

# CASCABEL

Journal of the

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION  
(VICTORIA) INCORPORATED

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MAJ GEN Barry Presenting the CO of 2/10 Fd. Regt. LT. COL D Ashton with a Cart Case and Certificate for the Regiments contribution to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1956 Olympic Games Colonel Commandant RAA (SR) BRIG D Perry is in the background

Photo courtesy Lt. Col Robert Sealey

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# CASCABEL

Journal of the

----- ROYAL AU STRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC -----



## FOUNDED:

First AGM April 1978  
First Cascabel July 1983

## COL COMMANDANT:

BRIG D.I.Perry RFD, ED

## PATRONS and VICE PATRONS:

1978

### Patron:

LT GEN The Hon Sir Edmund Herring  
KCMG, KBE, DSO, MC, ED

**Vice Patron:** BRIG Sir William Hall KBE,  
DSO, ED

1982

**Patron:** BRIG Sir William Hall KBE, DSO,  
ED

**Vice Patron:** MAJGEN N. A. Vickery CBE,  
MC, ED

1999

### Patron:

BRIG K. V. Rossi AM, OBE, RFD, ED

### Vice Patron:

MAJ GEN J. D. Stevenson AO, CBE

## PRESIDENTS:

1978 MAJGEN N. A. Vickery CBE, MC, ED

1979 MAJGEN J. M. McNeill OA, OBE, ED

1981 COL A. (Sandy) Mair ED

1984 MAJ P. S. (Norman) Whitelaw ED

1988 BRIG K. V. Rossi AM, OBE, RFD, ED

1991 MAJ M. Taggart RFD, ED

2004 MAJ N Hamer RFD

## JOURNAL NAME:

**CASCABEL** - Spanish - Origin as small bell or Campanilla (pro: Kaskebell), spherical bell, knob like projection.

**CASCABLE** - English spelling.

## ARTILLERY USE:

After 1800 AD, it became adjustable. The breech is closed in large calibres by a CASCABEL(E) screw, which is a solid block of forged wrought iron, screwed into the breech coil until it pressed against the end of the steel tube. In the smaller calibres, the A bore tube is carried through to form the CASCABEL(E)

[Ref: "Text Book on Fortification Etc", Royal Military College, Sandhurst, by COL G. Philips, RE, 4th Ed, Ch-1, P9, para 28,1884].

[Source: COL Alan Mason, Vic, May 1993].

## CASCABEL HISTORY:

The name was put forward by the first editor, LTCOL Rob Gaw, and accepted because of its unique and obvious Artillery connection.

## ASSOC LOGO:

Our Assoc Logo is the 1800 AD 9 Pdr Waterloo Field Gun. Copy is taken from Device, Badge and Motto of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, as approved in 1833, by HM King William IV.

## LAPEL BADGE:

Copy of the left arm brass gilded gun once worn by GUN SGTS above the chevrons on each arm. Brassards worn by IGs at North Head were embroidered with this insignia. Selected by MAJ Warren Barnard, 1984 Assoc Committee.

**RAA Association (VIC) Inc  
Committee**

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9702 2100  
**Vice President:** Lt Col. Jason Cooke  
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SSGT Brian Cleeman  
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(10 Mdm Regt Assn)

**Honorary  
Auditor:**

**MUSEUM TRUST**

**Curator:** SSGT Brian Cleeman  
Phone: 9560 7116  
**Members:**

**VIC REGT CONTACTS**

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St Kilda  
  
22 Fd Bty 8710 2407  
65 Princes Hwy  
Dandenong South  
  
38 Fd Bty 5221 7666  
Myers St  
Geelong  
  
38 Fd Bty 5231 2056  
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Colac

**CONTENTS AND SUBMISSIONS**

The contents of CASCABEL Journal are determined by the editor. Articles or opinions of authors & contributors are their own, and do not necessarily represent or reflect the official position of the RAA Assn (Vic) Inc, Australian Army, the committee, the editor, staff or agents.

Article style, clarity and conciseness remain the responsibility of the article owner or author.

Submissions for the **July 2007** issue are required no later than **1<sup>st</sup> June 2007** unless otherwise arranged with the Editor.

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# The President Writes

The Church Parade was held on the second Sunday in February. There was the usual good attendance by the Association members. The Regiment was also very well represented by all ranks. The Band was up to its usual high standard and seemed to be appreciated by all who attended.

The biggest plus from my point of view was the form of service on one piece of paper and the hymns printed out in an easily read form.

The Banner of Her Majesty the Queen was paraded at the service, and this brought a real Artillery emphasis to the service.

In my opinion, the actual service itself could have been a little different, and the speaker could have related more to the day.

I am sure that all who attended will have an opinion and some comment to make, either approval or criticism; so a form has been printed later in this magazine so that you can have your say. Please take the time to complete and return the form so that the Committee can make a value judgement for the future.

A visit to HMAS Cerberus has been arranged for Thursday April 4<sup>th</sup>. Details will be notified when they are finalised.

The arrangements for the Gunner Luncheon in August are progressing satisfactorily, and again, details will be notified as they become available.

As I mentioned in the last magazine, a number of activities have a short lead-time. The only practical, inexpensive way of notifying members is the email. If you have an email address, please ensure it is up-to-date. If you do not have access to the internet, maybe you know someone who does, and would be prepared to take messages for you. If you do have access to the internet and you know of members who do not, perhaps you could pass information on to them.

Regards to all

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Neil Hamer".

Neil Hamer  
MAJ (R)

## Membership Report April 2007

### Current Membership

Life Members	212
Annual Members	72
Affiliates	39
Others (CO/CI, Messes, etc.)	11
RSL	1
Libraries	<u>5</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>346</u>

67 AA SL BTY Association and 15 AUST FD REGT Association have asked to be removed from the mailing list.

6 unfinancial members have been archived.

### New Member

We welcome BDR R J Marshall to the Association as an Annual Member. BDR Marshall enlisted in 2 MDM REGT in 1948.

### Vale

It is with regret that we note the passing of COL W M Vincent RFD ED and MAJ J V Phillips OAM RFD ED.

COL Mike Vincent joined the Association in 1982 and became a Life Member in 1983. I first knew of Mike in about 1952 at 2 FD REGT. Although he had been about the system since then, I have no other information recorded.

MAJ John Phillips joined the Association in 1982 and became a Life Member in 1984. John also had a National Medal and an Anniversary of National Service 1951 1972 Medal.

John served with 91 Forestry SQN RAE (SR), 14 NSTB, 22 FD REGT (SP), 10 MDM REGT, 2 FD REGT, 132 DIV LOC BTY, MonUR, 3 Pay Unit and HQ 3 DIV. He served from 1953 to 1990 37 years.

In 1990, John became the curator of the RAAPC Museum. He was awarded the OAM for his work in this area.

**The usual reminder about the proforma on the last page below the Parade Card.**

If you have not already done so, it would be appreciated if you would provide the information requested so that our files can be kept up to date. This proforma should also be used to notify us of any changes in the future. It would also help if you could provide any information about your occupation, achievements and other service to the community.



Neil Hamer  
MAJ (R)  
Membership Co-ordinator

Contact: Telephone: 9702 2100  
0419 533 067  
E-mail [nhamer@bigpond.net.au](mailto:nhamer@bigpond.net.au)



## RAA Association (Victoria) Inc Corps Shop

**The following items may be purchased by mail, or at selected Association activities.**

### PRICE LIST

<p><b>Badges, etc</b></p> <p>RAA Assn (Vic), members                      \$5.00          RAA badge cuff links                            \$9.00          Key ring, RAA badge                            \$4.00          Key ring, RAA (Pewter)                        \$4.00</p> <p><b>Ties</b></p> <p>Blue with single red gun                        \$30.00          RAA Burgundy with gold gun                   \$43.00          RAA Navy with gold gun                        \$43.00          St Barbara Stripe                                \$43.00</p> <p><b>Books</b></p> <p><i>Kookaburra</i>                                        \$39.00  <i>Aust Military Equip Profiles</i>                    \$13.50  <i>AMEF Profile Leopard Tank</i>                    \$17.00</p> <p><b>ENQUIRIES:</b></p> <p>BRIAN CLEEMAN                                (03) 9560 7116          REG MORRELL                                    (03) 9562 9552</p>	<p><b>Stationery</b></p> <p>Card, RAA badge, with envelope              Christmas message                            \$0.20              blank inside                                    \$0.20</p> <p>Stickers</p> <p>    Bumper: <i>Gunners do it</i>                              <i>with a bigger bang</i>                    \$2.00              Square: gold badge, red                              and blue background                    \$2.00</p> <p><b>ORDERS:</b>          Most orders will require an additional FIVE DOLLARS packing and postage, which will cover one to several small items. If in any doubt concerning this, or availability, please contact one of the enquiries numbers above.</p> <p>Cheques should be made payable to RAA Association (Victoria) Inc, and be crossed <i>Not Negotiable</i>.</p> <p>Orders to:                      Mr B. Cleeman            28 Samada Street            Notting Hill VIC 3168</p>
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### **AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPING MEMORIAL - AN INVITATION TO BE A SPONSOR OR MEMBER**

The Australian Peacekeeping Memorial will commemorate and celebrate Australian peacekeeping. It will honour the sacrifice, service and valour of Australian peacekeepers given in the same spirit as in other conflicts honoured in cenotaphs and memorials across Australia and on ANZAC Parade, Canberra.

