



**8th/7th Battalion  
Royal Victoria Regiment**

*Swift & Brave - Yield to None*



# The Ranger

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

*2017 Edition*



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**Front Cover:**

LCPL Campanale and his section showing off the Mil Skills trophy at Puckapunyal.

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## The Address by the Commanding Officer



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this issue of the Ranger Magazine and to get an opportunity to mention a few of the highlights of 2017.

Although in many ways this was to be a year of consolidation after the achievements of the unit in making Battlegroup Jacka "Ready", no small feat in itself, and which was a testament to the leadership of our previous commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Tom Biederman, and his team. A shift of focus from collective training at the combat team level back to individual and small teams was our aim.

The year started with Force Preservation Training, as always, in the comfort of the National Service Lines at Puckapunyal. An opportunity for many of us to get acquainted with one another for the first time, given that a number of personnel had posted into and out of the battalion over the Christmas and New Year period.

The thing that struck me immediately, as I first spoke to the assembled groups, was the sense of pride and professionalism within the unit. It was in equal parts daunting and inspiring. A group of new members were welcomed into the unit and work commenced.

Throughout the year and the many training activities conducted, the Ops team – consisting of Major Andrew McQuilkin, Warrant Officer Class Two

Glenn Scott and Sergeant Dan Purcell – have been the core of our success. Their work has ensured that every activity has been conducted to a high standard and I sincerely thank them for their efforts.

I also need to thank the company commanders – Major Shane Armstrong (Admin), Major Jason Beck (Alpha), Major Stan Carnes (Bravo) and Captain Ted Guinea (Charlie) - for their work throughout the year. The challenges of dealing with dispersed personnel in multiple depots over broad geographic areas were theirs and they rose to it. Strong training programs that complemented and worked towards each of our training activities were used successfully throughout the year. The battalion XO, Major Cliff Gowers needs to also be acknowledged for his work on governance activities. Hardly the most martial of activities but essential to the successful running of the unit and he continues to perform well.

Over the course of the year we have committed approximately 50 personnel to either the Transit Security Element (TSE) operations or onto Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB). For the latter, our Ops team and Orderly Room, led by Warrant Officer Class Two Gary Kirk, formed the backbone of the mounting headquarters and ensured all 4 Brigade personnel were well prepared prior to their departure in the first week of November. A job well done.

Continued individual development has also been one of the key drivers this year. Headquarters 4th Brigade have been running a junior officer development program but their efforts have been underpinned within the unit by the unit's Adjutant, Captain Sam Beverly, who has made it one of his personal goals to improve the skills of the subalterns, both practically and theoretically. Although I am not convinced the lieutenants particularly enjoyed it at the time, I am sure they would agree with its benefits; in hindsight. Excellent work, Adjt.

The unit associations aligned with us have also continued their good work. I was particularly pleased to host Dick and Brian from the 8/7 & 2 RVR Association, who visited during our military skills weekend and awarded prizes to the champion soldier and the champion section – won by members of Charlie Company. BHQ also hosted a meeting of the RVR Association in

August. A contingent led by Neil Grimes, President of the Association and former CO of 5/6 RVR, spent the evening at the depot, culminating with a visit to the Ranger Museum. Myself and the RSM were also honoured to be guests at the annual 8/7 & 2 RVR Association Dinner held at the Warrnambool depot in October. Many thanks to all who turned up on the night and made it something to remember.

Throughout the year we have had many ceremonial occasions that we have supported. Of course ANZAC Day was the largest, with some 26 separate catafalque parties mounted over the course of a few days. Additionally, I was given the honour of leading the ANZAC Day march through Ballarat – something that will live with me forever, not least because of the rain. We have also supported or been in attendance for the Ballarat RSL 100th Anniversary celebrations, the unveiling of the Boer War Memorial in Canberra, Buninyong Avenue of Honour Rededication parade, Vietnam Veterans Day and Bahgallah WW1 Centenary Commemoration; amongst many others.

Some of the most heartening activities I have been involved with have been the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our officers and soldiers. This year we have presented two Soldiers' Medallions – to LCPL Champion (A Coy) and LCPL Grice (Admin Coy) – and promoted a significant number of soldiers to Lance-Corporal and Corporal. It is pleasing to see these young men and women continue to strive for advancement. A team from Charlie Company won the 4th Brigade Military Skills competition and will represent the Brigade at the 2nd Division Military Skills competition next year. They were the stand out competitors over the course of the activity and no one could doubt their professionalism and skills.

Recently, we have been honoured to learn that the Governor of Victoria, Her Excellency, The Honourable Linda Dessau AC, has agreed to be the Representative Colonel of the Royal Victoria Regiment. The Commander of the 4th Brigade, Brigadier David Westphalen; the Commanding Officer of the 5th/6th Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Josh Jardine; and I were honoured guests at Government House to meet with the Governor and discuss the role. Her Excellency is heavily engaged in the process and looking forward to supporting the activities of the Regiment.

So that is the year that was and we now look to 2018. The unit will continue to work towards the next iteration of Battlegroup Jacka, whilst implementing the outcomes from the 2nd Division's Capability Enhancement Review (CER).

The CER will have some significant impacts on 8/7 RVR. We will see the Sunshine depot; currently A Coy, 5/6 RVR, become B Coy, 8/7 RVR; and see a jump of approximately 20% in our numbers. Our Monegeetta depot will remain with Bravo Company but the remaining elements of our existing Bravo Company at Ballarat and Warrnambool will become part of the reorganised Charlie Company. Additionally, those members at Warrnambool, Mildura and Swan Hill depots will have their parading patterns changed to reflect the CER requirements. But along with that will come some additional recruiting for those locations in an effort to build their numbers. Sadly, it will also mean the loss of a number of Admin Company members to 4 CSSB. Although all of these changes will present some challenges, it is nothing the unit has not seen or done before and which ultimately will be carried out to the unit's betterment.

As is always the case, the end of the year sees numerous postings in and out. Our core team will remain remarkably stable, however we will bid farewell to our Regimental Sergeant Major, Warrant Officer Class One Barry Fawcett; who leaves to take up the same role at the 7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, in South Australia. The RSM has been a fantastic asset for the unit; a thorough professional who is always seeking to develop the best in the unit and its members. For a CO new to command, he has been the ideal sounding board and common sense check, providing wise counsel and ensuring optimal outcomes. I will be forever grateful for his work and can only wish him the best of luck in his new posting.

For all the others posting out, we look forward to seeing you upon your return to the Battalion; to those posting in to the unit, welcome.

Finally; to the members of the Battalion, continue your good soldiering; and to the families, thank you for your ongoing support. Without it we would not be able to provide the capability this nation deserves.

***David Cadogan-Cowper***

***Lieutenant Colonel***

***Commanding Officer***

***8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment***

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## RSM's Foreword



It 2017 once again started with the mandatory force preservation training which is considerably important to set the momentum for the year. Of particular note this year was the Adjutant installing his high standards of physical training on the Battalion, ensuring they conducted BFAs on both the Saturday and Sunday. I also heard him mention something about this developing mental resilience in the unit also.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank the Unit's Operations Cell for their professional dedication and capability focused work ethic. Of particular note, I would like to commend Sergeant Dan Purcell on his performance over the last two years in the Operations Cell. SGT Purcell's skills, knowledge and attributes are beyond reproach and should be an example for all reservists to achieve for. I personally thank SGT Purcell for his service on behalf of the Battalion. I wish SGT Purcell all the very best for the next step in his journey in the Army, that being posted to the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment.

I am once again proud to say that the Officers and Soldiers of the Battalion have professionally stood shoulder to shoulder with your Regular Army brothers and sisters and contributed to the Chief of Army's 10 Lines of Effort, the Reserve Transformation. More so now than ever, we are capability driven and if we are not contributing to the Army's Mission, we are simply bystanders; bystanders that will be left wanting whilst the rest are ready to deploy. I ask that everyone is brilliant at the basics and for everyone to display professional mastery. We must take every opportunity to improve ourselves and our teams. All members, regardless of Corps, must maintain their readiness and proficiencies. I remind you of the Army Mission Statement that is pertinent to us all; to provide a potent, versatile and modern Army to promote the security of Australia and to protect its people and interests.

It has been an absolute honour to be the Regimental Sergeant Major of 8th/7th Battalion, the Royal Victoria Regiment; "Country Victoria's Own". The Battalion has achieved noteworthy mentions this year, and you should all be proud for having contributed to this in some small or big way. I wish you and your families all the best for Christmas 2017 and a mission focussed 2018.

**Barry Fawcett**

**Regimental Sergeant Major**

**8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment**

**DUTY AND HONOUR**

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## 8/7 RVR Wins 4 Bde Mil Skills!

I was honoured to be asked to represent 8/7 in the Brigade Mil Skills competition and thought there were others far better suited to take this honour. As time drew nearer to the event those that were better suited fell away and in Steven Bradbury fashion I, along with a rag tag bunch of diggers from Monegeetta, Bendigo and Shepparton were left standing to carry the flag for 8/7 RVR. We didn't even have enough to make a section.



The event began with a 10km Tough Mudder course in which we completed the course at a good pace. Tackling objectives together and maintaining a tight group for the run sections in between objectives we did well.

After the Tough Mudder we began the Mil Skills part by completing 4 of 6 assessment stands. These were AACF with a contact in a defensive position, first aid & stretcher carry, section attack and construct a cat wire

obstacle. The last two assessments were Establish a CP tent for a PLHQ with PW handling and Site a CP tent with hardened generator. We completed each task set out with the stretcher carry being the toughest. After concluding the six stands a six hour navigation exercise began, 20 checkpoints within the time frame.



We completed 10 with a couple of wrong turns and some learning along the way as some of the inexperienced diggers took turns in navigating.



The shooting phase of the competition included LF6, (the highest score getting the top shot award and it was also scored as a section for the top section shoot award) followed by a kilometre run and falling plate shoot.

