



9RAR ROLL CALL!

JOURNAL OF 9RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW)



AUGUST 2011

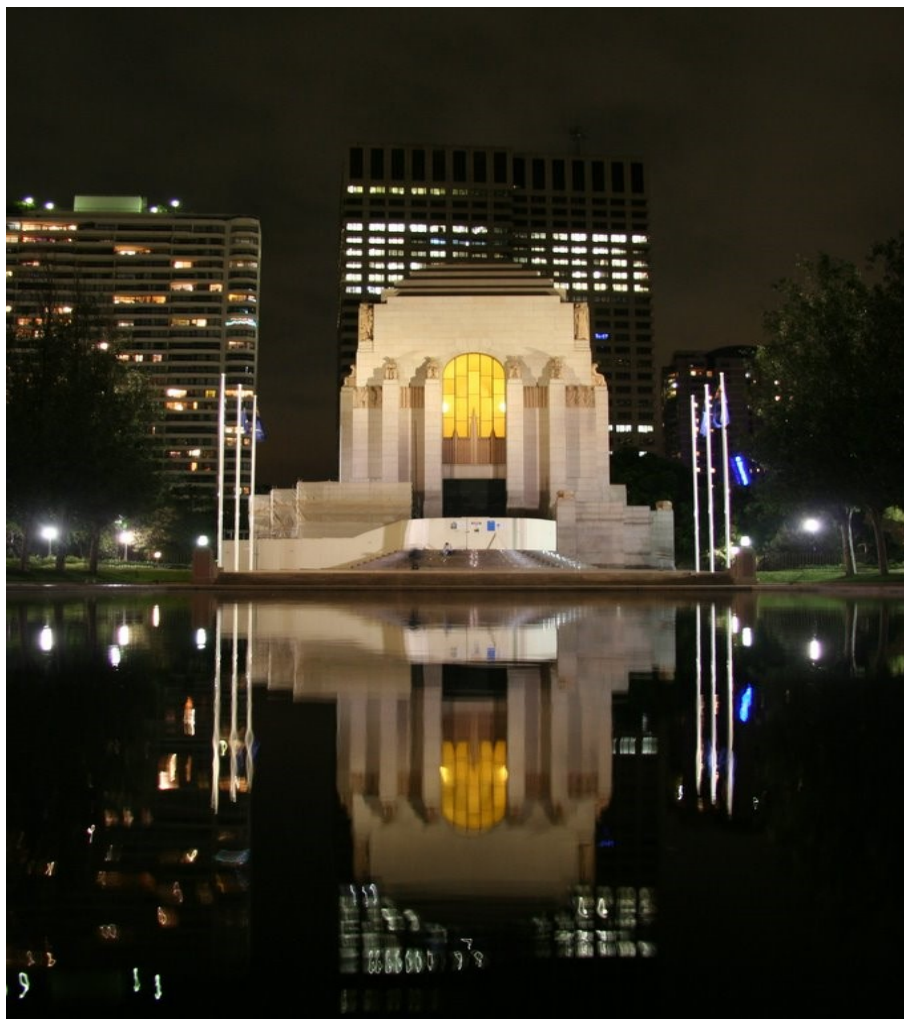
ISSUE 2 (2011)

Highlights:

- The 9RAR Family: President's Word
- Book review: Battle Scars
- 2Plt Hobart Anzac Day
- World War 2 Trivia

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The scene of where the memorial service will take place in Sydney on the 11th of November 2012, looking across the Pool of Remembrance.

9 RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW)

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EDITOR'S REPORT

What a sad few months since the last edition with the loss of so many old comrades, including the loss of our dear friend and 9RAR Committee Treasurer John Sheekey. See "VALE" for more details.

The President of the Reunion Committee has been really busy locking in events, excursions and timings to ensure all attendees have a "WHALE OF A TIME". The full programme is laid out further in the newsletter.

I have embarked on a Slide Recovery project to save our pictorial history of 9 RAR's tour in Vietnam. Jim Silence, a 12 platoon REO, had left his slides in their cassettes since the seventies I enticed him to trust me with them, which he did. I discovered a treasure trove that rekindled long lost memories. The funny, the happy and the sad. I will share a few with you. The others I am hoping to have as a slide show for the reunion.



Above: D Company after Operation BBQ. Thanks to Ray Stanley and Laurie O Sullivan the unrecognised Heroes who really supported the company well in the field and back at "THE DAT".

FROM THE ASSISTANT EDITOR

Every year Anzac Day brings mixed emotions for my family and I. My husband and I remember our dearly loved grandfathers and wish they were still here with us. However whilst we are sad we are also very proud. We are proud of our children who are growing up to respect our veterans and to be grateful for all that they have done to keep our nation safe. It makes me so proud as a mother to see my children march with their beloved Poppy (see photo right). This year was my daughter Elizabeth's first time marching (at age 4) and she loved it. My son Patrick (9) meanwhile is an old hand and understands more about why his Poppy marches. They call out "thank you" to all the marching soldiers and we do our best, as proud parents and grateful Australians, to teach them why they should be thankful.

