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PHONE (W) (02) 9264 7555 FAX (02) 9264 2656

paddy@iswright.com.au

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



(PHOTO BOTTOM ON PAGE 1)

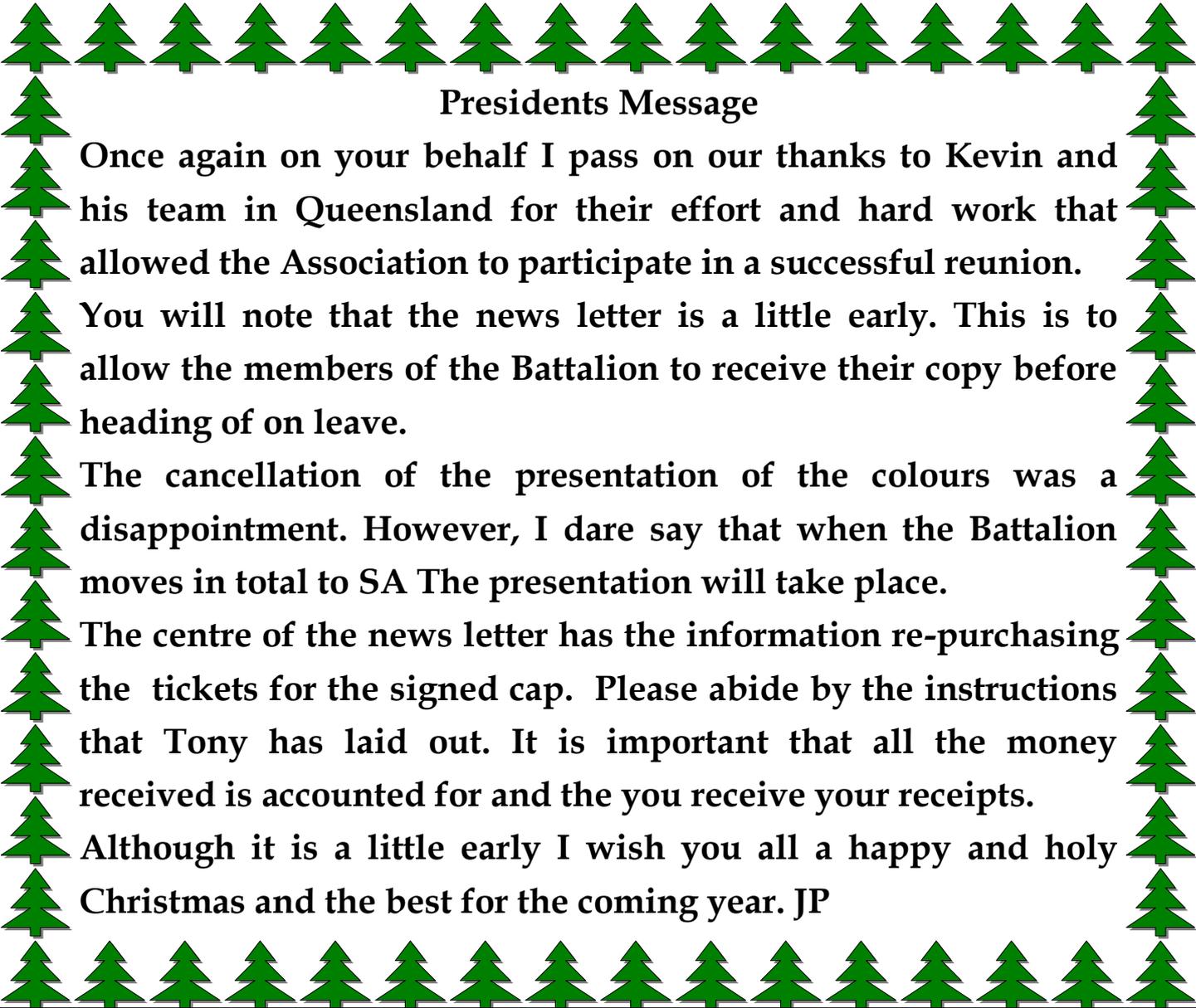
SERVING AUSTRALIA: CRAIG HANSEN:- It's a very big highlight for what I had to deal with. It's been a tough time. From nearly dying to get to this, it's amazing. It caps off a very tough time. Craig was awarded the Northern Territory award for serving Australia, on 26 August 2009.

Craig is a Pl SGT in 7RAR who was wounded in Afghanistan when the Bushmaster he was travelling in ran over an IED on patrol last November. He was evacuated back to Australia to Nepean hospital here in Penrith. He spent 11 weeks laid up with two broken ankles and crushed heels and a broken right arm. He has been back several times since for ongoing treatment, his last visit in September required corrective surgery, which went ok!! and he hopes to be back walking by the end of this year. We all wish him well during his recovery.

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Presidents Message

Once again on your behalf I pass on our thanks to Kevin and his team in Queensland for their effort and hard work that allowed the Association to participate in a successful reunion.

You will note that the news letter is a little early. This is to allow the members of the Battalion to receive their copy before heading of on leave.

The cancellation of the presentation of the colours was a disappointment. However, I dare say that when the Battalion moves in total to SA The presentation will take place.

The centre of the news letter has the information re-purchasing the tickets for the signed cap. Please abide by the instructions that Tony has laid out. It is important that all the money received is accounted for and the you receive your receipts.

Although it is a little early I wish you all a happy and holy Christmas and the best for the coming year. JP

REMINDER TO ALL SERVING MEMBERS OF 7RAR

Please remember to advise the XO of any change of address that may occur due to being posted from the Battalion to another location somewhere else other than Robertson Barracks. This will enable the 1/2010 Seven News to arrive at your new location without being re-directed. There is a change of address notice on the back page of the newsletter. If you are unsure of contact details of your new location the 1/2010 Seven News will be out early April which should give you time to let me know any address change before the newsletter is posted.

Tony Keech, XO/ED



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.

William Hartley Smith, 2/7th Battalion AIF, passed away 3 Sep 2009.

1200839 Denis (Bottles) Bathersby, A Coy both tours, passed away 4 Sep 2009.

36157 Aubrey Philip (Duke) Wellington, Sigs, C/CHQ 1st tour, passed away
 12 Oct 2009.

Enda Fieldhouse, loving wife of Doug, (Mors 1st tour) passed away
 21 Oct 2009.

Enda Fieldhouse, loving wife of Spunky, (MORS 1st tour), passed away
 21 Oct 2009.

2010 CALENDER

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 19 Mar 2010 | Cut-off date for articles for 1/2101 Seven News. |
| 6 Apr 2010 | 1/2010 Seven News Posted. |
| 10 Apr 2010 | AGM Canberra details Saturday 10 April 2010
1400 hrs, Drawing of VC Raffle. |
| 25 Apr 2010 | ANZA Day, state details in 1/2010 Seven News. |
| 16 Jul 2010 | Cut-off date for articles for 2/2010 Seven News. |
| 5 Aug 2010 | 2/2010 Seven News Posted. |
| 6 Aug 2010 | 43rd Anniversary of the Battle of Suoi Chau Pha. |
| 18 Aug 2010 | 44th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. |
| 1 Sep 2010 | 45th Birthday 7RAR. |

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

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

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

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

Phone (W)().....(F)().....

Email.....@.....

Wife/Partner's Name.....

Army No:.....Unit.....Pl.....Coy.....Dates.....Location.....

Remarks/Hons/Awards/.....

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

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

M/SHIP COSTS- \$20 PER YEAR OR- \$80 FOR FIVE YEARS, \$5 FOR FIVE YEARS FOR SERVING MBRS OF 7RAR-- PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH THROUGH THE MAIL

(your dates for renewal will be shown on your membership card when issued

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

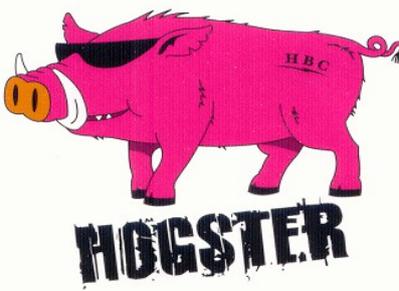
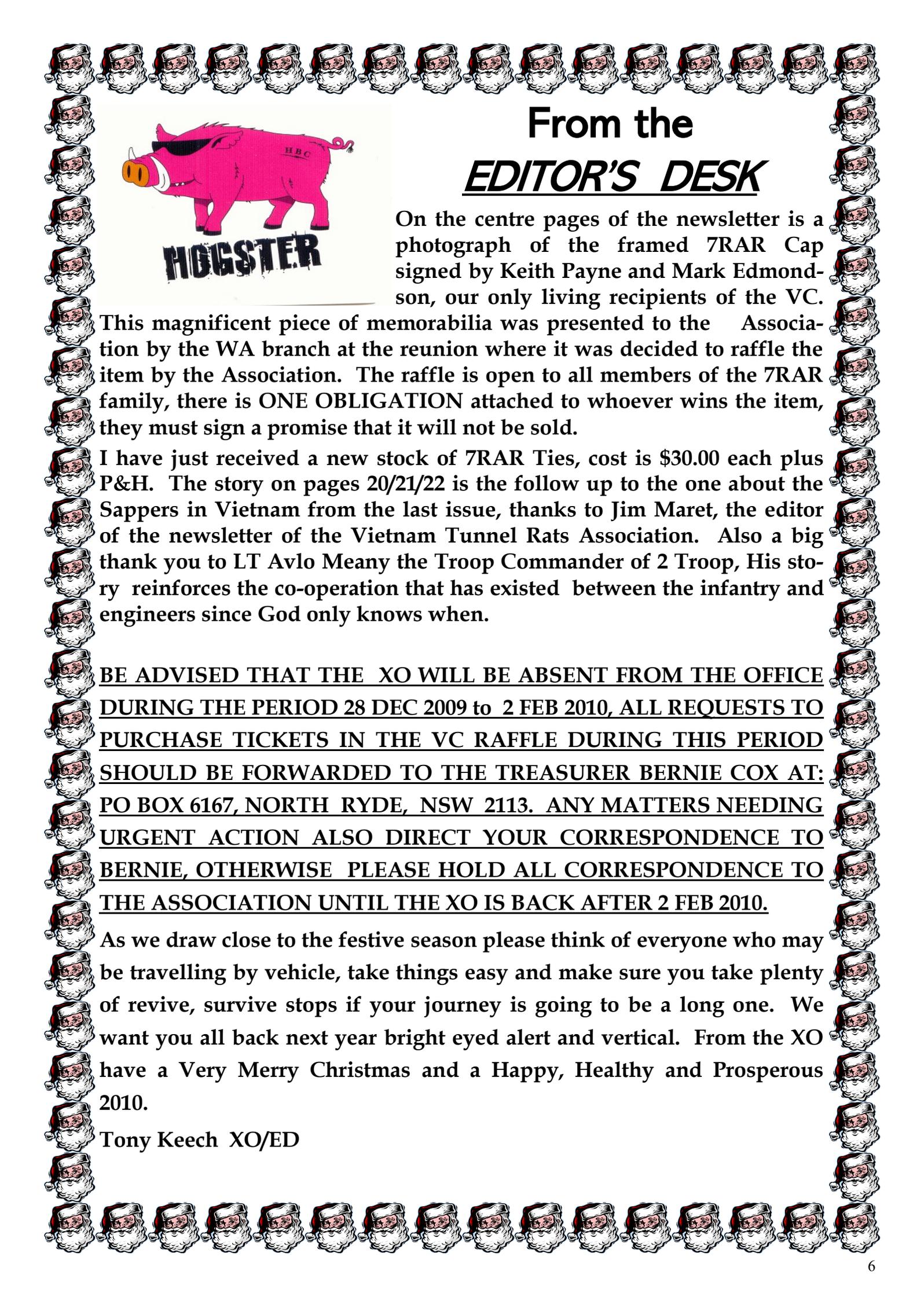
RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO: - 7RAR ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 8143
WERRINGTON COUNTY
NSW 2747 (02) 4721 4349 0418 624 211
Email: porky_seven@bigpond.com

Office Us Only:

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

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

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



From the ***EDITOR'S DESK***

On the centre pages of the newsletter is a photograph of the framed 7RAR Cap signed by Keith Payne and Mark Edmondson, our only living recipients of the VC.

