



9RAR ROLL CALL!

JOURNAL OF 9RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW)



MARCH 2010

Highlights:

- Important dates 2010
- Reunion news
- Book review : *Contractor Combatants*
- Mates Corner
- Presidential Ponderings
- Stan the Ram

Inside this issue:

<i>Important Dates</i>	1/4
<i>Editor's Report</i>	2
<i>Memorial Services</i>	3
<i>Presidential Ponderings</i>	4
<i>Vale</i>	5
<i>Book Review</i>	6
<i>Mates Corner</i>	7
<i>Second Chance</i>	8
<i>Stan the Ram</i>	9
<i>Thank You, Brian Vickery</i>	10
<i>Reunion News</i>	11
<i>Museum Collection</i>	

Copyright on all original items in Roll Call is held by the author and should not be reproduced for profit without the written consent of the author. Reproduction for non-profit newsletters, military archives or study purposes in proper context is encouraged, but acknowledgement should be given to the author and source. Items reproduced in ROLL-CALL are acknowledged wherever possible

ANZAC DAY 2010

Anzac Day 2010 is approaching and 9 RAR will have a contingent of veterans marching in the City of Sydney March. 9 RAR welcomes all members and invites them to participate in the march. A post-march event will be held immediately following the march, at The Windsor Hotel. 9 RAR members and their family are welcome. During the gathering the 9 RAR AGM will be conducted.

DETAILS:

Form Up Place (FUP): Corner Bent & O'Connell Streets, Sydney City

Time: 10.30 am

Post-march Event: The Windsor Hotel, Corner Park & Castlereagh Streets



9 RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW)

MEMBERSHIPS: C/- John Sheekey

PO Box 197, Willoughby NSW 2068 Ph: 02 9958-6970

CORRESPONDENCE: C/- Trevor Murdoch

140 Lagoon Street, Narrabeen NSW 2101 Ph: 02 9944-0529

ROLL CALL: C/- Barney (Rick) Bigwood

73 Barclay Road, North Rocks NSW 2151 Ph: 02 9873-5209

Editor's Report



ABOVE: The editor, Rick “Barney” Bigwood, working hard in 10 plt lines with Mick “Ugly” Coble swinging his hammock.

This is my first attempt at producing the “Roll Call”, so I hope everyone will bear with me.

Firstly I have some BLOODY big “GP Boots” to fill. Over the last decade Ross Richards has ably produced the newsletter with limited resources and tight deadlines. Lesley, his understanding wife, has had to put up with the incessant phone calls and the loss of time with Ross.

I would ask all of you to thank Ross for his fabulous contribution to our association over the years and wish him and Lesley well with their “GREY NOMAD” adventures.

Being a “baby boomer” I went to school when pens with nibs and ink was used—not quite slates and pencils, as I know some of you suspect! As such I have been “technologically challenged” and so I have drawn upon the services of my “stay at home” daughter-in-law Emma and my son Andrew to assist me with the computer issues. Emma is a whiz with Microsoft “Publisher” and has designed this new layout for us. I have appointed her “Assistant Editor” and if you have articles or stories to contribute, particularly for “MATES CORNER”, her contact details are in this newsletter.

In Closing THANKS AGAIN ROSS for your years of dedication, BUT!!!! You will be getting the odd call or two from me asking for advice.

BARNEY the Editor

Memorial Services

The South Aussie Association has for a number of years been conducting memorial services at the grave-sides of our comrades KIA.

Last year they ventured to Whyalla and Wangaratta to honour 2 of 10 Platoon's lost warriors, Lance Corporal "Rick" Abrahams and Private "Bernie" Binder. These two services were driven by the former Platoon Commander Lt Adrian Craig.

Below is a picture from the Wangaratta Service.



FRONT ROW (left to right): Doug Cromb, George Hill, Alf Cairns, Lori Binder (Bernd's Sister), Charlie Carter and Bob Saillard.

BACK ROW (left to right): Adrian Craig (10plt Commander), John (Fred) Cain, Peter Atkinson, Tony Mullavey, Laurie Creece (Medic), Mick Credlin (Sgt), Tom Goode, Mick Coble, Steve Nugent and Graham "Cuz" Cousins.

