



9RAR Roll Call



JOURNAL OF 9RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW) : Issue 2, 2016 (September)

Hyperlinks

Tribute to the Vietnam Veterans finally returning home to Oz:
<https://youtu.be/FyJ-ih5kjEs>

Australian War Memorial to revise official record of impacts of Agent Orange use in Vietnam War
<http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-14/australian-war-memorial-to-revise-agent-orange-record/6619118>



Welcome home Gary Archer

Inside This Issue

Editor's Report	2
Vale	3-5
Feature Story	6-10
Presidential Ponderings	11-12
Regimental Square News	13
Roger King: Photos	14
Book Review	15
Kapooka March Out	16
Museum/Entertainers	17
Mates Corner	18-25
Merchandise	26

Feature Story

Private Gary Archer and others interred in Malaysian and Singaporean war cemeteries have been brought home to Australia. For more details see our feature story on page 6.

9RAR ASSOCIATION (NSW) CONTACTS

MEMBERSHIPS & CORRESPONDENCE: Eric Pope
ericpope@bigpond.com or phone (02) 9774-5113

ROLL CALL: C/- Barney (Rick) Bigwood
barneybig@live.com.au or phone 0488-727-475

EDITOR'S REPORT

What a year so far. Anzac Day fabulous weather, new march route, wonderful get together at the Windsor Hotel. The emotional home coming of the Vietnam era soldiers and dependents from Malaysian and Singaporean cemeteries. Among those repatriated was our own Gary Archer ex 11platoon D company who tragically died of burns in a US Hospital in Tokyo Japan. My admiration goes out to the sheer determination of our mate Eric Pope who battled bureaucracy from the highest government level to get justice for Gary. He also again took up the battle to ensure that members of 11 Platoon, in particular Terry Moore the brave digger who entered that blazing tent through the exploding ammunition and mines to pull Gary out, could attend the ramp ceremony at RAAF base Richmond. The support Eric gave Gary's sister Lyn Vouros was appreciated by the family.

Sadly we also have lost more of our comrades to the effects of their service and the ravages of time, see "Vale".

Barney

Thank you to Mick Coble and Alan Barnes for the photos below.



VALE

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

- John Truan (11Plt DCoy)
- Ronald "Ron" Lennon (5RAR DCoy)
- Sgt John Maloney (7Plt, CCoy)
- Bob Adams (1Plt ACoy)
- Joseph "Joe" Szabo
- Ted Pavey, Medic (5Plt BCoy)
- Larry Wakeham (12Plt DCoy)
- Les Smith (10Plt DCoy)
- Col Nell Espie (Matron, Vung Tau Hospital)
- Sgt Raymond Stanley (DCoy, 9RAR)
- Lorna Phillips, mother to R.A. Phillips (KIA Vietnam 18/1/1969)

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"

60 OBITUARIES

A strong and honest soldier

Ronald 'Ron' Lennon
 Soldier
 Born: March 29, 1943, Sydney
 Died: May 1, 2012, Caloundra

THIRD-generation soldier Ron Lennon was a fine career soldier who served three tours of duty in Vietnam, including more than 300 days, gaining many medals in the process for his bravery.

He joined the army with service number 120061 in 1965, following in the footsteps of his father Roy, who served in World War II as a divisional provost marshal, and his grandfather, Albert, who served as a corporal with 6 Australian Light Horse.

Mr Lennon first arrived in Vietnam in August, 1966, with 1 Australian Reinforcement Unit and was posted to 5 Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment as a forward scout.

Despite the dangers he faced, he returned home with the battalion in May the following year, before serving again in Vietnam as a platoon sergeant with 9 RAR (from November 1968 to November 1969).

While many soldiers had only one or two tours in the troubled country, Mr Lennon's outstanding service stretched to a third tour of duty with the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV) from February, 1971, to October that year. By then he had attained the rank of warrant officer and, in total, spent a highly significant 929 days as an infantry soldier there.

A skilled and courageous infantryman, he was awarded the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star and the Unit Citation of the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

Post-Vietnam, Mr Lennon forged a long solitary career with the military police before he eventually retired from the army in 1980.

"We all sold Ron in high esteem and followed his service in the army, including his Vietnam service, with pride," his brother John said.

"I recall vividly descending - and ascending home - Ron on his first deployment with 5 RAR, which was the trigger that

led to his decision to join the army after retiring from the railways after working in Clonsilla before moving to Milarka, where he earned a living as a leading hand on farms.

Two years ago, Mr Lennon was diagnosed with cancer and moved to Largsborough in the Sunshine Coast hinterland, where he spent his final months with some of his family.

His service in Vietnam left him with deep mental scars that only soldiers who served in combat could understand, and John (whose own son, also called John, is a captain with the Engineering Corps and has served in East Timor and Afghanistan).

Last year, Ron, his son Rip and John first travelled to the AATTV Home of the Australian Adjutant General at the Land Warfare Centre in Canberra where Ron had completed a number of army courses.

A tree has been planted to honour each AATTV member and there they found Ron's tree, as well as a tree and memorial plaques for Warrant Officer Tom Phillip, who was killed in action with the training team and was grandfather of John's daughter-in-law.

Rip said of his father: "He was a strong, honest man who won't be forgotten."

Two fellow 9 RAR soldiers, Dick Van Dyke and Ron Tex O'Toole, also paid tribute to him, saying he was a good man and a great soldier.

Mr Lennon is survived by his mother, Margaret, three step-sisters and a step-brother, six children from his first marriage to Yvonne and a son from his second marriage to Kathryn, who died in 2006.

PROUD SOLDIER: Ron Lennon, seen here as a forward scout with D Company, 5 RAR (left) and conducting rappelling training in Vietnam, was a third-generation military man.

Do you want to honour someone who served in the military?

In Loving Memory Of

Robert Frederick Adams

31st May 1945 - 15th June 2016
 Aged 71 years





ABOVE LEFT & CENTRE: John Truan.

LEFT: Larry Wakeham outside a bunker.

In Loving Memory of

Joseph George Szabo



7th February 1948 - 23rd May 2016
 11am Wednesday 1st of June 2016
 Heritage Park Crematorium Chapel Goodna

LESLIE SMITH

Les Smith passed away on the 18 March 2016 with a funeral service being held at Nerang, Qld, close to where he lived. His funeral was very well attended with 9RAR well represented. He was called up for National Service on 1 May 1968, did his Recruit Training at Kapooka and Corp Training at Singleton before flying over to join ARU early January 1969. He joined 1 Section, 10Pl, D Coy, 9RAR, after his three weeks acclimatisation.

Les was lightly wounded on the 30 May 1969 when hit by shrapnel from a truck that had run over a mine outside Dat Do. He went, with others, by dust off to the hospital at Vungers for a couple of days before returning to Nui Dat and joining Sig Platoon, Support Coy, where he spent the remainder of his tour before returning on the Vung Tau ferry.

Les married shortly after his return from the funny farm and then moved to Cairns, Nth Qld, where the bulk of his wife's family lived. After a few years in Cairns he joined the local Naval Cadet unit and then spent the next 23 years volunteering with the cadets at several units along the Qld coast. He rose to the rank of Commanding Officer of all naval cadets in Qld before resigning to take up a transfer position as a Supervisor for the main Qantas Reservation Service in Hobart, Tasmania.

He worked with Qantas for a couple of decades before succumbing to PTSD and having to retire on medical grounds. He then moved to Brisbane, Qld, remarried and spent a number of years enjoying his passion of motorcycles and Euro sports sedans. Les would never miss out on a two wheeled fang up into the Qld Hinterland with mates, whenever the opportunity arose.

Les had a bit of a Cancer scare on one lung last year but treatment seemed to get on top of it and he was given a good report. Out of the blue, his lungs suddenly filled with fluids which could not be drained fast enough, and four days later his innings was over. He is survived by his first and second wife, three children and six grandchildren.