As it turned out we won the Brigade Mil Skills and we came equal first for Top Section Shooting Silver Plate. We also had the Top Shot of the competition in our 6 man section.

After some reflection I felt I was lucky to have been involved with a good bunch of guys that pushed through the challenging times, did what was asked and generally worked hard. We didn't do anything special; we just got the job at hand done.

Overall it was a great event; it was well organised and executed. We all had a great time however the real test will be the Divisional Mil Skills, then England, HERE WE COME!!!

**LCPL Orazio Campanale**

**Sect Comd**



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## A Coy

When I look back on my first year as OC A Company, I think firstly of our achievements for the year – and secondly of what we seek to achieve in the future.

I came to 8/7 RVR as an officer whose experience at all rank levels was much more based on service in 5/6 RVR. With the healthy rivalry between the two battalions, and serving so long in 5/6, I had always been one of the first to poke fun at our country cousins. But from the first day I took command of 8/7's biggest rifle company, I have learnt three things about my troops - they can shoot, they can run, and they show up – most of the time, anyway, and we're working on that. As regards everything else, we can train them. And, when I say "we", I'd like to express at the outset the good fortune I had in arriving to such a cracking company command team; My 2IC Captain Francis Dignam, an administrative powerhouse and a man steeped in the recent history of the battalion; My CSM, WO2 Pete Hardcastle, another long-serving and well-known member of 8/7 RVR; my deeply experienced and capable CQ, Sergeant Pete Marsh completed the side. Add Lieutenants Alejandro Zambrano-Perez and Mark Djurovic—both of whom I had a little to do with in their officer training – and later Lieutenant Simon Hampson, and the officer ranks were complete. And with three experienced platoon sergeants – Tim Knight, Nick Arundell and Rodney Spong – the platoon commanders had all the administrative and training support they needed.

But no ARES command team would be complete without its ARA component—WO2 Mitchell Nielsen and Sergeant Aaron Marcelino have worked tirelessly day-to-day to support the part-time force. Let me say at the outset that what we have achieved this year has only been possible because of the committed and thoughtful effort of this group of men—I thank every one of them.

I have to be honest in admitting that I joined the Army Reserve as a firearms enthusiast (and indeed I remain one). But along the way, and particularly as I assumed command positions, it became about the people. And those who serve under me now are the equal of any I have commanded in the past 30 years. I think back to that first Tuesday night earlier this year when I arrived at the Laverton depot and introduced myself to the first ranking member I saw—Sergeant Marcelino and within five minutes I was reunited with officers I already knew, and was at home from that first moment. (For those unfamiliar with our Laverton accommodations, I should make the point that they are, by any standards – well, Spartan. There are some excellent examples of 1940s mahogany, but the utility of the former No. 1 Aircraft Supply Squadron building, and its accompanying hangar, perhaps leave something to be desired for an Australian infantry rifle company under the IBM construct in 2017. Meanwhile, our Geelong cohort enjoys a facility so luxurious it could comfortably house a battalion).

So the year began, as always, with the annual readiness and Force Preservation weekend, this time at the former National Service Lines at Puckapunyal, familiar to many of the old guard from the 3 Trg Group days. Then came the usual round of AIRN shoots, BFAs and mandatory training. To the amusement of those assembled, the BFA track came up a little short, enabling a most enjoyable re-test bright and early the next morning. But what was really happening here was that a group of men and women, many new to the Battalion, was coming together for the first time, looking at the lay of the land and forming the command teams that would take us through the next year.

From the outset, incoming CO Lieutenant-Colonel David Cadogan-Cowper gave his battalion command team clear and

precise guidance as to how he wanted the year's training to progress. Input from his command team was both encouraged and welcomed. As part of the weekend, it was a pleasure for all to see Alpha's Sgt Tim Knight presented with his 20-year service rosette – a fitting reward for one of the most active members of the Company. Very strong results in the AIRN statistics, and the completion of our annual mandatory training, laid the foundation for the year's operations. As always, Alpha Company had a wide range of support tasks for Anzac Day across its catchment area, including the pre-dawn service in Geelong and the Ocean Grove service, both of which required catafalque parties. The Company hopes to march as a formed group in Geelong on Anzac Day next year, with plans currently being laid.

With ceremonial and commemoration activities concluded, the scene was set for the Battalion's field weekends. An early highlight was field firing on HE ranges, with the 84mm Carl Gustav the centre of attention. Through extensive Tuesday night lead-up training, many of the Company's soldiers took the opportunity to qualify on about the heaviest weapon most ARES infantry soldiers will regularly fire – and enjoyed the experience. The range was run by A Coy, principally by the CSM, Trg WO and staff. In addition to some very loud bangs, a couple of minor fires were produced, and swiftly extinguished to Range Control's satisfaction.

A section-level training weekend was held in bush not far from Ballarat, in what proved to be a very workable training area. Alpha Company's trainees for this weekend consisted almost entirely of section commanders and 2ICs, so a very experienced section indeed was on show. There was inevitably some head-butting among the Alpha males in regards to command positions, but all attempts were made to share the exposure. It was a vital refresher that resulted in our junior commanders getting to know each other far better.

This led nicely to a platoon-level training weekend, run by A Coy, in which a company minus consisting of two platoons conducted an exercise at Puckapunyal, with both platoons deploying to the field to conduct a training exercise aimed at practising patrolling skills and IMT. Lieutenants Zambrano-Perez and B Company's Liz Normand ably took command of their respective platoons and gained much training value in the ensuing exercise. This was echoed by their troops, many of whom had not exercised at platoon level for quite some time. Live firing came around again, for another full weekend – this time with the rifle, pistol and machine-gun, and the MAG-58 in a range of LFs. Many soldiers took the opportunity to qualify on the MAG-58 and the less often used service pistol, a novelty for many soldiers.

All this led towards the Battalion military skills weekend, in which Alpha Company was able to add two teams to the one each provided by Bravo and Charlie. Despite their best efforts, the Alpha teams were ultimately narrowly bested by the Charlie team, which went on to win the Brigade military skills competition later in the year. The Alpha males look forward to next year's rematch. Very pleasingly, this weekend also saw several Alpha Company private soldiers take their first step on the leadership ladder, assuming promotion to the rank of lance-corporal.

The year's end also saw the Company coming to grips with the new chest webbing and packs issued as part of the Solder Combat Ensemble, and the Company looks forward to using the new kit in the field next year. Finally, a combined officers and NCOs dinner was held for the two Victorian battalions at Laverton on Remembrance Day, with the usual round of promotions, and hails and farewells. As the year ends, with its wrap-up routines as we move into the stand-down period, we're holding a civilian range shoot for the company's firearms enthusiasts, of which there is more than a handful.

SGT Nick Arundell has arranged a day at the SSAA Little River range. Sadly, early hopes of the loan of a .50 calibre rifle for the day were dashed, but there have been promising signs of a range of rifles to be fired, and the prospect of some 5.56mm sponsorship from the likes of Winchester. The venerable .303 and a new Warwick WFA-1 straight-pull bolt action are also strongly rumoured to be making an appearance.

And so I end my words where I began, with my praise for your efforts this year and my hopes for our collective future. Our numbers will increase, as will our AIRN statistics. There will be more Tuesday night pack marches through the wilds of

Laverton and Geelong, and more weekends with our weapons in all weather conditions in the field. But most of all, I put our section commanders and their 2ICs on notice – 2018 is going to be your year. This is the year when we will see you truly gripping up your sections, leading from the front, training them, and generally driving them to create the Company we all know we can be. I look forward to your efforts – and so should every one of us.

**MAJ Jason Beck**

**OC A Coy**



**CHQ**

MAJ Beck, JR  
 WO2 Nielsen, MRW  
 SGT Marcelino, AMP  
 SGT Marsh, PR  
 CPL Cattell, TGR

OC  
 Trg WO  
 Trg SGT  
 CQMS  
 Coy Clerk

**A****Alpha Company****Geelong**

LT Djurovic, M  
 WO2 Hardcastle, PJ  
 SGT Almond, K  
 SGT Arundell, NG  
 SGT Spong, RJ  
 CPL Butterworth, TRJ  
 CPL Dinning, DA  
 CPL Lynch, MJ  
 CPL Towers, DR  
 CPL Vidot, AL  
 LCPL Challis, JL  
 LCPL Champion, CS  
 LCPL Dunne, SF  
 LCPL Studham, GR  
 LCPL Wojcieszak, JD  
 PTE Barby, PA  
 PTE Bubb, DJ  
 PTE Budge, JW  
 PTE Chandler, JR  
 PTE Clark, JC  
 PTE Daborn, AD  
 PTE Gouldson, BE  
 PTE Hore, TA  
 PTE Inchley, ZAC  
 PTE Kennedy, NJF  
 PTE Lowe JBP  
 PTE Markovski, M  
 PTE Mortimer, M  
 PTE Smith, JD  
 PTE Taylor, SS  
 PTE Thompson, TPF  
 PTE White, CE  
 PTE Young, G  
 PTE Gallagher, BT  
 PTE Gebert, TL  
 PTE Mullins, BJ  
 PTE Mullins, MJ  
 PTE Reed, WB  
 PTE Sedlins, EK  
 PTE Stretton, SL

PTE Thompson, BM  
 PTE Watts, JL  
 PTE Alderdice, JB  
 PTE Becker, RDZ  
 PTE Gould, HB  
 PTE Gunning, SA  
 PTE Marendaz, NJ  
 PTE Pitt, AM  
 PTE Suter, MBJ  
 REC Lee, JC  
 REC Noller, JC

