



nulli secundus

# 2<sup>ND</sup> BATTALION ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION, INC THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

South West Pacific, Japan, Korea, Malaya, Thai-Malay Border, South Vietnam,  
Cambodia, Rwanda, East Timor, Solomon Islands, Iraq, Timor Lesté, Afghanistan

## RINGO

Courage. Sacrifice. Mateship.

NEWSLETTER

PATRON: COLONEL JM CHURCH, DSO, (RETD)

APRIL 2015

### THE BATTALION REPORT

2015 is set to be another busy year for 2RAR.

The Battalion has commenced 2015 continuing its consolidation of foundation warfighting skills and the progression of the Amphibious Ready Element Landing Force (ARE LF) capability. The main effort for 2015 will be to meet the required standards for certification as the ARE LF.

Both A, B and Support Coys started the year with a MILSKILLS diagnostic exercise. This served to govern the focus areas for individual Coys in the following ten week live fire and field training programme designed to progressing from individual skills up to company level missions.

Support Coy platoons have been extremely busy solidifying their specific subject matter expertise, culminating this initial training period with the successful conduct of Ex BUSU LANDING at Townsend Island, SWBTA. The training opportunity provided by this exercise was excellent and the full mission amphibious profiles to complete the activity were extremely valuable. Deploying as an entire sub unit was somewhat novel however proved effective in achieving the required live fire and Mission Essential Task certifications prior to the upcoming SEA Series of exercises.

Admin Coy notably provided support to all these activities in the usual fashion whilst still managing to undertake their own training including a short field deployment of the remaining maintenance assets.

From April onwards the Battalion will step into a series of SEA exercises in order to prepare for certification as the ADF's Amphibious Ready Element. This will commence with Ex SEA SABRE on board HMAS CHOULES and see the 0B HQ element afloat, whilst 0A conducts its function from Lavarack Barracks.

In May the Battalion will assist HMAS CANBERRA in the conduct of the ships work up period order for her to be certified and then role rapidly into EX TALISMAN SABRE. This will see the Battalion as a whole conduct Amphibious operations with the US Marines in northern Australia. This will be a great opportunity with the Battalion integrating with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. In addition it will be first the time we have operated from separate platforms (US shipping and HMAS CHOULES).

The culminating exercises for the year are set to occur in September/October on the SEA SERIES of exercises. This will be the certification exercise series for the ARE and result  
(Continued over...)

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(Continued) in a Combat Team sized elements being deemed ready for any operation.

The final major Battalion activity for the year will be the RAR birthday parade. This will be the 70th birthday of the founding battalions of the Regiment and will be the first time in history the three Battalions will be on a ceremonial parade together. It will also see the presentation and dedication/consecration of new colours to both 2 and 3 RAR.

'Second to None'

CO: LTCOL Michael Bassingthwaighe, DSM  
RSM: WO1 Brian Buskell, CSM

### THE LAST VIETNAM VET LEAVES THE ARMY

THE last Vietnam veteran serving in the Australian Army, former NQ Formation Safety Officer Maj Lester Mengel, is an optimist through and through.

Lester, who joined in August, 1968, and was posted to 2RAR, was just old enough (19) to join the Battalion's second tour of Vietnam from May 12, 1970 to June 1, 1971. PTE Mengel was a forward scout in 2RAR, A Coy, 3P1, 3 Section.

It was when they were patrolling through rice paddies, Lester experienced his first close call when they were shot at. A few days later on patrol, he looked down to see three prongs of a jumping jack just beside his boot.

He was millimetres from standing on it and the near miss "rattled his cage" enough that he was choppered out and later, underwent rehabilitation.

He was made part of an HQ Task Force-Defoliant Team detachment, spraying the infamous Agent Orange from the back of a truck, a job that not only introduced him to transport, but affected his life dramatically towards the end of his career. (Continued on page 11)

PRESIDENT  
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT  
VICE PRESIDENT/WELFARE  
SECRETARY  
TREASURER  
ANNUAL REUNION CO-ORDINATOR  
MERCHANDISE  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR  
PROJECTS  
MEMBER  
HONORARY PADRE

L (LEO) VAN DE KAMP  
MD (MATT) RENNIE, OAM (LM)  
KR (KEVIN/DASHER) DEAN, OAM (LM)  
GW (GORDON) HURFORD, AM  
NJ (NORM) DEVEREUX  
PT (PAUL) KING (LM)  
AJ (ARTHUR) MACDONALD  
RJ (RICK) HOLLINGDRAKE, OAM (LM)  
TE (TERRY) DINNEEN  
RW (ROSS) BIMROSE  
MONSIGNOR EA (EUGENE) HARLEY, OAM

07 5444 0889  
07 3201 7673  
07 3265 5354  
07 5443 5583  
07 3203 0254  
07 3267 0914  
07 3901 4266  
07 3285 4197  
02 4754 4238  
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t.mdinneen@bigpond.com  
daphne.bimrose@bigpond.com

Postal Address: PO Box 1097 Toombul Qld 4012

Website: <http://www.2rar-association.com.au>

**WARRIORS WHO HAVE MARCHED OUT**

- 12917 Private Gordon James BULL, 2RAR: Korea 22 May 1953 to 6 April 1954. Veteran of The HOOK. Passed away 9 September. Age: 82+ years. Recorded in 'The Voice' KVAA.
- SX2905, 4/738 Warrant-Officer Class One Raymond Gordon Wilson BALDWIN, OAM 2/27 AIB: Middle East, Kokoda, Gona, New Guinea, Borneo. 2RAR: Malaysia 1961-63 12 PI D Coy. Passed away 15 December. Age: 93+ years. Farewelled by over 300 at Centennial Park, SA. Thanks Malcolm Allen
- 33350 Major Ronald Frederick SMITH, RAAF: New Guinea, 30 Sqn, 7Sqn (shot down over Wewak/ Bismarck Sea). 2RAR: Korea (Sgt – WIA,) RAINF. 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron AAAC Oakey (Maj). Passed away 6 October. Age: 90+ years. Thanks Bill Mellor, President, Australian Army Aviation Assoc.
- 215799 Corporal Timothy Hocart MCCOMBE, OAM 4RAR: Malaya 1965-66, Borneo 1966, Malaysia 1966-67. 2RAR: Vietnam 1967 (Pte) 11 PI D Coy (WIA). 1<sup>st</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> Bn RNSWR (Cpl). National President VVFA & VVPPA. Passed away 31 January at Bowral, NSW. Age: 69+ years. One of our boys. Thanks Frank Cole, Bill Roberts, Gordon Hurford
- 235311 Lieutenant Colonel Victor Joseph ADAMS, 2RAR: Vietnam 1PI A Coy 1967-68. Passed away 31 December. Age: 68+ years. His Memory will live on, an admired and respected leader and a great bloke. Thanks Phill Evenden, John George, Deone Cole, Peter Jasper, Tim Easton, & others
- 13687 Corporal Derek Anthony BLIGH, 2RAR: Malaya 1955-57 (Pte; RAINF), AFVPU: Vietnam 1967-68 (Cpl; RAAPC). Passed away 15 February. Age: 79+ years. A real nice bloke, the heavyweight boxing champion of 2RAR in his time. Thanks Jock Cassidy
- 3411971 Private Graeme Patrick CUMMINS, 1ARU: Vietnam 1967, 2RAR: Vietnam 1967-68 5 PI B Coy. Passed away 23 December in palliative care. Age: 68+ years. A hard fought battle ends, memories of your courage won't. Thanks Arthur Francis, Jack Tolliday
- 214994 Sergeant Clive Coleman MILLEN, 2RAR: Vietnam 1967-68 Sect Comd 5 Sect 11 PI, 7RAR: Vietnam 1970 PI Sgt. Tragically killed in vehicle accident 2 February at Ulladulla, NSW. Age: 70+ years. President Ulladulla TPI Association. Private funeral. Thanks Terry Dinneen, Gordon Hurford
- 2400892, 3/410184 Private Derek DONNELLY, 3RAR: Korea 1952-53, 2RAR: Malaya 1955-57. Passed away 14 October, Perth, WA. Age: 84+ years. Thanks Brian DeVaus
- 2792898 Private Douglas John ('Jekyll') HYDE, 2RAR: Vietnam 1970-71 Forward Scout 1PI A Coy. Passed away after a long illness. Age: 65+ years. As good as they make them. Much respected. Thanks Bill Rolfe, Pat Savage, Garry Johnston
- 315477 David Ross JONES, 2RAR: Prior to amalgamation. 2/4RAR: 1973-76, 8/9RAR. Passed away 8 December in palliative care at Townsville Hospital. Thanks Gary Jear

