOME SPECIFIC AVAILABLE DATES & COSTINGS WITHIN NEXT FEW WEEKS. WILL FORWARD INFO TO THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE REGISTERED INTEREST ASAP. FURTHER DETAILS ALSO ON WEBSITE.

ROD LYONS (A1 2ND TOUR)



From the Editor's Desk

As a result of non-payment of membership fees for periods ranging from 2000 to 2004, those un-financial members have been removed from the database. To check your financial status the year appears as the first set of figures in the top left hand corner of the address label, it is also stamped on the front of your card. Most memberships expire on 31 Aug of the paid up year.

The details published in the last edition of Seven News regarding the ACB are further clarified. If you have the ICB you are not entitled to the ACB. I am still in discussion with Army Office regarding the method of nominating eligible members for the ACB. When all details are clarified I will submit those names I have for approval. Any member of the Battalion who has not been authorized to wear the ICB, please send me your details.

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 former friends and comrades in arms.

*Sydney (Joe) Arthur Kiely, 7RAR 2nd tour,
Passed away 9 May 2007.*

*Rudolph Domenico (Rudy) Brown, 7RAR 2nd tour,
Passed away Tue 15 May 2007.*

2007 CALENDER

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>6 Aug 2007</i> | <i>40th Anniversary of Battle of Suoi Chau Pha, check State reports for activities in your area.</i> |
| <i>18 Aug 2007</i> | <i>41st Anniversary of Battle of Long Tan.</i> |
| <i>1 Sep 2007</i> | <i>42nd Birthday of 7RAR.</i> |
| <i>23 Oct 2007</i> | <i>68th Birthday 2/7th Bn AIF.</i> |
| <i>11 Nov 2007</i> | <i><u>1100hrs Remembrance Day, Sydney activity at Garrison Church, (Maximum attendance please, if you are going to be there please advise XO by 7 Nov Ph (02) 47214349)</u></i> |
| <i>23 Nov 2007</i> | <i>Cut-off date for Dec Newsletter.</i> |
| <i>10 Dec 2007</i> | <i>2/2007 Newsletter due for release.</i> |

Duty First
7th Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment Association Inc (Qld)
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Held Combined Services Club, Canberra, ACT
Saturday 19 May 2007

1. The President, Ross Ellis declared the meeting open at 2.05pm. All up 22 members were present, this included 9 proxy appointments.

2. The following apologies were tendered:

Bill Fogarty, Clive Swaysland, John Sutherland, John Press, Rod Lyons and Tony Williams.

3. The XO read a synopsis of the minutes of the last AGM.

Moved GEN Grey Seconded Doug Gibbons, the minutes as read be accepted.
Carried.

4. The Following reports were presented to the meeting:

(a) The President Ross Ellis

General

Having been launched into this year with the superb 2006 Reunion in Perth, the life of the Association has continued apace. First we had the gatherings right around Australia on 6 August 2006, Suoi Chau Pha Day, to commemorate both of our tours of duty in Vietnam, and this was followed closely by the Battalion's 41st birthday. In October we dedicated plaques to the Battalion's Seven at the AWM and our Roll of Honour at Regimental Square in Sydney. Then on 3 December, we concluded a tremendous year by celebrating the re-raising of 7 RAR in Darwin.

It has also been a time when we have farewelled some of our brave colleagues, and I wish to express my deep sympathy to the families and mates of these men. On a happier note, it has been pleasing to witness the increasing smaller reunions which have occurred, particularly at platoon level. I know that news items and photos of such reunions are warmly welcomed in the pages of our Newsletter The Seven News.

Membership and The Pig List

The XO has taken steps to trim our membership list by deleting those who have not paid their membership fees for some time and those who wished to leave the Association. We have a membership of just over 1,000 and Tony is persevering with his attempts to ensure that all remain financial members. It is of course ironical that we are still receiving applications for membership, not only from Vietnam vintage soldiers, but also from 7 RAR, and I shall discuss this further with the CO next month in Darwin

Finance.

I wish to thank Peter Leeson who is a partner in Fiducian Financial Planning, for the care taken in looking after the investment of the Association's funds. Our reserves are adequate for the purpose of providing support for members who find themselves in dire need. However, we must keep pace with inflation and prudent investment must be a hallmark of our fiscal policy.

Seven News

The addition of colour to the Seven News has improved its appearance markedly. It is hoped that there can be further improvements made in the future and that a sponsor may be found to pay for its production. Any member who has a suggestion on either of these aspects of the Seven News is asked to contact the XO please. Thank you Tony for your hard work in its production and many thanks also are due to the contributors. May your numbers be increased.

The Web Site

I wish to thank our esteemed web master, Kev Gillett, for his improvements in the web site, which have no doubt been observed by the computer literate members of the association. The biographies of the Commanding Officers have constituted a most welcome addition to the site and they will be completed later this year. We all should make a more concerted effort to send articles and news to Kev who cannot be expected to create everything himself.

2009 Reunion - Pigs in Paradise

The Association will gather at Coolangatta/Tweed Heads in September 2009 for the next reunion of members which is to be held at one of the best holiday destinations in the Antipodes.

Ted Lewis advises that plans are afoot to create a sensational atmosphere for us to reunite with our mates and indeed, celebrate the 44th Birthday of the Battalion. The Brisbane Reunion Committee Members, accompanied by their ladies, met on May 12 at Kev Gillett's residence in Taigum for the inaugural meeting. It is now confirmed that the reunion as originally planned will be held around 1 September 2009 at the Twin Town Services Club.

An emphasis is to be given to inviting soldiers from the Arms and Services which supported the Battalion in Vietnam. This will also include RAAMC staff and members of the entertainment troupes. Peppy Turra has undertaken to contact US Army and Air Force personnel with a view to inviting them as well. It is fortuitous that Kev Gillett is President of the organising committee, as he will be able to keep everyone informed of reunion developments as they come to hand by posting the details on the web site.

As a footnote, let me say that I hope that we will have some of our current Battalion members at this reunion.

Dedication of Plaques at the AWM for the Battalions Seven

On October 19th last year, our Association participated in the plaque dedication program which the AWM has instituted to allow Australian military units to commemorate their war service by placing a bronze plaque in the walkways of the AWM precinct. The plaques for the 7th Battalion Australian Imperial Force and 7RAR were organised by our Association, while General Sandy Pearson co-ordinated the preparation of the plaque for his Battalion, the 2nd/7th Infantry Battalion. The ceremony was well attended and I think it was a great success. The after action festivities were enjoyed by all.

A DVD of the ceremony has been produced, and it will be issued to specific members in the states who will be asked to control the loan of the DVD to those who would like to see it.

Dedication of our Roll of Honour at Regimental Square in Sydney

On the Sunday following the AWM plaque dedication ceremony, about 100 gathered at Regimental Square in George Street Sydney to dedicate the 7 RAR Roll of Honour which had been affixed to the convex side of the memorial's main wall.

8 RAR and 9 RAR had already placed their Rolls of Honour there and it is to be hoped that other Battalions follow suit. It is of note that Tony Blake and Roger Wainwright are moving to have the Regimental memorial redesigned and refurbished, and I wish them the best of luck in this endeavour.

60th Anniversary of the Royal Australian Regiment

There is to be a celebration of the Regiment's 60th birthday in November next year around 20th, 21st and 22nd. Details will be published in the next edition of Seven News as will the planning of the precursor on next ANZAC Day, also in Sydney. Tony Blake is the prime mover of this festivity and I urge all members to join in the celebration if they are at all able to do so.

7 RAR

I am delighted to report that the rebuilding of 7 RAR continues apace. On the 14th of next month there is to be a rededication of the Colours at a church service to be held at Robertson Barracks. I am hopeful that the two patrons will be there to witness this important occasion and anyone who is at all interested in attending, please notify the XO who in turn will advise the Adjutant.

