

Australia **Centurion** November 2017

1ST ARMOURED REGIMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Nucleus Squadron doing the job



T23B conducts a live firing assessment at Mount Bundy Training Area where the crews were tested in their ability to identify targets quickly and engage with deadly accuracy using the M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank's various sights and weapons systems.

As part of the Armoured Cavalry Regiment, Nucleus Squadron's Tank troops provide the 1st Brigade – Australian Army, massive firepower with the mobility to move across most of the battlefield.

The M1A1 is the beast of the battlefield. It has a top speed of up to 60 kilometres an hour, weighs 62 tonnes and has an operational range of up to 400 kilometres. Its main weapon is the 120mm M256 Smooth Bore Cannon with a range of up to 4 kilometres! The Abrams also sports a 12.7 mm M2HBQCB Machine Gun and 2X7.62 millimetre MAG58 Machine Guns

Image Credit: TPR Gilcrist-Lau [Australian Army](#)

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.

Important:

If you change home, postal or email addresses, please advise Secretary.

If at all possible please provide an email address for communication purposes including Newsletter distribution.



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1st Armoured Regiment Association Committee 2017/2018



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

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Association Web Site

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



The following Honour Roll is dedicated to those 1st Armoured Regiment Soldiers that made the ultimate sacrifice



Killed In Action

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

Died of Wounds

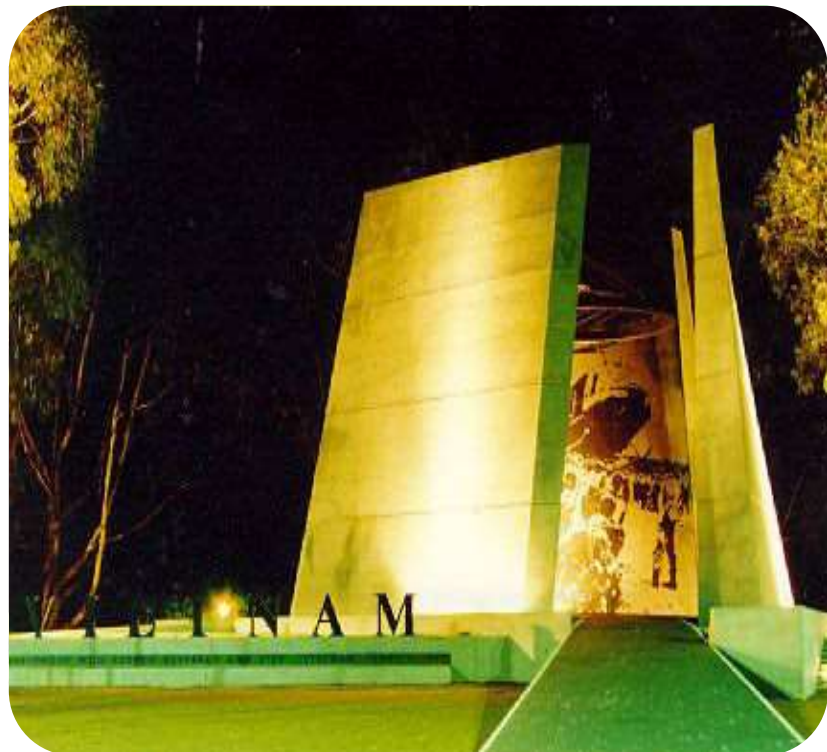
TPR M. Hannaford
WO2 T. Phillips

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)



VALE:

WO2 R.E. DILLOW

Bob served in the Regiment during the 50's and possibly 60's – he was in Spec Eqpt Tp when I was in the Regiment (57-62), he was posted to AATTV from 15 Apr 66 until 5 Mar 67. Bob passed away on 30 Nov 2016.
Ian McVie

GORDON JONES AM

Dear Friends,
It is with much sadness that I pass on the news that my very good friend, Gordon Jones AM, passed away peacefully mid-afternoon today, Saturday 23rd September, after a long illness.

At the time of passing, Gordon was surrounded by his loving and caring family, including his wife Robyn and daughters Wendy and Stephanie.

This remarkable man will be missed by us all.

Joan and I send our condolences to all who knew Gordon

RIP dear friend

Maurice Meecham

ANDREW McGRATH- KERR

From Newtown Tasmania, Andrew passed away on 21 August 2017, A and C Sqn 1969 – 1971
Wife Kathryn

H.E.M.J. Bert Ummels

B & A Sqs from 2 Apr 1969 until 1 Apr 1970 in SVN. Passed away in Feb 2017

Donations:

WARREN PROUD

A SQN VIETNAM VETERANS
Following their function held in Albury during August 2017, \$237.00 was donated to the maintenance and upkeep of Centurion 005.

VIC/SA ASSOC. MEMBERS

Attending the annual Tolmie camping trip this year also donated the left over amount from the weekend of \$40.00 toward the upkeep of 005.

New Members:

IAN BIGNALL

Vietnam, 1 Troop A and B Sqn 1968 -1970 MANILLA NSW 2346

COLIN MILNER

Vietnam, 2 Troop A and C Sqn 1969 1971
BEROWRA NSW 2081

Q STORE:

Go to Web Site www.paratus.org.au and in the Menu click on Q Store then follow the instructions.
Any questions contact Mick Dunn
opsmanager@paratus.org.au





The theme for this publication follows Medals to Badges to Stickers to memories of patches from the past along with squadron and unit memorabilia.

Some of these stickers and badges are currently available from the Q Store; see www.paratus.org.au/q-store If you have any questions regarding current or future availability of these or any other items please contact Q Store Manager Michael Dunn at email address opsmanager@paratus.org.au

Next year is the 50th Anniversary of the battles of Coral and Balmoral in SVN, May – June 1968, which were significant milestones for the 1st Armoured Regiment and the coming of age for the Centurion tank in the jungles of South Vietnam.

..... In early April 1968 American and South Vietnamese forces launched a combined operation designed to eliminate any remaining enemy forces involved in the Tet Offensive.

In late April the Australian Task Force was told that its own operations would become part of the allied operation and in early May it established three Fire Support Bases (FSBs) Coral, Balmoral and Coogee.

The enemy forces reacted violently to the establishment of these bases and on two occasions launched night attacks on Coral resulting in many Australians killed and wounded.

After suffering these losses the Australian Deputy Task Force Commander ordered that the tanks be brought forward from the Task Force base at Nui Dat to aid in defence of the FSBs.

Four tanks of 1 Troop, C Squadron, 1AR, moved to defence of Coral, while the tanks of 2 Troop, C Squadron, 1AR, proceeded to Balmoral.

The tanks performed well beyond expectations, prevailing in a number of close battles in and around Coral and Balmoral saving the lives of many soldiers (For further detail see; www.army.gov.au/our-history/history-in-focus/australian-tanks-at-the-battles-of-coral-and-balmoral The Australian Army's experience with tanks at Coral and Balmoral reconfirmed many of the lessons learnt during the Second World War: the vulnerability of light vehicles such as APCs when attacking heavily defended enemy positions; the value of tanks in reducing Australian casualties; and the mobility of medium tanks in even the heaviest of jungle terrain.

Post-war the Australian infantry had limited exposure to working with tanks, so many had initial misgivings about the benefits of tank/infantry cooperation.

The battles of Coral and Balmoral soon convinced them otherwise, and the tank/infantry partnership that developed from these two actions remained unshaken throughout the remainder of the Vietnam War.

In May of 2018 the DVA (Department of Defence) will be hosting a reunion to commemorate the battles of Coral and Balmoral. If interested see acceptance of the invitation on page 5. Please complete and send to Colin Toll as per instructions

This year is also the 100th Anniversary of the charge of the Australian light horseman at Beersheba in the Desert at the foot of the Judean hills; see full details on page 15.

The horses ridden by the light horsemen were called 'whalers'. I discovered the reason that they were called this was because most of the horses were sourced from NSW hence the name 'whalers'

I have also been able to research a few articles about some unknown facts and misconceptions regarding the Vietnam War.

Once again I remind everyone to please think about what you may be able to send to be included in future Newsletters that may be of interest to others. Some of our members do not have access to the internet so when you are posting information, stories, pictures etc. on varying face book pages don't forget to send a copy to the Editor as well so that I can publish these items for all members.

Also, not all people are interested in Face book for a number of reasons.

Remember, when putting up a post on Face book it is here today and virtually gone tomorrow.

