

Centurion

February 2019

1st ARMoured REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC. NEWSLETTER

Reg No AO044180K

The new broom at RHQ

CO – LTCOL John Holloway



RSM – WO1 Andrew Donnelly



R2IC – MAJOR Jonathan Bennett



ADJT – CAPTAIN Thomas Bittner



Theatres of Operation

Japan

Vietnam - Battle Honours
◦ Coral - Balmoral
◦ Hat Dich
◦ Binh Ba

Rhodesia

Cambodia

East Timor

Iraq

Solomon Islands

Afghanistan

Our Soldiers Today

(Click on)

<http://armynews.realviewdigital.com/#folio=1>

Newsletter Contributions

The views and comments expressed in this Newsletter are those of the individual contributor and not necessarily endorsed by the current committee.

Whilst every care regarding all information is exercised, it should not necessarily be taken as absolute historical fact.



1ST ARMOURD
REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION INC.

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From The Editor's Desk

A number of 1AR ex members intend to gather in Mt Beauty to march on ANZAC Day so if any Association member up that way wish to march they can attend. Details from Les Snelling bravo.13@bigpond.com

WARNING ORDER

We are now around seven to nine months out from our next AGM (must be held before the 30 November) and time for positions on the Management Committee to be considered.

In my case, I will not be nominating for the position of Communications Manager, which includes Website Administrator and Newsletter Editor, along with design standards for letter heads, badging, brochures and flyers etc., as well as supporting the Secretary with Communications to members and committee.

Come July, I will have been producing the Newsletter for 3 years and although I have enjoyed the association with this production now is the time to move on and start much planned travel with my wife Wendy while we still can, which will include getting away from Macedon's cold winters.

Also, I think we need a younger member to take on such things as an improved and updated website using modern day techniques and products.

I have received many encouraging and positive comments in the past for some of the work done on the Newsletters, for which I am very thankful.

So we need new blood

The jobs of Newsletter Editor and Webmaster don't necessarily have to be done by the same person and can be easily separated.

Anyone needing more information about these roles are encouraged to contact me on either the email or phone numbers below and I will be pleased to provide as much assistance as I can. The Newsletter can be done in any format a person so desires but I have simply been able to do it using Microsoft Word. The Newsletter is very important to a number of our members and can be very rewarding for the Editor to produce this product.

Below is a picture of the new Association lapel badge that were received last week. The Secretary has commenced distribution and hopes to complete the distribution – including new membership cards – within the next two months.

My final Newsletter will be in May and by that time I hope to be able to announce the new Editor and Webmaster.

Yours Faithfully,

Peter

Peter Lukeis

Editor

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PATRON

MAJGEN Craig Orme DSC, AM, CSC, (Retd)

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Links to Web Sites and Face Book Pages

Web Sites

1st ARMoured REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC.

<http://www.paratus.org.au>

RAAC CORPORATION

www.raaccorpltd.org.au

ROYAL TANK REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

www.royaltankregiment.com

Facebook Pages

1st ARMD REGT ASSOC MEMBERS ONLY

www.facebook.com/groups/112757492512931/

1st ARMD REGT SOCIAL PAGE

www.facebook.com/groups/106848019339045/

1ST ARMoured REGIMENT FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/1ArmdRegt/



Report from the Secretary - Russ James

E: secretary@paratus.org.au

P: Secretary, 1st Armoured Regiment Association Inc.

PO Box 301, Mentone. VIC 3194

Please note new address above

B: Bendigo Bank

1st Armoured Regiment Association Inc.

BSB: 633-000 Account: 161498159



Report from the Secretary

It is just over six (6) months since the present Management Committee was elected at the Association's AGM in Canberra. In the last newsletter I wrote that I believed we had kicked some goals and I believe that this trend has continued. What has been achieved?

Membership – since 14 July 2018, 29 new members have joined the Association and 58 lapsed members have renewed their membership from 2017 and 2018. Efforts to contact lapsed members continues through personal emails, telephone calls and individual letters. A recent audit of the Membership Database revealed that we now have 475 paid up members including a number who have paid their members subscriptions up to and including 2024.

Executive and Management Committee meetings – continue to be held on a regular basis over the internet and copies of the minutes from all Committee (Executive and Management) meetings are distributed to Association members via email. Our next Management Committee meeting should be held in the fourth week in February.

New Policies, Procedures and Documentation:

- Criteria for nominating and the process for approving life membership of the Association is to be discussed and hopefully finalised at the next Management Committee meeting
- An Expression of Interest (including Terms of Reference) for the Association's next major reunion (2021) is also to be finalised at the next Management Committee meeting
- A document outlining the Association's attitude to the provision of services (welfare, health and well-being) provided by Ex-Service Organisations and Groups for Veterans, Ex Service people and their families is to be finalised at the next Management Committee meeting
- A Memorandum of Understanding between the Tank Museum and the Association is in the final stages of drafting following a meeting at the Tank Museum attended by the President, Vice-President, Secretary of the Association and the Assistant Manager of the Museum on 24 January 2019 (what a joy it was to be back in Puckapunyal on a day when the temperature hovered around 43 degrees in the shade – how did I live and work there for around 12 years?)

- Drafting has commenced on the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board (Board of Management) for ARN 169 005. The Board is to be responsible, on behalf of the Association, for the management and maintenance of 'our' Centurion.

The Immediate Future

- Membership renewal notices have been mailed to 147 members whose Membership fees are due
- New Membership badges have been received and 100 have been dispatched. The remainder are to be sent to paid up members over the next 6 months or so
- Communication Strategy – only two responses were received in response to our request for suggestions. Drafting on the strategy, which is to include recommendations for changes to our existing website, is to commence in three (3) to four (4) weeks,
- By-Laws – subject to other demands, drafting work should commence in around a month or two. Watch this space.

News Members:

Peter Blackwood
Ross Moody
Michael Crossley
Phil Lawrence

Donations:

Kevin Ramsdale
Gerry McCormack
Anonymous donator
David Thompson

Unidentified Membership Fees

During 2018 the Association received five (5) membership payments without any Membership details. If you paid your membership fees during 2018 and did not receive a new membership card or you have stopped receiving Association emails and newsletters, please contact the Secretary at secretary@paratus.org.au

IMPORTANT

Contact Details – as indicated in the last newsletter it is important that our membership contact details are up to date. If in doubt, please advise the Secretary at secretary@paratus.org.au if you have changed your address, your phone numbers or your email address/s in the last couple of years!