This magnificent piece of memorabilia was presented to the Association by the WA branch at the reunion where it was decided to raffle the item by the Association. The raffle is open to all members of the 7RAR family, there is ONE OBLIGATION attached to whoever wins the item, they must sign a promise that it will not be sold.

I have just received a new stock of 7RAR Ties, cost is \$30.00 each plus P&H. The story on pages 20/21/22 is the follow up to the one about the Sappers in Vietnam from the last issue, thanks to Jim Maret, the editor of the newsletter of the Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association. Also a big thank you to LT Avlo Meany the Troop Commander of 2 Troop, His story reinforces the co-operation that has existed between the infantry and engineers since God only knows when.

BE ADVISED THAT THE XO WILL BE ABSENT FROM THE OFFICE DURING THE PERIOD 28 DEC 2009 to 2 FEB 2010, ALL REQUESTS TO PURCHASE TICKETS IN THE VC RAFFLE DURING THIS PERIOD SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE TREASURER BERNIE COX AT: PO BOX 6167, NORTH RYDE, NSW 2113. ANY MATTERS NEEDING URGENT ACTION ALSO DIRECT YOUR CORRESPONDENCE TO BERNIE, OTHERWISE PLEASE HOLD ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE ASSOCIATION UNTIL THE XO IS BACK AFTER 2 FEB 2010.

As we draw close to the festive season please think of everyone who may be travelling by vehicle, take things easy and make sure you take plenty of revive, survive stops if your journey is going to be a long one. We want you all back next year bright eyed alert and vertical. From the XO have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2010.

Tony Keech XO/ED

The National Diggers Bowls Carnival held in Dubbo on the 15th, 16th and 17th September 2009 was once again a huge success. This was due to the organisational skills, hard work and a commitment to succeed by Eric Chamberlain and his band of merry men. A big thank you must go to another Pig, Roddy Pilon, 2nd Tour, of Rod Pilon transport who was one of the major sponsors. The other being Michael Hannah, 5 RAR, 2nd tour, and Harry's Cafe De Wheels Fame.

Along with Rod, Porky's people were well represented at this years Carnival. Our team consisted of (Skip) Eric Chamberlain, 2nd tour, (Second) Sid Morris, 1st tour, (Lead) Victor Bartley, 2nd Tour, and with "Wild Bill' Harley, 1st Tour, filling in as Super Sub. Our team was appropriately named "the Three Little Pigs". Jack Good and Barry (Arab) Gissell (both 2nd tour) were in the original "Three Little Pigs" team of last year. But due to unforeseen circumstances, neither were available for selection.

Day One saw our team (Eric and Sid that is) play scintillating and superbly thought out shot bowls, the same cannot be said for me as I could not handle the fast greens and windy conditions at Dubbo Railway Bowling Club. Day Two saw a repeat of Day One and just when moves were afoot to relegate me to the sidelines, Big Eric pulled a muscle in his back, this he informed me was because of the heavy load (me) that he had to carry. With Sid taking over as Skip and "Wild Bill" being elevated to Lead, I thought here is my chance to make amends, but alas this was not to be. It is with bowed head that I humbly report, we lost eight games out of eight, thus keeping our beaten record at 100% and for this I take full responsibility.

It was only after many action and dynamically posed/staged photo's were taken with Eric's "you beaut" \$2.50 camera, we found out that he had forgotten that, to have clear pictures the lens needs cleaning. Which means that "Seven News" readers will not be able to see Bowls played in true Pig sty(le). Fortunately there was a professional photographer available who was able to take shots of me and our Pig Mascot, and also proof that we did at least win one end.

The Winners of the Carnival were: 1st The Hunters - Newcastle. NSW
2nd: Bribie Island Diggers - Queensland
3rd: Tryhards - Nowra Bowling Club. NSW
4th: The Bellcos - Canberra. ACT

If there are any Pig Bowlers wanting to have a great time next year, get a team together or just nominated yourself and come on out, over, up or down to Dubbo and join us for the 2010 carnival. I guarantee you will meet some great people and really enjoy yourself. Remember fellow Pigs, we are not getting any younger, so get out and enjoy what we have left. (See photos overleaf)

Best Wishes to all - Victor Bartley D. Supt. 2nd Tour



Some of the hectic action on the green.

Sent: Sunday, 11 October 2009 11:43 AM

Subject: TPI - AMBULANCE COVER

If any one ever comes across the problem below with ambulance cover. Let the TPI Federation and Blue Ryan know about it immediately.

Welfare Report ;

An issue that concerns me is the number of TPI's I meet that are not aware of the limitation of the gold care in relation to the ambulance service. Time and time again a veteran tells me that as a TPI he or she has no worries about joining the ambulance service because the gold card will cover all requirements. Well unfortunately, I have bad news for them if they ever decide to leave their home State.

Please Note;

The ambulance service provided for gold cardholders only covers the State in which you live or if interstate it will only cover transport to the nearest hospital. If ever there is a need for a gold cardholder to be moved from a local interstate hospital to a specialist hospital or to be transported back to their home state from interstate, then it will be at the gold cardholders expense. My advice to all TPI's when travelling is to either have travel insurance and/or maintain membership of the ambulance service.

Reported in the Victorian T.P.I. Newsletter - Chin Up Autumn Edition 2009.

NOTICE TO ALL 2/7TH A.I.F. MEMBERS

I received a message from Bill Cowie asking me to place this notice particularly directed at our 2/7th members. The daughter of the late Aub Stiff lost her copy of "The Fiery Pheonix" to water damage and is seeking someone who may have a spare copy for sale, if anyone has a copy please contact Jill on (02) 4602 0887.

MEMORIAL FOR PAUL "ZIGGY" TRZECINSKI

DEDICATION

Emma Swain 7/9/2009 9.46am

Son learns more about the dad he never knew.

Paul Trzecinski has endured 41 Father's Day's without his dad.

Born after his father's tragic death in 1968, Mr Trzecinski has always relied on others to paint a picture of the man he never knew. But yesterday, during the dedication of the PTE Paul Trzecinski Memorial, Mr Trzecinski's vivid imagery of the man he lost his life during the Vietnam War became more complete. "This has been an unbelievable moment for me and my family," Mr Trzecinski said after the service.

"We've looked forward to this day for such a long time and the whole event was better than I ever expected it to be...its really humbling. About 200 people gathered near Telegraph Lagoon for the dedication including General Peter Cosgrove, Hunter MP Joel Fitzgibbon, Maitland MP Frank Terenzini and Maitland Mayor Peter Blackmore.

PTE Trzecinski's widow Charleen was also in attendance. "It's still fresh in my mind and things like this bring it to the front again, but it's so beautiful to have him honoured in this way," Mrs Trzecinski said.

PTE Paul Zygmund "Ziggy" Trzecinski was killed on January 27, 1968, at Nui Dat, Vietnam. Ziggy was Maitland's first casualty of the Vietnam War and one of four Australians killed, he was 21.

Months before his death, Ziggy had taken compassionate leave to return home to Maitland to marry his young sweetheart. "I always remember him, I have photos of him everywhere. I try to put what happened to him to the back of my mind, but today it's all come flooding back," Mrs Trzecinski said.

Following the service, which included the unveiling of a 4.6 tone rock with a plaque detailing Ziggy's military, Mr Trzecinski extended his thanks to the people of Maitland.

"The Maitland community has been absolutely unbelievable...it's a community full of heart and soul," he said. "I know so little about my father, so being here in Maitland and talking to the people who knew him has helped fill in the blanks."

Storey compliments of The Maitland Mercury 9/08/09.



MEMORIAL: Family, dignitaries and friends attended the dedication of a memorial to Private Paul "Ziggy" Trzecinski, who was killed during the Vietnam War. Pictured are General Peter Cosgrove and Ziggy's son Paul, holding a photo of his Dad.



Catafalque Party mounted at the Memorial.



L to R:- Joel Fitzgibbon, Member for the Hunter, John McIntosh, Pres Maitland Vets and General Peter Cosgrove, at the memorial after the unveiling.



Front of Decanter, note cork which prevents leakage and allows the crystal stopper to be packed separately to prevent breakage.



Back of Port Decanter. (See order form on next page, note address change notified on order form from reunion).



SEVEN BATTALION PORT DECANTER ORDER FORM



Port Decanters are **\$37:00 each**: Postage is \$12:00 NSW; \$15:00 Qld; \$20:00 WA & NT

NAME _____ Contact Phone Number _____

ADDRESS: _____

(Please Print)

STATE & POST CODE _____

I would like to order ____ Decanter(s) at \$37:00 each; \$ _____ + Postage \$ _____

I have enclosed a Cheque/Money Order (No Cash) for \$ _____

SEND TO:- 7RAR Decanter Issue 2009, Trademark Wines,
7/37 Rushdale Street, Knoxfield, VIC 3180

Any problems contact Tony Blake:- digger7@hinet.net.au or phone 0409 668 709

On the previous two pages is a photograph of the Port decanter which is available from Trademark wines. The order form if you wish to purchase any of these items is above. Please note that each item is safely packed for conveyance via the carrier which is used by the wholesaler. The crystal stopper is packed separately with the cork as shown to prevent damage and also ensures no leakage. Please note the address change from that shown on the order form that was available at the reunion. If you intend to purchase the decanter, the initial run of 36 has been made so your order will be filled as it arrives at the wholesaler.

IN SEARCH OF

I would like to try and contact two guys I served with in South VietNam (67-68) and who don't appear on our Membership List. "Buck" Rogers was from WA he was the A Coy barber and Bob Hodge from SA was one of the A Coy cooks both 1st tour, who I bunked with. If anyone knows of their whereabouts please contact me: Jim Booker Phone (02) 9821 1656 or Email : jimcal@iinet.net.au

MINUTES OF 7RAR SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD TWIN TOWNS RESORT TWEED HEADS

SUNDAY 30 AUGUST 2009

1. Meeting opened by President John Press at 1420hrs. 186 members were in attendance.

2. The following apologies were tendered:

Ron Grey, Stacey Kruck, Dan Wyborn, Don Cruden,
Tony Williams, Bob Daly, Chris O'Neil, Tony Norris.

3. The President extended a welcome to all life members, members, soldiers, ladies, partners, sons and daughters to the meeting and advised the meeting as this is a special general meeting there are no minutes of a previous meeting to be read.

You all have a copy of the suggested Banner for the 7RAR group, you should be aware the RAR Association has tried to simplify the design of all banners for the Associations and have come up with the suggested one you have. As there are a large number of us here today I don't expect to end up with too many variations to that which is shown in the copy you have before you. I will now hand over to Tony.

4. Executive Officer: -

Congratulations to the QLD committee for their efforts in organising this event. Firstly let me mention the 7RAR Port, there are order forms here at the front so if you wish to purchase the port please take an order form and proceed as directed on the form. We need a minimum order of 36 before a run will be done.

I have for sale 20 ties, the three pig car stickers, the porky 7 car stickers and lapel badges, those wishing to purchase any of these items see me after the meeting. At this point in time we have 1100 members in the Association.

5. Business

Financial Report:-

(a) The Treasurer discussed the financial situation of the Association and reiterated that we were in a healthy situation as far as our finances were concerned.