Placing an article in the Newsletter and especially the Web site is a more permanent way to keep others informed of items that you want to be visible for a longer period of time, so please send to:

newsletter@paratus.org.au
webpage@paratus.org.au

DON'T FORGET THE ASSOCIATION'S REUNION, NOV 2018
See full details and Registration form, page28

Yours Faithfully,

Peter

Peter Lukeis

Editor, Newsletter

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50th Anniversary of the battles of Coral and Balmoral



The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) is planning to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Battles of Coral and Balmoral, SVN May to June 1968.

The planned date for the Commemoration is:

Sunday 13 May 2018

The proposed venue is the National Convention Centre, Canberra ACT, but will be driven by the number of Veteran's attending.

Priority for seating, lunch etc. will be given to Veterans of the Battles.

If you wish to attend the Commemoration, please complete the following information and send to the DVA Commemoration Representative for the 1st Armoured Regiment,
Colin Toll: Email (colin@precruitment.com.au) Mobile: 0408 235 273

INTENTION TO ATTEND (please circle yes or no)

- Will you be attending the Coral-Balmoral Commemorative Service at the National Vietnam Memorial Canberra on Sunday 13 May, 2018 **Yes / No**
- Will you be attending the Coral-Balmoral Commemorative Luncheon at the National Convention Centre Canberra, on Sunday 13 May, 2018 **Yes / No**
- Will you be bringing a Spouse/Partner **Yes / No**

Your initials and name :

Spouse/Partners initials and name :

Preferred Phone Number email:

Postal Address :

Veteran's Army Number:

If you are a Veteran of these battles please advise which FSB:

Coral or Balmoral

Today's Date:



VICTORIA STATE NEWS

State Rep - Iain Reynolds

G'day Members,

I have been kicking around an idea for the past 12 months to see how much interest it would generate, & I think it's about time to put this out there so that you can start putting a few extra dollars away into the savings.

What I'm looking at is spending a week in Bangkok Thailand. With the Reunion in Adelaide November next year, I'm looking at doing this somewhere around the middle of **May 2019**.

For those that have been to Bangkok & can recommend a reputable hotel (not too expensive) something close to markets & restaurants, please email me & I will look into it. Or I will look at package airfare/hotel deals closer to the time & email you with updates.

This will be a mixed event, so that you will be able to bring your wife or girlfriend (but try not to bring both). Once in Thailand there will be a day trip along the death railway to Hellfire Pass up to the Bridge on the River Kwai (Please see link below for full tour details). We can also find a nice restaurant once there to have a Long Lunch which could go well into the evening.

<http://www.bangkokdaytours.com/tour.asp?tid=60>

State Reps please forward this email onto your members as I'm inviting all states, & not just my members from Victoria.

Because I'm opening this up Australia wide, getting there will be own means as to which airline & departure point you choose. I will let you know the firm dates & the hotel that we will be staying at.

Depending as to where you are flying out from the trip should be around \$1500 per person. That would include Airfares, Accommodation & the day tour.

For all those that are interested please email me direct & I will add you to the mailing list. As I said I'm sending this out nice & early so as to give you plenty of time to start saving.

Regards,

Iain Reynolds

Victoria State Rep
1st Armoured Regt Assoc.
0411-066-704

vicrep@paratus.org.au



The Grand Final week end trip at Tolmie camping Ground



This year went well with 21 people attending. The weather was mild & at times wet with a few showers on the Saturday. It was good to see the Corps RSM Peter Swinfield join us again this year for the 5th time. We also had 2 South Australian members make the long journey across the border to join us.

David Pye supplied the lighting for the site again this year & also went out to cut & bring back the firewood to keep us all warm.

We held the dining in night on the Saturday night, with roast beef and vegies slowly cooked in a bush ovens. For desert we had fruit pies & cheesecake. Many thanks to Peter Keane for bringing up the tables & also with specialized training doing a great job on the pepper gravy. The red wine for the night was supplied by Max Hammond from Fowles Wines.

Overall it was a very successful weekend. For those members that have not attended a camping trip in the past & could have attended missed a great weekend.

We managed to turn a profit again on the weekend which was decided to use \$150 to purchase a First Aid Kit to be taken along to future camping trips. With the remainder donated back to the Association for the upkeep of Centurion 005.



A Squadron Vietnam Reunion

17th - 19th AUG 2017 - ALBURY
Tubby Brooker



Members of A SQN that had served together in Vietnam during 1969-1970 gathered in Albury over Thursday 17th through to Saturday 19th August 2017.

This is the first time that those from A Sqn had attempted to do this, however, individual troop gatherings had been held over the years.

This had been sometime in the planning and for a number of reasons it was finally organised. Numbers although were good, but not as many attended as we had hoped. We also had a number of late withdrawals due to various reasons. We had 85 members and partners finally attended and from all reports had a great time. We started on Thursday with registration and Meet & Greet in the Stanley Room of the Commercial Club. We attended the Albury RSL's Long Tan ceremony at the SS&A Club on Friday. We had a wind up Buffet dinner again at the Commercial Club on Saturday night.

All in all a great weekend, made great with the fantastic support of the Commercial Club. Nothing was too much trouble for them.

Most attendees are now looking forward to Adelaide 2018.



169005 UPDATE

Oct/Nov 2017
Tubby Brooker



Work on 169005 is nearly completed we have now refurbished or replaced damaged or worn out parts as best we can. We have now finished in the engine compartment and only have small adjustments to do.



The next major task was to replace the clutch and gearbox and reconnect all the linkages. Along the way we rebuilt the gear stick housing and refurbished and re shimmed the steering sticks.



We were a bit worried about the clutch. We were hoping that the clutch plates had not seized onto the drive plates. Once the clutch was in and connected a few pumps on the clutch pedal and all was free.

Next task put the gearbox back in



Gearbox now back in clutch connected and linkages also connected. Steering linkages connected and had a preliminary adjust. A number of minor tasks and adjustments to be carried out. These include replacing the Aux gen fuel pump, fitting electronic temp and oil pressure gauges. We will also prime the main engine with oil and check all linkages and fittings. We hope to fire up around Cambrai Day if we don't strike any hold ups.



President's Report

Dear Members,

Welcome to the November 2017 newsletter.

Following on from the August newsletter the Committee has commenced work on its identified priorities with a significant focus on governance, finance and the Association's constitution. The Committee has identified three organisations who are capable of undertaking the work the Committee seeks to reconstruct the Association's finance records from 'spreadsheets' into an accounting package which will better facilitate Association finance reporting and budgeting. As alluded to in other communications this work will be completed at 'arms-length' to any former committee member and any member of the association that may have had involvement in the Association's finance records. For current Committee members, it ensures complete probity before two committee members sign-off on the financial statements.

In line with tightening governance arrangements the Committee has taken steps to change banking arrangements which will require a 'two-step' approval process of any 'Association' expenditure. Under the new banking arrangements individual 'credit card' access to the Association's accounts will be removed.

With respect to budgeting the Committee has intent to provide funding to State and Territory representatives to assist their endeavours with local member's functions. The intent is to set a calendar of events so that members may attend functions should they travel interstate.

With respect to functions the 2017 Cambrai celebrations focus is Adelaide given the relocation of the Regiment. The Regiment has the following key functions for which members of the Association may attend. More detail is available on their Facebook page:

- 18 Nov 17 1800h – Cambrai Dinner. Adelaide Convention Centre. \$120 per head. Dress: Suit minimum, Black tie preferred. POC: LT J Lawrence Joshua.lawrence@defence.gov.au
- 19 Nov 17 1500h – Opening and Blessing Chauvel Lines, Edinburgh Defence Precinct
POC Adjutant CAPT J Gluhak Joshua.gluhak@defence.gov.au
- 20 Nov 17 1000h – 100th Anniversary Battle of Cambrai Parade Edinburgh Defence Precinct
POC Adjutant CAPT J Gluhak Joshua.gluhak@defence.gov.au

2018 will also see the 50th Anniversary of the Battles at Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral. There are two matters here – the Inquiry into Unit Recognition and the 50th Commemoration.

With respect to the inquiry the Minister for Defence Personnel announced on 24 Apr 17 the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal would conduct an inquiry into unit recognition for service with submissions due on 16 Jun 17. Hearings commence early Nov 17 and only those who made submissions will give evidence.

