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At the Gunner Dinner
Left to Right. SSgt Reg Morrell, Sgt .John Decker SSgt Brian Cleeman
Photo supplied by SSgt Reg Morrell

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The President Writes

Not a lot has happened recently, bearing in mind that I am actually writing this report at the end of August to meet our printing requirements.

The Gunner Dinner, which was held at the Caulfield RSL, was one of the best that I have attended. (Not **just** because I was the DMP). The venue was excellent, the food was great and the band was up to its usual high standard. Last but not least, the guest speaker, Mr Barry Heard, held the attention of the mess for the entire duration of his very interesting and informative talk.

About sixty members and guests attended.

My thanks to the organisers SSgt Reg Morrell and SSgt Brian Cleeman for their efforts on our behalf.

A number of social events have been organised for the near future.

These include the Golf Day, a Cocktail Party and a visit to the Vietnam Veterans Museum. Information on these events is given elsewhere in the magazine.

These events are organised for the benefit of the members, so please do your best to patronise them.

I attended a

well attended by the members of the Bty and I enjoyed a very good social evening.

The Victorian Defence Reserves Support Day March was held in inclement weather (it rained) on Sunday 31 Aug. I have more to say about this later in the magazine.

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

Regards to all

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Neil Hamer". The ink is dark and the signature is written on a light-colored background.

Neil Hamer
MAJ (R)

Membership Report October 2008

Current Membership as at 30 Aug 08

Life Members	206	(209)	
Annual Members	48	(59)	7 unfinancial
Senior Annual Members	19	(19)	
Serving Concessional Members	8	(27)	1 Resigned 18 No Response
Affiliates	36	(37)	
Others (CO/CI, Messes, etc.)	12	(11)	
Libraries	5	(5)	
RSL	<u>1</u>	<u>(1)</u>	
Total	<u>335</u>	<u>(368)</u>	

New Members

We welcome the following members to the Association.

Capt Peter Smith OAM as a Life Member, Sgt William John Underwood as an Annual Member and Gnr Stjepan Bosnjak as a Serving Member.

I would remind Annual Members that once you attain the age of 80 years your membership becomes free-of-charge (no annual subs).

It is necessary for you to register your date of birth with me so that you can be placed in the no subs category. Nineteen members (Y S) are currently registered.

Resignations

Resignations have been received from Sgt D F Seaman, Bdr D M English, Bdr H T Dunkley, Gnr J Anderson, and 2/7 Fd Regt Association.

We have lost contact with the Exmouth Hvy Bty Association

Vale

It is with regret that we note the passing of MajGen J D (John) Stevenson OA CBE, Lt R L B (Dick) Glass MC, WO2 B V (Bernie) Upton, Sgts J F (John) Kelly and T W (Terry) Youngman.

A tribute to MajGen Stevenson appears later in the magazine.

Lt Glass served in 15 Fd Bde from March 38 to May 40 and 2nd AIF 8 Div 2/11 Aust Fd Regt from July 1940. WO2 Upton served in the Militia from August 37 to May 40; AIF 9th Aust Div: Australia, Middle East, Syria and Borneo; CMF July 48 to February 65.

Sgt Kelly served 20 years in 2Mdm and 2 Fd Regts.

Sgt Youngman served in 15 Fd Regt.

Lest We Forget

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.

Would you also please let me know if you have been awarded an ADM.



Neil Hamer
MAJ (R)
Membership Co-ordinator

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ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR GENERAL MICHAEL JEFFERY AC CVO MC

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

ON THE OCCASION OF

EULOGY FOR GENERAL SIR FRANCIS HASSETT

ANZAC MEMORIAL CHAPEL, DUNTRON, CANBERRA

17 JUNE 2008

The passing of General Sir Francis Hasset AC, KBE, CB, DSO, LVO is an occasion of great sadness. All of us who knew him feel an immense sense of personal loss.

It is also an occasion for celebration - a celebration of the life of an outstanding combat soldier, a great military leader and a loving husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather. It is a life of amazing achievements, a life of duty, loyalty and service to the nation, of sacrifice and dedication, and of love of family. It is a life of personal example indeed one of inspiration.

Like many here this morning I was one of those whose lives were touched in some way by Sir Francis.

I arrived here at Duntroon in 1955, to begin my career as an Army Officer, when Sir Francis, as a young Colonel, was serving as the Director of Military Art. He was without question the officer we all aspired to be.

He was battle trained and highly decorated from World War Two and Korea; he had a lovely young wife and family. He had a physical presence and an aura about him that inspired confidence and trust. He also clearly understood young men.

I recall as a young Cadet on a night navigation exercise in the Canberra area. After becoming geographically embarrassed, namely lost, a classmate and I decided that a few quiet beers in the private bar at the Ainslie Hotel would be far more to our liking than trying to find navigation markers on a very cold night in the hills of Canberra.

As the hours slipped by very pleasantly, we eventually adjudged it time to return to the College and so we commenced our long walk back. Around about the Russell Offices area we were getting quite weary and thought it best to further conserve our energy by flagging down the next passing car heading in the direction of Duntroon.

Soon the lights of an approaching vehicle loomed large and I stood in the middle of the road and flagged it down. It stopped, and it was not until my classmate and I had made ourselves comfortable in the back seat, that the unpleasant realisation hit us, that there in the driver Military Art, Colonel Hasset.

navigation exercise
lines without further comment or conversation.

We thought we were gone; 21 days confinement to barracks and 84 days stoppage of leave at least; possible dismissal loomed large in our minds. But nothing happened, nothing at all.

We sweated for weeks on the consequences of that fateful evening, however it never came. Years later as a very junior General, when I asked why we were never reprimanded, Sir Francis replied with a smile that in waiting for the sword to fall, you were punishing yourselves far more than I ever could - so true and so typical of his leadership style.

Sir Francis was born in Marrickville Sydney in 1918. He left school at 15 and was accepted into the Royal Military College in March 1935, aged 16.

He soon proved himself a capable cadet; eager to learn, quick to adapt, athletic and smart. He excelled at military subjects and featured in the College rugby, boxing, equestrian and athletics teams.

On graduation, in 1938, Sir Francis was posted to the Darwin Mobile Force first as a rifle platoon and then as a Mortar Platoon commander.

At the outbreak of World War Two, he was posted to the 2nd/3rd Battalion of the Sixth Division as Adjutant and sailed for the Middle East in 1940.

He fought at Bardia and Tobruk, was wounded in action and mentioned in despatches. On recovery, he attended the British Army Staff College and was subsequently promoted to Major and posted as Brigade Major to the 18th Brigade in Syria under Brigadier George Wootten. He then returned to Australia after the

Japanese entered the war and, at just 23, was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, the youngest Army Officer to attain that rank.

He saw further service in New Guinea, ending the war as a staff officer with the 3rd Division, having again been Mentioned in Dispatches for meritorious service and appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire.

Sir Francis returned to Australia at the end of the war and served as an Instructor at the Australian Staff College. On 18 May 1946 he married the beautiful Hallie Roberts a relationship based on love, admiration and mutual support. To quote Brigadier John Essex-Clark, she also illuminated him

Peace for Sir Francis, however, was not to last. After briefly commanding 1 RAR in Australia, in July 1951 he assumed command of 3 RAR

He led his battalion magnificently through some of the toughest fighting of the war, which reached its peak in October 1951 in the Battle of Maryang San, seen as one of the finest examples of a phased battalion attack in the annals of Australian Military History.

Chinese forces held the group of hills overlooking the Imjim River and the Commonwealth forces positioned nearby.

Maryang San, or Hill 317, rose 200 meters above the valley, dominating the ground and everything and everyone around it.

As long as the Chinese held Maryang San, they could dominate the whole area to the south. Earlier attempts by US forces to attack the Chinese position had failed and the Commonwealth Division was then given the task preparatory to a general advance.

On 5 October, while British forces attacked further west, men from A Company 3 RAR attempted an advance along a spur south-east of the summit. The attack acted as a feint by drawing Chinese defenders away from the main ridgeline, up which B and D Companies then advanced.

In a series of intense and hotly contested assaults, D Company captured four knolls leading up the ridgeline. Later that day, C Company took over the attack and captured a feature known as Baldy, before moving on quickly to occupy the summit, which fortunately had been abandoned by the Chinese.

Throughout the next day, the Australians held the summit against heavy Chinese fire and attempts to infiltrate the position. Early on 7 October, B Company captured the final objective action highlighted by a number of acts of great bravery.

The following day the Chinese continued to launch bombardment after bombardment at the Australians. In the evening, after one of the heaviest Chinese bombardments, the Chinese attempted a number of counter attacks. After each attack the Chinese withdrew with heavy casualties, until they finally gave up in the morning and the Australians San was secured.

20 Australians had been killed and 89 wounded in some of the heaviest fighting that Australians were to see in Korea. Several hundreds of casualties were inflicted on the enemy. For outstanding leadership in this battle, Sir Francis was rightly awarded an immediate Distinguished Service Order.

The men of the Battalion under LTCOL Hassett combat conditions of any theatre of war in the 20th Century.