Essence of an officer and a gentleman

By Lt. Col John Pearce
Herald Sun Saturday 15th December 2018

The first man to drive a Centurion tank on Australian soil and an officer who played a vital role in bringing 7000 Australian troops safely home from Vietnam for Christmas 1971.

John Frederick Williams will be fondly remembered as a "man on a mission".

John passed away at Epworth Hospital in Richmond on November 24th 2018.

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John passed away at Epworth Hospital in Richmond on November 24.

Born on December 14, 1931, in West Bromwich, England, he spent his boyhood years living with the prospect of death.

Having lived through the Blitz, he was already a resilient person capable of handling the stresses that underpin a military career. Yet it was his unbridled energy, positive attitude in adversity and passion for a cause that helped him achieve what he did. In 1948, the family migrated to Australia and settled in Parkes, NSW. John spent his teenage years working on a farm, learning carpentry and drafting for the Department of Main Roads, and joined the 6th Royal NSW Mounted Rifles reserve Regiment. He was quickly promoted to sergeant and was immediately accepted into the inaugural Officer Cadet School course at Portsea in 1952. Graduating from Portsea with a medal for field work, John was the only officer sent to Armoured Corps and was posted to Korea in September 1952. He celebrated his 21st birthday while serving on the Korean front line. In less than four years, he had gone from farmhand to the army's most qualified Centurion tank officer.

On his return, in 1953, John was charged with the deployment of 12 ex-British Army Centurions from Melbourne Docks to Puckapunyal. Lt Williams led this unusual convoy along the Hume Highway.

It was in "Pucka" where he met and later married Shirley Margaret Hayes. They raised four children together.

In 1971, John was posted to Australian HQ Saigon, where the now Major Williams planned and executed the withdrawal of the entire Australian contingent of more than 7000 soldiers in less than four months.

"Operation Timothy" began in November 1970. Maj Williams and his team had the idea to get most of the troops home to spend Christmas 1971 with their families.



While a logistic nightmare, once they had the plan, it was the meticulous attention to detail, skilled co-ordination and the sheer energy and drive of Williams and his team, that made the mission a success.

On December 9, the last Australian infantry battalion in South Vietnam sailed home for Australia on board HMAS Sydney, just in time for Christmas.

In 1972, Maj Williams was

rewarded for his efforts with a posting to PNG, becoming the next Commanding Officer of

Murray Barracks. It marked a significant international posting for an aspiring CO, following in the footsteps of former governor-general Michael Jeffery.

Unfortunately, the sudden and tragic illness of his daughter, Brenda, meant he could not complete his post. He requested a compassionate posting to Melbourne so Brenda could receive the best medical attention.

Balancing family and military life was difficult, but Maj Williams put his family first, even though it meant his dream of becoming a Regular Army CO was now over.

In late 1974, he was asked to become CO of the 4th19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment. This famous Regiment has a proud history dating to the 4th light Horse - the only Australian unit to serve on all three fronts in the Great War, including Gallipoli, Palestine and France, and most notably, the charge at Beersheba in 1917. During the 1970s, the army was at its lowest level of popularity. Maj Williams inherited an under-equipped and poorly funded unit, depleted in manpower and at risk of disbanding. However, he was adamant he could restore pride and honour.

He embarked on a massive recruiting drive and organised two important "Freedom of Entry" ceremonies - an honour bestowed to a unit with historic ties to a region in appreciation of their dedication and service.

These included Kyneton in 1976, and notably Melbourne in 1977, where the march was part of the Moomba parade.

The unit also marched at the Queen's Silver Jubilee parade in 1978 and featured armoured vehicles alongside traditional horses.

The events boosted morale, but importantly helped bring the regiment back in touch with local communities, a high priority for Maj Williams.

Within three years, he had turned the regiment into Australia's largest Army Reserve armoured unit, all the while supporting a dying daughter, a growing family and starting his civilian career as a builder.

Soldiering was in his blood - he loved the camaraderie it endeared and relished the challenges.

He continued his association with the army until his death. Right to the end, he was a fighter displaying his characteristic mental strength, courage, dignity and

graciousness - the essence of an officer and much-admired gentleman. He is survived by his three children and 9 grandchildren

"Back in the days when we were on Centurions....."

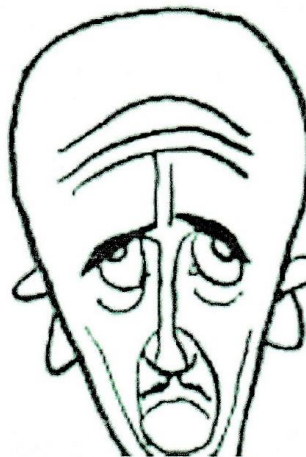
For the blokes that can remember

The Driver



Here is a good time to see what a Driver looked like. The Driver is a living sacrifice to the engine. He is selected because he has short legs and massive over developed feet. His mind is untainted by education, so the massive amounts of dials, switches, steering levers and gear stick hold no terror for him. As he spends all his time in his separate compartment and even sleeps there as well as writing his letters under the dash light. He is a good chap to keep away from, mainly as he doesn't even come out to bathe or wash his clothes. The reason being that he is mostly covered in a large amount of grease, which is difficult to wash out. He has a very strong left leg. He is of no use anywhere else in the Tank

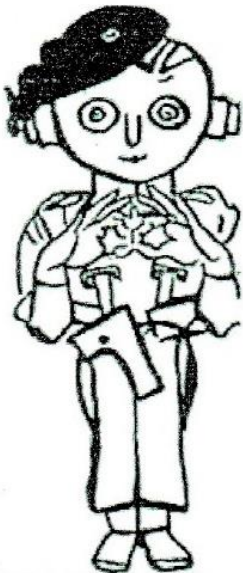
The Crew Commander



The Crew Commander is in control of the complete tank, instructing the Driver, Gunner and Operator in their duties. His commands to the driver are always proceeded with, "Driver speed up, speed up.' To the gunner with a sharp kick mostly to his head. To the operator with much screaming and gestures mostly rude. He has no hair and if he has he does he does not keep it for long.

The Gunner

The gunner spends all his time in it close confined space with his eye pressed against a gunner's sight and his ape like brow indented into the sight's fetid sponge. He is continually kicked in the head and shoulders by the crew commander, who more often than not convey his message to the gunner in this manner. He normally has one hand on the Elevating wheel and another on the Travis wheel while his index finger fires the 20 lb gun. His feet control the fire of the .30 cal and .50 cal machine guns. There are around four dozen other switches, dials and controls for him to user mostly at the same time. When not firing the guns he is not required for any other purpose and spends his time reading war comics.



