

# CASCABEL

Newsletter of the Royal Australian Artillery  
Association (Victoria)



Registered by Australia Post Publication No.: VBH7517

NUMBER 13

JULY 1987

## THE PRESIDENT WRITES

Dear Member,

We have just passed a fairly low-key quarter which, never the less, was comprised of four Association events upon which I would appreciate reporting. Happily each was blessed with great Melbourne weather. Nobody can say that autumn in Melbourne does not turn on periods of really wonderful spells of sunshine.

Back in March there was a visit to 2/15 Field Regiment at Puckapunyal where a combined camp was being held with 48 Field Battery. In the following month 10 Medium Regiment invited Association members to their camp on a practice day, and unfortunately I was unable and disappointed that I could not attend. To the Commanding Officers and personnel of the regiments go our grateful thanks for their usual welcome to their OP and gun areas.

ANZAC Day this year, weather wise was the complete turn about from last year. Absolutely no faults with the weather and this made for an enthusiastic turn out of old soldiers and a very satisfactory attendance of gunners, large and small, at the Artillery Mess, Batman Avenue. We have lots of thanks to offer to the Mess President and others, who so assisted - from a very early hour

that day, to make it such a success.

Another occasion was the Happy Hour, this time held at Robinsons Road Frankston, depot of 23 Field Battery. Thanks go to those personnel who put a lot of work into making it such a merry meeting. At this point I would urge - and I am always urging somebody - any old gunner who has never attended a Happy Hour, to make up his mind to do so. I fully appreciate that driving home is a problem but really, there is plenty of LITE available, on which one may, with confidence, find home in safety. Give it serious thought and I will see you at Landcox Street Brighton 27NOV87.

Our visit to the Engineering Development Establishment at Maribyrnong unfortunately had to be postponed for reasons out of control of this Association. A forward date has been fixed: 20NOV87, which will give us a chance to see this very interesting operation - so make a note in your programme now - please!

The Annual General Meeting takes place this year on Thursday 30JUL87 at 7.30pm. The usual conviviality will follow, so please support your committee by turning up despite the depths of our winter. I wish to say, in advance of the AGM, that your Association is in good shape. Our Association Shop is doing well in providing items of interest to gunners and is proving a worthwhile activity. Also, I am pleased to say

that our membership is steadily rising. This is just a little advance information but come along and hear all the details at the ACM.

A very sad note to report is the death of committee member, Desmond Cox. We include a tribute to Desmond later in this newsletter. My best wishes to all,

Norman Whitelaw

#### CHANGES IN COMMAND

The 1st July, 1987 saw changes in command of the three Victorian Artillery Units.

LTCOL Michael Buckridge has succeeded LTCOL John Morkham, who has transferred to the Inactive ARES, as CO 2/15 Fd Regt. LTCOL Buckridge has just completed a two year stint as OC, 132 Div Loc Bty. He started his commissioned service as a Sect Comd in 5 Fd Regt in 1967. After moving to Victoria in 1968 he has served with 2 Fd Regt, 132 Div Loc Bty and 2/15 Fd Regt. LTCOL Buckridge's more recent postings have included HC 2 Fd Bty and as SO2(OPS), HQ RAA.

LTCOL Bob Collins is off to the Reserve Command and Staff College as the Senior Instructor in Military Operations. He has been replaced as CO 10 Mdm Regt by LTCOL Ron Lenard. An ex Regular Army officer, LTCOL Lenard has served with A Fd Bty, 4 Fd Regt, 16 LAA Regt and 8/12 Mdm Regt. Since transferring to the ARES in 1984 LTCOL Lenard has been the BC of 39 Mdm Bty in Colac.

MAJ Ross Peterken has been posted as OC 132 Div Loc Bty to replace LTCOL Buckridge. MAJ Peterken commenced his ARES service in 1971 and has served with 2 Fd Regt, 2/15 Fd Regt, 132 Div Loc Bty and HQ RAA. His most recent posting was as BC 23 Fd Bty at Frankston.

