



"CASCABEL"

Newsletter of the Royal Australian Artillery
Association (Victoria)

Editor: Lt Col R.M. Gaw

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Asst. Editor: Capt J.A. Davis

THE PRESIDENT WRITES

Dear Member,

Happy New Year! Since our last issue of our Newsletter quite a deal has happened at the tail end of 1983. Because there was no normal parade celebration for St. Barbara's Day it was arranged that our RAA awards would be presented at the end-of-the-year parades of the Units which owned the worthy recipients. I journeyed first to 10 Medium Regiment at Geelong with Colonel Mike Vincent. A memorable night this because the Army car started to have hiccups crossing the West Gate Bridge and finally gave up the ghost near the RAAF Depot at Laverton. Bless the RAAF - they lent us a car and finally just made the parade at Myers Street with CO Rob Gaw biting his nails to his wrists. An excellent parade indeed and I made our awards to:

SNR NCO/WO - SGT D. OLLIS - 37 Mdm Bty
OFFICER - CAPT D. COLLINS - OC TST

We were indeed pleased and proud to have our Colonel Commandant Maj. General Jock McNeil with us - he presented the McNeil trophy with his usual aplomb to:
CAPT TONY HUNT ON BEHALF OF 37 MDM BTY.

Then followed a real good supper and some ale in the Drill Hall with all partaking and thoroughly enjoying themselves. The CO, and one of your Committee, Rob Gaw has a damn fine Regiment down there at the Pivot.

A few nights later there was a repeat performance at the 2/15 Fd Regiment's Drill Hall at Dandenong - but this time our Vice Patron and Past President Maj. General N.A. Vickery climbed into uniform and made the presentation of the Vickery Trophy to Capt W. Cross. I did the trick with the other awards, which were made to:

GNR/BDR - GNR L. BLAKE - 23 RD BTY
CADRE - CAPT W. BARNARD - ADJT

Again this was a real smasher of a parade and CO Dennis Murphy - of course he's a member too - is to be congratulated on the whole of the evening. 2/15 are in great shape - a very warm feeling for me as I was the CO at 2 before it was 2/15 - over 30 years ago.

Our Happy Hour early in December was again co-hosted by 132 Div Loc Battery at Landcox Street with the new B.C. Bernie Pearson at the helm. A jolly good affair and as usual it seemed to go a fair bit longer than the Hour - it was certainly Happy.

Now then our plans early this year will include a Church Parade for all members and ladies too at St. Bartholemews in Burnley followed by a little something at

the Mess at Batman Avenue and a little later a visit by members to Fort Queenscliff. Firm dates and times will be advised to you quite soon - be ready to join in both these outings.

Remember the old Drill - "One sees that the bore is clear, that gun buffer and recuperator are correctly connected up, that the isolating valve is open - and that the equipment is in all respects ready for action".

Take care.

SANDY MAIR - COLONEL
PRESIDENT

DID YOU KNOW?

Artillery as a mobile weapon was first used by the British at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704. Cannon firing 3 lb balls were attached to infantry battalions and used in a similar manner as today's mortars.

J.S.S.C.

During the latter half of 1984, I was privileged to be accepted to attend the Joint Services Staff College in Canberra as the Army Reserve representative for Australia for that particular course.

A place is set aside for an Army Reserve nominee to attend each course and I followed such outstanding officers as Lt Col W.M. Oakley, Lt Col G.R. Allinson and Lt Col E. Lynes among many others from throughout the Reserve.

The College was established in 1969 and commenced to operate in 1970. It is presently situated in a delightful park like setting adjacent to the Mt. Stromlo Forest in the A.C.T. suburb of Curtin. On-site facilities include a nine hole par 3 golf course, a tennis court and a volley ball court, together with an extensive library, syndicate rooms, lecture theatre and an excellent officers mess.

The aim of the Joint Services Staff College is to provide selected military and civilian officers of Lieutenant Colonel rank or equivalent with an advanced education in preparation for senior appointments in the Department of Defence and in the Services.