The Commemoration date is set for 13 May 18 at the Vietnam Memorial, Anzac Parade Canberra followed by a luncheon at the National Convention Centre. Detailed timings will be available once the DVA Committee sets the program. I should also add that the DVA Committee only provides for a single RAAC representative and that the 1AR and 3 Cav (Vietnam) Associations jointly agreed for the RAAC Corporation to represent their respective interests at the DVA Committee.

I would also like to reflect on my comments in the August newsletter regarding member behaviour. You'll recall that a non-negotiable for me is individual member commitment to assist 'righting of the ship' with positive respectful conduct with no vested interests apart from the long term survivability of the Association. Unfortunately, there remains a small group who continue to resort to bullying and personal attacks in public forums which is unacceptable behaviour in any Australian workplace or household. Poor behavioural traits do little other than damage the reputation of the individual who initiates the poor behaviour.

Let me close by reiterating my comments that such behaviour has no place in this Association!

Paratus.

Greg Nicholas
President

On Friday the 20th October 2017 - Members of the 1st Armoured Regiment were farewelled by the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association in Darwin to commemorate the Regiment's historic departure after 22 years of being part of the Palmerston community.



Looking very military Trooper Tsarouchas!



CO Lt Col Chris Gardner and Peter Still Richard Stanios -Well done to our NT Rep Peter Still on representing the association on this occasion. We look forward to our continuing close relationship with The Regiment. Paratus



Great RAAC turnout for yesterday's promotion. Thanks to everyone for all the support.
See you in 3 Brigade – Brigadier Scott Winter 25th October 2017



'Centurion' Exclusive

Could this be the new CRV?

Filmed recently at a LAND 400 secret testing ground



SO WHAT'S IT LIKE IN YOUR MOB SIR? DO THE TROOPS ALWAYS FOLLOW ORDERS TO THE LETTER?



OH GOD NO. I'M IN THE AIR FORCE. THEY DON'T TAKE ORDERS AT ALL - THEY BARELY FOLLOW NICELY PHRASED SUGGESTIONS...

Article by Colin Toll former CO 1AR to Scott Winter current CO 1AR in Feb 2012 Of the 'Centurion' re: the original trooper Paratus

Scott

Given my involvement with obtaining the Regiment's first mascot you will appreciate my sentimental attachment to the Leopard. That is all that it is a, sentimental attachment. My opinion is that of a former member of the Regiment and one who still harbours a great love for it. I respect the decision that has been made and may well have made the same decision if I were in your shoes.

Having said that I will now say that a male lion is a poor substitute for a male or female leopard. Having recently returned from the Okavango Delta in Botswana, the predator capital of the world, where I saw hundreds of lions and two leopards, I can tell you that the male lion is a lazy bastard that does nothing except eat, sleep and copulate! The males are not the hunters. The lady lions do all the hunting and killing. The males lie around sleeping and trailing after the girls when they move.



On the other hand, the leopard, male or female, is described as, elusive, the shrewdest big cat, cunning and a stealthy hunter known for their adaptability to all sorts of climates and terrain. Their adaptability has helped them survive. Further, they come in black, the international colour for armoured forces.

I hope you will amuse me by letting me tell you a story.

Before I assumed command of the Regiment my predecessors, Peter Jarrett and John Grey, had both tinkered with the idea. There was a file in RHQ on the matter. I was determined to make it a reality. Melbourne Zoo was reluctant as it is a quarantine station and animals are not supposed to leave its confines except under special circumstances. They were also reluctant about the choice of animal as the leopard is hard to handle for all the reasons it is a good hunter. They suggested a lion!!

The compromise was that the leopard could be our mascot but it had to remain in the Zoo, and it would not be allowed to visit Puckapunyal. To me that was Phase 1 complete.

We then set about charming the Zoo Board and the Zoo Vets. We regularly sent an Army bus to bring the Board and their wives to the Regiment in Puckapunyal for mixed dining-in nights, firepower demonstrations and so on. Our Honorary Colonel at the time was Sir Henry Winnike the Governor of Victoria. I co-opted his support and had him with me out in the Zoo. It all worked as eventually the Chairman of the Zoo Board called me and suggested that "it might be a good idea if Paratus visited the Regiment in Puckapunyal" providing a suitable enclosure could be provided. Phase 2 complete.

There was not any money for building Leopard enclosures. However, Werner Fritz was the OC of 21 Construction Squadron based in Puckapunyal. Werner had been a year or two behind me at Duntroon. I think he was in Fourth Class when I was in First Class. I asked Werner if his Squadron were allocated "training stores" for the ongoing training of their tradesmen. So, the enclosure became a training project for the Sappers. Phase 3 complete.

Paratus visited the Regiment on a good number of occasions and was a great hit. His handler stayed in the Sgts Mess and had a ball.

I wanted to have the Leopard Head decal on all our vehicles. I contacted a graphic designer in Melbourne and together we came up with the decal design. He produced final artwork and I wanted to see it before it was sealed. Remember there were no faxes let alone the internet in those days. The Governor had invited me to dinner at Government House. I told the graphic designer to meet me outside the front gates of Government House at a time just before I was due for dinner. At the time, Government House had a Guard at the front gate. They wore old WW1 uniforms, slouch hats and were armed with the 303 Rifle. As my staff car swept up the drive towards the front gates, the gates were slowly opened and the guard did a "present arms". However, my car screeched to a stop, a shadowy figure emerged from the bushes and I leapt out in full mess kit and proceeded to confer with this man. The guard

"ordered arms" and the gates closed! Subsequently, they let me in after I approached them on foot and established my bona fides. The Governor thought it was a bit of a hoot.

When the decals arrived I had them put on every vehicle including my staff car. This type of thing was just not done in the army of those days. I was sure that I would be ordered by my superiors to "get rid of those things young fella!" Nothing was ever said and they have remained on the vehicles ever since. I still can't believe it.

The Zoo Board invited me to lunch one day. They said they wanted to make a presentation to me. After lunch one of the vets entered the Board Room and placed in my lap a tiny two week old black leopard. Trooper Paratus had fathered this little fella and the Zoo intended to hand raise his successor to make it a little easier for the mascot to be in the Regimental Lines.

So, there we are. It was all some thirty years ago but the memories are fresh. I will be sad to see the end of all that. Scott, thank you for the time you have given me. I hope this old tankie hasn't induced you into a coma with my story. The Regiment is a wonderful command and I am sure you are enjoying every minute of it. Good luck to you and the Regiment and welcome Leo Paratus!





D and S at its best!!!



Letter from a Recruit

Text of a letter from a kid from Eromanga to Mum and Dad. (Eromanga is a small town, west of Quilpie in the far south west of Queensland)

Dear Mum & Dad, I am well. Hope youse are too. Tell me big brothers Doug and Phil that the Army is better than workin' on the station - tell them to get in bloody quick smart before the jobs are all gone! I wuz a bit slow in settling down at first, because ya don't hafta get outta bed until 6am. But I like sleeping in now, cuz all ya gotta do before brekky is make ya bed and shine ya boots and clean ya uniform. No bloody horses to get in, no calves to feed, no troughs to clean - nothin'!! Ya haz gotta shower though, but it's not so bad, coz there's lotsa hot water and even a light to see what ya doing!

At brekky ya get cereal, fruit and eggs but there's no kangaroo steaks or goanna stew like wot Mum makes. You don't get fed again until noon and by that time all the city boys are bugged because we've been on a 'route march' - geez it's only just like walking to the windmill in the bullock paddock!! This one will kill me brothers Doug and Phil with laughter. I keep getting medals for shootin' - dunno why.

The bulls eye is as big as a bloody dingo's arse and it don't move and it's not firing back at a like the Johnsons did when our big scrubber bull got into their prize cows before the Ekka last year! All ya gotta do is make yourself comfortable and hit the target - it's a piece of p ... !! You don't even load your own cartridges, they comes in little boxes, and ya don't have to steady yourself against the roll bar of the roo shooting truck when you reload!

Sometimes ya gotta wrestle with the city boys and I gotta be real careful coz they break easy - it's not like fighting with Doug and Phil and Jack and Boori and Steve and Muzza all at once like we do at home after the muster. Turns out I'm not a bad boxer either and it looks like I'm the best the platoon's got, and I've only been beaten by this one bloke from the Engineers - he's 6 foot 5 and 15 stone and three pick handles across the shoulders and as ya know I'm only 5 foot 7 and eight stone wringin' wet, but I fought him till the other blokes carried me off to the boozier. I can't complain about the Army. Tell the boys to get in quick before word gets around how bloody good it is.