Memorial Services in NSW

The NSW committee is considering taking up the wonderful work of the South Aussie Branch and investigating a program for our fallen in NSW. All ideas warmly welcome. Please contact any member of the NSW 9RAR Committee (contact details are on page 6 of this newsletter).



Important Dates: 2010

ANZAC DAY, 25th APRIL

See details front page

BLUE MOUNTAINS VIET NAM VETERANS DAY

Expected to be held **Sunday, 15th August**. Confirmation to follow.

RAR N.S.W. ASSOCIATION 62nd BIRTHDAY FUNCTION

Sunday 21st November at Victoria Barracks, Paddington. This event will be bigger than normal, as the RAR NSW Association are not holding a post-Anzac Day function. Instead resources will be concentrated and used for this birthday event.

Presidential Ponderings

This is an historic edition of Roll Call in that it marks the end of an era and the beginning of another. The remarkable contribution made by Ross Richard for so many years in his role as editor cannot be underestimated and for which we are truly grateful and indebted. Ross's decision to step down after such a long time evoked feelings of sadness and gratitude.

He did a mighty job and we thank him. This enormous job has been taken up by the ubiquitous Barney Bigwood who has been a pillar of strength to the committee for a number of years. He has accepted this challenge with his customary brand of no nonsense practical, effectiveness gift wrapped and packaged with an irreverent sense of humour. Thanks Barney from us all.

I wish to thank, also, the Wentworthville RSL sub -branch which recently made their second generous donation to the 9RAR Association to assist us conduct our activities for the benefit of our family members.

9RAR featured prominently when the latest awards of Order of Australia Medals were announced. This wonderful honour was bestowed on the fantastic Michael Mummery from SA, Ted

Davies joined his wife Mitty in exalted company and David Morrison was recognised for his prominent military achievements. We congratulate all and wish them well.

"9RAR featured prominently when the latest awards of Order of Australia Medals were announced."

The RAP list is longer than it should with Margaret Morrison making a good recovery from knee surgery; John Sheekey has undergone some more surgery following the completion of his Chemo; Barry Wakefield is recovering following a lengthy stay in hospital over Christmas and Bluey Reed is well enough to give cheek again having spent too long in hospital and Warren Stickens is hobbling around on a very dickey knee. Good wishes for a swift recovery and safe journey is sent to all.

Those who met the very impressive young diggers from 8/9RAR at the recent Qld reunion will be surprised to know they are now on deployment to Timor as a Bat-

alion Group with 20 members attached to 6 RAR in Afghanistan. I'm sure you join me in wishing these wonderful you men a safe and successful deployment.

As Anzac Day approaches I look forward to seeing as many familiar faces as possible. We hope to have as many Next-of-Kin as possible, marching in honour of their fallen loved ones.

The NSW Reunion in 2012 is rushing at us like a runaway train so come to Anzac Day prepared to assist in some way , to make this a memorable occasion befitting the best state in Australia.

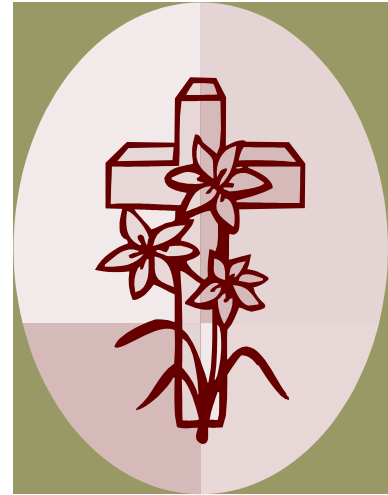
Cheers,

Doug

VALE

Steve Patterson Rodney Glover And Ken “Jock” Smith

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Steve Patterson, Rodney Glover and Ken “Jock” Smith, former comrades in arms. Our hearts go out to their families and friends as we extend our most sincere condolences.



Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans Day



Here comes the 9 RAR banner at last year's Viet Nam Veterans' Day in the Blue Mountains. Two stalwarts Eric and Bernie seek the help of Keith Payne VC.

A little know fact about Keith Payne VC is that after getting his discharge from the Australian Army in 1975 he joined the Army of the Sultan of Oman, as a Captain fighting in the Dhofar War. There he earned himself another 2 campaign medals, to join his vast array from over 4 countries.

