



nulli secundus

2ND 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: MAJOR GENERAL M.D. SLATER AO, DSC, CSC (RETD)

OCTOBER 2016

THE BATTALION REPORT

'Capable, Adaptive Partners' on Ex RIMPAC 16

Amphibious Ready Element – Alpha (ARE-A), based on A Coy and elements from 2 CAV REGT, 3 CSSB, 3 CSR, 3 CER, 10 FSB and the RAAF, deployed on Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 16 in mid-June aboard the RAN's flagship, the Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) HMAS CANBERRA.



CO 2RAR Lt Col Michael Bassingthwaighe, DSM, addresses the Samichon Memorial Service at Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

The 348-person strong Landing Force were augmented by two US Marine Corps Platoons from the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment (2/3 Bn) and a Coy HQ and Platoons from the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (RNZIR) and His Majesty's Armed Forces of Tonga (HMAF). The latter relationship was formalised through the temporary re-raising of Victor Coy, and the Battalion title, "2RAR/NZ Landing Force", in homage to the integration that occurred in March 1968. This formed the largest land force commitment to RIMPAC in history.

For 2RAR, the first phase of RIMPAC 16 began at Marine Corps Base – Hawaii (MCBH), Kāne'ohe Bay on the Eastern coast of O'ahu Island. This phase served as the integration piece between the US Marines from the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) and the Battalion.

Key activities included weapons familiarisation, static live-fire range practices, Shallow Water Egress Training (SWET), Manoeuvre Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT), Ground-Air Integration Training (GAIT) with a range of rotary wing aircraft (including CH53D *Sea Stallion* and MV-22 *Osprey*),

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Assault Amphibious Vehicle (AAV-P7/A1) familiarisation training, Small Boats Platoon training in high sea-state and a beach landing site establishment race between members of the Australian Amphibious Beach Team (ABT) from 10 FSB and their US counterparts. 10 FSB won.



2RAR soldiers conduct a 10-day live-fire training at Pohakuloa training area on Hawaii Island.

The Battalion also commemorated the Battle of Samichon River, alongside our USMC brothers-in-arms (the 1st Marine Division fought on 2RAR's flank, left of the Hook).

The first Harbour Phase at MCBH proved invaluable to the effective force integration of the Battalion Landing Team and their USMC counterparts, before re-embarking HMAS CANBERRA and re-deploying to Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA), Hawaii Island. (Continued on page 2).

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WARRIORS WHO HAVE MARCHED OUT

- W98796, WX40384, 5/400235, 52852 Corporal Herbert Oswald BECKE, WW2 1943-46, 10 LH, 11 Bn AIF, 2nd Aust Fd Arty Trg Regt (Gnr), Japan 1952 (K Force), 1RAR, 2RAR Korea 1952-53 (Pte), 2RAR Japan 1953, 2RAR Malaya 1955-57 (Pte), Malaysia 1960-61 (Pte). 4RAR Vietnam 1968-69, 1971 (LCpl). 2/4RAR 1973 (Cpl). Passed away WA on 18 May. Age: 91+ years. An old and weary soldier gone but never forgotten, you can stand down now. Thanks "Yuki" Barnes, "Toad" Fletcher
- 215581 Warrant Officer Class One (WO, RSM-A) Arthur Murphy FRANCIS, 2RAR Vietnam 1967-68 (Cpl), 1970-71 (Sgt), 3RAR, 4RAR, 8/9RAR. Funeral held at Singleton, NSW on 16 August. Age: 70+ Years. Thanks Gordon Hurford
- 29060 Warrant-Officer Class 2 Thomas Derek NICOL, 2RAR Korea 1953. Veteran of the HOOK. HQ 1ATF Vietnam 1969-70 RAASC. Age: 83+ years. Funeral held 29 July at Mona Vale, NSW. Tom was a parachute mate of John Church (dec.) CO 2RAR 1970-71. Thanks Bob Wallace
- 18278 Craftsman William Leonard (Len) CROSSLEY 2RAR Korea 1953-54 RAEME. Veteran of the HOOK. Passed away 11 September. Age: 88 Years. Thanks Brian Iselin
- 2783461 Lance-Corporal James Edward GALBRAITH, 2RAR Vietnam 1967. DOB: 5 May 1945. Recorded in the Journal of the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia.
- 16823 Warrant Officer Class 1 Robert Ernest (Marbuc) MCKEOWN, 3RAR Malaysia 1963-65, 2RAR Vietnam 1967-68, 1970-71 8 PI C Coy. Dad passed away at Wagga Wagga. Funeral was held 8 July. Age: 72+ years. Thanks Tracey Lakey (Daughter), Mick Bell, Bill Parry
- 2786134 Lance-Corporal Anthony John MITCHELL, 2RAR 1967-68, D&E PL, HQ 1 ATF 1968. Passed away 16 July at Bowral Private Hospital after a long and courageous fight with cancer. Thanks Phil Moscatt, Ray McCann, Brian McFarlane ¹



*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

AGM, COMMEMORATION & REUNION 2016

See you at Twin Towns!

The AGM will be held on Sat 29 Oct 16 in the ANZAC Room Tweed Heads & Coolangatta RSL, the Commemoration Service at Chris Cunningham Park (under shade), and the Annual Reunion in the River Room at Twin Towns Services Club. Looking forward to seeing YOU.

See Notice of AGM page 11.

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.

(Continued from page 1). Among the lava rocks, skeletal trees and brown grass, and aside from the odd wild goat, there are few signs of life. PTA proved an excellent location for live-firing and saw the Battalion engage in Sniper/Marksman practices, fire-team assault grenade practices, static high-explosive weapons alongside our 108 Battery, 2RAR's organic fire support unit, conducted a Joint Coalition Fire Support Coordination Exercise (FSCEX) alongside Weapons Company 2/3 Bn and A Battery, 1/12 (1st Battalion, 12th Marines) and utilising a range of delivery platforms (including Close-Air Support) and weapon systems, including F18 *Super-Hornet*, AH-1 *Cobra*, AH1Z *Viper (Huey)*, 155mm Artillery and 81mm Mortars. The FSCEX concluded with participation in a 155mm Gun-line Artillery raid. The ASLAV Troop, call-sign V12, conducted a partnered exercise with the Combined Anti-Armour Team (CAAT), 2/3 Bn, and fired their armament alongside TOW missiles.



108 Battery, 2RAR's organic fire support unit, conducted a Joint Coalition Fire Support Coordination Exercise (FSCEX) alongside Weapons Company 2/3 Bn and A Battery, 1/12 (1st Battalion, 12th Marines) and utilising a range of delivery platforms (including Close-Air Support) and weapon systems, including F18 *Super-Hornet*, AH-1 *Cobra*, AH1Z *Viper (Huey)*, 155mm Artillery and 81mm Mortars. The FSCEX concluded with participation in a 155mm Gun-line Artillery raid. The ASLAV Troop, call-sign V12, conducted a partnered exercise with the Combined Anti-Armour Team (CAAT), 2/3 Bn, and fired their armament alongside TOW missiles. This series of live-firing offered a unique training opportunity and further enforced force integration and combat excellence, setting the conditions for the commencement of the 'free-play phase'.

2RAR played a central role in three-ship Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) operations throughout RIMPAC, ahead of conducting ARG operations as part of the Australian Amphibious Force next year. The 'free-play' amphibious lodgement at Marine Corps Training Area – Bellows (Beach) provided a superb opportunity to rehearse as a Battalion Landing Team, as part of an ARG.