As a battalion commander in Korea, Sir Francis excelled as an inspirational and tactically astute leader. He led without regard for his own safety, sharing every danger with his men and displaying the finest qualities of a Senior Officer courage, calmness, a capacity for detailed planning and execution and displaying a total trust in his subordinates. Above all he had a tremendous regard for his men; they knew it, sensed it and returned it in spades.

A newly arrived reinforcement officer to the battalion after Maryang San, LT Ron Grey had this to say about his CO:

There were feelings, almost an aura of command and calm confidence that surrounded the Commanding Officer. The Hassett touch left a lasting and life long impression on me as a young rifle platoon commander; a recent reinforcement still as raw as a bunch of freshly cut carrots and on my first day in the line, ready to set out on a night fighting patrol.

Just before last light and ready to go, the field telephone rang. Expecting it to be Basil Hardiman finding yet another fault in me. I answered. It was in fact LTCOL Frank Hassett and he said I know it is your first time out, good luck, see you at the debrief in the morning. Although a relatively small thing, it left an impression that has remained all these years since May 1952.

What the now General Grey didn't battle hardened veterans of the battalion orders group, it was the young reinforcement officer who was both called for and accepted by his CO.

Returning from Korea, he had four very happy years at Duntroon, before serving as a Marshal for Queen Elizabeth II

In 1960 he was promoted to Brigadier and specially selected to command of the 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade in Malaya. His foresight and influence resulted in the 28th Brigade achieving a far more multinational focus as it conducted counter-insurgency operations in Northern Malaya, prepared for its South East Asia Treaty Organisation role to secure a key airfield in Laos and moved into its new and wonderfully appointed barracks at Terendak in Malacca.

Sir Francis also led participation in regional exercises with Thailand. He contributed to developments in the conduct of, and doctrine relating to, tropical warfare and counter-insurgency. For this work, he was upgraded to Commander in the Order of the British Empire.

As the Australian Army targeted approach to command would serve him well as he assumed more senior appointments including his first two star appointment in 1968 as General Officer in Command of Australia

With his wealth of training and operational experience, he was a certainty to be chosen to lead the Army Review Committee in 1970, more colloquially known as the

Its far reaching reforms included moving from a geographical to a functional command system, which involved in part the replacement of the various State Army Command Headquarters with a national field force, training and logistics command system; a system that remains largely in place today and has proven its effectiveness in peace and war.

In 1971 as Vice Chief of the General Staff, he was appointed to implement the organisational reforms he had initiated, as well as supervising the end of conscription, the withdrawal of our troops from Vietnam and the consequential organisational changes brought about by a reduction in Army manpower.

In 1973 he was promoted to Lieutenant General as Chief of the General Staff and oversaw the development of brigade bases in Townsville, Enoggera and Holsworthy. In 1975, he was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia for eminent service.

In November of 1975 he was promoted to General, and appointed Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee the equivalent to today Force Staff when the position was created under his watch in February 1976.

The creation of the Chief of the Defence Force Staff was indicative of the major changes that characterised the Defence establishment at the time. Sir Francis worked tirelessly and exhibited tremendous leadership in fusing together three independent and essentially stove-piped structured Services and their separate support bureaucracies.

Given Sir Francis his career-long battle with ill-health would force him into premature retirement in April 1977.

And so ended 42 years of dedicated, loyal and courageous service to the Australian Defence Force, during which his impact upon it was unmistakable. His influence can still be seen across the training, doctrine, structure and functions of Defence. It was largely a result of his impressive leadership that the difficult task of creating a joint organisation was achieved without major stresses and divisions.

Throughout these extraordinary years, Sir Francis was supremely blessed to have the enduring love and support of Lady Hassett in a family relationship that he greatly cherished.

Having met after the war they began courting, and to quote the Commandant at the Army Staff College where Sir Francis instructed at the time:

Frank Hassett was impossible when he was courting Hallie; he lacked concentration and was often looking for good reasons to get away. I believe that he was absolutely besotted with her and I could see why.

Luckily for Sir Francis, and perhaps for the Commandant, Lady Hassett accepted Sir Francis they were married on 18 May 1946. They were blessed with four beautiful children Lyndal, Michael, Sandra and Jonathon and in turn seven wonderful grand-children and a great granddaughter in whom he had so much pride.

Although tragically suffering the loss of their son Michael in a motor vehicle accident, Sir Francis and Lady Hassett embraced family life and later country life with passion and dedication. Their inspiration has seen

three of their grandchildren Michael, Andrew and Christopher serving with distinction in today Force.

Their love endured all the stresses of service life: operational deployments, frequent postings, separation and the loss of a much loved son. Throughout his lengthy illness it was Hallie who cared for and loved him right to his peaceful passing at home, where he wanted to be.

So from whom did this quiet but very special infantry officer draw his inspiration as a military leader? There were three: Warrant Officer Sid Greville of the Australian Instructional Corps, General Sir William Bridgeford, his inspirational commander in Bougainville, and General Sir Thomas Daly, his boss as Chief of the General Staff.

The common characteristic shared by these outstanding men was that they were all quiet achievers, strong believers in the military ethic and with a great love for their soldiers; themes that resonate with Sir Francis own leadership style.

Sir Francis believed in leadership by example, self-discipline and quiet competence. His subordinates thought that he was charismatic and his professional confidence and loyalty permeated through all who worked for him.

Colonel Maurie Pears, a platoon commander at Maryang San, once wrote:

My service with the General in Korea was the turning point in my life. It gave me confidence, an understanding of my fellow man, and a realisation that good care of your men will provide massive returns. His trust in personally briefing me before Maryang San gave me the confidence in myself for the first time. I doubt whether I would have had the courage to proceed to Maryang San after the assault on Kowang San without his comforting and inspirational presence. I had moved from a troublesome and unconfident subaltern to one who was conscious of his men and his responsibilities because of the Hassett inspiration .

Sir Francis earned the admiration, gratitude, affection and respect of those soldiers who served in battle with him.

He was a man of high values particularly integrity and compassion. He was a born leader and epitomised the Royal Australian Regimental motto of

Corporal Ted Doyle, Sir Francis

words, I would say he is the finest man I have ever had the pleasure to meet, let alone to work for

Sir Francis

generous donation by Sir Francis and Lady Hassett, reflects his own experiences in youth. It annually honours the best of junior leadership within the Royal Australian Regiment to inspire the next generation of promising leaders. I was particularly proud to have had the opportunity to present the inaugural award with Sir Francis in October 2006.

May I conclude with a quote from Brigadier John Essex-Clark

His personal and primary legacy was as an exemplar of inspirational leadership, gracious and quiet charisma, unflappable planning and decision making, extreme will power under pressure and a belief in the wisdom and ability of his fellow men .

May a good, great and gentle man rest eternally in deserving peace.

Reprinted from the website of the Governor General

<http://www.gg.gov.au/governorgeneral/speech.php?id=435>



Maryang San "Operation Commando" 5-8 October 1951

the feat of the Australian Army during the Korean War.

Robert O'Neill, Official Historian of Australia in the Korean War

In late 1951, Chinese forces held a group of hills overlooking the Imjin River and the Commonwealth forces positioned nearby. Maryang San was a steep hill (Hill 317), rising 200 metres above the valley in front of it, with ridges running east and west. As long as the Chinese held Maryang San, they could dominate the ground to the south.

Earlier attempts by US forces to cross the valley and attack the hill had failed. In late September, the British Commonwealth Division was ordered to prepare for a general advance, called "Operation Commando", aiming to push communist forces back further north of the 38th parallel. Lieutenant Colonel Francis Hassett, commander of the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR), planned to draw on the Australians' experience in New Guinea during the Second World War by "running the ridges". A victory in this attack would also give the UN more leverage in the continuing armistice negotiations.

The night before the attack, Australian entertainer Gladys Moncrief performed in front of the troops from 3 RAR. Lieutenant (later Lieutenant Colonel) Maurie Pears remembered:

"It was a magic night, deadly quiet and calm. You could hear a pin drop. She sang in the open with a piano accompaniment. It was almost like Mum saying 'Look after yourself'. This was the closest we would be to home for a long time."

Pears won a Military Cross for his leadership during the attack at Maryang San.

On 5 October, while British regiments attacked further west, 3 RAR's A Company attempted an advance along a difficult route up a spur south-east of the summit, at times clawing their way forward. This attack was not expected to succeed, but it drew Chinese defenders away from the main ridgeline, up which B and D Companies advanced from the east.

A heavy mist helped conceal the attackers, but also made navigation difficult, and the two companies lost contact with each other. In a series of bitter fights D Company captured four knolls leading up the ridgeline. Then late in the afternoon C Company, commanded by Major Jack Gerke, rejoining the battalion after assisting a British attack on Kowang San (Hill 355 - known as "Little Gibraltar"), took over and captured a feature called "Baldy". The company then moved on quickly to occupy the summit, which had been abandoned by the Chinese.

