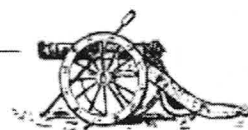


CASCABEL

Journal of the

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION
(VICTORIA) INCORPORATED

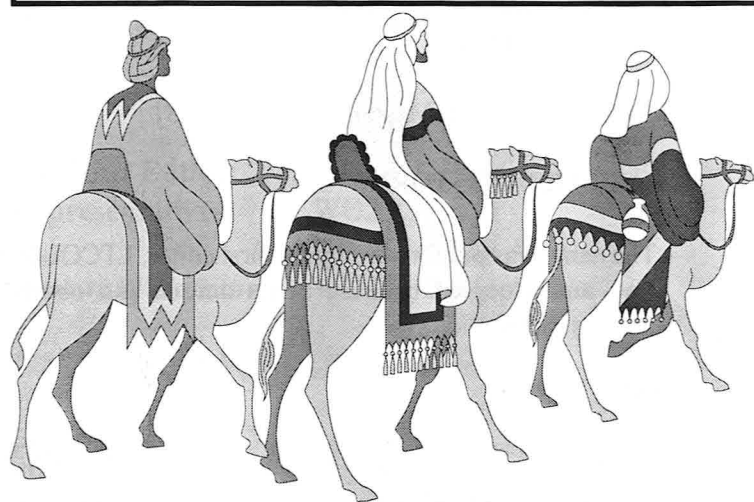
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Number 66

Published Quarterly in
Victoria Australia

January 2001



**Merry
Christmas**

*Peace on
Earth*



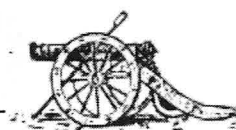
**Happy
New Year**



CASCABEL

Journal of the

----- ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC -----



FOUNDED:

First AGM April 1978
First Cascabel July 1983

COL COMMANDANT:

BRIG G. B. Standish AM, RFD, ED

PATRONS and VICE PATRONS:

1978

Patron: LT GEN The Hon Sir Edmund Herring
KCMG, KBE, DSO, MC, KStJ, ED

Vice Patron: BRIG Sir William Hall KBE, KG,
DSO, ED

1982

Patron: BRIG Sir William Hall KBE, KG,
DSO, ED

Vice Patron: MAJGEN N. A. Vickery CBE,
MC, ED

1999

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

Vice Patron: MAJ GEN J. D. Stevenson AO,
CBE

PRESIDENTS:

1978 MAJGEN N. A. Vickery CBE, MC, ED

1979 MAJGEN J. M. McNeill OA, OBE, ED

1981 COL A. (Sandy) Mair ED

1984 MAJ P. S. (Norman) Whitelaw ED

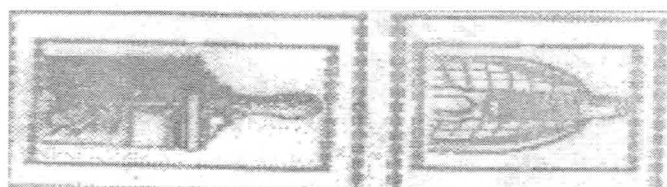
1988 BRIG K. V. Rossi AM, OBE, RFD, ED

1991 MAJ M. Taggart RFD, ED

JOURNAL NAME:

CASCABEL - Spanish - Origin as small bell or
Campanilla (pro: Kaskebell),
spherical bell, knob like
projection.

CASCABLE - English spelling.



REASON FOR:

Once a fixed extension left over when a muzzle loaded gun was molten cast. It was the left over molten ore plug from the cast liquid entry point. Left on as it was found to be a good handle to move or elevate the barrel. Then shaped to look like a bell.

ARTILLERY USE:

After 1800 AD, it became adjustable. The breech is closed in large calibres by a CASCABEL(E) screw, which is a solid block of forged wrought iron, screwed into the breech coil until it pressed against the end of the steel tube. In the smaller calibres, the A bore tube is carried through to form the CASCABEL(E)

[Ref: "Text Book on Fortification Etc", Royal Military College, Sandhurst, by COL G. Philips, RE, 4th Ed, Ch-1, P9, para 28, 1884].

[Source: COL Alan Mason, Vic, May 1993].

CASCABEL HISTORY:

The name was put forward by the first editor, LTCOL Rob Gaw, and accepted because of its unique and obvious Artillery connection.

ASSN LOGO:

Our Assn Logo is the 1800 AD 9 Pdr Waterloo Field Gun. Copy is taken from Device, Badge and Motto of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, as approved in 1883, by HM King William IV.

LAPEL BADGE:

Copy of the left arm brass gilded gun once worn by Gun Sgts above the chevrons on each arm. Brassards worn by IGs at North Head were embroidered with this insignia. Selected by MAJ Warren Barnard, 1984 Assn Committee.

POSTAL ADDRESSES:

For all correspondence

Not related to CASCABEL:

Secretary

RAA Assn (Vic) Inc

101 Warralong Ave

GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088

**For all correspondence related
to CASCABEL:**

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RAA Assn (Vic) Inc

34 Richmond Ave

CARRUM DOWNS VIC 3201

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RFD, ED
Phone: 9598 8452
Vice President: MAJ N. Hammer RFD
Phone: 9702 2100
Secretary: MAJ R. A. W. Smith RFD
Phone: 9435 6352
Treasurer: SSGT R. W. Morrell
Phone: 9562 9552
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SSGT B. Cleeman
SSGT E. Paddon
BDR L. Pritchard
GNR D.F.C. Edwards
Cascabel Editor: SGT R. G. Curtis
Representatives: WO2 L. Foster
(10 Mdm Regt Assn)
Honorary Auditor: WO2 T. D. Hopkins

MUSEUM TRUST

President: MAJ J. R Pearson
Phone: 9850 9397
Secretary: SSGT B. Cleeman
Phone: 9560 7116
Members: SSGT E. Paddon
Phone: 9763 5995

VIC REGT CONTACTS

2/10 Mdm Regt	9526 4222
8 Chapel St	
St Kilda	(Melway 58 D9)
Bandmaster:	WO1 D. Farrell
	9526 4230
22 Fd Bty	9792 2642
Lonsdale St	
Dandenong	(Melway 90 E9)
38 Mdm Bty	5221 7666
Myers St	
Geelong	(Melway 228 D4)
38 Mdm Bty	5231 2056
Queen St	
Colac	

CONTENTS AND SUBMISSIONS

The contents of CASCABEL Journal are determined by the editor. Articles or opinions of authors & contributors are their own, and do not necessarily represent or reflect the official position of the RAA Assn (Vic) Inc, Australian Army, the committee, the editor, staff or agents.

Article style, clarity and conciseness remain the responsibility of the article owner or author.

Submissions for the **April 2001** issue are required no later than **Fri 2 March 2001** unless otherwise arranged with the Editor.

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ISSN 1322-6282

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ORGANISATIONS ADF &

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EDITOR'S EXOTERICS

Have you ever sold a house and bought another? Then you know what I am feeling at the moment. I have had my house on the market since 12 Oct 00 with only three family groups coming to have a look at it. If I can sell it, I want to buy a two bedroom unit with garage under the same roof. Cascabel would then be produced in the garage. Merv Taggart is not so sure that he likes that idea. (bit of a come down for Cascabel - all tongue in cheek humour of course).

Wasn't that interesting? You can wake up and read the rest now.

Last issue I published an installment of "My Service Career" by COL Farley which was a very much reduced version of his time at MUR and the full article on his service with 22 Fd Regt (SP).

This has proven to have been an unpopular move as no less than four people approached me at our AGM and asked if I could approach him for a more detailed account. Well I haven't had to do that as I already had it, we incorrectly thought that the MUR part of his career would be of limited interest to Gunners, but we were wrong and so I have printed it in full in this issue.

Also COL Farley has been able to send me a good photo and specification details of the SP 25-pr Yeramba from the publication "Guns of the Regiment" by S.N. Gower. As these arrived too late to include them with the 22 Fd Regt article last issue, I have included them after the expanded version of MUR in this issue.

Do you realise that this is the 14th issue of Cascabel that I have produced since I commenced in October 1997, and still we have lots to share with you in the future. It would seem that Gunnery is an inexhaustible subject, but that does not mean that we do not still want your letters to the editor about Arty subjects, so keep them coming.

Christmas and New Year are upon us already. I am convinced that the older we get the faster the years fly by, has that been your experience too? But what a year it has been, the GST (including **George Speict** Terrorism in Fiji), and Bruce Ruxton said we had a new record crowd at the Anzac Day March, 4th Fd Regt celebrated its 40th birthday, congratulations guys!, the Friends of Suai Fundraising Ball was acclaimed a great success by the organisers, our visit to the Pay Corps and Sigs Museums were absolutely an experience of a lifetime and David Osborne has resigned after many years as Vice-President and Membership Secretary of the Assoc, and not before causing an upheaval in the ranks by giving me a photo to publish last issue, but omitting to tell me it was not of the unit Offrs' Mess we were standing in at the time. Now fair go fellas! I'm a former New South Welshman and a Bird Gunner at that!

So anyhow! A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all, and hope to be still with you all through next year.

Ron G. Curtis
Editor



The President writes

Did you all spot the deliberate error in the last issue? People are blaming Ron Curtis but I have to admit that I was the one who “proof read” the caption on the picture of the 2/15 FD Regt Officers. The other error was the date of the RSL Service at Springvale Cemetery being published as 7 November, the correct date being the 5 November. This was an error in the original information given to us.

The Artillery Ball raised approximately \$23,000 for the Friends of Suai fund and I am sure that money will be put to good use in Timor. My apologies for not having the exact figure to hand. I was invited to be present when the cheque was handed over and wrote down the figure but I seem to have mislaid it. At least the cheque won't be mislaid. It was about 1^{1/2} metres long and everyone had their picture taken with it.