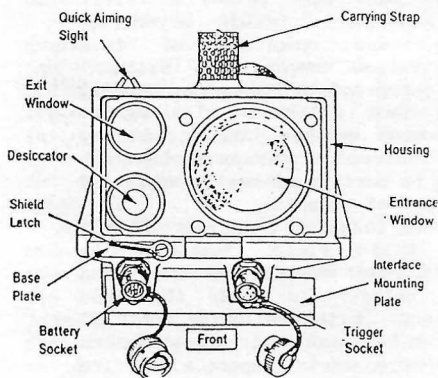
We extend our thanks to the outgoing unit commanders for the support that they have given to to the RAA Assoc. We look forward to the possibility of their return to a Corps posting in the future.

Congratulations to the new incumbents. We wish them every success in the challenging years ahead.

#### DON'T LOOK AT THE LASER WITH YOUR REMAINING EYE!

The response from the FO Party varied considerably when the ADJT dumped the Laser Range Finder(LRF) down in front of our OP on the first day of camp. Our BC enquired if you could see the beam. "Of course, just like Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader" was the reply. The FO Ack looked at the two large Esky sized cases that the LRF travelled in and wondered where he was going to fit them into our already over crowded vehicle. The FO, on the other hand, contemplated finally using one of the many items of equipment he had only seen demonstrated on the lawn outside Gunnery Wing at the School of Artillery - this just goes to show how wrong you can be because like most things in the army, the LRF is controlled by a bombardier.

#### THE RANGEFINDER FIRE CONTROL LASER L1A1



The LRF is described as a lightweight man-portable system remember struggling into the MCG on Boxing Day for the cricket in the BYO days.

The system consists of:

- a. the rangefinder,
- b. the head angulation sighting equipment (HASE), and
- c. the medium level tripod.

The system can be used without the tripod by using the little feet that fold down out of the HASE. The HASE is not unlike a theodolite in principle once it is levelled and orientated you can determine bearing and elevation.

The rangefinder sits on top of the HASE like a big shoebox on top of a lunar landing module.

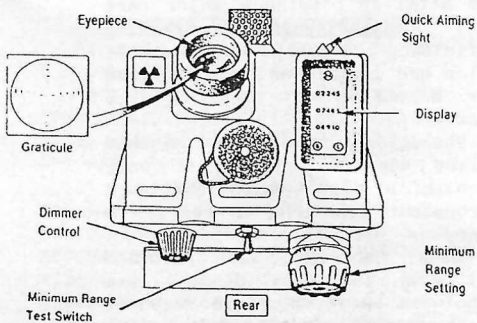
A few procedures on the hill are changed when using the LRF. For a start the bombardier has to lug it up onto the hill as well as do everything else that he normally does. Target indication is easier - the supported arm commander merely lines up the cross hairs in the sighting telescope with the target and has the observer look in. The bombardier then takes over and, having laid on the target, triggers the rangefinder. (This fires the laser transmitter which emits a very intense infra-red light pulse. A small portion of the light is reflected back to the instrument which activates the receiver system within the rangefinder). He then reads the range display which is shown in numerical form for 15 seconds. After the range has been determined, bearing and elevation are read off the appropriate scales on the HASE.

Adjustment is simple. After ordering down the direction, distance and elevation to the target, the impact of the first adjusting round is also lased. The direction, distance and elevation of the adjusting round is then ordered followed by fire for effect. The beauty of this procedure is that it works even if the adjusting round is not even "in the parish".

The characteristics of the rangefinder are:

- a. Range accuracy  
plus or minus 10m
- b. Maximum range  
20,000m
- c. Minimum range  
200m
- d. Minimum range facility  
200 to 6000m
- e. Range discrimination  
50m
- f. Range display  
Digital
- g. Range selection  
3 range selections
- h. Telescope magnification  
x 7
- i. Field of view  
125 mils

- j. Working temperature  
minus 30 degrees centigrade  
to 52 degrees centigrade
- k. Power supply  
24 V dc, 1 A/h, nickel  
cadmium rechargeable battery
- l. Number of shots per battery  
300 at about 20 degrees  
centigrade
- m. Weight:  
Rangefinder - 4.4 kilograms  
Battery pack - 1.4 kilograms  
Using the LRF was enjoyable and  
straight forward even FO Acks  
from our Colac battery had no  
trouble in mastering this system  
after a few minutes of instruction.