- 2/5454 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Leslie Joseph COOPER, 3RAR: Korea 1953-54 (Pte). 2RAR: Malaya 1955-57 (Pte). Funeral held 21 January in WA. Thanks Terry Dinneen
- 44127 Private Malcolm OWEN, 1ARU: Vietnam 1967. 2RAR: Vietnam 1967-68 12 PI D Coy. HQ AFV: 1970. Passed away 20 September at Yorke Peninsula, SA. Age: 66+ years. Mal's membership meant a great deal to him. Thanks Sandy Owen, Trevor Wilson
- 217144 Private Clement Arthur HUGHES, 1ARU: Vietnam 1967, 2RAR: 1967-68. Passed away in May 2014. Age: 68+ years. Recorded in the 'Journal' of the Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers & Peacemakers of Australia
- 37872 Private Andrew ROSS, 3RAR: Rear details 1963 (medical), 2RAR: Post Malaya 1963. Passed away in October at Cleveland, Qld. Andrew did not serve overseas due to his medical status. Thanks 'Bindi' Albrecht
- Private John Llwellyn WATKINS, 2RAR: 1964, 6RAR: 1965, 8RAR: 1966. John was a good sportsman until he hurt himself and was discharged on 22 November 1966 medically unfit. Passed away 9 December. 8RAR Assoc. attended the funeral held at Lidcombe Cemetery, NSW. Recorded in 8RAR Assoc. 'Behind The Eight Ball'.
- James Clifford WOODS 1RAR, 2RAR, 3RAR, 4RAR. Passed away 18 March. Funeral held 23 March at Deception Bay, Qld. No service details available. Rest in Peace James. Thanks Glen Willmann



*Yes, you'll always march beside us,  
And when our time is through  
We'll muster on that "Last Parade"  
To march again with you.*

**LEST WE FORGET**

**NEW RSM (ARMY)**

LONG-serving RSM WO1 Don Spinks has been announced as the 10th RSM of the Army. He will replace outgoing RSM-A WO Dave Ashley, who will retire in July.

WO1 Spinks, who has served as a soldier since 1979, was promoted to WO1 in January 1999. In 2000 he was selected to attend the US Army Sergeant Majors Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, where he completed the US Army Sergeant Major and the Command Sergeant Major courses.

He has served as the RSM of 2 Cav Regt, RSM Multinational Force and Observers – Sinai, Egypt, RSM RAAC, RSM 1 Bde, RSM JTF 633 on Operation Slipper and Command Sergeant Major at FORCOMD.

Congratulations RSM-A!

**FROM HISTORY'S PAGE<sup>1</sup>**

On 5 Mar 53 the Battalion embarked for Pusan, Korea on MV 'New Australia' and arrived on 17 Mar 53. A soldier 34251 Private Graham Rhodes Belleville (correct spelling) stowed away on board because he had been posted out of the unit a few days before. He was fined five pounds and taken back on strength. In 1957, on graduating from OCS, he served as an officer in the Battalion for a short period. He was killed in action on 12 Feb 66 as a Captain (54956) serving with the Army Training Team in South Vietnam.

<sup>1</sup> RAR Standing Orders 2005 Chapter 6

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The last year has passed very quickly and I want to thank all members of the management committee for their tireless support throughout the year.

Firstly, welcome to the first issue of "RINGO" for 2015. I hope that you all had a safe and enjoyable festive season and that the New Year has started on a positive note. The Committee had its first meeting for the year on 4 February and it looks as if this year will again be a busy one. It is our aim to provide members with regular information concerning welfare and other issues that may be of interest as well as forthcoming Association activities. We will also continue to strengthen our close relationship with 2RAR.

The Association congratulates the Reverend Monsignor Eugene Harley, our honorary Padre, on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the General Division. As well as having delivered long and loyal service to the Australian Army, Monsignor Harley has continued to provide outstanding service throughout the years to the community through the Catholic Church. It is very satisfying to see that his outstanding contribution has been justly acknowledged.

I attended the RAR Association (RARA) AGM and Conference in Singleton 28-29 November last year. The RARA represents over 100,000 current and former servicemen who served in the Regiment's twelve Battalions since its formation in 1948, as well as families. The aims of the RARA are:

*To perpetuate mateship created in service with the Regiment; To preserve the memory of those who died; and To protect the interests of the Regimental Family (its men and their families) to government.*

A number of issues were discussed and the approved Action Plan for 2014/15 will be placed on the 2RAR Association website.

The book "A Duty Done" written by LtCol Fred Fairhead, (Retd) has been published and covers the operations conducted by the Regiment in the Vietnam War. The book is significant in preserving the history of the Regiment's involvement in this conflict. Order a copy [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.

The Secretary and I took the opportunity to represent the 2RAR Association at the RARA (North Qld) annual dinner held at the Townsville RSL on 21 February. It was a wonderful evening. We also visited 2RAR at Lavarack Barracks and held informal discussions with the commanding officer. Our Association representative, Jock Cassidy, continues to work closely with 2RAR to seek ways in which we can support battalion activities.

We have agreed to provide prizes to the value of \$400 for the unit fishing competition to be held this year. We were also given a tour of the unit museum which has been refurbished and 2RAR continues to upgrade this wonderful facility. Once completed, this will be a first class museum.

While travelling over the Christmas period, I had an opportunity to visit Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk in Seymour, Victoria. The monument is dedicated to the Australian servicemen and women who served in the Vietnam War. The names of over 60,000 Australian personnel as well as the eleven tracker dogs are inscribed on the 106 panels. This is an outstanding monument and well worth a visit. Details [here](#).<sup>3</sup>

This year on 25 April, we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the landing of Australian troops on ANZAC Cove, Gallipoli. It is on this day that we remember all those Australians who served and died for this country in all conflicts and peacekeeping operations. Dawn Service Ceremonies and ANZAC Day Memorial Services will be held

throughout the nation and I would hope that 2RAR will be represented at many of these ceremonies. For those members residing in the SE Qld region, I encourage you to join the 2RAR contingent in Brisbane for the ANZAC Day march through Brisbane. Details are within this newsletter, and will be published on our website.

It was wonderful to see our soldiers afforded welcome home parades across Australia on completion of Operation Slipper. We honour 2RAR warriors Private Matthew Lambert KIA on 22 August 2011, & Lance Corporal Luke Gavin KIA on 29 October 2011, and all our warriors who died, were wounded or suffered as a result of their service in Afghanistan.

Finally, the next major 2RAR association reunion is planned for May 2017 to be held in Brisbane. No firm details have yet been decided but a reunion sub-committee will be formed shortly to commence the planning process.

"Second to None"

Leo Van De Kamp  
President

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

In 2015 committee meetings will be held as follows:

- Wed 4 Feb 15 ✓
- Wed 1 Apr 15 ✓
- Wed 3 Jun 15
- Wed 5 Aug 15
- Wed 7 Oct 15
- Wed 2 Dec 15

### AGM, Commemoration & Reunion

The AGM will be held on Sat 31 Oct 15 in the ANZAC Room Tweed Heads & Coolangatta RSL, the Commemoration Service at Chris Cunningham Park (under shade), and the Annual Reunion at Twin Towns Services Club.

### Honorary Members

The Management Committee recently invited the following to be Honorary Members of the Association: Mrs Barbara Handley and Lieutenant Commander Raymond Godfrey, RAN (Retd). Both have accepted the Committee's invitation and we welcome them to the Association. The Association has 5 Honorary Members.

### The Reverend Monsignor Eugene Harley, OAM

At the AGM in October, The Reverend Monsignor Eugene Harley was appointed as the Honorary Padre for 2RAR Association. Then, not to be outdone, we noted with a great deal of pride that he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the Australia Day 2015 Honours List.

Eugene served in Malaya, Borneo & Vietnam, and was blessed to serve 7 years with 2RAR. Before retiring in 1985, Mons Harley was appointed Principal Catholic Chaplain to the Army. Well done Padre!

