THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION VICTORIA



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All mail to be forwarded to The Secretary RAR Assn (Vic) Branch PO Box 6213 Frankston Vic 3199

PRESIDENTS'S REPORT

With the shadow of COVID continuing to hang over us there has been next to no activity on the Association front and, therefore little

to report. Again, this year the RAR Corporation met by Zoom and again all associations reported the difficulty of recruiting younger members from the Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns.

However, a more positive note is that with the sale of Tramways RSL building the home of the RAR Association of Victoria has moved to Kew RSL at 63 Cotham Rd, Kew. Trams 24,42,48,69 and 109 all service the area with the 109 stop 35 being right alongside the RSL. All our memorabilia have been moved to Kew and set-up is almost complete. Also, we now have sufficient storage space to store as many battalion banners as required.

When COVID restrictions lift we plan to hold regular Happy Hour Drinks and Eats monthly. Watch the Newsletter for more information on this.

In the meantime, please stay safe and remain COVID aware.

John James

Duty First

RARA VIC NEWS

Our Annual Dinner which is normally held mid to late November at the William Angliss Restaurant may take place in early December 2021, however the location may be the Kew RSL as the William Angliss is booked out.

ARMY NEWS

DEDICATION RECOGNISED

Celebrating Army nurses for International Nurses Day

Army News, May 2001

Throughout history Army nurses have constantly shown their compassion, dedication, and professionalism.

Since the formation of the initial Australian Army Nursing Service more than 120 years ago, nurses have deployed with Australian forces into the field, supporting soldiers and the community.



Australian Army Nursing Service WW1

Most recently, nurses deployed to bushfire and flood affected areas, and helped the community during the COVID-19 problems.

RAANC Head of Corps Col Toni Busbby said International Nurses Day was a day to reflect on the hard work they do.

"Between the bushfires and COVID-19, nurses have demonstrated our value and utility, not only in how we deliver an effect to a community, but how we prepare our soldiers to deploy," Col Bussby said.

"Most of the corps are out there every day dealing with people face-to-face, often when they're at their most vulnerable.

"It's an opportune time for all of us to praise and reflect on what it is that the nurses do and what society requires both now and into the future: humanity, focus on individuals' care requirements and the basics of health care in the military setting.

"it's a time for us to reinforce what we do and see how it's valued by both the Army and the community.

International Nurses Day is celebrating each year on May 12, on the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

It is a day to acknowledge the compassion, professionalism and round-the-clock commitment of nurses caring for patients.



The Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps motto is 'Pro Humanitate', which in Latin means 'For humankind'.

AIR-TO-GROUND STRIKES IN JOINT FORCE EXERCISE

Army and Air Force are working together on Exercise Black Dagger. Flt-Lt George MacDonald – Army News, May 2021 reports

Exercise Black Dagger happens twice a year to train Army and Air Force personnel to coordinate close air support for soldiers on the ground.

Held between May 3 and 14, Black Dagger is the final activity for the students on No,67 joint terminal attack controller (JTAC) course.

The exercise provides students an opportunity to coordinate aircraft and ordnance in live and simulated air to ground strikes.

No. 4 Sqn CO Wg-Cdr Sean Jobson said the exercise was a critical component of JTAC training as it consolidated everything the students had learnt throughout the five-week course.

"The JTAC's executed all phases of a typical close air support mission; from the planning and briefing to the controlling and reporting, "Wg-Cdr Jobson said.

"Black Dagger is a live-fire activity which ensures the JTAC are operationally ready to utilise air power in support of the joint force.

"On this course we had we had students from both the Army and Air Force, and they had the opportunity to control aircraft during several close air support scenarios.

"Supporting the exercise were:



F/A-18A/B aircraft from No. 75 Squadron.



PC-21 forward air control aircraft from No. 4 Squadron.



Tiger ARH from 1 Avn Regt



81mm Mortars from the 5RAR.

As a joint fire observer from 8/12RAA, LBdr Aaron Oblea said the course opened his eyes to the wider ADF.

"So far, I've been really happy with my achievements on the course, and I am excited to apply what I have learnt to my role in Robertson Barrack, ultimately to support troops on the ground," LBdr Oblea said.

"Having come from an artillery background, learning to speak to aircraft meant I had become more flexible, open and free when calling in support.