It is expected that at some future date all ARES artillery units will be issued with the laser range finder.

Captain R.P. Dalton  
10th Medium Regiment

#### GUNNER PORTRAITS

##### LIEUTENANT COLONEL D.G. COX ED

Sadly, Desmond Cox died on the 28th May 1987. He had commenced his association with the Royal Regiment of Artillery in 1932 when he enlisted with the Honourable Artillery Company in the UK. He had only been a short time with the HAC when his company, Spicers Ltd, paper manufacturers, transferred him to Melbourne upon the amalgamation of that company with a locally established company in the same business Detmoulds Ltd.

He became a member of 2 Field Brigade shortly after his arrival and was commissioned in 1937. Enlisting in the AIF during October 1939, he was posted to HQ RAA 6 Aust Div, the commander of

which was Brigadier, later Lieutenant General Sir Edmund Herring. In Palestine he was reposted to the 2/2 Aust Field Regiment and served in Egypt, Libya, Greece and Crete, returning to Australia with the AIF Advance Party on the entry of Japan into the war. Having arrived in this country he was not to see service with 2/2 Field Regiment again, but was posted to other units including this country's only heavy regiment formed during World War 2. Ultimately appointed Battery Commander of 58 Field Battery 2/8 Field Regiment, he really showed his metal in playing a major part in reestablishing training efficiency and morale within a unit which had languished out of action for a period of over eighteen months.

Throughout the war Desmond formed many friendships of very meaningful value which continued throughout his life of nearly 75 years.

When the CMF was reformed following the war, Desmond was appointed CO of 22 Field Regiment (Self Propelled) based at the Landcox Street Drill Hall in Brighton. It was this posting which completed his active duty with the RAA - a most meritorious and outstanding career of service.

Always earnest in seeking an outlet for his energies, he joined Melbourne Legacy, holding office and serving in many capacities on committees with the same dedication he gave to both his army career and his vocational calling. He served Legacy over a period of 30 years and his company for a total of 49 years, never having transferred throughout his working life to another business.

He was just short of 75 years of age at the date of his death, but he left a host of friends who much admired his gentlemanly ways and who sadly mourn his passing. At all times he set an example for others to follow, he was a very loyal member of our society and an unashamed royalist. Though very sick he made a great effort during last ANZAC Day to attend The Shrine with his two grandchildren with

whom he shared a great love and rapport.

To his widow and his son and family, this Association extends the deepest of sympathy and at the same time we express our thankfulness in having shared his very fine sense of companionship and the benefits of his good works and wisdom as a committee member over a long period of time. He will be sadly missed but so very long remembered.

Major P.S. Whitelaw

Desmond Cox retained his interest in, and involvement with, this Association until the last. A week prior to his death he submitted, for inclusion in this issue of Cascabel, a short history of the regiment of his youth - The Honourable Artillery Company.

The article is reproduced below in memory of a true gentleman of The Regiment.

#### FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE

##### THE HONOURABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY

The original Honourable Artillery Company was embodied by Letters Patent of Henry VIII on 25 August 1537 as the Fraternity or Guild of St George. There are, however, clear indications that this Charter merely set down Rules and Regulations covering an organisation which already existed. Its task was to defend the Realm by the maintenance of the science of Artillery and shooting with the longbow, crossbow and hand gun.

Originally called The Guild of St George, the HAC's name went through a series of permutations (including "London's Hopeful Artillery"), its present name coming into common usage by 1638.

