



VOL # 3 Issue # 24

173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

Representing the 1RAR Group 1965-66

THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE CHAPTER'S MAGAZINE

SITREP



April - May - June 2015

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CROSS OF GALLENTY WITH PALM UNIT CITATION RECOMMENDED TO BE AWARDED TO 1RAR GROUP VIETNAM 1965-66



UPDATE by Ray Payne OAM

As most of you would be aware, the Late Carey McQuillan and I worked together for nearly five years to have the US Army Meritorious Unit Commendation (MUC) awarded to the 1RAR Group and worn by current members of 1RAR and the current members of our attached units. The MUC was finally awarded at a parade at 1RAR in Townsville on the 4th July 1991.

However, at the same time as the battle for the MUC was underway we had also applied to have the Group awarded the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation. We had numerous battles, letters, phone conversations with staff at the Directorate of Honours and Awards of the Department of Defence (The Directorate). Each time they came up with a reason for rejection it was different time. Each rejection we refuted their response ... they found another reason. With each change of government or Minister a new submission was made. Unfortunately it was always a negative response.

About two years ago a Chapter 23 member, Alan Larson, asked me if he in conjunction with another who had had previous success with submissions to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal) could make a submission and I provide them with all the information ... which naturally I did.

The Tribunal is an independent statutory body that was established under the Defence Act 1903. The Tribunal commenced operation as a statutory body on 5 January 2011.

I was privy to their submission and was impressed and thought it covered all the necessary arguments.

The Tribunal came down with its decision, would you believe, on the 4th July 2014, exactly 23 years to the day when

we were presented with the MUC.

The following is an extract from the Tribunals ruling:

DECISION:

On 4 July 2014 the tribunal decided to set aside the decision of the Directorate of Honours and Awards not to recommend that the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment be awarded the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation and substitutes its decision to recommend to the Minister for Defence that the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment and its attached units that served in Vietnam between May 1965 and May 1966 should be awarded the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation.

The Tribunal wrote to Alan back in July 2014 ... that letter appears on page 2 of this edition.

We now await the final approval of the Minister of Defence. We are hopeful that the approval will come through this year giving us time to organise the presentation. However, we implore you to be patient, we have waited all this time we don't need someone chasing the Minister or in some way upsetting the process.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Chapter 23 member, Alan Larson for his outstanding effort in gaining the approval recommendation for this long awaited award.

CURRENT SITUATION:

In November I wrote to Darren Chester MP, Secretary to the Minister. He in turn advise in December that he has sought advice from Defence.

In the past week I have written to the Minister. I await his reply ... hopefully that will come in the next month or so. You will be advised as soon as it comes to hand.



Australian Government

Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal

DHAAT/OUT/2014/820
Ref: Application 2013/004

Mr Alan Larsen
4 Mark Avenue
TOOGOOM QLD 4655

Dear Mr Larsen

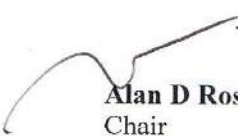
I write to advise you of the outcome of the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal review of the decision of the Directorate of Honours and Awards of the Department of Defence that the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) and its attached units that served in Vietnam between May 1965 and May 1966, should not be recommended for the award of the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation (CGWP).

After careful consideration of the matters raised over the course of the review, the Tribunal has decided that the decision of Defence be set aside and substitutes it decision to recommend to the Minister for Defence that 1RAR and its attached units that served in Vietnam between May 1965 and May 1966 should be awarded the CGWP.

As a consequence of this decision, the Tribunal's report has been provided to the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence for a decision. A copy of the Tribunal's report is enclosed for your retention. The Parliamentary Secretary will write to you in due course to advise you of the Government's decision in relation to the review.

I trust that you will be pleased with the Tribunal's decision.

Yours sincerely


Alan D Rose
Chair
Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal

10 July 2014

Enclosure

Report – *Alan Larsen and the Department of Defence [2014] DHAAT [26] (4 July 2014)*

LOCKED BAG 7765, CP2-3-068, CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

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I Was Only 19: The power of a song to change a nation

by Oshaughnessy Gillian



Songwriter John Schumann talks to Gillian O'Shaughnessy on writing 'I Was Only 19' - and how the song helped to change Australian attitudes towards the men and women who are sent to fight for them in war.

John Schumann didn't go to Vietnam, but in 1983 he



wrote a song that changed the way many Australians viewed the war and the veterans that fought in it.

The Vietnam War was the longest conflict of the 20th century in which Australians fought, involving some 60,000 personnel.

At first it wasn't widely opposed but by the end of the war, in the early 1970's attitudes to the war had changed to such an extent that hundreds of thousands were marching in the streets of Australia's capital cities to voice their protest, and returning soldiers were often shunned.

John Schumann was the right age to be called up, but he missed the draft. His memories of the late 1960s and conscription were of jumpy black and white television images being broadcast into lounge-rooms across the country, and his mum peering at him anxiously from time to time when she thought he wasn't watching.

"I had asthma as a kid, and even though I knew how to handle it, every time I had an asthma attack mum would take me to the doctor," he recalled.

"I didn't know why. There was no need to.

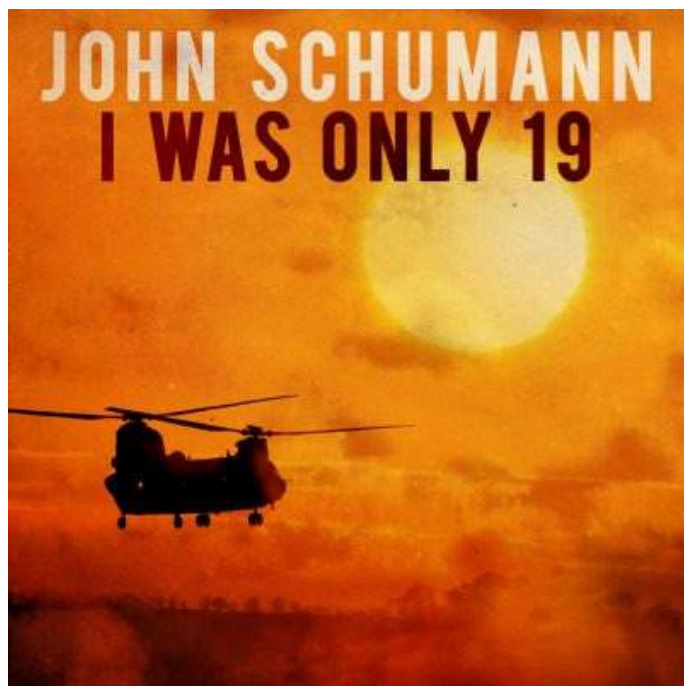
"But I worked out afterwards, that she was laying a paper trail in case my marble did come out of the barrel."

Schumann clearly remembers friends who did get

called up, and who came back fundamentally altered. He watched unemployment set in, he saw friendships fracture and relationships break up.