The AGM went off well. You will see the new committee listed at the third page as usual and the Statement of Income and Expenditure appears elsewhere in the magazine. Any other information that you wish to know can be obtained by contacting the Treasurer or myself.

You will notice from the committee list that David Osborne has retired from the committee and the positions of Vice President and Membership Secretary. David has been a power of strength to the committee for fifteen years and I want to thank him for the great service that he has given to the Association. Major Neil Hamer has taken his place and his duties. We can't show Neil to you yet. He is a little reluctant to have his photo taken but he has slipped right into his duties most of which require wrestling with the membership list software.

Other changes are: Lionel Foster has returned to the committee after his grand tour of the outback and will keep us informed of the activities of the Geelong based 10 Medium Regiment Association among his duties. David Edwards has joined us having decided to retire from his former hobby as military memorabilia collector.

My last point on the AGM is to grizzle once again about the attendance. I know there are a million reasons for not attending but we would love to get a heap of apologies. Then we would know that at least the notification was getting out. Let us know if it would be better to have a daytime meeting and of course the elder members are welcome to have a carer with them if it helps.

Not much happened in August and September on the Gunner front. However, on the personal side our daughter Tracey had a run with the Olympic Torch at Traralgon on the 8 August. Apart from the pride and excitement that was created in the family I must comment on the absolutely great planning and execution by everyone involved. It all ran exactly to time and the runners were thoroughly briefed at every stage. Tracey ran at 11.00am and spent the rest of the day letting people touch the torch, which she was able to buy.

I was asked along with others by the Anzac March organisers to act as Marshall for the “Battle for Australia Day” service at the Shrine of Remembrance on 6 September. I understand that this occasion is to replace the Coral Sea service. A very select group of units paraded. I met members of 39 Battalion and 2/14 Battalion, the two units that stopped the Japanese on the Kokoda Track in 1942. I was able to have a chat with Paddy Woodward who was with 2/14 Bn during the war. He said he enjoyed reading my articles in Cascabel so I thought I should give him a mention. I remember asking him when he was my gun sergeant in 1951 why he joined the artillery in the CMF after spending the war with such a good infantry Bn. He reckoned that if he was ever to go to war again he wasn't going to walk.

Sunday, 19 November, saw the Granting of the Freedom of Entry to the City of Greater Geelong by the Mayor Cr Michael Crutchfield to the 2/10 Medium Regiment RAA under the command of Lieutenant Colonel

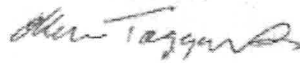
Richard Maurice. This was an original ceremony as both the City and the Regiment have changed name and form since the previous granting in the 1960's and so the privilege has lapsed. The granting parade was conducted at the Eastern beach Reserve and was an ideal location with the combination of beach and parkland as a backdrop. This was followed by a mounted parade through the city centre and the challenge at the City Hall in Gheringhap Street. The Regiment acquitted itself well and all earned the fine reception provided by the City council. I heard that the band thought that it was a long way to march leading all those that were riding.

St Barbara's Day was celebrated at Chapel Street Depot on 3 December with a lunch and family day. This is the day that the Association Whitelaw prizes are presented and they are listed later in this issue.

There are many changes of posting about to happen within the Regiment and we will bring these to you when the new postings are known. Our best wishes to those who will be leaving.

The timing of this issue is planned to remind you of Church Parade on 4 February at St Bartholomew's in Burnley Street Burnley. I hope to see many of you there.

Best wishes



Merv Taggart MAJ
President

Vale – Lieutenant William H. (Young Bill) Hall ED

It is with great sadness that I learned of the passing of Bill Hall on the 21st November last. Although he did not rise to high military rank Bill made a notable contribution to the Regiment, the Association and to the community.

Bill enlisted in 2 Medium Regiment RAA as a Regimental Cadet at the Chapel Street Depot in 1950. He was allotted as a signaller as most of the cadets were until reaching the age when he could be enlisted as a gunner. He performed well in several trades within the Regiment until commencing officer training in 1956 and was commissioned as a Lieutenant in 1958. Due to a major reorganisation in 1957 we went to different units and did not work together in the Army from then on. However the close links inherent in our membership of the Artillery Regiment family meant that our lives have touched regularly over the years as Bill remained a staunch supporter of the Association.

Having followed his father in an interest in RSL affairs, he became Deputy State Secretary Victoria of the RSL until being forced to retire by illness. Some of his duties included representing the RSL as a member of the Patriotic Funds Council, the War Veterans Association, the Sir Edward Dunlop Medical Research Foundation and the Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey Memorial Fund. He was the voluntary Licensed Firearms Dealer for the RSL.

He spent many years as a member of the board of the Naval and Military Club and is held in high regard for his efforts during that time and for his time as President of the Club.

We have lost a good Association member and I have lost a good friend of 50 years and I am sure you will join me in offering sincerest sympathy to Bill's wife Elizabeth, daughter Gina and their families.

Merv Taggart

PRESENTATION OF THE WHITELAW PRIZES

The 3 December saw the St Barbara's day celebrations held by 2/10 Mdm Regt at Chapel Street Depot. A good gathering joined in for lunch and family activities which included the presentation of the P.S. Whitelaw Prizes.

The Association presents these prizes each year from a bequest from the estate of a former President Major P.S. (Norman) Whitelaw. They are presented to recipient's chosen by the CO for the members judged to best meet the criteria mentioned.

This year the prizes go to:

The Bombardier or Gunner who has displayed the greatest enthusiasm, initiative and competence in the performance of his/her duties, for their unit during the year.

Gunner R. E. Trainer

The Warrant Officer or Senior NCO who, by his/her display of leadership and technical excellence, has made the most valuable contribution to their unit during the year.

Sergeant J. Leader

The Officer who has made the most valuable contribution to the Regiment during the year.

Major N.H.B. Floyd

The Regular Army member who has made the most valuable contribution to the regiment during the year.

Sergeant S. L. Edwards

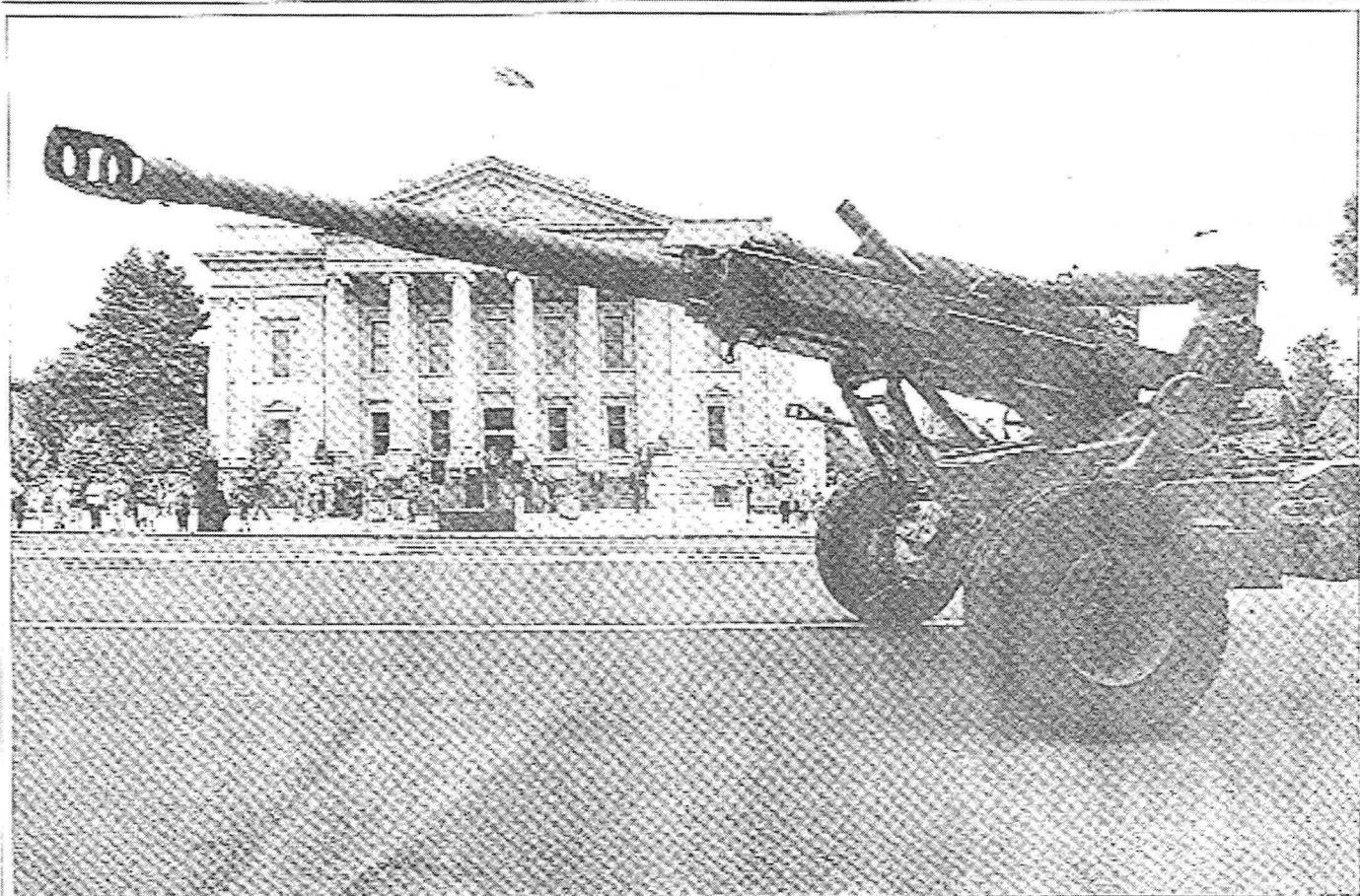
The 10 Medium Regiment Association also presented a prize for the "Best Junior NCO" and the recipient was

Bombardier S. N. Quail

Our congratulations go to these members

The Gunners are distinguished from the other soldiers by their excellent spirit. In action their handling is skilful, their aim perfect, and their courage supreme.

