

# RINGO



December 2020

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- Incoming President's Report
- Letter from CO 2RAR (Amphib)
- Warriors Who Have Marched Out
- Kibeho Massacre - Part 3 (Final)
- Afghanistan
- Membership and Merchandise Forms

**Merry Christmas and**  
**a Happy New Year**

2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment Association, Inc

*"nulli secundus"*



# RINGO

DECEMBER 2020

**RINGO** is the official Newsletter of 2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment Association, Inc. All correspondence is to be addressed to The Secretary [2rarsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:2rarsecretary@gmail.com)

**Cover Image:** Leo Van De Kamp, Immediate Past President and the latest Life Member of the Association. Leo's statement on his departure from the Chair is on Page 3.

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**Disclaimer:** The Objectives of our Association are clearly outlined on our website, or available from the Committee on request. In keeping with those objectives the Committee and the Editor of RINGO will not publish any correspondence or article, which is Defamatory, Insulting, Lewd, Political, Religious, Discriminatory, or in the opinion the Committee or the Editor is otherwise in conflict with the Objectives or Community Standards.

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## IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT'S REMARKS



As I pass the reins to a newly elected committee headed up by Robert Althofer, I would firstly like to pass on my sincere congratulations to the president and newly elected 2RAR Association committee members. You have an important task ahead of you and I'm confident that the Association will

continue to flourish.

For those of us who have stood down, we remain committed to providing the new team any support and/or advice as might be requested. I thank those new members who have come forward to take on the management positions of the committee. It is only right that to give more effect to the objectives of the Association, and more effective recruitment opportunities for the Association, that the management control of the Association be located in Townsville, the home base of the Battalion.

With the management committee now largely located in Townsville, I do need to thank a number of individuals who have been instrumental in ensuring a smooth transition. Firstly, I want to thank the Commanding Officer, LTCOL Judd Finger CSC, who has been very much at the forefront in making this happen. Additionally, our patron, MAJGEN Mick Slater AO, DSC, CSC (Retd) has also been very much involved. Lastly, I need to acknowledge the work behind the scenes and sound advice during the negotiations the committee received from our Honorary Legal Adviser, Pat Savage. My sincere thanks to these three gentlemen for their outstanding effort in facilitating this transition.

As we hand over the reins to the new committee, I am pleased to say that the Association continues to be in a sound financial position. I have been president of the Association for nine years and I would like to acknowledge the commitment, dedication and hard work of all committee members who have been part of the committee during this time. I wish to thank them for their solid support, their guidance and advice which has helped me tremendously along the way. I have very much appreciated the contribution that each of the members has made. I also acknowledge all Association members and their families for their support, encouragement and friendship over the many years. It has been a

wonderful journey and I have appreciated and enjoyed the camaraderie very much. I do look forward to meeting up with many of you in the future. Lastly, I wish all members of the Battalion good soldiering and to the Association members and their families all my best wishes for the future.

May you all have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year with peace, happiness and every success in 2021.

'Second to None'

Leo Van De Kamp

Immediate Past President

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### Outcome

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of 2RAR Association, Inc was held at 1030 hours Saturday 31st October 2020 at the Geebung RSL Club, corner of Newman Road & Collings Street, Geebung, QLD 4034. The Association's Management Committee elected for 2020/2021 is as follows:

|                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>President</b>      | <b>Robert Althofer</b> |
| <b>Vice President</b> | <b>Justin Huggett</b>  |
| <b>Secretary</b>      | <b>Malcolm Gray</b>    |
| <b>Treasurer</b>      | <b>David White</b>     |
| <b>Committee</b>      | <b>Blake Kirkham</b>   |
|                       | <b>Troy McGill</b>     |
|                       | <b>Mark Reasons</b>    |

4 Special Resolutions were voted on and each was passed unanimously. An amendment to the Association's Rules has been submitted to the QLD Department of Justice for approval.

The election of this Management Committee for 2020-2021 means that the bulk of the positions are now filled by eligible members from North Queensland, principally Townsville, which will shift the "centre of gravity" away from South East Queensland to North Queensland. The main advantages of this is the colocation of the committee with the Battalion and that it allows a younger generation of 2RAR veterans to take the helm of the Association and give it the leadership and direction into the future.

The new Committee is to be congratulated and we wish them every success in the future. The Association is in good hands.

## LETTER FROM CO 2RAR (AMPHIB)

*(printed with permission LTCOL J. Finger, CSC)*

Dear Leo,

I am writing this letter to provide the Unit's support for the 2 RAR Association Committee transition from SE Queensland to North Queensland. This move has been many years in the making and is a fantastic outcome for the future of the Association.

In line with the Committee transition, we as the Unit are now looking to take a more active role in the Association and to align the Association's activities to optimise its potential to cater for the ex-serving members of the Battalion. Indeed, I believe that we now have an opportunity to enhance the Association to become a formidable organisation designed to provide an ongoing and active role in the health and well-being of our veterans.

It is important to state that the 2 RAR Association is a wonderful organisation that has done a tremendous job in supporting the veterans of this fine Unit. When I talk of evolving the Association to provide more overt support of the Unit, this has nothing to do with the current Committee, but everything to do with the physical presence of a Committee based within the Unit in Townsville. The opportunities this presents to 2 RAR is immense.