Your loving daughter, *Susan*

BEERSHEBA 100th ANNIVERSARY

31 October 2017

Desert Charge that found Glory

One hundred Years ago this month, Australians rode into history, writes Jonathan King.

It was October 1917, and Allied forces had hit a brick wall. Having driven the Turks back east from the Suez Canal and into Palestine by winning a series of battles since August 1916, they had been defeated so badly at the coastal fortress of Gaza that the war cabinet sacked their commander-in-chief, Sir Archibald Murray.

Now Britain's new commander-in-chief, General Sir Edmund Allenby, had arranged for fake battle plans to be lost from a saddlebag falling off a horse near the Turkish front line that claimed he was going to pretend to attack Beersheba from the south while in reality he would be attacking Gaza harder than ever.

The Turks fell for it.

He was inspired by Lawrence of Arabia, who had recently captured the Red Sea port of Aqaba by riding camels out of a desert wasteland to launch a surprise attack from behind. At Beersheba, 100 years ago this month, Allenby sent Australian Light Horsemen out into the water-less desert to skirt around the back of the town to attack from the east; knowing the Turks would never expect that they had not even erected barbed Wire defences there.

It was a make-or-break battle in the Allied campaign to dismantle the Ottoman Empire in Palestine. Success depended on the Australians surviving for days, galloping across desert sands, leaping trenches and capturing Beersheba before sunset on October 31.

Beersheba, isolated and surrounded by rocky hills and outcrops at the foot of the Judean Hills, was the only town with wells. If the plan failed, both horses and men could die from thirst. Commanded by veteran Turkish general Ismet Bey, Beersheba had 28 artillery guns, nine machineguns, two aircraft and 4400 men, including 1000 experienced riflemen.

World War I correspondent Charles Bean noted: "The Light Horsemen knew well that the fate of the battle and probably the campaign in Palestine depended on this charge; they also realised, that for the first time, Australian cavalry were actually to charge! For this time the Light Horse were to act purely as cavalry, although with only their bayonets as shock weapons. Australians had never ridden any race like this." In late October, the commander of the Desert Mounted Corps and skilled Boer War veteran Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Chauvel led his troopers 50 kilometres into the desert to ruined water wells at Asluj, which he repaired as their base. Lieutenant Philip Tod wrote: "We have orders to set out on an all-night ride in complete silence, even our stirrups and bridles are muffled.



Rumour is we are to attack the Wells of Beersheba." Corporal Harold Gleeson complained he was "parched with thirst marching all night on a weary dusty ride of 30 miles". Private Hunter wrote: "The dust was terrible. One could not see beyond his horse's head."

At 3.30pm, Chauvel ordered the two regiments closest to Beersheba to mount the 6A-kilometre charge, the 4th from Victoria commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Murray Bouchier and 12th from NSW led by Lieutenant-Colonel Donald Cameron - each with just 400 troopers. Their commander, Brigadier General William Grant, told men who had gone 48 hours without water: "Once they smell it, your horses will be so keen to get to the water in the wells of Beersheba they will gallop faster than ever." At 4.45pm, Chauvel gave his famous order "Put Grant straight at them!" Grant rode to the regiments hiding behind a ridge at the assembly point and shouted: "Men, you are fighting for water. The only water in this desert is at Beersheba. Use your bayonets as swords. I wish you the best of luck -Forward!"

The 800 troopers rode their horses to the crest, from where they saw Beersheba across a long, slight slope, flat right up to the trenches. Looking through binoculars trooper Ion Idriess, who became one of Australia's greatest authors, said: "Hiding in a depression behind the hills was Beersheba, the white dome and minaret of the great mosque and the railway station, barracks and numerous buildings, growing plainer to us."



Trooper Colin Bull - killed in action at Beersheba

Captain Jack Davies stood up in his saddle, turned and shouted: "Come on boys, Beersheba next stop!" They trotted down the ridge, then cantered. But once the startled Turks spotted them and fired artillery shells, they galloped.

When they got within three kilometres, machine gunners started firing. But they were riding so fast the Turks did not have time to adjust the artillery sights from long to short range.

Then 2.5 kilometres out, Bouchier screamed "Charge!" and they galloped full pelt, yelling at the top of their voices. Idriess reported: "We laughed with delight when the shells burst behind our men as Turkish gunners wild with fear forgot to lower their sights."

That fear was explained when "captured Turkish officers told us they never dreamed that mounted troops would be madmen enough to attempt rushing infantry redoubts protected by roaring machine guns and artillery".

When the horses were only a kilometre away, Turkish officers mistakenly ordered men to hold their fire until the Australians dismounted to fight in trenches not realising many Light Horsemen would leap over them.

Bean continued: "Next the foremost troops were jumping trenches, some dismounting and turning upon the Turks from the rear with bayonet in bloody hand-to-hand fighting." Others galloped ahead to rear trenches, one trooper capturing 50 frightened Turks.

Some galloped straight to Beersheba. The bewildered garrison quickly surrendered. Lieutenant Guy Haydon said: "You've never heard such awful war yells as our BOYS let out; they never hesitated for a moment, it was grand. Riders would roll off or a horse drop but the line swept on. As we neared their trenches, the pace became faster.

"A bullet hit me high up in the left buttock, just under the belt, lifting me clear off my horse and dropping me sprawling on a heap of dirt and I rolled down into a pit and safety.

"But all this time, only a few seconds, men raced their horses through and over the trenches and while some of us were hand-to-hand fighting the remainder had charged through the town. Although it is the heaviest fire I have been under, I never felt less afraid."

Captain Jack Davies, who was first into Beersheba, said: "Providence guided me that day as I rode into the town as if I knew all the roads leading into it."

Allenby's trick had worked, Davies said, because "I've seen some surprised people in my life and those Turks were certainly not expecting us!"

As many of the troopers believed their wonderful horses, aka Walers, had won the day, they were very sad when ordered at war's end to leave their horses behind. "Rather than sell them to locals who treated their horses badly, many of us decided to shoot them instead," said trooper Albert Cornish.

The Australians had killed 500 Turks and taken 1500 prisoners at the cost of 31 troopers and 70 horses.

Haydon reported "a British Cavalry Officer serving since 1914 said 'I have seen every action in which the British Cavalry have taken part, but the charge of the LH at Beersheba, is the finest thing that I have ever seen mounted troops do'."

It was a stunning victory that established the Light Horse as the best cavalry force in the world.

A turning point battle for Palestine, it enabled Allenby's forces to capture Gaza from the demoralised Turks, and drive them North from Jerusalem and finally Damascus to win the war in Palestine.

Beersheba was Australia's first big achievement on the world stage, ahead of 1918 victories on the Western Front. Now 100 years on, it is a stark contrast to the battle that stands as the cornerstone of Australia's national identity, Gallipoli which cost 8709 Australian lives for no gain.



Trooper Gerald Digby - killed in action at Beersheba

Johnathon King's Palestine Diaries
The Light Horsemen's Own Story
Battle by battle is published in
October by Scribe Publications

Three more Victoria Cross medals go on display

13 July 2017 by AWM Website Admin

Captain Robert Grieve's Victoria Cross was on display in his old school library when a fire tore through it in 1989. The medal survived and, remarkably, was found among the ashes.

The medal, which had been scorched in the blaze at his beloved Wesley College and was found by the then deputy principal Alan Storen, is one of the latest three First World War Victoria Crosses to go on display at the Australian War Memorial as part of the Victoria Cross centenary project.

Memorial Director Brendan Nelson said the loan of the medals awarded to Captain Robert Grieve, Lieutenant Clifford Sadlier, and Sergeant Lewis McGee took the number of Australian Victoria Crosses on display in the Hall of Valour to 82.

"We're very proud of these men," Dr Nelson said. "We're proud of the stories that are behind them and we're very proud to be able to exhibit these three Victoria Crosses here at the Australian War Memorial."



Captain Robert Grieve

Robert Grieve was awarded his Victoria Cross for his actions at Messines in Belgium on 7 June 1917. Having already suffered a massive gas attack from the Germans, his company came under sustained fire and was being held up by barbed-wire defences. As the only officer in his company who was not dead or wounded, Grieve made his way through a gap in the wire to attack a machine-gun post. He had been a good left-arm bowler at Wesley College in Melbourne and his well-aimed grenades silenced some of the gunners, allowing him to reach the nearby trench and bomb the rest of the machine-gun crew. Grieve was wounded in the action, but survived the war and continued to host an annual dinner with his men until he died in 1957.