. There were some losses due to the international economic downturn but this was minor compared to other institutions. Due to the guarantees given to the banks one of our investments in the Challenger group have been frozen, however this does not pose any problems at this stage.

Jack Ezzy raised the point, as to the money we have currently in the associations accounts what do we intend to do with it? There was much discussion about the use of the assets and as a result of the financial position of the Association there seemed no reason to increase the membership fees at this time.

Peter Leeson raised the point of looking forward with our finances as there will be a Seventh Battalion for a long time to come. The President summed up the discussion on the finances of the Association with the guarantee that the Committee of Management would consider all suggestions and advise the members as to the proposed actions to be taken.

Authorise changes to the Constitution:-

(b) The XO addressed the subject of changes to the constitution which have been in existence since the formation of the 7RAR Association Inc (QLD). There is a need to change the rules to allow current serving members of 7RAR to be admitted as ordinary members of the Association.

Moved Jim Husband.....Seconded John Rawlinson.....

That these amendments be made to the Constitution.

Carried.

Richard Kenny advised the meeting that the means to change the rules were available on the QLD Office of Fair Trading website.

Panel for Appointment to Committee of Management:-

(c) The President raised the subject of appointing members to a panel for appointment to the Committee of Management, as we are all getting on in years there needs to be some order of replacement for those on the committee. Points of discussion centered on currently serving members of the battalion and the children of current members.

The Next Fundraiser:-

(d) The subject of our next fundraiser was short circuited by Geoff Murray, Allan West and Doug Fieldhouse who presented a piece of memorabilia, (a 7RAR cap signed by the two surviving members of the ADF awarded the Victoria Cross, WO2 Keith Payne and Trooper Mark Donaldson) to be raffled by the Association as a fundraiser.

This priceless piece of memorabilia has but one obligation attached and that it is not to be on-sold by the winner.

The President thanked the WA branch for their magnificent gift. Much discussion was held on the cost of tickets, who should be able to buy them and the date to draw the raffle.

Moved Jim Husband.....Seconded Bob Wood.....

The cost per ticket be \$10.00. Carried

The raffle should be drawn before next ANZAC Day, details to be finalized by the Committee of Management.

Next Reunion Location:-

(e) Much discussion was held about the location of the next reunion in 2012 and also a look forward to 2015. The indication by the meeting was a majority view that VIC should be the location of the 2012 reunion and the 2015 reunion be held in SA. The Committee of Management will confirm the locations and advise all via the Seven News.

Bequests to The Association:-

(f)The President raised the subject that members consider bequeaths to the association when drawing up their will.

6. General Business:-

The President advised the meeting that Ted Lewis, one of our current Vice Presidents has informed him that he wished to resign from the Committee of Management.

His resignation was accepted and the President

Ted acknowledged the vote of thanks and wished the Association all the best for the future.

Chris Ashenden addressed the meeting on the presentation of Colours to the Battalion on Saturday 10 October at Torrens Parade Ground, Adelaide. (This has been superseded by the parade being cancelled).

Stoney Bourke spoke on the subject of a donation by the Association to the maintenance of the RAR Memorial Walk at Enoggera.

Moved Stoney Bourke.....Seconded Eric McCoombe.....

The Association donate the sum of \$500 to the RAR Association for the maintenance of the Memorial Walk, to be reviewed annually by the Committee of Management.

Carried

Mick O'Halloran moved that Doug Fieldhouse be admitted to the Association as a life member for his dedicated and untiring service to the Association in WA, the motion was seconded by Ken Bladen.

Carried

The President presented certificates of appreciation to the following members:-

Geoffrey Douglas Murray and Alan Leslie West, for services to the WA branch of the Association.

7. The Executive Officer recited the ODE.
8. The President declared the meeting closed at 1557hrs.

SEVEN IN SEVENTY

The Association has been able to obtain a limited number of photo copies of the above book. The reproduction is as good as you will get at the cost we were able to have it done at. They are for sale at \$40.00 per copy plus postage to the purchasers location there is a limited number (40) so it will be first in first served. Those interested send your order to:

Rod Lyons
45 Cornwall Avenue
TURRAMURRA
NSW 2074

Don't send any money until you receive the book with the Invoice. Once you receive the book and Invoice send the cheque/money order to the XO at the Association PO Box shown on the back cover.

NEW MEMBERS

Fin 2010 MBR No: 861
Michael Kim Allan
44 Fort Street
PETERSHAM NSW 2049
(02) 9568 2534 SPT 2ND TOUR
Michael.Allan@AQIS.GOV.AU

Fin 2014 MBR No: 1444
Ewen James Hedges
PMB 13 WINNELLIE NT 0832
OC A COY 7RAR
(08) 8935 3295 0448 405 614
ewen.hedges@defence.gov.au

Fin 2014 MBR No: 862
John Sydney Chapman
5 Riverview Place
FAILFORD NSW 2430
PNRS 2ND TOUR
(02) 6554 3458 0438 652 754
nedkelly55@hotmail.com

Fin 2014 MBR No: 1445
Stephen John Marr
PMB 13 WINNELLIE NT 0832
B4 7RAR
(08) 8981 3586 0466 210 327
Stephen.m1981@hotmail.com

Fin 2014 MBR No: 863
Daniel (Dan) Harrison
PO Box 175 A COY 1ST TOUR
NAGAMBIE VIC 3608
(03) 5794 1837
julieh@harboursat.com.au

MBR No: 897
Lynne Fletcher
PO Box 276
CRONULLA NSW 2230
ENTERTAINER FEA

MBR No: 898
Dinah Lee
Po Box 3018
BANGOR NSW 2234
ENTERTAINER FEA
dinahlee@optusnet.com.au

MBR No: 899
Sylvia Raye
6 Tottenham Place
BLAKEHURST NSW 2221
ENTERTAINER FEA
bowraye@iimetro.com.au

A vulture boards an airplane, carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at him and says, "I'm sorry, sir, only one carrion allowed per passenger."

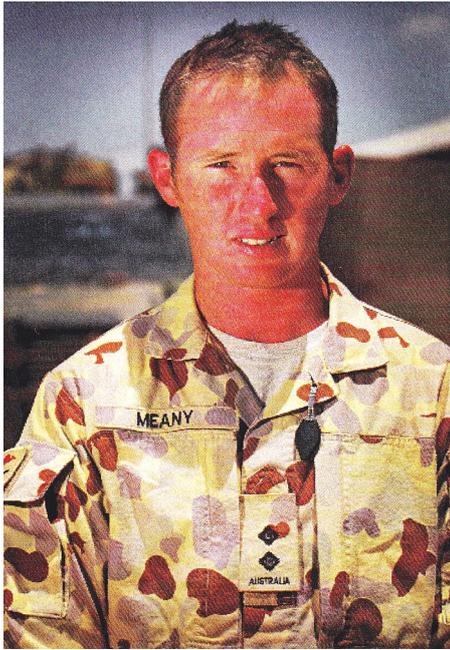
Two fish swim into a concrete wall. One turns to the other and says, "Dam!"

Two hydrogen atoms meet. One says, "I've lost my electron." The other says, "Are you sure?" The first replies "Yes, I'm positive."

2 Troop 1 Field Squadron in Afghanistan 2008 - 2009

By LT A.D. Meany, Troop Commander 2TP

1 FD SQN MRTF-1 Tarin Kowt, Afghanistan

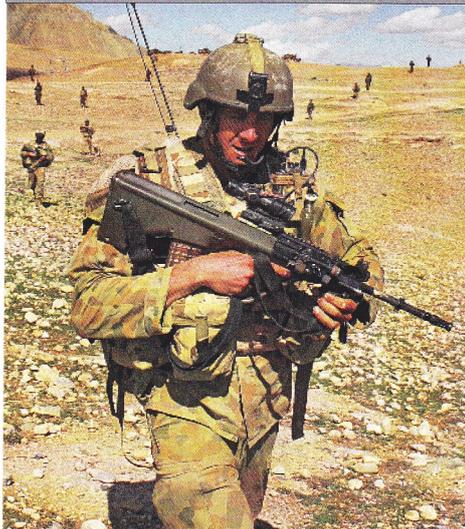


2 Troop, 1 Field Squadron has just returned to Australia from a deployment with the Mentoring and Liaison Task Force (MRTF) in Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan. Once again 2 Troop were deployed supporting the 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, just as they had in Vietnam, and we found many similarities between our deployment and that of our predecessors in Vietnam. Both our arrival and departure were during the warmer months and we found ourselves working in scorching temperatures, though somewhat less humid

than what the Tunnel Rats in Vietnam experienced. However the heat still managed to induce more than enough sweat and steamy nights while deployed in the field. Towards the end of the year we began to experience the cold of a desert winter, a new experience for many of us Darwin based Sappers.

A record low temperature came during a bridging task, with temperatures dropping to minus 10 degrees. This "inspired" the Sappers, who increased their work tempo in an attempt to keep warm. The majority of the work we did in Afghanistan involved searching travel routes for improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). This was achieved by searching likely points where insurgents could place IEDs to target either Coalition Force or Afghanistan National Army (ANA) convoys. Searches consisted mainly of Sappers on the ground with metal detectors, aided by the keen noses of Explosive Detection Dogs (EDDs) and their handlers. The section of Engineers dismounted from the armoured protection of their vehicle and moved forward to search for the deadly devices. As in Vietnam, this has earned the Sappers no end of respect from the other members of the Battle group. The job of Sappers is particularly dangerous due to the evolving IED threat within Afghanistan. The use of Anti-Personnel (AP) Mines as initiators makes this even more difficult.

Engineer Corporal Brayn Carr moves in front of a patrol in southern Afghanistan 2009

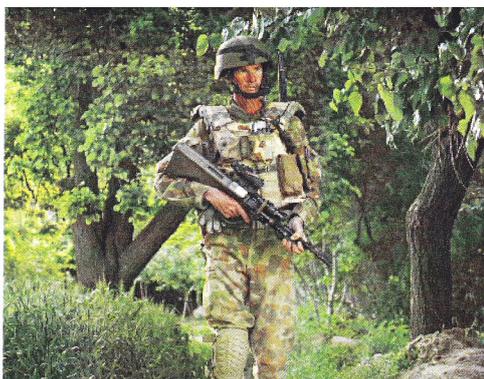


Sapper Stewart Law on patrol in Phuoc Tuy Province South Vietnam in 1966



Due to the low metal content of these devices it takes a large amount of skill to detect them, and utilising detonation cord the insurgents can link them directly to the main charge without needing a power source. This means an IED can be

emplaced very quickly, with minimal ground disturbance. Thankfully the IEDs can still be detected by the Sappers providing they take their time, and technology is constantly producing new tools in the fight against the primary weapon of our enemy, the IED. Also keeping in line with our proud heritage is the dismounted patrolling we conduct with our 7RAR brethren. Sappers accompany our infantry counterparts on all patrols conducted in the 'green zone', the belts of vegetation that surround the rivers that flow through Afghanistan's valleys. Though certainly not as dense as the jungles of Vietnam, this area provides us with many of the same challenges.



