



9 RAR ROLL CALL!



March 2015

JOURNAL OF 9RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW)

ISSUE 1 (2015)

Highlight:

Bruno Adamczyk's (KIA) brave daughter Michelle speaks of the effect of war on families (pg 20-22)

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AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E03059

After having advanced about half a mile from their front line towards "Cappy," a daylight patrol of No. 5 Platoon, B Company, of the 9th Battalion, are in the act of challenging a dugout which they expected to find occupied by the enemy. (Photo courtesy of the Australian War Memorial)

9 RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW)

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EDITOR'S REPORT

Welcome everyone. The sad fact of this edition is that a number of our “brothers” have “Marched on”, 9 since the last edition. This year we have the REUNION in Melbourne, now is time to register if you haven't as yet. Stan tells me that all those with no email addresses will be getting further advice shortly by “snail mail”. Planning is progressing and it will be a great event.

It seems you cannot have any peace even when you travel overseas. Helen and I went on a lovely cruise last December and as we boarded a “BOOMING” voice yells “giddy Barney”. It was “Sloaney” from Support Coy. Trev Murdoch also took to the high seas and was discovered by Nigel Cubit from Mortars. Nigel was good to his word and forwarded a photograph of the mortars in action at FSB Wattle supporting one of the rifle companies that was in contact. The boys had not even set up their fire positions (you can see it on page 11).

The true meaning of being the family battalion is shown by the work of “Cuz” junior, Robert Cousins (son of Graham) who has set up a Facebook page (see bottom of the page for details). We have Michelle, “Mickii” Mathews (daughter of Bruno Adamczyk KIA) also participating. A ring in on the page has surfaced a bloke who reckons “d” is a “b” backwards— Dog Mooney. The 7 degrees of separation was at work as both Robert and Dog Mooney were Coppers in the Hunter Region of NSW and share common friends.

Barney



Left: Garry Archer's grave. After surviving the 9th Battalion's baptism of fire on Operation Goodwood D Coy were withdrawn for 2 days R&C in Vung Tau. The night they arrived back in Nui Dat Pte Gary Archer was severely burned when his tent caught fire. Pte Terry Moore hearing the flames rushed in and pulled Gary out, also waking others in the tent. Terry should have been decorated for his actions that night as we all know the amount of ammunition, grenades and claymores that were held our tents.

Gary was flown to a US military hospital in Japan but only survived a few days. Gary is buried in the Commonwealth war graves cemetery located in Terandek Military base Malaysia.

See Story Page 14.

ARE YOU ON FACEBOOK?

There are quite a number of groups on Facebook now. Email Barney (barneybig@outlook.com) with details of your Facebook group and we can publish a list in the next edition. This is a great way to find members who may be on FB but haven't found your group yet. To start you off, here is a link to one for members (and family members) of **D Company**.

Search for: [D Company, 9RAR—South Vietnam 68/69](https://www.facebook.com/groups/339175649609745/#)
(www.facebook.com/groups/339175649609745/#)



VALE

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.

Leslie Wood, Sept 2014

Thomas Lea, Sept 2014

Colin “Crooky” Crook, Sept 2014

John Higgins, Oct 2014

Terrence Leo Slattery, Oct 2014

Robert “Bobby” Russell, Nov 2014

Neil “Humph” Humphries, Nov 2014

David Snelling, Dec 2014

Bob Davidson, Jan 2015

See photos and more information on page 6.

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"

9 RAR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

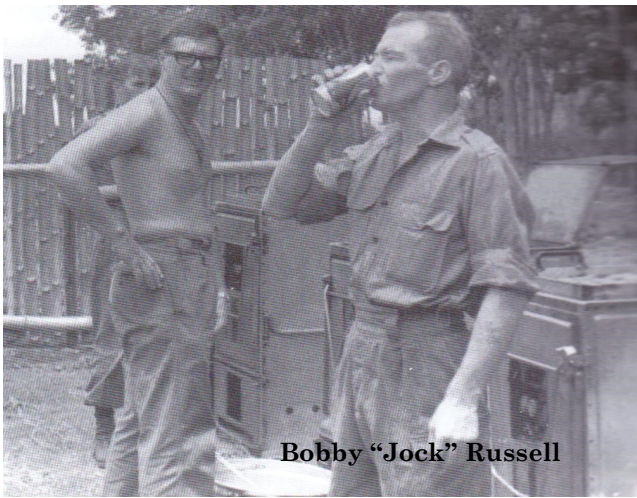
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Bob Davidson with Des Cochrane instructing the ARVN



Above: Neil Humphreys "Humph", machine gunner 2 Sect, 10 Plt.