#### **Progress to Date**

The Federal Government, through the Department of Veterans' Affairs, has provided an initial grant of \$200,000 to assist with the construction of the Memorial, which experience indicates requires about \$2.5 million to fund such a major national memorial in Canberra. A committee for the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project has been convened with duly elected office bearers and representatives from the ADF, the AFP, State and Territory Police, and peacekeeping veterans.

The APMP Committee welcomes membership and support from all peacekeeping veterans, interested individuals and organisations.

Full details of the project are listed on our website : [www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au](http://www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au)

## **Colonel W M Vincent RFD ED**

**“A big man with a big voice and a big heart”**

*Provided by Brigadier D I Perry RFD ED  
Colonel Commandant Southern Region*

William Michael Vincent was born in Hobart on 27 April 1934 and died suddenly on 6 January 2007.

He joined the Union Bank (later the ANZ Bank) in 1950 and remained a banker until his retirement in 1996. He was particularly successful in his civilian employment having established the Bank in Singapore in 1977.

His military career commenced with NS in 1952. He was selected for Officer training and was commissioned shortly after. Work brought him to Victoria where he was posted to 2 Fd Regt RAA as Lieutenant in 1955. He was subsequently promoted to Captain and Major in that Regiment, serving as BC of both P and Q BTY's and 2 I/C.

As a Major he visited PNG in 1964 and as a Lt Col visited SVN in 1969.

He commanded 15 Fd Regt RAA and also 2/15 Fd Regt RAA. In 1981 he was promoted Colonel and appointed as COLARTY 3 Div FF GP. He was appointed CI RCSC (3Div) in 1985-86 and was also appointed as Honorary ADC to the Governor General.

He retired from the Active List in 1988 after 36 years of service. On retirement he continued his military interests with the DRA(Vic) where he served as President from 1994 to 1998 and the Naval & Military Club where he served as a Director from 1988 to 1992. More recently he became involved with his local RSL where he embarked upon the major project of cataloguing and recording their property and history. It was a mark of his dedication that he was working on this project when he collapsed on the day before he died.

In between his civilian and military occupations he found time to be involved with U3A where he shared his love of music as a lecturer on Opera Appreciation and Jazz Appreciation.

Mike was the epitome of an Officer and a Gentleman. A larger than life gentle man a lover of life, of family, and God, Queen and Country.

His memorial service was held at All Saints Church Toorak and the Military eulogy was delivered by MAJ GEN J E Barry AM MBE RFD ED

He is survived by Mary, his Wife of 45 years and their Daughters, Helen, Ruth and Sarah, their respective families, especially his beloved Grand Children, Hayden, Ella and Celeste

### **Colonel W.M. (Michael) Vincent RFD ED**

All will be shocked to hear of his death: he suffered a cardiac arrest and passed away on Saturday 6 January 2007.

He will be remembered (amongst many other things) as a stalwart gunner, a past President and Vice President of the Victorian Branch of the Defence Reserves Association and a long time Naval & Military Club member and supporter. Before his retirement he worked in the International Division of a major bank and for some years was its Singapore manager. His contribution to the community was multi-faceted and he will be sadly missed by his many friends and fellow reservists.

About his military career: available records show that Lieutenant W M Vincent was listed as a member of 2nd Field Regiment RAA in 1955.

In 1960 he was a Captain and posted as Battery Captain and in 1963, after promotion to Major, became Battery Commander of P Battery. That posting was followed in 1966 by a transfer to Q Battery as Battery Commander.

In 1969 following a term as Second-in-Command of 2nd Fd Regt and having gained qualification for promotion, he assumed command of 15th Field Regiment RAA at Dandenong where he remained until 1971.

In 1976, he was again called upon to take Regimental command, this time of the recently amalgamated 2nd/15th Field Regiment RAA at Batman Ave.

He was promoted to Colonel in April 1981 and was appointed Colonel (Artillery) on 3rd Division Field Force Group Headquarters where he remained until 1983 after which he became Chief Instructor of the Reserve Command and Staff College until his retirement.

To his many colleagues and friends he will be remembered for his larger than life presence, his perceptive nature and his astute management. His contributions will be sadly missed in his many interests.

Our thoughts and condolences go to his devoted wife Mary and their family.

Reprinted from the Defence Reserves Association Newsletter

### **Colonel Mike Vincent A tribute**

From the moment that Saturday when I heard that Mike had died, I felt that I had lost the company of a great friend and that something, or rather someone, had suddenly gone out of my life.

Whether Mike would agree, I always felt that we had somewhat parallel careers in the CMF and the Army Reserve. We commanded our respective units (he 2/15, me 10) at about the same time and we succeeded each other as "Colonels Artiller".. Because of his integrity, I was appointed first.

At TEWTs, we were renowned for jousting with each other, whether it was to offer the syndicate solution or to comment on it. "Seconds got out of the ring" when we were on our feet.

In many ways, Mike looked after me. He was the one who would point out that one does not wear gloves in summer ceremonial service dress.

He was also responsible for the various clerical titles under which I served, whether as "The Bishop of Birchip," "The Cardinal," or "The Wicar of Woodend".

He would describe my marching ability as "loping," but then no one else seems to have my long legs!

We had similar interests in model railways, but Mike took the hobby to a much higher plane.

He too was an active churchman in the Anglican church, as to he was in the craft.

We have both been blessed with wonderful wives.

Who will now organise the Gunner Luncheon and the 3 Div one?

In some obituaries, the writer might suggest that the departed person would be leaving a hole in the organisations for which they worked. Forbid me to suggest anything similar, but I will enter the rooms of the Naval and Military Club and other venues and find that Mike's stentorian voice will never again be heard and we will all be the poorer for it.

COL Graham Farley



## **Major J V Phillips OAM RFD ED**

### **An adult lifetime of service to country and community**

*Provided by Brigadier D I Perry RFD ED  
Colonel Commandant Southern Region*

John Vincent Phillips was born on 31 January 1935 and died after a short illness on 4 February 2007.

John was employed by the Victoria Forests Commission for his entire civilian working life. Shortly after turning 18, he enlisted in the CMF as an Engineer and in 1954 he was called up for NS and as a consequence of his postal address was posted to 14 NS Trg Bn which was the Artillery training Battalion.

At the cessation of his recruit training he was posted to 22 Fd Regt (SP) RAA and following the disbandment of this, Australia's first and only SP Regt, he was posted to 10 Med Regt RAA and then to 2 Fd Regt RAA. During these appointments, he was commissioned and served as a GPO.

He was then posted to 132 Div Loc Bty RAA as a Captain where he served in a variety of appointments including Rdr Tp Comd and BK. Following these Regimental postings, he served out of Corps at CSTU and Monash University Regiment and then returned to RAA as a SO3 RAA at HQ 3 Div.

On reaching the then retiring age for FF Officers John transferred to RAAPC where he was promoted to Major and continued to serve until reaching final retiring age in 1990.

Throughout his life John developed a penchant for history and travel and was instrumental in establishing the RAAPC Corps Museum, the Forests Commission Museum and was a significant contributor to and supporter of the RAA collection at Chapel Street. It was in recognition of these services that he was awarded the OAM and he maintained a constant support of these facilities to the end.

He will be remembered by all those that worked with him or served with him as a happy honest hardworking and God fearing man who enjoyed life to the full. His funeral service was held at St Alipius Catholic Church Ballarat and his military eulogy was delivered by Lt Col W Fletcher RAAPC



**VX15922 Corporal R F Woodward**

**3/123284 Warrant Officer R F Woodward BEM**

*Provided by Brigadier D I Perry RFD ED  
Colonel Commandant Southern Region  
From the military eulogy delivered by Mr R Wilkinson  
Secretary 2/14 Inf Bn Association*

In service terms Ronald Frank Woodward was a man of two separate lives. As an infantryman in World War Two with the 2/14 Battalion where he was called "George". and as a Warrant Officer in the Artillery Corps of the peacetime Citizens Military Forces where he was known as "Paddy".

Army records in Canberra advise that Ronald Frank was born on 9 February 1920 at Melbourne. He enlisted on 20 May 1940 at Melbourne and marched in to the 2/14 Battalion on 24 May 1940. He was posted to 10 Platoon in B Company.

He became known to his fellow soldiers as “George” or “Georgie”. which was the name he originally enlisted under. He was very much under age and so he took his cousin’s identity. His actual birth date was 9 February 1923

He initially saw action against the Vichy French forces in Syria in hard fighting at Zahrani, Damour and Jezzine before returning to Australia with the Battalion to meet the initial Japanese threat to Port Moresby. The Battalion saw immediate action on 27 August 1942 as they took over the key Isurava battlefield on the Kokoda Track under fierce enemy attack.