To broaden the course, overseas students are invited to attend and my course (28/83) included visitors from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, India, Indonesia, Thailand, the Phillipines, the United States of America and Malaysia. Australian Course members comprised 11 Army, 7 Navy, 8 Air Force, 4 civilians and a Federal Policeman.

The course is divided into an orientation week for overseas officers and four studies:

1. Government, Defence and Strategy (6½ weeks)
2. Influences on National Security Policy (6½ weeks)
3. Australian Defence Policy (6 weeks)
4. Joint and Combined operations (3 weeks).

The Course is alternatively demanding and exhilarating and combines personal study, individual written papers, syndicate and sub-syndicate papers, syndicate and sub-syndicate presentation, a series of case studies and various lecture and discussion sessions. Visiting lecturers were of the highest standard and included prominent Ministers, senior defence officers, officials of the defence department, leading academics, political and industrial personalities.

The Course covers a wide range of topics and contrary to popular belief, very little time is devoted to tactics and only the last study touches on the tactical and strategic employment of Australian defence forces.

Each course undertakes a visit to a selection of major defence installations, an industrial tour to evaluate selected aspects of commerce and industry and an overseas tour to gain first hand knowledge of the economy, foreign policy and political outlook of a selected Country in our region.

My Course was split, one half visiting Indonesia and the other visiting Malaysia and Singapore. Previous courses have visited India, China, Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

Any A Res Lt Col under 45 years of age may apply to attend JSSC and if it is possible to find the time, I thoroughly recommend it.

LT COL D. I. PERRY

Ed Note:

As reported in our last issue Lt Col Doug Perry will succeed Col Mike Vincent as Colonel Artillery on 1 Apr 84.

PROMOTIONS AND POSTINGS

Maj Bernie Pearson assumed command of 132 Div Loc Bty in Nov 83 from Maj John Morkham who has been posted as S02 (Arty) on the Colonel Artillery's Staff.

Congratulations to David Osborne and Gerry Butcher on their recent promotion to Major. Both officers are posted to 2/15 Fd Regt, David as BC 2 Fd Bty and Gerry as BC 3 Fd Bty.

The Association also congratulates Major Bob Collins on successfully completing his TAC 5 Course (the only Victorian so to do). TAC 5 is the ARES qualification for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. Maj Collins has now been posted as BC 37 Mdm Bty, Geelong.

"STONK!"

The Regiment had been enjoying a bit of a let-down from solid training with the accent mainly on Gun Drill, Specialist Training and half-day Troop Occupations coupled with a certain amount of good natured competition by eye-casting from one sub-unit to another.

Then there was a quick flurry as a number of Officers returned from the School of Artillery at Binhir-Bepor. Many came back with all sorts of new clothing, fancy fly-whisks and other jazzy accoutrements - and a wee bit jaded.

The Old Man had also been away and rather slammed things into gear by ordering a four-day exercise with live rounds way out on the desert-range at Ynot-aggin. As usual the damm thing started with a roll-out march at 0100 hrs, without lights - followed by a Regimental night occupation with Zone Registration starting from the OPs at dawn.

About 1100 hrs it was hot! B.S.M. Jazzer Wilson was in the shade of the Battery Command Post taking a brew with the Acks. Then it started - "MIKE TARGET, MIKE TARGET, MIKE TARGET, STONK". The Sig. repeated the order back to R.H.Q. without a qualm. Mark you he didn't know what was meant by STONK, but as he had been working with Bill Campbell, the Sig. at R.H.Q. for a long time and had clearly heard him, he knew better than to "Say again" - so he repeated the order as he had heard it and got a clear "Through Sir".

One of the Acks put down his mug and whispered to Jazzer - "What the bloody hell is a STONK?" Jazzer harshly clipped back "Shaddup Bombardier - yer might learn somethin".

