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Preserved in Sunbury today is this gun once used by the Rupertswood Battery of the Victorian Horse Artillery.

Photo courtesy of "Victoria's Volunteers" Website

<http://users.westconnect.com.au/~ianmac/volunt.html>

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The President Writes

In the last copy of *Cascabel* you were asked to comment on the church parade that was held this year at St George's next door to the Depot. We have received three responses and these have been in favour of the move.

The visit to HMAS Cerberus museum and gunnery range was well attended, and we had a very interesting and informative day.

The family day held on the Puckapunyal range, in magnificent weather, on the 26th May was an historic occasion and an extremely well organised day.

The Reserve Forces Day March will be held this year on Sunday 1st July. It has been a little disappointing in the past years to see a number of members of this Association electing to march with other organisations. I appreciate that our military service has extended over a number of different organisations, but, perhaps a rotation of organisations could be the answer.

I attended the "Grand Artillery Ball" this year. To my mind it was "different" to what I expected, but, judging by the attendance, was a success.

The organisation for the Gunner Luncheon at the School of Artillery is reaching its final stages. A page later in the magazine gives all the details.

A Cocktail Party will be held at the depot again this year. Details are given in the magazine.

The Golf Day has also been organised for the 9th November. Some interest has been shown by the Berwick RSL and so we are inviting veterans from other corps to attend.

Advance notice of the AGM: Thursday 8th November. Details later.

In an attempt to attract more serving members into the Association the Committee has decided to offer free membership to all serving members regardless of corps. Membership will be renewed each year so that the active database can be kept up to date. We hope that the serving members will continue their membership of the Association when they become non-serving members.

Also it was decided that free membership to offer to all Annual Members over the age of 80 years. The membership database listed 19 members in this category. However, a large number of members have provided their date of birth. Therefore an assessment as to their eligibility cannot be made.

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

Neil Hamer
MAJ (R)

Membership Report June 2007

Current Membership

We now have an additional two classifications of membership:
Annual Senior Members and Annual Serving Members.

Life Members	210
Annual Members	63
Annual Senior Members	19
Annual Serving Members	1
Affiliates	39
Others (CO/CI, Messes, etc.)	11
RSL	1
Libraries	5
<u>Total</u>	<u>349</u>

New Members

We welcome MAJ J B Kelly, CAPT J M MacNeil as Annual Members and 2LT C R Kinnane as an Annual Serving Member to the Association.

Vale

It is with regret that we note the passing of LTCOL B A Pearson RFD.

W M Vincent RFD ED and MAJ J V Phillips OAM RFD ED.

LTCOL Bernie Pearson joined the Association in 1986 and became a Life Member in 1988.

I have no other information recorded.

Bernie passed way on Saturday 26th May after suffering a heart attack. He was aged 67.

A tribute to Bernie appears later in the magazine.

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

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Lieutenant Colonel Bernard (Bernie) Pearson RFD ED

Lieutenant Colonel Bernard (Bernie) Pearson RFD ED, joined 2 Fd. Regt. RAA on the 10 Jun 1961, and was posted to Signal Troop, RHQ. He attended at OCTU, where he was then promoted to Sergeant. He returned to 2 Fd. Regt. and was posted as TARA Sergeant in Q Bty. at Landcox Street, Depot for approximately 12 months.

Bernie was promoted to Lieutenant and transferred to P Bty. as a Section Commander. Later, he became GPO of 2 Bty, at 2 Fd. Regt., then Regimental Survey Officer, then to HQRAA as SO3 Ops. He was then transferred to HQ 4 Task Force as a Staff Captain (Admin.) He was then transferred to 15 Fd. Regt., where he performed the role of FO & BK at 23 Fd. Bty. He was next posted to HQRAA as SO 2 Ops, then he became Battery Commander (BC) of HQ Bty, 2/15 Fd. Regt.

Bernie, then transferred to RCSC, where he did his Tac. 3 Course, and then to HQ 3 Div. FFGP. He was then posted as BC to HQ Bty. 10 Medium Regiment and later as BC of 37 Mdm. Bty.

Bernie attended the Senior Officer's Tactical Course, where he performed the role of Instructor at RCSC. Later he was re-posted as BC to 39 Mdm. Bty. at 10 Mdm. Regt. He was then transferred to 4 Brigade as Brigade Major, then transferred to 132 Divisional Locating Battery, as BC. He later returned to RCSC as a Tactics Instructor and was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel.

In 1986, Bernie was made Commanding Officer of Melbourne University Regiment and he retired on the 26 Sep 1989. Bernie described himself as a Tribal Elder. Bernie was awarded the Reserve Force Decoration, Efficiency Decoration, National Medal and Australian Defence Medal.

On leaving the Army, Bernie using his military skills, became an active member of the local Country Fire Authority and subsequently, became Secretary and Deputy Group Officer at Springfield Fire station. During the past 12 months, Bernie was the Central Council Delegate and Rural State President of the CFA. Just recently, and due to his outstanding performance, Bernie was one of four persons to be considered by the Government to fill a vacancy on the CFA Board, in July, this year. (This matter is still being considered.)

Bernie died as a result of a massive heart attack at St. Vincent's Hospital on 26 May 07, at the age of 67 years.

SSGT. Reg Morrell



Launch of Reserve Forces Day March – Victoria

On the 31st October 1917, the 4th Light Horse Brigade of the Australian Mounted Division charged the well prepared Turkish defensive positions at Beersheba. In the receding daylight of that fateful afternoon, hundreds of valiant men on sturdy horses that had been denied water for 48 hours beforehand forged a legend.

On thundering hooves and with every muscle and sinew straining, these mighty horses carried their militiamen riders to and beyond the defenders trenches to capture Beersheba and its wells of sweet water. This victory against all odds changed the course of history in the Middle East and the “last great cavalry charge” by the 4th Light Horse Brigade has earned a prestigious place in the annals of Australian Military history.

On Sunday 20th May 2007, this momentous event was vividly and enthusiastically recounted by a descendant of a participant, Captain John Cox, to an enthralled audience at the historic Raheen estate in Melbourne on the occasion of the Reserve Forces Day March 2007 Launch hosted by the Chief Executive of the Pratt Foundation Mr Sam Lipski. Raheen owners and Patrons of the Pratt Foundation Mr & Mrs Richard Pratt kindly allowed their stately home to be the venue for the RFD launch which was coupled with the launch of the Light Horse Memorial project; an undertaking that includes “The Park of the Australian Soldier” in Beersheba and the bronze sculpture that will be its focal point. This magnificent art work of a full sized mounted Australian Light Horseman charging the Turkish trenches is presently under construction in the studio of Peter Corlett in Melbourne and will become the central feature of the Park in April 2008.

Eighty invited guests were addressed by The Minister for Veterans Affairs, The Hon Bruce Billson MP, Major General W B Digger James, Patron of the Australian Light Horse Association and the Chairman of the Victorian Reserve Forces Day Council Major General Greg Garde.

The 4th /19th Prince of Wales’ Light Horse Regiment - the line successor to the famous 4th Brigade - mounted a Lance Guard and music throughout the activity was provided by the combined 4th/19thPWLH and 2nd/10th Field Regiment Band. Mounted troopers from the Light Horse Heritage Troop added colour and a historical atmosphere to the occasion.

Dignitaries present at the Raheen launch included Sir Zelman and Lady Cowan, the Israeli Ambassador His Excellency Naftali and Mrs Tamir, Major General and Mrs David McLachlan and Major General Jim Barry, and the activity was conducted by our personable Master of Ceremonies Flight Lieutenant Peter Meehan.

The Reserve Forces Day March in 2007 will recognise the 90th Anniversary of the Beersheba victory by having the 4th/19th PWLH Regiment lead the parade on the 1st July at the Shrine of Remembrance.

Ian D George
25 May 2007

**Reserve Forces Day Launch
& Launch of the “Park of the Australian Soldier”
Raheen, Melbourne 20 May 2007**

Address by Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Bruce Billson

Thank you Peter.

To our hosts today, particularly to our chairman of the Reserve Forces Day Council, Major General Greg Garde, Sir to you and Mrs Garde, thank you and thank you for your story. I must say that the story and the tribute we had prior – wasn't that just magnificent? Can we show our appreciation again?

I occasionally get asked a question about commemoration and for about the \$11 billion a year we spend taking care of those that have served our nation, we spend about \$45 million on commemoration. That is about \$1 for every \$100 we spend on health care for those men and women that have served our country and I think the explanation of the events, the connection they have with the circumstances of our nation, of our work internationally, and it's very direct link to the outstanding service of the men and women of today's Australian Defence Forces. What a vivid explanation Sir, I commend you for that.

I would also like to acknowledge and recognise and sincerely thank our hosts today, Richard and Jeanne Pratt. Remarkable Australians and again showing their commitment to our nation and things that are very important. To His Excellency, the Australian Ambassador, good to see you here. My friend and colleague, Michael Danby, good to see you looking well Sir. To Sir Zelman and Lady Cowan, great to see you joining us for this very important occasion. To our leadership of the Returned & Services League, and other Ex-Service Organisations, good to see you all here today.

