



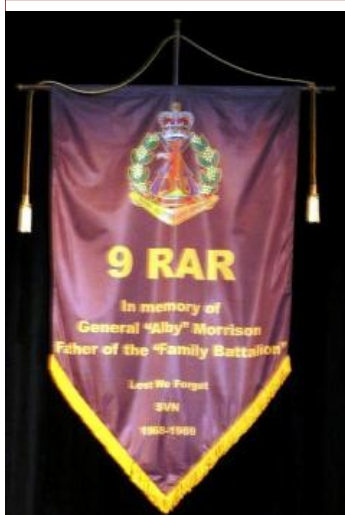
# 9 RAR ROLL CALL!

## JOURNAL OF 9RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW)



MARCH 2014

ISSUE 1 ( 2014)



## NOT WHERE BUT WHO TFRW??????



## 9 RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW)

**MEMBERSHIP & CORRESPONDENCE:** C/- Eric Pope 19 Ingram Ave Milperra NSW 2214 Phone 02 9774 5113 9 email [ericpope@bigpond.com](mailto:ericpope@bigpond.com)

**TREASURER :** C/. Stephen Nugent 33 Bertana Crescent Mona Vale 2103 9997 1552. email [cheryl.nugent@hotmail.com](mailto:cheryl.nugent@hotmail.com)

**ROLL CALL:** C/. Barney 73 Barclay Rd North Rocks 2151

02 98735209 0488727475. email: [barneybig@live.com](mailto:barneybig@live.com)

**ROLL CALL:** C/- Barney (Rick) Bigwood

## EDITOR'S REPORT

Happy New Year to all of our 9th Battalion Family. The cost pressures of hosting the 2012 Reunion meant that we had to economize and not produce a Xmas edition of ROLL CALL.

However with ANZAC DAY rapidly approaching My team of Emma and myself have been busily putting this edition together to ensure all the necessary information regarding our biggest day of the year is disseminated early .

The major change for the 9th Battalion Association is our **RETURN TO THE WINDSOR**. I will include some photographs of the refurbished Windsor inside this edition. I personally went and inspected the new facilities in November last year. I am sure everyone will be more comfortable this year.

Since September several of our number have "Marched On" I will endeavor to cover all that I am aware of in the "VALE" section.

A Big Congratulations to that B Coy platoon commander who will be the country's Governor General by this years ANZAC DAY. Well done Cossie.

My assistant editor (daughter in law EMMA) will be testing all my limited computer skills as we now have to liaise through technology as She and Andrew my son have moved to the cherry capital of Australia (YOUNG NSW) where Andrew is teaching History and English at Hennessy College. This has meant much tick tacking via computer to produce this edition.

Hope to see as many of you as possible this ANZAC DAY.

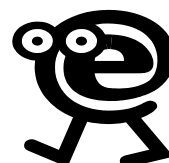
## ROLL CALL WANTS YOUR EMAIL!

### A Message from the Assistant Editor

Roll Call would like to send you this journal (and other updates) via email, sometimes as a PDF document. However to do this we need an up-to-date list of email addresses. If you would be happy to receive updates and/or Roll Call via email please contact me with your name and current email address so that we can create a database of details.

Emma Bigwood

Ph: 0422-429-745 or email [ebigwood@bigpond.com](mailto:ebigwood@bigpond.com)



## VALE: What a SAD 6 months we have lost 6 of our Vietnam Brothers'

In Oct last year we lost David Benford.

In Nov Ian "Squizzly" Squires ex 11 Plt marched on.

Also in Nov Michael "Rex" Butts passed away on the Gold Coast .

In Dec Ken Hopkins CSM support Coy (Ex WW2 & Korea) lost his battle with disease.

January 2014 and David Presgrave lost his battle with cancer .

Feb and only a week ago Lindsay Abernethy also passed.

