

THE RANGER 2004

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



Butterworth Bound



RCB68 departs for Malaysia

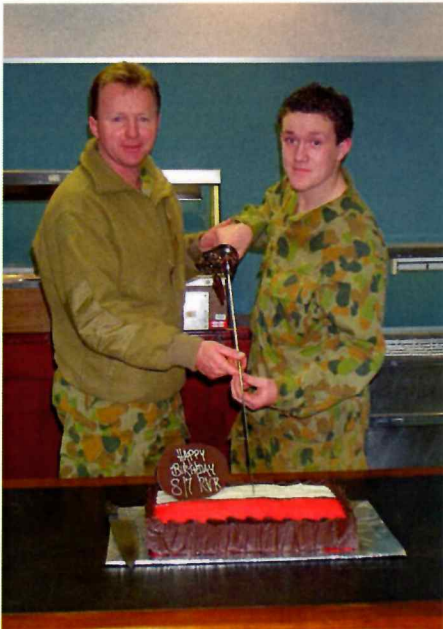
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Private Frank Partridge:

A Militia Man's VC

Story page 35



Honorary Colonel
Mr John Landy AC, MBE
The Governor of Victoria

Regimental Colonel
COL PA. Riley AM, RFD

Allied Regiments
The Staffordshire Regiment
(The Prince of Wales's)
The Royal Regiment of Canada

Commanding Officer
LTCOL .M. Hinchliffe

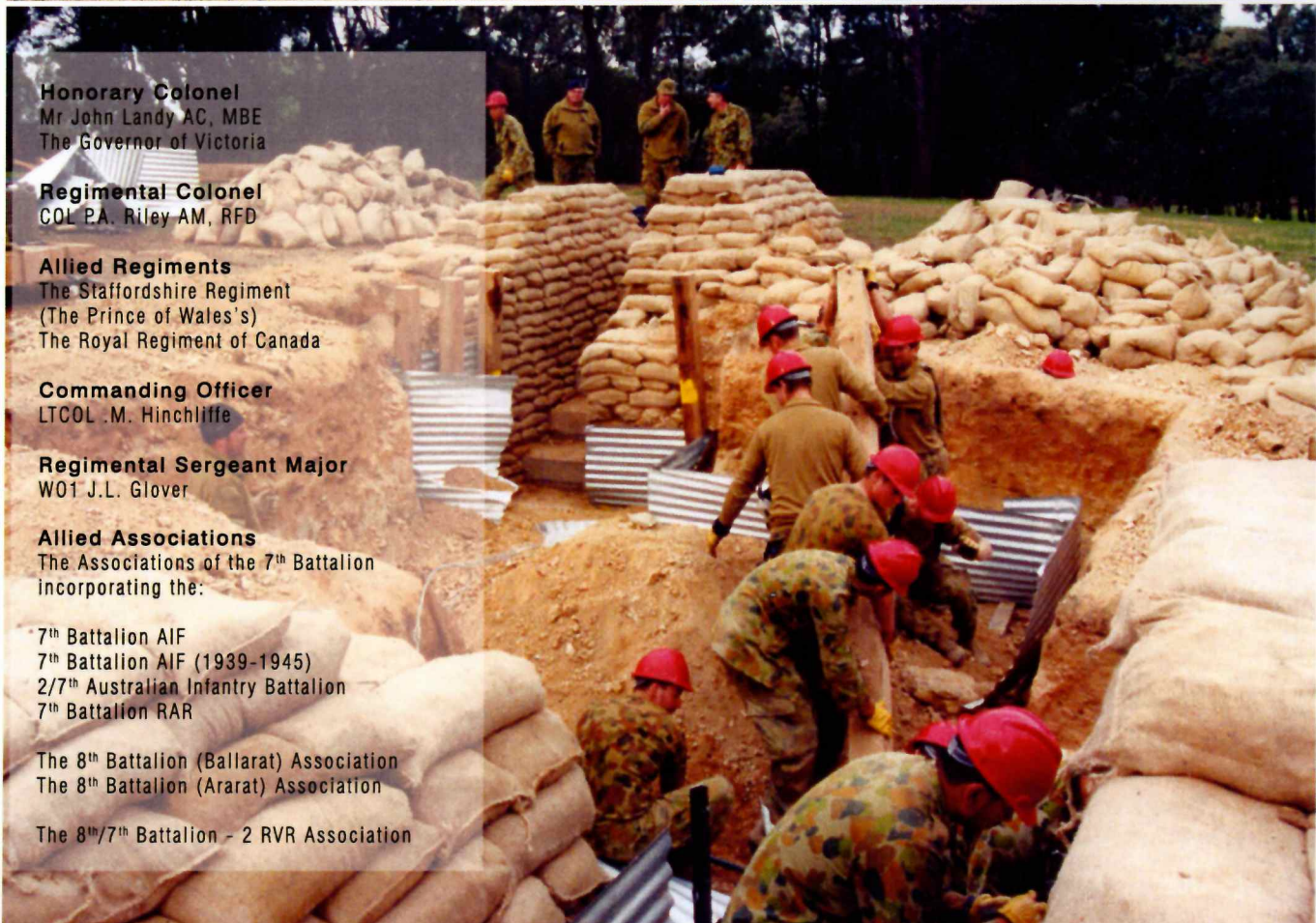
Regimental Sergeant Major
WO1 J.L. Glover

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.

The Ballarat 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 based on 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 its lineage back to a number of units. These include the 8th Battalion (City of Ballarat Regiment), 7th Battalion (The North West Murray Borderers), the 38th Battalion (The Northern Victorian Regiment) and the 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 the area:

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

The year 2002 saw the Bendigo members move into a new depot, Passchendaele Barracks, at Junortoun, a suburb of Bendigo. In 2003 Battalion HQ, B, D and Admin Coy moved into their new depot, Ranger Barracks, in Ballarat, while work on the redevelopment of the 2/10 FD REGT Depot in Geelong to where A COY will continue.

8/7 RVR BATTLE HONOURS

Boer War South Africa 1899 – 1902

World War One

Landing at Anzac Cove
Somme 1916 – 1918
Ypres 1917
Bullecourt
Polygon Wood
Amiens
Albert 1918
Mont St Quentin

World War Two

Bardia 1941
El Alamein
Capture of Tobruk
Greece 1941
South West Pacific 1942 – 1945
Hindenburg Line
Finisterres
Hari River

The CO's Report by LTCOL Craig Hinchliffe



As the battalion enters its annual posting cycle routine for 2005 we have a chance to reflect on the year that was and determine if we achieved the goals we set ourselves. As the articles for the Ranger Magazine roll in from the depots with accounts of incidents that, for some reason didn't make it to me through the official chain of command, I'm reminded of the personalities that shape and influence the character of a Light Infantry Battalion such as ours.

From a personal perspective I intend to recount some of the events and incidents that made my year with the battalion so enjoyable, rather than focus on the achievements of the Battalion Command and Leadership team. Accounts of these achievements are addressed in the numerous articles

Lt Col Craig Hinchliffe contained within the magazine.

For me 2004 was preceded by my retirement from the Regular Army after 22 years and the immediate attendance of the Pre Command Course in Canungra as a Reservist. The highlight of this course, apart from the social interaction with fellow Commanding Officers Elect, was the address by MAJGEN F.X. Roberts on his 'Thoughts on Command'. A small extract of his presentation, that is a useful reference for all battalion leaders, is as follows:

'Command and leadership:

- get the priorities right,
- get the instructions right,
- get the organisation right,
- get the right people into the organisation,
- get the right spirit into the people, and then
- leave them to get on with it.'

'Getting out and about:

- You need to be seen to be accessible and to know what is going on in the unit,
- Set and enforce high standards,
- Know your soldiers and let them know you,
- Explain your style and be consistent in your approach, and
- Be accountable and hold others to account.'



CO at Pucka, May 2004

On completion of the Pre Command Course, I was lucky enough to join LTCOL Houghton, the OPSO and the RSM for a Hand-Over / Take-Over tour of the battalion depots covering Laverton, Geelong, Warrnambool, Mildura, Swan Hill, Shepparton and Bendigo before returning to Ballarat. Meeting with the junior leaders and soldiers impressed upon me the need for Mission Command to be practised within the battalion and the need for me to gain a greater understanding of how Reserve training schedules and exercises impacted on soldiers living and working in different parts of the State. This experience established the pre-conditions, which initiated the first Battalion survey and the Battalion Command Group (CO, Coy Comds, XO, S3, S2, S1 and RSM) agreeing on the following goals for 2004:

- To develop and sustain a High Performance Team Culture across the battalion.
- To attract and retain quality people in the battalion.
- To develop integrated knowledge, leadership and business management processes to enhance situational awareness and tempo of decision making (Unit Standing Orders, SOPs and

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Remote Depot Access to the Battalion OPS LOG on the Defence Restricted Network or DRN).

- To develop organisational agility to form composite teams in accordance with the Battalion's Directed Level of Capability (DLOC) for Reserve Response Force (RRF) tasks.

The challenge for 8/7 RVR, which is not experienced by regular battalions in the ADF, is to position ourselves as a 'employer of choice' in North and South Western Victoria. In essence we need to make battalion training activities professional, exciting and stimulating for participants, delivering an experience that cannot be bought 'on civy street'. The benefits for retention are obvious, however, our experience was that when the soldiers were 'talking-up' their reserve experiences, the battalion seemed to attract a lot more enlistment enquires in the regional depots. So informed by the responses to the battalion survey, the activity schedule was amended to a series of shorter eight day exercises which featured sub-unit live firing ambush, defence and patrolling activities as well as white water rafting, cross country skiing and support company skills enhancement courses. It is interesting to note the cyclic nature of battalion training regimes as it was established by the OPSO and RSM that the courses camp at Burrumbeet in 1913 was of a similar duration due to reservist employment considerations – perhaps our novel idea was not so new after all.

The battalion currently has a composite company, augmented by elements of 4 Brigade, deployed to Malaysia (Nov 04 – Feb 05) as Rifle Company Butterworth Rotation 68 (RCB68). Getting the composite group administratively prepared was like pulling teeth – wisdom teeth to be exact. My thoughts are with those soldiers who had their wisdom teeth removed, in accordance with Army policy for overseas deployments, only to find that they missed out on the trip – that's soldiering for you. My wisdom teeth were removed for similar reasons years ago - at least the battalion now has a larger pool of soldiers, NCOs and officers who are ready for short notice overseas deployments.

This posting rotation will see a lot of ARA cadre staff leaving the battalion in December and some of them will not be replaced due to personnel shortages in higher readiness Regular Army units. WO2 Turner and SSGT Anderson (CSM & CQMS C COY) are off to NORFORCE, and they thought they were isolated in Swan Hill and Shepparton! CPL Hutchison, the recruiting dynamo of Shepparton, is being promoted and posted to Recruiting in Albury. WO2 Haley is posted from Bendigo to Puckapunyal (CAT-C) while CPL Walters is off to 2 RAR in Townsville. WO2 Cunningham (CSM B Coy) receives a short service commission at the rank of Captain and is being posted to Puckapunyal. From a Q perspective SGT Marsland (TECH SGT) is off to 1 RAR and CPL Wilson (Ledgers) is off to 4 RAR (Commando). Down in Geelong, CPL Spong has been picked up for promotion to SGT and is off to 3 RAR for some more time hanging under canopies or waiting for C130 support. SGT Taylor (OPS SGT) is off to ADFA while CPL Haiser is taking discharge to live in a warmer climate. Major Falloon, our long serving OPSO, is off to Kapooka (ARTC) to assist with developing the newest members of the ADF. There is speculation that Major Falloon will be put in charge of the "tact and diplomacy" training modules but this has not been substantiated. WO1 Glover, our RSM who has spent two years away from his family is finally returning home to Townsville for a well-earned rest in RTC – NQ. I would like to wish them all the best for their travels and thank them for their respective contribution to the battalion.

Late breaking news is that I am to be posted to Papua New Guinea as a 'policy adviser' to the PNG Defence Force for two years on a Short Service Commission. This was unexpected and it means at my time in command of the battalion is coming to a close all too quickly. The new CO will be LTCOL Rob Marsh, I ask that all members of the battalion provide the new CO with the same enthusiastic support that I enjoyed.

In closing I would like to make special mention of the Battalion XO, Major Neil Leckie, and the Regimental Colonel, Colonel Paul Riley. These gentlemen are the custodians of the battalion's

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history and traditions, and their service and representation of the battalion's interests are invaluable. My time as Commanding Officer of 8/7 RVR has been the highlight of my career because of the quality and calibre of the people I have served with.

Good luck, good soldiering and remember *Celer et Audax – Cede Nullis*

A Third Year in the Chair by the XO Major Leckie

The longer you are in a job, the easier it gets, or at least that what most people believe. Having now completed my third year as XO for the battalion, I have found that this year has been just as demanding and at the same time as fulfilling as the previous two.

As the CO's understudy, I undertake a variety of tasks. I am required to keep abreast of what is happening in the battalion, itself no mean task for a part-timer when most things happen during the days when we part-timers are not here. I also represent the battalion when the CO is not available.



ANZAC Day Service at Clunes

The first of these tasks was to be present at the Graduation Parade for Melbourne University Regiment from where 2Lts Marcus Doherty and Cameron Warfe joined the battalion. Another was presenting copies of the 7th and 8th Battalion Histories to the Pleasant Street Primary School during their 'We Remember' night where the students put on plays about their thoughts on PoWs. Another was to be a part of the ANZAC Commemoration Service at the Pleasant Street Uniting Church. Probably the most challenging for a non-Vietnam Vet was to speak at the Vietnam Veterans Service in Ballarat on Long Tan Day.



Major Leckie with Maj Gen Gillespie, Land Commander, at the Monash Service

Along with these tasks were the usual O H & S, Equity and NPMA Audits requirements for the battalion. Throw in another ANZAC commitment at Lake Bolac and ANZAC Day at Clunes, arranging for the country launch of the 7th Battalion History here in Ballarat, sitting in for the Adjutant while he had seven weeks away on various courses and arranging the Publicity for RCB, I have had a busy year. It is just as well that I don't have a full-time job!

However, when all is said and done, as with most of us I wouldn't do it if I didn't enjoy it!

I look forward to another year, a new CO, OPSO and RSM and the new challenges that being a part-time soldier brings.

S1 Issues by the Adjutant, Capt Stuart Purves

The S1 (Personnel) Cell has had several manning changes in 2004 including a new Adjutant, Captain Stuart Purves and Chief Clerk, WO2 Richard Doorne. Another new arrival to the Battalion was CPL Troy Best filling the Orderly Room CPL position. Staying on for another year in the Battalion was CPL Scott Sporn who continued as the Movements CPL and CPL Michelle Haiser continuing as the Pay Rep.

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The GRes members in the S1 Cell include CPL Alison Wait who took on the position of the Discharge Clerk, and we welcomed PTE (TFE) Kerry Saffron on board as a re-enlistment into the Pay Cell along with PTE (TFE) Felimon Gayanilo late in the year.

Also late in the year WO2 Julie Farrer-Boatman, a former ARA Ordnance Clerk joined the Battalion, as a 'jack of all trades' in the S1 Cell. The Adjutant put her to work on competency log books and she will head up the team dedicated to the long overdue re-write of the Battalion Standing Orders in the New Year.



Adjt and OPSO at ARA farewells

Last, but by no means least, the venerable Deanne Saunderson continue her sterling work as the APS01 Receptionist. This being her 14th year of service to the battalion she once again proved crucial to the smooth running of the S1 Cell.

The year saw some dramatic changes to manning and establishment, brought on by the lack of personnel available in the Army to be posted to the battalion. 8/7 RVR operated with four ARA vacancies in the year 2004 and this is likely to increase to seven; with three positions, including a vital WO2 position, unlikely to be filled when the incumbents leave at the end of the year.