"I watched some of these guys become sick and destabilised in ways I didn't understand then though I understand more now. And I really did think, there but for the grace of god, go I."

The song



It was in 1982 when Schumann met his soon to be brother-in-law Mick Storen who had fought in Vietnam. After getting to know him, Schumann asked him to talk about his tour of duty. Mick agreed and the conversation was recorded. That interview eventually became the basis of the song 'I Was Only 19.'

"I reckon it was about nine months later I wandered out into the backyard of the tiny little Carlton house I was living in, and wrote 'I Was Only 19' in 10 minutes. People ask how long it took to write the song and the answer is: all my life, nine months and ten minutes."

Schumann describes the process as something akin to being a conduit for something bigger than himself. He knew it was a good song, an important song, but he had no idea the broader impact it would have. And it might never have been recorded if it hadn't received approval from Mick.

"The agreement was that he (Mick) would hear it first and if he didn't like it, the song would not see the light of day," Schumann said.

"I remember playing it to him live at a family bbq, and I remember he looked at me silently, for what seemed like at the time about ten minutes, but it was probably about a minute, before he spoke.

"I thought, I have really touched a savagely raw nerve here."

From there the response to the song just kept growing.

"One of the very first times we played it live," recalls Schumann, "was at the Prospect Hill Hotel in Cue in Melbourne.

"We had set up on the floor, there was no stage in this particular room and the room was full.

"The first few rows were sitting down, they were almost crowding in on our performing area, and we played 'I Was Only 19' and I turned around to change guitars," he said.

"About eight or nine people that I could see, who were sitting close to the band, were crying, in tears. And I thought there's something going on here."

Even now, the song evokes strong reactions from those who have fought in war, soldiers who may not have been born when Vietnam was fought.

"My band at the time, the Vagabond Crew," said Schumann, "went to do a Forces Entertainment Tour. We were in Tarin Kowt and I was walking down this dusty road inside the camp."

"Some young bloke came up to me and said, 'mate you're that John Schumann bloke who wrote '19,' legend.'"

"I was totally gobsmacked that a song that had been written 28 years ago then, was held in such high regard by young blokes who were in the army but hadn't even been born when it was number one.

The legacy

John Schuman has reflected a lot on why Vietnam Veterans were treated with such disdain when they returned from the war, and why the song that he wrote, helped to change attitudes.

"Australians are fundamentally fair and decent and we love our stories," he said.

"You can do a senate enquiry, you can do an academic report, you can do speeches- you can do your presentations and symposiums, but you tell a bunch of Australians a story and it will touch them, it will touch their hearts and their minds," he insists.

"I think 'I Was Only 19,' was a four minute, 19 second story that let the rest of Australia know what was happening to their Vietnam veterans, and I think they stopped and thought, 'shit, we really didn't treat those guys very well, that was really not fair.'"

"And I think," he continues, "that there was a moment of shame, if you like, on the part of the vast majority of Australians, who hadn't stopped to think

about the impact of that war on the poor blokes we sent to fight it."



Schumann says the Welcome Home Parade for Australian Vietnam Veterans in 1987, followed by a concert where John Schumann's band Redgum performed, was a turning point. From there, the desire for a War Memorial to recognise Vietnam Vets grew, and was eventually dedicated in October 1992.

"It (the Parade) was a national outpouring, a national

apology, to say, 'I'm sorry, you blokes, I'm sorry we didn't welcome you home, I'm sorry we didn't understand you were crook, I'm sorry we didn't understand that this was a different war to the war your fathers and grandfathers fought, I'm sorry we let the government work you over, I'm sorry you were sprayed with chemicals, I'm sorry you're sick.

I'm sorry."

"I think 'I Was Only 19' played a small but important part in that, because as I said, we respond to stories best," he states.

"The more I think about Australians and stories," he explains, "the more I come to the realisation that they are very important to us and to our understanding of who we are, where we're going and how we're going to get there."

"We have learnt from the Vietnam War," he said. "But it took us a while, a lot of people were hurt in the meantime."

"We have learned now, that regardless of our position about any conflict that our government gets us into, we have an obligation to respect, support and care for the veterans of those conflicts, and their families for ever, and not to count the cost.

"Because," says Schumann, "that's the bargain. That's the bargain."

"Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

— [Winston S. Churchill](#)



CHAPTER 11

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CHAPTER AWAY MEETING REPORT

By Neil Cromarty

The first meeting for the year was an away meeting held over the weekend 6th, 7th & 8th March. At Lightning Ridge New South Wales (Opal Capital of the World). For our American mates Lightning Ridge is about an 11 hour drive North West of Sydney and about forty five minutes drive north to the Queensland Border. Bob & Rosina, John & Irena, Graham & Helen arrived on the Thursday, Kyra & myself arrived on the Friday, all stayed at the Opal Caravan Park, I can thoroughly recommend it. Friday night we all had a meal at the club and had a few beers together and bought raffle tickets, some of us were lucky enough to win a prize. A couple of days before we arrived it was very hot with temperatures above 40 degrees.



Bob, Rosina, Graham and Helen enjoy a cup of coffee at their caravan while their mate watches on



Although we only had a small turnout everyone had a most enjoyable time, the meeting was held at the Lightning Ridge Bowling Club, thanks to Michael Taylor and the Club for letting us use the meeting room. Michael, a medic with B Coy 1st Battalion RAR and a resident of Lightning Ridge who was up until his retirement in charge of the Lightning Ridge Hospital.



Chapter Members at the meeting left to right

John and Irena McDonough, Michael Taylor, Neil Cromarty, Bob and Rosina Cockerill, Kyra Cromarty, Helen and Graham Groth. And local veterans Mal Brown and Lyndle Boulton

After the meeting we all enjoyed lunch at the club then took the opportunity to have a look around the Opal fields, and hit the shops to check out opals for sale.



In front of the Hebal Hall.

Neil Cromarty, Graham Groth, Michael Taylor, Helen Groth, Bob Cockerill, Kyra Cromarty, Rosina Cockerill, Irena Mc Donough

For the Saturday night Michael Taylor had organised a special night for us, this was a trip to Hebal, just over the Queensland border, about forty five minutes away. Michael had organised a bus for the trip, the rest of the bus was filled with Lightning Ridge Rotary Club members. This was a special fund raiser, held every year , for the district, organised by the P&C (Parents & Citizens) for the local primary school. There are only 13 children in the school. They have been doing it pretty tough in this area, they have not had rain here for four years. A few beers etcetera at the Hebal pub first then into the hall. It was a fresh seafood night, all bought in from Brisbane that afternoon and consisted of oysters, prawns (shrimps) Balmain bugs. After that we were served some delicious deserts. The highlight of the night was a Yabbie race (small freshwater type crayfish) Yabbies are bought at auction and placed in the middle of a circle , first over the line wins the race.

BALMAIN
BUG



Michael Taylor, Rosina and Bob inside the Hebal Pub.



Bob, John Bevan our bus driver, Michael, John & Irena enjoy a drink under the veranda of the Hebal Pub.



