

THE RANGER 2002

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



The new Ranger Barracks, Ballarat
Official Opening 9th August 2003.

Regimental Colonel
COL P. A. Riley AM RFD

Allied Regiments
The Staffordshire Regiment
(The Princes of Wales)
The Royal Regiment of Canada

Commanding Officer
LT COL R. S. Haughton

Allied Associations
The Associations of the 7th Battalion
incorporating the
7th Battalion AIF
7th Battalion AIF (1939-1945)
2/7th Australian Infantry Battalion
7th Battalion RAR

The 8th Battalion (Ballarat) Association
The 8th Battalion (Ararat) Association

The 8th /7th Battalion – 2 RVR Association



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8/7 RVR – A BRIEF HISTORY

The 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment, encompasses the area bounded by Mildura, Warrnambool, Geelong, and Shepparton. The battalion HQ is at Ballarat, 110km West of Melbourne.

Ballarat's part of the history of the battalion commenced on the 23rd 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 21st July 1858. The first parade of the new unit was the 9th August 1858. As the Battalion Headquarters is now based at Ballarat, 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 8th/7th Battalion traces it's lineage back to a number of units. These include the:

8th Battalion (The City of Ballarat Regiment),
7th Battalion (The North West Murray Borderers),
38th Battalion (The Northern Victorian Regiment)
and 59th Battalion (The Hume Regiment).

These battalions cover the major cities of Ballarat, Mildura, Bendigo and Shepparton.

The battalion has been granted, and used, The Freedom of Entry to the following cities in its area:

Ballarat	1983 & 1998
Echuca	1989
Hamilton	1990 & 2000
Maryborough	1980
Swan Hill	1988 & 1999

The current operational role for the Battalion is to provide a company for Rear Area Security Operations (RASO) to the 4th Brigade from Victoria.

The year 2002 saw the Bendigo Platoon move into a new depot, the commencement of the building of the new Ballarat Depot Ranger Barracks in ~~Curtis~~ ^{Sturt} Street, Ballarat and further work on the redevelopment of the 2/10 FD REGT Depot in Geelong to where A COY will move.

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CO's Message

The Battalion started the year with a new structure, focusing members with like skills into sub-units not based on geographic locality but on qualifications and competencies. This allows soldiers to serve in one depot but be a member of different companies over their service in the battalion.

Alpha Company was charged with the training of the battalion's fully qualified infantrymen, Bravo Company had responsibility for training soldiers from completion of the Rifleman Infantry Operator Basic (RIO-B) Course until recognised as proficient infantrymen. Charlie Company was given responsibility for DTU's and the soldiers that require completion of their RIO-B Course. The three Rifle Companies, together with Support and Admin Companies have a NCO presence in each depot, wherever possible.

This training focus has meant that soldiers with a similar level of training can train together on weekends with their mates with similar skills. Additionally, Officers and NCO's have been provided the opportunity to develop and improve their knowledge and military skills expected of their rank while training with increased numbers of soldiers.

The battalion's training year has been a hectic one. Most notable among the year's activities was the short notice commitment of 8/7 RVR members to serve with the 5th/7th Battalion, The Royal Australia Regiment (5/7 RAR). 27 soldiers left for Darwin on 15 July 02 to begin twelve months service, six months of which will be spent on the border between East and West Timor as part of the United Nations Transitional Authority East Timor (UNTAET). Our best wishes go with them.

The Southern Regions Courses Camp (SRCC) 05-21 July 2002, saw the battalion conduct RIO-B and DFSW Courses. The battalion has also conducted two Rifleman Infantry Operator Platoon (RIO-P) Courses this year.

8/7 RVR conducted Officer/SNCO Training for units across 4 BDE. This training focussed primarily on the Military Appreciation Process (MAP) and was run over two weekends, the first at our Newtown Depot (Geelong) and the second at the newly built Passchendaele Barracks at Junortoun, just outside Bendigo.

8/7 RVR was part of HAMEL 01 at Puckapunyal Military Area (PMA) and Longlea (Bendigo) over the Nov-Dec period last year. This involved two company groups of the battalion participating in a number of combined arms exercises, culminating in the company clearance of the Greenvale Hospital site. Many lessons were learnt at all levels.

Battalion members provided support to other RTC-VIC Courses in the form of instructors and support staff, most notably to the three RIO-B Courses held this year. Supporting and sustaining this tempo were the battalion's Transport, Catering and Medical Platoons, which consistently provided excellent service.

This year has also seen 8/7 RVR take enormous steps towards establishing itself in new facilities. As mentioned, 8/7 RVR has already occupied the new Passchendaele Barracks, with 15 Transport Squadron at Bendigo. Considerable planning has been undertaken in the development of Multi-User Depots in Geelong and Ballarat. Construction of the new

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Ranger Barracks in Ballarat, expected to be completed by June 2003. The official "Turning of the First Sod" took place on 17th November 2002.

The 8th/7th Battalion has been an active recruiter in the last year. Training Year (TY) 01/02 saw 8/7 RVR convert 105 enquires to enlistments, the best result in the Brigade. Only enthusiastic and dedicated battalion members can achieve outcomes like this.

I personally wish to thank all members of the battalion again for their contributions and their families for their support over the year, and welcome new members to the battalion, and a farewell to members who have left or are leaving the battalion.

When all this activity is set against a backdrop of considerable defence-wide change, the tempo sustained by 8/7 RVR throughout 2002 is quite an achievement. With members ever increasing and plenty of activity, it certainly is a great time to be a member of Australia's oldest Infantry battalion!

LT COL Haughton



CO presents AASM to SGT Anthony Skiparis (Bendigo) at SRCC, July 2002

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From the RSM

And so ends 2002. It has been a tough year with a lot of changes that have once again stretched the battalion in training, resources, manpower, however, as always, this strong and proud battalion has survived.

It was a credit to the battalion, and every member in it, to see that once again, when the call to arms was sent out for volunteers for operational service with 5/7 RAR, that the response was overwhelming. At times we tend to forget why we serve with the Reserves but it is great to see that in this unit when we are called upon to do the job we train for that so many members are prepared to put their money where their mouth is. I am sure I speak for all members of the battalion, in wishing all members deployed with 5/7 RAR a safe and rewarding trip and I look forward to welcoming them back to the battalion next year.

The battalion has been on the move again this year with the opening of the new Passchendaele Barracks in Bendigo. This depot is the new home of HQ Support Company and 5 Platoon B Company. 15 Transport Squadron and the Army, Navy and Air Cadets also use the depot. HQ C Company is also on the move to Shepparton from Swan Hill. A move is also on in Ballarat next year with the construction of the new Ranger Barracks. The barracks will house BHQ, HQ B Coy, HQ Admin Coy and the Main Q. Once A COY move into the revamped 2/10 FD REGT Depot in Geelong, hopefully, there should be an end to the moves for the battalion.

The posting cycle is also upon us with a new RSM marching in 2003. WO1 Glover from Land Command Battle School will take over from me in January. There are also new CSMs for C and SPT COYs on the way and a QM to the main Q. Several other members will be coming and going, so there will be some new blood in the battalion.

Well, it has been a good six months for me in the chair. I would like to thank the CO and all members of the battalion for the support during my time as RSM. After over 21 years with the Regular Army it has been a great way to finish my career as RSM of a battalion with such a long and prestigious lineage. After Christmas I am looking forward to running my own company in the Ballarat area and taking a position as a Reserve CSM in the battalion.

I look forward to seeing you all around the traps in the future.

DUTY FIRST

WO2 John Spencer



CO and WO1 Croft at Buninyong RSL, ANZAC Day 2002

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OPS CELL – The engine room of the Battalion

To try and describe in this short article what the battalion has achieved this year is in effect not doing justice to the members and families of this battalion. It would have been much easier to convey the essences of our training if it had not been for the high tempo of operations we have maintained in a fluid environment with a reduced full time manning to assist the reservist. Throw into the cooking pot a complete restructure of the Battalion outlined in the Operational Order released late last year and a significant influx of new staff and I considered we would face interesting times as we challenged existing concepts on the value, role and worth of The Army Reserve.

Despite many opinions to the contrary, the Operations Cell is the driver of all battalion activities and when it is not operating at full capacity problems arise in abundance. The extent of this dilemma was probably most evident when the staff played tag for the first half of the year. SGT Colin Taylor (I've got more medals than a World War Two Vet and the money to show for it) deployed to East Timor as part of the Australian Training Team over the period Jan – Jun 02 and was replaced by SGT Roger Derrick from Bendigo. No sooner had both SGT Derrick and I settled into our new roles, I departed for a seven week holiday at sunny Puckapunyal to complete my COAC course. By the time I got back at Easter SGT Derrick had decided to out do me and was in Singleton completing his Range Qualifications. During my short sabbatical Major Leckie ably managed both the XO & OPSO roles. Both SGT Derrick & I were back together for only a short period in May before he was selected as a Platoon Sergeant for the Reserve Company that was joined the 5th/7th Battalion as Alpha Company for the Battalion's November 2002 rotation to East Timor. Throughout the first six months the OPS CELL only on very rare occasion managed to have it full staff complement is the same location.

Despite this I was reasonably pleased with the way battalion operations proceeded. We successfully implemented the battalion restructure which according to Major General Wilson on a visit to the battalion "would do away with the Post Code Soldier". Members of the battalion are now grouped according to their qualifications obtained rather than their geographical location. This has allowed the battalion to develop a focused training program for the trained element, those completing their Initial Employment Training and lastly but not least those that have recently joined the battalion & army. Consequently we have been able to achieve an economy of effort by allowing solider of like skills to be concentrated and prepared for future tasking.