The HAC's location has not always been at Armoury House; originally it was in Bishopsgate, the HAC moving to its present grounds in 1641. The main portion of Armoury House was built in 1735, thanks to the generosity of King George I and a fortunate investment in South Sea stock.

Until 1780 the HAC trained the



officers of the Trained Bands of London. It was also often called upon to quell riots in London until 1829 when London's Police force came into existence. Following the turn of the century the Company saw service abroad with Battle Honours being gained in the Boer War and the two World Wars. Today, the HAC provides valuable support to the Gunners in BAOR and has recently successfully formed two Home Service Force Companies which have the task of guarding key points within the United Kingdom.

The composition of the HAC has not always been part Infantry and part Gunner as it is now. Notwithstanding the "Artillery" in its name, it was not until 1781 that its artillery connections started, this being when the City Corporation gave two brass three pounders to the Company by way of thanks for its assistance in the quelling of the Gordon Riots. Since then, the HAC has kept close ties with both the Brigade of Guards and the Royal Horse Artillery.

The word "Artillery" in its name is also misleading as it is now thought of in its modern sense. In the 1600s, it actually meant "any missile weapon", such as the longbow and hand gun. More correctly therefore, the HAC's name should have been the Honourable Infantry Company it was however not called that because the word Infantry (which was of Italian origin) had, at the time, not yet arrived into common usage in England.

Throughout its history, a very close association has been maintained with the Lord Mayor and the City of London. By custom, the Company have the privilege, with only a few other Regiments, to march through the City and the HAC has almost always been responsible for providing the Lord Mayor's personal guard. Since 1925 this task is again undertaken by the Company of Pikeman and Musketeers, a voluntary and "senior" part of the HAC. In return, successive Lord Mayors have been helpful to the HAC, both financially by providing funds for equipment, and administratively when, for example,

in 1658, the Court of Aldermen prepared a set of Rules and Orders for the HAC, these being the oldest Regimental Orders in existence.

It is therefore fitting that, in celebrating the Honourable Artillery Company's 450th Anniversary, the HAC is both exercising its ancient privilege of marching through the City and is being entertained by the Corporation of London.

From an article submitted by:

Lieutenant Colonel D.G. Cox

#### RESTORATION FOR CHANGI CHAPEL

Excerpts from an article by SGT E. Combe "Army Newspaper"

"After 42 years, the RC Chapel from Changi Prisoner of War Camp is to be erected at the Royal Military College, Duntroon.

It is to be erected as a permanent memorial to all Australian prisoners of war and reconsecrated as a Chapel for single denomination and interdenominational services.

The Chapel, one of three built by prisoners at the infamous camp, was dismantled, crated and returned to Australia in the care of the Australian War Memorial in 1946.

It has remained in its crated state in the AWM warehouse at RMC as no suitable site was identified for it to be erected on.

\*\*\*\*\*

A roof will be built over the Chapel to protect it from Canberra's harsh winters. Much of the work will be carried out by the Army apprentice Engineers and the Department of Housing and Construction has expressed an interest in being involved in the Project."

#### YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

A public appeal has been launched to raise funds for the re-erection project. If you can help, please send your donation to:

Major General R.L. Hughes

Director

Changi Chapel Appeal

c/ PO Box 63

CAMPBELL ACT 2601

### SCREW GUNS

Smokin' my pipe on the mountings,  
sniffin' the mornin' cool,  
I walks in my old brown gaiters  
along o' my old brown mule,  
With seventy gunners be'ind me,  
an' never a beggar forgets  
It's only the pick of the Army  
that handles the dear little pets  
- 'Tss! 'Tss!

For you all love the screw guns,  
the screw guns they all love you!  
So when we call round with a few  
guns, o' course you will know  
what to do - hoo! hoo!  
Jest send in your Chief an'  
surrender - it's worse if you  
fights or you runs;  
You can go where you please,  
you can skid up the trees, but  
you don't get away from the guns.