Eric Pope (left), Keith Payne (centre) and Bernie Fitzpatrick (right).

Book Review: Contractor Combatants

Contractor Combatants: Tales of an embedded capitalist

By Carter Address

This is a rarely told story, one of success in Iraq. The left wing press shout from the roof tops every adverse occurrence. However when something positive happens the coverage just isn't there.

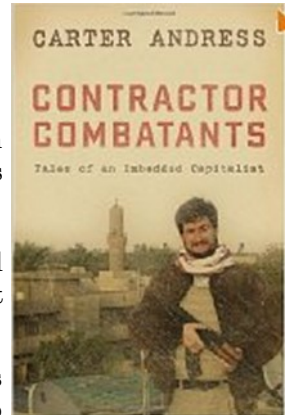
Carter Address started off as an infantry officer & did the US Ranger school which teaches the Airborne groups. After reading the book I felt he was very good at thinking outside the square.

The story picks up in the early days of Iraq, Saddam has gone and a vacuum is left. Insurgents are wrecking havoc on the coalition forces, and each other, not to mention the civilian population. Initially Carter started working for other firms and learnt the wrong way to do things. When things became unbearable for him he founded the American-Iraqi Solutions group (AISG). From just a few Americans he grew the business to more than 2500 people from 12 different countries and won contracts worth over \$50 million. In the very complex post-Saddam Iraq he had to contend with Shiites, Sunnis, insurgents, al Qaeda and a whole host of groups fighting for their 'patch', all armed to the teeth.

Probably one of his greatest achievements was being able to do what the US forces could not. That was to supply Iraqi forces with a hot meal three times a day in Fallujah. The 5,000 troops fighting there had not received a hot meal for 45 days. They also required water, fruit and so on. The strength of AISG was in its flexibility. When one group held an area which could have meant fighting their way through, Carter simply negotiated and hired men from the same group - problem solved. During the 18 months Carter Address was in Iraq he supplied everything from bread & water to trucks & cranes.

The staff went to work with bullet proof vests, pistols, AK47's and anything else they thought they needed to get the job done; anything to rebuild a war ravaged country and make an honest buck along the way.

The book shows Iraqis and Americans working together, solving their problems and re-building their nation. Bear in mind that the Iraqi people had never known democracy or any real sort of infrastructure.



9 RAR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

President	Doug McGrath	panache26@optuenet.com.au	02 9981 2675
Vice President	Trevor Murdoch	tmurdoch@customfinance.com.au	02 99813811
Secretary	Eric Pope	ericpope@bigpond.com	02 97745113
Treasurer & Subs	John Sheekey	sheekeyj@bigpond.com.au	02 99586970
Newsletter Editor	Rick "Barney" Bigwood	rich@bigpond.net.au	02 9873-5209
Assistant Editor	Emma Bigwood	thebigwoods@bigpond.com	02 9837-5546
Welfare Officer	Trevor Murdoch	as above	as above
RAR Assn Rep	Rick "Barney" Bigwood	as above	as above
Members	Peter Nummy	panddnummy@bigpond.com.com	
	Colin Schofield	schoey58@gmail.com	02 97893349
	Ross Coughran	r.coughran@telstra.com	02 9892767
	Warren Stickens	w_stickens@hotmail.com	02 98634383
	Wayne Love	wayne.love@absoluteattics.com.au	
	Andrew Bigwood	thebigwoods@bigpond.com	02 9837-5546

MATES CORNER

ROLLCALL SUBMISSIONS

GIVE US SOME INTERESTING NEWS OR HUMOROUS ANECDOTES ABOUT THE 9RAR FAMILY, SEND IT TO:-

Andrew & Emma Bigwood thebigwoods@bigpond.com ph: 02 9837-5546

or Barney (Rick) Bigwood ricb@bigpond.net.au ph: 02 9873-5209

[PLEASE NOTE:- CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS \(inc. email\)](#)



Greg Matthews.

PO Box 533

Sanctuary Cove 4212.QLD

The Committee and Members

9RAR.

7th May 2009

It has now been in excess of 25 Years since Brian Hamilton invited me to join him each Anzac Day with the 9RAR family. At that time I was needing that sort of support.