Colonel Gabriel has decreed that the Association tie will be the Battalion tie and the XO has already arranged for a supply to the Battalion, with more to follow. The CO has also sought and received approval for the battalion training platoon to be named after Keith Downward MM, the connection being that Keith was a member of A Company and the current A Company will conduct the Corps training for the incoming Kapooka graduates. I trust that you will join me in applauding this initiative.

In future, I would hope that members of the Association respect my decision that contact with the Battalion be made through the Executive, please.

My Thanks

I wish to register my sincere thanks to Tony Keech for his continued operation of the nerve centre of the association. He does so, willingly and with great care and devotion. Some of us can all be of greater assistance to Tony by providing timely and accurate advice to him of our changes of address, and of course he always welcomes contributors to the Seven News. Hopefully, the CO of 7 RAR will provide a regular update on Battalion activities from the next edition.

There are many others whose efforts have been excellent too: Kev, Donny, John, Chris, the Executive and the Past Presidents to boot.

Thanks also to those of you who support other members and their wives. Your reward will be felt personally and we should all be thankful for your superb efforts.

The Patrons

I am pleased to report that both Colonel Eric and General Ron have negotiated difficult physical conditions and thankfully they continue to be active in Association affairs. I seek their guidance on important matters and am delighted that they have participated in many of our activities. Long may this be the case.

Thank you.

Moved Ross Ellis, *Seconded* Teeney Preston, The Presidents' report be accepted. *Carried*

(b) *Secretary/Webmaster* *Kevin Gillett*

No report submitted.

(c) *Treasurer* *Bernie Cox*

During the last financial year we had an operating result of \$16,215.47. The major return being, \$9,950.00 return from the reunion in Perth. The sale of the Pictorial History continues to go well and members subscriptions shows a positive trend.

The Major item on the balance sheet is cash resources of \$101,997.00 consists of \$55,800.00 on deposit with Peter Leeson and \$46,197.00 currently held in our bank account. It is planned to move up to \$25,000.00 over to long term investments. The Association is currently trading at an underlying profit, given the extraordinary profit from the Perth reunion and the continued sales of the Pictorial History.

A vote of thanks was extended to the organisers of the reunion in Perth for the return from a well organized activity. Finally the Association has no current debt and therefore I am happy to report the financial status of the Association is in excellent shape. Thanks were extended to the Reunion organizing committee for their great work.

The Pictorial History remains our major source of income apart from membership fees which will obviously dry up once all copies of the book are sold. Other items that attract a trickle flow of income include the Association ties, lapel badges and car stickers.

(d) Audit Opinion Mark Moloney

In my opinion, the financial report of the 7th Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment Association (Inc):

Gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the Association at 28 February 2007 and its performance for the year ended on that date; and

Is presented in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981, Accounting Standards and other mandatory financial reporting requirements.

M.A.Moloney CPA Canberra 19 May 2007

Moved Bernie Cox Seconded David Kibbey, the Treasurers report be accepted. Carried.

(e) Executive Officer Tony Keech

The current membership of the Association stands at 1027 with some 126 members un-financial. A notice will be placed in the next seven news reminding members who are un-financial to renew their membership or advise me if they do not wish to be renewed. The subject of the notice referring to the ACB has attracted quite a few members asking to be nominated for this award, some of who are probably entitled to the ICB. This subject will be dealt with when the cut-off date listed in the last Seven News expires.

During the reporting period three issues of the Seven News have been published. As you can see the production of the newsletter has changed in format due to the addition of colour pages throughout the newsletter. It is still a frustrating fact members who move do not advised me of their new address. A number of issues are returned to sender one in particular with the notation “dwelling demolished”.

I would also ask all members when filling in their details on the membership form for renewal or new membership all details are entered.

As a result of non-renewal by some members since 2000 I left off all those members un-financial from period 2000 and 2004. In what sometimes is a frustrating task I look forward to serving as the XO in future and fostering a closer link between the Association and 7RAR. Thank you.

*Moved Tony Keech Seconded Gen Grey, the XO's report be accepted.
Carried*

5. The President declared all positions of the Committee of Management vacant and handed the chair over to the XO to conduct the election of the New Committee of Management.

6. As all current incumbents have indicated they will stand for re-election and as there were no other nominations for the committee positions it was:

Moved Gen Grey, Seconded Teeney Preston the following members be re-elected as the Committee of Management for the period 2007 - 2008: -

President

Senior Vice President

Vice Presidents

Ross Ellis

John Press

Doug Gibbons, AM

Ted Lewis

Don Cruden

Rod Lyons

Kevin Gillett

Secretary/Webmaster

Treasurer

Bernie Cox

XO/Editor

Tony Keech, OAM

Historian

Mike O'Brien, CSC

Mark Moloney was re-appointed as the Hon Auditor, Peter Morrison, RFD, LLM was re-appointed as Hon Legal Officer and Mindy Sutherland was re-appointed as the liaison officer for wives, widows and their welfare. Mark Moloney advised the meeting, in accordance with departmental regulations he will vacate his position as Hon Auditor at the end of his current appointment, (end 2008).

Our Patrons:

Colonel Eric Smith, AO - CO 1st Tour;

General Ron Grey, AO, DSO - CO 2nd Tour; and

Lieutenant Colonel Shane Gabriel, CO 7RAR (Mech)

7. *The President resumed the chair and: **Moved:** a vote of thanks be recorded in appreciation for the contribution made by Mark Moloney as auditor. **Seconded** David Webster. **Carried***

8. *The President raised the subject of the relationship between the 7RAR Association and the new 7RAR and recommended that it be allowed to develop naturally. This will enable 7RAR to establish their own traditions.*

The CO has indicated the unit is happy to absorb some of the old traditions. He has asked the Patrons for their thoughts on naming the Barracks in Edinburgh, "The Horseshoe Barracks" and sought approval from Mrs Keith Downward to name the training platoon "The Keith Downward, MM Platoon.

9. ***General Business:***

(a) *David Kibbey recognised the projected profit from the reunion in WA was exceeded and congratulations be recorded for the WA organising committee, also since the last AGM the Award of the OAM to the XO in recognition of his services to the Association.*

(b) *The XO advised the members that the sets of three Porky Car stickers that have been selling well were donated to the Association by Len Schulz. A message of appreciation be extended to Len.*

(c) *David Webster raised the subject dealing with a possible reprint of Conscripts and Regulars. After some discussion it was decided to leave any decision on this matter to the author, Mike O'Brien, and that the Association would not itself organise a reprint. There being no further business, the President asked all members present to stand and recite the ODE.*

10. *The President declared the meeting closed at 3.07pm*

NEW MEMBERS LIST

A list of all new members will be published in the Dec issue of Seven News.



Royal Australian Regiment 1948 - 60 Years - 2008

60th Birthday Commemorative Events

There is a common saying "Saluting Their Service".

This is an opportunity to Salute the History of the Royal Australian Regiment and Honour the Fallen of the RAR during its 60 Years of Service. An opportunity to join your mates and remember your own service with the Regiment during the Commemoration Events in its 60th Year.

FIRST:

Commit to Marching on ANZAC Day 2008 in Sydney; with your Battalion Association or RAR Association and then attend the BBQ held at Victoria Barracks, hosted by the RAR Association, (NSW).

SECOND:

Join the Commemoration Events in Sydney November 2008 over the week-end, 21st, 22nd 23rd and 24th. In particular the Parade and Service planned for Victoria Barracks on Sunday 23rd, the RAR's 60th Birthday!

HOW To Be A Part Of These Special Events?

For further details contact your Battalion Association or Join the RAR NSW Association by contacting the Treasurer via Victoria Barracks.