The Hebal Pub

Tucked away on the NSW/QLD border between, Lightning Ridge and Dirranbandi on the Castlereagh Hwy is Hebel, once known as Kelly's Point because it is believed that Ned Kelly's brother Dan and fellow Kelly gang member Steve Hart lived here under an alias. Just goes to show you never really know who your neighbours are!

Our President Bob presented a book, Brief History of the Australian Army, on behalf of the Chapter to the school and the gesture was very much appreciated. Only too soon it was time to head for home, this is not a road to drive your car on of a night due to the huge number of Kangaroos on the road, evidenced by the number that had been killed by trucks, they can make a terrible mess of a car. Home by 12 o'clock.

The ladies were interested in having a look at some opal jewellery, Michael, being a local knew who to talk to and introduced us to a gentleman who had some opals for sale at the right prices. After some time our ladies came away very happy with their purchases.



Opals are a beautiful gemstone and of many colours.

Sunday morning we were picked up by the bus again for a tour around many of the sights. Our thanks to our driver John Bevan who donated his time to drive for us this weekend. First stop was the monthly markets for a look around, a bacon and egg sandwich and a cup of coffee. We then had a tour around the various opal fields, once off the main road there are only tracks running everywhere and very rough, at all the mine sights there are only shacks and old caravans where the miners stay when they are working their claims.



Opal miners shack



There are hundreds of mines from large to small leases. This was a real eye opener. We learnt that Opal is non-crystalline silica, similar to quartz, but is not a mineral. Its internal structure enables unique diffraction of light to produce white, gray, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, magenta, rose, pink, slate, olive, brown, and black. Opal is formed from a solution of silica (very fine sand-like particles) and water. In some sandstone outback regions, water passes through the sandstone to form a silica-rich solution that flows to voids formed from decomposed fossils and as the water evaporates, a silica deposit is left. This is repeated over vast periods and from it, an Opal is formed.

The Black Opal differs from other Opal as it is formed on a darker (black) quartz-like layer that enables greater refraction/reflection of the light to the top of the opal, especially the reds and pinks. It is the 'reds' that are more valuable.



In all it was a great weekend, Come Monday morning it was time to pack up and head for home. A mob of kangaroos came over to say goodbye.



We said our goodbyes and headed south, Bob & Rosina to Box Hill Sydney, John & Irena to Lismore, Graham & Helen to San Remo on the Central Coast, Kyra & myself seven and half hour back to Maitland.

I commend Lightning Ridge to you all and if you haven't been there add it to your 'Bucket List'.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be held on 4th July 2015 at Penrith, the meeting will be followed that night by our annual 4th July Remembrance Dinner. It will be the 50th Anniversary of our deployment to South Vietnam. I would appeal to you all to make a special effort to attend this dinner, it should be a great night.

This year we will have Scott Bevan as our guest speaker, Scott is currently working on the ABC 24, has worked for Channel 9, written several books, made documentary's and been an overseas correspondence and he has just informed me that he will be doing the ABC coverage of the 100th Anniversary of the Landing at Gallipoli on 25th April.



VALE



242574 Sidney Harold CHEESEMAN AM JP 7th March 1935 - 25th March 2015

The passing of Sid Cheeseman AM on 25th March 2015 will forever leave a hole in the membership of Chapter 11.

Sid was survived by his wife Michie, who is currently in a nursing home at North Parramatta, their children and grandchildren.

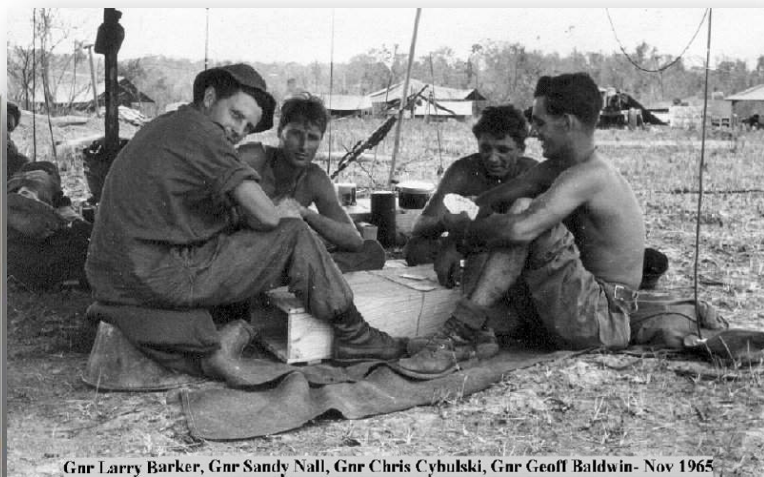
Sid was the immediate past President of Chapter 11 of the 173D Airborne Brigade Association his service to the Chapter while President, the work he put into the 2005 Brigade Reunion in Penrith ensured that attendees enjoyed every minute. Even after Sid retired from being Chapter 11 President he still played an active role. He donated items of interest to raffle, raising much needed funds for the chapter. He attended every function he was able to and contributed greatly to the festivities at dinners and away meetings.

Sid graduated from the Army Apprentice School as a vehicle mechanic. He saw service in Korea, Japan, Thailand and Antarctica. As a WO2 in 1965 posted to Vietnam to serve with 1ALSC as part of the 1RAR Group at Bien Hoa. With the arrival of the Task Force he moved to 101 Field Workshops completing his 12 month tour.

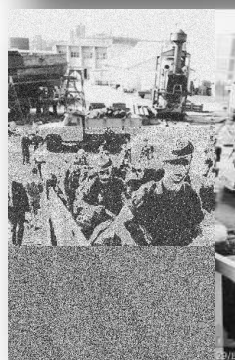
He was commissioned on 1st April 1971 (He would joke about joining the Officer ranks on April Fool's Day), he was allotted for duty at the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Centre. In December 1979 he was posted as Officer Commanding 1 Watercraft Workshop. Sid consistently produced outstanding results which resulted in his peers nominating him for an award in the Military Division of the Order of Australia. On the Queen's Birthday in 1984 Sid was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM)

Sid's funeral was held at Castlebrook Memorial Park Windsor Road Rouse Hill on March 31st at 11:00am the strong turnout of veterans and friends was a fitting farewell to a true soldier and a gentleman.

50 YEARS AGO.....



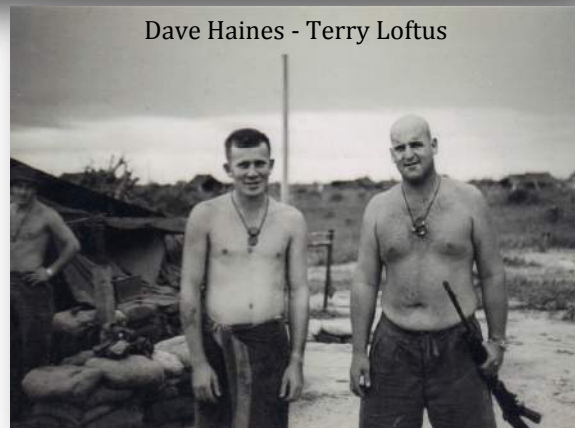
Gnr Larry Barker, Gnr Sandy Nall, Gnr Chris Cybulski, Gnr Geoff Baldwin- Nov 1965



1RAR Group

Bien Hoa

1965



Dave Haines - Terry Loftus



CHAPTER 19 - NEW ZEALAND

President - John Deazley
PO Box 73 260
PAPKURA NZ 2244
deazal173d@hotmail.com



Greetings

Fifty years since we went to Vietnam. Where has all the time gone since.