I particularly like to congratulate Digger James and for your ongoing work, Sir, some of your batons may have been passed but your passion continues and I thank you for your many years of selfless service, not only during your service but beyond.

I would also like to acknowledge and recognise the outstanding men and women of the Australian Defence Forces. Our 'Regs' – our Regulars or our Reservists, you have heard a bit of a story about their work at the moment. We have 11 theatres of operation, and 3000 men and women frankly sharing the good fortune that we enjoy in this country standing up for those values and the prosperity and the peace that we enjoy and revel in every day. Our men and women are helping others also to secure that opportunity as well as defending our national interest. And I say to each and every one of you – you do us proud day in, day out and we admire your work and today's generation carry forward a remarkable tradition. Thank you all for your service.

I am thrilled to be here today. This is a very important double-header.

We've got a remarkable First World War victory that deserves to be told, the story of great achievement against adversity and it is very much a part of our character where as a nation we have not only survived in these harsh environments, we've prospered. And you see that skill set and perseverance and commitment carried through to that remarkable story of Beersheba.

It is also though an important opportunity to recognise a very significant component of today's Defence Forces, and that is our Reservists. I have been on the hull of an ANZAC frigate on the border of Iran and Iraq talking to medics that are Reservists. So whilst we

heard about a complete Reserve unit going to bring stability to the Solomon Islands and working in other areas around the world, our Reservists as individuals and the skill set that they bring is making a remarkable contribution.

Both of those two occasions deserve the time to pause and reflect and frankly to celebrate and to convey our thanksgiving.

We are launching today the Park of the Australian Soldier – a remarkable project at Beersheba. A remarkably important place not only for our nation but for the people of Israel. An outstanding initiative and a wonderful project for the Pratt Foundation to drive and shape and I am delighted that the Pratt Foundation in partnership with the Beersheba Foundation, with the support of the Australian Government, including my department, have been able to bring together all that is needed to make sure that proper recognition for those dramatic events that are just short of 90 years away in their anniversary of the Australian 4th Light Horse Brigade, that all of that is captured and conveyed.

The Defence Force's Reserve Day and the lead up to this important day on the 1st of July is also something I will briefly touch on but first the Battle of Beersheba.

Many of you and in fact all of us here cannot help but know the background of the story and I again thank you for that but the importance of capturing Beersheba is remarkably significant. The daring and the action of the Australian Light Horsemen was vital in the supply of not only water for the Allied horses and troops but for turning around the whole Turkish flank in Palestine. That was the goal of our British partners – to drive the Turks North from Gaza. It was an inspirational victory. One that many have described as the last great cavalry charge. But it did set in train some remarkable events – the capturing of Gaza, and Jaffa, and the Ottoman Empire, the liberation of Jerusalem, all of Palestine, the Balfour Declaration, and ultimately the establishment of Israel in 1948 – what a remarkable series of events were activated by the extraordinary courage of the Australian Light Horsemen.

Times have changed. Today we are dear friends, enduring friends with our Turkish colleagues. Once foes, now enduring friends we see our citizens and many from New Zealand welcomed to the shores of Gallipoli each year for Anzac Day. But for many in our community the story of Beersheba has been told in part through popular cinema. We remember the 1941 Chauvel film 'Forty Thousand Horsemen' with Chips Rafferty or the 1987 award winning film 'The Lighthorsemen'. Whether you have learnt the story through those popular images or a dedicated study of history, the courage and the daring, the determination of those who served in the battle deserves enduring commemoration. But also Beersheba, not only for these events but also its ongoing tribute to those that lost their lives. It is very important this project and it brings together so many significant threads.

Beersheba is not the largest of the Commonwealth war cemeteries in the region. Beersheba war cemetery, just 2km away from the site of this outstanding tribute we are launching today is the final resting place for the greatest number of Australians who gave their lives as part of General Allenby's liberational push so it is very important for our nation.

I want to congratulate the Pratt Foundation, the Beersheba Foundation for their foresight, their daring. The project is remarkable but their generosity in bringing it to a point where it can be achieved also is incredibly significant and deserving of recognition.

The funding of the Park of the Australian Soldier project in Beersheba, Israel is a remarkable feat of philanthropy, of storytelling, of connecting peoples in our journeys.

I also want to pay tribute to the city of Beersheba for setting aside the land for the park and offering to maintain its infrastructure on such an important boulevard in that bustling city. The landscape memorial will provide not only a place of commemoration, for reflection, for telling that remarkable story, but a recreation area, a children's playground with equipment suitable for children with disabilities or without disabilities. Again those links of opportunity and the chance to enjoy what life has to offer is bought forward through this park. And could they have chosen better than the renowned Victorian sculptor, Peter Corlett? I don't think so Sir, and congratulations on this commission. Peter has done some remarkable work in different places around the world and it is fitting that he will be producing the enduring tribute. Your skills and your artisan talents are remarkable and I am delighted that can now be a part of more people's experiences as they travel through this important part of our world.

I look forward to the dedication of the park next April and invite you all to stay engaged and supportive of that project. It reflects an important part of our history. But I ask you all to do something that is equally important today. Many people stop me and say 'Bruce, what can we do to support our men and women of the Defence Forces?'. Well Reserve Forces Day is one of those opportunities .

With the 90th Anniversary of Beersheba coming up, its focus is a part of Reserve Forces Day for 2007, as that day recognises the characteristics of determination and loyalty displayed by the Light Horsemen. It also is a character set in qualities that we see in members of Australia's Reserve Forces.

Sunday, July 1 at the Shrine of Remembrance, the annual march and a ceremony will be held to acknowledge the dedication of current and former Reservists. These are men and women of our nation who have full lives and in addition choose to contribute to the defence of our nation and its national interest. We say to employers out there 'you want some good talent? - recruit a Reservist.' We say to organisations wanting to know how they can support the work of our men and women 'think about Reservists. Their skill set, their commitment, I invite you to play your part to recruit and support that work'.

Reservists have and continue to serve willingly in times of war and times of conflict and times of peacetime. Reserve Forces Day is a timely reminder of the importance of Reservist in the security of our nation and our national interest. I encourage you all to participate wholeheartedly and fully recognising Reservists and their commitment to train and serve alongside our Regular serving personnel. The work they are doing is valued, it is important, it is meaningful, we see it places such as Rwanda, Malaysia, Indonesia, Solomon Islands, and deployments right around the globe today. Australian Reservists feel proud of what you have achieved already. Feel proud of what we know you will continue to achieve for this nation. You uphold a long tradition of courage and sacrifice and mateship. We admire and salute you and encourage the wider Australian public to recognise that commitment by supporting Reserve Forces Day.

I thank you for a few minutes of your time.

The Hon Bruce Billson MP Minister for Veterans' Affairs

BEERSHEEBA 90th ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS

Sunday 20 May 2007

By Major General Greg Garde AO RFD QC

We gather today to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the charge at Beersheba by two of Australia's most famous Light Horse Regiments. Most appropriately, this is the theme of Reserve Forces Day this year.

Many are unaware that the legendary Australian Light Horse was not raised to meet the demands of World War One, nor was the charge at Beersheba reflective of light horse doctrine or training.

The Light Horse were raised in 1903 from existing colonial units and detachments of light horsemen and mounted riflemen. In fact, when they were formed there were protests from socially prominent and well connected units such as the Melbourne Cavalry Corps and the New South Wales Lancers who resented the loss of their lances, and conversion into mounted infantry. Light Horse tactics were to dismount when within small arms range and use the ground for cover to bring fire to bear on the enemy. Horses, typically the ever reliable Walers, were employed for the high level of mobility they provided.

Light Horsemen were citizen soldiers, who provided their own mounts and rode to parades. Detachment centres in Victoria were located so as to be within ten miles of members' homes, giving a return journey in one day of up to twenty miles. Light Horse training included drills, competitions and manoeuvres.

The Army specification for light horsemen was that they should be daring and bold horsemen, careful horse masters and possessed of both cohesion and individuality.

The Light Horse Brigade raised in southern Victoria was the famous 4th Light Horse Brigade, the area of which extended from the Western District to Bairnsdale.

It was at Bairnsdale according to one history, that a woman (would you believe) with her two brothers enlisted as light horsemen in about 1890. She was an outstanding horsewoman "every bit as good as her brothers", and an able shot, and medical inspections were scarcely necessary for peacetime service. It seems likely that she served for almost a decade when the possibility of active service compelled her departure from the ranks.

On the outbreak of World War 1, the 4th Light Horse Brigade marched through the streets of Melbourne in September 1914 and was embarked for Egypt. Following the landing at Gallipoli, all nine Light Horse Regiments were landed as reinforcements to serve as riflemen without their beloved horses. It was on 7 August 1915 that the 3rd Light Horse Regiment was ordered to charge at the Nek. 600 light horsemen charged across a tiny space in four lines, one after another, 150 men at a time. In accordance with their orders, they had fixed bayonets, but no bullets in the breach only to be massacred to the last man by a hailstorm of enemy rifle and machine gun fire.