### 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"*



Squizzly above in Vietnam and at his funeral on the right



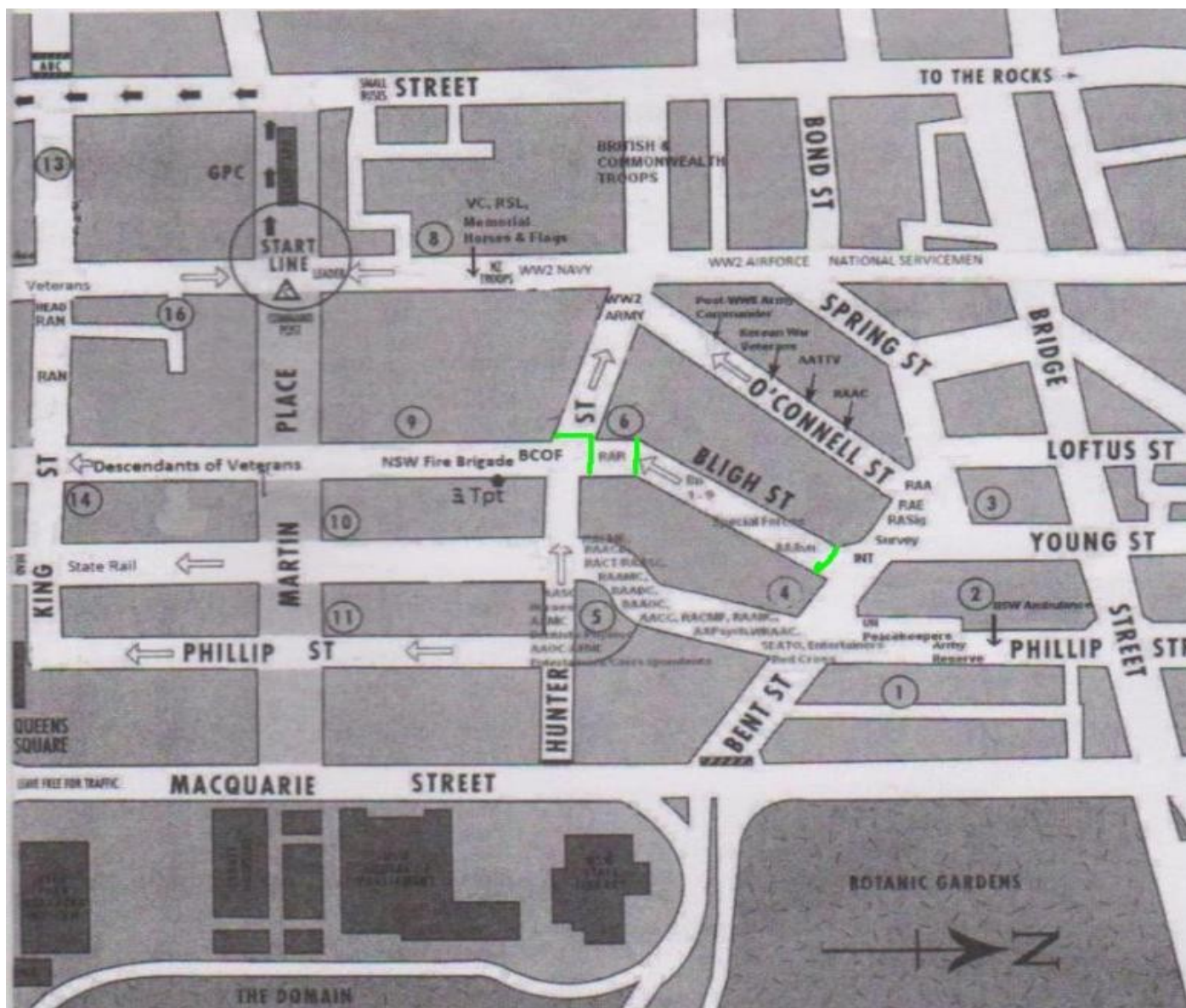
### David Presgrave left giving of himself in support of SLISA

Lindsay Abernethy RIGHT was one of our stalwarts who attended all our reunions. He attended the Sydney reunion and was clearly suffering from the medical treatment he was receiving. In hindsight I guess Lindsay was saying goodbye to us like Bill Kennedy was.





## ANZAC DAY 2014



### Changes to order of march 2014

The major change to the ANZAC DAY march this year is the consolidation of WW2 troops. Due to declining numbers of WW2 personnel they will assemble and march in WW2 order of service ,Navt, Army and Air Force. Those not able to march will travel in Land Rovers . Those choosing to march can have 1 carer if required. All unit banners will be in mass formation.

With regards to the ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT there are no changes from the FUP (cnr of Bent & Bligh Sts) with the battalions in numerical order along Bligh st.

For 9th Battalion after march activities see page 6.