Or Contact the Commemorative Coordinator at:-

RARCommittee60@gmail.com

The Web Site of RAR NSW Association is:-

http://members.iinet.net.au/~rlmuir/RAR_web/index.htm

**Report on the AVVRG Long Tan Community Health Aid Project and the
Involvement of the RAR Association WA Branch in the Long Tan Dental Clinic
4th July, 2007**

In 1970/71 Bob Wood from Busselton WA served as a platoon commander on operations in D Coy of the 7th Battalion the Royal Australian Regiment in Vietnam. In 2005 Bob, accompanied by his wife Valma returned to Vietnam for a holiday and to revisit the old battlefield. Whilst there, Bob and Valma learnt of the work of the Australian Veterans' Vietnam Reconstruction Group (the AVVRG).

Since 1994, this organisation has undertaken many projects in Vietnam including poverty alleviation, the construction and ongoing support of a leprosarium, an orphanage, a kindergarten at Nui Dat on the site of the former 1st Australian Task Force, medical teams and specialist medical work and; currently; the Long Tan Community Health Aid Project centred at the site of the August 1966 Battle of Long Tan.

The Long Tan Community Health Project is a multifaceted project with a total cost of around US\$200,000. The project includes the installation of 300 composting toilets, the installation of a physiotherapy unit, women's' health issues, a children's' fluoridation program and the installation of a fully equipped dental clinic in the existing medical centre at Long Tan at a cost of US\$25,000. At the time of the commencement of the program, the 5000 people of Long Tan had no dental facility. Bob and Valma asked if they could accept the responsibility to raise the \$US25,000 in the South West of WA and this offer was quickly accepted.

On return to Australia members of the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) Association in the SW were canvassed and the RAR Association Dental Clinic Fund Raising Committee was formed. With the inclusion of unbelievably generous donations from a number of individuals, the amount of approximately A\$37,000 was raised.

This money was forwarded to and utilised by the AVVRG to purchase and install a new fully equipped dental clinic including an autoclave, a state of the art dentist's chair and ancillary equipment, a 5 KVA generator and the shed to house the generator and an air conditioning unit.

The Long Tan Community Health Aid Project was completed in the first half of 2007. On 25th June 2007, the completed project was officially handed over to the Vietnamese people by the Australian Consul General in Ho Chi Minh City, Mr Mal Skelly. This ceremony was held at the Peoples Committee Headquarters in the Hamlet of Long Tan which is situated about 50 metres from the Medical Centre which houses the dental clinic. The ceremony was attended by many Vietnamese and Australian dignitaries and was addressed by Mr Truong Van King, Deputy President of the Peoples Committee of Baria/Vung Tau Province, Mr Mal Skelly, Australian Consul General, Ho Chi Minh City, Mr Paul Murphy, Coordinator, Vietnam Operations of the AVVRG and Mr Bob Wood, Vice President of the RAR Association WA Branch. After the ceremony, the facilities at the Long Tan Medical Centre were inspected and Mal Skelly, Paul Murphy and Bob and Valma Wood were introduced to the Vietnamese medical and dental staff.

Prior to leaving Australia, Bob and Valma were given an anonymous donation of \$300 from a member of the Busselton RSL and a donation of \$400 from the Special Air Service Regiment Association with instructions to disburse the money as they saw fit in Vietnam. Late last year a severe typhoon hit the Long Tan and surrounding areas resulting in devastation and much loss of life. The area has not yet fully recovered and Bob took the opportunity to present the donated monies to Paul Murphy of the AVVRG where it will be spent on providing food parcels to 50 families in severe need of assistance as a result of the typhoon.

The people of Long Tan through their Peoples Committee representatives expressed their sincere gratitude to all those involved in the successful completion of the Long Tan Community Health Aid Project. In September of this year, a medical team from Australia will be travelling to Vietnam under the auspices of the AVVRG. This team will consist of doctors, nurses and hopefully a dentist and a dental nurse. When the long summer school break is over in Vietnam it is intended that all of the approximately 2000 children in the hamlet of Long Tan will attend the new clinic for a dental examination and treatment as appropriate. All Australian volunteer medical and dental teams are self funded and generally remain in country for around 2 to 4 weeks. Reports say that the work load is heavy, hours are long but the final result is extremely rewarding.

*Bob Wood
Vice President
Royal Australian Regiment Association WA Branch*





Above: 2nd from left, Mal Skelly, Australian Consul General HCMC.

Below: Bob Wood, Paul Kelly and interpreter.





*Above: Paul Murphy, Tony Clarke, Valma and Bob Wood, Long Tan Medical Centre.
Below: Valma Wood, Nuynh Thi Thu, Mal Skelly, Nguyen Xuan, Bob Wood, Paul Murphy.*



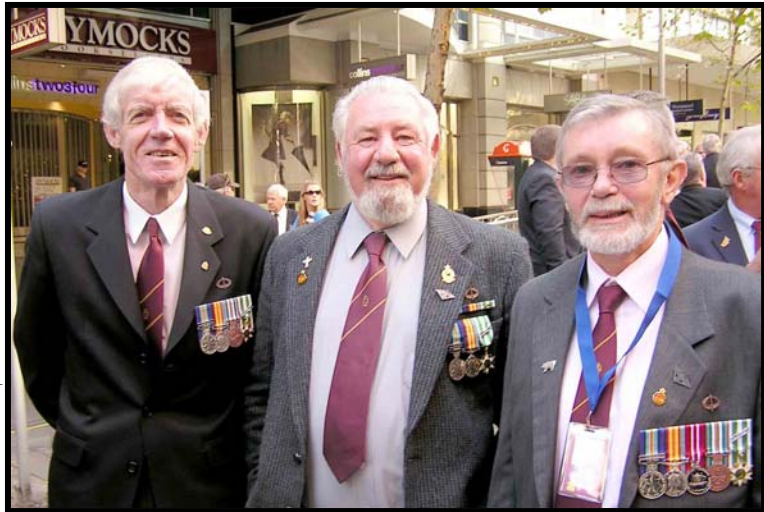
PEARLS FROM VICTORIA

Anzac Day 2007

Once again 7RAR shone on the Anzac Day Parade - according to our count nearly 150 members represented us on the day - and we managed to march nearly in step despite the 'stop-start' that we had along the route.

'Go-Go' was our Battalion parade marshal and he was able to perform these duties in spite of his fellow 'Pigs'. The highlight was his "Eyes Left" just after we passed the Eternal Flame.

We were at 'Eyes Right' at the time, so I suppose it was a logical move to get 'eyes' to the front - not that it's in the drill manual. (Go-Go - I warned you I'd mention this!)



We also had Ray Martin (Channel 9) and a film crew accompany us as they were doing a story on Barry Heard. They also joined us for Post-March activities held 'as usual' at the Post Office Hotel.

There seemed to be an extra buzz at this year's get-together. When we had our May debrief we could only put it down to the fact that we had a better than usual turn-up post-March and that we had a higher than normal family representation.

I believe that we had nearly 150 members and family at the pub. Given that quite a few of our marchers go on to other venues - local RSLs, football etc - this was quite an achievement. Also we had quite a few interstaters turn up as well as a few members who hadn't attended Anzac Day for many years. They certainly contributed to a strong Battalion feel to this special day.

To give you an example of the numbers - the pub had to bring up extra grog as their ready bins ran out - they were expecting about 70-80.

We had an usually successful raffle, with quite a variety of prizes and Rob Arnott was able to secure some merchandise which was also well accepted.

In what has now become an integral part of our Anzac Day, we took time to call our Roll of Honour. It still remains one of the few times we can do this as a group. Ray Martin was one of the readers asked to help with this ceremony and he was honoured to help us.

I understand that Ray was well accepted by 7RAR members, who didn't hold back in exposing him to some traditional Australian idiom!

Partners Of Veterans Association

I met Carole Doyle ('Gerry' Doyle - A3-1st) who is very involved with PVA. The Association has a website (<http://www.pva.org.au>) and it could be very interesting to your spouse, partner or friend. Anyway have a look - it is always useful to have additional resources.