"Thanks to this course, I like to think that I can now speak two different languages."

Australia is one of 21 nations, mostly NATO-linked which hold US JTAC training accreditation via a Memorandum of Agreement with the Joint Fire Support Executive Steering Committee, intended to ensure commonality in JTAC tactics, techniques, and procedures.

FEATURE STORIES

WINDOWS TO MODERN

WAR WO2 Max Bree - Army News July 2021

A sweeping view from the office of Australian War Memorial Director Matt Anderson looks over lush lawns, old Army vehicles and the bridge of HMAS *Brisbane*, onto the site redevelopment works that are about to start.



Mr Anderson shows renderings of a large glass section that will join the main building to the new Anzac Hall.

Another shows an orientation gallery to be built under the memorial's front, allowing better wheelchair access.

The drawings reveal how light will come through an oculus – a glass feature that is an inverse of the memorial dome.

Mr Anderson speaks about the importance of preserving the building's front façade and how they will dig a level under Anzac Hall to create space for galleries showcasing modern operations.

"At the moment, in 15 paces, you can go from Vietnam to the Tarin Kowt wall," he said.

"In the size of half a tennis court you're trying to tell the story of Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, the Middle East, maritime forces and 62 peace keeping missions.

We need more space to do this properly, and to do justice to our veterans."

This hit home when Mr Anderson was recently asked by an Air Force officer just home from Operation Aslan where that section was so he could show his children. I bent down his children and I said, "We don't tell that story yet, but we will." Mr Anderson said.

But to fill their modern galleries the Australian War Memorial team needs stories and donations from the people who were on the operations.

"When we conduct oral histories, people often tell us things they haven't told their families: they'll say, I haven't said this before, but". Mr Anderson said.

The Memorial is also eager for donations of things such as note-books, sketches, letters, uniforms or anything to help tell an operation's story.

One of Mr Anderson's favourite item is a range card from Afghanistan drawn in a digger's notebook.

"Anyone who has mounted a gun piquet knows what that is." Mr Anderson said.

"It's a wonderful way of explaining the circumstances of that gun pit on that day and allows others to connect with that experience."



Another of Mr Anderson's favourites is a UN stubble holder.

"That speaks to us, it speaks to our nature, it's a moment in time that speaks to who we are," he said.

The revamp has special significance for Mr Anderson, who in previous roles as High Commissioner to Samoa and to Solomon Islands, witnessed RAAF flights full of aid and Navy ships arriving to assist.

He also was exposed to the lasting reputation of Australian soldiers as the Ambassador to Afghanistan.

"When I met the Governor of Uruzgan, he asked for more Australian soldiers, he wanted them back." Mr Anderson said.

The galleries featuring modern conflicts will help maintain Charles Bean's vision of a memorial, a museum and a archive, according to Mr Anderson.

This means putting things in galleries to give people an understanding of the military's service and sacrifice.

The exhumation and reinternment of WW1 soldiers at Fromelles in 2009 showed Mr Anderson the smallest items could also be the most powerful.

In a digger's pocket they found a paper railway ticket, Perth- Al "It's a wonderful way of explaining the circumstances of that gun pit on that day and allows others to connect with that experience." Albany return used only one way.

"That's a very powerful tiny item. If it's meaningful to a service person, it will be of meaning in us in helping tell the story, "He said.

D & E PLATOON, 1 ATF

FROM STAN SUTHERLAND'S BOOK
"IN THIS MAN'S ARMY

6th January. We boarded centurion tanks for the return trip to Nui Dat. There's no comfortable place to sit on a tank. I perched myself on the turret, which is more than hard on the backside. The tankies are all fitted out with sunglasses, or goggles, whichever they prefer. A centurion tank belting down a dirt road at about forty kilometres an hour is a sight to see and even more so when there are three sections of them (two to a section). The tank in front chews up and spits out behind it everything from buffalo shit - which there's plenty of - to dirt, gravel, rocks the lot. For the infantry, sitting on the tank behind, it is rough...we have nothing to protect our eyes with. The tanks hurl along about fifty metres apart, insufficient for us to avoid the crap. This adds another paragraph to the uncomfortable life of an infantryman. By the time we got back to Nui Dat we all sore backsides and were covered in muck. Riding on the tanks is as hairy as any ride you'll get at Luna Park. Still, it's much better than walking.