### Constitution/Governance

A sub-committee under the chairmanship of Ross Bimrose has commenced a review of the preamble to the Constitution that is the Vision Statement, Objects and Strategies. The sub-committee has agreed a draft, which will now be sent to our Honorary Legal Advisers, Pat Savage and Bill Rolfe, for an independent review.

It is our intention that the recommendations for changes to the Constitution will be circulated for members' consideration and will be presented for approval at the AGM on 31st October at Tweed Heads.

### Funeral Sashes

It has been a custom to drape an RAR Sash over the foot of the coffin of a deceased member. In order that we more clearly identify 2RAR we will now drape a miniature 2RAR flag on the coffin. After the service, the flag is removed from the coffin, folded and then presented to the NOK.

The families have warmly received this; as well there have been positive comments from others at funerals.

<sup>2</sup> <http://goo.gl/kD8zwL>

<sup>3</sup> <http://goo.gl/48xUlr>

## 2RAR Fishing Club

At our meeting in February 2015, the Committee agreed to support the newly formed 2RAR Fishing Club which is under the management of WO2 Adam West, Spt Coy, 2RAR. The Association will provide prizes for four fishing competitions to be held this year. Association members are welcome to join the club and participate.

### Sponsorship

The Association has been privileged to now have a sponsorship agreement with Australian Leisure and Hospitality Group (a subsidiary of Woolworths, ALH Group operates a portfolio of 328 licensed venues across Australia). The originating premises are Buderim Tavern (Sunshine Coast), Vale Hotel (Townsville) and Kirwan Tavern (Townsville). Members in Queensland have recently received an identifying card to be used at the venue. The basis of the sponsorship is that the Association will receive 10% of the total spend by those presenting the card. If you forget your card, members just need to remember our number, which is 007.

There is no doubt that this sponsorship has the potential to provide the Association with funds that can then be spent on members and the achievement of our objectives.

It is our intention to try to roll this out in other parts of Australia, particularly capital cities. We will be the first to let you know when new agreements are signed. Details [here](#).<sup>4</sup>

### ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES

Grahame Edwards (NSW)	(02) 9520 5681 edfamily1@iprimus.com.au
Vacant (ACT)	VACANT
Jim Cooper (VIC)	(03) 9548 0016 jimwend@netspace.net.au
Cameron Simpkins (Tas)	0458 660 866 cameron.simpkins3@bigpond.com
Mal Allen (SA)	0451 374 133 mal@aladdco.com.au
Vacant (WA)	VACANT
Vacant (NT)	VACANT
'Jock' Cassidy (Townsville)	0431 355 579 johnccassidy65@hotmail.com
Bill Martin (NZ)	(0011649) 267 7545 bwmartin@xtra.co.nz

### MEMBERS' DRAW

Congratulations to Ivor Briggs of Emu Park Qld winner of the financial Members' Draw held on 4 February, who received the book: 'Uncommon Soldier' by Chris Masters, 2012.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Association is open to any person who has served in 2RAR after 16th October 1945: past members of 66 Bn AMF; 2RAR; 2/4RAR; 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC); 2RAR MTF-3; and all ranks currently serving in 2RAR.

Classes of Members: Ordinary, Associate, Honorary, & Life.

### MEMBERSHIP STATUS

Check the [newsletter mailing label](#) for the status of your membership. If '2014' or prior, you have [lapsed](#); if '2015' or beyond, you are [current](#). Financial Year: 1 October to 30 September. 1 - 5 years (\$20 - \$100)

### ACCESS TO GALLIPOLI BARRACKS

When planning an activity, such a reunion, at the RAR National Memorial Walk at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, you will need to make arrangements beforehand. To gain access to the barracks contact Secretary RAR Assoc. (Qld).

Greg Decker: 0417 464 251  
secretary.rarassociationqld@gmail.com

### NEW MEMBERSHIPS

Welcome to our newest members: (10)

SCOREBOARD - NSW: 3, WA: 3, TAS: 2, QLD: 1, NT: 1, ACT: 0, VIC: 0, SA: 0, NZ: 0

Graeme Hindmarsh	NSW
Gerald Astin	WA
Trevor Roberts	WA
Michael Krzeszkowski	NSW
David Callick	QLD
Warren Barrie	WA
Gregory Holmes	NT
Malcolm Spencer	NSW
Paul Young	TAS
Gary Graham	TAS

### DONATIONS

We appreciate financial donations, and we thank these members for their recent contribution:

Melville Robertson	Leo Walsh	Bruce Berg
Ian Rose	Alexander Nie	

### MISSING-IN-ACTION: KOREA<sup>5</sup>

The Australian Council of Korea Veterans Associations continues to make good progress in the search for and identification of Australians missing in action from the Korean War. Ian Saunders has received profiles of the four Unknowns buried at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery, Busan.

These profiles meet the criteria, taken from Defence Instruction (General) Personnel 20-4 'Recovery of Human Remains of ADF Members Previously Unaccounted for' of "strong circumstantial or cogent direct evidence.

This evidence may take the form of items of Australian clothing or equipment found with or near the remains; eyewitness accounts; or substantial research from military records."

We shall be pursuing how this evidence and the DNA samples provided by family members are being applied.

### REUNION: 10TH INTAKE NATIONAL SERVICE 2015

A reunion of the 10th Intake National Service will be held 6-12 October 2015 at Sawtell Beach Tourist Park, NSW. Overseas service is not a prerequisite.

Contact: Richard Barry (richyvon47@hotmail.com)  
Tel: (02) 6792 3114

### 'RINGO' ITEMS

Do you have a story to tell? A snippet about a mate, or an event? Served in Korea, Malaya, Malaysia, Vietnam, Rwanda, East Timor, Solomon Islands, Iraq, Timor Lesté, Afghanistan?

Tell us about your experiences.

Post to: PO Box 1097 Toombul Qld 4012  
Email: 2rarsecretary@gmail.com

### 2RAR ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Join the Association! Help us help you and your mates. Your membership is important to US.

What do YOU get?  
Information: RINGO! 4 editions per year. Join our Email list.  
Enlist a mate. Sign him up. Encourage him.

<sup>4</sup> <http://goo.gl/SwTJau>

<sup>5</sup> Rear Adm Ian Crawford AO AM(Mil) RAN National President ACKVA

### ANZAC DAY BRISBANE

Association President Leo Van De Kamp will lead 2RAR. This year the head of the parade will step off at 9.30am instead of the usual 10.00am.

The FUP is in Mary Street intersecting George Street. Look for the 2RAR Assoc. Banner.

Order of March: (Area C & D Army)

RAR Assoc. (Qld), 1RAR, 2RAR, 3RAR, 4RAR, 5RAR, 6RAR, 7RAR, 8RAR, 9RAR, 8/9RAR, 5/7RAR, 2/4RAR

### ANZAC DAY SYDNEY

We had invited Lt Col Vic Adams, Retd (PI Comd 1PI A Coy Vietnam 1967-68) to lead 2RAR in this year's Sydney Centenary of ANZAC March. However, tragically, Vic passed away on 31 December, age: 68. Lyn has advised that she and the children would like to march in Vic's memory.

Form-up area will be in Bligh Street which comes off Hunter Street. Whilst the march starts at 9.00am we don't usually form up until about 10.30am and march off around 11.00am. Afterwards we will gather at The Club located in Barrack Street.

This will be my 26th year as the Battalion Banner Bearer in the Sydney ANZAC Day March. *Well done, Phill! Ed.*

Phill Evenden  
0413 715 622

### ANZAC DAY ADELAIDE

Form Up at 0930hrs, western side of Pulteney Street, corner of North Terrace and Pulteney Streets, Adelaide. Step off time is anticipated at 1020hrs.

Adrian Craig, will be in charge of the RARA SA, including 2RARA SA, contingent. Keith Dobson will lead the 2RARA SA Contingent. John Mathwin will maintain our step with his side drum. It would be great to see a good turnout of blokes, especially those of recent service.

The RARA SA Reunion, will be held at the Lion Hotel, corner Jerningham and Melbourne Streets, North Adelaide.

Mal Allen  
0451 374 133

### THEATRE: ANZAC TRIBUTE TO 1<sup>ST</sup> AIF

Beenleigh RSL and the Beenleigh Theatre Group are staging an ANZAC commemorative play: 'The First: An Anzac tribute to the 1st AIF' at the Beenleigh Crete Street Theatre from 12-25 April.