RIP mate.

Story by Steve Nugent



JOHN TRUAN: Did you know him?

Attached below is a message from Juanita Truan; daughter of John "NOGGY" Truan (11Platoon DCoy) who is seeking information and contact with anyone who knew her Dad. She especially would love any photos or stories about him. You can see from her message she wants honest answers .

"Barney, do you remember my dad? Did you meet him? Have you heard anyone mention him? Any of the 11plt guys maybe?

In confidence, I think my dad lost it a bit somewhere into his 3rd tour and I suspect he may be remembered for the behaviour that ensued. So even if he is remembered in less than glowing light I am still interested to learn of others recollections. This suspicion meant that I did not seek any information while he was alive, wanting to maintain his honour and privacy, accepting only his explanations and stories of his time there rather than challenging these with the views and details of others. Now he is gone I am able to get the back story and truths, safe in the understanding that these will no longer disrupt his accepted narratives. Thanks for your contact thus far."

JOHN TRUAN Cont.

FROM ERIC POPE: John was originally in Support Platoon, D Coy, before moving to 11 Platoon as a medic and then to 6 Section (Bernie's Section) as forward scout after Bruno and Paul Edwards were killed. I'll be seeing Bernie on Monday night and I'm sure that we can get a few recollections together. Please pass on our regrets at hearing of John's passing.

****If you can help with any recollections of John's time in Vietnam please email Barney on barneybig@live.com.au*

LARRY 'Wakka' WAKEHAM

FROM POPEYE (Paul J. Kinney): Ahhhh, Barney, mate, great sadness encompasses my soul. Wakka was a great bloke. Have never forgotten the card games in his tent with the trunk full of beer, coke and ice, with the accompanying Jack Daniels or Jim Beam. Mostly the "Pudden", the language of the card games, Blackjack and poker, and "Pudden, pudden the gutz". Will be eternally grateful to Wakka, he taught me not to play cards, I was just a bunny when it came to playing and it was a lesson that sank in as quickly as my money used to disappear. Wakka always made me welcome into his hootch, whether I played cards or not, after doing my arse a few times, it was always not. Truly the world is a sadder place for his passing, but while I live he will never be forgotten.

JOHN MALONEY

FROM MICK SHAVE: A mate of mine has just died. We served together in the same platoon for two years. Once, when ambling along a track through a rain forest in South Vietnam - following my mate, I noticed a snake coiled in the undergrowth. Now this mate of mine was as deaf as a post so to get his attention I had to tap his shoulder then, as you do, I lobbed a stick at the snake. You can imagine our shocked surprise when the bloody thing uncoiled to catapult itself with velocity through the air; it shot between us. I remember that day because it was also my birthday. Well, so far as I know, science has always maintained the impossibility of flying snakes, and every time we got together I would urge him to make public our shared experience. But he wouldn't. And now he's dead. And nobody is ever going to believe me. John, old Mate, I loved you.

RAY STANLEY

From Adrian CRAIG: I served with Ray when he was the Sgt Cook of D Company 9 RAR and the fresh meals he sent to us in the field during resupplies proved that he was a great believer in the Regiment's motto of DUTY FIRST.

JOE SZABO

From Kevin Lynch: Excellent turn out to farewell Joe today, C Company very well represented. Sadly another Digger passes too young, only 68. Stand down Joe, your duty well and truly done. RIP mate.

ABOVE RIGHT: 9RAR Members from around south-east Queensland who attended Joe Szabo's funeral.



WELCOME HOME: Repatriation of Our War Dead



Above: Bernie Fitzpatrick, Bill Morris, Gary Archer, Terry Moore, Ian Lygoe and Ted Bennett. November 1969

The History, Recovering the Dead, Welcome Home

"Prior to 21st January 1966 the Australian government's policy with regards to servicemen and servicewomen KIA(killed in action), died accidentally or from medical causes was to have them buried in the nearest Commonwealth War Cemetery administered by the Office of War Graves. This change of government policy was brought about by embarrassment and public pressure."