In 1968/1069 I was moved to Vietnam as a reinforcement to 1FD Regiment/12FD Regiment at Nui Dat with various unattached responsibilities including FSB Air resupply, Air Recon, Aerial Missions on the , Chu Hoi Speaker and Leaflet Rehabilitation Programme, Ground Defoliation in many areas including Dat Do, Long Hais and the Horseshoe. In the latter part of being in Country I was detached to 9RAR as a Sig. **needs fixing**

As I really was not attached to any one unit or base for any length of time and floated about filling in, I initially was somewhat lost as to whether to even go on Anzac Day or where to go for that and many other reasons we all now know.

Fortunately for me Brian extended a welcome invitation to join 9RAR on Anzac Day, as a result I have rarely missed being with 9RAR on Anzac since.

I therefore felt it overdue that I express my appreciation for the initial invitation, continuing acceptance and involvement by everyone within the 9RAR family since, especially Doug McGrath.

Thanks for the friendship and pleasure over the years and hopefully many more to come.

I guess to convey my thanks generally you may wish to report this in Roll Call at your convenience.

Kind Regards,

Greg Matthews

Mates Corner: Second Chance



SECOND CHANCE: Lyle Orreal received news that he did not have pancreatic cancer.

1117082orreal4

WHEN Lyle Orreal was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer last July he accepted it was the beginning of the end. Knowing death was pretty much a formality having been given just six to 12 months to live, the former Vietnam veteran and long-serving local councillor summoned all his courage to try and put his loved ones at ease. However, in a remarkable chain of events the affable Labor Party stalwart was given another shot at life.

In an exclusive interview with the *Western Advocate*, Mr Orreal said he's received the best

news anyone could ever want.

"I've got another crack at life," he said. "Can you believe it? I don't think I am going to die after all. I am still in the dark as to what was causing all the pain, but it's not pancreatic cancer."

"When you're told you haven't got long there's naturally a lot of emotion involved. It's so hard on your loved ones."

"But at no stage did I feel sorry for myself. It's not part of my make up. I told my family to be strong and face up to the fact my time had come and it was out of our control."

Call for News: Mates Corner is a set of snippets about 9RAR members, family and friends that many people tell us is one of the most interesting parts of *Rollcall*. It does not appear in every issue simply because it relies on input from 9RAR members, and they are a modest group when it comes to the written word. It doesn't matter how we get the snippets: email, letters, telephone messages, or written on beer coasters. But unless we get them, they can't be printed. **Contributions for Mates Corner or any part of the 9RAR newsletter will be gratefully received by:**

Peter Nummy. Email: panddnummy@bigpond.com or Phone: 02 9823-2057

Andrew & Emma Bigwood. Email: thebigwoods@bigpond.com or Phone: 02 9837-5546

Remember, something that you regard as old news may be new and interesting to someone else. Contributions from family members are especially welcomed.

What about it, guys?

Mates Corner: Stan the Ram

Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full



Fine ovine line: Pte John "Stan the Ram" Macarthur VI and 8/9RAR handler Pte John McGrath.

Photo by Tpr Michael Franchi

By Tpr Michael Franchi

THE enlistment of 8/9RAR's newest recruit was endorsed with a resounding "baa" when the RSM administered the oath on parade on November 4.

Pte John Macarthur VI, known as Stan the Ram, is the latest mascot to continue a tradition started by the original 9 Bn.

CO 8/9RAR Lt-Col Simon Stuart said Stan was an important symbol for the battalion. "He represents a physical link to the past for us, in particular to 9 Bn, who served with distinction in Vietnam.

"One of my predecessors, Lt-Col Eric Phillip, decided the battalion needed a mascot and he gave some pretty clear guidelines as to what it should be," he said.

"The animal had to be either an Australian native or have had a significant contribution to Australia's prosperity, so they decided a merino ram was the way to go. One of the soldiers was related to the family who donated the first ram, which was a direct descendant of the first merino sheep brought to Australia in the late 1790s."

Peter Hacker, of Roselea Merino Stud, donated the ram. Mr Hacker is a member of the Queensland Merino Stud Sheep Breeders Association, which has donated the past four mascots to the battalion.

