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# THE RANGER

## 2000

The Annual Journal of the 8<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment

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### **Regimental Colonel**

Brigadier W.J. Hocking Ed, RFD

### **Allied Regiments**

The Staffordshire Regiment

(The Prince Of Wales)

The Royal Regiment of Canada

### **Commanding Officers**

Lieutenant Colonel J. Paterson

Lieutenant Colonel R. Haughton

### **Allied Associations**

The associations of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion incorporating the

7<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF

7<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF (1939 – 1945)

2/7<sup>th</sup> Aust Inf Battalion

7<sup>th</sup> Battalion RAR

The 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Ballarat) Association

The 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Ararat) Association

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF THE RANGER

- 2 & 3 CO's Messages, past & present  
3 From the RSM  
4 Editors Note  
4 A Coy  
6 B Coy  
10 C Coy  
15 SPT Coy  
20 ADMIN Coy

### Front Cover

Royal Victorian Regiment Hamilton Freedom of Entry Parade

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF 8/7 RVR

The 8<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Victoria Regiment, encompasses the area bounded by Mildura, Warrnambool, Bacchus Marsh, Shepparton and Echuca. The Battalion Headquarters is at Ballarat, 133km west of Melbourne.

The history of the Battalion commenced on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1857, when a meeting of citizens in Ballarat was convened to consider the possibility of establishing a Rifle Corps in the District. Representations were made to the Government of the Colony of Victoria and assent for the enrolment of a Corps was received on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 1858. The first parade of this new unit was the 9<sup>th</sup> August 1858.

This date is celebrated annually as the Battalion's birthday.

The Battalion has existed since that date with an uninterrupted history, although under a variety of titles. The present day 8<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion traces its lineage back to a number of units. These include the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion (City of Ballarat Regiment), 59<sup>th</sup> Battalion (The Hume Regiment), 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion (The North West Murray Borderers) and the 38<sup>th</sup> Battalion (The Northern Victorian Regiment).

The Battalion has been granted freedom of entry to the following cities in the area:

Ballarat	1983 and 1998
Echuca	1989
Hamilton	1990
Maryborough	1980
Swan Hill	1988 and 1999

The current operational role for the Battalion is in the defence of vital assets in Northern Australia, as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade from Victoria.

The year 2000 marks the last year in which the Battalion paraded in the Ranger Barracks in Curtis Street, Ballarat. The Battalion has continually occupied the site since the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1986.

## 8/7 RVR BATTLE HONOURS

Boer War: South Africa 1899-1902

World War One

Landing at Anzac Cove

Somme 1916-1918

Bullecourt

Ypres 1917

Polygon Wood

Amiens

Albert 1918

Mont St Quentin, and Hindenburg Line

South Africa 1899-1902

World War Two

Bardia 1941

Capture of Tobruk

El Alamein

Greece 1941

South West Pacific 1942-1945

Finisterres

Hari River, and

Borneo

## From LTCOL John Paterson

**B**y the time you read this I will have long left the Battalion for a posting to East Timor. This came at very short notice and unfortunately I did not have the opportunity to speak to each of you before I handed over command. I deeply regret this as I had planned to visit every depot prior to my departure, and in particular I was looking forward to welcoming back to the Battalion our troops from 6 RAR and the Operational Search Battalion. It is certainly not the way I would like to end my command, but if nothing else it illustrates the dynamic environment in which we all work.

I can categorically state that this posting has been the highlight of my nearly 25 years of Army service. Command of soldiers is always a joy, never more so than at battalion level. Although we are a small battalion and are not at high levels of readiness we have certainly more than pulled our weight in the Brigade. Relative to our effective strength, our level of participation in Operations Warden and Gold has been greater than other 4 Brigade units. I know that you have all participated in this to some degree, and you can be well proud of the Battalion's efforts and your part in them.

With our participation in the mobilisation of 6 RAR last year, the deployment of the rifle company to Butterworth, and our role in the Olympics we have had a taste of how the Reserve can contribute to Army's capability in the here and now. I think that you can all anticipate further opportunities for this. What this means to each individual is how important it is to gain your qualifications for rank and trade as soon as you can. The Brigade may have to provide a specified capability to Army and this will be dependent on as many as soldiers as possible becoming fully proficient in their trade. I know that you will all give LTCOL Haughton the same support you gave me as you face the challenges of the future.

As I leave the 8<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion I am more convinced than ever that the only difference between Reserve and Regular soldiers is the time and resources devoted to their training. You are all fine young Australians and you should be proud of your contribution to our Nation's defence. I am certainly proud of you. Good luck and good soldiering to you all. ❖



## From LTCOL Rob Haughton

I feel privileged to take over as CO for the 8/7 RVR, a Battalion that has a proud history, and a long association with much of rural Victoria. I publicly acknowledge the work of the past CO, Lt Col John Paterson and wish him all the best in his future deployment and postings.

I have come to the Battalion at an exciting time, but also at a time of further change. With the completion of Op Gold and the return to the Battalion of some members who have served full time with 6 RAR, I think that all members of the Battalion should be proud of the achievements by these individuals. Not only was the Battalion able to meet the reinforcement needs of the full time service, but 8/7 RVR soldiers were able to meet the employment requirements set for deployment.

I believe that the Battalion is in for a challenging year ahead both from the point of reduced resources and achieving the desired competencies from the resources available. I would ask that each member of the Battalion focus on their individual skills and competencies and use the available training time to their best advantage. I expect the Battalion to grow in numbers of trained soldiers and to retain current members in the next year, but this will require a concerted effort from all Unit personnel. In 2001 I want 8/7 RVR to be seen as the best Battalion in the Brigade with the most competent soldiers. I look forward to the challenge of CO.

## RSM's Report

2000 is almost at an end and we can look back on our achievements with pride and a sense of accomplishment. Since being appointed as the RSM in November last year, you the soldiers of the Battalion have constantly proved you're worth within the Australian Defence Force.

Without soldiers of the Reserve the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment could not have performed their operational function in East Timor and the Defence Force's role in the Olympics would have been nearly impossible to sustain. Both of these tasks have proved that any soldier given good and sustained training, leadership and a realistic operational focus can perform tasks to the highest level. Well done to all concerned.

For those of us that have remained in Victoria, participation in activities like Exercise Bobdubi, the opening of the "Mateship" Statue in Shepparton, the Freedom of Entry in Hamilton and many others have proven our ability to perform with credibility.

The quality of the unit's Warrant Officers, Senior and Junior Non Commissioned Officers has come to the fore by providing the training, leadership and embedding the military ethos within the soldiers. Without them no military unit can function. Thank you for your support.

So as I say farewell to the soldiers of the Battalion and look forward to new challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century always remember "The only constant is change itself".

Good luck and good soldiering to all in the future.

### 'Duty First'

We hope that everyone in Alpha Company has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## From the Editor

Another year has passed and we are now in the new millennium. This 'Ranger Magazine' reflects life in the 8<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion as we proceeded from one century to the next. If however you are pedantic, the turn of 2000 to 2001 will see the real new millennium.

Within the Battalion the ebb and flow of time has influenced our history. Most notable is the sale of the barracks and our soon to be departure from a location that we have occupied since the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1886. Next years magazine will tell the story of this.

Since Ranger 1999, the Battalion has had many activities. Notable events include the Freedom of the City of Hamilton, the dedication of the 'Mateship' statue at Shepparton and a number of Battalion activities such as Exercise Bobdubi 11, and weekend activities at Puckapunyal, Warrnambool and Bendigo. We too, have had a visit from the Chief of the Army, Lieutenant General Cosgrove.

Each of the Company's has also undertaken individual training and their contributions report on their activities and their experiences.

Over and above this members of the Battalion have been integrally involved in Op Search Coy in Melbourne and Op Gowan Gold in Sydney, and the ongoing commitment to East Timor.

Lastly, we have two Commanding Officer's reports. The CO for the last two years is in Timor and he has been replaced by LtCol R. Haughton, who took over the reigns in October.

What this 'Ranger Magazine' is about is a report, a reflection, and a reminder of life in the Battalion for the last 12 months. Read and enjoy.

Rupert M. Dalley  
CAPT  
IO/S2  
Editor

## Alpha Company

Well what can I say Alpha Company started the year with a rush as always carrying the Battalion? We started the year by being awarded the Champion Section trophy won by CPL Willett and his men. "Note" For those who have **never** seen this trophy it is a glass slouch hat mounted on a wooden stand it also comes with a champion section flag that is displayed at the Depot for 1 year.

The first training weekend of the year saw Alpha Company responsible for its co-ordination consisted of live firing at the MMR and Sneaker Ranges (SGT Brandich decided to finish the Sneaker Range 1- 1/2 hours early which attracted the attention of the CO, the OC was very impressed).

Late February we travelled to Queenscliff to participate in the last Beating the Retreat Parade, the drill was outstanding, the food was great the fire works went forever and the beer was cold. The training also started for OP GOWAN GOLD support to the Olympics.

A couple of days after the parade CPL Ken Erlenbusch died; (29<sup>th</sup> February 2000) the men of Alpha Company sadly miss him.

We were transported to Warrnambool for the March training weekend to practice Urban Patrolling, VCP's and fighting in built up areas. The training was enjoyed by all, especially the fighting in buildings, windows were smashed and doors kicked in. Some people realized that throwing smoke grenades inside a building is not good to ones health. It also proved to be very prosperous, we were all issued big wooden lockers when we arrived back at the Depot thanks to the Pioneers.

April came with the usual rush of ANZAC Day support tasks and Alpha Company having a dawn service at the adopted Boer War Memorial Park. About 150 people turned up for the service, which proved to be a success with all involved. We also provided a number of cenotaph parties to local RSL's and the Rats of Tobruk Association.

May saw us traveling to Bendigo to conduct conventional training, which was a breath of fresh

air. We could finally practice all our skills and get away from a Low - Level Operation type scenario. It started off with some lessons on ambushing and orders we then actually conducted a platoon ambush. The next day we conducted a platoon plus attack on an enemy position. This training weekend was enjoyed by all, except for CPL Arundell who developed symptoms of the flu, he looked a sorry sight.