The Discharge Cell had a solid year processing termination notices and discharge paperwork for 54 Battalion members who had ceased parading or indicated they were no longer interested in the Army Reserves. This has been offset by the good work of the Recruiting Cell in D Coy, who has recruited over 60 new members to the Battalion. This turnover of soldiers, whilst representing a loss of skills and experience, has injected new blood and enthusiasm into the Battalion.

A total of eight requests for manning variations have been submitted this year including requests to:

- Raise an additional section in A Coy (approved);
- Raise a second Transport Section and fully manned Transport PI PHQ (approved);
- Raise a Pioneer Section and Pioneer PI SGT position (pending);
- Activate a Battalion S2 (Intelligence) Cell consisting of three positions (approved); and
- Activation of two Cook positions at the expense of two Steward positions (which we have not been able to fill for some time) (approved).

All of these requests have been supported by Brigade and Division HQs and are likely to be approved in time for the New Year.

With the end of the year approaching we say goodbye to CPL Michelle Haiser. Michelle is to be discharged on 23 Dec 04 and is planning to settle on the Gold Coast with her husband John and their children, Joseph and Tyler. Michelle has been an asset to both the Orderly Room and the battalion during her time with us. It is always difficult to assert yourself within a predominantly male environment, and despite some early troubles Michelle has keep focused on her job, performed to a very high standard this year, and earned the respect of all who work with her. We wish her all the best for the future.

FROM THE RSM, WO1 John Glover, RSM 8/7 RVR 2003/04



Soldiers of the 8th/7th attalion RVR, during 2004 the members of 8/7 RVR have brought further credit to this fine unit by carrying out their many and varied tasks (both collectively and individually) in the most professional manner. I take great pride in all of our achievements, too various to mention for fear of missing some worthy person.

To the junior NCO's I say thanks you for your efforts. Everybody knows that your task is the hardest. Most *RSM Glover* of you have direct command of eight men, and you are *RSM at Touch Rugby* responsible not only to train your men but also to guide, discipline and set the professional standard. Make no mistake your rank and your job is most important and that you are a very valuable commodity. History has shown that wars are won and lost at your level. To the SNCO's, I urge you to continue to set the standard that all your juniors should aspire to, and continue to offer the correct advice to the junior officers in a professional and tactful manner.

This has been the most gratifying two years of my 29 years of service life. It is the culminating point of any soldier's career to be appointed the RSM of an Infantry Battalion, but to be the senior soldier of the 8/7 RVR has been far more than I could have imagined. I am now moving to Townsville as the Senior Instructor of the Soldiers Promotion Training Section RTC - NQ, from where I will continue to look to 8/7 RVR to provide the yard stick by which the standards, professionalism and enthusiasm can be measured for the remainder of 2nd Division.

I wish you all good soldiering and hope that your families will continue to understand your lot and support your careers and efforts.



Playing touch against 5/6 RVR

Enjoy your leave and return safely and refreshed ready for 2005. Above all, drive safely, your country needs you. Finally, I bid you all goodbye and wonder when I will see your likes again.

Operations Cell

The Final Brief - Operations Officer's Report Major David Falloon

'The OPSO sits behind his desk, **as usual it a bloody mess**
With work from today, yesterday and a while ago
He doesn't have time to say hello
Even though he is the consummate professional with a rare gift
You can be sure he has no reservations of going the biff
The CO has asked for a number of briefs
I didn't think it would give him so much grief.

Not to be out done is the mighty Squiz,
Who is not only a genius but also a whiz
An Ops Sgt of legendary proportions,
He has spent four years in the one job and done it without caution
Often found fixing computers or working on the Intranet
Everyone knows that the 8/7 RVR site is his pet

Then there is Tiny Pellow, the Battalion's mature WO
A one line artist who gives anything a go

ACMS, TASMIS, ARTD, WTSS & PD&T
Just some of the army acronyms for him and me
Notwithstanding that, his tastes are more sublime
Because it's more fun to give Skip a hard time

Finally there are Turks and Barry
Two young fellas who still have to marry
You can give them tasks day in and day out
With confidence that it will be finished I have no doubt
Despite this, it should be noted we could not convert Turks to an Infanteer
For some reason he reckons it is more dapper to be an Engineer

Here ends my little ditty
Which to say the least is a pity
For six years or is it seven
I have worked at the Battalion for which some call heaven
Apart from the comrades, friends and mates you will love the allowances and pay
However, like all good things there comes a time to say good bye, farewell & tootaloo, this is my
last day"

NOW DRY YOUR EYES, BUILD A BRIDGE AND GET BACK TO WORK,

YES I AM TALKING TO YOU.

As B Coy (RCB 68) 8/7 RVR conducts its final preparations at Puckapunyal in readiness for its deployment to RMAF Base Butterworth on the 8 Nov 04, it is an opportunity to reflect on another year in which the battalion has again provided exemplary service to the ADF and in particular to the 4th Brigade. As such each member of the unit can take pride that they have assisted in enhancing the battalion's name at a time in which constant changes have become the norm and not the exception. Changes driven by both external and internal forces which have for most cases been for the better have reinforced army doctrine, empowered the chain of command concept, decentralised the decision making process and given sub-units back the responsibility for the training of their soldiers. It remains to be seen if the sub-units grasp this opportunity, especially as we enter 2005 and we look to improve on the adjustments made to training by introducing Coy based training weekends in local areas and Sub-unit exercises at interstate venues. The success of these will be dependent on the members attending the activities.

To date we have confidence that the training mix that was introduced this year with battalion weekends and the Rifle Company 8 day exercises has been a success especially for those members who previously had to endure long trips on coaches to get to the training area. Both C & A Coy exercises in May & Sep respectively were well supported and provided a prime opportunity for members to get back into the green and do some corps related work, something that has been missing due to the recent RRF focus. I would also like to publicly thank all the staff who participates in the Southern Regions Courses Camp during June-July this year. Their efforts made it a great success.

Within the OPS cell we have also been working hard to improve our support systems to provide the command team with more relevant information to assist with training outcomes and resource management. The introduction of the OPS LOG by the CO has provided the unit with a fantastic medium to disseminate information, allocate tasks and provide a forum for general discussion of issues. All members are encouraged to get behind the system but at the same time recognise it is only a tool and should not replace face to face contact if possible. At the same time we have tried to improve computer connectivity throughout the battalion with the use of DRAS which has for the

first time linked all the battalion barrack locations. We understand its limitations and we are working on improving these or finding alternatives such as the Citrix Server at Geelong.

Other initiatives, which we are working on and which will have an immense impact on the battalion are the Intranet Web Page and the course nomination program. The Battalion Intranet Web Page is up and running on the DRN and we are currently in the process of have it transferred to the Internet. Once this occurs members will be able to access the Battalion Training Program externally as well as a number of other useful forms. We are also revamping the course nomination procedure to a nearly paperless system. At this stage the Ops Cell receive up to 900 nominations a year, which is just under three nominations per member. The new system which will access the computer link up will allow members to submit nominations to the next higher and so forth with each step requiring a number of checks to be undertaken. More to follow on this.

Overall, I have been in the battalion since 1998 and when I leave latter this month (Nov) it will close a period in my life in which I am proud of what we have achieved. I see a battalion, which in 1999-2000 only spent just over \$500,000 in ARTS, and yet last year with a similar number of members we spent just over \$1,000,000 indicated we are working harder and longer. Despite this every time the call has come from higher whether it be the 6 RAR rotation to East Timor, OP Gold, the 5/7 RAR rotation to East Timor or RCB the battalion has responded. This is no more evident than with the RCB task, which has been planned and executed by the battalion despite the hurdles that we have had to overcome. When the 115 members step on to the plane it will be with pride, knowing we can achieve anything given the opportunity. Let no one tell you are just part of a reserve unit, you belong to the Oldest and Senior Infantry Battaion in the Australian Army, a battalion that has the most VC winners and one in which has more history than most regular units. When you go forth do so knowing and living the unit mottos:

CEDE NULLIS
SWIFT & BRAVE

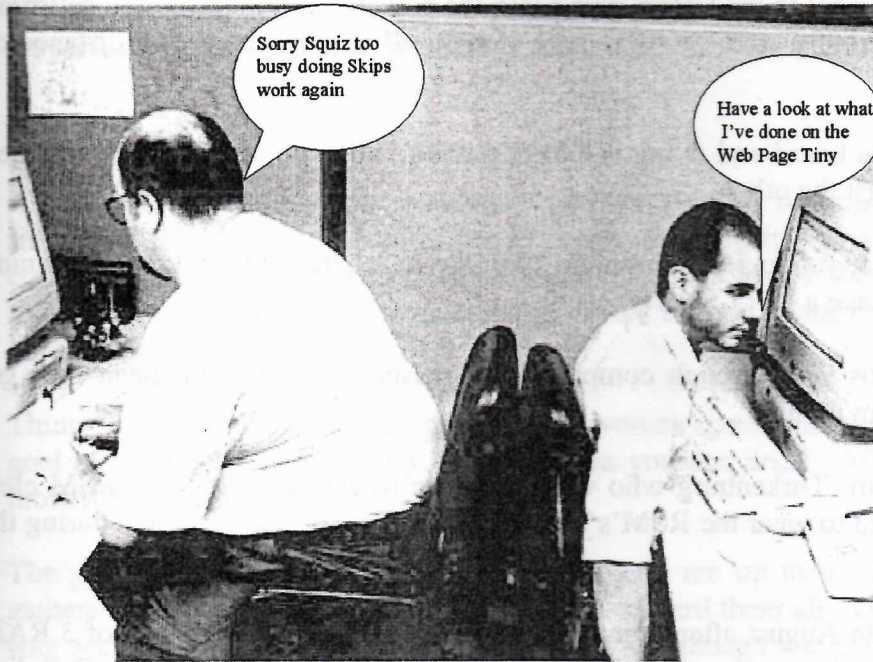
CELER ET AUDAX
YIELD TO NONE

Operations Sergeant, Sergeant Colin Taylor

With another hectic year finally over for the OPS Cell and after almost four and half years as a member of the 8th/7th Battalion, I am now finally moving on. The Army has posted myself to the ADFA in Canberra as SGT Instructor, which should be a little bit quieter than that of the Operations SGT that I've held here.

During my time here I have seen the moves from the OLD Ranger Barracks in Curtis Street to the NEW Ranger Barracks at Sturt St and the combining of the Officer's and Sergeant Messes into the Regimental Mess. During this time I have seen a lot of course nominations, the bookings for use of many training areas and ranges for the battalion's activities over this time (often with little or no lead-time), which is just a little of what the battalion OPS SGT has to do on a daily basis to assist in the smooth operation of the Battalion.

To those who I have got on courses over the last four years, and passed, congratulations as it takes a lot of effort to get the courses that are available and correct dates out to you. But at times it has been very frustrating, when you finally get someone panelled for a course and that soldier pulls off the course for what ever reason, after all the effort that has to gone into getting people on courses and they don't let you know.



During the latter half of the year I have been slowly handing over and training WO2 Pellow on how the OPS Cell works. We have covered what computer applications are to be used, such as Army Capability Management System (ACMS) and PD&T (PMKeys). Along with this I have maintained the battalion's computer network and have developed the 8/7RVR Intranet and Internet web sites. These sites have had between 100 to 200 hits per week since they have been established.

I have enjoyed my time working with the OPSO, Major Falloon, WO2 'Tiny' Pellow and my OPS Clerks Pte Harriman and Sapper Turkenburg. I would like to say it has been a hard, challenging, but enjoyable four years as the OPS SGT. Best of luck and good soldiering for the future to all the members of the 8th/7th Battalion and I hope to run into many of you somewhere in the future.

From the Battalion Orderly Room

2004 started off as per usual some new faces and some old ones missing. A new CO, ADJT, and CCLK. Things started with the ever-anticipated induction training!! Once the real stuff started it was all a matter of teaching the new guys how things run in a reserve unit, ie Volleyball is PT!

Volleyball, now there is a touchy subject to some, always seemed to be for sheep stations, or at least the CO's farm and the ADJT's Olive farm. If only the CO could be on a winning team for once.

The OPSO, when possible, was always ready for PT especially when it was volleyball, although when sheep stations were mentioned he lost concentration for some reason. You may have to stop parking behind everyone's cars, after being hit twice in two weeks, your ALFA ROMEO has decrease from \$ 100.00 to being to "give away to good home".

Anyhow on with the HQ, the new ABSENT (oops I mean ADJUTANT) seems to be fitting in well, apart from all of the paper work that seems to keep on appearing in his tray.

The RSM's main concerns this year have been his flight times from Melbourne for reunion travel, or whether to wear a beanie or not, or if CPL Best had compiled the weekend results from the footy tipping.

The new Chief has taken over from Neville (never here) Bullock, and seems to be fitting in well, must be his support staff! It has taken a while but we believe he is finally out of SF mode. This has allowed him more time to work on his golf game, and believe me he needs it, plus two new re-shafted sticks (don't make them like they used to hey chief!)

Other new faces around are CPL Troy (Smegel) Best from up north somewhere. Quick question, Troy, have you found your precious yet?

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PTE Kerrie Saffron, a re-enlistment to the GRES going into the pay cell, perhaps we may get some work done in there, although highly unlikely with three women all within whispering distance of each other.

CPL Allison Wait has come on board and doing 3-4 days a week, although, as already mentioned not sure on work output amongst the others.

Old Faithful Dee has been here running the Battalion (we like to let the CO think he is running things) although she seems to take a lot of flexi time.

We had two new additions this year through compassionate reasons, that doesn't mean they get away without some dirt on them though.

SPR Ashley (I'll be at the gym) Turkenburg who we have since found out is the real RSM elect apparently, as he felt compelled to wear the RSM's jacket, rank and all around for hours during the Battalion LFX weekend.

LCPL Dave Hastings arrived in August after trying his entire military career to get out of 3 RAR, and get to a battalion with some history, goal achieved. LCPL Hastings has fitted into the Battalion very well, except his inner soles of his shoes keep moving from place to place. And has even joined a local cricket club, in fact, in his first game he made a 1st BALL DUCK, it was great viewing for the whole family.

CPL Mark (Twinkle toes) Reynolds the new TPT CPL has improved on his volleyball over the course of the year and would be assured to be a starter on any primary school team.

We would like to mention the members in the Quartermasters store but it seems no one has seen them much this year (only on the volleyball court). A new QM, well a younger QM anyhow, however there was only one new member to join their illustrious crew and that was SGT Charles (Chucky) Cartwright who seems to have two left hands, and two right feet when it comes to volleyball. Onya mumbles!

Since we don't seem to have any dirt on WO2 Craig Cunningham, we have decided to make him an officer at the end of the year, that should hopefully eliminate his squeaky clean image. Quick note: Lake runs are not PT and are not enjoyable!

There was a rumour WO2 Shane Armstrong preferred driving his parents FORD around instead of his SS VT HOLDEN, which was in the panel beaters getting repaired. Young Jacob has been in a few times through out the year, and been spilling the beans on CSM D!! Quote from Jacob, "How come there are never any dishes dad, is that because we eat take-out every night while mum is away?"

CPL Steve Linane the GRES clerk for B Coy has been doing a fairly good job for someone who only comes in for 6 hours a day (0900 – 1500) a couple of days a week!

SGT Colin (Squizzly) Taylor has been very busy keeping the Battalion computer system operational, I think he starts next year. Seriously though he has done a great job with the IT, and gone with the upgrades round for round and blow for blow, however, the computers seem to have him against the ropes on this one.

And finally we should not forget to mention the volleyball court itself as it has injured a number of members over the year. (Score: volleyball court 7 – members NIL)

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CPL Scott Sporn doesn't want to be mentioned due to the fact he believes that you can't comment on perfection, well I have only one comment on the "Tell him he's dreaming!"

A female perspective

It isn't always an easy job working in perhaps the last bastion of masculinity – an Australian Infantry Battalion. Let's face it, the guys join thinking it's going to be a 'boys own' adventure complete with heavy weaponry, only to discover, shock horror, they let females in to play now! Ah those suffragettes have a lot to answer for. Yeah, things certainly went downhill for fellas after we got the vote.

