

CASCABEL

Journal of the

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION
(VICTORIA) INCORPORATED

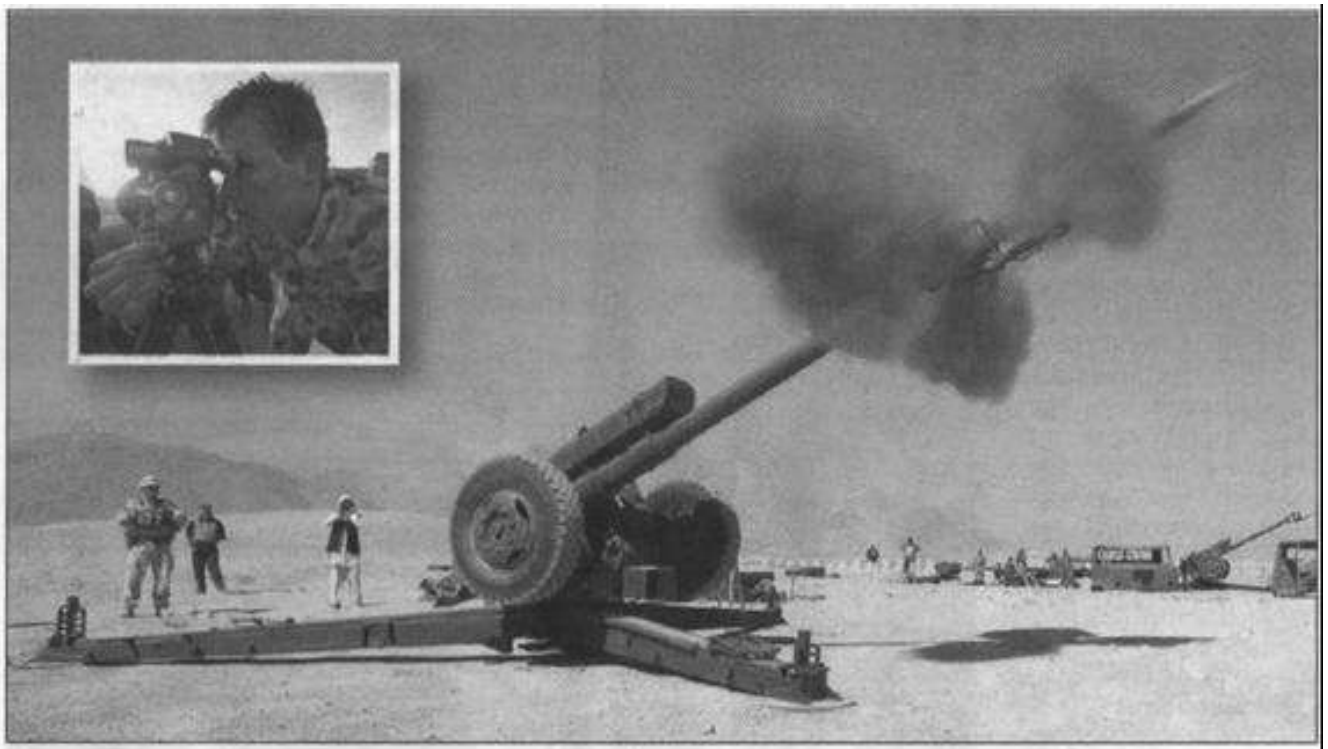
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FEBRUARY 2011



The Artillery Training Team - Kabul (ATT-K) also has a 10 man Mongolian Training Team (MTT). Assisting Afghanistan under a bilateral agreement, the Mongolians have a great deal of experience with equipment of Russian origin. The Mongolians assisted ATT-K personnel with instruction on the Russian 122mm D-30 Howitzer and its sighting system and Russian PM-22 Aiming circle (director).

See p23 Ed.

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ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

(VICTORIA) INCORPORATED

ABN 22 850 898 908



FOUNDED:

First AGM April 1978

First Cascabel July 1983

COL COMMANDANT: BRIG N Graham AM

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: MAJ GEN 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

2008

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

Vice Patron:

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1978 MAJ GEN N. A. Vickery CBE, MC, ED

1979 MAJ GEN 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 breach 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
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9705 1155
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9587 1676
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Auditor: Major David J Osborne
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Curator: SSGT Brian Cleeman
9560 7116

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CONTENTS AND SUBMISSIONS

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Article style, clarity and conciseness remain the responsibility of the article owner or author. Submissions for the May 2011 issue are required no later than 31 March 2011 unless otherwise arranged with the Editor.

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The President Writes

The start of another year.

By the time you read this article Christmas and New Year will have been and gone. Nevertheless, **I extend to you a belated Season's Greetings.**

The Annual General Meeting went off with its usual "bang". **There are no changes to the Committee, Cascabel Editor and Auditor.** I thank the members who again took on the task of managing the Association on your behalf.

When you get to read the Parade Card on the last page of this magazine you will note that we have made some changes to the dates of some of the usual activities.

The Gunner Dinner has been moved to October to – hopefully – get some better weather, but mainly to help spread our activities throughout the year.

The RAA Luncheon will again be held in March.

Church Parade has been moved to coincide with **2/10 St Barbara's Day and family day in early December.**

The Annual Golf Day was held at the Berwick Montuna Golf Club. This was our ninth year. It was won by LtCol Jason Cooke. I am not sure whether this means that he is a good golfer, or the rest of the field was a bit ordinary. I think it is the former as I was a member of the field. Congratulations Jason, we look forward to you defending your title in November this year.

We have about 110 members on our email contact list. Please do not forget to notify me if you change your email address, as some people appear to do with great regularity, so that you stay informed about the Association.

I look forward to seeing you at the next Association function.

Regards to all

Neil Hamer

MAJ (Retd)

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Current Membership as at 3 Dec 11

Life Members	201	(199)
Annual Members	46	(49)
Senior Annual Members	13	(16)
Affiliates	34	(35)
Others (CO/CI, Messes, etc.)	12	(12)
Libraries	5	(5)
RSL's	2	(2)
<u>Total</u>	<u>313</u>	<u>(318)</u>

New Members

We welcome:

Capt R F (Reed) Powney, Life Member and

Cpl G D (Graeme) Vaux, Annual Member
to the Association

Vale

It is with regret that we note the passing of:

Capt Doug Weir (joined Sep 95),

WO2 Brian Hutchinson (joined Aug 88),

Sgt Igor Erimin (joined May 88),

Sgt Neil Morgan (joined Jul 87) and

Gnr Leslie Harris (joined Nov 02).

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 Contact: Telephone: 9702 2100

MAJ (Retd) 0419 533 067

Membership Co-ordinator

Email: nhamer@bigpond.net.au

From the Colonel Commandant

In previous editions of Cascabel, I have advised you that changes are underway in the RAA Historical Company (RAAHC). In recent years this organization, which had its origin in the original RAA Historical Society, focused its support on the Australian Army Artillery Museum (AAAM) at North Fort in Sydney.

The Annual General Meeting for the RAAHC on 9th October saw the initiation of a new phase for the organization; one that will refocus it as a national body designed to maintain and preserve the history and heritage of Australian artillery throughout Australia.



Major General Tim Ford (Retd), who is also the RAA Representative Colonel Commandant, was elected as Chairman. An article from him, (p34) explaining the new direction, also appears in this edition of Cascabel.

General Ford has advised regional RAA Colonels Commandant that he would like to use our role to spread the word on the new focus of the RAAHC and to support arrangements that will establish firm links between the RAAHC and State and regional based museums, sites, and organisations that have a common interest in Australian artillery history and heritage. We are invited to attend any RAAHC Board meeting

Now that the setup of the new National RAAHC is in hand, General Ford has tasked MAJ Mike Laurence RAA, Research Historian, Australian Army History Unit, to develop the RAA Heritage Master Plan. Brig Doug Perry will continue to represent Victoria as the Heritage Representative. There will shortly be a meeting of interested parties in Victoria.

General Ford has further amplified the direction of the plan by stating that he wants a National Artillery Community that takes responsibility and keeps a weather eye on our fixed and moveable heritage on behalf of the Australian People. This is a huge task when you take into account the sites, memorials to individual units as well as Museums and Garden Guns. His aim is to get local input so that the Regiment is receiving accurate local advice, bottom up not top down, on things that may need political or financial assistance.

I will keep you informed of all developments so that we can keep the Victorian Gunner Community involved.

I trust that you had a Merry Christmas and wish you all the best for the New Year.

Best wishes

Brig Neil Graham AM

Colonel Commandant, Southern Region

Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery.



MESSAGE FROM COMMANDING OFFICER 2nd/10th Field Regiment RAA



To all Gunners

Welcome to 2011. I hope and trust that you have thoroughly enjoyed the festive season spending valuable time amongst family and friends. I know I enjoyed my Christmas break, 2010 was a busy year, full of challenges, achievements and great memories, but for me there were also those missed opportunities. By the time you read this, the Regiment will be back in full swing with

another full year of training, exercises and operational tasks.

Before I provide a quick report card on the Regiment in 2010, I would like to personally acknowledge and thank those members that have been posted out and/or retired from the Regiment. Without their dedication, commitment and tireless efforts, either provided throughout their career or during their posting to 2/10, the

achievements of the Regiment would not have eventuated. I would also like to extend a very warm welcome to those families that have joined the Regiment either through new enlistments or recent postings. To all members of the Regiment including families, best wishes and good luck, and may you continue to enjoy being part of our Regimental family especially we us.

Throughout 2010, the Regiment again delivered on a range of tasks and activities, performing them at the usual high standard we have set ourselves. In summary we achieved the following since November last year: conducted 10 training courses qualifying over 120 soldiers in a variety of skills;

- conducted a series of field training weekends at the individual and collective level that the **Regiment hasn't been able to achieve for a number of years;**
- constructed and delivered the training and evaluation of the 4th **Brigade's team** representing the Australian Army at a international military skill competition whom returned with silverware;
- plus participated in EXERCISE JACKA, a Brigade concentrated period of two week designed to certify the High Readiness Reserve Force inside which 2/10 also delivered 3 training courses for the ongoing conversion of Artilleryman within the 2nd Division.

We achieved all of that despite the uncertainty surrounding the future role of Artillery in the 2nd Division; the unfortunate situation that arose regarding the schedule of equipment & weapon replacement where the Regiment was temporarily without our mortars; and the continued pressure on resources including ammunition and training days. Combine all of the above of which was delivered by the Regiment being under manned, lacking in junior leaders and senior NCOs.

This was an outstanding effort by all members of the Regiment and I am immensely proud of the results we have achieved in 2010. We are and do deliver capability to the 4th Brigade, the 2nd Division and to the Australian Defence Force. Thank you and well done, but I am going to ask you to do it all over again.

We need to consolidate our achievements and finally put to rest this ridiculous notion that the 2nd Division can do without gunners. I need to maintain the themes I introduced into the Regiment last year regarding the re-establishment of our Regimental culture; continue development of a closer working relationship with the School of Artillery, ultimately securing within the school the 2nd Divisional Artillery Training cell; and finalising the conversion of the Regiment from guns to mortars.

There are a couple of major exercises over the next couple of years that will involve members of 2/10. We need to capitalise on these opportunities and prove that our training provides our members with the necessary qualifications that enable them to be selected. The future looks very exciting, full of opportunities including an overseas deployment; we simply need to put ourselves in the best possible position for this to occur. I have no doubt we are up for the task and that 2011 will see the Regiment excel across a wide range of tasks, continuing the delivery of capability to the ADF.

Now for some quick public announcements. There is an open invitation to any member of our Gunner family to visit the collection of memorabilia at the Regiment. And a very warm invite to our next Open Day, date yet to be confirmed. We would also love to see you all at any one of our Regimental or Association activities including the Gunner Lunch and Dinner. As I have previously stated, it is always an excellent opportunity to discuss all things Artillery amongst friends and fellow gunners.

Feedback and views from Association members are always welcome so please contact me on jason.cooke4@defence.gov.au if you wish to discuss anything. Again I extend all the best for the first half of 2011 and hope to see you at as many functions as possible.

Ubique

Jason Cooke

Lieutenant Colonel

Commanding Officer

2nd/10th Field Regiment

EDITORS INDULGENCE My apologies for cramming so much in, but space is always at a premium.

With the Christmas and New Year festivities well behind us, it is now appropriate to turn our thoughts towards attending our Gunner Luncheon at the RACV Club on March 11th. A bumper crowd last year with members coming from interstate. What about you locals, we need you there!! **It's a fantastic** opportunity to catch up with old faces & reminisce about how good we were in our day!!

Many of you may have noticed that two common pages have been missing from recent editions: namely the current pages 3 and 43. Due to space considerations, it is my intention to only include them in the first journal of each year.

I have had further feedback of names of Sgt's Mess members shown in my "indulgence" page of journal 104. From Barry Irons: I was able to recognise about 3 of them; the rest came from (Maj) John Boothroyd who asked me to forward them on to you.

Front row centre with the cane. L/Col Pete Turner MC. was then the CO. On the right in the photo is Joe. On his right is WO2 John Boothroyd, (LAD). **Second on right from John he believes is WO2 "Blue" Patterson, next to him is WO2 Caterer Rodger Isherwood. Next is the ARA BSM, but John cannot as yet remember his name. Front row left of the CO is RSM WO1 "Moose" Mathews, alongside him is WO2 Jimmy Funge BSM HQ Battery.** Front row extreme left is WO2 Ron Fricker, on his right is (a young) WO2 Mal Bugg. Standing on the left centre row next to the Sgt wearing the sash, is SSGT Jack Crutchfield BQMS HQ Battery. Top row extreme left is SGT Kevin Moon, (LAD) the SGT standing top row directly above John Boothroyd is SGT Ken Johnston, to his left John thinks it is Jock Galloway, who became BSM HQ Battery after the untimely passing of Jimmy Funge. Finally, my own contribution is Sgt George Beale 5th from right, middle row. (Ed) Combined with the 6 names from Lt Col Keith Bunnett, the total of 17 finalises this identification process.

Another successful 3 Bty reunion was held at Caulfield RSL on 28/10/2010. These reunions originated many years ago & were strictly a **Sgt's Mess** function. These days the membership has been widened somewhat & now includes a few odds & sods from other messes & depots.



Brian Cleeman, John Decker, Reg Morrell, Peter Harris, Alan & Barbara Halbish, Frank Perry, Andrew Millis, Rod & Judy Olsen, Andrea & Barbara Monahan (in black), Andrew's partner Mary Beth (between the Monahans), Sam Phyland, Peter Shattock, David Osborne, Sylveen & Darby O'Toole, Norm White, Maureen & Brian Joyce.