The Coalition partnership was put to the test as the Battalion Landing Team effectively secured a Beach Landing Site at Bellows, then subsequently seized and secured several objectives in built-up terrain. Small Boats Platoon inserted the Pre-Landing Force (including Reconnaissance and Snipers) by zodiac, then made way for the ABT to set the conditions for Bushmasters and ASLAV to lodge ashore.

Ultimately, RIMPAC 16 provided the opportunity for the Battalion to rehearse amphibious operations best practice and as part of an ARG, forging Coalition partnerships that will stand the unit in good stead as it drives forward on its own journey of amphibious capability development.

¹ Tony Mitchell was one of 4 national servicemen posted at the same time to 2RAR, but apparently spent their full tour in D&E PI HQ 1ATF. The DoD Statement of Service

differs; 2RAR: 24 October 1967 to 9 April 1968 & 15 April 1968 to 22 October 1968. Note: Tony's name does not appear in the 2RAR Vietnam 1967-68 book.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the October 2016 edition of "Ringo". The year is moving by very quickly and the Association is gearing up for a major reunion in Brisbane from 17-21 May next year. I would like to see maximum attendance and I encourage all members to start planning now for this outstanding event.



President Leo Van De Kamp & Patron Maj Gen Mick Slater

The Reunion Committee has been very busy identifying suitable venues for the various activities and these have now been agreed.

Registration details are contained in the insert of this newsletter and I urge you to register early to take advantage of the early bird savings. The invitation is for all those who served with 2RAR and 2/4RAR, not just for those who are members

of the 2RAR Association. So if you have an ex-2RAR or 2/4RAR mate who is not a member of the Association, why not encourage them to come along and enjoy the functions. Keep an eye on our website for information and updates.

The Secretary and I were invited by CO 2RAR to attend a number of ceremonial activities in Townsville 1-3 September 2016. On 1 September the Battalion put on a ceremonial parade to lay up the 2RAR's third Stand of Colours at the All Saints Chapel at Lavarack Barracks. The Battalion's new Queens and Regimental Colours were issued in November 2015. On the evening of 2 September, 2RAR marched along the Strand and Exercised its Freedom of Entry to the City of Townsville, finishing at Jezzine Barracks.

Both parades were outstanding and are a credit to all members of the Battalion.

Whilst in Townsville, we took the opportunity to have discussions with Lt Col Michael Bassingthwaite, DSM and his staff. I would like to thank the CO and all members of the battalion for their hospitality during our visit. We also had the opportunity to meet with the Association Patron, Maj Gen Mick Slater AO, DSC, CSC (Retd) who also attended the 2RAR celebrations.

The Royal Australian Regiment Corporation AGM and National Council Meeting will be held at Keswick Barracks, Adelaide from 2-4 October 2016. This meeting will be attended by Corporation Board Members; Presidents of State/Territory RAR Associations as well as National Presidents of RAR Battalion Associations or their appointed delegates. A number of key speakers, including the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Infantry Corps Regimental Colonel as well as a number of other guests have been invited to attend. The conference will discuss current advocacy issues, DVA matters, individual RAR Association issues as well as look at the future directions and develop a strategic plan covering the next five years. An outline action plan will be issued at the completion of the conference.

The 2016 2RAR Association AGM and annual reunion will again be held at the Twin Towns Services Club, Tweed Heads 28-29 October this year. Both our Patron Maj Gen Mick Slater AO, DSC, CSC (Retd) and the CO 2RAR Lt Col Michael Bassingthwaite, DSM have indicated that they plan to attend this reunion. Planning for the reunion is well advanced and details are contained in this Newsletter.

This annual reunion provides a great opportunity to catch up with old mates as well as make new ones. I am confident

that we can make this another successful 2RAR Association event.

The Association was invited to send a representative to the 50th Anniversary of Long Tan Day celebrations held at the Australian War Memorial 17-18 August 2016. Mr Simon Whitehead, a 2RAR 1st tour Vietnam veteran attended on behalf of the Association. Simon has also agreed to take on the role of the 2RAR Association representative in the ACT.

The Secretary and I also took the opportunity to meet with our North Queensland representative Jock Cassidy who continues to work closely with 2RAR to seek ways in which the Association can support Battalion activities. He has organised a unit fishing competition for members and families with the Association providing some funding support as well as a Company barefoot bowls day. He organised a family day in Train Park South Townsville on 18 September for 2RAR and Association members' families sponsored by the Association.

Everyone were well entertained with animal petting, face painting and of course the train rides! About 80 people attended including battalion, Legacy, VVAA and Association members and families. The VVAA supplied and cooked 123 sausages, and the Sallyman supplied hot and cold drinks.

As a means of attracting new members from the North Queensland region, an Association dinner is planned in Townsville for late November. The Association will provide some subsidy for attendees to encourage participation. Well done Jock. Your continued support to 2RAR members and their families is certainly appreciated by the Battalion.

On Association membership, we continue to have a membership base of around 600. We need to develop strategies to attract the next generation of veterans to join the Association.

There are still a lot of ex-2RAR members out there who we would like to see join the 2RAR family. To facilitate the sharing of Association information more widely, we have now created a Facebook Page which is up and running.

Members can access our page via the following link below.² Once you have accessed the page, could you please: Click on 'Like'. Provide feedback.

My thanks to the Association management committee for their continued hard work. A special thanks also to Rick Hollingdrake for again producing an outstanding Newsletter.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the October annual reunion at Tweed Heads.

"Second to None"

Leo Van De Kamp
President

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

In 2016 committee meetings will be held as follows:

- Wed 3 Feb 16 ✓
- Wed 1 Jun 16 ✓
- Wed 12 Oct 16
- Wed 6 Apr 16 ✓
- Wed 3 Aug 16 ✓
- Wed 7 Dec 16

MEMBERS' DRAW

Congratulations to Barry Tinkler, MBE, of Glenning Valley, NSW winner of the financial Members' Draw held on 3 August who received the book: Australian Military Operations In Vietnam, by Albert Palazzo. 2nd edition 2009.

DVA WEBSITE: NOMINAL ROLLS

The new DVA website combines the Nominal Rolls of veterans who served during World War Two, Korean War, Vietnam War and First Gulf War. Why no Malaya/Borneo? View new site here: <http://nominal-rolls.dva.gov.au/home>

² <https://www.facebook.com/2RAR-Association-Inc-1183231068415223/>

THE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Door Gunners

Wings were presented to the NOK of Kerry Pearce in Albany WA on 18th August. Alex Nie, our representative in WA made the journey with Keith Taylor (RAN) to Albany to make the presentation; all had a very successful day. The Pearce family were extremely proud recipients of Kerry's wings.

2017 National Reunion

It is important for all to understand that this is a nation-wide reunion for all who have served in 2RAR and 2/4RAR at any time. The theme of the reunion will be, "Where old mates reunite". Planning is progressing well the following program is confirmed:

- Wednesday 17th May 2017. Organise your own sub unit or platoon reunion as a warm-up for the next few days.
- Thursday 18th May 2017. Meet and Greet at South Bank Piazza from 5.00pm until 7.00pm
- Friday 19th May 2017. Commemorative Service at the National Memorial Walk (NMW) Enoggera commencing around 10.00am, followed by stroll through NMW, lunch at 12.00noon. There may be some other activity arranged for the afternoon such as a static weapons display, vehicles and possibly aircraft display, or even a demonstration. Details are yet to be determined.
- Saturday 20th May 2017. Reunion Dinner is at the Brisbane Convention and Entertainment Centre (BCEC) commencing at 6.30 pm with pre-dinner drinks. Dinner will conclude at 12.00 midnight.
- Sunday 21st May 2017. "Dismissal Parade". Ladies lunch at Pony Dining (beautiful restaurant on the Brisbane River). Men will have a BBQ lunch at the iconic Breakfast Creek Hotel in the Rum Bar.