Over the next several days they repulsed 28 company strength attacks resulting in over 200 enemy dead in front of their position. The Platoon Commander, Lt Butch Bisset, moved about the position constantly cheering and inspiring his men whilst distributing extra ammunition until he suffered mortal wounds from a machine gun burst. His men worshipped him and, at great personal risk, a number of them including Georgie Woodward volunteered to carry him clear of the area. At times a running fight would develop and they would turn about and ward off enemy attacks until finally clear.

George was wounded during this period on the track and was to be repatriated. It was at this time that the Army became aware of his age and sought to have him return to Australia for discharge. He managed to avoid the MP’s and remain scarce long enough for his parents to give their consent for him to remain in the army.

George then served with the Battalion until the end of the war, serving in the Markham-Ramu Valleys and Borneo campaigns. He marched out of the Battalion on 7 November 1945 and was discharged from the Army on 18 December 1945 with the rank of corporal. He returned to his family as Paddy. Of the total of just over 3000 men who served in the Battalion through the course of World War Two, George was one of only 116 to see active service with the Battalion in every Campaign.

His friend, Sergeant Jim Coy, MM, who served with George throughout the war recalls how George “used to give me curry” on how to do things.

After the War, Paddy enlisted in the Citizens Military Forces in the Royal Australian Artillery. He served with 2 Medium, 4 Medium and 10 Medium Regiments gaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class II and serving as Battery Sergeant Major. He had secondments in various training roles during this time in particular being posted as Battery Sergeant Major to, “Blamey Battery”, an artillery officer training unit set up in 1951

In the New Year’s Honours list for 1955 was the listing in the London Gazette of the award of the British Empire Medal (Military Division) to Warrant Officer Class II Ronald Frank Woodward for services to the Royal Australian Artillery. This simple listing and Paddy’s modesty hid the circumstances of a serious peace time military accident when a round prematurely “cooked” in the bore of the gun during a practice shoot.

Paddy took control of the situation and supervised the response to the accident and recovery and treatment of the casualties. His skill training and quiet determination enabled the situation to be properly dealt with and typified his entire military service service, devotion and friendship to others.

George was a valued member and friend of his comrades in the 2/14 Battalion Association. He was President of the Association in 1996 and was made a Life Member in 2005. He was also a respected member of the Royal Australian Artillery Association and the Portarlington RSL.

He did not suffer fools but was willing to share his knowledge and provide assistance to anyone who needed help.

This is how we will remember him.

### **Farewell Brave Soldier and Friend.**

(This Vale is longer than most and whilst the circumstances are not entirely unique, they warrant telling. Paddy Woodward was an exceptional person well known and highly respected by all who served with him D Perry)



## ***Tet turning point***

**By Chris Coulthard-Clark**

If there was any one point when the Vietnam War was lost for the allies, the Tet Offensive of 1968 was probably it. Yet the reverse suffered at that time by the southern republic and its American and other allies, including Australia, came in the midst of palpable military success. William Slim had been able to turn “defeat into victory” (the title of his famous memoirs) in Burma in 1944.<sup>45</sup>; but Tet was a case where defeat came wrapped up in apparent victory.



Soldiers of the 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (7RAR), wait for the helicopters that will take them to the starting point for Operation Coburg.

AWM P01539.005

In the last months of 1967 allied intelligence had detected sure signs of communist plans for an offensive timed to coincide with the traditional Buddhist celebrations of the lunar new year (the end of January). These signs, however, provided no clues about the likely enemy targets and methods, or the nature of what was planned. No one knew that the North Vietnamese leadership, having become no less frustrated than the allies at the apparent military deadlock that had developed in the war, had opted for a massive strike which they hoped might lead to decisive victory.

Although the Viet Cong announced their intention to observe a seven-day ceasefire over the sacred holiday period, South Vietnamese and American commanders were not lulled into lowering their guard. They knew from previous experience that, even though the communists had not usually violated such truces in previous years, they still habitually used any bombing halt or break in operations to re-deploy forces and generally improve their positions.

Accordingly, for the 1968 festival, named that year Tet Mau Than (“The New Year of the Monkey”), the allies decided to respond with a 36-hour ceasefire during which only half the South Vietnamese forces would be permitted to stand-down. American and other forces would be put on full alert and positioned to deal with any attacks the communists might launch. Thanks to the foresight of Lieutenant General Frederick Weyand, the US commander in III Corps Tactical Zone, the focus of defence preparations was specifically altered to cover population centres across South Vietnam, especially the capital Saigon.

For the 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) this meant deployment outside their usual field of activity in the province of Phuoc Tuy. After the commander of Australian Forces Vietnam, offered the use of the 1ATF, Weyand asked him to send it to neighbouring Bien Hoa province, to operate alongside American forces preparing to block any thrust against the vast complex of military installations around Bien Hoa city and adjoining Long Binh, located some 25 kilometres north-east of Saigon. The task force move, codenamed “Operation Coburg”, involved the bulk of 2RAR (Royal Australian Regiment)/NZ (ANZAC) and 7RAR, along with supporting armour, artillery and engineers. Left behind in the 1ATF base at Nui Dat would be 3RAR, while a New Zealand company of 2 RAR held the Horseshoe feature.



A group portrait of the members of the assault pioneer platoon, support company, 7 RAR shortly before they left on Operation Coburg.

AWM P01979.004

By the afternoon of 24 January the Australian battalions were on the ground in their new area of operations, called "AO Columbus", on the eastern boundary of Bien Hoa with Long Khanh province. It was an area not totally unknown to Australians, as 1RAR had fought there in November 1965 when it was attached to the US 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate), operating out of Bien Hoa airbase. Almost immediately patrols began having contacts, and these increased over the next four days in both scale and frequency as a number of enemy camps were uncovered and attacked.

At 6 pm on 29 January the truce came into effect, and operations by the Australians were put on hold. During the early hours of the following day, however, some communist forces in the northern half of the country mistakenly began their part in the planned offensive a day early. President Thieu of South Vietnam immediately cancelled the ceasefire and recalled troops on leave to their posts. At 3 am the next day the relative calm was shattered as towns and cities across the nation came under massive attack from the communists.

The extraordinary scene in the north, around the old imperial capital of Hue, was remembered by one member of the Australian Army Training Team (AATTV) who was there with a South Vietnamese platoon carrying out night surveillance on a low hill outside the city. Warrant Officer Terry Egan recounted how, at 3.40 am, the whole horizon from 20 kilometres north of Hue to Phu Bai 15 kilometres to the south-east suddenly erupted to the roar of gunfire. In addition to artillery of varying calibres, flares, mortars and tracer bullets, the night sky was lit by the trails of banks of rockets arcing from the inland mountains towards the city.

A particular focus of the offensive was Saigon, the population of which was sent reeling by an onslaught which was both frightening and staggering in its savagery and destructiveness. Soon large tracts of Cholon, the adjoining Chinese town, were levelled by fighting between communist insurgents and government troops. A notable witness to events in the capital was Major General Arthur MacDonald, who had taken over from Vincent as Commander AFV (Australian Forces Vietnam) only at midnight on 30 January. When he was woken by an explosion near his house in the centre of Saigon a few hours later, he stepped out onto his balcony, in time to see Viet Cong carrying satchel charges on long poles running past towards the nearby Presidential Palace. Not long afterwards, heavy firing broke out down the road, where communist special assault troops also attacked the US Embassy.

Other Australians in the capital had similar experiences. The billets for Australian personnel working in Saigon, known as "Hotel Canberra", came under attack from about 40 Viet Cong soon after 2.30 am. Members of 7RAR who were providing the guard detachment in sandbag "pillboxes" out in front of the building at the time returned fire, killing one of the attackers and forcing the others to retire. About an hour later, another enemy soldier appeared and fired off a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) before he was also killed. The missile skidded down the road towards the hotel but fortunately did not explode.

Out in AO Columbus the Australians were called upon to deal with a Viet Cong incursion into the village of Trang Bom. D Company of 2RAR supported by armoured personnel carriers became

involved in house-to-house fighting to clear the village, only to see the Viet Cong return the next night and cause the whole process to be repeated. Fighting there lasted into 2 February.

Despite the precautions that had been taken at General Weyand's instigation, the Bien Hoa-Long Binh complex was still heavily attacked by 5 VC Division, resulting in much damage to aircraft, buildings and facilities. The role of the Australians nearby was promptly changed to intercepting and blocking enemy forces as they attempted to move back to their sanctuaries. In the words of the commanding officer of 7RAR, Lieutenant Colonel Eric Smith, for the next few days Viet Cong flowed past his company "like water". For the most part, the enemy were demoralised and disorganised, and avoided contact, although many were caught in platoon ambushes set by the Australians.



Lieutenant Colonel Eric Smith, commanding officer  
7RAR.