ANZAC Day 1965 (Sunday) I was relaxing with other members of my Signal Squadron at Papakura RSA (Auckland) having provided the army presence at Papakura township ANZAC Day observance. I was called back to Papakura Camp. At about 2.30pm I was told by my squadron commander that I was going to Vietnam with the gunners. By 10.00am on Monday 26 April I had been posted to 161 Battery RNZA. Not really a big deal as both units were headquartered on the same Parade Ground.

July fifty years ago 161 battery was in place behind 1 RAR. The battery became the fourth firing battery of

3/319 Artillery Regt.

Later in 1965 working with B Coy 1 RAR in a Forward Observation Party I was patrolling with a platoon and thought to myself I was now an ANZAC soldier. I was proud to be with 1 RAR.

The relationship that was forged within the brotherhood that was 173rd Airborne Brigade has remained with those of us who served at Bien Hoa 1965 -1966.

This year sees 161 Battery having a reunion at Palmerston North 15 to 18 July. If anyone wants more information please contact me email:

dezal173rd@hotmail.com

or phone mobile: 064 272 919 747

Wishing everyone a good year.

John Deazley



CHAPTER 23

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Ray Hughes OAM

As I sit to write in my fifth week of staring at my navel, I have two important messages for you.

1. When the carpet salesman tells you that the underlay and carpet are the softest you can get, he is lying.



2. The concrete underneath is just as hard as when it was laid 20 years ago.

I'd like to thank all of our Chapter 23 members and others that enquired after my health, phoned, sent cards and gifts. It was a great comfort. This is what I was talking about in our last newsletter when I mentioned that 50 year bond that we all have between us.

Having broken three ribs and my scapula in a bedroom fall I am starting to recover slowly. I am still doped up with some very strong pain killers. At this stage I am unsure if I'll be able to attend our April meeting as even getting in and out of a car is very painful, however, I will be endeavouring to be there.

Secretary Ray has already impressed upon you all the importance of this April meeting to the future direction of our Chapter. We have in the past been a very successful a Chapter with your continued support. It is that time to review our operating and financial procedures to take us into the future. It is imperative that everyone is aware of the planned changes that are necessary and that everyone fully understands, because information is always better when heard from the horse's mouth.

It appears that currently little is being done for 1RAR Group members to commemorate the 50th anniversary of our deployment. I am aware that 1RAR Assn is holding their annual reunion in the vast city of Woolgoolga for their members and that's all. I have asked Secretary Ray Payne to investigate the situation and possibilities.

I trust that you are all safe and well. Looking forward to the April meeting.

Regards Ray

SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Ray Payne OAM

Julie and I had planned a five week trip to the US including the reunion in San Diego, we were starting in Seattle and Craig and Pat Ford were going to drive us down the west coast to San Diego. After the reunion



it was off to Las Vegas and San Francisco via Lake Tahoe, finishing with a week in Hawaii. A great plan that had to be cancelled because of our dollar ... I wasn't prepared to throw away 30¢ in the dollar ... disappointing, but there will be other times.

Our President is currently suffering a great deal of pain following a fall in which he broke three ribs and his scapular (shoulder blade). Any movement is painful and will be for a while. We can only wish him to improve soon.

You will notice that the away meeting that was planned for Yamba in September has been listed as TBA. There are a number of reasons for this ... first is that I have had some negative reports about the Blue Dolphin which has prompted me to check it out and also do a recce just in case. The other reason is that if the Cross of Gallantry is approved I am reasonably confident that the presentation would take place in Townsville and to fit into the training schedule would be in October around the Battalion's 70th Birthday on the 12th.

Julie and I will be going away in our van on the 23rd April and marching in Grafton on ANZAC Day. We plan to extend our break returning home on Friday, 22nd May ... missing the May meeting.

Please make a very special commitment to attend our April meeting ... thanks.



EVANS HEAD GATHERING 2015

SILVER SANDS HOLIDAY PARK

6th –9th February inclusive. (4 Nights)



We started the official fun from the 6th February and continue through until we say farewell on the morning of the 10th. Many chapter members stayed from the 2nd until the 12th. We had a great crowd with 42 attending.

We planned quite a few things to entertain ourselves, we use a marque on site (No 76) as the gathering 'chat' point, if anyone was not doing anything they headed for the marque as there is always someone to chat with and enjoy tea & coffee at any time of the day.

We held the Evans Head Olympics ... everyone competed in all events with points allocated to the winners of each event. The competition was hotly contested, not to say we didn't have lots of fun and laughter, because that was certainly the case. The Olympic events were held over three days with some of the events being Bocce, modified croquet, the golf ladder, ping pong, thong toss and many others. By the third day we had a tie for Champion between Charles & Geoff, a count back could split them so they were both declared champions, given their gold medal and a bottle of wine. Sandra Hall won the ladies events.

We held a BBQ at the camp kitchen, the new kitchen has four BBQs and good facilities ... I must thank the members who cleaned up all the BBQs, great job fellas. We have most 'happy hours' at the marque, but with the Bowls Club and the RSL Club both backing up to the park we enjoyed their hospitality. Some of the ladies played bingo at the Bowls club when it was on. The bowls club has a fabulous Chinese restaurant, which most of us dined at a few times. The Chapter subsidised one of our Chinese meals. Both club held raffles and a number of our members had good wins.

Most mornings some members left for an early morning walk along the beach or around the streets checking out the homes. Coffee and the shops is always on the agenda for the ladies.

One of our novelty events that really had us rolling with laughter was our 'Mystery Box Party'. This was a simple game ... everyone had to bring a \$5.00 novelty gift in a box ... any size box. When your name is drawn you pick and open your box, if you don't want your gift you can swap it with anyone who has already opened theirs they can't refuse to swap. This is such a fun game, best I've ever played.

Another fun event we organised was truly fun but also assisted local charities. We selected a theme and then members had to spend \$10.00 in the local Op Shops and purchase an outfit to fit with the theme ... this year the theme was Royalty. Once dressed we all walked to the Bowls Club where a member of the staff was asked to nominate the best male and female. Us doing this was so well received by the club and its members, they were very taken by the fact we were game to do it, but more so that we were assisting their local charities, quite a bit of kudos for the 173d. Our winners were Jan & Doug Stapleton.