For the Commemorative Service on Friday 19th May 2017, medals are to be worn as entitled.

Registration by attendees is essential and is now open. You can register:

- Online at: <http://www.2rar-association.net.au>
- By downloading a registration form from the website and completing it and mailing it to the address shown on the form
- Use the registration form we have inserted in RINGO and mail it to the address shown on the form

The cost of the reunion per person is:

- \$180.00 if you pay before 30th November 2016. We call this "early bird"
- \$200.00 if you do not pay until 1st December 2016 but before 31st March 2017
- \$225.00 if you do not pay until 1 April or later.

Please note: Your registration is NOT completed until fees have been received

Accommodation. The Reunion Committee suggests that if you want to get in early for accommodation in Brisbane, that the centre of gravity would be South Bank. There is plenty of accommodation on South Bank or just across the river in the Brisbane CBD. There are also a number of caravan/holiday parks around Brisbane. The closest ones to the CBD are Newmarket and Aspley. Check the Internet for further details.

Battalion Museum

The CO has advised that John Ferguson was selected to be the new Curator of the Battalion museum. He will take over later in the year. John Toomey, the present curator will continue as a part time volunteer. The dioramas are still in production; The Hook is almost finished, with Malaya and FSB Vietnam is underway. The Association has assisted with some funding for the museum refurbishment.

Funeral for Arthur Francis

I attended the funeral for Arthur (Frangar) Francis on Tuesday 16th August at the Anglican Church in Singleton. He was buried with full military honours. The Chief of Army attended as the Official Mourner, the Sydney Army Band provided all the required military music and Infantry Centre Singleton provided the full guard. Ray Frankel, a good mate of Arthur's gave a eulogy, as did members of his family. I estimated that there was more than 500 people attending and there were more Warrant Officers Class 1 than I have ever seen in the one place – pace sticks everywhere! Following the service at the church, refreshments were served at the Singleton RSL Club.

State Representatives

I want to say a special thank you to the State Representatives. Each representative contributes significantly to the efficient functioning of the Association. We are very appreciative of your involvement. I would like to specifically mention Jock Cassidy whose role is much more under the spotlight as he is our direct link with the Battalion. Jock is involved daily with Association matters and he is well connected to the NCOs of the Battalion. Thanks Jock. Because of your work we enjoy an enviable relationship with the CO, RSM and all ranks of the Battalion.

Association Dinner

The Association, through Jock Cassidy, is planning to hold a dinner in Townsville, which would be aimed at recruiting new members for the Association from NQ region. The dinner will be held at the Townsville RSL. It was planned to have one-third current members, one-third Battalion members and one-third potential new members with a cap at 60. The dinner is scheduled for 4th November. The CO will be approached to be a Guest Speaker. The President Leo will also be attending. Depending on the success of this dinner, we may consider promoting the Association in other regions particularly where we are aware there is a concentration of previous 2RAR members who are not yet members.

Membership

This closely aligns to the objective of the Management Committee whose aim is to not only increase the number of members but more importantly to find new younger members, particularly those who served after 1975.

Some younger members are critical to a successful Committee succession plan. Don't wait for the Committee ... if you know of an ex-2RAR member who is not an Association member, please encourage them to join. I like to call it ... "Make a mate a member"

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2RAR ASSOC. EMAIL LIST

Not receiving emails from us? Left out of the loop? In the dark? Subscribe to the Secretary's email List.

Email the Secretary! 2rarsecretary@gmail.com

MAJOR GENERAL JOHN FREWEN AM, CSC

Major General John Frewen is a career infantry officer whose father and grandfather also served in the Australian Army. He completed his secondary education at Xavier College in Melbourne and graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon, in 1986.



Maj Gen Frewen (CO 2RAR 2003-04) will deploy as Comd Joint Task Force 633 (JTF 633) in command of our ME forces from Jan 17 for 12 months.

His first appointment was as an Infantry Platoon Commander in the First Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR). He later served again with 1RAR as a Company Commander (including a tour as the Officer Commanding of the Australian Rifle Company Butterworth, Malaysia) and as the Operations Officer.

Major General Frewen commanded the Second Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment (2RAR) from December 2002 until December 2004, and the 1st Brigade from October 2012 until October 2014.

In training appointments, Major General Frewen has conducted the Australian Infantry Platoon Commander's Course; been Senior Instructor of Tactics at the Officer Cadet School in New Zealand; and led the Australian Army's Battle Command Wing of the Combat Training Centre. Major General Frewen has held a range of staff appointments, most notably Military Assistant to the Chief of Army in 2006, the Director Military Strategic Commitments in Australian Defence Headquarters in 2008/2009 and Chief of Staff Headquarters Forces Command in 2011/2012.

His operational service includes Rwanda with the United Nations in 1993/94; leadership of the regional military intervention force in support of the re-establishment of law and order in the Solomon Islands in 2003 (a force comprising 1800 military personnel drawn from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Tonga); and Afghanistan, as both the Australian National Commander in Kabul and later, in Kandahar, coordinating NATO efforts to rebuild the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police in Regional Command (South).

Major General Frewen is a graduate of the University of New South Wales, the Australian Army Command and Staff College and the US Army War College. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree and Masters Degrees in both Defence and Strategic Studies.

He was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his leadership in the Solomon Islands. Major General Frewen also received the United States Meritorious Service Medal as a Strategic Plans Officer with the Headquarters of the United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) in Hawaii. Other awards include the Army Journal Chauvel Essay Prize in 2008, a Future Summit Australian Leadership Award in 2009 and the US Secretary of Defense National Security Essay Prize in 2010 (the first non-US recipient of that award).

Major General Frewen is married to Jenelle with two children. He is the Chairman of the Australian Services Rugby Union and his leisure interests include rugby union, surfing and reading. He took up his current appointment as Head Military Strategic Commitments in October 2014.

EULOGY: ARTHUR MURPHY FRANCIS, CSC OAM

Hello my name is Reg, Reg Frankel I'm a mate of Arthur's. I have known and been mates with him for fifty years, but many of you here today have also known him for a long time so I am also trying to speak about Arthur as your mate. I hope I also speak on behalf of those of you that haven't been in the military, but have your own close connection.



Arthur Murphy Francis. Arthur, Arty, Dad, Pop, Uncle Arty.

At this point some of you in the audience will be saying; who is that idiot up there – very one knows he's Frangar – Frangar Francis. Just like Scruffy is Robin or Sparkes Peter.

I'm just putting it out there because you are going to hear it a lot today and you need to know who the conversation is about. A greeting I'm sure that Pam and her family are

going to hear today is "G'day I'm Bill or Bob and I was a mate of Frangars"

I've thought about this a lot over the last week – and initially didn't want to do anything at all until someone said, you should because he'd do it for you (thanks Eric Pearson) – I hope you will bear with me and in the end it will make some sense. Some years ago Arthur was asked to contribute to the content of a new soldier's handbook; and he chose to write about mates – mateship. Something that he and I talked about a lot and firmly believe in and as some of you know; those of you that have read the book - he mentioned me in this context. He also mentioned the relationship that our wives have – the sisters. We believe in the mateship that is spoken about in the same breath as Gallipoli, Tobruk and Kokoda. We believe that soldiers have to have someone close to them, someone they can depend on, trust and who is not afraid to be held accountable – attributes that Arthur had and actively practiced.