I enjoyed touching base with so many of you at Anzac Day this year at the Windsor. I love being able to put faces to all the names and I really appreciate the feedback I get on the Roll Call. If you ever want anything included in the Roll Call please call or email me and I will make sure it is included. Special thanks to all those who voted to appoint me to the Committee as Assistant Editor (or as I like to call it Editor-in-Chief!) I look forward to many years to come in this rewarding role.

Finally, I would like to mention John "Sheeks" Sheekey who was a valuable member of the 9RAR group for so long. Rest in peace, you will be dreadfully missed.

And as always, to all of you, our valiant veterans, I say thank you.

Emma Bigwood : thebigwoods@bigpond.com



VALE

Robert DAY (Dino) C Coy
 Raymond GIBBONS (May 2011)
 Bob FARRER (May 2011) D Coy
 Dave SUTTON (May 2011) B Coy
 John SHEEKEY (April 2011) A Coy
 Adrian RYAN (June 2011)

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"

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of several of our former comrades in arms. Our hearts go out to their families and friends as we extend our most sincere condolences.



Rest in Peace

Left: Dave Sutton

Above: Deirdre and John "Sheeks" Sheekey

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IMPORTANT DATES: 2011

Sunday 14th August Blue Mountains Vietnam Veteran Memorial Day starts at 11.30 from the Fire Station in Springwood with a march to the memorial Park. There are many venues to have a quiet ale and some lunch afterwards. Come along and help Bernie Fitz and Popey carry the banner.

November 2011: the RAR Assoc NSW will be having a Birthday Function in the Officer's Mess courtyard. It is a good day with the historical museum open and tours of the barracks. More information as it comes to hand.

ANZAC DAY 2011

Another successful Anzac day with over 60 marching in inclement weather. Wonderful support by our adopted Pipe band helped to keep the old stagers in step. This wonderful affiliation was the work of an old Scot "Trevor Angus Jock McMurdoch". The band will also be participating in our reunion next year.

Tony Mullavey stepped up to the plate along with Ross Coughran to handle all the merchandise sales and collect fees in the absence of "SHEEKS" who was at home critically ill but still watched the March on the Tele.

The food again was ample and of good quality, thanks to Schoie. The hat whip around raised about \$400 which is roughly a third of the cost. Thanks to Ross and Warren .

Also present were 2 young mums, Kelly Barr-Jones and Nicole Beat, who have volunteered to fund raise for us to provide funds for our reunion. They have been successful so far to the tune of \$5000 with 17 months still to go before the event. Kelly's husband Gregg has also volunteered to join our committee to bring more business acumen to our planning. He has experience with this sort of thing as he is the president of the 2/1 Battalion Association 2nd AIF, his fathers WW2 unit.

Ross Coughran was awarded Life Membership of the 9RAR Association for all this work supporting the Committee. Congratulations Ross!



BOOK REVIEW: BATTLE SCARS

Author: Matthew Carr (ISBN: 9780980812909—pbk)

"You've got cancer!" Thus begins this book. An entree which leads to a most incredible main course of courage, wit, wisdom and love.

Finding the right words to honour Matthew's story of his ongoing war with cancer is difficult. One thing stands out, beyond a shadow of doubt, this man is a warrior in the truest sense of the word.

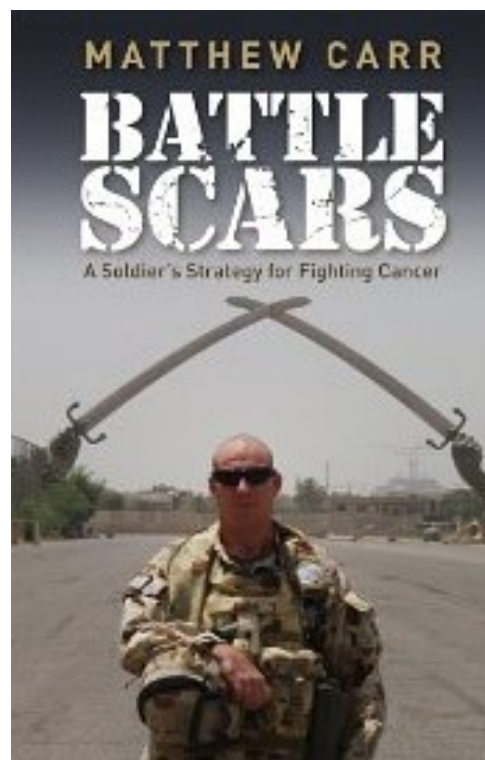
Real heroes are rare men. In the military they are recognised with the award of bravery medals, the highest being the Victoria Cross. Some heroes never receive a medal, but their actions are such that they set examples we poor mortals can only stand in awe of. Such a man is Matthew Carr.

To read Matthews book, which I did in a single sitting, is to be inspired. There is no self pity in this story. There is an initial confusion over "why me?" to begin with, but then the training of a military warrior takes over and one knows that cancer has never met an opponent quite like Matthew.

Without a single reservation, I commend this book as one to be bought and read by anybody with a desire to know what it means to hear, "You've got cancer". The same commendation applies to anybody dealing with a family member, friend, workmate or fellow veteran who has been told, "You've got cancer".

Note: Matthew's dad, Bob, was a member of 5 Platoon, B Company, 9RAR.