The next training weekend in June was conducted at Puckapunyal, which involved some shooting and APC work. After completing the shooting side of the weekend the Battalion moved to the APC shooting range. We observed the APC live fire shoot after a long wait on the range before the shooting actually started and an even longer wait to marry up with the APC's so we could do some training with them. When we finally married up with the APC's we did some compulsory basic training, then got on board and moved to our harbor position for the night. The next morning we rehearsed for a platoon plus attack, the Brigade Commander arrived to watch and was impressed. The photos below show some of the action. Xmas beers will be on all the soldiers in the photos. We know who you are!



July saw the running of the course's camp at you guessed it at Puckapunyal (Site Six). The Battalion ran a Sub Two CPL Course, PTE's Clark, Carroll,

Wilson, Galt and White from A Coy attended the course and all passed well done.

The Battalion's budget came out and consequently there were no training weekends in August and September. However August was soldiers departing for the Olympics and Sept saw the Chief of Army visit the Battalion and the boys couldn't resist a photo opportunity. More Xmas cheer!



From left to right - CPL Hardcastle, PTE Holloway, PTE Clark, The CA, PTE Bernek, PTE Kemp, PTE Currie, PTE Penning and PTE Byme.

Then finally the purse strings were opened in October and we were allowed to conduct training at our Depot. Alpha Company conducted a CFA on the Friday night also using the NVG's, there was nothing of interest to see around the Barwon River which disappointed everyone. The only exciting thing to occur during the CFA was PTE Clark dropping his NVG and the whole company having to go back and search for it which was found much to the relief of Clarky. The next day we had some lessons on the NAD, NWS and IR kit.

That night we had a Regimental Dinner at which the Commanding Officer and RSM attended, a good time was had by all even the TRGWO got "tipsy", the first time anyone had seen this. The soldiers were surprised we think the TRGWO was also surprised he had to lean on a lot of furniture.

We are looking forward to the blokes returning from Sydney and Brisbane in November and December. This will give us a wealth of experience to kick off next year's training.

We hope that everyone in Alpha Company has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

# Bravo Company

By CAPT David Falloon with assistance from LT Georgie Francios

CHQ saw a big turn over in both full and part time staff at the start of the new millenium with Maj Laidlaw taking over command of the company from Maj. Hopkins and Capt. 'DMEO' Falloon replacing Capt. Saultry as 2IC following his transfer to the ARA. After starting the year without a CQMS, SSgt 'Savage' Westbury through his slouch hat into the ring to take up the vacant position on full time service until the end of the year. We also welcome back, CPL 'I've been everywhere!' Tracey after doing a stint as Ops Sgt. with WO2 'Battle Chassis' Spencer the only member of the 1999 staff remaining and taking on the added responsibility of CSM following WO2 Bartels posting.

In addition, we have also seen a major shakeup in each of the PHQ's with the following members posted to the company after the transfer of previous incumbents to other units.

## 4 Platoon

2Lt McFadden

## 5 Platoon

Lt Francios

Sgt Skiparis

## 6 Platoon

2Lt Jones

Sgt Johnson

Overall, the company probably started the year in the best shape it has for many years with all key staff positions filled giving it a great opportunity to provide well programmed training within a proper company setting.

Prior to delveling into the year's events, the company would like to formally farewell the members of the Bacchus Marsh depot who moved on to parade with A Coy. The staff appreciate your efforts that you put in whilst members of B Coy and issue an open invitation to visit us when you are in the area, you will always be welcome back to the best company in the Battalion. At the same time we warmly welcome the members from Warnambool who now man 6 Pl. Already you have put in a big one this year and we are looking forward to your future efforts.

Following the fervor of East Timor the major focus for the Battalion has been the support to Op Gowan

Gold which has seen B Coy provide 31 of our soldiers with an opportunity to gain new skills and experiences whilst on operational service. Despite having a nominal strength of about 85 at the start of the year this has been reduced to about 60, following the discharge of non-effectives. 4 Pl have definitely demonstrated that they are keen to offer service and have had 10 members of their total strength of 26 in Sydney for 3 months which is worth an acknowledgement.

CHQ had great satisfaction in the planning and conduct of the Bn MOUT weekend conducted at Briely Hospital, Warnambool. The JNCO's had a large degree of freedom to train their sections with minimal supervision and the soldiers enjoyed the chance to break windows and break through roofs (as a method of building entry) as the hospital facility was derelict and about to be bulldozed. The soldiers appreciated this type of opportunity as it doesn't present all that frequently and put in a huge effort displaying enthusiasm and passion, ultimately gaining a greater understanding of working in built up areas.

In April the Battalion conducted a Range Qualification Course over 9 days at PMA and was attended by B Coy members both as students and support in the form of shooters for the actual range practice. This was an excellent opportunity for all members to fire a significant quantity of ammunition types on the Classification, DFSW, Sneaker, Section Defence and live fire section attack by day and night.

The May Bn training weekend was an opportunity for CHQ to deploy to the field with a company (two Platoons) of soldiers to command, which is not all that easy to come across with unit resources where they are at the moment. Ambushing was conducted by both platoons with many soldiers finding themselves 'laying in wait' for the first time and experiencing the importance of 'actions on' and rehearsals prior to the occupation. The company harbor was probed and penetrated, despite the fact that the rest of the Bn (notional) was providing us with security for the conduct of battle prep prior to a cordon and search task the following morning. This again was a very valuable training weekend for all involved and another opportunity for the 2IC to find his way onto the front page of the local newspaper.

However, the 2IC was less than impressed with the

performance of radio communications during the exercise. On more than one occasion communications could not be established with OA once the company occupied its night loc despite the use of the lightweight antenna. At one stage the OC had the 2IC move around the position until contact was made and once obtained the 2IC was ordered not to move least communications failed. It did! The 2IC looked a pitiful sight sitting out on his lonesome swearing at the radio trying to get it to work again. It was not until the Hot Wash that the 2IC learnt that the 108 Sig Sqn sigs in OA were operating in clear when talking to the Coy and then switching to Crypto for 95. Consequently they could hear us but we couldn't hear them. Suffice to say the 2IC language on learning this was quite pointed.

Football was in the air in June when the annual Aussie Rules match between B Coy 8/7 RVR and 5/6 RVR took place at Russell Square in Ballarat. However, like everything before the fun could start nominated B Coy diggers attended the NPMA and Audit courses that was run on Saturday and gave them an opportunity to qualify and hopefully a better understanding of how the Mess Books work. On Sunday with a little help from our friends (members from other 8/7 RVR sub-units) we defeated the boys from the city by 10 points. Considering the team had neither trained nor played together the performance was excellent. From a CHQ point of view the turning point in the game would have to have been when the Captain of the team, WO2 Spencer made his entrance late in the quarter, obviously a pre game plan of the RSM's. His excellent performance in placing his head directly in the path of a fast moving football thus deflecting it and preventing a dangerous attack developing left everyone in awe. Unfortunately we had to put the Battle Chassis in for a service on Monday to replace the dented armour but if you look close enough you can still see the red mark it left on the top of his head.

Training continued unabated in the middle of the year with many B coy members undertaking the Op search training prior to deploying on OP Gold and participating in the Bn training weekend in July at PMA. It was memorable for the number of senior personnel in the Battalion who filled out the sections to allow section commanders to practice their skill's

whilst operating with APC's of 4/19 PWLH. August saw the first of our large contingent leave for Op Gold on their three-month tour of duty in Sydney and included;

Sgt Johnson  
Cpl Stringer  
Cpl Allan  
Pte Petrov  
Pte Stapleton  
Pte Stockdale  
Pte Ellis  
Pte Watson  
Pte Rowe  
Pte Nimmo  
Pte Hewerdine  
Pte Hogg  
Pte Reale  
Pte Barclay  
Pte McGlashan  
Pte Thewlis, and  
Pte Byrne

A plethora of other B Coy members would undertake shorter stint with the Op Search Battalion both in Melbourne and Sydney. The rest of August and September was reasonably quiet and allowed CHQ the opportunity to catch up on some of the Administration and do some planning for the remainder of the training year. It's taken all year, but a high point has been our trusty 2IC can now call himself an Infantryman after his corps transfer from MP's went through. All we are waiting for now is the ceremonial burning of the red Beret.

In October we had the first of the Depot based weekends conducting training on Ninnox and GPS and to all accounts was very well received by the members of B Coy, BHQ, Spt Coy and Admin Coy who attended. This means if you didn't attend you missed out on learning to use some great kit. Next time make sure you are there.

It now coming to the close of another year and we can safely say this has been one of the biggest and busiest. Whilst it can be a sad time as we say farewell to the following their posting,  
Lt Francios posted to CATD on promotion to Captain,  
WO2 Spencer taking on the biggest job since Ben Hur, CSM Admin Coy, and

SSgt Westbury going to the dark side on transfer to A Coy and enlisting into the regular Army, and Cpl Tracey taking up a posting at 10/27 RSAR. To you, thank you very much for the assistances and friendship you have shown.

We can all take pride in our performance this year and as such on behalf of the OC, well done and thank you for your efforts over the busy period. We hope you have a great Christmas and New Year and we can't wait to see you back in the 2001 ready and firing for what will be possible another big year in training. Already we have a substantial number of personal nominated for qualification courses in Jan and Feb, with weekends in Feb, Mar and May looking a possibility.



## **4 Platoon (Ballarat)**

**By Sgt Dobson**

The year from 4 Platoon.

It started off fairly quietly with Sgt Dobson away doing his Ops Search Cse (fat lot of good that did him) and numbers were down from previous years.

In March the Pl went down to Brieley as part of a Bn W/End. There they were introduced to some new Lieutenants, one being 4 Pl new boss, 2Lt Hugh McFadden. A successful introduction was made after the RSM pointed out some lost property to him.

In April the Range Qual Course was held and as per normal 4 Pl proved that in a moments notice it will have members attend to assist in GD's. Unfortunately for some of them, (namely Pte's Watson and Reale) the weather turned rather wet

and they gathered a new understanding of what wet weather gear to bring along. Its not issued because it looks good does it boys. Sgt Dobson was student of merit on this course, with Sgt Cox lagging a distant second.