AGM 2010. Secretary Rachel Decker, President Maj Neil Hamer, Treasurer SSgt Reg Morrell

I attended our AGM on Nov 4 at Caulfield & was very pleased to hear comprehensive presentations from Brig Graham & Lt Col Cooke. Very informative indeed. However, the attendance of only 17 members was rather poor. Surely we can do better than that in 2011!!

I have been in contact with RAN Cmdr Jim Uncles who has been responsible for making a detailed **submission to the UK Govt re the granting of a pardon to Harry "Breaker" Morant. Unfortunately, the UK Govt has not seen fit to grant the pardon.** I have included (pp17-20) a **summary of article's from Jim's web site which cover many of the points in his submission.**



"Our" old M2A2's being stored whilst going through the disposal process. Extra security was provided by regular (unarmed) sheep patrols.

The picture was provided by Ron Harris.

Drunks pick fight with SAS war hero

YOLANDA ZAW, The West Australian November 16, 2010, 6:42 am

Elite SAS war hero Mark Donaldson was among three military hard-men who found themselves in a one-sided altercation with two drunks in central London yesterday.

According to reports, Trooper Donaldson, who received the Victoria Cross for bravery in Afghanistan, was walking with Royal Marine Lance-Cpl Matt Croucher, 26, and British Army Capt. Peter Norton, 47, both George Cross winners, when two drunks tried to start a fight with them.

The three soldiers had been at a reception at Buckingham Palace and were dressed in civilian clothes but wore medals on their chests.

The two men, who had a Staffordshire bull terrier, hurled abuse and shoved the decorated war heroes, attempting to provoke a fight.

After ignoring polite advice to "walk away" the duo found themselves on their backs while their dog ran away, yelping. "After they ended up on the ground, the guys just calmly adjusted their suits and walked off," a witness said

Former Head of Regiment



Brigadier Wayne Goodman, AM

I was able to advise some of you earlier that I am soon to deploy on operations at short notice. Unfortunately, as you can imagine, this impacts significantly on my ability to represent you as Head of Regiment for the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. I was not expecting to be deployed and this deployment reminds me that we must all remain prepared at all times for any eventuality.

The Deputy Chief of Army has appointed Brigadier D. P. Coghlan, AM to replace me as Head of Regiment and I am sure that you will provide him the same level of support that I have enjoyed. The Regiment continues to face a significant period of change which is challenging our leadership and our flexibility. As we know, each element of the Regiment is facing a number of exciting equipment and structural changes that will test our ability to adapt. As we have come to expect of the Regiment, we will manage this change, quickly adapt to the challenges posed and continue to provide the capability required and expected of the Gunners.

I have welcomed the opportunity to represent you, I thank you for your forthright views and your support over the last 18 months and I look forward to renewing our acquaintance in the future. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the continued support of our families in this time of operational intensity. I wish you and your families the best of health and encourage you to make the most of the opportunities that you have to be together.

I acknowledge that we have three distinct Regimental professions that all perform laudably from operations in Timor Leste, to the Middle Eastern Area of Operations including Operation Herrick and all of the operations in between where the Regiment is represented.

Finally, I offer you all the traditional greeting in farewell, good shooting.

Ubique

New Head of Regiment Profile



Brigadier David Coghlan was born in Canberra and graduated from the Royal Military College Duntroon in 1984 to the Royal Australian Artillery. From 1985 to 1968 he held a variety of Regimental postings in the 16th Air

Defence Regiment at Woodside in South Australia involving both the Rapier and RBS-70 surface-to-air guided missile systems.

In 1989 and 1990 Captain Coghlan was the SOS Operations at Headquarters 3rd Brigade in Townsville and from there was posted as an instructor at the US Army Air Defense School at Fort Bliss Texas. For his service at Fort Bliss he was awarded the United States Army Meritorious Service Medal. Upon return to Australia in 1993 he was the Operations Officer and Battery Commander of Headquarters Battery at the 16th Air Defence Regiment.

From there Major Coghlan attended Army Command and Staff College at Queenscliff followed by a posting to Brisbane as the SO2 Operations at the Deployable Joint Force Headquarters. In 1998 he was posted to Canberra as Staff Officer to the Director General of Preparedness and Plans - Army. In 1999 he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel as the SO1 Organisational Structure in Army Headquarters. For his efforts in this area he was awarded a Chief of Army's Commendation.

While posted to Army Headquarters he completed a Master of Defence Studies at the Australian Defence Force Academy where he was awarded the Defence Studies prize as the top student in the program. In 2001 Lieutenant Colonel Coghlan was awarded first and second prizes in the Chief of Army's Essay competition for his papers *The Revolution in Military Affairs* and *The Prospect of a United Nations Standing Force*. A later article, *Australia's Defence Policy in the Post-Cold War World*, was published in the Army Journal.

During 2002 Lieutenant Colonel Coghlan deployed as the contingent commander of the Australian United Nations Military Observers and Senior United Nations Military Observer in the Oecussi Sector of East Timor. In 2003 and 2004 he commanded the 16th Air Defence Regiment during a period of rapid expansion and revitalisation.

Promoted in 2005 he was appointed as Colonel Plans Headquarters Training Command - Army. During 2006 he was the J5 - Plans at Headquarters Joint Operations Command in Sydney.

Following this appointment Colonel Coghlan deployed to Afghanistan as the Deputy Commander Joint Task Force 633 (Afghanistan). In this role, based in Kabul, he was the senior Australian Defence Force representative in Afghanistan. For his performance as J5 and in Afghanistan Colonel Coghlan was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in the 2008 Australia Day Honours List.

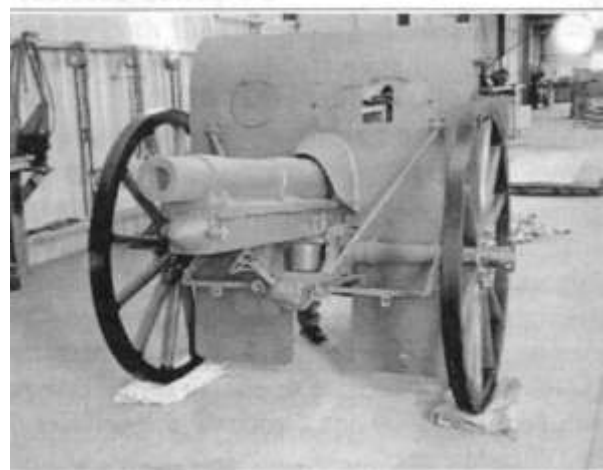
In 2007 and 2008 Colonel Coghlan attended the US Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania as a member of the resident Class of 2008 graduating with a Masters of Strategic Studies.

His major research paper for the course *Prospects from Korean Reunification* was published by the Strategic Studies Institute, the US Army's institute for geostrategic research and analysis. A recent article *Clausewitz: Strategist of Choice for the Twenty-First Century* has been published in the Autumn 2010 Edition of the Australian Army Journal.

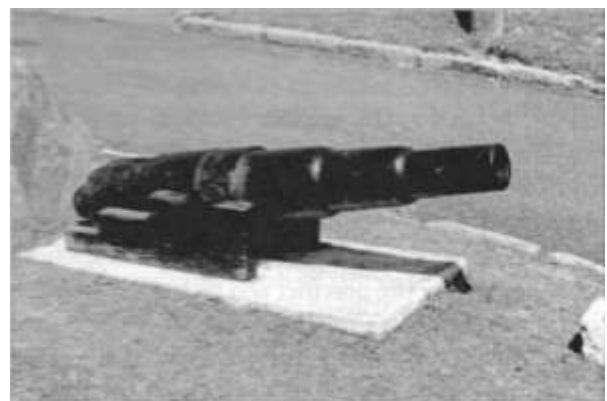
Promoted in October 2008, Brigadier Coghlan is currently the Director General of Military Strategy in Strategic Policy Division of the Department of Defence.

Brigadier Coghlan is married to Trish and they have three children, Jessica 18, and twins Benjamin and Sarah who are 15. His interests include his family, reading, history and he is a keen follower of cricket. They live in the suburb of Forde in Canberra.

The Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company (RAAHC) continues its fine work.



Deniliquin NSW. 75 mm Field Gun Model 1904
Restored by their Volunteers with Advice from
RAAHC



20 Pounder RML (Armstrong) gun has been removed for restoration. The breech screw that had been rusted in place for over 40 years has been freed and missing parts being manufactured. This naval version of the gun will have a carriage built to authentic specifications

Origins of the 25 Pdr - Pt 3b

Design, Redesign, and more Design.

The Alecoto Mark 3

The Alecoto gun carrier was an off-shoot of the airborne A.17 Tetrach light tank intended for use by airborne formations. As a light carrier, the Alecoto could carry relatively heavy weapons for the support of otherwise lightly armed airborne troops, and the first Alecoto, the Mark 1, mounted a 94 mm howitzer that fired the same ammunition as the 3.7 in mountain howitzer⁴. A few Mark 1s were produced, but the project had a low priority, and the end of the war came before the rest of the intended marks were produced. The Mark 2 was to have had a 6 pdr anti-tank gun, while the Mark 3 was to have mounted a 25 pdr on the front hull.

The Mark 3 would have been a formidable vehicle/gun combination as it was supposed to mount the massive 32 Pdr5 anti-tank gun. None of these projects were built, and only a small number of 94 mm-armed Mark 1s were produced. Most of them ended up as hack tractors on Salisbury Plain training area.

The T51

When the British Army gunners received numbers of the US M7 Priest they were most taken with the amenities and style of the vehicle. Although the Priest was a very popular weapon, it had one major disadvantage, and that was its 105 mm calibre howitzer. While 105 mm was, and still is, a widely used artillery calibre, it was not at that time an established British one. This caused supply and other quartermaster difficulties, to the extent that someone decided to ask the Americans if the Priest could mount a 25 pdr in place of the 105 mm howitzer.

Via the British Military Mission based in Washington, the US Ordnance Department was asked to actually build such a version of the M7. The Americans complied by converting the original M7 prototype, the T32, to take a 25 pdr.

To keep the picture clear they re-named the conversion the T51, and the conversion was finished in July 1941. Once finished, the T51 project went no further. While the 25 Pdr conversion was perfectly feasible, and the resultant gun/carriage combination was quite

successful, the US Ordnance Department felt they had quite enough to cope with in producing the M7, and a 25 pdr variant for another nation, no matter how closely allied, was not on at the time. Thus the T51 project lapsed. Another classic case of what might have been.

The Sexton

When the Americans announced that no further progress could be expected with the T51, the idea of some form of 25 pdr self-propelled carriage, based on the M7 Priest did not die. Instead, the British turned to Canada, and requested the Canadian Army Engineering Branch to convert their Ram chassis for the role. The Canadian Ram tank was a design and production programme very similar to that carried out in Australia with the AC series. (About which, more to follow).

The Canadian Ram was a local design, using the chassis and hull of the American M3 as a basis, initially mounting a turret with a 2 pdr, and then a 6 pdr gun. As with the Australian AC, the Ram design entered production, but was later withdrawn once the American arsenals were able to pour out huge numbers of M3s and M4s for all. So the Ram production lines were soon to be available for the 25 pdr project.

The design of the 25 pdr carrier was very similar to that of the M7 Priest, but adapted to suit British requirements, e.g. the driver position was switched to the right-hand side and the prominent pulpit of the Priest was eliminated. The open box superstructure design was retained and the 25 pdr itself was placed into a redesigned saddle and cradle that allowed not only full elevation but a wide traverse. The first '25 pdr, S.P. Tracked' was sent for evaluation to the United Kingdom in January 1943.

The design met with rapid approval, and production then went ahead at the Sorel-located Montreal Locomotive Works. Soon named Sexton, the first batch was based on the Ram chassis. Later batches were based on the M4A1 chassis (known to the Canadians as the Grizzly) but throughout the life of the Sexton, production changes were being constantly introduced. The early three-part bolted front hull was eventually replaced by a one-piece cast item, and so on, for to mention every production change would take

too long to reiterate here.

The full production run eventually reached an impressive 2150 units and did not cease until the end of 1945. It was June 1944 before the first examples were ready for action and the Sexton duly took part in the Normandy landings and all subsequent campaigns. The Sexton was initially used only by the Canadian and British armies, but its use spread. In service it was a very popular gun/vehicle, rather large for the gun carried but reliable, roomy, possessed of a useful cross-country performance, and with plenty of room for crew and all their equipment.

The open superstructure was exposed to all weathers, though, and canvas covers could not always cope with the European winter. A special version with the 25 pdr removed was used for forward fire observation, and as a command vehicle, (this was the Sexton GPO), and there was even an attempt to produce a wading version with full DD (duplex drive) kit.

After the war the Sexton soldiered on, but by the late 1950s the type was phased out of British Army service. Several of the Commonwealth armies had used the type for many years, and India is still understood to have used the Sexton up to the 1960's.

South Africa phased-out the Sexton about the same time, and Portugal used the Sexton into the 1970s. Italy was at one time a great user of the Sexton and even went to the point of replacing the 25 pdr with old German 105mm howitzers on some vehicles.

Sextons are still to be seen in numerous museums and in private hands, and one of the best known is the example kept running at the Royal School of Artillery at Larkhill. This is understood to be an ex-Portuguese Sexton. The Sexton was easily the most successful of the 25 pdr self-propelled variants and was produced in by far the largest numbers. In many ways it almost (almost) approached the success of the towed 25 pdr.

The Yeramba - **Australia's Own**

The Yeramba is one of the least known of all the 25 pdr self-propelled variants. It was an Australian conversion undertaken post-war, the first being produced in 1949. The Yeramba

originated as the result of a requirement for some form of self-propelled artillery to support a newly-formed independent armour brigade, but at the time there were few funds to obtain such equipment. However, there were plenty of surplus towed 25 pdrs around and also a number of redundant M3 General Lee/Grant tanks left over from the pre-1945 era, so it seemed a logical idea to combine the two elements into a new design.

The result was the Yeramba, which at first sight appeared to be a Sexton, but closer examination soon revealed the M3 origins, the most obvious of which were the doors in the side hull and the driver's position. The first Yeramba was produced in 1949 at the Development and Proving Establishment at Monegeetta and trials were carried out on the Puckapunyal ranges. The 'production' run was carried out during 1951 and 1952 but only 13 were made. These were issued to the 22nd Field Regiment, a Citizen Military Forces unit based in the state of Victoria but usually operating from Puckapunyal. There they were reliable and popular vehicles, but with the arrival of more modern armour in Australia they were phased out during 1956. A few still survive in scrap yards and it is to be hoped that this oddity will be preserved for posterity. As is the one in the tank museum at Puckapunyal. (and the gun fitted is not the original, trust me)

The Yeramba was an unusual piece of self-propelled artillery produced to suit a local requirement. It had an ammunition capacity for 88 rounds and one further item of note was that the 25 pdr barrel used a muzzle brake, a standard fitting elsewhere but unusual in Australia where the first towed 25 pdr muzzle brakes were not fitted until 1962. Two Bren Guns were also carried.