General Maximilien Foy



THE BIG GUNS ROLL IN: The 2nd/10th Medium Regiment of the Royal Australian Artillery rolled into Geelong yesterday after being granted freedom of entry to the City of Greater Geelong. Mayor Michael Crutchfield (right) was on hand to take the salute.

Photos PHILIP STUBBS

Medieval ceremony of freedom to city makes a comeback

NOEL MURPHY

IT'S an old tradition, one that dates all the way back to medieval times.

And yesterday saw history in the making when freedom of entry to Geelong was granted to 2nd/10th Medium Regiment of the Royal Australian Artillery.

The first time the amalgamated City of Greater Geelong had extended the right, the event was one of ceremony and fanfare.

After a granting ceremony at Eastern Beach, at which an official freedom of entry scroll was presented to Lieutenant Colonel Richard Maurice, troops marched through Geelong in battle order.

It was a military case of "bayonets fixed, swords drawn, banner flying

ment's authority was challenged by police in the city centre.

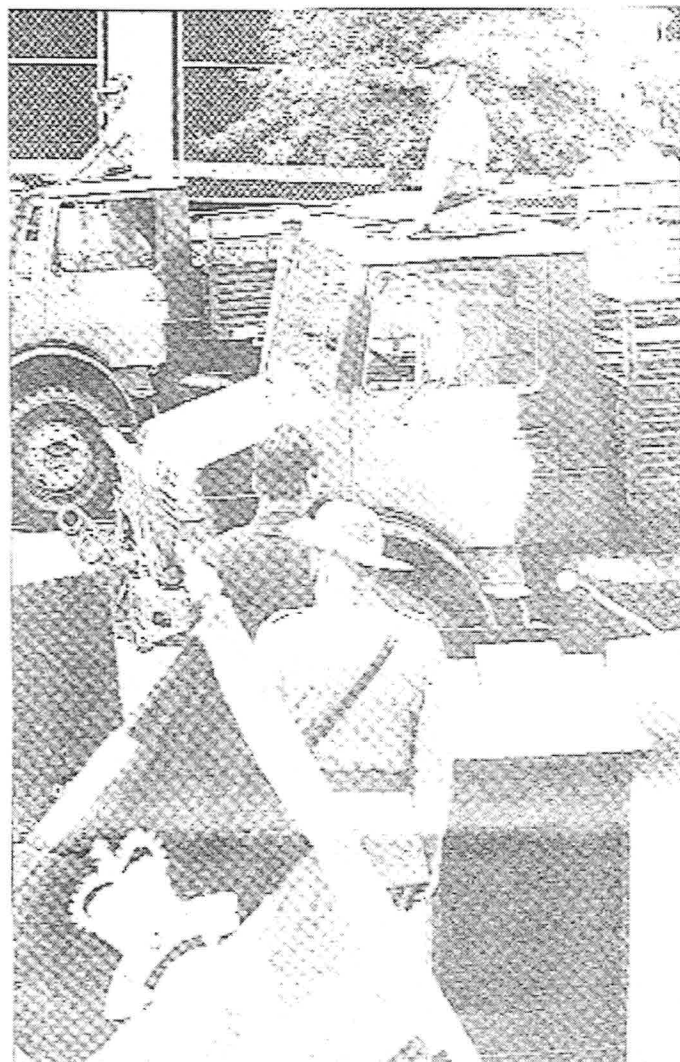
Vehicles and gun tractors paraded through the city to the stirring strains of their regimental brass band.

Following this ceremony, mayor Michael Crutchfield took the salute as the regiment paraded past city hall.

The medieval concept of granting freedom of entry dates to the 15th century when troops loyal to city fathers in England were given free entry within city walls.

This was awarded as a measure of trust in the troops and as a token of appreciation of their protection.

The freedom of entry ceremony is symbolic of the historical links between artillery units and the City of Geelong which date back to the raising of the first artillery unit in





RAA Association (Victoria) Inc Corps Shop

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

PRICE LIST

Badges, etc

RAA Assn (Vic), members (limit two per member)	\$5.00
RAA, tracksuit	\$3.00
RAA badge cuff links	\$9.00
Key ring, RAA badge	\$4.00

Brooches

Marcasite Gun	\$103.00
Marcasite Exploding Grenade	\$93.00

Bar items

Crock, blue with gold badge (name at no extra cost)	\$22.00
Coffee mug, blue, gold badge (name at no extra cost)	\$6.00

2nd/10th Medium Regiment Band

<i>Voice of the Gunners</i> recording cassette	\$15.00
compact disc	\$20.00

Clothing items

Cap, RAA badged	\$7.00
Scarf, blue with red flash	\$29.00
Wallet, cam	\$5.00

Ties

Blue with red flash	\$30.00
Blue with single red gun	\$30.00

Books

<i>Kookaburra's Cutthroats</i>	\$39.00
<i>Aust Military Equip Profiles</i>	\$13.50

Stationery

Card, RAA badge, with envelope Christmas message	\$0.40
blank inside	\$0.40
Stickers	
Bumper: <i>Gunners do it with a bigger bang</i>	\$2.00
Square: gold badge, red and blue background	\$2.00
Folders, white A4 size, 2-ring	\$2.00

ENQUIRIES:

BRIAN CLEEMAN	(03) 9560 7116
REG MORRELL	(03) 9562 9552

ORDERS:

Most orders will require an additional FIVE DOLLARS packing and postage, which will cover one to several small items. If in any doubt concerning this, or availability, please contact one of the enquiries numbers above.

Cheques should be made payable to RAA Association (Victoria) Inc, and be crossed *Not Negotiable*.

Orders to: Mr B. Cleeman
28 Samada Street
Notting Hill VIC 3168

Annual Association Church Parade
Sun 4 Feb 2001
Service at 11 am

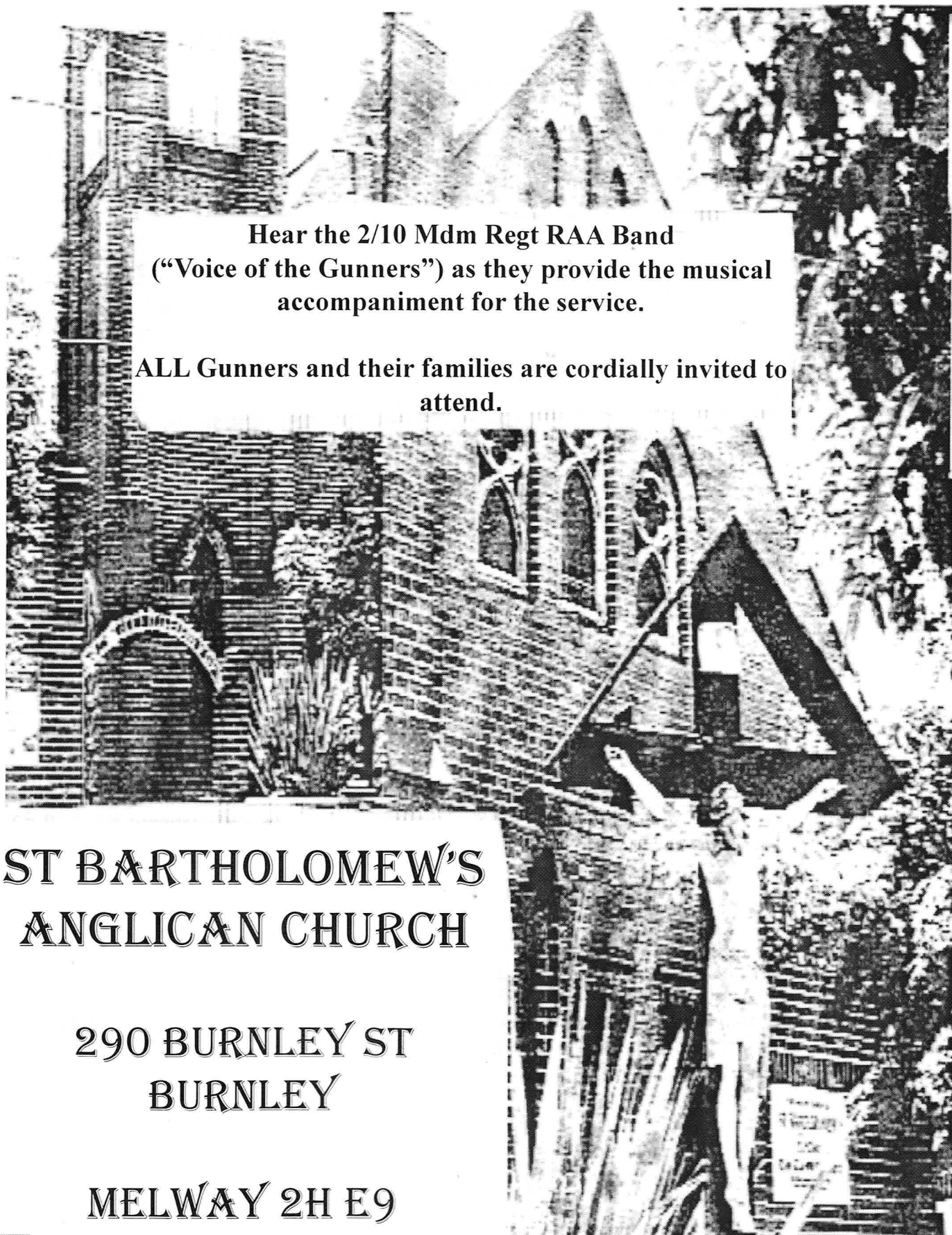
Hear the 2/10 Mdm Regt RAA Band
("Voice of the Gunners") as they provide the musical
accompaniment for the service.