Things look simple enough on paper. Men, women (presumably of the same species), a common goal of service to their country, all the coffee you can drink. We should be set. And things do mostly run smoothly, mostly.

The poor fellas though, always thinking we girls are up to no good any time two or more are gathered. Mothers meeting. Hens club. We've heard them all. Of course men gathered for a chin wag are *always* discussing critical work issues. Although we're yet to uncover any unit members by the name of Warne, Crawford or Eales.

Do you know the easiest way to unhinge these battle hardened warriors? Smile. And smile a lot. They just can't take it. If there were a DS solution for actually being happy at work they still wouldn't get it. Memo to the fellas: Women have an extra gene that enables them to laugh during work hours *and* still get things done.

There was a welcome addition to the battalion earlier this year with the posting in of a highly trained guard gnome who was installed to oversee the RSM's veggie garden. Unbeknown to the ladies his duties turned out to be overseer of the RSM's Mud Map. No veggie duties were actually required. So what do we do with all the carrots?

One thing the girls of 8/7 RVR are constantly amazed at is the ability of the men folk to turn a seemingly harmless activity into a highly competitive, take no prisoners, blood sport.

And what activity has claimed the most victims this year - Range Practices? Grenade Throwing? Hand to Hand Combat? Route marches during peak hour? Nope, it's that seemingly innocuous game of Volleyball. "Volleyball, how serious is that???" Where I come from it's still considered a *non-contact* sport.

Maybe it's the constant strive to be the Alfa male that has them all rutting like moose on the court. But in a pack there can be only one Alfa male. So, rank aside, who is it?

We girls do enjoy the daily competition. We know who the Alfa male is. Sorry can't tell you then the game would be over.

It's a big relief to us not to feel the primal urge to be part of the male pecking order and it's resultant daily testosterone-charged jostling for pole position. We're happy to leave that to the fellas and keep to what we like best – just watching.

But seriously, we thoroughly enjoy working with the blokes. We might take a different road (with occasional shopping detours, coffee stops and, sure, we can't read maps) but at the end of the day the destination is the same, and as long as we all arrive in one piece it's all good. Are we there yet? Are we there yet?

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"Maybe we should write a poem" - "nar"

"I did it my way" - Michelle

"Can't we just hurt them, even a little bit? Please!" - Alison

"Shut the Door" - Dee

"There's more to life" - Kerrie

"I used to fantasise about men in uniform until I had to clean up after them" Anon (well, Bernie)

A Company

What more can I say than state the bleeding obvious: Geelong depot was, is, and always will be the most superior and professional depot in Alpha Company, if not the Battalion. Anyone who has had the privilege, nay, the honour of visiting us down at Boswell Avenue leave with this belief without a shadow of a doubt. Not only is this true due to the extraordinary quality of the soldiers and platoon staff in all facets of the military environment, but also because of the far from challenging competition tendered by the other depots in the Southern Region of 8/7 RVR. Let's just see what the other depots have to offer:

Ballarat - a place once famous for its gold mining prospects, those parading at the new Ranger Barracks probably hope to find a new reef of the precious metal to fund their escape from such a place. Its one positive as a depot is the chance to conduct Arctic acclimatisation training on any parade night between March and October (I believe one of the founding members of the depot was Sir Douglas Mawson)

Laverton - situated on a RAAF base... need I say more.

Warrnambool - more closely related to 9th Brigade geographically speaking, this quaint little town on the south-western Victorian coastline has much to offer... if you happen to be a retiring couple looking for a place to happily knit and lawn-bowl you days away (for more information on a house in this area, contact Brad Miller for inspection timings). Although, they do have an immaculate full size pool table, perfect for those games of 'Combat Slosh' and 'Kelly Pool'.

Having said this, however, Geelong's dominance does in no way analogous to the 'best of a bad bunch' theory. Geelong depot sets a high benchmark in platoon training that should be the aspiration for each and every other depot in the Battalion. This is in no short way attributed to the members of the depot who put their heart and sole into every Tuesday night and training weekend, eagerly seeking to maintain their high standard of physical ability and unwavering professionalism. This fact was duly acknowledged at the Alpha Company Dinner, where Geelong members achieved a clean sweep of the prizes and awards on offer on the night, including the best soldier and non-commissioned officer in the company (PTE Reichl and CPL Baird respectively).

A number of events throughout the year have also demonstrated Geelong's rich and deep-seated talent, including the Alpha Company 8-Day Exercise, Battalion Range and Military Skills weekends, the snow trip, and the Company Dinner. From these activities, a number of people deserve special mentions for their contribution to service and Army life:

PTEs Colley and Guld - demonstration of the futility of gambling, when on Grand Final day they placed bets for Port Adelaide to win by 39.5 points or less... Port was victorious on the day by 40 points.

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LCPL Cattanach – development of section camaraderie, where during a VCP stand during the Mil Skills weekend one of his soldiers damaged a piece of LT Warfe's car, both of the section members who witnessed the event said absolutely nothing, thereby preserving the fate of the aforementioned soldier.

PTE Dinning – providing the mess with bottles upon bottles of home-brew bourbon and port, which is invaluable used to clean the whiteboards at the conclusion of the parade night.

PTEs Johnson and Oflus – practicing their interrogation techniques of withholding information on the 8-day exercise, with Johnson neglecting to tell anyone about his recently operated on knee before embarking on a patrolling activity in marching order, while Oflus waiting until it was precipitating quite violently before informing SGT Brandich that he did not have a raincoat... I would feel safe with either of these soldiers safeguarding Australia's national secrets.

Overall, the Geelong depot has faced a number of challenges throughout the year and have 'improvised, adapted and overcome' each and every ordeal that has arisen. I put this down to a hardworking and dedicated team, never willing to admit defeat, and constantly searching for ways to improve not only themselves individually but also those around them. With such a never-say-die attitude, there is no doubt that Geelong will continue to achieve the high results that has made it the premier depot in Alpha Company this year.

Laverton's reply: Laverton news: Motto: no gear & all the idea

This year the Laverton depot has been very busy. Our numbers have increased to the point that we don't have enough table and chairs in the Lecture Room. Heading into 2005 will no doubt provide more memorable moments and challenges, but here are just a few from 2004:

The first moment that will be memorable will be the Support Company dinner. The Laverton depot put in a good presence with nine soldiers, which involved the "Dutch oven" road trip to Bendigo. However the moment of the night was after the head table departed and the RSM had his little speech and announced that the soldiers should be proud of the Royal Australian Victoria Regiment (what the!!!). That's the effect of wine and a good night.

More memorable would have been the Geelong dinner held in October. The day kicked off with the naming of the W.G Nottingham Club (see later). Formalities were over with by about 1400 hrs when the go ahead was given to open the bar or should we say that "Pandora's box" was being opened. From here we virtually drank the bar dry waiting for the coach to arrive which never came. Is that Ops issue or Transport Platoon issue? Anyway CPL Best (out of his Orderly Room Cell) came to the rescue by bringing a Coaster down and transporting all to the Geelong RSL. Just in time as the bored Diggers started to kick the footy. By the way did you get the ten L&D's for scratched highshines CQ? Anyway the night went well until CPL Spong had his little long speech. We woke from that only to be bombarded with Geelong's award ceremony. Thank God for wine! What has been noted was the fact that all the Geelong soldiers brought their cute sisters to the dinner. However, with that said I think a night's success can be gauged by how many people chucked. Believe me there were a few. With PTE Hartwich semi nude on the Coaster heading back to Laverton and having to pull over for PTE Dvoracek so that he could exercise his tonsils. It was an excellent night thanks to our Geelong hosts.

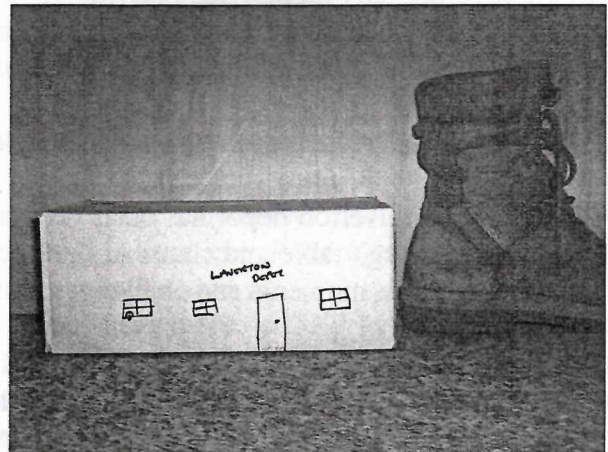
Here are some of Laverton's memorable moments for 2004:

1. Pte Dvoracek eating 5 pies then complaining that he has spent \$50 bucks before the Geelong dinner has even started (mind you he can't even stand up properly).

2. PTE O'Brien's lack of excitement when he was a host for the W.G. Nottingham club opening. Rumour has it that he only had a grin on his face when PTE Hartwich was semi nude on the bus.
3. PTE Hartwich being told that he was drinking like a girl at one function (not the Geelong one either) resulting in him being sick, then going out and falling asleep at a nightclub.
4. PTE McCarthy getting panelled for OP Relex only to be told that he has to pass the Army Swim Test. Having passed the Army test finally, he then gets to Holsworthy only to be told that he now has to pass the Navy Swim Test. In the words of PTE McCarthy "f*\$k swimming!"
5. SGT Cox coming in on Tuesday nights and telling us his cop stories about druggies, pro's and donuts.
6. SGT Prada not coming in on Tuesday nights and getting a jersey for Malaysia (what the!!)
7. CPL Arundell and his on going drama with getting the guys to do a bar stocktake properly.
8. Lt Strack trying to ascertain why he has not been paid. Good thing CPL Haiser is always on hand to help him!
9. PTE Barber giving his trip up to Malaysia so that PTE Tarrant can take his place. What a mate!
10. PTE Duggan receiving champion soldier and PTE Dvoracek most improved soldier for Laverton in 2004. Considering that these two needed a cassette tape in a walkman to remind them to breathe only 18 months ago.

In closing the Laverton depot is always looking to bolster our numbers, so if you feel the need to move closer to the city and escape country life, come on down and see us. We don't have weapons but we have a pie warmer. If our numbers continue to grow then we are looking to taking on a mascot, maybe one of the smaller depots such as Geelong or Warrnambool would make a great mascot for us!

If you do come down to visit us, then just look for the tiny depot at the back of the RAAF Base.



The Year that was (by Pte Duggan and Pte Dvoracek)

The Laverton depot has undergone a rigorous year. The boys at Laverton have experienced 12 months filled with events ranging from anywhere in between the tumultuous and the tantalising. With the year drawing to a close we look back upon the year that was...

Coming back from the Christmas Break saw us welcome a new officer to the Laverton depot, 2Lt Marcus Doherty. He greeted us in kind with a number of gruelling smash PT sessions. The first training weekend saw Laverton in the thick of it, literally, with the Laverton section having to bash its way through the thick vegetation of Enfield State Forrest at night. This was after Cpl Arundell had the fine idea of testing our CASEVAC capabilities by inserting a stick in his eye.

The early part of the year also saw Laverton's boozier become official. This involved all of us learning some basic accounting after CPL's Oakley and Arundell had to endure various primary school level accounting mishaps with the stock-take.

This year's ANZAC Day again reminded us of the great sacrifices past soldiers have made for our country. Wearing our uniforms gave us a lot of pride that day, so we had to make use of it. We did so too the fullest, by working up a bit of 'Dutch Courage' at Young & Jackson's and then hitting the nightclub dance floor. That night kicked off many other nights with the Laverton boys getting together, one such memorable night culminated with Pte Hartwich somehow winding up sleeping in a manhole in the Spy Lounge nightclub.

Mid year courses camp gave many of us the chance to either get qualified or gain extra qualifications. In order for us to better focus on work of a night we established our room to what was later known as the 'Bat Cave.' We were honoured by the CO's visit, he was mildly surprised but rather taken aback by a certain poster on Pte Duggan's locker.

As the year was beginning to wrap up, those that are going to RCB are now being tantalised by the thought of training in the exotic lands of Asia.

Finally a special mention goes out to Cpl Oakley, who has recently got married and who we wish all the best to his newborn child. Upon asked about fatherhood he was quoted saying "Having a kid is like having a 24 hour picket."

Naming the W.G. Nottingham Club at Laverton

On the 16 October 2004 Laverton depot held the opening ceremony for the W.G. Nottingham Club. Previously the Laverton bar was attached to Geelong's Beatham Club for purposes of Audit and stock resupply. Then in 2003 permission was given so that Laverton could separate from Geelong's Beatham Club and start the process of finding a worthy soldier to name the Laverton club after. Following some research through the Australian War Memorial by PTE Miller from Geelong a suitable candidate's name for the club was found and with a little administrative help from Major Leckie, the Battalion Executive Officer, a Naming Ceremony was arranged.



Brig Dunbar, Mrs Meredith, Lt Col Hinchliffe

LCPL William George Nottingham was selected from many soldiers from the Great War that served in the 7th or 8th Battalion. Nottingham had a number of awards and honours. The fact that he assisted PTE Beatham VC at Rosier also made the decision easy. It was also fitting that we could tie the Geelong and Laverton Depots together by the fact that Beatham and Nottingham knew each other and performed a heroic deed together.

At Rosier, that the line was held up by four heavy machine guns. PTEs Beatham and Nottingham dashed forward. Together they destroyed two of the guns, used the third gun to silence the fourth gun and allowed the advance to continue. For their efforts PTE Nottingham received the Military Medal and PTE Beatham received the Victoria Cross posthumously.

The Commander of the 4th Brigade, Brigadier Wayne Dunbar and the Commanding Officer of 8/7 RVR, Lt Col Craig Hinchliffe and his wife Sue, attended the Naming Ceremony. The Hinchliffes attended the A Company Dinner following the Naming Ceremony.



Pte O'Brien, Mrs Meredith and Lt Col Hinchliffe

Mrs Dulcie Meredith, PTE Nottingham's daughter, officially named the Club. A great time was had by all and the club's profits are certainly better because of that day.

A letter from Mrs Dulcie Meredith

Dear Sir

I am writing on behalf of my family and myself to thank you for the warm welcome you all gave us at the naming of the 8/7 RVR club at Laverton on the 16th Oct.

It was indeed an honour to name it after my father W. G. Nottingham, it was a day I shall remember always. As it was all rather overwhelming for me it was made much easier with the kindness shown.

I would particularly like to thank Cpl Steve Oakley for the research he put in for the occasion.

I wish your young recruits success in their chosen careers.

Yours sincerely
Dulcie Meredith

Warrnambool's reply:

This year was an eventful year for the ol' Warrnambool depot, lots was done, lots was drunk and lots were never to be seen again. We lost a few lads, but the few we gathered from the various parts of Warrnambool and the surrounds have picked up the slack admirably and performed well under the extreme pressure that is the Warrnambool depot. The start of 2004 saw the depot lose its Depot Manager with WO2 Armstrong's move to a CSM position in Ballarat with Delta Company. With this change, Warrnambool was fortunate to receive a new full time member in Corporal David Harding from 1RAR in Townsville Qld. 'Hards', as he is colloquially known, has fitted straight into the depot and the soldiers have benefited from it. He has also put into place a great training program, which all the troops got heaps out of.

ANZAC Day 2004

ANZAC Day was a big hit again this year, with past and present diggers reminiscing about days gone by over a couple of quiet ones. We were fortunate to have the assistance of Corporal Rod Spong from Geelong as a catafalque commander for our Port Fairy service, with Corporal Rod Charman tasked as the parade commander for the march through the main streets of Warrnambool. Sergeant Baulch took on the catafalque for Warrnambool. The weather held out for us all, although it was bloody cold during the dawn service. The boys carried it off with aplomb and dignity and the town was suitably grateful for the work we did. Even CPL Stapleton was able to get up and enjoy the day after SGT Rantall took the boys through the rigours of PT over his inert body that morning. Speaking of PT, PTE Barber will always remember one fateful night when our PTI, one of our new boys PTE Miller, took us for a little harmless touch rugby. Poor Barbs was injured on the sideline when PTE Cole came charging down for a try but Barbs had to try and stop him. The result: 2 weeks physio for Barbs and crutches for a week. That'll learn him!