AWM P01706.007

One of the most significant actions was that of C Company of 7RAR, which on 5 February found itself in contact with an enemy force in a well-constructed bunker system six kilometres north of Trang Bom. After assaulting the position on three successive days, aided by air strikes, artillery and helicopter gunships, the Australians were finally left in possession of a base camp believed to have been defended by an enemy regimental headquarters and three companies.

After 9 February both battalions were ordered to move back to the south of the area of operations, around two fire support bases codenamed "Harrison" and "Andersen". From here, 7RAR was relieved by 3RAR on 11 February and 2RAR was returned to Nui Dat two days later. FSB Harrison was now closed, but operations continued to be directed from FSB Andersen, which was located near Trang Bom. Three times between 18 and 28 February, Andersen came under attack but each time the Viet Cong were beaten off.

Meanwhile, the Australians left in Phuoc Tuy were also engaged in heavy fighting, after Viet Cong forces attacked the provincial capital, Ba Ria, and other population centres like Long Dien, Hoa Long and Dat Do. At first light on 1 February the National Liberation Front flag was flying over BA Ria. The whole town appeared to have been infiltrated; government installations had been over-run or cut off, and snipers had taken up position in numerous places, including the town's cinema and the cathedral.

At Nui Dat, the newly arrived deputy commander of 1ATF, Colonel Donald Dunstan, sent the task force Ready Reaction Force (RRF) to assist the Province Chief in his attempts to recapture the enemy-held parts of BA Ria. A Company of 3RAR, carried in APCs (armoured personnel carriers) of A Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment, was ordered to join in the defence of Sector (province) Headquarters. From the moment the carriers entered the town the Australians came under light automatic fire, and by the time they arrived at Sector Headquarters they were receiving RPGs as well. In fighting to secure other government positions, two carriers were damaged and disabled.

By mid-afternoon on 2 February, the majority of the Viet Cong had withdrawn and A Company was relieved to return to Nui Dat. Late the next day, D Company of 3RAR was deployed to Long Dien to assist in clearing it and the nearby village of Ap Long Kien. By early afternoon on 6 February both tasks were complete and the company returned to Nui Dat.

The task force was again called upon on 7 February to assist with the security of BA Ria and (the next day) Long Dien. Other elements of 3RAR were involved in an uneventful sweep of Hoa Long on 8-9 February, but this was effectively the end of the Tet Offensive in Phuoc Tuy. Overall, the casualty toll on both sides had been relatively small – including five Australians killed and nearly 50 Viet Cong.

Operation Coburg was brought to an end on 1 March, and the task force elements returned to Nui Dat. In the fighting in Bien Hoa province, enemy losses had amounted to 145 killed, 110 wounded/escaped and five captured, for Australian casualties of seven men killed in action, three died of wounds, and 75 wounded. The Viet Cong had also lost considerable quantities of weapons, equipment and rice.

If the Australians could count themselves as successful, so could the allies generally across the country. Although initially overwhelmed by the scale of the Tet Offensive, they were able to recover their balance within about six hours of its start. The communists were driven out of most of the towns within four days and the general uprising which they hoped to trigger did not eventuate. Fighting continued in Saigon until mid-February, but the cost to the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army was out of all proportion to the losses they inflicted.

In all, some 45,000 enemy personnel were killed by the end of February (out of a total of 84,000 committed to the offensive), compared to allied military deaths of about 6,000. With the locally based communist infrastructure in the South effectively annihilated, the leadership of North Vietnam would be obliged to send increased numbers of troops from its own territory to keep the war going. Judged on this scale, the offensive had been an unmitigated disaster – in every sense except public perception.

The very fact that the communists had been able to mount such a concerted effort, at a time when allied military authorities had been providing assurances that they were well on top in the conflict, was sufficient for pundits to deduce that the communists must be winning the war after all. It did not matter, for example, that the enemy troops who stormed the US Embassy in Saigon had been on a suicide mission, with all being cut down in the outer grounds. In the sensationalist press, this episode was distorted into a story that the enemy had actually occupied the embassy buildings. Faced with a tidal wave of public scepticism and disenchantment, the American government accepted a new political and psychological reality. US President Lyndon Johnson rejected requests by his commander in Vietnam, General William Westmoreland, for another 206,000 American troops to regain the initiative and called for a detailed review of official policy in Vietnam. On 31 March, Johnson ordered a halt to the bombing of most of North Vietnam and withdrew from the 1968 presidential election. There could not have been a more stark admission that his policy on the war had failed.

Tet had handed the communists a propaganda coup which actually reversed the military results of the offensive. It was for them, in every sense, a victory snatched from the ashes of defeat.

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<http://www.awm.gov.au/wartime/20/article.asp>



## 2/10 Field Regiment Presentation Night Photos



LT Eling receives his Commission Certificate from the Colonel Commandant RAA (SR) BRIG D



CPL Burnett receives the 10 Mdm Regt. Association prize for the best JNCO of 38 Fd Bty

## The Major Norman Whitelaw Prizes



WO2 Wainwright receives the Award for the best WO / SNCO of 2/10 Fd Regt



SGT McKenzie receives the Award for the best ARA Cardre of 2/10 Fd Regt



GNR Grzelak receives the Award for the best OR of 2/10 Fd Regt

The Officer of the Year Award was won by Capt Sullivan. He was unable to attend the presentation night.

Photos courtesy Lt. Col Robert Sealey



## Confessions of a Shy Signals Sergeant

The Regimental Signals Officer was unable to attend the fortnight camp at Site 17 Seymour so the newly commissioned 2nd Lt was given the job in addition to his duties as the IO. Evidently the regular Adjutant harboured a grudge against the novice IO because the IO was instructed to rely on the experienced Sig Sgt me.

The vehicles allocated to Sigs included one mechanically unreliable Austin Champ, one World War Two vintage Chev "Blitz" Pie Van Sig truck as the radio vehicle and an open 6x6 GMC as a line crew vehicle. The GMC had no canopy. I was told that there were none at 3 BOD South Kensington. This information was unpalatable because rain was forecast and the line crew had no protection.

The QM, Capt Dick, said he was genuinely sorry that he had no spare tent fly to issue to me as a makeshift canopy for the GMC. I believed him. The only time that a QM takes pleasure in refusal to issue is when he does have the item in store and refuses out of sheer enmity.

A recce tour of the entire site housing Two Field Regiments and One Div Loc Bty showed, with some stretch of the imagination, the only "spare" tent fly to be that erected over the guard tent at the main entrance gate. I coveted that fly. Several of the less muscular and more cerebral line crew members volunteered to assist Staff Sgt "Nobby" set up the orderly room and while he was still recovering they discovered their objective in one of the wicker panniers used for paper work transportation. The form was so obscure that even the restored Staff Sgt was ignorant of its use. After the "AAF" was printed so many numbers that the form must have been designed for the start of World War Three.

Impeccably but mendaciously typed the form ordered the guard commander to strike and fold the guard tent fly for collection at 1100 hours by the Divisional Maintenance Unit who would paint the word GUARD in military white on the fly and return it by last light that day. A tall thin line crew member wearing an ill-fitting borrowed Sgt's jacket delivered the signal to the guard commander. By the time the line crew messenger had slunk back behind the battery charging shed to shed his borrowed jacket the guard commander had the immaculate folded fly by the roadside awaiting collection.

At precisely 1100 hours the line crew GMC wearing number plates temporarily borrowed from a visiting military ambulance collected the tent fly which was then hidden beneath a bench in the Officers Mess bar pending the approach of inclement weather.

A later enquiry into the loss of the tent fly was inconclusive although suspicion of involvement by medical personnel persisted for some time.

The camp was an enormous success. Radio operators proved competent, recharged batteries were delivered just in time, and, irrespective of the harsh weather conditions, the line crews in the field pushed the cable through to OP's and Command Posts from the back of their tent fly covered GMC. Sometime or other the IO / Acting Sig O, must have misinterpreted a comment made by a senior officer about the importance of the protection of radio batteries because, on the rare occasions I saw him, he was standing in Field Marshall Kitchener pose near a chore horse.

On strike camp day the QM, Capt Dick was faced with one facet of the QM's nightmare. Rather than being one short he had one too many tent flies. A gun sergeant who was later to achieve considerable status as a Warrant Officer One solved the problem for Capt Dick. He tossed the spare fly into a pie van of another regiment as it passed through the gate to be returned to 3 BOD. Superior intelligence prevails.

Unfortunately for me a conversation with the catering Sgt George left me unsettled. George told me that ordinary chicken was served in the snake pit and OR's mess but that Officers were served aristocratic chicken. That triggered my covetous characteristic so I enrolled in the Officer's cadre course and eventually obtained my pips.

In the Officers Mess a few nights later a moustachioed major, one of the cadre instructors, told me that I should not aspire to ever hold a Field Marshall's baton due to the multitude of my personality defects a principal one of which was my tendency to be grossly over deferential of officers senior to myself.