Throughout the next day, the Australians held the summit against heavy Chinese fire and repeated attempts to infiltrate the position. Early on 7 October, B Company captured a final objective, "the Hinge", a high point on the ridge west from the summit, after a fierce action highlighted by a number of acts of great bravery. All next day the Chinese bombarded the Australian positions, making resupplies of ammunition and the evacuation of casualties difficult.

In the evening, after half-an-hour's ominous silence, the heaviest bombardment yet preceded a series of desperate and courageous Chinese counter-attacks during the night. After each attack the Chinese were forced to withdraw with heavy losses, until in the morning they gave up and the Australians' hold on Maryang San was secured.

and aggression had won the day. Private Jim McFadzean, Signaller, C Company, 3 RAR

Twenty Australians had been killed, and 89 wounded, in some of the heaviest fighting the Australians were to see in Korea. With the support of New Zealand and British artillery and British tanks, the Australians had succeeded. Lt Col Hassett was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for his leadership throughout the long and bloody fight.

Warrant Officer Arthur Stanley called Maryang San:

One of the best planned operations, commanded by experts, fought with outstanding bravery by all who took part, in some of the worst country in the world, with victory at the end.

Sadly, after the Australians were withdrawn and British troops had taken over, by the 5th November, Maryang San was recaptured by the Chinese. It was a terrible blow to morale for those who had fought long and hard to capture it. The tactically important ground of Maryang San remained in the hands of Chinese forces for the rest of the war.

Reprinted from the Australian War Memorial Website

http://www.awm.gov.au/korea/operations/maryang_san/maryang_san.asp



Donation from Mary Vincent



The Association has been fortunate and privileged to be the permanent beneficiary of a generous donation of all current military uniforms and other military equipment and memorabilia of the late Colonel Michael Vincent RFD ED.

The gift includes a full set off all current summer and winter service dress, badges of rank, caps and hats, buttons and a mess kit.
It also includes his Aides-de-Camp aiguillette and crimson silk sash.

His wife, Mary, Lt Harry Shepherd and Sgt Max Mellington attended the Sargood Barracks on 15 July 2008 to make a formal presentation to the Association. SSgt Brian Cleeman accepted the donation on behalf of the Association.

The uniforms and other equipment will be on display in due course.

Harry Shepherd
LT (R)



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(Royal Australian Artillery Association (Victoria) Inc.)

Thursday, the 8th of November, 2007 at 1930 hours.

Caulfield RSL
2 St. Georges Road,
Elsternwick.
(Melways 67 G3)

Bistro opens at 1745 hours.

(Contact Reg Morrell on 9562 9552 for bookings by 01 Nov 07)

This is a great opportunity to know what your Association is doing and also to find out the current information on 2/10 Field Regiment
e.g. change over from field guns to mortars.

Light supper will be provided after the meeting.

War hero whose gunnery skills saved his mates

RICHARD (DICK) LEWIS BARNET GLASS, MC
MANAGER, SOLDIER, CARD PLAYER
25 June 1915 31 May 2008

By GRAHAM FARLEY

On 24th July, 1945, with the Second World War nearing its end, Lieutenant Richard Glass was awarded the Military Cross when the patrol, for which he was the forward observer, was ambushed by a party of sixty Japanese in the Bougainville campaign. With his left arm shattered by shrapnel, Dick, as he was universally known, still had a good right arm to fire his Owen gun. He was also able to successfully call down artillery fire on the enemy using close target procedure. This enabled the surviving members of the patrol to extricate themselves safely. Three men of the 24-man patrol were killed and eleven were wounded. Dick, being one of the latter, spent the next six months in hospital recovering from his wounds.



Dick died on the 31st May this year, aged 92, at the Girrawheen Nursing Home, Brighton, of heart and vascular diseases. He was born the elder child in a Jewish family to Zara (n and Ernest Glass, in St. Kilda in 1915. The Sanders family had established the Leviathan Men

Barnet Glass, had pioneered the rubber industry in Australia when he came to this country in the nineteenth century to make rubber raincoats.

Wadhurst was chosen for Dick Here he encountered some anti-Semitism. So his mother had him taught boxing. From then on Dick held his own.

His secondary schooling was at Geelong Grammar School about the time that J. R. Darling (later Sir James) became its headmaster. In Dick boarding house, *Manifold*, the matron, a bridge player, got Dick and two of his card-playing school friends during his first year to make a foursome for bridge on Saturday nights.

In later years, concentrating on his studies, Dick also had time to enjoy rowing, rugby and of course boxing, at which he was the school champion. Dick was inevitably known as school!

Leaving school, Dick entered the Barnet Glass organisation qualifying in his spare time as an accountant and a secretary through the relevant institutes.

In the middle thirties he joined the militia serving in the artillery. Shortly after the Second World War commenced he enlisted in the Second AIF. He was posted to the 2nd/11th Field Regiment, RAA -- corps troops with the 8th Division.

As only one of two such units could accompany the 8th Division to Malaya, the two commanding officers tossed for it. That Dick ^{nd/11th} sailed for the Middle East where they fought the Vichy French in Syria.

Having been a gun sergeant, Dick was appointed Troop Sergeant Major (TSM). When his short-sightedness was diagnosed, his CO ignored the report, citing that a sergeant-major handles men and the sight matter was of no importance.

The unit returned to Australia following the entry of Japan into the war. It was posted to Darwin as part of that region commissioning.

In 1942 Dick married Joan Appleton, whose family name was associated with shipping and with the naming of Appleton Dock. Two daughters were born, Barbara and Jenny. Dick and Joan mutually agreed to a divorce some twenty five years later.

Returning to his unit, the regiment was posted to Bougainville where Dick, as an officer, had the full range of artillery duties, including observation of fire, whether from a fixed position or accompanying the infantry. It was while supporting a patrol of C Company of the 47th Battalion that the action that earned him the Military Cross occurred.

When Dick was discharged from hospital and the army, he took a position as a cost accountant with the Australian Paper Mills. Following success in displaying his management skills, Dick was offered the position of General Manager of Brown-Gouge Drycleaners. Dick retired twenty years later, having successfully restructured the firm and introducing new standards to the industry.

When the 2nd/11th unit association sought to publish its official history, Observation Post, Dick, having learnt to type and then to master early computers, typed out the manuscript for its author, Bill Lewis.

Even before retirement, Dick had begun to enjoy overseas travel. Previously this had been restricted to international dry cleaning conferences. Now as a tourist, he was accompanied by his partners, first Bettye Harrison and then Berwyn Boan. They visited most countries in the world.

His card playing skills had not been allowed to rust and Dick got great satisfaction from a hand of bridge. Dick played duplicate contract bridge in many clubs but it was when he was secretary of the Naval and Military Bridge Club that he met the author of this obituary. The two then played fortnightly until Dick moved into a retirement home in Brighton.

During this period Dick wrote his life story and it forms the basis for this obituary. Unfortunately his autobiography was never finished.

After his funeral, his family and friends met back at the Heroes Club, home of the Toorak RSL, a fitting venue for this humble but great man.

Dick is survived by his two daughters, Barbara and Jenny, and their families.

This obituary was written in partnership with Dick
Reproduced with permission of the Age, Melbourne



Gunner Dinner 2008

The Annual Gunner Dinner was held at the Caulfield RSL on Friday, 1st of August, 2008. The numbers for a our Dinner started off slowly, but after some prompting from our Dining President, Major N. Hamer RFD, our numbers rose to a total of 56 members attending the Dinner. We had a good response from the Regular Officers, including the RSM from 2/10 Fd Regt., but only one OR. Over the past 4 years, there has been a good attendance to our Dinner by the School of Artillery, but this year, there was no response or interest shown by them. Hopefully, next year, we may see an improvement.

According to feedback from our Members, the Dinner was extremely successful due to the company, venue, good food and wine. The guest speaker, Mr, Barry Heard gave an interesting and impressive account of his time in Vietnam, as a A Company Signaller with 7RAR.

Once again, the 2/10 RAA Band lead by WO 2 S. Deekes gave an excellent performance. The Caulfield RSL, President Sergeant John Decker, the CEO Mr. Neil Condon and Staff are to be congratulated on their service and venue.

Convenor - Ssgt Reg Morrell.





Gunner Dinner Article and Photos Supplied by Ssgt Reg Morrell.
(No names were supplied with the photos at the time of print.)

Jumping into History

The Paragunners of 1943

by Arthur Burke



AWM 100546. Markham Valley, New Guinea. 5 September 1943. Screened by dense smoke, paratroopers of 503 US Paratroop Infantry Regiment and gunners of 2/4th Australian Field Regiment with their 25 Pounders land unopposed at Nadzab, during the advance of 7th Australian Division on Lae.

Gunner Robbie Robertson exited badly and plummeted head first downwards. Suddenly, he heard a loud crack and was wrenched upright and upwards. His the cool air. For only the second time in his life, this young soldier experienced the exhilaration of floating above the earth and for several minutes, it was difficult to believe that he was in the middle of a war.

VX 50978 Gunner Ian George Robertson had just jumped into history -- the history of 31 young Australian artillerymen who had just parachuted with two guns into New Guinea in support of the 503rd US Parachute Infantry Regiment Allied advance east to capture Lae.