That was the only real injury to any person for the year, the building though is another story entirely. We needed to do some minor renovations to the depot earlier this year, so who steps up to the plate? Why of course, PTE Atwood. After a few devilishly quick and devastating swings of the

sledgehammer the work was done and the real work could continue. The only problem, getting him to stop.

Recruiting

On the recruiting side of things, we have been all over the southwest manning stands and recruiting tents in order to increase our numbers. The depot has been to the Warrnambool Show, the Heywood Festival, and a Careers Day in Hamilton along with a morning with the Monivae College Cadet Unit while they were in the field. We got a few tyre kickers, but we also had a few people sign on, with one completing his Recruit phase and then into his IET and another opt to do the two-part component of the Recruit phase due to Uni commitments.

J.W.H Atkinson MC Club

The 'Boozer' was quit busy this year again with members having birthdays and get togethers, also with the 'coppers' offering their patronage for send-offs for police members leaving the district to bigger and better things. Unfortunately though, we will not be able to have our proposed regular trip to a theatre restaurant for our end of year break up as we are losing members to overseas service.

Comings and Goings...

During the course of 2004, Tel El Eisa Barracks has seen some new faces and also some old ones leave. The following are the new faces of the depot:

- **Rossie** - came across from the reg truckies and became Stowie's Coey.
- **Lachie** - due to schooling commitments and 'Deb' training, didn't parade much. We should have him in one of the sections straight after Christmas as he will be heading off to Kapooka over the break. Good luck!
- **Travis Hastie** - joined up as a truckie and has completed half of Kapooka due to Uni. We should have him behind the wheel in the New Year.
- **Brad Miller** - our new PTI. A job well done by the OC and Dave Boulton in coaxing this fella back into the 'Green Machine'. He is enjoying punishing us all into 'Machines' now. Used to jump out of perfectly good planes with 3RAR.
- **Trotts** - Came to us from the big blue one and is fitting in well with the guys. Has got a fair bit of experience for the new blokes and I am sure he will 'off load' some of this to them in the future.
- **Ollie** - Wasn't certain what he wanted to do when he arrived in Warrnambool. Has now become 'second fiddle' to Steve Ivey in the kitchen, and the bar snacks just keep on coming. (Don't steam the 'dimmys' for the 2IC) Congrats go out to him for getting Student of Merit on his 'bait layers' course.
- **Mulgrew** - has been with us since very late last year, but still hasn't decided on a career path.
- **Hoges** - no not the bridge painter. Doing well and is keen to progress.

And now, for the old faces that we lost:

- **WO2 Baulch** - after promotion, moved on to better things on the employment side. Is now rallying the troops in Bendigo. Good luck on RCB.
- **WO2 Dernhel** - after a very long career with both the Regs and Reserve, WO2 Dernhel decided to call it a day and has now retired. But as the saying goes, '*You can take the man out of the Army, but you can't take the Army out of the man!*' WO2 Dernhel stills drops in from time to time to check on the blokes and make sure the place is still running well.

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- **Rossie** – found a better job up north chasing cows and sheep. I wonder if they have Mogs up there?
- **Wazza** – went off to Laverton following his lady.
- **Barbs** – went to Uni and is now parading in Laverton.
- **Davo** – decided that Scandinavian women were better than the ‘Green Machine’ and is still over there.

All in all it has been a good year at the southern depot. Everyone has enjoyed the training that has been conducted during the course of the year, especially with the ability to get out and about and be seen to be training. We must also send out our best wishes to those selected to attend Rifle Company Butterworth over the summer. We have four definite attendees and one in reserve:

- Sgt Steve Ivey (Admin Pl, Cook)
- Cpl Rod Charman (4 Sect, 5PI Section Commander),
- Pte Rob Attwood (5 Sect, 5PI Rifleman),
- Pte Dan Stoman (Admin Pl, Driver) and
- Pte Liam Cole (Reserve).

Good luck to these fellas, and also hope that Coley gets on the trip too.

On behalf of the members in Warrnambool, I extend our wishes for a merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year and we will see you all in 2005. For those on deployment to Malaysia, make the most of a perfect opportunity and come back with some great stories to wet the mouths of those who couldn't make it.

I'll leave it be at that but one more thing that has to be mentioned is the exploits of Jellyman! One night Jellyman was out on the town with the boys, he had a few too many, went home and ended up spewing in someone else's bed while his Mrs slept peacefully (well not after) beside him. Stay tuned for more on the adventures of Jellyman the greatest hero of the all!

B COMPANY

2004 has been a mixed year for the ‘Backbone’ of the Battalion, B Coy. As the battalion's Training Company we have been responsible for RAINF soldiers from date of CIT March Out until completion of Initial Employment Training. RTC VIC took back responsibility for the RAINF Mod 1 Courses this year meaning B Coy was responsible for conducting RAINF Mod 2 Courses only. Also the Battalion Training Program was given a big shake up with the implementation of 8-day activities and training weekends every 3 months. As most of the training weekends were conducted at battalion level the B Coy soldiers normally joined in with A or C Company.

Most of the staff from 2003 remained this year with little change however we did get a new CQMS the infamous, Charles Edward Joseph “Chucky” Cartwright. We also got CPL “Hit Man” Harding as the Depot Manager at Warrnambool and CPL “Sponge Bob” Spong in Geelong.

The start of the year kicked off with the normal training weekend at Pucka and in Feb a Mod 1 Course conducted by RTC VIC on which we only had a couple of soldiers. We also had a number of soldiers attend the Mod 1 at Singleton. A concern was the new TMP going from the old RIOB/RIOS/RIOP to the new Mod 1 and Mod 2 system. A number of soldiers who did the old RIOB were going to be deficient a number of competencies.

Recruiting remained positive with a good flow of soldiers coming into the Company, and after the Mod 2 in Jun/Jul we passed on 30 soldiers to A and C Companies.

In March B Company was given the task of conducting the Beat Retreat Parade at SCMA Fort Queenscliff, a task done by A Coy in previous years. This weekend was a huge success for the company and battalion providing valuable exposure for 8/7 RVR and receiving very positive feedback. Due to numbers required soldiers came from all Companies but the co-ordination and HQ element was B Coy. Soldiers arrived at Geelong at all hours on the Friday night, Sat morning saw issuing of embellishments, weapons, and last minute inspections of uniforms. We then bused out to the Fort arriving at about 1100h. The rest of the day until about 1630h was rehearsals, going from a rabble of GRES soldiers thrown together and having not done drill for some time "much to the amusement of SCMA Staff" to a well oiled machine by late afternoon. Come the main parade they pulled it off and performed extremely well.



As an incentive to get numbers, local leave was granted Saturday night and most ventured out to the night spots of Geelong. Sunday those remaining went to the Beach for a game and BBQ, SGT Cartwrights eyes were popping out of his head and his pace maker nearly gave way when he saw the female forms parading around.

Well done to all those that participated in the Beating Retreat

ANZAC Day at Ballarat

In June/July the company conducted a Mod 2 Course at Puckapunyal, this being the first course using the new TMP. The course was very successful and conducted without incident. We had 3 soldiers from 11/28 RWAR, 1 from SUR, and 13 from 12/40 RTR. After completion of this course a number of soldiers were internally posted to the Trained Soldier Companies giving them a much-needed boost.

In October we sent 5 soldiers to WA: 1 for a Mod 1 Course and 4 for a Mod 2 Course conducted by 11/28 RWAR. In November we have a number of soldiers attending Mod 1 and 2 Courses in NSW with 41 RNSWR. This has meant the battalion didn't need to run a Mod 2 in November/December as planned saving valuable resources and giving the staff chance to commence well earned BRL earlier than previous years.

To all B Company soldiers out there remember your aim should be to spend as little time as possible in B Company. Get yourself on either a Mod 1 or 2 Course. Course dates are regularly faxed out to depots but B Company get little response. The sooner you get qualified as a Rifleman the more opportunities you will have, not to mention more pay increase.

A number of ceremonial activities have been conducted in and around Ballarat this year starting with the POW memorial opening which was probably the biggest ceremonial event the battalion has had for some years. ANZAC Day the company again provided numerous Catafalque Parties in and around Ballarat as well as various Guest Speaker roles. The support will continue next year with an Australia Day Ceremony being conducted at the Town Hall.

This year due to resource restrictions rather than conduct our own White Water Rafting we provided personal to support the Unit Adventure Training Leaders (UATL) Course conducted on Mitta Mitta River. This way the Adventure Training Wing provided all equipment, rations, and accommodation. Unfortunately participation was disappointing especially from the full time staff. People always complain about never doing Adventurous Training, yet when organised the excuses come from everywhere. The importance and benefits of White Water Rafting are under estimated, if

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an activity is done in future it needs to be incorporated into the Training Program and made a CO's "Place of Parade!"

A lot of kilometers were travelled by some of the drivers and it was a credit to them that it was achieved in a safe manner. Well done those that did participate and a good time was had by all.

There are a few changes in manning next year. We will be farewelling the OC, MAJ George who is transferring to OC Admin Company, the CSM, WO2 Cunningham who thought if you can't beat them join them and is becoming an officer and going to Puckapunyal. SGT "Chuck" Cartwright who is going to the Main Q, CPL "Sponge Bob" Spong on promotion to SGT back to Old Faithful, 3 RAR.

To all of them good luck in the future and thanks for your efforts whilst with B Coy.

With the outgoing brings some incomings. The new OC will be CAPT on prom to MAJ "I didn't knock it off" Cliff Gowers. 2IC could be CAPT "I didn't knock it off either" John Spencer. New CSM will be "I want to be OPSWO" Shane Armstrong, and the CQ will be "us Linanes are taking over the Battalion" Tony Linnane. Why is his name different to his brother Steve Linane?

This year has been a bit more stable for B Coy compared with the previous year, the new Training Program and cancelling of the November Mod 2 Course has assisted this. Never the less, it has been successful with many soldiers moving through onto A and C Companies with some of them going to RCB. It looks like 2005 will be a much busier year with the responsibility of the Mod 1 Course returning to the battalion. The incoming CSM is looking forward to the challenge.

C Company by WO2 Brad Turner, CSM C COY, 2003-04

2004 saw a very demanding and fulfilling year for Charlie Company and especially the headquarters element in Shepparton. As directed by the Commanding Officer, our role this year was to concentrate on Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Intelligence and to become as self-sufficient as possible, which to a large degree we achieved.

Additionally, one would have thought that given the headquarters element were in the same location for a second year and there had been no major changes to key staff, things would run more smoothly. This did not prove to be the case, with numerous 'sidewinders' coming in, causing considerable frustration both internally and externally. Still, as yet, nobody has to be put on suicide watch.

Changes to the full-time staff manning for the year were as follows:

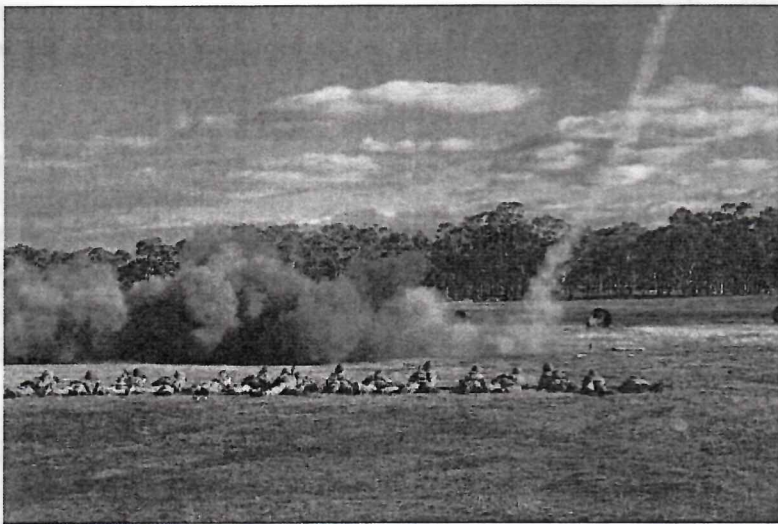
Posted Out: SGT Bill Clayden, the stalwart from Mildura who is now in 5/7 RAR, Darwin, after a stint in the Sinai (OC Sir, another person with more than one medal).
CPL Bloffwitch from Swan Hill (Ando was happy).
TPR Woods from Mildura after a year of endless running around as 'dogs body'.
CPL Mark Lazzarini transferring to the Active Reserve mid-year and being back-squadded to 4 CSSB, 8/7 RVR lost a perfectly good Transport CPL.

Remaining: MAJ Alex Gabriel (newly promoted) as OC C Company - Shepparton
WO2 Brad Turner as CSM C Company - Shepparton
SSGT Peter Anderson as CQMS C Company - Swan Hill
LCPL Sean Smithies as C Company Clerk - Shepparton

Posted In: CPL Troy 'Hutch' Hutchinson as Training CPL - Shepparton

CPL Sean Connelley as Depot Manager – Mildura

Reserves: Throughout the year, numerous soldiers have either discharged, transferred to another unit due to work or education commitments, transferred to the inactive reserve or transferred to the regular army. To those who have remained active members of the Defence Force, full or part-time, well done. To those who have discharged or transferred to the Inactive Reserve – your loss.



Claymore and Parachute Flare firing

During the Commanding Officer Elect's handover/takeover tour late in 2003, it was indicated that C Company should focus on a Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Intelligence role. We were also tasked to become as self-sufficient as possible. As a result of discussions early this year, another major change was the implementation of eight-day training blocks instead of numerous and often non-productive training weekends. These changes were a breath of fresh air for C Company personnel. Following these C Company was able to plan and put into practice some excellent and more realistic training. This in turn made the training more interesting for the soldiers and increased attendance on Tuesday nights and training activities. Thanks have to go to the people who conducted the training at depot level and were key personnel during the C Company eight-day activity - SGT Jack and CPL Connelley at Mildura, CPL Karnups at Swan Hill and once we confirmed they belonged to C Company, CPL Dawborn at Bendigo. Being the driving forces and instigators behind the training though, thanks have to go to CPL Hutchinson and CPL McKinley from Shepparton.

This in turn led to some realistic and beneficial training, some of which came about as the opportunity arose. One of these was the close surveillance of the clubhouse at a local golf course by Shepparton members, due to the fact that the place had been robbed several times in the preceding months. The covert insertion, conduct of the task and extraction greatly enhanced the Tuesday night training by being a real task.

Exercise Borneo was the first of the eight-day training blocks and was well received by the members who attended. The length of the activity gave us the chance to revise the soldiers' infantry skills, which had been covered on the Tuesday night training, and then step up the level to include training and tasks not often covered or practised by the soldiers, thereby making the training interesting. Close surveillance followed up by cordon and search tasks with full orders, briefings and debriefings, all after dark, added to the difficulty but increased the participant's enthusiasm.

Throw in a very large quantity of live small arms ammunition (for the OPSO: RPM or rounds per minute), the battalion allocation of high explosive natures, a variety of testing range practices and additional time up our sleeves all allowed us to achieve more than what we normally could on training weekends. All of the soldiers were suitably impressed by the RSM's claymore demonstration and won't consider using a sandbag as cover, as well as firing small-arms to engage targets out to extended ranges as part of section shoots and the use of other weapons rarely included on range weekends.

Finishing off with a platoon on platoon field phase brought together all their training and was fiercely contested to be the platoon that survived. This activity, although highlighting a few training shortfalls, was excellent in the rivalry and professionalism displayed by the soldiers. This became evident on the last day when the company did a fifteen kilometre tactical withdrawal, which was not only completed by all the soldiers, the last kilometre was done at a run.

RedR Australia is an organisation responsible for the training of humanitarian aid-workers in preparation for deployment overseas. C Company, Shepparton, was approached to see if we could provide some realistic support to a course that they were running at nearby Dookie Agricultural College. After some desperate wheedling to the OPSO for blank ammunition, we were able to effectively support the course.