Except from "THE TEAM" Australian Army Advisors in Vietnam 1962-1972. By Ian McNeill AWM.

~~~

### **From Gary's sister Lyn Vourous after the Funeral.**

Hello Eric,  
I still have my head in the clouds and it is so hard to believe the struggle is over and our brother Gary is in his home town. I think my brain is trying to process it all. I can not thank every one involved enough, there are no words that I can say that would ever be enough. I feel as though I have the biggest and best family ever in 9RAR and I have such love and admiration for you all, all the support you have all given to me freely throughout this great cause will never be forgotten. I would like to thankyou all and the list is to long for me and I do not know where to start. I also hope that this wonderfull event will bring some healing to the pain you have all felt over the years especially Terry it was so wonderfull to hug and thank him for his brave actions on that day, though I feel that is never enough. I feel so privileged to have met him. Gary would be so proud of you all.

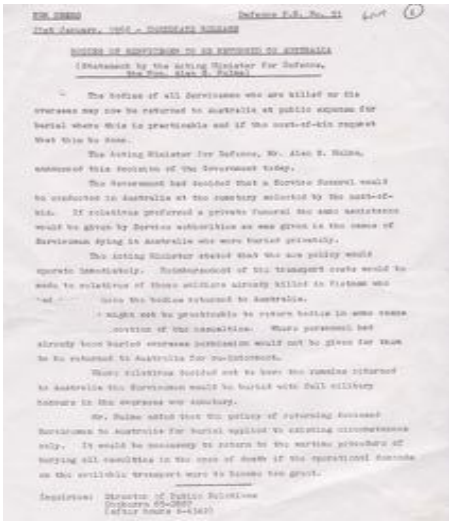
Love and Best wishes to you all  
Lyn

PS. I had no idea that Doug had arranged for Peter Cosgrove to be in attendance. My email system went down two days before we left for Sydney. That was also fantastic that he managed to fulfil another one of my wishes. Many Thanks, Lyn

### **1. THE HISTORY:**

{On 10 September 1965 a member of the Training Team died from wounds received while accompanying an AVRN battalion on an operation in Quang Tin Province. Warrant Officer2 R.A. Scott Royal Australian Infantry, became the second member of the Team to be killed in action. His death set in motion a series of events which resulted in the Australian Government reversing its longstanding policy of interring war dead only in cemeteries overseas.}

Scott arrived in Vietnam 16th March 1965, leaving a wife and two children in Sydney, New South Wales. He was attached to the advisory team or 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment 2<sup>nd</sup> ARVN Division based in Tam Ky, the capital of Quang Tin Province. The team leader paired him with Master Sgt Eugene Jordon, US Army. Scott and Jordon became firm friends, protecting and supporting each other on operations and sharing their moments of relaxation when the battalion was on rest. As with many unit advisers, each knew that the other would not quit the field of battle without his friend. The knowledge that one could rely totally on one's partner was the greatest comfort an adviser had. Scott once confided to Jordon that if he were killed he would like to be buried in Australia. Jordon assured him that should that happen he would still be around as an escort. The subject was not mentioned again. The operation on which Scott met his death was a routine search of a village four kilometres north of Tam Ky. There had been no resistance before a single erratic burst of machine gun fire from a distant hut sent bullets skipping in the direction of the two advisers. One hit Scott in the head. Jordon tended to his friend until a helicopter arrived to evacuate him to the US Marine Corps Aid Station at Chu Lai. There Scott died the same afternoon.



Mindful of his assurances to Scott, Jordon sought leave to accompany Scott's body to Australia but found that Scott was to be buried in the British cemetery in Malaya. Jordon then approached an American General in Saigon on whose personal staff he had once worked and asked for an aircraft to transport Scott's body home for burial, in accordance with the American practice, and for permission to accompany it. But although willing to make an aircraft available, the general was loath to oppose Australian policy so obviously.

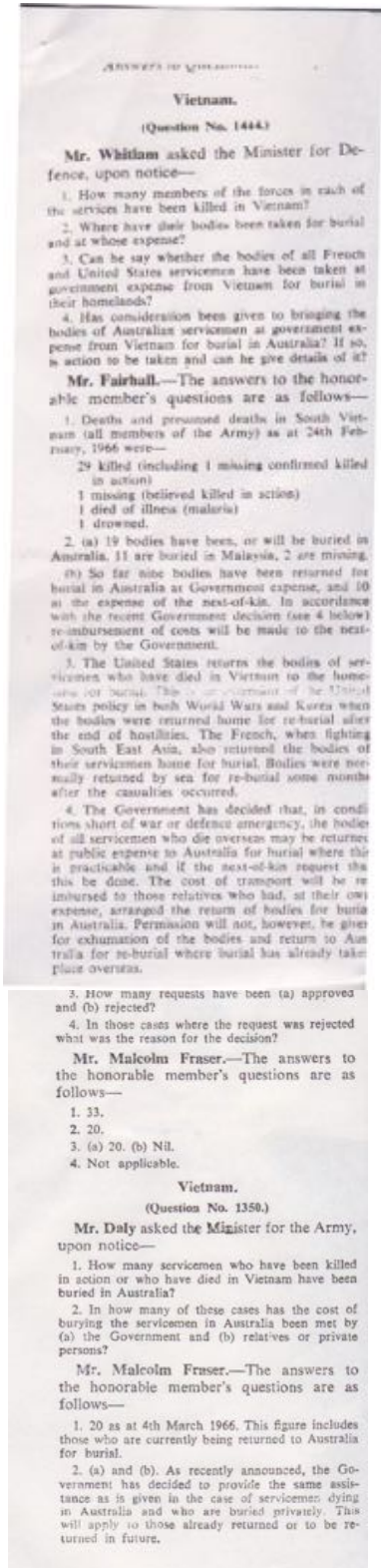
Jordan then returned to I Corps where he began a collection among American advisers of the

v2nd ARVN Division. When the advisers at Australia House, Da Nang heard that the Americans were intending to pay for the return to Australia of one of their own who had been killed in action they immediately began their own collection. Accompanied by Master sergeant Jordon, Warrant Officer Scott's Body was flown to Australia by Qantas on 19 September and buried in the military section of Rookwood Cemetery, Sydney, on 22 September. Jordon had refused to allow his own fare to be paid from the donations, insisting that any money left over be given to Scott's widow.

In Australia "Tiny" Jordan, tall regular featured, and well-spoken was an excellent ambassador for his country. He was feted by the Returned Servicemen's League and Army units. At the same time, articles appeared in the Australian press observing that Americans and Australians were having to pay for the return to Australia of diggers killed in action. In Da Nang, it was taken for granted by the Training Team that, the precedent having been set, they would return to Australia for burial any further adviser killed in action if the next of kin so desired. Rather than tempt fate by maintaining a fund for this purpose, they decided to collect money only when needed. The need did arise two months later when Warrant Officer 2 K.A. Wheatley, who had received the Victoria Cross posthumously, and Warrant Officer 2 R.J. Swanton were killed in action in Quang Ngai province. The Training Team arranged for their bodies to be flown to Australia.

Not long after, on 21 January 1966, the Australian Government announced that the bodies of servicemen who died overseas would be returned to Australia at public expense. It was a popular decision among the soldiers, many feeling that suffering in Australia during the Vietnam War was restricted to the close relatives and friends of the few who made the sacrifice. The return of their dead seemed a gesture the country could well afford.

That action of an American in fulfilling a promise to his friend resulted in the Australian Government reversing a long held policy; it also demonstrated that. Australians have no monopoly on mate ship.



## **2. RECOVERING THE DEAD (THOSE BURIED IN SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA)**

Welcome Home Gary: Written by Eric Pope the man with dogged determination to follow this task through.



*Left: Outside the base at Richmond.*

I have received many emails of praise and "thank you" and feel obliged to point out that this project was only achieved thanks to a massive team effort. So here goes, I apologise if I have left out any names:

Warren Featherby (9RAR S.A.): who had found that Gary was buried in Terendak and encouraged us to find out why.

Rod Slater (9RAR QLD): Who reported that he had

shown Lyn and daughter Lisa over the Memorial Walk at Enoggera and that they were interested in finding out more about how Gary died.

Bob Coker (Web-Master of the site "The Casualty List"): Who advised that Lisa had contacted his web site to see if he had any further information on Gary's death.

Bob and Val Parison (9RAR Qld): Having now ascertained that the Archers had moved from Sydney to south east Queensland Bob and Val set about searching phone books and other references to compile a list of possible addresses.

Brian Woods (9RAR Qld and ex 5 Section 11 Platoon): Spent two days with me checking out the addresses that had been supplied by Bob and Val. Brian also kept me under control when we visited the Funeral Parlour that had buried Gary's father but because of "privacy restrictions" refused to give me details of the Next of Kin.

Lisa Vouros (Gary's niece): Finally contacted me after we placed a Notice in local papers that we wanted to hear from Gary's relatives. We then contacted Lyn and commenced what became a very close friendship. We finally met Lyn, hubby George and Lisa when they came to the Brisbane reunion and then met another two off Gary's sisters, Judy and Val, when they came to the Sydney reunion.

The story behind Gary being buried at Terendak was that his father thought it desirable that he be buried "with all of his mates". He obviously was not aware that "all of his mates" from 9RAR (all 35 of them) had been returned to Australia. We raised the possibility of having Gary returned to Australia but the family were divided over whether this should happen.

Lt Col Anonymous (must remain silent to protect the innocent): I met this gentleman who, at that time, was an advisor to The Minister for Veterans' Affairs so I asked him to make some enquiries as to what the Government's position was on returning the diggers from Terendak. He advised, a couple of days later, that they would not support a formal request. Having sown the seeds in the DVA and having spread our desire among the Veteran Community the matter was put on hold.

Unfortunately, our actions had re-opened a rift within the Archer family that was later to prove a problem.

The next stage was when Bob Shewring from the Vietnam Veterans Assn circulated a petition on Change.org so we were quick to sign and pass it on to everyone. This petition was successful and we all celebrated when the Minister published a Press Release that they will be coming home.