Resource allocation in this restrictive environment has also been improved by providing sub-units with clear tasking whilst providing a training & career path for all members in all depots that allow them the opportunity to put into practice what they have been taught. Despite this it was noted that the one difficulty we would face would be the administration of our members once the restructure took effect by having up to five sub-units represented at each battalion depot. This is one area that we need to continually persevere with and ensure our members receive the best administration that is possible. To all staff, whether ARA or Reservist, get out there and get to know your members both at the different depots and especially within your training sub-unit. You will find it a rewarding experience, as there is nowhere else in the Defence Force you can find the diversity of people that you do in the reserve. If we put the effort into networking with our members as we do outside you would find you could get almost anything done and create a better environment for our members and their employers by harnessing their goodwill.

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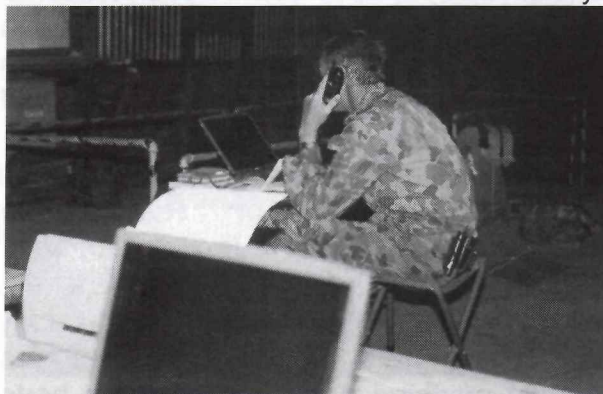
Specifically what have we achieved? Well the list is too long to record everything and as most members were involved in the programmed battalion training I will not mention it individually. However, in addition to this we have:

- Provided support to RMC,
- Provided support to three RTC VIC RIOB Course,
- Provide manpower & support to the 5/7 RAR A Coy selection board,
- Provided a Platoon of trained soldiers to A Coy 5/7 RAR,
- Conduct a DFSW specialist course,
- Provided support to external unit courses and activities,
- Qualified external unit members in Infantry IET competencies,
- Conduct extensive recruiting programs, which have resulted in the battalion having the best recruiting figures in the BDE once again,
- Conducted the Bde Officer/SNCO training,
- Provided the Regular Army with a steady stream of personnel for various corps including Infantry, Transport & Medical, and
- Attend numerous meetings, conferences, courses, etc mainly at short notice.

With battalion strength of just on 300 to achieve this and our normal training program, I feel this is an enormous feat with many of these activities undertaken by reservists. This shows the flexibility we have within the battalion and just shows the support that we can expect to receive from all members.

As this year closes it is an opportunity for us to reflect on what we have achieved, what we could have done better and how we will ensure the success of future activities. Mistakes have occurred and will always do so as long as their interaction between members of the human species. What I consider unacceptable is not learning from these mistakes, and introducing procedures that minimise them being repeated. An organisation such as The Army that relies heavily on human interaction means our decision directly impacts those above, next to and below us. It is this that must be uppermost in our minds when conducting training to ensure that it resembles as close as possible the conditions that our soldiers will encounter on operational duties. Professionalism must be the cornerstone of everything we do

To all thank you very much from the Operations Cell including our newest recruit, CPL Peter Keleher for all you have done to assist us. Please keep up the good work and ensure you have a safe and prosperous Christmas & New Year. I look forward to seeing you in 2003 where we can add to this battalion's illustrious history.



Nothing's changed: OPSO Hamel 01 with computers and mobile 'phone

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ADJUTANT'S REPORT

2002 HAS BEEN A TUMULTUOUS YEAR. Many factors have provided administrative challenges for BHQ and its Orderly Room.

BHQ and its Orderly Room have witnessed a considerable turnover of staff throughout 2002. MAJ Neil Leckie (OC Admin until 2001) moved to the position of XO. CAPT David Falloon (ADJT in 2001) moved to the position of OPSO and SGT Peter Croagh moved from Orderly Room SGT to Chief Clerk. SGT Roger Derrick started the year as OPS SGT and on return of SGT Colin Taylor from service with the East Timor Defence Force Training Team, began service with the RVR Company with 5/7 RAR. CPL Phil "Des" MacMillan and PTE Sean Smithies were posted into the positions of Orderly Room Corporal and Movements Clerk respectively. In July CPL MacMillan took on responsibilities as Chief Clerk. That same month, WO1 Peter Croft's long agonized over deployment finally came to fruition. He deployed as a Temporary CAPT for six months to East Timor as a United Nations Military Observer (UNMO). The mantle of RSM then was picked up by WO2 John Spencer. In July, 8/7 RVR was lucky enough to secure the services of Mr David Willoughby in the newly created position of Employer Support Payment (ESP) Clerk. David's presence and experience have been of tremendous assistance in area of accounts payment. The Dispatch Clerk position was filled by PTE Kerri Walters for the first half of 2002 and on completion of her Full Time Service (FTS) contract she moved to SCMA and responsibility was passed to PTE Rebecca Walsh. Assisting in the successful transition of staff were those who remained from 2001: CPL Dale Andrews (Pay Clerk) and Mrs Deanne Saunderson (Receptionist).

The introduction of a Competency Based structure for the companies brought with it initial confusion, especially with regard to responsibility for administrative reports/ returns. Throughout the year much of the confusion has been alleviated; but the next posting cycle brings additional challenges in this area, as newly posted staff initially grapple with their Victoria wide responsibilities.

The deployment of 8/7 RVR soldiers to East Timor with 5/7 RAR, showcased the professionalism and experience of the 8/7 RVR Orderly Room. Little notice was provided for the establishment of the Company, and before deploying a stringent selection process was imposed. This process necessitated rapid checking of personnel details, pay details, competency logs, welfare arrangements and medical suitability. Under the supervision of SGT Croagh, and CPL MacMillan, both whom had considerable experience of pre-deployment administration, the soldiers of 8/7 RVR deployed to Darwin in extremely good administrative condition. The ability to increase tempo for pre-deployment administration against a backdrop of Army wide personnel administrative change in the form of PMKEYS was a highlight of 2002. PMKEYS was rolled out across Army in July 2002. Despite considerable expectation of failure and down time the introduction and migration of data was quite successful. Since introduction, the level of knowledge in the use of PMKEYS has developed within the Orderly Room. The challenge remains to raise knowledge across the battalion, and indeed to provide PMKEYS access to the 'Northern' depots.

8/7 RVR has made real progress in consolidating throughout 2002 and must continue to strive for greater accuracy of information and completeness of communication. With 2003 promising to be an equally tumultuous year (the move to new depot and considerable staff turnover) 8/7 RVR BHQ and Orderly Room must continue to maintain its solid work ethic.

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A YEAR IN THE CHAIR

After over 4 years in the position of OC Admin and with Maj Cole posted to the 'black hole' of Pucka, I found myself in the XO's chair at the start of this year. Most people think of the XO (Executive Officer) as being the person who runs a ship or submarine while the CO (or Captain) sits in The Wardroom sipping coffee. Unfortunately, the position of XO in an Army Reserve Infantry Battalion is quite different.

While the main task of the XO is to understudy the CO and act on the CO's behalf when he is unavailable, the other tasks take precedence. This year I have found myself as Chairman of the Battalion O H & S Committee, Reporting Officer for the Padres, Member then President of the Regimental Audit Board, Senior Equity Officer, Reviewing Officer for PARs, Battalion PR Officer (with the Adjutant), Museum Manager, Deputy President, then with WO1 Croft's posting to East Timor, President of the Regimental Mess Committee and finally, Editor of this magazine. Then there are "other tasks as directed/requested", such as visits and ANZAC Day speeches.

On a Tuesday this involves arriving at the depot early afternoon (whenever possible) to read the mail and email, attending the CO's Key Personnel Brief at 1800 hours followed by the Main Battalion Conference at 1830 hours, and then following through all those matters that need attending to during a Parade Night. In addition to Parade Day duties, I also found myself the Camp Comedian, sorry Camp Commandant, for the Southern Region Courses Camp (SRCC), LO for the formation of the Bendigo Mess and LO for the Opening Ceremony for the Bendigo MUD that occurred on the last weekend of the SRCC.

For those who attended the SRCC and saw me pawing through packet upon packet of photos, the battalion now has eleven photo albums covering the last twenty years, mostly in chronological order and mostly named. These albums will travel with me when I visit each depot so that names can be put to those photos that are unnamed.

Where did the year go? Officially, I retired from full-time teaching in September 2001 and was looking forward to a relatively quiet year, spending my spare time with the Reserve and doing a little bit of part-time teaching. However, all that changed when Captain Falloon went on course for 7 weeks in the February/April period. With a hand-over at each end, this effectively amounted to 9 weeks full-time with the Army. Then in May/June one of the teachers at SMB went on three weeks Sick Leave and I found myself back teaching full-time for three weeks. Now, in the Fourth Term I am back doing three or four days per week teaching until Ex Hamel. Representing the CO, I have visited Swan Hill/Mildura twice, Warrnambool twice and Bendigo three times since the depot opened. During the year I also visited Laverton and Geelong. On social occasions, I have also visited the Swan Hill and Shepparton depots. As the old Aussie song says, "I've been everywhere, man."

All in all it has been an extremely busy year and a very satisfying one, although in the battalion I did not achieve all I set out to. However, there is always next year! Well at least until 22nd September!

Major Neil Leckie

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A COY

A COY commenced the year under the leadership of the experienced Major Kyle Tyrrell with CAPT Rob Gregory as 2IC. WO2 Peter Young was the CSM and the ever-reliable SSGT Graeme Westbury was the CQMS. The Clerks were lead by CPL Andrew Cook and CPL Tracey Ferguson. Geelong's 1 PL was commanded by 2LT Andreas Fouras, with staff of CPLs Peter Baird and John White. Depot Commander at the ever-increasing Laverton depot was CPL Brett Corney. 2 PL was commanded by LT Joe Lavery and ably supported by SGT Chris Rantall.

The year has been a defining one for A COY. In the one year, A COY has been reconfigured in accordance with the battalion policy, to be responsible for the continuation training of all battalion's fully qualified soldiers, but, more importantly, the company was put to the test by the requirement to provide its members to raise a Reserve Rifle Company to deploy to East Timor with 5/7 RAR.