I have met with both Mr Robert Althofer and Mr Justin Huggett, the two ex-2RAR members who are nominating for the President and Vice-President positions of the Association. I know both members well and the Unit provides its full support behind these men. As with all change, the transition will be painful, but it is vital for the survival and future health of the Association. I have no doubt these two men are the right people for the job.

I also write to outline the Unit's expectations for the transition of the Committee to Townsville and how we, as the Unit, would like the Battalion and Association to work together going forward. First and foremost, the Association exists to support the Unit and its ex-serving members. I am of the firm belief that the Association can become an organisation that can save lives. I do not believe that this is a dramatic statement. Our nation has now conducted 20-years of persistent operations and the need to support our modern day veterans is at a critical point. Additionally, the need to support our older veterans is always of equal importance. The key for the Association going forward is to become an organisation for all - A trusted agent that all veterans, irrespective of age or circumstance, can turn to for support in times of need.

The Unit will be offering the following to not only the 2 RAR Association, but also the 2/4 RAR Association:

- Permanent office space and a merchandise store for both Associations. This support also extends to conference room facilities for committee meeting, reunions, Association days, etc.
- Standing invitation for the Association committee members and other veterans to attend Unit battle dinners and dining-in nights.
- The Unit is evolving the Soldier's Club into a Veteran Precinct that is open to all ex-serving members. An open invitation would extend to all ex-members to attend sporting events, boozier parades and morning coffees.
- The continued evolution of the Museum as a place where veterans can volunteer and as a draw card to bring ex-members back into the Unit. The museum is absolutely world-class and can only get better.
- DVA advocates based out of the Veteran Precinct to provide targeted support for ex-members of the Unit.
- The Unit wants the Association to become an organisation that openly battle-tracks our ex-serving members to monitor those in need and provide support where and when required. It is our moral obligation to ensure this occurs. If we do not help ourselves then no one else will. It is my intent to actively transition our discharging personnel over to the committee. I see a committee member attending a soldier's discharge meeting with the CO and an active handover from the Unit to the committee of that member. The committee can then support with DVA advocacy or just monitor to provide support. The Unit is seeking for the Association to become an organisation to ring our ex-serving members on a routine basis to see how they are. The power of a phone call cannot be understated, and I believe this is the most powerful tool the Association can provide to our veterans. A friendly voice and trusted agent will save lives.

There are many great veteran organisations in Australia doing good things, but I believe the missing link in battle-tracking those veterans in need are committed Associations who can provide a trusted voice. The 2 RAR Association is a fantastic organisation that now has the potential to evolve, through the leadership of modern veterans, into something that Army has never seen - A powerful group that looks after its own, sees itself as the first point of call and fully integrated with the Unit. I have now briefed Commander 1st Division, Commander Forces Commander and the Colonel Commandant on the future intent for the Association. They are all in agreement that it

## LETTER FROM CO 2RAR (AMPHIB)

*Continued from Page 4*

is a fantastic initiative. The Colonel Commandant in particular, expressed that he believes this is the missing link in looking after our veterans and he is watching our progress with a keen interest.

To Leo, Gordon, the current serving committee and Association, on behalf of the Battalion, thank you for your decades of hard work and commitment to the welfare of our ex-serving members. Your passion and drive to continue serving our Unit through the Association has being immense. The transition of the Committee is just another step in the Association's progress forward and has been built upon your tremendous support and tenacity. We thank you for everything you have done.

Now you can enjoy the fruits of the Association while the younger generation do all of the hard work. As a show of our appreciation, I would like to extend an invitation to the current serving committee to attend 2 RAR's Dining-Out Night on 07 December. I believe it would be a fitting time to formally pass the baton to the new Committee and to thank you, in a public forum, for your decades of hard work and devotion.

On a personal note, thank you for the tremendous support the Committee and Association has shown me in my tenure as the Unit's CO. The 2 RAR Association is by far the most positive Association I have had the privilege of being a part of. The Association and members have shown nothing but the upmost support and friendship. I firmly believe that the most important thing that has occurred in my time at the Unit will be the transition of the Committee to NQ and the new chapter in the Association's history. If a Unit is to call itself ready in serving its country then how it treats its ex-members is the clearest indication of its worthiness. We have a duty to continue caring for those who have served us in the past. I now look forward to become an ex-serving member of the Unit and joining the ranks of this wonderful Association.

Duty First,  
Second-to-None  
Judd Finger  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Commanding Officer



## MEMBERSHIP

### Your membership matters

Membership fees are due as at 1st November each year. The fees are \$20.00 per year and you can pay up to 5 years in advance. You can renew membership on the website at:

[www.2rar-association.net.au/merchandise](http://www.2rar-association.net.au/merchandise)

and you can pay through PayPal, direct debit or by cheque.

Please advise us if you have changed any of your contact details, particularly your email address.

If you are unsure of your membership status, call David White on 0452 202 954.



## WARRIORS WHO HAVE MARCHED OUT

### 215093 Private Terence Adrian CRUSE, 4RAR, 2RAR

Terry served in 2RAR in Vietnam 1967/68.

Terry passed away on 29 October 2020 aged 75+. His funeral was a private family affair.



### 214314 Warrant Officer Class 2 Charles Fredrick CLARK (a.k.a. Bluey Stephens), 2RAR, 6RAR and AATTV

Fred served in 2RAR in Korea veteran of The Hook) 1953, Vietnam 6RAR and AATTV

Fred passed away on 30 October 2020 aged 83+. His funeral was a private family affair.



*Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.  
And let perpetual light shine upon him.  
March out with pride digger  
Your duty done  
May he rest in peace.  
Amen. God bless*

*Rev Graeme Davis, OAM, CSM  
Hon Padre 2RAR Association*



### PASSING OF A MATE

If you become aware of anyone who has served in 2RAR at any time, pass away, please advise the Secretary ASAP so that all members of the Association may be made aware of the situation. Funeral details are appreciated if known or the Funeral Directors who are handling the funeral. In this way we can keep up the information flow to the membership.

### When I am Gone

*by Lyman Hancock*

When I come to the end of my journey  
And I travel my last weary mile  
Just forget if you can, that I ever frowned  
And remember only the smile

Then forget to grieve for my going  
I would not have you sad for a day  
But in summer just gather some flowers  
And remember the place where I lay

And come in the shade of evening  
When the sun paints the sky in the west  
Stand for a few moments beside me  
And remember only my best



**We need your stories & your contributions to RINGO.**

**Let us have them to share with everyone.**

SCREW THE CLOSE AIR SUPPORT,  
JUST GET A LAWYER ON THE  
RADIO AND ASK IF WE ARE GOING  
TO END UP IN COURT IN 25  
YEARS' TIME IF WE RETURN FIRE!



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the December 2020 addition of the 2RAR



**President 2RAR Association**  
**Robert Althofer**

Association Newsletter 'RINGO'. This will be the last official duty for our interim editor, Gordon Hurford, before handing over to the new editor for 2021. Hopefully the new editor can continue to do justice to the newsletter from all the hard work that has been initiated from Gordon.

The last few months have been a busy but exciting time for the

Association, with the changeover of the guard of the executive committee to a new generation, this occurred at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) that was held on 31st October 2020. This also saw the smooth transition of the Association's HQ from SE Qld to Townsville so as to further align with the Battalion and to strengthen its close bond.

I would like to take the time and acknowledge the outstanding service of the ex-committee members who have provided strong, sound service to the Association over many years. I would also like to congratulate our past President, Leo Van De Kamp on his awarding of Life Membership to the Association at the AGM. An honour well deserved.

The Association's new management committee consists of the following members:

- **Patron:** MAJGEN Mick Slater, DSO, DSC, CSC (Retd)
- **President:** Robert Althofer
- **Vice President:** Justin Huggett, MG
- **Secretary:** Mal Gray
- **Treasurer:** David White
- **Committee Member:** Mark Reasons
- **Committee Member:** Troy McGill
- **Committee Member:** Blake Kirkham

Our Association's purpose is to foster camaraderie among the serving and ex-serving members of the Battalion. The Association exists for ALL members who have served in the 2nd Battalion and the 2nd/4th Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment, regardless of where that service occurred. By building on the bonds formed in service and our shared identity we

encourage our membership to become self-reliant and independent members of the community.

On behalf of the Association, I would like to thank the outgoing Commanding Officer of 2RAR, LTCOL Judd Finger, CSC; his support to the Association in particular with the transition of the Association to Townsville has been immense. LTCOL Finger has shown determined leadership of the Battalion and wish him all the best on his next posting.

The new executive committee looks forward to what 2021 will bring and hope to introduce ourselves to all our members as we move into a new year.

'Second to none'

Robert Althofer

President

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Association is open to all ex-members of 66 Aust Inf Bn, 2AR, 2RAR, 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC), 2/4RAR, and all currently serving members of the Battalion. It also includes members of other Corps of 2RAR MTF-3 Afghanistan and NOK of deceased 2RAR personnel. Application for membership is to be made on the Membership Form - See Page 15

***Membership fees fall due on 1st November. Fees are \$20.00 per year and you can pay up to 5 years in advance. Check the website for details.***

### Communications with the Association

All matters are to be communicated through the Secretary. Contact details are:

**Telephone: 0428 588 431**

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

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## KIBEHO MASSACRE

### Part 3 (Final) - The Massacre - B Coy 2RAR

*By Major Steve McCrohon, OC B Coy, 2RAR  
during Operation TAMAR, Rwanda*



*Major Steve McCrohon*

#### 18th April 1995:

In Kigali, OC B Coy 2RAR was briefed on the deteriorating situation at the Kibeho Internally Displaced Persons' (IDP) camp.

Reports indicated that the RPA had started an operation in and around the camp. The

RPA were in fact circling the camp with the intent of clearing the camp of IDPs as well as attempting to identify and isolate ex militia elements hiding among them.

The militia were hated by the RPA and many were considered an 'enemy of the state'. The militia were heavily involved in the murderous campaign during the earlier phases of the genocide in 1994.

The Ops briefing revealed that hostility by the RPA towards the IDPs was heightening, mass casualties were expected, and the UN HQ was anticipating that the situation on the ground would quickly deteriorate. Reports from UN troops responsible for security of the camp came from C Coy Zambatt. It was noted that there was a great amount of speculation in the brief and nothing could be guaranteed, however the RPA were active in and around the camp and things were starting to intensify.

The OC was briefed and tasked with organising a security team under his command to head to the Kibeho camp. He was tasked with providing protection for a medical team who were to establish a Casualty Collection Point (CCP) within the camp. The security force would consist of a Platoon (-).

Prior to the deployment of the Platoon (-), the Australians dispatched the contingent legal officer under the protection of a section of infantry to the vicinity of the Kibeho Camp. The infantry troops were commanded by SGT Irish O'Hallaron, PL SGT 4 PL. With him were CPL Nigel Clayton and his section of troops.