Yeramba data

Crew	6
Weight	29,984 kg
Length	6,971 m
Width	2,74 m
Height	1,74 m
Max speed	40 km/h
Range	200 km

Gun elevation -9° to + 40°

Traverse 40°

The FV 304

In the post-war years, the highly successful Universal Carrier concept was developed to the point where the War Office issued specification for a range of vehicles known as the FV300 series. The idea was that the basic vehicle was to be used as the basis for a range of vehicles ranging from a light tank (the FV 301) to a 25 pdr carrier (the FV304) and a 5.5 in gun-howitzer carrier (the FV 305). The FV 305 had a low priority and faded from the scene but the FV 304 went ahead. By 1950 most of the design work was well under way. The 25 pdr was to have some unusual features.

It was to be mounted in a high-angle barbette-type mounting, was to be fitted with a semi-automatic breech block, and a fume extractor would have to be added to the barrel as the crew compartment was to be enclosed. The dial sight and carrier had to have a special long and high body, and all this was ready by the middle of early 1952, when the first complete gun was finished. This gun was allied with its carrier, but the next stage is still uncertain.

What is known is that in 1953 the entire FV 300 series project was terminated, with only the one FV 304 prototype in being. With the project over, this was of no further use to anyone, so it ended its short life as a target on an artillery range, forlorn and sadly, forgotten

The FV 3802

By 1952, the end of the service life of the Sexton was in prospect, and it was consequently decided to develop a new 25 pdr self-propelled equipment, using the Centurion tank as a basis. At the time it was not exactly certain what type of artillery piece was to be used in the new design, but the 25 pdr was chosen purely to act as an evaluation piece, and as the base for a whole family of associated vehicles. The full range of this Centurion based family was as follows:

FV 3802 25 pdr SP

FV 3803 Section Vehicle, R.A.

FV 3804 GPO/CPO Vehicle

FV 3805 5.5 in SP

FV 3806 7.2 in SP

FV 3807 120 mm anti-tank SP

Only two of these designs actually got to the hardware or trials stage, the FV 3802 and the FV 3805. (I would have loved to have seen the FV 3807) The FV 3802 chassis was based on that of the Centurion Mark 7 by using the Centurion Mark 3 power pack. However, the FV 3802 had only five road wheels instead of six, and the hull was 20 in (508 mm) shorter than the normal Centurion hull. (Why, O why, do the designers (ADE) think they can do better, over an existing successful design?). The 25 pdr was fitted using the same barbette mounting as that designed for the FV 304, and was mounted in a roomy box compartment, entirely enclosed for crew protection, and with the barrel facing to the rear of the vehicle.

The barrel could be depressed to -1°50' and elevated to +68°. Gun movements could be made either manually or with power assistance, and there was a coarse and fine speed selection. Traverse was originally to have been 45 degrees right and left but this was later reduced to 30 degrees. The main contractor for the FV 3802 was Leyland Motors. In all, one prototype and two 'pre-production' vehicles were actually produced, but the whole project was cancelled in 1956.

Even so, it was 1958 before the last example was delivered, and this, along with the other two vehicles, was used for some desultory trials work through 1959. The 5.5 in FV 3805 fared no better and in late 1960 that project also drew to a close. It has been suggested that the FV 3802 was dropped from further consideration because the 25 pdr gun was too small for the size of the hull involved, and it must be said that the FV 3802 had too much hull for too little gun.

But that was not the real reason for the demise of the FV 3802 or the FV 3805. Both were only really feasibility and evaluation designs that suffered by the fact that by the time they were ready, the American defence industry had cornered the market in self-propelled artillery of all kinds.

The Americans could supply the needs of NATO with weapons of chosen standard calibres and neither the 25 pdr nor the 5.5 in featured in this new standard NATO calibre range. Thus the FV3802 project came to an end, the victim of a new age of standardized equipment for a new concept of peace-keeping.

The 25 Pdr Afloat ?

Mention must be made of the 25 pdr as a naval weapon before this summary of variants is complete. The idea of standardizing land-based weapons for naval use has long had its attraction, but few of these have ever had much success and the naval 25 pdrs were no different.

The original idea was to use the 25 pdr as a 'submarine gun'⁶ but the separate loading ammunition posed problems in that role, and by the time development of a fixed piece of 25 pdr ammunition was under way the whole idea had been dropped in favour of other projects.

But that was not the end of the 25 pdr afloat, for in 1944 it had been decided that the Army could do well to provide its own artillery support in the final phases of amphibious operations. The Army was not so keen, so the idea was turned into a nice compromise with the Royal Marines being duly lumbered with the manning of landing craft **known as LCG (M)'s. These were equipped with** either 25 pdrs or 17 pdrs mounted in two "turrets" on the fore deck, and during 1944 were used by the 330 LCG (M) Flotilla. They saw action but once, at Walcheren, when some of the 17 pdr craft were sunk (incidentally by ex-British 3.7 in anti-aircraft guns used by the Germans for coastal defense).

The exact number of 25 pdr-equipped LCG (M)s is still uncertain, but one interesting fact is that **some remaining LCG (M)'s were handed over to** the Burmese Navy in 1948. Some of these retained their 25 pdr armament (minus muzzle brakes as ships seldom encounter tanks!) for use in what the Americans term 'riverine' operations. Some of these craft were reportedly still in being **used until the 70's perhaps a few of them may** still survive.

Message ends.

Out.

Barry Irons

Armament Artificer ®

4. *The 3.7 in Mountain Gun was a veteran of the first war, with a short barrel and limited range. (Again, note the calibre size, sound familiar ?)*
5. *The 32 Pdr calibre was 3.7 in (94 mm) (refer to the 3.7 in Bofors AA gun)*
6. *The AC 3 Australian Cruiser Tank. (More detail in next issue.)*
7. *Submarine gun. This is a subject that I have been fascinated with for some time. Seeing the wartime documentaries and films of the submarine deck gun, being brought into action after surfacing in a matter of minutes. The (fixed) ammo being passed to the gun crew at the ready, from a hatch or portal on the side of the conning tower, always creates interest. This gun, being able to withstand the depths of submersing, resisting! the attack of salt water corrosion, the packing or seals around the breach mechanism and other moving parts, and around the muzzle to prevent the ingress of water or moisture, truly is a marvel of design and engineering. And, above all, being ready to fire at all time, no matter what the situation.*

References;

25 pounder gun by Terry Gander Part 1 & 2 - Outline Publications Ltd. London SE1

Permission has been asked for the above publication by letter and email with no reply. I have been advised that copy write may no longer apply as this publication is over 25 years and long out print.

"Gunners in the Jungle" The history of the 2/15th Field Regiment RAA. 8th Division AIF. By Cliff Whitelocke. ISBN 0 9592123 0 2

Generous permission to use excerpts as required by Mr. David Richards, President - 2/15th Field Regiment Association, Westmead NSW 2145.

(This book is a must read for general interest and historians alike, of a unit achieving its best under difficult, and later terrifying and trying conditions **as POW's in Singapore, and give full meaning to** the words, we must never forget)

The story (saga) of Harry "Breaker" Morant continues. Cmdr Jim Uncles has been pursuing justice for Harry & the following article are extracts from various sources explaining his endeavours. Of course, you will draw your own conclusions. Ed.



Cmdr James Uncles - Profile

A lawyer by occupation, I have spent 28 years in the Australian Navy specialising in criminal law with extensive experience as an advocate before Military courts martial and in civil courts as a Police and Crown prosecutor. I have a reputation for addressing injustices.

I became involved in this case 12 months ago after watching the 'Breaker' Morant movie (not for the first time!!). I became concerned by the apparent disregard for the rights of the accused to a fair trial, in particular a reasonable opportunity for their



Australian defending officer, Major James Thomas, to prepare a defence case for Lieutenants Morant, Handcock and Witton who had been charged with killing Boer prisoners during the Boer War.

I believe that Morant, Handcock and Witton were not tried in accordance with the law of 1902 and had suffered injustice as a result. In short, the convictions for murder were unsafe and a review process has to be done. Despite extensive literature on the Boer war and the life of Morant, no one had ever examined the details of the trials, questioned neither the legitimacy of the evidence nor the conduct of the trials. As a senior lawyer, I have used my extensive legal and military experience to study the case and have produced significant evidence that asserts Morant, Handcock and Witton did not receive fair trials.

In October 2009, I forwarded two petitions for

pardons for these men, one to the Australian House of Representatives Petitions Committee and the other to Her Majesty, the Queen. In May 2010, I also sent a petition to the Senate. I lobbied Australian politicians and written letters to the British government. I succeeded in having the matter heard before the House of Representatives Petitions Committee on the 15th of March 2010. A member of the Committee described the grounds of appeal as strong and compelling.

I believe unsafe convictions were the result of fatal flaws in the arrest, investigation, trial and sentencing of the accused. The historic process of petitioning the Crown for the exercise of the royal prerogative of mercy has been used to argue for an inquiry into the execution of Morant and Handcock and the imprisonment of Witton.

The facts of the case

WHY DID LIEUTENANTS MORANT, HANDCOCK AND WITTON NOT GET FAIR TRIALS?

Denial of natural justice - Investigation

On or about 22 October 1901, Morant, Handcock and Witton were arrested and placed in solitary confinement over allegations of shooting Boer prisoners and an investigation commenced;

The men were kept in solitary confinement for three months, denied contact with each other, visits from other personnel, including the military chaplain. The men were also denied details of the investigation, no opportunity to seek legal advice and be represented, cross examine those who gave evidence or to conduct their own inquiries and arrange defence witnesses;

The lack of time to consult legal counsel was a gross injustice noting the seriousness of the charges.

Denied opportunity to prepare a defence for trial

The prosecution had three months to prepare cases against the accused before trials commenced on 16 January 1902.

The men were denied the right to consult legal counsel until 15 January, only had one day with their lawyer, Major Thomas to prepare for their trial;

Their confinement and limited time to prepare a defence (including locating and interviewing witnesses) was oppressive and contrary to military law and procedure of 1902.

Condonation

The men should have been pardoned during the trials under the principle of condonation because they served in the defence of a Boer attack on Pietersburg on 22 January 1902 and again in response to possible Boer hostilities on 31 January 1902. Their alleged offences were also condoned (excused) by Military Command therefore they should not have prosecuted and pardoned.

Errors by the Judge Advocate

The members of the courts martial were not properly directed on the law by the judge advocate on issues including, obedience to superior orders, evidence of provocation, **evidence of the accused's limited military service**, their status as volunteers, ignorance of military law, sentencing principles, admissibility and relevance of evidence of shooting of Boer prisoners by other soldiers and direct the court on the law of reprisal / retribution as a defence;

The significance of recommendation for mercy, mitigating circumstances and character evidence and how these could be used in the sentencing process;

Failed to ensure the court was directed on issues including, sufficient time and resources to prepare a defence to charges of murder and to ensure the accused were not unfairly restricted in their rights to a fair trial;

Failed to advise the courts on the requirement to **have a trial member drawn from the accused's unit or another auxiliary unit**;

Failed to advise the courts martial that only one penalty should have been passed against the accused for multiple charges. Multiple sentences of murder charges was prejudicial.

Convictions and Sentences

Lord Kitchener, who confirmed the convictions and approved the death sentences failed to:

Provide the Secretary for State a complete and detailed record of the trial proceedings so that they could be reviewed by the Judge Advocate General (a requirement of the Manual of Military Law). The summary provided by Kitchener was misleading and deficient;

Inform the accused of the verdicts and sentences within a reasonable time so they could seek legal advice about an appeal to the King;

Ensure that he was available in Pretoria after he had confirmed the sentences and convictions on 25 February 1902 to hear pleas for mercy by the accused and their counsel, Major Thomas and / or forward petitions for review and clemency to the King for consideration;

Ensure the accused were permitted to contact their relatives and / or representatives of the Australian Government to seek clemency on their behalf. This failure was particularly cruel and designed to ensure the Australian government could not assist;

Ensure that the petition for mercy prepared by Morant was considered by him while granting a stay of execution;

Ensure that the need for prompt military justice was balanced against the rights of the accused to exhaust all lawful avenues of appeal for mercy, including by the Australian Government and their relatives;

Properly consider the recommendations for mercy made by the courts martial;

Was in error in only commuting the sentence of Witton and not the sentences of Morant and Handcock;

Ensure the accused did not suffer injustices during the investigation and trial proceedings;

Failed to ensure that Lieutenant Colonel Hall, the area commander and superior officer of the men be available to give evidence on issues such as

orders to shoot prisoners. This failure caused **extreme prejudice to the accused's defence of obedience to superior orders.**

Conclusion

The convictions and sentences were unsafe and contrary to law of 1902. Posthumous pardons are needed to address the substantial errors in the investigation, trial and sentencing of the accused. Injustices resulted and the convictions should be quashed.

Petition to the Senate

To the Honourable President and members of the Senate in Parliament assembled:

Your petitioners request that the Senate:

Note the grievance concerning the trials by courts martial of three Australians, Lieutenants Harry **'Breaker' Morant, Peter Joseph Handcock,** George Ramsdale Witton during the Boer War. Following the Courts Martial between 21 January 1902 and 17 February 1902, convictions were imposed as follows:

- Morant, Handcock and Witton guilty of killing eight Boer prisoners;
- Morant guilty of killing a Boer prisoner. Handcock, and Witton guilty of the manslaughter of a Boer prisoner; and
- Morant and Handcock convicted of killing three Boers.

Morant and Handcock were executed by firing **squad on 27th of February 1902.** Witton's sentence of death was commuted to life imprisonment and he was released in 1904.

Grievance: The trials of Morant, Handcock and Witton were unjust, in particular:

- Morant, Handcock and Witton were denied procedural fairness during the investigation of allegations against them between October 1901 and January 1902 ;
- The trials conducted in 1902 contained serious errors of law and trial procedure and denied Morant, Handcock and Witton fair trials according to the military law of 1902;

- The application of condonation should have caused pardons to be granted to the accused at the time of the trials or after their convictions but before sentences had been carried out.