In May the platoon was a Longlea the platoon did a night ambush which all things considered went down rather well. It was one of the few occasions where rehearsals, timings etc actually happened and the positive training that resulted from this was very beneficial to the men. The only item of note was again the RSM pointing out some lost property to Lt. McFadden.

Sub 2 Cpl occurred in July and Pte's DAWBORN, BRIDLE, WATSON and PETROV all attending and passing to a certain extent. No WATTO, the course report is not to be used for that.

August saw the FOC Hamilton and we were rather surprised by the breakfast on that day. It is not too often that steak etc is served at 0500 when one does not have a beer in hand. The weekend went well without incident (Except for the RSM spoke to Lt. McFadden again, but this time it was not about property).

Around August, the platoons numbers started dwindling as the Olympics Op Search Bn's took out men. By September we were down to numbers being counted on one hand and it made for some unique training.

We look forward to the rest of the year as members come back home.

## **5 Platoon (Bendigo)**

**By LT Georgie Francios**

In the past year the platoon has grown from a posted strength of 5 to 17, and by the time you are all reading this article there should be well over 30 fighting machines patrolling the Wellsford State Forest on Wednesday night parades.

Some of the more memorable activities that we have been involved with have been;

Shepparton parade and ANZAC Day festivities which produced the following quote from Barks, 'I'll come back before the end of the night with 5 different coloured .....

May training weekend when Robbo found that the comms cord in the ambush site was two metres short of his pit after being brought back in from early warning, and Ryno and Vanders being rudely awoken in the Company harbour by enemy saying, 'you're all dead!'

Footy weekend against 5/6 RVR when platoon members decided to do some last minute training late on Saturday night with some boxing gloves and enthusiastic sparring which left Macca, Robbo, Ryno, Barks, and Wortho a little worse for wear (lucky that CPL Mazzon was yet to join the platoon!). It was on this weekend that an inter-platoon bet was made that we are all still waiting for somebody to claim.

APC training weekend which saw the Boss relegated to a No.3 Rfn in the section and found himself crushed by 4 unsuspecting section members who failed to hold on during the mounted assault when the APC slammed on the anchors for the dismount. Gashman was happy to get his feet back on the ground after turning green from the rough ride back to site 6.

Freedom of Entry to Hamilton weekend which saw a chip bowl completely destroyed and a memorable team bonding activity involving the expulsion of an invader out the front of Irish Murphy's by Robbo and Macca.

Op Gowan Gold has brought Gashman out of his shell and seen section buddies Hoggy and Byrny successfully juggle their Olympic commitment with their hectic social lives, no doubt having at least a few drinks in the Cross. CPL Stringer has also endured a three month stint in Sydney and is keen to make his return in the turret of a bucket. Robbo, Ryno, and CPL Godfrey also spent 2 weeks supporting the Olympics whilst the Sarge spent one month imposing discipline to members from his favorite unit - 4 BASB.

The year has definitely been memorable and will hopefully be emulated and surpassed next year with more diggers joining the team (and Camel returning

to the fold) to knock down the enemy a bit quicker (not to mention the beers!).



## 6 Platoon (Warrnambool)

By SGT Williams

Continuing its reputation as the premiere platoon within the battalion, 6 Pl, B Coy has proven its flexibility and ability to meet and overcome any situation or request presented to it. From last year when the call went out for volunteers to go to East Timor, 6 Pl rallied to the call, with members leaving home, work and study commitments to join 6RAR as the Battalion prepared to assist with peacekeeping mission in East Timor. The Pl has maintained contact with their mates via numerous phone calls and letters, which have included a request for 'stores' from 'Rat'. Those members of the team in Timor have spent many months patrolling through close, mountainous terrain always with the prospect of contacting Militia and have interacted with the local population, picking up the language and customs and making friends along the way. When they return to

the Battalion, at least one will have gifts made for him by the citizens of our newest neighbour, in the form of two scarfs. When our mates get back, the experience they have accumulated will be drawn upon to enhance our ability and effectiveness further.

The same can be said for those members who have rendered such exemplary service during the recent spectacle that was the 27<sup>th</sup> Olympiad in Sydney. Again rising to the call in spite of commitment in their civilian lives. The members of 6 Pl gathered what time they could accrue and preform with the utmost professionalism, protecting both athletes and spectators, from at home and abroad. Pl members saw their Pl Sgt, Sgt Johnson of only a few months depart as OP's Sgt for the Op Search Bn. The service rendered while serving in the Op Search Bn was of an inestimable value in helping the games be so memorable an occasion for Australia and the world. In spite of facing a demanding work routine, members of the Pl still found time to take advantage of the opportunity presented, especially Pte Reed who now has a most comprehensive collection of photos of himself and assorted athletes.

## Charlie Company -

### News from the North

It is fast becoming a cliché but 2000 was again a very busy year for the company.

As was the majority of the battalion, we were preoccupied for most of the year with Operation Gold; either attending courses, doing admin and participating to a greater or lesser extent in either the Sydney or Melbourne deployments.

At the same time we also managed to conduct Infantry training at soldier and section level, while individual soldiers completed a number of trade and promotion courses. By the end of the year the majority of C Company was qualified in Ninox and the GPS, the latter tested during a navex in the flooded Nyah forest near Swan Hill.

2000 also saw us cement our alliance with the cadet units that share our three depots and we now have a very good working relationship with them. In due course I expect to see a valuable spin off in recruiting from this source.

On the personnel front the situation was ,as always ever changing.

Lieutenant Jamie Hall went inactive in order to pursue educational and other pursuits in Japan.



Lieutenant Luke Jackson was posted in as Platoon Commander 7 Platoon Mildura on a two year FTS contract. As well as completing ROBC at the start of the year, one of his achievements so far has been the introduction of Guinness into the all ranks' club.

Following the retirement last year of WO2 Wayne Harris, WO2 Jim Boatwright was posted in from Canungra in early 2000 as the CSM and in a short time has made his mark on the company, particularly in the recruiting sphere. He is also a physical fitness enthusiast ;as anyone who has endured one of his training circuits can attest !

SSgt Noel Allport left on promotion to WO2 to 3RAR and East Timor, and on his return to Australia he was presented with a certificate of commendation from Commander 2 Div for his work with us as CQMS and acting CSM.

His successor was SSgt Greg Cooper whose time with us was unfortunately brief as he will depart for 2 RAR at the end of the year. Aside from being a top class CQMS and completing Sub 1 for WO during his posting, Coops was also notable for his enthusiasm for club functions and his efforts to reduce the native fish population of the Swan Hill area.

Sergeant Andrew Turner arrived in late 1999 as the Platoon Sergeant /Commander of 8 Platoon Swan Hill and has really revamped training for them. as well as attending numerous courses including Sub 1 for WO and deploying on Operation Gold for 2 months.

Corporal Brad Rockett also arrived as our full time Company Clerk and rapidly settled into the country lifestyle; acquiring a few acres and cattle at Vinifera on the Murray River.

Promotion congratulations must go to Sgt Jim Boatwright to WO2, LCpl Brad Rockett to Cpl and Pte Rod Charman to LCpl.

Platoon Sergeant 9 Platoon, Sergeant Brian Tyler demonstrated incredible versatility; commanding the Echuca depot prior to its closure and then looking after Shepparton and Bendigo depots simultaneously until the start of the year when he reverted to the

sole responsibility of Shepparton. He was also responsible for much of the behind the scenes liaison prior to the ceremonial parade for the unveiling of the "Mateship" statue at the Shepparton civic centre. In spite of all this activity, he also found time to successfully complete Sub 1 for WO. At the end of the year he departs for Western Australia as training warrant officer with the Pilbara Regiment.

Throughout the year a number of soldiers succeeded in transferring to the ARA whilst a small but steady trickle of soldiers arrived from Kapooka. The end of 2000 sees us awaiting the return of a number of soldiers from 6 RAR and seeing the payoff for all our recruiting activities conducted this year.

Major Tony Watson  
OCC Company

## **"EXERCISE TRYOUT"**

**(or, How to spend the weekend  
with 87 secondary school students  
and remain sane!!!)**

C Company conducted a "Try Before You Buy" weekend on a massive scale in March..

By liaising closely with careers teachers from the Swan Hill and Mildura regions we took a group of 87 enthusiastic and noisy students and three anxious teachers to Puckapunyal for a taste of military life.

The first culture shock was reveille at 0600hrs, particularly as many of the students had decided that neither they nor anyone else really needed any sleep Friday night. Following a substantial breakfast in the ALTC OR's Mess and initial briefings the weekend got underway.

Activities included demonstrations of Infantry weapons and equipment (including the liberal application of cam cream), participation as spectators in the 4 Bde firepower demonstration "Exercise Bullecourt". The students also participated in quick decision and leadership exercises. Following a simulated range practice on the WTTS system, the day concluded with a lantern stalk. Saturday night was very quiet with most opting for an early night.

Sunday morning's activities consisted of a PT bull ring which included the Puckapunyal swimming pool indoor obstacle course and a recruiting presentation.

All good things must come to an end and shortly after lunch participants departed by bus for their home locations.

The activity resulted in 40 recruiting enquiry forms being filled out and whilst some of these are for future reference as the students were under age the activity definitely succeeded in raising the Company's profile with a key recruiting demographic.

## FAST AND FURIOUS

### Operational Search Company - Melbourne OPERATION GOLD 2- 12 September 2000



The Operational Search Company – Melbourne consisted of 94 personnel drawn from various 4 Bde units including a significant number of 8/7 RVR soldiers.



During its deployment the Company conducted searches of 6 sporting venues including the Melbourne Cricket Ground, a total of 11 floors of the Melbourne Hilton Hotel were searched and a permanent 24hr Vehicle Check Point at the Hilton was established and manned for 6 days.



The Melbourne Exhibition Building was searched prior to the Prime Minister's Olympic Dinner and a number of searches of athletes buses were also carried out.



