



*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)**

**APRIL 2018**

### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the first 2018 Ringo edition and I hope that you all enjoyed a very safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year period. While 2017 was quite a busy year especially with the May reunion, 2018 is shaping up to be busier than ever. The committee has already met in February and we have quite a few major projects to undertake this year.

This is a year of consolidation for the Association as we tackle several important issues. The committee has noted that while the Battalion was gifted a major painting – The Battle of the Hook - from the Korean campaign, and the “Ringo” statuette for the Malayan/Malaysian era, there is no legacy from the Vietnam era. With 2RAR having served twice in Vietnam, the committee is now looking at the possibility of the commissioning of a painting to depict the Battalion’s two tours of Vietnam.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the redevelopment of the 2RAR Honours and Awards publication is also on the agenda. The existing booklet needs to be revamped and updated to include those honours and awards from 1985 onwards. There will be considerable cost involved in both the Vietnam legacy painting and Honours and Awards publication. While the Association continues to be in a sound financial position, we will need to prioritise these costly projects.

Additionally, the committee is now seeking to formalise the Battalion’s Roll of Honour. There is currently no set down criteria for who should be placed on the Battalion’s Roll of Honour. There are currently a number of lists with conflicting names and the committee will now examine and recommend, in close consultation with 2RAR, on who should be included on the Roll of Honour.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to 2RAR RSM WO1 Jason Sten. WO1 Sten replaced WO1 Trent Morris who left at the end of last year. We look forward to continuing the work closely with the RSM to maintain the close relationship with the Battalion that has been fostered over the years.

We finally said farewell to John “Jock” Cassidy as the Association North Qld rep. We thank him for his excellent contribution over many years. The new Association representative is Cpl Jason Harrison who is still currently serving with the Battalion.

Jason has started the year on the run as he develops new initiatives to continue to engender the close bond that exists between the Association and the unit.

He is looking at ways for ex-members to become

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involved in a number of social and other activities with the Battalion in Townsville. Jason has also taken on the task of the 2RAR museum curator and has asked the local Association members to provided periodic assistance to further develop the museum. Jock will continue to assist Jason for the time being. The committee has lauded Jason for his outstanding efforts to date and we will continue to assess how we can support him. Well done.

CO 2RAR has invited all ex-2RAR members to participate in the unit’s ANZAC Day activities in Townsville this year. I know that many of you have local responsibilities within your own areas but if you are able, a trip to Townsville to march with 2RAR is recommended. For those in the SE Qld area who are not able to travel to Townsville, I encourage you to attend the Brisbane march under the 2RAR Association banner.

The committee has commenced the development of Standard Operating procedures (SOPs) for the Association. Five SOPs have been completed to date and these will be placed on the 2RAR website. I encourage everyone to have a look at these documents. I further encourage all members to regularly view the 2RAR Association [Facebook](#) Page as this is the platform where most of the current news and activities are placed on.

Our membership remains reasonably static and we are slowly receiving applications from post-Vietnam era veterans. This will hopefully start to increase over the next few years. However, we do have a number of members who have let their membership lapse. If you are one of those could you please remit the small annual contribution of \$20 to the Treasurer as this will ensure you will continue to receive this newsletter. We don’t want to lose you.

Finally, a thank you to our Editor for again producing an excellent newsletter.

‘Second to None’

Leo Van De Kamp  
President  
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### PRINTED FOR FREE

This edition of RINGO has been printed courtesy of the Hon Peter Dutton MP, Federal Member for Dickson.

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### WARRIORS WHO HAVE MARCHED OUT

- 3410350, 36649 Major George MacLauchlan LOGAN, RFD 2RAR Malaya (Pte) 1955-57, 3RAR Malaya 1963-65, 7RAR Vietnam 1967-68, AATTV (WO2) 1969-70. Sad news of the passing of George Logan on 19 December 2017. Age: 81 years. A true warrior, a gentleman, and a good bloke. A past President Beaumaris RSL. Thanks Stuart Dodds, Merv Dicton
- 22861 Staff Sergeant Ronald GILDERSLEEVE, BEM, 2RAR Korea 1953-54 (Pte), 1RAR Korea 1954, 2RAR Malaya (Cpl) 1955-57, 1961-63. 6RAR Vietnam (SSgt) (Long Tan) CQMS D Coy 1966-67. Sad news of the passing of Ron Gildersleeve at Yamba on 2 February 2018. Age: 87 years. Ron was a Life Member of 2RAR Assoc. Thanks Harry Smith, Fred Clark
- 35558 Corporal John A TOLLIDAY, 2RAR Malaya (Cpl) 1955-57. Sad news of the passing of John "Jack" Tolliday on 14 December 2017 at Ballarat, Vic. Jack had a private funeral. Age: 82 years. Jack requested that his passing be recorded in RINGO, and his mates be informed. Thanks, Gary Quennell (Stepson), Alf Vockler.
- 38923 Private Anthony (Tony) Paul MONIN, 2RAR Vietnam (Pte) 1967-68, Aslt Pnr Pl. Tony passed away peacefully on 18 January 2018. Age: 69 years. Privately cremated. A Celebration was held on 31 January at Wynnum-Manly Workers Club. Rest in Peace
- 15217 Corporal Donald William (Curly) ESSENHIGH, 2RAR Malaya (Pte) 1955-57, 1961-63. 2RAR Vietnam (Cpl) 1967, 1st Australian Rest and Convalescence Centre 1967, Australian Force Vietnam Amenities and Welfare Unit 1967-68. Sad news of "Curly" Essenhig who passed away on 31st January 2018 at Warwick Hospital. Age 88 years. I last saw "Curly" when posted to Canungra in the 1970s. Thanks Dennis Johnston
- Lucas TUCKWELL, A Coy 2RAR Interfet, 4RAR. Sad news of his passing in Phuket Thailand (took his own life). Lucas was cremated, and his ashes scattered upon the sea. An NGO volunteer in Cambodia. Lucas joined the Army in 1996, discharged in 2002/3. Tucks was my number One scout on INTERFET. Reach out and talk to your mates. Thanks Sean Algaba, Dean Houston
- 25611 Private Robert (Bobby) WOOLCOTT, 2RAR Malaya 1955-57. Sad news that Bobby passed away overnight 22 March 2018 at a caravan park near Newcastle, NSW. Bobby was formerly from East Devonport, Tas. His wife Doreen pre-deceased him. Bobby lived life to the fullest. Thanks Chris Mole (friend)



*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

#### CHRIS CUNNINGHAM PARK: MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN

The Tweed Shire Council and the Tweed Heads & Coolangatta RSL Sub Branch in 1984 and in 2016 agreed to rectify the disintegration of the Memorial Fountain in Chris Cunningham Park, to see the fountain return to its glorious best in time for ANZAC Day 2018.

With the aid of grants from the Queensland, New South Wales & Commonwealth Governments, along with Twin Towns Services Club and the Sub-Branch, this community asset of remembrance will be restored.

Well done to all concerned!

### WELCOME: RSM JASON STEN

Warrant Officer Class One Jason Sten was born in Newcastle, NSW, and educated in Lismore, NSW prior to enlisting in the Australian Regular Army in December 1990.



On completion of his initial employment training, Warrant Officer Sten was posted to 2/4RAR. When the Battalions split, he was subsequently posted to 2RAR. During his time in the unit, Warrant Officer Sten served as a

soldier, with a deployment to Rwanda, and a rifle company section commander with a deployment on Operation INTERFET to East Timor. He also spent time in Support Company as direct fire support weapons corporal.

Warrant Officer Sten was posted to the Land Command Battle School Battle Wing Canungra in 1998 prior to a posting to the Defence Forces Corporate Support Office, where he gained his Diploma in Safety and Management. In 2005, Warrant Officer Sten was posted to 6RAR, Enoggera, as a platoon sergeant. It was in this role that he deployed to East Timor on Operation ASTUTE.