The Operator

The operator spends his time, netting in the two, sometimes three radios, a job requiring some dial turning and other secret actions that are required every eight minutes on each radio.

Any man with well cared for fingernails and pink ears, will be selected as a wireless operator. At the start, some sort of elementary process known as "Netting In", which is the most roundabout way yet devised by man to create utter chaos. When he is familiar!" with the three fundamental formulae for muddle, pandemonium and misdirection of energy, he is turned loose. He also is required to convey messages to people, load three guns, clear all stoppages, rearrange ammo from bins around the tank and also under the floor, so as the ready bins have a full load at all times.

He spends his spare time cleaning his area of the Turret, which is mostly kept in an immaculate condition, as is his uniform, fingernails and hairdo.

In his spare time he listens into civilian radio stations, mostly Vera Lynne.

In the case of the operator, he is a nervous type as he spends a lot of time clearing stoppages in guns (that could explode and kill him) keeping his hands free of the breach block, which can remove hands, fingers or even arms, in its recoil. Jumps out of the way of very hot ejected 20 lb ammo cases, which roll around his general area. And hope, that while the turret is in the special position so as he can extract the rounds under the floor and hopes no one will traverses the turret and take off more fingers, arms or legs. An operator is a very careful chap. He is also a very nervous chap. Never approach from the rear without warning if he is wearing a shoulder holster



1ST ARMOURD
REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION INC.

Honour Roll

Killed In Action

WO2 J.A. Bond
WO2 J. Stone
TPR J. Kerr

Died of Wounds

TPR M. Hannaford
WO2 T. Phillips

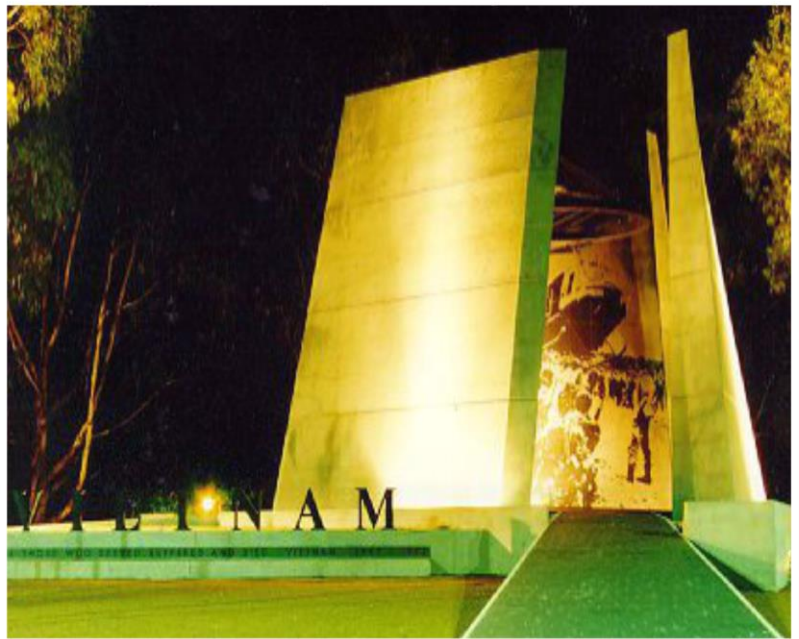
DOW Post-Vietnam

WO1 L. S. Swarbrick
WO2 N. Lowes
TPR P G. Barwick
TPR R. S. Bellott

Killed Accidentally

LT A. J. Massey
SGT R. Morrison
SGT R. G. Murray
TPR A. M. Jordan
TPR A. Patterson
CFN B. Silver (LAD)

Dedicated to those 1st Armoured Regiment
Soldiers that made the ultimate sacrifice



VALE:



Paul Fricke

From Graeme 'Wol' Walker.

24 December 2018

It has been brought to my attention this afternoon that Paul Fricke (2 Tp A Sqn 85 to early 90s) has passed away in hospital in Townsville as a result of a MVA a few days ago, in Cairns.

It is my understanding that Paul was riding a motorcycle (one of his great loves) and that two cars were also involved.

Paul had transferred to RAEME (aviation) around the mid-90s after completing his tenure as CC 14B.

Rest in Peace Paul. (Paul is in the centre in the chequered shirt; taken in Tidworth UK Mar-Apr 86 - EX North Star-Southern Cross. He was driver CS 12 at the time.

(Photo courtesy Peter Duncombe)



Bruce Briggs

John Briggs posted the following on Engine Deck on 18 Jan 2019.

It is with a heavy heart that I advise the passing of Bruce Briggs, Bruce was a member of the Regiment in the early 80's and passed away this morning at the QE2 hospital Brisbane after a short battle with a tumour. He was my brother in life and brother in arms RIP mate.





Kenneth Campbell (CAM) McPherson passed away 3rd February 2019

Cam has been a highly regarded and respected member of the 1st Armoured Regiment Association for many years and as a result of his steadfast commitment and highly valued contribution to the Association he was awarded full life membership. He will be sadly missed by all his good friends.

The funeral of Cam McPherson was the first time that the Regimental Flag was used as a coffin pall. Several references to moving to the green fields beyond were made during the Eulogies and a detailed explanation of the 'Mud and the Blood to the Green fields', as symbolised in the Regimental flag, was provided.

Cam's Army and Civilian history in his own words

Following my enlistment as a regular soldier in June 1968, Basic Training at 1RTB at Kapooka in NSW and posted to the 1st Armoured Regiment at Puckapunyal in VIC, I underwent 3 months Corps Training with HQ Squadron qualifying as a Gunner/Signaller. At the time, B Squadron was currently in the process of deploying to Vietnam and A Squadron was being raised.

After Corps Training, I was posted to 1 Troop, A Squadron under the command of Troop Leader, Lt Frank Meredith as his Radio Operator/Gunner. Following Corps and Field Operations, in March of 1969, I was encouraged by our RSM WO1 Ivan Maher, to undergo NCO Training, which I did and qualified in all three subjects, a) thorough knowledge of Armour.ie; Centurion Tanks and M113 APC's (Armoured Personnel Carriers), b) Man Management and c) Military Law. Even though qualified, I was informed that I would have to wait until an opening occurred before being eligible for promotion.

In July 1969, I embarked with several others as the first contingent of A Squadron on a now defunct Pan Am flight to Vietnam. On arrival at Nui Dat, I spent 3 weeks posted to Forward Delivery Troop Detachment to acclimatize to the conditions before being posted to a combat unit. On the 21st of August '69 I was posted to 1 Troop B Squadron where I found my previous Troop Leader, Lt Frank Meredith from A Squadron in Command.