During the deployment, the Company was privileged to play host to the Commanders of both JTF 112 and 4 Bde. Additionally 5 unit Commanding Officers took

advantage of the invitation to visit their personnel during this time.

From my point of view, as the OC of the Company it was the best command I have ever held and the 94 members of Operational Search Company – Melbourne can be very proud of their contribution to Operation Gold.



Major Tony Watson



## Callsign Three Three, The Year that was

A year has passed since our last contribution to annals of the Battalion's history. In that year we have seen an almost 100% turnover in personnel. As with the rest of the Bn we supplied a significant number of members to the re-raised 6 RAR, other battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment and other Corps. Most of those soldiers have served overseas in East Timor and other exotic destinations in our region. We also farewelled a few soldiers who could no longer make the commitment to the Army and left to pursue other things. It hasn't been all doom and gloom though and we welcomed a few new members to the fold. So to those members, Farewell and Welcome.

There can be no doubt that the focus of this year has been the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and what a games they were. Just getting all our people to and from their assigned deployment locations was an Olympic event in itself. Callsign Three Three supplied troops to the Operational Search Battalion, some to the soccer in Melbourne and some the games proper in Sydney. All returned looking resplendent with their snazzy brassards proudly displayed on their arms and "All Areas Passes" still swinging from their necks.

Accounts of brushes with celebrities and dealing delicately with irritated truck drivers holding incorrect paperwork added colour to this once in a lifetime experience. One soldier even recounted the story of an unusual find in the back of a horse float (I have it on good authority that marital aids of such huge dimensions are used to settle horses before events). Whispers of covert insertions into arenas and other "special" areas just proved the theory that you should never tell Diggers what they're "not allowed" to do as it simply presents a challenge to their boundless initiative and ingenuity. It seems that a lot of fun was had by all. While, on the whole, all members enjoyed the experience and learned great deal from it, I'm sure they are all glad to be back. C'mon Athens, pull ya finger out!

### **No names, No pack drill!**

The deployment of troops did not always work like a well-oiled machine and a certain CPL who shall remain anonymous (unless you can guess who it is) certainly started his deployment in a less than organised manner. It went something like this:

**PL SGT:** "CPL, you will be picked from the depot at 1300 on Sunday 27 Aug. Make sure you are there with **ALL** your kit. Don't be late!"

**CPL:** "No worries Sarge, I'll be there with bells on"

Sunday 27 Aug, Approx 1340h: PL SGT rings the said CPL at home:

**CPL:** "Hullo"

**PL SGT:** "You're f&@!%\$g late!"

**CPL:** "Huh, um, err, um what time is it?"

**PL SGT:** "1345, you're late!"

**CPL:** "Ahh s&%t, have we gone to day light saving?"

**PL SGT:** "Just get your s\*#t together and get over here, you've got 10 minutes!"

**CPL:** "err sorry Sarge, I forgot to...(unintelligible) no worries Sarge, I'm on my way" CLICK

Same day about 40 minutes later. CPL arrives in a cloud of dust.

**PL SGT:** "CPL have you got all your stuff? Are you sure you haven't forgotten anything?"

**CPL:** "Positive Sarge".

**PL SGT:** "Right load your gear in the car and let's get going".

About five minutes later as the vehicle departs the depot:

**CPL:** (with his best choir boy look) "Sarge can you drop by my house, I've forgotten my ID Card and some paperwork?"

At this point it is believed the PL SGT mumbled a few choice profanities before counselling the CPL about his poor start to the deployment and poor personal organisation. It is also felt that the CPL was lucky that the PL SGT had to use both hands to steer the car!

It has been said that not much happens in the thriving metropolis that is Shepparton. I'm beginning to believe this might be the case after receiving a phone call from the local wallopers and the press. It seems the sight of a soldier undertaking a CFA is enough to put a scare into some locals and set the chins wagging on others.

Other highlights of the year were the unveiling of the "Mateship" statue in Shepparton on 24 Apr 2000. This was a major event on the Battalion's calendar. Well done to those soldiers who participated and thanks to those behind the scenes workers who contributed to make this a success.

### **Onwards and upwards**

The month of July saw a number of soldiers head off on various courses at Pucka. The diggers of 9 platoon all enjoyed success on the courses they undertook. So, congratulations go to PTE Tim Tubb and PTE Dave Logan who proved their tactical and technical competence by passing the SIOPS Cse. PTE Tubb deserves a special mention as he was originally earmarked for a support role and was placed (coerced perhaps) on the course at extremely short notice. Congrats also to PTE Colin "Ronnie" Corbett who passed his IET Mod 1 Course. Well done to all of you.

And so the year is almost at a close once more. As the year ends we farewell PTE Tim Tubb who is transferring the full time army and will become an Aircraft handler with Aviation Corps.

In closing I just want to remind you the challenge of recruiting remains constant and so I challenge you to recruit just one mate each. If you can get just one of your mates to join the Army reserve there is no reason why this Bn shouldn't be able to double it's current strength.

Cheers and good luck from the fruit salad capital of Victoria.

## No Need for army alarm

Residents living near Shepparton's Somme Barracks may see the odd army reservist decked out in full combat gear during the year.

But residents should rest assured that they are merely taking part in training exercises.

Concerns were raised on Wednesday night when a man wearing a military uniform and carrying a rifle was seen marching in Archer St.

Somme Barracks depot commander Sergeant Brian Tyler said the army reservist was undergoing a combat fitness test.

"He was just taking part in his yearly requirement, as every soldier does," Sgt Tyler said.

The test involves marching 15km in full uniform, pack and rifle.

In Shepparton, the test is conducted over a 5km route near the barracks in Sobraon St.

Sgt Tyler said the police were usually informed before the training to prevent alarm. Twelve members of the army reserve are in Shepparton.

## Armed jogger raises fears

A man dressed in army fatigues carrying a rifle, raised the concerns of residents in Archer St, Shepparton on Wednesday evening.

Shepparton Police were contacted by passers-by who saw the man running in the area about 8pm.

Police discovered the man was actually an army reservist from the nearby barracks in Sobraon St taking part in training.

Police took no further action on the matter.

## 7PL C Coy Mildura - Kiarivu Barracks

During the past twelve months, four members from Mildura have joined the ranks of 6RAR and headed off to Timor, while another seven deployed to Sydney and Melbourne to support the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Full time Staff at Mildura has changed dramatically over the last twelve months with LT Fraser Hill posted to 3 Trg Group, and the appointment of LT Luke Jackson as PL Comd. Cpl Mick Rosier also left us in June, off to 4RAR and then Timor in October.

Promotion wise, Rod Charman completed his Subject Two for Cpl Cse in July and was then awarded his first hook in OCT. Congratulations Rod.

On the social scene the year started quietly with functions on Anzac Day and the occasional Friday night drinks. With the warmer weather and BBQ upgrade the Q Bar saw a fair bit of service in last half of the year. Friday night drinks became a bi-monthly event often ending at 4 or 5 in the morning. One of the more memorable nights including a few Guinness's while watching the fireworks of the adjacent Mildura Show. Social evenings at Mildura also included members of the local fire brigade, ambulance, police, as well as local businesspersons.

Recruiting has been a big push for the year, involving High School students being taken to Puckapunyal, visits to surrounding schools and places of employment and a display at the local Show.

7PL has also been involved in helping the Mildura Based Army, Navy and Air Force Cadets, with many members volunteering their time to give the Cadet NCO's and CUO's a heads up.

With a few more members 7PL is looking to be a lot more active and rewarding in 2001.

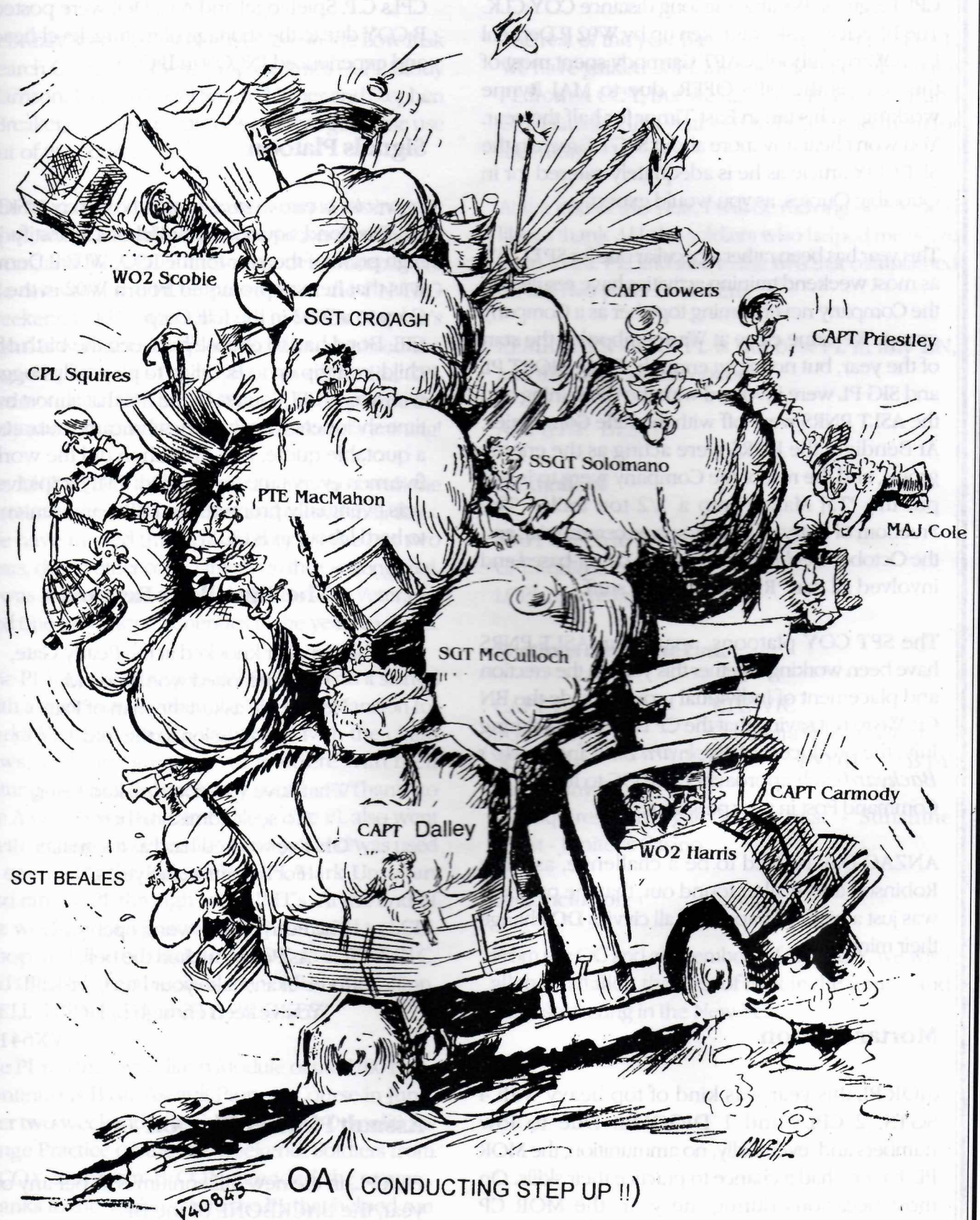
## 311 RCU - Kiarivu Barracks

This year saw a number of changes to the staff of 311 RCU. John Clark retired from Cadets in July, with Peter Atkinson taking over as AO. Alan Harris has now assumed the 2IC position with Peter Kinleyside soon to join the ranks as the TRG OFFR.