#### 19th April 1995:

A group of 32 Australian soldiers were deployed to Kibeho. These troops consisted of the OC, 4 PL (-) led by LT Steve Tilbrook, and a section of medical troops under the medical command of CAPT Carol Vaughan-Evans. The infantry section was commanded by CPL Brian Buskell and his 2IC was LCPL Andrew Miller. The medical staff were tasked with establishing a CCP, while the infantry would provide protection on the ground.

LT Tilbrook, CAPT Vaughan-Evans and LCPL Miller would all be awarded the Medal of Gallantry for their efforts during

the Kibeho Massacre.

The Australians arrived in convoy on the outskirts of Kibeho at approximately 09.45 hrs. There was good memory of the ground as most troops had deployed earlier in a protection capacity for the medical teams, however this time there was a distinct uneasiness in the area.

On arrival at the central part of the camp, the Australians were met by the OC of the Zambian Coy. He indicated that there were already many dead IDPs. He led OC B Coy to an area where 11 dead were positioned. The dead were lying in a row, face up. The OC was informed that the dead had been killed on the razor wire, collected by the Zambians and laid out for our arrival.

The CCP was established during the day and then the Australian group was required to return to their allocated night location at the Zambian Bn HQ approximately 1 hour's drive from the Kibeho camp. Unfortunately, the Australians orders were to withdraw each day before last light.

#### 21st April 1995:

The Australians arrived at the camp at approximately 0830 hrs. Earlier in the morning the Australians had received news of 20 more IDPs killed during the evening.



*Kibeho IDP Camp*

The Zambatt Coy had collected the bodies and the Zambatt OC again led OC B Coy to the location of the dead. All bodies showed signs of gunshot wounds and the ages differed from elderly to children.

On re-establishing the CCP, the RPA attempted to intimidate the Australian troops. Rather than be intimidated the Australians stood firm and proud in their role as protectors.

#### 22nd April 1995:

The RPA were seen firing directly into the masses of the IDPs. At this point it was estimated that there were 1,000 dead and many wounded. The Australians continued to monitor the situation, placing their own lives in danger. A COMASC situation report dated 2100 hrs 22nd April, stated that the Kibeho Camp had experienced much firing during the early hours of the morning resulting in many deaths. Initial reports indicate the RPA fired directly upon the IDPs, firing small arms and rocket propelled grenades into the crowd. Firing continued in the afternoon and into the night. This account was supported by Australian troops on the ground who reported the RPA firing directly into the IDPs.

At 1650 hrs it was reported that a mass breakout occurred amongst the IDPs. IDPs were breaching the RPA cordon and the RPA were responding by firing automatic fire directly into the massive crowd. The RPA were also firing into the local hospital, which was staffed mainly by civilian medicos from France.

*Continued Page 9*



## KIBEHO MASSACRE - Part 3 (Final) - Rwanda Massacre

*Continued from Page 8*



On being made aware, LT Tilbrook and PTEs Burke and Daniels leapt into action, passing through hostile contact to secure the safe passage for the medical staff. The RPA were using the gaps between buildings as firing

lines. In between bursts of automatic fire, LT Tilbrook and his soldiers would jump between buildings. Once secure on the ground, they would do it again and again until they reached the hospital and successfully retrieve the cowering medics. SIG Barry Quinn would later write, "throughout the day of the 22nd April, Lieutenant Tilbrook showed extreme courage and bravery for his command of the Ausmed elements at Kibeho. I believe he should be recognised for his brave actions that occurred on the day; it was an honour to serve under him".

In addition to the surrounding mayhem, the Zambatt Coy perimeter had been broken. IDPs along with militia had broken into the compound and were threatening the safety and security of the Zambatt position. The RPA were firing into the area and the situation was quickly getting out of control. CPL Buskell stepped forward with some section troops to try and assist the Zambians. He left LCPL Miller and two others in their location to maintain a link and a secure base. At this point LCPL Miller was forced to act, his position was becoming untenable as the weight of numbers was bearing down on the position. LCPL Miller called "fixed bayonets" and formed an extended line with the troops at his disposal. His action assisted in clearing the compound and restoring some semblance of control. Later, LCPL Miller would be asked by his OC, "Andrew, you didn't stab anybody did you"? To which he replied, "well boss not too sure, may have nicked a couple".

CPL Brian Buskell would later state, "the mateship shown by my section on the 22nd April when the position was overrun by IDPs and when they were fired on, was outstanding. You knew they would not let each other down". PTE Justin Saint wrote, "I firmly believed we would be overrun and killed".

### 23rd April 1995:

The United Nations Headquarters in Kigali issued a news release stating: "At dawn on April 23, 1995, UNIMIR troops on the ground at Kibeho camp have counted an estimated 3,000 – 4,000 dead and hundreds wounded and injured. UNIMIR troops have been conducting triage in order to best assist with the medical situation on the ground. The Australian Medical Team is presently in operation at the camp and is being augmented. UNIMIR troops are providing shelter to approximately 250 orphaned children. Rwandan Patriotic Army soldiers have been observed burying the bodies of victims killed in the camp".