In 2007, Warrant Officer Sten was posted to 41RNSWR as the Operations Sergeant, and he deployed to Iraq on Operation CATALYST. In 2008, he was promoted Warrant Officer Class Two as the Training Warrant Officer of an independent rifle company within 41RNSWR. In October 2009, he received a posting back to 6RAR, where he served as the Team Sergeant Major, Mentoring Task Force One, Afghanistan. On return from Afghanistan in 2010, Warrant Officer Sten served as the CSM Alpha Company and as the Battalion Operations Warrant Officer.

In 2013, Warrant Officer Sten was posted to Warrant Officer Training Team at the Warrant Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Academy – Canungra as an instructor. During this posting he was awarded a Commander Forces Command Bronze Commendation for leadership, drive, vision and initiative in development of the Subject 1 Warrant Officer Course Operations learning management package.

In 2016 Warrant Officer Sten was appointment as Regimental Sergeant Major 9RQR. Warrant Officer Sten was then selected to deploy under the United Nations as the RSM of the contingent in South Sudan.

In 2018 Warrant Officer Sten took up his current appointment as RSM 2RAR.

During his time in the Army, Warrant Officer Sten has deployed to Malaysia with Rifle Company Butterworth, Hawaii with 2RAR, with operational service in Rwanda, East Timor (twice), Iraq, Afghanistan and South Sudan. In recognition of his contributions to Mentoring Task Force One, Warrant Officer Sten was awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation. *(The Meritorious Unit Citation comprises an award of a Certificate of Citation to a unit signed by the Governor-General and insignia of the Citation worn by members of the unit.)*

Warrant Officer Sten is married to Taryn, and they have a son, Cruz (born 2009). Warrant Officer Sten enjoys snow skiing with his family, and camping.

### DISTRIBUTION OF RINGO

Looking to the future distribution of RINGO, it is the Committee's intention to send out the newsletter electronically (by email).

Please advise if you would prefer to receive your copy of RINGO via post, or email.

## AGM, COMMEMORATION & REUNION 2018

The AGM will be held on Sat 27 Oct 18 in the ANZAC Room Tweed Heads & Coolangatta RSL, the Commemoration Service at Chris Cunningham Park (under cover), the Memorial Fountain restored, and the Reunion at Twin Towns Services Club.

Looking forward to seeing YOU.

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

In 2018 committee meetings were held as follows:

- Wed 16 Feb 18 ✓
- Wed 6 Jun 18
- Wed 3 Oct 18
- Wed 4 Apr 18 ✓
- Wed 1 Aug 18
- Wed 5 Dec 18

## MEMBERS' DRAW

Congratulations to David Hartcher, Davoren Park, SA winner of the financial Members' Draw held on 16 February who received the book: Afghanistan: Australia's War by Gary Ramage & Ian McPhedran. © 2014.

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> year of the draw.

## NEW MEMBERSHIPS

We welcome new members; 2 x Vietnam, 3 x current era! (5)

Shane Knowles	Burdell, Qld	Rwanda, East Timor, Timor Leste, Afghanistan
Allan Brann	Mundingburra, Qld	2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Bn 1971
Terry Pope	Woodstock, Qld	2/4RAR, 2RAR; Rwanda, 2RAR East Timor, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste
Stanley Hodder	Condon, Qld	1RAR 1966, 6RAR 1966-7, 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Bn 1970
Nathan Towney	Marian, Qld	2RAR East Timor 1999-00, 2001-02

## DONATIONS

We appreciate financial donations 'big and small', and we thank these members for their recent support.

Lawrence Hayward	Stuart Smalley	Terence Fisher
Alfred Arnold	Ron Robinson	

## ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES

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## 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 (Amphib).

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

## ABOUT: JASON "HARRY" HARRISON

Corporal Jason Harrison was born in Sydney, N.S.W. He was educated in Perth and Darwin and completed his senior schooling in the ACT, graduating in 1988. During his school years CPL Harrison served in the Airforce and Army cadets between 1984 and 1986. Corporal Harrison enlisted into the Australian Army Reserve in 1987. He completed recruit training with the 5th Training Group at Ingleburn NSW and Initial Employment Training at Holsworthy, NSW. Upon completion he was posted as a rifleman to Sydney University Regiment.

Corporal Harrison transferred to the Australian Regular Army in 1989. After completing training at the Army Recruit Training Centre and School of Infantry he was posted as a rifleman to 2/4RAR in 1990. During his tenure he served in Charlie and Delta Company and Signals Platoon within Support Company. He completed specialist Basic Assault Pioneer Course and Regimental Signals Course. He also deployed on exercise rotations to Rifle Company Butterworth twice in Malaysia.

With the delinking of 2/4RAR in early 1995, Corporal Jason Harrison remained at 2RAR. During this time, he completed a sub unit exchange to Hawaii and Louisiana, USA. In 1997 he completed the Basic Sniper and Basic Reconnaissance Courses achieving student of merit on both, consequently he was posted as a Sniper and Sniper Team Leader in Support Company. During this time, he deployed on operations twice to East Timor as a Sniper Team Leader, initially as part of the International Forces East Timor (INTERFET) and then in a subsequent rotation as part of United Nations Transition Authority East Timor (UNTAET). During this tenure he completed additional exchanges to Hawaii, USA and Wewak, PNG.

CPL Harrison was promoted to Lance Corporal in November 2002 and deployed again on operations to Iraq as a member of Security Detachment Two (SECDET II), tasked with protecting the Australian Embassy in Baghdad. CPL Harrison deployed on operations a fourth and fifth time in 2006 and 2007 to Timor Leste as a Sniper Team Leader and Acting Sniper Supervisor as part of detachments to 3RAR and 1RAR. Unfortunately, in 2007 he returned to Australia early due to a fractured leg.

Between 2010 and 2013 Corporal Harrison was posted to the Opposition Force (OPFOR) Platoon at the Combat Training Centre serving as a Squad 2IC, Squad Commander and Sniper Team Leader. During his tenure CPL Harrison was promoted to Corporal and posted back to 2RAR in 2014. During this recent posting, CPL Harrison served as a Radio Detachment Commander, Sniper Team Leader and Section Commander and completed a Training Team exchange to Wewak, PNG. Unfortunately, 29 years of infantry soldiering has caught up with CPL Harrison and in 2016 he had four procedures on his neck and back. This injury forced a medical downgrade and he awaits a final determination with a likely outcome being medical discharge in early 2018. CPL Harrison is currently posted to Transition Platoon.

Corporal Harrison has been awarded the Australian Active Service Medal with clasps East Timor and Iraq 2003, International Force East Timor Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Defence Long Service Medal with second clasp, Australian Service Medal with clasp Timor Leste, Australian Defence Medal, United Nations Medal with UNTAET ribbon, Timor-Leste Solidarity Medal and the Infantry Combat Badge. Harry is the 2RAR Association Rep, having taken over from 'stalwart', Jock Cassidy.

Harry is a life member of the QLD RSL and a member of 2RAR, 2/4RAR and RAR Associations.

## **ANZAC DAY: BRISBANE**

### **Dawn Service (Enoggera)**

The ANZAC Day Dawn Service will take place at the RAR National Memorial Walk at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera. The Service will commence at 4.50am sharp.

### **Brisbane City March**

March FUP is Mary Street facing George Street. March step off 1000hrs. President RAR Assoc. (Qld) Kel Ryan will lead the RAR Association (Qld) Banner, followed by the Banners of: 3RAR, 4RAR, 5RAR, 6RAR, 7RAR, 8RAR, 9RAR, 2/4RAR, 8/9RAR, 5/7RAR, 1RAR, 2RAR

## **ANZAC DAY: MELBOURNE**

Anyone in Melbourne on Anzac Day are welcome to March with the Battalion. The FUP is in Collins St, East of Swanson St, at 9.15am! See you there! After March at the Mail Exchange Hotel corner of Bourke and Spencer Streets.