The opening show on Sunday 12 April at 2 pm is a free show to veterans and partners. Contact: 'Butch' Buttigieg<sup>6</sup> 0401 572 510 or (07) 3287 4968.

All other sessions \$10.00 (subsidised) (07) 3807 3922

### 'RINGO' QUOTATION

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#### 'Get with the Strength'

Did you know D Coy had a fully mechanical hygiene system? On the next WHITE chiefs visit he will be impressed by all the thunder box lids opening on the hygiene private's command. It only took a little oil, split second timing and the coordination of the firing of the 175's.<sup>7</sup>

'Blue' Gibson has had some kind mates write to the papers in Melbourne telling of his loneliness and non-receipt of letters, would you believe 410 letters in 5 days!

Special get well soon to:-

'Blue' Gibson, Tim McCombe, John Freeburn, 'Rumbo' Rumsey, 'Bruno' Tompson, & John Young.

### CALENDAR 2015

Sun 1 Feb	2/4RAR delink to form 2RAR and 4RAR (1995)	Townsville, Qld Holsworth, NSW
Sat 25 Apr	ANZAC Day	Local arrangements
Fri 24 Jul	Samichon Day commemorating the Battle of the HOOK 24/25 July 1953. Gus Breen Ph: (02) 9428 683 E-mail: gusbreen@yahoo.com.au	The RAR Memorial, Regimental Square, Wynyard Street, Sydney, NSW
Mon 27 Jul	Korea Veterans' Day 62nd Anniversary of the Armistice in Korea 27 July 1953	Korean War Memorial, Broadbeach, Qld Local arrangements
Sat 15 Aug	2RAR and 4 RAR link to form 2/4RAR (1973)	Townsville, Qld
Tue 18 Aug	Vietnam Veterans' Day	Local arrangements
Sun 30 Aug	National Malaya & Borneo Veterans' Day. Merdeka (Independence or Freedom) Day	Enoggera, Qld. Kings Park, Perth WA Local arrangements
Tue – Mon 6-12 Oct	Reunion: 10th Intake NS 1967 POC: Richard Barry (richyvon47@hotmail.com) Tel: (02) 6792 3114	Sawtell Beach Tourist Park, NSW.
Fri 16 Oct	2RAR Birthday 1945 (70th Anniversary)	Labuan, North Borneo
Sat 31 Oct	2RAR National Reunion: AGM, Commemoration Service, & Reunion	Twin Towns, NSW
Wed 11 Nov	Remembrance Day	Local arrangements
Mon 23 Nov	RAR Birthday 1948 (67th Anniversary)	Hiro, Japan

### 2RAR WEBSITES

#### 2RAR ASSOCIATION (NATIONAL)

<http://www.2rar-association.com.au>

#### 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Battalion 1967-68

<http://bit.ly/QTc4SG>

#### B Coy 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Battalion 1970-71

<http://www.bcoy2rarnz.com/>

#### 2/4RAR ASSOCIATION

Website: <http://www.24rarassociation.com/index.html>

### DVA CLAIMS: MISSING EVIDENCE

It is still possible to put in a claim to DVA without the physical evidence of an After Action Report.

"Any case where a person who has served with the Battalion is denied entitlements because of a lack of evidence, whether that person is an Association member or otherwise, our Association will take all steps available to help that person obtain evidence, from any and all sources we can identify.

Section 14 of the Veterans entitlement Act Part II sub-para 3 and 4 refer. As the system has lost the 1967-68 After Action Reports, sub-para 4 allows for the claimant to produce whatever evidence that may be available including statements from others who may have witnessed or have immediate knowledge of the event or injury which caused the disability being claimed".

<sup>7</sup> 1/83 Coy, US Artillery usually located at Nui Dat, and which was equipped with two 8-inch self-propelled guns and two 175mm self-propelled guns.

<sup>6</sup> 'Butch' Buttigieg, served in 6RAR Vietnam 1966-67, 1969-70

**FAREWELL: TIM MCCOMBE, OAM**

A good attendance and we filled the church. An open casket, initially. Our 2RAR flag was not used despite assurances that it would be and was returned to me outside the church prior to the hearse moving off. I was later able to pass it on to Tran at the completion of the afternoon.



It is obvious that Tim was a giant among his colleagues at Granville and his success in that area is unchallenged.

There were many who had contact with Tim from Granville, including some notables from Canberra.

2RAR was represented by Terry Fisher, Bob Pink, Ben Morris, Ken Thomas & me. The Vietnamese community was well represented.

I was able to speak with John Shields (6RAR, 2RAR) who thought he had treated Tim when Tim stepped on the anti-personal mine<sup>8</sup>. John was confused as he had treated mine victims on 9 May 67 in a separate incident. Both John & Tim were hospitalised at 8 Fd Amb in early August 1967, and together were medevacked to Australia.

I also met Kihen Nguyen who claims to have been one of the 'Bush Rangers' (translators) attached to each Company. I've sent him a photo of Tan, D Company's translator, and plan to 'catch-up' with both John and Nguyen soon.

Rest in Peace Tim.

Terry Dinneen  
Winmalee, NSW

**MRS KONOWEC'S CONNECTION**

SYDNEY'S new airport at Badgerys Creek, could be named after a Queensland aviation hero. Len Waters was the first Aboriginal Australian military aviator and the only one to serve as a fighter pilot in the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II, flying a staggering 95 missions in the sky above New Guinea. He also spent almost his entire life in Queensland.

The fourth of 11 children, Waters was born on an Aboriginal mission in northern NSW but grew up at Nindigully, near St George, Queensland, and went to Nindigully State School before finishing his education at the age of 14.

Mr Waters' daughter Dianne said it would be a tremendous honour and a worthy one if Sydney's next airport was named after her dad. "We would be so proud," she said. "He just went to show that even if you were born on an Aboriginal mission and had the odds against you, you could really make something of yourself."

For those who are unaware Wally Konowec recently married Dianne (nee Waters). Wally was the D Coy 2RAR Sig Vietnam 1967-68.

I reckon the happy couple will be as proud as punch if Len Waters has his name on the new airport.

Sid Powell, & Terry Dinneen

**THE ASSOCIATION TIE**

The new Association tie reflects our regimental heritage incorporating traditional colours in diagonal stripes of Battalion Black, Scarlet (Corps), & Rifle Green (Regiment).

To get one, see merchandise form page 12 page.

**VALE: TIM MCCOMBE, OAM**

It is with great sadness that I extend my condolences to the family and friends of Tim McCombe OAM.

Tim passed away on Saturday, 31 January 2015, at Bowral District Hospital, New South Wales. Tim McCombe OAM was a veteran who devoted his time to lending a hand to other veterans and current serving men and women.

A regular soldier himself, Tim served in the Australian Army from 1964 to 1973 in locations including Malaya, Borneo (4RAR) and Vietnam. During the Vietnam War he served as an infantry soldier from May to August 1967 with 2RAR and was severely injured by a mine explosion (Losing a leg).

At the time of his passing he was the National President of the Vietnam Veterans Federation Australia (VVFA), and NSW Branch President of the VVFA's affiliate, the Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association of Australia (NSW Branch) Inc. Both of these organisations support Vietnam veterans and work with those returning from current and recent deployments.

Tim was a strong advocate for his fellow veterans. As an original member of the Ex-Service Organisation Round Table he contributed greatly to the conduct of the group and its significant representation of the veteran community since 2009. His insight and contribution will be missed.

Tim was also a member of the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service National Advisory Committee (NAC) from 1986 - 1993 and again from 2007 - 2012. In this position he championed the needs of veterans of all ages and all backgrounds and assisted the NAC in understanding many of the barriers facing veterans and their families in the access to services.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson

**DVA: REHABILITATION APPLIANCES PROGRAM**

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP), will see the inclusion of several falls prevention items in the program's National Schedule of Equipment (the Schedule). RAP assists eligible members of the veteran community to be independent and self-reliant in their own homes through the provision of a wide range of clinically required aids and appliances.

The RAP Schedule is being expanded to include a range of falls prevention items currently supplied through the Home Front Programme.

Eligible veterans can continue to access falls prevention items in the same way they access other items on the RAP Schedule, by asking their general practitioner for an assessment.

If the falls prevention item is clinically required, the item will be supplied to them.