Paul "Popeye" Kinney



FOUND: 'Returned from Active Service' Badge



Charlie Carter and his boys found this at the Windsor as they were being swept out by the cleaner on Anzac Day. The number engraved on it is **A441862**. If this is yours or you know who it belongs to please contact Roll Call Editor Barney Bigwood on 0488-727-475 and we can organise for it to be returned.

"The Marines I have seen around the world have the cleanest bodies, the filthiest minds and the highest morale and the lowest morals of any group of animals I have ever seen. Thank God for the United States Marines." These words were spoken during World War 2 by the First Lady of America, Eleanor Roosevelt. Can you imagine the boost in morale she gave her troops? In this picture (from UPI Photos/Files) she is meeting with some Aussie sailors and soldiers. Picture taken about September, 1943.



PRESIDENT'S WORD: The 9RAR Family

The sadness surrounding the tragic loss of John Sheekey and David Sutton has prompted me, as the President of this wonderful organization, to express how proud I have been recently of the 9RAR Family and what we have achieved.

We have created something very special with this association, in the way we care for and support each other and take pride in the achievements of others. We use the word "family" quite deliberately as, I believe, we have created a culture of caring for each other as one would expect in a good family.

I had the very great honour of delivering eulogies on behalf of John Sheekey and David Sutton at their recent Memorial Services. This is not a duty I wish to become accustomed to or proficient at but it is a most humbling role to be asked to perform.

Sheeks served the NSW Association as Treasurer with both dedication and distinction for the twenty four years since its inception. His service to the 9RAR Family was immense and cannot be adequately measured. As sad as his passing was, the memorial service was a celebration of his life and the 9RAR family turned out magnificently to form a thirty man honour guard for their little mate who was known to many and loved by all.

The following is an excerpt from his eulogy:

"John has been a tireless worker for the association which grew from such humble beginnings to offer support for the 9RAR Family as it is known today.

Always industrious, Sheeks was the Chancellor of the Exchequer to 9RAR and jealously guarded association funds at all times.

His warm and friendly demeanor was known to change in an instant if he thought there was any hint of extravagance or unnecessary spending. Both Brian Vickery (who flew in to attend) and I, as his President's, have been chastened by the Sheek in this manner, on more than one occasion.

Throughout his long illness he remained independent and upbeat.

If he could not attend a meeting I would receive the Treasure's report by email with an apology as he was having another "holiday" - Sheek Speak for going into hospital for another bout of Chemo.

He stubbornly refused help and never complained. As his voice was affected he endured the Darren Lockyer jokes with good grace. He was one of the first to book for the recent A Coy reunion in Tasmania this past Anzac Day and was bitterly disappointed he was too ill to attend.

Little did any of us know what was to follow so soon after. John Sheekey was highly regarded and much loved by his army mates and others who knew him. I received a flood of supportive emails ranging from former private soldiers right through to General Peter Cosgrove. He made a remarkable contribution to our Association and along with his work with Legacy touched the lives of so many.

A wonderful family man, he will be missed by all who knew him. Though small of stature John Sheekey was a giant of a man. I mourn his death but celebrate his life. I am proud to have been his friend. Lest we forget."

I did not know John in Vietnam so my relationship with him grew through our working together as members of the association committee. The opposite was the case with Dave Sutton. Our bond was forged in the cauldron of army service, both through the ordeals of training in Australia and the intensity of combat in Vietnam. We met at Woodside when we were both posted to 9RAR to do our Corps training in Tango Company and it was here we developed the bond of brothers.

An excerpt of his eulogy follows:

"Throughout all his training Dave was a model soldier. Always fit and very strong, he handled the physical demands of the relentless training with ease. Dave was highly disciplined and conscientious about everything he did and showed a dedication and commitment to all he undertook. Dave Sutton was a remarkable athlete and a very fine Australian Rules player with the famous Carlton Football Club.

The next chapter in his book of life, came when the landing barge hit the beach in Vung Tau and we were whisked off to the tent city at Nui Dat, our new "home" where he served in 8 section, 6 Platoon of B Coy 9RAR under the command of Lt. Geoffrey Locke.

The 9RAR Family cont.

His Section Commander Dessie Thompson was impressed with the fine young soldier and assigned him the role of no.2 to the machine gunner. He was the consummate no.2. Would carry anything, was fastidious with the weapon and was dedicated to his role. Nothing was too much trouble for Gentleman Dave Sutton. When Ray Evans came home, Dave took over responsibility of the gun.

A quiet, reserved man, he nevertheless had a wicked sense of humour.

Dave Sutton was a friend in every sense of the word, to those he cared about. Totally trusting and trustworthy, there was nothing Dave would not do for a friend. Dave was my dear friend with whom I had served in the same platoon since the first day we met at Woodside.

He suffered severe gunshot wounds, in a heartbreakingly tragic engagement.

I was not with the Platoon at the time of the engagement as I was in hospital at the time.

Word spread like wildfire through the hospital of the casualties to 6 Platoon and a sense of helplessness swept over me when I learned Dave had been hit. Helplessness - because I wasn't there with him and that there was nothing I could do to help him. It was the only time I ever cried in Vietnam.

Within a day we were both in the Task Force Hospital in Vung Tau- Dave fighting for his life in Intensive care and me in isolation with severe tropical ulcers.