As a replacement for departing B Squadron Personnel, I replaced the Gunner on the Troop Leaders Tank, Tango One. This position I held until the Troop Leaders Radio Operator, Lance Corporal Tom McLaughlin as a National Serviceman (a School Teacher from Brisbane) had finished his tour of duty and returned to Oz on the 3rd of December 69. After Tom's departure, Frank Meredith moved me back to my old position as his Radio Operator with the rank of Lance Corporal.

During early March 1970 whilst on Operations, the Crew Commander of Tango One Bravo took ill and returned to Nui Dat.



I cannot remember the exact details after all this time but there was no available Crew Commander at Forward Delivery Troop Detachment to replace him.

Lt Meredith asked me if I could take command of Tango One Bravo. I said that I could and did. Several weeks later Lt Meredith recommended my promotion to Corporal and later approved by our Squadron Commanding Officer, Major John Chipman. During mid-April there was a change of Command of the Troop with Lt Meredith promoted to Captain and posted to 1 Psych Ops Unit to be replaced by 2nd Lt Chris Prickett. I remained in command of Tango One Bravo until May.

My Crew at the time were the following, Trooper Bob O'Connor, Trooper Colin Milner and Trooper John Thatcher. In early May 1970 I was posted to Squadron HQ Troop to take command of their Tank until I returned to Australia on the 29th of July. After several months leave I returned to the Regiment and as a Corporal Instructor I was engaged in Field Training with C Squadron who were next to replace A Squadron in Vietnam. It was my role to simulate battle conditions they would likely encounter and with a team of young Troopers and the input of C Squadron Troop Commanders as to their movements on the Puckapunyal Range, I devised mock Mortar Attacks and Land Mine situations by having my team dig half metre holes in strategic positions advised by Troop Commanders as to where they would be operating, filling the holes with a plastic canister of Diesel and Sump Oil and a charge of C4 Explosive and a detonator with leads camouflaged to a hidden position by me.

As a Tank was in close proximity I would detonate the charge and the land would erupt with a loud "Bang" and lots of smoke and the Tank Crews would carry out their drill as trained.

Following these exercises, I was once again encouraged by our RSM WO1 Ivan Maher, to improve my career by furthering my education by enrolling in an Educational Course and enrolling in a clerical course. I applied for and passed an AACE2 Course conducted by HQ Puckapunyal Area Command, followed by a Clerical Course conducted by HQ Area Command at Broadmeadows in Melbourne. On my return to the Regiment I was posted as Corporal Clerk of HQ Squadron. In early 1972 my father suffered a heart attack and with no other family to look after him. My mother died in 1960, and with no brothers or sisters, I applied for a Compassionate Transfer to Melbourne to look after him. My Regiment Commanding Officer, Lt Col Kepper, contacted HQ 3MD and after an investigation by their Welfare Unit, they strongly recommended my transfer. Lt Col Kepper then wrote to me such a warm letter of understanding, informing me of my responsibilities to family and granting an immediate transfer to Melbourne.

As it turned out, I was transferred to the very unit that investigated my father's state of affairs, the Welfare Unit of HQ 3MD, where I served the remainder of my enlistment as a Sergeant Welfare Investigator.

I am a Mechanical and Structural Engineer. Following my Army service I spent the next 30 years in underground and surface mining. Initially 6 years involved in the construction of the Melbourne underground loop, after which I became a Quarry Manager for a number of companies including CSR, Readymix, Associated Quarries and Symonds Sands

For a number of years I was the Secretary of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Melton Sub- Branch and later, Appeals Officer of the Melton sub-branch of the RSL. I have belonged to many ESO's and have a passion and commitment the Australian Defence Veterans Party in Canberra to address the issues so long outstanding.





Mitch Grant

Mitchell Francis GRANT

Served in the Australian Regular Army from 19 Feb 1973 to 18 February 1979, followed by a period in the Army Reserve from 10 May 1983 to 13 Mar 1984.

Served with the 1st Armoured Regiment from 25 September 1973 to 18 Feb 1979 as a crewman driver/signaller and driver armoured fighting vehicle.



**Brigadier Peter Badman LVO,
m.i.d., jssc, psc, t.t.
4 Oct 1936 - 10 Feb 2019**

Eulogy by COL Gerald M McCormack (Rtd)

Brigadier Peter grew up and was schooled in Sydney before entering RMC Duntroon in January 1954. Along with his other Armoured Corps classmates Ken Phillips, Graeme Gill, and Peter Bourke, he graduated on 11 December 1957.

He then spent the normal amount of time at the Armoured Centre and 1st Armd Regt until November 1961. When, after having passed the Technical and Armoured Vehicle Aptitude Test, he was selected to attend the Long Armour Technical Course at the British Army's Royal Armoured Corps Centre at Bovington in Dorset UK.

Not only did he graduate and return to Australia with the qualification of "t.t." but he had met a young lady, Mary, who became his wife. Mary noted that Puckapunyal in the winter of July 1963 was a far cry from the green and pleasant land of England in the summer which they had just left. With their three children Michael, Margaret and Robert they became Team Badman.

Peter's time at Pucka then took on the familiar Armd Centre, 1st Armoured Regiment shuffle until, in October 1967 the announcement that a tank squadron would be sent to join the Australian Forces in South Vietnam. The squadron would be the then "working up" squadron which at that time was C Squadron. It was undergoing field training on the Pucka Range.

Peter was commanding B Squadron at the time and they had just finished their time as the "working up" squadron. Most of its men had been transferred to the Cavalry/APC squadrons as reinforcements for the squadron of M113s already in Vietnam.

Unbeknown to most of us, for some time there had been a tank rebuild and update programme underway at the workshops at Bandiana. It became a new version of the Centurion tank. Rebuilt from scratch and updated with new fuel tanks, an IR searchlight, gun sights, driving lights and a .50 Ranging Machine Gun. Thus a totally new system of sighting and firing had been developed which we had to quickly come to grips with.



Peter was selected to be the commander of the squadron to be formed, trained and then deployed on operations in less than five months' time. So, rather than being able to gather the 80 or so extra men needed to man the four troops each of four new type of tanks and train them into the largest tank squadron ever formed in Australia, Peter watched in disbelief while all of his soldiers went to the Jungle Training Centre at Canungra for three weeks to train as infantrymen! This was done in four rotations of about 40 men each time. The squadron rarely had everyone together anywhere.