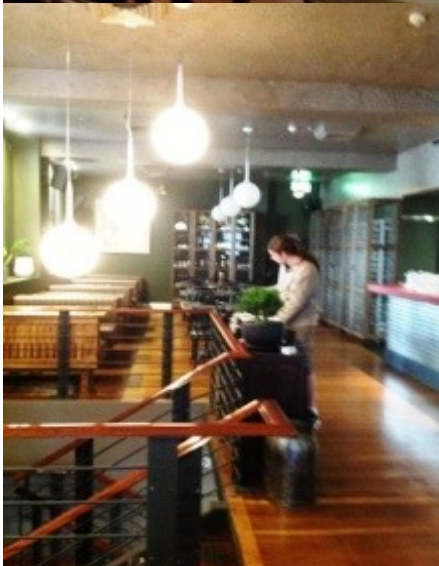
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## **PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS:**

## **9 RAR After March Get Together.**

2014 Is a return to the Windsor Hotel Cnr of Park & Castlereagh Sts.

Last Years temporary venue of the Albion served us well albeit a little crowded. The Windsor has been refurbished and photographs are included below. With our advancing years I think all will appreciate the increase in seating and nice surroundings. The new PA system will enable El Presidente to be heard above the din. As usual finger food will be available with a whip around as usual to help with the cost. 9 RAR Merchandise will be available for purchase, look at the merchandise pages in this edition to get some thoughts on your requirements.



From the left is a photo of the corner of the room near the toilet area, the next is a shot looking right from the top of the stairs and below is looking left from the stairs. Right where this bloke is are the controls for all the media ,PA etc.



# MATES CORNER

## ROLLCALL SUBMISSIONS

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

Emma Bigwood [ebigwood@bigpond.com](mailto:ebigwood@bigpond.com) ph: 0422-429-745

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



## Schoey Versus The Water Buffalo – (Circa 1969)

**Introduction.** Schoey, aka Colin Schofield and father of the very talented Justine Schofield (host of Everyday Gourmet) was a ‘Nasho’ serving in 6 Platoon, B Company during 9 RAR’s tour in Vietnam. During the tour, Schoey and I shared an ‘incident’ involving a very agitated and irate water buffalo. About 20+ years ago at a 9 RAR reunion, Schoey asked me to document this because he wasn’t convinced that his family and friends believed him when he ‘waxed lyrical’ about the time he wrestled a water buffalo to the ground and walked away unscathed. I promised him I would do that and now offer an apology for being 20 + years late!

**The Tale.** I was in charge of one of those dreaded TAOR patrols, which was tasked to lay an overnight ambush at a location west of the village of Hoa Long. The patrol was made up of diggers from all B Company platoons and CHQ (Brian “Dog” Mooney, John “Watto” Watson, ‘Jock’ Russell, “Brylcream” Bennett, ‘Bluey’ Reed and Peter Wynd spring to mind). Schoey was appointed Patrol 2IC.

As we patrolled beyond the Paddy Fields, we encountered villagers from Hoa Long hurrying back towards the village to avoid breaking curfew. We propped and I commenced sending in a Locstat on the radio when a water buffalo burst out of the scrub in the immediate vicinity. He was heading in my direction when the radio handset was flung one direction and I dived in the opposite direction trying to find some cover that may offer protection from the crazed beast

After I hit the ground, I looked up to see bodies diving into the ditch either side of our narrow axis of advance as the buffalo, head down and charging, continued searching for a victim. Alas, Schoey was 'tail-end-charlie' and the huge beast hit him front-on (no doubt Schoey was searching his arcs at the time and never

late!). Whether plain terror, only had the good the buffalo's life. The buffalo along the avoid being little paler than thing resembling rounds into the care to avoid underneath the make the buffalo more agitated so it was followed up with a volley of small arms fire from most of the patrol, including a long burst from 'Watto's' GPMG. This did the trick! had Schoey's safety in mind buffalo was being filled with ever, I cannot put my hand heart on this one!

Bluey reed &amp; schoie



saw the buffalo until it was too it was coolness in a crisis or just Schoey can respond, however, he sense to wrap both arms around huge horns and held on for dear started to slowly push Schoey ground, but he hung on grimly to gored. I recall that he looked a normal and his eyes were some-saucers! We initially fired a few rear end of the buffalo, taking Schoey who had most of his torso

huge beast. This just seemed to

We helped Schoey out from dead beast and assisted him A little colour started to re-face as he retrieved his flung did a stocktake; after which he reported that all of his bones appeared intact. While this was happening, the owners of the water buffalo (Hoa Long villagers) appeared. They were clearly unhappy and showed signs of hostility. Let me emphasise that they were not the only ones who were unhappy/hostile!