Going over the top, one trooper uttered the immortal words -

"Goodbye cobber, God bless you".

Following withdrawal from the Gallipoli Peninsula, the Light Horse Regiments were reformed. Every unit had a sense of identity. It was home to its members; a home proudly and jealously defended. It combined a physical comfort and focus for all, with a spiritual refuge for those who needed it. The strength of this union could mean the difference

between success and failure in battle. The spirit was uniquely Australian and very different from the more obvious British form evolved over hundreds of years and exemplified in battle honours of past glories. For the fledgling Australian Army there were as yet no battle honours, no regimental title beyond a number, and an isolation magnified by the distance and remoteness from home and loved ones.

So it was that on Wednesday 31st October 1917 at about 4:40pm, the charge of Beersheba was launched by the 4th and 12th Light Horse Regiments initially at the trot, then a canter and soon a gallop. Their object was the wells at Beersheba after which the town had been named in biblical times. Despite a fearsome Turkish barrage, and intense machine gun and rifle fire, the heroic charge could not be halted. The stunning victory achieved by the light horsemen is now legend.

But the story of the light horsemen does not end at Beersheba. Their distinguished campaign continued through Palestine to Damascus and the surrender of Turkey. Their service continued between the wars and through World War 2. It is represented by the Commanding Officer, citizen soldiers and band of 4th/19th Prince of Wales' Light Horse Regiment and many former members who are with us today. This regiment has seen horses, wheels and tracks. What stands supreme are the qualities of the light horsemen, the mateship, the loyalty, the courage, the perseverance, the professionalism, and the quintessential citizen character.

Recent years have seen the continuing overseas service of members of the regiments of the modern day light horse - the proud successors of the light horseman of old, and every bit as good.

On behalf of all present today and on behalf of present and past members and families of the Light Horse, I convey my thanks to Richard and Jeanne Pratt for their hospitality and to the Pratt Foundation for its magnificent gift.

In honour of the heroic service and sacrifice in war of Australia's light horsemen I officially launch Reserve Forces Day 2007 with two verses of the poem entitled "Beersheba" written by 'Trooper Gerardy' (the pseudonym of Edwin Gerard of the 12th Light Horse Regiment), the celebrated light horse bard.

*We have seen, and we'll remember till the dark approach of death
Overmantles fond reflection and consumes the living breath,
How the Mounted men of Anzac bared the bayonet as they sped
Hard a-gallop at the trenches through a hurricane of lead!
Aye, the parapets of Abdul were but hurdles for the steeds
Underneath impulsive riders that were doers all of deeds!*

*We approached the high defences, and the stricken reeled and swayed
Ere they toppled from the saddle in the ruck of Grant's brigade.
They would ride no more to battle who went under in the race
That the march of better seasons from the mind will not efface.
Over barbed and tangled hedges, over parapets and saps
We careered, till we encompassed all the Turkish murder traps.*



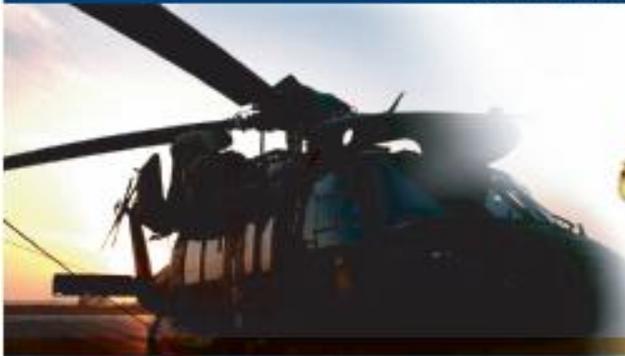


VICTORIAN RESERVE FORCES DAY
MARCH AND CEREMONY
1ST JULY 2007



RECOGNISING VALUED SERVICE TO THE NATION
& 90 YEARS SINCE THE CAVALRY CHARGE AT BEERSHEBA

MILITIA | CITIZEN MILITARY FORCES | NATIONAL SERVICE | RESERVES | CADRE |
Reunions afterwards. Past and Present members of the Australian Reserve Forces



ARMY RESERVE



NAVY RESERVE



AIR FORCE RESERVE

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL A. HOUSTON AO AFC
CHIEF OF DEFENCE FORCE
WILL BE TAKING THE SALUTE & PRESENTING AWARDS



Assembly/Forming up point:

Queen Victoria Gardens, South of Princes Bridge

Melbourne Ref. Map 2F, H7

At 1100 hours for stop off at 1130 hours, march to the Shrine Forecourt where a service will be conducted

Wet weather plan: Warrant Officer Ceremonial to advise by 1100 hrs on the day

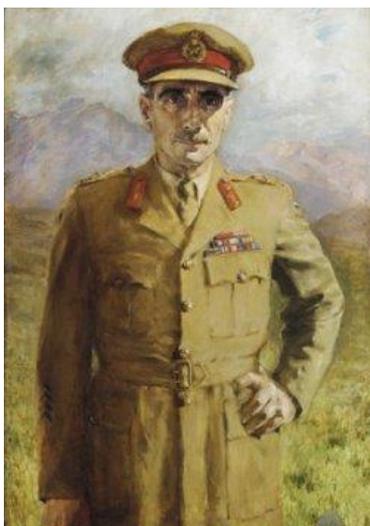
For More Information, www.rfd.org.au

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Vasey, George Alan (1895 - 1945)



George Alan Vasey (1895 - 1945), [A. M. E. Bale](#), 1946, courtesy of Australian War

VASEY, GEORGE ALAN (1895-1945), army officer, was born on 29 March 1895 at East Malvern, Melbourne, third of six children of Victorian-born parents George Brinsden Vasey and his wife Alice Isabel, née McCutcheon. His father, a relatively unsuccessful barrister and solicitor, edited the *Argus Law Reports*. Alan, as he was known within his family, was educated at Wesley College. In March 1913 he entered the Royal Military College, Duntroon, Federal Capital Territory. Following the outbreak of World War I, Vasey's class graduated early and he was commissioned lieutenant in the Permanent Military Forces on 29 June 1915. He joined the Australian Imperial Force next month, arrived in France in March 1916, held various regimental posts in the 2nd Divisional Artillery and saw action in the Somme campaign. Promoted captain in August, he became commander of the 13th Field Battery in November.

In February 1917 Vasey was appointed trainee staff captain on the 11th Infantry Brigade's headquarters. The brigade took part in the battles of Messines (June) and Ypres (October) in Belgium. Vasey, who had been made brigade major in August, developed a strong friendship with his commander [Brigadier General James Cannan](#), who described him as 'hard-working, meticulous, alert, convincing

and courageous—yet somewhat shy and bashful'. Except for a short break, Major Vasey held that appointment until the war ended, taking part in the defence of Amiens (March 1918), the allied offensive (August) and the attack on the Hindenburg Line (September-October). He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (1918) and twice mentioned in dispatches.

Vasey returned to Australia in September 1919. When his A.I.F. appointment terminated in Melbourne on 6 November, he went back to the P.M.F. as a lieutenant and honorary major. He was not promoted to substantive major until 1 March 1935. In the meantime, he endured a series of discouraging postings as adjutant, quartermaster and brigade major of artillery and infantry units in the Militia. The Vasey who had been so confident and outgoing during the latter fighting on the Western Front gradually withdrew into himself. Studying at night, he qualified as an accountant. At St Matthew's Church of England, Glenroy, Melbourne, on 17 May 1921 he married Jessie Mary Halbert. He attended the Staff College, Quetta, India, in 1928-29. Back in Australia in 1930, he accepted more Militia appointments, but contemplated leaving the army. In 1934, however, he returned to India on exchange as brigade major of the 8th Indian Brigade. From 1936 he served at the headquarters of the Rawalpindi District on the North-West Frontier where there were minor operations against local tribesmen.

In April 1937 Vasey joined Army Headquarters, Melbourne, and in December 1938 became general staff officer, 1st grade (training). He was promoted substantive lieutenant colonel on 2 November 1939. Apart from the two years at Quetta, he had spent twenty years as a brigade major or in a similar posting while citizen-officers who had joined the Militia after World War I had risen to the rank of lieutenant colonel by the mid-1930s.

Following the outbreak of World War II, Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Blamey, commander of the 6th Division, A.I.F., selected Vasey as his assistant-adjutant and quartermaster general. On 15 December 1939 the 6th Division's advance party, headed by Colonel Vasey, embarked for Palestine. He was still the division's senior administrative staff officer during the capture of Bardia in January 1941, but was head of the operational staff when the division advanced to Benghazi. Promoted temporary brigadier in March, he was given command of the 19th Brigade and appointed C.B.E. (1941).