They sends us along where the roads  
are, but mostly we goes where  
they ain't:  
We'd climb up the side of a  
sign-board and trust to the stick  
o' the paint:  
We've chivied the Naga an' Looshai,  
we've give the Afreedeeman fits,  
For we fancy ourselves at two  
thousand, we guns that are built  
in two bits - 'Tss! 'Tss!

For you all love the screw guns,  
etc.

If a man doesn't work, why, we  
drills 'im an' teaches 'im 'ow to  
behave;

If a beggar can't march, why, we  
kills 'im an' rattles 'im into  
'is grave.

You've got to stand up to our  
business an' spring without  
snatchin' or fuss.

D'you say that you sweat with the  
field guns? By God, you must  
lather with us 'Tss! 'Tss!

For you all love the screw guns,  
etc.

The eagles is screamin' around us,  
the river's a moaning below.  
We're clear o' the pine an' the  
oak scrub, we're out on the rocks  
an' the snow.

An' the wind is as thin as a  
whip lash what carries away to  
the plains  
The rattle an' stamp o' the  
lead-mules - the jinglety-jink o'  
the chains 'Tss! 'Tss!

For you all love the screw guns,  
etc.

There's a wheel on the Horns o'  
the Mornin', an' a wheel on the  
edge o' the Pie,  
An' a drop into nothin' beneath you  
as straight as a beggar can spit:  
With the sweat runnin' out o' your  
shirt-sleeves, an' the sun off  
the snow in your face,  
An' 'arf o' the men on the  
drag-ropes to hold the old gun in  
'er place - 'Tss! 'Tss!

For you all love the screw guns,  
etc.

Smokin' my pipe on the mountings,  
sniffin' the morning cool,  
I climbs in my old brown gaiters  
along o' my old brown mule.  
The monkey can say what our road  
was - the wild goat 'e knows  
where we passed.  
Stand easy, you long eared old  
darlin's! Out drag-ropes! With  
shrapnel! Hold fast - 'Tss! 'Tss!

For you all love the screw guns  
the screw guns they all love you!  
So when we take tea with a few  
guns, o' course you will know  
what to do - hoo! hoo!  
Just send in your Chief and  
surrender - it's worse if you  
fights or you runs:  
You may hide in the caves,  
they'll be only your graves, but  
you can't get away from the guns!  
Rudyard Kipling

In Victoria, we have adopted  
"Screw Guns" as our Regimental  
Waltz. It has become a tradition  
that the CDA and his lady lead the  
Regiment and their guests in the  
Regimental Waltz at the Artillery  
Ball which is to be held this year  
on the 21st August, at No 9 Darling  
Street South Yarra (see notice  
enclosed).

Members of the committee could not agree on the definition of the term "screw guns". Perhaps you can help? Any member who can provide us with information on the meaning of this term is requested to write to the Editor, Cascabel c/ PO Box 449 FRANKSTON 3199. Any such information received will be published in our next edition.

#### THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN

In the late afternoon of 18 August 1966 in pouring rain and in the mud and shattered trees of the Long Tan rubber plantation of Phuoc Tuy Province, South Vietnam, a dispersed company of 100 or so Australians had been fighting for their lives, holding off a force of some 2500 Vietnamese members of the NVA and Viet Cong.

The first contact was 1540HR 18AUG66 and the battle continued on until the evening of 19AUG66. The enemy suffered many casualties and some 245 VC were killed.

The Artillery support during this battle is reproduced below from the book "The Battle of Long Tan" by Lex McAuley.

#### THE ARTILLERY

Extract from the Operations Log, 1st Field Regiment RAA, listing the regimental fire missions for 18 August 1966:

TIME MISSION

16.19 Fire Mission Regiment (FM Regt) grid 487674 called by callsign (cs) 34 (Stanley)

16.22 FM Regt grid 487676  
A 400 (490672)  
D 300 (488670)  
D 200 (487668)

16.28 FM Regt 490672 called by cs 34 - suspected VC company area  
D 200 (488672)  
R 200 D 200 (486670)  
D 200 (484670)  
L 200 (484674)  
A 400 (488674)  
D 100 (487674)  
R 200 (487672)