Over the years we have all watched Arthur progress to the pinnacle of his career – RSM of the Army. We have all watched with pride, some of us knowing that we had the honour of serving with him. Arthur was a fine soldier, a brave and caring man who was respected by all who passed his way. He was a loyal friend to us all, a tower of strength and guidance to his family. He was a great man.

The other day a few of us were sitting around at Pammy and Arthurs house and we were talking to their eldest granddaughter – Emma- and we asked her what she remembered about her Pop when he was in uniform. Well, she couldn't remember anything because when she was born he had already discharged from the army.

Then we wondered what all the kids would make of what was happening today and could they make any sense of it. By the way; we aim to make sure that we get them all together and with the right people explain. What this was all about and why all the soldiers were here celebrating their pop's life at his funeral. We have already started that process the other night at a family get-together where someone spoke about Arthur and what he meant to that person. Well I've thought about that and when I strip all the ceremony and service away from what is taking place I believe that today its simply about a group of likeminded people saying farewell to a mate – the army way.

Goodbye mate.

SNIPPETS

- In September, the Battalion laid-up their old colours in the All Saints Chapel at Lavarack Barracks. In conjunction with the Laying-up, the Battalion exercised its right of Freedom of the City of Townsville³ which was conducted on The Strand, and included a Battalion Ball as well. All over 3 days.

HISTORIES PAGE

Yesteryear 1958/59, before we got the SLR 7.62; Lee-Enfield's.303 at the Slope. A Coy, 2 Bn RAR, changing the Guard at the War Memorial, Hyde Park, Sydney.



L-R: Sgt H.E. Smith (RSM 8RAR 1971-73), Cpl John Randell, Pte J.N. Hemerik (RSM 2/4RAR 1977-79), Pte "Blue" Calder, + 2 unknown.

Only the best, the ones who had no overseas service in the Coy; the others were too smart! Note our new blackened US gaiters! "They were the days my friends". Thanks 'Dutchy'

- Association member Brigadier JJ Shelton, DSO MC renewed his membership recently for 2 years, following a prompt. In his note to the Secretary, he said: "My only excuse is that as a 66 Aust Inf Bn member I must be slowing down." Brigadier Shelton service included 66 Aust Inf Bn, 2RAR, 4RAR, 6RAR, and 9RAR.
- Sad news on the passing of LCpl Herbert Oswald BECKE: My memory tells me that Herbie served in WW2. He told me a story about when he joined up in 1941 and asked for enlistment in the Light Horse where he was accepted and was sent to Northam to join 10 LH. When they kitted him and gave him a horse, his feet would not reach the stirrups. As a result, he was posted to 11Bn AIF. I have no proof of this but he certainly wore the Medals. As a Private soldier in 2RAR when I marched-in in 1960, he was a senior soldier who was always willing to help out new recruits. He was in C Company with Big Stan and Rufus Symons. He stayed there until he joined 4RAR in 1964. He then served with 4RAR in various roles until leaving the Battalion to return to Perth where he was a Mess Orderly at Campbell Barracks until retirement. Following this he returned to the same job as a civilian where he worked until age and ill health forced him to retire. Rest in Peace Herbie. Charles Tony (Toad) Fletcher
- Sad news on the passing at Caloundra, Qld of RSM Jack Currie, MBE. Jack served with 3RAR & 1RAR Korea (Cpl), 1RAR Malaya (Sgt), 1RAR Vietnam (WO2), and 1RAR Malaysia/Townsville (RSM). Please pass the word down, particularly to the old khaki and green column the details of the final farewell for one of the old and beloved warriors of the Regiment who personified its motto "Duty First". George Mansford.

CALENDAR 2016

Mon 1 Feb	2/4RAR delinked to form 2RAR & 4RAR (1995)	Townsville, Qld Holsworthy, NSW
Mon 25 Apr	ANZAC Day	Local arrangements
Fri 22 Jul	Samichon Day Commemorating the Battle of the HOOK 24/25 July 1953. At 11am. Mick Kohlhoff (02) 9451 7603	The Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park, Sydney, NSW
Sat 23 Jul	Korea Veterans' Day Memorial Service (Cascade Gardens). At 10am.	Korean War Memorial, Broadbeach, Qld
Sat 27 Jul	Korea Veterans' Day 63rd Anniversary of the Armistice in Korea 27 July 1953	Local arrangements
Mon 15 Aug	2RAR & 4 RAR link to form 2/4RAR (1973)	Townsville, Qld
Thu 18 Aug	Vietnam Veterans' Day	Local arrangements
Wed 31 Aug	National Malaya & Borneo Veterans' Day. Merdeka (Independence or Freedom) Day	Local arrangements
Sun 16 Oct	2RAR Birthday 1945 (71 st Anniversary)	Labuan, North Borneo
Fri 28 Oct	2RAR Annual National Reunion "Meet, Greet & Dine" (4.00pm Harbour Lounge)	Twin Towns Services Club, Tweed Heads, NSW
Sat 29 Oct	8.30am: AGM: ANZAC Room 9.45am: Commemoration Service 10.30am: Reunion: 'River Room', Level 3 "Mates, Memories, Camaraderie"	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta RSL Chris Cunningham Park Twin Towns Services Club, Tweed Heads, NSW
Fri 11 Nov	Remembrance Day	Local arrangements
Wed 23 Nov	RAR Birthday 1948 (68th Anniversary)	Hiro, Japan
Thu 18 - Sat 20 May 2017	2RAR National Reunion <i>Where old mates reunite</i>	Brisbane, Qld

- Gordon had a call from Dasher Dean recently and told him that he had been in hospital at St Vincent's in Main Street, Kangaroo Point. He was having pain management treatment (after an operation last month) and said that he has relief for the first time in many years. He was in good spirits and said that the hospital staff had told him he would be on drugs for 14 days. Get well soon Dasher. *Had a chat with Dasher (he was in Melbourne), he hopes to get to the reunion. Ed.*
- I had a wonderful lunch with Matt Rennie and son at Ipswich on Korea Day, then at six pm the Sherwood /Indooroopilly Sub Branch put on a full outline of the battle of the Hook and surrounding areas, with maps showing where 2RAR was. The bunker was mentioned, also Cooper. It was bloody marvellous and sad and disturbing. Then I was called up to present the poster of 2RAR the Hook to the Sub Branch. Dasher is a very proud Korea veteran. Kevin 'Dasher' Dean

³ 2RAR was granted the Freedom of the City of Townsville on 15 October 1971

DROP SHORTS

37822 Corporal Phillip Ness DOBSON, MID ⁴

(6RAR) Long Tan veterans lose medic who saved 23

Just five weeks before the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, a hero who kept 23 wounded Australian soldiers alive on the dark, wet Vietnamese battlefield has died.



Friends of former medic Philip "Doc" Dobson say the 75-year-old died on 10 July in Ipswich, west of Brisbane, on Sunday night. He had been recovering from a stroke. During the battle in the Long Tan rubber plantation on August 18, 1966, 18 Australian soldiers were killed and 24 were injured. Vietcong forces lost 245 soldiers with another 350

wounded, as the Australian troops pushed forward with artillery fire. Not one of the 23 wounded Australian soldiers who made it to a makeshift battleground clinic, set up and managed by Corporal Dobson, died.

Platoon commander Geoff Kendall said Mr Dobson continued to care for the wounded after the battle.

"He was going to all the unconscious men, and putting a safety clip between their lip and their tongue, to stop them swallowing their tongue," Mr Kendall said. [Link: http://bit.ly/2d2Wkux](http://bit.ly/2d2Wkux)

"I can't give you an answer why ... how some of them survived. But they did," he said in a 2006 documentary. "For some reason — don't ask me why — they had great faith in what I was doing. If they only knew that I knew nothing."