For the Australians on the ground, the situation had become quieter, however sporadic firing was still occurring as the RPA continue to chase IDPs and militia who were still encamped in the Kibeho area. The Australians had confirmed 4000 dead and approximately 650 wounded. On the ground, CPLs Buskell, Blake and Norton along with their troops continued to gather and help the hundreds of wounded IDPs. PTE Justin Fidler wrote, "the most saddening thing to see was the bodies of the women and children, hundreds were slaughtered and lay in pools of blood. Many of the children were still clinging to what was left of their parents, some of them still too young to walk, some not spared, falling victim to either machete or automatic weapons".

### 24th April 1995:

A changeover of Australian troops in the Kibeho camp took place. LT Tom White and his soldiers from 5 PI deployed to the area under the direct command of CAPT Ian McMahon.

Information was received at the Australian Headquarters in Kigali that the RPA had now surrounded the church at Kibeho. They were armed with automatic weapons and recoilless anti-armour weapons. The RPA wanted the remaining IDPs to vacate the church. CAPT



*Casualty Evacuation*

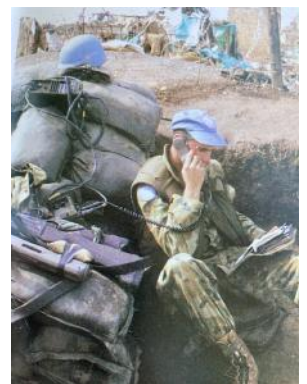
McMahon negotiated with the RPA to have the evacuation time extended until 1200 hrs. The RPA agreed to this. The evacuation of the living refugees continued while the Australians continued to collect dead and dying from the fields around the camp.

### 25th- 30th April:

The Australians continued to collect the dead and wounded over the remaining days of April. The troops of 5 PI continued to have difficulty with getting the remainder of the IDPs to leave. The IDPs were afraid of the RPA and rumours were hitting the camp suggesting that IDPs returning to their villages were being attacked and killed in retribution for the early days of the genocide.

CPLs Stewart Green and Mark Blake's sections moved into the area to retrieve more bodies.

This task itself was quite horrendous. Bodies being collected at this point had been dead for some days and had been lying in the sun. In one afternoon, the soldiers of these two sections collected another 42 bodies. The state of the bodies and the smell of death made many soldiers ill.



*Continued Page 10*

*Sig Barry Quinn*

## KIBEHO MASSACRE - Part 3 (Final) - Rwanda Massacre

*Continued from Page 9*

### The Remainder:

The tour of duty would continue until 23 August 1995. The Kibeho massacre would be forgotten by those in positions of authority, and relationships with the hierarchy of the RPA and the Rwandan Government would be renewed. However, the Australians never forgot and never forgave.

There would be other incidents in the remaining months of the tour, but nothing would reach the scale and barbarity of the Kibeho massacre.

The Australians for their efforts would always be held in high esteem. The contingent would receive a letter of appreciation from the Deputy Force Commander, Brigadier General Anyidoho, congratulating them for their efforts at Kibeho.

Importantly, both contingents, would receive the ANZAC Peace Prize for 1995, Major General 'Digger' James would write, "the Australian contingent to Rwanda has been a vital element in the success of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda. It has allowed United Nations troops to deploy throughout the country to promote peace and harmony", he added, "the efforts of the Australian Contingent have been an integral component in the return of peace to Rwanda, as such it has been able to enhance regional stability and has contributed to international peace".



*LCPL Andrew Miller (left) and Pte Wayne Jones (right) in Kibeho IDP camp*

## 42 for 42



42 for 42 is a not-for-profit organisation which was founded by ex-Army veterans whose aim is to help struggling veterans and their families by building a memorial dedicated to those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. The 42 stands for the 41 veterans who were killed in Afghanistan, with the 42nd representing the veterans we have lost and continue to lose to suicide, and those who have returned with injuries and mental illness.

### Memorial Garden

The goal of the 42 for 42 organisation is to demonstrate the powerful symbolism of people coming together for a common cause, moving forward in life, sharing our burdens, helping carry the load, and taking one step at a time to achieve our goals. Our vision is to build a Memorial Garden to honour the 42 fallen, which will be located in the grounds of the Anglican Church at Milton, near Suncorp Stadium.

The 42 for 42 Afghanistan Memorial Garden is to pay tribute to everyone that served during Operation Slipper, remembering the veterans who were killed in Afghanistan and those that continue to succumb to their injuries, both mentally and physically, to this day.

Donation in support of the memorial may be made via the website: [42for42.org.au](http://42for42.org.au)



### ASSOCIATION'S POSTAL ADDRESS

Don't forget that we have a new postal address. It is:

**PO Box 2352**

**IDALIA QLD 4811**



## REMEMBRANCE DAY

On 11 November 1918, the guns of the Western Front fell silent after four years of continuous warfare. With their armies retreating and close to collapse, German leaders signed an Armistice, bringing to an end the First World War. From the summer of 1918, the five

divisions of the Australian Corps had been at the forefront of the allied advance to victory. Beginning with their stunning success at the battle of Hamel in July, they helped to turn the tide of the war at Amiens in August, followed by the capture of Mont St Quentin and Pèronne, and the breaching of German defences at the Hindenburg Line in September. By early October the exhausted Australians were withdrawn from battle. They had achieved a fighting reputation out of proportion to their numbers, but victory had come at a heavy cost. They suffered almost 48,000 casualties during 1918, including more than 12,000 dead.

In the four years of the war more than 330,000 Australians had served overseas, and more than 60,000 of them had died. The social effects of these losses cast a long shadow over the postwar decades.