At the same time the new tanks started to arrive and Peter was sent off to Canberra, and then South Vietnam for briefings. The squadron came together for a 4 day exercise before going on mandatory pre-embarkation leave Just before Christmas. Peter dryly commented that it was a good thing that the Armoured Corps had such motivated and flexible soldiers otherwise he would never have imagined that the operational deployment could have taken place.

We began to see what a motivated and flexible boss we were going to be working with. The trials of getting to Vietnam were minor compared to those of commencing operations there.

C Squadron may have been formed from rough stones but by the time we met our first test at Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral, Peter Badman had trained us, coached us, inspired us, melded and polished us, so that the Squadron then sparkled like a diamond.

The photos show how young and sparkling he looked at the end of his time as “Three Niner” (3-9), the Officer Commanding C Squadron. It is taken just after his 31st birthday as he was returning to Australia to attend the Command and Staff College as a student. Again he dryly noted that he had just finished the hardest command and staff assignment possible.

He need not have worried because six years later he was selected to go to another Staff College, this time on the staff.

After Vietnam and Staff College, Canberra beckoned and Peter moved between the Corps Directorate and various departments at Army HQ. This included the massive task of selecting the replacement tank for the venerable 1942/43 designed Centurion.

That appointment took Peter around the world until the US M60 and the German Leopard were selected to be tested under Australian conditions. As the New Tank Project drew to a close Peter had demonstrated an intellectual technical prowess to match his superior staff, training and combat prowess.

As noted above he was then selected to put his experiences before the junior majors selected to attend Staff College at the British Army's College at Camberley. Peter and Mary and their family represented Australia for two years there.

Towards the end of that posting in Dec 1976, a Royal Visit to Australia was being planned for Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. Peter was selected to become an Equerry to Her Majesty and so he deployed to London to assist with the planning of the visit. This naturally meant a number of meetings with the Royal Household and with the Queen.

For his services to the Queen during the planning and then as her Personal Escort during the visit he was made a Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order. In photographs of the visit you can see our black beret prominently displayed wherever Her Majesty is being met, opening a new building or just being handed a bunch of flowers. Peter's official appointment was the “Australian Equerry-in-Waiting to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II”.

After all that glitz and glamour it was back down to earth with a posting as a student of the Joint Service Staff College followed by a year as the Personal Assistant to the Chief of the General Staff, now known as the Chief of Army.



He must have done that demanding job well because he was promoted to Colonel and appointed to be the Chief of Staff of the 1st Division in Brisbane. Again, after that appointment, he was promoted, this time to Brigadier to command the 6th Brigade in Brisbane.

After Brisbane it was back to Canberra to begin a series of appointment at which Peter chaffed at being hindered by minutia and the convoluted politicking of the higher levels of Defence in general but in Army in particular. So much so that he resigned rather than dash his intellect on the shoals of mediocracy he found in the some of the high ranking staff there.

Within days he was asked by the Australian Defence Industry to join their company as a senior executive which he did. His Army resignation is dated just after his 51st birthday, a career of 31 years.

With ADI Peter was able to organize time to write, publish and build. At Narooma on the NSW South Coast about 3 hours from Canberra he and Mary found an old stone cheese factory on the banks of the lagoon to which dairy farmers had bought their milk by boat. The factory and jetty were turned into a magnificent family home centred around the lagoon.

There they welcomed old friends, and new, from all over Australia and the world. Friends made in their various moves came to join a warm and relaxed atmosphere of boating, good food and warm hospitality.

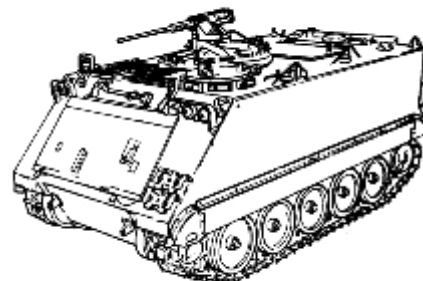
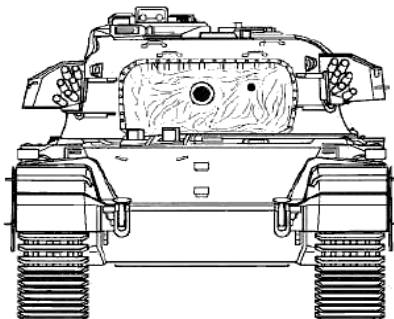
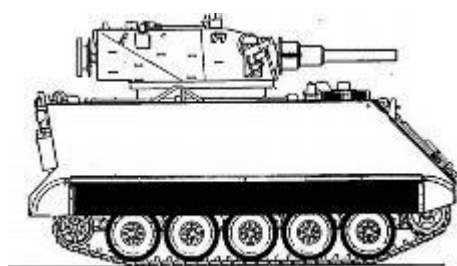
When Peter was diagnosed with his illness, and especially when he was hospitalized, Mary was with him constantly. She was able to move to a cottage by the nursing home than enabled her to share in his care and provide some warm familiarity.

Peter will be remembered militarily for his skill, his drive, his humanity and the Herculean efforts he put in to create a new tank squadron for war. It was larger than ever imagined, from new tanks, new soldiers and in terrain never considered by the designers and theoretical tacticians. Afterwards, militarily he was stymied by Canberra more than the jungle or the enemy we faced there.

Vale Peter, our Three Niner.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY TANK MUSEUM PUCKAPUNYAL

VIETNAM TRACKS - START UP DAY



The Australian Army Tank Museum is holding a Vietnam Tracks - start up day on Sunday March 31, 2019.



- An invitation is extended to all members of the 1st Armoured Regiment Association
- The cost per entry to the Museum will be \$5.00 for each attendee
- Entry to the base is by photo ID, but not before 1000
- Depending on Association member numbers, we will be holding a sausage sizzle on the day, so to help us cater please advise me names of all attendees via email to: vicepresident@paratus.org.au

They will be starting all the M113A1 vehicles that are runners, along with Centurion ARN 169005.

Access to the inside of the M113A1's will be possible.

Access to 169005 may not be available, due to safety concerns.

It will be a great day; the cut down Leopard is worth the visit alone.