By way of consolation for his remarks he told me that high rank is not as attractive as it appears to be at first sight. Every elevation in rank, he said, involves an elevation in vicious behaviour and as proof of that he told me of his own treatment. A little problem occurred at Puckapunyal with a BBQ'd jumbuk putatively owned by a squatter named Teehan and he, the major, was summoned by a General to attend Divisional HQ in Queens Road Melbourne. He drove to Melbourne from his home in a provincial city to be met by a WO1 MP who directed him to a waiting room barren except for a hard wooden chair and a tannoy speaker with no "off" switch.

He remained there for nearly two hours with verse four of "Waltzing Matilda" being played repeatedly. It was only the heavy traffic in Queens Road that stopped him crossing the road and emulating the suicidal swaggy with Albert Park Lake as the billabong. Appalled at evidence of such high rank viciousness I resolved to remain at a modest rank for the remainder of my service in khaki to Queen Elizabeth the First of Australia.

When a criminal is convicted in court of one crime he is able to admit other crimes and have them "taken into consideration" with no additional penalty. And so I tender this voluntary confession of the misappropriation of military property to lift the weight from my ageing conscience and in the hope of absolution from this and other undiscovered crimes committed.

Sgt. A.N. Onymous  
PRONTO



## **ANZAC Day 2007**

On behalf of the Officers and Soldiers of the Regiment, it is my pleasure to invite you and your family to the ANZAC Day Dawn Service on Wednesday 25 April 2007. The Service will be held at the Gunner's Memorial at 8 Chapel Street, St. Kilda East, commencing at 6.00 am. It will be preceded by a Gun Fire breakfast at 5.00 am and followed by a hot breakfast at 6.45 am, both in the Drill Hall. The Regiment will then participate in the ANZAC Day march in the City of Melbourne and on completion host functions that you are also invited to attend in the respective Messes of the Regiment. The Messes will be open from midday.

I would be grateful if you could RSVP for the ANZAC Day activities to the Regimental Sergeant Major, Warrant Officer Class One David Lehr, on 0408 021 064 or [david.lehr@defence.gov.au](mailto:david.lehr@defence.gov.au), by no later than Tuesday 17 April 2007.

The Regiment and I look forward to seeing you on ANZAC Day.

D.J.R. Ashton  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Commanding Officer  
2/10<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment

### **Geelong & 38 Field Battery ANZAC Day Activities**

Lay wreaths at the Dawn Service

Geelong	4.15 am
Colac	6.00 am

38 Field Battery will march in the Geelong Parade at 11.00 am.

The 10 Medium Regiment Association Annual General Meeting will be held at Newlands Barracks after the March.

A barbeque will be provided in the afternoon  
All are welcome



## **60 years of Australian Peacekeeping and the Gunner contribution**

By Major General (Retired) Tim Ford, AO  
RAA Representative Colonel Commandant, and  
Chairman of the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project

Peacekeeping generally describes actions taken by the international community to assist and support a developing peace in countries that have been racked by conflict with neighbours or by internal divisions. 2007 is the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Australia to Peacekeeping, and our peacekeeping veterans plan to mark the occasion later this year by approval for a site in Canberra for construction of an Australian Peacekeeping Memorial.

Australia's involvement in international peacekeeping first commenced in Indonesia on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 1947, when four Australian Military officers were deployed by Australia as part of a United Nations Good Offices Commission. Since then, Australia has contributed over 46,000 Australian military and police to more than fifty peace operations around the world<sup>1</sup>.

Over the past few years veterans of these peacekeeping missions have felt that an Australian Peacekeeping Memorial should be built in Canberra to honor all those who have and will continue to serve on peacekeeping operations. The Memorial would represent all those from the Defence Force, the Federal, State and Territory Police Forces and Government Agencies who have served and died on peacekeeping operations commanded or authorized by the United Nations or sanctioned by the Government of Australia.

Today's peacekeeping activity by the United Nations is as large as it has ever been. At the moment, there are some 18 UN "Blue Helmet" Peacekeeping Operations being conducted around the world, involving over 95,000 military, police and international civilians from some 114 countries. Australia is supporting seven of these missions with UN or coalition military or police components. These deployments are in the Middle East and Sinai, the Sudan, Cyprus, Timor Leste, Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition to the UN commanded missions, there are a number of other peace operations being conducted around the world. These missions are being coordinated by various regional organizations, or "ad hoc" coalitions of interested nations. Australia has recently been involved in several such coalition peace operations and is at present actively supporting peace initiatives in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands.

The principal role of the military in these peace operations is to provide the basic security which encourages the peace process to strengthen. This allows all the other actors, who come from a wide range of UN agencies, international financial organizations and various other international and local aid and humanitarian organizations, to effectively coordinate their activities and to work with the local community to develop a stable environment leading to a sustainable peace. While there is no specified enemy force operating against the military in such operations, the general situation is often very dangerous and volatile, and peacekeepers are sometimes directly targeted by groups that do not support the peace process. Furthermore, the location of these missions is often remote, local infrastructure and utilities are destroyed, the areas to be covered can be huge, and there are often scattered landmines that need to be cleared. In many of these situations crime is

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<sup>1</sup> For a full list of these peacekeeping operations, see the Department of Veterans Affairs web site at:  
<http://www.dva.gov.au/commem/commac/studies/anzacsk/res2.htm>

rampant and there are often serious ethnic tensions and large distressed populations in need of humanitarian assistance. Peacekeeping is therefore a difficult assignment. Australian contingents led by young Australian military officers and NCOs and police have performed well in these difficult circumstances; but, as in other dangerous overseas operations, unfortunately Australian military and police have suffered casualties. Some have died or been injured, and many have been traumatized by peace operations. We should remember them.

The RAA has played its part in the Australian peacekeeping effort. Individuals from the RAA have commanded United Nations and other international peacekeeping operations, and Gunners have served as key personnel in various mission headquarters and contingents overseas. Additionally, RAA sub-units and detachments from field, locating and air defence units have all deployed on recent peace operations. Some of these deployments have been in their primary RAA roles, while others have been in a secondary role as an “infantry company” undertaking a wide range of general security tasks in support of the particular peacekeeping mission. As I write, elements of 20 Surveillance Target Acquisition Regiment, 4th Field Regiment, 8/12<sup>th</sup> Medium Regiment, and 16 AD Regt are involved in overseas peace operations. Ubique.

The Australian Federal Police also has an excellent record in peacekeeping, and has now created an International Deployment Group comprising police from federal, state and territory police forces which is specifically trained and prepared for offshore peacekeeping and stabilisation deployments. We have seen the benefit of this capability in their partnership with the ADF and other actors in recent regional operations in Timor Leste, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Bougainville.

The proposed Australian Peacekeeping Memorial will be designed to both appropriately commemorate and celebrate all aspects of Australian peacekeeping. It will commemorate the courage, sacrifice, service and valour of Australian Peacekeepers. It will reflect the same spirit of service as do other cenotaphs and memorials across Australia and on ANZAC Parade in Canberra which honour the service of Australians in other distinguished campaigns. It will celebrate Australia’s long and distinguished contribution to international peacekeeping since its commitment to the very first UN peacekeeping mission in 1947.

This proposal has now developed into the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project (APMP). You can find out much more about the plans for the Memorial by visiting the APMP web site at [www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au](http://www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au) .



## Slim, Sir William Joseph [Viscount Slim] (1891 - 1970)



Sir William Joseph Slim [Viscount Slim] (1891 - 1970), by unknown photographer, 1953, courtesy of National Archives of Australia. A1200:L15797.

SLIM, SIR WILLIAM JOSEPH, 1ST VISCOUNT (1891-1970), army officer, governor-general and author, was born on 6 August 1891 at Bristol, England, younger son of John Benjamin Thomas Slim, commercial traveller, and his wife Charlotte Amelia, née Tucker. Educated at St Philip's Catholic school, Edgbaston, and King Edward's School, Birmingham, Bill showed literary ability, little aptitude for sport, and an interest in the army, but lacked the means to proceed to a military academy. He taught in an elementary school, worked as a clerk with a firm of engineers, and joined the University of Birmingham Officers' Training Corps. On 22 August 1914 he was gazetted second lieutenant, Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

Seriously wounded at Gallipoli in August 1915, Slim was invalided to England. He was granted a regular commission in the West India Regiment, but in October 1916 rejoined his old battalion in Mesopotamia. In the following year he was wounded again, awarded the Military Cross, and evacuated to India. After recovering, he served with increasing boredom at Army Headquarters, Delhi. He transferred to the Indian Army in 1919. Next year he was posted to the 1st Battalion,

6th Gurkha Rifles, of which he became adjutant in 1921. At St Andrew's Church, Bombay, on 1 January 1926 he married Aileen Robertson (1901-1993) with the forms of the Church of Scotland; although the service was followed by a ceremony in the Catholic church at Quetta, he regarded himself as a lapsed Catholic.

Slim's brilliant success in 1926-28 at the Staff College, Quetta, was followed by a term at Army Headquarters and by his attachment (1934-36) to the Staff College, Camberley, England, as Indian Army instructor. From the 1937 course at the Imperial Defence College, London, he returned to India. He was promoted lieutenant colonel (1938), given command of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Gurkha Rifles, and appointed (1939) commandant of the Senior Officers' School, Belgaum, as temporary brigadier. Meanwhile, he also developed as a writer. To supplement his income, he contributed stories and articles under the pen-name 'Anthony Mills' to English newspapers, particularly the *Daily Mail*, and to periodicals such as *Blackwood's Magazine*.