In bitter fighting in Greece in April 1941 Vasey revealed outstanding ability as a leader. His brigade took the first shock of the German assault and fought a determined rearguard action at Vevi, near the Greek-Yugoslav border. Later, it held the vital Brallos Pass. Vasey's tall, gaunt frame, with his head of wiry black hair parted in the middle, could always be found in the forward areas. He talked to his soldiers in colourful language that soon became legendary but never seemed to offend. As commander of the Australian forces on Crete in May 1941, he faced a series of desperate situations and was among the last to be evacuated. He was awarded a Bar to his D.S.O. (1941) and the Greek Military Cross (1944).

Returning to Australia in December 1941, Vasey was promoted temporary major general (substantive 1 September 1942), initially as chief of staff, Home Forces, and then—after Blamey became commander-in-chief, Australian Military Forces—as deputy-chief of the General Staff. In September 1942 he was sent to Port Moresby to command the 6th Division. Next month he took over the 7th Division, then fighting its way north along the Kokoda Trail. His leading soldiers entered Kokoda on 2 November. Boldly sending troops through the jungle, he trapped the Japanese at Gorari. Between mid-November and mid-January 1943 Vasey's division fought the grim battles for Sanananda and Gona on the north coast of Papua. The American general Robert Eichelberger remarked that, even after many weeks in the jungle, Vasey 'looked like a commander'. He was appointed C.B. (1943) and awarded the United States' Distinguished Service Cross (1944).

For much of 1943 Vasey trained the 7th Division on the Atherton Tableland, Queensland, before leading it throughout the successful Lae-Nadzab campaign in New Guinea. On 5 September, the day after the 9th Division landed by sea near Lae, elements of the 7th Division landed by air at Nadzab. The 25th Brigade advanced rapidly and captured Lae on 16 September. Often near the front line, Vasey had a strong rapport with his soldiers. '[T]hese fellows of mine are in marvellous form', he wrote, 'I have never seen a body of men so physically and mentally fit'. They nicknamed him 'Bloody George'.

Vasey moved quickly. Reversing his axis, he sent his troops up the Markham Valley and into the Ramu Valley. In a daring attack the 2nd/6th Independent Company seized Kaiapit, and Vasey reinforced it by flying in the 21st Brigade. The 2nd/16th Battalion stormed Shaggy Ridge on 27 December and the division continued the offensive towards Madang. Major W. B. Russell recalled providing a platoon to escort Vasey to Shaggy Ridge: 'They cleaned and tried to polish their sodden boots and equipment as though it was a ceremonial parade. Whenever General Vasey appeared, either on foot or in a jeep, it was all the troops could do to avoid calling out "How are you George?", such a sense of comradeship prevailed between the General and his men'. In February 1944 Vasey was evacuated sick, shortly before his division was relieved by the 11th. He was twice more mentioned in dispatches.

Sent home to recuperate, Vasey was disappointed to find that Blamey preferred Major General (Sir) Stanley Savige for corps command. In June 1944 Vasey was stricken with polyneuritis and forced to relinquish his command. He was determined to lead a division in battle again, although it was to be months before he began to regain his strength. Blamey feared for Vasey's health, but the latter's immense popularity and the intervention of Frank Forde, minister for the army, assisted Vasey's cause. There were suggestions that the government was grooming him to replace Blamey. Early in 1945 he was given the 6th Division, which was fighting around Wewak in New Guinea. He flew north to assume command, but on 5 March 1945 the Hudson aircraft in which he was travelling crashed into the sea off Cairns killing all on board. Survived by his wife and their two sons, he was buried with full military honours in Cairns cemetery.

Blamey described Vasey as 'a well loved friend . . . brave . . . resourceful . . . destined by training and capacity to rise to the very top of his profession'. Prime Minister John Curtin thought that Vasey was 'a brilliant soldier' and that Australia owed him 'a very great debt of gratitude'. General Douglas MacArthur regarded him 'as a superior division commander'. Major Russell wrote: 'No soldier or general could have been so loved and worshipped by his men. I think most of our heroic dreams were associated with some hope of special service or sacrifice for him'.

Another unnamed senior officer passed the following judgement on Vasey:

He could be ruthless and kindly, tolerant of human weakness in the doers and triers, fiercely intolerant of conniving, laziness and inefficiency. He hated importance and was quick to deflate it. He could throw away the book when the occasion required, and he could produce it and use it when it served his ends. Like many apparently tough characters, Vasey was at bottom sentimental, and that was one of his most loveable traits.

It was a 'fair estimate', with the qualification that, as a commander, 'Vasey never let sentiment transcend logic; in military matters his head always ruled his heart'.

Shortly before his last flight, he had told his wife to 'look after the war widows because the bloody government won't'. Alice Bale's portrait of Vasey is held by the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

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Author: David Horner

Print Publication Details: David Horner, 'Vasey, George Alan (1895 - 1945)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 16, Melbourne University Press, 2002, pp 440-442.

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Maj P.J. BADCOE, VC (Post.)

PETER BADCOE was born in Adelaide on 11 January 1934 and was educated in his home city. He joined the South Australian public service as a clerk. Early in 1952 he served seven weeks in the 16th National Service battalion and on 12 July entered the Officer Cadet School, Portsea, Victoria, from which he graduated Second Lieutenant on 13 December 1952.

Early postings included the 14th National Service Training Battalion and 1st Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery. From late 1958 until 1961 he served in the Directorate of Military Operations and Plans at Army Headquarters as a General Staff Officer Grade III. He returned to regimental duties with the 4th Field Regiment on 6 February 1961 and in June of that year was posted to the 103rd Field Battery, with whom he served a tour of duty in Malaya as a battery captain. After a third period with the 1st Field Regiment, November 1963 to August 1965, Badcoe changed his corps from artillery to infantry. He was promoted temporary Major on 10 August 1965 and posted to the Infantry Centre at Ingleburn, New South Wales.

In August 1966 Badcoe realized his ambition to serve in Vietnam when he was posted to the Australian Army Training Team there as a subsector adviser to the Nam Hoa district of Thua Thien province. As an adviser he was concerned with military operations and training carried out by the Ruff Puffs in his district.

In December he was reallocated to the sector headquarters of Thua Thien as operations adviser. Normally he would have been responsible for planning, liaison and associated staff work, but he took full advantage of the latitude given to advisers to lead forces into action whenever the opportunity arose. It was as province (or sector) operations adviser that he carried out the following actions for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

On 23 February 1967 he was acting as adviser to a regional force company in support of a sector operation in Phu Tho district when he monitored a radio transmission which reported the death of an American subsector adviser and the wounding of an American medical adviser. With complete disregard for his own safety Badcoe moved alone across 600 metres of fire-swept ground, attended to the wounded medical adviser and ensured his safety. He then organized a force of platoon strength and led them in a successful assault against the enemy machine-gun post near the body of the American adviser. He killed the machine-gunners in front of him, picked up the body of the dead American and ran back, over open ground still covered by hostile fire, to the regional command post.

Two weeks later, early on 7 March 1967, the Sector Reaction Company was deployed to Quang Dien subsector to counter Viet Cong attack on the headquarters. Badcoe, who had left the command group when their vehicle broke down, joined the company headquarters and personally led the company in an attack over open terrain to capture a heavily defended enemy position. His action prevented the enemy from capturing the district headquarters and averted certain heavy losses.

Exactly one month later, on 7 April, Badcoe was on an operation with the 1st Army of the Republic of Vietnam Division Reaction Company, supported by armoured personnel carriers, in the Huong Tra district. As the 1st Army moved forward to its objective the company came under heavy small arms fire and had to withdraw to a nearby cemetery for cover. Badcoe and his radio operator were left fifty metres in front of the others, under heavy mortar fire. Badcoe ran back and rallied his men and got them moving but they were again stopped by heavy fire. He rose to throw grenades but was pulled down by his radio operator. When he got up to throw another grenade he was killed by a burst of machine-gun fire. Soon after friendly artillery was called in on the enemy position and it was assaulted and captured.

Badcoe was buried at the Terendak cemetery, Malaysia, his epitaph being 'He lived and died a soldier'. In November 1967 an Australian and New Zealand soldier's club in Vietnam was officially opened as the Peter Badcoe Club. A training block at the Officer Cadet School, Portsea, was also named Badcoe Hall in his honour.

For his services in Vietnam, in addition to the Victoria Cross, Badcoe was also awarded the American Silver Star. South Vietnam awarded him the National Order Of The Republic of Vietnam (Knight), three Crosses Of Gallantry (With Palm, Gold Star and Silver Star) and the Armed Forces Honour Medal, 1st Class.

Badcoe married Denise Maureen MacMahon on 26 May 1956. He had a family of three girls. His widow who subsequently remarried, and his three daughters presented his medals to the Australian War Memorial for display in the Hall of Valour.

Lest we forget

<http://www.aattv.iinet.net.au/badcoe.htm>

Adviser News
Australian Army Training Team Vietnam(AATTV)
Sponsored By: Rick Ryan - AATTV Association (Western Australia) Branch Inc.