Jim Cooper, 2RARA (Vic)

## **ANZAC DAY: SYDNEY**

The Memorial Service at Regimental Square (off Martin Place, George St end) commencing at 0830hrs. Form-up area for the March is Bligh St, off Hunter. Step-off is schedule for 10.00 hrs thereabouts, later than early.

Post March get-together at Combined Services Club, Barrack St, off George St near Martin Place.

Grahame Edwards, 2RARA (NSW)

## **ANZAC DAY: ADELAIDE**

The RAR-SA Association will form up on the eastern side of Pulteney Street between North Terrace and Rundle Mall, this being the same as last few years.

2RAR will follow behind the RARA-SA Colour Party and 1RAR. Please assemble by 0930hrs. Step off is anticipated slightly earlier this year around 1010hrs.

Peter Grabb will again lead us this year with John Mathwin keeping us in step with his hand-held side drum.

The route will be same as previous years, along North Terrace, down King William Street, over the King William Street bridge into War Memorial Drive, halting and falling out near Pennington Terrace by the Cross of Sacrifice where a Remembrance Service will be conducted 1130hrs, at the end of the March.

Eyes right will be made at the National War Memorial corner of Kintore Avenue and North Terrace, the Boer War Memorial by the Government House entrance and at the saluting dais.

### **ANZAC Day Reunion**

Again, to be held, commencing at 1200hrs at the Lion Hotel, corner of Melbourne Street and Jerningham Streets North Adelaide. About a 15-minute walk across the parklands and along Finnis Street (stopping off for a refresher at the British Hotel) and saying G'day to the late Tom Young.

Mal Allen 2RARA (SA)

## **HUMOUR: THAT'S FUNNY!**

### **Great Expectations**

While talking to a potential recruit, the military recruiter said, "Exactly what kind of job are you looking for in the military?" The high school kid said, "I'm looking for something with an enlistment bonus of about \$20,000, where I won't have to work too hard, wear a uniform, and won't have to deploy overseas, unless it is to Noosa."

The recruiter said, "Well, what if I could hook you up with a skill that allowed you to come straight in as a Lieutenant, where you'll only work weekdays, and you can have the base of your choice and stay there as long as you want?" The young recruit sat up straight and said, "Wow! Are you kidding me?"

The recruiter replied, "Yeah, but you started it."

## **2RAR MUSEUM, TOWNSVILLE**

Jason Harrison has recently taken over from Jock Cassidy as our representative in NQ. Jason is also the curator of the 2RAR Museum, located within the Battalion in Samichon Lines in Lavarack Barracks.

Jason is looking for volunteers to assist him in a huge number of tasks that he wants to undertake, including a complete refurbishment, digitisation of museum artefacts, outside grounds improvements, research, raising funds, etc. The list goes on!!

Jason is very enthusiastic and puts his heart and soul in to everything he does. He is asking for help.

Those who live in Townsville may care to dedicate some hours each week. Those travelling around may care to drop into Townsville and while you are there give Jason as many hours of assistance that you can. Others may care to take a holiday in NQ and arrange to do something for the museum.

There are also those who may not be able to get to Townsville for a hands-on help, but you might be able to do some fund raising e.g. run a chook raffle (or the like) and raise funds to keep the museum running. I know we can all chip in and help.

*I will leave you with one very special thought:*

The museum is us. It reflects what has been in the Battalion and the wars we have fought. This is our heritage. Young ones like Jason are looking after our heritage for us. Surely, we can do something to protect our own interests.

I hasten to add that this include 2/4RAR's heritage. And for those "tech-savvy" guys, please spread the word via all mediums please.

Gordon W. Hurford, AM  
Secretary

## **LETTERS**

My copy of RINGO arrived today and what a very pleasant surprise it was. I refer to two articles; Page 9 – Op Magnus (I was there, OC 5PI B Coy). When we de-trained, A Coy was deployed to the EAST of the road/train-line and B Coy to the WEST. A Coy had a Contact within 24 hrs; but we only saw evidence of long deserted CT camp-sites – very tiring and frustrating; but nevertheless, we all became professional infantrymen in a short time.

The second Article on Page 11, "Another 2RAR Moment". As a newly promoted T/Capt. and appointed Adjt of 2RAR of the re-established/split of 2RAR Pentropic into 2RAR and 6RAR; and my introduction Presentation to our "Nasho" reinforcements of our history and of course, The Colours. I'm sure that our RSM (Bill Turley) also would have been heavily involved in the planning and implementation of the presentation – I remember it well and I am very pleased that the LADS were impressed and that some still remember it today. Thank you; my Day has improved immensely!

Bryan Pannell  
Forde, ACT

In response to Don Godley's ongoing contribution, Operation Magnus Thai-Malay Border in the recent copy of RINGO, I would like to thank Don and in particular Terry Dinneen who over quite some time has contributed with a lot of informative and memory "jogging" experiences regarding this, which was understandably overshadowed by the magnificent work done by the RAR in Korea, Malayan Emergency, Confrontation, Vietnam and all others since, however for those participants of the Thai-Malay Operations they were very real.

I would also like to thank Don for his tireless and relentless work long in the past now with others to get recognition for our Active Service for the Thai-Malay campaign.

Vic Moulder  
C Coy 2RAR 1961-65

## **VALE: MAJOR ADAM DUNBAR**

### **Another veteran lost to suicide**

With sad regret the 2RAR family lost ex-Major Adam Dunbar (Intelligence Corps, ex RAA) to PTSD on 6 Nov 2017. Much loved, and never without a smile or a joke, Adam will be greatly missed by those that served with him, his family and a broad swathe of ardent Sydney FC or Socceroos fans that knew him as a close friend.

2RAR was warned for duty as Al Muthanna Task Group 3 on 16 Jan 2006, leaving little time to convert from the on-line Ready Battalion Group before deployment into Iraq as a motorised/cavalry Task/Battle Group in May. In doing so, 2RAR welcomed a considerable number of specialist reinforcements during pre-deployment training and this included Captain Adam Dunbar, RAA, as the Commanding Officer's Arab Linguist. Adam had previously served with 4 Field Regiment before undertaking language training so was no stranger to 2RAR. Intelligent, personable and with a great sense of humour he slotted into the Headquarters staff without difficulty.

Known as the 'CO's Arab', Adam was part of the CO's personal staff and patrol, accompanying the CO and the Combat Team commanders as they coerced, negotiated and cajoled Iraqi leaders: Provincial Governors, Councillors, Army and Police Commanders, Sheiks and Imams alike towards a more secure southern Iraq. Where the CO went so went Adam - he routinely carried the burden of almost daily mounted patrols over the hot, dry and dusty, 72, 000 square km of Al Muthanna and Dhi Qar provinces only to be engaged in long, laborious and demanding discussions between the CO and the Iraqi leadership once a destination had been reached. From the most operationally critical negotiations on the MOU that underpinned to transfer of security responsibility to Provincial Iraqi Control in July, to key negotiations post the contact in Al Rumaythah (26 Sep 2006) with the Battle Group dictating terms for ongoing security arrangements, through to the endless rounds of obligatory polite but obtuse conversations, Adam was both the ears and voice of the CO.