On 23 September 1939 Slim assumed command of the 10th Indian Brigade. In November 1940 he led a force which captured Gallabat (on the border between Ethiopia and the Sudan) from the Italians. In failing to capitalize on this success and take nearby Metemma as well, he blamed no one but himself: 'When two courses of action were open to me I had not chosen, as a good commander should, the bolder. I had taken counsel of my fears'. Wounded soon after in an air-attack, he sent a stoical telegram to his mother: 'Bullet Bottom Better Bill'. He was promoted acting major general and appointed to command the 10th Indian Division in May 1941. A successful campaign (June-July) against Vichy French forces in Syria preceded an easier one (August) in Persia, described by him as *opéra bouffe*.

Recalled to India in March 1942, Slim was promoted acting lieutenant general and given command of I Burma Corps (Burcorps), then in retreat from Rangoon before the advancing Japanese. Against great difficulties, he brought the exhausted but defiant survivors to Imphal, India. His pre-eminent contribution, as in subsequent campaigns, was in maintaining morale. He spoke to as many soldiers as possible, man to man, and enabled them to hope 'when hope seemed absurd'. Their 'will to live sustained a will to fight'. On Burcorps' disbandment in May, Slim was appointed to command XV Corps. During the Arakan campaign of 1942-43, he clashed with his army commander, Lieutenant General Noel Irwin, who attempted to have him relieved. The outcome was tersely expressed in Irwin's message to Slim: 'You're not sacked. I am'.

In October 1943 Slim was appointed to command the Fourteenth Army. He smashed the fraying legend of Japanese invincibility at Imphal and Kohima (May-July 1944), and at Mandalay and Meiktila (February-March 1945), Burma. The reoccupation of Rangoon in May 1945 completed a series of victories that brought him fame. Lord Louis (Earl) Mountbatten considered him 'the finest general World War II produced'. The transformation of a defeated force into a proud army was Slim's greatest achievement, and he had come to be known by his soldiers as 'Uncle Bill'. After Rangoon was taken, Sir Oliver Leese, commander-in-chief, Allied Land Forces, South East Asia, decided that he would replace Slim. The decision was greeted with dismay and incredulity by officers and men of the Fourteenth Army, and was quashed in London. Promoted general on 1 July 1945, Slim took over from Leese just as the war ended on 15 August. He had been appointed C.B.E. in 1942 and awarded the Distinguished Service Order in 1943; he was appointed C.B. and K.C.B. in 1944, and G.B.E. in 1946.

Early in 1946 Slim was sent to London to resuscitate the Imperial Defence College as its commandant. He retired on 1 April 1948. An ensuing term as deputy-chairman of the Railway Executive ended seven months later with his recall to the army as chief of the Imperial General Staff. He was promoted field marshal on 4 January 1949. During the next four years he visited British commands abroad and a number of other countries. In Australia he impressed many people, including Prime Minister (Sir) Robert Menzies. He was appointed G.C.B. (1950) and G.C.M.G. (1952).

On 8 May 1953 Slim was sworn in as governor-general of Australia. Menzies had sought a man of stature, one who had no involvement in Australian politics, and one who would represent the monarch effectively. Slim was to see no change of prime minister over his term of nearly seven years. Despite occasional friction, a relationship of trust developed between him and Menzies, based on a healthy respect for each other's intellect and integrity.

Partly because of the royal visit of 1954 – the first by a reigning monarch to Australia – but also owing to his own combination of authority and humanity, Slim's governor-generalship was judged to be notably successful, even by those who believed that the office should be held by an Australian. His humanity came to be as apparent to the Australian people as it had been to his soldiers in Burma. Early in his term, however, he occasioned some surprise by the unflattering remarks he made 'about anything or anybody in Australia he regarded as below par'. As a field marshal he was well qualified both to inspire and to rebuke the Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia.

The Slims travelled widely throughout Australia. Sir William's speeches impressed by their cogency, dry humour and directness, as did his off-the-cuff remarks to journalists (when implored by one photographer to smile, he replied, 'Dammit, I *am!*'). His craggy appearance, upright bearing, and jutting chin barely disguised his kindness and approachability. What they did disguise was the pain he continually felt as a result of his wounds. He and his wife both possessed fortitude. She suffered a succession of illnesses, beginning with a serious haemorrhage on their arrival in Canberra. Her determination and perfectionism matched his, and were seen in the improvements she made to Government House, Canberra, and Admiralty House, Sydney. A warmth of heart and manner characterized her presence, whether as hostess or guest, at the many functions attending the vice-regal office.

Slim's three books were all published during his time in Australia. The first, *Defeat into Victory* (London, 1956), about the Burma campaign, sold more than 100,000 copies and was hailed as one of the best, and best-written, on World War II; he dedicated the book to Aileen, 'a soldier's wife who followed the drum and from mud-walled hut or Government House made a home'. He included a number of his speeches in Australia in *Courage and Other Broadcasts* (1957). Accounts of his earlier and smaller battles, some previously published in *Blackwood's Magazine*, appeared in his reminiscences, *Unofficial History* (1959). The Slims were also interested in the arts and education; the former teacher enjoyed visiting schools and talking to pupils and principals alike.

Appointed G.C.V.O. (1954) and K.G. (1959), Slim left office on 2 February 1960 and returned to England. On Menzies' initiative, Sir William and Lady Slim received Australian pensions and passports. In 1960 Slim was raised to the peerage, taking the title Viscount Slim of Yarralumla and Bishopston. He was appointed deputy-constable and lieutenant-governor of Windsor Castle in 1963 and was promoted constable and governor in 1964. His other posts included chairmanship of the council of the Fairbridge Society, and directorships of the National Bank of Australasia Ltd and Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd. He held nine honorary doctorates, including four from Australian universities. He retained his affection for the Gurkhas and friendships with former colleagues. Failing in health, Slim retired from his posts at Windsor shortly before he died on 14 December 1970 at St Marylebone, London. He was accorded a full military funeral at St George's Chapel, Windsor, and was cremated. His wife, and their son and daughter survived him. (Sir) Ivor Hele's portrait of Slim is held by the family, Leonard Boden's by the National Army Museum, London. Slim is further commemorated by a plaque in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral and by a statue at Whitehall unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II in 1990.

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**Author:** Michael D. de B. Collins Persse

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<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A160311b.htm?hilite=Slim>



### Apology

Cascabel Issue # 90 January 2007 Page 14

Listed as donating funds for the Artillery Flag for the Shrine was Lt Col. G Allison. It should have read Lt. Col. G Allinson.

My sincerest apologies for the incorrect spelling

Lindsay



# Briefcase 'that changed the world'

By Angela Hind

BBC Radio 4's The World in a Briefcase

In the summer of 1940, the war with Germany was at a critical stage.

France had recently surrendered and the Luftwaffe was engaged in a concerted bombing campaign against British cities.

The United Kingdom was being cut off from the Continent, and without allies to help her, she would soon be near the limit of her productive capacity - particularly in the all important field of electronics.

On the morning of 29 August, a small team of the country's top scientists and engineers, under the direction of Sir Henry Tizard and in conditions of absolute secrecy, was about to board a converted ocean liner.

With them they carried possibly the most precious cargo of the war - a black japanned metal deed box containing all of Britain's most valuable technological secrets.

They were on their way to America - to give them away.

This high-powered team included representatives from the Army, Navy and Air Force, along with specialists in the new technologies of war.

Earlier that morning, radar expert, Dr Edward "Taffy" Bowen - a vital member of this Tizard Mission and responsible for looking after the metal deed box that was to become known as "Tizard's briefcase" - almost lost it.

When he had arrived at London's Euston station, the Welshman had handed it to a porter while gathering up his remaining luggage, then watched helplessly as the man headed off to find the 0830 boat train to Liverpool without waiting for his customer.

As he struggled to keep the porter in sight above the wartime throngs, Eddie Bowen would not have drawn much attention from the busy Londoners. Only his face would have betrayed his concern.

## Short distance

Just five days short of the war's first anniversary, Britain faced one of its most desperate hours.

The Battle of Britain was raging, and bombs were falling nightly on Liverpool. Nazi armies ringed the country from the Norwegian coast down to France; an invasion was expected within weeks.

As Bowen knew, the seemingly ordinary solicitor's deed box - for which he was personally responsible - held the power to change the course of the war.

Inside lay nothing less than all Britain's military secrets. There were blueprints and circuit diagrams for rockets, explosives, superchargers, gyroscopic gunsights, submarine detection devices, self-sealing fuel tanks, and even the germs of ideas that would lead to the jet engine and the atomic bomb.

But the greatest treasure of all was the prototype of a piece of hardware called a cavity magnetron, which had been invented a few months earlier by two scientists in Birmingham.