Another game we played was run by Gail & Jan it was a whole new version of 'pin the tail on the donkey'. As the ladies were blindfolded the fun started and the men laughed not realising that their turn would be next.

We have decided to do it all again next year with the majority already booked in from the 1st February until the 15th February for two weeks of fun. The official gathering will still be four days and our HQ will be Site 76. Think seriously about joining with us for what is really a most enjoyable holiday. Remember, we are not that old that fun cannot be a major part of our lives.

Gallery on next pages.



Jeff Hufer, Gordon Nielson, Ron Evans



Happy Hour is part of the deal



John Vincent, Doug Stapleton



Box Party fun



Box Party gathering ... great fun



Julie has selected her mystery box



Its nice in the shade



Dawn quite excited about her mystery gift ... she didn't keep it long!!



So did you win Dawn? Guess not!



Who called it pin the tail on the donkey?



Jeff playing ladder golf Not bad mate!



Haven't lost the touch ... but I wasn't allowed to touch



Julie said tall people had an advantage ... give her a step.



Jeff still trying



Go Sandra ... great effort



Ron needed a hand ... he stuck them on the hand!!!



BBQ before our trivia night



All the outfits bought for \$10.00



Olympic Games Champions ... Geoff & Charles



Evans Heads was once again a great event that provided members with a great deal of fun and many many laughs.

I wish to offer my thanks to two ladies, Gail & Jan, these two helped ensure that we were always entertained by their crazy antics ... thanks you ladies we all love you!

BRISBANE WELCOME HOME - OPERATION SLIPPER ENDS



Some of the Chapter 23 members arriving at ANZAC Square ... L-R: Dr. Mike Naughton MD, Kevin Petersen, Alex McKean, Ray Raines

More than 3000 veterans of Australia's military campaign in Afghanistan were given a hero's welcome in Brisbane on Saturday morning.

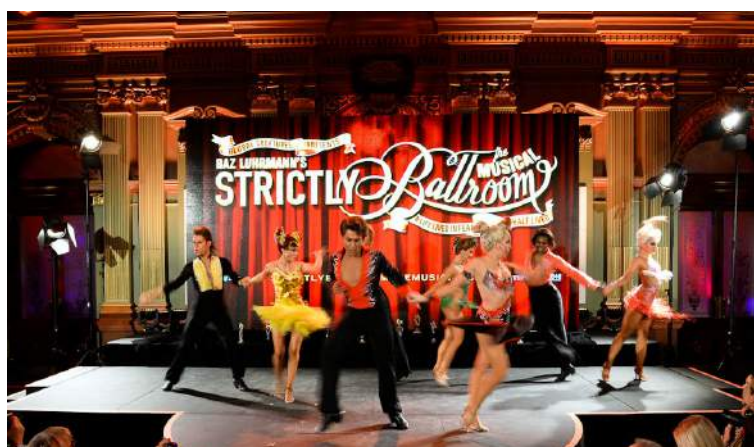
The 14-year military operation resulted in the deaths of 41 ADF members, with hundreds more suffering injuries, both physical and psychological.

The scorn their predecessors who served in Vietnam faced upon their return was nowhere to be seen.

Instead, they were greeted with waving Australian flags and signs expressing a nation's gratitude.

In one of a series of such parades held across Australia, the Operation Slipper veterans from all Australia's defence forces marched through the CBD streets under an overcast sky.

More than 5000 people lined the streets to watch the returned servicemen and women march through the city.



CHAPTER 23 EVENT - MATINEE

STRICTLY BALLROOM

Margaret Malone has made a provisional booking for 16 for Strictly Ballroom at Lyric Theatre, QPAC at 1:00pm on 23rd September. The tickets will be \$60.00 concession. Margaret needs to confirm the number of tickets we require within the next 2 weeks. Payment is not required until the 17th of June. Then she must pay for the tickets she books. They are good seats in the centre of row O in the 1st balcony. Don't miss out.

CHAPTER 23 LADIES MONTHLY LUNCHEES - BRISBANE

April 30th	Coffee Club	Eagle St. Pier, Riverside.
May 28th.	Gilhooleys	Albert St. City
June 25th.	Southbank Surf Club.	Southbank
July 30th.	Summit Restaurant	Sir Samuel Griffith Drive, Mt Cootha
August 27th.	Chilli & Spice.	128 Charlotte St., City
September 24th	Nagomi.	7 Eagle St. Pier, Riverside
October 29th	Vapiano.	Queen St. Mall City
November 26th	Customs House	399 Queen St., City

The meeting place for Southbank venues is at our usual spot at the bottom of Tribune St., in the Parklands. City and Riverside venues, we meet at The Pig & Whistle in Queen St Mall.

For Mt Cootha, we will meet in the city and get a bus to Mt Cootha.

July & November venues have been booked, as advised by the venues. Numbers will be required closer to the time.

If you have any queries, feel free to contact Margaret ... 0427867154 or Sandra ... 0411124987..



CHAPTER RAFFLE:

Thank you to all those members who have already returned their sold raffle ticket and a special thanks to those who have sold multiple books. I still have some books available for anyone who wants them.

Please remember that all sold or unsold tickets must be returned by 1st July.

CHAPTER 23 MONTHLY MEETING VENUES

Apr 11th	Lions Supporters Club
May 9th	Bribie Island RSL Club
June 13th	Sandgate RSL Club
July 11th	Greenbank RSL Club
Aug 8th	Redcliffe RSL - Anniversary
Sept 14 th -17th	Away - To Be Advised
Oct 10th	Yeronga Services Club
Nov 14th	A.G.M. Lions Supporters Club
Dec 12th	Tweed Heads Bowls Club

LAST POST

The True Story



In military tradition, the Last Post is the bugle call that signifies the end of the day's activities. It is also sounded at military funerals to indicate that the soldier has gone to his final rest and at commemorative services such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

The Last Post is one of a number of bugle calls in military tradition that mark the phases of the day. While Reveille signals the start of a soldier's day, the Last Post signals its end.

The call is believed to have originally been part of a more elaborate routine, known in the British Army as "tattoo", that began in the 17th century. In the evening, a duty officer had to do the rounds of his unit's position, checking that the sentry posts were manned and rounding up the off-duty soldiers and packing them off to their beds or billets. The officer would be accompanied by one or more musicians. The "first post" was sounded when he started his rounds and, as the party went from post to post, a drum was played. The drum beats told off-duty soldiers it was time to rest; if the soldiers were in a town, the beats told them it was time to leave the pubs. (The word "tattoo" comes from the Dutch for "turn off the taps" of beer kegs; Americans call this "taps" or "drum taps".) Another bugle call was sounded when the officer's party completed its rounds, reaching the "last post" – this signalled that the night sentries were alert at their posts and gave one last warning to the other soldiers.

The Last Post was eventually incorporated into funeral and memorial services as a final farewell, and symbolises the duty of the dead is over and they can rest in peace.

'Blue Lanyard, Green Valley'.