However, someone read the fine print which decreed that the family must "unanimously" agree to bringing a body home. Two of Gary's brothers had lost touch with the family therefore it was unlikely that they would be able to be asked to give their approval.

Lawrie Lewis and Dave Stacey (9RAR S.A.) I had been talking to Lawrie about another matter and mentioned this situation to him. He asked that I send him an email setting out the problem and he would take it up with Brig Chris Appleton, Director of the Australian War Graves. Dave Stacey read my email and sent off a letter to Brig Appleton. That matter was soon sorted in the family's favour and Brig Appleton visited the Archer family and helped convince all members that it was best if Gary



...was to be returned to Australia and re-interred at Rookwood, not far from the area where he had been brought up.

Unfortunately, the "fine print" again was brought to our attention; their definition of "family" excluded Gary's in-laws from attending the Ramp Ceremony and they would have to view the activities from outside the wire with us 9RAR diggers.

Barney Bigwood happened to be having a few beers with a few mates from Castle Hill RSL Sub-Branch, (Dave Cronan, Don Tait and their local M.P. David Elliott); Mr Elliott was due to have a meeting with The Commissioner (Maj Gen Mark Kelly) so he undertook to raise the situation at that meeting.

Within two weeks Major General Kelly wrote to Doug McGrath to advise of a solution that met everyone's expectations. So now we are back where we were, at the top of the first page, about to experience a couple of the most fantastic days since leaving Viet Nam in 1969.



*ABOVE: Reunited once again.*

### **3. WELCOME HOME:**

The day arrived. On Thursday morning, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, we assembled outside the Clarendon Hotel with a great view of Richmond Air Base's runway. Spot-on time the two C17 cargo planes came in to land, what a fantastic sight, and when they went into reverse thrust the tremendous roar of the engines were more comforting than the sound of any "dust-off" chopper.

Finally, Gary was back on Australian soil to be re-united with his family and mates. After all that had evolved over almost ten years the relief that I felt could not be explained.

Due to Lyn's persistent insistence some of Gary's 11 Platoon mates, Terry Moore, Bernie Fitzpatrick, Ian Lygo, Alan Cunningham and John Beattie had been permitted to join the family members and Sir Peter inside the base to view the unloading of the coffins.

Other members of 9RAR assembled at the main gate and formed a Guard of Honour as 35 hearses carried the coffins off the base to be transported to their final burial site. It was extra moving to see a number of children's coffins in the convoy of hearses, says a lot about the attitude of the Government of the time.

On Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June, we assembled at the War Graves section of Rookwood Cemetery, where chairs had been set up under cover, to view the re-interment ceremonies. Padres performed an over-all Service with the usual prayers and hymns then individual services were held for each person with a bugle playing the Last Post as each coffin was lowered into the grave. Members of the current 8/9 RAR attended to Gary and a 9RAR sash was placed on the headstone ready for photographs.

We were invited to attend an afternoon tea put on by the Office of Australian War Graves but as I walked past Gary's grave I looked down at the coffin at the bottom of the hole and felt the biggest sense of relief ever. Finally, Gary was back home.



ABOVE LEFT: South Vietnam. 1969-01-15\*. Private (Pte) Ted Bennett of Springwood, NSW (left), and 2789258 Pte Terence (Terry) William Moore of Inverell, NSW, examine an enemy rocket propelled grenade and an 82mm mortar round captured during Operation Goodwood in the north west of Phuoc Tuy Province. ABOVE RIGHT: Terry Moore

## THE INCIDENT AT NUI DAT

*This is written in Terry Moore's words to the best of his recollections of the night of the fire. Please do not hesitate to contact him if you need any clarification on any issue. Email: [btmoore54@gmail.com](mailto:btmoore54@gmail.com)*

I was asleep in my tent that was next to the one Gary was in when John Deelan woke me up to tell me their tent was on fire. When I looked into the tent I could see Gary engulfed in a ball of fire trying to get out of his bed, only to collapse back onto the bed overcome by smoke and flames. Ammunition was going off because of the intense heat.

Realizing I had to act quickly because of the rockets and grenades in the tent along with the already exploding ammunition I grabbed a blanket. I held it up in front of me and raced into the flames to grab Gary and try to get him to safety. I was about to pull Gary through the opening in the sandbags which formed a wall around the tent when two hand grenades went off blowing us both backwards out of the tent.

Gary was so badly burnt from the fire when I let go of him his skin and flesh stuck to my clothes. To the best of my knowledge I do not believe his injuries were caused by the grenades as I did not receive any injuries from them, only superficial burns from pulling Gary to safety. I remember having a conversation with Gary after the fire whilst waiting for the ambulance to come but I am unable to recall anything that was said.

The fire was extinguished by 11 Platoon bucket brigade, a process that was made more difficult by the fact the water drums were close to being empty. In the meantime Gary was transported to Vung Tau by helicopter and then subsequently sent to the burns unit in Tokyo.

The next day on leave in Vung Tau I spoke to a senior staff member of the hospital who told me that Gary had been transported to the hospital in Tokyo to the burns unit and that he had 3rd degree burns to 100 percent of his body. I made the comment to the staff member about the two hand grenades going off under Gary's bed only seconds after I got him off it.

A comment was then made by the hospital staff member that has haunted me to this day when he told me because of the serious nature of Gary's injuries I would have been better off leaving him where he was.

It was days later when I was on operation Goodwood that I was told Gary had died and a few weeks later when I was called to give evidence at an enquiry into the fire.

\*[www.awm.gov.au/collection/BUL/69/0022/VN](http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/BUL/69/0022/VN)

## PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

My first duty is to thank Emma and Barney for the magnificent job they do in producing Roll Call. It is an unenviable job which most would not want or could not do. Yet team Bigwood just keep getting better. Thank you! This edition is even more laudatory as Barney is having daily chemo for Prostate cancer . You are a good man Barney and we wish you well with this challenge.

Anzac Day seems a long time ago but what a great day it was in Sydney this year. It was an historic day, as it with George Street closed to build the new light, rail this was the first time the march route took us down Elizabeth Street not past the Cenotaph and along George Street. Bill McDonald led our march superbly and we had over 60 marchers behind the banner bearers, Warren Stickens and his son Dean, Dave Jeffrey and Carl Mogan's son Brad. In blustery conditions, this was a mission well performed.

This particular Anzac Day commemorated:

- 25 years since the Gulf War
- 50 Years since the Battle of Long Tan
- 75 years since Tobruk and the defence of Crete
- The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the battles for the Western Front-Villers-Bretonneux
- 100 years since the 1<sup>st</sup> Anzac Day service was held

The Anzacs were recovering in Egypt after the failure of the Gallipoli expedition.

On 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1916 on the banks of the Suez Canal, Australia's greatest General, Sir John Monash turned our his brigade and its attached units well after dawn at 6.45am in a simple act of recognition of the landing at Gallipoli; he realized this anniversary should be treated with respect and reverence – and also with irreverence.

“Every man who served on Gallipoli wore a blue ribbon on the right breast and every man who, in addition had taken part in the historic landing on April 25<sup>th</sup>,1915, wore a red ribbon also.” Monash wrote home. “Alas, how few of us are left, who were entitled to wear both”.

There was a “short but very dignified” service, a chaplain's address and the Last Post from massed buglers. The rest of the day was a holiday.

They played cricket matches and other amusements and the whole Division went down to the Canal to swim and take part in a great Aquatic Carnival.... Both sloping banks of the Suez Canal for fully a mile north was one teeming mass of naked humanity – at times there were over 15,000 men in the water.