One of those survivors, fellow medic Graeme Davis⁵, paid tribute to Dobson yesterday as he described how "hell opened up" after units were sent out to investigate mortar fire from earlier that day.

"He certainly did his job to the best possible degree, under exceptional circumstances," Reverend Davis, now a Catholic deacon in Lismore, said yesterday. "He got his Mention in Despatches (award for distinguished service). "He did his role exceedingly well. I think everyone on that battlefield did."

Reverend Davis, who was shot in the arm during the battle, said Dobson's death came nine months after he discovered a man, whose funeral service he was to conduct, was the soldier who pulled him to safety during the battle. "On his death bed, it became known that he was actually the cavalry driver who picked me up and took me back to the landing zone, where we were choppered out," he said.

The battle began late in the day, when Reverend Davis's 12 Platoon joined 11 Platoon and pushed towards the enemy. "All hell opened up. No one quite expected what we'd taken on," he said. "We exhausted our supply of ammunition, we called for resupply. The monsoons had started by that stage. "We soon realised that 11 Platoon had been annihilated ... Phil Dobson had formed a little aid post there where, when we could, we could bring bodies back to. But the medic with 11 Platoon was killed. I was wounded. So it was only Dobson, Geordie Richardson and one other medic left to do all that work." ⁶

SOLDIERING

An oath to God and Country on a bible they swore
Farewell to innocence and home comforts no more
Raw recruits with uniforms to wash, starch, iron and keep
Bugle calls before dawn, best hurry or you're in shit creek
Marching, running, drilling until lights out and then sleep

Here are some soldiers' rules you'll learn on the run
This is your rifle, that is your gun... One for killing, one for fun
If you needed a mother, you would have been issued with one
The code for brawls is to form a ring, no eye gouging, fight clean
Never steal, dob a mate, volunteer, or admit to what you've seen

The grenade has a four second fuse; prepare to throw
Detail, load, watch your front and on my order, get up and go
Pathetic idle horrible men, gawd help us, yar too bloody slow
Yer handlin bayonet fightin like fairies. Get tough and mean.
A thrust to the stomach or throat, in, out; quick and clean

Marching from dawn till dark then digging a trench or two
Two volunteers needed for a few hours or so; you and you
Pay parade followed by two-up with a sentry as cockatoo
Comes the day when training is ended and seven days free
Prepare wills and bid hooray; you're going overseas

Mothers and sweethearts crying as the train hisses and groans
A final tearful farewell, take care and please come home
Alas, for some of them, a homecoming was never to be
Sacrificed in battle on foreign soil for the likes of you and me
Such are the ways of soldiering as it was and always will be

George Mansford
© May 2010

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Samichon Day: Sydney

This years' service on 22 July was conducted by MICK KOHLHOFF who served on "The HOOK" with 20 Field Regiment Royal Artillery. It was conducted inside the Anzac War Memorial Hyde Park Sydney, in front of the Eternal Flame – an outstanding venue.

Our special thanks go to Mrs BELINDA MITROVICH – the Memorial's Deputy Manager who arranged the site – the Wreath Laying Venue – the Chaplain, the Bugler, seating etc. 24 Attendees made for a fine ceremony.

Prior to the commencement of the Service, Guardians from R.S.L (NSW) Headquarters, resplendent in their Maroon Uniforms with Gold Piping distributed a Gold Star to all present. A choice of one with the name of a fallen Digger or a blank to be completed by each recipient was available.

At the completion of the Samichon Service, all were invited to cast the Star from our position above onto the Shrine of Remembrance below. These Stars are later collected, burnt ceremonially, and the Ashes returned to an appropriate overseas War Cemetery.

It was a memorable Day. Lest We Forget

Gus Breen, AM, DFC
Lane Cove, NSW

Received the October Ringo with thanks

Regarding Pte Ian Clements. Ian was in the Anti-Tank/Tracker PI with me for a short time then went to Int Section [2nd Tour]. I will e-mail Doreen Aveny to say that he was remembered and that he was a diligent soldier.

On another note, in the Harry Smith report on page 10, second paragraph, I had to laugh at Harry's Malay, he said he spoke to the rubber tapper with "Selamat Pugi." It should be "Selamat Pagi"!

Pugi is a very rude word and in this context means "something inappropriate." *Enough said! Ed.*

'Frangar' Francis
Singleton, NSW

⁴ Phillip Dobson joined the Army on 24 September 1962, serving until his discharge on 23 September 1968, with rank of Sergeant.

⁵ 2RAR Association Member Reverend Graeme Davis, OAM CSM served in Australia with E Coy 3RAR, C Coy 2RAR, & 12 PI D Coy 6RAR at Long Tan (WIA).

⁶ "Doc Dobson, hero medic of battle of Long Tan, dies at 75". [Link: http://bit.ly/29FMloi](http://bit.ly/29FMloi)

RETURN TO AUSTRALIA

By Bryan Pannell

After six months in this position as assistant Adjutant, 3RAR arrived to replace us for their two-year stint. Our Battalion's return to Australia was by air rather than by ship (QANTAS by now had 707's and these were considered more economical.) and we arrived in Brisbane to be sent off on leave for a couple of weeks then to return to Brisbane and Enoggera Barracks from where I had departed some four and a bit years before to going to OCS.



December 1964: Group portrait of 2RAR Officers' Mess at Enoggera Barracks: Back row, left to right: 2nd Lt L E D Cooper; 2nd Lt T E Dineen; 2nd Lt D Levenspiel; 2nd Lt E W Anderson; Lt K A Hudson; 2nd Lt J Bourke; Lt D H Fussell; Lt J E D White; 2nd Lt L Seal; Lt G L Mansford; Lt J W S Maddams; Lt L O Peters; 2nd Lt D R Keena; Lt E C Crooks; and 2nd Lt D G Savage. Middle row: Lt B H Wickens; Padre H Mansell; Lt I McLean-Williams; Capt D D Caldwell; Capt M T Turrell; Capt W G Coburn; Capt M P Casey; Capt R F Merrell; Capt K W Baudistel; Capt B R Honner; Capt O E Kleinig; Lt J Orr MBE; Lt B W Pannell. Front row: Capt I E Hutchison; Capt E A Richardson; Maj W A Piper; Maj F J Spry; Maj Colin Nicholas Kahn (later Khan); Lt Col A V Preece MVO; Col O D Jackson OBE; Maj A T Pembroke MC; Maj R G Kennedy; Maj L D Johnson; Capt P R Phillips; and Capt A W Hammett. (Absent: Maj G J Lucas MC; Maj R G Morahan; Father E J Harley; Lt D C Presgrave; Lt I J Cahill; 2nd Lt R M Tucker; and Lt R E Haring.)

The barracks had not changed a bit but the inmates had. Firstly, the Battalion had to revert to the dreaded "Pentropic" organisation which was an absolute pain and secondly, many of the officers had been reposted to other units and appointments so there were lots of new faces around and they knew nothing of the Battalion's experience over the past two years. Thirdly, and the most disheartening of all, we found we had joined 3RAR Australian Component rather than them joining us. Only one of our Senior Officers came to Brisbane, no Captains and just a few subalterns. It was not the same unit I had joined three and a half years before.

Before the Mast: The next two years were to be testing ones. I found the job to be quite different to the one I had in Malaya. I was working longer hours and there were more demands especially from the Adjutant who usually enjoyed Wednesday sports afternoons at the races. Before going, he would bring his "in" tray to my office and empty it into mine and walk out. This was noticed eventually by his superior but by then it was a bit late. We eventually got a new Adjutant and our working relationship was much more agreeable.