Our involvement commenced with a surprise military controlled evacuation at one o'clock in the morning, which left the trainees stunned and disorientated and suffering from a lack of sleep the next morning. Throughout the day the Shepparton soldiers alternated between professional soldier/bandit modes conducting vehicle checkpoints and roadblocks, demonstrations of how best to survive when coming under fire which the trainees then practiced. The activity culminated with the trainees arriving to inspect a bandit controlled water point at which time they were taken prisoner and questioned before eventual release.

At the barbecue on the completion of the training, the soldiers were commended on their professionalism, having exceeded all expectations of the instructors on the course. The training value for the soldiers was also immense, giving them an insight from both sides of the fence if ever deployed in a peacekeeping or RRF role. Points to note post-activity are that PTE Tamie Andrew is never again to scream and several members of the unit showed themselves too adept at switching to bandit mode.

February saw quite a few C Company members travel to Swan Hill to support a Korean Veterans Dedication Ceremony. Having the 'band' play very slowly to accommodate the aging veterans certainly made the march to the Cenotaph very interesting. Following this we then had to combat 42°C heat and long-winded politicians. One politician in particular will probably make sure that they check the gender of the soldiers before making blanket statements, thanks to a quiet word from PTE Andrew.

ANZAC Day this year was huge with Catafalque Parties going everywhere. Still one of our best media publicity occasions quite a few members found themselves 'owing a carton', appearing in either the newspaper or on the local news – most notably in Shepparton WO2 Turner as Parade Marshall and CPL Hutchinson as Catafalque Party Commander and marching in a neighbouring parade earlier.

Other Catafalque Parties have been provided on request, which have put us in good standing with the local RSL (nothing to do with the number of meat trays won there or the number of jugs consumed). Other ceremonial activities supported were the Armoured Corps Remembrance Day Parade and Avenue of Honour Opening Ceremony at nearby Tongala on 7th November and Remembrance Day.

In all six members of 8/7 RVR took part in the day at Tongala. Due to the uncertainty of the number of available C Coy members without RCB commitments, we were limited in our tasks to providing Door Openers for the Chief of Army (CA) and the Governor General (GG) and an Escort Officer for the Chief of Army. When the CA arrived there were only two passengers in his car so as is the drill the third member opened the door for no-one. Following the CA came the GG. Unfortunately, the Mayor of the Shire of Campaspe stood in the wrong position so the GG's driver drove through the correctly positioned Door Openers. This meant that the Major had to open the GG's door.

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Consequently the boys from Shepp really didn't have to do much on the day. However, one was spoken to by the CA, and he was aware of the battalion's presence, which was the main aim of the exercise.

The parade was short and sweet while the dedication of the Avenue of Honour a moving tribute to all who served in South Vietnam and in particular to those of the Armoured Corps who died there.

Congratulations to the Australian Light Horse Memorial Committee for the day. Attendees from C Coy were LCpl Smithies and Ptes Healey, Hughes and Watson and Maj Leckie and Pte Thannhauser from Ballarat.



C Coy tried quite a few different things this year to gain more recruiting prospects, but the end results are being evaluated, as the numbers were disappointing.

One would hope that the unit deployment to Malaysia will act as a draw card early in the new year.

The bottom line is that at all out-stations the numbers could be better and, manning changes and relocations within the depots may well hinder this. The company will have to get as many people Unit Level Promoter qualified to assist with recruiting and build on the good publicity that has been achieved this year. We need go-getters!



Although not as well attended as was hoped, a successful Dining In Night was enjoyed by all. It was a chance to dress up, enjoy the hospitality at the Shepparton RSL and for Company Funds to put some money back towards the soldiers. Some questions that did

arise from the night were:

- Why do some Shepparton members dispense with their clothing after midnight?
- How was the Company Clerk still standing at the RSL let alone how he achieved the removal of his polyester belt without doing himself more of an injury with the scissors?
- Should CPL Hutchinson continue his 'skippy' impersonation?
- Why was PTE Watson attempting to revisit his childhood years?
- Were the RSM, QM and CQMS mentally traumatised by exposure to the 'tumbleweed' next morning?
- Why do visitors to Shepparton usually leave worse for wear?

Even so it was an excellent, albeit long, night so thanks to the RSL and those members from the battalion who made it the success it was.

After suffering considerable white-ant damage and with people actually putting feet through the woodwork, the contract to replace the drill hall floor at the Shepparton Depot was finally approved at a cost of approximately \$120,000. This then threw the Company into disarray as CHQ was forced to operate out of the Gordon Ayre MM Club for over a month, which meant no phone access or computer connectivity regardless of what was tried (and no, we didn't spend the time with the fridge doors open). It was a trying period but the end result was well worth the wait and has been

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favourably commented on by depot users and visitors alike. Also providing a bit of a scare was the contractors digging up a quantity of ammunition that was dated vicinity 1910 and had been lying under the floorboards for a long time. The contractors were very wary with their jackhammers after that.

With the end of the year approaching, a number of soldiers have been very fortunate to be selected in the deployment of a *Somme Barracks floor being repaired* company strength group, to Rifle Company Butterworth – three months training in Malaysia. From the Northern Company, these members include:

- Shepparton - CPL McKinley, CPL Logan, PTE Altenhof, PTE Armstrong, PTE Cummins, PTE Fehring and PTE Moore.
- Mildura - SGT Jack, PTE Theodore, PTE Farrell and PTE Godwin.
- Swan Hill - CPL Holland, PTE Arnold and PTE Dear.

It will be an excellent experience for them, the chance of a lifetime and if they have listened to all the advice passed on to them by the CSM and CPL Hutchinson, then they should return unscathed and more knowledgeable for the experience.

2004 has certainly been a full-on year with a roller coaster ride of highs and lows. The constant however has always been the enthusiasm, professionalism and dedication of the soldiers throughout the company and northern depots. This will be tested with more modifications being implemented within the manning and structure of the company but there is no reason why the unit won't continue to grow and improve – especially with the training activities planned for next year.



For the members of C Company and indeed all the members of the northern depots, keep on doing what you have been doing, never stop striving to do better and it has been brilliant working with all of you.

Shepparton Depot floor under repair

C Company, an anonymous soldier's perspective

The year started out as a quiet one for Charlie Company with only one new ARA Member (Cpl Connelley) marching into Mildura in the Kingswood to take up the position as Depot manager. Taking over from Sgt William David Peter Clayden would probably seem like a hard task but the Cpl seemed to take it with ease. The only problem he has faced is getting the speed right from the Kingswood to the 'fast car'.

Moving from Mildura down to Swan Hill where the numbers are a lot smaller, we lost another member to the Regular Army (Pte Ben Ghirarello). Word has it he was shipped to that great place Tully for two months, welcome to the regular Army! Word has it that the flying Nun has a new partner with the Padre getting caught for low flying.

Down to the 'Head Shed' at Shepparton where the finger is always on the pulse. Turned out to be a bad few months for the CSM with a couple of main men leaving, first his man Domnsy to 3 RAR and then his taxi driver Lazza to 2 CSSB. (Think he can call on Faulie as his full time driver). After

a hard year we had a Dining In Night where the boys (after a few beverages) seem to have a thing about their undies because that's all they were left in. Some have problems with body hair!

That's all from us and we wish every one the best.

Mildura

With Darrel, Kev, Ash and Goddy now soaked in sweat and fighting off numerous tropical ailments (not to mention liver poisoning) in Malaysia, it is time to look back at what makes the boys (and girl) from Mildura a breed apart.

Things started off with a young bloke by the name of Blairy being shipped off to Kapooka. For those of you not yet acquainted with the lad, if he was any more laid back he'd fall over. Full credit to the bloke though, he got through with the assistance of a not so laid back SGT Hall.

Another young bloke by the name of Chandler also completed recruit training with his mate Rowey. The instructors' only gripe with Chands was that they were unable to prise away his drink bottle, which appears to be super-glued to his left hand.

Speaking of courses, congratulations must also go to Ash, Simmo and John for becoming qualified grunts, the latter two having the good fortune of completing Mod 2 in WA. Word is that Simmo got quite intimate with some of the local ticks (not chicks), over there, although he is very coy about the details.

There have been a few wild nights at the Pearse VC MM Club this year. Who could forget Di's charming female fellow copper friend who had no inhibitions about regurgitating her entire alcohol consumption for the evening in front of everyone? Sweety reckons he has been scarred for life, poor chap. Or Timmy's now infamous christening of the pool table which is now part of 7 Pl folklore. Let's not forget Jacko's introduction to the art of nipple piercing by an obliging lass, who no one could remember inviting in the first place.



MILDURA DEPOT 2004
7 Pl. C Coy. B/7 RVR
Front Row: PTE D Simmonds, PTE E Sweet, PTE S Ansell
Second Row: PTE D Knights, PTE Chandler, CPL S Conroy, SGT D Jack, SGT R Jackson, PTE K Farrel
Third Row: PTE J Drummond, PTE B McNally, PTE A Bradburn, PTE D Blair, PTE N Leviston, PTE S Duden

Knightsy, Blairy and Conno took part in white water rafting down at Omeo. Before heading off they had to endure numerous harrowing accounts of last year's antics from Dinger and Horse. "Never again" they were warned "You'll freeze your arses off" was the cry. As it turned out, the cold water was nowhere as bad as the 11 hour marathon from Mildura to Omeo that transpired, thanks to Conno's expert navigation. What looked good on the map turned out to be an epic encounter with 40 kms of unsealed road, through what we now know is the site of the Australian Rally Car Championships.

Final word must go to the young Army Cadet Sgt who barged in to the lecture room the night of the CO's visit. "Excuse me mate" he uttered to the CO as he grabbed the folder he had left on the desk.

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Farewells. We last a few during the year:

PTE McGlashan - ARA, (RAEME)
PTE McDermaid – (lurking down in
Melbourne somewhere)
PTE Rowe - Perth

Four members are deploying with the RCB in Malaysia:

SGT Jack
PTE Farrell
PTE Godwin
PTE Theodore

D Company

2004 has been a steady year for the Recruiting Company, with two new drivers at the front of the starting grid, the OC CAPT Townsend and CSM WO2 Armstrong. Bringing up the rear of the grid is CPL Graham Paizis. The company set out to provide direction to achieving the recruit Prospect figures for the battalion.

The year started off at a reasonable pace with the mandatory Induction Training, the trips to Melbourne for Recruiting and Defence Force Recruiting APA-M Conferences to establish prospect figures to achieve for the year.

D Company has had a good year at the helm. We, along with the Depot Managers and the Unit Level Promoters (ULPs), successfully achieved to recruit more prospects for the 2003/04 than the target set. We achieved 64 whereas the target was set at 52. For 2004/05 the target is set at 69. We are travelling steadily towards that target and hoping we will capture that and then some.

We managed to place some people onto the ULP course throughout the year, not as many as we had hoped due to cancellations or scheduling.

There was a few activities attended, these were quite eventful.

The Recruiting Team establishing a firm base at Mildura Grand Hotel for the Hot Air Balloon Show. Pte Turkenburg, better known as Turks, set about winning the hearts the local female inhabitants. Showing off his arm band tattooed biceps Turks caused minor arguments as to who lay claim to him between two female stewards who wanted a piece of him. The week finally ended with Turks leaving behind two broken hearts. Oh, by the way, the Balloon show was exceptional!

The next trip for the Recruiting Team was the Regional Van Tour conducted with the good team from Brigade Recruiting Support Cell, WO2 John Sayers, WO2 Max Woodall and Capt Kneale, The tour started from Shepparton, covering the northern region along the Riverina as far as Mildura, then changed direction south towards Hamilton and Geelong. Information nights were conducted at Echuca, Ouyen, Hamilton and we had a fairly good response from locals. Thanks go out to the West Vic Employment Centre.

Another activity conducted was a Recruiting Conference in Ballarat in August to pass on relevant and up to date information to Depot Managers, hopefully not to boring lads!

It is almost the end of the year and we are at the point where depots are attending shows, proving awareness and being inundated by Veterans saying that's not a 'Bren Gun', or that's not a '.303', back in my day (50s) or kids coming up asking 'have you shot anyone' – reply NO!

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August saw a new addition to the company. We welcome LCPL David Hastings from the 3 RAR. His experiences will no doubt be invaluable to the battalion. He is adjusting well and is an enthusiastic JNCO. Dave Stop saying Sorry!

Postings in –out

We saw CAPT Townsend go of to Canungra to do a course and has moved into C Company.

WO2 Armstrong moves to B Company as CSM.

We welcome WO2 Steve Murchant – posted in from CTC Townsville.

CPL Paizis, like an old ‘Tassie Oak’ still standing tall and firmly rooted in place with D Company.

The Delta has progressed steadily the chequered flag is in sight, to all Depot Managers, keep up the good work, prospect hunting only 49 to go.

SPT COY / PASSCHENDAELE BARRACKS

Well, what a year 2004 has been. The CQMS SGT Dave McHenry finally made it to Bendigo albeit at the expense of a rebuilt motor for his Nissan Patrol. After he parted with several thousand dollars for his car, he was finally on his way.

Bendigo/Spt Coy again has risen to the battalion’s call and produced some outstanding efforts and achievements. By the time this goes to print the soldiers would have paraded at the Barracks 46 times, that being a Tuesday night almost every week. This year the soldiers have conducted ceremonial activities for Darwin Defenders Association and ANZAC Day Catafalque Parties for the Bendigo City as well as Huntly Memorial Association. The ANZAC Day activities culminated in a combined march through the city with 15 Transport Squadron in which the soldiers performed to a standard that

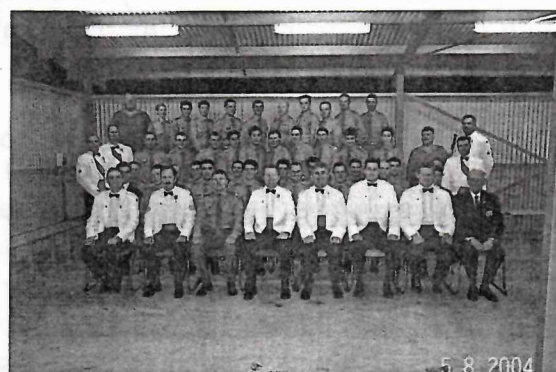


ANZAC Day in Bendigo



Left: Bendigo Full Time Staff: Sgt McHenry, WO2 Haley and Cpl Walters

would make any old soldier proud. An enjoyable afternoon was continued at The Bendigo RSL and back at the barracks with plenty of male bonding happening. Since these activities we have flown the flag proudly for the Battalion at the Vietnam Veterans Day Catafalque and Remembrance Day.



Right: Support Company Dinner October 2004

Pioneers weekend away by Cpl Baird

The Assault Pioneer Platoon attended a weekend 29/30 May 2004. The size and scope of works can be seen in the photographs elsewhere in this magazine. The task was completed with stores provided and acquired as necessary.

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The task completion rate has exceeded immediate requirements and expectations.

Manning - 1 Sect (9 Pers.) : 2 x qualified Pnr - 7 x A-Coy Infantry members

Summary Scope of works completed.

4 x firing point bunkers (Large)

6 x various lengths Catwire type 1 construction

Mounting and Camouflage of waiting bays

Construction, mounting and camouflage of entry archway

Backfill of dart mechanism bunkers - full length of range

Clean up of site from previous works

Collection of stores for future works

Due to lack of immediate stores, tools and meal time transport, some effective time was lost, as a result actual on-site job time would equate to approximately 12 hours. The level of enthusiasm, standard of work and commitment to work displayed by the participating members was excellent. As a result of this, the rate and quality of task completion was of a very high standard. Given the manning level, seniority and actual task timing I am personally very pleased with the results.

On a personal note I found it pleasing to see the self-motivated enthusiasm generated amongst the members in that they had hands on experience to visualise a prospective personal goal in a possible pioneer section. Some "senior" members frequently commented how good it was to do "something different" and of tangible value.

I trust this exercise has been of some benefit, and the members are more than willing to assist in any future activities or requirements. Many thanks Sgt Trevor Beales for his transport support.