But this was no time to be daydreaming! Six hundred foot was not that high and now the ground was rushing up to greet the young paragunner. Stop any oscillation, grab the shrouds and turn into the wind, feet together, knees slightly bent and muttered Ian.

Then he was down, rolling, smacking the release buckle -- it was all over! He leapt to his feet and was guided through the head high kunai grass by Lieutenant Pearson megaphone. Johnnie Pearson gathered his flock around the cane pannier from which they drew their weapons then allocated search arcs to find the pieces of the guns and other equipment. Only Gunner Lidgerwood had been injured in the drop, unfortunately landing in a tree and hurting his shoulder.



AWM 015701. Port Moresby, 1943. A gunner adjusts a parachute before the Australian airborne artillerymen and their guns -- dismantled and attached to parachutes -- join the transport planes which took them over the Markham Valley. The Australian paratroops were trained in less than a fortnight, and their jump, with those of American paratroops provided one of the most spectacular episodes of the new Allied move.

Sixty years ago this was the Markham Valley on Sunday, 5 September 1943. At 10.15 am, six squadrons of US Mitchell B 25 strafers led an armada of 302 aircraft. Each aircraft calibre machine guns swept the carpet of kunai grass ahead of their bays disgorging 60 fragmentation bombs. Six A 20s then obscured the scene with smoke and at 2000 feet 96 voices screamed, 47
 transports spawned three battalions of US 47s
 and about 1000 feet above, fighters hugged their protegees whilst brother aircraft at 7000 feet provided an interim umbrella below the top cover boys up in the sun, staggered from fifteen to twenty thousand feet. [2] The securing force had been launched for the 7th Australian Division landing.

Sergeant Wally Murnane and his detachment were the first to find a complete set of gun parts. Their squat little ground! munition box that had broken loose from its parachute load
 hurtled over the detachment
 Fortresses were delivering 192 rounds to fuel the hungry guns.



AWM 015700. September 1943. Australian gunners with their 25 Pounder Short Guns dismantled, and the parts attached to parachutes, wait for the order to don their own parachutes and equipment prior to joining the planes which flew them to the Markham Valley where they, and their guns, parachuted to complete the ring round Lae. The Australians achieved a feat never before attempted in the Pacific.

It was hard to believe that less than a month ago, Lieutenant Pearson had approached Gunner Robertson, his friend from the reinforcement ship that had taken them both to join the 2/4th Field Regiment AIF in the Middle East in September 1941. mission coming off
 in Syria too late to see action. The months of waiting in the Brisbane Line when their unit had been

recalled to Australia had whetted their appetites for their slice of the war
signaller and visions of a submarine drop behind enemy lines began running through his mind.

Back at Nadzab strip, a new challenge faced the 2/4th -- fire. The Americans,
desiring to enlarge the airstrip quickly chose to burn the kunai grass rather than cut it by hand.
Fanned by the breeze, this was soon out of control and only the bushman ship of some of the
Gunnery saved their position from being destroyed. In truth, the Gunnery were quite disappointed
that the landing had been unopposed by the Japanese and their Shorts had not been called into
support.

In response to General Sir Thomas Blamey
Nadzab, Lt Gen Edmund Herring commanding New Guinea Force ordered the 9th Division to
capture Lae from an amphibious landing east of Lae whilst the 7th Division was to establish itself in
the Markham Valley west of Lae by an overland and airborne operation. The 503rd US Parachute
Infantry Regiment was to secure Nadzab for the 7 Div
to Lae. On 8 August 1943, the commanding officer of the 2/4th Field Regiment, Lt Col Alan Blyth
was ordered to support 25th Brigade. He approached Maj Gen George Vasey commanding 7 Div
and proposed parachuting a two gun section of the new 25 Pounder Shorts to support the 503rd
Regiment. [3] Since the Americans did not have any guns suitable for paratroops, Vasey agreed.

That first night all the paragonners gathered around Murnane
parts had been scattered about a mile away and it was not until the second day that Sergeant
Jimmy Thompson and his crew brought it into action.) Ian Robertson describes the utter
exhaustion by nightfall and how they
luxury of American rations that night. Early next morning Robbie and Lieutenant Frank Ross joined
a forward US company and they moved up into the hills to Gabsonkek as a blocking force against
attack from the north.

Lieutenant Frank Faulkner and a signaller joined the 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion protecting the
southern flank.

When Gunner Robinson reported to his battery headquarters as directed by Lieutenant Pearson,
he was part of a group
there, but none of us had disclosed our secret orders,
four lieutenants (Johnnie Pearson, Frank Ross, Frank Faulkner,
choose about ten
physical training -- forced marches, running along the beach, climbing ropes, tumbling. Next the
men were told to parade with their gear and were spirited off in trucks. Only as they entered the
lines of the 503rd US Parachute Infantry Regiment did they begin to realise what might be in store
for them.

Ross and Robertson dzab began patrolling. Captain Don Moorhouse had
arrived overland with the 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion and supplies of sig cable. Robbie was flat out
laying miles of line back to the guns when a cheerful officer walking by made a remark to him
about Short 25 Pounders. Ian looked straight up into the eyes of the 7 Div commander. General
George Vasey told Ian he was
wandered off along the track, completely alone.

When Lieutenant Pearson reported to Colonel Kinsella, commander of the 503rd Regiment, the
latter was amazed that the Gunnery did not know their mission. He insisted on addressing them
and offered an
recalls proudly. Twenty-four hours of hard training later, 33 would-be paragonners made their first
jump from 1200 feet at the 30-mile airstrip outside Port Moresby.
Gunner Robertson and he moved into the doorway in
acknowledgement of

The battery commander and observer parties from 54th Battery and E Troop guns arrived on 8
September and 25th Brigade stepped off for Lae. The Light Section of paragonners did not take
part in this advance but remained in support of 503rd Regiment who continued to maintain a
secure perimeter around Nadzab as it built up into a major base. Lae fell to the 7th Division on 16
September 1943.



AWM 060259. Faria River area, New Guinea (several weeks after the jump). A forward observation officer of the 2/4th Field Regiment (Artillery) attached to the 2/27th Australian Infantry Battalion adjusting an artillery bombardment on the Japanese positions on Shaggy Ridge.

Three men, including Lieutenant Evans were injured in the one and only practice jump at the Port Moresby Airfield. Lieutenant Alan Clayton volunteered to replace Evans and jump straight into action with the other 30
airstrip on
hour wait for a call
forward which did not eventuate till the 2IC of the 503rd landed in his light aircraft and said,
are you doing still here? -- GO!
minute hop to Nadzab climbed to 600 feet.

The red light came on above the jumpmaster.
the door!

1. Interview A.R. Burke with I.G. Robertson, Burwood, Vic, 9 December 1995.
2. Dexter, David The New Guinea Offensives, Australia in the War of 1939 1945, Series 1 Army, Vol VI, AWM, Canberra, 1968, p. 344.
3. Henry, R.L. The Story of the 2/4th Field Regiment, Merrion Press, Melbourne, 1950, p. 206.
4. Interview A.R. Burke with F.A. Faulkner, East Brighton, Vic, 21 November 1995.

Retired Colonel Arthur Burke is the Honorary Historian of the 4th Field Regiment RAA, today holder of the traditions and spirit of the 2/4th Field Regiment AIF. He dedicates this article to the four officers and 27 soldiers who were the first Australian Gunners to parachute into action in the South-West Pacific theatre of World War 2 sixty years ago on 5 September 1943. It took 47 years of fighting bureaucracy before the survivors of those 31 paragunners were presented with their US Combat Jump Wings at the 50th anniversary luncheon for the formation of the 2/4th Regiment in Melbourne in 1990.

Reprinted from

<http://www.anzacday.org.au/history/ww2/anecdotes/jumping.html>



Unit Histories

2/15th Field Regiment

The 2/15th Field Regiment was raised at Rosebery Racecourse, Sydney, on 12 November 1940. The regiment had two batteries, the 29th and 30th Field Batteries, and by 22 November the regiment was at full strength. The regiment began training at Ingleburn with 18-pounder guns, the type used during the First World War, and many of which, as noted comically in the regiment history, were

Holdsworthy, Sydney. In May the regiment, less two troops, moved to Bathurst, where it carried out joint training exercises with 8th Division

Sydney, on board the troop ship Katoomba, for overseas service. The Katoomba was part of a convey taking the 27th Brigade to Malaya. The vessel arrived in Singapore on 15 August.

With growing unease about Japan and while the rest of the 2nd Australian Imperial Force (AIF) had been sent to the Middle East, the 8th Division was sent Malaya, Singapore, and the islands to Australia

were able to familiarise themselves with the jungle. It was not until 23 November the regiment received its first 25-pounders. Shortly afterwards a new battery, the 65th Battery, was formed.

Throughout November and the start of December it seemed that war with Japan was increasingly likely. Late in the afternoon of 5 December the 2/15th began moving from Singapore to the state of Johore, Malaya, to relieve the 2/10th Field Regiment. The 2/10th was operating on the east coast of Malaya in support of the 8th Division
up position at Kluang Rubber Estate, near Kluang.