So started the Anzac Day tradition we continue today.

We gathered the New Windsor Hotel for our reunion. Here the concept of 9RAR Family was clearly in evidence as over 220 attended our lunchtime get together. The AGM was completed with thanks to the outgoing committee and to those who have stood again.

I would like to thank the wives and families of our committee, without whose support, our effectiveness would be greatly impeded.

Fundraising is so critically important to our very existence as without it, we could not provide the food free of charge on Anzac Day as we have done now for over twenty years or the welfare support we need to. To this end I would like to thank the ticket sellers and Kelly and Gregg Barr-Jones for their continued and magnificent support for 9RAR with raffles for fund raising.

## **PONDERINGS CONTINUED...**

The historic return of the soldiers who had been buried in Terandak in Malaya was particularly poignant for 9RAR. Eric Pope is to be congratulated for his relentless pursuit of bringing these men home in support of the family of our own Garry Archer. A small group from 9RAR were able to join family members at Richmond to witness the arrival of the caskets and the ensuing Ramp Ceremony. Those of us who were not able to enter the base, joined with other Veterans to form a Guard of Honour at the gate as the motorcade exited. Sir Peter and Lady Cosgrove graciously stopped en route to share a few moments and pose for photos with our contingent.

The re-internment services held at Rookwood cemetery the following day were superbly organised and executed. Each man was given a very respectful burial supported by family, friends and unit supporters. Garry Archer's support group by far exceeded that of all the others. 9RAR really stood out very publicly as a close knit, caring organisation, about which I was very proud.

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on the Battle of Long Tan was commemorated on 18<sup>th</sup> August across the country and at the Long Tan Cross itself. Sadly not all made the journey to Vietnam to pay their respects were able to do so as they had intended but I'm sure they found their own way of doing so. We sent a contingent to Springwood for Vietnam Veteran's Day, the city service was conducted at the Cenotaph in Martin Place and I attended the service conducted in Orange.

I accepted an invitation to speak to the students of the Orange Anglican Grammar School on both leadership and Vietnam Veteran's Day. Students from this school, along with students from other schools participated in the service conducted by the Orange RSL Sub-Branch.

I was proud of the students who made a memorable contribution to the solemnity of the service and was mesmerised by a deeply emotional and poignant poem presented by a local lady, Gwen Cassell who also wrote it. Mrs. Cassell generously agreed to allow me to share it and another of her poems, with you.

We have lost a number of our Family in recent months and others such as the wonderful Garry Mayer, are engaged in a severe struggle to overcome their medical challenges.

We offer our unconditional support to these men and their families, as we are one big family with bonds forged in blood a generation ago.

I wish you all, the very best as life's challenges present themselves.

Let us look after each other.

Regards,

Doug

### **9RAR ASSOCIATION**

**Patron: His Excellency General the Honourable  
Sir Peter Cosgrove (Ret'd) AK, MC**

**Doug McGrath.**

**National President**

**1164 Pittwater Road,**

**Collaroy Beach. 2097 NSW**

**P: (02) 9981.2675 M: 0407.832.675**

**E: [panache26@optusnet.com.au](mailto:panache26@optusnet.com.au)**

## REGIMENTAL SQUARE, GEORGE ST, SYDNEY

Regimental Square in Sydney was closed earlier this year as work was commenced on the Sydney Light Rail Project and the demolition and construction of buildings adjacent to it. The NSW Branch of the Royal Australian Regiment has been fully consulted on the reconstruction of our Square. All the Brass artwork, statue, plaques etc have been removed and placed in storage. The refurbishment costs of the square are being fully met by the Developer through a generous levy to Sydney City Council. Below you will find the latest update from Brigadier Paul O’Sullivan AM, MBE (Ret’d) (sent via email to Eric Pope) and some artist impressions for the end result. You will note the Paper kiosk that used to stand near the entrance has been permanently removed.

Below is the imagery as provided by Charter Hall.



## 9RAR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

|                          |                          |                                                                                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>President</b>         | Doug McGrath             | <a href="mailto:panache26@optusnet.com.au">panache26@optusnet.com.au</a>                 | 02-9981-2675 |
| <b>Vice President</b>    | Trevor Murdoch           | <a href="mailto:tmurdoch@customequitygroup.com.au">tmurdoch@customequitygroup.com.au</a> | 0414-015-204 |
| <b>Secretary</b>         | Eric Pope                | <a href="mailto:ericpope@bigpond.com">ericpope@bigpond.com</a>                           | 02-9774-5113 |
| <b>Treasurer/Subs</b>    | Steve Nugent             | <a href="mailto:Cheryl.nugent@hotmail.com">Cheryl.nugent@hotmail.com</a>                 | 02-9997-1552 |
| <b>Newsletter Editor</b> | Rick 'Barney' Bigwood    | <a href="mailto:barneybig@live.com.au">barneybig@live.com.au</a>                         | 02-9873-5209 |
| <b>Assistant Editor</b>  | Emma Bigwood             | <a href="mailto:thebigwoods@bigpond.com">thebigwoods@bigpond.com</a>                     | 0422-429-745 |
| <b>Welfare Officer</b>   | Trevor Murdoch           | (as above)                                                                               | (as above)   |
| <b>Members</b>           | Peter Nummy              | <a href="mailto:panddnummy@bigpond.com">panddnummy@bigpond.com</a>                       | 0418-292-788 |
|                          | Colin Schofield          | <a href="mailto:cschofield1@optusnet.com.au">cschofield1@optusnet.com.au</a>             | 0409-789-336 |
|                          | Ross Coughran            | <a href="mailto:cullychristine@gmail.com">cullychristine@gmail.com</a>                   | 0407-467-175 |
|                          | Warren Stickens          | <a href="mailto:w_stickens@hotmail.com">w_stickens@hotmail.com</a>                       | 0409-151-614 |
|                          | Phil Barry               | <a href="mailto:philbarry@exemail.com">philbarry@exemail.com</a>                         | 0409-313-410 |
|                          | Jenemy Ferguson          | <a href="mailto:annel@bigpond.com">annel@bigpond.com</a>                                 | 02-9999-6969 |
|                          | Tony Mullavey            | <a href="mailto:tmullavey@optusnet.com.au">tmullavey@optusnet.com.au</a>                 | 0416-231-993 |
|                          | Gregg & Kelly Barr-Jones | <a href="mailto:gbybuild@bigpond.net.au">gbybuild@bigpond.net.au</a>                     | 0414-945-024 |

# ROGER KING: PHOTOS

— One man's war through the lens —



VISION: Roger King shows his compelling images of the Vietnam conflict.

Picture: BILL CONROY

IN a tribute marking Vietnam Veterans Day, Bendigo RSL has unveiled a rare collection of photographs taken by veteran Roger King.

The Cold War conflict that occurred in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia lasted from November 1, 1955 to April 30, 1975.

August 18 was originally the day for commemorating the Battle of Long Tan in 1966, the largest single battle fought in Vietnam by Australian troops, but it has since been adopted by all Vietnam veterans.

Enlisting at the age of 18 in 1967, Mr King trained for a year before being sent to Vietnam with the 9th Battalion anti-tank platoon.

A passion for photography inspired Mr King to document his wartime experiences and create a collection that until now has not been viewed by the public.

"I'd always had a strong passion for photography and wanted very much to become a photographer," he said.

But after returning home, life got in the way for Mr King and he was prevented from pursuing his dream.

"In those days it was difficult to get a start in photography. The courses were all full-time over several years, and I couldn't sit still for very long after the war."

His camera and photographs were put away as he recovered from his war experiences and built a life for himself back in Bendigo.

After almost 40 years, Mr King's collection is on display at the Bendigo RSL in Havilah Road.

It is hoped the display will encourage other war veterans to bring out their wartime images to be shown at the RSL.



*All photos by Roger King. Thanks for allowing us to reproduce them here.*