John Randall and Harry Boot had invented the cavity magnetron almost by accident.

It was a valve that could spit out pulses of microwave radio energy on a wavelength of 10cm. This was unheard of. Nothing like it had been invented before.

The wavelength for the radar system we were using at the start of the war was one-and-a-half metres. The equipment needed was bulky and the signals indistinct.

The cavity magnetron was to be the key that would allow us to develop airborne radar.

## Kitchen technology

"It was a massive, massive breakthrough," says Andy Manning from the Radar Museum in Horning.

"It is deemed by many, even now, to be the most important invention that came out of the Second World War".

Professor of military history at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, David Zimmerman, agrees: "The magnetron remains the essential radio tube for shortwave radio signals of all types.

"It not only changed the course of the war by allowing us to develop airborne radar systems, it remains the key piece of technology that lies at the heart of your microwave oven today. The cavity magnetron's invention changed the world."

Because Britain had no money to develop the magnetron on a massive scale, Churchill had agreed that Sir Henry Tizard should offer the magnetron to the Americans in exchange for their financial and industrial help. No strings attached.

It was an extraordinary gesture. By September, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology had set up a secret laboratory; by November, the cavity magnetron was in mass production; and by early 1941, portable airborne radar had been developed and fitted to both American and British planes.

The course of the Second World War was about to be changed. It was, says writer Robert Buder, possibly the most important development of the 20th Century.

In fact, it was so important a development that the official historian of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, James Phinney Baxter III, wrote: "When the members of the Tizard Mission brought the cavity magnetron to America in 1940, they carried the most valuable cargo ever brought to our shores."

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/science/nature/6331897.stm>

Published: 2007/02/05 13:45:07 GMT

Article provided by CAPT. Peter Wertheimer RFD



## **Wanted North Head Fortress Memorabilia**

The RAA National Museum at North Fort, North Head, Manly NSW is establishing a permanent exhibit devoted to the North Head Story from prehistory to the present.

An important aim of the exhibition is to place North Head in the context of the early exploration and settlement, Aboriginal heritage, and the effect of its defence usage on the community. The unique aspects of North Head as an "island" remote from the mainland, then tied to it by a sand spit (Manly) will be woven into the story. For an Army museum, naturally the most significant period was when North Head was established as "North Head Fortress" as part of the defence of Sydney, 1939-1945.

During the period from the mid 1930s to 1945, North Head was prepared for war and occupied by Coastal Artillery, Heavy Anti-Aircraft Artillery, Coastal and Anti-Aircraft Searchlights, Radar, C Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Garrison Battalion and 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Volunteer Defence Corps, and others. Serving with the male component of the Fortress Staff were a number of Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) members. Also playing a very important role at the Military Hospital were nurses of the Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD).

*The National Artillery Museum needs photographs (especially identified people doing things), uniforms, memorabilia, diaries, artefacts, drawings, original newspaper clippings etc from this period from around 1935 to the end of the war in particular, and up to the time the Coastal Battery was dismantled in 1962.*

If you have something (or you know someone who has) could you please contact the Project Manager, Ian Taylor.

Email: [ita01@ozemail.com.au](mailto:ita01@ozemail.com.au)

Tel: 02 9953 9441 Mob: 0407 539441





The  
**Grand Artillery Ball 2007**  
*At The Naval and Military Club  
Flinders Lane Melbourne*

**Sat 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2007**  
**1930 for 2000hrs**

**Tickets: \$60 per person**

**Masquerade theme**  
**Dress:**  
**Jacket & Tie**

**Further Details contact:**  
**Sergeant Sherree McKenzie 0408 650 889**  
**Sergeant Steve Neal 0439 425 661**



**Warning Order**

Open Day

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> of May

2/10 Field Regiment in the Field

Transport & catering to be provided.

Details to follow by email.

For further information contact MAJ Robin Smith email: [rasmith@melbpc.org.au](mailto:rasmith@melbpc.org.au)



# MY SERVICE CAREER

## By COL Graham Farley, OAM, RFD, ED (Rtd)

### Part 27 Colonel (Personnel - Projects), 1982

1982 was to prove to be my last year in the Army Reserve as an active officer. My duties at Braemar College were no less. I was as regular as I could be in attending Wednesday night parades at *Grosvenor* in Melbourne, but my involvement in the life of 3 Div FF Gp was not great. There was no annual camp as such to attend. But I was encouraged by the RAA Corps to keep in close touch with the units.

Life at field force on a Wednesday night used to commence with supper (of one course) in the mess. This was followed by a conference chaired by the SO1 (COORD). Officers then their offices. There was always the thick file of documents to read, many of which had been produced through the then future. As with nearly all good organisations, there was a superb female executive assistant, who could type to a very high standard, for the commander. This was Mrs. Bradley. It was this lady who had prepared the document for the Artillery TEWT in September, 1980.

There are those of us who

same people will fail to retain the very documents upon which archives are built and from which histories are written. I find that my diary was well kept, but my collection of army documents in 1982 was restricted to pamphlets, TEWTs and the like. But I did keep staffing documents for the field force and the various corps planning committees. The main names and appointments were:

In February, 1982 the commander was MAJGEN K. G. Cooke. He was assisted by COL L. A. Thomson<sup>2</sup>. The Chief of Staff was COL W. J. Hocking, with LT A. Darling as the ADC. The DSM was WO1 D. D. Frew.

Arms and Services Advisers were: COL (ARTY) COL W. M. Vincent; DMS COL B. J. Cairns; SO1 (ARMD) LTCOL J. S. Graham; SO1 (INF) LTCOL M. J. Musgrave; and SO1 (LOG) LTCOL G. S. Green.

SO CESRF was CAPT G. D. Collins. SO1 (Mil Sec) was LTCOL W. N. Lunn. SO1 (COORD) was LTCOL J. Wood, with MAJ R. A. Knight as the SO2. SO1 (OPS) was LTCOL A. M. Robb, with MAJs A. J. Poole and R. J. Savage were the SO2s.

SO1 (PERS/LOG) was LTCOL K. G. Petersen. The Chaplains were Senior Chaplain CHAP 3 J. A. Leaver and G. M. O

Burns was listed as the SO2 (OPS/TRG).

By July 1982, a number of changes in the Command and Staff List had taken place. CAPT I. E. Farrell was ADC; LTCOL G. B. Standish was SO1 (COORD); SO2 (PR) was MAJ R. L. Suggett; LTCOL G. H. James was SO1 (OPS) (ARES); SO2 (ARTY) was MAJ D. M. Murphy; SO3 (ARTY) was CAPT J. A. Davis; and COL (ENGR) (COMD 6 Const Gp) was COL G. R. Hunt.

The list of chaplains was more extensive. In addition to those named above, there were Chaplains A. S. Hoskin, B. J. Connell, P. K. Hudson, A. G. Rudd, G. V. Warne and Mr. G. E. Hoskin as the Everymans Rep Welfare.

SO1 (CESRF PROJ) was now LTCOL J. McL. Bennett. SO CRES PROJECT was COL B. D. Clendinnen. LTCOL G. R. Allinson and LTCOL E. C. Hawkes were listed as SO1 (PROJ).

The family has lived at Elwood since 1947. On army nights it had been my habit to sleep overnight in my parents . I would then drive back early the next day to Woodend. Following the death of my father in November, 1980, I had continued to spend the Wednesday night with my mother in Elwood. But early in 1982 my mother decided to purchase a unit in Geelong. My association with the flat at Elwood was about to cease. On Wed 3 Mar 82 I had my last overnight sleep at Elwood. It was a nostalgic time.

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<sup>2</sup> This officer was well known as the officers here listed, but for the sake of consistency I have restricted them to their initials.

On Fri 12 Mar 82, MAJGEN G. L. Maitland was dined out at the Naval and Military Club following an *Grosvenor*. At the dinner Mrs. Hunt sat on my left and Mrs. Rosalie Sandow on my right. Shirley and I stayed at the club overnight as there was no longer the option of Elwood.

The next day there was an army mobilisation exercise seminar conducted by HQ 3 Div FF Gp. It was based on a similar exercise that had been held in Canberra. I drove to the exercise as a passenger with MAJGEN K. Cooke

The highlight presentation was given by COL Alan Mason. COL Mason was a gunner. He was butions at TEWTS, particularly at the erected around a topographical model, the features being indicated in coloured chalk with grid lines to coincide with distributed maps. At such functions when other more conventional solutions had been offered and the DS staff had made their comments, one could always rely on the short-statured Alan Mason rising to provide a very different point of view. His analytical style was such that many of those who had just spoken would start to squirm in their seats and the rest of us were grateful that we had not offered any solution or comment.

On the occasion of this mobilisation TEWT, COL Alan Mason gave a lecture concerning his own mobilisation experiences at the start of the Second World War. He commenced his talk by heaving behind him on to the stage the tin trunk that he had had in 1939 complete with all those essential items that a keen subaltern about to go overseas would possess. My diary says, rule in the book for the use of an OHP<sup>3</sup>, he [Alan] told us how it really happened in 1939 and implied that it would all happen [again] in a [similar] future situation. notes that were taken that weekend, but only Alan memory.