**Laverton**

CAPT Dignam, FT  
 LT Hampson, SJ  
 LT Zambrano PA  
 SGT Knight, TV  
 CPL Beales, WM  
 CPL Dvoracek, BK  
 CPL Krupa, P  
 CPL Lennie, SC  
 LCPL Caddy, CJ  
 LCPL Carlisle, M  
 LCPL Lourey, CS  
 LCPL Ludeman, JK  
 LCPL Mottram, B  
 PTE Balshaw, SP  
 PTE Barber, JP  
 PTE Celestino, MK  
 PTE De Vos, PJ  
 PTE Duffield, TA  
 PTE Edwards, L  
 PTE Finlayson, AP  
 PTE Hadley, SD  
 PTE Hauser, ZN  
 PTE Ichim, S  
 PTE Lay, T  
 PTE Mauro, IJ  
 PTE Middleton, SI  
 PTE Nguyen, HT  
 PTE Ore Fernandez, HM

PTE Parsonage, LJ  
 PTE Reid, JLD  
 PTE Rodriguez, AC  
 PTE Schmidt, BJ  
 PTE Webb, JF  
 PTE Wyllie, DSW  
 PTE Baird, PA  
 PTE Bruce, MR  
 PTE Chand, TJS  
 PTE Convey, SG  
 PTE Crowe, NP  
 PTE Cuff, AR  
 PTE Dang, P  
 PTE Escudero, PJS  
 PTE Hendrickson, JID  
 PTE Hetman-Howie, AJC  
 PTE McGuinness, BL  
 PTE Nguyen, PMK  
 PTE Piang, BLT  
 PTE Ramsay, AJ  
 PTE Singh, S  
 PTE Croos Dabrera, HL  
 PTE Day, AW  
 PTE Flynn, AJ  
 PTE Greenwood, MJ  
 PTE Pramudiarta, HE  
 PTE Tran, HP  
 PTE Treeter, P  
 PTE Zuleta-Arias, JPJ  
 REC Abul Waffa, HH  
 REC Agosta, G  
 REC Hopkins, CB  
 REC Killoran, JE  
 REC Kretzschmar, BJ  
 REC McDowell, LS  
 REC Sawhney, S  
 REC Singh, K  
 REC Tiwari, VC  
 REC Yang, C

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## B Coy

After completing force preservation training in January, we have had another busy year as we have moved from the Ready Phase and the demands of Battle Group Jacka into Reset. With the departure of WO2 Glenn Scott to Ops we welcomed WO2 James Stewart to the coal face, who then made the Company do some drill.

Once again, we have supported Army in its force generation cycle, conducted the Battalion Field Firing Weekend, and provided support to Rifle Company Butterworth whilst also supporting the Transit Security Element on operations. Whilst maintaining these commitments we have also taken the time to recognise our forebears at the opening of the Buninyong Memorial and also the opening of the Fall of Singapore Memorial.

A number of members within the Company have been promoted also including Rob Powell to Captain, Daniel Horgan to Corporal, Shaun Brown, Darcy Demasson and Tristan Russell to Lance Corporal. It has also been pleasing to see LT Liz Normand graduate from RMC after a number of years effort to now join the Company. It is important that we keep growing the Company in this way and I would encourage everyone to plan ahead and attend promotion courses.

Being a member of Bravo Company for the last few years has been a real pleasure and I would like to acknowledge the support I have had from the Command Team, the Junior Officers and NCOs over this period.

*MAJ Stan Carnes*

*OC B Coy*



**CHQ**

MAJ Carnes, PSF OC  
 CAPT Dragojlovic, N 2IC  
 WO2 Stewart, JA Trg WO  
 SGT Fitton, S Trg SGT  
 CPL Murray, SW Coy Clerk  
 CPL Hiller, SF Coy Clerk  
 PTE Ireland, B Coy Clerk

**Ballarat**

CAPT Powell, RW  
 SGT Beales, TC  
 SGT McGregor, LS  
 CPL Horgan, DN  
 CPL Kelly, AT  
 CPL Short, GS  
 CPL Ward, RJ  
 LCPL Brown, SC  
 LCPL Coltman, GC  
 LCPL Demasson, DG  
 LCPL Portway, L  
 LCPL Rawson, SA  
 LCPL Sullivan, LJ  
 PTE Foster, LB  
 PTE Geddes, RJW  
 PTE Hughes, DK  
 PTE McMillan, SM  
 PTE Petrie, ZR  
 PTE Shalless, DC  
 PTE Snook, DW  
 PTE Terrill, JA  
 PTE Tyter, BOJ  
 PTE Butler, JP  
 PTE Dawson, BC  
 PTE Godson, DA

PTE Robinson, DJ  
 PTE Sault, DJ  
 PTE Barnes, JM  
 PTE Dow, SL  
 PTE Leger, MA  
 REC Breadsell, BJ  
 REC Keyte, JD  
 REC Mitchell, CL

**Monegeetta**

LT Normand, ER  
 CPL Deutscher, ME  
 LCPL Campanale, OV  
 LCPL Russell, TS  
 PTE Aulich, PCH  
 PTE Doneski, BB  
 PTE Gregory, MP  
 PTE Shannon, JM  
 PTE Sheppard, NJ  
 PTE Bourne, GA  
 PTE Boyd, S  
 PTE Cosentino, N  
 PTE Matin, KA  
 PTE Wright, MS  
 PTE Bocock, JK  
 PTE Reddy, VN

**B****Bravo Company**

PTE Sahin, D  
 REC Aulich, BJ  
 REC Hume, NT  
 REC Pillay, KW  
 REC Rutter, RJ  
 REC Tabernerri, C

**Warrnambool**

LT Laxton, MJ  
 CPL Petering, WJ  
 LCPL Callaway, RL  
 LCPL Kent, AC  
 LCPL Mahony, LJ  
 LCPL Walther, JW  
 PTE Cook, LF  
 PTE Francis, MHF  
 PTE Jennings, ML  
 PTE Alexander, CJ  
 PTE Buchanan, BA  
 PTE Crimmin, SB  
 PTE Finlay, DE  
 PTE Mibus, EP  
 PTE Pimblett, AR  
 PTE Robinson, MWJ  
 PTE Wilson-Rea, DP

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## C Coy

2017 started out with most of C Coy breaking their personal records for the BFA... until we realised that the track was too short. The next morning C Coy lined up (with the rest of the Battalion) to redo the BFA and finished off the Mandatory Training weekend feeling fitter.

Along with regular Tuesday night activities, the company concentrated for multiple weekends ... including HE training in March and the LFX in September. We also had a number of people at EX BOARs SPRINT in picturesque Cultana during the middle of the year. Our CSM WO2 Bob Creelman and Training Warrant Officer, WO2 Ryan Young have been central to our successful training and participation in 2017; and our Coy Clerk CPL Cameron Norman and CQ SSGT Michael Wakeling have kept us well equipped and administered.

Outside 'CHQ main', our depots have been capably led in Swan Hill (SGT David Logan) and Shepparton (SGT Roger Derrick); while LCPL Dale Rohkamper has been invaluable assisting me at 'CHQ tac' in Mildura. SGT Glenn Ludeman has also joined us at Bendigo to oversee the growth and development of the platoon at that location. There are many others at each of our locations that have put in extra time and effort to assist the efforts of C Coy and I thank them.

2017 is also the end of an era for C Coy, as the disposition of 8/7 RVR changes. With a move away from our country roots towards the bigger population base of Melbourne, our Coy will look a little different from 2018. For several years we have been Mildura, Swan Hill, Shepparton and Bendigo ... but next year that will change. Whatever the change 'on paper', I know that personnel from regional Victoria will keep punching 'above their weight' when it comes to service to our nation. I wish everyone an enjoyable break and a prosperous and successful 2018.

***CAPT Ted Guinea***

***OC C Coy***

## Mildura

This year has provided for several great training opportunities for the Mildura depot, with members from 108sqn coming to the depot to set up a comms network as part of their training, which gave Mildura members the chance to see the equipment & capabilities that 108 can bring to any area. They set up a standalone DRN with terminals we could use to access DRN (which we have very limited access to) & refresher training on the 152s as well as a chance to look at their FFR vehicle.

***LCPL Dale Rohkamper***

## Shepparton

Somme Barracks has had consistent numbers throughout the year with more than a dozen members parading in Shepparton under the eagle eye of SGT Derrick, and when Sarge is off chasing gold and enduro racing on his bike, his trusty offsidiers CPL Baker and CPL Wright. Somme Barracks is, it seems, currently the mecca for pre-fitness assessments, with the depot consistently having up to ten prospective ADF recruits turning up each week and being put 'through the ropes'. On the whole these are for ARA positions but recruiting for reservists has been strong and remains consistent with new recruits PTE Singh, PTE Mackenzie and most recently REC Johnson, joining the Depot alongside PTE Tulloch and PTE Clarke who transferred over from the ARA and are now living the Reservist dream.

There has been a strong focus on Battle PT and 'Back to Basics' training in 2016-2017 and as a result parade nights have been largely based around military skills including section attacks and weapon handling drills. Throughout the year training included (but was not limited to) discussions on tactics; 66mm, 84mm, and 9mm refresher training; as well as consolidating F88 and F89 basics.

Training Weekends were on the whole well attended, with members stating that the LFX weekend was well worth a trip to sunny Pucka. On the Mil Skills Training weekend, C Coy showed the rest of the Unit how it's done, with the regular training paying off and diggers from Somme being part of the successful C Coy team taking out first place on the weekend. Anzac Day was memorable for a number of reasons, with the depot acting as catafalque and flag bearers at the service at Benalla for the first time, whilst also participating again in the dawn service at Murchison. In both instances the Somme soldiers proudly represented the unit and Australian Army as a whole.

Congratulations go to the following pers: CPL Wright, who was promoted to full track earlier in the year. Not one to stay idle, Wrighty is currently completing his Sub 1 course for SGT. PTE Mackenzie who completed his Mod 1 Cam Course in June. PTE Sinclair, PTE Taylor

and PTE Elliot who successfully completed the Small Arms Course (SAC) in August. And of course SGT Derrick who continues to show everyone how it's done. Somehow he still gets to 11 on the beep test and this year has reached some awesome personal milestones; assisting with coaching the U/19 Australian National Downhill Mountain Bike Squad and fighting it out for a win in Masters 5/6 category of the Australian National Gravity Enduro Series while representing Australian Defence Force Cycling.