I unwittingly committed an atrocity a day or so later when he was on the improve, by sneaking in to IC to see my mate. We were not long into our conversation when I was thrown out. I had exposed him to a level of infection that had the matron apoplectic, and threatening all manner of charges would be laid against me. I never saw him again in Vietnam.

On his return to Australia in mid 1969, Dave underwent a lengthy period of recovery and rehabilitation before he was discharged back into civilian life.

Despite seeing him intermittently over the years it was with great joy that the old 8 section boys, joined us in Sydney about four years ago for the Anzac Day march and reunion activities. For most of his NSW mates, this is the last memory they have of their friend Dave.

David Sutton was highly regarded and much loved by his army mates and others he knew. A wonderful family man, he will be missed by all who knew him.

We, Dave's army mates, join you all today in our mourning for his passing but in celebration of a life which enriched many other lives. As we mourn his death we celebrate his life. I am proud to have been his friend. Lest we forget"

I am proud to say that in another display of our ideals, the 9RAR Family and the local veteran community of which Dave was a member, combined to have over twenty members present to honour this special friend.

The other event for which I feel a great sense of pride is the collective good wishes and pride our family has expressed, in honouring David Morrison in his remarkable achievement of attaining the promotion to Chief of Army. I know I spoke for all of us when I congratulated David on attaining so lofty a position. David has charted his own career course, registering his own long list of achievements in a stellar military career of service to this nation. He has enjoyed the support and counsel of parents who have been parents not just to him and his sister Jenny but to all of us as well. The common theme among all 9RAR members I have spoken to is how proud the father of the Battalion, Alby, would have been had he known. I think it very fitting and poignant that David, feeling so close to his father at this time, wore his 9RAR tie to Canberra, before changing into uniform for his investiture. So there we have it - 9RAR, the youngest battalion in the Regiment, which only now exists in a combination with 8RAR, has, with Peter Cosgrove, now produced two Chiefs of Army in an amazing achievement. How did the Mother of the Battalion, Margaret, handle this moment? With immense pride of course! So Margaret Morrison is now, undisputedly, the Mother of the Army!

This day was bitter/sweet for the Morrison family, as Margaret was in hospital at the time undergoing some tests. She has since undergone surgery for a bout of bowel cancer and is at home recovering well, sound in the knowledge that my good wishes were from the 9RAR Family as a whole.

From a very proud President of the 9RAR Family,

Cheers,

Doug

CERTIFICATES OF SERVICE

All veterans are entitled to a “Certificate of Service” which can be presented to them by their Federal member of Parliament. See information below which was kindly supplied by Ross Coughran.



Certificates of Appreciation

Certificates of Appreciation are a way of expressing the nation's thanks to those who have made a contribution towards Australia's efforts in war, conflicts and peace operations. The contributions can be as a civilian or as a member of the armed forces. For the Second World War, the contribution may have been in Australia or overseas. For all other conflicts the contribution must have been given overseas in the country in which the conflict occurred.

Certificates are available for service in:

- Second World War, for service in the Australian armed forces or on the home front
- British Commonwealth Occupation Force (Japan)
- Korean War
- Malayan Emergency
- Indonesian Confrontation
- Vietnam War
- Gulf War
- Iraq War
- Peace Operations

Who can apply?

A person who made a contribution, either in the Defence forces or as a civilian, may request a certificate in respect of his or her service, or a family member or friend may nominate a person. Next of kin may nominate a deceased family member. Certificates of Appreciation are not available for service in the Boer War or the First World War.

Persons who served in the Defence Reserve Forces or National Service may apply for a Certificate of Appreciation provided that they served in a war or conflict for which a certificate is available.

Application forms should be completed and forwarded, with supporting evidence of service, to the electorate office of the applicant's Federal Member of Parliament.

- [DO755: Application for Certificate of Appreciation](#)

Any civilian service on the home front, which assisted the Australian effort in the Second World War, qualifies for a Certificate of Appreciation.

For more information and applicant guidelines please see:

- [Factsheet COM25 Certificates of Appreciation](#)

Evidence requirements

Evidence of contributions which are to be provided in support of an application may include:

- Service record showing service during the relevant period.
- Medals awarded for service in the conflicts for which a certificate is sought (or photographs of these medals) inscribed with the applicant's name and service number on the rim.
- Copy of an entry from these nominal rolls:
 - Second World War Nominal Roll
 - Korean War Nominal Roll
 - Vietnam War Nominal Roll.
- Any other relevant documentation or evidence which clearly validates the claim or, if no evidence is available, a statutory declaration attesting to the eligible service may be submitted.

MATES CORNER

ROLLCALL SUBMISSIONS

GOT SOME INTERESTING NEWS OR HUMOROUS ANECDOTES ABOUT THE 9RAR FAMILY? SEND IT TO:-

Emma Bigwood thebigwoods@bigpond.com ph: 0422-429-745

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



HOOK UPS: Bringing old comrades together



Please let us know if you are looking for a LONG LOST COMRADE and we will put it out there.

Alan Barnes saw the article on Vince Restuccia in the last Roll Call and approached the Editor for contact details. A very successful contact was made.