Admin Company

Company Headquarters

Admin Company Headquarters this year has consisted in the main of its Company Commander Captain (soon to be Major) Cliff Gowers. Following his promotion to Captain mid-year, the second half of the 'Dodgey Brothers' John 'things will change, heads will roll' Spencer, joined Cliff as the Company 2IC. WO2 Brian Tyler joined them during the year as CSM on his return to the battalion. With the dispersed nature of the company members it has again been a difficult year for the company, however, we have provided.

We look forward to the return of the OC from RCB in February and his well-earned promotion.

Catering Platoon by the WO Caterer, WO2 Broemmer

The Catering Platoon entered another year still deficient in numbers. We were bolstered with the fresh arrival of reinforcements in the guise of Corporal Allison Wait and the successful completion of the basic Cook's Course by PTE's Watson (Ballarat) and Price (Warrnambool). Both members attending their Initial Employment Training during the past twelve months and achieved excellent results. Of course, during this time one of the stalwarts of the Catering Platoon, CPL Steve Ivey (Warrnambool) successfully completed his qualifications for the rank of Sergeant and after a short while, finally made the lofty heights of the rank of Sergeant. Congratulations Steve! Solutions are currently being sought to allow CPL. Wait to also achieve this milestone Sergeant rank in her Army Reserve Career.

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PTE Michael Currie continues to stiffen the backbone of the Catering Platoon at Ballarat and has been identified as NCO potential and has been nominated for Subject courses in the near future. Congratulations are also in order to PTE Currie for his "Sub-Unit Commendation" recently bestowed upon him for his diligent assistance at a recent Motor Vehicle Accident in the vicinity of Ranger Barracks. Unfortunately, PTE Holmes-Burrows has been dogged by injuries during part of this year, but the Platoon welcomes Pte Wilson of Ballarat who has just completed Kapooka.

The Catering Platoon assisted with many smaller tasks throughout the Battalion and when we achieve the full strength of days-gone-by we will again be able to provide a full range of services to the battalion and indeed the brigade as well. The 8/7 RVR Catering Platoon has a reputation to uphold as one of the premier catering outfits within the Brigade and can only go from strength to strength.

As Warrant Officer Caterer, I am currently completing the Battalion Food Safety Policy and completing the draft of the associated paperwork that goes with this very important part of the catering process. The Catering Platoon maintains and will continue to provide quality and nutritious meals to the Battalion and hope that everyone enjoys the experience of dining with 8/7 RVR.

Australian Army Catering Corps - We Sustain

Medical Platoon

Doc Harris and his small band of Medics have provided sterling service to the battalion again this year. The complexities of preparing members for RCB made life difficult but it was done. The Medical Platoon was fortunate to have gained the services of Cpl Alex Gaitin from B Coy who has looked after the administration of the platoon and has taken the pressure off long serving member Pte Ray Borowiak. It was good to see Cpl Viv Holland rewarded for his services with the battalion by being included in RCB Admin Section.

Q Platoon 2004 by the QM, WO1 Pringle

Q Platoon started the year with the QM attending day one, 19 Jan 04, then decided he required an additional three months off. The RQMS decided he should be the QM. The acting QM purchased four more firearms with the HDA he received. For the members from the Main Q this year has been normal day to day tasks.

The Q received a new addition to the fold, SGT 'Chucky' Cartwright, he was posted to 8/7 RVR all the way from the little blue one, 1RAR.

Activities of note the year are detailed below:

- The May – QM holiday finished and back at work, (Bugger):
- Maintaining the integrity of battalion equipment, Technical Regulatory Framework (TRF) and gaining the accreditation certificate from 2 Div after they conducted an audit on 8/7 RVR equipment;
- The Maintenance Advisory Service (MAS): responding to the MAS report thirteen months later;
- Introducing 'Chucky' to the Standard Defence Supply System (SDSS) Version 4 again;
- QM to SGT Marsland; print out a stocktake for C Coy, SGT Marsland, "what again".
- The AIRN Range shoots;
- White Water Rafting, too cold for the Qwee's this year, RCB issues 'phew' ;
- CPL Wilson this year's CQMS B Coy is not as good as last year's. (From last years CQMS B Coy, CPL Wilson).

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- How could I forget - trying every angle to get Ranger Barrack broad acres slashed without the Commanding Officer having off loading some of his sheep? (leave the sheep alone OPSO)

SGT Linnane – posted in from the inactive emergency reserve, he proved such a good asset that he is off to Butterworth as the CQMS

At the end of this year we say good bye to SGT Marsland, departing for sunny climates 1 RAR and CPL Wilson to 4 RAR. (More goodies).

Next year will see WO1 Ross Pringle, WO2 Marty Griggs, SGT Cartwright, Tech SGT and PTE Culic remain. The two new members to arrive next year are: CPL Pollick from 1RAR, becoming the CQMS A Coy and CPL White, from 2 RAR, CQMS B Coy

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of Q platoon, and the CQMSs for the professional manner in which they conducted themselves this year.

Another Q view by Pte Culic

This year has been a very busy, productive and interesting year for the Q personnel. Not only have we been preparing for the RCB trip but also we have been supporting the battalion in all their other tasks, such as the RRF and training weekends and exercises. As we cannot think off anything else which is politically correct to say we will finish with saying that 'a very touchy feely year had by all.'

Transport Platoon by Sgt Dalmayer

Another year has passed and quickly I might add! The year began with Cpl Damien King being posted to a better fishing ground at Karratha with the Pilbara Regiment. He has been replaced by the able Cpl Mark Reynolds from ALTC Pucka. I am sure that Kingy has sussed all the best fishing spots out.

The year has seen instructors being required to attend a total of five 16-Day Driver's Courses run in Adelaide and Tassie to support the trainees. The bottom line for us is that if instructors do not attend, then the trainees are not accepted (and people wonder why they **all** can't get on a driver's course!) This has put a fair strain on the resources of the section as not everybody can get time off from their civilian work at the right time to attend the courses as well as carry out other battalion requirements such as the lead up training for the RCB Rotation.

Vehicle changes have seen the provision of a new 4 x 4 Hino to the battalion and the continual upgrade of the Commodore Fleet.

The section this year welcomed Pte Helen Thannhauser, who is doing a lot of k's in the Commodores, and Pte Glen Smith, Jacka's twin! Staff movements next year will see Jacka Smith retire after numerous years in the battalion and the reserve in general. It is interesting to note that Jacka is still unsure which Corps he belongs to. I may also be moving on, depending on APA finalising promotion and transfer.

Next year will again be busy with the major exercise at Cultana in SA in May and the usual array of weekends and driver's courses.

I ask that all battalion drivers take more care when using the battalion's vehicle to avoid the number of speeding fines (which flying Padre was it?) and the number of accidents (we had three in three weeks!)

Have a safe break and good luck for next year.

Par Oneri

Ballarat Ranger Military Museum by the Museum Curator W02 Broemmer

The Museum has had a quieter year than I would have hoped for (mainly due to my Civilian employment situation), however, we have been very active making things ready for the warmer weather and the peak 'tourist' season. Myself and Mr. Ben Smith have been diligently preparing for the major external display that we will be conducting in November to assist the Ararat Legacy Club celebrate its 75th anniversary. This will involve a major display of uniforms, equipment and associated items to be held at the Ararat Performing Arts Centre. This will be held during the period 4th -9th of November 2004.

MAJ Bill Akell CSM (Ret) has been actively recruiting for the Museum Foundation Membership and has also conducted a 'Major' raffle (no pun intended) with the first prize being a Long Tan Framed Print signed by the surviving COY and PL commanders.

On a sad note, one of the stalwarts behind the formation of the Museum has passed away; SGT Norman Allen STRANGE MM was a great friend of the museum and provided many items and expertise from the period of the 8th Battalion in the lead-up to and during the Second World War. He will be sadly missed.

Another relatively newcomer to the Museum, Mr. Ray Rosenow, continues to provide continued fundraising support and light comic relief to the Museum.

One of the more recent acquisitions of the Museum was a donation directly from the Western Front Battlefields (Bullecourt area) of a number of relics, including a huge piece of shrapnel and various Artillery nose fuses and other items. Retired US Army LT COL Ted Mandro donated these items. There is a huge interest in all things "World War One" throughout the world and the items from the Great War are now becoming scarcer and scarcer. It actually gets to the point that in the future we will have to be prepared to purchase unit relevant items from people because they will be more reluctant to donate them. Your financial support is encouraged.

I also challenge all members of the unit to identify any relevant items for donation to the Museum. All members going to RCB in Malaysia may also wish to identify relevant 'historical' items from the tour for future display in the museum. (I am still waiting for items from the East Timor veterans.....)

We will continue to nurture the museum, and we should have some major developments in the not-too-distant future, which should provide some interesting reading in the Ranger Magazine in 2005.

Rifle Company Butterworth 68 – 8/7 RVR Year Book (Part I)

All going to plan the 8/7 RVR lead, 4 Bde Rifle Company, should be well into the second month of its three month rotation as you read this edition of the Ranger over your Christmas turkey. The Australian Army has stationed a Rifle Company at the Royal Malay Air Force Base (RMAF) Butterworth, since a downsize in the 1980s that saw the hand over of the RAAF Base to the Malaysians. Simultaneously, the RAAF Fighter Jet Squadron withdrew and the permanently deployed Infantry Battalion reduced to a rotational three-month deployment of company size. As the article is written prior to the departure of the current company (due to be conducted on 8 November) here are a few words on the planning and preparation of the current deployment.

The most recent deployment of a 4 Bde element to Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) occurred over the Christmas period of 1999, and the Army Reserve has provided numerous rotations over the summer months on a yearly basis since. In line with the Divisional Commanders direction, all such rotations will employ a combination of Infantry soldiers from the Division's Rifle Battalions, supplemented with Rifle Sections of Supporting Arms units. In the case of the current RCB, 8/7 will be joined by approximately a platoon of soldiers from 5/6 RVR, rifle sections from 4 CER and 4/19 PWLH, with supporting elements from the above listed units, 4 CSSB, 108 Sig Sqn and other non-4 Bde units. The compilation of the deployment manning commenced in February of 2004, the response from across the Bde was in excess of 250, on commencement of pre-deployment training and administration in August, this number was reduced to under 200, of which 120 took initial allocations in the Coy Group.

The pre-deployment administration was conducted over four weekends, in Melbourne at Maygar Barracks, Broadmeadows. The first hurdle faced in conducting this training was the disparity of units involved, and travelling times in getting soldiers spread between Mildura, Warrnambool and Albury/Wodonga to Melbourne for each of the weekends. Not only did this rule out any training on the Friday nights, release times on Sunday needed to be tailored to ensure all returned to the home locations at a decent hour on the Sunday evenings. The training itself included the mandatory requirements of health and dental checks, as well as deployment specific Customs, Quarantine, welfare and psych briefs. To conduct this training support was provided from other 4 BDE units, Joint Movement Control Office Melbourne (JMCO Melbourne) and Federal Government Agencies the Australian Customs Service (ACS) and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS).

In addition to the hurdle the geography of the Company provided one of the chief concerns during the preparation period was the non-AIRN compliance and significant numbers of soldiers whose competencies and course results do not match up on PMKeys. A worthy reminder of the continual requirement for soldiers to remain AIRN compliant and constantly check that their trade qualifications on PMKeys are consistent with their course achievements. Due to the lead time for this deployment (and some relentless leg work by Coy Clk, CPL Steve Linane) only individual BFA performances were a 'war stopper' for a few of the nominations for this rotation. But any soldier who nominates for a short notice deployment or Full Time Service in the future, be advised, AIRN compliance and an up to date PMKeys record is essential to ensure you get to the plane.

By way of signing off, a special thanks to the OPSO, MAJ Falloon for all his efforts in providing top cover and representation for the Coy on this deployment. Never afraid to throw in the mouth guard and rip on the gloves on behalf of the company, his enthusiasm, especially considering he won't be getting onto the C130 on November 8 has been admirable. Thanks again Sir, and best wishes for your posting to Kapooka next year.

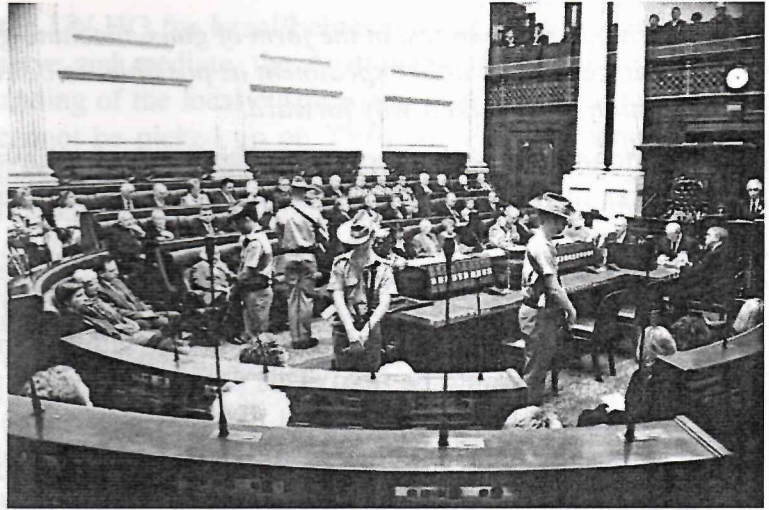
Finally, we look forward to a successful deployment and safe return, and just as important, next year's Ranger when we present Part II of the RCB 68 story.

Note: The first Hercules finally departed Tullamarine with some 70 RCB Members on board at 1322 hours on Monday 8th November. A delay of some hours, much to the annoyance of most participants, was caused when a 10% spot check for Dangerous Goods (DG) revealed three items, which contravened the DG Act. This caused a 100% check of *all* baggage. A reminder for all future air trips!!!

**THE GENERAL SIR JOHN MONASH GCMG CB VD COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE by
Major Leckie**

The Ranger 2004

On Friday 15th October 2004, I was privileged to be able to represent the 8th/7th Battalion at the Annual General Sir John Monash Commemorative Service held in the Legislative Assembly Chamber at Parliament House in Melbourne. This year's was the 6th Annual Service in the revived Monash Services. A Catafalque Party from the Monash University Regiment, a bugler and Cadet Under Officer from Monash's former school Scotch College and a number of 5/6



RVR Members participated in the service. Speakers were: *MONUR Catafalque Party*
His Excellency Patrick Henault, Ambassador for France to Australia;
Mrs Judy Maddigan MP, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly;
Major General K. G. Gillespie AO DSC CSM, Land Commander;
Rabbi Raymond Apple AO RFD, Senior Rabbi to the Australian Defence Force; and
General Peter Gratton AC OBE (Ret'd), Chairman of the General Sir John Monash Foundation.

John Monash was born in West Melbourne on 27 June 1865, to a family of Polish Jewish origin. Monash was educated at Scotch College, where he was Dux of his school at 16, and the University of Melbourne, where he completed degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Doctor of Engineering and Doctor of Laws. While at University Monash he became interested in the Australian military, and began his service career in 1887 with the Melbourne University's Metropolitan Brigade of the Garrison Artillery. Until the outbreak of war in 1914, he worked at learning the skills of artillery and engineering, as well as teaching and designing.

By 1914, he was in command of the AIF's 4th Brigade in Egypt, where, like most Australian troops, he experienced the disastrous effects of bad organisation and planning, and poor command decisions in the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign. It was to be in France in 1918 that Monash would truly make his mark.

After moving to the Western Front in 1916, Monash was promoted to Major General and took command of the 3rd Division. In the years leading to 1918, he and his troops were involved in many confrontations, including the Battles of Messines, the Third battle of Ypres, and Polygon Wood, with some successes.

In May 1918, Monash was appointed Corps Commander of the Australian Forces, and in that year he led some significant attacks by Australian troops in the final stages of the war. Monash's troops were involved in helping to stem the March German offensive. But it was during the battle at Hamel that Monash really secured his reputation. Monash's skilful planning and attention to detail resulted in a triumphant attack and capture of the town by Australian and American troops. This was the beginning of a series of successful campaigns by Australians that continued until their last battle in October.