Lt Col Shane Gabriel, CO 7RAR Afghanistan 2009 - supported by 2 Troop 1 Field Squadron

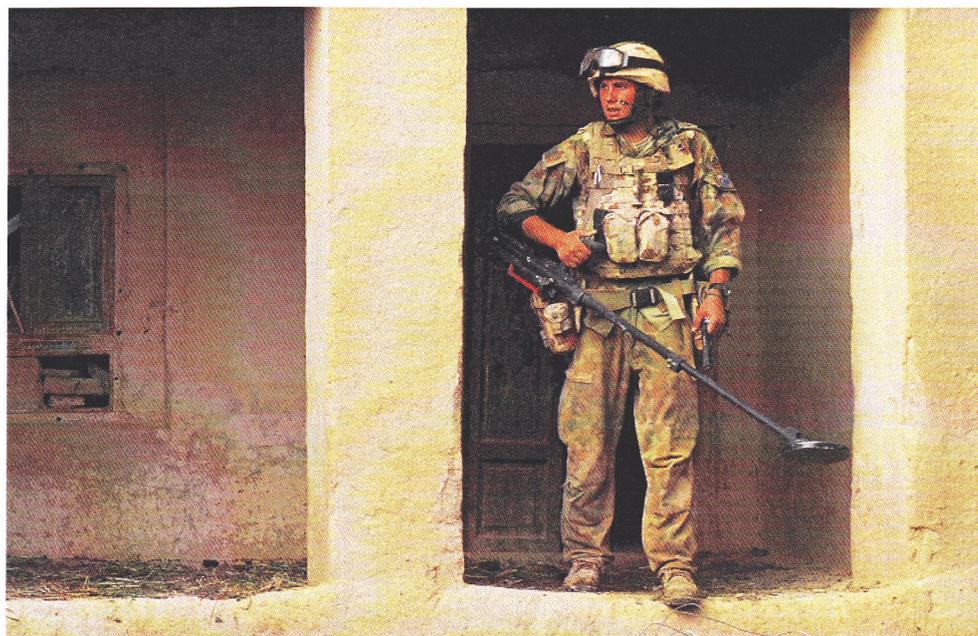


Lt Col Ron Grey, CO 7RAR Vietnam 1970 - supported by 2 Troop 1 Field Squadron

The IED threat has now evolved into the green zone with the use of both Victim Operated (VO) and Radio Controlled (RIEDs) becoming a common insurgent practice. These can

be from a simple trip wire device initiating mortars, to a RCIED that could best be described as a claymore mine on steroids. The other important function of dismounted patrolling is the conduct of search for caches. By locating caches of weapons and IED components, 2 Troop has been instrumental in the removal of the insurgent's capability to conduct attacks.

Working alongside Australian mentored ANA Engineers, the sappers have located a vast array of weapons that have been confiscated or destroyed to prevent them from being employed against us or our Coalition partners. As I am certain you would have all experienced in Vietnam, the work for Sappers never ends. On return from an operation there remains any number of tasks to be conducted within the Patrol Bases. Whilst our counterparts rest, the men tirelessly continue on with minor construction tasks to improve the standard of living for all personnel. From a command perspective, it is a fortunate aspect that the Sappers of today are kept busy. This is due to them sharing the same



Above: Afghanistan 2009 - Sapper Jacob Gatt detects for mines around a local structure.

Below: Vietnam 1967 - Sapper Les Carruthers detects for mines around a local structure while Sapper John Todd keeps watch



love for mischief as many of you during your deployment in Vietnam! Overall, the men of 2 Troop have worked hard on their nine-month deployment, which is quite possibly the longest since your own in Vietnam. Like our forefathers, the relationships we have developed with the soldiers from 7RAR will be eternal and the memories from this operation will remain with us forever I speak for the entire Troop when I say we are proud to continue the traditions of 1 Field Squadron in Vietnam, and can only hope to be

worthy of comparison to the Sappers who came before us. Follow the Sapper.

RED FRIDAY
READ ON AND FEEL HUMBLE AND PROUD

While I was in the airport, returning home, I heard several people behind me beginning to clap and cheer. I immediately turned around and witnessed one of the greatest acts of patriotism I have ever seen. Moving through the terminal was a group of soldiers in their uniforms, as they began heading to their gate everyone (well almost everyone) was abruptly to their feet with their hands waving and cheering.

When I saw the soldiers, probably 30-40 of them, being applauded and cheered for, it hit me. I am not alone. I'm not the only red blooded Australian who still loves this country and supports our troops and their families. Of course I immediately stopped and began clapping for these young unsung heroes who are putting their lives on the line everyday for us so we can go to school, work, and enjoy our home without fear or reprisal.

Just when I thought I could not be more proud of my country or of our service men and women a young girl, not more than 6 or 7 years old, ran up to one of the male soldiers. He knelt down and said 'hi', the little girl then asked him if he would give something too her daddy for her. The young soldier didn't look any older than maybe 22 himself, said he would try and what did she want to give to her daddy.

Suddenly the little girl grabbed the neck of this soldier, gave him the biggest hug she could muster and then kissed him on the cheek. The mother of the little girl, who said her daughters name was Courtney, told the young soldier that her husband was a Corporal and had been in Afghanistan for 5 months now.

As her mum was explaining how much her daughter, Courtney, missed her father, the young soldier began to tear up. When this temporarily single mum was done explaining her situation, all of the soldiers huddled together for a brief second. Then one of the other servicemen pulled out a military looking walkie-talkie. They started playing with the device and talking back and forth on it. After about 10-15 seconds of this, the young soldier walked back over to Courtney, bent down and said this to her, "I spoke to your daddy and he told me to give this to you. "

He then hugged this little girl that he had just met and gave her a Kiss on the cheek. He finished by saying "Your daddy told me to tell you that he loves you more than anything and he is coming home very soon." The mum at this point was crying almost uncontrollably and as the young soldier stood to his feet he saluted Courtney and her mum. I was standing no more than 6 feet away as this entire event unfolded. As the soldiers began to leave heading towards their gate, people resumed their applause. As I stood there applauding and looked around, there were very few dry eyes, including my own. That young soldier in one last act of the moment turned around and blew a kiss to Courtney with a tear rolling down his cheek.

We need to remember everyday all of our soldiers and their families and thank God for them and their sacrifices. At the end of the day, it's good to be an Australian.

RED FRIDAYS

Very soon, You will see a great many people wearing Red every Friday..

The reason?

Australian's who support our troops used to be called the 'silent majority'.

We are no longer silent, and are voicing our love for Country and home in record breaking numbers. We are not organised, boisterous or over-bearing. We get no liberal media coverage on TV, to reflect our message or our opinions.

Many Australian's, like You, me and all our friends, simply want to recognise that the vast majority of Australia supports our troops. Our idea of showing solidarity and support for our troops with dignity and respect starts this Friday and continues each and every Friday until the troops all come home, sending a deafening message that every Australian who supports our men and women afar will wear something red. By word of mouth, press/ TV let's make Australia on every Friday a sea of red much like a homecoming football team.

If every one of us who loves this country will share this with acquaintances, co-workers, friends, and family, it will not be long before Australia is covered in RED and it will let our troops know the once silent majority is on their side more than ever, certainly more than the media lets on. The first thing a soldier says when asked 'What can we do to make things better for you?' is. . . "We need your support and your prayers".

Let's get the word out and lead with class and dignity, by example; and wear something red every Friday.

IF YOU AGREE - THEN LET'S ALL DO THIS.

IF YOU COULD NOT CARE LESS THEN DON'T, IT IS YOUR CHOICE.

THEIR BLOOD RUNS RED--- SO WEAR RED! --

Lest we Forget.

EVEN IF YOU DON'T AGREE WITH THE POLITICS THEY ARE OUR MEN AND WOMEN AND NEED OUT SUPPORT....

**Remember how the Vietnam Veterans were treated.
(PS, I have designed a lapel badge for this, have a look below).**

You can see from the size it is about the same as a \$2 coin. They will be available from the XO early next year for \$3.00 each pin plus P & H.

The colour is Silver metal edge and writing on a blood red background.



PEARLS FROM VICTORIA

Shrine Pilgrimage - 9 August 2009

Due to the inclement weather we were invited to conduct our service to all the 7's (WW1, WW2, SVN and Afghanistan) inside the Shrine itself. Quite a moving ceremony was conducted and the visitors there found themselves an unexpected addition to the Shrine tour.

By the way, this year marks the 75th anniversary of the Shrine's dedication - the display they've developed is well worth the visit.

2009 AGM

Our AGM was held on 9th September, 2009 as August can be quite busy. In his President's Report, 'GoGo' summarised our year's activities as being successful. Fund-raising through the sale of caps and raffles on Anzac Day were well supported by fellow Pigs and that we were very appreciative of that support. The post-March venue proved to be a disappointment, but as usual 7RAR was well represented on the March itself..

Victoria has been chosen as the location for Reunion 2012 and offers of help have been received from many quarters including South Australia and Tasmania. The following members were elected to form the 2009/2010 general committee:-

President - 'GoGo' Goggins (piginsh@hotmail.com)

Vice President - Rob Arnott (arnottkaren@hotmail.com)

Secretary - David Wain (dfwain@optusnet.com.au)

Treasurer - 'Roo' Dowley (alan@pneutech.com.au)

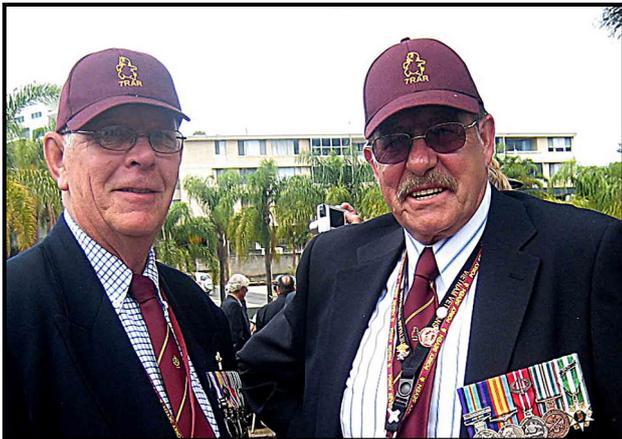
Asst. Sec - Ian Dunn (dunn@techinfo.com.au)

IPP - Bill Anderson (lastwill@hotmail.net.au)

As usual, all other Pigs who turn up at our monthly meetings are co-opted as members of the Committee.

Reunion 2009

The general consensus amongst the Pigs I've spoken to is that it was a well organised event - especially given the attendance. The memorial service was particularly good and the display of the flags was a sobering reminder of fallen comrades.



Vic Pigs have a hard act to follow - but we're working on it - especially as we've been promised a copy of 'Lessons Learnt' from those Pigs still in Paradise

In the last newsletter Peter Kerley (L) modelled a fine line in Pig's wear - here he's showing off a more flattering piece of Reunion headwear and looking quite dashing. So is the bloke with him but modesty prevents me naming him!

Some initial work has already commenced but we need to develop a strong committee to start working on all the details that go into a successful reunion. We are organising a Think Tank for ALL interested parties in February 2010. Details of venue, date and timings will go out via word of mouth but in the meantime please register your interest in attending by emailing 'GoGo' or any of the committee listed above
Your ideas and energy will be welcome.

Anzac Day 2010 (Sunday April 25)

The actual March details will likely be much the same as usual - with only the FUP seeming to change.

Post-March rendezvous, which has been disappointing the last several years, will probably be located in the Limerick Arms Hotel. It isn't an Irish theme pub - it was actually founded in 1855 by two Irish brothers who went on to form the Toohey's Label. The current manager has a strong affinity for the ADF and was actually hoping to incorporate a recognition of Anzac Day.

A sub-committee of Geoff Leech, Rob Arnott and 'GoGo' Goggins will be meeting with pub management later this month to finalise arrangements.

Full information will be given in the 1/2010 Newsletter but we wanted to assure all members that Anzac 2010 will be improved.

Next Meetings

Out December meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 9th and is, effectively our breakup night. Please come along if you are not already caught up with other festivities.

The first meeting for 2010 is planned for Wednesday 10th February, meeting starts as soon as everyone has finished eating - generally about 8.00pm.

Parting Shot

I like to spend Christmas with my family - trouble is they just like to spend and spend!!!