They're in the Army Now

At the June meeting I heard from 'Macca' (Alan McMullan - 1st) that Mordi's son Paul Beacal had just marched-in to Kapooka as the first step to joining RAEME. By the time this newsletter comes out he should have completed Recruit training with a whole new attitude to 'civvies'

At the time I thought it was interesting that sons of ex-Infantry had chosen non-Infantry corps when they joined. For example, my son went to Armoured (Yes, a poor ride beats a good walk any day!) and Jake O'Donnell's son went to Sigs. I've since found out that Michael, now that he's back from overseas, is converting to Infantry - welcome to the ranks, even if it's 5RAR.

I went the wedding of a friend's son in Townsville on 30th June. This young man is in 2RAR - whose motto seems to be "Second to None". When I said that made 7RAR 'None', I don't think he registered.

Sunday 6th August - Lone Pine Remembered

August 7, 1915 marks the day that 7Bn, AIF landed at Lone Pine. For many years the closest Sunday to this date has been marked by the 2nd/7th. 7RAR have now taken over this ceremony to our predecessors.

This year we will be forming up at 11:30am before a simple ceremony at 12:00 in front of the Eternal Flame. An informal get-together, generally at Billy Bell's Hotel follows so we can catch up on each other's news.

All members of 7RAR and their family and friends are warmly invited to attend.

Monday 7th August - Suoi Chau Pha Memorial Dinner

This year marks the 40th anniversary of A Company's engagement with elements of 274 Regiment - where 7RAR lost 6 diggers and 19 were wounded.

To mark this occasion we are holding a memorial dinner at the Malvern East RSL and all 'Pigs' are invited - irrespective of whether you were First or Second Tour. Your spouses, partners, girlfriends and family will also be welcome - we'd like to see you. Invitations have been extended to Jake O'Donnell (OC A) and Neville 'Nobby' Clark (FO) - and both have indicated that they will try very hard to get there

If you can come, please let Go-Go know as he is co-ordinating the guest list - he can be contacted on mob: 0415 510 783 or ph: 9309-0007. A reunion for 1 Platoon has not been formally organised but Ray Ogden tells me he is willing to host a 'happening' on Saturday night. If you're interested please give me a call on (03) 9336-1317 and I'll pass on details to Ray, I know he'll be happy to catch up with other 1 Platoon veterans.

Annual General Meeting - 12th September, 2007

Our AGM is scheduled for Wednesday night at Percy's Hotel in Carlton, starting at about 7:30pm (1930hrs, if you prefer). All 7RAR members are welcome to attend - and even nominate for any positions - you might even get elected, the duties aren't that onerous!

If you don't want to get on to the 'executive' we have concept that anyone who turns up is a member of the committee. That way we can always get fresh ideas. Meetings are convivial and we even get through business items in between the dinner that also accompanies our agenda items. Wives, partners, girlfriends, family are also welcome to come along.

Parting Shot

What do you say to a young digger who says to you - "But in your day a centurion was a rank, not a tank"

Bill Anderson

Email: lastwill@hotmail.net.au

Ph: (03) 9336-1317

ANZAC DAY IN LOUTH

The small township of Louth, 100 km south of Burke sitting on the banks of the almost empty Darling River was this years setting for 7 RAR pigs get together for ANZAC day reunion. The meeting point was at the Louth racecourse where the ravages of the drought were all too visible. However it was a showcase of the many and varied ways vets are able to bring the comforts of home with them camping.

My thanks to Cheryl Good and Jody for cooking way to much food and providing us with most of our meals.

Vets turned out in the early hours for short dawn service at the memorial next to the tennis courts. The ladies from the tennis club turned up and provided meals after the dawn service and the two other services during the day. The main service at 11am included a march of vets and partners down the main street (the only street really). Students from the local school participated in the service and planted a pinetree in memory of the Anzacs at Gallipoli. It was a moving and happy experience to see all the locals in attendance to support the Anzac memory.

The Louth hotel was just across the road and was a great venue for downing ale or three and catching up on how we won the war and how much better we are now. But I can't help thinking how old everyone has got. The hotel owner was obviously very happy with us, so happy with us that he supplied breakfast for the next day. I now suspect it was a cunning plan to get us back for another day at the hotel.

Back at camp Burt Eade set up his guitar and entertained us with his playing. This led to dancing and much laughter .I have too say that the original dancing style by one Barry Gissell AKA "The Arab" was unique to say the least and "coincided" with the first rainfall for years in the area and turned the red dust into heaps of very red mud.

Those in attendance were Jack and Cheryl Good , Barry Gissell "The Arab" and Jody, Burt Eade, Wally Barnett, Eric Chamberlain, Trevor Lees, Wayne Nash , Colin, from Melbourne, Richard "Darkie Williams, Bunda Walker and Sue, Garth Gilbert , Chris Montford , John Flynn, John "JC Thomas .

A special mention to Kerry Schofield who flew in with his good friend Ken Lapin for the ANZAC service . My apologies if I have forgotten anyone but the brain cells are disappearing by the day .





7 RAR ARTICLE FOR SEVEN NEWS

It gives me great pleasure to provide the first article from the Seventh Battalion to Seven News since we were delinked from the Fifth Battalion on 3 December, following 33 years linked service. While we are focused on our future, we readily acknowledge that we are the heirs of the enviable reputation of the original Seventh Battalion, forged in war and home service between 1965 and 1973. Both the Seventh Battalion and the Seventh Battalion Association constitute our Battalion family.

The decision to delink the Fifth/Seventh Battalion to form two mechanised infantry battalions within the First Brigade, is a key element of the Enhanced Land Force initiative. As a mechanised infantry battalion, the Seventh Battalion provides the key warfighting capability of infantrymen to form combined arms teams in a variety of operational tasks.

We are well advanced on our re-raising task to achieve this level of capability. On delinking, B Company was allocated to the Seventh Battalion and became the first members of the Battalion to serve on operations since 1971, due to their deployment in Afghanistan with the Reconstruction Task Force. Concurrently, the Battalion Headquarters, Administration Company and A Company were raised from January. With the return of B Company and further growth through significant numbers of riflemen reinforcements from the School of Infantry, we have now achieved a robust size and are well balanced to enable further growth. In due course, the Seventh Battalion will relocate from Robertson Barracks, Darwin to Adelaide with other elements of the First Brigade.

June has been a particularly key timeframe in this latest period of the Battalion's service. The first major regimental activity to Rededicate the Battalion Colours was conducted on 14 June. The Colours were returned to the Battalion from the Soldiers Chapel at Kapooka and were formally returned at a Battalion Church Service. We were very fortunate in being joined by the Association Patrons, President, two Vice Presidents, Executive Officer and a number of other members.

The Church Service was followed by an all ranks function where a number of presentations were made by the Association representatives. The highlight was addresses by Major General Grey and Colonel Smith that strongly resonated with the men of the current day Seventh Battalion. We gratefully received gifts of great regimental value from Ross Ellis and Barry Calagari. Of particular note for the Roadrunners of C Company (1st Tour), Graham Chapman and Ted Lewis presented a C Company pennant that will be employed by the company upon their re-raising in due course.

The visit by the Battalion Association representatives included an opportunity to view the capabilities of the cavalry, tanks and gunners with whom we form combined arms teams. This included an opportunity to talk with a section of A Company on the capabilities of the modern day infantryman. We are most grateful for the time and interest of the Battalion Association representatives in making this a most memorable and important regimental activity.

While there is still much to be done to complete our growth, we have achieved a great deal in the short time to date and are currently focused on a variety of training activities to prepare for subsequent operational tasks. The most important task we currently have is the conduct of an Infantry Initial Employment Training platoon (Corps Training). Due to the high number of prospective infantryman currently entering the Army, all RAR Battalions are conducting this training to cope with the additional training capacity.