ALL Gunners and their families are cordially invited to
attend.

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S
ANGLICAN CHURCH

290 BURNLEY ST
BURNLEY

MELWAY 2H E9



REPORTS FROM THE AGM

The twenty-third AGM was held at 2nd/10th Medium Regiment's depot at Chapel Street, on Thursday 26th October 2000. Previously August was the traditional time of year, and it was hoped that we would avoid the worst of Melbourne's weather by moving to later in the year. Twenty-five were present, with fourteen apologies.

The following summaries of reports on the state of the Regiment have been prepared by the Secretary.

COMMANDING OFFICER'S REPORT

The CO's report opened with a brief film presentation from TV news coverage, showing the guns in the field and with the band in an 1812 performance. He then went on to focus on four areas.

1. END OF 4TH BRIGADE REVITALISATION

The conclusion of the four-year revitalisation trial heralds a return to the traditional employment of Artillery. A reduction in resources, including ARA personnel, is already being felt. The trial was considered successful, with a sustained increase in individual readiness (AIRN) from 6% to 89%, and availability of effective personnel at 30days NTM from 39% to 89%, as well as other improved indicators.

New roles and tasks will see the Regiment required to be able to provide elements for deployment with other units, for training or deployment.

2. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Unit's key outcomes set for 2000 were:

- * raise profile, presence and relevance in local community,
- * 50% increase in manning by Dec 2000,
- * 90% retention rate,
- * 90% AIRN compliance, and
- * meet Olympic Games task.

Areas of emphasis include Recruiting, Retention, Individual Motivation, Family Involvement, Employer and Community Involvement, Safety and Training.

"Friends of Suai" fund-raising and Freedom of the City Parades in Port Phillip and Geelong have raised community awareness. More than \$22,000 was raised for Suai through the ball held in conjunction with Port Phillip Council, and a strong bond established.

3. CURRENT STATUS OF THE REGIMENT

Manning, at 217, is at 61% of minimum level of capability (MLOC), while individual readiness (AIRN) has reached 89%. Apart from vehicle problems, other equipment serviceability is high.

2001 and beyond will see a reduction in ARA personnel (eg down to 10), the replacement of the M198 (though the "Medium" designation will continue), and the possibility of Multi-User Depots.

4. MAJOR ACTIVITIES - PAST & FUTURE

Activities this year included Safety support for Ex CROCODILE in Sep/Oct, the Firepower Demonstration in March (which was enjoyed by many of our members), and Olympics support.

Next year's activities include two firing weekends (LFX), and ADF and 4BDE exercises in May and Nov/Dec

COLONEL COMMANDANT'S REPORT

BRIG G. Standish opened with thanks to LT COL R. Maurice for his presentation.

The School of Artillery has now become the Offensive Support Division of the Combat Arms Training Centre (CATC).

RAA Conference 2000 will be held at Bridges Barracks 17-19 November, with the agenda including:

- * Presentation by the Deputy Commander of the Army,
- * Fire Support for 2020,
- * Combat Training Centre,
- * Force Development, and
- * Army equipment maintenance.

Areas for discussion include security of Regimental property and the Regimental Shop post the redesignation of the RAA Officers and Sergeants Messes to the non-corps specific Bridges Barracks Messes and funding for Regimental projects.

A recent visit to U.K. included the Edinburgh Tattoo and Woolwich, now the home of an Air Defence Regiment on service in Bosnia, which has two magnificent Messes. The nearby Royal Arsenal, closed to the public for 300 years and derelict in recent times, is part of an 87 acre project which will see the opening next May of the Firepower Museum. A video "FIREPOWER - The Royal Artillery Museum Redevelopment" completed the presentation.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT YEAR TO 30TH JUNE, 2000

	LIFE	ANNUAL	AFFIL	TOTAL
	=====	=====	=====	=====
BALANCE 1/7/99	221	113	56	390
NEW MEMBERS	5	5	2	12
TRANSFERS	1	(1)	-	-
RESIGNED	-	(3)	-	(3)
DEATHS	(2)	(3)	-	(5)
DELETIONS	-	(13)	(1)	(14)
	=====	=====	=====	=====
BALANCE 30/6/00	225	98	57	380
	=====	=====	=====	=====

INTERESTING FACTS

OF THE TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF 380

THERE ARE 55 Ors	THERE ARE 115 SGTs AND WOs
THERE ARE 148 OFFRs	THERE ARE 6 FEMALES
THERE ARE 4 INDIVIDUAL AFFILIATE MEMBERS	
THERE ARE 57 AFFILIATE ORGANISATIONS	

MEMBERS DECEASED SINCE THE LAST AGM:

COL L LONGWORTH
MR A PACKER
GNR J T FLYNN
GNR J F LANGLANDS
GNR B CLARK

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Displayed below is the Statement of Income and Expenditure as presented by the Treasurer at the AGM. The Net Assets as shown on the accompanying Balance Sheet (not shown) is \$43,749.85.

RAA ASSOCIATION (VICTORIA) INCORPORATED A1 3889Z

STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2000

GENERAL FUND

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Subscriptions	2,072.50	AGM - Supper	150.00
Life Member Voluntary Contributions	331.70	Postage	721.05
Interest Current Accounts	1.87	Printing & Stationery	92.40
Interest Invested Funds	639.37	Insurance	356.66
Sale - Membership Badges	80.00	Gifts & Presentations	68.38
Coach Fares ADJ - Surplus	5.00	Bank Charges	37.03
Donations	11.00	Cascabel Expenses	438.59
Profit - RAA Association (Vic) Shop	(180.75)	Incorporation Fees	33.00
Profit - CD's & Cassettes	870.36	Obituaries & Wreaths	0.00
Profit - Back to the Regiment Night	1.00	Donations:	
		Vic Scottish Regiment	100.00
		St Bartholomew's	100.00
		Transfer to Whitelaw Fund	128.22
		Depreciation	103.85
		Surplus for Year	1,502.87
	3,832.05		3,832.05

RAA SOCIAL FUND

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Interest Current Accounts	2.62	Transfer to Property Trust Fund	47.95
Interest Invested Funds	895.57	1999 Gunner Dinner	52.00
Surplus		Surplus for Year	1,902.04
1999 Artillery Ball	197.00		
2000 Gunner Dinner	906.80		
	2,001.99		2,001.99

PROPERTY TRUST FUND

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Interest Current Accounts	0.00	Purchase Books	30.00
Interest Invested Funds	0.00	Display Cabinets	48.00
Donations	59.10	Display Counters	0.00
Transfer from Social Fund	47.95	Picture Framing	0.00
		Locks & Tags	29.05
	107.05		107.05

WHITELAW FUND

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Interest invested Funds	5.69	Presentations	133.91
Transfer from General Fund	128.22		
	133.91		133.91

2nd/10th Medium Regiment - 2000

The Year in Review

This past year technical artillery took a back seat to Operation GOLD, the Defence Force support to the Olympic Games, which was the primary event on the Regiment's activities. A substantial number of the Unit's personnel were involved, for periods from two weeks up to 3 months, as support personnel, contributing to the much vaunted success of the Games. Several other Unit members were deployed to East Timor as part of the UN presence. All these personnel performed with distinction and did themselves and their Unit proud.

Notwithstanding my previous comments, some artillery activity did occur during the year. In particular, the Regiment played the major part in organising and participating in a Brigade firepower demonstration, Exercise BULLICOURT. This took place at Puckapunyal in March, and involved elements of 4/19 PWLH, 5/6 and 7/8 RVRs, 4 CER, 4 BASB, 4 Bde HQ, and of course, 2/10 Med Regt. This was the only opportunity this year for members of the Association to view the Regiment in the field, and come they did, in droves. Ex Bullicourt attracted the largest turnout of "olds and bolds" of any event, probably in anyone's memory, with some 108 members of the RAA Association attending, and thoroughly enjoying their day. The day did not only involve the field live fire activities, but culminated in a banquet, and concert by the Regimental Band, on the Corso at Bridges Barracks. The highlight was the Regimental Sergeant Major conducting the guns in the 1812 Overture!

Other training activities throughout the year included a weekend at Portsea where the younger members of the Regiment were "instructed" in some of the basic survival skills learned over many years by the Old Bulls – the SNCO's – over a very tiring and testing two and a half days in June. In September, those not involved with the Olympic Games were given the opportunity to experience some of the Army's newest night vision and night fighting equipment in the scrub and on the ranges at Puckapunyal.

Traditional activities such as the support to ANZAC Day and the Regimental Birthday function in April attracted good numbers of families and friends of the Regiment, and provided an opportunity for past members to keep in touch.

Another highlight of the year was the *Friends of Suai* Ball, held instead of the traditional Artillery Ball. This function was organised in conjunction with the City of Port Philip, and raised some \$23,000 to assist the devastated town of Suai in East Timor. Support for the function was received from many quarters, including the RAA Association, for which we thank you.

The year ended with two ceremonial activities. On the 19th November, the Regiment exercised its right of Freedom of Entry to the City of Greater Geelong, with a parade at Eastern Beach Reserve followed by a mounted parade, with guns in tow through the streets of Geelong to the Town Hall. The final occasion for the year was a parade at the Chapel Street Depot where the Regiment was passed from the outgoing Commanding Officer, LTCOL Richard Maurice to the incoming Commanding Officer, LTCOL David MacCallum. May I take this opportunity to wish our departing CO and his family, all the best in his new appointment, and thank him for the efforts he made on behalf of the Regiment to leave a stronger and more capable Unit. The parade was followed by a feast in honour of Saint Barbara, at which a number of awards and presentations were made including the RAA Association and 10 Mdm Regt Association Awards. Congratulations to all recipients.