Condonation arose from the call to service during a Boer attack on Pietersburg on 23 January 1902 and again on 31 January 1902. and the condoning of their offences by superior officers prior to their arrest;

- The members of the courts martial were not properly directed to a competent standard by the judge advocate on issues including lawful excuse of obedience to superior orders, that evidence of **provocation, evidence of the accused's limited military service,** their status as volunteers with limited education and ignorance of military law and customs could be used in determining criminal culpability, sentencing provisions and principles in accordance with the Manual of Military Law. The admissibility and relevance of evidence of instances of military personnel, other than Morant, Handcock and Witton shooting Boer prisoners and the existence of orders to shoot prisoners;

- **Morant, Handcock and Witton should not have** been sentenced to be executed and as in the case of Witton, Morant and Hancock should have had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

Your petitioners request that the Senate:

- Support the review that was conducted by the House of Representatives Petitions Committee on the 15th of March 2010 into a petition concerning Morant, Handcock and Witton that was submitted to the Committee;
- Make representation to the Australian government and the British Crown and seek a fair and transparent review of the convictions and sentences of Morant, Handcock and Witton;
- Seek a British Crown pardon for Morant, Handcock and Witton with respect to the offences of which they were convicted;
- Seek commutation of the death sentences and a quashing of the convictions imposed on Morant, Handcock and Witton.

Injustice for 'Breaker' Harry Morant, but the fight continues!



Almost 108 years after they were found guilty of killing Boer prisoners of war and executed by a British firing squad, the prospect of justice is still **elusive for Lieutenants Harry "The Breaker" Morant, Peter Handcock and George Witton**, (sentenced to life imprisonment).

The British Government's Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Liam Fox, MP has announced that the petition for pardons (quote) *'does not identify any new primary evidence and I have determined that there are insufficient grounds on which to take the petition forward'* (end quote).

The refusal of the British Government to consider the case for pardons and the evidence that says **Lieutenants Harry "Breaker" Morant, Peter Handcock and George Witton** did not receive fair trials and should not have been sentenced to death is an insult to our democratic traditions of due process of law.

I would like to offer the descendants of these men my sincere apology for the decision made by the British government. I join Australians who support the case for pardons in condemning the decision about this case as it demonstrates the **British government's refusal to have an independent judicial assessment of the case in an open and accountable manner and without the interference of those who support this travesty of justice.**

In 1902, the British conducted a trial of these men in secret and without consultation with the Australian government. One hundred and eight years later, Dr Fox has again conducted a review in *secret*, without any accountability to the public and scrutiny of his decision. Although I produced previously **'hidden' evidence of orders of British**

officers to men like Morant not to take prisoners, Dr Fox has refused to convene a judicial inquiry to assess all the evidence for and against the granting of pardons. The evidence of superior orders is compelling and corroborates what Morant said, that he obeyed orders and yet paid the ultimate price while his British superiors, (in particular Captain Taylor) escaped liability!

Regrettably, Secretary Fox has relied on the advice of public servants in his Department rather than an assessment conducted by an independent judicial officer. Further, the decision is an indictment in protecting the reputations of senior British military officers, in particular Lord Kitchener who used these men as scapegoats for flawed tactics in fighting the Boers in 1902.

This decision is not only against the weight of evidence in support of pardons, it is an insult to the Australian House of Representatives inquiry into the matter in March 2010 when the case was described as *strong and compelling*. It also *flies* in the face of prominent judicial figures, MPs and others who have urged the British government to do the right thing and subject the case to a judicial inquiry and not rely on the subjectiveness of British public servants **'behind closed doors'**.

This case won't go away with this decision. It will continue to attract support for justice and criticism of the British Government. Winston Churchill once said, *'If you are going through hell, keep going'*. I assure the British Government, the case for pardons will continue and redress will be sought through judicial means!! I have already commenced work in this regard, to get this case away from bureaucrats and before a judge in an open and transparent hearing, a process that the government obviously fears.

A final word about the Australian government! The reluctance of the Gillard government to lobby the British for a fair and transparent judicial review is regrettable. While Ms Gillard supported a mercy plea for drug trafficker, Schapelle Corby **she has ignored the plight of the 'Breaker' !**

The Details of the case for pardons can be viewed at Jim Uncles web site:

www.breakermorant.com

Birds have big impact

By Lt Bill Heck

THE modern battlefield seems to rely on better armour and bigger weapons, but a small group of Australian soldiers at Multinational Base Tarin Kowt is making a big impact without bullets or bombs.

Gnr Joe Hennessey, 20 Surveillance Targeting and Acquisition Regt, loves flying and has followed his passion for model helicopters into a career as an air vehicle operator. He said flying the UAVs, or 'birds', was the best job he could hope to find.

"I fly the bird, which is largely automated, but I am also trained in maintenance and preparation," Gnr Hennessey said. "In flight, the UAV pretty much looks after itself, but the launch and recovery is where things can possibly go wrong quickly and the bird is vulnerable; that's where I really earn my money."

The UAVs can be in the air for more than eight hours at a time and can carry out a variety of tasks and missions to provide real-time information to commanders on the ground. They also have the versatility to support patrols or conduct fixed location surveillance, deterrence or counter-IED missions.

"When we are operating in the direct support role, we feed a constant flow of information to the patrols on the ground and that directly effects how the commander reacts," Gnr Hennessey said.

"I fly almost every day and every mission is different; I know I am making a difference."

Detachment commander Lt Ben Allan-Agnew said the technology allowing the UAV to be deployed remotely had improved rapidly since the ADF acquired the equipment.

"The mountains here have always been problematic but with operators in different locations we can now take control and put the bird where it is needed," Lt Allan-Agnew said.

"We used to have to deploy a container, similar to the control centres shown in the movie Avatar, but now we can be mobile in a Bushmaster or static with a man-pack system. The operating



Model career: Gnr Joe Hennessey, 20 STA Regt, prepares his bird for flight. Photo by LS Paul Berry

procedures are now more streamlined so it is no longer the logistical problem it used to be."

Maj Chris Flear, OC of the Tarin Kowt UAV mission, praised the achievements of his detachment, especially given their small manpower and footprint.

"We are an integral part of the overall coalition effort in gathering battlespace information," he said.

"We have the ability to scope the whole operational area and get a feel for the dynamic and what people or vehicles are moving around, both before and after an event. We are able to build an intelligence picture through sustained surveillance about who is doing what, when, where and why."

Maj Flear explained that because the UAVs were a relatively new capability to the ADF, how best to deploy them was still in the developmental stage.

"It takes a period of time to develop skills but as time goes by and the birds become more common-place, force elements will work out better ways to employ them," Maj Flear said.

OBSERVERS

OUR TOUR SO FAR

Major Paul Duncan

Battery Commander 105th Battery

(Chief Joint Fires CTU /formerly BC MTF-1)

It is hard to believe that the 105th Battery Observers have now been deployed and responsible for providing fires to Mentoring Task Force One (MTF-1) for almost eight months. The time has passed quickly and we are now focussing on the prospect of another month improving the Area of Operations (AO) when it would be far easier to begin contemplating our upcoming reunion with loved ones in Australia.

... success in Afghanistan comes at a cost and MTF-1 have lost a number of men to insurgent activity.

The transformation of Uruzgan Province since our arrival has been heart-warming. There has been tangible success within our AO; however, success in Afghanistan comes at a cost and MTF-1 have lost a number of men to insurgent activity. The ever-developing 'inkblot of security' has been pushed out further than anticipated. New Patrol Bases manned by the Battle Group, as well as the ANP (Afghan National Police) and the ANA (Afghan National Army), have been established across the AO. This has given the local Afghan people a greater sense of safety and improved the reach of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA).

Callsign (C/S G29) has worked tirelessly, supporting the deployed observers and providing advice and technical support. Manning the Fires Desk 24 hours a day can be quite tedious but under the guidance and motivation of Warrant Officer Class Two Mick 'Blue' Kelly the team has done a great job in challenging circumstances.

C/S G21 has supported Combat Team Alpha (CT-A) within the Mirabad Valley. This area has been the focal point for numerous insurgent activities and

has kept Joint Fire Splinter Team (JFST) Commanders Warrant Officer Class Two Kev Dolan, Bombardier Dean Crust, Bombardier Glenn Swain and (earlier) Lance Bombardier Ryanjack extremely busy. They have been involved in a number of Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blasts and fire-fights and been required to call in the fires of Apache gunships, mortars and M777. Of particular note was the performance of the observers during the numerous, prolonged and intense engagements in Sorkh Lez and Musazai.

C/S G22, consisting of 2-man JFSTs commanded by Lieutenant Graham Cummings and Sergeant Kyle Faram has been kept busy since arriving in April as Relief Out of Country Leave (ROCL) replacements and then being required to stay to help MTF meet the additional allocated tasks. The C/S has performed very well, filling in the gaps during ROCL and more recently supporting MTF elements on essential convoys and liaison tasks.

C/S G23 led by Captain Pete Allan (and later Captain Christian Sandner) supports CT-C. The C/S has maintained its excellent start to the tour and have remained within the expansive CT AO consisting of Chora and the Baluchi Valley. Chora is frequently visited by dignitaries and is widely described as the model for counter-insurgency. G23 has been instrumental in providing timely UAV, AH and fires to CT-C during community engagement and partnered patrols whilst faced with a well resourced and determined insurgent threat.

C/S G24 ably led by Captain Brendan Perkins, Bombardier Dane O'Brien, Bombardier Dean Crust (for the first five months) and Bombardier Ben Cook have provided outstanding support to CT-D in very fluid circumstances. Initially providing support to key operations as well as convoy protection and local security tasks around Tarin Kot, six months into the tour the team was required to deploy to Deh Rawud, an area previously owned by the Dutch and French. Shortly after arriving in Deh Rawud the team closed with and decisively engaged the enemy in a number of incidents. Of particular note is the team's ability to control multiple assets, and in one case an Excalibur engagement, in support of frequent and significant contacts in the areas of Derapet and Gharam.

The 1st Field Regiment team back in Brisbane has

provided great support to us as a deployed element by ensuring that our partners and family are always well informed and have gone out of their way to ensure that partners have been looked after and reassured during trying times.

*'Courageous restraint' is a term
that is far easier to say than
actually execute ...*

'Courageous restraint' is a term that is far easier to say than actually execute; however we are glad to report that although we are at the higher scales of kinetic activity, the judgement shown by all the observers on the ground has been exemplary. As such there have been no reported cases of civilian casualties as a result of indirect fire. As aforementioned, the success within MTF-1's time here in Uruzgan has been tinged with loss. To date we have lost six men to insurgent actions and a further 34 wounded.

*... we are constantly challenged
by a dynamic, thinking enemy...*

So with the end of tour in sight we reflect on what has been a very busy eight months for the observers of 105th Battery. The pace of activity coupled with the rate of progress within our AO has been immense and we are constantly challenged by a dynamic, thinking enemy. The manner in which the observers have taken to this demanding and dangerous task has been humbling. Their bravery, professionalism and sense of humour has been noted, and remarked upon, at all levels of the Battle Group. All our families and friends, as well as the wider RAA community, should be immensely proud of the tremendous job that the men are doing in such difficult circumstances.



Training Team - Kabul

Lieutenant Adam Murcott

*'Experience is a brutal teacher,
but you learn. My god do you learn.'*

C. S. Lewis

The Artillery Training Team - Kabul (ATT-K) was initially formed as the Artillery Intellectual Development Team (AIDT) in April of this year. It was a 10 man team of field gunners with varying levels of experience - all but the Commanding Officer were from the 8th/12th Medium Regiment. The team's initial mandate was to develop an Afghan National Army (ANA) School of Artillery and the foundations of the ANA Field Artillery Branch. However, what actually ensued was a far more complex, demanding and encompassing mission.

During the first month of its tour, the ATT-K observed the qualifying live fire practice of an artillery graduating gun course - taught under the now defunct Advanced Combat Training Brigade. The results were not what would be expected from a group of 'qualified' gunners within a 'western' technical framework. Graduating students were not allowed to use the panoramic sight, neither staff nor students were confident enough to be within 20 metres of the gun when it fired, it was only a direct fire practice and there were six rounds in total for over 50 students. This single, poorly run exercise proved to be a representation of wider, systemic issues that permeate the ANA Field Artillery capability.

At the time of the live fire practice, the ANA lacked key enablers that have been identified as essential to generating an operational capability. The currently fielded batteries are not employed 'in-role' anywhere in Afghanistan. Any firing being conducted in support of operations is tightly controlled by mentoring personnel. A lack of a national training framework and technical doctrine continuously undermine efforts towards standardised training. No dedicated ANA School of Artillery existed.

The required knowledge base of field Artillery personnel had been drastically underestimated - no

courses for Fire Support or Fire Direction. Tactics, techniques and procedures remained Soviet in nature and were not tailored to current operations. In addition, equipment for the provision of fire support either did not exist or was otherwise inadequate (guns in disrepair, ammunition mismanagement, lack of infrastructure and basic issue items). It would be the responsibility of the ATT-K to rectify the above points, alongside a myriad of other issues, from its location in Kabul.



Live Fire Exercise May 2010

The ATT-K forward detachment consisting of Major Piero Bertocchi (BC 101), Lieutenant Anthony Mumford *QFECC* TP COMD), Lieutenant Adam Murcott (GPO 103), and Warrant Officer Class Two Dave Warren (BSM 103) commenced operations in Camp ALAMO on the north eastern outskirts of Kabul. Camp ALAMO is a small FOB filled to capacity. The majority of personnel are from 2-22 (Triple Deuce) Battalion of the 10th Mountain Division. It is also home to British, Mongolian, French, Turkish, Greek and Romanian personnel. The Camp is situated within the much larger Kabul Military Training Centre (KMTC). KMTC is an ANA facility which trains up to 14,000 soldiers at any one time - the ANA is surging toward a total strength of 171,600 soldiers by October 2011. It is also now the interim home of the ANA School of Artillery before it moves to Kandahar as part of the Combined Arms Training Centre in 2013. The remainder of the ATT-K was located at Camp DUBBS, approximately two hours away by car, and south west of the city.

Camp DUBBS is also located within a larger ANA base. It shares its location with the Counter Insurgency Training Academy, the ANA 201 st Corps and the Headquarters of the Combined Training Advisory Group - Army. This Camp was home to

Lieutenant Colonel Richard Vagg (DDWS-Land / CO ATT-K), Major Karl Britton (BC 102), Captain Jonathan Ronayne (BK 101), Lieutenant Luke Haitas (GPO 101), Sergeant Kayne Falconer (S1G SGT 101), and Sergeant Dean Walton (SIG SGT 103). The office life of CTAG-A was hectic. Although Australian led, the ATT-K is a multinational Coalition Force (CF) Mentor Team. It has benefited from the service of members of the United States Marine Corps (USMC) and United States Army (US Army).