Bill Dobell is trying to contact **TED ANGELO** (3794159) ex C Coy 9RAR Vietnam 28/05/69 to 05/12/69. Please contact Bill with any information. Ph: 03 5336-1538 or 0417-616-759. billdobell@gmail.com

Andy Ochiltree is trying to contact **J.A. GUILD** Army Aviation and instructor OCS 1970. Can you help? Please contact Andy via email with any information. ochiltre@bigpond.net.au

Robert Hicks is trying to contact Crpl **KENNETH LANG aka Brian or Langie**. Ex 8 Sec, 3 Pltn, A Coy 7RAR, Vietnam 1968/69, 1971/72, Provost Unit. Please contact Robert via phone or email with any information. Ph: 0418-979-102. robsuma@bigpond.net.au

A/Editor's Note: I love helping people get back in touch after many years apart. Send your success stories to me so that I can publish it in the next edition. thebigwoods@bigpond.com

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Report by the National Commission on how Australia should celebrate the Centenary of Anzac
www.anzaccentenary.gov.au

Vietnam Casualty List of Australian Servicemen

Www.thecasualtylist.com/casualtylist.html

Fund Hope for Mental Health

www.getup.org.au/campaign/HopeForMentalHealth

Veterans and Partners Help Sites through DVA

www.wellbeingtoolbox.net.au or www.touchbase.gov.au

The Siege—Consolidation. Just a Fair Go for Superannuation

www.justafairgo.net



Follow on from last edition from article on US RANGERS. The response from my US Mate.

G'Day, Rick....

Just received my copy of the *9 RAR Roll Call* yesterday and am most appreciative. You cannot estimate my surprise, not to mention the honor and privilege, I felt to see the reprint of my e-mail as cited on Page 9. To find myself mentioned in the journal of such select company as members of the 9th RAR - past and present - overwhelms me. Thank you all very much, Sir.

Additionally, your journal was an interesting read, as such things always are. It's always great to learn more about my ANZAC brothers in arms. And again, I reiterate, if I had to go to war, I regret not having the opportunity to work with Aussies at least once considering that which has been repeatedly told to me. With that thought in mind, I'm reminded that ANZAC Day is fast approaching and I wish all Aussie and New Zealander vets a reflective *Welcome Home!*

As I once told both you and Andrew, one of the highlights of my life was being invited to join with the 5th RAR vets and marching in the 1994 ANZAC parade in Brisbane and then participating in their annual reunion and then hitting a few RSLs later on. It was a grand day and a memory I will long cherish. I hope you guys have a grand day. I'll think about you and, of course, those that can no longer march with you. FYI, my wife Debra and I were lounging about the other evening absent much to do and she and I got around to making up our respective "bucket lists." For Debra perhaps it's a bit too premature considering that she's only 53, but in my case I ain't no spring chicken! In any event, our lists weren't too terribly different, except she refuses to go skydiving and I at least want to hit the air once or twice more before I kick the bucket.

More importantly, however, she and I both would like to make at least one or more return visits to Australia, particularly to parts not yet visited. It is hoped that one day in the not too distant future in satisfying this bucket list item that perhaps I'll be able to meet you, Rick, your family, and hopefully hook-up once again with Andrew and finally meet Emma and the little ones. It's a fact we ain't gettin' any younger. In the meantime, as I've hinted at before, Qantas flies both ways and the door is *always* open to you and yours.

Take Care Mate,

BOB

NATIONAL MEMORIAL WALK



Anzac Day at The Royal Australian Regiment, National Memorial Walk was marked with the dedication of the new memorial stone "Keeping the Spirit Alive". This was done by Padre Gary Stone. The stone is situated just outside the Contemplation Building.

MATE CORNER NEWS

The **Gympie Times**
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Gympie servicemen honoured

29th June 2011

Tags: memorial, vietnam war

TWO Gympie national servicemen killed in Vietnam are honoured on a new memorial to be unveiled today.

The granite boulder in Gympie Memorial Park commemorates the 287,000 young men called up for service between 1951 and 1972.

The 212 who died on active service in Borneo and Vietnam include Private Dennis Neal and Private Gordon Sorrenson.

Private Neal, 22, was a motor mechanic when called up in 1969. He was posted to the 2nd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment and went to Vietnam on May 17, 1970. He was returning from his first operation when a booby trap detonated, killing him and another soldier.

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Ex-servicemen Alan Chandler and Kevin Lynch from the ninth battalion who served at Vietnam in 1969 with Terry Radonich from the Navy Reserve at the Mooloolaba dawn service.

Guest speaker Major Peter Rogers, DFC, retired, spoke of the courage of the Lost Soldier who lays to rest at the Australian War Memorial at Canberra. "The lost soldier paid the ultimate sacrifice...we don't know his name, we never will...his family is lost to us as he is lost to them," Major

Rogers said. Along with the Mooloolaba Junior Surf Lifesavers, wreaths were laid by Peter Mitchell, RAN, representing the navy, Hayden Kenny OAM representing the army and Squadron Leader Norm Cooper representing the air force.

Above left: Gymire servicemen honoured. Article sent in by Kevin Lynch.

Above right: Anzac Day at Mooloolaba

9RAR REAL ESTATE



WTFRW GET TOGETHER BEFORE 2012 REUNION

W.T.F.R.W C Coy Get together

Thursday 8th November 2012, from 12 midday

Kirribilli Club: 11 Harbour View Crescent, Lavender Bay

Cost \$30/person which includes light lunch (pay for your own beverages)

R.S.V.P - David Sheekey (02) 9955 4940 or email davidsheekey@hotmail.com

WHO ARE THEY? We have some answers!