"I think [Stan] shows good strength, fearlessness and courage to be part of the Army," he said.

Lt-Col Stuart said Stan had fitted in well and, like all soldiers, he was young with a good deal of character and spirit.

"He will do his physical training along with the rest of us each day ... and he'll accompany the battalion wherever it goes, supporting events and parades," he said.

Mates Corner: Brisbane Reunion Highlights

Two highlights of the Brisbane reunion, for 11 Platoon members, were:

Gary Archer

Finally getting to meet, in person, Gary Archer's sister Lyn and her family. Lyn was able to sit around and talk about Gary with his Platoon mates and was finally able to find out the circumstances surrounding the tent fire that took Gary's life.

Bruno Adameczyk

Thanks to Johnny Retschlag I had been in contact with Jack Parke, who was Bruno's best mate during their time together in 9RAR. During one of the free days we took Bruno's two daughters, Jackie and Michelle, and their families to visit Jack and his wife Helen. The girls had not met Jack before so it was very rewarding to see them and Jack form a very special friendship.

Article by Eric Pope

Brian Vickery's Service to the 9 RAR Family

A letter from Doug McGrath

To the 9RAR Family,

I write this as my first communication in a new position of National President of the 9RAR Association and ask that it be distributed to the members nationally.

Brian Vickery, after a remarkable contribution, stood down from this position at the National Conference conducted during the Reunion in Brisbane.

Let me say here, that I am humbled to receive such an honour and will endeavour to fill Brian's size 13's as best I can with my size 9's.

Brian's role in the establishment of Associations of 9RAR members is immense.

In the case of NSW, Brian raised the idea of establishing an Association to a small group who were having a well earned drink at the end of the Welcome Home March in Sydney.

"My thanks and congratulations once more to Brian for all he has given to our membership for a generation."

From that group, which included Garry Mayer, John Sheekey, Brian Hamilton and myself, the NSW association was born. The charter was established on that day and we have steadfastly pursued it ever since.

It is simply "To extend the hand of friendship, to those who wish to receive it."

On his move to warmer climes, I replaced Brian as President in NSW and it was soon after that he assumed the National Presidency. So you can see that I follow in his not inconsiderable sized footsteps.

Without Brian's initial vision, drive, wisdom and commitment, none of this would have ever happened. We are ever in his debt and I wish to thank him most sincerely for all he has done for the 9RAR Family over the past 22 years.

I wish also to compliment Barry Stalder and his wonderful committee for staging a first class reunion. A range of activities spanned almost a week and people were free to choose any that they wished to attend. Everything was planned to perfection and went off superbly.

The memorial march and service was a highly-charged emotional affair. Superbly presented by Garry Mayer it was very special to have our dear Margaret Morrison, the "Mother of the Battalion, attend on her son David's

arm. David's speech was wonderful in both style and content. It was quite eerie at times to close your eyes and think that it could have been Alby speaking. Ted Chitham was very informative in his introduction of the activities of the RAR Association and the working bees to maintain the memorial trees which have been planted in honour of all the fallen. We were treated to a trip down memory lane wandering through the 9RAR museum amongst the conviviality of the BBQ lunch. Throughout this wonderful series of events, organised to perfection by the Qld committee, the soldiers of 8/9 RAR played a significant role. How young and fit they all looked, so ably led by their very impressive CO Lt Col Simon Stuart.

The National Conference on Saturday marked the end of an era with Brian stepping down and we have all thanked him for the enormity of his contribution and achievement.

A lot of issues were canvassed and all states reported on their activities.

On the reunion front the decision was finalised to hold the next one in NSW in Nov 2012. The NSW committee will look at a variety of locations from Sydney to major regional areas and will report in once a decision has been made.

The Dinner on Saturday night was a magnificent occasion. Our Patron, Peter Cosgrove gave his customary superb speech to the assembled diners before John Essex-Clark, a former 9RAR CO of the post Vietnam era, offered a fascinating insight into his period of 9RAR leadership. This outstandingly executed period of sustained conviviality was rounded off with Sunday's relaxed BBQ in the picturesque gardens overlooking the city – a perfect location to finish a perfect reunion. Congratulations once again to the Qld team.