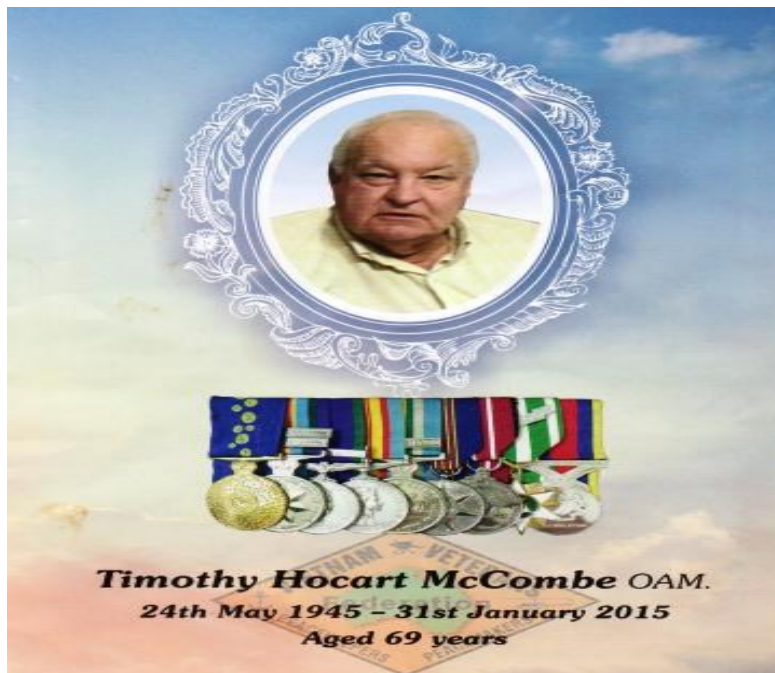


Bobby "Jock" Russell

Colin Crook was Battalion Orderly room Sgt at Enoggera.

Jock Russell a native Glaswegian cook did 2 tours of Vietnam the first with 176 Air despatch Company and then B Coy 9 RAR. He was also the "Banner" master. He like the other unsung heroes of the battalion worked his hardest for the troops in the field making sure a top feed was available after operations. RIP "Jock".

While Tim McCombe (OAM) was not one of our own he deserves a special mention for the work he dedicated his life to, helping veterans. Tim lost a leg in 2 RAR's first tour in Vietnam but this did not stop him from fighting for recognition of the effects of Agent Orange. He also was our advocate on the Prime Minister's advisory group on veterans. The veteran community will miss him.



Timothy Hocart McCombe OAM.
24th May 1945 - 31st January 2015
Aged 69 years

THE SYDNEY INFANTRYMAN LUNCH

The following extract from Trevor Murdoch (11 Platoon):

Event: infantry Luncheon

Purpose: To eat good food, drink good wine, talk old soldiers' talk and walk away feeling pleased.

Required: Infantrymen , ANY nationality, Any army with service as infantry whilst on the nominal roll of an infantry battalion; war service is NOT essential.

When: 1st Thursday of every month.

Where: The Royal Automobile Club of Australia; 89 Macquarie St Sydney.

Time: 1200 for 1230.

Dress: At least , a collared shirt & shoes.

For notice of attendance contact Mick Shave ,lynette111@live.com or Dave Jeffrey, dave.jeffrey@yahoo.com.au

GRANDMA'S HEART: A TRIBUTE TO THE NURSES

Young man, you ask me who I am,
 And why I wear this faded yellow ribbon.
 I am the woman who held your dying uncle's hand,
 And wrote a letter once that broke your grandma's heart.
 I am she, who met the 'dust off' at the door,
 And carried bloodied, broken bodies through to Triage.
 Then cut through muddied boots and bloody combat gear,
 And washed away the blood and fear and jungle.
 I kept the faith when even hope was lost,
 And cried within, as young lives ebbed away.
 Those hours when death frosted dying eyes, mas was the last
 Smile many a young man saw.
 I have the voice, that blinded eyes remember,
 And the touch of reassurance through the pain.
 In darkest night when combat would return, it was my name
 That many soldiers called.
 I have dressed their wounds, and wiped away their tears
 And often read them letters sent from mum.
 I hugged them close and willed each one my strength, and smiled and prayed
 That each boy made it home.
 And here today you ask me who I am... I am the nurse who served in Vietnam.