I'm sure we when the lead, how-on my

beneath the to his feet. turn to his M16 and





To keep a long story at a manageable length, the patrol continued and the following day back at Nui Dat during the patrol debrief, I was verbally reprimanded for being flippant (after the incident, I transmitted a Contact After Action Report with the outcome being 1 x Water Buffalo KIA and Sunray Minor shaken but uninjured). I was informed some days later that compensation had been paid for the loss of the water buffalo!

I always thought that Schoey was a cool dude, but after that incident he was elevated to a super cool dude!

Photos taken on the patrol were provided by Brian Mooney.

Peter Stammers  
Orderly Room Corporal  
B Company 1968-69



**DOG  
Mooney  
left. These  
photos  
from Dog's  
collection  
of his tour.**



AS you can see it was the WET SEASON. Left is Jock Russell & Peter Stammers



Make center text.







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## **Battalion and Regiment Flags:**

Vinnie Falcocchio is a fellow RAR brother from 2/4 Battalion who produces memorabilia and flags . ORDER

[vfalcocchio@bigpond.com](mailto:vfalcocchio@bigpond.com)



I do all the Battalion Flags and The Regiment Flag which is this one above the price \$100 including postage in Australia and the size is 30 cm x 60 cm( \$180 for 2)

## **BOOK REVIEW: THROUGH ENEMY EYES:**

**Author** Dave Sabben . **Reviewer** Ross Richard

Sometimes you read a book that has a pretty profound effect on you.

I've just done that.

I've just read *Through Enemy Eyes* by Dave Sabben.

First, let me tell you about Dave Sabben.

Second Lieutenant Dave Sabben was the Platoon Commander of 12Pl, D Coy, 6RAR in 1966.

And on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 1966 was the battle of Long Tan.

Long Tan?

Briefly, in the Battle of Long Tan, D445 NVA Battalion and 275<sup>th</sup> Viet Cong Regiment (total of about 1500 to 2500 strong) clashed with D Coy, 6RAR (108 strong) in a rubber plantation near the village of Long Tan. The result was a decided victory for the Australian forces, and a pivotal moment in the Australian war effort. It also was the single engagement in Viet Nam that killed the most Australians, 18, and recorded the greatest damage on enemy forces with 245 bodies remaining in the field after enemy withdrawal and an unknown number of dead buried along the withdrawal route. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Long\\_Tan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Long_Tan))

And the book *Through Enemy Eyes*.

The story is that battle from the viewpoint of the NVA commanding officers. (Ironically written by a platoon commanding officer in D Coy).

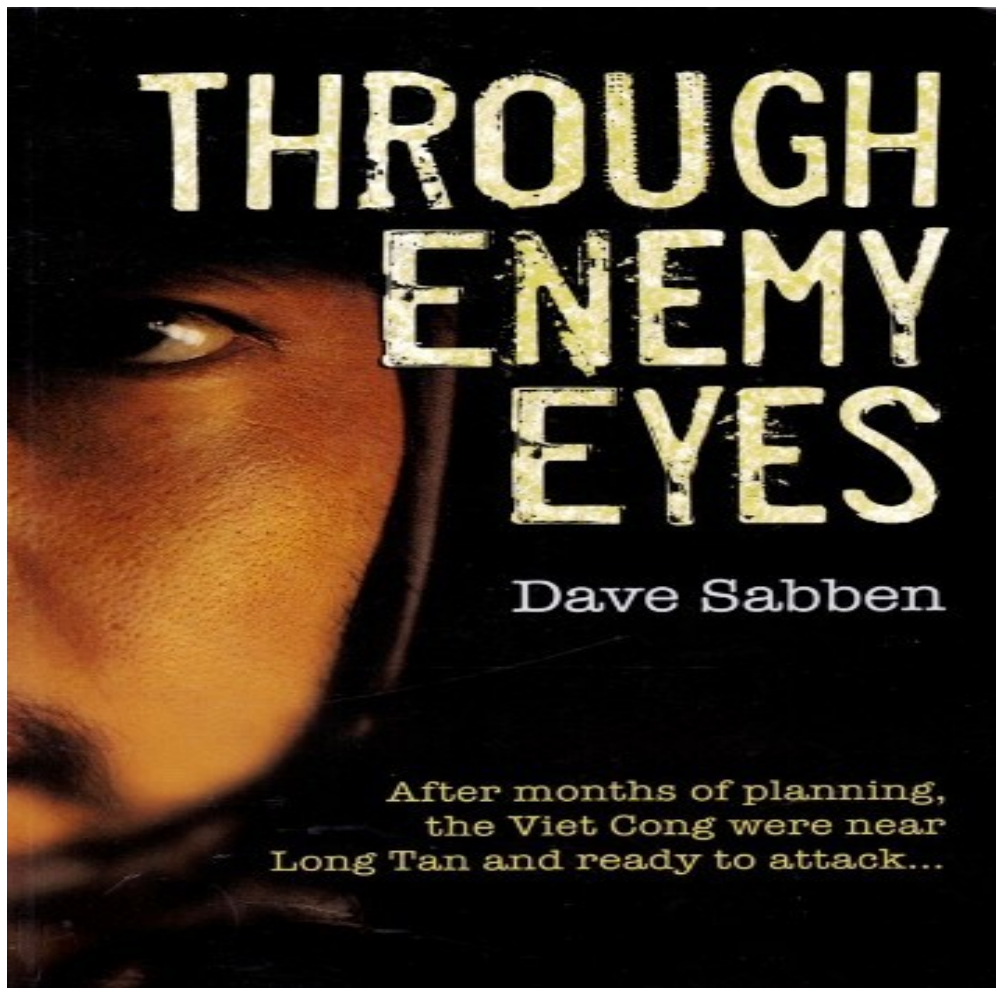
The style is called a 'factional' account of what happened. Facts of the event are strictly adhered to, but the detail which is lost with time and has been supplemented with imaginative characters and fictional detail. This literary technique has been done before with great success in *Gone With the Wind*, *The Cruel Sea* and other classics.