Within the Seventh Battalion, this training platoon is named after Keith Downward, MM with the kind consent of his widow, Mrs Ann Cossey. The actions of Keith Downward at Chau Pha with A Company, that resulted in his award of the Military Medal, provides a definitive example to these trainees of the expectations and demands of being an infantryman.

Apart from this critical training, the Seventh Battalion is currently

conducting a variety of training activities to further develop our mechanised infantry capability. This includes individual training to qualify APC drivers and crew commanders and collective training activities with other First Brigade units to enhance our ability to fight as combined arms teams.

In addition, members of the Battalion have commenced conversion training on the upgraded APC, the M113AS4 or 'stretched APC'. The Seventh Battalion is planned to receive the first delivery of these vehicles in the near term. The M113AS4 will provide a significant increase in our capability through the vehicle's superior protection and mobility characteristics.

I trust this article has provided you with a sense of the Seventh Battalion of today and our progress since delinking. It is an exciting time to be in the Army, particularly as an Infantryman, but more so as a Pig ! We have established a close relationship with the Seventh Battalion Association and are grateful for the support and advice we have already received. I trust you will look forward to further updates on the progress of your Battalion in this next period of our service to the nation.

Duty First

*Lieutenant Colonel Shane Gabriel
Commanding Officer
Seventh Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment*



Above: - Brigade Chaplain commences the service.

Below: - PTE Ferris, 1 PL A Coy recites the soldiers prayer.





Above - Colour Party leaves the Church.

Below - Ross Ellis with LTCOL Shane Gabriel, CO and WO1 Dave Allen, RSM.





Above - COL Smith presents 20 year service certificate to WO2 Pratt, RQMS

Below - GEN Grey addresses gathering, in front on the floor The Tiger's Head.





Above - Members of B Coy on operations in Afghanistan.

Below - A familiar site to all members of the Battalion past and present.



THE BEST FROM THE WEST

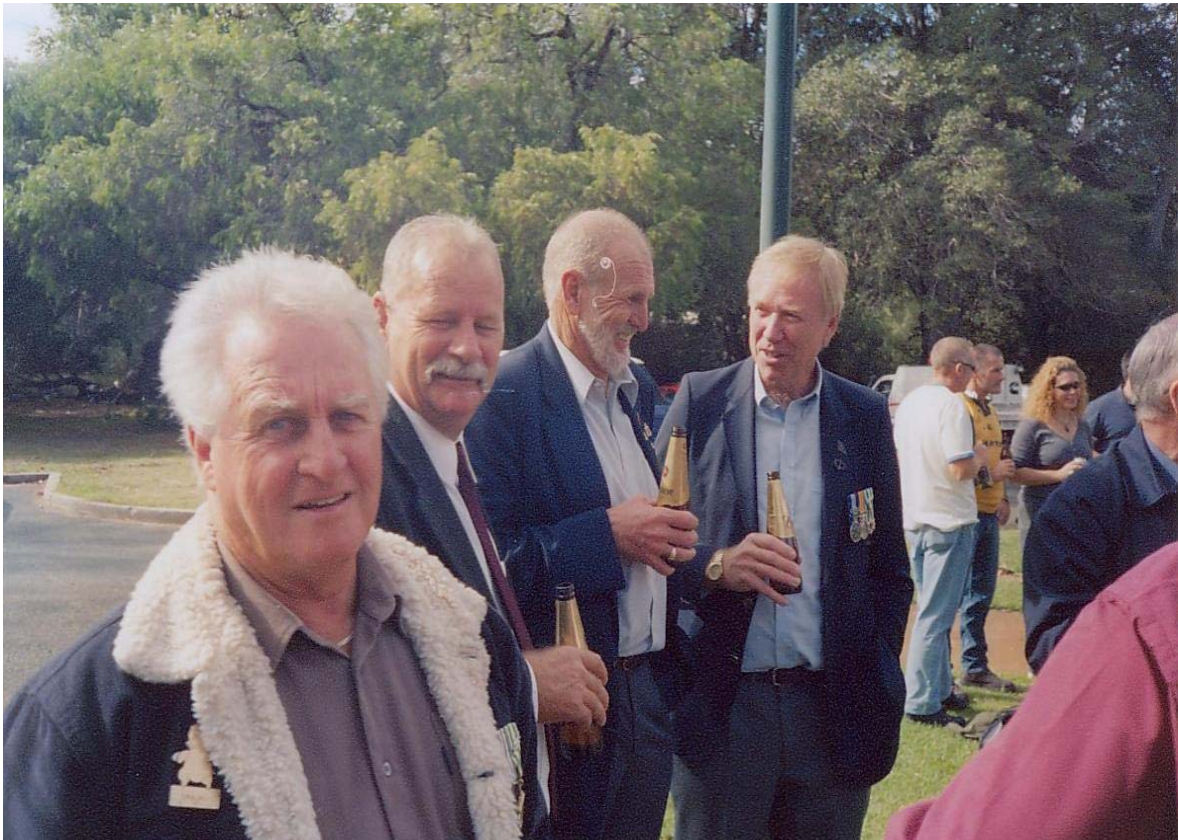
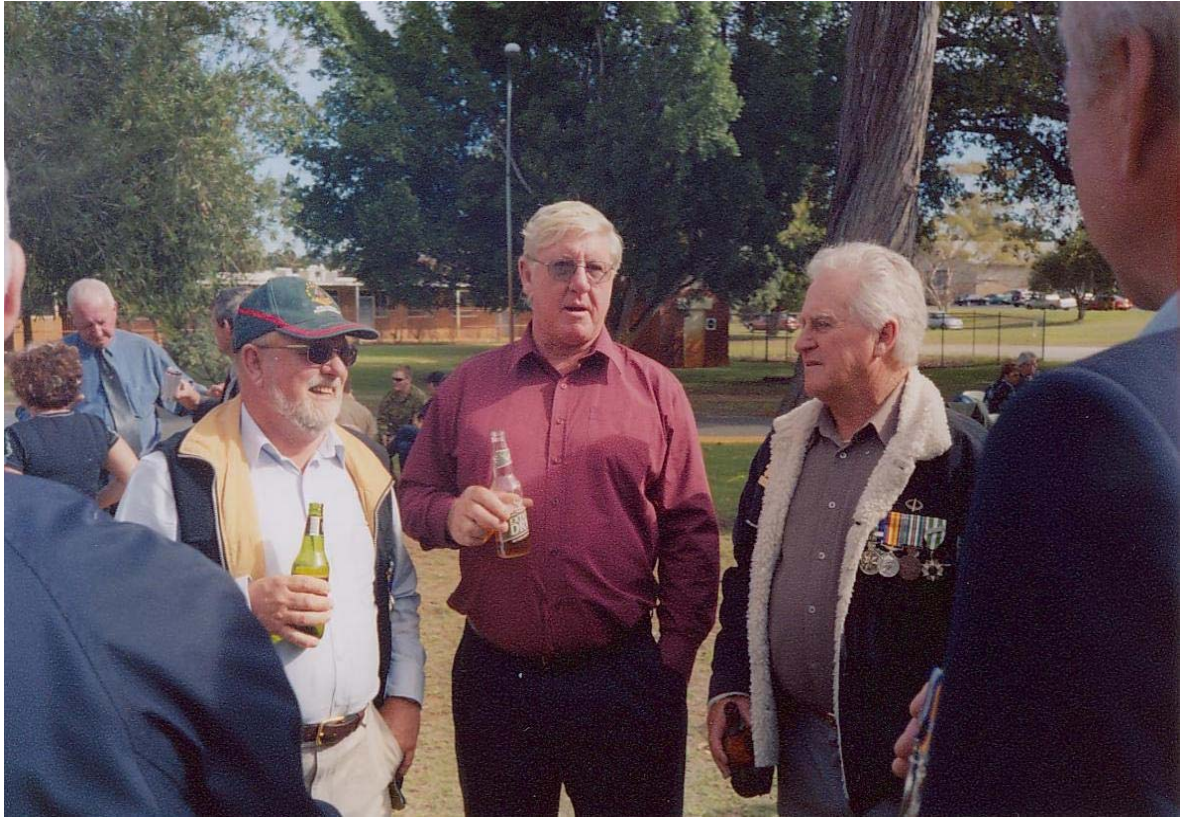
G'Day from WA to all PIGS everywhere.