311 RCU also competed in EMU 200 with CUO Brown collecting first place in the Turbo Javelin Relay U/16. Another first for 311 is the appointment of CUO Donica Foster, who is also the first female CUO in the Sunraysia area.

# Support Company -

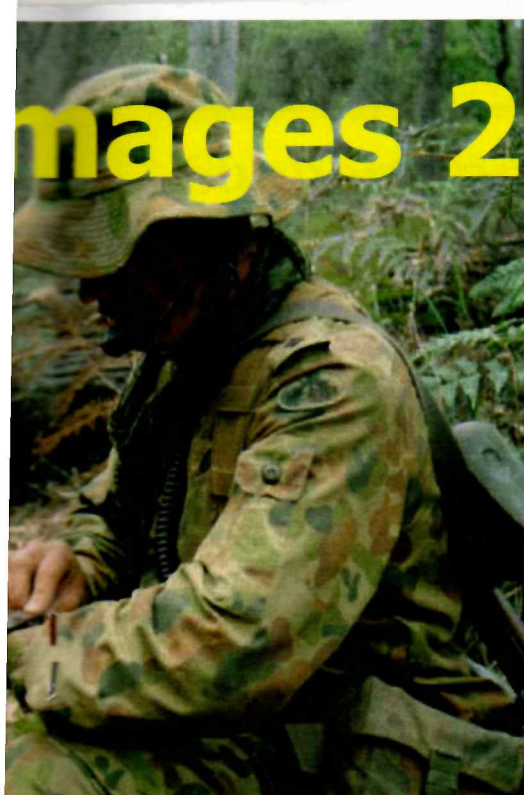
## A few good men .... and getting fewer



8/7 RVR In



# Images 2000



The year started off in Ballarat with a new OC, MAJ M Defina, a new CSM, W02 AG Harris, a new CQMS, SSGT G Green, and CAPT C Carmody staying on as the COY 21C. CPL, Leckie was, on occasions, the COY CLK. In the later of the year CPL Ferguson became the long distance COY CLK. The BN's RSO task was taken up by W02 P Dernehl from Warmambool. CAPT Carmody spent most of the year as the OPS OFFR, due to MAJ Rynne working on his tan in East Timor for half the year. You won't hear any more about SSGT Green in the SPT COY article as he is adequately catered for in Quotable Quotes, as you would expect.

This year has been rather a peculiar one for SPT COY, as most weekend training activities have resulted in the Company never coming together as a Company group. We came close at Warmambool at the start of the year, but not close enough. CHQ, MORT PL and SIG PL were involved with the CP training and the ASLT PNRS were off with the Rifle Companies. At Bendigo, the PNRS were acting as the enemy group, and the rest of the Company were trying to put the "Taj Mahal" into a 1/2 ton trailer. The Freedom of Entry of Hamilton was ceremonial, and the October weekend training was depot-based and involved all that "Rifle Company" stuff.

The SPT COY platoons, apart from ASLT PNRS have been working together this year on the erection and placement of individual groups inside the BN CP. We're not saying that the CP is huge, but during July, the producers of *Backyard Blitz* and *Burke's Backyard* each approached the OC to feature the Command Post in their programs.

ANZAC Day proved to be a challenge, as PTEs Robinson and Walker found out, that the program was just a piece of paper and all civvies **DO** change their minds.

### **Mortar Platoon**

MOR PL this year was kind of top heavy with 4 SGTS, 2 CPLS and 1 DIGGER.. Due to low numbers and, eventually, no ammunition, the MOR PL, haven't had a chance to practice their skills. On most occasions during the year, the MOR CP procedures were practised.

SGTs Wait, Baulch, Hirst and Williams, and PTE White, all served with an OSC (Operational Search Company) in Sydney or Melbourne, and gained valuable lessons.

CPLs C.P. Spielvogel and A.C. Dell were posted to B COY due to the shortage of mature, level-headed and experienced JNCO's in B COY.

### **Signals Platoon**

*Improvise, overcome and adapt* is the war cry of SIG PL, as CPLs Bond, Squire and McMahon can testify. The high point of the year for the RSO, W02 P Dernehl was that he was promoted from a W02 in the SIG Corp to a W02 in the INF Corp.

CPL Bond had to choose between the birth of his child, or a trip up to Bendigo to play "silly buggars" with a tent. CPL Squires found out that almost every time she opened her mouth, what came out rated as a quotable quote. PTE McMahon did the work of five men every time he paraded. PTE JA Spielvogel was eventually promoted to LCPL, and sentenced to hard labour in B COY.

### **The Signaller's Reward**

The signaller knocked at the Pearly Gate,  
His face looked worn and old;  
He meekly asked the man of Fate  
For admission to the fold

"What have you done", asked Peter,  
"To seek admission here?"

"Oh! I've worked hard as a signaller  
For several weary years."

The Pearly Gate swung open wide  
As Peter touched the bell,  
"Come in and take your harp," he said  
"You've seen enough of Hell"

"VX64158"

### **Assault Pioneer Platoon**

PNR PL, in the new Millennium is as per any other year, the BACKBONE of the BN.

The Platoon's year started a little bit differently as

two members of the PL, Michael Stoop and Aaron Harper, were on tour in Malaysia for three months with the Section that went over with 5/6 RVR. While the Section was on tour with 5/6 RVR, it won the Section Mil Skills Competition. WELL DONE!

February saw the first of the PL go on the Low Risk Search Course for the Olympic Games - CPL Cindy Harrison, PTEs Michael Smith-Warner and Stephen (Breaker) Moran - at least one of them got some use out of the course.

The PL put into use some carpentry skills in early April, when it installed wooden lockers in the PNR room, and for A COY, these wooden lockers were the ones that the PL acquired from the BN TRG weekend held in Warmarnbool in March. No, that's right! It was not the "platoon" that acquired the wooden lockers - it was just two of the PL, CPL Redmond and PTE Smith-Warner, as they were the only two that turned up for that weekend's training!

On ANZAC Day this year, the PL marched with the Korean Veterans Association, and carried their flags. We have missed this opportunity for the last two years, due to other commitments in the Geelong area. It was a very good day with the Korean Veterans, and one that I hope continues in the years to come.

The PL had a real busy month in May, and it started with a chain saw weekend at Werribee Mansion for Parks Victoria. The PL went mad with the chain saws, with no "greenies" to interfere with their cutting down all the trees they could see! Thanks to the A COY boys that came along. The PL also went on the training weekend at Bendigo, and was used as enemy for the Rifle COY. CPL Mark Urquhart also ran the PL through some IMT's. At the end of the weekend, PTE Stoop was promoted to LCPL Stoop and posted back to A COY as a SECT 21C, and CPL Urquhart received the Soldier's Medallion. WELL DONE TO BOTH BLOKES!!

The PL ran the Demolition Module of the 1/00 Non-Continuous Basic Assault Pioneer Course in June, over two weekends, finishing with the Demolitions Range Practice on the last weekend. Soldiers from A COY and from B COY attended the course. Thanks to the soldiers from the PL that helped run the course.

The July Courses Camp saw some of the PI, used as enemy for SUBJ 2 CPL CSE, while CPL Redmond went away on a Low Risk Search Course for the Olympic Games - that was a waste of a course, but well done Red!

The rest of the year has been very quiet for the PL. We have gained LCPL Michael McHale, joining the PI, from A COY, but we have lost PTE Parkhill and CPL Harrison this year - GOOD LUCK to them for the future!

At the end of this year, I will be moving on. I would like to thank ALL the soldiers who helped me while I was in the PL, and also to the two that complained for the two years I was here.

REMEMBER - PNR PL is the best PL in any BN, and this BN is no exception!!

ALL THE BEST!

#### **Promotions**

SSGT Green to W02 (pending)

CPL Squires and  
LCPL Spielvogel

#### **Postings out of the Unit**

CAPT Carmody	RTC VIC
SGT Tully	Canungra (Battle Wing)
SGT Hirst	53 <sup>rd</sup> INDP BTY
Puckapunyal	
CPL Squires-	Brisvegas Gold Coast - Sunshine Coast - Jupiter's Casino

#### **In Conclusion**

From the OC and all members of SPT COY, we wish all the Battalion the best of luck in the future, and good soldiering in the New Year.