After an extensive selection process, 21 of the 27 members selected from 8/7 RVR were from A COY. The 8/7 RVR members of the re-badged A COY 5/7 RAR now in East Timor are:

WO2 Jim Boatwright (CSM)

SGTs SJ Cox, R Derrick

CPLs NG Arundell, AS Mazzon, SJ McKinley

LCPLs SM Ellis, RV Petrov, MH Russell

PTEs S Ansell, CT Bryne, AJ Clark, NJ Cooper, LC Dear, JF Farquharson, S Fitton, CP Hayden, AE Johnson, NJ Logan, PB MacCumber, MJ Moloney, GA Parker, AC Russell, CG Stockdale, EHK Sweet, DJT Ulrich.

It is worthwhile recording the contribution of those members of the battalion. Certainly the COY is exceedingly proud of their commitment and look forward to gaining much from their increased skills upon their return.

COY TRAINING

The company's training year, after Exercise Hamel 01, kicked off with Range Shoots in January. In February, the COY exercised in Section Level Conventional Operations followed by Beat the Retreat at Queenscliff in March.

In April, the COY exercised in Platoon Level Operations, including a Repelling Exercise at Shell Stadium for the Geelong v St Kilda AFL game as a PR event. The COY also undertook ceremonial duties for ANZAC Day in a number of locations including Ocean Grove, Norlane, Meredith and Wye River. In May, the COY undertook Offr / SNCO Training focusing on Platoon Operations.

June was again a live fire activity and in July the COY was involved in selection for deployment with 5/7 RAR.

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By midyear a reshuffle of resources begun to bite for the battalion as a result of which A COY had ammunition withdrawn, but not to be deterred, plenty of worthwhile training was still undertaken, mostly focussing on individual skills that are frequently overlooked or sometimes need special refresher training. For the balance of the year through August, September and October the COY undertook training in the areas of navigation, field craft, Q & D exercises, Laws of Armed Conflict and scenario based training designed to exercise sections in application of LOAC with particular emphasis on security operations.

Presently the COY is preparing for this year's Exercise Hamel 02, which will involve some lead up on individual skills including NBCD training, time allocated for sections to work up their drills and fieldcraft prior to deploying into a COY exercise based on an area defence scenario. All this is a lead up to the Brigade's deployment of a Force Protection COY Group to Exercise CROC 03 in Shoalwater Bay.

In August, Major Tyrrell was farewelled as the OC as he returned to an ARA Captain's Posting and I was fortunate enough to be able to stick my hand up for the OC's job. You've got to be happy when one of your first duties is to "supervise" training such as the Adventurous Training Snow Survival Trip at Falls Creek. Five days of freezing my proverbials off was certainly worth it to see Pte Shaw's face plant at the bottom of the hill (with pack)! I don't know what he's complaining about, I reckon his nose was straighter after the fall than before. Meanwhile in September, Laverton's CPL Corney was promoted SGT and posted to 1 RAR and CPL Steven Oakley from Ballarat took over the reins of Depot Commander.

During the reshuffle following the departure of those members bound for 5/7 RAR, a number of posting changes were made. SGT Brandich headed to B Coy and SGT Hardcastle joined the team at Geelong.

LTs Black and Coffey moved on to greener pastures (a little closer to their homes) and at the end of the year COY dinner in October, the 2IC, CAPT Rob Gregory was also farewelled. In the 2IC's case he coped a bit of stick from CSM WO2 Pete Young with the CSM thinking he could make it up to him at the OFFR/SNCO Dining in Night. Unfortunately, the CSM wasn't aware it was the 2IC's Last Parade. Oops! Anyway, good luck to all departing members and thankyou for your contributions.

I'm sure the COY is looking forward to getting stuck into some conventional training (with ammunition) from here on in and I'm confident that this COY will form the backbone of the Brigade COY Group deploying in September next year.

Maj Doug Laidlaw

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LAVERTON

This year the Laverton depot has seen a lot of members come and go. With Pte's Baylis, Hartwich, Pham and McLennan getting on the DFSW Course. All of our TFE's getting qualified and moving onto B Coy. All of our DTU's off to sunny Kapooka at the end of year (don't forget your golf clubs fellas).

We said goodbye to now SGT Corney who is enjoying the good life at 1 RAR. Five members from Laverton managed to get onto the Timor Trip with 5/7RAR. Unfortunately, three of them were NCOs, leaving us at one stage with just LT Lavery and CPL Oakley. The arrival of LCPL Clulow to assist with the training, has made life a lot easier but as yet we still don't have a clerk.



Laverton Members

A COY

Lt Lavery
Cpl Oakley
Lcpl Clulow
Pte Baylis
Pte DeLima
Pte Hartwich
Pte Pham

B COY

Pte Campbell
Pte Goonetilleke
Pte Naismith
Pte Pedrana
Pte Pollard
Pte Stachlewski
Pte Webb

C COY

Pte Tarrant
Rec Borg
Rec Combes
Rec Duggan
Rec Dvoracek
Rec Gerhardt
Rec Meilak
Rec O'Connor

ADMIN

Pte Currie
Pte Holmes-Burrows

Timor COY- Sgt Cox, CPL Arundell, LCPLs Russell, PTEs Byrne, Russell
Inactive/Discharges- PTEs Joseph, Keay, McLennan, Buttling, Finch, White.

A few noteworthy events have transpired over the past year. REC Combes' was so keen to get to parade one Tuesday that he shelled out \$60 for a cab ride from Bacchus Marsh to the luxurious suburb of Laverton. Or PTE "Stolly" Stashlewski who was so keen he turned up for a parade night that did not actually exist in the first place. This would have gone unnoticed had he not called up several other diggers asking them why the doors were

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locked and all the lights were out. He was subsequently charged in a Kangaroo Court at the company dinner. Another charge from Laverton was Pte "Manky" Baylis, who earned that dubious nickname from going on the adventure training ski trip and having feet that would stun a Mongolian Ox. In all fairness, though, those feet did kill *all* the rats in the hut the group stayed in one night (and the hut is to remain free of all non-bacterial life for the next 100 years).

Monthly functions have started to take off at Laverton, albeit with small and painful attendances. For the most part they have been memorable nights, except maybe for Pte Campbell, who may or may not remember anything from the night he fell asleep outside Crown Casino. He was picked up at 2 AM and put on a bus home.

As we close the chapter for another year here at Laverton we look forward to the New Year, and hopefully all the newly qualified members that the depot will have come the start off next year.

ADVENTURE TRAINING: EX HOWLING BLIZZARD

This activity was run to reward those members of Alpha Coy who were consistent paraders throughout the year. It was a Nordic skiing activity conducted on the Bogong High Plains near Falls Creek in Victoria, over the period 01-06 Aug 02.

The group, consisting of MAJ Doug Laidlaw, LT Joe Lavery, WO2 Peter Young, CPL Peter Baird, PTEs Michael Baylis, Liam Reale, Paul Shaw and Liz Vorbach, arrived at the Geelong Depot on the evening of 31 Aug 02. We did a few basic lessons, got to know our equipment and then distributed the food! Each person was to get two medium size salamis, but due to a stuff-up with the supermarket each person had enough salami to feed a small nation for a week. I still get a bit queasy when I see a salami!

On Sunday morning PTE Choundary drove the group and all their gear to the Tawonga Caravan Park, just outside Mount Beauty. Here we finalised our equipment and learnt how to erect the two man tents we would be calling home for the next week. We then enjoyed a hearty dinner and just a few beers at the pub.

The adventure began at the aptly named Windy Corner, which is located at the Falls Creek Ski Resort. The group was a mixed bag consisting of those that had never been to the snow, let alone been on skis, and those who could actually recognise their stocks from their bindings! The novices were left to their own devices to get from Windy Corner to the Nordic Bowl, which is where we participated in a couple of hours of very basic 'how to' lessons. Some showed more talent than others, but everyone had a great attitude and was keen to get underway.

We departed the Nordic Bowl and headed off in strong winds towards our first night's camp at Wallace Hut (named after the Wallace brothers who erected it 150 years ago). The snow was very slushy and patchy in places and the wind gusting, but everyone (well most anyway) made it to the hut without falling over too many times. We pitched our tents as best we could out of the wind, next to Wallace Hut. The effort by Doug Laidlaw and Peter Baird in building a wall to keep the wind at bay had to be seen to be believed. King Arthur himself would have been proud of that wall! We then made our way inside to warm

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up and cook dinner. We shared the hut with a three-man group who were doing a round-trip of the High Plains on snowshoes!

The next day we decided to stay out of the wind and headed off on the lee side of the Plains to the vicinity of Rover Lodge. We played around on the slopes perfecting our fall techniques, and Peter Baird and Mick Baylis showed-off their shovel-sliding prowess. We stopped for lunch and piled into the Rover Lodge emergency shelter to get out of the wind. One of the occupants of the Rover Lodge decided to see who was making all the noise, and as luck would have it was my Uncle Frank who I hadn't seen in years! This bloke is well into his seventy's and is still out there skiing around. He invited us in for some conversation and a hot brew, which we willingly accepted. After the luxury of the Rover Lodge it was hard to head back to Wallace Hut and our tents. By this stage everyone had improved their skiing immensely and was enjoying it more.

The following day we packed up camp and followed the pole line into Cope Hut. Whilst skiing the last few hundred metres to the hut and to everyone's enjoyment, I came a cropper at exactly the same place I did last time skiing into this bloody hut! I'll take a different route next time. This time we didn't set-up the tents preferring to make use of the biggest hut on the Plains. After quickly settling in we all headed out to find some firewood and to have a play on the snow. Paul, Liam and Mick came back boasting of their newly found abilities to get airborne over makeshift jumps. They were exceptional in getting into the air but their landing were, well, pathetic! We then got the potbelly stove going to dry out some clothes and to warm up. Liz and Liam kept us all amused with their abilities with the metho stove, and it was about this time that Liam introduced his feet, or rather their smell to the group. Thanks Liam. My eyes are watering just thinking about it! Later in the afternoon we were joined in the hut by two skiers. These blokes were excellent company and the hut became a lively place with a rowdy game of cards.