And has been done with great success here by creating fictional NVA commanding officers to bring to life what could be a dry academic tome and populate the story with personality and character.

What was such a large force doing attacking D Coy? Since the event information has been released that D Coy was not the target, and that the intended target was 1ATF (1<sup>st</sup> Australian Task Force, Nui Dat). And why did the operation, months in the planning, fail? Well, to tell you that would be a spoiler, wouldn't it?

Why did I like the book so much? I'm no dedicated fan of military history, and Viet Nam is not a part of my life that I continually want to revisit. But I still have many unanswered questions that pertain to that era of my life. This book was able to fill in some blanks in a manner that made sense, much more sense than the official variation of the events. It also gave reason to much of the activities that we undertook shortly after this event and gave me the opportunity to see our involvement from a different perspective.





The book was amazingly alive. The word pictures that Dave created in his story brought the work of planning, preparation and execution of this event into vivid detail, and the ambitions of those involved into realistic recreations.

As I said, the book had a profound effect on me, and I hope that someone else, either veteran, partner or child of veteran, or interested person can benefit as much as did from reading this book.

The book can be bought on line probably through your favourite retailer, but it can also be bought directly from Dave from his web site at:-  
<http://www.sabben.com/>

Enjoy the read.

Ross Richard 6pl

# MERCHANDISE: Plenty of stock

MARCH 2014



**CAPS \$20**



**HATS \$90 Complete with badges & pugaree**



**MEDAL BOXES engraved \$60 plain \$50**



## ALL TEE SHIRTS \$25.00

ALL items plus postage & Packing.



**ABOVE: Super fit B Coy Digger is shown wearing Tee shirt . Note that this picture has been digitally altered to enhance model's features.**



Merchandise sales will help next years Victorian Reunion . Please Support us to Support



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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.

With the end of Vietnam War lists the OC A Coy Major W. McDonald had his MID (mentioned in Dispatches) upgraded to a Medal of Gallantry and 2nd Lt Geoffrey Locke was awarded an Commendation for Distinguished Service

See more at:

[http://www.9rar.org.au/battn\\_history.html](http://www.9rar.org.au/battn_history.html)

*We're on the web. Find us at:*

**[www.9rar.org.au](http://www.9rar.org.au)**

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## **“ROLL CALL”**

**The Official Newsletter of 9RAR Association (NSW)**

**MARCH 2014**

**Sgt John COCK  
KIA 19th January  
1969 during  
OPERATION  
GOODWOOD.**



**Early morning on the 19th January 1969 2 Platoon A Coy were attacked with RPGs and Small Arms fire . Resulting the death of 3 of their comrades. Sgt John Cock paid the Supreme sacrifice that day along with Pte John Key and Pte Arnold Sykes.**