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

CCLK to SGT CROAGH	05 MAY 00	"Mate, nothing happens in my office" "We all know that!"
SSGT GREEN " "	09 MAY 00 "	"I'm obnoxious not grumpy" "I don't need any help to get into trouble, I do all right myself"
QM TO SSGT GREEN	"	"What shonky are you doing now?"
CPL PAIZIS	09 May 00	" I haven't had a female in here for months".
SGT McCULLOCH TO CO	12 MAY 00 "	"We are going to do it in different positions" "You're not coming!"
SSGT GREEN	15 MAY 00	"The name's Greenie not Houdini"
LCPL SQUIRES	16 MAY 00	"Give me the bad news. I need something to cheer me up"
CPL WARD (PT Rope Run)	21 MAY 00	"All right, we'll finish off with a tug!"
CPL LECKIE	06 JUN 00	"The Monday after the weekend?"
PTE BREWER	20 JUN 00	"I'm after SSGT Green, I don't know why though"
SSGT GREEN	20 JUN 00	"I'll just switch off my Q'ee head"
CCLK	20 JUN 00	"I'm short and I'm going to get shorter"
SSGT GREEN	29 JUN 00	"Never have a dog and bark yourself"
CO (Subj 2 Cse)	29 JUN 00	"I want you to suck the Instructors dry"
SGT COX (While watching the ABC TV on Subj 2 Pucka)	20 JUN 00	"Ahh, Great Military Blunders. Eh Spence, are you in this?"
SGT WAIT	18 JUL 00	"There is not enough weekends in the month"
RSM	20 JUL 00	"Just ask me, and I'll give the latest answer"
ADJT (Op Search Cse)	25 JUL 00	"You'll concentrate on fairies"
SGT TULLY (To CSM SPT) CSM (To SGT Tully) SGT TULLY	02 AUG 00	"Is my wife there yet?"  "Your wife has just taken off with SSGT Green" "Shit hot"

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

CAPT FALLOON To SSGT GREEN	02 AUG 00	"So not to get abused by you, how do I .....?"
CPL LECKIE	04 AUG 00	"What do you need a sewing kit for?"
CPL ALLEN own webbing?"	"	"I'll just go grab the Chief's webbing. Arr, does the Chief
ADJT	07 AUG 00	"Kids can't play with Officers"
CAPT CARMODY	08 AUG 00	"It will be justification for my frustration"
CPL WATSON SSGT GREEN	08 AUG 00	"Where is LCPL Squires?" "Don't worry about LCPL Squires - she's been fixed up for the night"
RSM	09 AUG 00	"My second brilliant suggestion"
ADJT	15 AUG 00	"We (Offrs) don't work on competencies"
CCLK	31 AUG 00	"You're in and out like a crab's eye"
CPL TRACEY Badge Day)	31 AUG 00	"Yea, I'm just going to sell my arse in the Mall" (Legacy
Extract from Conference Notes UNKNOWN	07 SEP 00	Nomination for SPT for RMC Exercise Beersheba "Ahh no, CAPT Falloon, not Bah-she-bah"
CCLK (Talking about Tiger Beer)	08 SEP 00	"I wouldn't give that stuff to a Jap on Anzac Day"
ADJT	08 SEP 00	"Mac, I don't want to be a fuddy duddy, but ..."
MAJ AKELL (RTD)	14 OCT 00	" Arr, have you blokes got training tonight"
WO2 SPENCER	14 OCT 00	" Get your NADS out"
SSGT GREEN	19 OCT 00	"You know the one good thing about Alzheimer's Disease is that you meet a whole lot of new friends."
WO2 PELLOW	19 OCT 00	"The ADJT's <i>out there</i> ".
SSGT GREEN	24 OCT 00	" Marriage is not a gamble, it's an occupational hazard".
MAJ DEFINA	24 OCT 00	"I'll sign anything, but I'll sign for nothing".

## Admin Company

While the year 2000 in the battalion has been quiet in some respects, due to the commitments with members in 6 RAR and on Op Gold in Sydney and Melbourne, Admin Coy members have had an extremely busy year.

Since "The Ranger 2000" magazine last year, Admin Coy, along with the remainder of the battalion, deployed on Ex Bob Dubi II, attended battalion weekends at Warrnambool and Puckapunyal and also attended the battalion weekend at Bendigo where a near full strength A Echelon was deployed.

While Rifle Coy members just need to draw a few stores, grab their rifle, webbing and pack and jump on a bus, or Hercules, to deploy to the next phase of an exercise, Admin Coy has to "pick up the pieces" and move the battalion's stores. This occurred four times on Ex Bob Dubi II. The QM and Transport Platoons, with a little help from 4 BASB, shifted all the range stores for the weapons phase at Puckapunyal, then moved the defence stores for the Brierly VAP phase AT Warrnambool, moved all stores for the East Sale phase and then brought them all back to our depots. During this time the Catering Section fed about 100 people from firstly the Warrnambool Depot kitchen, and then from a tent on the side of the road at East Sale. For spartan conditions, this situation was bettered by the kitchen under the tarpaulin at Bendigo.



## CHQ

CHQ has had a stable year. Maj Neil Leckie and Capt Cliff Gowers remained as OC and 2IC while WO2 Geoff Pellow remained as the CSM, Trg WO and

Coy Clerk. However, on 30<sup>th</sup> October WO2 Pellow transferred to Spt Coy as CSM and the Coy welcomed WO2 "you're killing me" John Spencer from B Coy. With an exercise occurring in late January 2001, the early change in postings will ensure a smooth transition for the preparation of the exercise. It seems that WO2 Spencer has now gained the "sufficient experience" to transfer to Admin Coy which was missing during the "Spencer for CSM Admin Coy" campaign during Ex Bob Dubi II last year.



## Transport

Ex Bob Dubi II saw members of the Transport Platoon, under the guidance of Cpl Jacka Smith, work with members of 4 BASB in providing transport support to the battalion. Along with this support the platoon undertook licencing and familiarisation training for several battalion and BASB members. 2Lt Warwick Stapleton (4 BASB) and Cpl Smith will not forget the exercise as a 2Lt Stapleton's familiarisation drive in a Land Cruiser "Troop Carrier" took five people about two hours to recover from being bogged to the axles near the beach West of Warrnambool.

Sgt Alan Tarr took over as the Transport Supervisor in mid January. In February he saw two of his drivers, Ptes Peta Maher and Robert White, complete the 4 Brigade Drivers Courses where Pte White was awarded the Student of Merit. That month the Transport Platoon also partook in the battalion training weekend at Puckapunyal.

March saw the platoon participate in the final Beat the Retreat at Queenscliff and the training weekend at Warrnambool. The Transport Platoon boys were at it again at this exercise when they bogged a Unimog to the axles in the same area as in December.

In April for the platoon was at the unveiling of the Mateship Statue at Shepparton followed the next day by ANZAC Day activities while May saw participation in the Bendigo training weekend. Pte Daniel McKinnon used his last Training Day to complete his CFA for his AIRN. June saw participation in the training weekend back at Puckapunyal and members of the platoon also participated in the AIRN Medical/Dental weekend late in June. At this time, Cpl Smith, who is on an Age Extension this year, headed off a 4 month holiday in WA.

Sgt Tarr instructed on the July Drivers Course where Ptes Marshall Sullivan and Robert Terkley were students. Pte Michael Dooley did his Op Gold training in this month. August saw the departure of Pte Dooley for Op Gold in Sydney on the same weekend as the rest of the battalion participated in the Freedom of Entry to the City of Hamilton.

In September, Pte Terkley took part in Op Gold in Melbourne while Cpl Smith, after returning from his holiday, answered the call from the Olympics in Sydney to help with the shortage of Bus Drivers (nothing to do with height). Pte White commenced 3 months Full Time Service.



## Medical Platoon

Ex Bob Dubi II saw members of the Medical Platoon work with members of the 4 BASB Treatment Section. Cpl Viv Holland stayed with the rifle company for most of the exercise while the other Medics were rotated through the activities. SSgt BJ McKeon arranged simulated casualty training for the rifle company for the Brierly Phase. The realism of the simulation opened the eyes of the infantry soldiers to the problems that they may face.

The start of the new year saw Pte Adam Wallace pass his Subject 1 for Cpl Course and Pte Chris

Skinner head to the US on Long Leave. February saw the discharge of Pte Beaumont to take on a career with the Navy while Cpl Greg Graham, who relisted in November, started a Health Technicians Course.

March saw the promotion to LCpl for Pte Wallace and the transfer of Pte Rye Carr to the ARA while April saw the transfer of Cpl Greg "Buck" Rogers from 4 BASB Shepparton to Admin Coy and Cpl Graham complete his course. May saw the welcome return from the US of Pte Skinner to Warrnambool and Cpl Holland undertake Op Gold Training.

In June the platoon welcomed "the disease", Pte Richard Parkinson from B Coy, and carried out a complex AIRN Medical/Dental weekend. July saw SSgt McKeon support the 4 Bde Courses Camp while Cpl Graham undertook Op Gold training. Shortly afterwards, Cpl Graham took Long Leave when he started work at Sovereign Hill.

September was a busy month for the platoon with Cpl Holland and Pte Skinner on Op Gold in Melbourne, Adam Wallace promoted to Cpl and Cpl Graham returning from Leave.

With SSgt McKeon's active recruiting, the platoon has some more members transferring in and will rival Transport Platoon as the biggest in the company.



## QM Platoon

With the transfer in 1999 of WO Wain, WO2 Chris Bates took on the role of QM and SSgt Greg Green took over as RQMS. By April, the incoming QM, WO1 Kevin White was finally found after his overseas holiday and assumed the role of QM. WO2 Bates, after delaying a transfer, resumed as RQMS

with SSgt Green moving to CQMS Spt Coy. WO1 White became Capt White in July.

## Q Section

The QM Platoon has been stretched to the limit this year. SSgt Graeme Westbury has been on Full Time Service as CQMS B Coy, Cpl Al Kincaid has been absent for most of the year, Cpl Adrian Ward has done time on Op Gold and on a Subject 1 Course and is studying for Subject 2. Pte Fran Webb also attended Op Gold in Melbourne with Cpl Ward, counting blankets and carrying out vehicle checks. This left the QM, RQMS and Pte Brewer to look after the shop, and they did it well!

The posting season is upon us once again. The platoon will lose two of its mainstays: WO2 Bates and Cpl Ward (on promotion) to Townsville.