The Rice Bowl Operation

Lex McAulay sales@banner-books.com.au

You might have received an e-mail from Ray Payne about a book I just finished on the operation we did in November-December 1965 in 'the Rice Bowl', which involved securing Duc Hanh and Vo Xu and finding the rice caches.

There was enough interest to go ahead and have some copies printed.

These are now available.

The book is 'Blue Lanyard, Green Valley'.

The book describes the planning and execution of Operation 'New Life 65', and the subsequent sortie into the Hat Dich area, with a look at what 1RAR did in the 55 Days from mid-November to the end of the tunnel operation in January – no other battalion in SVN did what we did in those days.

Appendices include the calendar of events, HQ locations and post-operation reports.

I was amazed to see how much artillery was fired. They must have thought the stuff was going rusty.

The price is \$55.00 which includes postage within Australia.

Some people want two copies, but the postage need not be paid for a second copy, so make the total for two \$99.00.

I'm not making money from our experiences, as printing costs and GST must be paid, Australia Post is a profitable arm of government and even registering the book for the ISBN number costs a fee, plus by law a copy must be provided at no expense to them to the National and State (of publication) libraries.

You can send a cheque to:

*Banner Books,
122 Walker Street
MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650,*

Or card detail by phone to 07-4123-0255

Or e-mail if you wish, sales@banner-books.com.au

Or direct deposit to:

*National Australia Bank
BSB 084-802*

Account 50 703 1500

Banner Books

If you do the direct bank thing, please advise by e-mail with a postal address for delivery.

The book will arrive in the 3kg Australia Post red-white satchel, by parcel post contractor if door to door.



CHAPTER 27

SOUTHERN STATES AUSTRALIA

President - A.B. Garcia

Secretary - John Arnold

PO Box 1092 Altona Meadows VIC 3028

Ph: 03-8060 6045 Email: johnarnold@iinet.net.au



Eulogy

35501 Gordon John Andrews

13 January 1935 - 11 March 2015

Our dad was a kind and caring gent but firm and fair; he had a knack for and enjoyed making people smile; he was cheeky and accepted all his ailments with extreme tolerance.

Gordon was born in Orbost, East Gippsland Victoria in 1935 where his family resided in nearby Tanjil Bren a saw milling town.

In his early teenage years the family moved to the Victorian town of Leitchville.

Later on he moved in with the Robertson and Barrowman families also in Leitchville; where he worked on their farm and the corner store where he had a lot of fun; his other play-time activity was running around with a broom on his shoulder that he substituted for a gun.

Gordon joined up for National Service at Puckapunyal in 1953 at the age of 18. He then joined ARA allocated to Infantry Corp in 1954; where he served as a member of the Royal Car Company for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II's first Australian tour.

Gordon was assigned to reinforcement training Btn (4RAR), Ingleburn before being deployed to 1 RAR Korea from March 1955 to April 1956.

On his return to Australia he transferred to RAAOC and served in various Ordinance Depots: 3BOD South Kensington, Vic., 1Div Ord Coy Liverpool, NSW and 1 Comp Ord Coy Ammo Det Marrangaroo Lithgow, NSW.

During courtship with Margaret, a date to the movies resulted in him walking out at the end of the movie and forgetting he had taken mum along, leaving her sitting in the chairs; he didn't go back for her but waited for her in the foyer.

Mum and Dad married in December 1964 at St Stephen's, Kurrajong followed by an adventurous camping honeymoon along the Murray River.

Gordon was then deployed to Bien Hoa Airbase, South Vietnam with 1RAR Gp from 1965-1966.

Back in Australia he became a parachute rigger at Leichhardt, NSW; with his final posting to Defence Centre Melbourne Parachute Rigger until his discharge in 1978. This led to the family moving to Wodonga that same year.

Dad loved his time in the army, it provided stability and discipline. He didn't stray far from army life gaining employment with RAAOC 31 Sup Bn from 1980 to 1995.

Even though his schooling was short, his knowledge, gained from thorough reading and television viewing

would ensure that he would be an asset to any trivia team; particularly with his interest in military and American and British history.

Dad joined the Military Museum Bandiana as a volunteer, this allowed him to impart his wonderfully in-depth knowledge to thousands of visitors; he relished in the chance to talk to so many keen-eyed and interested school children and to share in the memories of past and present defence personnel and their families. He would spend hours sorting through buttons and medals to be put on display. This work was a huge part of his life; he will be sadly missed by all.

Another of Dad's great loves included reading he would sit in his reclining rocker for hours reading pretty well anything from science fiction to the odd biography; that was in-between television channel surfing, mum never got a chance to control the remote, threatening she would bury it with him.

One other love, of course, was Collingwood Australian Rules Football Club; where at matches he would sometimes get into mischief. One incident recalled was at a game against Footscray where he made the mistake of standing at the wrong goal-end and during an altercation was nearly poked in the eye by an opposition supporter's umbrella, and to add embarrassment to injury that supporter was a woman.

He was a meticulous mender, one of the best recyclers in the business, on many occasions he would mend items with whatever was to hand; once mending mum's petticoat with army green cotton and utilised parachute material for just about everything else even the children's jeans.

Gordon's special patience led to the creation of hundreds of military and replica models. Hours were spent in his 'little room' with the radio playing quietly in the background whilst he quietly placed decal after decal onto accurately painted craft.

Dad loved the Australian environment, Deidre's inspiration for studies and work in that area. Many holidays were taken to camping sites across the country; on one outing, to Swan Hill, a visit to the Pioneer Settlement ended with dad chasing an emu which had stolen Deidre's lunch, she made her father chase after the bird to get the sandwich back.

Dad also enjoyed target shooting where Neil sometimes joined him and his friends in Shepparton and also June.

In the 1980's he was reunited with his sister Lola, gaining a brother-in-law, a niece and 3 nephews and over the years, great nieces and nephews.

Gordon was a proud family man and generous provider. He cared greatly for many people helping and supporting when and wherever he could.

May he rest in eternal peace.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19 2015: (A DAY OF LAUGHS & SADNESS).

On Thursday March 19 several of our chapter made the trip to Wodonga to farewell our very staunch and 'the oldest member' of the chapter; Gordon John (CHOOK) Andrews was taken from this life journey on Wednesday, March 11 2015. This information was passed to me, as the secretary by Gordon's wife, Margaret and thus the planning for the final hoorah began.

Once the news was sent out to the members several made their plans to attend this goodbye and I arranged with Col Butterworth for him to accompany me on the return trip. Others made their various plans to be there while, naturally, some were just not able to make it.

Jim 'Shad' Harper arranged a floral tribute to be delivered for the funeral (and the wreath of native flora delivered was superb). Jim later advised that he would regrettably not be able to attend due to his wife Ena's long suffered health problems.

The chapter president, A.B. Garcia and Ursula had to also change their plans to attend due to another funeral they had to attend in Melbourne on the same day but they were able to send their special regards to Margaret and family. Likewise, Russell and Jan Quinn were prevented from attending due to his poor health.