***PTE Sharon Jaudzemis***

**CHQ**

CAPT Guinea, EP  
 WO2 Young, RT  
 WO2 Creelman, RJ  
 SSGT Wakeling, MT  
 SGT Derrick, RS  
 SGT Logan, DJ  
 CPL Norman, CW

OC  
 Trg WO  
 CSM Bendigo  
 CQMS  
 Trg SGT  
 Swan Hill Depot Commander  
 Coy Clerk

**Bendigo**

SGT Ludeman, GA  
 CPL Bubb, TL  
 CPL Connor, SW  
 CPL Trewartha, RE  
 LCPL Malone, SJ  
 LCPL Otten, N  
 LCPL Tucci, CS  
 PTE Bailey, MJ  
 PTE Clarke, TJM  
 PTE Dodd, RM  
 PTE Everton, SJ  
 PTE Francis, MP  
 PTE Goodman, TJ  
 PTE Kirby, MR  
 PTE Schenk, JH  
 PTE Scott, AJ  
 PTE Cobden, SJ  
 PTE D'Rosario, BJ  
 PTE Northend, GL  
 PTE Oliver, AAR  
 PTE Paffrath, WJ

PTE Heffernan, JD  
 PTE Turner, OJ  
 PTE Whitty, BSM

**Mildura**

LCPL Rohkamper, D  
 PTE Blanch, A  
 PTE Bysouth, LK  
 PTE Cameron, AJ  
 PTE Hart, CPJ  
 PTE Hickey, MP  
 PTE Smith, JM  
 PTE Elder, M  
 PTE Howison, SG  
 PTE MacGillivray, MP  
 REC Crowhurst, JA

PTE Simpson, JS  
 PTE Sinclair, JA  
 PTE Stagg, TP  
 PTE Taylor, DP  
 PTE Tulloch, AJA  
 PTE Walsh, AJ  
 PTE Kearney, MG  
 PTE MacKenzie, RT  
 PTE Norwood, DA  
 PTE Peterson, JB  
 PTE Robinson, NP  
 TRN Liversidge, TW  
 PTE Russell, JM  
 REC Johnson, DL

**Shepparton**

CPL Baker, DS  
 CPL Wright, BN  
 PTE Elliott, JB  
 PTE Jaudzemis, SG

**Swan Hill**

PTE Batten, MJ  
 PTE Jobling, DM  
 PTE Dunstan, TR  
 PTE O'Flaherty, CJ  
 PTE Cooney, BS  
 REC Rolfe, EVL

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## Admin Coy

'What is and what should never be' is one of my favourite songs by Led Zeppelin. Whilst Robert Plant and Jimmy Page were thinking about an affair with Plant's wife's sister, the song title more or less nails the new restructure of Admin Company. As of January 2018, Admin Company will cease to exist. For the most part, existing members will be subsumed into 4 Combat Service Support Battalion, based in Broadmeadows, Melbourne. Some will remain as part of 8/7 RVR, namely a few Quartermaster Staff and a Transport Supervisor. In effect, logistic soldiers that have been parading in 8/7 RVR, will continue to do so, but will wear a different colour patch and answer to 4 CSSB. Those remaining will most likely be understaffed to provide the support the Battalion has enjoyed for many years. From a company that consisted of around 60 soldiers covering off medical, repair, transport, catering and stores, the logistic component will now consist of a few stores staff and a driver.

Once again Admin Company has been out and about. This year we have had soldiers on exercise and operations in Northern Australia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and representing the Army with great success in the Defence Ski Competition. We also had a new recruit on 'adventure training' at Base Camp in the Himalayas in Nepal. Of course, we have 'kept the home fires burning' by supporting training and conducting our own routine training. We have also taken the opportunity to complete a range of courses from promotion to vehicle qualifications.

The thing that has continued to impress me over the last three years as Officer Commanding of Admin Company is the enthusiasm and commitment to duty of the reserve soldier. Our soldiers have demanding full time jobs across the spectrum of vocations, yet they find the time and energy to offer their service to the nation, when they could be otherwise with their family and friends relaxing. It's not always easy to motivate yourself for a training weekend at Puckapunyal after a tough week at work in the middle of a wet and cold Ballarat winter, but our soldiers do – well most, in this example!

The thing I enjoy most about a reserve unit is learning about what soldiers do in their civilian life. It's a fascinating thing to be in the same uniform, in the same organisation doing the same thing with paramedics, police officers, window cleaners, prison officers, students, stay at home mums, security officers, teachers et al. The conversations are never boring and always healthy.

Whilst things will change for the logisticians of 8/7 Royal Victorian Regiment, the change will bring a range of new opportunities that will be positive for the soldier. Not least of those moving will be Warrant Officer Class 2 Mark Broemmer whose 37 years with 8/7 will end in Jan with a posting to 4 CSSB - an outstanding effort from a committed, loyal and hard-working soldier.

**MAJ Shane Armstrong**

**OC Admin Coy**

## Catering

The Catering Corps team members of Administration Company started out 2017 as a year of rebuilding with the promise of two new ex-ARA Corporals.

CPL Alborough made his appearance at Ranger Barracks and has fit in nicely with his other Catering team-mates. He has recently assisted the Army Women's Ski Team in the snowfields and is deploying to Rifle Company Butterworth over the November to March period.

CPL Jess Moore had made arrangements to pursue a career in Corrections at Hopkins Prison in Ararat and decided that in order to establish herself in that career she would go on the Inactive Army Reserve list. We wish CPL Moore well in her career path.

CPL Matthew Watson continues to provide the mid-range expertise and catering supervisory skills. Like all of us, CPL Watson continues to juggle the Work-Life-Army Reserve balance, as you can't be in two places at the same time on the weekend.

PTE Rachel Dodd has made the most of available opportunities after having recently deployed to Papua-New Guinea and half way through this year has taken the opportunity to deploy to Northern Australia as part of the border control force with OP Resolute.

Sadly, we are losing one of our most respected cooks of 7 years - PTE Lisa Edwards from Laverton. Lisa's chosen civilian field of Nanny/Specialised Child Care has ramped up so she has decided that a spell in the Inactive Army Reserve is favourable to discharge. We wish Lisa all the very best with her work and hope to see her return one day.

Our newest addition to the Catering Team is PTE Adam Hetman-Howie. Adam was newly recruited into Catering in 2016 and having completed his recruit training was panelled to attend his MOD 1 Catering in August. Adam is very keen and is progressing nicely. Adam is looking forward to completing his IET with the MOD 2 course in the next 12 months.

Which of course just leaves me...? Like all of the rest of the Catering Team, I will be joining the boys and girls at 4th Combat Service Support Battalion (4 CSSB or '4 Sizzbee'). While many of my ARA peers identify strongly with a particular Battalion, the same could be said for the reserve members of 8/7 RVR. The Battalion has been my second home for the last 37 years (my wife will tell you that sometimes I even spent more time at the unit than I did at home during that time). I have totally enjoyed my time here. I have spent many days training, mentoring and enjoying the company of many fine specimens of local soldiers and officers. I have served under 16 consecutive Commanding Officers. Some may think it sad that I have only been posted to just one unit, but I see it more as a badge of honour that brings with it a deep sense of pride. I have been extremely lucky to provide the daily food requirements for the soldiers of the Battalion in all ranks from private through to the position of Warrant Officer Caterer. My mission is, and has been since 1983 (after 3 and half years as a grunt), to ensure that the members of this Battalion have been well looked after in the culinary field, and at this point in time I believe I have achieved that aim. It is my future plan to continue that tradition and also hone our skills and share them with 4 CSSB, and other units as required.

All of the 8/7 RVR Catering Team members are being posted to 4 Combat Services Support Battalion in Maygar Barracks, Broadmeadows, effective 16 Jan 18. While we will still be parading at our normal home depots, our formal ties with 8/7 RVR will be severed. A new world order, so to speak.

## **WO2 Mark Broemmer**

### **Q Store**

The year kicked off with a new RQMS WO2 Brenton East arriving in Ballarat from sunny Brisbane. The Main Q Store stayed the same with Marty Griggs as Log Manager, SGT Dylan Aspland as TQMS, CPL Vaugh Edwards Tech and Clothing Stores, and CPL Brendon Daniels LSA / Governance Reporting and RSG. In the Company Q Stores we had SGT Pete Marsh at Alpha Coy, SSGT Mick Wakeling at Charlie Company and SGT Trevor Beales with Bravo Coy. We had induction week in the first week of February at Puckapunyal in the National Services Lines, which gave the 'Q -wees' some time to get to know our reserve 'Q-wees': PTE Glen Linane, PTE Maddie McMaster, PTE Benjamin Schmidt and PTE Sharron Jaudzemis.

During the year SGT Aspland and CPL Edwards both worked on the new garden area, including the addition of the artillery piece at the back gate. I think Eddie and Dylan may have missed their calling in life - should have been landscapers.

PTE McMaster looked after the issuing of all the new Jackets which took up most of her time after she returned from TSE working out of Darwin. At least you got out of the cold Maddie! Once Maddie was done issuing jackets we got the new SCE (pack and webbing system), which has taken a lot of space at the Main Q Store.

There was also Legacy Day, so all the members from the Main Q were out selling Legacy badges.

CPL Edwards was sent on TS 2017 which was a last minute stabbing. Eddie found working with all the units up North was interesting to say the least, but he enjoyed the field pay – albeit late. Then when he got back he went straight off to SUB 2 SGT in Albury, but still managed to get away for a midyear cruise.