At this stage, as the year comes to a close, the Regiment farewells a number of senior personnel, including the Commanding Officer, LTCOL Maurice, the Operations Officer, MAJ Nick Floyd, the former adjutant, CAPT Simon Grace and the RSM, WO1 Paul Washford. To all those leaving, we wish you good luck in your new postings. And to those new arrivals in their stead, welcome. But more of the new appointments next year.

Finally, on behalf of the Commanding Officer and the Regiment, may I wish all members of the RAA Association, and their families, Seasons Greetings and a Joyous New Year.

MAJ Jim PEARSON
Second-in-Command
2nd/10th Medium Regiment

We have received the following letter from Kevin Browning requesting details of 19th century Victorian artillery units. We are unable to show the chart he supplied as it is too large to reproduce here. Any help would be greatly appreciated by him and by us.

We are presently preparing an exhibition on the Colonial Artillery for display at North Fort, Manly. The display will include sections on the coastal forts of all Colonies and the Lineage of the Australian Colonial Artillery. I am writing to seek your assistance with the display.

Enclosed is a sheet showing the Lineage of the Victorian Artillery. I am not confident that the information I have is either complete or accurate. We are seeking more accurate dates (at least month and year). If you can provide dates they were formed, merged, split or disbanded it will complete the information. We intend to display the lineage like a family tree. Whether the unit was field or garrison will be indicated by colour (eg red for field, blue for garrison). To differentiate between Permanent, Militia and Volunteer units we will use a special border to denote the difference. It is very important that the correct name of the unit is used and the grouping of the sub-units is shown. Could you please check and amend the enclosed sheets. Each column represents the same unit.

The layout of the final product will be different to the sheets. The older units will appear at the top and the units at Federation at the bottom. We are seeking a photo of each of the units to include on the chart. The photo may be of an individual in that unit (in uniform) or a group photo. Depending on the photo itself we may have to do some cropping/enlargement to achieve the desired effect. Can I ask you to assist with photos of the Victorian units. Short term loan of photographs or source and reference numbers is preferred.

For the display of the colonial forts we are seeking, rather than a photo of a gun or a group in the fort, something that gives a better understanding of how the fort looked. This could be a photo, engineer drawing or sketch.. If you could suggest appropriate ones of the Victorian forts and their source, we would be very thankful. The latest date we are looking at is 1901. The forts are:

South Channel Fort,
Point Franklin,
Queenscliffe,
Fort Nepean,
Eagles Nest, and
Crows Nest

My e-mail address is isbrownink@mania.com.au

Home phone 02 9824 9275

Home address is 3 Ohio Place,

KEARN NSW 2558

or correspondence can be sent to the RAAHC at North Fort.

Is it possible to obtain an example of the buttons worn by the Victorian Artillery units. Either a loan, donation or send us a price. We hope to have in our display a range of buttons as worn by the various State artillery forces.

Yours sincerely

We have received the following letter from WO 1 Darryl Kelly OAM requesting historical details for a book about gunners who have had active service since WW2. His questionnaire is enclosed as a loose leaf and should be self-explanatory. I hope some of you can help him. I guess it was Darryl that I saw in the UK magazine, Gunner", where he was RSM of the Centenary Guard that we sent to London in the year 2000.

END OF MISSION

I am writing to introduce myself, my name is Darryl Kelly and like members of your association I am also a Gunner.

I am currently co-writing a biographical history entitled "*End of Mission*" with another soldier, Cameron Simpson.

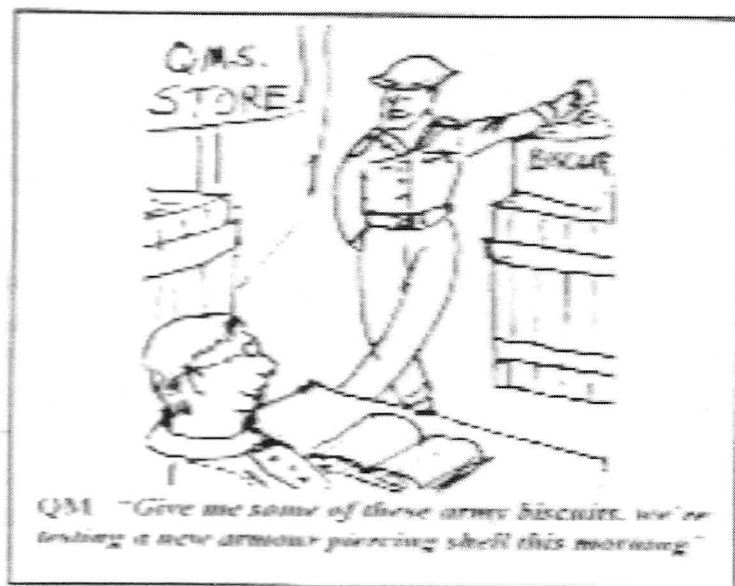
The book is an A to Z of all members of the Royal Australian Artillery and attached Corps, who have served in an operational / peacekeeping capacity commencing from the end of the Second World War.

As you could appreciate the task is a daunting one but well deserving to those who served, in service with the Royal Regiment. We are making every effort to include everyone both past and present as accurately as possible. With this we are trying to establish, career highlights, nicknames, photographs of individuals, detachments, parties etc.

We now ask if you would be willing to mention our work in your next newsletter and include the attached handout to your members.

I want to thank you for your assistance in our quest and wish both yourself and your members all the best for the future.

UBIQUE
Darryl Kelly



LOCATING NEWS

Over the Melbourne Cup long weekend my wife, Lyn and I went to Sydney and attended the official opening of the Locating Museum display in the North Fort section of the RAA Museum, North Head. Some of you may know that in recent years the Loc Wing was based in North Fort although the Radars were within the complex of the School itself in the ARMCO buildings.

The display was opened by Mr Rusty Priest NSW State President of the RSL. Rusty is also the patron of the Locating Association and was an original Locator dating back to the "early 1950's" where he was a surveyor. A plaque was unveiled within the display while some fifty odd members and their partners watched. Rusty gave a resume of his service in the locating stream up until his retirement which included the implementation of the AN/KPQ1 radars in mid 1960's. Following the opening a BBQ lunch was provided followed by a guided tour of the Museum including a walk through the tunnels and gun position of the 9.2" guns that were originally installed at North Fort.

The last time I was there in 1972 the tunnels did not have lighting and were in an appalling state with rubbish etc. The Museum Group are to be highly commended in the restoration and curation that is being done to the Fort and the area in general.

Currently within the large shed with the Locating display is the AA equipment which includes a 90 cm search light and its bigger brother, along with a 3.7" AA gun, a 3" AA gun mounted on vehicle tray and a 40 mm bofors gun. Also with the display is a predictor for the HAA battery. There is also a Rapier missile launcher on display. It is hoped that soon the AA equipment is going to be moved to make way for the Locating display to expand. Within the loc display is a complete radar AN/KPQ1, GRA/8 Sound ranging system, Survey beacon, an Electronic Velocity Analyser [EVA] radar and Hydrogen generator on trailer with a Met Pilot Balloon theodolite.

The Museum has obtained a 3 Mk7 radar and it will also be housed in the display when available. I believe that a 4Mk2 radar is held by the Museum and this will complement the HAA display when incorporated.

There are of course many smaller items including photographs and manuals that are especially locating and I have taken up some photographs from the 132 Loc Bty history which will be copied onto a scanned image and printed out for display usage. Some of these photos may be used within the book that has been prepared by Keith Ayliffe on the definitive history of locating in Australia dating back to WWI.

The manuscript has included ALL Locating units raised in Australia and it may come as a surprise to some members to find out that it was not always 131, 132, 133 Loc Bty that formed part of the Artillery ORBAT. Early beginnings used designations of 2 Div Loc, 1 Loc Group, 31 Loc Bty, 20 Loc Regt, 104 Div Loc Bty, 130 Gun Loc Bty, and CB Staff Tps attached to Div HQ.

I have seen the latest manuscript and will look forward to seeing a copy of it along side the book "The Gunners by David Horner" which mentions Locating there but does little to cover the history and development of this unique branch of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery.

The Association has also commissioned a lapel badge which will hopefully be available before Christmas. At this stage I have no idea on cost of the Locating History.

Also on display in the Museum is the new Locating Artillery banner which was recently displayed in Sydney on the Reserve Forces Day parade. It is very distinctly Locating Artillery and hopefully a second one will be available for use in Victoria. More details soon.

In closing I can recommend a visit to North Fort when in Sydney. It is open at weekends and they have a team of well versed guides to take you around the displays. I have not mentioned the guns apart from the AA but there are the normal weapons along with an interesting South African 155 mm captured in the Gulf encounter.

Craig Cook



MY SERVICE CAREER

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

Melbourne University Regiment



Being a student at The University of Melbourne, it was logical that I would be allotted to Melbourne University Regiment in which to complete my 98 days of obligatory National Service training. In those days (1954), MUR (as it is abbreviated) occupied a relatively humble training depot in the university grounds. Some years later, a purpose-built depot was provided in Grattan Street, closer to the Exhibition Gardens. It was a three storey affair, with a reasonable vehicle park at the rear. It was to be shared with the RAAF for some years.

MUR had been reformed in 1948 along with many other Citizen Military Forces (CMF) in Australia as a consequence of the deteriorating international situation. In its previous guise, it had been known as the Melbourne University Rifles. Prior to the introduction of National Service, it had consisted of the regular army cadre and volunteer CMF personnel, the latter seeing it perhaps as a hobby in which to pursue military interests and, of course, be prepared for a role in Australia's defence if so called upon. MUR, with all other CMF units, was to be tasked to provide the training facilities for the remaining 98 days of obligation of NS personnel. But these soldiers would not in every case see themselves as volunteers and wish to cooperate. This tension affected all CMF units. I know of no cases where it led to anything like rebellion or non-cooperation, but in the MUR at least, personnel having completed their 98 days to the letter, would accept discharge even in the midst of a field exercise during the annual camp. They would have to be provided with transport back into the camp where they would return their uniform and kit and be marched out, their obligation over.