CEASEFIRE AT WOOLWICH

This article first appeared in February's issue of The Gunner. It was suggested by LTCOL John Morkham that our Association should acknowledge this historic occasion. He drafted an email to be sent.

The article and the email, which has been sent, are printed below:

The Article

Ceasefire at Woolwich

Following a MOD decision on the future use of the Royal Artillery Barracks at Woolwich, the regimental home of the Royal Artillery will move in the course of this year to Larkhill. The decision also results in the move of 16 Regt RA to North Luffenham this coming summer, but CVHQ RA and the RA Band will stay at the Royal Artillery Barracks. Furthermore, Firepower will remain at its current Woolwich Arsenal site.

The Royal Artillery charts its formation back to 26 May 1716 with the formation of two companies[sic] of artillery at what is now Woolwich Arsenal. Thus it is fitting that we will formally mark the departure of the regimental home on Saturday 26 May. The Master Gunner has directed that:

- Our long and distinguished historical association with Woolwich be appropriately reflected in the farewell event.
- All branches of the current regiment – serving, retired, families, Regular and Territorial – have the opportunity to participate in marking the farewell.
- The event should centre around a parade and traditional Sunset Ceremony.
- The event should not be too burdensome on the Regiment considering the current level of commitments. This factor should also temper the level of funding for the event. Priority should go to the formal opening of the new regimental home at Larkhill in the early summer of 2008 which the Captain-General is due to attend.

As a result this year's event will be divided into three parts:

- From Saturday Morning Firepower will be hosting a number of community events over the bank holiday weekend. It will be an ideal opportunity for those who have not visited Firepower (even for some time) to catch up with developments with the RA Museum.
- From 1300 to 1630 hours a "regimental garden party" will be held on the Royal Artillery Barracks sports fields. In the arena there will be displays by The King's Troop RHA, the Flying Gunners Motorcycle Display Team, the RA Parachute Display Team, the RA Band and regimental Pipes and Drums. All are encouraged to bring a picnic lunch. Tea and cakes will be available. The intent is to create a family orientated event in which all elements of the Regimental family can engage.
- The Farewell Parade and Sunset Ceremony will commence at approximately 1630 hours. All current Regular and TA regiments will be represented on parade plus The King's Troop RHA and the RA Band. The retired regiment will be invited to participate in the March Past. The Sunset Ceremony, including all parading troops marching off through the Woolwich arch, will be the culmination of the day. We are waiting for confirmation of the VVIP to take the salute.

The Email

Field Marshall The Lord Vincent GBE KCB DSO
Care of Major Gareth Blythe TD

My Lord

On behalf of the members of the RAA Association Victoria (Australia), may I wish you, the RA Association and guests at Ceasefire at Woolwich a successful day and much happiness together on this highly significant milestone in the history of The Regiment.

News of the Ceasefire was a topic of conversation at the Dawn Service breakfast held on ANZAC Day last month. Members asked me to tell you that we will be thinking of you on the 26th.

Coincidentally our local regiment, 2nd/10th Field Regiment, will be conducting an "At Home" during a field firing exercise on that day. I am sure that we will take this opportunity to toast the health of The Regiment, and its future success in the new "home" at Larkhill. We note that our Captain General is scheduled to attend the formal opening at Larkhill in 2008.. We hope that we can coordinate the travels of one of our members to be with you then.

Ubique!

Yours aye,

Neil Hamer RFD
Major (R)
President



RAA Association (Victoria) Inc Corps Shop

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

PRICE LIST

<p>Badges, etc</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>Ties</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>Books</p> <p><i>Kookaburra's Cutthroats</i> \$39.00 <i>Aust Military Equip Profiles</i> \$13.50 <i>AMEF Profile – Leopard Tank</i> \$17.00</p> <p>ENQUIRIES:</p> <p>BRIAN CLEEMAN (03) 9560 7116 REG MORRELL (03) 9562 9552</p>	<p>Stationery</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 with a bigger bang</i> \$2.00 Square: gold badge, red and blue background \$2.00</p> <p>ORDERS: 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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COCKTAIL PARTY 2007



A Cocktail Party will be held at the Chapel Street Depot on Tuesday the 4th September.

The normal Tuesday parade at the depot will be cancelled to allow serving members of 2nd/10th to attend.

All members of the Association, with their wife, husband, partner and friends are invited to attend.

The Party will commence at 1730 hrs with hot food being served from 1800 hrs onward.

The cost is \$10 per head. This will cover the cost of catering and incidentals.

Dress is neat casual.

To make it possible to cater for the correct number of people attending, please contact SSGT Reg Morrell not later than Monday 27th August.

6 Melissa Street, Mount Waverley 3149.

9562 9552. 0425 837 958

morrell@morrells.org



**GUNNER LUNCHEON
2007**

Date: Saturday 4th August 07 Time: 1200 for 1230 hours

Place: School of Artillery, Puckapunyal

Dress: Lounge suit. Jacket and Tie. Medals are NOT to be worn.

Cost: \$60-00

Transport: Own transport to be used. If you have transport difficulties, alternative arrangements may be made.

**Contact for transport: LTCOL Jason Cooke 9282 6900, 0409 043 165
jason.cooke@defence.gov.au**

A tour of the School of Artillery will be conducted for anybody who is interested at the conclusion of the luncheon.

The closing date for bookings is Friday 13th July or when all places have been taken. The maximum attendance is 100 due to space restrictions.

Please return the following information and payment to:

**Gunner Luncheon
C/- MAJ N Hamer RFD
12 Marida Court
BERWICK VIC 3806**

**Rank, Name, Address.
Guest's Rank, Name.
Special Dietary Requirements.
Preferred Seating With (Or Not).**



Professional men of war

Just before 9 am on 1 July 1945, with the acrid smell of burning oil hanging heavy in the air, the troops of the 2/10th Australian Infantry Battalion waded ashore at Balikpapan. It was Australia's last campaign of the Second World War.



Balikpapan, August 1945. Brigadier Ivan Dougherty of the 21st Brigade with his three battalion commanding officers: Lieutenant Colonels Frank Sublet, Keith Picken and Philip Rhoden.
113192

Almost immediately the 2/10th's commanding officer, 32-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Tom Daly, was confronted with a dilemma. The battalion's objective, a ridge known as Parramatta, loomed ahead but the supporting tanks were bogged on the beach, the artillery was not yet ashore, and naval gunfire support was unavailable. Should he wait for the fire support, which might give the Japanese time to recover from the preinvasion bombardment? Or should he push on, with all the risks that entailed? Each option had the potential for heavy casualties. Knowing the danger an organised Japanese force could pose to the landings, Daly ordered his troops forward.

Advancing with only small arms, the men of the 2/10th surged up Hill 87, the first feature on the way to the summit of Parramatta; it was in Australian hands by 12.40 pm. By this time the tanks had been freed and moved forward, and the artillery was also in action. With this support in train, Parramatta was secured by 2.12 pm. Visiting the summit the next day, and seeing the fields of fire it provided over the landing beaches, Lieutenant General Sir Leslie Morshead, commander of I Corps, commented, "Thank God for the 2/10th Battalion."

Daly walked the Australian official historian Gavin Long through the attack on Parramatta a few days after the end of the war. Long noted that Daly was "a quiet, shy chap" but that concealed beneath this persona was "great drive and sound military sense". These qualities were still evident when I spoke to Daly 55 years later. His answers to my questions were considered, honest and self-effacing. Reflecting on the assault on Parramatta, Daly recalled the "warm glow" he felt when he issued orders and they were carried out without hesitation: "I had never been so proud of the chaps ... all their battle drill was just exactly as we'd trained." Despite his success that day, he still pondered his actions, admitting he often lay awake at night thinking about how he could have done better: "I wonder if I had been more efficient, if I'd really been more on top of my job, been more professional, if some chaps wouldn't have died."



Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Daly addresses the 2/10th
Battalion on the
fifth anniversary of its formation, 31 October 1944.
082067

Daly's actions, and his reflections on them, illustrate the challenges faced by Australian COs during the Second World War: to train soldiers well; to employ supporting arms to best effect; to improvise when plans went awry; to motivate soldiers to do things that self-preservation argued against; and to value the life of individuals and yet have the courage to sacrifice them in pursuit of larger objectives.

Daly epitomised the Australian army's field commanders in 1945. The army had been at war more than five years and committed to active operations for four. In its ethos, structure and proficiency it bore all the hallmarks of a long-established professional army. The men who were commanding its battalions were younger, more experienced and more thoroughly trained than they had been at any time since 1939. Paul Cullen, CO of the 2/1st Battalion in 1945, observed: "We were a very experienced, toughened, competent army, with a wonderful team of company commanders and platoon commanders ... It was a marvellous team to be the captain of."