"He saw the fact his own men had recommended him for the cross as a greater accolade than the cross itself," Dr Nelson said.

Grieve's great-niece Mary Carter, who was at the Memorial for the handover, said her great-uncle was a modest man who would have been embarrassed by all the fuss.

"He was always there for people when they needed him," she said. "That was just in his nature."

Wesley College Curator of Collections Kenneth Park, who was also at the Memorial when Grieve's VC was handed over, said the school was extremely proud of Grieve's actions and was proud to be able to loan the medal to the Australian War Memorial.



Lieutenant Clifford Sadler

The second Victoria Cross to go on display was awarded to Lieutenant Sadler for his actions at Villers-Bretonneux in April 1918, and is on loan from St George's Cathedral in Perth.

"His company was being attacked by German machine guns from the left flank when Sadler attacked successfully not only one, but three machine gun posts," Dr Nelson said. "He did so by leading a small number of his men using what today we would call grenades and his revolver and he was able to successfully overcome those three machine guns which played a significant role in the Australian successful counter attack at Villers-Bretonneux."



Sergeant Lewis McGee

The third medal to go on display is Sergeant Lewis McGee's, and is on loan from the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

Dr Nelson said McGee, "one of Tasmania's finest", was a member of what the Tasmanians called the "Fighting 40th", and was awarded his Victoria Cross for his actions "in the mud, the slime, and the bloodbath" at Passchendaele in 1917.

"The Australians had to get through barbed wire," Dr Nelson said. "Lewis McGee, realising ... his men were being cut to ribbons, and armed only with a revolver, attacked a German pill-box that was holding them up and was able to successfully kill a number of the Germans manning that machine gun and take another 20 prisoners. Unfortunately and tragically he was killed a week later on 12 October [at Passchendaele] and posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross."

He is buried at Tyne Cot Cemetery, just 250 metres from the pill-box he captured.

"There are very, very few of us that perhaps have in us the qualities that are behind these medals and that are in these medals, but these are people that inspire us," Dr Nelson said.

"A century on, they continue to inspire us in our everyday lives ... We see it every day in Australian life, just everyday Australian men and women who when the time comes run towards tragedy to help other human beings. That is the value and importance of these crosses."

The Victoria Crosses are on loan to the Memorial for six months and will be on display in the Hall of Valour.

**Corporal Cameron Stewart
Baird, VC, MG**



In February 2014, Baird was awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia (posthumous). Corporal Baird was killed on operations in Afghanistan in June 2013.

Victoria Cross Citation



Corporal Baird's citation for his Victoria Cross reads:

For the most conspicuous acts of valour, extreme devotion to duty and ultimate self-sacrifice at Ghawchak Village, Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan as a Commando Team Commander in Special Operations Task Group on Operation SLIPPER.

On 22 June 2013, a Commando Platoon of the Special Operations Task Group, with partners from the Afghan National Security Forces, conducted a helicopter assault into Ghawchak Village, Uruzgan Province, in order to attack an insurgent network deep within enemy-held territory. Shortly after insertion, Corporal Baird's team was engaged by small arms fire from several enemy positions. Corporal Baird quickly seized the initiative, leading his team to neutralise the positions, killing six enemy combatants and enabling the assault to continue.

Soon afterwards, an adjacent Special Operations Task Group team came under heavy enemy fire, resulting in its commander being seriously wounded. Without hesitation, Corporal Baird led his team to provide support. En route, he and his team were engaged by rifle and machine gun fire from prepared enemy positions. With complete disregard for his own safety, Corporal Baird charged towards the enemy positions, supported by his team. On nearing the positions, he and his team were engaged by additional enemy on their flank. Instinctively, Corporal Baird neutralised the new threat with grenades and rifle fire, enabling his team to close with the prepared position. With the prepared position now isolated, Corporal Baird manoeuvred and was engaged by enemy machine gun fire, the bullets striking the ground around him. Displaying great valour, he drew the fire, moved to cover, and suppressed the enemy machine gun position. This action enabled his team to close on the entrance to the prepared position, thus regaining the initiative. On three separate occasions Corporal Baird charged an enemy-held building within the prepared compound. On the first occasion he charged the door to the building, followed by another team member. Despite being totally exposed and immediately engaged by enemy fire, Corporal Baird pushed forward while firing into the building. Now in the closest proximity to the enemy, he was forced to withdraw when his rifle ceased to function. On rectifying his rifle stoppage, and reallocating remaining ammunition within his team, Corporal Baird again advanced towards the door of the building, once more under heavy fire. He engaged the enemy through the door but was unable to suppress the position and took cover to reload. For a third time, Corporal Baird selflessly drew enemy fire away from his team and assaulted the doorway. Enemy fire was seen to strike the ground and compound walls around Corporal Baird, before visibility was obscured by dust and smoke. In this third attempt, the enemy was neutralised and the advantage was regained, but Corporal Baird was killed in the effort.

Corporal Baird's acts of valour and self-sacrifice regained the initiative and preserved the lives of his team members. His actions were of the highest order and in keeping with the finest traditions of the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.

Medal for Gallantry Citation



Corporal Baird's citation for his Medal for Gallantry reads:

Lance Corporal Cameron Stewart Baird was part of a Commando Company mission assigned for clearance and search of a Taliban stronghold in November 2007. During the initial phase of the clearance, Lance Corporal Baird's Platoon came under heavy fire and during the ensuing close-range fire-fight, a member of his team was mortally wounded.

Displaying complete disregard for his own safety, Lance Corporal Baird

led other members of his team forward under heavy fire from machine guns and assault rifles to recover the wounded team member back to a position of cover.

He then re-entered the compound and continued to engage the enemy. Even though under constant fire, Lance Corporal Baird continually moved amongst his team members coordinating their fire, and throwing grenades to neutralise the enemy machine gun positions. Once the close quarter battle had been won, Lance

Corporal Baird again led his team forward and began room-to-room clearance, where he was again engaged by several enemy. Lance Corporal Baird continued to lead the fight killing several enemy and successfully completing the clearance. Throughout the action, Lance Corporal Baird displayed conspicuous gallantry, composure and superior leadership under fire. He was personally responsible for killing several enemy combatants during the clearance, ensuring the momentum of the assault was maintained, and undoubtedly preventing further members of his section from becoming casualties.

His performance and his actions were of the highest order and were in the finest traditions of the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.

Badges - Bruce Cameron

A recent post by Mick Dunn (1 AR Assn Ops Manager) got me thinking. Mick's post was to ask if anyone could identify the badge that a friend of his had found while fossicking. The badge was unusual, as it was surmounted by a King's Crown. It was, I suggested, an RAAC collar badge as worn prior to 1955 (when the Queen's Crown badge was issued).

What were the badges worn by the RAAC and its forebears, I wondered?

The Australian Tank Corps (ATC) came into being in 1927. The badge worn was:



In 1932 it was realized that the Defence Act did not allow for a tank corps. Members of the ATC were transferred to the Australian Army Service Corps and presumably wore the badge of that Corps (which was, it seems, the badge of what was originally the NSW AASC).

In 1941 the Australian Armoured Corps (AAC) was formed; becoming the RAAC in 1948. I believe that the AAC originally wore a gilt rising sun badge, though at some stage this was 'silvered'. According to Digger History, <http://diggerhistory.info/pages-badges/history02.htm>, the RAAC badge as we know it was introduced in 1949 (with a King's Crown). The Queen's Crown badge was introduced in 1955.

1 Armd Regt came into being in 1949. According to Digger History again, the 1 Armd Regt badge as we know it was introduced in 1951 with the King's Crown; BUT only as collar badges. The Queen's Crown beret badge was introduced in 1955.

Deduction from the above ... the RAAC beret badge with King's Crown was issued, but the 1 Armd Regt beret badge was not. Interestingly, some time ago, Rodger Tockock came across one of the latter. After some investigation it was verified as not being a 'fake' and was thought to have been a prototype made just prior to the King dying (and hence quite valuable). Photo of the design below.