The fourth day on the snow saw us move to a new campsite. The scenery was impressive as we picked our way through melting snow and creek lines. We pitched our tents amongst the gnarly Snow Gums as the snow, turned light brown by a dust storm (I kid you not) was too slushy for snow caves. Once again the group was dazzled by the abilities of Doug Laidlaw and Peter Baird to construct a fortress around their tent that the Roman Legions on their best day could not breach. Not to be outdone, Joe Lavery proceeded to construct an entire lounge room, complete with TV, in the centre of the camp. Alas the TV reception wasn't good - too snowy! It was then time for some practice on how to descend a steep slope using kick turns and all the skills developed over the previous days; or if you were Liz by sliding down on your arse. Later we found a nearby slope where Liam found ways to risk his life. Whispers were heard amongst the group of 'no brain, no fear'. But at least it took the focus off his feet!

Our final day on the snow found us descending the slope we had practiced on the day before, except this time with full packs. All was going well until Paul, raising his arms in a victory salute having made it down without falling, fell over and broke his nose! But being a tough nut he soldiered on without so much as a whimper. We continued to wend our way down from the High Plains through intermittent whiteouts. The route took us down through a valley dominated by high features and was quite spectacular. To soon we had reached the trail running around the base of the Falls Creek Resort and headed back to our start point at Windy Corner. We stopped at the Nordic Shelter for a shower and a hot chocolate before packing our heavy packs into the HiAce for the trip home.

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The wind was incessant, the weather at times awful, the snow slushy and even patchy in places, but the group was excellent and the spirit in which the trip was approached was exceptional. It was a great trip that was enjoyable and rewarding and at the same time demanding. A similar trip will be planned for next winter - but only for those who regularly parade!

WO2 Peter Young



8/7 RVR Ski Company on patrol



It's not Pucka

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B COY The sting behind 8/7

Ballarat

The year 2002 started off with a new OC, MAJ J.J. Murphy, and the same B COY staff as last year, but we did break from tradition, as the last two CQ's B COY had were 4 foot nothing, ex-5/7, and rode on big bikes. The new CQMS, SGT Terrie Marsland, was a welcome addition to CHQ. At this stage of the year, SGT Anthony "Skip" Skiparis was overseas in East Timor trying his hardest to earn his MM (money and medals). A welcome addition to B COY at this time was CPL Steven Oakley. He didn't stick around for long before absconding to A COY, but his hard work and dedication were well appreciated. Another reinforcement to the Company was CPL Nicole Cunningham, efficiently performing the much-needed role as Company Clerk. If there is ever a guinea pig needed for a test to find out if radiation is caused by phones, CPL Cunningham would be the ideal choice.

The first weekend was a bit of a fizzer, as no B COY diggers turned up for the weekend, only the Headquarters' staff from the three Depots. Someone was heard to say, "If you recruit students, they all have *School Holidays*".

The first major event of the year was the 2002 Ballarat Federation Tattoo, where the three depots from B COY supplied most of the troops, with a few mercenaries from A and ADMIN Companies. This was a fine opportunity to show the public the two major aspects of the Infantry Soldier – field and ceremonial. One highlight, after being granted local leave, was that one of the soldiers from Bendigo Depot, who will remain anonymous, returned from Local Leave wearing a trophy around his head from a conquest the night before. Hopefully, the Australia Day March through Ballarat will be the last time this battalion is asked to attend. The reason for this negativity is that the march consisted of: - three local politicians, a pipes and drum band, a detachment from 8/7 RVR, three or four local ethnic groups, and two transvestites. The marching pace was so slow that even PTE Michael Currie (Catering Platoon) could keep in step.

The next couple of months is where B COY got stuck into its primary role for the year, and that is to conduct numerous ranges for the RIO-P personnel of B COY to be qualified for transfer to A COY. There's not much to say about these ranges, as you all know, but one weekend stands out, because it happened just after a certain wildlife cull, where between 100m mound and the butts, there were numerous dead kangaroo carcasses, and when the diggers took up the lying prone position, it looked (and smelt) like a scene out of *Gallipoli*, or *All's Quiet on the Western Front*.

Finally, in July, the Southern Regions Courses Camp (SRCC) occurred, and the diggers got a chance to go bush. SGT Shane Armstrong thought he was in for a bit of a bludge during the field phase of the course, but as Murphy's Law would have it, the Platoon Commander had to attend another course, leaving SGT Armstrong to take over his position. Numerous soldiers were enquiring as to why they would need gardening gloves for the course. Six hours into the field phase, they found out the reason why! One significant point about the bush phase of the course was, most unusually for Pucka in July, it only rained one night. The only other significant event that occurred was when a certain digger lost a certain piece of equipment (NAD). After seemingly days of searching, the item was finally found on the way back to the trucks on the last leg of the search. Thanks

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to SGT Bill Armstrong for his keen eyesight and diligence. At the end of the SRCC, the Company swapped SGT Marsland with SGT Luke Nugent, who became the new CQMS of B COY, is not 4 foot nothing, not ex-5/7, and doesn't ride a big bike!

After the SRCC, we once again fell into the routine of ranges, with the only difference being, because of new TMP's, the Chaplain, CHAP Glen Buijs, and the RAP Medic, LCPL Ray Borowiak conducted concurrent training in between range practices. Special mention must be made here of the hard work put in by CAPT Cliff Gowers, SGT Skiparis, SGT S. Armstrong, and SGT Mark Prada in the running of the ranges.

It was at this stage of the year, that CPL John Stapleton went on his OFFR/NCO PNR course, and the only difficulty he had was not being able to go scuba diving for crays during working hours, like he does down at Warrnambool.

As we go to print, we are preparing for EX Hamel 02 and the end of the year functions. Here is a good opportunity for the Company to say farewell to CSM, WO2 Tony Harris, who's finally going to get some decent fishing done, and re-discover sunlight. Also amongst the farewells are SGT Skiparis, off to Darwin, and SGT Nugent, off to 2 CDO. From the OC and all members of B Coy, we would like to thank all members of the Battalion who have helped make this year very successful.

We wish everybody in the battalion safe travel and Merry Christmas!

Major John Murphy



B COY at the Federation Tattoo, Ballarat Australia Day Weekend



This group includes WO2 Harris, SGT Rantall and SGT Derrick

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BENDIGO - LOST MAZZ FOUND MUD

The end of another year approaches: a year that has seen many changes for Bendigo based personnel. We gained a MUD but lost a Mazz, and, for that matter PTEs Hayden, Farquharson, and Macumber, all of whom have been re-badged to 5/7 RAR and are currently on holiday in East Timor. While on that subject, our heartiest congratulations go to PTE Chris Hayden. He got married on the Saturday and put his name down for Timor on the following Tuesday night. How green is that?

The CO has lost his title as the 'Resident Brass', and has been replaced by OC B/SPT Coy, Maj John Murphy, who, to his credit still keeps a photo of the CO in his office. We don't have the heart to tell him that it really belongs on the picture rail in the entrance foyer. What's the use-he wouldn't part with it anyway!

Cpl Rurik Dawborn has learned much and has strained a muscle (or should have) providing hard, realistic and relevant hockey training for the diggers as part of Parade Night PT. I don't think CPL Mazzons 'Rectangle Of Death' wrestling sessions are that much missed. They would perhaps have been more fondly remembered if 'Mazz' had lost more often.

To set the record straight, he was in fact defeated **once** - by PTE Andrew McIlroy - and PTEs Bridle, Clark, Frohn, Alford (who did it easy with only one arm - the other one being broken at the time), Barbarich, Belcher (who, it is alleged, burnt CPL Mazzon with the cigarette he is always smoking), Duncan, Hamilton, Honeychurch, McLaren (who lashed viciously at CPL Mazzon because of an eye injury he sustained on the basketball court when CPL Mazzon wasn't even there), Parr, Bad Boy Potter (without whom the DFDA would never have been tested), Trenti, Westley, Boyle and lastly PYE Clayton (who wasn't even enlisted then but who is included because he has heard of CPL Mazzon).

The work rate has been sailing along at a cracking pace as usual. We are fed C COY's cast offs and have proceeded to turn them into soldiers capable of withstanding the rigours of the A COY (PL). Another section of Bendigo's finest will move to A Coy after Ex Hamel further bolstering their ranks with some seasoned party goers. By mid next year Bendigo will have fielded a platoon worth of soldiers to A Coy, two CPLs, two soldiers Sub 1 qualified for CPL and two soldiers SIO-S qualified.

One thing we are proud of in Bendigo is that we play hard but we can sure as hell work hard too. This is evidenced by LT Dan (Black) and 2LT Fouras, who have both built shrines in the corner of their bedrooms, to honour the memory of their service in Bendigo.

Have no doubt - if they are any good - they were probably trained here and remember that in the eyes of God we are all equal and as far as we in Bendigo are concerned - that goes for on the sporting field as well - so look out!

Cheers from the premier breeding grounds at Bendigo.

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WARRNAMBOOL

The crew here at Warrnambool started 2002 off by welcoming a new ARA member, SGT Shane Armstrong from 6 RAR, to its ranks, to the sun, surf, and the wet and wild cold winds of Warrnambool. He was very surprised to find how low the numbers were that was attending at the depot. We started of the year with eight and now we have twenty on the books and there are still more either attending ARTC now or still in the pipeline at the testing stage.

RECRUITING:

With the focus on recruiting, activities throughout the year consisted of an eye opener to the afternoon that was spent at the Port Fairy Folk Festival. What a sight, hippies, hairy armpits and not a female in sight that wore a bra, and to top it all off if you had a bar of soap you would successfully eliminate the population of Port Fairy by ninety five percent. Postal drops and visits to the secondary schools around the district in conjunction with the CLT team was a big success to the gaining of a few prospects that now parade at the depot whether they be DTU's or at the TFE stage. I must thank the CLT who have put in a huge effort and time to helping our course, especially our information nights and the Warrnambool Show. Our thanks go to CPL Ange Samitimo(RAAF) and Petty Officer Brendon Mclaughlin (Navy).