My first contact with my anticipated future unit was a parade during NS at Puckapunyal which was addressed by the then Commanding Officer of MUR, LTCOL Norman Vickery, who had won the MC in North Africa. Vickery, a gunner officer, was subsequently promoted brigadier as Commander 2nd Artillery Group, Royal Artillery (Field) (CAGRA) and Major General, commanding the 3rd Infantry Division and later the CMF member on the Military Board of the Army.

By good fortune, university and other tertiary students, whose lectures had already commenced at their various institutions, were released from Puckapunyal a fortnight or so early. Some of us were even conscientious enough to wear military uniform to lectures, as we were still legally under military discipline.

My first parade with MUR was on a Saturday, when we were addressed by the new CO, LTCOL Somerton, and issued with "signs formation," and "titles embroidered." I think we signed some forms or provided some information and were sent to our homes.

My next experience was a weekend bivouac at Puckapunyal as a member of the Medium Machine Gun Platoon (MMG). Quite apart from learning to fire the water-cooled Vickers machine gun, I was to be privileged to be on the bivouac at which the MUR Anti-Tank Platoon shot up a World War II Grant tank that had been left out on the firing range, after it had broken down on exercises during the week. It has been said that it was the only target that the platoon ever hit, but it was also a case of "someone had blundered."

The newspapers took up the case with enthusiasm, one of them describing the tank as a new Centurion, worth many thousands of pounds. The Army said that fifty pounds was more like it. No, the unit was not granted a battle honour as a result, but those of us who were there, in Henry V terms, could stand and

bare their arms and say that they were there. It will be interesting to see how the forthcoming history of MUR treats the incident.

On another bivouac, we were quartered in a tree line through which Centurion tanks thundered, but we all survived.

A friend of mine had a cash value for a weekend bivouac. The pay was about three pounds, which he translated into "a long-playing record," which was about the same price. I think you could get quite a few CDs today for a weekend's service.

Annual camps were of three weeks duration. In January, 1955 it was held at Scrub Hill and in 1956 at Site 7, Seymour. These were large affairs of over one thousand personnel and a large officers mess, since the unit had officer training as one of its priorities.

I had seen friends of longer experience wearing sergeants' stripes and even being commissioned, so I thought I might investigate those opportunities, since I had several years of service ahead of me. MUR was in the habit of conducting 20-day courses in November/December at the conclusion of annual examinations. I marched in to camp in January 1955 to find that I was a Corporal. In that year I undertook First Appointment study and examinations.

MUR was encouraged to produce officers and it might be assumed that the entry requirements for university might suggest that such students would make good officers. There were three subjects, A (Military Knowledge?), B (Tactics in the Field and C (Military Law). The examination for Subject A had some similarities in the Danny Kaye film, *The Court Jester*. Subject B was quite exacting, while Subject C, under the tutelage of LTCOL Brock was most interesting. I had obtained a few days leave from the start of the 1956 camp in order to complete my role at a Scout Jamboree. When I arrived at the camp, I was told to get myself properly dressed as a probationary Lieutenant.

I was one of thirty-three newly commissioned officers in that camp. The Senior Subaltern had plenty of victims as a result. More senior officers set out to impress us "wet behind the ears" officers with their pranks of going over the roof of the marquees and the like. One experienced captain was challenged as to whether he had his "pips" the right way up. He must have been given the tip that he hadn't, for he had time to adjust them. The accuser had to pay for drinks for the entire mess.

The 20-day course in 1955 saw me directed to the artillery course that was conducted at 2nd Field Regiment's Training Depot at Batman Avenue, sadly no more in existence, it having had to make way for the CityLink extensions. Prior to this course, I had been sent a letter saying that MUR had a requirement from Army to train something like two hundred officers. I was to reply, stating if I had any objection to being trained as a gunner and become a member of the new artillery troop in MUR.

I have to confess that I replied stating that my mathematics was not good and that I didn't like loud noises. I do not have a copy of that letter, but I know that I raised some futile objections in it. If I had been clairvoyant, I would have known that I was about to be posted to Mirboo North High School in my first year as a teacher. Mirboo North was in Gippsland, a region consisting almost entirely of artillery or special reserve units (such as the one with the State Electricity Commission).

I enjoyed the course at Batman Avenue, which was conducted by the unit's cadre staff, under the leadership of CAPT Don Baker. Following lectures in the unit's theatre, complete with picture theatre style seats (which always impressed me), we would train with equipment on the adjacent playing field to the east.

I guess that I was already aware that the army's textbooks were known as Pamphlets or "Pams." I suppose there was some historical reason for this, the early documents being only pamphlets. I had seen pamphlets about infantry minor tactics and one on the two-inch mortar. In artillery, there was a considerable range, coming out as volumes. Volume III in the artillery series contained most of the pamphlets needed for field firing. Acquiring these pams was rather important. Keen officers and NCOs would bind them together and keep them well up to date through the amendment system. It was often the case that one could bluff oneself out of a difficulty by accusing the other person as to whether they had the latest amendment! At the 2nd Field Regiment course, we were issued with précis documents. One, which was to stand me in good stead, was a summary of the sequence and simultaneous actions in a deployment. I am sure that I have still got it somewhere.

Vintage "blitz buggies" hauled the ordnance 25-pounder guns, and we learned all about the director and how to lay the guns in "bearing centre of arc". I quickly learned what to do on hearing, "Aiming Point, Director," and how to raise my arm in acknowledgment. I also found that my voice, when raised in a shout, could degenerate to a squeak. It was probably fortunate for all that I did not have to serve on the guns in artillery units, but man the command post instead, where tannoy systems assisted the voice. Finding that there were always seats in the vehicles and that gunners always rode to battle, I began to see great advantages in being a gunner, something that I have never regretted.

I might have had second thoughts in the following three week camp, for a CAPT Hogan, who subsequently rose to senior rank as a medical officer, was detailed to get us to firing stage. He was one of those officers who led by example. Now commissioned, I found myself being treated as if I was back in NS days, with pick and shovel digging gun pits and other essential but sweaty tasks. One could never object, for CAPT Hogan would be the first to get rid of his shirt and grab a spade to get the gun pit going. Being out at the Seymour site, we had to spend some time in driving to and from the firing range at Puckapunyal, but "mine not to reason why."

In January 1956, the camp was at Site 17 Seymour which was in the area of the training grounds for the First World War and particularly for remounts for cavalry. The MUR was a tented camp, with large marquees for messing.

It was only a small percentage of the community that had access to cars in those days, but university students seemed to be well above average in this regard. The camp authorities had to provide for a large civilian car park. On the last day of camp, it was obvious that car owners were straining at the leash to break camp. One could almost hear the whine of engines and the impatience for the starter's signal. But the CO ordered that private cars could not leave the confines of the camp until the remainder of the personnel were on board trucks and on their way to Seymour for rail transport to Melbourne.

When I reached my home at Elwood after that camp, my links with MUR were terminated. I had heard that the nearest unit to Mirboo North was a battery that paraded at Korumburra and Leongatha. This was R Battery of the 22nd Field Regiment (Self-Propelled), RAA, with its Head Quarters at Landcox Street, Brighton. My next career step would be to contact the unit and let them know just how fortunate they were to gain my services. I decided to go to the depot in person.

**The infantry must never be deprived of powerful
artillery support**

Ludendorf

In a General Order

1 August 1910

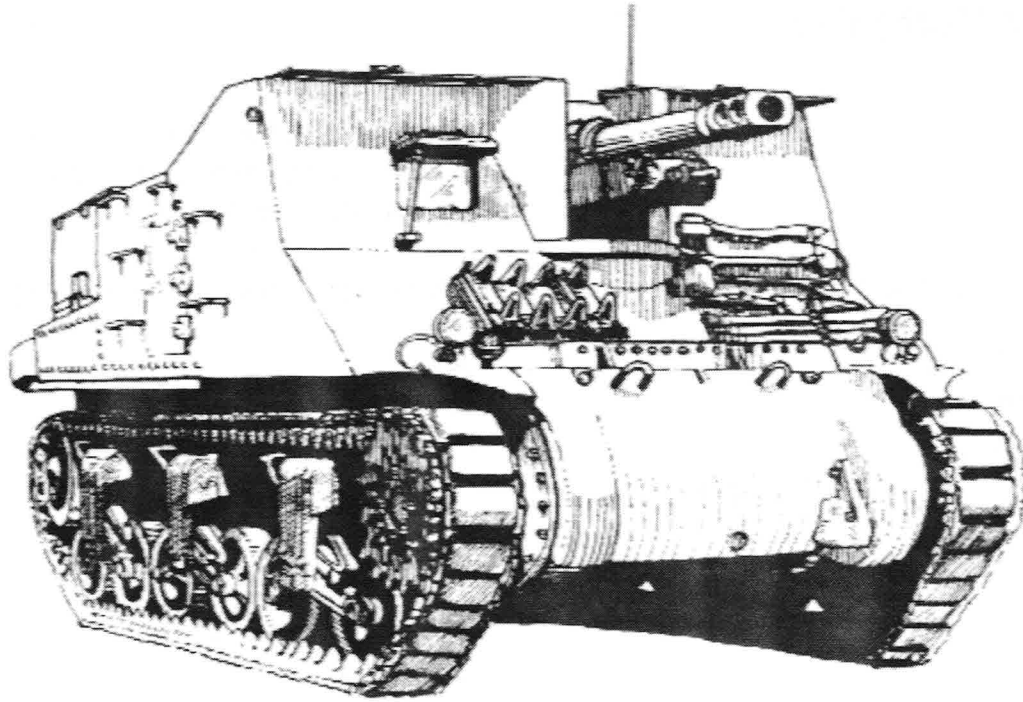
SP 25 pr Yeramba

Nomenclature:	Ordnance QF 25 pr Mark 2/1 on Mounting SP 25 pr (Aust) Mark 1 on Carrier, Grant SP 25 pr (Aust) Mark 1
Manufacturer/Designer:	Army Design Establishment/Ordnance Factory, Bendigo
Date of Introduction:	1949
Date of Withdrawal:	1956
Theatres Used:	Not used outside Australia
Ordnance:	
Weight:	8 cwt 31 qr (450 kg)
Length:	97.5 in (2,476 mm)
Calibre:	3.45 in (87.6 mm)
Breech:	Vertically sliding wedge
Firing Mechanism:	Percussion
Maximum Range:	13,400 yd (12,250 m)
MV:	1,700 f/s (518 m/s)
Ammunition:	
Type:	Separate
Nature:	HE, AP, Smoke
Fuses:	Percussion, Time
Weight:	25 lb (11.3 kg)
Charges:	4
Carriage:	
Type:	Mounting carried on modified tank chassis
Recoil:	Hydro-pneumatic
Top Traverse:	20° (354 mil) left and right
Elevation:	40° (708 mil)
Depression:	-9° (159 mil)
Rate of Fire:	5 rpm
Detachment Size:	6
Weight in Action:	281 tons (28,984 kg)