Finally, the badge found by Mick's friend (below left) seems to be different to others pictured on the Net. Seems to me that this badge might be rather more significant (and valuable) than initially thought. Compare the details of the crowns. (The direction of the tanks on the collar badges was reversed for left and right collars.)



John Cottis: For the trainspotters, the crown is not a King's or Queen's crown, it's simply the crown. The old badge here has a crown started up by Edward VII who directed was to be used, stylised on the 'Tudor' Crown, in the early 1900s. The one we have today in use is the actual St Edward's crown which has been the coronation crown since the 1600s (although not compulsory). Georges V and VI, and HM now all used it for their coronation (Edward VIII not having a coronation).

There was apparently some direction in the 50's which said that the St Edwards crown was to be used in all heraldic applications and QEII used it for her coronation. Edward VII was clearly in the dog house. Technically the St Edward's crown would be the 'senior' crown so as a symbol of the monarch would logically continue.

My guess would be that any of the current potential future monarchs would continue to use the St Edward's crown as it's been the symbol of successful monarchs in recent time.

My response was:

Thanks John. It's great when people can add value to the understanding of a subject. I'll mention to Peter Lukeis, who's doing an article on badges for the next newsletter. In the email I mentioned above I referred to Rodger Tocock having come across a 1 Armd Regt badge with a Tudor crown (he knew the crown history). I posted the following from him on my blog today: "The authenticity of the 1 Armd Regt beret badge with the King's (Tudor) Crown was confirmed by one of Australia's leading experts/dealers and was purchased by him on a confidential basis. The badge is what's known as a Sample badge. A small quantity, probably less than 10 would have been struck. The badges would have been manufactured by a locally based company such as Stokes. The dye used to strike the badges would most likely have been destroyed as the badge was never approved nor worn." The badge was obviously extremely rare. Fingers crossed for a similar outcome for Mick's friend.



For purchase details of all items see Web site www.paratus.org.au/q-store

WWI TANK FIND CHANGES HISTORY

THE first major archaeological dig in 100 years at the site of one of Australia's biggest military defeats has turned up a "missing" British tank that Aussies long thought had fled the Bullecourt battleground due to cowardice.

The British Ministry of Defence-backed team of British and Australian archaeologists and volunteers has just unearthed tank armour plates with green paintwork, bits of track, six-pounder shells and other metal objects belonging to "Tank 796".

The French Government had issued an extraordinary permit for the first dig of an Anzac battlefield in the Somme since the end of the Great War, to solve the mystery of the fate of a dozen British tanks that were deployed to support the 1917 assault on the German line by the Australian 4th Division but "disappeared", leading to the slaughter of 10,000 Diggers. Head of the expedition, MoD chief archaeologist Richard Osgood, said the find was very exciting and showed that far from claims the British left Australian Diggers to be slaughtered on the German Hindenburg Line, the tanks had been engaged in battle but were not fit for the campaign.

Herald Sun 19th August 2017 Charles Miranda



For purchase details of some of these items see Web site www.paratus.org.au/q-store

Those rumours about Russians out bush in Vietnam were true

Extract from 'Holdfast' June 2012

We regularly heard rumours of fair haired Caucasians being spotted out bush, serving with the Viet Cong or NVA units. Some of our own Sappers were lucky enough to make a sighting, but the reports were usually dismissed as "highly unlikely" by the powers that be. The once secret SAS report (below) however, finally gives credibility to the many sightings. And the Russians have finally owned up as well, admitting now that some 3,000 Soviet soldiers served in Vietnam.

Many of these served as advisors, working directly with Viet Cong and NVA troops.

These Russian Veterans are now able to meet openly (right) to celebrate their service and commemorate their fallen comrades.



PATROL REPORT

Recco Ptl/Ptl 31.

Ref maps VIETNAM XUYEN HOC 1:50,000 sheet 6430 11
and Pictomap Supplement 1:25,000 sheet 6430 11 SA. Size and Composition of Patrol

Capt	T.N.	CULLEY	Ptl Comd
WO2	E.	BALL	Zic
Cpl	J.K.	HORNHOVER	Sig
Tpr	D.M.	TERRY	Medic
Cpl	S.T.	TANIGRA	Rfn
Tpr	S.	PENI	Rfn

B. Task Recco Zone '2301C. Date Time Out 281620HD. Date Time In 061620HE. Route Infil by hel into LZ YS 710698
Exfil by hel from LZ YS 704691
For patrol route see annex PF. Terrain Flat terrain with gullies up to 15 - 20 ft at creeks. Area covered with med primary jungle dense secondary 5 - 15 ft high consisting mainly of saplings. Visibility 5 - 40m. Flowing water in SUOI DA YS 700690 and creek YS 704688.G. En

At YS 709701 at 281030H ptl estb ni LUP.

At 281955H heard large dnl 5000m W.

Further dnl heard at 2000 hrs and two more ten mins later.

At YS 707703 at 290030H ptl obs NE well defined foot track. Showed signs of recent use by small gps persons.

At 290335H ptl estb OP 20m E of track.

At 290912H ptl heard sounds hvy chopping and trees falling from 50 - 60m NNE. 2 mins later heard voices of approx 3 pers from 40m NNE.

At 290915H ptl heard sound of med rkt fired from 200m E.

Shortly afterward ptl heard 1 short burst of HEIG fire from same loc.

At 290917H ptl heard voices approx 6 pers from loc of tree felling.

* At 290940H ptl obs 1 VC mov SW on track. Dress blue shirt white shorts armed with short wpn. Pers appeared to be CAUCASIAN - well built, fair complexion, brown hair and 5 ft 10 - 11 ins tall.

At 291010H ptl obs 3 VC (incl 2 females) mov NE on track. Dress male in black, 2 females coloured blouses and black trousers. Females talking and using rakes to scatter leaves on to track.

From 291100H to 1430H withdrew 50m E for comm.

At 291125H ptl obs 1 VC mov SW on track. Dress: black and carrying wpn slung.

At 291205H ptl obs 2 VC mov NE on track. Dress: black both carrying bundles of wood on poles.

At 291750H ptl heard 1 pers mov towards loc felling small trees and apparently marking others with machete. Pers reached 30m



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An Extract from 'Thunder Run', Newsletter of the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia (US Army) – 3rd Quarter, 2017

Vietnam? I Was There Last Night

Reprinted with the permission of the author, Robert David Clark

A couple of years ago someone asked me if I still thought about Vietnam. I nearly laughed in their face. How do you stop thinking about it? Every day I wake up with it and go to bed with it. But this is what I said. "Yeah, I think about it. I can't quit thinking about it. And I never will. But I've also learned to live with it. I'm comfortable with the memories. I've learned to stop trying to forget, and learned instead to embrace the memories.

Vietnam just doesn't scare me anymore." A psychologist once told me that not being affected by the experience would be abnormal. When he said that, it was like he'd given me a pardon. It was as if he said, "Go ahead and feel something about the place, Bob. It isn't going anywhere. You're going to wear it for the rest of your life. Might as well get to know it."

A lot of my "brothers" haven't been so lucky. For them, the memories are too painful – their sense of loss too great.

My sister told me of a friend she has whose husband was in Vietnam. She asked this guy when he had been there. Here's what he said: "Just last night." It took my sister awhile to figure out what he was talking about. Just last night. Yeah, I was in Vietnam. When? Just last night. And on my way to work this morning. Over my lunch hour. Playing with my kids. Yeah, I was there.

My sister says I'm not the same brother who went to Vietnam. My wife says I won't let people get close to me – not even her. They are probably both right. Ask a veteran about making friends in Vietnam. It was risky. Why? Because we were in the business of death, and death was with us all the time. It wasn't the death of, "If I die before I wake." This was the real thing. The kind where boys scream for their mothers. The kind that lingers in your mind and becomes more real every time you cheat it. You don't want to make a lot of friends when the possibility of dying is that real, that close. When you do, friends become a liability.

A guy named Bob Flanigan was my friend. Bob Flanigan is dead. I put him in a body bag one sunny day, April 29, 1969.

We'd been talking, only a few minutes before he was shot, about what we were going to do when we got back to "The World." Now, this was a guy who had come in country the same time as I had. A guy who was lovable and generous. He had blue eyes and sandy blonde hair. When he talked, it was with a soft drawl. Flanigan was a hick, and he knew it. That was part of his charm. He didn't care. Man, I loved this guy like the brother I never had. But I screwed up. I got too close to him. Maybe I didn't know any better. But I had broken one of the unwritten rules of war. Don't get close to people who are going to die. Sometimes you can't help it. You hear veterans use the term "buddy" when they refer to a guy they spent the war with. "Me and this buddy of mine." Friend sounds too intimate, doesn't it?