At Camp ALAMO Captain Clint Hauger, US Army, Fire Support Officer (FSO) for 2-22, was instrumental in preparing and shaping the ground for future operations. His advice and liaison with 2-22 and other agencies was a constant asset in the development of the ANA School of Artillery. The



Sergeant Walton Instructs on the T3 Course

ATT-K has also received larger and slightly more challenging support from less obvious sources.

The ATT-K also has a 10 man Mongolian Training Team (MTT). Assisting Afghanistan under a bilateral agreement, the Mongolians have a great deal of experience with equipment of Russian origin. The Mongolians assisted ATT-K personnel with instruction on the Russian 122mm D-30 Howitzer and its sighting system and Russian PM-22 Aiming circle (director). A significant language barrier exists between the ATT-K and the MTT. Two members of the MTT speak some English, however, when it came to discussing complex training and gunnery issues, conversations early in the tour could rapidly degenerate into charades. Regardless, the Mongolians have been a pleasure to work with. Given the language difficulties, it would be easy to dismiss them; however, they have become an effective and important part of the team. In the near future, the ATT-K will be joined by members of the Singaporean Armed Forces. The team will also

be assigned soldiers from the US Army for assistance with the many ancillary tasks that are vital to the development of a school.

The development of Training Support Packages (TSPs) and Programs of Instruction (POIs) for the ANA artillery took place at Camp DUBBS from May to mid July. Analysis showed that the ANA Field Artillery would need to be divided into three streams - Fire Direction, Guns and Fire Support- if the professional development of the Artillery Branch was to be successful. Each stream would have a Basic Course (11 weeks) and a Squad Leader Course (8 weeks). Each stream would also have time dedicated to it on a Platoon Sergeants Course (8 weeks) - similar to the old RAA WO Gunnery and Artillery Basic Officers Training Course (BOTC). For 'senior' officers, a Captains Career Course (CCC) would be developed and installed into the officer training continuum. Collectively, 11,417 power point slides were produced in addition to numerous speaker notes, assessments and handouts. Each course would fit into the career continuum for enlisted soldiers and officers. Concurrently, with the development of POIs and TSPs, the ANA doctrine would be written.

The development of the ANA Artillery doctrine was an enormous undertaking for all those involved. The task was to design a bespoke ANA Artillery Doctrine Set using an amalgamation of Australian, British and American doctrine. The ANA now have an Employment of Artillery, Duties in Action, Gun Drill and Procedures, and Communications publication. The doctrine was designed with the current conflict in mind but with enough flexibility that it will remain relevant for at least the next 10-15 years.

Translation of our vast library of freshly produced English documents into Dari is an ongoing process that has been challenging at times. The main effort for translation revolves around a US\$100,000 translation contract. This contract has been procured to ensure the 900 hours of translation can be handled in a matter weeks. Currently, the ATT-K translation capability extends to a handful of barely qualified, underpaid interpreters - individual sentences, written as succinctly as possible in English, pose a significant question to the translator who is not familiar with gunnery terms and definitions. At times, documents are

victims of an individual interpreter's own language idiosyncrasies or laziness. The ruthless implementation of the independent check - a Gunner's best friend - on translation has become a key requirement to ensuring success. Translation among other things, have also provided the team numerous challenges in the conduct of the Train the Trainer (T3) course.

The T3 course has been developed to retrain the new Afghan IGs and SMIGs of the ANA School of Artillery in the doctrine drafted by the ATT-K (NATO centric tactics, techniques and procedures). The CF instructors from the ATT-K have largely been lieutenants and sergeants, with the ANA student instructors on the course ranging from sergeants to full colonels. The inherent challenges of trying to teach senior ranks that they need to change their way of doing business is made more difficult and complicated because of the differences in age, language, and culture. The two month T3 course is designed not only to revisit the science of artillery from a different perspective; it is to develop the art of artillery for the ANA and be a catalyst for a cultural shift. The ANA artillery capability will be precise and discriminating. The ATT-K is attempting to impart the required knowledge to the School of Artillery which will foster a level of ownership that will ensure that the Afghan officers and soldiers are capable of self-determination. Coupled with this, is the challenge of securing mission essential equipment for the Afghans to achieve their mission.

Without acceptable equipment, the task of providing timely and effective indirect fire is impossible. The acquisition of new equipment in the 6400 mils scale was a key step in moving away from the old Russian 6000 mils system. In order to bring Afghanistan into line with NATO standards, the guns, sights, and aiming circles have been converted to 6400 mils. In addition to the 6400 mils scale conversion, the ANA D-30 fleet is being completely refurbished. 44 Guns are being sourced from the Ukraine in a foreign sales contract; in addition 60 Bosnian guns will be donated by the government as a good will gesture. All these guns will come with a full complement of Basic Issue Items (BII).

The ATT-K has also run its own validation and trials process for various equipment. A hand held Gunnery Computer (GC) is being acquired from a

Ukraine Defence Contractor. With necessity being the mother of all invention - a contract and trials period that would have taken several years in Australia and administered by a heavily manned DMO project team has been done in less than two months by a second year lieutenant. New TFTs have been acquired in English, Dari and Pashtun. Lieutenant Haitas and Lieutenant Diaz have developed the ANAs own manual prediction system. Additionally, infrastructure development has been a key focus of the ATT-K.

The establishment of key infrastructure and sustainment plans has been an essential task of Major Bertocchi in his appointment as Second In Command ATT-K and ANA School of Artillery SI/4 mentor. This involved the identification and securing of appropriate facilities for the ANA School of Artillery. Additionally, the Multi-Purpose Instructional Facility (MPIF) project was also secured. Costing over two million US dollars, the MPIF is being developed to provide housing for the School's 36 new D-30s and instructional facilities for 600 students at full operating capability. A robust sustainment plan is also being pursued to ensure that the ANA School of Artillery is able to continue to deliver training well into the future. The ATT-K has performed many tasks, but its members are fundamentally mentors.

What the ATT-K will achieve by the end of its tour is a functioning School of Artillery. It is up to subsequent iterations of the ATT-K to ensure that the changes made to the ANA Artillery form a legacy of Australia's involvement. On 4 October, the opening ceremony for the ANA School of Artillery is to be conducted which will mark the official beginning of ANA teaching the new ANA Artillery Doctrine using the programs of instruction drafted by the ATT-K. It will be the culmination of a great amount of work on the part of the ANA and their mentors. It will take some time but the future of this country will be ensured 122mm at a time.

Australian and Afghan Soldiers Mentoring Milestone

Australian-trained Afghan National Army (ANA) artillerymen achieved an historic milestone this week, officially opening their new School of Artillery in Kabul with a spectacular live-fire demonstration by Afghan Artillery Instructors.

The school, which will prepare Afghan soldiers to become skilled artillerymen, is an important step

towards Afghan security forces taking full responsibility for security in the coming years.

Speaking at the opening, the ANA Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General Sher Mohammad Karimi, outlined the importance of the school and thanked Australia for its contribution as the lead partner nation.

"I would like to show thanks and appreciation to all our friends, especially the Australians and Americans, who taught our soldiers how to use the guns," Lieutenant General Karimi said.

"It's a big achievement for the ANA and I'm sure there will be more improvement for our artillery soldiers in the future."

The opening followed several months of training and gunnery drills provided to the Afghan instructors by Australian artillerymen from the 8th/12th Medium Regiment. The training culminated last week with the successful first live firing of their D-30 Howitzer artillery guns.

During his recent visit to Afghanistan, Minister for Defence Stephen Smith announced Australia would commit up to 20 artillery trainers to the school. These artillery trainers will be drawn from within the existing Australian troop presence in Afghanistan of around 1550 personnel.

The school has now commenced its inaugural **Artillery Basic Officer's Training Course run by the** newly qualified Afghan Instructors. The school will train 2100 officers and soldiers over the next twelve months, with around 440 students attending one of nine different courses at any one time.

Lieutenant Colonel Richard Vagg, Commanding Officer of the Artillery Training Team – Kabul, said the course is the next pivotal point in progressing the ANA artillery training.

"The basic courses will see ANA Officers and NCO's training young Afghan officers. These officers will then go down into southern Afghanistan and fill the batteries in the southern provinces and actually fight the Taliban," Lieutenant Colonel Vagg said.

"It's essential that Afghans develop the ability and confidence to teach other Afghans, if we are going to be able to transition to Afghan-led security."

Customs and Traditions

Provided by Christopher Jobson
Former RSM Ceremonial & Protocol Army

The Slouch Hat's Puggaree

The puggaree takes its name from the Hindu 'pagre' meaning a turban or thin scarf of muslin. The puggaree was worn around the hat, sometimes falling down behind to keep the sun off the neck. It has in time been worn on the Slouch Hat in many forms. However, during The Great War a plain khaki cloth band was worn and this style continued until 1929. In 1930, new puggarees were introduced with different coloured folds denoting Arms or Services. During the Second World War a flat puggaree was issued to the 2nd AIR However, the troops serving in the Middle East introduced a folded puggaree as a distinguishing mark of active service. In time, this style has become the puggaree of today (it's said that the seven folds in the current puggaree represent the six States and the territories of Australia; well, it's a nice story anyway).

The Hat's chin strap is worn with the buckle on the left-hand side, and in line with the mouth. The cadets at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, however, wear the straps on their hats back-to-front. This custom goes back to the death of Major General Sir William Bridges at Gallipoli in 1915. Bridges was the founder of the College and it is said that when he was shot he had his hat on back-to-front; in respect, the cadets at the College turned their hats around. Today, cadets at the College wear the hat correctly; however, the chin strap is attached with the buckle on the right-hand side of the face.

Berets

The origin of the beret goes back to the latter days of The Great War.

During a British Army Tank Corps dinner, held at Bernicourt in 1917, a discussion was held by some officers with regard to what type of uniform the new Corps would wear with the coming of peace.

It was decided to adopt the 'beret Basque' which was, at the time, being worn by the Chars d'Assault (the French tank regiment). The opinion was that the beret, which was black, hid oil stains and was considerably more practical for use with tanks than the khaki peaked cap or the leather helmet. After some debate, a recommendation was put forward

to, and approved by, His Majesty King George V in March 1924.

The Australian Army then adopted the beret and its general duty beret colour is dark blue and is worn by a number of corps', including the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. A number of corps' and units adopted other colours for their berets; these are Rifle Green (Royal Australian Regiment), fawn (Special Air Service Regiment), Sherwood Green (the commandos), dull cherry (airborne), scarlet (Military Police), Slate Grey (Nursing Corps) and light blue (worn by both the Aviation Corps and by soldiers on United Nations operations). *Editors Note: Berets are no longer an authorised form of headdress in the Australian Army except for Special Operations Command.*

Peak Caps

The Service Dress Cap (the peaked cap) was introduced in 1902 and over the years it has gone through a number of changes with regard to its shape and size (most notably in 1911 and again in 1925). It is now generally accepted that in the Australian Army it was only worn by commissioned officers and warrant officers; however, up until the end of The Great War it was a general duty item of dress and was worn by all ranks (it is generally agreed that at Gallipoli more Australian soldiers wore the peaked cap than the Slouch Hat).

Editors Note: The peak cap is no longer an authorised form of headwear in the Australian Army.

Helmet Ball

The white helmet worn by Artillery bands is the same as that worn by the Australian Army Band Corps; however, whereas the helmet of the Band Corps is topped with a metal spike, the Gunners' helmet has a rounded metal ball.

After the defeat of the French by Germany in the Franco-Prussian War of 1871 the British Army adopted the German 'Picklehaube' helmet as an item of headdress. The helmet had a spike on its top; however, this caused problems when the gunners were tightening the girths of their horses as the spike would, at times, stick into the horses' sides. In 1881 the Gunners removed the spike from the helmet, to overcome this problem, and replaced it with the ball. The

ceremonial helmet of the Gunners still has the ball on its top.

Regimental Badge

The Royal Australian Artillery was formed on 24th August 1899 from the regular army artillery units of the Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland colonies. In 1903 it adopted as its badge a multi-flamed grenade bearing a circular strap with the inscription Royal Australian Artillery; within the strap was the Royal Cypher of King Edward VII.

In 1911, with the death of Edward, the Cypher was replaced with that of King George V.

In 1913 the Royal Australian Artillery adopted a badge based on that of the Royal Artillery; the badge contained the 9 pounder RML (rifled muzzle-loader) gun and two scrolls, and was surmounted with the Crown; the motto on the upper scroll (above the gun) was Ubique (Everywhere), however, the lower scroll contained both the motto Consensu Stabiles (Firm and Steadfast) and the title Australia. The badge remained in service until 1942.

During both The Great War and the Second World War all Australian soldiers wore the badge of the Australian Commonwealth Military Forces (commonly referred to as the Rising Sun). With the end of the Second World War gunners continued to wear the Rising Sun badge until 1949.

In 1949 His Majesty King George VI granted the Royal Australian Artillery (which now, since 1936, included the militia) the badge of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. The design of the badge's Crown was based on the Imperial Crown (commonly, but incorrectly, referred to as the 'King's Crown'); it was approved by both King George V and King George VI to be worn on badges during their relevant reigns.

In 1954, with the ascent of Queen Elizabeth II to the Throne in 1952, the badge's design changed slightly; the new Crown was one based on the St Edward's Crown (commonly referred to as the 'Queen's Crown').

The official description of the Regiment's badge is:

A 9 pounder RML (rifled muzzle loader) with rammer; above, a scroll bearing both the Regimental Battle Honour and motto UBIQUE (EVERYWHERE) surmounted by the Crown. Below, a scroll inscribed with the Regiment's second motto QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT (WHITHER RIGHT AND GLORY LEAD).

Memories from the past. This article was published on 21.4.96

Digger down but not out

THE craggy face of Brigadier Keith Rossi has been at the forefront of Melbourne's Anzac Day celebrations for 20 years or so.

The feisty ex-artilleryman was even a marshal of the parade for 13 years, and was looking forward to Thursday's commemorations. Looking forward even more until a high fever saw him rushed to St



Vincent's Hospital. The 75-year-old, born and bred in Ivanhoe, thought he had a recurrence of the malaria he contracted in New Guinea in 1944.

Doctors diagnosed it as a nasty kidney bug he picked up on safari this year in Kenya (you can not keep an action man down). When I spoke to him, he was adamant he was going to march on Thursday and if the antibiotics program was finished, he would have a drink with his old mates.

Like most diggers, he is reticent to mull over the war, but did explain his unit in Combined Ops took him to the Middle East, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), New Guinea and the Pacific. He ended up running a flotilla of old warships. His Task Force 74 commandeered anything that could be spared from Fleet Operations to land spotter parties behind enemy lines so "our ships could bomb the crap out of them". Sounds like a perfect mini-series.