### Sir John Monash

John Monash was born in Melbourne on 27 June 1865. After an education at Scotch College and the University of Melbourne, studying law, arts and engineering, he became interested in the Australian military, and began his service career in 1887. He joined Melbourne University's Metropolitan Brigade of the Garrison Artillery, and until the outbreak of war in 1914, he worked at learning the skills of artillery and engineering, as well as teaching and designing. By 1914, he was in command of the AIF's 4th Brigade in Egypt, where, like most Australian troops, he experienced the disastrous effects of bad organisation and planning, and poor command decisions. It was to be in France in 1918 that Monash would truly make his mark.

After moving to the Western Front in 1916, Monash was promoted to Major General and took command of the 3rd Division. In the years leading to 1918, he and his troops were involved in many confrontations, including the Battles of Messines, the third battle of Ypres, and Polygon Wood, with some successes.

In May 1918, Monash was appointed corps commander of the Australian forces, and in that year, he led some significant attacks by Australian troops in the final stages of the war. Monash's troops were involved in helping to stem the March German offensive. But it was during the battle at Hamel that Monash really secured his reputation. Monash's skillful planning and attention to detail resulted in a triumphant attack and capture of the town by Australian and American troops. This was the beginning of a series of successful campaigns by Australians that continued until their last battle in October.

Monash wanted to move away from what he considered to be outdated British tactics, believing that ...

***"... the true role of infantry was not to expend itself upon heroic physical effort, not to wither away under merciless machine-gun fire, not to impale itself on hostile bayonets, but on the contrary, to advance under the maximum possible protection of the maximum possible array of mechanical resources, in the form of guns, machine-guns, tanks, mortars and aeroplanes; to advance with as little impediment as possible; to be relieved as far as possible of the obligation to fight their way forward."***

[Ed; Is this not the essence of how Infantry fight today?]

He supported the view that the most effective warfare involved many different types of weaponry and defences working together- the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.

Monash was also a brilliant tactician. For example, he was renowned for the idea of bombarding German lines with gas and smoke shells together for a few days prior to an attack, so that the Germans were conditioned to associate the gas with the smoke. However, on the day of an attack, only smoke shells would be fired. This not only provided a smokescreen for the advancing troops, but it also caused the Germans to put their gas masks on automatically, which distracted them and caused confusion, impairing their visibility and communication.

***The main thing is always to have a plan; if it is not the best plan, it is at least better than no plan at all.***

Known as a meticulous planner, Monash held conferences with his officers before operations to generate ideas, to elucidate any problem areas, and to make sure that all involved were fully versed and familiar with the plan.

Photo and text courtesy of AWM





## LIFE MEMBERSHIP



**Immediate Past President  
Leo Van De Kamp**

Following the AGM on Saturday 31st October, Leo Van De Kamp was appointed to Life Membership of the Association. His citation stated:

"Leo has been the Association's President since 2012. His first public responsibility was the 2RAR Reunion in Townsville for Vietnam Veterans which included the W and V Company personnel of RNZIR who served with

the Battalion. He was also a valuable member of the reunion organisation team. This reunion was a resounding success due to Leo's involvement and his representational qualities.

2RAR Association is recognised by other kindred organisations as being a benchmark for which many strive to achieve. This is the result of Leo making sure that the Committee's fiduciary duties are carried out with thoroughness, accuracy and in compliance with the law and laid down procedures. In his time as President he has always put the Association above all other Associations and organisations. He has steered a steady ship through sometimes stormy waters.

He is dedicated, clear thinking and always of good humour. He is persistent, enthusiastic, and tireless in all that he undertakes.

Leo has been steadfast and unwavering in his dedication and loyalty to the Association. His indefatigable efforts for 2RAR and 2RAR Association have been "second to none".

The Association is pleased to recognise the services of Leo Van De Kamp and appoint him to Life Membership."

We thank Leo for his service and he has been at the helm in a very production time in the life of the Association.

Leo was presented with his Life Member name tag as well as a Silver Soldier in recognition of this achievement.

## RESPECT THEIR SERVICE TOO ...

The following advertisement appeared in the DVA *Vetaffairs* newspaper recently. It stated:

*"I have been lobbying since 1996 to gain full recognition for some 3,000 Vietnam Veterans (National Servicemen) from all over Australia who lawfully served their country during the Vietnam War for less than 181 days. Senator Eric Abetz has kindly acknowledged our quest and has offered to receive submissions so that he can adequately prepare a case to be considered by the responsible minister. Please submit your story about how this non-recognition of a medallic award has affected your life in any way.*



Contact Richard Barry, OAM

Tele: 02 6792 3114

Postal: PO Box 43, NARRABRI NSW 2390

Email: richyvon47@hotmail.com"

Richard Barry has worked on this proposal for more than 30 years. He has a very detailed submission which is being facilitated by Senator Eric Abetz who in turn will present the submission to the responsible Minister. The submission is 77 pages long and contained a brilliant seven-page letter from a military lawyer.

If you believe you have been affected by this policy, i.e., you did not receive the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (see above) because you were evacuated early and therefore did not serve a full 181 days in country, please contact Richard directly on the contacts shown above.