The J.W.H. Atkinson MC Club is flourishing with the odd gathering of the local Constabulary. The spirit of ANZAC is still strong in the Warrnambool community with approximately one hundred attending the ANZAC Day function, there was Two Up and Crown and Anchor, which was very successful. It was good to see our Navy counterparts from HMAS Warrnambool also taking part and supporting the mess. At the end of the day three kegs and plenty of bar snacks (thanks to the hard work by CPL Steve Ivey) topped off a great day had by all.

A couple of things have changed this year physically around the depot: a new outside bar with a wood heater thanks to the craftsmanship of CPL John Stapleton and SGT Shane Armstrong. There is also a new gaming area adjacent to the mess, but we are still waiting on the snooker table. In the pipeline is bench seating for the outside bar, and we looking at an up grade to the male S.A.L's.

NEW ARRIVALS:

We would like to welcome CPL Charman from Mildura, Corbs who defected from 5/6 RVR, Lenchy, Nick Coates, Daniel Stoman, and Josh Petering. Still to join the ranks are Lyndon Edney, Warrick Petering, and Scott Davis.

A special thank you goes out to Lyndon King who tirelessly and effortlessly ensures that the depot is cleaned and maintained to a high standard.

COMMENTS:

Trying to spice up a training activity – No use putting sugar on shit.
Placing a wet oily rag around the fuel cap will most definitely get us to wherever it is that we are going, as the HiAce will run on the smell of an oily rag.

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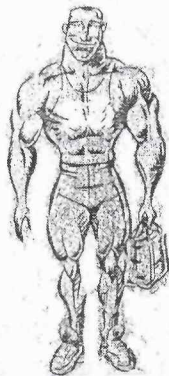
C COY



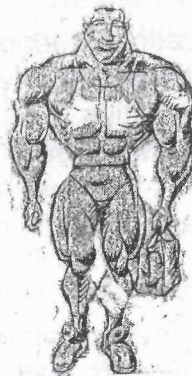
1 MONTH IN B COY



3 MONTHS IN B COY



5 MONTHS IN B COY



6 MONTHS IN B COY



1 WEEK IN A COY



HOW A KIWI SEES HIMSELF



HOW AN AUSSIE SEES A KIWI

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C COY 2002 in perspective

Events from last year were to have a profound effect on C COY in 2002. With the consolidation of trained soldiers from across the battalion into A COY, C COY was left to administer and train the Direct to Unit Enlistee's (DTUs) and the Training Force Establishment (TFEs) soldiers, a job that is vital to the process of consolidation but one that was restrictive in the activities that could be undertaken. The challenge therefore from the outset was:

- a: How to make training interesting and motivating for the trainees while still covering the requirements of the competencies for CIT (Common Induction Training) & RIO-B (Rifleman Infantry Operations - Basic).
- b: Ensure that the soldiers didn't like it too much so that they wouldn't want to progress to B COY after completing RIO-B.

The end result was a mix of fun, challenges and repetition.

Training was conducted in a number of locations during the year including Shepparton and Ballarat but essentially C COY found a home in Barracks Block 4, Tobruk Barracks, Puckapunyal for our weekend training activities. This provided all the facilities of a home away from home, especially when the CQMS brought the TV and SGT Clayden set up the Brew Point. In fact there were a few nights when we were stirred by those staying out in the cold at the MTR but we could tell that it was stirring laced heavily with a lot of envy. Such is life!

During the weekend training, which was the only time we get to get together as a group, we had the opportunity to conduct APC Familiarisation, Introduction to the Leopard Main Battle Tank, complete the pool obstacle course (on numerous occasions), introductory shoot on the WETTS and do a few short pack marches. The one thing that was a constant for the soldiers was the PT. It was only after running the 2.4km track around the barracks a few times and having most of the soldiers fail (including the OC) that a flatter track was found that did not require running up a pretty damn big hill twice to complete the course. With the removal of the hill the pass rate went up as steep as the hill was!!

As the role of the Company was to pass soldiers through to B COY as quickly as possible we had a constant change in the members attending the activities. The only constant was the staff who stuck diligently to the task at hand. While not being the most exciting of jobs it was one that was vital to the ongoing vitality of the battalion. The way in which the training was conducted was a credit to the commitment of the staff within the company.

It is important to recognise and thank those that are leaving or have left during the year.

- MAJ Saultry – Posted to Combat Training Centre on Short Service Commission at the start of next year
- WO2 Boatwright – found the pace too tough and bailed out and went to East Timor to get away from us!
- Sgt Cassidy – Posting to 6 RAR next year.
- Sgt Bill Armstrong – Posting to 6 RAR next year.
- Cpl Rockett – Discharged from ARA mid year to pursue a farming career.
- LCpl Logan - - Posted to A COY.

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To those that are remaining with C COY we wish you all the best in the new role next year with the RIO-B training and would like to wish CAPT Gabriel all the best in his new appointment as O.C.

MAJ Saultry

MILDURA

The year started off back in to full swing with everyone trying to get used to what company that they were in. And if the bedreaded bus trips to Pucka weren't long enough now, Sarg Cassidy was finally told that weekend trips would become boring and we would put on a bus and DRIVER to take us down to Pucka (thank God!).

Enough about that boring Army talk, Mildura held some ripper piss-ups at the depot this year. ANZAC Day proved to be a big day with the usual Cenotaph Party and then the mega piss-up back at the depot over 100 people turned up and, with 20 cent pots, who wouldn't rock up. It was a good day and night. (Oh the booza was closed early though!)

Then the Games Night was on, with Cass winning the Iron Man comp "drinking and eating horrid things, he is real good at".

The next was Sweety's birthday, everyone turning up as Drag Queens, there are some photo's attached, as you will see that these gals look good with PTE McGlashan being the best looking SHE BITCH on the night.

Then come on to the Courses Camp, enough on that Military stuff back to the piss-ups.

The next was the Farewells night at the Depot, with Sarg Cassidy and Tracy leaving for 6 RAR at the end of the year, and Maca McGlashan, Sweety, Dinger Ansell and Mick Moloney leaving for East Timor on the 11 Nov. We also farewell Rod Charman off to Hamilton to be a Copper. "Pity the poor Hamilton residents!" The Farewells night produced a few surprises with the diggers presenting Sarg Cassidy with 9 Litres of Bundy Rum, which go down well.

There was a lot more that happened throughout the year but the Sarg say's he will get trouble if I included those bits.

Members departed this year

PTE Jeremy Shields-ARA, (RAEME)
PTE Jayden Hopfner-ARA, (RAEME)
PTE Gosling-ARA -(5/7 RAR)
PTE Tim Hawson-(2/10 MDN REGT)
CPL Bruce Nichols- ARA, (RAEME 'Thank god')
PTE Carman Palma-ARA (Catering)
PTE Nathan Cooper (RQR) they will be happy with 8/7 RVR
CPL Rod Charman (posted Warrnambool)

The Timor blokes will be back (we hope!)

PTE Scotty Ansell
PTE Ernie Sweet
PTE Brad McGlahan
PTE Mick Moloney

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D COY (RECRUITING)

At the start of 2002 there were a few changes in the structure of Recruiting with the formation of D COY, which is basically the Battalion Recruiting Cell. This consists of the Unit Recruiting Officer WO2 Craig Cunningham who took over from WO2 "Tiny" Pellow, and his assistants CPL Graeme Paizis and CPL Josh Todd.

The Battalion maintained its very effective and practical method of recruiting by leaving the onus's on each depot to plan and design their own recruiting plans for their geographical locations. To achieve this most new members were sent away to attend a Unit Level Promoters Workshop. For financial year 2001/02, 8/7 RVR recruited 105 members eclipsing all other Brigade units. Most depots recruited well with Shepparton getting the highest of 22.

2002/03 is going to be a different story, since early this year a new system was put in place by Manpower where prospects phone the 131901 number and all paperwork and correspondence is no longer looked after at unit level. Straight away problems were observed and recruiting numbers have declined, but things are slowly picking up. However, our inquiry to enlistment ratio is much lower than before. Still depots have remained positive and the number of applicants has actually increased this year.

Recruiting activities have occurred throughout the year with an Information Session being held in each depot once a month, numerous attendances at shows, displays, schools, and public relation activities within the community.

A couple of the main activities have been the opening of the Bendigo Depot, which was an interesting event, especially trying to co-ord with 15 TPT SQN who originally had our stand right away from everything in the back corner of the compound out of sight on the MUD.

The Melbourne Show was another big one with quite a few 8/7 members participating. Also the Ballarat Show in which we got 37 prospects, however some of them were a bit dodgy as SGT Trevor Beales took names of some females that were wider than taller. And the umbilical twins PTEs Trevor Woods and Liam Reale getting confused with the age minimum as they have been known to target the 14-15 year old females.

A major drawcard at the shows has been SGT Rantalls Yowie Suit which has been on every amusement ride going, not to mention the Dodge Em Cars, Rock Climbing Walls and Ride- on Lawn Mowers. Shame we don't even have snipers in the unit.

Its been a very busy yet frustrating year for recruiting, seeing so many potential enlistees come in only to be knocked back at some stage of testing.

Next year will see WO2 "Tiny" Pellow back as the Unit Recruiting Officer as WO2 Cunningham moves on to B Company.

Remember if the unit doesn't recruit that means no more cushy postings to Victoria for Full Timers and the rest of us will **all** be out of a job.