SGT Aspland went off to do SUB 4 WO Quartermaster, also at Albury; and, by all reports, made the right decision to drive home on the last day off course. Well done Dylan!

Even SGT Beales got into the promotion courses fever completing his SUB 1 WO, his first promotion course since 1994. Well done SGT Beales.

Throughout the year the Q Store supported the ARES weekend activities, from the HE weekend to unit and BDE Milskills.

With the new 2 DIV UE review a lot of the ARA Q positions were closed down, which will bring new teething problems. But we have managed to pick up a new depot at Sunshine, so hopefully we have some new ARES 'Q-wees' come across from 5/6 RVR to join the team.

For next year the Q Store will look quite different as WO2 East is posted to 2 Commando Regiment in Sydney, after just one year in Ballarat. SGT Aspland is off to join the Navy. Not really, he is off to 2 RAR in Townsville and SGT Pete Marsh is heading to 6 RAR in Brisbane. CPL Daniels and CPL Edwards are going to be the only two left at this stage with Marty. So please take it easy on them.

#### **WO2 Brenton East and CPL 'Eddy' Edwards**



### **Transport**

Hello all from RACT. Well it's been a busy year. We had LCPL Yortson and PTE Kelly get their G-Wagon code, CPL Grice and PTE Kelly qualified as ADI, as well as ADI on a G-Wagon course. LCPL Challis competed in the Biathlon Skiing competition which the team won; congratulations to her and the team. LCPL Yortson completed her MOD 2 CPL course and LCPL Challis completed her gap training. CPL Grice completed his Transport Manager's and SUB 4 CPL courses. Congratulations to CPL Grice, as not only did he get promoted to LCPL and CPL, he was also awarded the Soldier's Medallion. This year we see the unit structure change, and as a result LCPLs Challis, Yortson and PTEs Bubb, Brewer, Daborn, Kelly, and William are all being posted to 4 CSSB. We wish them good luck, but we will still see them as they are not leaving location, just the unit.

#### **Sgt Adam Turpin.**

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## Sig Pl

The battalion has a long history of regimental signals, with a Signals Platoon having been previously based out of the former Maryborough depot, and at other locations across the state. More recently, the unit has maintained communications on an as-needed basis. During the last force generation cycle as part of Reinforcing Battlegroup Jacka over 2014-2016, 8/7 RVR successfully demonstrated that it could produce an effective mounted and digitised Combat Team signals detachment. The unit also worked closely with 5/6 RVR and 108 Sig Sqn to form the BG S6 cell and platoon HQ. Alongside the CT Sig Det, this was 8/7 RVR's contribution to the BG Jacka Signals Platoon, a mixed team of around 35 soldiers and officers from as far afield as Tasmania, Brisbane and the Pilbara Regiment. The BG Jacka Signals Platoon supported numerous exercises over the period, culminating in Ex HAMEL in mid-2016.

In the wake of HAMEL 16, it was clear that 8/7 RVR would be required to maintain a regimental signals capability on a more regular basis in order to effectively support unit activities and future force generation cycles. This fact has been further reinforced by the steady introduction into service of the Harris suite of digitised radios and the Battlefield Management System (BMS), which have demanded an increasing depth of technical proficiency from operators at all levels of command. In time, every member of the unit will be expected to maintain at least a basic level of proficiency with the new radio systems, and this will require a more sustained training and skills-retention effort than has been the case for past generations of communications equipment. The live fire range weekend in September saw the unit taking its first steps towards establishing this sustained signals training effort, with one of the concurrent training activities for the weekend being a basic combat communications course refresher, provided by CPL Towers. Members of 8/7 RVR can expect this kind of training to occur periodically in the future.

Over the coming year, 8/7 RVR will continue to develop its signals capability. However, in the future this capability will come to look substantially different to the signals platoons of the past. If it is to play an effective role as part of a Battlegroup supporting an ARA Combat Brigade, the unit must adapt to the rapidly changing reality of information warfare. This means that regimental signallers must not only become familiar with digitised and networked communications systems, but also begin to understand the limitations of a contested, congested and complex electromagnetic environment and the importance of electronic and cyber effects in the modern battlespace. This is an exciting opportunity for any signallers, riflemen and commanders keen to play a role in BG Jacka, on operations, and at various other activities. As the unit's signals capability develops, it will increasingly be at the forefront of 8/7 RVR's evolving role, and those involved will be exposed to new equipment, new training, and an insight into the most rapidly changing aspects of land warfare.

**CAPT Leon Holt**



**Senior Command Group**  
 LTCOL Cadogan-Cowper, DR CO  
 MAJ Gowers, CN XO  
 WO1 Fawcett, BF RSM  
 CAPT Beverly, SR ADJT



**Ballarat**  
 MAJ McQuilkin, AJ OPSO  
 MAJ Runciman, AL Trg Offr  
 CAPT Davis, DC Padre  
 CAPT Holt, LM RSO  
 WO2 Kirk, GE CC  
 WO2 Scott, GM OPSWO  
 WO2 Free, RR Welfare Offr

SGT Holl, JW ORS  
 SGT Purcell, DJ OPS SGT  
 CPL Hall, KJ Pers Clk  
 CPL Medwell, PJ Rec Offr  
 CPL Sawant, S Mov Clk  
 PTE Currie, MJ BHQ Clk  
 Mrs Saunderson, DL Reg Clk

**CHQ**  
 MAJ Armstrong, SA OC  
 LT Collis, BF 2IC  
 LCPL Paizis, GJ Coy Clerk  
 Mr Griggs, MG Log Mngr



WO2 Broemmer, MKW Ballarat  
 WO2 East, BA Ballarat  
 SGT Aspland, DJ Ballarat  
 SGT Turpin, AR Ballarat  
 CPL Alborough, NW Ballarat  
 CPL Daniels, BJ Ballarat  
 CPL Edwards, VC Ballarat  
 CPL Grice, AD Ballarat  
 CPL Watson, MS Ballarat  
 CPL Tuck, RL Laverton  
 LCPL Yorston, MK Ballarat  
 PTE Brewer, PR Ballarat

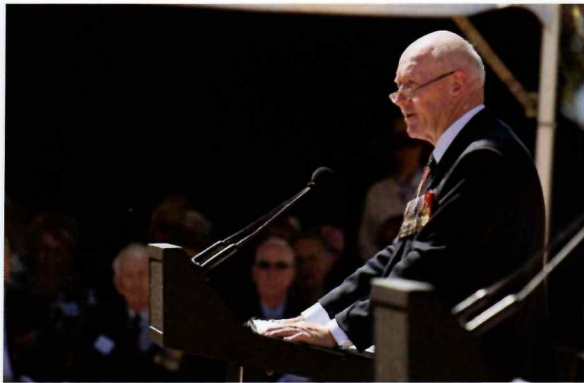
PTE Howard, RJ Ballarat  
 PTE Kelly, MP Ballarat  
 PTE Linane, GD Ballarat  
 PTE Marriner, NJ Ballarat  
 PTE McMaster, MM Ballarat  
 PTE Trewella, DT Ballarat  
 PTE Williams, ST Laverton  
 PTE Somkiat, JP Laverton  
 PTE Singh, D Shepparton  
 REC Hayward, JM Ballarat  
 REC Swann, LP Bendigo

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## Snapshots, the Year That Was

### 75th Anniversary of the fall of Singapore 15 Feb 27

Ranger Barracks Soldiers from both Bravo and Admin Company Participated in the 75th Anniversary of the fall of Singapore. This was held at the National Prisoner of War Memorial in Ballarat. The ceremony was nationally televised on the ABC Network and pulled a crowd into the thousands from all around Australia and from overseas.



In attendance was the Governor-General, Sir Peter Cosgrove; Major General Mark Kelly, AO, DSC, Retired; and Major General Simone Wilkie, who was representing the Chief of Defence Force.

The follow is a list of personnel that where involved in the ceremonial support.

WO2 Stewart: Event Co-ordinator  
CPL Ward: Catafalque Commander  
LCPL Yorston: Catafalque Party Member  
LCPL Grice: Catafalque Party Member  
PTE Geddes: Catafalque Party Member  
PTE Williams: Catafalque Party Member  
PTE Tyter: Catafalque Party Reserve  
PTE Brown: Catafalque Party Reserve  
SGT Holl: Flag Orderly  
CPL Hiller: Flag Orderly  
CPL Murray: Wreath Orderly  
CPL Sawant: Wreath Orderly  
CPL Hall: Wreath Orderly

In addition to this ceremony, there also was the unveiling of the Grieving Mother Memorial. This was conducted prior to the main service at the Arch of Victory and was attended by the CO and RSM of 8/7 RVR.



WO2 James Stewart

### The Spirit of ANZAC Centenary Experience (SACE), Geelong 21–27 Feb 2017

The Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience is a travelling exhibition that tells the story of Australia's involvement in the First World War; and the ensuing Century of Service of Australia's armed forces in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations in which Australia has been involved.

The Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience follows a chronological timeline spanning the period from pre-First World War Australia to the present day, using a mix of visuals, artefacts, audio and film to engage visitors.



An important feature of the experience is the curated 'local stories' zone. These zones were created with the local communities and contribute a legacy for each region. The Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience is the flagship community event of the Australian Government's Anzac Centenary National Program.

Late January 2017; A Coy was directly approached to support the SACE tour in Geelong for February 2017. The support consisted of members of Navy and RAAF, along with soldiers of 8/7 RVR from the Geelong region, to act as guides and ushers for all visiting members from the local community. The members who assisted in this role were: SGT Rodney Spong, SGT Katina Almond, SGT Nicholas Arundell, LCPL Jai Wojcieszak, PTE Dylan Bubb, PTE Nathan Crowe, PTE Jordan Hendrickson, PTE Martin Markovski, PTE Mel Mortimer and PTE Ben Thompson.