Big career in uniform

A former reservist has a prominent part in ensuring war-related productions have an authentic look.

AB Melanie Schinkel reports

At the age of six, a documentary on the Battle of El Alamein spawned costume designer Ian Sparke's obsession with military history and paved the way for an intertwined career in the Army Reserves and the entertainment industry.

The miniseries *The Pacific* and feature films *Beneath Hill 60*, *Kokoda*, *The Great Raid* and Baz Luhrmann's *Australia* are just some of the productions on Mr Sparke's show reel.

Director of *Beneath Hill 60* Jeremy Sims said it became apparent early on that the film - based on a real story about Australian tunnellers in World War I - would require more than just a few hired costumes.

"Ian had all the German costumes, all the Allied costumes, he knew all the different regiments, where they fought, where they died, what colour patches they wore, he even knew what underpants they wore because he just loves that whole world." Mr Sims said.

In 1975, Sparke's childhood fascination drove him to join the A Res where he was posted to 2RNSWR. For about 20 years, he juggled his reserve and civilian careers.

"I just loved being a digger because it was completely different from what I was doing in the civilian world. It really helped me in designing military costumes for screen that looked like authentic soldier uniforms," he said.

"I salvage uniforms, badges and military equipment from the US, England, Pakistan and Australia. Fortunately, I have a very good collection myself, about 50,000 items, which I started when I was young."

In 1993, the remains of an unknown Australian soldier, killed in France during World War I, were brought home and interred in a tomb at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. The ARA's history department commissioned Mr Sparke to develop authentic uniforms for the honour guard at the ceremony, which set his business Sparke Films into motion.

"The Unknown Soldier ceremony was my first professional job. After that, the jobs kept coming, so I left the reserves and developed Sparke Films to provide historic military uniforms and advice to the entertainment industry," he said.

In 1998, he, his son Luke and a small crew set up a workshop on the Gold Coast. Apart from its film credits, Sparke Films has also designed re-enactments for more than 30 episodes of the ABC's *Australian Story* program and was responsible for costume and production design for the History Channel's production of *The Battle of Long Tan*.

In early 2007, the creators of acclaimed miniseries *Band of Brothers* approached Mr Sparke to hire



Dressed for success: Ian Sparke in costume as an extra in *Beneath Hill 60* as the padre.

wardrobe, webbing, props and set pieces for *The Pacific*, a 10-part miniseries based on the story of three marines during World War II.

"Working on *The Pacific* was huge. It was a lot of pre-production and then an additional 11 months of shooting episodes. The biggest challenge was being consistent with costume continuity." Mr Sparke said. For *Beneath Hill 60* the biggest obstacle was the mud.

"The mud and water was a challenge. We tried to keep the uniforms clean. They were made of wool so they had to be hand washed and hung dried. Some of the main cast wore genuine military uniforms, but for all the mud scenes the uniforms were completely re-created." Mr Sparke said.

"It was important for us that they didn't look like 'cookie-cutter' soldiers and even if they were

filthy and dirty, they still looked the part."

In addition to production design, military costuming and advice, Sparke Films trains a combination of civilian and military personnel employed as extras to realistically set the scene of war on screen.



Stacked racks: Ian Sparke rifles through his extensive collection of military memorabilia.

"We want to see convincing soldiers on screen so we recruit and train film soldiers and a lot of them are or were real soldiers." he said.

"The real soldiers are often yelling commands or using a weapon during a scene. It just adds to the realism."

ADF members interested in becoming a film soldier can email ian.sparke@yahoo.com.au or download an application form online at <http://www.sparkefilms.com.au>

New bullet trap to improve small arms safety

By Sgt Andrew Hetherington

THE development of an innovative new device to be fitted to F88, M4 and F89 weap-ons on exercises will prevent future injuries to soldiers, sailors and airmen.

The bullet-trap blank-firing attachment (BTBFA) developed by Thales Australia Ltd is designed to catch a live round fired from a weapon during a blank-firing exercise.

The BTBFA is made of steel, weighs 360g and allows blank rounds to be fired.

The internal baffles and outer casing will stop live rounds from exiting the barrel, preventing injury or death to the firer or bystanders.

DMO project manager Stan Williamson said the new device would replace existing blank-firing attachments.

"The \$10 million project involves the purchase of more than 54,000 BTBFAs for the ADF, with 2000 being manufactured each month at Thales in Lithgow," Mr Williamson said

"The first units to receive BTBFAs for F88s were ARTC at Kapooka and the School of Inf in early September, with other units to receive them at later dates."



The bullet trap is bright red in colour. The old blank-firing attachment was yellow.

Safer option:

The new bullet trap fitted to the F88 Steyr will help reduce the instances of live rounds being fired during blank-firing exercises.

Kiwi hero saved Digger mates

**MORRIE DAVID STANLEY,
MBE**

SOLDIER, HOSPITAL
ADMINISTRATOR
22-3-1931 — 16-9-2010

By **GERRY CARMAN**

MORRIE Stanley, one of the heroes of the bloody Battle of Long Tan — the Australian Army's most intense encounter of the Vietnam war — has died of cancer at his home in Campbells Bay on Auckland's North Shore. He was 79.

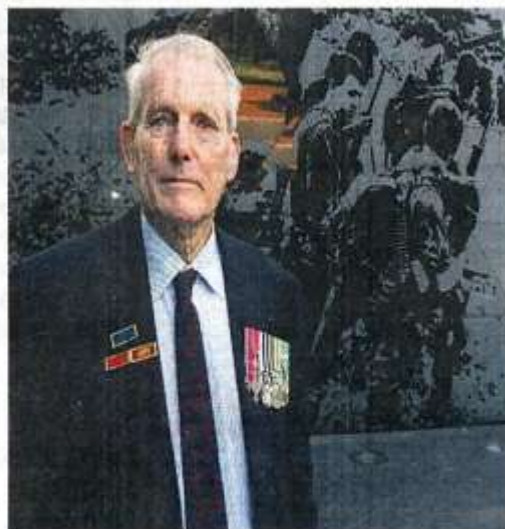
Stanley, then a 35-year old New Zealand Army captain attached to Delta Company of 6RAR, is widely acknowledged as having played a huge role in saving most of the 108 besieged Australian Army soldiers from annihilation during the 3½-hour battle on August 18, 1966.

He was the forward artillery officer with Delta Company when they were attacked in a rubber plantation by a force of about 2500 Vietcong and North Vietnamese soldiers who outnumbered them by about 23:1.

He stayed by the side of the company commander, Major Harry Smith, calling in artillery fire from New Zealand, Australian and American howitzers at the Australian base at Nui Dat five kilometres away. The enemy force attacked in waves during a torrential downpour, almost overrunning the Australians.

Maintaining his calm amid the mayhem — "I had to overcome my dread that I would make a mistake," he recalled — and with mud and rainwater at times obscuring his map from which he calculated critical co-ordinates for the gunners, Stanley was in constant radio contact with the gunners at Nui Dat as the Australian soldiers fought against overwhelming odds with limited ammunition.

At times he ordered salvos



Morrie Stanley (far left) at the Canberra War Memorial, and among the Vietcong and North Vietnamese dead immediately after the Battle of Long Tan in 1966.

from the 18 New Zealand and Australian 105-millimetre howitzers and six 155mm United States howitzers in the battery to within 30-50 metres of the Delta Company lines.

He also disregarded requests from Sergeant Bob Buick, who took command of 11 Platoon after his commander was killed, to bring down fire on his position. The platoon had only 10 men left out of 28 and Buick was prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice because he thought he was about to be overrun.

By the time the enemy disengaged and slipped away, they left 245 dead in the plantation. The Australians lost 17 dead, and 23 were wounded — and the battery had fired more than 4000 shells from its howitzers.

Stanley's links with the Australian Army, in fact, went back to his roots as a soldier in 1950.

Born in Christchurch, he grew up in Napier, which had been destroyed by an earthquake. His father was a drill master and the young Stanley became a prefect and regimental sergeant major in the school cadets. In 1949, he joined a special cadet unit in Wellington to complete his final two years at school, and while there won a place at the the Royal Military Academy, Duntroon, in

Canberra. He was 19 when he sailed for Sydney for the four-year cadetship.

As a New Zealander, he had more to overcome than the average young Australian cadet. It was demanded of him, as part of the tough initiation, that he sing *Waltzing Matilda*. But his Kiwi spirit would kick in and instead he would sing the New Zealand marching song *Maori Battalion*.

"I received some attention for my impudence," he recalled politely of what must have been stern punishment.

But there was a silver lining to the hazing. He met a young Canberran, Alva, at a church function and they were engaged the day he graduated as a lieutenant in December 1953. They married six months later.

As his army career progressed, he was among 150 soldiers sent to England for ceremonial duties (including guard duties at Buckingham palace and the Tower of London) as well as training with the British Army on Salisbury Plain.

Back home, in January 1966, he was ordered to prepare for posting to South Vietnam as a replacement battery captain with 16 Field Regiment, which was providing direct artillery support for the Australian 1RAR.

The unit was attached to the US Army's 173 Brigade. After a relatively quiet start to his posting with 1RAR, at the end of April 1966 the battery moved to Vung Tau and Nui Dat in Phuoc Tuy province and he joined 6RAR as its forward artillery officer.

The events at the plantation on Long Tan erupted less than four months later. Stanley's actions that day earned him the military MBE. Many consider he deserved a higher award, as is the case with the Australian officers and soldiers involved in that heroic action against overwhelming odds.

After Vietnam, his postings included a four-year stint as a defence liaison officer in Melbourne — the first army officer to hold the job that had been the preserve of Royal New Zealand Air Force officers. In all, he spent eight years in Australia, not to mention the demanding period with Australians at Nui Dat.

After he retired from the army with the rank of major in 1976 he took a job in hospital administration and completed this 16-year career as a personnel manager.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Alva, and sons Peter and Andrew. A third son, Donald, died before him.

Drafting Guys over 60

This is funny & obviously written by a Former Soldier.

I am over 60 and the Armed Forces thinks I'm too old to track down terrorists. You can't be older than 42 to join the military. They've got the whole thing ass-backwards. Instead of sending 18-year olds off to fight, they ought to take us old guys. You shouldn't be able to join a military unit until you're at least 35.

For starters: Researchers say 18-year-olds think about sex every 10 seconds. Old guys only think about sex a couple of times a day, leaving us more than 28,000 additional seconds per day to concentrate on the enemy.

Young guys haven't lived long enough to be cranky, and a cranky soldier is a dangerous soldier. 'My back hurts! I can't sleep, I'm tired and hungry' We are impatient and maybe letting us kill some asshole that desperately deserves it will make us feel better and shut us up for a while.

An 18-year-old doesn't even like to get up before 10 a.m. Old guys always get up early to pee so what the hell. Besides, like I said, 'I'm tired and can't sleep and since I'm already up, I may as well be up killing some fanatical son-of-a-bitch.

If captured we couldn't spill the beans because we'd forget where we put them. In fact, name, rank, and serial number would be a real brainteaser.

Boot camp would be easier for old guys. We're used to getting screamed and yelled at and we're used to soft food. We've also developed an appreciation for guns. We've been using them for years as an excuse to get out of the house, away from the screaming and yelling.

They could lighten up on the obstacle course however. I've been in combat and didn't see a

single 20-foot wall with rope hanging over the side, nor did I ever do any pushups after completing basic training.

Actually, the running part is kind of a waste of energy, too. I've never seen anyone outrun a bullet.

An 18-year-old has the whole world ahead of him. He's still learning to shave, to start up a conversation with a pretty girl. He still hasn't figured out that a baseball cap has a brim to shade his eyes, not the back of his head.

These are all great reasons to keep our kids at home to learn a little more about life before sending them off into harm's way.

Let us old guys track down those dirty rotten coward terrorists. The last thing an enemy would want to see is a couple of million pissed off old farts with attitudes and automatic weapons who know that their best years are already behind them.

***How about recruiting Women over 50in menopause!!! You think Men have attitudes !!!

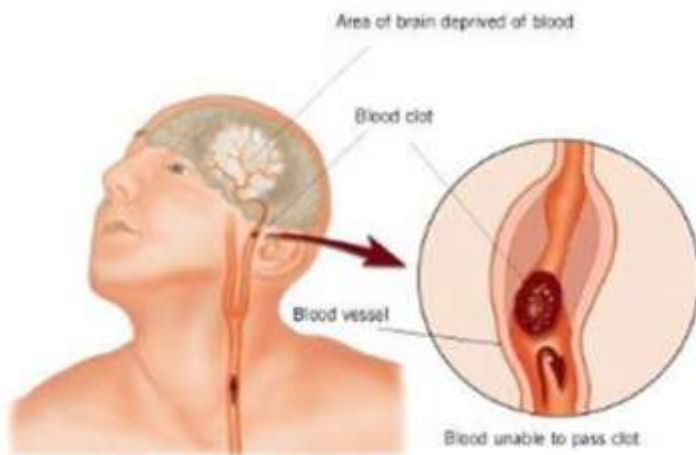
Ohhhhhhhhhhhh my God!!!

If nothing else, put them on border patrol.... They will have it secured the first night!



Courtesy of Mike Prowse in Queensland

I have included this article as an important piece of general information. We are all getting older & the likelihood of suffering a possible debilitating, or even fatal attack increases with each passing year. Ed.



Blood Clots/Stroke - They
Now Have a Fourth Indicator,
the Tongue

STROKE: Remember the 1st Three Letters....S. T R.

STROKE IDENTIFICATION:

During a BBQ, a woman stumbled and took a little fall - she assured everyone that she was fine (they offered to call paramedics) ...she said she had just tripped over a brick because of her new shoes.

They got her cleaned up and got her a new plate of food. While she appeared a bit shaken up, Jane went about enjoying herself the rest of the evening.

Jane's husband called later telling everyone that his wife had been taken to the hospital (at 6:00 pm Jane passed away.) She had suffered a stroke at the BBQ. Had they known how to identify the signs of a stroke, perhaps Jane would be with us today. Some don't die. They end up in a helpless, hopeless condition instead.

It only takes a minute to read this...

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke...totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

RECOGNIZING A STROKE

Thank God for the sense to remember the '3' steps, S T R . Read and Learn!

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

S *Ask the individual to SMILE.

T *Ask the person to TALK and SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently)

(i.e. It is sunny out today.)

R* Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.

If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call emergency number immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

New Sign of a Stroke ----- Stick out Your Tongue

NOTE: Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue. If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

A cardiologist says if everyone who reads this message relates it to 10 people; you can bet that at least one life will be saved.

Thanks to Mick Prowse in Queensland for sending me this important & updated information.