Adam's bent for absorbing and passing detailed information from his Artillery background and his natural affinity with Arabic contributed greatly to the success of 2RAR as AMTG 3 and later as Overwatch Battlegroup (West). His keen ear, aided greatly by the strong personal relationships he made with our Iraqi Interpreter's, allowed great insights into what was really on Iraqi's minds and what was happening on the ground. The sight of an Australian Captain wandering around the Command Post and BG Headquarters having very animated discussions in fluent Arabic over any one (often two at the same time) of a number of mobile phones caused routine amusement for us, and mild surprise to visitors and newcomers. It was rare that we didn't know, or couldn't find out what was going on, in those parts of southern Iraq where we had built sound relationships. If nothing else, we knew the soccer score - a passion shared between Iraq and Adam.

The number of RAA gunners and NCO, both serving and ex, at his funeral was noticeable, and was complimented by a broad range of those that had served with him, as well as those that knew him from the broader community. A clear mark of respect for an intelligent and committed man who served his country selflessly.

Brigadier Michael (Mick) Mahy DSC  
CO 2RAR  
2005-06

## **VALE: RONALD GILDERSLEEVE, BEM**

Just home after farewelling Ron Gildersleeve BEM at Yamba (NSW) funeral home. Ron was aged 89 years when he passed away on 2 Feb 18.

Those from D Coy 6RAR are in the first photo; the second photo was taken in SVN 1967 (both not included). Our Company Driver, Steve Williams, was also there. I counted about 70 people at the funeral service, including about 21 military. Ron had two families and quite a few children and grandchildren.

Ron had joined the Merchant Navy at age 14 as a cabin boy and at the end of the war his ship brought soldiers home from Singapore. He then saw service in Korea (2RAR 1953-54, & 1RAR 1954), two tours of Malaya (2RAR 1955-57, 1961-63) and as CQMS D Coy 6RAR. I recall first meeting Ron at our 2RAR base on Penang Island some time in 1956.

He retired from the ARA as a WO2 in 1975 and became the Postmaster at Yungaburra on the Atherton tablelands, but served in the CMF with 51 RQR Cairns as a WO2 in charge of the platoon at Atherton.

He moved to Burpengary north of Brisbane and then to Yamba, NSW. Ron was awarded a BEM in the Military Division on 1 January 1972 for 'outstanding and dedicated military service.' Ron was a very loyal, efficient and pleasant CQMS Staff Sergeant and served us well, as he did in all units he served with. I mentioned Dave, Bob, and John in my brief talk as part of the RSL Eulogy.

Lt Col Harry Smith SG, MC  
OC D Coy 6RAR  
Long Tan (1966)

## **SECRET INCURSION PATROLS INTO THAILAND**

### **Recollections of Patrols on the Thai-Malay Border**

*By Donald Godley: 6 PI B Company August-October 1962*

Neither General Stretton or the official history make any mention of this sort of thing happening. We who were there well and truly know what we had to do, and we did it willingly. We were all primed up to get the C.T.'s and it didn't matter how.

If you don't want to believe us, then look towards our involvement in Borneo for answers. Secret incursions across the Indonesian border was emphatically denied by all British and Australian authorities from 1966 until 1994, when our government officially recognised that it was practised on a grand scale. There is records of serious gun battles taking place in Borneo, hence a more active role taken by people to force the politicians to admit what went on.

Unfortunately for us of the Malayan situation between most certainly our time on the border and later sorties, no firing took place, therefore it has become too easy to continue to cover up, but the strain was still there on our nerves, not to mention the efforts we had to go to dodging the Thai Police Field Force Battalion patrols, who were trying to get us and we are dead lucky they didn't follow our example of laying down ambushes where ever we could, or some of us would have been goners for sure.

### **HUMOUR: THAT'S FUNNY!**

#### **And The Same To You**

A general and a captain walking down the street passed a number of soldiers, and each time one of them saluted the officers, the captain saluted back and said, "The same to you."

"Why do you always say that?" the general asked the captain. "I used to be a private, too," said the captain, "and I know just what they are thinking."

## **DROP SHORTS**

### **DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL (DSM) <sup>1</sup>**

**Corporal Paul John TEONG**

**2<sup>ND</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment**

For distinguished leadership as a Section Commander, during contact with opposing militia at Montaaain, East Timor.

Date: 10 October 1999

AN Interfet report to the UN has commended an Australian army corporal, claiming his composed actions in a fatal border clash with Indonesians on October 10 "prevented a greater loss of life".

Corporal Paul Teong, 25, 8 PI, C Coy 2RAR was leading his men in convoy on a mission to secure the border village of Montaaain, whose citizens were said to be in the grip of the militia and suffering brutal treatment.

Interfet maps showed Montaaain inside East Timor, but Indonesian maps – which Interfet admitted in the report to the UN were correct – showed it was just within West Timor. Indonesian troops fired warning shots above the heads of the Australian-led patrol.

Corporal Teong had just enough time to order his men to prop, or crouch low in the ready position, acknowledging the warning shots while keeping a good knowledge of his own patrol's position. Indonesian mobile police, manning a border post, then fired directly on the Australians. The Australians returned fire, killing one member of the Indonesian mobile police brigade and injuring another, who remains in hospital.

An Indonesian second-lieutenant, Erwin Egy, was also praised for maintaining an understanding with Corporal Teong – who had some basic Bahasa Indonesian – during the 8 to 10 minute exchange.

The report says the clash was due to conflicting maps and "appears to have been initiated" by Indonesian troops who overreacted. It says the exchange would have been much worse if Corporal Teong and Lieutenant Egy had not remained cool.

## **POETRY**

### **The 'D' Company Flag**

You can call it an old bit of bunting  
You can call it an old coloured rag  
But hundreds have served with distinction  
Beneath The 'D' Company Flag



It went with the Boys to Vietnam  
It heard the APC's roar  
Saw B52's in the distance  
Saw young men exhausted by war  
It witnessed the elephants hidden  
'Get With The Strength' was the call  
Respectfully lowered each evening  
Safe at home now, it hangs on a wall  
It's resting now with memories  
Of those who share Aussie fame  
The 'D' Company Boys did their duty  
"Strength" is always the name of the game.

Margaret Gibbons, OAM  
August 2012

## **VICTOR WINKLER'S MILITARY INTERLUDE**

### **RA INF Corps Training**

For a soldier allocated to Infantry the training he receives in his second three months in the Army is the most important for him. It is during this period he learns the basics of being an Infantry soldier.

Although he may have been introduced to field-craft as a recruit, now he will undergo the whole course of this essential subject. Camouflage and concealment, target detection, target indication, fire control orders, field signals, field sentries, methods of movement and section and platoon formations will be taught and practiced until these skills become second nature.

Interspersed with the field craft lessons he will be taught how to operate all the weapons carried and used by the section. The machine gun, the sub-machine gun, hand thrown and projected rifle grenades, a separate grenade launcher, anti-tank launcher and claymore mine will be taught, practiced, live fired and tested. The immediate action drills for each of these weapons will be practiced and tested repetitively until they are perfect. Some of these weapons at that time were new to the section's armament. They were not all replacement weapons from an earlier era but augmented and increased the existing firepower of the section. The down side was they also increased the load the Infantryman was required to carry. Other subjects included in the syllabus were map reading and navigation, first aid, field hygiene and living in the field, field defences and character guidance, which was, as in his previous training, conducted by the Chaplains.

Physical training which in recruit training was conducted mainly in shorts, singlet and sand-shoes was now done in boots, and sometimes basic webbing equipment and carrying a rifle i.e. battle order. The soldier learned to climb up, traverse and climb down a rope in battle order and to carry a soldier of similar height and weight also in battle order the length of a football field in under a minute.

When these basic subjects and skills were mastered the soldier moved on to battle-craft. These comprised scouting, individual and team obstacle crossing, ambush and counter ambush drills, both when mounted in vehicles and on foot, patrolling and harbour drills (short or night halt security). It was probable that during the battle-craft phase the soldier came to the realisation of 'how it all works'. He began to understand and to function as a member of a platoon. Two subjects that the Corps trainee was introduced to during this period of his training were the enemy and communications. Initial lectures on the enemy provided a background for the trainees to use when exercising our own minor tactics. From time to time he would receive further instruction on this topic.