My diary entry for the 14<sup>th</sup> April recorded that I made a very accurate predication as to what might occur to me at the end of the year. I was coming to the end of my active army reserve days.

The 1982 Gunner Dinner was again held at the 3MD Officers Mess in Victoria Barracks. I had as my guests, the College chairman, Mr. Ken Bennett, and the Deputy Headmaster, Mr. Marcel Nyeholt. LTCOL John Henry was on my right. LTCOL Bob Freeland, now CO of 10 Mdm Regt, RAA, was in the chair. MAJ John Morkham proposed the toast to the Regiment, during which he extolled the virtues and abilities of the Div Loc Bty. COL Alan Mason kept Marcel Nyeholt stocked up with a fund of his stories. It had been good to be with the corps again.

LTCOL Bob Freeland was CO of 10 Mdm Regt, RAA; LTCOL Ian George was CO of 2/15 Fd Regt, RAA, and MAJ John Morkham was OC of 132 Div Loc Bty, RAA.

In the Queen

Melbourne, was appointed AM. This was also the year of the Falklands conflict which came to its conclusion on the 14<sup>th</sup> June, my 49<sup>th</sup> birthday.

At the risk of padding this chapter, I have found in my diary a reprint headed, any inference on the size of the 3MD FF GP team of officers, it is worth reproducing: the Staff of any Command it is desirable to keep the number of Officers at a minimum, as not only does every appointment to the Staff weaken some fighting unit, but a better selection is possible if there are only a few appointments to fill. There will be also less difficulty in finding accommodation in the field for small Head-Quarters, and less delay or confusion in moving it. It should not be forgotten, too, that there will not always be enough work for a large Staff to do, and that, when men are not fully occupied, mischief and friction are apt to arise.

On the same page I also transcribed, impossible for the ungrateful. We have done so much, for so long, with so little, we are now qualified to do anything with nothing.

The field force TEWT was held over the weekend of 2/4 Jul 82 at Wangaratta, based at Beersheba Barracks. It was named Exercise Kelly ainst another of our several enemies, the Musorians. For those whose memories need jolting, the same latitude as Sydney approximately 1200 nautical miles off the eastern Australian coast. The country consists of one large island of about 750,000 square kilometers surrounded by about 30 smaller islands of total land area about 75,000 square kilometers. <sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Overhead Projector. Do you remember them? Nowadays it would be a Power Point Presentation

<sup>4</sup> Ex Kelly

LTCOL George James commenced the Saturday morning was followed by a cloth model discussion of the Advance problem. The field locations for the weekend in turn were: Chivers Lane, Beauty Point, O

The accommodation for we three colonels (including Patterson and Clendinnen) had even included a bath. I think this might have been one of two occasions in the army when such English style of living was possible.<sup>5</sup> I still have the map enlargement of the area used. Sunday was a little warmer as it was sunny.

A dining-in night at which the Governor was a guest, was held at *Grosvenor* on Sat 17 Jul 82. We HQ officers were rostered to host the guests. My guest was BRIG Vial. There were four knights of the realm, including Sir David Fairbairn, Sir John Norris, Sir Bernard Callinan and Sir Edward Cohen. Sir Edward was also a gunner.

At the parade on Wed 18 Aug 81, the commander showed me his confidential report on me. Well, we cannot all be perfect in every area! But before the night was out I had earned my money by helping to smooth over a potential problem with a parent who considered that his son in one of the units had been passed over for promotion. I was assisted by LTCOL John Nolan, a legal officer who had offered to come along and assist. The night finished with the shaking of hands and smiles all round.

Later that month on the 18<sup>th</sup> I acted in my r  
Bev Blanksby ran with her usual competence. Meanwhile all officers of colonel rank and above had to meet a physical fitness standard if they were to attend the GOC FF Comd Ex at Tully, Queensland. My memory has a faint recall that officers were to undergo even greater challenges that might have included parachuting.

On Sat 13 Nov 81 I traveled to Puckapunyal to join the 2/15 Fd  
Regt, RAA, camp. It was the customary program, with visits to the OP and then the gun end, with lunch, morning and afternoon tea at Site 4.

On Sat 20 Nov 81, I put in what was one of my final days in the active army reserve. I had already been told in confidence that I would not receive further promotion. I now had before me the paper work from the military secretary advising that Colonels Andy McGilliard and Barry Nunn would be promoted to Brigadier rank. Back in 1969 Barry Nunn had teamed up with me and taken me under his wing at the Tac 5 coaching and assessment course. I am sure that his confidence and example, which led him to receiving the Blamey Sword for that year, greatly assisted me in qualifying then for Lieutenant-Colonel. I was now to be transferred to the RCMF. If the situation ever warranted it I could be recalled to active duty. I still had five years to run until 1988.

The next day I called in at the rifle range in Williamstown for my annual shoot and had the occasion to talk with LTCOL Graeme Standish, with whom I had served in a number of postings. Graeme would go on to be a Brigadier and be appointed AM before he too reached the age limit of his service<sup>6</sup>. Notwithstanding the n likened promotion to  
of a bottle.

1983 the army reserve was still buoyant. Third Division was about to be raised. But it would not be all that long after that that the reserve would contract and the bottle neck become even slimmer. But our commander, MAJGEN Kevin Cooke, was clairvoyant. He never told me in advance that on 1 Feb 83, on a total fire ban day, a bushfire would commence just west of Braemar College and nearly destroy its buildings and harm its students. The bushfire did however burn down the stables that had once been part of the Braemar Coffee Palace of 1890, as well as a small pavilion on the sports field. But no staff or students were hurt or injured in any way. School resumed a few days later. Nor did he tell me that, a fortnight later, catastrophic fires would sweep through parts of South Australia, along the Lorne and Airey that occasion, some eight members of staff and 28 students lost their homes. As never before, Shirley  
attend to army duties.

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<sup>5</sup> The other was at the CGS exercise in Canberra in 1977

<sup>6</sup> This would include an appointment as Colonel Commandant

I was to hand over my L Donald Sandow. I had already had the honour of meeting him at the aforementioned Governor infantry. Little did I know then that when I became a Legatee in 1999 I would meet and work with him again! Donald became the chairman of our group. I was to succeed him in that office. I got to know him and Rosalie very well over the years that were left to his life<sup>7</sup>.

But I had not completely shed the khaki uniform that I had first donned way back on 4 Jan 54 for National Service. Those tales should be more than sufficient for the next chapter in this series.



### **St. George s Uniting Church and the Royal Australian Artillery Depot East St Kilda**

The connection between St. George and the Royal Australian Artillery next door is rooted in a shared history. The first service of worship of St. George Presbyterian Church was held on 13 August 1876, in the Orderly Room of the then voluntary Militia force next door in Chapel Street, St. Kilda.

A Trustee of the newly formed congregation was Sir James McCulloch, also Premier of the Colony on four occasions, including at this time of the Church (-77). Earlier, McCulloch had also been involved with the early years of the volunteer Militia, serving as its Commanding Officer for a time.

It is likely that the first government led by McCulloch (1863-68) reserved the land bounded by Chapel Street, Dandenong Road, Westbury Street and Alma Road to the Crown, with land granted to the Church and the volunteer Militia gazetted in 1866.

St. George

Andrew Gillison went as Chaplain with 14 Battalion to Gallipoli, and was killed rescuing a wounded soldier. The Church

Gillison

since 1992.

Maj. Robin Smith



---

<sup>7</sup> COL Sandow died in 2006 from prostate cancer





## Parade Card

**APR 2007**

**04 HMAS Cerberus**  
19 Committee  
**25 ANZAC Day**

**MAY 2007**

**12 Grand Arty Ball**  
17 Committee

**JUN 2007**

**?? 3<sup>rd</sup> DIV lunch** (all ranks)  
21 Committee

**JUL 2007**

**01 Res Forces Day**  
19 Committee

**AUG 2007**

16 Committee  
**4 Gunner Dinner**

**SEP 2007**

20 Committee

**OCT 2007**

18 Committee  
**?? Happy Hour**  
**?? Arty lunch** (all ranks)

**NOV 2007**

**?? RSL Springvale**  
**08 A.G.M.**  
**09 Golf Day**  
15 Committee

**DEC 2007**

**?? St Barbara's Day**  
06 Committee

**JAN 2008**

**FEB 2008**

**10 Church Parade**  
21 Committee

**MAR 2008**

20 Committee

**APR 2008**

17 Committee  
**25 ANZAC Day**

**MAY 2008**

**?? Grand Arty Ball**  
15 Committee

**JUN 2008**

**?? 3<sup>rd</sup> DIV lunch** (all ranks)  
19 Committee

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Do you wish to receive Association information by E-mail Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

Serving Y/N \_\_\_\_\_ If so, Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Awards, Decorations, Medals, Etc. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Brief Service History \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Additional Information (Committee, Unit Rep, Etc) \_\_\_\_\_

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*Please Use Additional Blank Sheets if Space Insufficient*

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