169005 Report - February 2019

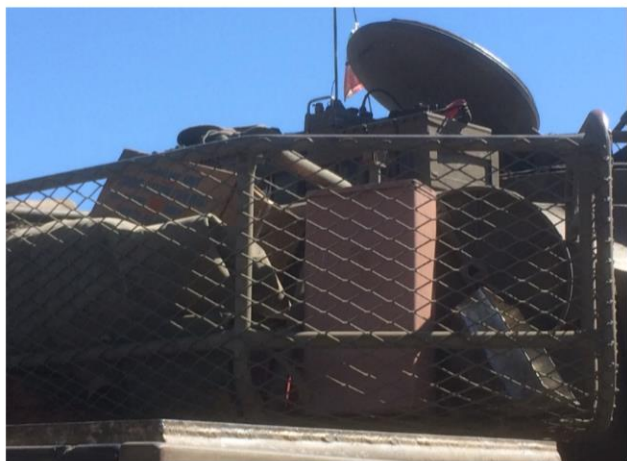
By Tubby Brooker

Centurion MK 3 tank 169005 arrived in Australia about October 1951, and was issued to the Armoured School at Puckapunyal for training. It remained with the Armoured School until late 1957, covering some 2600 miles during that time. Following a short period with the 1st Armoured Regiment, 169005 was sent for base overhaul in late 1958 and upgraded to MK 5 standard. With the overhaul completed, 169005 was again issued to the 1st Armd Regt, where it remained until mid - 1965, when it was sent for its second base overhaul.

This overhaul included an upgrade to MK5/1 standard, followed by further modifications to MK5/1 (Aust) standard during 1967.

It was issued again to the 1st Armd Regt in December 1967, being signed for by LT Jeff Adams. By the end of September 1968, 169005 was with 1 Forward Delivery Troop in South Vietnam. By early May 1969, 169005 was the Charlie C/S of 3 Troop B Squadron, having covered over 800 miles in combat operations.

The crew commander at the time was Whitney "Nobby" Clarke, the gunner was Chris Leihy and the operator was John Bartlett. As the usual driver was on leave, James Kerr took over, in what was to be his first operation. *The usual driver was TPR Wayne Stevens, who was burnt and blinded when an RPG passed across the front of his driver's compartment. TPR Kevin Skinner replaced him. That evening, Skinner was WIA by RPG shrapnel, Skinner was 'dusted off' on May 9 and was replaced by Jim Kerr.* On 13 May 1969, 169005 detonated a large mine which extensively damaged the hull area of the driver's compartment. Jim Kerr was killed instantly, and Chris Leihy was wounded. The tank was recovered back to Vung Tau and subsequently returned to Australia aboard HMAS Jeparit.



25 set in place

Rebuilt at 4 Base Workshops Bandiana, during the latter part of 1969, using a replacement hull sourced from New Zealand, 169005 was then issued to the 1st Armd Regt at Puckapunyal where it remained for most of the 1970s.



Commanders MG mount fitted

169005 completed its long service career on a high note. As C/S 12B named "Ancient", it was crew commanded by Peter Branagan when it formed part of the winning troop of Paratus Cup in 1976.

It later took part in the last all - Centurion Cambrai Day Parade at Puckapunyal. Sent to long term storage in 1977, it was sold to Combat Vehicles Australia Pty Ltd in 1989. Passing through a collector's hands in the interim, 169005 was acquired by retired LTCOL Peter Jarratt, a long serving RAAC officer and former CO of 1st Armd Regt, who on sold it to the Association in 2010.

The tank has been maintained as a working exhibit and is located in the Australian Army Tank Museum, Puckapunyal.



Parked next Swedish IKV 91



From April 2014 through to April 2018, 169005 has gone through an extensive mechanical overhaul, mainly due to a non-functioning steering brake linkage.

Over the years the build-up of debris under the RH fuel tank had caused the linkage to seize through the opening in the bulkhead.

To fix this we had to remove the fuel tank and oil tank in the transmission compartment. We also noticed a large amount of oil splatter in the compartment which we assumed to be a clutch seal problem. It had also impacted on the fan housing which was rendered less than effective. This meant removing the fan housings and cleaning all parts fully along with the transmission compartment.



Our troubles weren't over yet. We also discovered oil coming from the exhaust port of the main engine, although not terminal it was not far off.

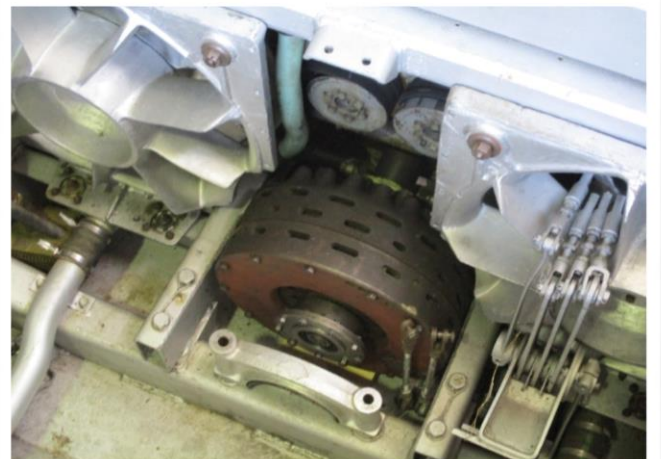


We thought it would be pointless doing all the other work and not replacing the main engine. The Association did not have the funds to pay for another engine, and as it turned out later an Aux Gen motor. The museum saved the day by providing both motors.

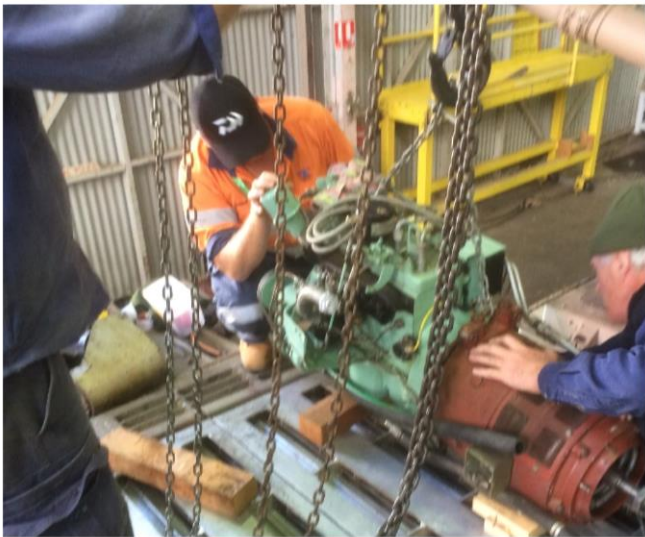
It was decided to strip out the hull completely, clean all parts and replace them all back again repairing anything found damaged along the way.



With all the cleaning completed time to refit all the major components starting with the main engine.



After 6000+ hours of works between four people it came the days to start up the main engine, but there seemed to be a lack of fuel getting to the carbys. We reluctantly made the decision to remove the carbys to check them. This was a mammoth task due to having to remove the inlet manifold as well. Once we had the carbys on the bench the problem was obvious, the preservative added to the engine had gummed up all the working parts of the carbys.