We asked who they were and where they are now in the last edition.

We had a reply from **Zenon Helinski** (3 platoon, A coy) who is living in Newcastle. Thanks for the update!

Individual photos, left to right: Barry Cheeseman (smoking); Frankie Gal (in helmet); Bruce Connell (smiling)

Group photo in the boozier (left to right): Unknown, John Borshoff, Hans Mouthaan, Unknown, Warren Tilse, Frankie Gal, Unknown

Note from A/Editor: If you know any of the 'unknowns' from A Coy drop us a line and we'll put the information in the next edition.



DID YOU KNOW JOHN "JOCK" McCOLL?

RIP: 215560 PRIVATE John Christopher "Jock" McCOLL, 1RAR Vietnam (Pte)

1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment—05/11/1965 to 09/06/1966

A message from Brian McKenzie, Advocate, Greater Hobart sub-branch, VVAA:

Both John Thompson and I today attended the funeral of John "Jock" McColl, along with eleven others including his landlady Nina, her daughter and some neighbours from Midway point. John had been a boarder at Nina's home for 12 years and she had cared for him after he suffered a stroke some years ago. John Thompson did a wonderful job with the service and all attendees laid poppies, recited the ode and observed a minutes silence in John's memory. John's original medals were displayed, Vietnam Medal, National Medal & Vietnamese Campaign Medal. It is presumed that he had served for 15 years plus in the ADF but never claimed his entitlement to the Australian Active Service Medal and Australian Defence medal. Little is known about his background nor his life following his Vietnam Service, although the evidence suggest he served as a regular Soldier for many years. Details on the "It's an Honour" website confirm that John was awarded the National medal for 15 years service on 9 May 1979. I am sending these details out via the net hoping for a response from anyone he served with John in Vietnam with 1RAR (05/11/1965 to 09/06/1966 or later years) who might have information so we can try and connect with his family in Scotland. If there is anybody out there who can assist, I can be contacted via email or on the numbers below.

Ph: 03 6245-1717 ^{SEP} or mobile: 0439-030-429

HERO MEDIC RECEIVES MILITARY CROSS



Young naval medic Kate Nesbitt has become only the second woman in the history of the armed services to be awarded the Military Cross. Able Seaman Nesbitt, from Plymouth, has been described as a “hero” after details emerged of how she saved the life of a soldier in Afghanistan. The 21 year old described how she ran 70 yards across open ground to treat a horrifically injured comrade while Taliban bullets were “whizzing around” her head, claiming “I was just doing my job”. In receiving the Military Cross Kate becomes the first Royal Navy Service woman to have receive the honour.

Her citation reads: “Nesbitt’s actions throughout a series of offensive operations were exemplary; under fire and under pressure her commitment and courage were inspirational and made the difference between life and death. She performed in the highest traditions of her Service. Kate was presented her Military Cross by the Prince of Wales at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace. (Sept, 2009)

HELP ME KEEP (ARMY) NUMBERS UP!

And receive a bonus by getting fit and enjoy a morning out of the house.

We are the remnants of the Sydney City Vietnam Vets Heart Health program enjoying the facilities of a well equipped Gym in Martin Place.

OUR PROGRAM.

Tuesday and Thursday, 09.30 hrs to 10.30 hrs

We are put through our paces by an instructor with a good variety of exercises. There is also an excellent pool that can be utilised.

Fees for Quarter - \$120

Every second Wednesday the ones that can, do one of the many excellent bushwalks around Sydney.

Interested in helping me out?

Phone - Col Schofield. [Bcoy] – 0409-789-336 **Email** - cschofield1@optusnet.com.au

Or Ross Treleaven at the Gym - 9226 8987 or 0414-331-434

HEALTH MOTIVATED.

Level 10, 52 Martin Place, Sydney 2000.

Ross is young ex Army and just taken over the gym and keen to get us old buggers into some sort shape again.

Come and give it a try – work at your own pace or join us for a bush walk to check us out.



TWO PLATOON'S HOBART ANZAC DAY

Picture a lazy Saturday afternoon - the beer garden of the Victory Hotel - Brisbane, November 2009. 9 RAR is reuniting. Two Platoon members are reflecting on those who aren't there. Someone says, 'Benny hasn't been to a reunion', and Peter Nummy comes up with the suggestion (liberally remembered and translated), 'Why don't we take the reunion to Benny?' So 2 Platoon's Hobart Anzac reunion was born.

We also realised that we could also catch up with two other Tasmanians, Tony Champ and Tex Evans. As it turned out Tex was in Queensland when we had the reunion but two out of three was not a bad average.

Former Platoon Commander Tony Daniels, who organised the reunion, told us on Easter Sunday night at the always popular 'Meet and Greet', that 66 men passed through our ranks in Vietnam; we had 7 KIA; 7 that we know of, have died since; of the remainder, there are still some we have been unable to contact, but 20 former members and a good number of wives attended the week-long celebrations.

Unfortunately we don't have a complete list of apologies from former members and next of kin, but there were many who are not well, recovering from operations, have wives recovering from operations, and some unable to escape from pressing family or business commitments.