If you have further queries about changes, they should be directed to DVA on 133 254 (metro) or 1800 555 254 (country).

**ABOUT 3 BRIGADE: TOWNSVILLE**

The 3rd Brigade currently consists of the following units:

- 3rd Brigade Headquarters;
- B Squadron, 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment (Bushmaster);
- 4th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery;
- 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment;
- 3rd Combat Signals Regiment
- 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment;
- 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment;
- 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment;
- 3rd Combat Service Support Battalion.

<sup>8</sup> Wounded: Pte Tim McCombe, Pte Noel Rumsey, & LCpl Brian 'Bruno' Tompson

**VETERAN SUICIDE <sup>9</sup>**

A TOTAL of 34 soldiers who served with units of 3rd Brigade have been named by their families as having taken their own lives in a new suicide register, established last August. Former soldier Aaron Gray, who runs the online register, said 127 (*now 181. Ed*) former or serving Australian defence personnel were already listed as having taken their own lives since the register was made public seven months ago. The great majority being soldiers.<sup>10</sup>

*Of the 68 veterans whose units are cited, half of them served with the 1st, 2nd or 3rd Battalions which form part of Townsville's 3rd Brigade*

Official Australian Defence Force figures show 106 members have taken their own lives since 2000, however they only included soldiers who were enlisted at the time of their death. Mr Gray said many more soldiers were driven to suicide after they left the service. "A lot of veterans, once they leave the defence force, feel alone, worthless and don't know where to turn," Mr Gray said.

A Defence Department spokesman said of the 106 serving soldiers they recorded to have taken their lives, 61 had not deployed. Of the 45 who had, 17 undertook one or more deployments to the Middle East. "The incidence of suicide in the ADF is estimated to be 35 to 55 per cent lower than that found in the general population," he said.

Commander 3rd Brigade, Brigadier Roger Noble said soldiers at Lavarack Barracks undertook suicide prevention training annually. "My observation in recent years is it seems to be working, which sometimes leads to a spike in reporting," he said. "I think we've got a much more alert bunch of people looking for the signs of suicide."

Townsville veteran and Mates4Mates ambassador Paul Warren said while progress had been made, the ADF still had work to do to improve mental health services. "Now is the time to act as the next conflict isn't too far away and troops are already being sent back to Iraq," he said. "The whole mental health thing needs to be overhauled as one suicide is one too many."

Since 2007 more than 3770 ADF personnel have been assessed for mental health conditions and 930 were diagnosed with PTSD. Another 490 had PTSD and another mental health disorder such as depression or anxiety. An incredible 2349 (about five per cent of the workforce) had a mental health condition other than PTSD. Defence told News Corp that it was working hard to overcome the stigma of mental health and to treat those affected.

**Facts and figures <sup>11</sup>**

The Department of Veterans Affairs spends more than \$166 million a year managing the mental health of some 27,000 veterans with diagnosed service related mental health disorders. This includes some 9500 suffering from PTSD and another 4000 cases who are treated by DVA but whose illness may not have been caused by military service.

**Military and veteran suicides**

2006 = 4	2007 = 6	2008 = 5	2009 = 6
2010 = 10	2011 = 7	2012 = 4	2013 = 12
2014 = 15	2015 = 5		

**Veterans Affairs PTSD cases**

2006 = 1126	2007 = 1110	2008 = 1010	2009 = 995
2010 = 897	2011 = 835	2012 = 950	2013 = 1087
2014 = 1211			

**SNIPPETS**

- Clive Millen, was a good bloke. He was a good section commander too. He was one of mine in 11 PI. I was shocked to hear the news - car accident but maybe a heart attack prior. Pretty sad to see too many good guys on the way out. Arthur Francis & Gordon Hurford
- John Shields was at Tim McCombe's funeral and accompanied Tim's family. John came from 6RAR as a re-enforcement medic to 2RAR to complete his tour, but succumbed to malaria and RTA'd early. Both he and Tim got to know one another in hospital at Vung Tau, and again when Tim helped John get his entitlements from Vet Affairs. Terry Dinneen
- The 70th birthday of the founding battalions of the Regiment will be the first time in history the three Battalions will be on a ceremonial parade together. It will also see the presentation and dedication/consecration of new colours to both 2 and 3RAR. Details in July/October editions.
- At Torrens parade ground we met ADF Slipper personnel including the 1st. Armoured Regiment currently exercising at Cultana with their Abrahams. Apparently a squadron comprising 14 tanks and 250 personnel is anticipated to be transferred to the Edinburgh Military Complex, in 2017. Mal Allen
- Kindly note that I did not serve in CHQ, I was No2 on the gun 2 Sect 10 PI D Coy. Simply a baggy arse and not one to embrace the staff of CHQ! A correction would be appreciated. Paul Murphy. *My apologies. Ed.* ☺
- Operation Slipper, the name the Australian Defence Force gave to its longest war, ended in late 2014 with 41 deaths and 256 wounded - Australia's first casualties since Vietnam.
- Tim McCombe once recounted to me that when he stepped on the mine his reaction was one of anger. He was so angry that as he hit the ground he punched his fist through a large fallen tree – the tree was rotten! *Ed.*
- We made a mistake with the date for our 2015 reunion at Twin Towns in the December RINGO; but as you know it is always on the last Saturday of October. ☺*Who me?*
- Bob 'Bluey' Bruce found a Vietnam Medal belonging to 356426 Pte Noel Douglas Hollindale, Spt Coy 1970-71, but he doesn't have contact details. Can you help? Email: [robert\\_bruce2@bigpond.com](mailto:robert_bruce2@bigpond.com)
- Grahame Wheeler wants to contact his old mate Brian Kane. Both Grahame & Brian served in 2RAR/NZ 1970/71 (AACC). He served in Spt Coy, or A Coy. Police were concerned for the welfare of Brian who was prospecting around Marble Bar. Brian has since been located. Can you help make contact? Email: [herveybayhermit@yahoo.com.au](mailto:herveybayhermit@yahoo.com.au)
- ON Australia Day 1968 during TET, C Coy 2RAR diggers attacked a Vietnamese camp and found themselves locked in a 17-hour firefight against more than 1000 enemy troops. Recently, two of those diggers returned to meet some of the Vietnamese soldiers they fought 47 years ago. "It's funny because the last time we saw each other, we were hell bent on annihilating each other," said Reg Gillian (9 PI). Also on the trip to Vung Tau was fellow 2RAR veteran Barry Wallis. Both are looking forward to meeting the commander of the NVA regiment they fought against. And we will see what we can do to support the Vietnamese veterans," he said. *Thanks Reg & Barry, we look forward to an article for RINGO on the event. Ed.*

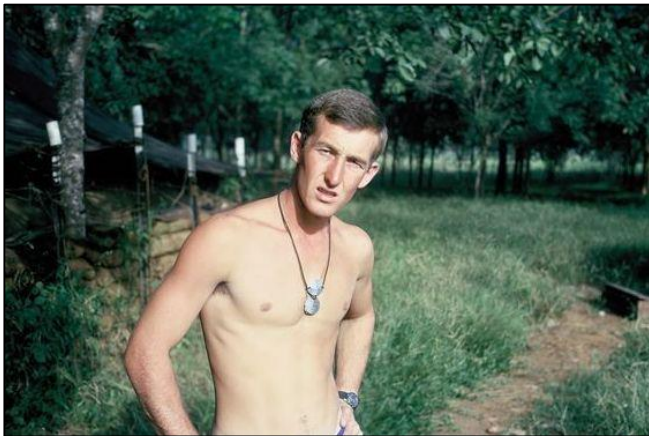
<sup>9</sup> Need help? Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service <http://www.vvcs.gov.au/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://goo.gl/nvBzjc>

<sup>11</sup> <http://goo.gl/ud6qjv>

## VIETNAM VET ROBERT WICKES<sup>12</sup>

ONE of the country's former top cops and a Vietnam Veterans group is backing a Davistown man's fight to wear his vet's motorcycle vest to the local RSL.