The communications aspect required the trainee to be able to assemble the radio, set a frequency and use voice procedure which is a form of common military language in order to send and receive messages. This enabled him to man the radio as a relief operator or operate the radio in an emergency situation without compromising security.

The emphasis during Corps training is on field work rather than on the parade ground. Some allocation of duties such as guard duty was normal as was weekend leave. To conclude his Corps training a final exercise involving all the phases of war, was conducted to ensure all that had been taught had been learned and could be done properly.

At least one of our allies trained their troops as specialists within the section and did not cross-train them. The Australian approach was to train the soldier, so he could perform each of the roles within the section, i.e. each

<sup>1</sup> Reference: Mission Accomplished (INTERFET): East Timor by Bob Breen (C). Page 194

rifleman could scout and operate the machine gun as either member of the crew and be a rifleman. Some rifleman showed a preference for a task. It made sense to want the best gunner in the section manning the machine gun as the gunner, and similarly with the choice of scouts if you were going to enter into a death contest with the enemy.

At the completion of this phase allocation was made to a section within the platoon and the company where the next phase of training would be undertaken.

#### REPUBLIC OF KOREA WAR SERVICE MEDAL



The Republic of Korea War Service Medal was introduced by South Korea in 1951 to recognise the assistance provided by members of the United Nations forces in combatting communist aggressions in Korea.<sup>2</sup>

During the Korean War, Australia used the Imperial Honours and Awards System and was therefore subject to the award policies set by the United Kingdom at the time. The regulations of the day did not permit the acceptance or wearing of this medal by British Commonwealth military personnel.

Following a campaign by the Australian Council of Korea Veterans Associations, a new offer of the medal was made by the South Korean government which was accepted, and approved for wear, by the Governor-General in 2017.

#### Eligibility for the Medal

Veterans who have been awarded with the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp KOREA are also eligible for the Republic of Korea War Service medal. The eligibility criteria, as directed by the Republic of Korea, is as follows: Served between 25 June 1950 and 27 July 1953; The service prescribed must have been performed:

While on permanent assignment; or  
While on temporary duty within the territorial limits of Korea or on waters immediately adjacent thereto for 30 consecutive days or 60 days not consecutive; or  
If you are unsure of you or your relatives' service dates you can access the Korean War Nominal Roll which has been curated by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The Nominal Roll includes approximately 5,700 members of the Royal Australian Navy, 10,800 members from the Australian Army, and 1,400 members of the Royal Australian Air Force who served in the Korean War operational theatre from 27 June 1950 to 19 April 1956.

It is important to note that eligibility for the medal ceases on 27 July 1953, and therefore the eligible service periods must be met prior to that date.

#### How can I obtain the Medal?

The medal is no longer issued by the Republic of South Korea and is neither administered nor issued by the Australian Government.

Eligible veterans can purchase the medal from reputable medals dealers. There is no requirement to provide proof of eligibility to wear the medal or in order to purchase a replica.

#### Can I wear my relatives' medals?

Allowance is made for family members of a deceased recipient to wear that person's medals on commemorative occasions such as Anzac Day. When worn by others, the usual protocol recommended is that the medals are worn on the right side to show that the wearer is not the original recipient. This policy extends to the Republic of Korea War Service Medal.

#### REST IN PEACE: GEORGE LOGAN

**3410350/36649 Major George MacLauchlan LOGAN RFD, 2RAR, 3RAR, 7RAR, AATTV<sup>3</sup>**

*If I could just ask you to give us a brief précis of your life?*

Alright. I was born in Edinburgh in Scotland and I believe it was a Thursday afternoon on the 4th December 1936. My Mum and Dad were ordinary working folk in Scotland. He was coal heaver. And Mum just did things around the place. As I grew up I grew up in Scotland and of course I grew up in wartime Scotland because by the time I was three World War II started. And hence from 3 to 9 we were at war.



WO2 George LOGAN, 7RAR 1967-68

Obviously, I have little recall as a youngster, but I do recall one morning being on my Dad's shoulders looking at a back of a place called Dudley Terrace. And the back of the building which had been bombed by the Germans. And this apparently was in 1940. And I was looking at this and I should recall a lone pipe with a loo hanging on the end of it. My Dad was then 35, and of course beyond the age where he was likely to be called up. However, this, the fact that the Germans bombed our street rather incensed him. So, he went off and joined up. And he went off and my uncles were away and so during that period - all my heroes were off fighting the Germans. And I distinctly remember in our house - you weren't allowed to swear. But if every now and then you said "Bloody Germans" they would chastise you, but you could get away with it. And so, when I was 9 he came back and not long after that he bought a shop. And we had that shop until we came to Australia in 1955. And I went to school at a state primary school and then I went to a Grammar School, I suppose it's equivalent; called Leith Academy which coincidentally was the home of the first ever golf club house. Not St Andrew's but Leith, and it was established around about 1528. The rector was Doctor McKee. And I recall him wandering about and I often wondered if he was the original rector.

When I left school, I should have stayed on, but I couldn't be bothered - I then worked in Dad's shop for a while and then became an apprentice, which I hated, Brendis Electrical Mechanical. And so, when my Dad announced we were coming to Australia, I was able to get out of being an electrical mechanic. I in fact wanted to join the army.

So, we arrived in Australia and I said I wanted to join up. I had attempted while we were in the UK [United Kingdom], I was just 18 at the time but somehow rather he managed to forestall that one. I arrived here, I said I wanted to join the army. Because my heroes had been soldiers. My Dad had been away, my uncles, all those sorts of things. My family demurred, you know.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.defence.gov.au/Medals/Foreign/Republic-of-Korea-War-Service-Medal.asp>

<sup>3</sup> <https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/people/778217>

"You're not going to join the army", and I was under 21 so I had to get their approval. So, I took off and I went to Queensland and worked in a sugar mill for a while. Then I came back and said, "I want to join the army." They said, "No." I said, "Okay, goodbye." And they said, "Hang on a second, hang on a second. At least if you join the army we'll know where we were." So, I joined the army in, let's see, 1st March 1956 and for a three-year enlistment. Went to Malaya for 2 years during the Emergency, came back from then, got out of the army very briefly. In fact, from about the 28th February 1959 until the 25th May 1959. In the interim I had come back, and I thought, "Now you've been in the uniform service, perhaps I should go in another one". So, I went in the fire brigade. I did the recruit training there.

Topped the recruit training course I might add and, we were just about to have our graduation parade. And we were being briefed on what we had to wear and so forth. And this fellow said, "Pardon me, and you wear medals." And we didn't use the term dickhead in those days, but he implied that that's what we were - "And none of you have got any medals." And of course, I did. I had a general service medal with class Malaya. So, the next day I turned up with my medal on. And he said, "What's that?" And I said, "That's a GSM [General Service Medal] with class Malaya." He said, "Where'd you get that?" I said, "I just told you, Malaya." "What were you doing there?" I said, "I was a digger in an infantry battalion." And of course, he said, "An Australian Infantry Battalion?" So, I gave him a nice burst and said, "Yes an Australian infantry battalion."

Promptly at the finish of that day went off, called in - I had the Monday off I think. On the Monday I went down to the recruiting office, re-enlisted and joined the army again. Where I served in the regular army from 25th May 1959 until about the 12th February 1979 leaving the regular army as a major. And then my life unfolded slightly differently. I became secretary to the Lord Mayor of Melbourne for a couple of years and then I was director of training at Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, the Victorian Automobile Association. Then I ran my own business for a while. My last 10 years of working life was as a services' member of the Veteran's Review Board which hears cases on appeal against the [Department of Veteran's Affairs] by veterans. And that was an interesting time. I resigned from the Veteran's Review Board about 5 years ago and from there to here, that's where I am now.