Centurion spitting out some dust

At about 1945 hrs, a few of the fellows came into my tent and ten minutes later we were joined by a couple more. Six of us were sitting around smoking and carrying on a bit when Dubbo came in and

said, "Hey Stan, I've just walked past the pogos' lines and there's a few of them in there tuned into)C 25 set. I've come up with a bit of an idea for payback for the short rations in the hot boxes they gave us a couple of weeks back." The last time we went to the range I taped the M60s firing as well as SLR's and M16's. We can get our radio set and tune in to them and pretend we're an Australian platoon stuck out in the jungle under heavy attack."

"Jeez Dubbo! I'm buggered If I know what made you think of that, but it sounds like fun. Hey! McAuley, go get Ecclestone and tell him we want him here with his radio set pronto."

lan went off and so did Dubbo to get his tape recorder. They were back in a couple of minutes with Ecclestone.

"Now fellas, a couple of you keep an eye on the cooks' and bottlewashers' tent while we get things sorted out here, but first we'll turn our lights off. When it's all over they'll look across here for sure, but there'll be no lights on, and they'll think we're all at the movies or the boozer.

Pte. Ecclestone soon had the radio tuned into the cooks who were talking to God-only-knows who. Seeing it was Dubbo's idea, he was given the handset to do the talking and when he cut in on the, the exchange went something like this.

"Can anybody read, over, I say again, can anyone read, over. If anyone can hear, please come in, over."

After a couple of attempts the radio crackled, and we heard, "We can read you, please identify by call sign, over."

"This is Ratshit two, I say again this is Ratshit two and we're in big trouble. We need your help, over". "Ratshit two, we hear you load and clear, this Base one. What's the problem, over."

At this point, Dubbo turned the tape recorder from pause to play and held the radio handset up to the speakers of the tape recorder. The machine guns and rifles were very impressive. At the same time Dubbo spoke into the handset for added affect. The expected reply came back.

"Ratshit two, this is Base one, we couldn't make you out, over."

"Base one this is Ratshit two, we're under heavy attack and badly outnumbered, you're the only radio contact we've been able to make. Stand by, don't go off the air, the enemy are attacking again, over."

Dubbo gave the guns and rifles from the tape another go into the handset for about fifteen seconds.

Our lookout, Doc Kilpatrick said. "Another sis pogos just went into their tent. They're excited as hell over there."



Alan Kilpatrick, 9RAR 7/69 to 11/69 and 1 ATF 12/69 to 6/70 and **Kevin Ecclestone**, HQ AFV 2/69 to 8/69 and 1 ATF 8/69 to 7/70.

All of us were pissing ourselves laughing.

"Base one this is Ratshit two, can you help. We're a platoon caught out here in the jungle on our own. Sunray and Sunray minor are both wounded and a corporal in charge, over."

Another solid burst of fire from the tape went into the handset of the radio.

"Ratshit two, we'll help, what do you want us to do, over?"

"Base one we need artillery support, I say again, we need artillery support, can you contact the Artillery for us, over?"

More small arms fire from the tape went into the handset.

"Ratshit two this is Base one, we can send a runner with a message to HQ Battery. It's only a hundred metres away. You blokes hang on out there, over."

"Base one this is Ratshit two, are you able to take down a message in writing for grid reference purposes, over."

"Ratshit two, this is Base one, affirmative, over."

"Base one this is Ratshit two. Write down three rounds to be fired for effect, I say again, three rounds to be fired for effect on the cook's tent, HQ Company, 1 ATF. I say again, on the cook's tent, HQ Company. 1 ATF, over."

"What! What's that?" Then there was complete silence.

By this time, we had all cracked up laughing our heads off. We couldn't have gone on even if we'd wanted too. Even Dubbo was at his end.

All the cooks and bottlewashers were outside their tent looking in every direction for any tell-tale sign of who'd stooged them. They looked our way for quite a while but all our lights being off had them baffled.

Everyone congratulated Dubbo for a great job of entertainment. None of us could recall when we had such a good laugh and so much fun.

Naturally, the cooks and the bottlewashers kept their mouths shut. D & E Platoon is the troublemaker in HQ company. They would've guessed that it was us but didn't want to embarrass themselves by going fishing for information to find out for sure. We talked and laughed about it amongst ourselves for weeks.