*"It is my understanding that your RSL Club has refused to allow Robert Wickes, 5 Pl, B Coy 2RAR Vietnam 1967-68 to wear his (leather) jacket with battalion and regimental patches in your premises. Allan Roberts, APM*



*"I further understand that Robert is a "Service" member of your RSL Club. What is concerning is the health of Robert and whether or not your Club has provided any welfare or support to this veteran and his wife." Allan Roberts, APM, 2RAR 1967*

2RAR Association member Robert Wickes' drama began in 2012 when he was turned away from Davistown RSL on Vietnam Veteran Day because his leather veterans' motorcycle vest, adorned with service medals and ribbons, was said to resemble outlaw motorcycle gang attire. Despite making a complaint at the time, Mr Wickes said he is still not allowed to enter the club wearing the jacket and is now considering legal action.

His campaign has garnered support from a former comrade-in-arms and retired assistant police commissioner of Victoria and Queensland, Allan Roberts and the Vietnam Veterans NSW. (Allan is also a 2RAR Assoc. member.) Mr Roberts and Vietnam Veterans, Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Association NSW secretary Frank Cole have both thrown their support behind Mr Wickes, calling for "common sense to prevail".

Mr Wickes has been a member of the club for 20 years and said the ruling is insulting. "I've been trying to get them let me back into the club with my jacket for two and a half years now," Mr Wickes said. "But it seems the RSL is not interested in reversing the decision.

"Even on Remembrance Day last year I was told I had to remove my jacket to have a few drinks with my mates.

"Most people know I'm a Vietnam vet and like my jacket which I had made up around 20 years ago. "Yes, I ride a

motorcycle – but that doesn't make me a bikie, just a proud Vietnam veteran. "I have travelled from state to state and never ever been refused entry to any pub or club."

Former police commissioner Allan Roberts, who served with Mr Wickes in Vietnam, urged the club to reconsider its decision. "Robert is proud of his service and has the support of numerous former soldiers across the country," Mr Roberts said. "I hope common sense prevails."

Vietnam Veterans, Peacekeepers & Peacemakers Association of Australia NSW branch said it was "astonished" to hear of a war veteran being denied entry to an RSL.

Davistown RSL Club has defended its actions and said the club "understands the motorcycle jacket has great personal significance" to Mr Wickes and it accepted he was "not involved in an outlaw motorcycle gang". "However, the club is bound by specific by-laws that ban the wearing of motorcycle jackets on club premises for all members and guests.

Update: Common sense prevails: Davistown RSL has amended a by-law which precluded a Vietnam veteran from entering the club wearing his motorcycle vest adorned with service medals. The club general manager confirmed that by-law 27 had been amended but refused to comment further on legal advice.

Mr Wickes' lawyer said he was awaiting written confirmation from the club of the amendment before offering further advice to his client.

## WAR DEAD BURIED OVERSEAS

REG Hillier<sup>13</sup> was the only Territorian killed in the Vietnam War. He is also one of 25 Australian soldiers who have never come home. Mr Hillier, along with 23 of those 25 soldiers, is buried in a cemetery on the Terendak military base in Malaysia. Another lone soldier lies alone in Kranji Cemetery Singapore.

The first one killed in Vietnam, was WO2 William Hacking on the 1st June 1963 who was brought home at Government expense. The second was WO2 Kevin Conway killed 6th July 1964, who was buried in a Cemetery in Saigon, then exhumed and removed to Ulu Pandan Cemetery in Singapore, then to allow for Singapore's expansion was again exhumed and reburied in Kranji Cemetery Singapore.

Reg Hillier's family was notified of his death and given the option to either pay 500 pounds to bring him home, which was roughly half a year's wage then, or leave him to be buried overseas.

The family hopes to have him returned so that he can be buried at the Adelaide River War Cemetery.

521 Australians were killed or died of wounds in the Vietnam War, 496 were brought back home to Australia, let's bring the remaining 25 home to Australia where they belong.

*Vietnam veteran organisations are campaigning for the federal government to repatriate the 24 Australians interred at Terendak. They include Major Peter Badcoe, a member of the Australian Army Training Team awarded the Victoria Cross, Private Errol Noack, the first national serviceman killed in Vietnam and Lieutenant Robert Birse, murdered by a fellow soldier who threw a grenade into his tent. They were buried in Malaysia under the long-running policy of burying war dead in the nearest Commonwealth cemetery, unless family were prepared to pay for their repatriation.*

How can YOU help? Contact your Local member. Sign the Petition<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> <http://goo.gl/yCOMpC>

<sup>13</sup> He was killed on 29 November 1965 age 26 years while serving with 1RAR

<sup>14</sup> Sign the Petition here: <http://goo.gl/rtbNST>



**DROP SHORTS**

**52053 Sgt Brian Charles Cooper, MM** <sup>15</sup>

At approximately 10am on or about 29/30th July '53, the Vickers Machine Gun Section was summoned to assemble outside the Support Coy. Orderly room, where it was addressed by the Coy. Comd. Major Thomas Wilson.

He congratulated the assembled troops on their sterling efforts during the attacks by the enemy on Hill 111 (left of 2RAR position, The Hook) during the night of 24th/25th July, and that as a consequence of their efforts, a Military Medal had been awarded to the Section, and as per protocol, the senior N.C.O. of the Section would be assigned the Award.

In deference to their memory, and the fact that they were recipients of the award, the names of ALL personnel should be recorded for posterity.

The members of this Section were:

<i>Sgt Brian Cooper</i>	<i>Cpl Kevin Power</i>	<i>Cpl Ron Walker</i>
<i>Cpl Douglas Franklin (W.I.A.)</i>	<i>Pte Arthur Tranter</i>	<i>Pte John Perring</i>
<i>Pte Kenneth Cranston</i>	<i>Pte Donald Hill</i>	<i>Pte Allen Madgwick</i>
<i>Pte Allen Casey (Sect Sig.)</i>	<i>Soo Kyo Soong (KATCOM)</i>	<i>Pte Dan Mudford (Absent W.I.A.)</i>
<i>H. Mathews (Sect Cook)</i>		

Thanks Ron Walker <sup>16</sup>

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Dennis Neal brother of Greg & Ian**

I was a member of 8 PI "C" Coy 2RAR Vietnam 1970-71. Dennis Neal was also in 8 PI, but sadly, was killed in a mine incident on 29 May 1970. Des Tully was also killed and several others wounded.

In November, "C" Coy 2 RAR had a reunion at Caloundra Qld and Jack Trease and I invited Greg Neal and his family. During the reunion Greg presented me with a copy of a poem that another brother, Ian, had written about Dennis.

I have attached a copy of the poem in the hope that it can be published in "RINGO" sometime in the future.

Bob (Bluey) Bruce  
Gin Gin, Qld

**HASSETT AWARD 2014**<sup>17</sup>

THE RAR's leading NCO for 2014 was recognised on November 20 with the presentation of the Hassett Award.<sup>18</sup>

Cpl Daniel Smith, of 2RAR, who joined the Army in 2006, received the award for his "outstanding professionalism, dedication to duty and selfless acts" in keeping with "the finest traditions of the RAR and the Australian Army".

CO 2RAR Lt-Col Michael Bassingthwaighte said he had known Cpl Smith since 2007, when he was Cpl Smith's OC in C Coy, 2RAR, and he deployed with Reconstruction Task Force 3 to Afghanistan in October that year.

Cpl Smith said from a young age his father taught him the importance of working hard and finishing every job properly the first time. Among Cpl Smith's many notable actions was his participation in Exercise Cambrian Patrol in 2013, where his performance contributed to the team achieving Australia's first gold medal in 27 years.

Cpl Smith deployed on Operation Slipper in 2007-08 and Operation Astute in 2009 and 2011.

He will finish 2014 in Recon PI and then post to Singleton as an instructor for two years.

*Congratulations Daniell Ed.*

**GUARD DUTY & NATIONAL PRIDE**

Well you would think that in a place like post-colonial Malaysia, ceremonial guard duty would be a thing of the past? Not so! Singapore was still a British Colony and what's more the Commander in Chief, British Land Forces, Far East, resided there in a colonial mansion set in acres of park land and had a permanent Guard 24/7.

The Battalion was on the roster to provide a Guard for his residence for one week and A Company had drawn the "short straw" to supply the Guard. The intended Guard Commander, Lt Don Wilcox became ill and as he was the only single, "living in" platoon commander in A Company at the time, a replacement had to be found and I won the raffle.