## BOOK REVIEW

### LONG TAN: THE START OF A LIFELONG BATTLE (Harry Smith)

This easy to read book starts off with the actual battle of Long Tan where D Coy 6RAR followed up on the mortars that had been dropped on Nui Dat. Major Harry Smith had 108 men to search the area that HQ believed was the area where the mortars had come from. The only problem was that the intelligence they had gained from all sorts of sources wasn't passed on. Facing D Coy was 2,000 V.C. & N.V.A. The fact that any of them survived was a miracle, but the book doesn't dwell on the battle too much. Instead the 'real' fight is with Harry trying to get his men properly recognised.

Starting his career at Portsea it wasn't long before he was commissioned and sent to Malaya to fight the Communist Terrorists (C.T's.) during the Malayan Emergency. They were causing all sorts of problems throughout Malaya and although it lasted for 12 years it's the only war where the terrorists were beaten. Commonwealth troops remained there for years afterwards.

Once the battle was over Major Smith recommend a whole range of awards for his men. These were systematically down graded by Brigadier Jackson and the Head Quarters whilst others less deserving were awarded, such as the 'postie' who got an M.I.D. What does come out is that R.M.C. (Royal Military College - Duntroon) officers had a better chance of receiving awards than others. Without naming anyone (as I really can't afford the lawsuits), desk jockeys simply didn't honour men that deserved it. Major Smith names some of them, (let him fight the lawsuits). It seems everyone got a gong except those who deserved it.

The book contains his ongoing fight to get recognition for those men, to his great credit. It also tells of his other loves the sea and yachts of which he has owned quite a few. He also covers his parachuting experience which was fairly vast.

This book shows that intelligence gained by patrols was not acted on and D Coy nearly paid a worse price than they did. It also shows the flawed awards system and I can only hope that this has changed.

Barry Wakefield.

*Assistant Editor's Note: Sending a special thank you out to our resident Book Reviewer Extraordinaire who is amongst those facing health challenges at the moment. Look after yourself Barry. We need you: who would do our reviews otherwise? Seriously, we are thinking of you and hope that you continue to improve from here. (Emma)*



## **31 PLATOON MARCH OUT PARADE**

### **1RTB Kapooka 03/06/2016**

The repatriation of the remains of 33 of our war dead from Terrendak arriving in Sydney on 03/06/2016 and the involvement of our Association in attending the ramp ceremony prompted NSW branch to seek assistance given that the 31 Platoon March Out at Kapooka was on the same day. Nobody as yet can be in two places at the same time. Doug McGrath put in a telephone call to me a couple of weeks beforehand to see if I could represent 9 RAR Association at the march out and I said I would very happy to do so.

Arrangements provided for me and Terry James to arrive at Kapooka at 1545 hrs. on 02/06/16, where we were met at the front gate by Lt. Aymee Preston, Platoon Commander, 31 Platoon. Lt. Preston escorted us to the lines of 31 Platoon where Terry and I addressed 51 of Australia's newest soldiers. We found them to be very attentive and interested in what we had to say. Both Terry and I were impressed by the way they conducted themselves and their very respectful manner.

After our presentation we were escorted by Lt. Preston to the Sergeant's Mess where we were booked in for dinner and a room each for the night. We were surprised that no Sergeants were in for dinner or for an end of day drink and we concluded that they, in the main, reside off base. Photographs on the wall suggest there are about 72 Sergeants posted to 1 RTB. Notwithstanding that, Terry and I enjoyed a few schooners before turning in.

Rain fell for most of the night and it was still raining when we went to breakfast. After breakfast and a read of the newspapers Terry produced two umbrellas from the boot of his car however, it stopped raining by the time we left the Sergeant's Mess at 0945 to make our way down to the Parade Ground where we were again met by Lt. Preston who directed us to where we were to sit. Fortunately the rain kept away for the entire Parade which also included 32 Platoon. Also in attendance were 700 visitors who viewed the Parade with interest.

Lt. Preston took us to the Officer's Mess for morning tea where we met Colonel Jobson, Commandant, Army Recruit Training Centre. Following morning tea we were taken to the Edmonton club where both 31 and 32 platoon with their family members and friends had assembled for lunch. Shortly thereafter, Terry and I took our leave and returned home quite pleased with the two days and what we had experienced.

*Report by Stan Sutherland.*





# GOLD COAST WAR MUSEUM

Situated on the Gold Coast is a wonderful Museum operated by Bob Meehan ex 4 RAR/NZ. If you are travelling on holidays or live up that way pop in and say "Giddy" to Bob. This museum covers Australia's involvement in all conflicts and UN operations since the Boer War through to current ones today.



# THE ENTERTAINERS, ANZAC DAY



A few were sick this year so the turnout was lower than usual. The picture above features (at left end of group) Nicki Gillis and Amy Williamson (daughter of John), who went to Iraq. I am in the middle, with Dinah Lee and Irene St John on the right. We all went to Vietnam.

*Story and photos by Sylvia Raye.*



## MATES CORNER

### ROLL CALL SUBMISSIONS

If you have some interesting news or humorous anecdotes about the 9RAR Family please send it to us for submission.

Barney (Rick) Bigwood: barneybig@live.com.au

or

Emma Bigwood: thebigwoods@bigpond.com



## TREVOR BLACK MEMORIAL PLAQUE

Trevor Black was Killed in Action in Vietnam on 4 April, 1969 but his name was never added to the memorial cross in Mackay, celebrating local soldiers. Recently this oversight was corrected and his plaque was added to the cross. Local "Niners" Dick Lancaster and Blue Nancarrow, along with Blue's wife Jenny, attended the ceremony. Trevor's sister Beverly Douthett travelled down from Townsville to attend, along with Noel and Jan Tambling. The picture below shows Dick, Blue, Beverly and Noel. You can read more of this story and see more photos from the day at the links shown.

<http://www.dailymercury.com.au/news/soldier-killed-action-finally-added-memorial-cross/2991194/>

<http://www.dailymercury.com.au/photos/trevor-blacks-plaque/39461/#/0>

*PIC RIGHT: Attendants at Trevor Black's memorial plaque ceremony.*



## GRAHAM 'KANGA' GRIFFITHS

The world from Allan Tonkin is that Graham is home and on the mend. More test results to come but he is doing well.

## UPDATE ON OUR VERY OWN BARNEY, ROLL CALL EDITOR

Giddy all. Just a quick update on my journey through this curse of prostate cancer. Today I start week 5 of my radiation schedule which has been every day except week ends for the last 4 weeks. Only one hiccup when machine broke down with me inside , I could never have been a "Tunnel Rat" , I was very claustrophobic . Very little side effects so far only a lot of wind and tiredness. After next week I have to wait 3 more weeks and have a blood test to see if PSA has come down or non existent. Update in next edition!

## NEWS FROM DES BLAZELY

Hi folks,

Just embarked on Scenic Crystal for trip from Amsterdam to Budapest. Just ran into a long lost Assault Pioneer from 9RAR in Vietnam.

Robert and Lynne Belgrove (Upper Kedron)

robertbelgrove@bigpond.com

Remembers Slats and Roachy very well. Went to a company after D&E but ran foul of officialdom and went to Pioneers. We will chew the fat on this trip. Please add him to our list and make him welcome. They have been married 46 years. Wow how good are you pioneers.

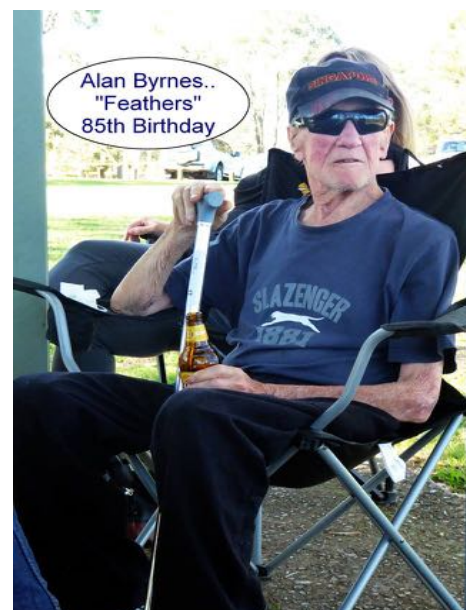
Cheers , Des Blazely

## RICHARD 'ANDY' ANDREWS

From TONY MULLAVEY: Tony (who is President of the VVAA at "The Train" St Marys) often meets prodigal sons. Hence it came as no surprise when he turned up with a former 10 Platoon Digger who hasn't been seen since the last day in Nui Dat. Richard ANDREWS known to us as "Andy" and to the diggers in 6 RAR he went to after us as "Buddha". "Andy" joined as a Reo late in our tour but that didn't stop him "Bagging" a Nog from a listening post. His email address is [kobber51@gmail.com](mailto:kobber51@gmail.com) if you want to get in touch.

## ALAN 'FEATHERS' BYRNES TURNS 85

Another huge milestone achieved was that by "FEATHERS" Byrnes, former CSM Delta Company. Feathers reached 85 last week and was joined by 9 Battalion well wishers and their partners.



## MICK CREDLIN TURNS 80

On the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2016, a number of Delta Company members gathered together for a Surprise 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday for well known 9RAR identity – Former Platoon Sergeant Mick ‘Rocket Man’ Credlin. The event was organised by Micks sons – Brendon and Tim, where a number of Delta Company members were invited, but due to the size of Tim’s newly constructed house in Cranbourne, it was a case of ‘first to reply – first to receive invitation’. Such was the response to invitations saw members travel from New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia to pay their respect to a “good bloke”. It was great to see a large number of members (and partners) attend and also the apologies for non-attendance rolled in which represented all the platoons of Delta Company.