## Catering Section

This year has seen a number of changes within the Catering Section. Sgt Mark Broemmer was pleased to accept, on behalf of the members of the section, the CO's Commendation for 1999 for all of the efforts during that year and in the lead up to 2000. The Caterer was also extremely pleased to be the recipient of a Divisional Commanders Commendation in March 2000 and accepted it on behalf of all the section members who have helped him achieve it.

Unfortunately, a number of long serving and hard working members of the section have for various reasons left the ARes this year. LCpl Paul Donovan (Warrnambool) served for 9 years with the battalion after 6 years in the ARA. Cpl Dale Mullane (Mildura) (18 years) and Ballarat members Pte Simon Andrew

(11 years), Pte Peter Suckling, Pte Kellie Wilson and Pte Jarrod Volke. The loss of these members has severely hampered the section, but it is still producing good results. Ptes Bob Kenyon and Coramen Parma are both away on Op Gold duties in Sydney which has left the Caterer, Cpl Steve Ivey (Warrnambool) and Pte Michael Currie (Geelong) to carry on.

## Tech Support

Tech Support is looking very thin. Cpl Darren Werry returned to the battalion this year but transferred to the ARA in July. Sgt Rod Jackson (Mildura) is our remaining Armourer and does an excellent job on weapons and also looking after the Admin Coy members in C Coy Depots who have paraded most of this year on Wednesday nights. We have welcomed an ex ARA Vehicle Mechanic, Cpl Robert Brown to Shepparton. He has already spent one week at BHQ servicing/maintaining the battalion's vehicles.

## Recruiting

Admin Coy is always on the lookout for new members. We can only take those members who have completed their Infantry training or are transferring in from other units or are ex ARA. We have vacancies for Storepersons, Clerks and Cooks. If you are looking for a new challenge then consider Admin Coy. Remember that without Admin Coy's background work, a battalion cannot carry out its tasks.

In the words of the Caterer, "the work is long and hard, the pay is lousy, but the rewards are a great deal of satisfaction that you get from a job well done".

# Victorian soldiers find freedom

By Capt Noel Gilby

The soldiers of 8/7 RVR invaded the tree-lined streets of Hamilton last month in continuance of a tradition that began in the middle ages.

The infantry soldiers, dressed for battle, carrying weapons and supported by artillery, armour and other units from Victoria's 4 Bde exercised their right to Freedom of the City of Hamilton.

The soldiers marched through the city streets in celebration of the regiment's 142nd birthday and its ongoing commitment to the communities of western Victoria.

8/7 RVR has a rich heritage dating from its formation in 1858 and its well known and respected for its involvement at Gallipoli, the Western Front and many of the significant battles of WW2.

Soldiers of the battalion continue the tradition today with overseas deployments including peacekeeping duties on Bougainville and East Timor.

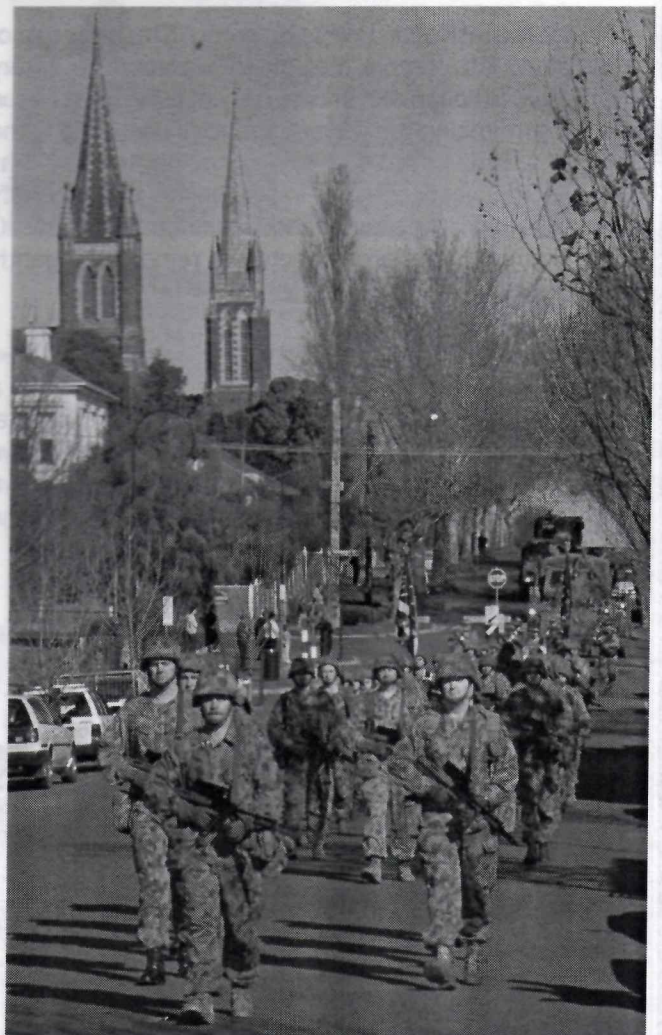
The Freedom of Entry marks the integral links between Australia's towns and cities and the ADF units residing in them.



Capt David Fallon, 8/7 RVR, shows young enthusiasts over some of the regiment's hardware after a Freedom of the City march through Hamilton, Victoria. Photos by FSGT Don Kenny



APCs support 8/7 RVR during its Freedom of Entry invasion of Hamilton, Victoria.



Soldiers from 8/7 RVR march through the streets of Hamilton.

Article provided by the Army News

## Time in Timor

During the period 28 Mar to 4 Oct, I was deployed as a United Nations Military Observer (UNMO) in East Timor. While most people are aware of the deployment of Australian combat troops to the East Timor Peace Keeping Force (PKF), and many of us will know personnel who deployed as part of 6 RAR, few people, it seems, are aware that Australia also has other military commitments to the area.

The UNMO Group in East Timor currently comprises approximately 150 military officers, drawn from 21 contributing nations. Australia currently has 15 officers serving with the group. Most staff serve 12-month tours of duty, while the Australians, Brits, Kiwis, Irish and Americans all serve only 6 months.

All personnel speak English (some to a better standard than others), although the teams are always an interesting mix of countries, cultures, language and cuisine!

UNMO teams operate in all regions of East Timor, although the largest teams are in the border regions. Team sizes range in size from approximately 9 to 24.

How is the task of an UNMO different? The basic role of the UNMO is to observe, monitor and report on the military situation, although a lot of time is spent conducting liaison and coordinating the various agencies operating in the regions. Time is also spent investigating "incidents" as they occur. Not necessarily to affix blame, but to identify exactly what happened. Although uniformed, all UNMO are unarmed, and are expected to remain stringently neutral.

Living conditions are also different to those experienced by the majority of the PKF. UNMO are provided with a subsistence allowance and expected to live off the local infrastructure. Teams are expected to identify their own office areas, find their own housing, and buy their own food. Consequently, we tended to live closer to the communities in houses as opposed to compounds.

In my particular case, I served in two areas, doing what were really two completely different jobs.

I spent the first 4 ½ months of my posting serving in Aileu, a town of approximately 4000 people, 47 km south of Dili. Here, I was a member of the FALINTIL Liaison Team, coordinating activities between UNTAET and FALINTIL (the ex-guerrilla force of East Timor). As the UNMO were the only UNTAET military personnel in the district (PKF were not permitted to enter without authority), this team became involved in a large number of miscellaneous activities, and was undoubtedly the busiest time of my tour of duty. The team lived and worked closely with FALINTIL, with 4 man teams living in the FALINTIL Company areas.

I served the remainder of my posting as a member of the Border Liaison Team in the Maliana district. In the border regions, UNMO are deployed in two man teams on either side of the border, with the main task of effecting liaison between the PKF and the TNI (Indonesian Army) regarding any issue that may arrive.

Memories? Like anyone who deployed, I have a few vivid ones:

- Sharing houses (12 months ago I hadn't really anticipated sharing a house with, at different times, Brazilians, Uruguayans, Bolivians, Swedes or Russians).
- Explaining the nuances of Australian phrases.
- The roads, particularly in the mountain areas (imagine the windiest road you've been on. Double the number of curves, put it on a mountain, make it single lane and foggy, and throw in a couple of armfuls of dogs, chickens, goats, water buffalo and suicidal drivers. Do this for 47 km and you have an idea of the road between Dili and Aileu.
- The level of destruction through the country (This had to be seen to be believed. In some areas, village after village, or house after house)
- The local people (Undoubtedly some of the friendliest I've met)

MAJ Rynne, OPS Offr, 8/7 RVR



FALINTIL training for their birthday parade on 20 Aug

# Images of East Timor



Kids on the beach near Batugade



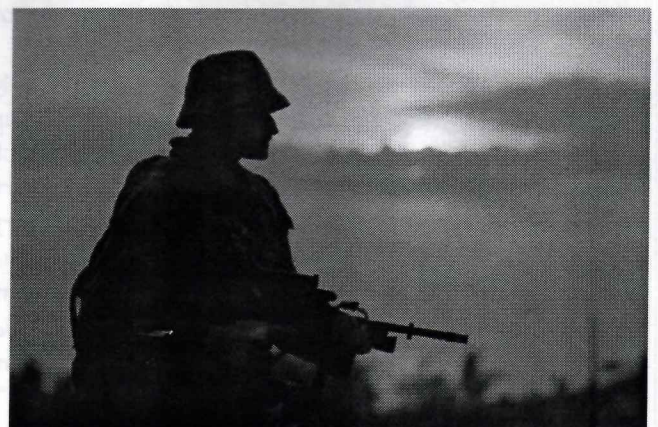
LT Simon Mouatt, MAJ John McCaffery and TNI Platoon and Company Commanders. On the bridge representing the border at Junction Point "A", Batugade

## Reserve diggers in Timor service



*Photo by CPL Kevin Piggott.  
Article in Army News 6 Jul 2000.*

PTE Donny Butters, 8/7 RVR, looks over his weapon from a guard post on the west border of East Timor. PTE Buttes is one of many part-time soldiers who volunteered for full-time service with the Australian contingent.