During the 7 days of spirit of ANZAC Centenary Experience; Geelong saw a total of 11,807 visitors with the busiest days being Saturday with 2,633, and Sunday with 2,684 people through the doors; all of which were greeted and assisted by our own members of the Battalion.

**WO2 Mitch Nielsen**

### March HE Weekend

The March HE Weekend was a great start to the field weekends for 2017. It was an opportunity for soldiers to complete training and shoots across the MAG 58, 84mm and GLA; as well as get back out into the field environment.

Weapons were issued after arrival at Puckapunyal on Friday night and the training groups were split up on Saturday morning, with preference given to those who needed to qualify on MAG 58. Officer Development training was then run by the ADJT around various TEWT scenarios.

Two ranges were run concurrently to cover all weapon systems in the available time and section level training was also run concurrently in order to set up the soldiers for upcoming activities.

The March HE weekend commenced 2017 with team building, familiarisation and professional mastery of arms. It set up 8/7 for the year and prepared each coy for the April FFX weekend.

**LT Simon Hampson**

### ANZAC Day (Mildura)

ANZAC Day saw the Mildura depot participate in several services in the Mildura and Wentworth regions. Nice weather saw a large turnout for the dawn and morning services at the Mildura cenotaph, with members of the catafalque party performing drill to a high standard.

PTE Laura Bysouth who hails from Wentworth also got to participate in her local community's service and was asked to speak about her time with the army and service in the reserves. CSM WO2 Creelman also spoke at the Wentworth service and their attendance was much appreciated by the community.



Members gathered at the Kiarivu Barracks Mess for a traditional ANZAC Day gathering after lunch before spending a quiet afternoon together at the Mildura RSL.

**LCPL Dale Rohkamper**

### April FFX Weekend

From 28-30 April 17 members of 8/7 RVR consolidated at Puckapunyal Military Area to conduct a live firing activity. A number of different training scenarios were devised to revise, refresh and hone soldier's skills. After conducting initial weapon revision, soldiers engaged in blank firing activities. Building up from pairs and into brick sized elements, soldiers practiced the quick attack with the help and guidance of SNCOs. Concurrent to this, other members assisted in the setup of a sneaker range for a later live firing activity. Once complete, brick sized elements cycled through the sneaker range. The obvious and extensive planning paid off and soldiers were equipped with a full suite of munitions, which enabled them to practice deploying both the 66mm and the GLAs. Brick commanders gained experience in their fire control orders and multiple different targets required quick and decisive action. Overall; the weekend was a large success, with all training objectives met, fair weather, and some enjoyable training all around.

**LT Liz Normand**

## May Ross Creek Weekend

In May 17, 8/7 RVR conducted a Field Training Exercise in the Ross Creek State Forrest. The 8/7 RVR 2017 training programs have been designed to provide soldiers with the ability to develop and refine their individual skills, building up their section capabilities and then moving into platoon level activities later as the year progresses. This weekend was designed to enable the practice of section level warfighting skills in a platoon environment.



Building on an enemy picture presented in the initial orders, Section Commanders received regular FRAGOs as they moved their sections through a bullring of activities. Sections were able to develop and practice their section level warfighting skills in an enabling environment. Once the activities commenced; sections were tasked to complete a quick attack, a deliberate attack, and an ambush. In order to achieve these missions, soldiers were able to practice their patrolling techniques, obstacle crossings, CASEVACs, halts, and PW handling. Additionally; the tempo of the weekend enabled directing staff to identify areas for improvement and conduct retraining as required.



Once A, B and C Companies had completed their field training activities, they consolidated back at Ranger Barracks for resilience training delivered by the Padre. This resilience training package sought to test and challenge serving members to determine how they would respond to difficult situations while emphasising the need to take the hard right, not the easy wrong.

**LT Liz Normand**

## Buninyong Avenue of Honour Centenary 01 Jul 17

One of the highlights of the 2017 year has been the march to commemorate the anniversary of the Buninyong Avenue of Honour. The march took place on Saturday 1 July and was conducted exactly 100 years from Saturday 30 June 1917 when the original Avenue of Honour was planted.

Buninyong is an important part of the Battalion AO. In addition to being the first inland town proclaimed in Victoria, the Avenue features 164 trees which commemorate the men from the former Shire of Buninyong who lost their lives in WW1. The 164 soldiers came from all parts of the old Buninyong Shire. There were 51 from Buninyong, 15 from Warrenheip, 14 from Yendon, 13 from Elaine and 9 from other districts. After a number of years of wear and tear, the local RSL began to rejuvenate the run down 2km Avenue of Honour 3 years ago, in time for its centenary. At the same time; organisers raised \$80,000 through grants and donations from local community and service groups, and various individuals.



The march involved 600 soldiers, cadets, school students, community groups, bands and the Creswick Light Horse; and was attended by the Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Angus Campbell.



**MAJ Stan Carnes**

## Jul Mil Skills Weekend

A challenge that awaits most sections on any Choco weekend is that it's rarely the same group of blokes working together and often members have to assume different roles and responsibilities. Although this can cause headaches at times, it is also an excellent opportunity for diggers to 'step up' and demonstrate their experience and capabilities. This was true for the recent Battalion Mil Skills, where different depots came together to form sections and many soldiers were plunged into the unknown.

After a standard sub-zero Pucka night, four eclectic call signs departed the FUP early Saturday morning and headed to their respective activities. Eight separate stands over the next two days awaited them, with 1.5 hours to complete each stand and 30 mins travel time between each. Activities such as the stores carry, wiring task and section attack demanded teamwork and communication, whereas weapon handling, navigation, the observation lane and judging distances relied on individual soldier skills. Under the watchful eye of the stone-faced DS, Section Commanders and 2IC's were tested on their C2 and ability to interpret, plan for and carry out orders.



31A

CPL Robert Trewartha

PTE Mathew Kirby (acting 2IC)

PTE Ben D'Rosario

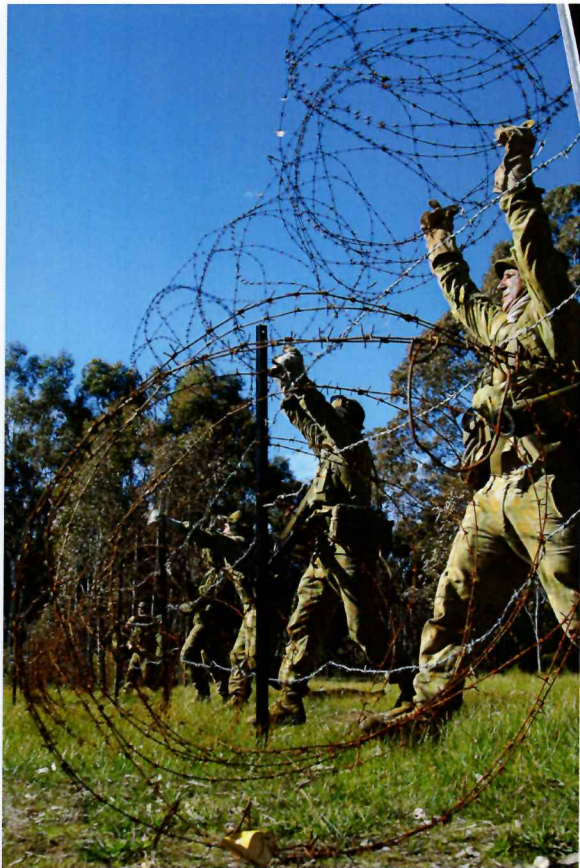
PTE Steven Cobden

PTE Jacob Elliott

PTE Dale Norwood

PTE Matthew Kearney





The weekend provided challenges for all. Whether it was working with a new team, in a different role, recalling tab data you 'data dumped' many moons ago, or simply adjusting to the icy weather; call signs had to come together and work collectively to achieve tasks. All should be proud of their efforts over the weekend and should ensure they reflect and share what they did well, what they learnt and what could be done better. At the completion of the activity, it was the boys from Charlie Company that took the title of Champion Section, with PTE Kirby taking individual honours as Champion Soldier; a fantastic team effort.

***CPL Robert Trewartha***

### **Ex Cool Shot 29 Jul – 11 Aug 17**

For 12 days in August this year a group of 8/7 RVR members got the incredible opportunity to represent our unit and the whole of Army in Exercise Coolshot 17, the Inter-Service Biathlon Championships at Mt Hotham.

SGT Almond, Cpl Bubb, LCPL Challis and PTE Williams all returned from previous years, with CPL Cattell joining us for her debut. We arrived on the mountain on Sunday to meet the 27 other Army members both ARA and Ares from all over Australia where we then commenced out

first week of intense training. Training involved full days of x-country ski techniques, endurance, race practices, and of course shooting; followed at night by lessons on equipment maintenance and familiarisation with the 22 calibre sporting rifles.



CPL Tegan Bubb was also invited to complete a Level 1 Nordic Ski Instructor course, which she completed over the course of 2 days and went on to assist in the instruction of novice skiers during the first week. Everyone showed incredible promise and with the 8/7 members making up 5 of the 8 people in the female team we were set for a win!

Day 1 of race week began with the Army, Navy and Air force teams competing in the biathlon sprint. The biathlon sprint is a short version of the biathlon distance which sees competitors' race x-country laps to the range where 2 serials of 5 rounds are shot; one standing, and one prone. The Army team set the standard high coming out of the day with a win in every category, men and women, senior and novice. Our very own PTE Siobhan Williams winning the Novice females by more than 2 minutes ahead.

After that we had a taste for glory and Army refused to lose a single race, including biathlon distance and both team relays. On our very last day everyone lined up for the long 10km x-country ski back to Dinner Plain; determined, we all worked flat out for over 40 minutes



and came in first and second seniors (PTE Williams, LCPL Challis) and first, second and fourth novice (CPL Bubb, CPL Cattell, SGT Almond).