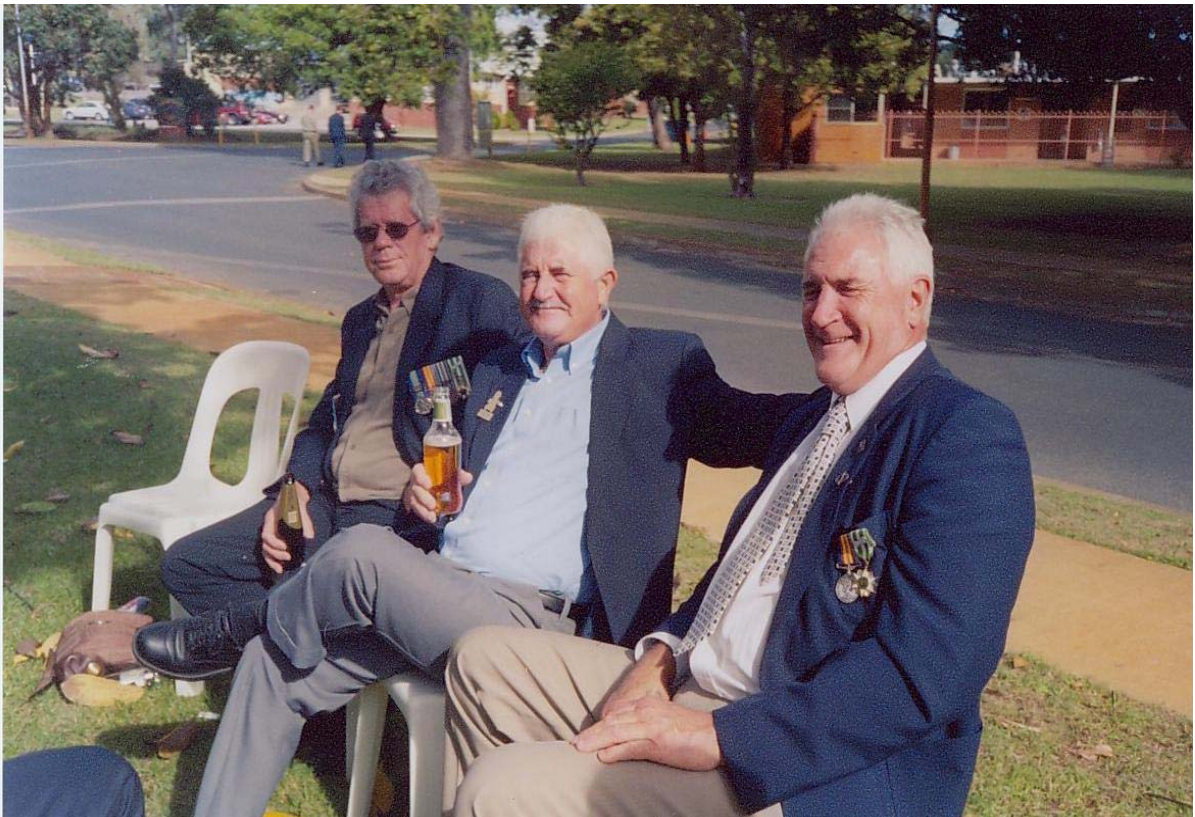
ANZAC DAY

After last year's bad weather, Anzac Day this year was terrific, great weather and the crowds were fantastic. We had about 75 PIGS lined up to march, a great effort and still probably the largest of the RAR contingents. It was great to see Julia Jacob and her family and John Bell join us for the march and we certainly encourage family members. After the service most gathered at 11/28 Battalion at Karrakatta for a feed and some drinks, although some joined other veterans at Rigby's to catch up with old mates from other battalions and corps.

11/28 Battalion did us proud, as they did for the reunion, by providing great food, really cheap cold beer and of course some pretty spirited two-up. Noticed having a punt were Gary Williams, Alex Mackenzie, Bob Wall and Enda Fieldhouse. It was great swapping yarns with some of the young diggers as well, to get some ideas on how it has all changed since our days, although the only thing that hasn't changed is that they still love a beer or three. The photos below show some happy PIGS sampling a few coldies. (Photos by John Davies)







WARNING ORDERS FOR WA PIGS

1. VIETNAM VETERAN'S DAY

- *Sunday 19 August 2006*
- *Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, May Drive, Kings Park*
- *On parade 1000 -1030 hrs, form up east of Lake*
- *March behind the PIG banner 1040 hrs*
- *Service commences 1100 hrs*
- *Medals to be worn*
- *Parking is a bit scarce so I suggest you get there early*
- *We want a large contingent marching*

2. ANNUAL PIGS SWILL

- *We intend to rotate the venues to try and even up travelling by members*
- *This year's venue still to be confirmed, tentatively Jandakot Airport cafe*
- *Tentatively Sunday 18 November 2007*
- *More details to follow*

3. BRUCE ROCK VIETNAM VETERANS GROUP WEEK/ WEEKEND

- *The Bruce Rock week/weekend is on again, lots of activities including Golf, Bingo, a Rifle Shoot, Lawn Bowls, Concerts, Street March with Brass Band, B-B-Q etc and many more. Everyone really has a good time*
- *Sunday Oct 28 - Sunday Nov 4, a whole week of activities*
- *March Saturday 3 Nov 1430hrs, meet at the Hotel, look for the BANNER*
- *For more details contact Merv Gould 9061 1143 or Bill Stewart 9061 1037*
- *For Oval Parking, contact Bruce Rock Shire 9061 1377*
- *Everyone who has attended in the past raves over it, great week or weekend so we would like a large contingent of PIGS ON PARADE.*

COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

On Tuesday 15 May 2007, the Town of Victoria Park held a commemoration service in respect of 2 Korean War veterans who were killed in action and 3 Vietnam War veterans who were killed in action, those being:

Paul Richard Van Rusewijk 3RAR

Christopher William Roost 4RAR

Alec Ernest James Bell 7RAR 1st Tour

Among the attendees were John Bell and his wife and John's two sisters representing the Bell family, Don Cruden, Geoff and Irene Brophy and Kanga Battersby representing 7RAR. The commemoration saw John Bell lay a wreath for his brother Alec, on behalf of his family and 7RAR. A metal plaque will be placed within the Harold Hawthorne Centre, which is the local community hall and the placement of the plaque, alongside other military memorabilia will be a lasting tribute to those who paid the supreme sacrifice. The service was very well attended and a credit to the organisers.

Of interest, Christopher Roost's sister-in-law has written a book entitled "Mary in the Morning", apparently Pte Roost died about a year after his marriage to Mary and his sister-in-law wrote the book trying to come to terms with his death and the effects it had on the family. A very well-written book and well worth a read.

ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION SERVICE - KINGS PARK

Don Cruden attended the Aboriginal Reconciliation Service held in Kings Park on May 30 2007. The ceremony was to acknowledge all indigenous servicemen and women for their contributions during past conflicts. Among the attendees was the daughter of the late Captain Reg Saunders, the first aboriginal to be granted a commissioned rank during World War 2. It was a very moving service with many dignitaries and ex-servicemen and women in attendance and it is hoped that this service will be repeated in future.

14th INTAKE NASHO'S (notes from Geoff Lawson)

Long-time friendships and conviviality, not to mention a few coldies, played host to a reunion of 7RAR's 14th National Service (Perth) Intake who completed their Infantry Corps Training in D Company in early 1969 at Holsworthy. I believe all but one remained with THE battalion until the completion of their service.