Monash wanted to move away from what he considered to be outdated British tactics, believing that:

The true role of infantry was not to expend itself upon heroic physical effort, not to wither away under merciless machine-gun fire, not to impale itself on hostile bayonets, but on the contrary, to advance under the maximum possible protection of the maximum possible array

of mechanical resources, in the form of guns, machine-guns, tanks, mortars and aeroplanes; to advance with as little impediment as possible; to be relieved as far as possible of the obligation to fight their way forward.

He supported the view that the most effective warfare involved many different types of weaponry and defences working together- the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.

Monash was also a brilliant tactician. For example, he was renowned for the idea of bombarding German lines with gas and smoke shells together for a few days prior to an attack, so that the Germans were conditioned to associate the gas with the smoke. However, on the day of an attack, only smoke shells would be fired. This not only provided a smokescreen for the advancing troops, but it also caused the Germans to put their gas masks on automatically, which distracted them and caused confusion, impairing their visibility and communication.

The main thing is always to have a plan; if it is not the best plan, it is at least better than no plan at all.

Known as a meticulous planner, Monash held conferences with his officers before operations to generate ideas, to elucidate any problem areas, and to make sure that all involved were fully versed and familiar with the plan.

Monash was knighted for his services in 1918, after the 8 August advance. He continued his commitment to the war in the formidable task of organising demobilisation and the return home of Australian personnel.

After the war, he worked in many prominent civilian positions, the most notable being head of the Victorian State Electricity Commission, a role for which he continues to be respectfully remembered. He was a leading and loved public figure after the war, becoming involved in many public and private organisations, such as the Boy Scouts, and in the commemorations of Anzac Day. Monash was honoured with numerous awards and decorations from universities and foreign governments. Monash University and the Monash Freeway in Melbourne, Victoria, are named after him.

General Sir John Monash died in October 1931. Field Marshal Montgomery, the famous British army commander in the Second World War (a junior officer in the First World War), later wrote:

I would name Sir John Monash as the best general on the western front in Europe.

Monash's body lay in State in Queen's Hall in Parliament House in Melbourne before his funeral. From an Australian Population of four million such was the esteem in which Monash was held that an estimated 300,000 people attended his State Funeral.

John Monash will continue to be remembered as one of the greatest figures in Australian history.

In 2005, a Junior NCO or Senior Soldier from 8/7 RVR will be invited to attend this most interesting service.

BRIEF ON OVERSEAS INSPECTION TOUR BY THE LAND COMMANDER

Following the Monash Service at the luncheon held at the Naval and Military Club, the Land Commander, Major General Gillespie, gave an in depth run down on his tour of the overseas locations where Australia has troops committed.

The Ranger 2004

The commander and his RSM toured the UN HQ for Israel/Lebanon/Syria and reported that while there are sporadic engagements to observe and mediate, the Australians are able to regularly mix with the locals and get a good understanding of the local customs and traditions. They next visited Kuwait on their way to Baghdad. It cannot be picked up on TV reports but the temperatures in Northern Iraq, where there are Australians helping to train the new Iraqi Army, can be as high as 60 degrees. Night-time temperatures can remain as high as 53 degrees and a person can lose 2.5 kg during a nights sleep. Regular patrols are held of sleeping members each 3 hours to wake them up for a drink so that they do not dehydrate while sleeping. The General reported that despite what we see on TV, things are steadily improving in Iraq. The Iraqis do not fire on the Australian's vehicles but constantly remind the Australians of the 1 – 0 win they had over us in the World Soccer Cup. The General also said that driving through an Iraqi hot spot at close to 100kmh in a closed down APC in 50 + degree heat is 'a bit of a thrill!' From Iraq the team moved to Eritrea where Australia has a two-man team, then it was on to the Sinai.

From the Middle East, they moved to ET where approximately 100 Australian Army personnel, mostly engineers, are involved in infrastructure rebuilding. They should all be returned to Australia by June 2005. Next stop was the Solomon Islands where the once 2,000 strong deployment is now down to 70.

The general said that the Army, while the operational tempo is reducing, is in a period of transition with the Armed Recon Helicopters, new tanks, upgraded APCs and Bushmaster Infantry Mobility Vehicles coming on line. Exciting times lay ahead for all members.

PRIVATE FRANK PARTRIDGE: A MILITIA MAN'S VC

Private Frank Partridge was a member of the 8th Battalion Militia who participated in the Bougainville Campaign in WW2. He became the last VC Winner in WW2 and was the only Militia Member awarded a VC.



CITATION: On 24th July 1945 two fighting patrols, 8th Australian Infantry Battalion, were given the task of eliminating an enemy outpost in Bougainville which denied any forward movement by our troops. The preliminary artillery concentration caused the enemy bunkers to be screened by a litter of felled banana plants, and from these well concealed positions to their front and left the patrols came under extremely fierce machine-gun, grenade and rifle fire. The forward section at once suffered casualties and was pinned down together with two other sections. Private Partridge was a rifleman in a section which, in carrying out an encircling movement, immediately came under heavy medium machine-gun fire. He was hit twice in the left arm and again in the left thigh, while the Bren gunner was killed and two others seriously wounded, leaving only the section leader unwounded, but another soldier began to move up from another position. Private Partridge quickly appreciated the extreme gravity of the situation and decided that the only possible solution was personal action by himself.

Despite wounds and with complete disregard to his own safety, Private Partridge rushed forward under a terrific burst of enemy fire and retrieved the Bren gun from alongside the dead gunner, when he challenged the enemy to come out and fight. He handed the Bren gun to the newly arrived man to provide covering fire while he rushed this bunker, into which he threw a grenade and silenced the medium machine-gun. Under cover of the grenade burst, he dived into the bunker and, in a fierce hand to hand fight, he killed the only living occupant with his knife. Private Partridge then cleared the enemy dead from the entrance to the bunker and attacked another bunker in the

rear; but weakness from loss of blood compelled him to halt, when he shouted to his section commander that he was unable to continue.

With the way clear by the silencing of the enemy medium machine-gun by Private Partridge, the platoon moved forward and established a defensive perimeter in the vicinity of the spot where Private Partridge lay wounded. Heavy enemy medium machine-gun and rifle fire both direct and enfilade from other bunkers soon created an untenable situation for the Platoon, which withdrew under its own covering fire. Despite his wounds and weakness due to loss of blood Private Partridge joined in this fight and remained in action until the Platoon had withdrawn after recovering their casualties. The information gained by both patrols, and particularly from Private Partridge, enabled an attack to be mounted later. This led to the capture of a vital position sited on strong defensive ground and strengthened by 43 bunkers and other dug-in positions from which the enemy fled in panic.

The serious situation during the fight of the two patrols was retrieved only by the outstanding gallantry and devotion to duty displayed by Private Partridge, which inspired his comrades to heroic action, leading to a successful withdrawal which saved the small force from complete annihilation. The subsequent successful capture of the position was due entirely to the incentive derived by his comrades from the outstanding heroism and fortitude displayed by Private Partridge. (London Gazette: 22nd January 1946.)

4 Brigade Officers TEWT, 22/24 October 2004-11-04

With the Commonwealth Games being held in Melbourne in 2006, the 4th Brigade will be tasked with a major part of the venue security. With this in mind the brigade tasked the CO 4/19 PWLH to run a TEWT Weekend for the brigades officers. Five officers from 8/7 RVR attended.

The weekend commenced with arrival at Tobruk Barracks Puckapunyal of the participants. Someone decided that there should be a brief at 2200 at the PWLH Lecture Room, but of course no-one told us! A 'phone call to the right person at the right time saved us some embarrassment. Typical of the weekend was that there would be no orders issued until the next morning – no time to prepare! Saturday morning saw the participants driven to Lyon Hill in Land Cruisers and the new



2Lt Warfe's syndicate presentation

Mess for drinks and a meal, the real point of the day's activities, I think.

Army All-Terrain Vehicle, the Hi Ace. Our task was to secure the West Bank of the Goulburn River and act as the Fire Support for a River Crossing by a Brigade Group, which was to attack Hughes Creek Hill. By the way, our egg and bacon roll breakfast arrived on the hill at 1000 hours, along with the makings for tea and coffee (but no hot water) and the breakfast cereal (but no milk).

The next task was to look at the advance from Rowells Hill from the enemy point of view. The sandwiches for lunch arrived during our preparation time. After we had done our presentations and listened to our Directing Staff espouse his theories for most of our time, it was back to the Officers

Our next task was to report to the Newport Power Station at 0930 hours Sunday to carry out a TEWT on the defence of a Vital Asset in preparation for the Commonwealth Games. By chance again we found out that there was a briefing at 4/19 PWLH at 0800 hours before we left Pucka. Breakfast was to be at Newport, so every vehicle stopped at the first servo on the Hume Highway ensuring that all would be late at Newport. Breakfast did arrive at Newport about 1000 hours and you guessed it, bacon and egg rolls.

The morning went well as the security

of the power station proved to be an interesting challenge for a Company sized RRF. All was going along nicely until the Brigadier arrived and asked to be able to be present at some time in each of the five group presentations. A 1230 hours finish looked good but was blown out the window by the Brig and an over zealous Directing staff who held his group until almost 1320 hours. After more sandwiches for lunch, it was return vehicles to the depots and home.

An overall good learning weekend, but thank God we weren't fighting a war, the admin was not so good!



Sandwiches for lunch at Newport Power Station

Notable moments, comments and quotable quotes

CSM D phoning who he thought was CPL Harding and then abusing him for answering the phone incorrectly (is that the way you answer a 'f....g' phone) only to realise he rung the wrong number and was talking to an unsuspecting civilian.

Can anyone understand SGT Chucky Cartwright?

Question: Where is SGT Beales second home when conducting Mod 2 Courses at Pucka?

Answer: the Kitchen!

At the drawing of a raffle in the Ballarat Soldiers Club:

Private Santamaria, after drawing out the winning ticket, and reading an unfamiliar name on the ticket, asked the assembled crowd: 'Who the 'f....' is Madge Peek?' to which Maj Peek replied: 'I don't care what you call me, I will take the prize! (Major Peek parades as the Intelligence Officer (S2) with the battalion on an as required basis.)

OPSO, you can't leave! Who will play war games in the XO's office with the Adjutant!

From the RQMS when asked where was the Q article for the Ranger Magazine:

'We don't do anything here!' (We all know that!!!)

Which Captain, just before deploying to Malaysia, announced his engagement by saying: 'Well, she was up the duff anyway!' but quickly added 'But it was all planned!'

Adjutant: 'What is a foul snooker?'

THE ADVENTURES OF COMBAT TEAM CHARLIE by CPL HUTCHINSON

What is it about the Shepparton Depot that everyone wants to visit? Possibly it is the multi-thousand dollar upgrade to the barracks floor from wooden boards to carpeted concrete? Sure it provides an excellent indoor cricket space that even the Australian team would enjoy training on. Or even for the lawn bowls experience on such a level and true running 'green' (although the carpet is

blue). I doubt it is for our company here, or our reputation of being professional and experienced soldiers. All I do know is that our visitors always leave the worse for wear...

The night air was crisp as the two unnamed soldiers lay in their early warning position as the remainders of the reconnaissance teams were observing the target. Briefly they remembered the rapid way in which they had been recalled to Somme Barracks to be given a warning order, then a detailed briefing from the Intelligence officer then full orders from the team leader. Rapid preparations had followed as they mission-tasked their equipment from the orders they were given as battle preparations swung into action. Rehearsals followed by the covert insertion to the target area before they silently patrolled in to their current location. These soldiers of Combat Team Charlie were not just here to provide early warning of any approaching vehicles to the target area along the only road leading to the site, but also to capture with digital imagery the numberplate of any suspect vehicle. They lay in the darkness, concealed by superior camouflage and by vegetation as the radio crackled in squelch. One whispered to the other in confirmation that the two other observation posts had been established and were postured to record all the information they could by means of logs and sketch maps. The team commander hissed, "Confirm the camera is ready to go." The other soldier nodded, easily able to see his surrounds through night vision equipment. Suddenly a bright flash illuminated the bushes about them and a soldier swore. The commander hissed, "What the...?" A second flash illuminated the bushes again and they swore in unison. As if possessed, the digital camera had taken two shots of shrubbery and low scrubby bush. Not a bad night's work boys...

None can challenge the esprit de corps of Combat Team Charlie! If your unit is suffering, we highly recommend a small dose of RSL Raffle Night for you and your team! With ten to forty meat trays on offer on a Thursday or Friday night, it is a good way to get your team to adhere stronger than araldite. The secret to a successful raffle night is to control approximately half the tickets in the draw. Let's do the math; with fifty percent of the tickets, pretty much you can expect fifty percent of the prizes. Then with your newly acquired meat trays, it's off to one of the bloke's house and a slap up feed of BBQ meat.

Once again the warning needs to be reinforced of the dangers of motorbike riding with two significant members of Somme Barracks being 'touched up' by their own machines. Fellas, I tell you over and over again, you are supposed to ride the bike, not have the bike ride you!

The eight-day exercise in May for Combat Team Charlie was nothing short of a monumental success for all involved. Especially grand was the field phase where two platoons were set upon another in an attempt to locate and effectively destroy one another. Much was spoken and taunts were made long before we deployed to the field, especially from one Private soldier who shall only be known as 'F...n' milk' who threatened (in jest) a senior Corporal that he was going to find him and kill him during the resulting engagement. I am presuming that many other likewise threats were made amongst the other men of the differing sides. Once deployed, both platoons were tasked to seek out but not engage one another. Information was needed, not kills at this point. My troops were skilful (or lucky) enough to locate the enemy rapidly and even confirmed who our opponents were during the first day. On the second day however we again located an 'enemy' patrol that were proceeding to occupy an observation post onto our platoon headquarters. After many requests to the company to engage the enemy, we were left with only the orders, 'Observe, do not engage!' Disgusted with the company's lack of balls, my patrol was left with only one weapon to try and force an engagement with our enemy. The dreaded 'brown eye'! At this point our opposite number knew we knew where they were and as I still had my pants about my ankles, slapping in glee, my nude butt cheeks it was obvious to them our location. At this time my opposite number decided that the jig was up and he collected his cronies as they slunk away into the bush, a little wild eyed from the display of open contempt at their insertion skills. So began a great game of cat and mouse as we trailed the patrol. Our tracking was severely hampered as reports of other patrols were now coming

thick and fast across the net as we were dispatched to locate and engage yet nothing was found. Something was brewing, and it was going to be big. Then word came, our platoon was to converge on an enemy concentration and we were a kilometre away! Running to join the platoon through the close country of the Puckapunyal scrub to our direct front came the sound of a monumental gun battle. Sounding like two machine gun battalions had opened up on one another; we pressed on toward the engagement. Halting just before the engagement and shaking the section into extended line ready to sweep forward, the forward elements of a fleeing enemy section broke contact and withdrew directly across our front. Slotting the first, then second and third soldiers that came into view, we advanced further into the melee. I was seeking one soldier desperately... 'F....n' milk! Then as we bounded into the engagement there he was! It is something that only experience on battlefields, whether through training, or real-time can give you, I read the battle. Here was my chance...I launched my own personal assault... I will now recall the events of the beleaguered section that was now in the grip of a platoon pincer assault. Pinned from two flanks and assaulted from a third as the enemies weak underbelly was exposed to my section assault. 'F....n' milk turned to his section commander as he could sense a menacing presence somewhere near. They all knew that they were in trouble, especially as another section of their own had just fled, still smarting from a totally unjustifiable mooning, this assault was too much as they withdrew from battle. Another section had attempted also to flee but judging from the volume of fire that had come from that direction there was no escaping that way! 'F....n' milk shouted above the noise of battle and through the pungent clouds of coloured smoke, "What do we do?" The section commander looked about his position and judged for himself as he assessed his own viability for survival. His response was noted by the other members of the surrounded section, he shrugged and asked his second in command, "I dunno? What do you reckon?" 'F....n' milk swore. There was a moment of anxiety for suddenly the menacing presence that had set his fears telling him to survive, somehow, survive. That sense of self preservation was suddenly screaming up at the digger but it was too late...the burst of automatic fire that came from their flank was loud and close! As 'F....n' milk's head and eyes snapped around he saw the reason for his trepidation and fears as he realised that he had been slotted by the one person he had baited not two days before. The remnants of the section capitulated to the action and were killed or captured. 'F....n' milk stood, unarmed and alone in the midst of the firefight and crossed to his nemesis and shook his hand. He simply spoke, "Yeah. You 'f....n' got me." And so endeth the lesson for all you aspiring gun-fighters...do not incur the wrath of a section commander lest you be slotted in training, mooned or given a name like 'F....n' milk!