All the ladies represented Army with determination and enthusiasm and contributed to us taking out the ADF Trophy with Navy coming second, and Air Force third. The ADF Novice Trophy was awarded to PTE Siobhan Williams after her clean sweep and stepping up into a senior position when required and LCPL Challis received the ADF Women Championship Trophy.

We would like to thank everyone who gave us the opportunity to compete this year and a special mention to CPL Nathan Alborough for joining us up the mountain and cooking 3 feasts a day for the Army team.

*LCPL Jess Challis*

### Small Arms Coaching Course 31 Jul – 04 Aug 17

Over the Jul - Aug period 8/7RVR held a Small Arms Coaching Course; qualifying 14 soldiers from the Battalion in coaching techniques for the in service rifle and machine gun. During the week long course, the 14 soldiers learnt the art of identifying common problems with firers shooting techniques, and how to correctly fix these problems using constructive critiques and the new adaptive firing positions currently being taught and used within the regular Battalions.



Once in the WTSS; students were given an in depth lesson from George the WTSS operator on the ins and outs of what the WTSS has to offer soldiers, and throughout the entire week George was there giving students constant, in depth, and extensive, lectures and feedback. The students were also lucky enough to have had the aid of soldiers from the Defence Force School of Signals holding platoon.

This dramatically enhanced the student's confidence when coaching, as most of the soldiers from holding platoon were fresh out of Kapooka and new to shooting. Once all students had passed the assessments at the end of the week, it was time to put to practice what they had been teaching others over the week on themselves. Students realised that their shooting had dramatically improved, with the majority shooting under a 100mm grouping for their group and zero with rifle; but the main one was that their group sizes for the machine gun had improved tenfold considering most had not shot a machine gun in years.

It was stated by students how beneficial it was to get back onto the tools; but more importantly that they now they had the knowledge and confidence to take back to their depots and start building soldiers shooting abilities ready for the September live fire. The students and staff wanted to again give a big thanks to the soldiers from Holding Platoon, Defence Force School of Signals, for their time and co-operation; and also a shout out to George (the WTSS operator) for his continuous input during the course.

**SGT Aaron Marcelino**

## Sep LFX Weekend

Just a few weeks after the soldiers of 8/7RVR returning from Platoon operations in sub-zero conditions at Puckapunyal; they found themselves back, this time on the firing-range.



A good turnout showed that not even the knowledge of a restless Friday night's sleep could deplete the pure joy of the thoughts of a Puckapunyal sunrise melting the frost away ... and firing live rounds down range.

The range activity itself was seamless and a testament to the efforts of planning staff, most notably Trg WO C Coy, WO2 Young. Activities included the LF6 on F88 and qualifications in both the 9mm pistol and Mag 58. C Coy NCOs were pivotal in the delivery of lessons for weapon qualification and the NCOs and Junior Officers of the Bn worked efficiently in the conduct of ranges.

Morale was high after the first day and while some soldiers chose to relax in the Multi-User Depot (MUD) watching a movie, others were content to perfect their night quarters in the glow of light from the weapons sheds at the MTR. OCs, 2ICs and CSMs also had time to discuss and finalise PARs between firing rounds down-range and organising other activities.

The professional behaviour of all personnel made the activity rewarding in terms of training and networking and marked another successful weekend for the Bn.

**CAPT Ted Guinea**

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## The Ranger Military Museum

The Ballarat Ranger Military Museum is the name given to the Unit Historical Collection of 8/7 RVR. The home of the 'museum' is the old 'Army' hut in the yard near the Rear Entrance to Ranger Barracks. The then Quartermaster of 8/7 RVR, Captain Bill 'Yank' Akell MID, a veteran of the Battle of Long Tan, set up the 'museum' in a couple of underutilised rooms in the old Ranger Barracks (now Dan Murphy's) in July 1989. When the old Ranger Barracks closed in 2001, the 'museum' moved to a temporary home in a council hall in Sebastopol. When the new Ranger Barracks were opened in 2003 moves were made to secure an old 'Army' hut that had been a Quartermaster's shed in the old Ranger Barracks and the temporary Cadet Hut in the B Coy Depot at Broodseinde Barracks in Russell Street (now housing). The hut was moved to the new Ranger Barracks and opened as a 'museum' on the Battalion's 150th Birthday on 9th August 2008. Since that date the 'museum' has grown to the point where another 'Army' hut is needed to display the Unit Historical Collection properly.

With the centenary of events of WW1, the museum has been busy. August 2014 saw a ceremony for the centenary of the raising of the 8th Battalion AIF, a battalion based mainly of Ballarat East's 70th Infantry. August 2015 saw ceremonies for the raising of the 18th Company, Australian Army Service Corps AIF, based on Ballarat's Militia 18th Company, AASC and the planting of a small 'Lone Pine' grown in Canberra from a seed of the original 'Lone Pine'. February 2016 saw a ceremony for the centenary of the raising of the 39th Battalion AIF in Ballarat. The battalion was raised in Ballarat, trained in Ballarat and departed for 'The Great War' from Ballarat. The battalion was often referred to as the 39th (Ballarat) Battalion.

This year has been somewhat quieter, with no centenaries to commemorate, but nevertheless has been busy. In January the museum was visited by Rosemary Fellows from the USA. Rosemary is a Grand-niece of the well-known WW1 identity, Brigadier 'Pompey' Elliott. Elliott completed his secondary schooling at Ballarat and although born further north-west from Ballarat in Charlton, always referred to Ballarat as his town. There is a 'Pompey' Elliott statue in Sturt Street.

The 'museum' was visited early in the training year by the new CO, Lt Col Cadigan-Cowper, along with his Staff Officer, the Adjutant Captain Beverly and the RSM WO1 Fawcett. The RVR Association, an association of Infantry and former Infantry soldiers, held it's once a year meeting in the barracks and visited the 'museum' to finish off its evening.

Mid-year the 'museum' had its annual Year 9 visit from Ballarat Grammar School, with 167 students and staff passing through. Later in the year two groups from Sebastopol's Phoenix College also visited the 'museum'. The 1st Alfredton Scout Group visited, and all were keen to look at the 'museum' collection of plastic weapons (they do look real!)

Other visits during the year were from the Ballarat & District Early Holden Car Club and the Armstrong-Siddeley Car Club. The 'museum' supported the Stratham Historical Society Open Day with a display.

The 'museum' has supported Ballarat's 'Memory Atlas' project where people were 'videoed' talking about all matters relating to World War One. <https://www.facebook.com/TheMemoryAtlas/>

The 'museum' also supported the City of Ballarat funded Historic Urban Landscape Ballarat Songways Music Mapping with information on the music of the once 2 RVR Band.

[http://www.hulballarat.org.au/cb\\_pages/songways\\_ranger\\_barracks.php](http://www.hulballarat.org.au/cb_pages/songways_ranger_barracks.php)

In late October three members of the 'museum', and a member of the Navigators Historical Society, undertook training held at Ranger Barracks by Museums Australia (Victoria) to enable them to undertake Oral History Recording. Oral History is aimed to record the lives of people, particularly with some military background, so that future generations will be able to hear what the generations before them had done. The recordings will be 'Uploaded' onto the Victorian Collections Website. <https://victoriancollections.net.au/> there is some amazing Victorian history on this Website!

For many years the 'museum' has been looking to expand, but funding has always been the issue. The Museum Committee is hopeful that by this time next year plans will be well in place to have a second 'Army' hut next to the existing hut and the 'museum' will then be much better placed to display the 8/7 RVR Unit Historical Collection.

The museum is open each Thursday afternoon from 1 – 4 pm and the fourth Sunday morning 9am to noon. It is also 'Open by Appointment'. The first point of contact for serving members is through the Curator, WO2 Mark Broemmer. Entry is by 'Gold Coin' donation. Details of opening times can be found on the 'museum' website [www.ballaratmilitarymuseum.org.au](http://www.ballaratmilitarymuseum.org.au)

**Niel Leckie**

**Museum Curator**



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## End of an Era

I am a very proud, long serving member of 8/7 RVR with 37 years of continued loyal service to the Battalion (I think I'm qualified to beat my own drum a couple of times...) so here goes.

I have been serving with 8/7 RVR (and its previous designation of 2 RVR) since 22 September 1980 and I wish to relate to you a few changes and occurrences that have transpired within that time. The 1980's were a period of renewal. The Vietnam War had only finished for Australia 8 years prior. The Australian Army Reserve was being built up with a massive media campaign utilizing the music of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture with huge Recruit courses being held at Puckapunyal "Other Rank's Training Wing" (we now know as the National Service Lines). Approximately 900 men and women were on my recruit course. Jungle greens, starched, with razor sharp ironed creases were the order of the day. After a camp/course you were paid in cash on the last day. Normal Reserve pay was via cheque in the mail every six months with no idea for exactly what you were being paid.... the pre-computer age. PTE Pay level 1 was \$60 per day.

The early 1980's Army was awash with veterans of the Vietnam War and many of these were the nucleus of the ARA Cadre staff. These men were demi-Gods with their experience and wisdom. We trained with the L1A1 Self Loading Rifle, The GPMG M60 and the 9mm F1 Sub-machine-gun. These were our 'bread-and-butter' weapons. It was a little bit exotic to actually have the unit receive some M16A1's and be trained on them, not to mention the M79 Blooper or wombat gun, the rarely encountered M203 and occasional use of the L9A1 Browning Pistol. You were very lucky to complete your 343-1 training by throwing a couple of live HE M26 Grenades. Towards the end of the 1980's there was a lot of exciting changes afoot.... New boots, new state-of-the-art F88 Rifle and F89 LMG, New DPCU uniforms and new webbing that pretty much resembled the previous except in DPCU But it was NEW!

Localised training usually consisted of weekends patrolling the Enfield and/or Creswick State Forests looking for the "Musorian" armed forces that had 'invaded' Australia. Food back in those days was prepared in the kitchen at the old 'Ranger Barracks' and Hot boxed out in metal containers and dished out to us in our pan-set-messing and usually consumed cold..... movement to and from Puckapunyal or the local training areas was in the back of the older style Mk 3 International trucks. Very rarely saw a bus...