So, I picked Col up from Southern Cross station at the arranged time of 0700 hours and off we went on our journey. Now, I have to say at this point we had not seen each other for quite some time and thus had a lot to talk about on the way. To minimize traffic delays I purchased a pass for the Tullamarine freeway to get out of the city and I have to say here that while it saved so much time and successfully reduced the traffic flow, I had not driven on this road since it had been incorporated into the freeway network all those years ago. This, coupled with our catching up conversation saw us freewheeling along the freeway and at a specific point Col asked me what was the purpose of a bright yellow fence off to our right. I recalled that this was the new access to Pascoe Vale Road and kept driving. His next concerned question to me was where do we turn off to get onto the Hume Freeway and I said that we just keep going straight and went back to our conversation. Maybe 5 minutes later Col pipes up and mentioned that we were just about to enter the Tullamarine airport precinct. OOPS, a totally illegal U turn across the freeway median strip and detour back towards the city, taking a roadway which runs up behind Essendon airport and making our way back onto the freeway and then we were set for the real trip north to Wodonga.

Now this did cause me some concern as I had calculated that we would arrive in Wodonga around 1100 hours which would make it tight to be on time. How-

ever we had a magnificent run and keeping on the speed limit of 110kph and only becoming geographically embarrassed once in Wodonga, and we actually had to stop and check our directions in the town and pulled up alongside a lady of our vintage to ask if we were heading the right way but she took one look into the car, saw two old farts like us and immediately coughed in her rompers and wouldn't talk to us. So, we then asked a young feller if we were going the right way and he confirmed that we were and we only had to travel another 50 metres and we were on the right street.

With all of this we arrived at the correct church at 1025 hours. See, you can't stop an old scout and a master map reader at all. WELL DONE THOSE MEN.

On arrival at the church the first sight we are hit with is Alan McIntyre (1ALSG) standing by his car in a pair of trousers, singlet and putting on his shirt & tie. After coming over to us and having a chat and discussing 'whatevers' and after several minutes we find his lady Maggie still sitting in the car, no air conditioning on and left looking like she had been abandoned and I must mention at this time it is about 31 degrees Celsius in Wodonga. She has to be a patient woman.

In front of the church we met up with Denis and Roxanne Edgley (C Coy 1RAR), Warren 'WAJ' Murray (3 Fld Trp; Tunnel Rats), Peter and Judy Sheehan (RAE) and it is the usual "put shit on Arnold" for several minutes. We were met by Gordon's son, Neil and waited the arrival of Margaret, with Deidre, their daughter.

Gordon was a very well respected man and this was evident by the big crowd gathered at the church, some veterans with whom he had served and worked and others family & friends.

While it is a cliché to say it, the service held was very well done with the obvious love, respect and some humour as can be read in the eulogy written by Deidre from their memories of Gordon, the husband, father and friend.



Judy Sheehan, Alan McIntyre (1ALSG), Roxanne Edgley, Denis Edgley (C 1RAR), Col Butterworth (A 1RAR), Maggie McIntyre and Peter Sheehan (RAE).



Farewell Good Mate

"It's odd, isn't it? People die every day and the world goes on like nothing happened. But when it's a person you love, you think everyone should stop and take notice. That they ought to cry and light candles and tell you that you're not alone."



His 'Cherry Beret' with medals and medallions on casket.



Casket escort Warren 'WAJ' Murray (3 Fld Trp), John Arnold (C 1RAR) Rear, Alan McIntyre (1ALSG), Maj. John Nelson OIC Parachute Riggers Followed by Deidre, Neal and Margaret Andrews.

STRANGE THINGS IN VICTORIA

On the way back from Wodonga we called into a service centre in Euroa and as we pulled up to the fuel pumps we saw this to our Left.



Couldn't resist a photo even though we were a bit nervous without our 'steel pots', vests? And a personal weapon.

Maybe there is something the government has not told us?

By the rego plate it seems this is part of some Military Club and it MAY have been on its way to a museum or display? We couldn't find out any information as the driver was nowhere to be seen.

REFLECTIONS FROM CHAPTER 27

At the moment the chapter is looking more like a 'walking wounded parade' than a well oiled, highly trained and efficient pack of warriors (Young that is).

Alf Law, 6 pl B Coy suffered a heart attack earlier in March, had an MRI on 9th then a quadruple bypass on 17th. At this time of writing it is understood that he is home again to have Sandra fuss over and serve him.

Russ Quinn, 8 Pl C 5RAR has not been too well for quite some time now and this is causing him to have to miss out on a couple of our recent get togethers. Jan has been keeping us up to date on his progress and hopefully he will soon be up and terrorizing Werribee again, soon.

Ena Harper, wife of our chapter 'money distributor' Jim 'Shad' Harper has spent the majority of the past year or so in poor health. We can only hope that things improve for her soon and she can get around to writing her life story for us as many of us feel she has had an amazing history, even before she met Shad.

Merv Williams and John Arnold has recently and currently had/having tests and treatment for heart related problems. Merv has a previous history and John's probably related to the Sydney Roosters recent efforts? To those who are mentioned here and others not mentioned, who have had a few health problems we wish you speedy recovery and future good health. Remember with the Melbourne winter soon upon us, to take all care.

CHAPTER MEETING MARCH 26, 2015:

On a very fresh, but sunny Thursday in Melbourne eleven of the 'Usual Suspects' held a meeting at the Noble Park RSL Club. As with all our meetings this was

quite a cordial affair but, once more, seemed to be a "Pick on Arnold Day". That's OK as, at least, he gets to have the last say, being the one who does most of the



Graeme Lobb, Merv Williams and Scot Birnie

keeping of records AND still having a bloody good and long memory. It was good to have Col Butterworth back on deck after his absence and to see Graeme Lobb able to get to this one.



Bill Williams, Col Butterworth and Graeme Lobb

Much of the discussion at this meeting centred on the upcoming ANZAC Day and it was decided that we would no longer make application to march as an individual identity in Melbourne but members would march with their parent unit and attend unit reunions after the parade. The 1RAR banner has been given back into the safe custody of the RAR Association and while we will no longer march with our chapter banner, we will fly the 173d Airborne Brigade flag behind the battalion banner of 1RAR.

We are in receipt of an invitation from the American Ex Servicemen's Association, Victoria Branch for our members who wish to attend the American Memorial Day service at the shrine on Sunday, May 24, 2015.



L-R: Scot Birnie, Denis Edgley and Roxanne

Anyone wishing to attend this service is advised to be at the forecourt of The Shrine at 1330 hours for a 1400 hours commencement. After the service which is expected to be of approximately 30 minutes duration, you are invited to join with everyone at "Misty's Diner, 103 High Street Prahran (Melways map 58 D6), which is about 5 minute drive from the Shrine. Those intending to join in this service are asked to contact the secretary, Ed Bartosh, by email on:

ebartosh@bartosh.com

phone (03) 9739 1879

or mobile 0438 508 235.