*Could you just give us a brief overview of the years between 1963 and 1979; where you served your time?*

In 1959 I went back in again and I went back to my old battalion which was 2RAR [Royal Australian Regiment] in fact back to the same company - B Company. And perhaps I should just go back a little. When I enlisted, they wanted me to join the intelligence corps and I wasn't very happy about joining the intelligence corps, I wanted to be an infantryman. And I recall they interviewed me for intelligence and deliberately being, a little vague in my answers. And they didn't then want me for intelligence. Maybe that's a reflection on me but never mind. So, I went off to the infantry and we did our training in Sydney and up in Canungra. And eventually went to Malaya in March of 1957 where I was in B Company 2RAR. When the battalion went home, we were on operations then - when the battalion went home we stayed behind, continued operations and eventually were joined by the 3rd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment [3RAR] and I stayed on with them until I came home in February 1959. And of course, to be discharged. I then re-enlisted, went back to 2RAR and usual training again, by which time I had made lance corporal I think, maybe corporal. We went off to Malaya again 1961, 1963; The Far East Strategic Reserve. Which for the main part, although it's eligible service under the Veteran's Entitlement Act, was really garrison service. We did have some six months in

operations in the Malay-Thai border area and we also spent an interesting period up in Thailand itself in a place called Ubol Ratchathani which is a not far from the Laos-Cambodian border.

We came back from Malaya in 1963 and several things happened. I was selected for a thing called the ENTAC. Now ENTAC stands for Engin Téléguidé Anti-Char ['Char' meaning tank]. It's a French guided missile and we were introducing it into service. And I was selected from the trials team for that and later, after completion of that part of it became an instructor at the Armoured corps on this weapon. By this time Vietnam was starting up and by 1965 the 1st Battalion went off. I tried to join them, but I couldn't. And I was at Puckapunyal, first at the recruit training battalion as a sergeant and then back again to the Armoured centre as an instructor. At this time the 7th Battalion had been formed and was at Puckapunyal. And I managed to wiggle my way in there. There was a fellow called John Barnes who will still not forgive me for that. John came over to Armoured centre, he was in the anti-tank platoon of the battalion, came over to Armoured centre to do the ENTAC Course, on the 106 RCL [Recoilless Rifle] course. Anyway, I explained to John that if he did well on this course, he was a corporal at the time, he would get his third stripe and become a sergeant as I was, and he could come over there as an instructor. Well John did well, and the next thing was he was posted in my place and I was posted as a sergeant in the 7RAR [7th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment] and off I went to 7RAR where I became the company sergeant major, CSM of training company. My company commander was a fellow called Doug Clively. Dunc was an old soldier whom I'd met first when I was in the airborne platoon in 1960 at Williamstown. I'd been in the airborne platoon for about 8 months then I broke my ankle so that finished that. And Dunc had been commissioned and as a lieutenant was the company commander, I was company sergeant major as a sergeant and we trained our blokes for Vietnam. In fact, one of the nice things about all of that is that people in X Company, training company that went over there all came back alive.

Some of them with bits missing, but they all came back. They were distributed throughout the battalion, I was very proud of the way they - we trained them very, very hard. Dunc had a saying. "A gallon of sweat is easier than a drop of blood". And so, we worked their butts off day and night and it paid off. It paid off. So eventually the battalion went off to Vietnam.

And I was on the advance party, joined what was called Recon Platoon [reconnaissance platoon], which was 5RAR's [5th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment] anti-tank platoon. Went out with them and in fact within about 3 days was in contact. Which made things interesting. I thought to myself, "Hmm, going to be a long year". The battalion then came up and we commenced operations. Throughout the year my platoon, the fire assault platoon, worked in various roles, mostly under the direct command of the CO [Commanding Officer] who was Lieutenant Colonel Eric Smith. And we did tasks as directed by the CO. We did some reconnaissance tasks, mostly we went out and secured landing zones for flying in of the battalion and specific individual tasks for the CO. I was with Fire Assault platoon until about January 1968 when I went off to 5 platoon B Company to replace A.D. Browning by which time I'd had a platoon commander, several platoon commanders and they'd all moved onto other things. And then I got a fellow who looked like he was going to stay with the platoon until the end of the tour. And I must confess I was a bit peeved about all of that because I'd commanded the platoon for most of the time and as far as I was concerned this was my platoon. So anyway, we had some disagreements and, off I went to B Company, just in time for the Tet Offensive which was to say the least a bit interesting. The completion of the Tet Offensive or our part

therein, came back did a few operations and then came home.

One thing that sticks in my mind because I had this bloke's name mentioned just the other day. Frank Frigerio. Frank was one of my lance corporals. He was a national serviceman [compulsory military service scheme]. He had a good head. And about 4 days, 3 days before we were due to come home Frank and I were coming in the advance party. We'd dug in outside, what was it, Baria. Dug in outside Baria and just at last light some shots were fired. And they came from inside the village, inside the town. And I scuttled over to where Frank was and got in his pit beside him. And I said, "Hang on Frank I think I want us to draw - they want to draw our fire into the village". "And we're not going to get, just hang on." And a few more shots came, it got dark, settled down and off we went. I went back to my pit, we spent the night as we would. Anyway about 3 days later, 4 days later we were back home.

Frank came from Ballarat, oh Bendigo I think. Anyway, he told me about walking into the pub on the Saturday after he got home. And one of his mates said, "G'day Frank haven't seen you for a while, where've you been?" Frank said, "Oh just got back from Vietnam." He said, "Oh yeah right", he said "Didn't see the footy team last week, did you?" And Frank said, "No I've been in Vietnam." And he felt alienated, was not that they were being deliberately wrong, deliberately spiteful or anything. It's just that most of us you only talk about the things you did last week and last month and the last few months. And Frank felt very alienated and I must say I felt for Frank. Because there he is one day in contact in Vietnam, the next day he's having a beer in his pub, difficult stuff. Different for us regulars because after leave, and I spent most of my time with a bloke called Ron Seek with whom I'd served in Malaya and in Vietnam. And Ron and I heartedly got stuck into the booze, had a thoroughly splendid time, went back into the army, which was our life, where people understood and empathised with you. So, got back from Vietnam that time and I was posted to the army apprentice school. I was still a sergeant.

Did that for about a year and thought, "Bugger this I'm going back to Vietnam". And there was a unit called the team, the Australian Army Training Team (AATT) in Vietnam. Largely operating the length and the breadth of the country as advisors. I wanted to be one of the team. They were seen as being the cream. So, I volunteered for the cream. Accepted, did a bit of training and went back to Vietnam. Very interesting year there.