Those who attended were: Tony & Ann Daniels, Peter & Diann Nummy, Roger Bennett, Ron & Toni Tait, Wayne & Bernie Pearce, Kevin & Liane Moffitt, (Rollo) & Wendy Rollston, Greg & Gail Rixon, Cresswell Fackender, Ian & Marilyn Sanders, Barry & Marilyn Broderick, Barry & Lesley Cheesman, Neil Smith, Wayne Love, Noel & Jan Tambling (and grand-daughter Kayley), Tony & Leone Champ, Tab & Edna Hunter, Phil & Sandra Barry, Ian (Chook) McCauley, Brian & Irene Daly, Bev & Geoff Douthett (Bev is Trevor Black's sister and while Trevor was a member of One Platoon, he had significant links to our members and also the Douthetts and Sanders have become close friends in recent years from meeting at our Battalion reunions.)

Col Beeton, ex-1RAR and a mate of several Two Platooners, attended some functions and generously helped out with transport.

Don Donovan, formerly from CHQ also attended one function with wife, Jodi.

Benny (Roger Bennett) whose absence from Brisbane inspired the event, had limited opportunities to attend as he was caring for his lovely wife Sue, who was undergoing a series of chemo therapy at the time. Nevertheless, we saw Benny at several functions and a couple of his former PHQ mates, Ron Tait and Brian Daly visited him and Sue at their home later in the week.

The events of the week were full of magic moments:

- The meet and greet on Sunday night when many who had not seen each other for many years once again shook hands, hugged, had a beer and a tear and a good laugh.
- The presentation at the reunion dinner, by Wayne Pearce to Cress Fackender of a bottle of rum – late compensation for certain rum rations that allegedly went astray in 1969. The bottle is to kept for another auspicious occasion.
- Cresswell's toast, proposed to the ladies, for their continual support and love of us old and ageing vets.
- The Peppermint Bay cruise – wonderful scenery, good food and drink and great company.
- The kid at the start of the march who thought it was 'scarey' that 'that old guy has an iPhone!'

TWO PLATOON'S HOBART ANZAC DAY Cont.



- Bev Douthett, knocking over half a dozen of as she ran to embrace a young serving soldier displaying Afghanistan and Timor ribbons. Turns out Hagar is from Bowen, and a family friend, who joined the Army after being inspired by Trevor's and Fred Black's example. Fred had bestowed a special blessing on him prior to his embarkation for Timor.
- The very poignant moment when we all assembled at the Hobart Cenotaph after the official ceremony and former section commanders, Ian McCauley and Wayne Pearce laid a wreath commemorating 'the service and sacrifice of our fallen comrades'.

All functions organised by Tony were most appropriate and spread strategically over the week to ensure a relaxed time for all. On all occasions the main objective of getting us together to renew friendships and to enjoy each other's company again was well and truly achieved.

We were all deeply saddened at the end of the week to learn of the death of John Sheekey. When Tony called for expressions of interest for the reunion over twelve months prior, Sheeks was the first to sign up. He was very keen to celebrate this occasion. R.I.P. our friend and comrade at arms.

There was discussion of repeating the event sometime between the Sydney Battalion reunion next year and the following one, and members will discuss in Sydney next year.

Brian Daly



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

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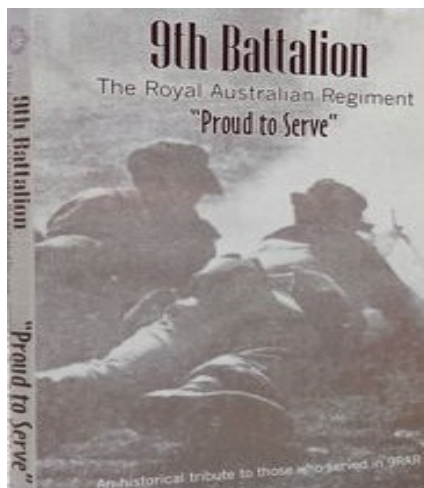
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Arms of the RAR



A Lithgow-manufactured L1A1 SLR fitted with early style fore end grips and a SUIT - Sight, Unit, Infantry, Trilux - optical sight, which were only issued on a limited scale to RAR Battalions.

THE Australian-manufactured L1A1 Self Loading Rifle (SLR) is the longest serving general issue weapon to be carried by the Diggers of the Royal Australian Regiment.

The first Australian manufactured example of the Belgian-designed Fabrique Nationale de Herstal *Fusil Automatique Léger* (Light Automatic Rifle) - better known the world over as the FN FAL - rolled off the production line at Lithgow in February 1959.



The L1A1 had a 20 round detachable box magazine.

The first Lithgow rifle was serialised AD5900001 and the first four characters of Australian rifle numbers thereafter reflected the year they were manufactured until production ceased in 1986, when only 11 rifles were made.

The Regiment started to receive the Rifle 7.62mm L1A1 by 1960 but none are believed to have seen use during the Malayan emergency, although they were definitely being carried in Indonesia, Malaysia and Borneo during the 1963-66 "Confrontation".

The rifle ultimately made its biggest mark on the RAR's proud history during the Vietnam conflict, where it faithfully served each and every Battalion deployed there from the first day to the last.

Many a Vietnam Vet will attest that while the M16 with its 5.56x45mm round

was light, handy, put a lot of lead in the air and made a lot of noise, anything hit once with the SLR's big 7.62 NATO round with its 144 grain projectile stayed hit!