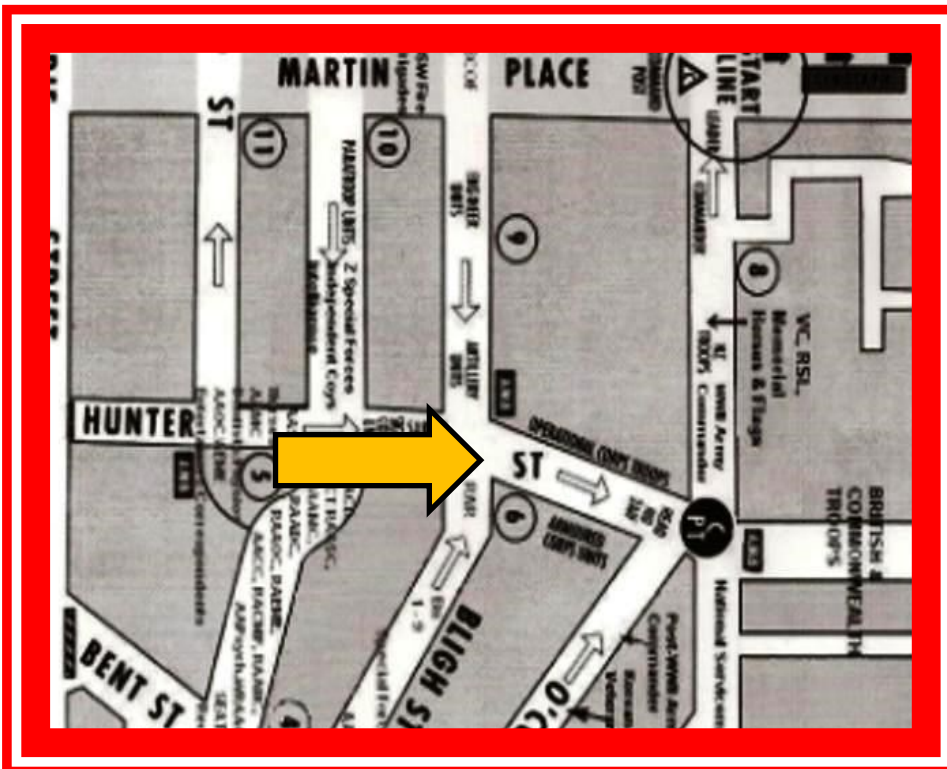
By Mike Subritzky, 2001

ANZAC DAY, SATURDAY 25th APRIL

Regimental Service: Regimental Square, George St at 0830hrs

Form Up Point For March: Bligh Street at 1030hrs

After March Venue: Windsor Hotel, corner of Park & Castle-reagh Streets, Sydney City.



NOTES

The RAR lines up behind the RAR Assoc in numerical order from the corner of Bligh and Hunter Streets, back up Bligh.

: The Regiment Service will commence at 0830hrs at “Regimental Square” on George Street.

Whilst there is major construction in the vicinity of the memorial the service will not be impacted.



Presidential Ponderings and Pontifications

As the 100 year Anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli advances with unprecedented interest and media coverage, commentators reflect on the horrors of war. As we sit in our lounge rooms with our families watching the Television dramatization of these events, there are cries of “that couldn’t have happened” “how could they do that to our young men?” and the classic civilian line, “they’d have never got me to do that”. Clearly history shows that the “War to end all Wars” did not succeed in its aim as many reading this can attest.

I write this evening just hours after the Prime Minister announced the committal of Australian troops to Iraq once again. Same place-different enemy. My late father used to say to me, “Beware a religious zealot”. Despite his apparent wisdom, he could not have imagined the conflict the world now faces. This could be lengthy, brutal and costly. We can only wish them well.

As our latest troops prepare to leave for foreign shores again, we have the chance to thank those returning from recent conflict.

Operation Slipper – Welcome Home Parade – 21st March 2015.

The end of 2014 marked the conclusion of Operation SLIPPER, Australia’s military contribution to the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan, and the International Coalition against Terrorism mission across Afghanistan and the Middle East which commenced in October 2001.

Since Australia commenced deployments to Afghanistan, over 33,000 Australian Defence Force personnel, Australian Public Service employees and Australian Federal Police have deployed to the Middle East Area of Operations as part of the operation.

A nation-wide commemoration activity marking the end of Operation SLIPPER will be held on Saturday 21 March in each State and Territory capital city and in Townsville.

Where possible as the 9RAR Association we should support the younger veterans by attending their Welcome Home Parade. We can take our Banner and wear our 9RAR ties to identify ourselves as veterans and members of the Defence Family. Show the troops how proud we are of their service.

Anzac Day 2015

This will be a massive day everywhere but the Sydney March should be very memorable. We will have our banners and a strong presence but I encourage everyone to join us on this historic occasion, including our families and next of kin who are welcome to march their fallen family member’s Welcome Home flag. As always, everyone is welcome to join us for our Annual AGM and family reunion at the New Windsor Hotel on the corner of Park and Castlereagh Streets.

There will be merchandising on sale with a surprise addition from a famous Australian.

Melbourne Reunion, a reminder:

If you haven’t already done so, book in for the incredible program Stan, Klaus and the Victorian team have organized for November in Melbourne. It will be superb and I am really looking forward to it. Don’t miss out.

Pandering to a Proud President:

In keeping with the traditions of the 9RAR Family, I can happily report on two joyous occasions in the McGrath family. Many will have met my three sons who have been marching with us since they all turned twelve. In the past six weeks both Lachlan and Duncan have been married with their youngest brother Campbell best man for both. We couldn’t be happier or more proud.

BEST WISHES, DOUG.

CENTENARY OF ANZAC: 9th Australian Infantry Battalion

The Ancestors of 9th Royal Australian Regiment

The 9th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. It was the first battalion recruited in Queensland, and with the 10th, 11th and 12th Battalions it formed the 3rd Brigade.

The battalion was raised within weeks of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later. After preliminary training, the battalion sailed to Egypt, arriving in early December. The 3rd Brigade was the covering force for the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915, and so was the first ashore at around 4.30 am. The battalion was heavily involved in establishing and defending the front line of the ANZAC beachhead. It served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December 1915.