It's time. RSL timekeeper Ernie Paddon checks his watch at 10.58, but the Town Hall clock reads 10.55.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

On Thursday 11-11-10 two members of the RAA Assoc Committee, Maj Merv Taggart and SSgt Ernie Paddon assisted Anzac House staff and RSL members in the Melbourne CBD, when at a couple of minutes to 11 am, 15 or 16 intersections were closed down by Police to enable Buglers from the Army Band Melb, and buglers from brass bands around Melb to sound "Last Post" and after one minute the "Rouse" There was a very good response from members of the public, with lots of good comments, from young and old.

HELPING HAND FOR TALIBAN

Apparently there is a small British advance post in Afghanistan with, posted over the entrances to the mess hall, a succinct mission statement. It says:

"The Taliban are keen to greet their maker. It is our job to arrange the meeting."

The visiting Yankees, who will soon take over in Helmand, love it.

New Direction for the RAA Historical Company

The Annual General Meeting for the RAA Historical Company (RAAHC) saw the initiation of a new phase for the organization – one that will refocus it as a national body designed to maintain and preserve the history and heritage of Australian artillery throughout Australia.

Following the AGM and subsequent Board meeting, a revised constitution was agreed and the following Board elected for the next year:

Ian Ahearn

Brian Armour

Kevin Browning

Schon Condon

John Cox

Nick Durrant

Tim Ford

Terry Waters

Vince Williams

Major General Tim Ford (Retd), who is also at present the RAA Representative Colonel Commandant, was elected as Chairman, and Colonel Ian Ahearn (Retd), currently the RAA Colonel Commandant Eastern Region, was elected as the Vice Chair.

The Objects of the RAAHC as outlined in the revised constitution are to:

- Foster, maintain and promote the heritage of artillery in Australia;
- Collect, acquire, preserve and display weapons and other articles which relate to the history of artillery in Australia;
- Prepare and publish articles, documents and journals on subjects of historical interest, and to provide a source of reference and historical record for approved institutions, societies and individuals;

- Do all such other lawful things as are necessary, incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them or to the progress, development or welfare of the Company.

Many of you will recognise that these objects are very similar to that of the original RAA Historical Society from which the RAAHC was originally developed.

It is intended that the RAAHC would now develop its profile as a national body that would support not only the Australian Army Artillery Museum (AAAM) at North Fort but all museums and sites that display items associated with the history of artillery in Australia.

The RAAHC has a membership some 280 members that included Gunners past and present, and many individuals with a great interest in Artillery, from all around Australia. All the RAA regional Colonel Commandants are members of the RAAHC and therefore could provide one of the points of contact to RAAHC State based members and regionally based RAA associations. General Ford encouraged all associations and members to contribute to the national identity and further development of the RAAHC. He said that Members will be asked for their ideas for a new logo for the RAAHC and how the current website should be developed to the benefit of members.

In addition to the national development of the RAAHC, the new Board has acknowledged the importance of its current collection, much of which is now on loan to the AAAM at North Fort, the work of volunteers there and around Australia is supporting artillery collections, the need to finalise the Memorial Walk at North Fort, **and the importance of “Cannonball” as a national artillery historical magazine.**

*This article included at the request of
Major General Tim Ford (Retd)*

Taliban attack goes up in smoke

By Sgt Andrew Hetherington

THE most crucial fire mission so far for the fifth rotation of Australian artillerymen serving with the British Army on Operation Herrick involved creating a life-saving smokescreen.

The 14 members of 4 Fd Regt are working with British counterparts from 4 Regt Royal Artillery at Forward Operating Base Budwan in Helmand province. They are known as Cutler Troop - named in honour of Sir Roden Cutler, VC.

The SM, WO2 Brett Donaldson, said since their arrival three months ago the gunners had been engaged in more than 30 fire missions and fired more than 300 rounds.

"The most significant mission we had was when we fired smoke rounds on June 15," WO2 Donaldson said.

"Between a patrol base 3km to our south and our FOB boundary, a couple of platoons of soldiers came under sustained small arms and RPG fire and were pinned down."

Fortunately the soldiers had not suffered any casualties, but it was not looking good for them as insurgents were moving to their location.

"We fired an extremely rapid self-defence smoke mission in support of them," WO2 Donaldson said.

"Within five minutes we had built up a smokescreen and in 15 minutes we'd fired 50 smoke rounds.

"The two platoons were able to safely withdraw back to their patrol base."

After the fire mission the gunners received an unexpected radio message.

"The observer sent us a sitrep over the radio expressing his utmost gratitude for the job we'd done," WO2 Donaldson said.

"It meant a great deal to the blokes as undoubtedly we saved some lives that day. We don't usually get feed-back like that, as all we mostly get is a battle damage assessment."

The L118 105mm guns the 4 Fd Regt men use at FOB Budwan are similar to the L119 currently used in Australia, with a few different features. The British L118 is capable of firing smoke, illumination and high-explosive rounds out to more than 17km.

"The ammunition we use here gives us a longer range than what the Australian guns use," WO2 Donaldson said.

"These guns have also been upgraded with an automatic pointing system that runs off an inertial

navigation unit and a GPS."

The gunners have been using the L118 to good effect during fire missions. They even came up with a plan to use one of the guns in an unorthodox way to support ground patrols outside the FOB.

"We have a gun platform close to the FOB wall above the Hesco barriers, where we use an L118 as a direct fire gun.

"We haven't needed to fire it yet, but it's been a deterrent to any Taliban from having a go at any of the patrols out when we move the gun there."

He said he was happy with the way the gunners had performed so far.

"I'm extremely proud of the blokes. They've participated in training they've never undertaken

before, they're working with a foreign army, away from home and their deployment began seven months before they arrived in Afghanistan," he said.

"With all these obstacles they've performed exceptionally well."

The gunners are living in dusty, hot conditions where temperatures are more than 50C during the day and 30C at night.

They are constantly sweating and replacing their lost fluids with water or sports drinks.

They face the constant threat of indirect fire from the Taliban and on numerous occasions have

received reports over their radio that an attack could take place at any time. They're on call day and night, waiting for a fire mission to be announced through loudspeakers so they can fire rounds at insurgents in and around the green zone on both sides of the Helmand River, less than 50m from the FOB wall.

At the FOB the 36 British and Australian gunners share the walled and secure space with Danish tanks, mortars and infantry, British engineers and a British ground-to-ground rocket detachment.

Between fire missions they either man a machine gun on picket, conduct weapons and first-aid continuation training, participate in small-arms and heavy weapons range shoots, perform gun maintenance, go to the FOB gym, play cricket and volleyball with British and Danish soldiers, or just keep cool by lying low.

"For the gun crews it's just a matter of putting all the data into a touch screen and the pointing system will find which direction the gun needs to be facing," WO2 Donaldson said.

The 4 Fd Regt gunners are due to return to Australia in October 2010.

Courtesy Army News



Heavy metal: Gnr Tim Murphy loads a cartridge case into the breach of an L118 (left) and, with British gunner Ryan Robertson, removes the flash suppressor from a gun barrel.

Gunners target Tigers

By Sgt Andrew Hetherington

GUNNERS from 16 AD Regt had the opportunity to target a Tiger during an exercise held at Woodside barracks on August 26.

Exercise Tiger Hunt gave gunners from 110 and 111 Btys the chance to track and simulate shooting down an ARH Tiger from 1 Avn Regt.

The helicopter and its aircrew flew simulated gun, rocket and hellfire attack profiles, targeting 16 AD Regt HQ.

Defending the unit were five RBS-70 detachments from 110 and 111 Btys and two radar detachments.

Commander A Tp 110 Bty Lt Owain Griffiths said the exercise enabled the gunners to familiarise themselves with Army's newest aviation asset and to track a real aircraft.

"After the aircraft landed on the unit parade ground the gunners received a brief by the aircrew and later the aircrew were given a brief on the capabilities of 16 AD Regt," Lt Griffiths said.

"The aircraft then flew for two hours allowing the gunners to track it."

110 Bty gun number Gnr Hannah Minehan has only been out of her trade training for two months. She is one of only four female air defenders in the Army. She said working with the Tiger was a great experience.

"It was the first real aircraft I've tracked and it was great to get a feel of what it's really like, as opposed to work-ing in a simulator," she said.

"It was an awesome and realistic experience, where we also learnt about the aircraft and its capabilities from the aircrew."

Bdr Jason Scott was Gnr Minehan's RBS-70 detachment commander during the exercise.

He said his gunners performed to a high standard.

"During each attack run we had at least 30 seconds to complete our drills to properly engage the aircraft," Bdr Scott said.

"I was impressed with the way they performed and

out of the six times we engaged the Tiger, I would say we would have easily hit it five times."

1 Avn Regt Tiger pilot Capt Stephen Bates said the experience was also valuable for him.

"We had the chance to learn about their equipment, which is one of the best low level air defence systems in the world," Capt Bates said.

"It's a very potent capability and the operators were professional with the way they set up and organised their firing."



LBdr Todd Makins shouts for a reload as RBS-70 operator Gnr Jonathon Hawke continues to track a Tiger during a joint training and familiarisation exercise at 16 AD Regt.

The RBS-70 system changes the battle space for any helicopter flying near it.

"[Flying against it] you have to employ high-level tactics to defeat it."

Lt Griffiths said his unit was planning to work with Tigers again in the future.

"To train with the Tigers was beneficial for the unit, as helicopters are a threat RBS-70 detachments are likely to encounter on the battlefield of the future," Lt Griffiths said.

This article is reproduced from BARRAGE, the Official Journal of 2/4 Field Regiment Association.

Pat Cahir is the associations secretary. Ed.

TRAVELS IN ASIA

From Daniel Cahir (son of Pat Cahir)

My wife Kathie, two youngest daughters, Ruairi and Roisin (now aged 10 and 9) and I have lived in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia since September 2008. As part of our Asian experience we have taken the opportunity to explore Malaysia and also discover some of the treasures within nearby countries such as Thailand, China, Cambodia and Singapore. We will also travel to Vietnam next year.

On our recent trip to Thailand in April we went on a day tour that took in the floating markets outside of Bangkok, the Tiger Temple (patting the tigers) and then also stopped at the site of the 'Bridge on the River Kwai'. The bridge that now stands there is not the original WW2 bridge built by the POWs (that was bombed by the Americans) but it is a newer steel and concrete structure. Unfortunately as the sun was extremely fierce at that time of the day, and the heat generated from the concrete and steel structures was intense, we did not stay too long (however I did remember to whistle 'Colonel Bogey's March!'). We then moved on to pay our respects at the nearby Kanchanaburi Commonwealth War Cemetery, where I spent some time explaining to my daughters what had



happened on the Death Railway. We then travelled onto Hellfire Pass for our last stop. It is located within the grounds of a Malaysian Army post and although we had had a long hot day in the Thai sun, the visit here was at a much cooler time of the day. The pass is a cutting made through a spur of the hillside where the track wound gradually down the side of the valley. Access to Hellfire Pass used to be down a rough local track but the Australian Army engineers had recently installed a lovely set of wide decking and stairs that descended down onto the old track about 300 metres above the Pass. At the top of the stairs the Australian War Memorial has built a museum detailing what had happened there. It has details about the Thai-Burma railway (parts of it were still being used into the 1980s), the use of enforced labour of both POWs and occupied countries, a scale

model of the original bridge over the River Kwai, movie reels about POWs, as well as a few donated relics on display. It is an excellent memorial.

The railway easement is only about 3 metres wide, and there are still some sleepers embedded in the earth. It was quite eerie to approach the pass, and I did not find it

difficult to imagine the noise of picks and the lights of the candle fires at night from which the Pass earned its name - it apparently looked like the 'fires of hell'. Walking through the pass you could see the marks of the drill holes, and there was a broken tip of a jackhammer tool stuck in the rock face. Nails from the sleepers were also on display. The Pass is quite deep and the rock and bush at this time of year was dry and it struck me as being very similar to the Australian bush (it was not dense jungle at that spot). At the far end of the Pass the Australian Government has erected a small pyramid shaped memorial, made of Wack granite, and which includes a number of preceding black granite blocks embedded in the earth to represent railway sleepers. I noticed on the wall of the rock face next to the original plaque memorial another plaque

indicating that Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop's ashes had been scattered in the nearby area. My wife and I did find it a thought-provoking visit.

Later in April I travelled (the benefits of cheap Air Asia flights!) to Sandakan with the intention of visiting on Anzac Day the site of the former POW camp from which the Death Marches originated. I had no idea if any sort of official ceremony was planned or not. Just ahead of the trip I decided to do an internet search and found that there was a notice from the Department of Veterans Affairs asking any Australians who were planning to go to Sandakan for Anzac Day to register with the department. I did this and soon received an invitation from the President of the Sandakan Municipal Council to attend an official reception and dinner on the night before. So from planning to travel very lightly I had to throw in a decent

set of clothes for the official 'do'. At the reception there were many Australian visitors, including relatives of the POWs, several local dignitaries, the acting Australian High Commissioner, members of both the Australian and Malaysian armed forces, and other 'free-loaders' like me. It was a very interesting night, and I spent some time talking to a local Chinese-Malaysian man who explained how the Sandakan population was grateful to the Australians who landed in North Borneo in July 1945 for liberating them from the Japanese, and how strong the connection was to this day between this area and Australia. He went on to explain further how his own father had been executed by the Japanese at that time on a spot about 150 metres from where we were currently dining. He had also lost his mother and sister to an errant American bomb (they were bombing the airstrip that the POWs had constructed). It was a stark reminder to me about how many others had suffered during the war.

Early the next morning we were collected from the hotel by several taxis and transported to the site of the camp for the Anzac Day Dawn Service. Much of the original camp grounds have now been developed, but the portion retained is now a tranquil park. There are several artefacts still there (a steam engine, concrete water tanks and some foundations) with accompanying guidebooks to explain their history or use.

The main memorial of the park is a large hut that contains the story and accounts of what had happened there, and I spent quite a bit of time later reading the displays.

I was surprised at how many people were at the Service and along with :-e local scouts, guides and military band I estimated the crowd at several hundred Australians and locals. A group of Australian troops based at Butterworth (Malaysia) formed the catafalque party, and the crowd was addressed by the son of one of the six survivors of the Death Marches (Professor

Richard Braithwaite, son of Dick Braithwaite, who escaped from the second Death March in June 1945). The most moving part of the ceremony was when relatives of those who died were

invited to come forward to the microphone to state the name of their relative who had died and state their connection. There were sons, daughters, grandchildren, great grandchildren and others who solemnly called the name and then added a flower to a plain wreath standing before the large black granite memorial. Readings were made by students from NSW, and in a re-enactment of what Australians troops had done in Malaya in WW2 to remind them of home (they had received them in parcels from family) some relatives burned gum leaves in a small fire as part of this ceremony. It was an amazing moment not due to the smoke, but due to the distinctive smell of eucalypt that wafted over the memorial site. After the Ode was recited, the crowd was then addressed by the



Australian acting High Commissioner and the Chief Minister of Sabah (the Malaysian state in which Sandakan is located).