My thanks and congratulations once more to Brian for all he has given to our membership for a generation.

We are different individuals so I am sure there are things I will do a little differently.

What I will not stray from, however, is offering the hand of friendship to those of the 9RAR family who wish to receive it.

Doug McGrath

(New) President of the National 9RAR Association

9 RAR REUNION 2012

At the 2009 Reunion in Brisbane, NSW was confirmed as the venue for the 2012 Reunion.

The February NSW committee meeting decided that we must form a separate Reunion Committee and seek other members to assist us to 'put on a good show'. Tony Mullavey has "VOLUNTEERED" to be our merchandising Guru as he performs this role for the ST Marys branch of the VVAA.

We need the help of our wives and families to bring commonsense and ideas to the table. We also need a financial type (retired accountant etc) to help "The Sheeks" to control the \$\$\$\$\$ please.

Someone with travel agent experience would also be a bonus.

IF INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT A COMMITTEE MEMBER.

Their details are in the newsletter, see page 6.

9RAR Museum Collection

The 9 RAR Museum Collection (Preserving our Heritage)

Highlights from the Brisbane Reunion



- Following the Memorial Service, the 9 RAR Museum Collection was officially opened by John Essex-Clark DSM and the months of planning made for a very emotive display.
- One of the main attractions was the captured weapons, these are currently held in trust by the Ninth Battalions Association. The other main interest was the comparison of the equipment that the modern soldier has to carry against what we carried 42 years ago. Everyone's comment was 'how do they carry this weight?'
- A large heartfelt THANK YOU to all those who placed a contribution into the Donation Box. \$1,050.00 was collected with many large notes in the box. A special thank you to Richard Starkins (Melbourne) for \$300.00 and to the Morrison family for \$50.00.
- During the Reunion, C Company members raised some money for their funds but have now decided to donate the proceeds to the Museum - a grand total of \$380.00. Well done men and thank you.
- Following the Museum opening, the RAR Foundation (Adrian Clunies-Ross AO MBE and John Essex-Clark DSM) approved a donation to the Museum Collection of \$2500.00. These monies were to assist us to present the history of the Battalion in a professional way to both our members and, where appropriate, the current members of the Regiment at Enoggera. Our sincere thanks go to the RAR foundation for their generous support.
- You can be assured that the money will be put to very good use to ensure that the 9 RAR Museum Collection will be preserved and maintained for future reference. A separate bank account has been set up to account for the expenses.

We now have over 500 valuable items in the collection. We will continue to put the old photo slide shows up on the website for you to look through. Do you have any old photographs or slides?

Dan Penman

Email: webmaster@9rarqld.org

Phone: 07 33970087

© Copyright on all original items in *ROLLCALL* is held by the author and should not be reproduced for profit without the written permission of the author. Reproduction for non-profit newsletters, military archives or study purposes in proper context is encouraged, but acknowledgment should be given to the author and source. Items reproduced in *ROLLCALL* are acknowledged wherever possible.

The 9th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:

The Battalion was formed on 13 November 1967 in South Australia. The Battalion served in South Vietnam from 5 November 1968 to 25 November 1969. The Battalion then remained at Enoggera until the 31 October, 1973 when it merged with 8 RAR to become the 8th/9th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (8/9 RAR). The Battalion's service in South Vietnam resulted in the award of a Distinguished Service Order, two Military Crosses, seven Military Medals, and eleven members of the Battalion were Mentioned in Dispatches.

See more at: http://www.9rar.org.au/battn_history.html



We're on the web. Find us at:

www.9rar.org.au



ABOVE: "THE LAST RITES FOR PTE GRUNT"

Finally Mick Bawdin fires his 9mm pistol in anger.

Pte Grunt didn't give up without a fight.

The Regimental ODE:

Rest Ye, Oh Warrior
You'll battle no more
No longer to live
The horrors of war
Your duty was done
With honour and pride
Farewell! Oh Brother
Until we march by your side

"Lest We Forget"

“ROLL CALL”

The Official Newsletter of 9RAR Association
(NSW) March 2010.

IF UNDELIVERED RETURN TO:
9 RAR Association NSW
PO BOX 197
Willoughby NSW 2068

TO:

B COMPANY WARRIOR 1969