WO2 Craig "Richie" Cunningham

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SUPPORT COMPANY

DFSW PL

The closing range weekend for the 2001/2002 training year saw a magnificent opportunity for those that found their way to the Anti-Armour Range. A wonderful allocation of ammunition greeted the firers. In particular a large pile of 84mm HE. Yes, I said HE. The challenge was to provide practices that provided good training value, that were imaginative, but commensurate with the skill levels and safety staff on hand. Those that were able to launch at least several "Flying Claymores" down range. The practices conducted demonstrated the accuracy the HE nature of ammunition for the 84mm Carl Gustav, particularly at ranges beyond 600m. Critical to success, is accurate judging of distance to the target and don't forget to dial in a fuse set just short of your target range. This is one of the few weapons systems we have in the battalion that can engage an enemy section beyond its own effective range.

The start of the 2002/2003 training year saw the conduct of the 1 / 02 Basic DFSW Course. The aim of this course was to qualify members to be employed in the DFSW PL. Within the restriction of ammunition availability we managed to get 12 qualified starters for February 2003. Some extras from 5/6 saw 18 trainees complete the course. 5/6 RVR also provided some much appreciated instructor support.

Valuable support that must be noted is that which came from the School of Armour. The facility of the School and instructor support was provided for the AFV Recognition component of the course. The support from the School of Armour augmented our own resources well.

A restriction of this course was the availability of ammunition, particularly for the 84mm Carl Gustav. Trainees will be required to complete their qualification this training year, when the ammunition necessary becomes available. Sub Calibre practices was possible, but no HEAT, HE or ILLUM ammunition was available for the course. The WTSS Facility provided good training that helped make up for the lack of explosive ammunition to develop weapon-handling skills.

Sustained Fire Machine Gun part of the course was a slightly different story. Sufficient ammunition was available and Puckapunyal provides excellent ranges both fixed and field firing for this weapons system. Excellent DTA exist as well, which were great for vehicle deployment drills.

The field firing range provided a rare opportunity to observe the effect of fire on AFVs. Provided as targets for tank crews, were a number of ex Canadian Defence Force Leopard turrets, placed on stands. As one would suspect the effect of 7.62mm link on armour is limited to the paintwork. However, damage to vision blocks and other bits and pieces, hanging off the vehicle, is possible. Any rounds that did penetrate a vision block or other opening seem to have bounced around somewhat inside the turret, creating potential for some nasty damage. Apart from forcing the crew to close down, engaging anything with the armour of a Leopard would not be an effective use of 1,000 rounds of 7.62mm 4B1T. I estimate it took about 1,000 rounds to manage a hit on a vision block from a range of 800m.

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This year will see the posting of qualified soldiers from the rifle companies to the DFSW Platoon. At this stage it seems that the platoon will be of about section strength in numbers. This will result in a platoon that will be able to man a gun line of two guns or a couple of Hunter-Killer teams armed with a total of four 84mm.

The platoon will be dispersed on Tuesday nights, however, a satisfying year of training awaits the members of this platoon. Weekend training and camps will see the platoon concentrated.

As soon as ammunition is available, the top priority will be to ensure that all that need to be, are qualified on the 84mm Carl Gustav. Live range practices will be backed up with extensive use of WTSS Facilities for both SFMG and Anti-Armour. Where possible, the platoon will be used to support the companies on exercise in the DFSW role.

SGT D.M Wait, DFSW PL.



DFSW Training, SRCC July 2002



Student of Merit, PTE Liam Reale, MAJ Leckie Commandant SRCC,
Most Improved, PTE Gavin Bridle

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ADMINISTRATION COMPANY

With the posting of the XO, Major Jeff Cole to Puckapunyal, and after over 4 year in the job of OC ADMIN COY, Major Leckie was transferred to the position of XO (Executive Officer (or 2IC)) in BHQ. Consequently, ADMIN COY started the year with Major Roger Gale at the helm, when he was able to attend, and WO2 Findlay as CSM in place of WO2 Spencer who was on Long Service Leave prior to discharge. Clerical duties were to be performed by the joint ADMIN/SPT COYs Clerk CPL Rosie "Two Dads" Campbell-Foulkes.

Early in the year WO2 Findlay took discharge and it wasn't long before Major Gale also found life was too busy to continue with the reserve and he was farewelled in June along with Warrant Officers John "It works for me" Spencer and Geoff "Tiny" Pellow. While Tiny found work in civvie street, WO2 Spencer opted to remain with the Army and took Full-time Service to fill in as RSM in the absence of WO1 Peter Croft who was posted to East Timor. For most of the first half of the year, the Caterer, WO2 Mark Broemmer found himself with two hats: Caterer and Acting CSM ADMIN COY. This situation was relieved when WO2 Pellow took over the dual positions of CSM SPT and CSM ADMIN.

Due to the lack of a proper HQ, ADMIN COY has suffered somewhat during the year but has still has performed well in providing administrative support to the battalion.

Does anyone know of any spare Captains or Majors in Country Victoria????

Catering Platoon

The year 2002 has seen a myriad of changes throughout the battalion and indeed ADMIN COY and to a lesser extent The Catering Platoon.

The platoon has reached its lowest number of members for over a decade, mainly through natural attrition, and being the resilient component of the battalion that it is, the platoon will regenerate in the future and again rise to answer the challenge.

Ins and Outs

Since The Ranger 2001, there has only been a small number of movements/retirements, the most notable being the medical retirement of PTE Bob Kenyon from Ballarat and PTE Coromel Palma from Mildura who made the jump at light speed and became an ARA Member in June.

However, there are quite a few willing helpers available during Ex Hamel 2001 and the troops were fed. The old age remains: No-one is irreplaceable. When someone goes, another takes his/her place.

The platoon has just been allocated a new recruit and PTEs Greg Fox and Matt Holmes-Burrows can't wait to complete their Cook's IET Course and start cooking for the battalion.

If there are any other members of the battalion who would like to make the transition to AACC the platoon would be only too happy to accommodate you. You can learn a trade, you never know where it may lead you. Army Catering Personnel are sought by civilian employers everywhere.

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Training Weekends

The Caterer, CPL Steve Ivey and PTE Michael Currie ventured into the unknown when they attended an Officer/SNCO Training weekend at the new Bendigo Depot in September. They experienced life in a submarine sized kitchen there, and want to know if they will receive "submarine allowance" for having to work in such confined spaces. However, it couldn't have been too bad as they returned the following week!

The platoon is looking forward to the completion of the Ballarat MUD (with a 25% bigger kitchen space) next year so that they can get some semblance of order into their work and look forward to serving the battalion in the future.

Australian Army Catering Corps: We sustain.

QM Platoon

The year 2002 for the Q started with both feet running (and has continued with the Adjutant's two and a half "lets see Ballarat" running sessions). A full compliment of Q personnel arrived this year except the QM. Some rash decisions were made, WO2 Ross Pringle became QM, SSGT Martin Griggs became RQMS. The TECH SGT was SGT Luke (Mr Approachable, only if you didn't discuss OH&S issues and SDSS) Nugent. CPL Damian Wilson had the Clothing Storeman and last but not least there was PTE Peter Brewer.

At first glance a decision was made to stocktake and spotcheck the unit as quick as possible. All went well up until the new Financial Year. Apart from a change in TECH SGT's SGT Terrie Marsland swapped with SGT Nugent, the Q was slowly heading towards SDSS, the new Q computer system. We all have completed the training for the new system, what a headache "still going grey". In September the MQ had a new addition. CPL Toni Boggs arrived from sunny QLD. Because of her height she became an instant OH&S issue. For some reason or other I seem to get more visits from the CQMS, so there does seem to be an advantage having a female storeperson in the MQ.

At the end of the year SGT Nugent heads off to Commando's (more batteries for the unit now) and I look forward to the arrival of the new QM next year !!!!!.

The main issues for the MQ have been:

Unit Stocktakes/spotchecks,
MUD's,
visits to 4 Bde,
Hamel 2002 preparation,
SDSS, still have more courses to do.

Main concerns, Unit PT, stores lists on time, next years dining-in night and not having a key to get in my house when I tried to stagger home (thanks RSM).

I can't wait to see SGT Nugent get a tattoo of a rabbit on his head, cause from a distance it would look like a HARE.

All the best to the Q and 8/7 RVR members, see you all 2003.

QM

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The year began for the Main Q at the speed of a thousand startled gazelles and has not changed much to date. The crystal balls procured at the start of the year are now clouded and are over used; they refuse to work any-more. The posting of SGT (Mr Approachable) Nugent to Commandos will be hard to bear but all good things come to an end.

SGT Terrie Marsland now holds the Tech Store in his iron fist and no he is not a Kiwi. Hamel is fast approaching and CPL Toni Boggs is only allowed to pack enough beauty products to fill a Rover, as Mog space is required for critical equipment.

The current QM would like to set up his office in the new SES complex next door next year and will hand over to the new QM, WO1 G. Rudd. CPL Wilson will take over B COY next year; his wit and humour will influence them all. And we still have PTE Brewer! The RQMS will be the TQMS and the QM will be the RQMS, but the harden up pills will still be issued to you and "time's wasted what's not spent shoot'n."

RQMS

Greetings from the Main Q Store, my first two months have been an experience. I seem to do all the work and I have already been bush, which is great for a person on a Compassionate Posting.

What can I say about the RQMS? He and the QM are always off travelling around the countryside so the RAAOC Rangers have given the Q Store a "make-over" and shown the "Grunts" how to do business.

We are all sorry to see PTE Arthur leave us as he was a bloke who made sense.

CPL B ^{his girlfriend}oggs (Mrs Muscles)

Note: The editor has the responsibility to ensure that no article can be considered offensive to any person. Consequently, a number of article, although no doubt written "tongue in cheek" have been edited somewhat before inclusion. Ed.

Photographs:	Inside Front Cover	A Echelon Crew, Ex Hamel 01 A COY Adventure Training A couple of Kiwis and their friend B COY Range Practice Officer SNCO Training
	Inside Back Cover	Bendigo kitchen Bendigo kitchen Ex Hamel 01 Ballarat Federation Tattoo Bomb Boy, Ex Hamel 01
	Back cover	Run for Life Team, Ballarat Bendigo Offices

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TRANSPORT

G-Day Everyone out there, #\$\$*#? *%&# Sorry about that, TPT is currently having technical difficulties at the moment, the fault lies somewhere in BHQ, Sorry for the inconvenience it may have caused.