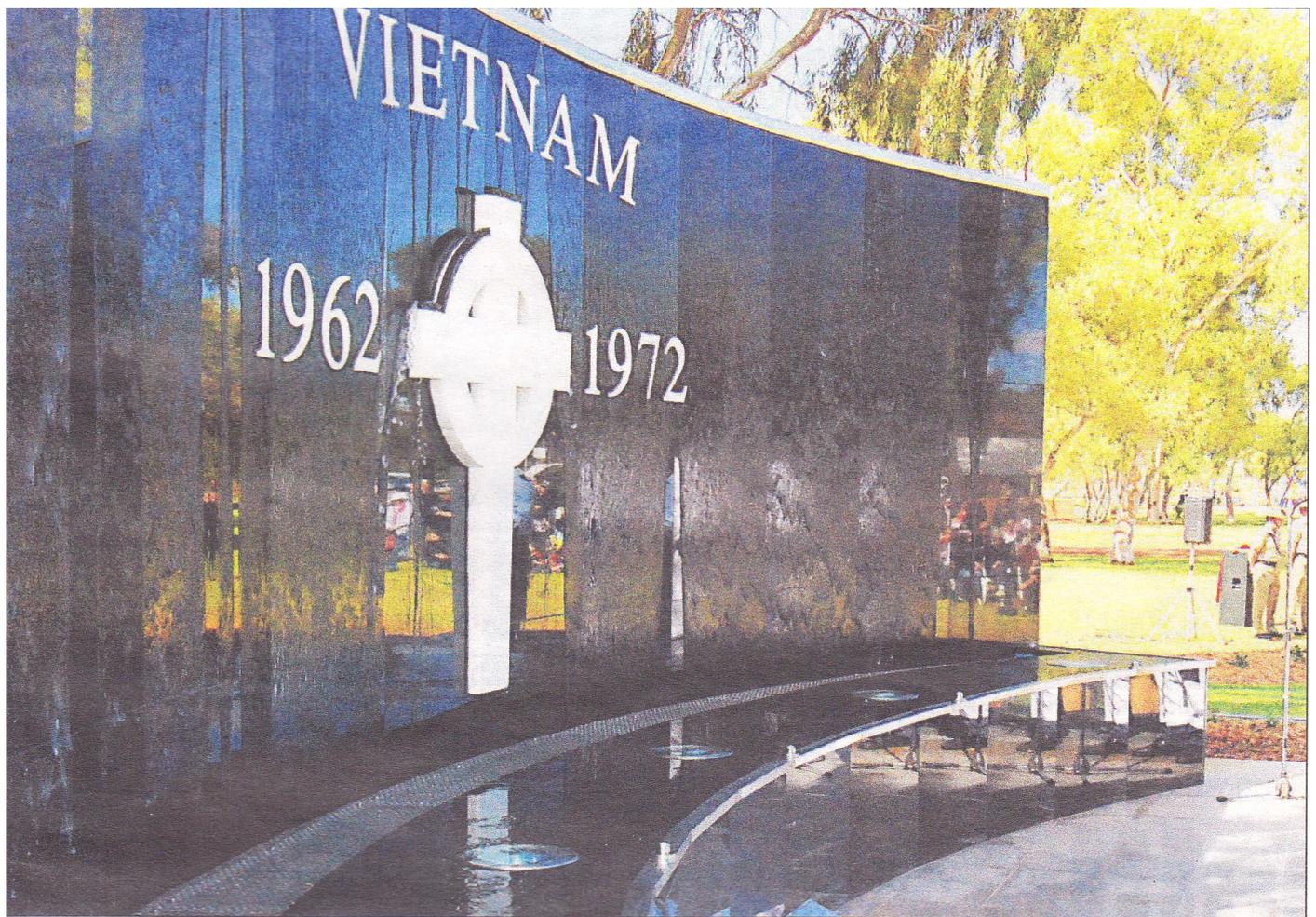
On behalf of the Victorian Committee - may you have a Happy Christmas and a busy New Year.

Bill Anderson

Email: lastwill@hotmail.net.au

Ph: (03) 9336-1317

Mob: 0419-877-463



KALGOORLIE-BOULDER VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION MEMORIAL

Hundreds of Vietnam Veterans attended the official unveiling of Kalgoorlie-Boulder's new war memorial at Centennial Park yesterday in what proved to be an emotional occasion for the diggers. The much-anticipated memorial was unveiled officially by former Federal politician Graham Edwards, who lost both his legs after stepping on a landmine in Vietnam.

The Kalgoorlie-born former labor MP was among those attending the dedication. The memorial, which cost around \$200,000 was more than four years in the making. Kalgoorlie-Boulder Vietnam Veterans Association Memorial Project committee president Jeff Dalley said the memorial was built thanks to the generosity of the local businesses and residents.

"On this day, we can look back and say our goal has been achieved, and the memorial stands as a testament to those who have been involved in this project, as well as the men who served in the Vietnam War," he said. A flyover by the Royal Australian Air Force marked the beginning of the service followed by a march on by veterans. The memorial was designed by retired firefighter and Boulder Returned and Services League member John Hefron.

Water cascades down the memorial's granite walls, which bear the words "Vietnam 1962-1972" and plaques detailing the history of the infamous Battle of Long Tan. (Article from Kalgoorlie Miner dated Monday August 17 2009)



The march was led by Graham Edwards.



Above:

Lest we forget: Kalgoorlie-Boulder Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Project president Jeff Dalley (centre) made an emotional speech during yesterday's unveiling of the memorial alongside secretary Ken Needham and Vic Dale.

(These photographs and story compliments Vic Dale D11 1st tour)



Part of the large crowd the attended the ceremony.



7RAR CAP SIGNED BY OUR SURVIVING MEMBERS OF THE ADF
AWARDED THE VC

The raffle for this **RARE** item, (a 7RAR cap signed by Keith Payne and Mark Donaldson, our two living members of the ADF who were awarded their VC's 4 decades apart.) is being conducted by the Association for all members of the 7RAR family. The ticket/s for this raffle adjoin this photograph and as stated on the ticket, the cost is \$10 per ticket or three for \$20.

The cut-off date for tickets is Wednesday 31 March 2010. When sending for tickets please send a self addressed envelope to enable a receipt and tickets to be sent to verify your purchase, **IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE YOUR RECEIPT WITHIN ONE WEEK OF SENDING FOR TICKETS PLEASE ADVISE ME OR BERNIE COX.** Please send a cheque or money order, **NO CASH PLEASE.**

The raffle will be drawn on Saturday 10 April 2010 at the AGM by General Grey. The winner will be advised by the most immediate means available so please ensure your contact details are on your ticket application. (See notice in the Editor's notes on page xx re the purchase).

SPECIAL RAFFLE 7RAR ASSOCIATION
SIGNED CAP BY OUR TWO SURVIVING SOLDIERS AWARDED THE
VICTORIA CROSS (SEE PHOTO PAGE 30)

NAME.....Phone ().....

ADDRESS.....

.....STATE.....POST CODE.....

ENCLOSED CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER FOR \$.....

COST IS \$10 PER TICKET OR 3 TICKETS FOR \$20.

SPECIAL RAFFLE 7RAR ASSOCIATION
SIGNED CAP BY OUR TWO SURVIVING SOLDIERS AWARDED THE
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ADDRESS.....

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ENCLOSED CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER FOR \$.....

COST IS \$10 PER TICKET OR 3 TICKETS FOR \$20.

**2010 AGM - 7th BATTALION THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN
REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC (QLD) No: 1A - 13547**

By direction of the Committee of Management and in accordance with the Rules of the Association, notice is hereby given that the 2010 Annual General Meeting and election of Officers to the Committee of Management will be held at:

**42 WILLIAN WILKINS CRESCENT, ISACCS, CANBERRA,
SATURDAY 10 APRIL 2010 COMMENCING AT 2.00PM.**

**NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION TO THE COMMITTEE OF
MANAGEMENT ARE TO BE SUBMITTED, IN WRITING, SIGNED
BY THE NOMINEE, HIS PROPOSER AND SECONDER, TO THE
EXECUTIVE OFFICER BY NOT LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF
BUSINESS FRIDAY 19 MARCH 2010.**

(FORMS ARE ON PAGE XX OF THIS NEWSLETTER)

BUSINESS

Any points for general business are to be submitted in writing to the Executive Officer not later than close of business, FRIDAY 19 MARCH 2010.

ATTENDANCE

Members attending please advise the XO not later than Friday 19 March 2010. If you cannot attend please appoint a proxy on your behalf using the form on page 34 of this newsletter and return to the Executive Officer not later than close of business, FRIDAY 19 MARCH 2010. Please be advised that in accordance with the Rules of the Association a minimum of 14 members must be in attendance to constitute a quorum, this number includes signed proxy forms. To ensure the efficient running of the association please make the effort to attend, please appreciate that the members of the Committee of Management give their time freely and any adjournment due to the lack of numbers will necessitate the meeting to be adjourned and rescheduled to take place within two weeks of this date.

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

NOMINATION FORM FOR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

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

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

Acknowledged by the nominee.....
date

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

NOMINATION FORM FOR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

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

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

Acknowledged by the nominee.....
date

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

I.....Member Number..... Being a financial member of the 7RAR Association hereby appoint.....Or in his absence appoint..... To act as a proxy on my behalf at the (Annual) General Meeting for the twelve months commencing Apr 2010.

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

Signature.....Signed this..... Day of March 2010

Printed Name

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

A list of the Committee of Management is detailed below. (Members are requested to consider nominating for the positions of Assistants to the Executive Officer/Treasurer/Secretary/Webmaster to understudy these crucial positions to ensure the smooth running of the Association's affairs if an emergency occurs with one of the members filling these positions).

7RAR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

- President: - John Press;
- Vice President: - Mr Rod Lyons;
- Secretary/Webmaster: - Mr Kevin Gillett;
- Treasurer: - Mr Bernie Cox;
- Executive Officer: - Mr Tony Keech, OAM
- Historian: - MAJGEN Mike O'Brien, CSC;
- Auditor: Mr Bernard Walmsley, Addersens Accounting Services.

PIG'S IN PARADISE - REUNION 2009

I think everyone who attended the reunion in Tweed Heads would agree that it went off with a bang. Congratulations to the organising committee for such a memorable occasion, as was stated after the 2006 reunion in Perth that it would be difficult to match this one, but somehow I think that happened. To mention names would be one of those occasions that if you missed someone it would detract from those who you named. The presence of COL Eric and wife Bett our first CO, 2IC 1st tour, MAJGEN David Drabsch and wife Pamela, Reg Bandy RSM 2nd tour, the current staff of 7RAR, LTCOL Shane Gabriel and his wife Karli, CO, XO, MAJ Glen Kuschert and his wife Katherine, RSM, WO1 Dave Allen and his wife Lucy and PTE James Smith representing the OR's of the battalion and all the members, wives, partners, family and friends made the occasion a very special one.

The activities kicked off on Sunday 30th with registration and the special general meeting followed by the meet and greet. Monday was the first major function, the memorial service, this saw Farther Keith conduct the service. The high light was the unveiling of the Honour Roll and the placement of a national flag to represent each member of the battalion killed on active service with the battalion. (Below, the flags and their bearers)





Above: The new 7RAR Honour Roll, this will be held by the battalion and used at each reunion memorial service wherever it may be.



The dinner on Tue 1 Sep was a ripper, even though we were spread over two floors it seemed to work out OK with the video link between the floors. The cake (photo left) was a success in imagination by the QLD organising committee and certainly was the focus of all those present.

I am not sure if everyone ended up with a slice for the birthday but the thought was there .



Our first CO Col Eric was ably assisted by the current CO LTCOL Shane to pose for the photo holding the sword above the cake ready for cutting. I think everyone was impressed with Reg and his sword drill taking the sword to the cake for the ceremonial cutting.