## ASSOCIATION'S POSTAL ADDRESS

Don't forget that we have a new postal address. It is:

**PO Box 2352**

**IDALIA QLD 4811**

## AFGHANISTAN

*This article has been published with the permission of P.D. Savage, MC and expresses the opinions of those listed at the end of the article.*



**Pat Savage, MC**

The contributors named below were junior Officers, NCOs, or Diggers in Vietnam. We served in combat roles with 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Battalion May 1970 to June 1971, experiencing the horrors and triumphs of armed conflict. We understand the ongoing effects on ourselves and our comrades. We wish to record our disappointment and distress on how the allegations of atrocities in Afghanistan have been addressed by the Prime

Minister, and in particular the Chief of the Defence Forces.

Prior to the release of the report the Prime Minister created an expectation of horror, with at least an impression that the contents were proof of criminal conduct by members of SAS Regiment. On the release of the report his obvious rage supported the impression he had given the week before. To confirm that impression he advised that he had formally apologised to the Government of Afghanistan. It is not unreasonable to conclude that the various addresses adopted a 'Presumption of Guilt', contrary to Australian Law and the UN Charter.

The Chief of the Defence Force essentially echoed the words of the Prime Minister. He compounded the issue by not only adopting the 'Presumption of Guilt', but by announcing outrageous initial retributions that would be imposed. The Chief of the Defence Force then offended many veterans and current service members by restating the unfortunate observation in the report that 'no officers were involved' in the various activities. No mention of the other 26,000 Armed Service personnel who served there, many of whom sacrificed life and limb and mental health, and insulting many officers who consider that they are an integral part of the unit they serve or served with. His address was insulting, inappropriate, self-serving, and extremely poor leadership. The Chief of the Defence Force may well be a person to bear part of the responsibility for the numerous failures obvious in the conduct of the conflict.

The Prime Minister and the Chief of the Defence Force were intense in their moral indignation, clearly intended to represent their responses and behaviour as virtuous. Having clearly adopted and encouraged the Presumption of Guilt, then promised all accused an independent investigation and a fair trial.

It may be the case that no officer has been identified as being involved in any of the events. To suggest that for a period of more than five years and thirty-nine atrocities, not one officer was close enough to his troops, or had access to the usual boozier gossip to at least be aware of some allegations, is simply not credible.

Official reports inform that in the period 2001 – 2016, a total of fifty-six Australian service personnel were killed in action, and three hundred and seventy three of the veterans who served in that period committed suicide. The suicide rate was seven times more than battle casualties. What more warning was required to the Government and the military hierarchy to thoroughly investigate the causes of suicide and develop appropriate responses? To our

national shame the suicide rate has increased and is more likely to be ten times above battle fatalities, with another nine suicides in the last few weeks. If the same proportions applied to all wars we have been involved in, we would have experienced over one million suicides. Unimaginable.

It may be that with the retirement of General Sir Peter Cosgrove, , the Army lost the last Commander who had any serious and life-threatening battle experience. Those who followed were undoubtedly qualified academically, but may not, and probably could not, have a meaningful understanding of the psychological impacts of battle, including the impact of over exposure to traumatic experiences, the initial paralysis of fear, the horror of loss or mutilation of comrades, and the images that will never be erased.

It is a simple reality that soldiers dehumanise their immediate enemy combatants. Any one of sound mind could not callously take the life of another non-combatant human being, yet innocents have been massacred in every war in history. It is only when the perpetrator dehumanises an entire country or a section of a country, that this will happen, and has happened throughout history, and continues in many conflicts today. The focus for Australia, at least from 2016, should have been on the origins of mental health issues, starting with the initial recruitment, basic and corps training, leadership, tolerance assessment, and over exposure to battle.

Many SASR soldiers have served multiple tours of Afghanistan. Up to six or eight tours is not uncommon, with one reported as having had sixteen tours. In time spent in actual operations on six tours, it would equate to the actual time spent in operations that a digger would have served in the entire WW2. Sixteen tours would equate to the total time spent in operations in all wars since Federation. How the hierarchy could have approved and encouraged that level of multiple tours, especially after the 2016 report, is incomprehensible and requires explanation.

The Australian Defence Forces senior management, including the Chief of the Defence Forces, will eventually have to answer for their failures.

We do not in any way condone any violations of the Geneva Convention, notwithstanding that in both Vietnam and Afghanistan our enemies were not distracted by any such niceties. We are however determined to ensure that all relevant matters required to give a complete perspective are canvassed, and that the accused are not sacrificed at the altar of the bureaucracy.

Any of those accused who are of sound mind and are found or plead guilty will have seriously diminished the proud reputation Australians have earned in battle since Federation. They will receive no sympathy.

|                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| D.W. Horrigan, DCM | Rifleman          |
| P.M. Wood, MID     | Section Commander |
| B.R. Seeley, MID   | Platoon Sergeant  |
| R.G. Franklin      | Platoon Commander |
| T.H. O'Neill       | Platoon Commander |
| P.D. Savage MC     | Platoon Commander |



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I would like to order \_\_\_\_copy/copies of the painting "Air Assault Operations Nui Dat, Vietnam"

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**This price is inclusive of transaction fees, packaging and postage fees**

**Prints are 600 mm x 350 mm + border**

You can pay for your print by:

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Direct deposit to the Association's bank account:

Account details: 2RAR Association, Inc.

Bank: Suncorp Bank., BSB: 484-799, Account Number: 063 350 355.

**Please note:**

There may be a delay of up to 3 weeks on delivery due to the current situation with Australia Post unable to move mail quickly due to the lack of scheduled aircraft.