By the start of January 1942 the Japanese had advanced through Thailand and most of Malaya. On 5 January the 2/15th left Kluang and moved north to reinforce the Allied troops that would fight the main Japanese force when it reached Johore. The regiment tery went to Muar, on the west coast, under the command of the 45th Indian Brigade. The regiment continued further north to join the 8th Division
Estate, between Gamas and Batu Anam, under the command of the 2/29th Battalion, while 30th Battery dug in a near Gamas, under the command of the 2/30th Battalion. All were in position by 13 January.

The 27th Brigade was to act as a -absorber
as many casualties as possible before fallback to other defensive positions. Consequently, on 14 January, B Company, the 2/30th Battalion, ambushed a Japanese column and destroyed the bridge crossing the Gemencheh river. Within hours, though, the Japanese repaired the bridge and continued advancing towards the 2/30th Battalion. Heavy fighting followed and the Japanese attack, which included tanks, was beaten off.

From then on, the regiment for
the infantry withdrawal along the Malayan Peninsula towards Singapore. In the first days of the campaign, the regiment fired 7,950 rounds in the Gemas Segamat sector by 29th and 30th Batteries, while 65th Battery fired 6,915 rounds in support of the Indian troops and, later, the 2/19th and 2/29th Battalions as they withdrew from Muar to Parit Sulong. The withdraw from Muar was particularly difficult and, by the time 65 Battery reached the main force at Young Peng, 24 of the battery
the end of the month, the last of Allied troops had crossed the causeway and reached Singapore. Among some of the last to cross were the 2/15th troops, who formed the last Allied artillery units in action on the peninsula.

Having crossed the causeway, which was subsequently blown, the regiment was deployed to the western area in support of the 8th Division
2/19th, 2/18th, and 2/20th Battalions, were deployed between Sungei Berith and Sungei Kranji. The Japanese, meanwhile, were preparing their forces for the invasion of the island and, during this static period from the end of December to the first week of February 1942, the regiment still fired over 1,000 rounds.

Preceded by a heavy bombardment, the Japanese attack on Singapore began at 10.30 pm on 8 February, when two Japanese divisions crossed the Johore Strait and attacked along the 22nd Brigade

artillery sank some barges. On 8 and 9 February the regiment fired 4,944 rounds, mostly between 10.30 pm and 4 am. With its communications cut, heavily outnumbered, and with the Japanese infiltrating between positions, the brigade and the 2/15th withdrew. During the withdrawal, vehicles became bogged and 30th Battery lost all of its guns except one. 29th Battery took up a position west of Bukit Panjang village. 30th and 65th Batteries moved to a position south of Bukit Panjang. The regiment continued to move back towards Singapore and provide artillery support when needed. On 11 February, 29th Battery, for example, was in action all day, firing 5,500 rounds.

By 13 February the battle for Singapore Island was all but over and on 15 February, British forces surrendered. Two days later, the regiment began moving from Tanglin Golf Course to Selerang Barracks, Changi, into Japanese capture. For the next three-and-a-half years the men of the regiment had to endure the brutality of being a prisoner of war of the Japanese.

Initially imprisoned in the sprawling Changi prisoner-of-war camp, it was not long before members of the 2/20th were allocated to external work parties. The first parties were dispatched around Singapore and southern Malaya, but later members of the 2/15th found themselves members of parties bound for the camps along the Thailand Burma Railway and in Borneo, Japan, French Indochina, Java, Sumatra, and Malaya. These men endured the worst horrors of Japanese captivity. Of the 556 officers and men who became prisoners, 294 died. The surviving prisoners were liberated in late August 1945 and began returning to Australia almost immediately.

References

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Australian War Memorial

Australian Tourism Awards
Major Tourist Attraction
HALL OF FAME

-2008 Australian War Memorial

Reprinted from the Australian War Memorial Website

http://www.awm.gov.au/units/unit_10390second_world_war.asp



The Soldier Who Couldn't March

I thought I would take time out, to relate an incident that happened to me while I was an Instructor in the Army. We were involved in preparing troops to go overseas as weaponry, PT, map Reading, and so on. I had a squad for marching exercises, after the exercise was over, a soldier came up to me and said, I suppose you have noticed I cannot march

not be that important, besides there were other units he could go into where no marching was required. He insisted, please help me, he was begging, I want to go into the infantry, and you have to march, Please help me. I said that I that when his right or left foot went forward, so did his arm but not in coordination, most unusual. I asked the other instructors, had they experienced anything like this, the answer was

It intrigued me, I thought about it, then it came to me like a flash, it was so simple why nobody had thought of it before. Next time I had this particular squad for marching, I made sure that this particular soldier was on the outside line, facing me, I gave the order QUICK MARCH, and off they went, I went over to the squad and marched alongside them, I moved alongside the soldier who couldn't march. I grabbed his arm, so that it was with mine, I could feel him resisting, I said to swing with mine, he was marching, down the end of the road, ABOUT TURN and QUICK MARCH, now I was working on the other leg and arm, everything was going like clockwork, Couple more times up and down the road, and I was sure. Before we started down the road again, I went up to this particular soldier, and said, Half way down the road I am going to let your arm go you will be on your own, the other soldiers were within earshot, Half way down the road I let go. and watched, he was marching unaided, I heaved a sigh of relief.

The soldier was elated, he ran away saying, enough, I must tell my Wife, and he did.

Fortnight later I had a letter from his Wife, who happened to be a nursing sister at one of the hospitals in the city, it appears that her husband, had this affliction for years, they had been to Doctors and Specialists, to no avail, and as she put it,

told him, you control your brain, not let your brain control you. He had Duntroon RMC.

Edmund Ingouville Williams
Coordinator Avenue of Honour
Lysterfield.

Edmund has a long association with Fort Gellibrand Williamstown, and Fort Queenscliff. He spent a good deal of his life in the Dept of Defence, Dept of Supply and Development. He is a Life Member of The RAA Association and the 2/7th Inf Bn Assn. The article happened in 1940.



SOCIAL GOLF DAY



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

(Melways 212 C4)

On Friday 7th November 2008
Tee Time 0830 Hrs

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

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

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

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

The cost for golfers is \$28.00 which covers green fees for 18 holes and trophies.

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

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

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

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

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

Not later than 24th October 2007.

Please include:

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

The name and handicap of your guests.

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

The name/s of your preferred group.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Thirtieth Annual General Meeting of the RAA Association (Vic) Inc
Will be held at the Caulfield RSL
2 St. Georges Road,
Elsternwick.

Thursday, the 6th of November, 2008 at 1930 hours.

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. Business arising
4. Correspondence
5. Treasurer
6. Membership report
7. General Business
 - a. President
 - b. Regimental reports
 - c. Election of office bearers
8. Other Business

.....
NOMINATION FORM

This form is to reach the Secretary not later than 30th of October 2008

<

<

a member of the Association, is hereby nominated for the position of
President / Vice President / Secretary / Treasurer / Committee member (cross out those positions not
nominated for) by the undermentioned Proposer and Seconder, who are also members of the Association.

<

<

I name)

<

<

Signature of consenting nominee: <

.....

FORM OF APPOINTMENT OF PROXY

I, <

of <

being a member of the Royal Australian Artillery Association (Victoria) Inc, hereby appoint

<

of <

Association, as my Proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the General Meeting of the Incorporated Association
to be held on 6th of November 2008, and at any adjournment of that meeting.

Signed <

Date <

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Signature of consenting nominee: <

.....

FORM OF APPOINTMENT OF PROXY

I, <

of <

being a member of the Royal Australian Artillery Association (Victoria) Inc, hereby appoint

<

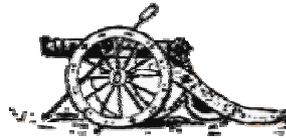
of <

Association, as my Proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the General Meeting of the Incorporated Association
to be held on 6th of November 2008, and at any adjournment of that meeting.

Signed <

Date <

RAA Association - Cocktail Hour



THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN
ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION
INVITES YOU
TO ATTEND A COCKTAIL HOUR

To be held at the Chapel St Depot 2nd / 10th Field Regiment
On Friday 24th October 08 from 1800 hrs

Entr - neat casual plus ties.

Function includes finger food, drinks at mess prices and

Coffee

Contact SSGT Reg Morrell on
9562 9552 or 0425 837 958
or morrells@morrell.org

RSVP 20 October 2008



RAA ASSOCIATION VISIT TO NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM

The RAA Association has organised a visit to the National Vietnam Veterans Museum, which has approximately 6000 artefacts. These include the marbles used in the conscription lottery, uniforms, vehicles and weapons. There is a photo gallery, dioramas showing aspects of the war, a moving audio visual exhibit and a Bell AH 1G Huey Cobra Helicopter Gunship. Details of the visit are as follows:-

- WHEN:** Saturday, 15th of November, 2008
TIME: 1000 hours Commencing at 1015 Hours
WHERE: National Vietnam Veterans Museum
Veterans Drive, (formerly Churchill Road South)
Newhaven, Phillip Island
Melway ref Map 934 A7
COST: \$25.00 (Includes admission and a 2 Course Meal)
TRANSPORT: Own means

I
Best regards,

Reg Morrell

.....