It is also understood that the new Commodore Acclaim 04 models now come with a batch of new features including the latest in dashboard electronics, additional power in kilowatts, a new braking system and the latest in wombat striking power. It is understood that a national recall is now under way to recall these new models as a Combat Team Charlie Medic found the car is *NOT* wombat proof.

REGIMENTAL MESS MIXED DINNER, 30th October 2004

The Annual Regimental Mess Mixed Dinner was held at Ranger Barracks on 30th October 2004. There were a number of farewells. From the ARA they were Major Falloon and Sergeant Taylor from the OPS Cell, the RSM WO1 Glover, WO2 Haley from SPT Coy, WO2 Cunningham from B Coy, WO2 Turner and SSGT Anderson from C Coy and Sgt Marsland from the Main Q Store. The Reserve saw Chap de Pyle take up a Short Service Commission of 5 years in Darwin.

Guests for the evening were Ron Austin, author of the histories of the 7th and 8th Battalions and his wife Sue. Ron was asked to talk to the gathering and his speech is included below.

I am delighted to be able to share with you a few thoughts about military history and tradition. The first question that should be asked is why history is important, and particularly military history. History of course tells us where we have been, it helps explain what we are doing today and assists

in predicting the future. One British military historian used the words 'Without a sense of the past, there can be no understanding of the present and no basis on which to model the future.'



Within the Army, there are well-established traditions, with each regiment or battalion jealously guarding its past. In the case of the 8th/7th Battalion, there is a rich history dating back to the formation of the Ballarat Volunteer Rifle Regiment on 28th July 1858. The Battle Honours won by the 7th and 8th Battalions of the 1st AIF, and later those of the 2nd AIF, added another rich layer to the traditions of the regiment.

Ron and Sue Austin

Some of the most obvious and everlasting traditions of any regiment are the deeds of the officers and men that led to the award of the Victoria Cross (VC). It was at Lone Pine, Gallipoli, that Lt Col 'Pompey' Elliott's 7th Battalion covered itself with glory by winning no less than four VCs. The awards to Lts Tubb and Symons and Cpls Burton and Dunstan, made the 7th Battalion unique, as no other Australian battalion has before or since, won four VCs in a single action! In British regiments, such traditions are constantly reinforced among all ranks, which leads me to the question: does every member of this modern successor battalion know about the heroes of the battalion?

Important as this is, there are also many other past heroes, who after having done their job, and in many cases made the supreme sacrifice, have merely slid back into almost forgotten history. Tonight I wish to focus on several such men.

During the epic Lone Pine action, other members of the 7th Battalion played a vital role in holding the trenches against the constant Turkish counter-attacks. Fred Tubb was holding his trench with 8 men, including Cpls Harry Webb and Fred Wright. The two NCOs acted as bomb or grenade catchers. Whenever the enemy threw bombs into the trench, Webb or Wright either caught and threw the grenades back at the enemy, or attempted to smother them using great coats or sand bags. Inevitably, such suicidal actions resulted in disaster. Wright was the first to die when a Turkish grenade exploded in his face killing him. Then Webb had both his hands blown off; undeterred by his wounds, Webb made his way unaided to the dressing station at nearby Brown's Dip, and was evacuated, but died on board the hospital ship. Webb was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) and Wright was Mentioned in Despatches.

LCPL Jon McAvoy, known throughout the 8th Battalion as 'the Lewis Gun King' in recognition of his prowess with that weapon, had won the Military Medal (MM) for subduing enemy machineguns and capturing 20 Germans in an earlier action, and during the fighting at Herleville Woods on 23rd August 1918 again distinguished himself. This time McAvoy shot down three enemy machinegun crews, then with his Lewis Gun rushed a German HQ, capturing the German battalion CO and taking many other prisoners. Unfortunately McAvoy sustained serious head and arm wounds when hit by a shell burst. McAvoy was recommended by his CO for the VC, but this was downgraded at higher HQ, and McAvoy received a Bar to his MM.

The final unsung hero is Pte Gilbert Robertson of the 7th Battalion, a Railway Worker from Maryborough. During the advance on Lihons on 9th August 1918, Robertson volunteered to go out under heavy enemy fire to try and rescue LCpl Schumann who had been wounded while collecting Lewis Gun magazines from casualties still lying on the battlefield. Robertson firstly continued the collection of magazines, which were by now desperately needed by the Lewis Gunners, and then he returned to the wounded Schumann and carried him back to safety, oblivious to the enemy bullets

falling about him. Schumann survived his wounds and was awarded the MM; Robertson was recommended for the VC, but this was subsequently downgraded at formation level to a DCM and then finally to a MM.

Whatever the weaknesses of the Imperial awards system were, soldiers of the 1st AIF accepted their lot, and did not constantly make representations to governments to have their gallantry awards upgraded to match the original recommendations. Gallantry awards for deeds in battle are honours bestowed via a system known for its somewhat amazing inconsistency, but they are not a right!

The soldiers I have spoken about tonight, although not VC winners, also made a magnificent contribution to the traditions of this fine battalion – their precious memory should be also treasured and upheld by the modern 8th/7th Battalion!

RVR Council by the Adjutant 8/7 RVR, Captain Stuart Purves

The RVR Council has met on two occasions this year and will do so again before the end of the year. It has been a busy year for both of the Battalions of the RVR, however there have been some interesting and positive initiatives by the council, in conjunction with the RVR Association.

An important RVR Association initiative has been the founding of an RVR Scholarship which will provide funding for a senior soldier or JNCO to travel to the U.K. to participate in an exchange with a Territorial Army (U.K. Reserves) Unit. The amount of funding for the scholarship is likely to be in the order of \$3000 to assist with airfares and other costs, although it is not expected that the scholarship will not cover the full cost of the trip. The exchange is aimed at giving a soldier who has performed to a very high standard throughout the year, the opportunity to go on a work, study or holiday trip to the U.K. whilst serving with a T.A. Unit. Funding has come from members of the RVR Association, businesses and the general community.

At this stage one scholarship will be offered per year with 5/6 RVR being granted the first scholarship. It is planned that the winner will be announced on 01 Dec each year and travel should be from 01 Jan the following year at a time when it is convenient for the exchanging T.A. Unit and the scholarship winner. Nominations should be forwarded through the chain of command to the battalion RSM or Adjutant who will compile a resume and references for submission to the scholarship selection panel made up of the members' CO and RSM, the Regimental Colonel and the President of the RVR Association.

The RVR Council has been exploring the option of establishing a Victorian Military Museum and has identified an unused building at Victoria Barracks Melbourne. The Regimental Colonel has had discussions with Corporate Support and Infrastructure Group (CSIG) representatives about the building and the proposal, and has received some positive initial feed back. It is planned to house all of the memorabilia that can not be accommodated in various messes, soldiers clubs, and depots in the museum along with private collection items and donations.

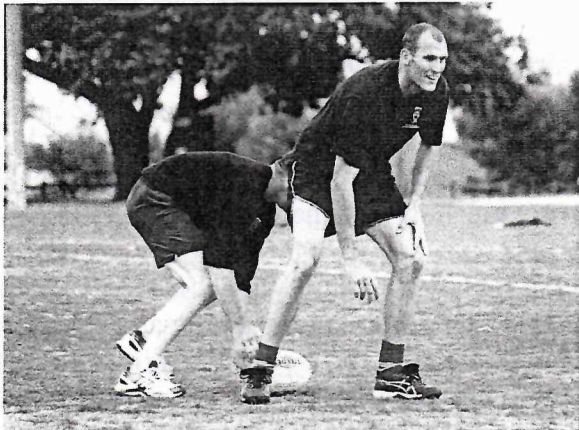
Earlier in the year the Regimental Colonel and the COs of 8/7 RVR and 5/6 RVR had an audience with the Honorary Colonel, His Excellency, Mr John Landy, AC, MBE, Governor of Victoria. His Excellency indicated his keen interest in the role of Honorary Colonel although he admitted that his time was very limited. It is hoped that the Honorary Colonel will be able to attend RVR functions and Battalion activities in the future.

CO 5/6 RVR has identified a Marksmanship Trophy that was originally used for the Victorian Militia Shooting Competition that is going to be used in the future as an award for an inter-Regiment shooting competition between 5/6 RVR and 8/7 RVR. Soldiers should expect to be

shooting for the trophy throughout 2005 with the inaugural presentation being made to the winning Battalion towards the end of the year.

The RVR Association has confirmed that it intends putting together Christmas packages for the soldiers deployed to Rifle Company Butterworth. RSMs of 8/7 RVR and 5/6 RVR will liaise with the CSM of the RCB Coy to come up with a list of items that the soldiers would like to receive at Christmas time and the association will endeavour to put them together, from Association funds and donations. It is likely that the packages will be sent over on one of the fortnightly C-130 flights before Christmas.

Odd Shots



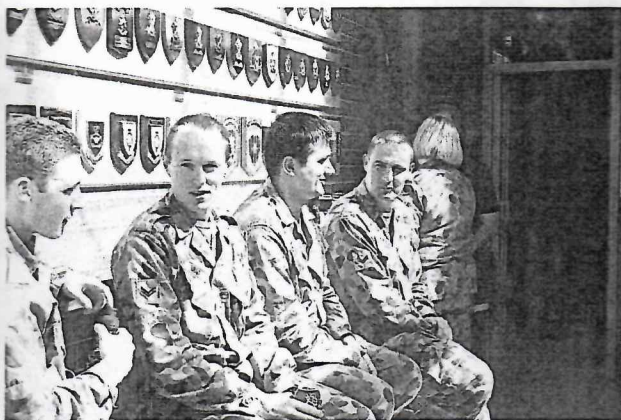
*Left: Chief Clerk's 'touch' Rugby
Below: Battalion Birthday 2004*



Remembrance Day Ballarat



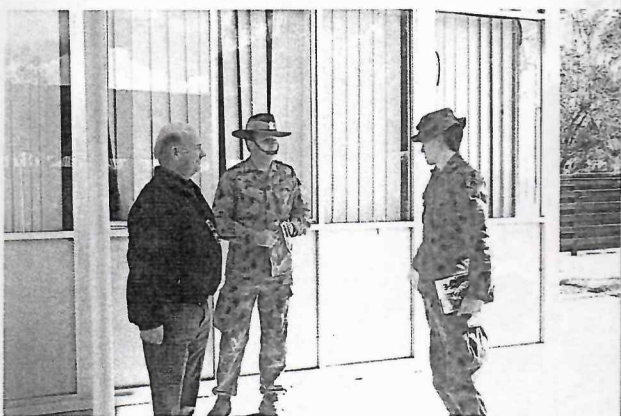
ARA Farewell 12th November



ARA Farewell 12th November



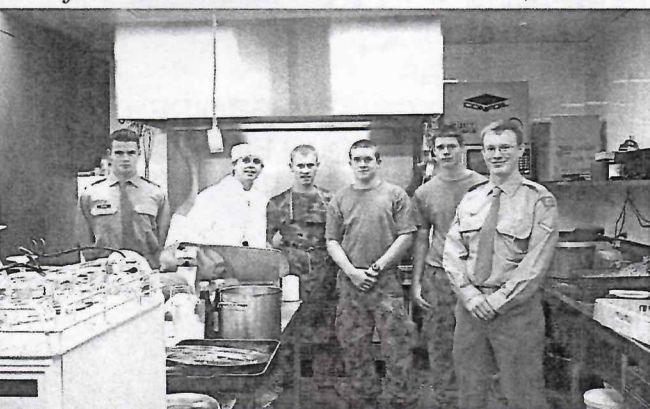
Chap Buijs farewelling Chap de Pyle



Presentation by RVR Association



Certificates awarded to Ptes Currie and Borowiak



The 'batchelors' table at Regimental Mess Dinner and dinner staff

REGIMENTAL FUNDS

Regimental Funds exists to provide the battalion members with useful goods, memorabilia and a supply of battalion related products such as T Shirts and Caps. Regimental Funds can also be called on to provide small amounts of cash to cover such items as wreaths at funerals. Obviously, any expenditure from the funds must be covered by sales, so get behind Regimental Funds by purchasing your needs through it. Contact WO2 Pellow in the Ops Cell.

A goods list is shown below:



8/7 RVR REGIMENT FUNDS PRICE LIST

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY PRODUCT PLEASE SEE YOUR
DEPOT MANAGER OR COY CSM

CLOTHING

UNIT PT LONG SLEEVE EMBROIDED SHIRTS	\$27.00
UNIT PT SHORT SLEEVE EMBROIDED SHIRTS	\$25.00
BN EMBROIDED RUGBY JUMPER	\$50.00
ARMY TRACKSUITS- BOTTOM	\$28.00
BATTALION PT SHORTS	\$10.00
RVR REGIMENTAL TIES	\$25.00
GLOVES	\$ 2.50

ACCESSORIES

SUNGLASSES – BLACK	\$10.00
LAPEL BADGES 8/7 RVR	\$ 4.50
LAPEL BADGES ARMY	\$ 5.00
LAPEL BADGE SANDS OF GALLIPOLI	\$10.00
ARMY CUFF LINKS	\$ 8.00
ARMY TIE BARS	\$ 8.00
8/7 RVR CAPS GOLD EMBROIDERY	\$ 4.00
8/7 RVR CAPS COLOUR EMBROIDERY	\$12.00

BOOKS

COBBERS IN KHAKI	\$40.00
OUR DEAR OLD BATTALION	\$40.00
WHERE TO FOR VALOR	\$16.95
THE MAD GALAHS	\$25.00
SOLDIERS STORY	\$20.00

PLAQUES

8/7 RVR DESK PLAQUES (SMALL)	\$13.00
8/7 RVR WALL PLAQUE (LARGE)	\$45.00

PRINTS

RANGER PRINTS (SET OF 4)	\$30.00
RANGER PRINTS	\$10.50

EQUIPMENT

THERMONATE MEMBERS	\$ 8.00
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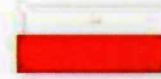
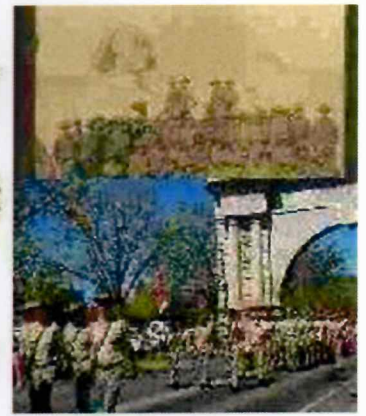
Assault Pioneer Task- Puckapunyal BSR

29 - 30 May 2004



CPL Baird, PTE Dinning, PTE Colley, PTE Guld, PTE Coates,
PTE Slaven, PTE Towers, PTE Robertson, PTE Wieland





BALLARAT

BENDIGO



GEELONG

SWAN HILL



LAVERTON

MILDURA



WARRNAMBOOL

SHEPPARTON



Rangon - Rattanak - Pindar - Rattanak - Rattanak - Rattanak
1878

8/7 RVR



Country Victoria's Own

Access the 8/7 RVR HOME PAGE on the internet

http://www.defence.gov.au/army/8_7RVR/index.htm

or on the Defence Web Site

http://intranet.defence.gov.au/ArmyWeb/sites/8_7RVR/

By Sgt Colin Taylor