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt. It was split to help form the 49th Battalion and bought up to strength with reinforcements. In March 1916 the battalion sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion took part in operations against the German Army. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley. The 9th Battalion attacked on the extreme right of the line and it was during this action that Private John Leak won, with the bayonet, the battalion's only Victoria Cross. Later the battalion fought at Ypres, in Flanders, before returning to the Somme for winter. In 1917 the battalion moved back to Belgium for the advance to the Hindenburg Line, and in March and April 1918 helped stop the German spring offensive. The battalion participated in the great allied offensive of 1918 and fought near Amiens on 8 August. The advance by British and empire troops was the greatest success in a single day on the Western Front, one that German General Erich Ludendorff described as "the black day of the German Army in this war".

The battalion continued operations until late September 1918. At 11 am on 11 November 1918, the guns fell silent. The November armistice was followed by the peace treaty of Versailles, signed on 28 June 1919.

In November 1918 members of the AIF began to return to Australia for demobilisation and discharge. On 5 February 1919, the 9th and 10th Battalions were amalgamated.

- **References** N.K. Harvey, *From Anzac to the Hindenburg Line: the history of the 9th Battalion, A.I.F.* (Brisbane: 9th Battalion A.I.F. Association, 1941).; C.M. Wrench, *Campaigning with the fighting 9th (in and out of the line with the 9BN AIF) 1914-1919* (Brisbane, Boolarong Publications, 1985).
AWM4/23/26/1-23/26/52



Left: Colour patch, 9 Infantry Battalion, 1st AIF.

Right: 9th Battalion 1st AIF at camp in Enoggera Brisbane before embarkation. Little did they know that their progeny, the 9th Battalion of the R.A.R., would one day make Enoggera its home as well (in 1970) .



Left: Second from left Lt S F Jordan 9th Battalion 1st AIF, captured June 1915 at Gallipoli. He is with fellow Australia POWs of the Turks.

Right: Pte John Leake VC of the 9th Battalion. He attacked a German position under heavy MG fire throwing “bombs” into it then bayoneted the 3 survivors.



9RAR MEMBERSHIP FEES (2014) REMINDER

Anzac Day 2015 is just about upon us but there are a number of members who have not yet paid their 2014 fees.

As you are aware it is an expensive process to have "Roll Call" printed, packaged and posted to you and our only form of income is our Membership Fees.

If you look at the cover sheet [with your name and address on it] of this issue and see a six digit number starting with **140__** , this indicates that you are shown in our records as being unpaid for 2014.

If you have any queries regarding your payment status please phone me on 02 9774 5113 or email me on ericpope@bigpond.com so that we can sort it out.

You can make your payment by mailing a cheque or Money Order, made out to 9RAR Association NSW, to me at :

19 Ingram Ave, Milperra NSW 2214.

Alternatively you can make a Direct Deposit into the Association's Bank Account:

Bank: Westpac

Branch: Northbridge

BSB : 032199

Account number: 184308

Be sure to use the six digit number on the cover sheet as your "reference" or "Aux serial number" so that your deposit can be identified at this end.

Last time some-one used 2016396 as a reference, would you please advise me who that was so that we can credit your account.s

All the best,

Eric Pope

Membership Co-ordinator



MATES CORNER

ROLLCALL SUBMISSIONS

GIVE US 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 barneybig@outlook.com ph.: 02 9873-5209



Excerpt of email to Secretary of 9 RARSA, from Bob Plummer

With reference to the death of Terry Slattery: *“I have also been informed that not only did Terry support the 9 RARSA Association with signage for the Spirit of Gallipoli Project, he also, over a period of some 35 years provided the signage for the ANZAC Day march in Adelaide AT NO COST a generous donation running into the tens of thousands of dollars.”* What a generous man. He will be sorely missed.



Mortar men of the 9th Battalion did not have time to properly prepare their positions on flying into FSB “Wattle” when they were called upon to support a rifle company that was in contact!!

Photo courtesy of Nigel Cubit. FRONT: L to R Tom Brown (Melb) , Alan Salmon (Winchelsea Vic), Nigel Cubit (Tassie)

REAR: L to R Gary Mallison (South Aussie) , Bruce Douglas (Townsville), Peter Adams (Tassie), Richard Humphries (not known).

BROTHERS FROM DIFFERENT MOTHERS:

Infantrymen who care and support “The Brothers” that they shared “ALL” with; their food, their water, their ammo, THEIR LIVES



ABOVE: John Beatty, Bernie Fitzpatrick, Chris Williams and Eric Pope: all 11 Platoon members having a coffee on the Central Coast.

Chris suffered GSWs to the head and back in a VC attack on 11 Plt's night position on the 16th of April 1969. Earlier that day 11 Platoon had discovered over 17 bunkers with gear and signs of occupation. Unfortunately the MFC was on the radio at 1944hrs adjusting night time DFs and his voice was heard by the enemy on the western side of the night time perimeter. The enemy attacked with grenades, small arms, automatic weapons and RPGs. It was here that Chris suffered horrific wounds to the head, back etc., and another 3 of the platoon were WIA. You can see the cunning of our enemy in the report where they shone torches skyward to try and attract the “Dust Off” chopper to their weapons.