So off I went to Singapore for a week with A Company's Guard. It was all pretty boring, (after all we didn't have to wear pith helmets) but a couple of matters might be of interest. I was invited to lunch with the General's wife, Lady Poet, someone else I don't recall and the General's ADC, a British Army Captain. Luckily, I had brought my David Jones light weight grey flannel suit with me so I was able to be suitably dressed for the occasion. It all went fairly well and I don't think I let the colonial side down too much, after all this is exactly the sort of occasion that Colonel "Jungle Jim" Ochiltree, Commandant at OCS, had prepared us for.

The second occasion was an invitation to go water skiing in Singapore harbour with the ADC and one of his mates. The water in Singapore harbour was pretty foul, what with all the evil smelling monsoon drains emptying into it each day so, not being an enthusiast, I said I would be pleased to come and watch. We spent most of the afternoon on the boat with them taking turns skiing and then while in the shallows of the harbour, the outboard motor went very fast but the propeller wasn't moving. 2Lt Pannell put his pre-army "fitting and turning" hat on and decided to investigate.

A small "pin" had fallen out of the propeller causing it to spin "on" the shaft instead of "with" the shaft. I explained what had happened and while they were trying to decide where to get help, I felt around in the muddy water and luckily, I found the missing pin. I inserted it in the right place and started the motor. It worked, and off we went, home to some dry clothes and a Gin and Tonic. Then back to the Battalion none the worse for wear.

Sport played a big part in the Brigade and there were many occasions where the ANZAC spirit was tested. We often played the KIWI's Rugby and so on and we also matched them on Brigade Sports Day. In preparation for such an occasion our CQMS Peter Elkins was elected coach of our (B) Company's Tug - of - War team and he struck on a way of determining the pulling strength of all the Company's potential team members. He selected a team of strong, fit men who were not big or fat; they were lean and mean. He trained them well and they pulled the socks off the other Company teams in the build up to the Brigade Sports Day.

The day arrived and our team marched smartly on to the rope while the KIWI team which consisted of overweight Maoris ambled over to the rope like this is going to be a piece cake. On the order 'Take up the strain' our chaps picked up the rope and went into their position like a well-oiled machine while the KIWI's casually picked up and leant on the rope.

On the command 'pull', our chaps who looked like weaklings beside the KIWI's, just walked away with the pull leaving the KIWI's sprawled on their butts in the dust. It was unbelievable. Quickly, the coach called the team to attention and marched them around to the other end of the rope while the KIWI's picked themselves up and ambled to their end of the rope for the second pull.

Our chaps simply repeated their initial performance leaving the KIWI's sprawled in the dust. Two straight pulls to us, it was no contest. I was proud to be an Aussie that day.

*(More anecdotes from Brian in July. Ed.)*

<sup>15</sup> Recorded in 'The Voice' Dec 2014 edition Page 9

<sup>16</sup> Cpl Ron Walker MMG PI 2RAR 17 March 1953 - 6 April 1954

<sup>17</sup> Army: The soldier's newspaper. December 4, 2014. Sgt Dave Morley

<sup>18</sup> Presented by Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove

## DENNIS WILLIAM NEAL

Dennis William Neal was born in Gympie, Queensland  
On the 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1948.  
He wasn't only a son and brother  
But also a very good mate.

He lived with his Mum and Dad  
Like every young son would do.  
He also had five brothers  
And his sisters numbered two.

The family lived on a dairy farm  
On the banks of the Mary River.  
With produce like calves, pigs and cream  
To the markets they would deliver.

Dennis rode a horse to primary school  
Which was at Scrubby Creek.  
His attendance there was very good  
And an education he would seek.

Dennis always wore a hat.  
Whether it was night or day.  
But firmly on his head  
That bloody hat would stay.

He loved swimming, fishing and shooting  
And there was always a boat to row.  
Or he would spend time with his black horse  
Whom he had named Beau.

Every chance he had, he would catch and saddle Beau  
And take him for a ride.  
With "Blue" his blue heeler cattle dog  
Trotting by their side.

It was a sad day when the neighbour's bull broke in  
And he attacked Beau poking him right and left  
Until he delivered the fatal blow  
That gored his horse to death.

There were a lot of jobs to be done on the farm  
That consisted of hard work  
Like cutting posts and falling scrub.  
These tasks Dennis would never shirk.

When Dennis left high school,  
He got work from farmers who lived around.  
A day's work in those days  
Was worth around about a pound.

It was an apprenticeship that he wanted most  
And five years into the future, Dennis could clearly see,  
With lots of study and hard work,  
One day a tradesman he would be.

Then came up a motor mechanic apprenticeship  
And Dennis was hired almost right away.  
There was no doubt in his mind  
The distance he would stay.

His new place of work was in Gympie town  
On the South side.  
He was too young to have a car  
So a push bike he would ride.

He did very well at his new job  
And picked up things really quick.  
He never had a single day off work  
Even when he was sick.

Dennis was very careful with his money  
And everything seemed to be going to what he planned.  
He bought a car, a pump action shotgun,  
And even a block of land.

The Vietnam War was raging,  
So the Australian Government brought conscription in.  
And when Dennis's number was drawn out,  
He did the only thing he could, and took it on the chin.

With 2 years of his apprenticeship left to do,  
His army life was put on hold.  
But he knew in those next 2 years  
How his apprenticeship would unfold.

In his final exam,  
He passed without a single worry at all.  
But his celebrations were short lived  
When he got the army's call.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL P01676.001  
L-R: Dennis Neal; Desmond Tully; & Peter ('Jack') Trease members of 8 Pl, C Coy, 2RAR, at Lavarack Barracks before departing for Vietnam 1970.

Dennis trained at places like Brisbane, Townsville and Singleton  
Just to name a few.  
And Dennis, being a skinny lad,  
Got the nickname of "Pull Through"

When his training was completed,  
He and his mates would be sent abroad  
To a war where machine guns chattered  
And artillery guns roared.

He left his own country on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, 1970.  
And to the Vietnam War he flew  
What the future held for him.  
He didn't have a clue.

While out on a patrol  
On the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, 12 days after he arrived,  
A mine hidden under a log was detonated  
And along with a mate, Dennis William died.

To save these two brave soldiers,  
From a war that sealed their fate,  
The end of the Vietnam War  
Came far, far too late.

Dennis was brought back to Gympie  
And was buried on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June  
And at the age of just 22 years,  
He died years and years too soon.

When Dennis died, it was very hard.  
It is something not even time will heal.  
But all his family and friends will never forget,  
Dennis William Neal.

Ian Neal (Brother), 2014

1735386 Private Dennis William NEAL  
2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment  
Vietnam  
17/05/1970 to 29/05/1970  
Age: 22+ years  
Official Commemoration: Gympie Cemetery: Lawn C - Row 2 - Grave 625

## THE LAST VIETNAM VET LEAVES THE ARMY

(Continued from page 1.) There was a third near miss while spraying rice paddies from an Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC), when the APC travelling alongside them hit a mine and ended up on the back of the escort Centurion tank in front. "I felt for wet patches, thinking I must have been hit," he said.

Exposure to Agent Orange proved to be a double-edged sword. Lester believed contact with the carcinogenic chemical saved his life because, since he was exposed to it and its long term effects became known, the ADF insisted on a health check every six months.

As a result, the cancer in his stomach and oesophagus was found in the nick of time. Radical surgery was required - he got a new oesophagus and lost most of his stomach. Judy credits herself for giving him the determination to recover.

Lester was still unconscious in intensive care 10 hours after surgery and she deliberately provoked her husband, pretending to confide to a nurse she intended to sell his Harley Davidson motorbike. Lester woke shouting: "Like hell, you're going to sell my bike!"

Doctors estimated Lester had a 20 per cent chance of surviving and everyday he savours his second chance at life. He woke up with the perspective that if he hadn't been exposed to Agent Orange, the cancer would not have been caught in time.

He might be right — in a cruel twist of fate, Lester's younger brother, John, was diagnosed with the same cancer but it was not detected in time for doctors to operate, and as a result, doctors said John's chances were slim.

Despite discharging three times from the ADF during his career, he quickly moved up the ranks during his 47 years of service.

Lester first left the Army three years after returning from Vietnam to become an interstate truckie based in Gatton. Then, having acquired all the skills a truckie needs, he re-joined the Army in April, 1978, this time with the Royal Australian Corps of Transport.