Shane Gabriel the CO and James Smith, James represented the youngest soldier of the battalion cut the cake at the dinner, under the supervisory eyes of Reg Bandy.

Now that we have 7RAR back on the order of battle this is a tradition we should continue at each reunion.

Might I say the battalion can be well

pleased with their choice in selecting James to represent the youngest soldier, he certainly carried out his duties with a great deal of professionalism which reflects highly on the soldiers in the battalion, and also the leadership from the head shed.



The final activities of the reunion were golf and bowls, pics from the bowls.



ANZAC DAY MAGNETIC ISLAND

Dear Editor,

I'd like to see as many of our Pigs next Anzac Day for a magical, but largely informal, time on Magnetic Island. I hope that, after reading these few pages, many will get their heads together and make early arrangements, involving as many of our mates as possible. There is no organising body and it will be up to each member to arrange his/her own transport and accommodation. Once they are here, I will be happy to tell each party where all the others are staying, if they let me know, as per below.

I would appreciate knowing the names, place of Island accommodation booked and contact details of those coming, if they could email me at colinfoley@allhomeloans.com.au please, or post to 20 Warboys St, Nelly Bay 4819 I'll be happy to help any lost Pigs with local knowledge on directions and transport, or those with queries on food, family or personal activities, tourist attractions, etc. I trust the information I've compiled here inspires a good number to experience our most sacred service, conducted on a Great Barrier Reef island, as part of a memorable and economical holiday.

Yours truly, Col Foley

WHY GET TOGETHER SO SOON AFTER THE GREAT REUNION WE JUST HAD?

Several of us were standing around the park in Coolangatta after the Memorial Service and, over a few beers (of course) reflected on the fact that, at an average age of say, 63, many of us wouldn't get to any more than another two or three tri-annual reunions. The simple solution seems to be to get together as often as possible, in good places.

Other "Veterans" living on Magnetic Island have had groups of mates here for Anzac Days and I thought it was time to make our blokes aware of how good the day is and make it clear that if they come they will have Pig mates here. We know they will have a great time on our beautiful island, whether they stay a day or weeks, and whether we have 25 or 125 turn up.

Ex 7RAR and living on the Island are Murray (Googie) Withers and me, Col Foley (both BHQ 1st) Living in Townsville area (and we hope, will be strong contenders for attending) are Chris (Hawk) & Maree Derrick, Ian Cameron, Roger & Chris Gentle, Wayne Cutler, Reg Parker & Sandra Elliott, Edward & Jean Isaac, Barbara Sheargold plus maybe others we don't know about.

Already committed to coming for a holiday to include Anzac Day, are Wally Harris and Chris Simpson (with his boat - there's an idea!) "Likelys" include the 50 or so blokes I spoke to at the Tweed Heads reunion who said they would like to be here. Also attending Tweed Heads reunion were Pigs from Airlie Beach, Mt Isa, Charters Towers, Mission Beach and the Mackay area, some of whom we might see drive to the ferry and come over.

ANZAC DAY ON MAGNETIC ISLAND

Maggie Island's RSL club has only about 50 members, but on Anzac Day we have some 2000 people attend our service; probably has the greatest ratio of attendees to members of any RSL club's Anzac Day. But this is no surprise to anyone who has seen it. Before dawn there are ferries full of people leaving Townsville, while others are enjoying a little "Moreton Bay porridge" (Bundy & milk) at the pretty little RSL hall. Fortified, the ranks make a short march to the park overlooking beautiful Alma Bay for a brief but moving ceremony on lawns surrounded by tropical trees full of birdlife. The entire Island community, and even some of the wildlife, is involved in the service in various ways as the sun rises over distant Cape Cleveland, sparkling the waters to the golden beach.

The march and the supporters then return to the picturesque garden surrounds of the RSL club, where our experienced and willing volunteers provide a gun-fire breakfast and drinks throughout the rest of the day.

Within the throng there are usually groups of servicemen and women, and ex-diggers, enjoying their own pre-arranged mini-reunions. At the end of the day some visitors return to Townsville. Others time their holiday stay on the Island to coincide with Anzac Day and make their way back to their holiday accommodation.

SOME HELPFUL FACTS ABOUT MAGNETIC ISLAND

Maggie is a Great Barrier Reef island, located is 9 km off Townsville, accessible by passenger ferry at \$29 for an adult, return or vehicle barge at \$150 for a normal-sized car, return, with up to 6 passengers. Some 3,000 permanent residents live in four Island settlements; Picnic Bay, Nelly Bay, Arcadia and Horseshoe Bay. The passenger ferry and the vehicle barge come into Nelly Bay. There are 24 bays or beaches, half of which can be reached by road. (From some you can walk right to the edge of the reef and start snorkelling) The main road, running the length of the Island, is only 12 km long, but very hilly. Transport is by taxis, buses or hire cars.

Attractions and activities include fishing, boating, all water sports, bush walks, golf and bowls, to name a few. The official stinger season is November to May, but there are stinger nets at Horseshoe and Picnic beaches and most accommodation has a pool. There is every level of accommodation, from cheap back-packers' rooms to expensive luxury apartments and houses or (see "ACCOMMODATION") Nearly all accommodation is for self-catering, easily done because there are two supermarkets and three convenience stores to buy groceries at. All three Island pubs serve meals and have bottle-shops and there is a fourth bottle shop at Nelly Bay. There is a good selection of restaurants, cafes and takeaways.

FLIGHTS TO TOWNSVILLE:

A quick check of Jetstar's web site at the time of writing shows the following prices:

MELB / TVL / MELB \$179 + \$179.

SYD / TVL / SYD \$149 + \$129.

BRIS / TVL / BRIS \$119 + \$79.

(SA, WA and NT have not been ignored, it's just that they are connecting flights to these cities) As always, he who books earliest saves the most!

ACCOMMODATION

If you have computer access, just Google Magnetic Island and you'll get a dazzling array of accommodation choices.

Meanwhile, you can plan on these rough guide figures.

Camping, at Bungalow Bay Koala Park, Horseshoe Bay, \$12.50 p/h, p/n

Basic motel-style, from \$30 p/h, p/n (if 2 or more)

Good holiday house or apartment, from \$40 p/h, p/n (if 4 or more)

Upper class holiday house or apartment, from \$50 p/h, p/n (if 4 or more)

Luxury holiday house or apartment, from \$65 p/h, p/n (if 4 or more)

The best holiday houses or apartments, from \$75 p/h, p/n (if 4 or more)

I'll try to answer any questions re choices by email if you send to colinfoley@allhomeloans.com.au or bookings@brightpointdeluxe.com.au But, please note, I will be away from 21st Oct to 16th Nov.

Colin Foley.

Readers might also like to know that Bob Dare (BHQ 1st) is back in Perth for a few months, after living overseas for many years, mainly Sweden. But not for long. He is intending to be in FNQ in Jan and then to the US for 3 months. After that, he will probably return to live on his boat, in Croatia.



I am looking for help to identify the chaps in the attached photo. (Sorry for the quality) (Chris Ashenden)

It was taken in a Sydney pub on the afternoon prior to the main body of the 1st tour departing for Vietnam. 5 of us were “volunteered” to assist with a promotion to be televised that night. Our duties were to visit a few pubs and down a beer or two or three at each. Transport was provided and beers were paid for. Occasionally the army does get it right.

The photo was captured that evening by photographing the TV as the edited version of the exploration was broadcast. I was fortunate to be one of those imbibing but cannot recall who the others were. They were likely from Support Company. None of us were from NSW.

If you can recall/identify those participating I would much appreciate receiving a call or email to cashende@bigpond.net.au.



I think these are some of the boys from SA during the reunion at Tweed Heads after the Dinner on Tue 1 Sep 2009. Has anyone sent this to missing persons?

GENERAL NOTICE - MEDALS/AWARDS

This notice is for widespread dissemination, if there is anyone out there in the community who knows of someone who served with the battalion and has passed away, their next of kin may not know about all the medals that have been awarded over the last decade or more. I am referring to the AASM, NS Medal, ADM or some other award the deceased member may be entitled to. If you know of anyone in this category have them contact their local RSL Sub-branch or Vietnam Veterans Association for advice that may help them obtain these medals/awards.

Tony Keech XO/ED

COLONEL ERIC SMITH DSO - A GUY I'VE ALWAYS ADMIRER

By Ken Bladen AM

When I was a 19 year old cadet at OCS Portsea early in 1954 Eric Smith arrived on posting from Korea as Senior Instructor and on promotion to temporary Major - not bad at age 29.

Eric's arrival was a breath of fresh air to us cadets, not only because his young wife Bett was a great looking bird but because Eric's generally friendly disposition provided a little humanity to what seemed to us a pretty intensively serious training schedule at that time.

In particular Eric Smith displayed a good sense of humour - a quality noticeably in short supply among most of the other OCS instructors. In fact, I found it gratifying, in later years, to find that Eric's sense of humour had never diminished; indeed I think it has increased with the passage of time.

One of the best things Eric Smith is remembered for by No 5 Course was his advice for what action to take when things along the path of life got very bumpy. Eric declared the three words to remember were: "IT WILL PASS"! He added "IT ALWAYS DOES". Over the 55 years since receiving that piece of advice, I've used it on a number of occasions always finding that the particular situation, incident, or happening indeed passed!

In 1962-63 while I was Adjutant 2RAR in Malaya Eric Smith was 2IC. As a matter of interest three other ex Portsea instructors also served in Malaya at that time: RSM WO1 Bill Turley plus Majors Geoff Leary and John Church, both were Company Commanders in 2RAR.

Notification of Eric Smith's promotion to Lieutenant Colonel arrived in Malaya in 1963. I was with the CO Alan Stretton at the time together with Eric. Stretton said, "Let me be the first to congratulate you Eric - you're to be promoted." The look on Eric's face said it all. Eric then took off home to celebrate with his wife Bett - for about 3 days! The rest is history.

It was a privilege to serve in 7RAR as one of Eric Smith's original Company Commanders from 1965 to 1967 inclusive. It was great to catch up again at the recent reunion at Tweed Heads.

Stephanie and I wish Eric and Bett many more long and happy retirement years.

Ken Bladen AM



THE BEST FROM THE WEST

Hi PIGS everywhere from the WA sty. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all. Thanks to all WA PIGS for your support during 2009, keep it going in 2010 with bigger and better attendances at Anzac Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, Bruce Rock and the end-of year PIGS SWILL.

QUEENSLAND REUNION

By now the Queensland reunion is all over, bring on Melbourne in 2012. Congratulations Qld, a job well done. Great turnout in Coolangatta and fantastic to catch up with old mates again. I thought the memorial service was particularly poignant, with a flag carried and then laid for every 7RAR soldier killed in action. The inclusion of a flag for Corporal Mathew Hopkins, who was killed in action in Afghanistan in March 2009 whilst serving with the current 7RAR, really brought it home to me and I'm sure to others that we are of the old guard and the current 7RAR are now very much part of the 7RAR Association family. Lt Col Shane Gabriel, RSM Dave Allen and the young soldier who represented Mathew Hopkins at the service all participated in the reunion and were keen to talk to us old diggers and share their experiences with us, as they are facing in Afghanistan and other conflicts around the world, what we faced in Vietnam. We wish the current 7RAR well in any theatre they serve and I'm sure they'll do the old PIG proud and uphold the tradition.

THE 7RAR REUNION AND AFTERWARDS (Noel & Patricia Bell)

When asked "How was your 5 week holiday?" This was no holiday, but a Military Journey. Thanks to Tricia, Ken (Dimples) and Daniel Daley, we stayed with them and attended the 7 R.A.R. re-union. Although Ken had just finished chemo the week before, he and Daniel, Noel and myself, climbed Mt. Warning, some 1156m high. Due to a time factor I didn't reach the top. This mount captures the sun's first rays on Australian soil.