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING:

The next meeting of this chapter will be on Thursday August 13, 2015 at Noble Park RSL Club, commencing at 1100 hours. It would be great to see some NEW attendees among the 'Usual Suspects'.

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2015:

This year the Victorian branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association, Australia will again be conducting the commemoration service at The Shrine. As in past years this is expected to be a very well presented event with a Gun Fire breakfast prior to the service to sustain participants until after the service. As a very special commemoration to the first major combat unit to be deployed to South Vietnam in 1965 fifty years ago in May of this year, members of the 1RAR Group (that's us) are to be given a place of honour in leading the march. This is a very special occasion for our blokes and hopefully there will be a very good turn out from ALL the units that served in that first tour.

CHAPTER RAFFLE:

If you haven't bought your tickets for the chapter raffle yet, you had better put your skids on and get them in ASP. This raffle of the WW1 digger in battle dress is a beautiful piece of craft work and would grace anyone's memory room or wall unit (see photo in this edition) and it will be drawn on ANZAC Day 2015. Tickets are still only \$5 each and you would all have received a book of four tickets in the past couple of months.



You can mail your ticket stubs and cheques/money orders to the Treasurer James Harper at:

PO Box 2143
Seaford Vic 3198

or you can deposit the money in any Westpac bank to our account at BSB; 704 230 Acct No. 100490090.

A guy was telling about this young girl, Sue, who disguised herself as a man and joined the army.

"But, wait a minute," said his friend, "She'll have to dress with the boys and shower with them, too, won't she?"

"Sure," replied the guy.

"Well, won't they find out?"

The guy shrugged. "Who's gonna tell?"



173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

REPRESENTING THE

1RAR GROUP 1965-66 VETERANS



MEMBERSHIP FORM: This form can be used for joining the Australian Chapter of your choice.

- CHAPTER 11 - NSW -** Chapter Secretary - Neil Cromarty - neilcrom@iinet.net.au
Home 02 4933 5958 or Mobile 0428 680 903 P O Box 585 RIVERSTONE NSW 2765
- CHAPTER 23 - QLD -** Chapter Secretary - Ray Payne OAM - raypayne@veteranweb.asn.au
Home 07 5524 7742 2 Flemington St BANORA POINT NSW 2486
- CHAPTER 27 - VIC -** Chapter Secretary - John Arnold - johnarnold@iinet.net.au
Home 03 8060 6045 PO Box 1092 ALTONA MEADOWS VIC 3028
- NEW ZEALAND -** Contact President - John Deazley - deazal173d@hotmail.com
PO Box 73 260 PAKURA NZ 2244

NEW MEMBERSHIP \$30.00 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP \$25.00 LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$200.00

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP NEW \$30.00 RENEWAL \$25.00

Note: New Members who join after 1st September are financial through till 31 December of the following year.

PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS:.

ALL APPLICANTS MUST COMPLETE THIS FORM.

Service Number: Date of Birth: Your Unit:

Surname:..... Given Names:Preferred Name:

Wife/Partners Name:..... Preferred Name:

Home Address:

..... State: Post Code:

Postal Address:

.....State: Post Code:

Home Phone: (.....)..... Mobile:

If you have an email address please provide it as it saves us considerably on postage

Email Address:

Signed:Date:

Return to the Chapter of your choice along with your membership payment. Make all cheques/MO payable to:

173D Airborne Brigade Association

If you wish to pay by electronic transfer contact the appropriate chapter secretary for details.



Below was sent to me by a friend ... those of you that know something about Facebook will enjoy this.

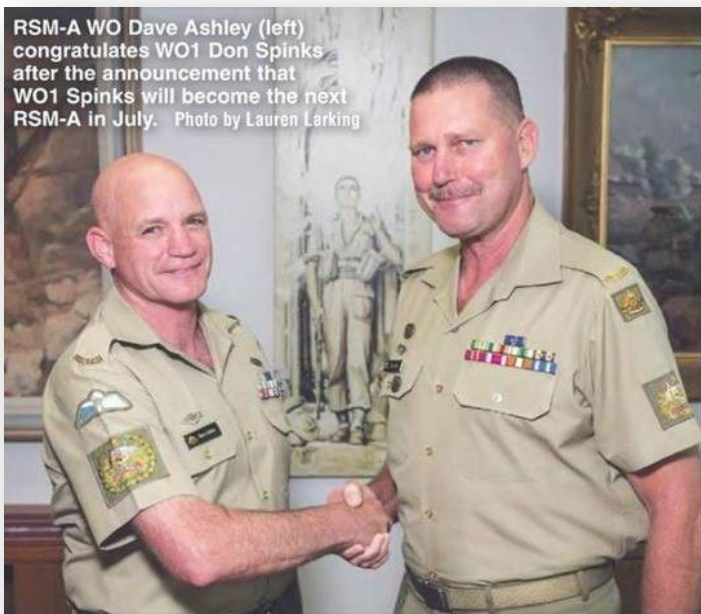
FACEBOOK:

As you may know I am not on Facebook. Hence I try to make friends without using Facebook. Therefore I walk around the streets every day telling random people how well I slept last night, what I ate, how I feel, what I am doing and what I will do. I also listen to their conversations and tell them each time that I like it.

Result: I have already 3 people following me: 2 police officers and 1 psychiatrist....

NEW RSM- ARMY

WO1 Don Spinks



Previous RSM-A

- 1 Wally Thompson OAM January 1983 January 1987
- 2 Kevin (Lofty) Wendt OAM, BEM Jan 1987
- 3 Peter Prewett CSC, OAM 1992
- 4 Arthur Francis CSC, OAM 1992 1997
- 5 Peter Rosemond CSC, OAM 1997 2001
- 6 Brian Boughton CSC, OAM 2001 19 December 2003
- 7 Kevin Woods CSC, OAM 19 Dec 2003 29 Feb 2008
- 8 Stephen Ward OAM 29 February 2008 4 October 2011
- 9 Dave Ashley AM 4 October 2011



SITREP

Southern Hemisphere Chapter's Newsletter

Representing the 1RAR Group 1965-66

Editor - Ray Payne OAM

2 Flemington Street

BANORA POINT NSW 2486

Australia

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VICTORIAN 1RAR GROUP VIETNAM 65-66

VETERANS

As you will note below you will be invited to a special commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of our deployment. John Arnold has been appointed as our contact between our Group and the VVAA. If you are planning to attend please advise John at johnarnold@inet.net.au or 0419 315 676. John will compile a list of names and forward to the VVAA.

VVAA Victoria conducts its Vietnam Veterans Day commemorations at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance. This year our focus is on the 50th anniversary of the deployment of the 1RAR Group to Vietnam. I am seeking contact with any former members of the 1RAR deployment in 1965 who are residing in Victoria. We would like to invite them to be our guests at the commemorations and also to publicly acknowledge them. I would also welcome any advice from your association in relation to whom you might recommend as a key note speaker that we might consider.

Regards,

Bob Elworthy AM

Victorian State President VVAA