A highlight of the evening saw Robert Cousins (Graham Cousins son) ‘volunteered’ to read aloud a letter of congratulations by the 9RAR National President Doug McGrath. This letter was read in the presence of Micks relatives and friends, describing his contribution to Delta Company during its tour of duty in South Vietnam. It described how Mick was able to organise and manage the diggers under his charge during happy and yet traumatic occasions – epitomising Mick Credlin as a “good bloke” and one of the finest soldiers to have worn the Australian Army uniform. The letter left many of Micks relatives and friends seeing ‘Uncle’ Mick in a different perspective.

Mick was able to take the floor and able to provide us with various accounts of his 80 years to date. From his younger years in Sea Lake to policing the streets of South Melbourne as a young copper. To joining the Australian Army – serving in Malaya, Borneo, Thailand and three tours of duty to South Vietnam. Eventually serving his final years in Army Recruitment.

With a strict ‘no present’ policy, members took it upon themselves to disobey this policy and gave ‘Uncle’ Mick a couple of colouring books featuring scantily clad women and a packet of coloured pencils. Rumour has it that ‘Uncle’ Mick has enjoyed his newfound hobby of colouring in.

In closing, Mick expressed his thanks to everyone for taking time out to pay birthday respects. He has assured us that he will be still here in 20 years time so that he can receive letters of congratulations from the Governor General and the Queen.



On behalf of the 9RAR National Association, I would like to extend a warm thanks to Lesley, Tim, Brendon and their families for their hospitality and home for the evening to Micks 9RAR comrades.

*Robert Cousins BM*

## **MICK CREDLIN: THE STORY OF THE FLAMING ARSEHOLE**

A STORY FROM POPEYE: One of the many old and honourable traditions of celebrating a birthday in Viet Nam for the members of D Company, 9RAR, who shall remain nameless, to protect the innocent, was the birthday boy got to put \$10 MPC on the bar for the lads to drink out. Don't mock, ye who pay \$5 for a schooner in this day, that \$10 bought a 100 cans of beer for the lads.

Duty free beer, spirits and cigarettes, where all a reality in our lives. Common sense was sometimes applied to our existence, the first night back from an operation, we partied, no sentry or other duties were inflicted on those of us who had been in the bush. Our cooks organised a meal fit for warriors, the boozier, that glorious institution, was the place to be, reason, usually a thirty day operation ending was enough, but when combined with the number of blokes who'd had birthdays whilst the operation was in progress and you could find four or five lads all tossing \$10 on the bar. 400 or 500 cans of beer for the lads to drink, usually only about 60 to 70 blokes in the boozier and you have party time, big time!!!!

Now let me take you on a little aside. During Popeye's life he has seen and enjoyed the sight of many a stripper type young lady taking her clothes off, and at that time he had even seen the great Sandra Nelson strip at the Pink Pussy Cat in Kings Cross. That girl put new meaning into mammary rotation, with tassels on her tits she had trouble not flying off the stage, as for her rear rotation, it was a sight to behold, all to the best music you could find, 50's and 60's rock and roll.

To set the scene you have to understand, our boozier was a humble building, rectangular in shape with at one end, the back, refrigeration equipment to keep the beer and goffa's cold, storage for our liquor stock, and the most important part of the whole place, the bar, this was about four feet wide, and ran the width of the boozier, about 12 feet, ensconced behind the bar was our sound system, a tape recorder with 15 inch reels, 6 solid hours of our music on a continuous basis. Our most prized decoration behind the bar, was our barman, a certain Corporal, a dilettante in the art of serving mixed drinks, bourbon and coke, jack and coke, scotch and coke, vodka and orange, Fanta would you believe and beer, glorious beer, and cigarettes. Just to the right of the bar was a doorway that led out onto a patio type set-up with a table and chairs for the outdoor types. Saw a great wresting match out there one night, it ended when one of the participants was told his little fingers would be broken if he didn't stop choking the bloke he was trying to kill. Fear not gentle folk, it was but a challenge of two extremely fit men, no animus was intended or given, neither was there going to be mercy on either participant. Upon being broken apart, both men proceeded to the bar, to be rewarded for their effort with beers and each others company.

Sorry for the digression there folk, back to our glorious boozier, now the roof of this humble construction was tin with timber beams, the perfect support for a supply parachute to be hung, to hide the boring decor of a tin roof. The walls were decorated with weapons we had liberated from the VC and NVA found in bunker systems and other places of interest. Dart boards, we had two, one on each side of the main doorway, made for interesting egress when a drunken digger was throwing, tossing or just plain trying to get the darts to stick in the "fucking board, arsehole of a thing keeps moving, know what I mean??" This was where our glorious barman, with his two stripes really shone, "Gimme the darts, boards are closed!" Thus was saved many an eyeball, forehead etc.

Amongst the drinkers was one who stood out, his name I will give in his honour, Pogo. Little Pogo, a small monkey, was a pet of one of the nameless, but was loved by all who met him, the lot of us. By human standards, it is my firm belief that Pogo had a drinking problem, just like we did. His tipples of preference was beer, glorious beer. Pogo drank from the upside down rim of an empty can. For those of you who have never seen a rim on a can, you have my sympathy, Pogo's beer can rim held a Pogo size schooner, which he drank with relish. When pissed, Pogo cut loose, he threw himself around in great abandon in the parachute hanging from the roof, he had a ball. Made you feel good that one of us could enjoy himself so much.

## THE FLAMING ARSEHOLE CONT.

For those of you wondering what the title of this piece has to do with this story, you hang in there sunshine, we are getting there, or I am at least. Know that young men are prone to do foolish things in the name of enjoying themselves, amongst the strange and wonderous activities young men find fascinating, God knows why, I don't, was lighting a fart, an emittance of air from the anus, methane burns baby and lighting a fart was sort of magic, to we poor simple souls with no access to ordinary entertainment.

We had been drinking steadily to the nearest point of inebriation, I'd had my four cans at which point I usually collapsed drunk in a corner or around a corner or over a corner, but this night I was on my eighth can and still standing, yes, folk, there are still miracles. Could not tell you what time it was when one of the lads decided he would strip and do the "Dance of the Flaming Arsehole". He approached the bar, climbed on it and announced his intentions, to tumultuous applause from his audience, those of us who weren't arguing about shit, footie, cars, girls anything but Viet Nam. Appropriate music flowed from the sound system and our hero began his strip. To say it was sensational is to put it mildly, this man had music in his soul and he did the best strip tease I have seen in my life, bar none. With just two pieces of clothing, shirt and pants he turned on one of the great displays of the strippers art ever performed, due to the fact that we had no seats in the boozier, he got a well deserved standing ovation from everyone except the two blokes bullshitting up the back about cars, holden v ford.

Then he decided it was time to do the dance, again accompanied by the music and the cheers of his mates, he proceeded to the moment some had been waiting for, the rest got back into the argument over holdens and fords. A lighter was provided, possibly the most dangerous moment for all us, it was a Zippo, sometimes described as a flame thrower looking for a place to happen, our hero strained to emit a fart, then his moment arrived, as did the fart, the zippo was lit, the fart was lit, as was all the hair around his arse, a scream rang out, his butt was put out, with beer, and he was last seen wandering away with a friendly medic, offering him solace and burn cream. Thus ended the Dance of the Flaming Arsehole.