Quite a bit of action. Quite a bit of action. Up in the north at a place called Quang Tri, we operated out of Quang Tri, which is the province which is at the northern end of, what was then South Vietnam and had the demilitarised zone running across the top of it with North Vietnam on the other side. And I recall when we were up on the DMZ [Demilitarised Zone], you look across at the large flag they had, on the other side which was on a pole I suppose in those terms, a hundred feet high, with this big flag. And you'd watch the rain storms coming in, from the west. And as they came in apparently the bloke who looked after the flag, the North Vietnamese, was under strict orders it wasn't to be got wet. And you'd see the storm coming in, down would come the flag, the storm would sweep through and then up it'd go again. During that time as I said I had about 8 months with the 1st Battalion 4th. 4/ 1st or 4/ 1st. 1st Battalion, 1st ARVN, ARVN [Army of the Republic of Vietnam] Regiment. Working and living with Vietnamese on my own. And they were first class. It took away, it took away any racism or prejudice I had against Asians. Because these blokes were my mates. And when things were going bad, they looked after me as much as I looked after them. And I'm very pleased about that because it really has made a difference. I still go to Vietnamese veteran's functions and I talk to them

about the young Vietnamese that are here, the Australian Vietnamese and how young Australian Vietnamese should made sure they grasp what's come from their background, their strong family values and all the other skills. Vietnamese really are a very moral group and the family is very, very important. And so, I still get a lot out of that. When I finished my tour, in fact I came home on R&R [rest and recreation] to attend my brother's wedding. And I was going back and some 2nd lieutenant was giving me a hard time because I'd jumped the queue in the wait to get on the plane. And my plane was going to Da Nang, everyone else was going to Saigon. And he said, "Sergeant major, sergeant major." and tapped me on the shoulder and I said, "Yeah what do you want?" And he said, "Do you realise you've jumped the queue" blah blah blah. And I said, "For Christ's sake I've got to get to Da Nang, I've no time to stuff around here. You're all going to Saigon, that doesn't leave for 3 hours, Da Nang leaves in 20 minutes, I've got to be on it." And he gave me a little bit of a reprimand and I thought to myself, hang on a second, 'cause I was a warrant officer at the time. In my army I've got to do what that bloke tells me 'cause he's a lieutenant and I'm a warrant officer. I thought, "Bugger this". And they'd just introduced a new scheme called the Admin Tech Officer's Scheme, where they would commission selected sergeants and warrant officers and the like. So, I thought, "That's it, that's what I'm going to do". So, I applied for that while I was in Vietnam, was interviewed in Vietnam. And there's a little story there because, in the Australian army we use code words when we're talking on the radio. For example, the adjutant is "Seagull", and the medical corps is "Starlight". And up in I Corp where we were the Australians were largely "Zulu", that was the call sign, Zulu. Anyway, I'm out in the scrub and there was a call from Quang Tri relayed through our headquarters and then to me. Now I could talk with our headquarters, but I couldn't talk to Quang Tri. And I could hear what was going on. And this bloke said, "Eddy Baja" or whatever our call sign was, "I've got a message for your Zulu." He said, "Apparently Starlight's been talking to a Seagull and the Seagull says the NT is a go." And the other man said, "What the hell does all that mean?" He said, "I don't know." He said, "I'm just passing on the information." He said, "Could you tell your Zulu." So, he said, "Zulu this is..." whatever it was. I said, "Zulu over." He said, "Some guy's got a message from a Seagull and Starlight says the NT's a go. Over." And I said, "This is Zulu, roger [OK], out." And just left it at that. And after a while he said, "For God's sake when you get out come and tell me what this is all about." And what had happened is our adjutant, the bloke who looked after the administration of the unit was Seagull. He'd spoken to a medic, warrant officer in Quang Tri, Ron Roney, saying, "Yeah they've checked it, and I can apply for the commission". But the Americans didn't understand all of this. It reminds me of one other time.

Barry Young who's sadly gone. And he was there, and this American had been talking to him. And he said, "Mr Logan, I've just been speaking with Mr Young." I said, "Yeah." He said, "He said he'd see me in a fortnight." I said, "Yeah." "What the hell kind of vehicle's that?" He just didn't understand a fortnight meant two weeks yeah. So, I was interviewed in Vietnam for a commission and I'll never forget because when I was in Malaya the first time, I had been on guard, had just come back off stand down. We used to go to Penang for two days stand down. I'd just come back from stand down. I was half pissed. And this bloke said, "You're on guard tonight." Now if a bloke's been drinking you don't put them on guard. And I said, "No you can't put me on guard, I've been on the piss." And he said, "Sorry about that Jock" because in those days it was Jock, "You're on guard." And I said, "All right." So, I was on guard. Now very early in the peace in Malaya I had been involved in a riot. We - it was coming close to independence. And four of us - Buck,

Timsy and another bloke whose name will come back to me. Slim, Slim Callahan. We had gone into town into the Queen's Bar at Kuala Kangsar, and we were having a thoroughly splendid time. And there was a big crowd gathered outside. Mostly Malays, who were cross about something or rather. And I don't think Slim Callahan made it any better. He abused them or did something. So, when we came out the bar there were all these people.

Waiting. And we walked through them and we got about 30 metres past and they're after us. We all had a beer bottle in hand and I remember we threw that and then went for the lick of our lives. And we beat them out of town and then this car came from town, several times and tried to run us over. And what they did was ambush us on a bridge because we went further. And I got a cracked skull. And a broken nose.

Big Buck broke his ankle. Slim Callahan had something wrong with - Kevin Tims I think also got knocked around. Anyway, there was an investigation into it and the soldiers had been drinking. Just before I left Malaya on that tour, I was having a drink in what's called the Armskote where we kept all the weapons. And the duty officer came in and I was found to be in possession of alcohol, so I got 14 days stoppage of pay for that. So, when I was up to be commissioned I was being interviewed. Now this is, 9 almost 10 years later. And he said, "Now I feel there's some problems with alcohol, Sergeant Major." And I said, "Well what do you mean sir?" He said, "Now when were you last drunk?" And I said, "Oh last night." He said, "Oh yeah and before that?"

And I said, "Probably the night before. Yes" "And before that?" I said, "8 weeks ago." He said, "Why 8 weeks?" I said, "Because I've been out on an operation for 8 weeks, I came back, and I've been on the piss for 2 nights." He said, "Oh, Oh right." I said, "But look. The last offence I had was somewhere about 1959, 1960. Here we are in 1969, actually 1970." I said, "It's 10 years."

I said, "I was a private soldier now I'm a WO, Warrant Officer." He said, "Yes, yes" he said, "We've still got it there." I said, "Well, you must recall it sir because you gave me the award." He said, "Did I?" I said, "Have a look." And he had been the 2IC [Second-in-command] of 3RAR and he said, "By God so I did." He said, "How are you?" And of course, we, you know we were fine, it was square one. Anyway, I was commissioned, came home and was commissioned. And stayed a couple of years at the Jungle Training Centre training people for Vietnam and in fact I was there when our commitment finally pulled up which was on the 7th December 1972.

Story about that one. When I'd been a very young digger in 1956 at the Jungle Training Centre at Canungra there was a fellow called, Gil Lucas who had been, I think in World War II a Korean soldier. Oh, and another one, Fred Lomas. Fred had been a commando in World War II, and he stood there when he had given me introductions to tropical warfare he said, "In the last show" and then went on. And that impressed me. So, after the 7th December, I think it was about the 9th December when, pull out in 1972, pull out was finally announced I was there giving the introduction to tropical warfare. And suddenly, we're out of the Vietnam War. So, I stood there with my arms folded and I said, "In the last show, the one that's just finished." And then went on from there pulling a Fred Lomas. I had two years at Canungra and they were good years. Then I wondered what we were going to do. And I had a feeling then that by the end of the century many of the resources that we had were going to be gone. I had a feeling that, I think in the seventies many of us did or some of us did, a feeling that resources would be gone. And I saw that if that were the case then Japan would once again be a threat. Because Japan has got no resources of its own.

And they went to war in 1941 over resources. The ABDA agreement. Australia, Britain, Dutch, America had stopped sending Japan oil and stuff and I figured - and they went to war over it. And I figured, "If we're going to have the same situation at the turn of the century then I'd be in my sixties, what would I be able to do?" The short answer was nothing because of age. So, I thought, "What if I learnt Japanese?"