BRUCE PLANE & IAN HERRON, D COY, 9RAR, JAN 1969

“YOU STILL OWE ME A DOLLAR”

Bruce Plane and Ian Herron were both called up for National Service in mid-1968 and did their recruit training together at the 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, Puckapunyal, their Infantry corps training together at 3rd Training Battalion, Singleton, were posted to the Reinforcement Training Wing at Infantry Centre, Ingleburn and did their Battle Efficiency at the Jungle Training Centre, Canungra together.

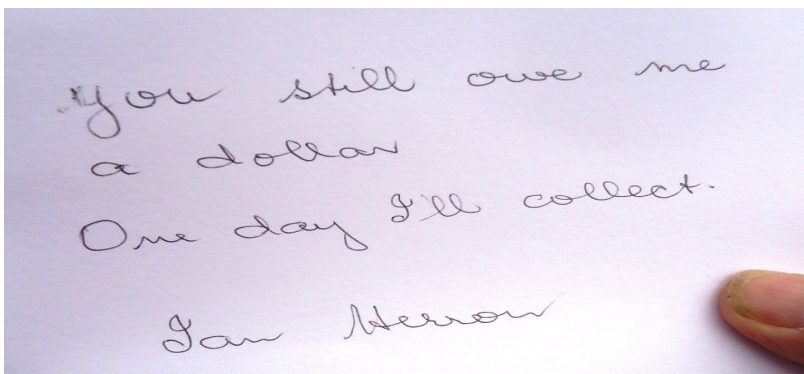
They both flew to Vietnam as reinforcements on 16 December 1968 and were both posted to the 1st Australian Reinforcement Unit at Nui Dat. On 8 January 1969 they were both posted to D Company 9 RAR with Bruce going to 10 Platoon and Ian to 12 Platoon. For the next week or so they stayed in base before they were to fly out to the Hat Dich Secret Zone to join their new platoons on Operation GOODWOOD. During this period they both bought ‘jack rations’ to supplement the Army’s ration packs and Bruce being ‘short of a quid’ (which he usually was as a poor country boy from Price in South Australia borrowed a dollar off Ian until pay day.

Both Bruce and Ian flew out to join D Company on the morning of 20th January 1969 and joined their platoons. Bruce was allocated to machine gun group of 3 Section. Mid-afternoon 10 Platoon made contact with an enemy at the location of A Company’s large contact on 10 January when Tom Meredith of 2 Platoon had been killed. About an hour later 10 Platoon made contact with the enemy in the same location and in the firefight Bruce was killed.

Bruce was buried in the Ardrossan Cemetery and Ian used to regularly visit his grave. 9 RAR SA started to conduct commemorative services for Bruce in 2007.

This year Ian was in Ardrossan the week before 20 January but had to return home before Bruce’s service so on Friday 16 January he went to Bruce’s grave and left a note and flowers.

Ardrossan is a very windy place at the best of times and sure enough come the 20th the note had blown south and was caught on the boundary fence/hedge and the flowers scattered. When people started to arrive for Bruce’s service on the 20th Ian’s note was discovered and after being shown to Adrian Craig, the Master of Ceremonies and also Platoon Commander 10 Platoon later in the Battalion’s Tour, Ian’s identity and link with Bruce was explained to Bruce’s brother Geoff and sister-in-law Betty and the note presented.



ABOVE: The note from the grave. RIGHT: 9th Battalion Memorial, Woodside S.A.



GARRY ARCHER'S GRAVE: MALAYSIA

Further on Gary Archer (story started page 2). The email below was from Ian Lygoe 11 Platoon who travelled with Bev his wife to the grave of Gary Archer which is now located inside the Malaysian military base at Terandek. (this was formerly home to Australian battalions attached to the Far east Strategic Reserve and the location for the Commonwealth War graves for the area).

There is now a campaign to return all Australians buried there home to Australia as the Malaysian Government intends on relocating the cemetery to expand the facilities there.

Ian & Bev had to use the Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade to negotiate the entry to the base.

Ian shares the following photos and says the Malaysians maintain the cemetery exemplarily.

Popey,

Below please find approval that Beverley and I had to get to get into Terendak base in order to see Garry's gravesite.

I will send a few photos of our visit via a separate email.

I send the approval in case somebody else would like to visit the site at some other time - approx 3 hour drive up fro Singapore - this is what they would need. As well if they do they should make sure that approval for visit is sent to the camp gate.

This approval was not sent in our case and it took some convincing to get us in. In the end some military police appeared and we could converse with them a little better than the other guys on the gate. They eventually escorted us two in front and two in back to the memorial and treated us really well after that. bev took a photo of them driving away from us as we were about to depart. In any event it is a credit to the Malaysians as to how they are looking after the grave-site - it is in excellent order

Ian



Top Left: The gates to the Malaysian Military Camp. 1 RAR was the last Australian unit stationed there, leaving in 1970.

Top right: The Commonwealth War Cemetery within the grounds of the base.