50th Anniversary of the Battle of Nui Le: 21 September 1971 Author: Craig Tibbitts, Historian

Fifty years ago in September 1971, Australia had been involved in the Vietnam War for over nine years. With no end in sight to an unpopular war, the Australians – like the Americans – were reducing their forces as they prepared to pull out of Vietnam. The withdrawal would take time and would not be easy.

While Operation Overlord in June had forced the enemy to withdraw, by September Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army forces were back in Phuoc Tuy Province, again looking to lure the Australians into a large-scale ambush to score a propaganda victory. The Australians would have to meet the challenge again.



A troop of M113A1 Armoured Personnel Carriers of A Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment, Royal Australian Armoured Corps, passing through a rubber plantation during Operation Ivanhoe.

Operation Ivanhoe launched on 19 September. Three companies of the 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, including a company from the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (4RAR/NZ), and one company of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR) - supported by artillery, engineers, armoured personnel carriers (APCs) and helicopters from 9 Squadron, RAAF were inserted near suspected enemy concentrations south-east of the Courtenay Rubber Plantation. But importantly, this time they had no tank support. As part of the staged withdrawal, 1 Armoured Regiment had recently departed Vietnam.

On 20 September an ambush and a series of contacts suggested the enemy was trying to provoke a reaction, luring the Australians into a well-prepared bunker system. The next morning, B Company, 4RAR/NZ came under mortar attack while patrolling south-east of the rubber plantation, suffering fifteen casualties. They then clashed with small parties of enemy in a series of fleeting firefights. As they continued patrolling the Australians saw more and more tell-tale evidence of an enemy presence. One officer remembered "... an uneasy feeling throughout the Battalion ... a sense of foreboding".



A patrol from 10 Platoon, D Company, 4th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment - New Zealand (ANZAC) (4RAR/NZ), follow a track through a rubber plantation during Operation Ivanhoe.

When D Company, four kilometres away, ran into an extensive bunker system and was pinned down by heavy fire, air support was called in and the enemy position was pounded for four hours. That afternoon the company

pushed forward again but were immediately forced to ground by withering fire. Looking to extricate themselves, the Australians unwittingly withdrew into a more precarious position within the bunker system. Trapped, surrounded, with reduced artillery support and no tanks, they were forced to rely on US airstrikes and RAAF helicopter gunships to keep the enemy at bay.

Running low on ammunition, D Company was in dire straits as casualties continued to mount. Artillery support kept them alive throughout the night, landing as close as 50 metres from where they lay. Some expected the enemy to attack at dawn to finish them off, but it never came. In the morning the enemy was gone; the battle of Nui Le was over.



Private James Duff, 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment

Nui Le was the last major enemy engagement by Australian troops in Vietnam. The five killed in action there were the last Australian soldiers to die in combat in Vietnam. For their bravery under fire, seven Australians were recognised with awards. Operation Ivanhoe concluded on 2 October. The following month, Nui Dat base was handed to the South Vietnamese and by December nearly all Australian troops had left Phuoc Tuy Province.

We remember those who fought in that battle 50 years ago. We pay our respects to those who died, and to the survivors who returned home.

VALE



AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN, WE WILL RE-MEMBER THEM "LEST WE FOR-GET" OUR FALLEN AND DE-PARTED COM-RADES

2RAR

ALLAN NORMAN

SVN 1970/71, 5 PI, B Coy Passed away 19 Sept 2021

RONALD MICHALOWSKI

SVN 1970/71, Anti-tank/Trackers Passed away 27 August 2021

BRIAN MOWBRAY WOOLLEY

Malaya 1955/57 Passed away 31 July 2021

4RAR

GREGORY JOHN SUTTON

SVN 1971 & 1968/69 Passed away 20 August 2021

5RAR

WO2 BARRY FITTON

SVN 1966/67 & 1969/70 Passed away 21 Sept 2021

BRIAN JAMES CORK

SVN 1966/67, 3 Pl. A Coy Passed away 26 July 2021

ALLAN JAMES HOWARTH

SVN 1969/70, 5 & 6 PI, B Coy Passed away 20 July 2021

6RAR

GARY WRIGHT

Passed away 29 August 2021

BARRY BUCKLEY

Passed away 21 August 2021

RAYMOND JOHN MacDONALD

Passed away 8 August 2021

WO2 LEONARD STANLEY BREWER

Passed away 6 August 2021

ROGER EDWARD PORTLOCK

SVN 1966/67 Passed away 30 June 2021

HARLEY PHILLIP WEBB

SVN 1966

Passed away 13 June 2021

ALLAN CHARLES MCLEAN

SVN 1969/70, Pioneer Pl, Spt Coy, also **5RAR**, SVN 1966/67 Anti-Tank Pl, Spt Coy Passed away 17 March 2021