## Operation Gold - 3 Platoon OSC-M

On the evening of 12 September 2000, 38 members of 3 Platoon of the Operational Search Company – Melbourne moved into action. 1 Platoon and 2 Platoon had finished the search of the Melbourne Cricket Ground and it was now locked down. It was 3 Platoon's task to ensure that, during the Olympic Soccer matches, nothing got into the MCG that shouldn't be there. A quick orientation visit to the site of the 2 proposed VCPs allowed members to work out where things were. At 0600 hrs the next morning the first VCP was up and running. There was a steady stream of delivery, trades and passenger vehicles to be searched before allowing them into the hallowed MCG. Some of the things taught on the Search course, such as the paperwork and communicating with the public, were not in line with the current requirements so the new ways had to be quickly learned. Fortunately several members of 3 Platoon had worked with 1 or 2 Platoon so they could answer the really important questions such as "Where do we go to get lunch?"

Members quickly settled into working with the Vic Police personnel and Explosive Detection Dogs (EDD). It seemed strange at first to be giving orders (suggestions?) to the Vic Police but both sides soon got used to it. The EDDs gave us a sense of security by giving the vehicles an initial check. The dogs were mostly well behaved. However, one of them managed to have some fun by pushing a toilet roll out of the back of a car and another enjoyed chewing and dribbling over one of the soccer team's baggage. One of the pizza delivery ladies was horrified to see the dog clambering over the pizza boxes in the back of her delivery van. One of the diggers who'd searched the MCG commented, "The dog was probably cleaner than a lot of the take-away food places in the MCG."

Some of the delivery drivers quickly learned that if they were more than twenty minutes late from their specified delivery time, they would be turned away. By the second day, most of the drivers were early.

It was probably against the Geneva Convention to have soldiers searching bakers' vans loaded with freshly baked bread and hot donuts early in the morning. But rumour has it that, later in the operation, one of the delivery drivers felt sorry for the diggers and handed over a box of donuts.

One morning was forecast to be a quiet morning but quickly became busy as about six cars and a large bus pulled up to the VCP. A swarm of Federal Police dressed in black suits, sunglasses and earphones piled out. They were part of the detail to pick up Chelsea Clinton from the airport and bring her to the soccer match being played by the USA team. They quickly explained to the Vic Police sergeant at the VCP what they were about and what they wanted the Vic Police and soldiers to do. Her response to them, in the best interests of inter-police co-operation was "I

don't care who you are, you're not getting in here without any f—— accreditation." This established the pecking order and she then directed the diggers to search the vehicles with a great deal more thoroughness than for previous vehicles. This gave the soldiers a first hand view of some of the weaponry and electronic equipment carried by the Federal Police. This also proved that the plastic Glock pistols could be detected by X-ray as the AFP could not unlock a briefcase and it had to be X-rayed.

Later on that day, the OPSO found out how powerful our security passes were as he found himself inadvertently standing next to Chelsea Clinton and surrounded by Secret Service men. Fortunately for the female players of the Swedish and Norwegian teams, the diggers realised too late that the passes could have given them access to the players' change rooms. They did find that at least the passes gave them access to the FIFA hospitality bar. The hospitality lasted only until FIFA realised that they were from the Army and then they weren't allowed back in. Some of the more unusual cargo that had to be searched was 900 kilograms of dates (which were X-rayed one box at a time) and 300 handmade chocolate soccer balls. By the look of alarm on the driver's face when he saw the diggers unloading the chocolate balls, he may have thought that the diggers were going to use their mine prodders to check for concealed articles. However, this was not the case and the balls were returned, searched and undamaged, to the van. Some of the off-duty teams had an opportunity to visit the Victoria Police Dog School and the Victoria Mounted Police Branch. The dog handlers were looking for a training aid to demonstrate the use of one of the attack dogs. However, the diggers knew better than to volunteer. (I think, from the size of the Alsation, that it must have been part timber wolf.) As they couldn't get any soldiers to demonstrate on, one of the dog handlers allowed himself to be attacked by the dog. I don't think that it was the most fun that the handler had ever had.

Some teams also visited the Special Operations Group HQ. This gave them the opportunity to check out some of the weaponry and bomb disposal gear which, hopefully, we would not get to see being used.

At 2030 hrs on the 26 September, the last VCP was closed down. There had been no mushroom clouds over the MCG nor balls of smoke and flame from any vehicle. 3 Platoon's motto was "We search for bombs, if you see us running try to keep up." Fortunately, 3 Platoon did not have to do any running.

SSGT Ivan Solomano  
3 PI OSC-M

## CPL Jacka Smith's trip to the Olympics

We left Melbourne at 0600 and arrived Sydney at 2215. We were then picked up and transported to Randwick Barracks to join about 150 drivers from the Army, Navy and Airforce to help out the 'driver crisis'. After a round of paperwork, we went to our accommodation at Timor Barracks in houses of about eight.

I was with six sailors from HMAS Albatross, Stirling, Cerberus and Watson. The sailors ended upstairs on beds while I was on the floor for three days until more beds arrived.

On the next day we were tested in 5 speed, 6 speed and 7 speed, back to front gearboxes to make sure we were competent.

Then it was into the real work. We went over to Regent Park to start our tasking (there were 3500 buses at Regent Park). My pickup point was at Bargo and Picton that took about 3 hours return with one hour off then start again.

At night hand over to the night shift. We picked up and dropped off every hour on the half hour 24 hours a day starting at 0630. If your bus broke down you radioed in and a spare bus came out and picked up your passengers and you stayed and waited for recovery. There were 8 accidents in 11 days.

You received a ticket for breakfast, one for lunch and one for dinner and the caterer received \$16.00 for each ticket.

On your shift you had a radio, a firstaid kit, and 6 tickets for the toll way. To fuel up you drove into one of five fuel depots, wound down the window, gave your speedo reading and sat while they refuelled.

I had day 8 at the Games in the new Homebush Stadium (simply unbelievable). I saw running, shotput, hurdles and pole vault.

At the conclusion of the games I flew back to Melbourne and was transported to Ballarat on the airport shuttle.

### Interesting notes:

GMH supplied 2000 Holden Commodores and at the end of the Games thirty were missing. At Regent Park 7 laptop computers went missing. Six Harley-Davidson pushbike were missing, one photocopier and 100 police flashing hand held traffic lights.

All drivers received a bronze medallion, a plaque, a brassard and a book on the job done.

## Visit of LTGEN Cosgrove, Chief of Army

In October the Battalion was privileged to have the Chief of the Army, Lieutenant-General Cosgrove make a flying visit. He commenced his visit with a lunch for Officers and SNCO's in the Officers Mess. From there he journeyed up to 'B' Coy and gave a short speech in which he revealed his views and plans for the Army Reserve within the Australian Army.

He also briefly reminisced on his time on Timor and the role of the Reserve in this exercise. This was followed by an interesting question time from the troops.

Finally, Lt-Gen Cosgrove made a number of promotions and presentation of medals, in particular officially recognising Maj Bill Akell's long and distinguished service with the Australian Army.

The visit was concluded by a visit to the OR's Club where the General mixed informally with members of the Battalion.

R M. Dalley  
CAPT



# Ranger Barracks

**SGT. M K W. BROEMMER**  
**Ranger Museum Curator**

As the unit's days of parading at the Ranger Barracks come to an end, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the details and even some of the lighter moments that have been had at the Ranger Barracks, the current home of HQ 8/7 RVR.

The Ranger Barracks was the result of the need for a new home for the Ballarat area Militia Forces. Various temporary homes had been used with many complaints forthcoming regarding the state of the wooden floors after the constant marching and close-order drill.

So, on the 2nd of July 1886 the Brand-new "Ranger Barracks" was officially opened before a crowd of over 4000 onlookers, that included many kindred units from Melbourne and other Western Victorian towns.

Cost was 5000 (pounds) and the contractors in charge of construction were Messrs., Taylor and Ellis. The drill hall was the largest single span construction of its type in the Commonwealth and held this title until 1912.

As part of the building, two cottages were incorporated into the design, these being the residences for the 'Sergeant-Major' and Senior Instructors and their families. The first Battalion ball was held on this night after having had displays of drill, bayonet practice and sword drill during the day.

When war broke out in 1914, many of the nucleus members of the first Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) came from the Ballarat based battalions. Many of these citizen soldiers were allotted to the 8th Battalion AIF and hence the link between the current unit and the old battalion. Many a recruiting rally and even a permanent recruiting fixture would have been situated at the barracks.

In the 1930's there was resurgence in the CMF (Citizens Military Forces) with many men serving part-time. Due to the Great Depression, Australia could not afford a large full-time Defence force and

had to rely on this type of training. This, of course, held us in good stead when the war clouds gathered in Europe in 1939, for the second time in just over twenty years Australia was raising a force to serve overseas. (2 AIF)

Again the Ranger Barracks played a significant role throughout the war. Compulsory military service being introduced in 1942 to counter the Japanese threat of invasion.

During the 1950's the National Service scheme was introduced and I have been told that on a number of occasions that up to 1200 men have paraded in Ranger barracks at any one time.

Ballarat did not have a concentrated Military presence in the Korean War, Malayan emergency, Borneo-confrontation or the Vietnam War. We can speculate that any number of locals on an individual basis may have passed through the Ranger Barracks on their way to or back from these various conflicts

Today's member of the Battalion should be extremely proud to have been associated with the same building that has 'seen-off' many of those brave souls that have volunteered for overseas service, many never to return.

The very same men who fought and died on the cliffs of Gallipoli; the mud and blood of the slaughterhouse that was the Western Front; the sand, flies and filth of the Sinai Peninsula; on the battlefields of the Western Desert, Greece, Crete and the dense jungles of New Guinea. We must never forget their valuable contribution to our history and the Ranger museum is a constant memorial to these brave men and women that have served before us.

Indeed it will be a sad farewell for most of us when we finally depart Ranger Barracks and move to a new home.

Will there still be a need for an Army presence in Ballarat in 115 years time? When we think of all the proud history of this Battalion we should see the Ranger Barracks as the focal point in our heritage of the past 115 years and may the Barracks remain in good repair in its retirement as it has truly served Ballarat well.