After an extensive apprenticeship as a junior Staff Officer and as by now the senior Lieutenant (or Senior Subaltern) in the Battalion, I was reposted as the Signal Officer in Support Company, a Captains position. The OC Support Company was Major Gil Lucas MC, a true blue Aussie and good bloke. I knew nothing about Signals but I had a very knowable Sergeant and a couple of very capable Corporals. Consequently, I learned quite a bit about the job in a short time. I remained in this position for almost a year when surprise, surprise, we had another reorganization back to our old Tropical Establishment like in Malaya.

The Vietnam War and National Service: By mid-1965, the National Service scheme had been running for at least three months and 1RAR had been reorganized and deployed to South Vietnam. 3RAR had returned from Malaysia where they had served on operations in Borneo against the Indonesians and they had been replaced by the newly raised 4RAR. After 1RAR, we were the next fittest battalion and on

reorganization, we were given the task of training two companies worth of National Servicemen as Infantrymen. 3RAR were later given a similar task. The army was about to expand to six Infantry battalions so that a brigade sized force could be deployed to South Vietnam and units could be rotated after a year of operational duty.

About the end of June, 1965 2RAR sent two of its Rifle Companies, B and C, to form the nucleus of 6RAR and we then set about the training of the National Servicemen. Later, 6RAR would do the same to bring them up to full strength. Both 2 and 6RAR shared the Enoggera Barracks and the various Messes etc. We all got on pretty well under the circumstances, even if things were a bit crowded.

Promotion to Temporary Captain: Upon the reorganization of the Battalion, the CO's position reverted to the rank of Lt Col and my old Company Commander, Arthur Rofe, became the new CO. My Company Commander from Support Company, Major Gil Lucas MC, became the Battalion 2ic and I became the Adjutant and was promoted to Temporary Captain rank. Normally, an OCS graduate could expect to spend three years as a 2Lt followed by four years as a Lt before being promoted to Captain; this promotion was six months.

Life as Adjutant: A couple of incidents occurred during my time as Adjutant that are of interest. The first occurred on the Battalion Birthday parade where the National Service trainees were put through their paces and as a result of their impressive drill performance, the inspecting officer Brigadier Stewart Graham, MC congratulated them and as a surprise, announced that as from that day, they would be permitted to wear our Black Lanyard thus signifying that they were now officially members of 2RAR rather than just trainees. The announcement was greeted with enthusiasm from all.

The next incident was much more serious. A number of new weapons had been on display at various units around Brisbane and it was our turn to have them. The next day, all of the weapons were set up for demonstration purposes and the troops filed past to have a look at them. The weapons were under the charge of Senior NCOs from Support Company who were quite experienced. During a break, one said to another, how does the Claymore work, to which he replied, you plug this in here and that in there and then squeeze this. BANG off it went. Fortunately, only one of them was standing in front of it. He, a Sergeant, lost both legs below the knee. A Warrant Officer standing next to him had his eardrums busted. There were no other casualties thank God. Of course there was a Court of Inquiry which found "accident by misadventure" on the part of the NCOs; never-the-less, a very sobering experience all round.

Reinforcements for 1RAR: After the completion of the NS training, we were given the task of providing reinforcements to 1RAR in South Vietnam who had been suffering quite a few casualties. A number of these were Stretcher Bearers (or Bandsmen). We provided some of our bandsmen as replacements only to hear of them too becoming casualties shortly after their arrival. So both 1RAR and 2RAR bands were suffering. I said to the CO, why don't we train up some riflemen as stretcher bearers and send them next time instead of our bandsmen. He thought that was a brilliant idea and we did just that next time. It only worked once because the next time, Army HQ ordered us to send a Cornet player or Trombone player by name, much to the CO's disgust.

Farewell to 2RAR: All good things must come to an end. After six months as Adjutant of 2RAR, and on my substantive promotion to Captain, I was reposted to the National Service, Officer Training Unit, at Scheyville. I had spent six years in the battalion and had gone from 2Lt to Captain; from Platoon Commander to Adjutant.

I thought that was something special - still do.

This is the final chapter of Association member Bryan Pannell's 2RAR Malaya series. Thanks mate!

THE BATTLE FOR NUI DAT - VIETNAM 1967

By 16632 Corporal John William Boyle (Jack) Hungerford.
Sect Comd 5 PI B Coy 2RAR 19/05/1967 to 09/01/1968.

This is the story of the battle for Nui Dat, a fierce battle that occurred in mid-1967. The Second Battalion Royal Australian Regiment was posted to conduct operations based at Nui Dat in Vietnam as part of an allied task force to support the government of South Vietnam in its effort to prevent the reunification of north and south Vietnam.

Nui Dat, in the middle of Viet Cong territory, was considered an ideal base to conduct counter insurgency warfare.

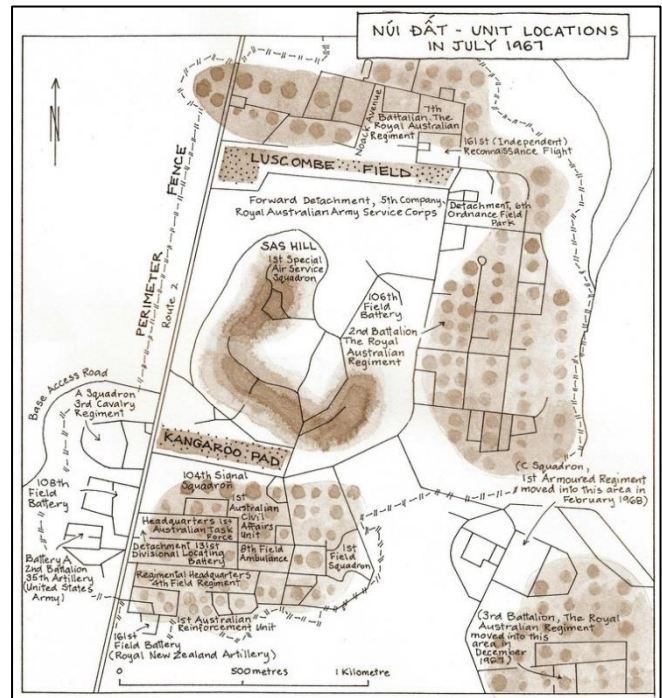


The Nui Dat based task force at its peak contained around 5000 service personnel consisting of two infantry battalions, artillery units, armoured units and all the support infrastructure required to sustain a battle force, including an airfield. These units were grouped around a strategically situated feature known as Nui Dat, Vietnamese for 'small hill'.

The occupation of the area, while militarily strategic, underlined many of the errors that ultimately led to the defeat of the Allied forces. Leaving aside the ideological dogma of 'freedom' versus Communist oppression, the heart of the Vietnamese insurrections was about the fundamental core of most revolutions, the oppression of a landless majority paying rental to a wealthy, resource owning minority.

In order to establish a task force, the local population were removed from their homes and livelihood without compensation. The land acquired was the size of a moderate township, with communications infrastructure; roads, electricity, telephones, recreation facilities and so on. The Government Department of Veterans Affairs described the base as having "a fighting pit for every soldier...elevated bunkers, manned 24 hours a day around the base's perimeter, which was further defended by (barbed) wire obstacles and belts of anti-personnel mines, vegetation was cleared from an area outside the wire to provide fields of fire..."