I noted on the inside cover of the 'Order of Service' the following words from Dame Mary Gilmore's "The Passionate Heart"...

*They are not dead, not even broken
Only their dust has gone back home to the earth
For they, the essential they, shall have re-birth
Whenever a word of them is spoken.*

As the light of day dawned and the ceremony ended, all attendees then relocated to the grounds in front of the Memorial Hut for a gunfire breakfast (Malaysian style!). I was very pleased to have made the effort to get there and was moved by the fact that the Malaysians were so welcoming and placed so much significance in remembering what had happened there.

Dear Alan,

A few weeks ago my wife and I attended the Annual Probus Club convention, known as the Rendezvous, in Darwin, N.T. I had the pleasure of being re-acquainted with Boyd Acland who was the Chairman of the 2009 Probus Rendezvous in Perth WA. Boyd was a gunner driver at 132 Div Loc Bty in Landcox Street Brighton and passes best wishes to anyone who may remember him.

Another unexpected pleasure was meeting (ex Capt.) Allan Ogden, ex 132 Div Loc and 15 Fd Regt and his father, Jack Ogden, who also served with the Regiment. Allan recognised me and said "Hello", which was just as well because I would never have identified him as the clean shaven young officer I knew at Dandenong. He now sports a beard that Father Christmas might envy.

Allan is the Business Manager of Darwin Military Museum, on East Point Road, Darwin and, with other volunteers, does a great job maintaining

elements of Australia's Military history. Contact details of the Museum are:- DarwinMilitaryMuseum@bigpond.com.au

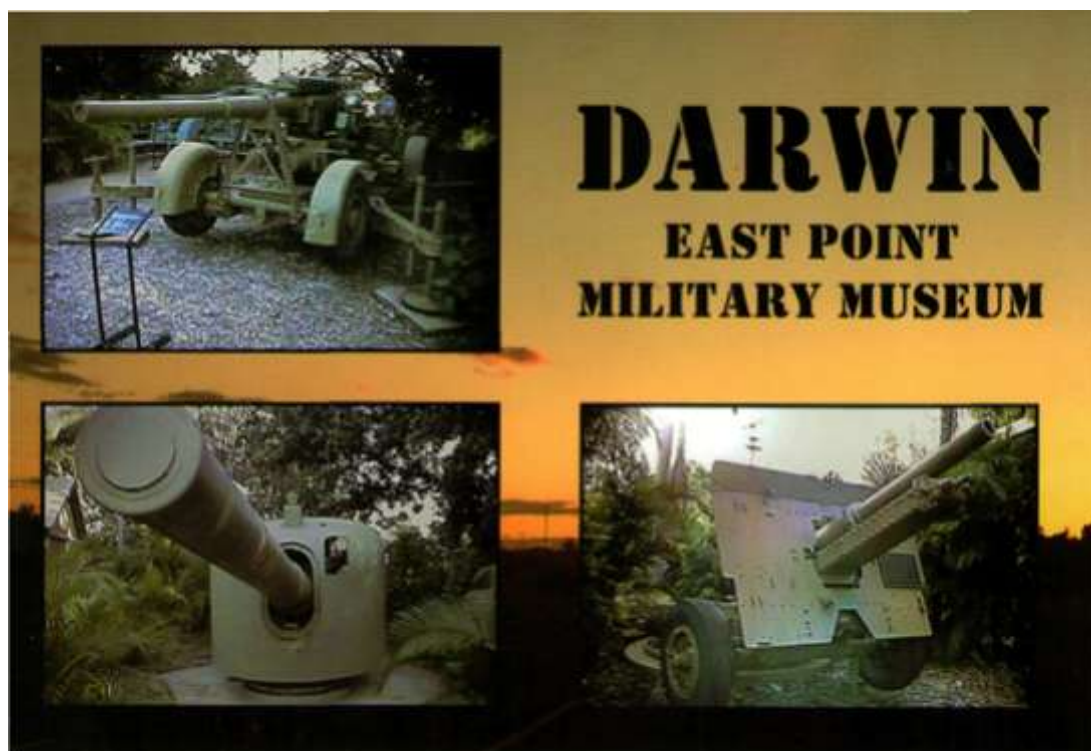
Postal address is - GPO Box 3220 Darwin NT 0801

Enclosed is a postcard from the Museum featuring some artillery pieces that may be of interest to Cascabel readers. I have sent to Allan a few copies of past issues of Cascabel including this issue that featured the book review about the bombing of Darwin in February 1942.

Should any gunners be visiting Darwin, please phone Allan 0417 876 997 and allow at least an hour and a half to visit the Museum in which Allan and his volunteers assiduously maintain military equipment that I doubt is preserved so well anywhere else in Australia.

Warmest regards,

Percy Cooper (Ex Capt)



For anyone intending to visit the museum in the future, I'm sure you will be made to feel most welcome. I've been there before Allan Ogden took control & believe the area has now been vastly improved. Well worth the visit. Ed

Latest from the museum.

* Our Business Manager Allan Ogden has returned to Queensland for family reasons, and his role has been taken over by Norm "Hawk" Cramp. Thanks to Allan who continues however as VP of the RAAA (NT), and who will be working on occasional projects for DMM.

The Soldiers' Priest

Amid the destruction and despair at the frontline, the endearing and empathetic Father John 'Tink' Tinkler was there offering support – and a smile.

THROUGHOUT A YEAR'S service in the Vietnam War, Father John 'Tink' Tinkler never carried a gun. "I chose not to so the soldiers would know I was there for them, not the war," he says. It caused fellow diggers angst during his 1968–69 tour of duty. Tink, now aged 72, recalls an occasion when he was ready to go to a fallen soldier's unit but was blocked by an officer because he was weaponless.

"He said: 'What would you do if the enemy surrounded you?' I looked him in the eye: 'Sir, I'd wait 'til they got up really close then I'd lasso them with my rosary beads and tie the bastards up. Sir.'"

With a ready laugh, sparkling blue eyes and a knack for winning people over, Tink was ordained in Condobolin, in central western NSW, in 1962, aged 24. He didn't volunteer for war but joined the Army when the National Service Scheme was reintroduced in 1964 and the churches were asked to provide more chaplains.

After two years, he was sent to Vietnam with an extra battalion needed to bolster Australian forces. Talk to any of the many soldiers Tink encountered and stories fly like bullets. Former 1RAR platoon commander John Salter recalls "Tink would drive us all nuts wanting to patrol with the rifle platoons. The more dangerous the mission, the more he wanted to go."

John remembers once when he was keeping Tink close while on patrol by making him a signaller (carrying the radio) and he asked him to send headquarters a situation report. "Tink took the handset and said loudly and clearly: 'Hello God. Hello God. This is Tink, over'," says John.

"So endeth stealth and secrecy – the whole bloody patrol fell about laughing."

Tink is embarrassed when told many soldiers held him in high esteem: "I was only a bloody chaplain for heaven's sake!

It was an honour to be a part of them."

Former 102 Battery member Bob Costello says Tink "put up with some shit" from non-believers. "He went to great lengths one night in the boozier to christen [a digger called] Floydie as a

good Catholic," he says.

Tink remembers it well: Floydie burst into a group he was addressing, eyeballed him and said: "I've always hated Catholics, always will," then disappeared.

"He did that each time I talked to a different group. After a while I was waiting... So when he burst in, I asked: 'Floydie, what are you drinking?' Floydie replied: 'Aussie VB.' I said: 'Give it here.'"

He handed it to me and I tipped it over his head and said: 'I baptise you a Catholic.'

What do you think now you're one of us, you bastard?" To this day, Floydie and Tink remain good mates.

Filmmaker Leonie Jones talked to more than 100 veterans for her documentary "They'll come looking for you: The Battle of Fire Support Base Coral" and says it was Tink's recollections that affected her most. "Tink had to write the letters home to the wives and mums," she says of the four-week campaign that claimed the lives of 25 Australian soldiers and hundreds of North Vietnamese. "It was just so sad, when you look at these 22-year-old, skinny boys going home in body bags." "They always wanted to know more detail," Tink says of the families. "A lot of them wrote to me when I was over there as if they were still writing to their son or husband." Many remain in touch.

Tink also stays connected to his returned comrades and understands Vietnam's lingering legacy. Like so many Australian soldiers that returned, he too experienced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), suffering a breakdown in 1998. "I had to ask to be moved away from a parish because I couldn't stand facing people and being in public," he says.

"I went to a school as a school chaplain [and] it was just like being in the Army: each class was like a different unit. You just went around and mixed with them on their level. I got back on my feet that way."

Decades after the Vietnam War, and despite battling his own demons, the Catholic priest at Moama, NSW, continues

to support his diggers, attending regular get-togethers for veterans in Echuca, Victoria, and, inevitably, presiding over many of their burial services.

Former 1RAR platoon commander Garry Prendergast says while other padres were "priests first and people second, Tink was a person first and a priest second... a leader. If you put rank on him and told him to climb over a wall and attack somebody everyone would follow him, not that he ever wanted to do that, not that he ever did. But he had that charisma about him and still does."

MATT DUNN

(Reprinted - Australian Geographic)



RÉSUMÉ

Age: 72 Location Moama, NSW

1962: Ordained at Condobolin, NSW, for Catholic Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes

1965: Joined Australian Army as a chaplain

1968–69: Australian Army's 1RAR Chaplain, Vietnam

1972–74: ANZUK Forces HQ, Singapore

1979: Awarded MBE

1992: Left Army, returned Wilcannia-Forbes

Diocese as a parish priest; awarded CSC (Conspicuous Service Cross)

2003–Present: Parish priest Moama, NSW

Courtesy of 12 Fd Regt (Vietnam) Association

The largest gun ever built was the "Gustav Gun" built in Essen, Germany in 1941 by the firm of Friedrich Krupp A.G. Upholding a tradition of naming heavy cannon after family members, the Gustav Gun was named after the invalid head of the Krupp family - Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach. The strategic weapon of its day, the Gustav Gun was built at the direct order of Adolf Hitler for the express purpose of crushing Maginot Line forts protecting the French frontier. To accomplish this, Krupp designed a giant railway gun weighing 1344 tons with a bore diameter of 800 mm (31.5") and served by a 500 man crew commanded by a major-general.

Two types of projectiles were fired using a 3000lb. charge of smokeless powder: a 10,584 lb. high explosive (HE) shell and a 16,540 lb. concrete-piercing projectile. Craters from the HE shells measured 30-ft. wide and 30-ft. deep while the concrete piercing projectile proved capable of penetrating 264-ft. of reinforced concrete before exploding! Maximum range was 23 miles with HE shells and 29 miles with concrete piercing projectiles. Muzzle velocity was approximately 2700 f.p.s.

Three guns were ordered in 1939. Alfried Krupp personally hosted Hitler and Albert Speer (Minister of Armaments) at the Hugenwald Proving Ground during formal acceptance trials of the Gustav Gun in the spring of 1941. In keeping with company tradition, Krupp refrained from charging for the first gun - 7 million Deutsch Marks were charged for the second (named Dora after the chief engineer's wife).



France fell in 1940 without the assistance of the Gustav Gun, so new targets were sought. Plans to use Gustav against the British fortress of Gibraltar were scrapped after General Franco refused permission to fire the gun from Spanish soil. Thus, April 1942 found the Gustav Gun emplaced outside the heavily fortified port city of Sebastopol in the Soviet Union. Under fire from Gustav and other heavy artillery, Forts Stalin, Lenin and Maxim Gorki crumbled and fell. One round from Gustav destroyed a Russian ammunition dump 100 feet below Severnaya Bay; a near miss capsized a large ship in the harbor. Gustav fired 300 rounds during the siege wearing out the original barrel in the process. Dora was set up west of Stalingrad in mid-August but hurriedly withdrawn in September to avoid capture. Gustav next appeared outside Warsaw, Poland, where it fired 30 rounds into Warsaw Ghetto during the 1944 uprising.

Dora was blown up by German engineers in April 1945 near Oberlichtnau, Germany, to avoid capture by the Russian Army. The incomplete third gun was scrapped at the factory by the British Army when they captured Essen. Gustav was captured intact by the U.S. Army near Metzendorf, Germany, in June 1945. Shortly after, it was cut up for scrap thus ending the story of the Gustav Gun.

Thanks to Sgt Gordon Hepburn for this interesting article.

RAA Association (Victoria) Inc Corps Shop

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

PRICE LIST

Badges, etc		ENQUIRIES:	
RAA Assn (Vic), members	\$5.00	BRIAN CLEEMAN	(03) 9560 7116
RAA badge cuff links	\$9.00	REG MORRELL	(03) 9562 9552
Key ring, RAA badge	\$4.00		
Key ring, RAA (Pewter)	\$4.00	Stationery	
Ties		Stickers	
Blue with single red gun	\$30.00	Bumper: <i>Gunners do it with a bigger bang</i>	\$2.00
RAA Burgundy with gold gun	\$43.00	Square: gold badge, red and blue background	\$2.00
RAA Navy with gold gun	\$43.00	ORDERS:	
St Barbara Stripe	\$43.00		
Books			
<i>Kookaburra's Cutthroats</i>	\$39.00		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.
<i>Aust Military Equip Profiles</i>	\$13.50		Cheques should be made payable to RAA Association (Victoria) Inc, and be crossed <i>Not Negotiable</i> .
<i>AMEF Profile - Leopard Tank</i>	\$17.00		Orders to: Mr B. Cleeman 28 Samada Street Notting Hill VIC 3168

Parade Card
as at December 2010

Jan 2011	Jun 2011	Nov 2011
	21 Committee	3 AGM
Feb 2011		4 Golf Day
9 Issue 106 Cascabel Posted	Jul 2011	15 Committee
15 Committee	19 Committee	
		Dec 2011
Mar 2011	Aug 2011	6 Committee
3 RAA Luncheon	8 Issue 108 Cascabel Posted	
15 Committee	16 Committee	
	Sep 2011	
Apr 2011	20 Committee	
19 Committee		
25 Anzac day	Oct 2011	
	7 Gunner Dinner	
May 2011	10 Issue 109 Cascabel Posted	
9 Issue 107 Cascabel Posted	18 Committee	
17 Committee		

Change of Personal Details

Rank	Surname and Post Nominals	DoB
Address		
Telephone Mobile Email		
Additional Information		

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC
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Reg No A13889Z

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