John Bolst, Gordon and Diane Dickson, Brian and Joan Griffiths, Geoff Lawson, Alan Leivers, Charlie Matheson and Pam Hoy, Geoff and Lorraine Murray, Gavin and Marina Rodie and Peter and Sandra Vlachou joined with Barry and Anne Hutchins and Kevin Pattle (who was visiting from the Sunshine Coast, something about a couple of Winnebago's but that's another story) at the Il Ciao restaurant in Applecross on June 9. John Burrows and Mick Painter tendered their apologies. The superb Italian cuisine complimented a very pleasant evening and this rugged, handsome crew (the blokes were looking in pretty good shape too) attempt to get together on a half-yearly basis.



*Back Row L to R: Gavin Rodie, Gordon Dickson, Alan Leivers, Brian Griffiths
Centre Row L to R: Kevin Pattle, Geoff Lawson, Charlie Matheson, John Bolst
Front Row L to R: Barry Hutchins, Peter Vlachou, Geoff Murray
(Photo by Joan Griffiths)*

LAZIEST SOLDIER

A sergeant was addressing a squad of 20 and said: "I have a nice easy job for the laziest man here. Put up your hand if you are the laziest." 19 men raised their hands, and the sergeant asked the other man "why didn't you raise your hand?" The man replied: "Too much trouble, sarge."

NAMETAGS

You all know by now that we are offering NAMETAGS in two sizes, the original size and now a larger version which is half as big again. Each small tag costs \$10, with the larger tag at \$15, 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 geoff.murray@mainroads.wa.gov.au

Work Tel (08) 9323 4579 Home Tel (08) 9448 3109



NEWSLETTER - WA CONTENT

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

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REPORT FOR "SEVEN NEWS"

Greetings to all pigs from SA. Yes, we are still going here even though fewer of us each year are in fulltime employment.

ANZAC day went off well with 54 of us attending the city march. It was great to have a number back this year from their sojourns in WA (reunion 2006) and places like the Kokoda trail (Tony Carr). Chris O'Neil was in great voice as Sergeant Major.

As the march progressed we got in step and then made resounding "halts" that raised additional applause from the crowds. Chris was also in fine form after recent illness but is not going to advertise for the 10 kilos he lost. With his return Gill Green was demoted to right marker.

Not bad given that he was selected to represent aboriginal servicemen at the dawn service and had his photo prominent in the "Advertiser". Graham Cornes' not on broadcast duties this year, was back with the troops. It's great that Jock McKay completed the march - he's now going great guns. Post march a few ales were consumed on the parade grounds before disbursement to various watering holes for different groups.

On other fronts things are going well. A memorial at the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial followed by lunch has been organised on 5th August to commemorate 40th anniversary of Suoi Chau Pha. SA was well represented on 06/08/67.

Details and contacts We are looking for a good turnout on the day. We have made contact with SA Defence Unit and through them will be contacting 7 RAR and doing what we can to assist with their location and orientation to the wine state.

Cheers for now

One alpha (Call sign, 1st tour)

7 RAR
Battle of Suoi Chau Pha
SA Commemoration - 40th Anniversary

In honour to those 7th Battalion and support personnel who died in Vietnam a commemoration service and lunch is planned for 5th August 2007.

Program

10.55 Assembly: Vietnam Memorial, Torrens Parade Ground

11.00 Entry of Honour Guard

11.05 Welcome

11.10 Reading of extract of battle reports

11.25 Reading of Honour Role

11.30 Laying of Wreath

11.35 Ode

Further respects to departed personnel may be made at Cross of Sacrifice

12.00

Assemble for lunch at Queen's Head Hotel, 117 Kermode Street North Adelaide

This invitation is open to all 7 RAR personnel, their families and others associated with the Pigs Please advise of intended attendance to either.

Tony Carr

Phone 08 8352 3760

Mobile 0405164793

Email: tonycarr1@bigpond.com

Chris Ashenden

Phone 08 8266 1311

Mobile 041789 2561

Email: cashende@bigpond.net.au

ANZAC DAY SYDNEY

Sydney turned on a wet day starting with the Dawn Service at the Cenotaph. It is almost impossible to assess the numbers attending this traditional service as it kicks off at 4.30am. As the dignitaries arrived so did the rain, this continued until the completion of proceedings. After the Dawn Service the 7RAR members gathered at the RAR Memorial at Regimental Square for the annual service, prayers and Honour Rolls were read. Those present strolled to the Fortunes of War for the early morning tipling and breakfast before adjourning to the Garrison Church for the Memorial Church Service. A good roll up with the usual members from 2/7th joining the 7RAR Group.

This year the assembly area for the march moved from Bent Street to Castlereagh Street, even though the step off time was a little earlier the bottleneck entering Martin Place meant we joined the mainstream march about the same time as previous years. Even though the march was plagued by intermittent rain the crowd was as large as ever and the reception was resounding. This year we were fortunate to have the Burwood Pipes and Drums lead the 7RAR contingent for the whole distance of the march.

Below: 7RAR Contingent (in the dry as we approached the Town Hall).





Above: A look at an erudite group of the 7RAR contingent, (all in step).

Below: Bernie Folkes, Doc Russell and Tony Bonvino waiting for lunch.



TOUR OF 1 BRIGADE DURING TRIP TO 7RAR

As part of our visit to 7RAR for the dedication to the Colours, we were given a guided tour of some of the units that are part of the 1 BDE makeup. Below are some snaps of the variety of equipment that make up the units of the BDE. The Officers and men of the units visited were very cooperative with the group and were quick to answer any question posed by the now out of touch members of the 7RAR Association group.



An ASLAV from the Cavalry Regiment which provide the integral support to the BDE. You have probably seen shots of these same vehicles on patrol in IRAQ but in a different form, basically with the skirts of wire mesh surrounding the vehicle to act as a shield against RPG attack.

The photos overleaf show various angles of the vehicle which gives you some idea of the advances made since most of us have worn the uniform.



Above: Side view of the ASLAV.
Below: A shoulder fired Missile.





*Above : An M1A1 Abrams Tank, recently commissioned into the Army.
Below : Ammunition for the main armament.*





Above and Below : Hercules, the Armoured Recovery Vehicle.





VII

Seventh Battalion
The Royal Australian Regiment
Binh Ba Lines
Robertson Barracks
PALMERSTON NT 0830

Tel: (08) 89353350
Mob: 0417032387
Fax: (08) 89353146

CO OUT 10 /07

Mrs A. Cossey
47/100 Nissen Street
PIALBA
QLD 4655

Dear Mrs Cossey,

I understand that Ross Ellis, President of the Seventh Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment Association has recently discussed with you, my intention to name our Corps training platoon in memory of your late husband, Keith Downward, MM. I am writing to formally request your approval for this action and I am most grateful for your positive indication of support.

You may be aware that the Seventh Battalion has been returned to the Australian Army order of battle after 33 years linked service with the Fifth Battalion. Similar to the raising of the Seventh Battalion in 1965, this action has occurred as part of the Army being enlarged in response to contemporary operational requirements. We are one of two mechanised infantry battalions in the Darwin based, 1st Brigade and in due course we will relocate to Adelaide.

As part of this process, we will train a number of our soldiers in their infantry skills within the Battalion to cater for the increased training demand currently experienced. This means that young soldiers will be posted directly to the Seventh Battalion after their recruit training at Kapooka and following this further period of training, will take their place as riflemen within the companies.

The actions of Keith during the Battle of Suoi Chau Pha on 6 August 1966, that resulted in his well deserved award of the Military Medal, exemplifies the hard-won reputation of the Australian Infantryman. I could not think of a better example to provide to our young soldiers at the outset of their service. To this end, it is my intention to name the Battalion's Corps training platoon, The Downward, MM Platoon.