Battlefield success in 1945 was the product of an evolution in command practice and training that began with Australia's first battles in 1941. During the Second World War, Australian infantry battalions fought in a variety of battlefield environments but the human aspect of war remained constant. Command in all theatres demanded immense reserves of physical and mental stamina; this was reflected in the steady decline of the average age of COs between 1939 and 1945, from 43 to 35. Most telling, however, is the average age of the COs actually appointed in 1945, which was 31. The youngest, Lieutenant Colonel "Charlie" Green of the 2/11th Battalion, was just 25. In the face of prolonged hardship and extreme danger, a CO had to elicit endurance and aggression from his battalion. The leadership this required was multifaceted. Reflecting on the qualities of a good commander, Phil Rhoden, who commanded the 2/14th Battalion on the Kokoda Trail when just 27, observed:

A commander has status, has his badges of rank ... [is] supported by military law ... But that's not enough ... He's got to have standing. He needs knowledge of his craft; be able to get on with people both upwards and downwards; have the power of communication; [be] seen to be interested in the job and those under his command and care ... but above all must know his trade. If he has the opportunity to display that in battle, and he comes out on top, it's a great plus for him.

Rhoden highlights the essence of battlefield leadership in the Australian army during the Second World War. Commanders could not rely on the authority of their hierarchical status to make men carry out their orders. They needed to win the trust and respect of their subordinates, and they largely did so through competent and timely decision making on the battlefield.



Australian officers at a tactical lecture in Palestine April
1940.
001353

The first Australian battalion commanders despatched overseas in 1939 and 1940 were ill-prepared for a war where infantry fought with close support from tanks, artillery and aircraft. They were the product of Australia's inter-war part-time army that used horse-drawn transport and lacked modern weapons and signals equipment. Furthermore, owing to their intermittent training with understrength units their command experience was limited. John Field, the original CO of the 2/12th Battalion, conceded there were "no tactical tigers" among his peers and that "high and low" they had much to learn. Although Australian officers began attending British army schools soon after their arrival in the Middle East, the Australian campaigns of 1941 often featured rash decisions born of desperation, inexperience, or pigheadedness. In action, COs found the existing command system, and in particular its communications, inadequate for maintaining control over increasingly fast moving, dispersed and complex operations. They had to develop means to manage this situation, as well as to adapt their tactical training to the realities of the battlefield. Battle experience became the principal arbiter of an officer's fitness to command. For example, by the time they embarked for Greece in April 1941 following their earlier campaign in Libya in January and February, only three of the 6th Australian Division's nine battalions were commanded by their original COs.

The new battalion commanders were the product of the experience gained in the campaigns of 1941 and distilled in and disseminated by the British army's schools. These schools became a critical element in training Australian COs. A quarter of all Australian infantry COs completed courses at the Middle East Tactical School, and they took this training and experience with them when they left the Middle East.

The battles of El Alamein in 1942 were the highpoint of Australian command practice in the Middle East. Command at Alamein, particularly in the October battle, demonstrated a maturity and refinement that was absent in many of the engagements of 1941. COs were still prepared to take risks, but generally these were calculated risks firmly grounded on experience, rather than the foolhardy risks of untutored enthusiasm or sheer desperation. Improvements in communications, principally reliable wireless sets, more experienced troops, and the development of drills to ensure thorough battle procedure was carried out even when time was short, increased control of operations. In the south-west Pacific battalion commanders faced a host of new challenges. Initially, command in the jungle was a very personal affair. COs fought with only the resources of their own battalions and commanded in close proximity to their forward troops; the terrain, vegetation and climate all severely affected communications, tactics and the ability to manoeuvre. Few heavy weapons could be employed and observation was limited.



Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Louch of the 2/11th Battalion confers with two of his company commanders, before the action at Derna on 31 January 1941.

005669

During the fighting in Papua in 1942 it became apparent that COs would regularly have to accept limited direct control over their companies and platoons; as one report noted, subordinate commanders had to be “trusted implicitly”. Common tactics and procedures, based on experience, became essential. Following the British model from the Middle East, the Australian army established or reorganised several schools to pass on experience gained in the fight against the Japanese. Foremost among these was the Senior Officers Course at the Land Headquarters Tactical School, designed to prepare unit commanders for warfare in the jungle.

Throughout 1943 and 1944 the Australians wrested the initiative from the Japanese in New Guinea. Growing confidence in jungle warfare was apparent in tactics that embraced, rather than feared, dispersion. For COs, battlefield leadership was not as heavily dependent upon their personal example as it had been in Papua. As innovations in weapons and air transport techniques, combined with more favourable terrain, allowed greater levels of support to be provided to the infantry, battalion COs were able to take a step back and concentrate on coordinating operations that often involved tanks, artillery and air support. Cooperation between units was itself fostered by relationships established at army schools. By 1945, the Australian army was arguably the best jungle fighting organisation in the world. At the heart of its success was the insight, trust and mutual respect that underlay its command relationships. These relationships were not only the product of a shared ordeal but also of a centralised and universal system of training that captured and distilled four years of hard-won operational experience and then steeped front-line commanders in its lessons.

During the Second World War the majority of infantry COs were citizen soldiers – volunteers who handed back their uniforms and returned to civilian life at war’s end. These battlefields, however, were no place for amateurs. The complex set of skills needed to bring about victory could only be developed through focused and systematic training. As Frederick Wood, CO of the 2/6th Battalion from 1942 to 1945, observed in his battalion’s history, Australian infantry COs were not professional soldiers but they became professional men of war.

Author

Dr Garth Pratten is a historian at the Australian War Memorial. His PhD thesis on Australian infantry battalion commanders in the Second World War was awarded the C.E.W. Bean Prize for Australian Military History for 2006.

<http://www.awm.gov.au/wartime/37/article.asp>



Worlds Largest Rail Guns Schwerer Gustav



Not as mobile as it appeared, the Gustav Gun was a logistical nightmare. For starters, it required a 500-man crew.

Schwerer Gustav and **Dora** were the names under which the German **80 cm K (E)** railway guns were known. They were developed in the late 1930s by Krupp in order to destroy large, heavily fortified targets. They weighed nearly 1,344 tons, and could fire a shell that weighed more than 7 tons at distances up to 37 km (23 miles). Designed in preparation for World War II, they were intended to be used against the Maginot Line. But instead of a frontal assault, the Wehrmacht outflanked the line during the Battle of France. One of the guns was used in Russia at the siege of Sevastopol during Operation Barbarossa. It was destroyed near the end of the war to avoid capture.

In the history of artillery, only the American 36-inch Little David had a larger caliber.

Development



An 80-cm shell compared to a Russian T-34 tank at the Imperial War Museum, London.

In 1934 the German High Command (OKH) gave to the firm of Krupp of Essen, Germany the problem of designing a gun to destroy the fortresses of the French Maginot Line which was then nearing completion. The gun had to be able to punch through 7 meters of reinforced concrete and an armoured plate 1 meter thick, and do this from a range that kept it out of reach of enemy artillery. Krupp engineer Dr. Erich Müller

calculated that the task would require a weapon with a calibre of around 80 cm, firing a projectile weighing 7 tonnes from a barrel 30 meters long. As such the weapon would have a weight of over 1000 tonnes. The size and weight meant that to be at all movable it would need to be supported on twin sets of railway tracks. In common with smaller railway guns the only barrel movement on the mount would be elevation, traverse being managed by moving the weapon along a curved section of railway line. Krupp prepared plans for calibres of 70 cm, 80 cm, 85 cm, and 100 cm.

Nothing further happened until March 1936 when Hitler visited Essen during which he enquired into the giant guns' feasibility. No definite commitment was given by Hitler, but design work began on an 80 cm model. The resulting plans were completed in early 1937, and approved. Fabrication of the first gun started in the summer of 1937. However, producing such a large weapon proved difficult and it became apparent that the original completion date of spring 1940 would not be met.

Krupp built a test model in late 1939 and sent it to the Hillersleben firing range for testing. Penetration was tested on this occasion. Firing almost vertically, the gun was able to penetrate the specified 7 meters of concrete and 1 meter of armour plate [1]. After the tests were completed in mid-1940 the gun and carriage were removed and probably scrapped. Alfred Krupp personally hosted Hitler and Albert Speer (Minister of Armaments) at the Rügenwald Proving Ground during the formal acceptance trials of the Gustav Gun in the spring of 1941.

The outcome of the tests resulted in orders for two guns. The first round was test-fired from the commissioned gun barrel on September 10, 1941 from a makeshift gun carriage on the Hillersleben firing range. In November 1941 the barrel was taken to Rügenwald where 8 further firing tests took place using the 7,100 kg armor-piercing (AP) shell out to a range of 37,210 meters.

In combat the gun was mounted on a specially designed chassis, supported by two bogies on two parallel sets of railway tracks. Each of the bogies had 20 axles, giving a total of 40 axles (80 wheels). Krupp christened the gun *Schwerer Gustav* (Heavy Gustav) after the senior director of the firm, Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach.

The ammunition for the gun consisted of a heavy concrete-piercing shell and a lighter high-explosive shell. A super-long-range rocket projectile was also planned with a range of 150 km that would require the barrel being extended to 84 m. This rocket projectile would have enabled the bombardment of England.