2RAR personnel were based in sandbagged tents in a former rubber plantation. The rubber trees extended into the labyrinth of barbed wire perimeter with an extensive network of claymore mines and illumination flares. B Company was assigned to concurrently carry out counter insurgency operations and provide a defensive shield around a section of the task force perimeter. Operations were generally of a 7-day duration, in Viet Cong held territory, flying in and out from the Luscombe airfield on Huey helicopters or on some occasions in armoured personnel carriers. It is my recall that one of these early operations was carried out in and around the Long Tan battle area. On our arrival, B Company took over the lines of a company that had been involved in the battle of Long Tan. Reminders of the battle, such as captured weapons, Viet Cong helmets with bullet holes were displayed prominently in the company recreation facility.



Around six weeks into our tour of duty, B Company returned from field operations for a short rest break at the Nui Dat base. However, for a tour of duty on active military service using the word 'rest' is a misnomer. While these short breaks provided some relief from the constant pressure and tension of field operations, soldiers were expected to be alert to all possibilities at all times. Soldiers were required to be armed and ready at all times, carrying or having their firearms and ammunition on hand 24 hours a day.

Base work still involved pre-dawn and dusk 'standing to' in fire pits in readiness for any enemy attack, 24 hours on guard picket duty, as well as routine maintenance, which included the never ending drudgery of filling and sandbagging defensive positions and living quarter tents and live firing exercise. The company recreation facility, more commonly known as the 'B Company Boozer' was open daily for a short period from the 1630 hours' parade to the evening stand to; then lights out by 2030 hours.

It would be fair to say that while the time was short and the official ration of beer was two cans per soldier per day, and no alcohol in the lines, some soldiers found ways to consume far in excess of the ration. A number of soldiers did not drink alcohol but collected their ration for their comrades. While cans were supposed to be issued opened, this rule was often circumvented. Soldiers who were on leave found their way into the American Duty Free Post Exchanges (PX) purchased bottles of spirits and carried them back into the lines.

Because of the need to maintain security of the task force perimeter, it was a relatively common practice for two platoons to be out of the base on field operations, leaving one platoon to 'rest' and maintain the company's section of the perimeter. On the night of this battle, 5 Platoon remained in the base, while 4 and 6 platoon were away on field operations. A company of soldiers at full complement, numbers around 150 (three platoons plus Company Headquarters). A platoon, at full complement numbers around 35 soldiers. On this occasion, the platoon was somewhat depleted, a force of about 30.

These 30 soldiers were required to cover the section of the perimeter where there were normally 150 to fill the roster, at night three bunkers were armed with machine guns.

The maintenance work carried out by the platoon during the earlier daylight hours was clearing vegetation from the labyrinth of barbed wire obstacles around the B Company perimeter, supervised by the Company Sergeant Major Kiwi Gibbons. As the wire contained a network of anti-personnel mines and flares they needed to be disabled prior to the clearing work. The control switches for the mines and flares were located in each of the platoon bunkers. They were disabled, and at the completion of the day's work, rearmed.

In a situation where 'the troops are thin on the ground' in order to fill the duty roster, every cook, bottle washer, orderly, clerk, storeroom orderly, and mechanic available is pressed into picket duty. These are folk who have undergone their basic training and have been assigned to activities that do not involve front line fieldwork as for various reasons they were assessed as having skills that were necessary in areas other than infantry field activities.

This particular night began with the normal routine. 1630 hours' parade, evening meal, B Company recreation facility open for a short period, standing to and clearing patrol around the wire, and lights out. The soldiers were rostered for their normal 2 hours on and 4 hours off picket duty. It was different in that it was at the height of the wet season. There was a massive tropical storm brewing, and it was particularly dark and windy. At probably around 2000 hours the tropical storm broke.

As I had been posted to the Malaya Peninsular for two and a half years, I had experienced many tropical storms, but this was a storm more ferocious than any I had ever encountered; strong wind, enormous lightning strikes, massive claps of thunder, and rain so heavy and thick that it was almost a flooding waterfall. It was a downfall that could strike fear into any person.

While the higher chain of the military and political command wanted to exude a vision of invincibility of the Nui Dat base, the confidence in this invincibility was not held by the troops on the ground, particularly so close in time to the Long Tan battle and the view that it had indeed been a foiled attack on the Nui Dat Task Force, contrary to the official conclusion of high command.

There are many ways that soldiers hide their fear; some with aggression and defiance, some with resigned compliance and some with withdrawn denial. One soldier in my section simply went to sleep. He could never be left alone on picket or guard duty. I know from my experience as a young soldier on operations in the jungles of Northern Malaya that there is much to fear; apart from 'the enemy' there were tigers, elephants and other wild animals all lurking in the darkness. On one operation we jointly carried out with a New Zealand (Kiwi) Company, on the Thai - Malaya border a Tiger dragged a hapless Kiwi soldier from his 'hoochie' in the dead of the night. On another Special Air Service (SAS) operation in Vietnam an Australian soldier was gored to death by a raging Elephant. In another incident involving B Company soldiers during our tour of duty a herd of wild pigs wandered into an ambush site, set off an anti-personnel

mine, they were then mistaken for Viet Cong attacking the bivouac site, causing a fierce reaction and heavy casualties amongst the pigs.

For a soldier alone in a forward bunker in a rubber plantation in the black of night with the thought that the Viet Cong are about to attack at any time, there is even more. Every movement, every shadow, every rustle of the leaves of a rubber tree brings the possibility of a Viet Cong soldier, add to this a pitch black night in a tropical storm with enormous claps of thunder, lit only with spectacular bolts of lightning and every rubber tree becomes an advancing Viet Cong soldier. Now add to this mix an aggressive individual soldier who against orders has spent considerable time in the B Company Boozie before going on duty, with a machine gun, in a forward bunker in an environment where over previous days there had been talk of Viet Cong activities in the area.

It had been a long day, I had just completed the rounds of my section and I was about to turn in when there was a sustained burst of machine gun fire from the forward bunker and a yell of "Viet Cong! Viet Cong!" and a further burst of machine gun fire.

"Stand to! Stand to!" was yelled through the rain and thunder.

Soldiers in various states of dress began staggering and running to their fire pits. Some commenced firing towards the wire. They could see the Viet Cong advancing through the wire and rubber trees...but there appeared to be no incoming fire.

I thought, "Why would the V. C. launch an attack and not fire?"

I looked to my rear to see, through flashes of lightening, our Platoon Commander Eric Pearson dressed only in a very flimsy raincoat, with a field radio on his back, simultaneously in communication with Battalion headquarters and issuing orders to the troops on the ground as he was trying to ascertain the situation. We needed the soldiers to stop firing both to assess the situation, and to conserve ammunition should there be a major attack.

Section Commanders, myself, Arthur Francis and Norm Devereux began running from fire pit to fire pit.

"Hold your fire! Hold your fire!" We yelled. We were beginning to get the situation under control, and I had one of my 'brilliant' ideas. There are flares in the wire, I thought. If I set some off, we will firstly be able to see any V. C. and secondly have some targets to aim at.

In to the bunker and shining a small field torch I found the switch board that was marked 'flares' and began to flick the switches. To my consternation every time I flicked a switch a claymore mine was set off. The flares had been wired to the mine switches. The soldiers in their flooded fire pits were not to know this.

"Incoming mortars!" became the cry.

The outgoing fire recommenced, by this time every cook, bottle washer, orderly clerk, store-man, mechanic and headquarter soldier was standing to in their fire pits. They were a second line of defence should the V. C. break through the wire and overcome the forward perimeter soldiers. The mortar platoon had also stood to and somewhere up the line it was decided that we needed mortar support. But in this fierce tropical rain and for some reason, either water in the barrel or the force of the rain or some other reason, the mortar shells began falling short; thankfully into the wire, not in our lines.

By now units on our flanks had also stood too ready to repel any attacks, but to this stage had not engaged in fire.