Once cleaned and tested we added new gaskets and replaced them back on the main engine.

The engine now started first try. Blew a far bit of smoke as it burnt out the preservative residue. 005 was given a good run in the confines of the museum and all systems seemed to function well.

Most of the team that worked on the project with the exception of John Blackwell, had not done as much detailed work as was required to complete the rebuild. But we had sufficient knowledge of the centurion to enable us to tackle the task that wasn't expected to be so extensive.

005 took the outgoing CO on a tank strip run before he was posted out and the tank performed extremely well. The CO was suitably impressed.

Newsletter Editor Wanted for the 'Centurion'

**See Editors Desk
Page 2**



Website Administrator (Webmaster)

**Wanted for the 1st Armoured
Regiment Association Web Site**

www.paratus.org.au

See Editors Desk Page 2





Australian Government

Department of Veterans' Affairs

New Veterans' Covenant, card and lapel pin

27/10/2018 Brian Hartigan editor@militarycontact.com

Veterans and their families are at the centre of a fresh package of initiatives from the Morrison Government to recognise their vital role and service to Australia.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said the government understood the home front was just as important as the front line.

"Our government will develop an Australian Veterans' Covenant that will be enacted in legislation so the nation can recognise the unique nature of military service and support veterans and their families," Mr Chester said.

"Like the United Kingdom Armed Forces Covenant, the Australian Veterans' Covenant is for the Australian community to recognise the service and sacrifice of the men and women who commit to defend the nation, and pledge their commitment to support veterans and their families.

"As part of this Veterans' Covenant, a new Australian Veterans' Card and an Australian Veterans' Lapel Pin will make it easier for all Australians to recognise and respect the unique contribution that veterans have made to Australia and for our veterans to reconnect with others who have served.

"As we have seen throughout the Invictus Games and in the lead up to the Centenary of Armistice, Australians want to acknowledge and show respect for our veterans who have given so much in their service.

"Businesses, government and community organisations can also play their part in recognising and respecting those who have served.

"The card and the pin can help these organisations identify veterans when they aren't wearing their uniform or medals, so they can offer discounts and extra support.

"The new card and lapel pin will, for the first time, enable everyone across the nation to recognise and acknowledge the unique nature of military service and support the more than 300,000 veterans in Australia and their families."



Mr Chester said the Prime Minister would be writing to businesses and communities to urge them to recognise the service of our veterans.

"In addition to the record \$11.2 billion annual support our government delivers for veterans and their families, we will invest \$11.1 million in these measures to deliver a national approach to recognise veterans and will further consult defence and veterans communities in coming weeks.

"We will also deliver \$6.7 million to develop the SoldierOn Fussell House accommodation facility to be co-located at the Concord Repatriation Hospital in Sydney that the NSW Berejiklian Government is investing more than \$340 million to rebuild.

"This includes the National Centre for Veterans Health – an Australian first, state of the art centre for specialised health care for veterans.

"Named for Lieutenant Michael Fussell who was serving with the Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan when he was killed in action by an improvised explosive device, the facility will house up to 40 veterans and their families at a time and will especially benefit those from regional and rural areas when veterans are getting treatment.

"Our government will also invest \$7.6 million for the Kookaburra Kids Defence Program to boost their targeted support to children of ex-serving defence force members who are experiencing mental health issues due to their service.

"The Kookaburra Kids Defence Program was first supported by our government with a \$2.1 million injection in a pilot program in NSW, the ACT, Queensland and the NT for 569 children, and this extra investment will see the program expand into Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia for 1750 children.

"As a country we can always do more to recognise and back in our veterans.

"Our government is committed to setting Australia up to support the veterans of today and tomorrow."

WWII Tank Found after 62 Years.



WWII Russian tank with German markings uncovered after 62 years. WWII Buffs will find this interesting. Even after 62 years (and a little tinkering), they were able to fire up the Diesel engine!

A Komatsu D375A-2 bulldozer pulled the abandoned tank from its tomb under the boggy bank of a lake near Johvi, Estonia. The Soviet-built T34/76A tank had been resting at the bottom of the lake for 56 years. According to its specifications, it's a 27-ton machine with a top speed of 53km/hr.

From February to September 1944, heavy battles were fought in the narrow, 50 km-wide, Narva Front in the north-eastern part of Estonia. Over 100,000 men were killed and 300,000 Men were wounded there. During battles in the summer of 1944, the tank was captured from The Soviet army and used by the German army. (This is the reason that there are German Markings painted on the tank's exterior.) On 19th September, 1944, German troops began an organized retreat along the Narva front. It is suspected that the tank was then purposefully driven into the lake to conceal it when its captors left the area.

At that time, a local boy walking by the lake, Kurtna Matasjarv, noticed tank tracks leading into the lake but not coming out anywhere. For two months he saw air bubbles emerging from the lake. This gave him reason to believe that there must be an armoured vehicle at the Lake's' bottom. A few years ago, he told the story to the leader of the local war history club 'Otsing'. Together with other club member, Mr. Igor Shedunov initiated diving expeditions to the bottom of the lake about a year ago. At the depth of 7 metres they discovered the tank resting under a 3 metre layer of peat.

Enthusiasts from the club, under Mr Shedunov's leadership, decided to pull the tank out. In September of 2000 they turned to Mr. Aleksander Borovkov the, manager of the Narva open Pit Company as Eesti Põlevkivi, to rent the company's Komatsu D375A-2 bulldozer. (Currently Used at the pit, the Komatsu dozer was manufactured in 1995, and has recorded 19,000 operating hours without major repairs.)

The pulling operation began at 09:00 and was concluded at 15:00, with several technical breaks. The weight of the tank, combined with the travel incline, made for a pulling operation that required significant muscle. The D375A-2 handled the operation with power and style. The weight of the Fully-armed tank was around 30 tons, so the active force required to retrieve it was similar. A main requirement for the 68-ton dozer was to have enough weight to prevent slippage while moving up the hill.

After the tank surfaced, it turned out to be a 'trophy tank' that had been captured by the German Army in the course of the battle at Sinimaed (Blue Hills) about six weeks before it was sunk in the lake. Altogether, 116 shells were found on board. Remarkably, the tank was in good condition, with NO RUST, and all systems (except the engine) in working condition. This is a Very rare machine, especially considering that it fought both on the Russian and the German Sides. Plans are underway to fully restore the tank. It will be displayed at a war history museum in the Gorodenko village on the left bank of the River Narv.