In keeping with the tradition of the Krupp company, no charge was made for the first gun. However, they did charge 7 million Reichsmark for the second gun *Dora*, named after the senior engineer's wife.

History



A shell for the Dora gun, on exhibition in the Polish Army museum in Warsaw

Schwerer Gustav

In February 1942 Heavy Artillery Unit (E) 672 reorganised and went on the march, and *Schwerer Gustav* began its long ride to the Crimea. The train carrying the gun was 25 cars long, a total length of 1.6 km. The gun reached the Perekop Isthmus in early March 1942, where it was held until early April. A special railway spur was built to the Simferopol-Sevastopol railway 10 miles (16 km) north of the target, at the end of which four semi-circular tracks were built specially for the *Gustav*. The siege of Sevastopol was to be the gun's first combat test. Positioning of the gun began in early May, and by 5 June the gun was ready to fire. The following targets were engaged:

- 5 June
 - Coastal guns at a range of 25,000 m. Eight shells fired.
 - Fort *Stalin*. Six shells fired.
- 6 June
 - Fort *Molotov*. Seven shells fired.

- The White Cliff: an undersea ammunition magazine in Severnaya Bay. The magazine was sited 30 meters under the sea with at least 10 meters of concrete protection. After nine shells were fired the magazine was ruined and many of the boats in the bay were damaged.
- 7 June
 - Firing in support of an infantry attack on Sudwestspitze, an outlying fortification. Seven shells fired.
- 11 June
 - Fort *Siberia*. Five shells fired.
- 17 June
 - Fort *Maxim Gorki* and its Coastal battery. Five shells fired.

By the end of the siege on July 4th the city of Sevastopol lay in ruins, 30,000 tons of artillery ammunition had been fired. Gustav had fired 48 rounds and worn out its original barrel, which had already fired around 250 rounds during testing and development. The gun was fitted with the spare barrel and the original was sent back to Krupp's factory in Essen for relining.

The gun was then dismantled and moved to the northern part of the eastern front, where an attack was planned on Leningrad. The gun was placed some 30 km from the city near the railway station of Taizy. The gun was fully operational when the attack was cancelled. The gun then spent the winter of 1942/43 near Leningrad.

When the German retreat began the gun was moved back to the west where it fired 30 rounds into the Warsaw Ghetto during the 1944 uprising.

The gun then appears to have been destroyed to prevent its capture sometime before April 22, 1945, when its ruins were discovered in a forest 15 km (9 miles) north of Auerbach about 50 km (31 miles) southwest of Chemnitz.

Dora

Dora was the second gun to be produced. It was deployed briefly against Stalingrad, where the gun arrived at its emplacement 15 km (9 miles) to the west of the city sometime in mid-August 1942. It was ready to fire on September 13th. However, it was quickly withdrawn when Soviet encirclement threatened; when the Germans began their long retreat they took *Dora* with them. *Dora* was broken up before the end of the war, being discovered in the west by American troops some time after the discovery of *Schwerer Gustav*.

Langer Gustav

The Langer Gustav was a long cannon with 52 cm caliber and a 43 m barrel. It was intended to fire super-long-range rocket projectiles weighing 680 kg to a range of 190 km. This gave it the range to hit London. It was never completed after being damaged during construction by one of the many RAF bombing raids on Essen.

General characteristics (*Schwerer Gustav*)

- **Weight of gun and mounting:** 1,350 t
- **Length of gun:** 47.3 m
- **Height of gun:** 11.6 m
- **Width of gun:** 7.1 m
- **Barrel length:** 32.48 m
- **Propulsion** 2 x Oil Electric D311 691 kW locomotives (DRG class V188)
- **Maximum elevation:** 48° (or 65°; sources differ, may refer to different mountings)
- **Weight of propellant charge:** 2,500 lb (1134 kg) in 3 increments
- **Rate of fire:** 1 round every 30 to 45 minutes or typically 14 rounds a day
- **Accuracy:** 20% (10 out of 48) of shells fell within 60 m of target point. Worst error was 1 shell landing 740 m from the target point. Assuming normal distribution, this gives a CEP of 190 m.

- **Crew:** 250 to assemble the gun in 3 days (54 hours), 2,500 to lay track and dig embankments, which would take 3 - 6 weeks depending on the geography of the land. 2 Flak battalions to protect the gun from air attack.

Ammunition

High Explosive

- **Weight of projectile:** 4.8 t (4,800 kg)
- **Muzzle velocity:** 820 m/s
- **Maximum range:** 48 km
- **Explosive mass:** 700 kg
- **Crater size:** 30 ft (10 m) wide 30 ft (10 m) deep.

AP Shell

The main body was made of chrome-nickel steel, fitted with an aluminium alloy ballistic nose cone.

- **Length of shell:** 3.6 m
- **Weight of projectile:** 7.1 t (7,100 kg)
- **Muzzle velocity:** 720 m/s
- **Maximum range:** 38 km
- **Explosive mass:** 250 kg
- **Penetration:** 264 ft (80 m) of reinforced concrete was claimed, but this seems extremely unlikely. In testing it was demonstrated to penetrate 7 metres of concrete at maximum elevation (beyond that available during combat) with a special charge [2].

Models

- 80 cm "Schwerer Gustav" (Heavy Gustav) - Deployed in March 1942 against Sevastopol.
- 80 cm "Dora" - Deployed against Stalingrad in September 1942. Possibly never fired.
- 52 cm "Langer Gustav" (Long Gustav) - Started but not completed.

Trivia

- *Dora* is featured in Harry Turtledove's *Worldwar* alternate-history series, in which aliens invade Earth in the midst of World War II. It scores two key hits on landed spaceships, destroying most of the invading force's nuclear arsenal before being taken out by an air strike. The description of the operation of *Dora* is technically accurate.
- In the cyberpunk manga *Battle Angel Alita* by Yukito Kishiro, a working replica of the *Schwerer Gustav* made from ancient technical data is used - to no avail - by 26th-century resistance forces against the technologically-superior orbitally-suspended city of Tiphares.
- The video game *Wolfenstein: Enemy Territory* featured a map with the *Schwerer Gustav* named Railgun (<http://games.activision.com/games/wolfenstein>)

References

- *Schwerer Gustav details* — A page with very extensive info on the *Schwerer Gustav*
- *Self-Propelled Dora* — An article on the self-propelled version of the *Dora*.
- <http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/Lab/1167/edora.html>
- <http://www.hpwt.de/2Weltkrieg/Dorae.htm>
- <http://html2.free.fr/canons/dora.htm>
- *German Artillery of World War Two*, Ian V. Hogg. ISBN 1-85367-480-X

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schwerer_Gustav"



RAA ASSOCIATION (VIC)

SOCIAL GOLF DAY



To be held at the Berwick Montuna Golf Club
Beaconsfield-Emerald Road, Guy's Hill

(Melways 212 C4)

On Friday 9th November 2007

Tee Time 0830 Hrs

This will be our Sixth Annual Golf Day and we look forward to an even bigger and better field to compete for the coveted RAA Association Perpetual Trophy.

A special invitation is extended to all veterans who wish to participate.

Golfers at ALL levels of expertise are invited to attend, including wives, husbands, partners, relatives and friends. Caddies, coaches observers and encouragers are most welcome to attend either, or both, the golf and the lunch.

Hire clubs, buggies and motorised carts are available from the Golf-Shop. These items should be booked directly with the Golf shop on 9707 5226 at least ten days prior. Photo ID and a deposit will be required for clubs and carts.

The cost for golfers is \$25.00 which covers green fees for 18 holes and trophies.

Lunch will be available in the Clubhouse at very reasonable prices.

The competition of the day will be a stableford competition. Players who do not have a handicap will be "allocated" a handicap on the day.

Trophies for the Winner, Runner Up and Nearest the Pin (3) will be awarded in the Clubhouse during lunch.

So that tee times and a number for lunch can be booked for this very busy time of the year, would you please indicate if you would like to attend, and the number of people in your group, by telephone, mail or e-mail to:

Maj Neil Hamer, 12 Marida Court, Berwick 3806;
Telephone, 9702 2100;
E-mail, nhamer@bigpond.net.au

Not later than 26th October 2007.

Please include:

Your name and handicap, (if you have one).

The name and handicap of your guests.

The number of non-golfers who will be attending for lunch.

The name/s of your preferred group.

MY SERVICE CAREER

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

Part 28 – While still Col (Personnel - Projects), 1982, and other matters

I run the risk of this article being seen as a “fill in.” I have one already prepared about my experiences with school cadets but I thought I might first share information on units and career planning in 1982 as far as it affected the various corps and, in particular, the “other ranks.”

Naturally, this chapter is not involved with senior appointments, although there were “PACs” for those as well. I cannot recall being a member of one of these senior groups. I certainly made recommendations for those gunners qualified for “half-colonel” but had no jurisdiction in that area

But just to refresh our memories I will list the units of HQ 3 Div FF Gp by their parade night. If I dared to list them by seniority I might make a number of cardinal errors! But I do trust readers can recall their “staff duties” for the abbreviations. My authority is a list headed something like, “Units by parade night” and issued about 1982.