We then caught a bus from Coolangatta to Sydney. The next 2 weeks we stayed with an old work colleague from Perth. We even got to see the new baby elephant, which was playing soccer at Taronga Park zoo.

We hired a car from "Rent a Wreck" in Sydney and drove to Bomaderry, near Nowra and stayed with another cousin, so that Noel could sort out her late Father's navy papers and present them to the Albatross Museum.

Next, we drove to Canberra to stay 3 days with friends, and on the Monday morning we moved into a Hotel in Canberra to join my late Father's 2/4th Machine Gun Battalion, as they were to have a plaque unveiled. They were an all West Australian Battalion and were prisoners on the infamous "Burma Railway" for 3 1/2 years.

There were four of the original Diggers there, all 90 plus who flew over from Perth.

We left Canberra on Thursday and joined Noel's cousin and her son and Grandson at Jack and Robin Doulis's at Erowell Bay, to carry out Noel's cousin's (who was in the Navy,) wishes, to scatter his ashes into the ocean at Jarvis Bay.

What Jack did not know was that we would be seeing him again on Saturday evening for his 70th Birthday surprise.

So all in all a memorable busy time was had starting with the 7 R.A.R. reunion, but no holiday.

Regards Patricia & Noel Bell

VALE ENDA FIELDHOUSE

It was with a great deal of shock and sadness that we learned of the sudden death of Enda Fieldhouse on the 21st of October 2009. Doug has long been one of the drivers of the association in the West and our thoughts and best wishes go to Doug and Enda's family. R. I. P. Enda

MAKING PEACE WITH THE ENEMY AFTER 42 YEARS

I had mixed feelings as the plane touched down on the tarmac of Tan Son Nhut International Airport (Saigon) in September 09. There, still standing are the US semi-circular concrete hangers! I never thought I'd ever be back on this tarmac but here I am today - back 'in country'.

My tourist book states "Communism is still alive - but it's not well" so I am very keen to draw my own conclusion.

Saigon is still Saigon. The locals do NOT refer to it as HCMC and I certainly felt the same. I was surprised too! Those filthy, smelly streets are now clean and modern.

The scooter is the pride and joy of the masses. It transports mum, dad, three kids, a large load of furniture, or six pigs bound in baskets. Where did all the old vehicles and motor bikes go that during the war belched smoke and pollution? The cars and bikes are all brand new and the air clean.

Red flags flutter everywhere and Uncle Ho appears 'alive' on billboards but apart from that I saw no armed soldiers nor did I view officious looking gun toting policemen one would expect in a communist State. In fact the people are running amok with filthy capitalism - and it's everywhere.

Today a young Vietnamese population craves wealth and all the goods the world can supply. The down-town shops are in the throes of modernisation. It's Gucci, Versace and ritzy, modern hotels. The young people, as everywhere else in the world, are obsessed with their mobile phones.

Watching the traffic is more fun than the circus. The Vietnamese road users show incredible skill in manoeuvring through cross-traffic at congested intersections with absolutely no road rage. That is not part of their culture. In fact, losing your temper is to show loss of face. So the Vietnamese don't!

I didn't see any shacks or humpies of old. What I did see were good brick homes, renovation and new construction. The beautiful, classic old French mansions are prevalent all over Vietnam but many are now under threat in the surge for new hotel development.

To my amazement, in the heart of Saigon the Rex Hotel continues to stand so I took my partner to the fifth floor. The roof-top bar is operating as it was of old - and the band is still playing! I'm caught in a time warp. Where did 42 years suddenly go?

Next location was Vung Tau on the southern tip of Vietnam. My partner and I took a fast ferry ride down the Saigon River which took about three hours. This was a town where I took my R & C in 1967. It was also the place where the enemy took their R & R as well - so we all partied down there together. With the bay on one side and the ocean on the other, it was always deemed the 'French Riviera' of Vietnam. It was the holiday town developed by the French colonialists for their vacations. I couldn't really see such merit in that description in 1967 but today it is a different matter.

This is now an up and coming tourist destination. In fact, it is the main holiday town for the nouveau riche Vietnamese of which the country has plenty. The authorities have certainly made enormous improvements to the Front Beach promenade area and I noted a cable car is now being installed (on the bay) to take tourists to the peak. Lots of new development at Back Beach too with numerous hotels under construction (with a few laying dormant possibly from lack of Dong). Try as I might I couldn't pin point the site of the Yankee 'Beachcomber' bar. The entire ocean front is undergoing so much redevelopment. A three level shopping centre on the beach front is way too impressive for a communist nation. This town is really shaping up. It's a different place to the one I once visited yonks ago.

Hanoi was next on the itinerary. The time had come to take a giant step into the former enemy's heartland, the very home of Uncle Ho and his victorious Communist Party. I was keen to see the town where my former enemy plotted their brutal war on the south.

The freeway extending from the airport all the way into down-town Hanoi is adorned with billboards promoting capitalist goods. Now, I'm not talking one or two billboards. This is multiple billboards for kilometres. Uncle Ho's anti imperialist, capitalist pig sentiment has fallen on deaf ears here. These signs indicated that filthy capitalism had arrived to stay. Uncle Ho - go eat your heart out!

We stayed in the old quarter, the favourite of tourists, where the streets are narrow and shopping and restaurants plentiful. Our five level hotel (one room wide), 'Elegance 2' was wedged between other narrow buildings. If it hadn't been for the support of the neighbouring buildings the structure would have blown over. New hotels are under construction all over town. There are shops, lots of shops - all "same, same - but different" (humorous Vietnamese tourist-speak). Capitalism is everywhere!

I was still mystified as to why all the cars were new with no old ones. Eventually I spoke with an ex-pat at a restaurant who explained, "just nine years ago, there were no cars at all in Hanoi". So there we have it!

We generally finished the day by taking a flight of stairs four floors to a roof-top bar that overlooked Hoan Kiem Lake. From there one could observe the congested non-stop traffic.

There is hours of fun just watching new terrified tourists trying to cross the road while being harassed by the walking shops. "Make it a Tiger this time - no ice please!"

Da Nang, right on the DMZ during the war and where the Yanks had a large air base that copped a hammering from the Viet Cong, was our next stop. This place is on the verge of a transformation into a town like Las Vegas.

Our taxi took us down a new dual carriageway that ran for many kilometres the entire coast of China Beach. New power poles indicated underground power and either side are large resorts under construction. As in Vung Tau, I noted a few had been moth-balled which is a sign of the times.

Greg Norman's new driving range and golf course is up and running in the same stretch. So I guess he's waiting for all his neighbours to complete and attract the golfers. It is my gut feeling that it is three to five years off yet.

Land titles are now available in Vietnam. I had previously learnt that the Viet government had introduced the Torrens Title system under license from DOLA in Perth. Already one large Australian real estate firm, Savills, was brandishing bill boards promoting new apartments overlooking the beach front - 'For sale now!' Uncle Ho - roll over!

You will be pleased to learn that in Saigon, the Independence Palace gates have been repaired and the delinquent tank responsible for the wanton damage has been impounded. The palace has since been renamed 'Reunification Palace'.

We found the war museum very entertaining with its anti-US slant. It is tagged the 'American War' rather than 'the civil war' which Uncle Ho and his band waged on the south. The pictures provide the 'facts' that the innocent farmers of the north had a hard time defending themselves against the American invaders. It's all good propoganda that stemmed from a side victorious in guerrilla tactics, tunnels and terrorism.

What I really wanted to find out about, was what happened in Vietnam after the Commos finally crashed those gates down in 1975.

Ironically, I found the answer in a book I purchased from a street vendor, in of all places, Hanoi. Now, this book was banned by the Commos but nothing appears to be banned now. The book 'The Girl in the Picture' by Denise Chong is worth a read. You will, of course, remember the little girl who ran naked from a napalm bombing.

The book provides the whole story on what the northern conquerors put their southern countrymen through. The girl, Kim Phuc, was callously used by the communist regime for propoganda until she defected to Canada in the 1980s. The Commos were not impressed with her slipping through the wire and blabbing to the world. Even today, she will not go back as she still fears the communist government.

As the book points out, after the glorious victory of 1975 the country took a backward leap. Over a million people (including many Commos) fled the evil regime by boat. Those that didn't flee died in thousands in re-education camps and the same Hanoi victors that brought 'liberty' and a 'glory' plunged the entire nation into ruin.

Before and during the war, people in the north were the poor and undernourished while the south prospered and were well fed. This envy coupled with a catch-cry of 'invaders' successfully motivated the Commo recruitment drive to plunder the south. In the south, the people were too busy making US dollars to fight a war. Hence the south lacked motivation. Throw in a corrupt South Vietnamese government with its own recruits press-ganged, coupled with overseas conscripted troops and it's not, as we now know, the way to win a war. Hence the side most motivated won. Vietnam was finally united - in political corruption, brutal government thuggery and starvation.

The wake-up call for Vietnam's communist regime didn't actually hit them until the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. At that stage Uncle Ho had been stuffed and mounted for twenty years. Incidentally, his body travels to Russia every year for a make-over. Thought you might be interested!

Anyway, the wall coming down finally spelt the end of the domino theory too. Obviously all we had to do was sit back and wait for the evil, which we fought so hard against, to merely self-destruct! Isn't hindsight a wonderful thing? However, in saying that, this did not prove to be the case with North Korea.

Now here is another observation: Vietnam doesn't have a radical Islamic problem! Strangely, the boat people head for a large land mass further south where they are welcomed, assured citizenship, and provided an income for life.

There is no free ride in Vietnam. It's a country made up of determined and progressive entrepreneurs, albeit predominantly Buddhist, with a small percentage Catholic. So unlike Bali (or anywhere in Indonesia) I felt Vietnam to be a *very safe* place. What a turn-around! The people are very friendly and they are amused by the tourists wearing the Commo caps. I get the feeling, they're over it. They might fly the flag (to keep the 'party' happy) but they won't put one of those damn things on their own head.

We stayed in modern three to four star hotels for just \$40 per night with meals at most restaurants about \$8, so it's a cheap holiday.

Just south of Da Nang is the town of Hoi An, which is well worth the journey. There one can buy inexpensive tailor-made clothing and shoes from loads of shops all "same same - but different". I did some credit card damage there. The hotels are very good and inexpensive. Our hotel the 'Ha An' even provided push bikes. We had become so comfortable with the 'road rules' (any side of the road you like) that we took to playing in heavy traffic, which something mother always told me to do when I was younger. I sometimes wonder about that!

We cycled for five kilometres out of the city, through the rice paddies and down to the beach for a swim. There was no one at the beach other than a parking attendant. She directed us to where we had to park the bikes. We had to pay of course. You have to laugh, but at least everyone has a job.

The former French colonialist occupiers not only gave Vietnam its beautiful French architecture but also its present day sewer systems. The new surge in hotels and office buildings, however, along with a growing desire by the greater populace to install flush toilets, is placing it all under enormous strain.

The electrical reticulation is another superstructure problem. It has to be seen to be believed. The cables so thick they nearly block the light of day.

On reading the morning newspaper I learnt that the Vietnamese government is concerned and is endeavouring to work out how to place it all underground. Meanwhile, new buildings and renovations are coming on-line so fast that additional wires are added daily. The enormous change in Vietnam is happening all too fast.

Vietnam is still a place where you don't drink the water nor clean your teeth in it. Bottled water is plentiful though. Don't eat salad or fruit unless it has been peeled or you may be searching for either a western toilet or a hole in the floor.

Other than that, I believe Vietnam is bound to become the new holiday destination for Australians in the next few years. It's changing so fast and for the better. After this trip I now hold the country very dear to my heart. Book me in for another tour!