Well G-Day, things in TPT this year have been pretty busy, we've racked up the K's going to 8/7RVR's proofing ground at the infamous Puckapunyal Training area (over 400 k round trip). The MTR will never be the same again with the Battalion advancing on it every month to "seize and hold ground, to repel attack by day or night, regardless of season, weather or terrain". ("RAIN" mmmm).

Transport Platoon has a very important role to play within the battalion, along with the other non-Infantry personnel (POGE'S). On most occasions we're seen as brew drinkers who go away with the rest of the battalion and bring stuff like swag's, chair's, table's, bacon & egg's in the car fridge and general stuff like that. I'm here to squash that myth. We do it hard like everyone else, pack, webbing, rifle and cam cream the only difference is we drive truck's, not walk (does going to the dunny count as walking).

So have I managed to get the bristle's up on anyone's back yet?

The battalion started off the year with very limited "Green Vehicles" due to the RAEME Mafia (MAS) coming through at the end of last year and grounding vehicles. This problem was fixed fairly quickly with vehicle's being repaired at a rapid rate by a Trade Repair.

By around March the platoon had a couple of vehicle's to play with but not many drivers to play with them. For most of the year, members of the battalion and Transport have gone away to various parts of the country to attend Drivers Courses with most of the participants doing extremely well, Transport now has most of it's members qualified.

During the training week-ends the drivers of the platoon usually do PAX lifts to and from various ranges or operate safety vehicles and on a couple of occasions actually did some driver training. Hopefully next year we'll get more training time to do our own things.

CPL Damian King

MEDICAL PLATOON

During the time of SSGT McKeon, the Medical Platoon became the largest platoon in ADMIN COY and possibly in the battalion. With the his posting last year and the loss of a few members, eg PTE Adam McKay to Commandos, the numbers dropped. This year with the posting of the newly promoted CPL Chris Skinner on Full-time Service in Ballarat from November the platoon administration has been reinvigorated.

LCPL Ray Borowiak continues to give great service to BHQ and B COY and also looks after their "sweet teeth". He is well supported by the recently MED ASSIST Qualified PTE Narelle Harry who regularly travels to Ballarat from Geelong to parade. C COY is well supported by CPLs Viv Holland in Swan Hill and Greg Rogers in Shepparton. Bendigo did have CPL Gioffre but she has unfortunately opted for discharge. Lastly our occasional

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RMO, Major Mark Harris, is still able to attend some activities and is great value when he does.

Minimal injuries have been reported throughout this year's busy training program and, though stretched, Medical Support remains largely battalion based.

The platoon looks forward to giving continual support to the battalion in the coming year.

SPECIAL EVENTS IN 2002

SRCC

In July 2002, 4 Brigade ran a number of courses under the general title of The Southern Region Courses Camp (SRCC). 8/7 RVR had the responsibility of running 2 of these courses, the Rifleman Infantry Operations – Platoon (RIO-P) Course and the Direct Fire Support Weapons (DSFW) Course. At the same time 5/6 RVR ran the Supervisor Infantry Operations – Section (SIO-S) Course. Other courses being run under the SRCC were a RIO-B Course and a Drivers Course.

The RIO-P Course was headed by Captain Cliff Gowers and WO2 Tony Harris and staffed by 8/7 RVR. The DFSW Course was headed by Captain Stuart Brades (soon to join 8/7 RVR) and jointly staffed by 8/7 RVR and 5/6 RVR. Both units staffed the SIO-S Course. While each course had its dedicated Q REP, Transport and Medical were provided by 8/7 RVR. Clerical duties were shared by both battalions.

While there were initial difficulties in staffing and resourcing all three courses, the courses did run and apart from some minor tidying up (when ammunition becomes available) most students completed their course.

The SRCC was based in the old 3 TRG GP lines. This provided adequate, but not perfect, accommodation and lecture facilities. However, the lines were much better than living in the bush as the RIO-P Course did for 10 days and the SIO-S Course did for 5 days in Puckapunyal in July! Thank goodness it was a dry year. Meals were mainly hot boxed with some bush time on CRP1Man. There was sufficient food but not always time to eat it. Pte Chris Skinner, the only Medic, was run off her feet for most of the courses but Ptes Jones and Vorbach, the drivers, went from flat-strap to nothing and back almost daily.

At the end of the 8/7 RVR run courses, prizes were awarded to Private I. Watson as the Student of Merit on the RIO-P Course and to Private Liam Reale as the Student of Merit on the DFSW Course. Private Gavin Bridle received the Most Improved Student on the DFSW Course

All in all, the courses achieved their objectives. Lessons were learnt on all sides: by the students, the staff and those who set up the courses. Roll on SRCC03!

Major Neil Leckie

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PREPARING THE RVR COMPANY FOR OPERATION CITADEL (ET)

The 10th of November will be marked by a significant event in the Army's history when for the first time since WWII, a reserve force of company strength will deploy with the 5th/7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment to East Timor.

The speculation surrounding the reservist's deployment originated in November 2001 with 5/6 RVR and 8/7 RVR being formally advised in late February at the monthly 4 BDE Conference. Although at that time it was 'hush hush', within days everyone knew and many inquiries were made by all ranks as to 'when do I go?' At the March conference, Gen Gosgrave, who was visiting Melbourne for Bruce Ruxton's farewell from the Victorian RSL, advised that due to a numbers limitation placed by the UN there was a hold up. Eventually, 8 months later, the Honourable Dana Vale gave her press release on the 16th May 2002 that the Reserve Company would be raised.

As a start point to the planning process a number of key dates were brokered by each of the relevant stakeholders. For the reserve units themselves the 15th of July 2002 was the most critical date given. This gave exactly two months for the company to be identified, selected, trained and administered before being relocated to Robertson Barracks.

As the first reserve force element identified to serve overseas since WWII, this deployment comprised a number of unique challenges. Firstly the potential candidates were required to be briefed on the conditions of their full-time service, which was to be 12 months after selection, including the Employer Support Payment Scheme, and secondly provided an indicative time line of what they were doing and when. These issues were critical during their decision making process particularly for soldiers planning to leave their existing employment in some cases as lawyers, policemen, teachers and farmers.

The administrative tail quickly followed with an audit of the soldier's documents and competency log-books confirming their technical proficiency, equipment requirements and medical and dental status. Within the space of 3 weeks over 130 wisdom teeth were pulled, 135 medical checks conducted, 1150 inoculations injected and 210 pairs of boots issued.

The selection phase conducted over 9 days from 21-30 June 2002 followed and was attended by 130 soldiers from 8th/7th Battalion, Royal Victorian Regiment, 5th/6th Battalion, Royal Victorian Regiment, 2nd/17th Battalion, Royal New South Wales Regiment, 41st Battalion, Royal New South Wales Regiment, 4th Brigade Headquarters and the 4th Combat Engineer Regiment. With only 95 positions available, each soldier's aptitude, skill and knowledge was tested within a bullring of stands which culminated in a 3-day exercise.

The integrity and transparency of the selection process was ensured by the Headquarters 2nd Division with oversight provided by both the CO 5/7 RAR and the School of Infantry. All soldiers at the conclusion of the activity were debriefed in detail of their either success and failure.

The beret parade represented a significant milestone in each of the soldier's careers. Standing in front of the Chief of Army, LT GEN P. F. Leahy, AO was a company that within 2 months, had been fitted, trained, poked, prodded and finally selected to represent the

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Army Reserve as a Company of the 5th/7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment on Operations in East Timor. Another 5 months of pre-deployment training including their recent visit to the Combat Training Centre will ensure that they were more than ready for their deployment in November this year.

CAPT KOOK, 4 BDE

A NEW HOME IN BENDIGO

On 20th July 2002, 5 Platoon B COY officially moved into its new home, The Bendigo MUD. On 26th October a small ceremony was held where the depot was named Passchendaele Barracks. This was the name of the former Bendigo Depot in Mollison Street. That depot had been named after the involvement of Bendigo's 38th Battalion in the WW1 battle at Passchendaele in France.

A Half Guard, commanded by the 2IC 15 TPT SQN with 8/7 RVRs 2LT Andreas Fouras as Guard 2IC, and made up of representatives from 8/7 RVR, 15 TPT SQN, TS Bendigo, 309 RCU AAC, 410 SQN AAFC and supported by the band of 2/10 FD REGT, marched on in a shower of rain. However, for most of the parade there was sunshine. The Official Opening was carried out by the Chief of Army MAJ GEN Peter Leahy.

The ceremony was followed by an inspection of the depot by the Official Party then an Open House for all visitors. Out in the Compound all of the units sharing the depot had a Recruiting Display.

While there were a lot of discussions and a huge amount of planning for the opening, it was worthwhile and proved to be a good PR exercise.

The naming ceremony was a much simpler show. Only locals were invited and involved. 8/7 RVRs Major John Murphy, now OC B COY and soon to be OC Support COY, invited 8/7 RVRs Southern Chaplain, Chaplain Glen Buijs, to name and Bless the Depot. This short service was followed by an even shorter service where the Memorial Stone at the rear of the depot was Blessed. The ceremonies were carried out during the morning tea break of the Non Public Monies Course (NPMA) being run for the New Bendigo Mess. After Morning Tea it was back to the NPMA Course for all concerned.



The new Passchendaele Barracks, Bendigo

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EX HAMEL 01

Exercise Hamel 01 was the completion of a year's hard work for 8/7 RVR and the other 4th Brigade units. For the infantry, the exercise had several parts. Each company spent time at Puckapunyal on dismounted operation under 5/6 RVR, mounted operations under 4/19 PWLH and Rear Area Security (RAS) Operations at Longlea under 8/7 RVR. The exercise was concluded with a two company clearance of a building at the former Greenvale Hospital. Along with 8/7 RVR, 5/6 RVR, 2/10 MED REGT, 4/19 PWLH, 4 CER, 108 SIG SQN and 4 CSSB attended the exercise.