And at least be a linguist. So, I applied to attend the language school which was a year course and was by selection. I got through that. But then they determined to send me to do Thai, study Thai. And I've often wondered why, and I suspect it was because I think we were thinking in those days, and of course this was before we pulled out of Vietnam. We were thinking of setting up some advisory teams in Thailand to go across and help bring back downed US [United States] aircraft and stuff like that. And if you had a Thai speaker it's always much better. But of course, by the time all of this unfolded the war had ended. But nonetheless off I went and did a year at Point Cook studying Thai. There I graduated with a credit, had a year taken up my life, because it was intense. And was then promptly posted to Papua New Guinea. Where you'd be astonished at the number of people that don't speak Thai. Including after about three years me. Had three good years in Papua New Guinea, loved that. Was mostly involved in training Papuan New Guinean officers who were good blokes, they were good blokes. Then I came back from there, had a year in a staff posting and then my last year in the regular army - by this time I was a major - was the staff officer responsible amongst other things for ceremony and protocol. And for example, I organised Sir Robert Menzies' [former Australian Prime Minister] funeral. And that was an interesting year. And then I looked around and I thought, well hang on a second, I'm a major. My form of commissioning meant that I couldn't go anywhere else and I think I was 41 at the time, maybe coming up for 42.

If I stayed on to the age of 55 I'd be a major for what, 15 years. I thought, "Oh bugger this". So, I pulled the pin. And I got a job as secretary to the Lord Mayor of Melbourne. And then, they're the parts.

*That's great. Perhaps we can go back to the beginning now. Can you tell us a bit more about your family?*

Alright. My family...

#### **OP MAGNUS: THAI-MALAY BORDER**

**By 15345 Donald Godley: 6 PI B Coy 2RAR 1962**

We came across a small creek. It was only a drain, choked full of bamboo leaves, that stain the water a jet-black colour. I don't know what its natural taste is like because we dropped stacks of Chlorine tablets into our water bottles, so all we tasted was chlorine, but it stunk like hell, that was enough. We were going to live on this water, for six weeks, except for a short period later.

We patrolled up the creek to within a few yards of the border and came upon a track, running east-west. We harboured up that night with the track running through the centre of our platoon position. This gave us two-gun positions, one facing east the other west. We were on the high ground to the west of the creek and the country was a mixture of jungle vines and bamboo clumps.

To do a harbour, the men form a circle and break up into two-man groups, spaced about 15 feet from each other and clear the ground for a hutchie, then cut a perimeter track right around on the outer edge of where the hutchies will be erected for sleeping or resting under. Jungle vines are then pulled and cut into lengths, just like long ropes.

These are tied to the trees and bamboo around the perimeter track, forming a complete circle and they lead to the gun positions. The perimeter vine, as it then becomes known, is at about waist height. It is our life line during the

hours of darkness, when you can't see your hand in front of your face. After stand-down, which comes one hour after last light, everyone tries to get some sleep. Depending upon the number of men, the night is broken up into periods of piquet on guns, so that one man is on each gun the whole night through until one hour before first light, when the last piquet wakes everyone for stand-to.

You leave the gun when your time is up, edge carefully along the vine to the hutchie containing the next man due on, wake him, not leave until he is on his feet and holding the vine, his life line to get him up to the gun position you had just left, for his turn. So, the night progresses, every single night the platoon is out.<sup>4</sup>

Over the years we well knew what might happen to anyone who lost the vine and began stumbling around lost. Men had tragically shot and killed by their own mates, and we didn't want that to happen to us. Whilst on the subject, the other danger was A.D's (Accidental Discharges). When stripping and cleaning weapons, this was a great danger. One slip and a mate could be dead. Our Platoon was the only Platoon in the Battalion that did not have an A.D. This was an excellent level of training and skill at arms. I recall we were very proud of ourselves. In 5 Platoon, a chap was cleaning his Bren. It was just one of those quick jobs, brushing some extra oil on during the day. The gun was resting on the ground on its by-pod when he pulled the trigger. It went off and the slug tore into a tree trunk just above the Acting Platoon Sergeant Norm Hardy's head. We understand that old Norm wasn't too happy for a while.

Prior to dark, the time to cut perimeter track, vine and stretcher poles to get us up off the ground for sleep and stakes for the guns, just ten minutes, that's all. You can imagine, the gollicks (machetes) were chopping to get the job done, I can tell you. It was important to get off the ground where possible. The thick layer of bamboo leaves was full of Bootlace Snakes. We called them that because of their small size, but they were Kraits – the most deadly snake in the world. Fortunately, because their mouths were tiny, they could only bite between the fingers or toes.

Large spiders, centipedes, scorpions and army ants were about and only worried us when we couldn't get off the ground, though the scorpions seem attracted to 'Pancho' Walters, no matter whether he was on or off the ground. Night came on and as always, it was black as the ace of spades. Fire flies were buzzing about all over the place, they were good company and kept us interested in the night going on around us. There was the still the constant never ending pat, pat of the bamboo leaves falling about like monster snowflakes, especially on bare heads at night.

You may now picture yourself with us in that kind of country. We had lived in the jungle for so long, it was a matter of becoming attuned to the banging and crashing of falling canes. About the middle of the night, I quite suddenly discerned an unusual sound coming towards me...

More about Op MANGUS in July: '[The Tiger](#)'

#### **DEPLOYMENT TO MALAYA<sup>5</sup>**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1955 it was announced that 3,500 Australian servicemen would be sent to Malaya that year. The infantry battalions, after finishing their service in Korea, had been withdrawn to Australia for reorganisation and reinforcement and, as in Korea, consisted of volunteer regular soldiers. During the next four or five years the task of the battalions was an unglamorous one of patrolling areas which hopefully had been pacified by the vast British effort, with occasional skirmishes when a fragmented CT group was cornered.

Deployment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, a large proportion of whom were Korea and World War Two veterans, was the first time

that an Australian Army unit was to serve in Malaya since World War Two, and of an overseas operational reserve in peacetime. The Battalion became part of the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Main body of 800 men, including 10 alsatian war dogs, embarked at Brisbane on the MV Georgic on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1955, and arrived in Penang Harbour on the 19<sup>th</sup>. The ship docked the next day, and the unit was transported by road to Minden Barracks, on Penang Island to become of the 28<sup>th</sup> British Commonwealth Infantry Brigade. Also, in late December 1955 the newly arrived Australians were to witness a cease-fire between the warring factions and a meeting between Chin Peng and principal Malay advisers. At the meeting Chin Peng attempted to negotiate recognition of the ailing Communist Party. Rather, the government demanded complete MRLA surrender and talks collapsed. Chin Peng and his tattered followers returned to the jungle.

In January 1956, after three months of acclimatization and local training on Penang Island, the Battalion was committed to anti-terrorist patrol on the mainland. It moved to South Kedah for the purpose, and the initial operations were in the Bongsu Forest Reserve where, on 11<sup>th</sup> January, the first terrorist was captured. Regrettably the first casualties occurred on 24<sup>th</sup> February when three battalion members were accidentally shot. Further casualties followed with, notably, an ambush on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 1956 when sergeant C.C. Anderson, one of the few aboriginal NCOs in the Australian Army was killed in an action which won him the posthumous award of an MID.

It is interesting to note that Corporal Charles Mene, yet another aboriginal NCO, was serving with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion at the same time and had won the Military Medal for bravery in Korea.

Later the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion moved to the Sungei Siput area in Perak, where the Emergency had first begun in 1948. On 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1956, an action took place which later became known as the "Pipeline Ambush". Three members of the unit were killed and one wounded. Subsequently awards of a Military Cross to Lieutenant Cambell and Military Medals to Private Pennant and Private Falk were given for this action. A further clash with terrorists during a reconnaissance patrol on 4<sup>th</sup> June, 1957 resulted in the award of a Military Medal to Corporal Kennedy for personal courage and leadership.

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<sup>4</sup> Later experience had a system of double-staggered piquet's. Ed.

<sup>5</sup> Mostly Unsung Australia and the Commonwealth in the Malayan War 1948-1960, by Lieutenant Colonel Neil Smith, AM. Melb. 1989.

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