RSVP 7 Nov 08

Reg Morrell, 6 Melissa Street, Mt. Waverley 3149
Telephone 9562 9552; Mobile 0425 837 958; Email: morrells@morrell.org

Name/s.....Telephone

I/We will be attending the Museum on 15 Nov 08.



Rocky Creek World War Two Hospital Complex (Former)

Significance

The Rocky Creek World War II Hospital Complex is important in demonstrating the pattern of Queensland's history as an example of a World War II installation located in North Queensland. Being close to the Papua New Guinea battlefield, Queensland played a vital role hosting and supporting Australian and United States Servicemen. As a hospital complex, the site is significant for the role it played in the provision of medical treatment to these troops, including the use of new treatments and technology, and for the research conducted regarding the treatment of malaria.

The Entertainment Igloo, constructed in 1943, demonstrates a rare aspect of Queensland's cultural heritage as one of the few remaining small igloos designed and operated as a theatre during World War II.

The Rocky Creek World War II Hospital Complex has a special association with those who spent time at the facility during the Second World War for cultural and spiritual reasons.

The Rocky Creek World War II Hospital Complex has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Queensland's history. Concrete slabs and scatters of artefacts could reveal information about the technology used in temporary military buildings during World War II.

The Rocky Creek World War II Hospital Complex has a special association with the work of the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (AAMWS) and with the important work of medical units, especially the Malaria Control Unit who developed new technology in Australia during World War II.

History

The Rocky Creek World War II Hospital Complex was in operation from October 1942 until September 1945 as part of the medical installations established in North Queensland during World War II. Some 30 000 patients were treated at this facility in almost three years.

In the 1930s the threat of war with Japan became imminent. As Japanese aggression moved across the Pacific in the early 1940s, a military presence in North Queensland gradually intensified. The Australian Army first began investigating the resources of North Queensland in the late 1930s, and when war was declared on Japan on 9 December 1941, the construction of military installations began immediately. The bombing of Darwin (March 1942) and Townsville (July 1942), and the arrival of American troops in the north (from March 1942), added further impetus to the establishment of facilities in the area. When hostilities extended to Papua New Guinea in May 1942, the military presence in the north intensified further still.

The installation of medical infrastructure on the Rocky Creek site commenced on 6 October 1942 with the arrival of the 19th Field Ambulance from Calcium. They were charged with the preparation of a camp for the 5th Australian Camp Hospital (ACH). The 5th ACH arrived at Rocky Creek from Redbank on 14 October 1942. The Commanding Officer, Lt-Col LA Little (AAMC) and Matron K Cahill, assisted by several nursing sisters and a few male orderlies, established a small camp hospital on the south eastern side of Rocky Creek. Their duties complete, the 19th Field Ambulance left Rocky Creek on 17 October 1942 to set up camp just outside of Kuranda, where an Advanced Dressing Station (ADS) was to be established.

Over the next few weeks, activity at the site increased. The first patients were admitted on 20 October 1942, and were joined the next day by more patients when the 1st Australian Camp hospital left Wondecla and removed its patients to Rocky Creek. November 2 saw the arrival of the 1st Australian Mobile Laundry Unit, while 20 VADs (later AAMWS) commenced duties on 14 November, providing much needed nursing support.

In January 1943 an advance party of 2/2nd Army General Hospital (AGH) AIF arrived at the Rocky Creek Hospital site, signifying a new phase in the hospital's development, and an intensification of activity. The 2/2nd AGH AIF replaced the 5th AGH which moved the next day, 5 January 1943 to a new hospital unit established at the North Cairns State School. The 2/2nd AGH, under the

command of Colonel Talbert, the Commanding Officer, and Matron, Miss Jean Oddie, launched into the arduous task of expanding the small tent hospital into a large 1200 bed General Hospital. On 20 April 1943 they were joined by the 2/6th AGH AIF, who after serving two years in the Middle East (Greece, Crete, Jerusalem and Gaza), arrived back in Australia to find themselves transferred to Rocky Creek.

Patients treated at the Rocky Creek Hospitals usually arrived in Cairns from Papua New Guinea, to be transported to Rocky Creek by the 4th Australian Hospital Ambulance Train. The train ran three times a week.

The Rocky Creek Hospital Complex covered a site of 763 acres, encompassing private land purchased by the Australian Military Forces, and Crown Land. The Complex initially consisted of the 2/2nd AGH; the 2/6th AGH; the Mobile Laundry Administration Area; the 2/1st Australian Convalescent Depot, and associated medical installations. The 1200 bed 2/2nd AGH was constructed by a local Cairns firm, TJ Watkins PTY Ltd at a cost of _____ were 73 buildings in total, including facilities for the 4th Australian Static Laundry. The Entertainment Igloo, recreation hut and warehouses were also constructed by Watkin and PR Ayre, at a cost of _____. The 1200 bed hospital of the 2/6th AGH was built by AH Hodge and Sons of Toowoomba, while the 600 bed 2/1st Convalescent Depot was constructed by Clive Kynaston of Cairns.

Both the 2/2nd and the 2/6th Hospitals employed a similar layout and were constructed using similar materials. The two hospitals consisted of 40 wards, offices, stores and other auxiliary buildings. The wards were laid out in pairs, with a service annexe in between. Most were constructed with canvas, and measures 60 feet x 20 feet. Early wards had earth floors, watered daily to make them firm, and a rattan carpet down the middle aisle. Other buildings were constructed from timber and iron. Later wards were set on a concrete slab and had a capacity of approximately 50 patients. By March 1944 both hospitals had been transformed from tent to hut hospitals and the bed capacity had increased to 1400, however, by September 1944 the daily bed average had increased to 1760. The buildings still had canvas walls but the floors were concrete and each ward had its own amenities, such as a wood stove, kerosene refrigerator, a permanent toilet and an office and dressing room. In October 1944 electricity supply, originally generator powered, switch to mains power, supplied by the Barron Falls Hydro Electricity Board.

The concrete ward floors consisted of reinforced concrete slabs varying in thickness. The annexes were bordered and partitioned by concrete wall bases, from which protruded metal wall ties. The concrete wall bases were slightly flanged on either side. On these flanges would have rested sheets of asbestos cement which formed the walls. They were probably nailed at the base to a wooden runner which would have sat on top of the wall base. The metal ties probably passed through the wood and continued up between the walls to the roof, or were bent over the wood if not in use. Where the asbestos cement sheets met the concrete, cover strips would have been nailed. Scatters of pieces of these cover strips are found over most of the site.

One of the wards in the 2/2nd AGH was the Malaria Experimental Ward. Participants involved in the experiments were all volunteers, and the trials involved groups of 5-6 volunteers being injected with parasites from the Anopheles mosquito which carries the malaria virus. Treatments were confidential and all volunteers signed a statement absolving the Army and medical staff of responsibility for any side effects.

While the work hours for staff at the Hospital Complex were long, various facilities were provided for their enjoyment in the leisure time available. The complex included an open-air picture show, where bingo was often played before the main feature. There was also a log-cabin recreational room and a tennis court with an ant-bed floor which was utilised by both patients and medical staff. Others spent their time planting garden beds outside their quarters and the hospital wards. Movies were shown in the Entertainment Igloo, constructed in 1943. A truck, with a projector on the back, would reverse up to the building along the built up driveway, so that the projector pointed towards the screen. Concerts and dances were also held in the building.

The staged closure of the Rocky Creek Hospital Complex began in 1944, and continued through to 1945. The 2/6th AGH was the first to close, in October 1944, followed by the 2/2nd AGH on 30 September 1945, which subsequently moved to Darley (Victoria). Following the end of the war, military buildings at Rocky Creek were auctioned and either dismantled or relocated. Some are to

be found in the district today, having been purchased by local residents and farmers. Portions of land were sold as freehold allotments and many were subsequently converted to agricultural use. The Entertainment Igloo was purchased by Frank and Eileen Frazer in 1947. The stage was converted into a family home, in which the Frazers raised their 11 children. Mr Frazer manufactured cane furniture in the auditorium. Following the death of her husband, Mrs Frazer stayed on at the igloo until ill health forced her to move to Cairns in 1995. The igloo and land were donated to the Atherton Shire Council.

In the lead up to the 50th anniversary of victory in the Pacific celebrations in 1995, a War Memorial Park was established on the former site of the Mobile Laundry Administration Area through the efforts of a group of local residents. Various memorials, a flag pole, interpretive shelter and a sheltered park bench have been erected at the Park. Anzac Day commemorative ceremonies are now conducted at the park, while the remains of the Rocky Creek site are often visited by locals and visitors to the area where either they, or a relative, spent time at the hospital during the Second World War. It is also anticipated the local Tolga State School will utilise the Memorial Park for the purposes of education, in particular to develop an understanding among students of the importance of the Rocky Creek Hospital Complex during the Second World War.