As the newest members of the Seventh Battalion in this latest period of the Battalion's service, I am keen to ensure we maintain strong links to our heritage. The reputation, standards and spirit of the original Seventh Battalion remain as a benchmark for the expectations of the current serving members. A formal acknowledgment by the present day Seventh Battalion of Keith's key contribution to this reputation is an important part of this intent. It is also particularly fitting, in that the Corps training platoon will be part of Keith's own A Company.

It is my intention to place a copy of Keith's Military Medal citation and biographical details in the Battalion Headquarters for the future reference of all ranks. To that end, I respectfully request your consideration of providing an image of Keith to accompany this documentation. I can assure you that any item you may wish to provide would be carefully reproduced and returned.

In closing, I trust you appreciate the esteem in which we current members of the Seventh Battalion hold our heritage and the example provided by men such as Keith and George. I would be delighted if you could consent to the Seventh Battalion naming our Corps training platoon, 'The Downward, MM Platoon'. I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Shane
S.L. GABRIEL
Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

2 April 2007

Overleaf and above is a copy of a letter from the CO 7RAR requesting permission from Mrs Anne Cossey (Downward) to name the Training Platoon within 7RAR, The Keith Downward, MM Platoon, in memory of "Shorty Downward" who was awarded the MM during the Battle of Suoi Chau Pha. Permission was given and at the time of our visit 48 young men were in training as members of the Keith Downward, MM Platoon.

ANZAC DAY 2007 IN MELBOURNE

Patricia and I decided to drive over to Melbourne to march with my mates from A Coy 1 Pl. It seemed fitting that the vehicle I drove over in was my pride and joy, a 1966 F100, only forty years old, and it was 40 years ago I was with these mates, Rob Arnott, Peter Christianson and another Piggy, Jack (Blackjack) Doulis, who came down from Waverley, we met at 9.00am at The Clock Hotel, Flinders Street Station. This is where we got to see how the other half do it! We were still in the pub at 11.00am, the march had been going past since 8.00am.

I was beginning to wonder if the boys had decided to give the march a miss and just get on the grog for the day. On making an enquiry I was told we had plenty of time! (Couldn't believe it!). At about 12.30pm, our mob (Piggies) formed up and moved out. We marched down to the Cenotaph then fell out, no official ceremony at the end. All the RAR flag bearers formed a square and a Vet in a wheel-chair laid a wreath.

We then walked down to the Town Hall Hotel for a lovely meal and a long chat with old mates. About 5 of us were given a list of fallen comrades to read out. While I was marching I had the company of Ray Martin who interviewed me for a segment to be broadcast later, Ray also joined us for lunch. When asked if he would like to read some of the names of the fallen, and did he think he knew how to read them, "I think I can", he said. Thanks guys for making it a memorable day. Cheers to Bill Anderson also, and their wives, Alva, Elaine and Karen. Next year we hope to be in Adelaide for ANZAC Day. That will mean that I have marched in every city with 7RAR.

Regards to all, Noel and Patricia Bell. (Some photos follow)





Pigs in Paradise

ANZAC Day 2007

This year we held our post-march reunion at the Pig and Whistle pub in Eagle Street. All feed-back from the day indicates it is a far better location than the Victory Hotel where we had gathered for years. For one, it opens after the march, not an hour later at 1.00 pm by which time half of our contingent are on their second or third shout at other pubs around the city.

Southerners Dave Willis, Pop Walker and Robert (Shakey) Oaks graced us Queenslanders with their presence and many photos were taken with the Pig of Pig 'N whistle as a backdrop (see website) Local stalwarts Ted Lewis, Jack Ezzy, Graham Griffiths, Don Robertson, Stacey Kruck, Nev Robertson, Keith Rowlands, Eddie Edmonds, Pat Quinn, Jim Pappandreas, Joe Turra, Ian Timms, Charlie Fizzel, Percy Meredith, Richard Hylard, (all the way from Rockampton) Sam Giacomantonio, Bill Temple and Kev Donnelly (with some of his section from the first tour) were present for the day. There were others drifting through during the afternoon but they didn't all get on the roll book for the day. Check out the website for photos and movie clip of 7RAR marching in Brisbane under "ANZAC Day 2007"





*Above: Kev Gillett leading the push, sorry about the focus.
Below: Some of the usual bandits posing for the camera.*





Suoi Chau Pha Day

Members are reminded that this August marks the 40th Anniversary of the battle and as such we in Queensland consider the occasion should be marked with some solemnity. Remembering and honouring those killed in the battle - Don Aylett, Ted Brophy, Leif Harstad, Jim (Gabby) Hayes, David Milford and John (Speedy) O'Connor is a part of our legacy but we also need to recognize the wounded and subsequent troubled survivors of the battle and their parents, siblings and spouses. With this in mind, following are the details of the day.

Sunday 5th of August - Memorial Church Service

To be held at the Enoggera All Saints Chapel starting at 11.00. Father Keith Teehey (to be confirmed) and Commissioner Stacey Kruck will be presiding. Members are reminded of the security requirements for entry into Enoggera Barracks. To gain entry a person must register at the Security Office and gain from there a photo ID entry permit. This is obviously time-consuming but wait, there is a short cut. If you indicate your intention to come to me by email or phone I can submit to the authorities a list. That list is then sent to the main gate and all members on it can gain quick entry by simply driving up to the gate and announcing their name and reason for wanting entry "to attend the 7RAR Memorial Service".

If you don't RSVP to me then you will need to factor in time to go through the security process. Please arrange your day to arrive in sufficient time to get to the Chapel well prior to 1100hrs. The Church service will last approximately 30 to 40 minutes

Lunch. *As for previous years the lunch and gathering will be held at the Light Horse Room at the Gaythorne RSL.*

Timings. *1200 midday to whenever.*

Costs. *Food - Pay as you go. Gaythorne RSL have a quality Buffet Luncheon available for members and visitors.*

Drinks. *The club has undertaken to provide bar service in the Light Horse room.*

Raffle. *There will be a raffle conducted to help defray the costs of the notice to be inserted in the Courier Mail on Monday 6 August in memory of the fallen.*

Guest Speaker. *Don Gillies, A Coy 2IC at Suoi Chau Pha will give us a short account of the battle.*

REUNION 2009

No, it's not too early to be thinking about the reunion. With about two years to go you could start planning your 2009 holiday with the Reunion the focus and the travel to and from, an extension. Go on from the Tweed and visit Cape York or the Simpson Desert or just laze away the days in beautiful sunny Queensland on one our thousands of beaches or National Parks.

Pack up the caravan and tour the country via the Tweed Coast or fly in and then fly on to Cairns, our typical tropical city with easy access to the Daintree National Park and the Great Barrier Reef. (Note: The online version of this info will have links to popular holiday destinations to help you plan.)

Accommodation

Over the next couple of months the Reunion Committee will visit Twin Towns Services Club to tie up accommodation details so stay tuned for later newsletters for specifics.

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Payments

As of this week the Reunion 2009 bank account has been opened and Leigh Christie, (A Coy 2nd Tour) an experienced former CPA, has accepted the appointment as Treasurer. Leigh and I are planning a periodic payment system so you can pay in advance for all costs, other than accommodation, online or by cheque/money order. A Reunion Database will be established that will allow for an automatic progressive payments receipt that can be sent via email or post.

Once all payments are made the Database will print an Event Access Card for each attending member, spouse, partner, friends or children with all events paid for, listed on the card. The card will be contained in a plastic sleeve and come with a cord to hang around your neck as seen in commercial or government offices. The card will fully identify the member with names, nicknames and tour details.

Merchandise

We are planning a rugby jumper as the prime attraction. There will be other items like coffee mugs, bush hats etc but more on that later when plans firm up. It is still very early days. We are starting to make plans and you need to be thinking about it yourselves. We all know what its like at our age...turn your back and another year has gone

*Kev Gillett
Brisbane*