Although many examples of the FN FAL in foreign service had a three position safety catch which offered the option for automatic fire, the Australian L1A1 was only ever self loading.

That said, there was a well known "match stick trick" which readily converted the SLR to fully automatic ... this phenomenon often occurred on exercise when firing blanks, but the author has been given no evidence it was ever employed in combat.

However, Australia did produce an automatic heavy barrel version, the L2A1, which was based on a Canadian variant.

The L2A1 had a three position safety catch which permitted automatic fire, a heavier barrel and a rudimentary timber clad bipod which became a hand guard when folded back under the barrel.

The L2A1 was issued with 30 round magazines identical to those of the 7.62 L4A1 Bren gun.

Production of the L2A1 commenced at Lithgow in 1961 and they were exported to New Zealand, Malaya, India, Uganda, Trinidad, Tanganyika, Zambia, Jamaica,

Mauritius, Barbados and Brunei.

Given its era, the L2A1 probably served in Vietnam and there is well documented evidence that its 30-round magazines were acquired by the SAS to be fitted to some radically shortened L1A1s.

It is a strong testament to Lithgow's adaptation and manufacture of the original Belgian design that the L1A1 essentially only received cosmetic changes during its 30-odd years of official Aussie service life.

The original turned solid wooden carry handles and "triangular" hand guards were progressively replaced with a cast plastic unit and laminated timber items with sheet metal heat shields, but they were about the only changes, and original configuration rifles could be regularly encountered right up until the L1A1 was retired with the introduction of the F88 Austeyr from the early 1990s.

But was the venerable SLR ever "retired"?

The rifle is the drill weapon of choice of Australia Defence Force's Federation Guard, Cadets are still seen parading with "Drill Purpose" (DP) deactivated examples and the Royal Australian Navy were still using them as "line throwers" until just a few years ago.



A Lithgow factory cutaway example of an Australian L1A1 showing the return spring for the bolt carrier's "rat tail" and the oil bottle and pull through stowage in the butt stock.

WWII TRIVIA

You might enjoy this from Col D. G. Swinford, USMC, Ret and history buff. You would really have to dig deep to get this kind of ringside seat to history:

1. The first German serviceman killed in WW II was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937), the first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940); highest ranking American killed was Lt Gen Lesley McNair, killed by the US Army Air Corps. So much for allies.
2. The youngest US serviceman was 12-year-old Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded and given a Dishonorable Discharge for lying about his age. His benefits were later restored by act of Congress.
3. At the time of Pearl Harbor, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced 'sink us'), the shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry division was the Swastika, and Hitler's private train was named 'Amerika.' All three were soon changed for PR purposes.
4. More US servicemen died in the US Army Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions, your chance of being killed was 71%.
5. Generally speaking, there was no such thing as an average fighter pilot. You were either an ace or a target. For instance, Japanese Ace Hiro Yoshi Nishizawa shot down over 80 planes. He died while a passenger on a cargo plane.
6. It was a common practice on fighter planes to load every 5th round with a tracer round to aid in aiming. This was a mistake. Tracers had different ballistics so (at long range) if your tracers were hitting the target 80% of your rounds were missing. Worse yet tracers instantly told your enemy he was under fire and from which direction. Worst of all was the practice of loading a string of tracers at the end of the belt to tell you that you were out of ammo. This was definitely not something you wanted to tell the enemy. Units that stopped using tracers saw their success rate nearly double and their loss rate go down.
7. When allied armies reached the Rhine, the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).
8. German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City, but they decided it wasn't worth the effort.
9. German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.
10. Among the first 'Germans' captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians. They were then forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans; then forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.
11. Following a massive naval bombardment, 35,000 United States and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska, in the Aleutian Islands. 21 troops were killed in the assault on the island. It could have been worse if there had been any Japanese on the island!

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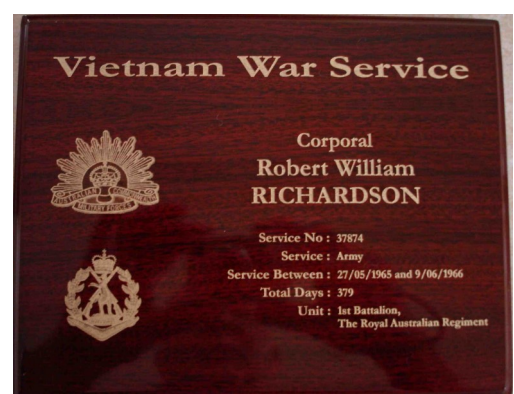
The Honourary Secretary

RAR Association VIC Branch

PO Box 94, Greensborough Vic 3088

Or contact President Allan Tonkin. Ph: 3 9366-1153

allantonkin@hotmail.com



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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



Lft: Typical WTRFW Orders Group

Right: 9 RAR DUST OFF during
"WET SEASON"



Left: OPERATION SURFSIDE April 1969
Bernie Fitzpatrick and his "Boss" Mr Bramah
were wounded in this Op.

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“ROLL CALL”

The Official Newsletter of 9RAR Association (NSW)

August 2011



2Lt Geoffrey Locke, B Company. KIA: 9th May, 1969