**2ND BATTALION, THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**NEW**

**RENEW**

**CHANGE OF DETAILS**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Tele: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Mob: \_\_\_\_\_

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

RAR Service: In which Battalions did you serve and when served:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Theatres/Operational Areas Served: In which operational theatres/area of ops did you serve and when:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Post-Nominals: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

(Financial Year: 1 November to 31 October)

**Yearly or Multiple-Years**

**\$20.00 (1 yr), \$40 (2 yrs), \$60 (3 yrs), \$80 (4 yrs), \$100 (5 yrs)**

(Cheques made payable to: 2RAR Association, Inc)

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt Required? YES/NO

Send to: The Secretary, 2RAR Association, PO Box 2352, IDALIA QLD 4811.

Direct deposit to:

Account details: 2RAR Association, Inc.

Suncorp Bank. BSB: 484-799. Account no: 063 350 355.

**2RAR Association - Merchandise Order Form****FULL NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Tele:** \_\_\_\_\_**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Post Code** \_\_\_\_\_**Mob:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_**All prices are inclusive of transaction fees, packaging and postage fees**

| ITEM   | PRICE                    | QTY | ITEM   | PRICE                      | QTY |
|--|--------------------------|-----|--|----------------------------|-----|
| Cap: Black - "2nd Battalion"   | \$35.00                  |     | Pewter Drink Coaster - RAR Badge                   | \$25.00                    |     |
| Cap: Black - "2 RAR"   | \$35.00                  |     | Pewter Drink Coaster - ICB Badge                   | \$25.00                    |     |
| Cap: Black/Silver - "ICB Badge"  | \$35.00                  |     | Money Fold- RAR badge - Leather                    | \$25.00                    |     |
| Lapel Badge - "2RAR"   | \$13.00                  |     | Badge - Rising Sun - Gold/Metal                    | \$15.00                    |     |
| Lapel Badge - "Vietnam"  | \$6.00                   |     | Bush Hat<br>M (58), L (60), XL (61)                | \$25.00                    |     |
| Polo Shirt: Black/Gold - "2nd Battalion"<br>M(97)L(102)XL(107)2XL(112)3XL(117)     | \$48.00                  |     | Key Ring - Penny Slouch Hat                        | \$6.00                     |     |
| Sport Shirt: Black/White - "Second To None"<br>L(102), XL(107), 2XL(112), 3XL(117) | \$55.00                  |     | Bumper Sticker - 2RAR Association                  | \$8.00                     |     |
| Tee Shirt: Black/White - "Second To None"<br>L(102), XL(107), 2XL(112), 3XL(117)   | \$37.00                  |     | Bumper Sticker - Vietnam Veteran                   | \$8.00                     |     |
| Tie: "2RAR" - Striped  | \$30.00                  |     | Bumper Sticker - 2nd Battalion                     | \$8.00                     |     |
| Stubby Cooler - "2RAR"   | \$11.00                  |     | Car Registration Plate Frames - 2nd Battalion      | \$20.00                    |     |
| Stubby Cooler - "Second To No Bastard"   | \$11.00                  |     | Note Pad - Leather - ICB Badge                     | \$10.00                    |     |
| Sticker (Oval) - "ICB"   | \$8.00                   |     | Sticker - Numerals                                 | \$8.00                     |     |
| Sticker (Round) - "2RAR"   | \$8.00                   |     | Sticker - Vietnam Vet - Oval                       | \$8.00                     |     |
| Key Ring - Black/Gold - 2RAR   | \$15.00                  |     | Sticker - Window Transfer - ICB                    | \$8.00                     |     |
| Wall Plaque: 2RAR  | \$55.00                  |     | Playing Cards - Rifleman                           | \$20.00                    |     |
| Book: Trackers Vietnam 1967/68   | \$20.00                  |     | Flag - 2RAR Black                                  | \$18.00                    |     |
| Ladies Silk Scarf  | \$57.00                  |     | Name Tag - Made to Order<br>"Your preferred name"  | \$28.00                    |     |
| <b>Package Deal 1</b><br>Polo shirt and Cap  | \$80.00<br>(Save \$7.00) |     | <b>Package Deal 3</b><br>Polo shirt, Cap and Tie   | \$105.00<br>(Save \$11.00) |     |
| <b>Package Deal 2</b><br>Sports shirt and Cap                                      | \$80.00<br>(Save \$7.00) |     | <b>Package Deal 4</b><br>Sports shirt, Cap and Tie | \$105.00<br>(Save \$11.00) |     |
| Tie: "2RAR" (Heritage)   | \$30.00                  |     | Stubby Cooler - "First round on us"                | \$11.00                    |     |
| Enamel Mug 2RAR  | \$25.00                  |     | Book: "A Duty Done"                                | \$20.00                    |     |
| Patch - Woven - Rising Sun   | \$8.00                   |     | Belt Buckle - RAR                                  | \$18.00                    |     |
| Patch - Woven - 2 RAR  | \$8.00                   |     | Belt Buckle - Huey                                 | \$18.00                    |     |
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| Patch - Woven - Combat   | \$8.00                   |     | Sticker - Unit Colour Patch                        | \$8.00                     |     |
| Badge - Next of Kin  | \$10.00                  |     | Patch - Woven - ICB                                | \$8.00                     |     |
| <b>Print -2RAR Air Assault Operations Nui Dat Vietnam</b>                          | \$50.00                  |     |  |                            |     |
|  |                          |     |  |                            |     |
|  |                          |     |  |                            |     |