Monday

- 4/19 PWLH Band
- A Sqn 8/13 VMR (Cobram only)
- 132 Div Loc Bty
- 2 RVR

Tuesday

- 3 Dental Unit
- 2/15 Fd Regt
- RAA Band
- 126 Sig Sqn
- Int Unit
- 7 Tpt Sqn
- 3 MCU
- MWTU
- 3 MP Coy
- 3 RAAPC Unit
- 3 Ord Svcs Unit
- 3 Ord PI
- 2 Cdo Coy
- 15 Tpt Sqn
- 3 EME SVC Unit
- 3 Div Int Unit

Wednesday

- HQ 3 Div FF Gp
- HQ 3 Trg Gp
- HQ 6 Const Gp
- 4/19 PWLH
- 10 Mdm Regt
- 7 Fd Engr Regt
- 8 Fd Sqn
- 10 Fd Sqn
- 22 Const Regt (SR)
- 38 Fd Sqn

1 RVR
1 RVR Band
MUR
Mon UR
3 Psych Unit
OCTU
3 Cat Trg Centre
1 Tp 8 Fd Sqn
108 Sig Sqn

Thursday

6 Fd Amb

Friday

A Sqn 8/13 (less Cobram)
3 Pvt Med Coy

Corps Planning Committee Chairmen

Since I am now copying information from LTCOL W. N. Lunn's list when he was SO1 (ARES) 3 MD of 10 Feb 82, I cannot go wrong this time either. These committees had been in being for some time, but their deliberations were now more formal.

(For some reason RAAC is listed first despite RAA always taking "right of the line" on parade!)

RAAC	LTCOL J. S. Graham
RAA	COL W. M. Vincent, ED ¹
RAE	COL G. R. Hunt, ED
RA Sigs	LTCOL J. B. Potter, ED
RA Inf	COL W. J. Hocking, ED
Aust Int Corps	LTCOL F. C. Covill, ED
RACT	LTCOL R. G. Newton
RAAOC	LTCOL G. S. Green, ED
RAEME	COL J. H. Lee, ED
RACMP	MAJ G. J. Maulday
RAACHD	SNR CHAP J. I. O'Callaghan
Army Health Services	
	COL B. J. Cairns
AACC	CAPT I. G. Isherwood
RAAPC	LTLCOL B. T. Condon, ED
AALC	COL G. P. Mackenzie, OBE
AA Psych	LTCOL W. A. Purdue
WRAAC	MAJ L. H. Bennett, ED
ORPAC	LTCOL D. M. Rattray, ED

ORPAC

The Other Ranks Planning Advisory Committee was LTCOL David Rattray's fiefdom. My memories are that it accounted for a lot of energy, time and deliberations. I am sure that it was deemed to be "a good thing," to use W.C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman's phrase from their hilarious spoof of English History, *1066 and All That*.

¹ I will list the post nominals as in Lunn's document, although many of these officers were to later receive both Australian honours and the RFD. For instance Norm Lunn was appointed AM in the same honours list as LTCOL B. Blanksby

But my memory goes back to the days when I was the BC at Warragul, then with depots also at Korumburra and Traralgon. I have no doubt that the system of “substantive” and “acting” ranks was well in place. One cannot vary a substantive rank without a “courts martial” being convened and then only with the verdict of the sword pointing towards the charged individual!

I recall being able to fill vacancies to inclusive of the rank of sergeant. I think there were about fourteen sergeant appointments in in a battery. So it must have also been equally straight forward for appointments to the rank of bombardier. There were NCO examinations, but if a soldier was doing the job, it was accepted that he was entitled to look like the appointed person and to receive the pay for it in an “acting” rank. But of course he could be just as easily downgraded.

Not exactly relevant, but during the time that I was BC in “Baa Baa Battery”² I coached two potential officers, David Minns and Adrian Keeble through their First Appointment examinations, and was proud to present them with their one-pip epaulettes.

I felt that the ORPAC ran the risk of taking away from unit COs their independence and authority of command, with other corps being involved in the discussions. It would have been a pity if a gunner was held back in promotion through lack of qualified personnel in other Corps.

I must not be too hard on the planning *advisory* committees for in my period as a headmaster I was glad to use the word, *advisory*, for such committees as the Student Leaders and the Uniform ones. I had no interest in setting up a body that could tell me how to run the show, but I was always glad to receive advice.

The personnel of the ORPAC were as follows:

Chairman	LTCOL D. M. Rattray, ED
3 MD Secretary	MAJ K. L. Cavanagh, ED
SO2 Records	MAJ L. H. Bennett, ED
WO1 Coord	WO1 D. C. Belcher
NCOIC CARO Det 3MD	WO2 C. W. Gibson
NCO CARO Det	CPL C. D. Mudie
Members	
HQ 3 Div FF Gp	WO1 D. Frew
HQ 3 Trg Gp	WO1 M. Shave
HQ 4 Bde	WO1 J. Hodges
RAAC	WO1 R. Burke ³
RAA	WO1 R. Millet, MBE
RA Inf	CAPT E. J. Pearce
RAE	WO1 N. J. F. Dodgson
RA Sigs	WO2 I. R. Oates
RACT	WO1 J. W. E. Casey
RACMP	WO1 G. L. Storey
RAEME	WO1 G. E. Powell
RAAOC	WO1 L. W. Tims
RAAPC	WO1 N. Brown
AACC	WO2 P. M. Jones
RAADC	WO2 R. J. Langley
AA Psych	WO1 A. Chapman
Aust Int	WO1 J. T. Cottle

² An inherited title for the unit, whether it was Q or R battery in that in some previous era soldiers had “borrowed” the life of one of Tehan’s sheep for a BBQ. The penalty was not for the acquisition but for being found out! The fleece was not adequately buried! The battery “banner” (it was too heavy to be called a flag in that it was double thickness) hangs I am glad to say in the training depot of 2/10 Fd Regt. Within the letter “Q” is an appliquéd sheep!

³ This warrant officer and several others in the typed document had been listed with the post nominals, “EM.” If I have erred in omitting them, then I apologise to all concerned and their relatives

Commander's Typist

One of the most important persons in the headquarters was Mrs. J. M Bradley, who had the title as the "Commander's Typist." Mrs. Bradley was a most efficient and helpful person. It was Mrs. Bradley who typed the document for the September 1981 RAA TEWT known as *In Direct Support*. For this the Corps was extremely grateful. It reflected her generous and helpful approach to all on the staff and similarly with the the commander in making some of her talents available to us.

Grosvenor

The building that housed the headquarters had quite a history. It has some of the characteristics that we read about the chateaux that housed the headquarters of armies in the First World War. Its centre piece was the dining room or mess. However, the building required a deal of maintenance to maintain the building in a safe and proud manner.

Further along Queens Road were two other fine heritage buildings available to the defence department. One, *Netherby*, housed the 3rd Training Group. The other, closer to St. Kilda Junction, was a hostel for army personnel.

But for those of us posted to *Grosvenor*, and my period was to last from July 1978 to the end of 1982, it was a good experience and, as I have said before, we dined in some style prior to parades in the manner that the British would term, "supper."



AN HISTORIC VISIT TO PUCKAPUNYAL

On the 26th May more than 200 relatives, visitors and cadets accepted the invitation of the Commanding Officer, LTCOL Dean Ashton, and members of 2nd/10th Field Regiment to attend the final live firing of the M2A2 howitzer.

We were given the opportunity to visit the OP and the gun line to see HE and Smoke fired from four guns.

A barbecue lunch was provided, and we were entertained by the Regimental Band.

On behalf of the Association I would like to thank the regiment for providing us with the opportunity to attend this special occasion, for the manner in which we were received by all members of the regiment and especially for the weather, which was great.

Neil Hamer



Parade Card

(as at 2 May 2007)

JUL 2007

01 Res Forces Day
19 Committee

AUG 2007

04 Gunner Lunch
16 Committee

SEP 2007

04 Happy Hour
20 Committee

OCT 2007

5-7 DRA Nat Conf (Syd)
18 Committee

NOV 2007

08 A.G.M.
09 Golf Day
15 Committee

DEC 2007

04 St Barbara's Day
06 Committee

JAN 2008

FEB 2008

10 Church Parade
21 Committee

MAR 2008

20 Committee
?? Arty lunch (all ranks)

APR 2008

17 Committee
25 ANZAC Day

MAY 2008

?? Grand Arty Ball
15 Committee

JUN 2008

?? 3rd DIV lunch (all ranks)
19 Committee

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND DETAILS UP-DATE

Please forward to:
RAA Association (Vic) Inc.
101 Warralong Ave
GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088

Rank _____ First Names _____ DOB _____

Surname and Post Nominals _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Phone (Home, Mobile, Work) _____

Fax and/or E-mail _____

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 _____

Additional Information (Committee, Unit Rep, Etc) _____

Please Use Additional Blank Sheets if Space Insufficient

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