Friend conjures up images of being close. If he's a friend, then you are going to be hurt if he dies, and war hurts enough without adding to the pain. Get close – get hurt. It's as simple as that. In war you learn to keep people at that distance my wife talks about. You become so good at it, that for years after the war you still do it without thinking. You won't allow yourself to be vulnerable again.

My wife knows two people who can get into the soft spots inside me. My daughters. I know it probably bothers her that they can do this. It's not that I don't love my wife. I do. She's put up with a lot from me. She'll tell you that when she signed on for better or worse, she had no idea there was going to be so much of the latter. But with my daughters it's different. My girls are mine. They'll always be my kids. Not marriage, not distance, not even death can change that. They are something on this Earth that can never be taken away from me. I belong to them. Nothing can change that.

I can have an ex-wife, but my girls can never have an ex-father. There's the difference.

I can still see the faces, though they all seem to have the same eyes. When I think of us I always see a line of "dirty grunts" sitting on a paddy dike. We're caught in the first grey silver between darkness and light. That first moment when we know we've survived another night, and the business of staying alive for one more day is about to begin.

There was so much hope in that brief space of time. It's what we used to pray for. "One more day, Lord. One more day." And I can hear our conversations as if they'd only just been spoken. I still hear the way we sounded, the hard cynical jokes, the morbid humour. We were scared to death of dying, and trying our best not to show it. I recall the smells, too. Like the way cordite hangs in the air after a firefight. Or the pungent odour of rice-paddy mud, so different from the black dirt of Iowa.

The mud of Vietnam smelled ancient, somehow. Like it had always been there, waiting. And I'll never forget the way blood smells – sticky and drying on my hands. I spent a long night that way once. That memory isn't going anywhere. I recall how the night jungle appears almost dream-like as the pilot of a Cessna buzzes overhead, dropping parachute flares until morning. That artificial sun would flicker and make shadows run through the jungle. It was worse than not being able to see what was out there sometimes. I remember once looking at the man next to me as a flare floated overhead. The shadows around his eyes were so deep it looked like his eyes were missing. I reached over and touched him on the arm – without looking at me, he touched my hand. "I know, man. I know." That's what he said. It was a human moment. Two guys a long way from home and scared shitless. "I know, man." And at that moment he did. God, I loved those guys.

I hurt every time one of them died. We all did. Despite our posturing, despite our desire to stay disconnected, we couldn't help ourselves. I know why Tim O'Brien writes his stories. I know what gives Bruce Weigle the words to create poems so honest I cry at their horrible beauty. It's love. Love for those guys we shared the experience with.

We did our jobs like good soldiers, and we tried our best not to become as hard as our surroundings. We touched each other and said, "I know." Like a mother holding a child in the middle of a nightmare, "It's going to be all right." We tried not to lose touch with our humanity. We tried to walk that fine line: To be the good boys our parents had raised, and not to give into that unnamed thing we knew was inside us all.

You want to know what frightening is? It's a 19-year-old boy who's had a sip of that power over life and death that war gives you. It's a boy who, despite all the things he's been taught, knows that he likes it. It's a 19-year-old who's just lost a friend, and is angry and scared, and determined that, "Some son of a bitch is gonna pay."

To this day, the thought of that boy can wake me from a sound sleep, and leave me staring at the ceiling. As I write this I have a picture in front of me. It's of two young men. On their laps are tablets. One is smoking a cigarette. Both stare without expression at the camera. They're writing letters. Staying in touch with places they would rather be. Places and people they hope to see again. The picture shares space in a frame with a picture of my wife. She doesn't mind. She knows she's been included in special company. She knows I'll always love those guys who shared that part of my life – a part she never can. And she understands how I feel about my brothers who I know are out there, yet. The ones who still answer the question: When were you in Vietnam? Me? I was there last night.

Robert David Clark lives in Minnesota, and served as an eleven-bravo with the 2/60th, 9th Infantry Division, 1968-69.

Why did the US and its allies lose in Vietnam?

Or

"Why did the Republic of Vietnam fall to communist forces after the US and its allies had withdrawn, having secured the Nation from external insurgency?"

The Vietnam War was Australia's largest continuous war. The nation's most divisive conflict. Although it ended more than 40 years ago, it confronted political leaders, military strategists, commanders and soldiers in the field with issues that resonate to this day. Why did the US and its allies lose in Vietnam?

The above was part of the promotion for an address at the AWM on 18 August 2017. Although it is not known if the question was being posed in order to answer: 'They didn't lose', the impression that the War was 'lost' is one which is widely held by members of the community who know no better.

Two extracts from the 2009 Vietnam Veterans' Day Address by the late Brigadier Ian Bryant, AM (Retd) correctly and succinctly puts the matter in context:

"... we should always remember our history: that Australian combat forces were withdrawn from South Vietnam in early 1972; that the January 1973 Paris Peace Accords were signed by North Vietnam and the US – leading to the US withdrawal by March 1973; and that North Vietnam, in the face of the Paris peace terms, invaded South Vietnam with such strength that Saigon rapidly fell to enemy armoured assault, March 1975. Except for the Crowing of the media, the world was silent.

Despite the fact that our combat reputation and humanitarian actions throughout our participation in Australia's longest war remains unsullied, the more irresponsible of the media attempt to still sensationalise events taken out of context or simply misquoted without apology. We never lost a battle."

1st Armoured Regiment Association Reunion 2018



**Commemorating
50 Years since
the Battles of
Fire Support Bases
Coral and Balmoral**

Adelaide Friday 16th, Sat 17th and Sun 18th November 2018



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Eric & Lyn Rowley
Stan & Celeste Iry
Trevor & Brenda Watts
Des Mahar
Mick & Judi Payne
Bill & Mary Stanfield



The 2018 Reunion will be held in Adelaide. Details such as they are at this stage are contained in this brief. These are correct at the time of printing, but be aware some may change slightly as the planning process continues.

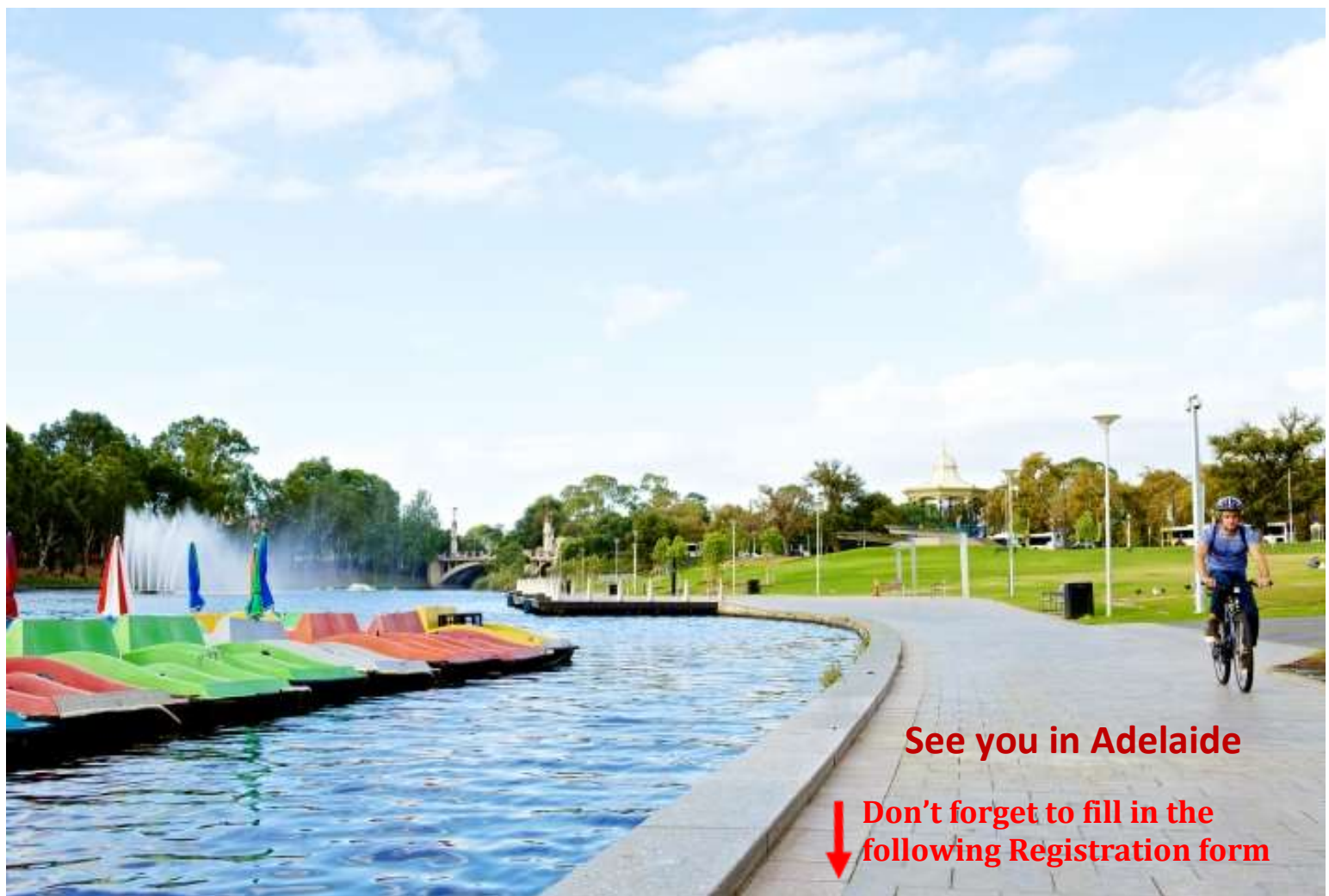
Functions & Venues:

Fri 16 Nov: Registration 1100-1600 Registration Intercontinental Hotel.
Meet & Greet 1800-2230 Intercontinental Hotel.
\$80 pp, food & drinks.

Sat 17 Nov: Back to the Regiment Edinburgh military precinct. Exact details of the visit will be released closer to the event once the Regiment releases the day's activities. At this stage all attendees will be bussed out and back to the Regiment, due to base security arrangements,
(Nil cost for bus.)
If any other costs are incurred they will be passed on in due course.
There is a plan B, if for some reason the regiment can't host on base, but at this stage it is unlikely this would happen.

Sun 18 Nov: Gala Dinner William Magarey Room Adelaide Oval Cost
\$125 pp, food & drinks.
1830-1900 Pre Dinner Drinks.
1900-2359 Seated Dinner.

Accommodation and Function pricing will be placed on the association web site as soon as they are confirmed by the SA organising committee.



See you in Adelaide

↓ Don't forget to fill in the following Registration form

Contacts for registration and payment are:

Mark Reid E: reid54@bigpond.com.au M: 0439 646 116 21 James Harrold Court Golden Grove SA 5125

Des Thompson desthomo@bigpond.com 18 Edinburgh Cres Reynella SA 5161

Table bookings: **Mark Reid** reid54@bigpond.com.au

Mick Dunn mdunn8888@gmail.com

Tables of ten only please.

Adelaide Reunion 2018 Registration Form

To avoid disappointment and to help us organise proceedings please complete this Registration form now and send to:

**1st Armoured Regiment Reunion
18 Edinburgh Cres Reynella
SA 5161**

OR

**You can scan it and Email it to:
reid54@bigpond.com.au
OR
desthomo@bigpond.com**

Please also send Registration Fee for \$50 or \$50 plus *total cost, via either of the following methods of payment:

Cheques / Money orders payable to
1st Armoured Regiment Reunion
18 Edinburgh Cres Reynella SA 5161

Online Banking
BSB 065112 ACC 10229270, Reference **"your name"**
and the word **"2018 Reunion"**

PARTICULARS	Given name	Surname/ Post Nominal	Preferred Name
Title: Rank/MR/MRS/MS			
Member Name			
Wife / Partner Name			

CONTACT DETAILS

Address:	Phone	
Suburb / Town	Mobile	
State	Post Code	Email.

REGISTRATION FEE \$50.00, Is non Refundable.

I /we would be interested in attending all /some of the following events

Event	Please circle preference	Cost
Meet & Greet, Intercontinental Hotel \$80.00pp	Me only/both	\$
Reunion Dinner Adelaide Oval \$125.00pp	Me only/both	\$
*Total Cost		\$

Note: All accommodation will be self-book.

Association Member	Yes	No
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Any special diet / accessibility requirements

Disclaimer

All members and or their partners attending the 1st Armoured Regiment Association Reunion, Adelaide 2018 do so at their own risk. The reunion committee accept no responsibility for personnel injury, property damage or any other loss that may be suffered through participation in any event/s comprising the 1st Armoured Regiment Reunion, Adelaide 2018

SQN FOR NAME TAG CIRCLE ONE ONLY

HQ SQN A SQN B SQN C SQN TSS OSS LAD

Dates Served in SQN

Corps RAAC, RAEME, ORDNANCE, TRANSPORT, CATERING, MEDICAL, SIGS

Other list.....

REGISTRATIONS CLOSE

16TH SEPTEMBER 2018

Order shirts now for the 2018 reunion, Adelaide

Orders will be placed in the Registration Bags.
Can be posted but will incur postage costs.

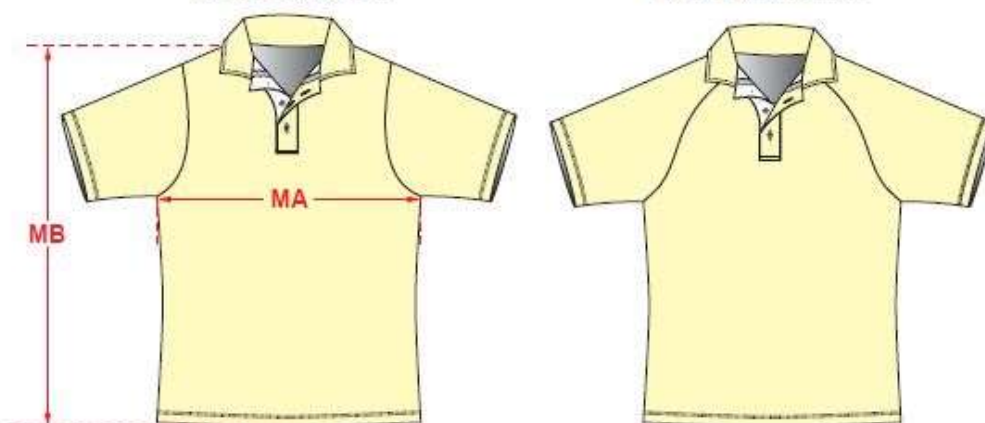
Follow these 2 easy steps to order

1. EFT \$45 per shirt to **BSB 065 112 A/C No 10229270, Reunion Treasurer** and **Reference 'shirt/s & your name' (Important)**
2. Then email Des Thompson desthomo@bigpond.com and advise **Shirts/s, your Name and size/s** E.g. Size/s 1 2 3Etc.
If in doubt contact Des on M: 0408 156 482



MEN set in sleeve

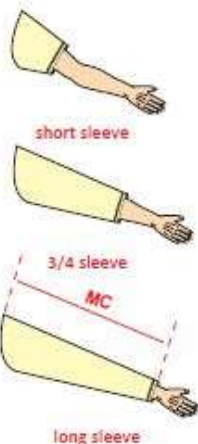
MEN raglan sleeve



MENS/UNISEX

Size(cm)	KIDS							ADULTS									
	4	6	8	10	12	14	XS	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL	4XL	5XL	6XL	7XL
MA Chest Width	36	38	40	42	44	48	52	54	57	60	62	65	70	74	78	81	85
MB Length from HSP	48	50	58	62	65	67	70	72	74	76	78	80	84	88	92	92	92
MC Long sleeve length	42	46	54	58	62	64	63	65	65	66	68	70	73	73	73	73	73

*Tolerance of 1-2cm is considered acceptable



How to get the best size:

1. Find a shirt that you wear at the moment and fits you comfortably.
2. Measure the Chest Width (Arm pit - Arm pit).
3. Correspond that measurement to our size chart. For example: If your shirt measures 60cm across the chest, then you would be a Large.

Please note: Promocomer/ Spida Sports will not take any responsibility for shirts that have been ordered in the wrong size. No refunds will be given.

If you require extra width or length please let one of our staff know. We can organise custom sizes for a small fee.