Comments

Yeramba had a GMC Twin Six diesel engine which gave a radius of action of 125 miles (200 km) with a maximum road speed of 25 mph (40 kph). It carried a maximum of 11 in of armour on the front of the hull, and its overall dimensions were: height 9 ft (2,740 mm); width 9 ft (2,740 mm); length 19 ft (5,791 mm). Ground pressure was 12 psi (83 kpa).

A total of 88 HE or smoke projectiles could be carried. Apart from personal weapons two, 303 in Bren guns were also carried in the fighting compartment. A No 19 wireless set was carried to provide communications.



**We have not abandoned our conventional weapons,
but are trying to keep a balanced capability to fight
either the atomic or the non-atomic war.**

General Maxwell D. Taylor
Chief of Staff
United States Army
3 Feb 1956

NEW POSTAL ADDRESS

All mail for **the Association**, except for matters concerning *Cascabel*, should be addressed to:

The Secretary,
RAA Assoc (Vic) Inc
101 Warralong Avenue
GREENSBOROUGH 3088

This address should now be used for Membership applications.

All mail for **the Editor of *Cascabel***, including articles and letters submitted for publication, should continue to be sent direct to:

The Editor
"Cascabel"
34 Richmond Avenue
CARRUM DOWNS 3201

(or e-mail to: rgcurtis@bigpond.com.au)

BOOK REVIEW



Beyond the Call, By Lindley A. Deacon, published and distributed by author, 2000, 210x145 mm, nine b&w photos, xii/100 pps, card cover. Available from Bill Deacon, 13 Wigram Street, SCAMANDER, TAS, 7215. \$19.95 incl postage in Australia.

This book is dedicated to the memory of all Australian nurses who served in any war. It was written with the assistance of the Department of Veterans' Affairs as part of the admirable 'Their Service - Our Heritage' commemorative program and must be counted as a valuable contribution to that scheme. Through it we can share the experiences of a number of brave women whose stories deserve to be told, re-told and preserved for future generations of Australians. Our young country needs to know, and treasure memories of the generation who, with great courage in the Great War, set enduring standards for all of us.

Central to this book are the brief biographies of seven nurses who, for their brave actions during the Great War were awarded the Military Medal by King George V. In all cases their awards related to German aerial attacks which struck medical installations a short distance behind the allied lines. Four of these awards were made to nurses of the 2nd Casualty Clearing Station (2CCS) as a result of their bravery and devotion to duty during a raid on 22 July 1917.

One of the sisters so recognised was the author's aunt whom he had never met. His interest being sparked, he became interested in the wider fields of the Australian Army Nursing Corps and their devoted service, together with the system of evacuation and handling of wounded of which they were such an important element during that war.

Included in the book is a moving narrative by a Sister O'Dwyer of her experiences in a CCS during 1917, together with anecdotes from other nurses. What comes through very clearly is the unrelenting toil, the long hours, the fear, constant concern for those in their care, an ability to 'make do' in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions and the sheer bravery of these devoted nurses. Stories from stretcher bearers expand on this.

The book is an interesting and somewhat curious melange of anecdote, statement, quote, fact, comment and verse put together in a somewhat disconcerting order. It sadly suffers from the lack of attention from an editor with a sound knowledge of Australian military organisation and history. Notwithstanding, Deacon has ably projected the horror of that 'war to end all wars' and the part played by our nurses to give some comfort to the real victims of it among whom they too should be included.

John Whitelaw

MAJGEN Whitelaw, in his accompanying letter, pointed out that, unlike his usual book reviews, this one has nothing to do with Artillery as such, but I am sure that you will all agree that the Nurses, while having their own Corps, will always be a part of every member's Corps, including Artillery. Ed.

LLOYD SEARLE'S WAR

AT SEA AGAIN

We could buy beer each night at five on board and I had been off it for a few days waiting for my birthday on the 25th. When this came about a few of us lined up with a mess bucket each and filled them. Dave bought an extra one to keep the party going and believe me it did. We finished the ale and then up into the swimming tub on deck. One guy in uniform came over and told us to be quiet as we were making a hell of a din. He should not have been so close to the pool when he said it because he finished up in the thing clothes and all. It was a lively birthday. The battleship steamed back through the convoy to commemorate either ANZAC Day or my birthday I don't know which as they both fall on the same day. We stood on parade at attention while the band played "Rule Britannia" and "Australia will be there".

ADEN

Arrived at Aden and refuelled but did not get shore leave. Aden is a typical example of an outpost of Empire. It is nestled between towering mountains with coastal guns facing out to sea and wireless masts on top of the cliffs. They have wonderful refuelling arrangements where five or six ships can refuel at the one time. There are dozens of vultures flying over the town all day long. There appear to be a few English people there although the population is mostly native. They came out to our ship in canoes and were diving for money we would throw overboard. They were not amused when they found most of the coins they were diving for were the brass buttons from our giggle jackets.

EL KANTARA

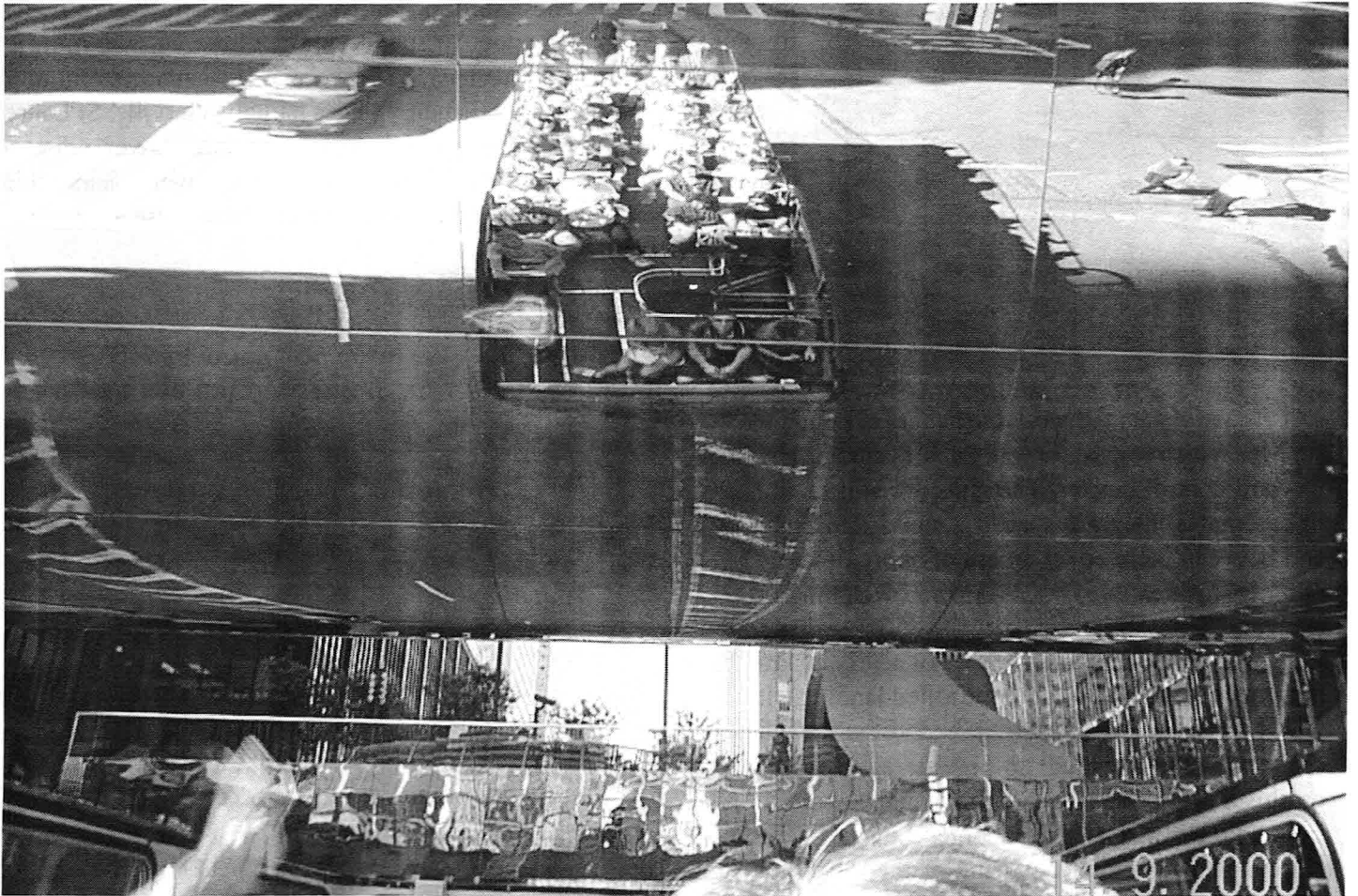
We arrived at El Kantara on the Suez Canal and had a meal and then disembarked and boarded a train headed for Palestine. We arrived in the morning after travelling all night and it certainly looked a strange place after Australia. The part of the line where our train stopped was lined with wogs selling oranges. They were dirt-cheap and one of our chaps bought about fifty for a pack of playing cards. The wog evidently thought they were some form of currency. We soon settled down in our camp at Beit Jirja and after three days moved down to Deir Sunied where we learnt to be permanent guards.