16.32 FM Bty fired cs 4 (US 155mm) 485660

16.46 FM Regt called by cs 34 grid 487669  
A 100 (478670)

R 200 (479663)  
R 200 (481667)  
D 100 (480666)

17.06 FM Regt called by cs 34 grid 480678  
A 400 (484677)  
L 200 (484679)  
R 100 A 100 (485673)  
R 200 (485676)

17.28 FM Regt called cs 34 grid 481669; not cleared as airstrike in progress

17.35 FM Regt called cs 39 (Honner) during enemy assault grid 481664  
R 200 D 100 (479665)  
D 100 (479666)  
D 100 (479667)  
D 100 (479668)

17.37 FM Bty (US 155mm) called cs 39 (Honner)  
A 100 (488659)  
R 100 D 100 (487658)  
R 400 (486654)  
R 400 (486650)

18.06 cs 34 told cs 39 after helicopter resupply that nothing must be allowed to interrupt the fire of the guns  
(18.00 to 18.15: firing was halted to allow the helicopter resupply)

18.32 FM Regt called cs 34: VC attacking grid 482671  
L 200 (483672)  
D 100 (482673)  
A 400 L 200 (487672)  
D 200 (485673)  
L 200 (484675)

18.36 FM Bty (US 155mm) called cs 39 grid 485654  
A 200 (487652)  
L 200 (487655)  
L 200 (488658)

18.58 FM Regt called cs 34 grid 484675  
D 100 (483675)

19.15 FM Regt called cs 39 grid 493671  
R 300 (493668)  
R 200 (493666)  
R 300 (493663)

19.55 FM Bty called cs 39 grid 510662  
R 200 (510660)  
L 400 (510664)

21.15 FM Regt called cs 39 grid 493671  
L 200 (493673)  
R 400 (493669)

23.25 FM Regt as for 21.15  
02.54 FM Bty called cs 39 grid  
487671  
D 200 (485671) fired 3  
times in early morning.

Total rounds expended in the period  
were 2639 rounds of 105mm and 155  
rounds of 155mm. This is an  
official figure, and some who were  
present believe that another 1000  
rounds or more may have been fired.

Major J.V. Phillips

HISTORICAL MOMENTS  
42ND ANNIVERSARY APPROACHES!

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

ORDER OF THE DAY

by GENERAL SIR THOMAS BLAMEY;  
Commander in Chief

Advanced LHQ, Borneo,  
15th August, 1945.

SURRENDER OF THE JAPANESE

The Japanese have surrendered.

Our long and arduous struggle  
has ended in complete victory.

The climax has come at the time  
when all six Australian Divisions  
are fighting strenuously, each on  
its own area, in the far flung  
battle line. No divisions amongst  
the Allies have contributed more to  
the downfall of our enemies than  
ours.

Our general officers and our  
commanders of all grades, our  
regimental officers and our warrant  
and non-commissioned officers have  
led unfalteringly to victory. Under  
their guidance, the troops have  
been formed into a magnificent army  
to the pride and glory of  
Australia.

We have fought through the  
burning days and freezing nights of  
the desert. We have fought through  
the ooze and sweat of tropical  
jungles. We have defeated the  
Italians and the Germans and we  
would soon have destroyed  
completely the Japanese before us.

We are now to go to our homes,  
having done our part in ensuring  
freedom, for which we have fought  
so long and successfully, and so  
let us stand together in future  
years to ensure that it remains the  
crowning heritage of Australian  
people. Above all, we give thanks  
to the Almighty, for his greatest  
and crowning mercy that marks for  
all people the total downfall of  
tyranny.

T.A. Blamey  
General  
Commander in Chief  
AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions for the next issue  
of Cascabel are requested to reach  
the Editor not later than FRI  
18SEP47.

Please forward your article to:  
"CASCABEL"

P.O. Box 449 FRANKSTON. 3199  
OR

c/- Artillery Depot, Batman Avenue,  
MELBOURNE. 3000