Then came a critical incident...one of the headquarters staff, while running to his fire pit in the darkness had struck a star picket and sustained an injury. A soldier to our right flank

near company headquarters yelled "They are though the wire! They are through the wire!" and simultaneously every cook, bottle washer, orderly, clerk, store-man and headquarters soldier opened fire with a wall of lead.

It was fortunate that our soldiers were safely below ground level in their fire pits, as it was not the V. C. who were in the greatest danger.

It was also fortunate that most of them appeared to be firing towards any incoming aircraft rather than ground as they should have done. A few well aimed shots would have wiped out the entire orders group of 5 platoon, especially as risk was Arthur Francis, who continued running from fire pit to fire pit to enforce a cease-fire. It was even more fortunate that the weather was so foul that no gunships had been called in to provide support as in the confusion it is possible that they may have returned fire believing they were under V. C. attack.

The added effect of this wall of gunfire associated with the "through the wire" call was to induce units on our left and right to commence fire, which in a ripple effect commenced until every unit around the wire perimeter joined the frenzy of gunfire.

Eventually the tropical storm subsided as they do and after we were able to calm the situation enough and after a number call it was a relief that there were no casualties. (After each contact the Section Commander or his Second in Command calls his section to number from scouts to rifle-men, if a soldier does not respond to the call it is assumed that he is a casualty to be found and assistance rendered.) Soldiers continued to stand to until around midnight, when they were stood down, but the night picket to dawn became an alert 2 hours on 2 hours off watch. Many years later a member of the platoon told me that he had been in the vicinity of the open latrine and when the 'stand too' call came he leapt into the latrine. "Jack, I literally spent most of the night up to my ankles in shit," he told me.

The gunfire continued reverberating around the Nui Dat task force until well after midnight. There must have been tons of ordinance expended on the battle.

The following morning when we carried out our routine clearing patrol, we found no evidence of Viet Cong activity, no drag marks in the mud, no blood trails where the V. C. had carried way their wounded and dead. The rubber trees, however, had sustained heavy casualties.

The aftermath

Around two weeks later, when the Australian newspapers came, we read reports that the Viet Cong had made 'probing attacks' around the perimeter of the Nui Dat Task Force, but had been repelled by sustained gunfire.

The private soldier who had, while in an intoxicated state, initiated the first machine gun fire, was given the benefit of the doubt, but shortly after was transferred to another unit following further unacceptable behaviour towards other soldiers involving loaded weapons and alcohol.

© John (Jack) Hungerford
Newlyn, Vic
12 August 2016

OUR 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>

2nd BATTALION, THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION, INC

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SATURDAY 29th OCTOBER 2016

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of 2RAR Association is to be held at 0830 hours Saturday 29th October 2016 in the 'ANZAC Room' Tweed Heads & Coolangatta RSL Sub Branch, Level 2, Twin Towns Resort.

NOTE: The Club operates on Queensland time, not NSW daylight saving time.

Members attending are asked to arrive at 0800 hours and check their financial status. Only financial members are permitted to stand for election and to vote at the meeting. Notice is also given that all Committee positions will be declared vacant. If you wish to nominate yourself or another person for a position on the Committee, complete the Nomination Form and submit your nomination in the prescribed manner.

The outline agenda for the meeting is as follows:

- Attendance / ApologiesSecretary
- Confirmation of Previous Minutes President
- Business Arising President
- Reports President
- Financial / Auditors ReportTreasurer
- Appointment of AuditorTreasurer
- Election of Office BearersChairman
- Agenda Items/ General Business President
- Next MeetingSecretary

Note: Any matters for discussion/notice of motion under *General Business* must be notified to the Secretary in writing no later than ten days (19th October 2016) before the date of the AGM.

Gordon Hurford, AM
Secretary

Methods of Voting

Every financial member present at the meeting shall be entitled to one vote and in the case of equality of votes; the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote. Voting shall be by show of hands. The *First Past the Post* method of voting will be used. This means the nominee with the most number of votes for a position wins. Listed below are the current Executive and Management Committee positions and incumbents filling those positions.

- PresidentL. (Leo) Van De Kamp
- Vice President R. J. (Rick) Hollingdrake, OAM
- Secretary G.W. (Gordon) Hurford, AM
- Treasurer N.J. (Norm) Devereux
- CommitteeR.W. (Ross) Bimrose
- A. (Alf) Vockler
-T.E. (Terry) Dinneen
- P.T. (Paul) King
-A.J. (Arthur) MacDonald
- Auditor Mr P. (Paul) Masters

Note: All currently serving Management Committee incumbents have chosen to stand for re-election.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Printed courtesy of: Hon Peter Dutton MP, Federal Member for Dickson, 3/199 Gympie Rd Strathpine Qld 4500

**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	Borneo	Vietnam	Cambodia	Rwanda	East Timor	Solomon Is	Iraq	Timor Lesté	Afghanistan
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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"	\$35.00		Pewter Drink Coaster - RAR Badge	\$25.00	
Cap: Black/Silver - "ICB Badge"	\$35.00		Pewter Drink Coaster - ICB Badge	\$25.00	
Lapel Badge - "2RAR"	\$12.00		Pewter Belt Buckle - ICB Badge	\$28.00	
Polo Shirt: Black/Gold - "2nd Battalion" M (97) L(102) XL(107)2XL(112)3XL(117)	\$48.00		Bumper Sticker - 2RAR Association	\$5.00	
Sport Shirt: Black/White - "Second to None" L(102) XL(107) 2XL (112) 3XL (117)	\$48.00		Bumper Sticker - Vietnam Veteran	\$8.00	
Tee Shirt: Black/White - "Second to None" L (102) XL (107) 2XL (112) 3XL (117)	\$32.00		Bumper Sticker - 2nd Battalion	\$8.00	
Tie: 2RAR Tie (New style)	\$29.00		Car Registration Plate Frames - 2nd Battalion	\$20.00	
Stubby Cooler - "2RAR"	\$11.00		Note Pad - Leather - ICB Badge	\$21.00	
Stubby Cooler - "Second to No Bastard"	\$11.00		Badge: ICB Metal/Bronze - Large	\$15.00	
Sticker (Oval) - "ICB"	\$5.00		Badge: ICB Metal/Bronze - Small	\$13.00	
Sticker (Round) - "2RAR"	\$5.00		Badge: Returned from Active Service (RAS) Metal/Bronze	\$15.00	
Key Ring - Black/Gold	\$15.00		Badge: Rising Sun - Gold/Metal	\$15.00	
Wall Plaque: 2RAR	\$55.00		Money Fold Leather with credit card pockets - RAS badge	\$30.00	
Book: 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Bn 1967-68 Vol 1. Reprint 1985	\$90.00		Flag: 2RAR Black (48 cm x 31 cm)	\$18.00	
Book: Trackers Vietnam 1967/68. Peter Haran	\$29.00		Name Tag: Preferred name: _____	\$28.00	

Package Deal 1	Package Deal 2	Package Deal 3	Package Deal 4
Polo shirt & Cap \$75.00 (save \$8.00)	Sports shirt & Cap \$75.00 (save \$8.00)	Polo shirt, Cap & Tie \$100.00 (save \$10.00)	Sports shirt, Cap & Tie \$100.00 (save \$10.00)

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

Payments for Membership/Merchandise can be made by: -

1. Cheque to accompany this Order Form
2. Direct Credit to Association Bank: - Provide name and initials, then email details of deposit to the Treasurer (normdev12@bigpond.com) to enable identification of your payment for membership &/or merchandise.

3. By going to the 2 RAR Association website and submitting an order: <http://2rar-association.net.au/>