9RAR

RICHARD "BARNEY' ALAN BIGWOOD

SVN 1969, 10 PI, D Coy, also **HQ 1ATF** 1969, **4RAR**, 1969 and **1RAR** 1968/69.

Passed away 26 Sept 2021

MICHAEL MARKHAM

SVN 1968/69, C Coy Passed away 23 Sept 2021

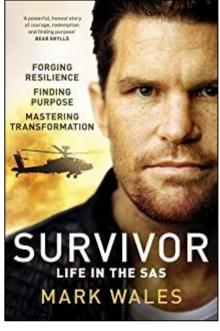
DAVID HUGH STACEY

SVN 1968/69, 5 PI, B Coy Passed away 26 August 2021

EDITOR'S CORNER

BOOK REVIEW

Survivor – Life in the SAS Review by Sgt Dave Morley, Army June 2021



With a plethora of books on the War in Afghanistan why would you

splash your hard-earned bucks on Survivor – Life in the SSI hear you ask?

Unlike many authors former SASR Capt Mark Wales does not use his book to brag about his exploits because, in many instances he barely scraped through the goals he had set himself.

During a platoon attack he led at ADFA, he came up short on the "enemy" position and attacked one of his own sections – an inept, dangerous, and humiliating fail for an aspiring infantry officer.

Later, as SCdt Wales at Duntroon, he failed to complete his ambush orders and winged it, went off tangent and discussed whether chocolate or M&Ms should be taken out on the task, with the O group ending in laughter

Despite this sorry episode and badly fumbling a live grenade at Majura Range. Mr Wales graduated RMC and got his wish, a posting as a PI Comd in 2RAR and later, a deployment to East Timor.

In 2004, then Lt Wales finally got his wish with an opportunity for SASR selection, losing his gooseneck along the way, but impressing his assessors with his determination, if not his military skills.

Several Afghanistan deployments followed with Capt Wales becoming a squadron XO, but the war wore him down.

He left the Army and after a few attempts, was accepted into the prestigious Wharton MBA program at the University of Pennsylvania, again struggling every inch of the way through the course.

Mr Wales later established Kill Kapture, a business producing "tough luxury" clothing, starred on the TV show *Survivor*, where he met his future wife, and started motivational speaking at corporate functions.

Survivor – Life in the SAS features several dozen colour photos

depicting the author's life from childhood, enlisting in the Army, through several deployments and into his post-Army civilian life.

It's a well worth read.

SUBSCRIPTIONS 2021

DIRECT BANKING DETAILS

Bendigo Bank

The Royal Australian Regiment Assoc Victoria Branch Inc.

BSB 633-000 A/C No. 154956494

75% of the year is gone, and have you paid your subs - come in guys it's not that expensive. I pay, what's your excuse.

FUNNY BITS







Wow, I think you went too far with the plastic surgery!



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THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION VICTORIA

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP - 1st January to 31st December 2021

wish to apply for membership of the Vid	(Given Names)
Date of Birth	On first name terms, I prefer to be called
Details of my service with the Regimen	t are:
Regimental Number	Rank Units and dates served
	(If insufficient room use back of form)
Honours, Awards and/or Post Nominals	3
Full Residential or Postal Address	
	Postcode
Telephone (Private)	(Bus/Fax)
Present Occupation	or Retired Yes No (Circle)
Next of Kin	Relationship
Address of NOK (if not As Above)	
	Postcode
Enclosed is my subscription for one year	ar's membership
REMITTANCE: Annual Subscription @ \$30.00 Donation (Optional) TOTAL: \$	\$ \$
Date:	
Signed:	
	-000, Account No. 154956494 with your name included. cayable to 'RAR Association Victoria Branch'.

Send to Secretary, PO Box 6213, FRANKSTON VIC 3199. For a receipt by return mail, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.