Description

The Rocky Creek World War II Hospital Complex site consists of the Entertainment Igloo and building remnants of the 2/2nd AGH, located on Frazer Road Reserve.

ENTERTAINMENT IGLOO

The Rocky Creek Igloo is located on the southern side of the Kennedy Highway, approximately five kilometres north of Tolga. The World War II building is nearly rectangular in plan, 42.6 metres in length and 22 metres wide at its widest point. It is composed of two major elements: an which formed the auditorium of the theatre; and the stage and backstage area.

The igloo has a curved auditorium roof 34 metres long, and has an overall width of 17.4 metres and a clear internal span of 16.8 metres. The interior space is 6.4 metres high to the top of the trusses, and the roof projects about a metre higher as a low-pitched gable to an overall height of about 7.5 metres.

The entire igloo stands on a concrete slab foundation about 18 metres by 34 metres in plan, with a raised kerb and two external drains running along the building's long sides, and twenty cast concrete feet which support the trusses. There are ten trusses spanning the interior space. Each is composed of two curved half-trusses which are pinned at the foundations and at the apex where they meet: a three-pin truss system. The trusses are made entirely of sawn pieces of native hardwood nailed together.

The roof of the igloo is clad with corrugated iron, the centre section of which has been angled up into a low-pitched gable. Rafters and the upper chords of the trusses support timber purlins, to which the corrugated iron is nailed. There is a ventilating gap in the roof above the centreline, protected by a raised sheetmetal ridge capping which is semi-circular in section. The curved roof has no guttering; water simply runs off into concrete drains on either side of the building.

Most of the interior of the auditorium is one large clear space. There are seven major ground-level openings into the auditorium, all symmetrically positioned. In the centre of the front wall are large double doors in the mid-point and at the rear end of each side wall, all protected by small skillion roofs. The rear doors are fitted with theatre exit bolts made by J Adams and Son of Sydney.

Along each side of the curved wall there are seven dormer windows with iron sides and skillion roofs, fitted with horizontally-pivoting window panes of Caneite. The only glass in the auditorium is in four small casement windows in the front wall. Low down on the side walls there is a horizontal opening in the iron for ventilation.

The stage and backstage area are housed in a more conventional timber-framed building with a gabled roof, which rises to about 9 metres above the ground at the ridge. It was built as a symmetrical structure continuing the centreline of the auditorium and it extends 8.6 metres along that axis and projects out sideways beyond the sides of the auditorium to 22 metres wide. The

stage building is clad externally on its walls and roof with corrugated asbestos cement sheeting. The stage floor is elevated about a metre above the ground.

The entire structure of the stage building appears to be of sawn hardwood, framed with vertical studs and horizontal rails. Some interior walls are lined with vertical tongue and groove boards, and the entire proscenium around the stage is faced with selected vertical boards, left unpainted. The quality of the original carpentry is very good.

Post-war modifications to the backstage area include the partitioning of the stage itself with a stud framed wall just behind the proscenium, and two small partitioned rooms located at the rear of the stage. A small external room in front of the toilet in the western corner is a further post-war addition. All partitions and additions are timber-framed, and the rooms are lined and have ceilings of either asbestos cement sheeting or hardboard.

FRAZER ROAD - WESTERN SIDE

Frazer Road extends in a south-eastern direction from the Entertainment Igloo.

The western side of Frazer Road contains several concrete floors on a long gentle slope running parallel to the road. From the northern end and extending south, the following remnants can be identified.

The rectangular concrete floor with drain holes and two separate sewerage sumps, one on the north-eastern side and one on the east.

To the south-east of the disinfectant room, the remains of a bitumen road outcrop on the table drain at the edge of Frazer Road can be identified. This outcrop aligns with the road just south of the large cross-shaped ward.

Further south, remains of the [redacted] e an elevated concrete slab with evidence of several walls and partitions. There are holes for drains and toilet outlets. There is a walkway leading down to the dysentery annexe (possible ablutions block). Marks in the concrete indicate that pans may have been used to supplement the toilets. There is a wing for beds running to the west and opposite that wing, to the east, there is another section of concrete floor that may have been another wing. The remains of garden beds are evident on either side of the western wing. There is a light glass, fibro and ceramic scatter surrounding the slab. At the northern corner is a sewerage inspection point. To the west-south-west is another, roughly in line with the end of the ward wing.

The remains of the [redacted] Ward [redacted]-shaped ward. The north-south arm has a similar pattern of partitions, drains and toilet outlets to that of the Dysentery Ward. There are two simple wings to the east and west. Located close to the end of the western wing are the remains of a brick incinerator which has been relocated to this site. There is a sewerage inspection point on the north-east corner.

Remains of a bitumen road running roughly east-west are evident further along Frazer Road. This area has a scatter of artefacts including a drug bottle, and also a scatter of introduced garden plant species.

Further south are the remains of the [redacted]-shaped ward. The name [redacted] te of the annexe.

Twenty metres east of the VD Ward, in close proximity to Frazer Road, is another rectangular floor with no notable details. There is no known evidence of its former use.

To the south of the VD Ward are the remains of three concrete slabs that are slightly terraced. These are the remains of a former garden bed on either end of the southern-most terrace. The eastern edges of the northern concrete slab are crumbling badly. Further west is the remains of another concrete slab with an annexe running NNW-SE and a wing at right angles running south-west. This formed part of the Isolation Ward. It has been severely damaged by recent bulldozer activity.

East of the Isolation Ward and adjacent to Frazer Road is the remains of a small concrete floor with wall bases around the perimeter. The ground between the two elements contains a scatter of fibro, glass and ceramics.

FRAZER ROAD - EASTERN SIDE

This section of the road reserve between Frazer Road and the cane field contains a cleared strip for high tension wires. The integrity of the hospital site remains on this side of the road are fair; road construction activities associated with the construction of Frazer Road, and the clearing of the large strip for the power line have caused damage to the site.

The eastern side of the road reserve contains the remains of several concrete floors and other remnants on a series of low wide terraces running roughly east-west. A fallen pole with ceramic insulators, evidence of roadways, broken sewerage pipes and a drainage line were all identified on the site.

Reprinted from The Queensland Government Environmental Protection Agency Website

<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/projects/heritage/index.cgi?place=601815&back=1>



Victorian Defence Reserves Support Day March

The march was held on 31st August this year. This meant a change in name because the date had been changed ??

The format of the day was very similar to other years.

The march was considerably shorter, starting at the bottom of the drive up to the Shrine.

There was no VIP shelter provided, which was a shame as the weather was decidedly not friendly.

The organising committee did a very good job with no apparent ps

The support received from other organisations appeared to be minimal.

I did not see one serving reserve soldier in uniform and on parade. I am told that this is because the Army will not pay reservists to attend. **As this is a Reserves activity, I find this absolutely unbelievable.**

If the Active Reserve cannot support its own special events, who can?

I am not sure why there was no VIP shelter provided, but I would guess the been at it again.

The thoughts above are entirely my own. If you have any comments to make, please direct them to me, and I will ensure that they will be given appropriate space in the next copy of *Cascabel*.

Neil Hamer
Maj (R)
President



MY SERVICE CAREER

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

The following part was never published. It should have been published in Issue 67 January 2001. The reason it was not I am not sure. In order to publish Col Farley's entire collection, Part 5 is printed below. Lindsay

Part 5 15 Fd Regt from 1957 to end of 1958

I had received advice that I was required to parade at the Warragul Training Depot, then a battery headquarters for 31 Medium Regiment, RAA, which had its HQ somewhere towards Melbourne. The exact chronology escapes me here, but there was a further unit change, the new unit title becoming 15th Field Regiment, RAA, its with headquarters at Dandenong. This unit absorbed the Korumburra battery personnel and also the Light Regiment at Sale and Traralgon.

Getting back to that first parade at Warragul, I recall being interviewed by the Medium Regiment CO, LTCOL Murray. He asked me about regularity of attendance and I replied that I would have to fit parades in around my professional occupation, but I did not mention scouts! I recall this officer advising me that if I could not parade weekly, then I should transfer to the reserve. (This assumes that I had completed my NS obligation.) But as I marched out of the interview, a major at the door told me quietly to ignore that advice and that I was welcome any parade night that I could make. I was thus introduced to MAJ Lloyd Baxter.

Lloyd Baxter was a pillar of Warragul town. He was a senior salesman at Burton one of the main Warragul stores. He was a warden at the Anglican Church. He had many other part-time activities, including being a steward for the nearby trotting track. In the CMF, he was battery commander at Warragul. And he too had a sense of humour, but a very special one. It was the humour of the clever quip. As with most field officers, he had seen service in the Second World War. He seriously told me how, on the need for a quick action in the desert, the order was given, in the field on CMF exercises, he would have the ability on a cold night or morning at the Observation Post (OP) to produce something tasty out of his rations, with the words, e.

Lloyd was like a father to the battery. He was not above giving up a lunch-time to cleaning one of the guns to show us how it should be done. He presided over the battery mess. He inducted me to got to know Mrs. Baxter very well, and I was always welcome at their home.