The order crackled on -
"Grid Reference 78843745
Axis 272°
Scale 10
Fire by Order"

The Command Post Officer - who incidently had just come back from the School at Binhir-Bepor calmly delved into his shirt pocket, pulled out his STONK trace - a bit of celluloid - plotted the grid reference on the Board, drew a line from the gun area to the Grid Reference on a bearing of 272 and proceeded to work out line and range for his two Troops - or his Acks did.

Lieutenant Hazelton noticed the questions on the faces of others in the Command Post - so he quickly said "A STONK is a quick method of producing a Linear Concentration - for a Regiment its always 525 yards - at right angles to the bearing ordered and

centered on the grid reference - here, read all about it in Vol. III, Pam 3, 1947. 'Jazzer' remained implacable but his ears were pricked like a stag gazelle that has just sighted a doe'.

There it was - and for six Troops - A,B,C,D, E, & F - it showed on the STONK Trace how they were dispersed over the 525 yards frontage - simple! The two Troops, C and D in this case were to fire on the right of the bearing 272 and would be evenly dispersed over their half of the 525 yards. E and F Troops would fire on the left of the bearing. A Troop would cover the total distance left of the line and B Troop would cover the total distance right of the line. It was not too long before "Ready" came in from the two Troops and Mr. Hazelton was able to report via his Command Post Sig. "Battery Ready". Then came Bill Campbell with "FIRE" and away they went.

That night over a gentle ale Bill Campbell said to his sig. mate from the Battery Command Post - "Jesus' you should a seen that STONK - terrific, right across the bloody desert - musta been a good coupla furlongs - she just went, STONK!'. He slammed his mug down - spilt his beer and said "gissanother".

COLONEL "SANDY" MAIR.

CALENDAR

Sun 18 Mar 84 Church Parade 1000 Hrs
Thu 05 Apr 84 10 Mdm Regt Camp Visit
Wed 25 Apr 84 Anzac Day at Batman Ave Depot
Fri 18 May 84 Gunner Dinner (Officers only)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A reminder - a renewal application is enclosed for those who have yet to pay their 1983 subscription.

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the famous early cannon was a massive 25-inch gun used by Mahomet II for the siege of Constantinople in 1453. It weighed 19 tons, was 17 feet long and fired a 600 lb stone for one mile. The fastest rate of fire was seven times in one day.

TO COME INTO ACTION - ACTION RIGHT

On seeing the TSM (now BSM or Bty Guide) leaping up and down and making swipes at imaginary flies, the tractor driver elbows his No. 1 in the ribs, and says, "Something doing." No. 1 wakes up, yawns and stretches, and says to the sleeping gun detachment in the rear of the tractor, "Wake up, you lazy bandhooks, looks like action." No. 1 dismounts, says "OK", to the driver, who halts. No. 3 dismounts, says, "What is it?" No. 1 answers, "Action Right, I think."

Nos. 1 and 3 lower the platform (25 pr ordnance) to the ground. No. 1 orders, "OK, Jim." The tractor advances till halted by the platform. Nos. 1 and 3 unlimber the gun. Meanwhile No. 4 has seized the primus and a two-gallon can of water and is making tea. No. 2 climbs on to the roof of the tractor and throws off the bed-rolls. The tractor driver yells, "Leave mine there - you mug," and prepares to proceed to the waggon lines under the direction of the BSM who has, however, gone to get rations at B echelon, twenty miles away and will not be back until tomorrow.

Nos. 5 and 6 take out the ration box and have an argument as to whether it will be "M and V" or bully-beef.

The TSM roars, "Get that tractor off the position." No. 1 says, "OK, don't panic." "Right, Bob, swing her around and get your sights on, the GPO is about to throw a seven."

Nos. 5 and 6, having settled the ration problem, unhook the trailer from the tractor. No. 5 says, "OK, Jim." The tractor proceeds to the WLs under the direction of the BSM, who, however, is still twenty miles away collecting rations. No. 1 says, "Leave the blasted trailer there, boys. Here comes Joe with the tea." No. 1 reports to the GPO, "Zero lines recorded." (Nowadays something about 'bearing centre of arc')