Richard Adams

1st Tour, May 1967 (7RAR)

2nd Tour, Sept 2009 (4FUN)

KALGOORLIE-BOULDER VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL PROJECT

The Kalgoorlie-Boulder Vietnam Veterans Association has completed a remarkable project with the unveiling on the 16th of August 2009 of a Vietnam Veterans memorial that is quite magnificent. It is a quiet place where veterans and their families are able to sit and reflect. Congratulation to Vic Dale for his dedicated work with the memorial committee, which took three years of fund-raising and hard labour before the official opening. Approximately 300 Vietnam veterans attended the opening, including 7RAR veterans Vic Dale, Graham Edwards, Sid Cox and Phil McClure. I'm sure you'll agree from the photo that they have done a wonderful job, well done.



VIETNAM VETERANS DAY - MANDURAH (By Teresa Williams)

Numbers were a bit down this year as the day looked like it would be wet and miserable but as in years gone by the sun came out and everything was fine.

A few members have already headed off to the east to prepare for the Reunion so there was only one lone pig at the Mandurah RSL to uphold the Pig's good name. Yes you guessed it Gary Williams. So Gary not being one to let anyone down kept the Two up going for the day and with fellow RSL members kept the place jumping. It was with regret that he had to retire home with his mates so he could return another day.

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY - PERTH (By Don Cruden)

Vietnam Veterans Day here in Perth was a big disappointment for lack of metro members' attendance. I know that there were services in Kalgoorlie, Port Kennedy and Mandurah, however only 5 of us turned up for the Kings Park service - Spunky Fieldhouse, Geoff Brophy, Don Cruden and banner carriers Colin (Ned) Kelly & Keith Battersby. Surely we can get a better attendance in future to support OUR DAY OF REMEMBRANCE? We had a very large crowd from the South Vietnamese community with their ladies suitably attired in their national costumes, which added colour to the ceremony.

Hopefully next year we can gain more support from our members for what is a National Day for remembrance for Vietnam Veterans. We only ask for four services during the year - ANZAC DAY, Vietnam Veterans Day, the Bruce Rock get-together and definitely our Xmas PIGS SWILL function.

Surely this is not too much to ask for a large attendance of members. ?????

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY - 2 SERVICES (By Allen West)

This year I attended 2 ceremonies. The first was in Rockingham where Rockingham RSL, Pt Kennedy RSL, Naval Association & Totally & Partially Disabled Veterans got together to get all the Vietnam Veterans together for a march, service and laying of the wreaths at the cenotaph in Rockingham. This event was well attended and the rain held off until just after the service was finished and then we retired to the Rockingham RSL for drinks and lunch

The second was on Tuesday 18 August which was to be at the Veterans Park Port Kennedy but it pelted down with rain and we had to go to plan B which was to hold the service at the Totally and Partially Disabled Veterans Club Rooms in Baldivis. The club has started a policy of inviting students from the Endeavour Primary School, Port Kennedy to be part of our service. The Year 6 students were bussed up to the clubrooms to join us for the service; two of the lads laid a wreath along with the Veterans and afterwards enjoyed a sausage sizzle.

The students were very interested in the memorabilia and talking to the Veterans. One of the teachers is very interested in military history and had spent his long service leave in Europe going to places like the Somme and other battle sites. After the students returned to school the Veterans enjoyed lunch and a few drinks with their mates

Regards Allan West

BRUCE ROCK GATHERING OF VIETNAM VETERANS

The annual BRUCE ROCK get-together has just taken place and was well attended by 7RAR members. Don Cruden drove 500km just to take the PIG Banner, well done Don. The march attracted almost 1000 veterans from all over the state, even some from interstate including Kev Gillett, who is over from Queensland to his old stamping grounds whilst visiting his mother and daughter. The banner was carried by Bob Curry and Dave Bryant and PIGS attending included Don Cruden, Kev Gillett, Bob Wood (complete with oink oink calling), Steve Chamarette, Mick Painter, Pop Walker, Charlie Matheson, John Beevis, Keith Lewis, Peter Wilson, John Cutbush and Kanga Battersby. The annual Bruce Rock gathering of veterans is certainly gaining momentum and is seen as one of the premier events on the veterans' calendar, so if you haven't been yet, mark it in your calendar for 2010.

NAMETAGS (Note: For BOTH Men and Women)

It was great to see Lt Col Shane Gabriel, current CO of 7RAR, wearing his PIG nametag at the reunion dinner. Our NAMETAGS are available in two sizes, the original size and the version which is half as big again. Each small tag costs \$13, with the larger tag at \$18, both prices include delivery to anywhere in Australia. To order, contact Geoff Murray as per details below and provide the correct name to be included on the TAG and the correct postal address. To ensure prompt delivery, pop a cheque (made payable to Geoff Murray) or money order in the post when you place your order, delivery is about three weeks.

Geoff Murray, 30 Bouvardia Way, GREENWOOD, WA 6024

geoff.murray@mainroads.wa.gov.au

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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

THE VIETNAM MEMORIAL WALL WASHINGTON DC

Last year Mike Tolnay planned a trip through Central and South America with its end point being to visit his daughter in LA. On the way he planned to visit the Wall in Washington DC. After nine months of travelling he arrived in New York and in the early hours of the morning ran into one of those food trolleys in the street and noticed a dedication sign painted on it to LCPL John Barnett, KIA 19.7.70 South Vietnam. The guy selling the hot dogs could only tell me that the trolley was owned by his family, some sort of government gesture when it comes to handing out this type of licence. Anyway John became my man, I did the paper and pencil thing at the wall with a great degree of difficulty because he was on line 30. When I finished this nice old guy said, did I know him. I could only respond, not really, only met him last week. I needed a moment to compose myself but by then he was gone probably thinking who was that loony.

Mike in front of the statues at the entrance to the Vietnam Memorial Wall.



PLAQUE 16 – THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH OCCUPATION

FORCE

1946 - 1951

Participation in the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) marked the first time that Australians were involved in the military occupation of a sovereign nation it had defeated in war. The entire BCOF force totalled 45,000, from Britain, India, New Zealand, and Australia. About 16,000 Australians served in BCOF.

For two-thirds of the period of occupation, the Commonwealth was represented solely by Australians, and throughout its existence BCOF was always commanded by an Australian officer. The BCOF area of responsibility was the western prefectures of Shimane, Yamaguchi, Tottori, Okayama, Hiroshima, and Shikoku Island.

At the peak of its involvement the Australian component of BCOF was responsible for over twenty million Japanese citizens and 57,000 square kilometres of country.

The primary objective of BCOF was to enforce the terms of the unconditional surrender that had ended the war the previous September. The task of exercising military government over Japan was the responsibility of the United States forces. BCOF was required to maintain military control and to supervise the demilitarisation and disposal of the remnants of Japan's war-making capacity. Regular patrols and road reconnaissances were initiated and carried out in the Australian area of responsibility as part of BCOF's general surveillance duties. The RAN component of BCOF was responsible for patrolling the inland Sea, assisted by the RAAF.

By early 1947 BCOF had begun to decline and, by the end of 1948, was composed entirely of Australians.

The force was dismantled in 1951, when the Japanese Peace Treaty came into effect.

(These plaques are part of 30 along the Remembrance Walk at the RSL ANZAC Village Narrabeen)

PLAQUES 17 - 18 - THE KOREAN WAR

1950 - 1960, Served: 7,000, Died: 51, Wounded: 27

The crisis in Korea originated in the closing phases of the Second World War, when control of the Korean peninsula, formerly occupied by Japan, was entrusted to the Allies. The United States and the Soviet Union divided responsibility for the country between them at the 38th parallel. By mid-1950, tensions between the two zones had escalated. On 25 June a North Korean army crossed into the southern zone and advanced towards the capital, Seoul. The city fell in less than a week, and North Korean forces continued their southward drive towards the strategically important port of Pusan.

Within two days, the US offered air and sea support to South Korea, and the United Nations Security Council asked all its members to assist in repelling the North Korean attack. 21 nations responded. Australia's contribution included 77 Squadron of the RAAF and the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR). When 3 RAR arrived in Pusan, the North Korean advance had been halted and their army was in full retreat. The UN forces commander, General MacArthur, was given permission to pursue them into North Korea. 3 RAR moved north as part of the invasion force and fought their first major action near the North Korean capital, Pyongyang. As the UN forces continued their advance, a series of successes led many to believe that the UN forces would soon bring the war to an end.

At this point, China entered the war and moved 18 divisions into North Korea, attacking the UN forces, inflicting defeats on the UN forces and forcing them into retreat towards the 38th parallel. The Chinese halted their offensive in January 1951, Seoul once again having fallen. At the UN, efforts were made to conclude a ceasefire without success. By the end of February, Chinese resistance collapsed south of the Han River near Seoul, and the city was recaptured by UN forces in mid-March and the line of war remained around the 38th parallel - where it had started.

Australian troops participated in two major battles in 1951. On the evening of 22 April, Chinese forces attacked the Kapyong valley and forced South Korean and New Zealand troops into retreat; other UN troops, including Australians, were ordered to halt the attack.

.After a night of fierce fighting, during which their positions were overrun, the Australians recaptured their positions and stalled the Chinese advance, at a cost of only 32 men killed and 53 wounded. For their contribution to this action 3RAR was awarded a US Presidential Citation.

The second major battle for the Australians was Operation Commando, an attack against a Chinese-held salient in a bend of the Imjin, a river running north-south that crosses the 38th parallel just above Seoul. Here the Commonwealth Division, including the Australians, had two key objectives: Hills 355 and 317. The attack began on 3 October, and after five days of heavy fighting the Chinese withdrew. 20 Australians were killed in the battle and 89 were wounded.

From 1951 on, both sides found themselves engaged in a war of attrition reminiscent of the Western Front, where men lived in tunnels, redoubts and sandbagged forts behind barbed wire defences. The war was generally fought with artillery and mines and in set-piece battles; at night patrols ventured into no man's land to raid enemy positions.

As the war settled into stalemate it became apparent that a negotiated truce was the only solution. The UN and North Korean leaderships signed an agreement on 27 July 1953. This agreement technically brought the war to an end, but a state of suspended hostilities continued to exist between North and South Korea.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2009

Our annual commitment to Remembrance Day at the Garrison Church was held on Sunday 8 November. It was encouraging to see the roll up although small it was enough to give heart that this activity will continue in the future We must make sure that we do not let this important commemoration service fade away like the numbers of our forebears from the 2nd world war.

Sandy Pearson upheld the banner for the 2/7th Bn AIF along with Winston Christie. David Kibbey travelled from Canberra to join Ian Mackay, Bernie Folkes, Bernie Cox, Rod Lyons, Len Schulz and the ladies, apologies if I missed someone. After the service we adjourned to the Heroes of Waterloo for lunch.





Some pics of the event opposite and above. It was a pleasure to be joined by Lorrae Desmond, MBE, Sylvia Raye, Dinah Lee and Lynne Fletcher all members of the concert parties that travel the globe to entertain the troops. These lovely ladies all travelled to Vietnam on many occasions during the period of our involvement to entertain the troops spread throughout Vietnam.

If you check out your copy of the Pictorial History you will see on pages 282/3 members of the ABC showband with Sylvia Raye and other entertaining the troops at the Luscombe Bowl area. On page 290 the lovely legs belong to Sylvia Raye.

We were oh so lucky that these lovely ladies came and did their bit to ease the boredom of life at the Dat. As a courtesy we enlisted these lovely ladies into the Association in gratitude for their services to their country and to the men and women of the ADF, especially 7RAR, deployed in SVN.

Tony Keech XO/ED

Kokoda Track

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it's challenging -
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