Left: 11 Platoon members Bernie Fitzpatrick, Bill Morris, Gary Archer, Terry Moore, Ian Lygoe and Ted Bennett just before boarding the Sydney November 1968.

BOOK REVIEW: ANZAC GIRLS (BY PETER REES)

This is the book that inspired the ABC to commission the TV series by the same name. It follows a group of women who volunteer to nurse during WW1. The conditions were harsh & they were treated like second class citizens. Often having to 'prove their worth' in the most trying of situations. They were expected to be unmarried & to remain that way.

Author Peter Rees, who has written many books about the first world war and other subjects has drawn on diaries and letters to convey the general feeling of what it was like. Nurses from both Australia & New Zealand felt motivated to support 'their boys'. Their dedication was to prove vital in nursing the wounded back to health & also in giving a friendly ear to problems that magnified with the distance from home. They also gave comfort to those who would not make it.

One such nurse was Narelle Hobbs a former matron from Brewarrina in far western NSW who had travelled to England to join up in May 1915. She was sent to Malta where so many of the wounded were sent, sadly she died at sea from cancer in 1918. Sadly she wasn't alone in never seeing Australia again, quite a few would drown at sea from being torpedoed by submarines and even worse a lot were hospital ships.

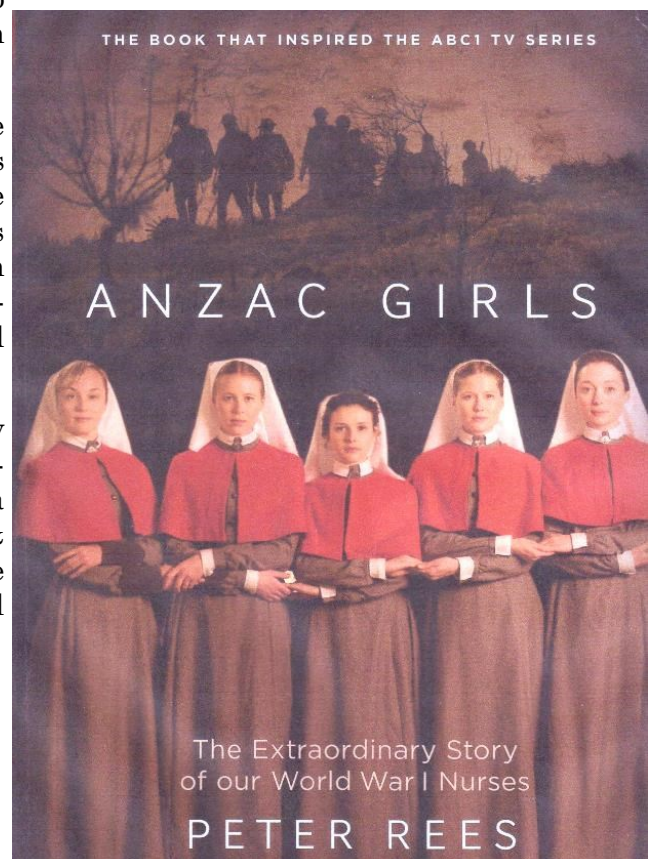
One such ship was the Marquette who was torpedoed on the 23rd of October, reaching the Gulf of Salonika, they believed they were safe. Standing on deck 3 nurses noticed a straight line coming for them & wondered if it was a torpedo. Seconds later their worst fears were to be proved correct. The Marquette sank in between 8 and 15 minutes, so many would drown yet others would survive. The sub actually surfaced and the survivors wrongly thought they would be rescued. Once a ship did pick up survivors they found 167 had perished including 10 sisters of the New Zealand Army Nursing Service plus 22 other ranks of the medical corps.

Nurses were spread over huge areas from Egypt, Greece, Malta, France & England. When the first nurses were sent to Lemnos Island the conditions were so primitive there were no female toilets, surgery was conducted in tents & getting water was a major problem. Things changed over time, mainly due to agitation by the nurses but the general feeling was that war was a man's domain and no place for a women. Once they had proved themselves time and time again attitudes softened. Some even looked upon them as indispensable. The huge numbers of wounded also changed the minds of the military as they needed men back 'in harness'. Especially on the Western Front.

One nurse who managed to buck the system was Alice Cook who was married to Syd Cook, whose father was former P.M. Joseph Cook. Most people knew about the marriage but chose to turn a blind eye. When he was shot in the head she gave him care & nursing & even transferred to different hospitals to be with him. Eventually when he was well enough to travel she accompanied him back to Australia.

A century on this book gives a good insight to not only what actually happened during this period but to the attitudes of the time. There are also some great photos a lot by Alice Ross King who was a keen photographer & the book relies heavily on her dairies & letters. For those who missed the series Or wish to learn more in detail this is a fine book.

Barry Wakefield



A DUTY DONE: ITS FREE!

Only pay \$15 for postage and a small donation to the upkeep of the Memorial Walk at Enoggera.