Mounted Operations (4/19 PWLH)

Each company undertook a "relief in place" to begin their mounted operations. The company's task was to clear the AO using the support of the APCs. In the words of the PAR, there was "a clear feeling that the infantry company were ballast" for the APCs. During the four days the infantry were treated to an artillery display of WP Smoke, but this was at such a distance (for safety reasons no doubt) that it was barely seen. They also observed from close hand a .50 Calibre Machine Gun Live Fire Shoot conducted by the APCs.

Dismounted Operations (5/6 RVR)

Another "Relief in Place" saw the rifle companies commence Dismounted Operations. This phase saw the company "Dig In" a Defensive Position that allowed a "live Fire" shoot to be undertaken. The shoot included the use of Claymore Mines and Mortar Fired WP. The other normal defensive operations of defensive routine (ie dig when you are your rest break) patrolling and ambushing were also undertaken.

Rear Area Security Operations (8/7 RVR)

Following a 2 hour "Taxi" ride from Pucka in APCs, each company arrived at the former Longlea Ammunition Depot site near Bendigo. This is the site where the new Bendigo MUD is being constructed. For all concerned, the 4 days training at Longlea was received as the best of the 3 areas. There were foot patrols, Land Rover Patrols, APC patrols, Check Points, Ready Reaction Force duties, civilian riots, and the Mayor of Longlea (the RSM) and his "male offsider" (the CO) to deal with. The enemy was provided by 5/6 RVRs Recon Platoon and did an excellent job in keeping the RASO soldiers on their toes.

A dual admin/enemy control organisation, under the XO Major Jeff Cole, ensured this part of the exercise functioned well. There were drivers, cooks, clerks, 108 SIG SQN Signallers and 4 CSSB Medics. All played dual roles, keeping the RAS administration working and being enemy or civilian as the script required. Everyone loves to be the enemy!

Greenvale

The culmination of the exercise and the year's training was undertaken at the site of the former Greenvale Hospital North of Melbourne. The OPSO, 8/7 RVR, Major Pat Rynne wanted to go out with a bang and he did. The concept was a RECON of a suspected enemy force, inserting a Blocking Force including a DFSW PL and a building clearance

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under MOUT conditions. The 5/6 RVR Company provided the Blocking Force, which allowed the 8/7 RVR Company to assault the building.

The whole show was overseen by the then Chief of Army MAJ GEN Peter Cosgrove and the Commander 4th Brigade BRIG Peter Alkemade. While the concept belonged to the OPSO, it was the CO 8/7 RVR, LT COL Houghton, who had to sell the idea to the Brigade Commander. He said it was 80% training value and 20% fun. At the end of the assault the Brigade Commander said it looked like 80% fun and 20% training value.

Many lessons were learned at the planning level, the JNCO level and at the soldier level. SGT Derrick's video of the whole show quickly brought home many points to the participants. The exercise was considered a high-point on which to end the exercise and the year.



Quick Orders at Greenvale Hospital



General Cosgrove with B Company at Greenvale Hospital

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A LETTER FROM PTE CLINT McKAY FROM EASTY TIMOR TO HIS MOTHER

If you want to get a picture of East Timor it's hot and muggy so far I've only been in Dilli. It's on an area of about 10km x 20km flat ground, then it rises into a range that looks like the Grampians with less vegetation on the hills.

Surrounding Dilli is rice paddies and banana trees mostly. There are a lot of ordinary small houses but lots of people live in shanties on the outskirts of town, in the hills and through the plantations I believe these huts were here before the crises as most of them have been destroyed as well. There are a lot of water buffalo, dogs, cats, rats and black pigs. The animals often roam around the streets happily ignoring each other.

There are a fair few people around but I suspect about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ that would normally be in a town this size (a little smaller than Ballarat). The people here are friendly and are very glad to have us here. It's not uncommon for them to grab you by the hand and kiss it as you patrol down the street. To get a feel for the destruction imagine a fire truck going down the streets of Ballarat filled with diesel instead of water, going from house to house spraying it and setting it alight.

Because that's how it was done here. I have only seen a handful of places that weren't burnt. We just got news that the last of TNI (Indonesian Army) have left East Timor. So far everything has been going well for me in the Army. I seem to pass everything without much trouble. First the school of Infantry, then "Cogswell" a month long course I had to pass once I got to Darwin then pre-deployment training before I came here. So I've had six months of progressive training before leaving Australia.

I'll put this in to save any confusion in my letter:

Section	-	8 men
Platoon	-	3 sections
Company	-	3 platoons + support
Battalion	-	3 companies + support

Not long after I got to Darwin there was a best soldier competition. It went for 24 h, straight covering 30km with a series of stands along the way. I came third out of the Company, which was enough to get me a trip to America to train with the Marines in Hawaii for two months.

Unfortunately no one got to go due to East Timor. We have some great equipment here. Every man in 5/7 RAR was issued with night vision equipment. It's about the size of an empty toilet roll that straps on to your head. To give you an idea how well it works on a dark night when you can't see your hand in front of your face with the naked eye if you look through the night vision equipment you can recognise a friend's face from out to 30 meters. On a night when there's a bit of light, say starlight, it's like day time only all in green. I also have a 3 x telescopic night vision scope for my gun.

I am the gunner of the Section loaded with 200 rounds and the night scope. It weighs about 14kg. Twice the weight of the rifles the rest of the Section carries. WE also carry water, webbing and sometimes helmets and flak jackets when patrolling. I said to my

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mates at the School of Infantry that I wanted to be the gunner when I got to my Battalion and a couple of weeks later I was.

Our first week in Dilli I was busy. The first three days I only got eight hours sleep. In those first three days my Company alone captured more Militia than any other whole Battalion did here in their first two weeks. Maybe our intelligence was better or maybe they didn't kick in doors and drag the Militia out in the middle of the night.

Things have settled down a lot since we got to Dilli. Now we do a lot of guards at the heliport, water point and power plant. These guards are interrupted about once a day with tasks. These tasks include patrolling, vehicle check points, assisting other patrols needing crowd or security control, searches for bodies and saving Militia men from holding houses.

Our Section was also attached to the Special Air Service for 24 hours to assist in security for Gausmo (the leader for the independence) the night before he gave his speech in Dilli. There are not usually bodies around the main streets but in out-of-the way places. So they have to be searched for "tip offs". Mainly the Platoon just finds halves or parts which makes sense because the locals seem to use make shift graves for their dead. The tables have turned so much since we've been here that recently on three occasions we've been called out to save Militiamen from holding houses.

A local political group (that I won't name) has been holding and beating, bordering on torture, Militiamen. In one bad case a Militiaman had his spine severed. (The locals must be tipping us about where the houses are). I just found out that tonight my Platoon is going to the barracks where the TNI has been staying (we're at the heliport at the moment). The locals have been taking pot shots at the TNI the last couple of days.

I find the excitement of patrols, cordon searches and spying on the TNI addictive, and suffer from boredom when on guards. I'm looking forward to going to the border soon. The 10th of November but its not for sure yet. We haven't had a day off yet and won't get one for a while. No hope of a beer. I think the bottle of whisky must be being held in Australia. Probably at my barracks.

Although I'll be glad for a break at the end of the nine months I enjoy the challenge here. I get along well with my Section and are confident with my job. My Corporal has let me know that I am currently being watched to hold a position of command. I already knew this because I'd seen a report going to the Platoon Commander.

Well, better go, It's 3pm and the daily down pours here again.

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QUOTABLE QUOTES

If you feel you have been misquoted – stiff! Editor.

No one told me you had to turn the computer on to use it! (Mr Technology himself, WO2 "Harry" Harris)

I thought I was going to Tully as a SGT!
(WO2 Harris after sending his demi-official letter signed as a SGT)

"Must be the water." (WO2 Young speaking on the dirt left in a glass after drinking the water from WO2 Boatwright's house water, 21FEB02).

"All you blokes with balls move to the front!" (Captain Butcher at PT, 28FEB02)

The RSM had a bad day:

RSM Croft to SSGT Anderson at midday: "You at home?"
Ando to RSM: "Ahh Yeh?????!!!!!! (19MAR02)

"I might be a bit anal-retentive." (RSM Croft, 19MAR02)

"It was me and a couple of blokes screwing around! (RSM Croft, 19MAR02)

RSM Croft to CPL MacMillan: "You keep telling me you're good."
CPL MacMillan to RSM "Yeh Sir, when you're next talking to the moon." (14MAY02)

"I was licking all sorts of things." (RSM, 14MAY02)

"Ahh, you loose weight digging holes." (CPL MacMillan, 20MAY02)

"And I only broke two fingernails!" (CPL Nicole Cunningham, 19JUL02)

"You sound like a Reservist already!" (MAJ Leckie to WO2 Pellow, 25JUN02, 15 days before Tiny went over to the "dark side")

"Did someone throw a Roach Bomb up at the Main Q Store?" (WO2 "Richie Cunningham when seeing all the Main Q Store personnel at a conference.

"You want what? When? (Reply from QM WO2 Pringle, 27JUN02)

"Passchendaele! What a name for a depot! Sounds more like a Soft Drink!" (CPL Rosie Campbell-Foulkes)

"I've been doing a bit of a suck." (CAPT Falloon, 10OCT02)





8/7 RVR BATTLE HONOURS

Boer War South Africa 1899 – 1902

World War One

Landing at Anzac Cove
Bullecourt
Polygon Wood
Albert 1918

Somme 1916 – 1918

Ypres 1917

Amiens

Mont St Quentin & Hindenburg Line

World War Two

Bardia 1941
El Alamein
South West Pacific 1942 – 1945
Hari River and Borneo

Capture of Tobruk

Greece 1941

Finisterres