Preparing to pull it out.



Komatsu D375A-2 is ready to go.



People from the nearby village come to watch.



Here it comes...



Through the muddy bank of the lake



In mint condition.



Hosing off 62 years' worth of 'muck.'



Incredibly, after a few minor repairs, they were able to start its diesel engine



Pretty amazing...





Battle Chronology

AUSTRALIAN ARMOUR BATTLE CALENDAR

Dates of historical significance for the RAAC
 MAJ John Baines, RFD, (Retd)
 RAAC Honorary Historian
john.baines5@bigpond.com



HOC Staff strive on behalf of the RAAC in general and veterans in particular, to ensure the accuracy of our published information and our collection material. If anyone can help in this regard, or otherwise add value, please contact John on the email above.

17-18 Feb 1967	A Sqn 3 Cav Regt and Infantry Suffer Heavy Casualties in Attack on Bunkers Precipitating Recommendations for the Use of Tanks in SVN, Operation Bribie
18-21 Feb 1967	A Sqn 3 Cav Regt Conduct an Unsuccessful Search and Destroy Operation to clear areas of the Long Hai Hills, SVN
21 Feb 1967	A Sqn 3 Cav Regt and Infantry Casualties in Operation Renmark add to the Case to Send Tanks to South Vietnam
31 Jan 1968	Beginning of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam 2 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt Participated in Combined Arms Team Action to Retake Trang Bom, SVN.
1-2 Feb 1968	3 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt and the Battle of Ba Ria, Tet Offensive, Phuoc Tuy Prov. SVN
3 Feb 1968	AATTV Advisor, Armoured Corps Warrant Officer in Action Hue, SVN
12 Feb 1968	First contingent of 1 st Armd Regt Centurion Variants Arrived in South Vietnam
19 Feb 1968	1 AR Vehicles Set off for Nui Dat Escorted by 2 Troop A Sqn 3 Cav Regt, SVN
24 Feb 1968	First Centurion Gun Tanks of C Sqn I Armd Regt Tanks Arrived in South Vietnam
27-28 Feb 1968	2 Tp 3 Cav Regt APC's Secured the Song Dinh Hard for the Off Loading of C Sqn 1 AR Centurion Gun Tanks and Tank Dozers
1 Mar 1968	3 Cav Regt Tp Sgt Displays Bravery as His APC Burns, Ba Ria, SVN
Mid Mar 1968	A Sqn 3 Cav Regt Operated in the Long Hai areas of Phuoc Tuy Province
Mar/May/Aug 1968	A Sqn 3 Cav Regt Cpl Recognised For Battle Actions, South Vietnam
18-23 Mar 1968	Successful Use of Tanks in Long Hai Hills Sth. Vietnam

16 Feb 1969	1 Tp B Sqn 1 Armd Regt Shock Action helped save Infantry lives and defeat the enemy, Hat Dich, SVN.
18-23 Feb 1969	A Sqn 3 Cav Regt Tp Ldr recognised for actions at Long Dien and Baria, SVN
22/23 Feb 1969	A Sqn 3 Cav Regt and 1 Armd Regt involved in operations against enemy attack on BARIA, South Vietnam.
7 Mar 1969	A Sqn Conducted escorts across Bien Hoa and Phuc Tuy Provinces, SVN
18 Feb 1970	1 Armd Regt & 3 Cav Regt in Action at the Battle of Long Hai
25 Feb 1970	2 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt M113A1 hit by large anti-tank mine, closing stages Operation Hammersley, South Vietnam
26 Mar 1970	B SQN 3 Cav Regt Vehicle Detonated Mine, Phuoc Tuy Province SVN
29 Mar 1970	A Sqn 1 Armd Regt Detonated Mine
29 May 1969	B Sqn 3 Cav Regt conducted ambushes in Phuoc Tuy Province, SVN
28 Feb 1991	RAAC Officer, Major John Cantwell, served as Liaison Officer in Operation DESERT STORM, First Gulf War, which ended today
20 May 1993	Last elements of B Sqn, 3/4 Cav Regt as Part of 1 RAR Bn Gp, departed Somalia.
22 May 1993	B Sqn, 3/4 Cav Regt as Part of 1 RAR Bn Gp (AFS) Welcome Home Parade, Townsville, Australia:
Feb 2001	2 Cav Regt Officer Served in UN Mission in Ethiopia/Eritria (UNMEE)
20 Mar 2003–31 Jul 09	RAAC Soldiers Involved in Aust Defence Commitment to the Rehabilitation of Iraq, Operation Catalyst
3 May 2003 – On going	2 Cav Regt Operated Security for Aust Staff, Baghdad, Iraq.
Mar -Jun 04	RAAC Colonel Military Advisor to the Special Coordinator. RAMSI Solomon Islands
6 Mar-20 Jul 05	2 Cav Regt Provided Armoured Component SECDET 6 OP Falconer / Op Catalyst, Baghdad, Iraq. (6A Unknown date SECDET 6B 6 Mar-20 Jul 05)
8 Feb 2011	RAAC Warrant Officer posted to 1 LAR Bn USMC Recognised for Meritorious Service Iraq
28 May 10- 5 Jan 11	RAAC WO1 Appointed RSM JTF 633, Afghanistan
15 May 2017	Approval Granted For Renaming Support Squadron School of Armour to B Sqn 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment
14 Mar 2018	Rheinmetall Boxer 8x8 Combat Reconnaissance Vehicle (CRV) Announced As the Winner of the Bid for the Land 400 Phase 2 Project



State Round ups

SA Calendar Dates

25 April 2019 – Anzac Day Dawn Service – 1st Armoured Regiment – Lunch Wellington Hotel North Adelaide

3-5 May 2019 Quorn Weekend – Meet Quorn Railway Station 1200pm – extended to 6 May for Interstate travellers

June 2019 – 1st Armoured Regiment – Binh Ba Anniversary – Details TBA – may include Winter Ball

July 2019 AGM Details TBA

Cambrai Day 1st Armoured Regiment – Edinburgh Precinct – includes Hammersley Awards

December Xmas Lunch – date TBA

Mark Reid State Rep SA



I am holding a Long Lunch on the 3rd of May with this being held 12:00 Hours at the Emerald Hotel 415 Clarendon Street South Melbourne. This will be a mixed lunch for past & present members. I would normally this lunch on the Friday before ANZAC Day, but unfortunately that falls on Good Friday this year, therefore I have had to make it the week after ANZAC Day (3rd May).

Regards,



Iain Reynolds
State Rep VIC
0411 066 704
vicrep@patatus.org.au