A DUTY DONE

A summary of operations by the Royal Australian Regiment in the Vietnam War 1965-1972 by Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Fred Fairhead



DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO SERVED

This book should become required reading and study at the Australian Defence Force Academy, the Royal Military College and Infantry Corps courses

Laurie Lewis ex 9RAR

What an outstanding record of the Regiment Fred has written and one which will remain a lasting and complete record of the successes and achievements of the battalions during their various tours of Vietnam

Peter Scott DSO former Commanding Officer 3RAR

If you would like a copy of this definitive historical account of the Royal Australian Regiment's involvement in Vietnam, independently valued at \$60, a **payment of \$15 is required to cover packaging and postage. An appropriate affordable donation would also be appreciated and would help the RAR Assoc (SA)** to continue it's support for serving and ex-members of the Regiment and the ongoing maintenance of the RAR National Memorial Walk at Enoggera Barracks in Queensland. All donations will be held in the RARA SA Welfare Fund.

To make an order, you may visit the RARA SA website, <http://rarasa.org.au/> save and print the electronic or credit card order form and post that in, or alternatively, send this form in with your contact details to RAR SA (Book Order), 13 Beatty St, LINDEN PARK SA 5065.

Name:

Address:

Contact No:

By Cheque/ Money Order

Payable to the RAR Assoc SA Inc, Welfare Account

If you served in Vietnam or in any other conflict and would like a personalised copy signed by the author, please provide;

Your First Name

Regimental Number

Unit/ Sub Unit



A DUTY DONE

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If you would like a copy of this book, please send this order form, with the details requested below, to:

RARA SA Inc (Book Order) 13 Beatty St., LINDEN PARK, SA 5065.

Alternatively, please send the details requested below to rar02@internode.on.net

Payment of \$15 is required with your order to cover packaging and postage. The book has been independently valued at \$60.00. An appropriate affordable donation would be appreciated to assist in the repairs and maintenance of the RARA National Memorial Walk and to assist serving and ex members of the Regiment through the RARA SA Inc. Welfare Account.

Payment to the RARA SA Inc. can be made in the following ways;

- By Cash or Cheques made payable to the **RARA SA Welfare Account**, at the address above, or
- By EFT/Bank Transfer to

Bank - ANZ Account Name - Royal Australian Regiment Assoc Welfare Fund

BSB 015-210

Account No 3893 24205

If paying by EFT, please ensure you place your initials and surname as the reference.

Postal Address (please write clearly)

If you served in South Vietnam, or any other conflict and would like a personalised copy signed by the author

Please Provide

Name.....

No/Street.....

Town/City.....

Email Address.....@.....

State..... Postcode.....

Ph. No.....

Regimental Number:.....

Conflict Served.....

Unit/Sub-Unit Served in:.....

Dates (years) served:.....

You can expect delivery within 14 days of ordering and payment.

MERCHANDISE: Plenty of stock



Merchandise sales will help next years Victorian Reunion . Please support us so that we can support you.

<u>LADIES SCARVES</u>	<u>\$25</u>
<u>POLO SHIRTS</u>	<u>\$35</u>
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ONE OF OUR FAMILY HONOURED

Michelle Mathews, daughter of Bruno Adamczyk (KIA July 1969), was asked to speak on the affect of war on families. Her speech is below. She is pictured below right with the Governor Of South Australia. SHE DID US PROUD .

Good morning His Excellency the governor, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

My name is Michelle Matthews and my father was Corporal Bruno Adamczyk.

Bruno was born on the 27th of July 1946 in Germany, he was an only child. When he was 3 years old, he moved to Australia with his mother and father. They originally settled in Mildura and then after in Magill South Australia. Bruno attended Rostrevor College but because he wasn't very academically minded he left at the age of 14 and started work at a Printing Business. This is where he met his future wife, my mum, Cecilia.

The day after Bruno turned 17 he joined the army and he was based at Woodside for training. In 1965 he was posted to Malaya with the 4th Battalion. His eldest daughter Jackie was born on the 26th of January 1966 and in September 66 he returned to Australia and married my mum so she and my sister could return to Malaya with him. I was born on the 14th of November 1967 at Terendak Garrison, Malacca, Malaysia and we all returned to Australia in February of 1968.

On Bruno's return he was posted to the newly formed 9th Battalion at Woodside again and we lived at Smithfield in the army married quarters and on the 9th of November 1968, 5 days before my 1st birthday, Bruno left on the HMAS Sydney for his tour of duty in Vietnam. Bruno came back to Australia for R & R in April of 69 and then returned to Vietnam. On the 12th of July 1969 Bruno was tragically killed in action at the age of 22. His body was returned to Australia where he was buried in full military honours on the 26th of July, one day before his 23rd birthday and two days before his 6 year commitment to the army was over.

His parents were devastated and my grandfather withdrew into himself, he was a broken man after the loss of his only child, Bruno. He turned to alcohol as he struggled to comprehend the enormity of his loss. In pictures before dad's death, my grandfather was smiling but not after, he always looked sad, troubled and angry. I remember as a young child, sitting on his lap trying to comfort him as he cried in pain. He suffered from various mental illnesses later, resulting in hospitalisation and medication. I think in some way, my grandfather suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder brought about from his beloved son being taken in Vietnam.