PALESTINE

We struck guard every second night regularly. When we took over our guns and vehicles it seemed to make us realise what we were here for that is apart from grogging on most of us had seen similar trucks and guns in the newsreels but these were ours. They were certainly made for rough use as we soon discovered when we went out on manoeuvres for days on end. The country we travelled over at most times was very rugged and we wondered how on earth vehicles could handle such country. We soon learnt that the desert is not all sand and that in places it is almost solid rock. We had to dig in everywhere we went with the result that a few pick and shovel handles were soon used up and had to be replaced, but the QM Store seemed to have a never ending supply of them and we still had to DIG, DIG, DIG. We often dug up relics from the last war and did manoeuvres over the trenches of the 1914-1918 War. We also learnt what a mirage looks like and we weren't even thirsty at the time. It was a bit strange sleeping out in the open for a while.

A whole new family of weapons are taking over artillery roles; however the role of field artillery remains essentially unchanged. It is still the most explosive force the Army possesses.

General Maxwell D. Taylor
Chief of staff
United States Army



A Puzzler Photo

You might like to write in and tell us what you think it is all about

It was sent in by

Alistair (Jock) Macdonald

Ex-W02 132 Div Loc Bty

Whose Letter to the Editor and other photos are on the opposite page.

Letters to the Editor

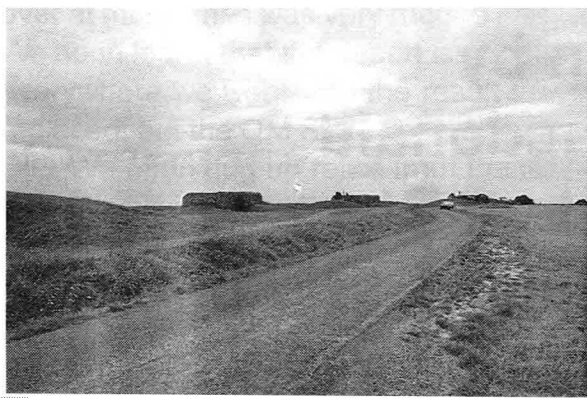
Dear Ed,

Having some Scottish friends visit us last year, we were invited to spend some time with them at their little holiday house at Trevieres in France. Visiting the local library to find the village on the map I found that it was about half way between Cherbourg and Caen and close to Bayeaux, but near to what is now called Omaha Beach.



The beach nowadays is a pleasant area with houses along the front of the dunes, it is a popular spot in summer time for swimming and sailboarding. On the 6th of June 1944 however it was a different affair. The area was basically three small villages namely Vierville, St Laurent and Colleville sur Mer. The landings areas were spread over a distance of nearly 100 km as the crow flies, from Utah to Sword. Some thirty artillery batteries were ranged along this area, these were a mixture of coastal and naval batteries.

We visited the surviving battery at Longues sur Mer Which consists of four guns, magazine and forward control bunker. The guns are still in situ in casemates, they are spaced about 100m apart and between them cover an arc of approximately 180°. Using a calibre of 152 mm and weighing in at about 20 tons, they were capable of firing six 45 kg rounds per minute to a distance of nearly 20 km thus making them a threat to the allied landings. It was the task of the cruiser Ajax and the French cruiser Georges Leygues to provide counter fire on this battery. At 0735 hrs the Longues battery became the target of the Georges Leygues. The battery then commenced firing at the destroyer Emmons and the battleship Arkansas stationed off Omaha. The relative accurate fire from the battery was attributed to the relative accuracy of the gun laying as direction had to be done by the gunners using individual optical sights. Allied bombing had destroyed the coastal radar installations and bombing had wrecked the underground comms. cable which the Germans had buried to a depth of 2 meters. 1000 lb bombs around the gun areas left craters 7m deep and 20 m in diameter.



Arkansas and Emmons replied with 12 in and 5 in respectively, they were joined by the French cruiser Montcalm. The guns then turned onto Gold and attacked the Bulolo forcing it to weigh anchor. Ajax opened fire at 11,000 m The shore battery went silent. At 0620 it recommenced as the assault forces were landing and had to be silenced. Ajax and Aronaut intervened and decisively and knocked out three of the four guns. The battery recommenced firing in the afternoon. The French responded quickly despite Ajax demanding that they stop firing. Georges Leygues twice hit the battery

and finally silenced it. In the aftermath, the Garrison of 184 personnel surrendered to the 2nd Battalion of the Devonshire Regt. On the 7th of June they survived without any injuries, although a 1000 lb bomb landed on the third casemate. The concrete only crumbled probably to poor quality concrete, courtesy of the conscript labour used to construct it.

The coastal defences of the "Atlantic Wall" were to have 12,000 bunkers built by May 1st 1943. By this date however only half of this number had been built utilising 291,000 men. Guns were acquired from many countries utilising different makes and many calibres thus causing a logistics nightmare.

Finally this area of Normandy is full of places to those interested in military history including the remains of the Mulberry harbour which was floated across the channel and was used to supply the assault on Europe by the Allies. At Arromanches is a unique theatre which shows a 360° movie of the landings mixed with today's film of the area. A museum is located in the town and pride of place outside it in A1 condition is a British 25 pdr.

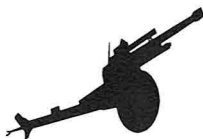
The photos show the guns, the mulberry harbour remains and Omaha beach.

Also a quiz photo you might like to use (*see front cover Ed.*). If Merv Taggart can confuse 'em I think I can go one better.

Regards

Alistair (Jock) Macdonald
Ex-W02 132 Div Loc Bty

Thanks Jock for your very informative and entertaining letter and photos. I am sure the members will enjoy trying to sort out your mystery photo on the front cover. Ed



Dear Ed,

May I say firstly you are doing a great job as Editor and the regular improvement in content and production is a credit to you.

My "active duty" with the Association is not active (other than life membership). but I read with interest each edition. I was hoping to join in last year's visit to Puckapunyal. but not to be; perhaps next time.

No doubt you have already received phone calls and letters about the "Nostalgia Time" photograph on page 9 of the October edition.

This photo is of 2/15 Fd Regt Officers at Batman Avenue. At the time I was CO (back row, 3rd from right), Peter Hemingway was 2IC (back row in centre) and Warren Barnard (Barney) was Adjutant (back row last on right).

I am sure others (David Osborne, Neil Hamer, etc) can put names on most of those present.

In that photo were a number of "Young Officers" which Barney took under his wing to bring them through training and exams, and ultimately produced proficient gunners. During this time we managed (with difficulty) to raise a third battery within the Regiment.

Keep up the good work. Sincerely.



Dennis Murphy
(LTCOL D. M. Murphy RFD, ED)



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PARADE CARD 2001

January 2001

No functions or meetings during this month

February 2001

- 4 Church Parade
- 15 Committee Meeting

March 2001

- 15 Committee Meeting

April 2001

- 19 Committee Meeting
- 25 ANZAC Day

May 2001

- 17 Committee Meeting

June 2001

- 21 Committee Meeting
- 29 Gunner Dinner

July 2001

- 1 Reserves Day Parade
- 19 Committee Meeting
- 28 Arty Ball

August 2001

- 16 Committee Meeting

September 2001

- 20 Committee Meeting

October 2001

- 18 Committee Meeting
- 25 AGM

November 2001

- 15 Committee Meeting

December 2001

- 2 St Barbara's Day
- 6 Committee Meeting

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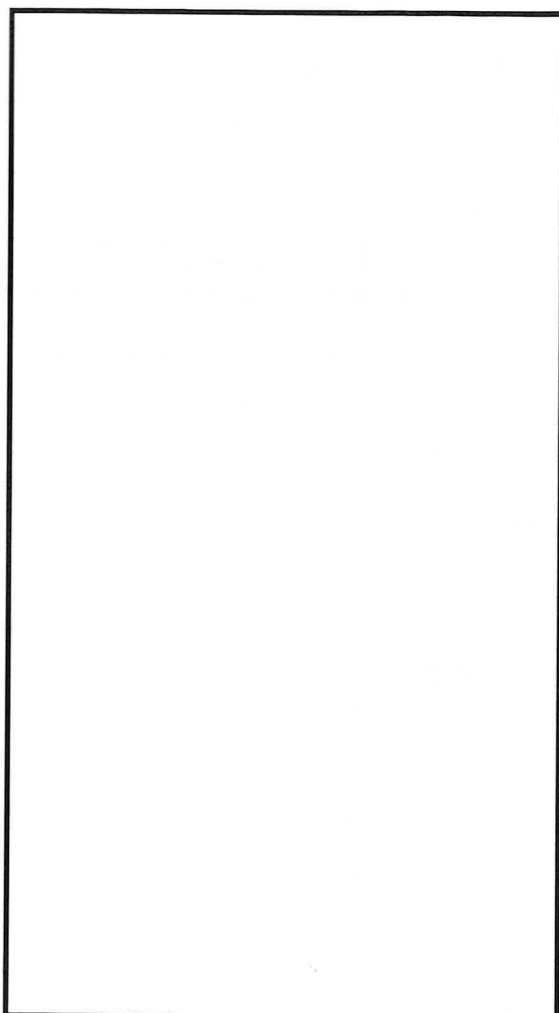
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