Mackay was calling for the couple to return to the town where their courtship began in 1981 and Lester, now in Defence Recruiting, managed to get a posting to Townsville. Judy recalled meeting Lester in the Commonwealth Employment Services (CES) office where Judy worked.

Lester used the CES offices in Mackay to conduct interviews for Defence recruitment. "Old savvy here, used to sit on my desk and stir me," Judy said.

Lester's recall is only slightly tinted by modesty. "I was suave, good looking and handsome," he said. Cards and flowers would always appear as Lester wooed Judy into a life with which she was already quite familiar, having grown up in an Air Force family. Even now, the inter-service rivalry is apparent in their relationship.

The lack of romance in Lester's forthright marriage proposal was typical of the charm he lavished on her, Judy said sarcastically. It happened when Lester was driving them home from Ayr, Judy passing him pieces of fried chicken which they ate in the car.

"Well, I suppose we should get married then," he said, between bites.

Marriage counselling was a pre-requisite in the Lutheran Church, as they had each been married before.

Part of this course required 100 per cent correct response to a 20-question test of knowledge about roles in the relationship and Judy got three questions wrong.

As a result, the pastor almost refused to marry them. Lester said on the test they both managed their financial portfolio while Judy said it was Lester's responsibility.

Ironically, when reality kicked in, Judy was the money manager and Lester was the spender. Those roles reversed recently.

"Judy's on an allowance now. When it's gone, it's gone," Lester said, maliciously referring to the years during which he was given a fortnightly allowance that never lasted.

They went back to Mackay when Lester left the Army so they could be closer to Judy's family and Lester became a supervisor for Boral Gas.

That sparked his interest in safety and led him to study risk management and safety first at CQ University, and later, at the Brisbane QUT. They moved to Bribie Island where Lester was the safety management and risk officer at the Caboolture Shire Council.

His expertise in safety and risk management led to him being offered a new position as Force Preservation Officer at HQ 1Div.

It was a captain's position and the prospect of going to the "dark side" proved a mental hurdle for Lester.

As an RSM, he had always been in "the soldier's corner" but his passion to promote, develop and grow safety in the Army overrode those problems. "It [rank] didn't matter to me, but the job did," Lester said.

Just when life became familiar and routine, the Army knocked on the door again, asking him to transfer from the Reserves to the regular army.

For the third time, Lester wrestled with the decision, this time after deliberating with the family, some of whom would be left behind when he joined again.

Married for 30 years and a Defence family for 34 years, there have been plenty of bumps along the way.

"Life in Defence can be challenging, yet rewarding," Judy said.

"You have three choices fight, leave, or make it work. We chose to make it work." There is also the family policy: "your rank stops at the gate". Family policy, however, goes out the window when Lester (aka the Detour Specialist) is driving.

"You never know where you'll end up," Judy said, and clearly, she was not allowed to have her say about that.

Lester's assertion that "separation" had kept them together through more than 34 years drew a look from Judy suggesting the "family policy" was, however, always in effect.

The couple spoke with pride and remorse about raising their four children, two of whom were serving in the ADF. They also have five grandchildren.

The remorse was because Lester's memories were mostly gleaned through stories in which he was not a participant and photographs in which he was missing.

Their recollections were laced with a sense of loss for each of the milestones he missed.

"I missed out because I was a military moron first, with family second," Lester said. Their perspective has changed since cancer interrupted their lives.

"Going forward, rather than trying to change the past has strengthened our family," Lester said. "You can't change the past, but you can learn from it."

Rather than put things off, we just do them now. "When we want something, we just get it."

The relationship with their children is stronger than ever and while Judy patiently waits for Lester to properly propose marriage, the couple is busy making new memories which include Lester. "If I could make one difference in the life of a soldier, it could make all the difference for all the soldiers coming through," Lester said.

Although Maj Mengel officially retired on Friday, February 13, 2015, his commitment continues as a Reservist.

While there are a lot of kilometres behind them on their "road well-travelled", it's obviously nowhere near the end of the road.

*With permission: Northern Services Courier March 5, 2015. Pages: 12-13*

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**DISCLAIMER: We have in preparing this newsletter used our best endeavours to ensure that the information contained in this newsletter is true and accurate, but accept no responsibility and disclaim all liability in respect of any errors, omissions, inaccuracies or misstatements contained in this newsletter**

2ND BATTALION  
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT  
ASSOCIATION, INC.



II

NEW  
MEMBERSHIP

RENEW  
MEMBERSHIP

NEW  
ADDRESS

FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Tele: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ Mob: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Regimental No: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

## RAR Service

RAR Battalions	1 RAR	2RAR	3RAR	4 RAR	5 RAR	6 RAR	7 RAR	8 RAR	9 RAR	2/4 RAR	5/7 RAR	8/9 RAR
Years e.g. 1970-71												

## Theatres Served/Years:

Japan	Korea	Malaya	Malaysia	Vietnam	Cambodia	Rwanda	East Timor	Solomon Is	Iraq	Timor Lesté	Afghanistan	Other

Post-Nominals: \_\_\_\_\_

Wife/Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

(Financial Year: 1 October to 30 September)

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

\$20

## MULTI-YEAR MEMBERSHIP

\$40 - \$60 - \$80 - \$100

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2014

Receipt Required? YES/NO

## MERCHANDISE PRICE LIST

(All prices are inclusive of transaction fees, postage & packaging)

ITEM	PRICE	QTY	ITEM	PRICE	QTY
Cap: Black - "2nd Battalion"	\$34.00		Pewter Drink Coaster - RAR Badge	\$24.00	
Cap: Black/Silver - "ICB Badge"	\$34.00		Pewter Drink Coaster - ICB Badge	\$24.00	
Lapel Badge - "2RAR"	\$12.00		Pewter Belt Buckle - ICB Badge	\$27.00	
Polo Shirt: Black/Gold - "2nd Battalion" M(97)L(102)XL(107)2XL(112)3XL(117)	\$47.00		Iron On Badge - 2RAR	\$12.00	
Sport Shirt: Black/White - "Second To None" L(102) XL(107) 2XL(112) 3XL(117)	\$47.00		Bumper Sticker - 2RAR Association	\$5.00	
Tee Shirt: Black/White - "Second To None" L(102) XL(107) 2XL(112) 3XL(117)	\$31.00		Bumper Sticker - Vietnam Veteran	\$8.00	
Tie: 2RAR Tie (New style)	\$27.00		Bumper Sticker - 2nd Battalion	\$8.00	
Stubby Cooler - "2RAR"	\$10.00		Car Registration Plate Frames - 2nd Battalion	\$18.00	
Stubby Cooler - "Second To No Bastard"	\$10.00		Note Pad - Leather - ICB Badge	\$20.00	
Sticker (Oval) - "ICB"	\$5.00		Badge: ICB Metal/Bronze - Large	\$14.00	
Sticker (Round) - "2RAR"	\$5.00		Badge: ICB Metal/Bronze - Small	\$12.00	
Key Ring - Black/Gold	\$14.00		Badge: Returned from Active Service (RAS) Metal/Bronze	\$14.00	
Wall Plaque : 2RAR	\$47.00		Badge: Rising Sun - Gold/Metal	\$14.00	
Book: 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Bn 1967-68 Vol 1. Reprint 1985	\$90.00		Money Fold Leather with credit card pockets - RAS badge	\$30.00	
Book: Trackers Vietnam 1967/68. Peter Haran	\$29.00		Flag: 2RAR Black (48 cm x 31 cm)	\$17.00	
2RAR Sash: 2RAR (Funeral)	\$20.00		Name Tag: Preferred name: _____	\$25.00	

Package Deal 1	Package Deal 2	Package Deal 3	Package Deal 4
Polo shirt & Cap \$73.00 (save \$8.00)	Sports shirt & Cap \$73.00 (save \$8.00)	Polo shirt, Cap & Tie \$98.00 (save \$10.00)	Sports shirt, Cap & Tie \$98.00 (save \$10.00)

ONLINE PAYMENTS:  
2RAR Association, Inc.  
Suncorp Bank, BSB: 484-799  
Account no: 063 350 355

For membership, and/or merchandise email\*post the above form to: PO Box 1097  
Toombul Qld 4012.  
For online payments, include your initials, name and description: ('1 - 5 year  
membership', &/or 'Merchandise') to allow your payment to be identified.  
\*2rarsecretary@gmail.com