My grandmother was shattered when dad was killed, whenever she spoke of him she would cry and as a young girl it was hard to see. As I got older, we spoke more about dad and she shared stories with me only a mother would know. My grandmother never really recovered from her boy being killed at such a young age, she felt cheated, like she hadn't been a mother for long enough.



My grandmother never went to the Anzac Day March when we were part of the Legacy group, our grandfather always took us. She would stay at home and cry in front of the TV. At the time of dad's death, my grandmother consoled mum as she struggled to comprehend what had happened. She comforted mum through the dark days as they waited for dad's body to come home from Vietnam. The care, compassion and strength shown by my grandmother were admirable especially since her own heart was broken by her only child's death.

They went to the cemetery every Sunday to place flowers at dad's grave and the pain and emptiness they felt from their loss was with both my grandparents till the day they died.

Mum was so young, just 22 when the love of her life went to Vietnam and never came back. I think at the time mum was the hardest hit and really struggled to go on. They had their whole lives ahead of them but it was snatched away in an instant. The reality of burying her soldier husband was more than she could bare and she would have seriously considered ending her pain with pills if not for the love for her children, me and Jackie. The toll of her loss continued to eat away at her and she ended up being admitted into Ward 17 at the repat for 6 weeks in November of 69 for treatment relating to Post-Traumatic stress disorder. Whilst hospitalised mum did a lot of crying and soul searching which helped her deal with her grief. My sister and I were eventually taken into custody by dad's parents as mum struggled to cope with daily life without her beloved husband. Even though the years have passed and mum remarried a wonderful man with whom she has a whole new family, the grief of losing her young husband is still raw and even to this day she has a photo of dad next to her bed that she looks at every night reminding her of her lost love. My mother and I have had a fractured relationship over the years due to the loss of dad and us living with our grandparents but we have managed to finally find peace with each other. We speak about dad a lot now and she makes him real for me as to what sort of man he was when away from the army.

I was aged one and my sister, Jackie, aged 3 when dad was killed in Vietnam and although we didn't comprehend what was going on it was a hard time for all the family.

It's not easy to put into words how I have felt growing up without a father, all the times when I needed my dad and he wasn't there. It completely changed our lives when dad was killed in Vietnam but most people don't understand the impact that that has had on us. I remember taunts that other children would direct at me because I didn't have a dad and how upsetting that was because I didn't really understand the whole situation myself. I remember being at primary school and day dreaming that dad would come to the front office and ask for me and tell me that he hadn't really been killed in Vietnam but had been missing in action. Sadly this could never come true, but it was like we never got to acknowledge dad's death, he was taken from us and we never got to say goodbye. All I knew was that mum lived somewhere else with a new family and Jackie and I were now living with our grandparents. Watching my grandma and grandpa struggle to maintain their own friendships with others, as they now had two young children to consider when their friends didn't, was hard because we felt it was us to blame for their isolation from others.

Even though I barely knew my dad he has had such a huge impact on my life and it is with a longing deep in my heart that I could somehow spend a few moments with him. Just to look in his eyes and see a reflection of me in him, to hear his voice, feel his touch and feel his love for me. This longing will be felt for the rest of my life and the part of my heart that belongs to my dad will forever ache.

I am extremely proud of dad and he is my hero but sometimes wish he hadn't gone to Vietnam, that he had just stayed home and been my dad.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE: In 2013, with much trepidation, I went to Vietnam. It was a journey 44 years in the making and one that I suppose I needed to do. My sister, Jackie, joined me and we went with a contingent of 25 other 9th battalion members. It was an extremely emotional journey, a pilgrimage of sorts, and I faced a few of my fears whilst over there. I also did a great deal of crying and soul searching which helped with the healing process. As we took off on our flight home I looked down on the lights of Ho Chi Minh City and felt a wave of peace wash over me. I now know that Vietnam isn't the dark, scary place I thought it to be, it's still where my father took his last breath but a beautiful country nevertheless and I have finally made peace with it. Would I go back, probably not, I did what I needed to do but am glad I went on that trip. Going with the Vietnam Veterans was the only way for me to face that journey and I feel they got something out of us being there with them also. We all supported each other and it makes me appreciate my 9th Battalion family even more.

Sadly the follow on from Bruno's loss continues down the generations with my children mourning the fact that they haven't got their poppa and have missed out on the opportunity to meet him. I help them understand and try and fill that void by doing talks at their primary school about The Vietnam War and their poppa's contribution. I also help organise services for Anzac Day and Remembrance Day at their school so that the other students have the personal input of someone touched directly by war.

I stand here today in loving memory of my dad and grandparents, and in support of my family, the 9th Battalion family, All Veterans, Currently serving Defence Personnel and their families.

Thank you.



Right: Bruno with his girls before boarding the HMAS Sydney.



Above left: "MANGUS COLORADO" playing with Tom Goode & Phil Warren back in the D Coy Lines, Nui Dat October 1969. **Above right:** Fixed defensive position in a bamboo forest.

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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

We're on the web. Find us at:
www.9rar.org.au