An important member of the Warragul cadre staff was SSGT Joe Monaghan. Joe went on to be in turn a WO2, WO1, and Divisional Artillery Sergeant Major (DASM). Joe was a gentleman and went out of his way to help anyone who sought it. My first experience of this was when he rang me from Warragul and said that I would need the National Service administration pamphlet for a forthcoming army examination. I would have expected that I would have to go to Warragul, but Joe brought it up to Mirboo North to me and seemed delighted to have the opportunity to be of service and to encourage this tall former-infantry officer. When living in Warragul, I was always welcome in his home. Joe trained marching girls with considerable success, using the training depot if the weather was inclement.

My association with the 15th began in 1957 and continued on and off until my teaching career took me to Geelong at the start of 1967. But I did not always parade in Warragul. I lived at Wesley College from 1959 to 1962 where I was a resident master in the boarding house, returning to Warragul in 1963 as battery commander. Eighteen months later, the sub-unit was corps-changed to a Recovery Unit of RAEME on the reason that the depot

was too far from the metropolitan area to maintain the guns. But Colac, even further away, was able to retain its guns and status as an artillery sub-unit. I then paraded at Dandenong, until I went overseas in 1966.

It was not long after I commenced with 15 Fd Regt, RAA, that I was admitted to the Naval and Military Club. LTCOL Eason had been very keen that his officers, particularly the young ones, should be members of the Naval and Military Club, a club that at that time enjoyed far more applications for membership than it had membership room. In those days its address was 7 Alfred Place. I was inducted on 23rd July, 1957 and have been a member ever since.

The first bivouac with 15th was at the RAAF range at Dutson in East Gippsland. There was no live firing, but there were deployments on the Saturday, followed by a night occupation. In the early dawn the mosquitoes were certainly live firing at us. My posting was a Troop Leader (TL), one that I thoroughly enjoyed. Amongst many tasks was the one of icles of the battery and leading them to their next deployment. This required a high standard of map reading

I have previously mentioned that I was active in the Scout Association, mainly as a Scout Master. My experiences in that movement interacted with those of the CMF and both supported the other. I knew how to live in the field, tie knots that did not slip, and read maps, even though I have a few friends who would dispute my mastery of that skill. But when it mattered I was able to lead the battery to the specified spot on the ground.

15th Fd Regt, RAA, was one of three field regiments in the Third Infantry Division. Together with 10 Medium at Geelong, Colac and Warrnambool, it meant that a gathering of officers could be an awesome experience. All gunners are equal as we know. One joins the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery, not a specific unit. The 2nd Field Regiment, RAA, paraded at the Batman Avenue Depot and it was at this depot that we would parade for dinners, officer gatherings and the like. In addition the CRA, together with his HQ RAA staff, were located there.

Quite a few of the CMF artillery officers, particularly those who had pre-dated National Service, had been trained in Blamey Battery. These officers had developed their own style of elan and dash. Following a formal mess, there were generally high jinks in the mess. One particular form of madness was a charge that was known as . One would suddenly spot that a row of officers with linked arms had formed across the wall at one end of the mess. Then to suitable cries of group would come abreast down the length of the mess crashing through everything and everyone in its path. I could name some of the principal players, but I won

As readers know, there is a particular culture in the ranks of the gunners. Certain equipments and procedures have seen the test of time. The artillery board still has its uses, despite the availability of computerized firing data. There always seemed to be a -forma -off

spirit duplicator and held on sheets of hard cardboard or caneite material with bulldog clips. Military life was a world of abbreviations. Officers were issued with map boards. It has always been said that one should fight battles at the spot where the enemy sheets join and your own cartographers have placed the area in the centre of just one sheet. Wise officers covered the rear of their boards with all sorts of useful information. In addition, we all had notebooks with similar and additional key bits of military information that could be referred to almost instantly. And then there was the mastery of almost sacred terms, such as was slowly admitted to its secrets.

In those days the establishment was for three gun batteries of two troops, each of four guns. The fire of the two troops, themselves commanded by the Gun Position Officer (GPO), were co-ordinated and commanded by the battery Command Post Officer (CPO). The personnel that would later be group in Head Quarters Battery, were then in RHQ. A Royal Australian Corps of Signals Troop provided communications from higher formation to regimental level.

The 1958 camp was the first camp that enabled me to appreciate the number of vehicles needed to move an artillery regiment. They had existed on previous camps, but I had not been directly concerned with them as I was not then a Troop Leader. I began the task of learning the various to be paid a particular respect!

By now, LTCOL sonality. He was a hard taskmaster, which did not do us any harm. He would turn up when unexpected. On one morning, as our sub-unit moved out of its overnight position, there was a sawyer stove remaining there all alone in the first light of the day, just when the CO drove up. He was speechless.

Although I kept a diary since I was 16, it got sparse attention during the years now under review. I made no notes on parades and few on bivouacs. Annual camp in 1958 was covered in a page and a half in the notebook. Once again, we were at Puckapunyal in the field. The first week was spent in a battery exercise in the State Forest (now part of the range). Lloyd Baxter encouraged us to wear battle dress. As the TL, I got quite fit doubling about, especially on the gun position and in getting the vehicles in line and moving. We had good weather.

The second week was a regimental and divisional fire and movement exercise. It rained on and off. I have rarely seen the range so wet. I see that I refer to deployed in mud and puddles by experts. likely to break through the thin hard crust on top and sink to their axles, in what looked like a mud soup. This situation taxed the resources of the Light Aid Detachments (LAD) and eventually resulted in the guns being deployed, with their trails on the roadway. Yes, Puckapunyal in winter was a wet and sorry place to be. I was glad to have my primus stove and other necessities to make life more bearable.

It was during that week that as I sat in an orders group for our battery, it became obvious that the divisional artillery regiment, it would be my battery. It then dawned on me with a shock that as TL, I would have the heavy responsibility of leading 72 guns and their support vehicles to the right spot at the time required. And just to make it more challenging, it was to be a long night move.

Fortunately, the military police were out in force and at every traffic junction, as I peered with the aid of a torch at the maps on my knee, there was an MP to indicate the right direction. I was told after by my colleagues, who were in the reconnaissance parties that, just as they needed the guns to arrive, my leading vehicle came over the rise in the road, the other vehicles following obediently.

But some experiences I would wish to forget, such as being detailed to be at the OP by first light. Quite apart from getting up some time earlier, shaving, dressing and finding all the required items, such as a set of binoculars, there was the need to arrange transport. The drivers of such vehicles were also going through the same routine. Two other factors challenged us. Would there be an early breakfast of any sort? And it always seemed to rain when I was detailed at that camp.

Hence we would arrive late at the OP, ill fed, only to be ticked off for being late. More senior officers, who had not had to get up much earlier and certainly had not had to find

transport, could tell us that come what may, we should crawl on all fours to be at the OP on time. While I was being dressed down and lectured in this way, the cloud would render all shooting impossible for some time, to say nothing of the rain still coming down.

When the weather was good enough for firing to commence, the less experienced officers, such as me, would be given a shoot. The instructor of gunnery (IG) would nominate an area target and require me to engage it. This was always accompanied by target identification.

middle distance. Red roofed hut. Seen?

The alternative was not, seen.

e been a brave,

require me to verify the target. This reply should have run along the lines of, target, left hand tree with three forks, right three o

away with this and not specify degrees or mils), burnt out vehicle with bonnet at six o

very early never to point at the OP.

Then as you sorted yourself out, found out who the signaller was and oriented the map, one felt the eyes of all present drilling into the small of one map reference was as good as one could get and that all other measurements would be sufficient to bring the ranging/adjusting round in view.

Over the years, my confidence and ability grew, but in those early days, one needed good luck as well. Following an Observation of Fire course at The School of Artillery (at North Head) in 1963, it suddenly dawned on me how simple and predictable all this shooting was, but it was then still 1958!

I for one never got adequate instruction in those early years as to what to do or say when that first round landed. I knew that I had to correct for line and then for range, but never had a clue as to what to do if the round landed behind a hill or there was an error at the gun end. The IG seemed to have more enjoyment showing off to his colleagues (under the shelter of the tent) than in carefully helping the victim officer on how to shoot the guns.

But sometimes one had an understanding IG who sat beside you and explained it all. And when the rounds did land as required, and the target had been was that feeling of a job well done. When it came for me to be an IG, I trust that I somewhat approached this preferred style. But then I have been a teacher and should know how to encourage a learner.

But my diary does note that there was always a feeling of exhilaration when the sun came out, or hot water was available in quantity, and we had dry clothing to put on.

Towards the end of 1958, I was successful in obtaining a teaching position at Princes Hill High School, Carlton, together with a resident mastership at Wesley College, Prahran. From 1959, I would now parade at Dandenong. Watch this space.



Parade Card
(as at 14 August 2008)

OCT 2008
?-? DRA Nat Conf
16 Committee

NOV 2008
06 A.G.M.
07 Golf Day
0? RSL Springvale
20 Committee

DEC 2008
04 St Barbara's Day
11 Committee

JAN 2009

FEB 2009
08 Church Parade
19 Committee

MAR 2009
19 Committee
?? Arty lunch (all ranks)

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