Barney mate, this actually happened. Whitton was the bar tender, Riddle and Enright the combatants and I was too pissed to be able to tell you the name of the stripper, but fuck he was good. Pretty confident the two happened on different nights, the fight and dance, but both did happen and I witnessed them, others will remember. Will post this on the D Company site on f/book. Should give some a laugh and the families an insight into what we found funny, entertaining and real.

Take Care,

*Popeye (Paul J. Kinney)*



## ON THE WALLABY WITH ALAN AND HELENE

### Alan Chandler, B Coy

Helene and I were sunning ourselves at Wongaling Beach (between Townsville and Cairns) when Rick Bigwood rang and asked if I could send him a short summary and a few photos of our five years caravanning (on the wallaby).

My writing will certainly not be as humorous as Bill Bryson (Down Under), as informative as Lonely Planet or judgemental as Trip Advisor. Sometimes summaries of people's travels, likes and dislikes can be a pain in the butt as we all enjoy things and places differently.

We decided to head off in the caravan from the Central Coast of NSW in 2011 with a shakedown trip to Yeppoon via inland NSW and Qld. It was certainly different as the caravan is a 24' Jayco 2008 sterling and the most I had ever towed was a 6 x 4 trailer to the tip or a 13' tinny to Lake Glenbawn each year.

All the stories you hear about female hand signals not computing in a male brain when backing a van are all true.

We were at Forbes when a fellow caravanner from Tasmania informed me that we were doing it wrong. Helene had only driven a small Toyota previously and my Tassie adviser told me that Helene should sit in the driver's seat and take directions from yours truly, R/H down, L/H down, straight back, etc. It means that I am out to level the van and unhook. It works a treat and is definitely right for us (much less stress). Best advice that I have been given and you do get a fair bit of advice especially when a novice nomad.

We survived that trip so in 2012 we headed off around Oz for fifteen months. It was a great trip.

*RIGHT: Afghanistan Memorial, Youngaburra (Atherton Tablelands). BELOW: The memorial to the commandos of WW2 at Exmouth and their famous boat "The Krait". (Pics by Alan Chandler)*



## ON THE WALLABY WITH ALAN CHANDLER CONT.

We spent ANZAC Day in Cummins with Geoff and Wendy Holman. For Dan Penman it is a must that you get Geoff's yarn on CD about attending the local footy B & S Ball when he and a couple of mates cleared the dance floor with a smoke grenade.(and the band played on)!! Geoff was shearing on the Monday when he was apprehended by the local sergeant whilst doing the "long blow" on some rough SA wethers. It is a great yarn and should feature in the 9RAR museum at Enoggera, definitely worthy of retelling at the 2017 reunion at Adelaide. Up the centre and spent ten weeks in Darwin. I had never been to the territory before. The newspapers down south are full of politics, negativity and rubbish. In the top end they are about crocodiles, snakes, barramundi and water buffalo.

NT = not today, not tomorrow.

Across to Broome via Kununurra. What a massive development the Ord River Scheme and Argyle Dam is. On reading "Kings in Grass Castles" the Durack family travelled from Goulburn to Kununurra by horse and dray( I felt it was a long drive in the Isuzu and Jayco). Tough hard times and in a lot of the north I still get the impression that it is a place for development and tough people. Down the west coast to Perth and then further south.

My frame of reference for trees when growing up on the banks of the Lachlan was the River Red Gum. The trees in the south west of WA are just unbelievable with some of Jarrah and Kauri reaching for the sky and as straight as a gun barrel.

WA is a massive state and a very proud state but the Swans were doing well that year so I was able to drive it into the Eagles and Dockers supporters. Across the Nullabor, as Slim Dusty would sing, "a long straight road". Toward the Murray via Peterborough and enjoyed the hospitality of Tex and Slats. Hit the Murray at Berri and then back upstream to Albury. Every town along the Murray, whether a small village or a bigger town/city is immaculate. Little wonder it is regarded as the lifeblood of the eastern states.

The next three years have seen us on different treks. Depending on the reviews and editorial decisions I will leave that for another day.

Next year we intend to spend three months in Darwin before heading down to Adelaide for the 2017 reunion.

Catch you on the wallaby – safe travels.



ABOVE: Vietnam Memorial at 80 Mile Beach, WA. (Pic by Alan Chandler)





*ABOVE: Gary Mayer, Alan Chandler, Peter Stammers and Lynchie*

## **UPDATE FROM THE SUNSHINE COAST AND KEV LYNCH**

Allan Chandler recently passed through on his way to spend the winter in Mission Beach, North Queensland so we took the opportunity to visit Gary Mayer in Maleny. Gary is not in the best of health so it was a great lunch. Peter Stammers joined us to complete the foursome.

David and Jill Greenhaulgh also called in heading north to catch up with family and Ann and I had a long lunch and a few laughs.

Harry and Nancy Birrell were also beating a path north, what's so attractive about Queensland in winter, maybe the weather. We had a few beers and Harry came to our monthly Riflemens lunch, he also tipped me one of his horses and it bobbed, good result all round.

Funerals are becoming far too common and recently I attended the service for Joe Szabo who served with Charlie Company. It was a solemn occasion that reminds us all that the infallible youngsters who served in 9 RAR so many years ago are now in that age bracket where health is very important so if it needs looking at, don't delay.

There is a big ex service presence on the Sunshine Coast and at Mooloolaba Surf Club. We have an open breakfast for veterans every Thursday morning, \$5, great way for visitors to meet locals.

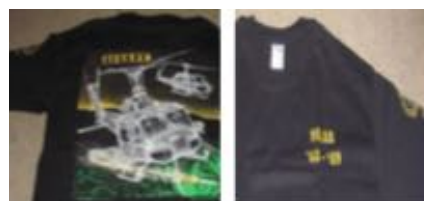
We also conduct a monthly (First Friday) Riflemens Lunch, 1200 start, \$15 for a light lunch, BYO fluid intake. We regularly get 30 plus and especially welcome those passing through.

If you're heading north/south and looking for a friendly face or two, contact Kev Lynch for a coffee or maybe an amber fluid or two.

Over and out from God's Country.

## MERCHANDISE PRICES

|                                       |                   |                |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <b>All T's</b>                        |                   | <b>\$28.00</b> |
| <b>Polo Shirt</b>                     |                   | <b>\$35.00</b> |
| <b>Caps</b>                           |                   | <b>\$25.00</b> |
| <b>Akubra Hat (with badges)</b>       |                   | <b>\$90.00</b> |
| <b>Ties</b>                           |                   | <b>\$35.00</b> |
| <b>Ladies Silk Scarves</b>            |                   | <b>\$35.00</b> |
| <b>Sashes</b>                         |                   | <b>\$60.00</b> |
| <b>Medal Boxes</b>                    | <b>- Engraved</b> | <b>\$70.00</b> |
|                                       | <b>- Plain</b>    | <b>\$50.00</b> |
| <b>9RAR Book</b>                      |                   | <b>\$25.00</b> |
| <b>Key Ring or Badges - per set</b>   |                   | <b>\$15.00</b> |
| <b>Jack Thompson CD's</b>             |                   | <b>\$15.00</b> |
| <b>Postage - Standard</b>             |                   | <b>\$15.00</b> |
| <b>Postage - Large or heavy items</b> |                   | <b>\$25.00</b> |



## ORDERS

Mr Warren Stickens: [w\\_stickens@hotmail.com](mailto:w_stickens@hotmail.com) or 0409-151-614

## PAYMENT

Please send a cheque or money order in favour of 9RAR Association NSW  
Send to: Mr Eric Pope, 9 Ingram Ave, Milperra NSW 2214

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

**Bank: Westpac**

**Branch: Northbridge**

**BSB: 032 199**

**A/C Number: 184 308**

Use your membership number and name as a reference please.

Please note that prices so NOT include postage, which is listed separately.  
Please include appropriate postage costs with your order.



### The 9<sup>th</sup> 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 31 October 1973 when it merged with 8 RAR to become the 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (8/9RAR). 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 the Vietnam War lists the OC A Coy Major W. McDonald had his MID (Mentioned in Dispatches) upgraded to a Medal of Gallantry and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Geoffrey Locke was awarded a Commendation for Distinguished Service.

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

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



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

**PRINT  
POST  
PP100000127**

**POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTRALIA**



**IF UNDELIVERED RETURN TO:**

**9RAR Association NSW**

**PO Box 253**

**Narrabeen NSW 2101**

**Print Post Approved**

**PP100000127**