The most exciting thing that you could hope for was a two-week exchange EX to New Zealand or the extremely exotic destination of Hawaii. In 1988, at the tender age of 25 I was lucky enough to travel to NZ on one such exchange EX. We left Australia in early March after a long hot summer and landed in lush green NZ. The poor New Zealanders coming here didn't know what hit them with our 'Indian Summer' of that year exposing them to some mid/high 30's days. Poor buggers almost starved as they were introduced to our rationing system where portion control was a lot different to their open-slatther system back home.

Over the years I have been associated with 8/7 RVR we have seen some difference in the pay system. At one stage, we had to use tear-off tokens as a sign-in for any work that we completed. As previously mentioned, we have had 6 monthly cheque payments, this being latter reduced to quarterly, monthly and the current system of fortnightly into your bank account. Parade nights used to be Monday evenings between 1930 and 2230. Various changes of Government have seen us being taxed on half of our pay; being requested to work 'voluntarily' every second week; parade for three hours and get paid for two; no week nights/work 1 Saturday in a month; 2 x 9 day block exercises instead of parade nights.... I think I have seen it all.

During the heady days of the 1980's, 8/7 RVR covered nearly all of Western Victoria, with depots in Ballarat, the old Ranger Barracks in Curtis St and B Coy in Russell St, Maryborough, Bacchus Marsh, Shepparton, Echuca, Swan Hill, Mildura, Warrnambool, Hamilton, Portland.... The RVR flag flew proudly almost everywhere. Geelong, Bendigo, Monegeetta, and Laverton were more recent acquisitions.

Various forms of military transport were sometimes dangled as 'bait' to entice wary soldiers into making themselves available for 16 day camps in various exotic locations (mostly sunny Puckapunyal), flights on Caribou's, Chinooks, Iroquois', C-130's, Bell 206 Jet-Rangers and the brand new Black-Hawk helicopters to name a few. We got to work with then state-of-the-art Leopard tanks and M113 Armoured Personnel Carriers.

Exercises into the 1990's saw the unit take part in Exercise Kangaroo 89, K 92 and Northern Explorer; later on it was Crocodile EX's and Talisman Sabre. By this stage Australia was again providing military support on a world stage with ARA units travelling to Somalia, Rwanda and Cambodia to name a few. The majority of Army reservists could only dream of getting a gig.... For many Reserve Soldiers the cold hard reality was that our main calling would be if ever Australia was invaded we would be ready with minimal extra training required.

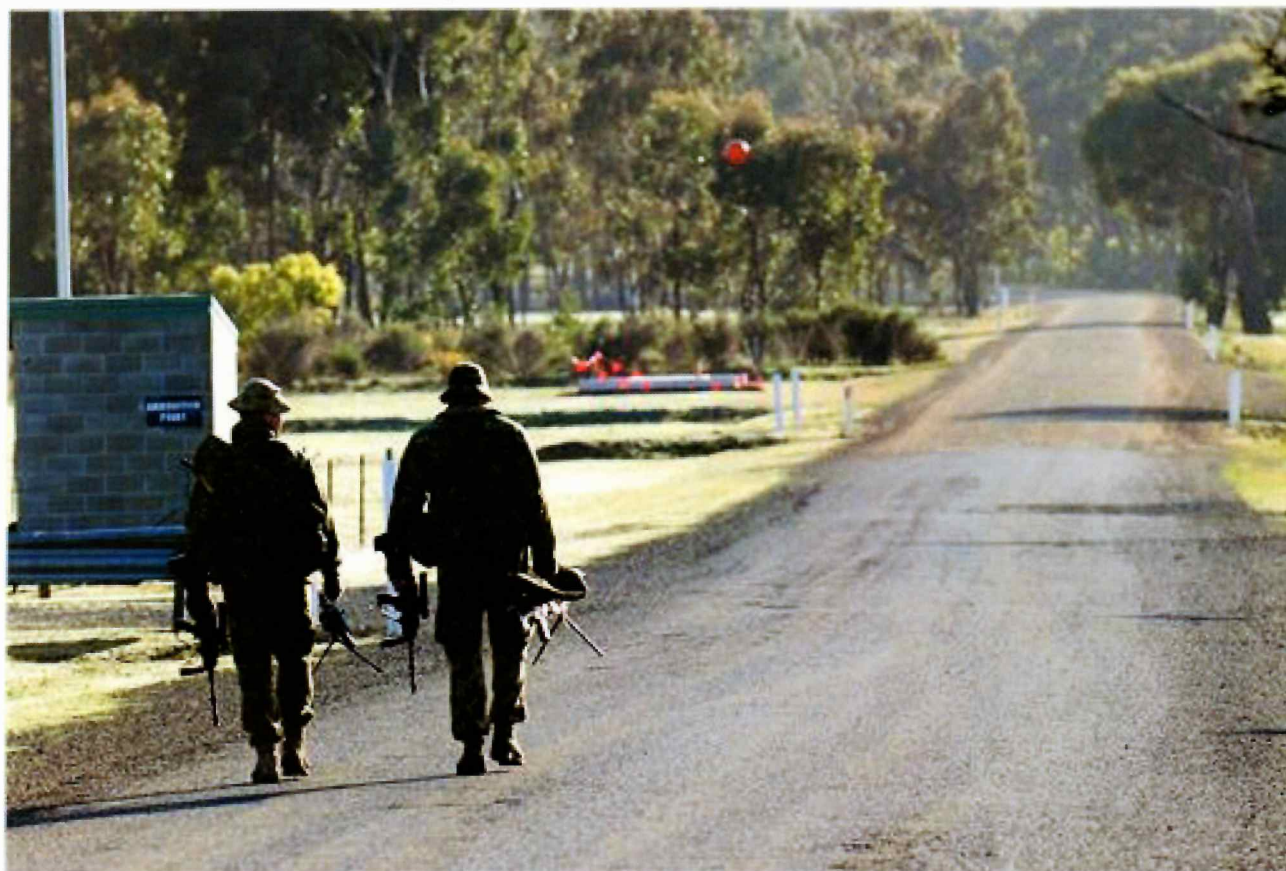
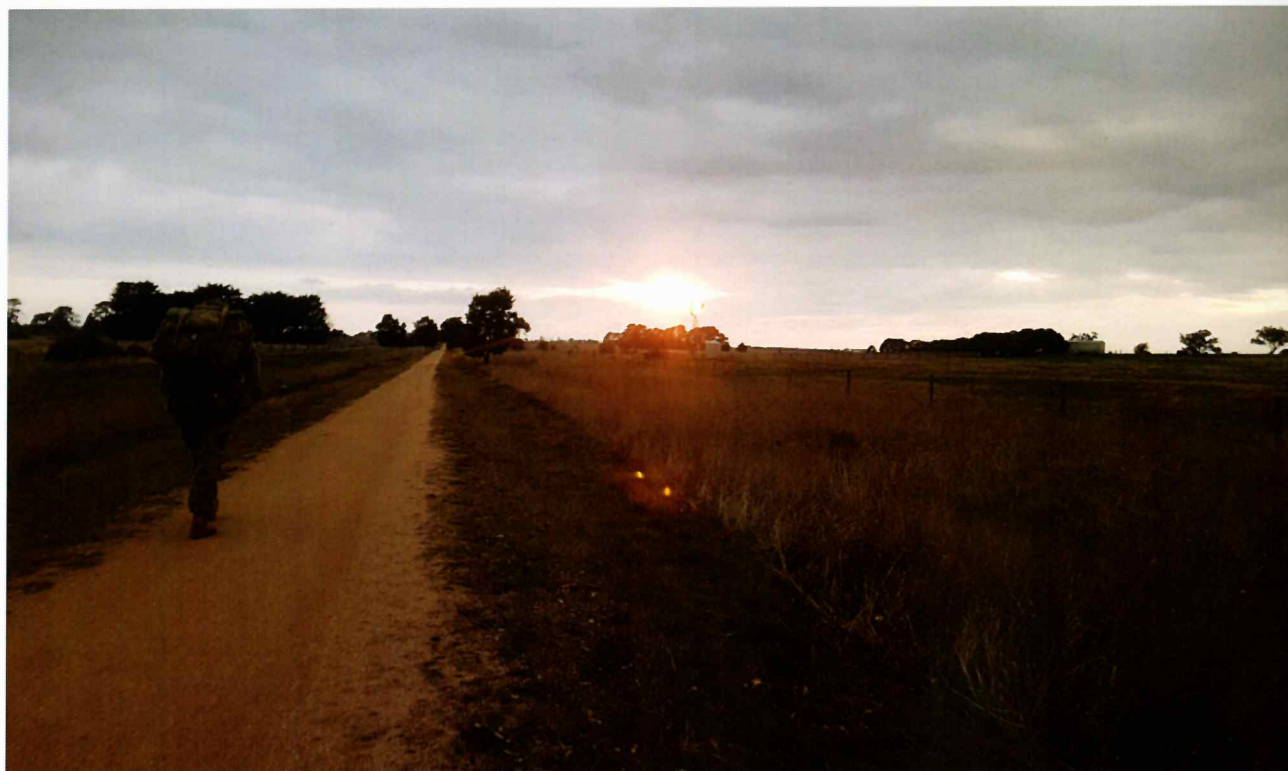
With the arrival of Australian troops in East Timor in 1999 it looked as if everyone would get an opportunity to 'get some operational experience'; various sorties in the Solomon Islands, the war in Iraq, and Afghanistan has given many Army Reserve soldiers the opportunity to serve their country overseas. Many of us have not received the same opportunities and it is not due to lack of trying or desire to serve....people higher up the food-chain make decisions that greatly affect our aspirations every day. Keep trying.

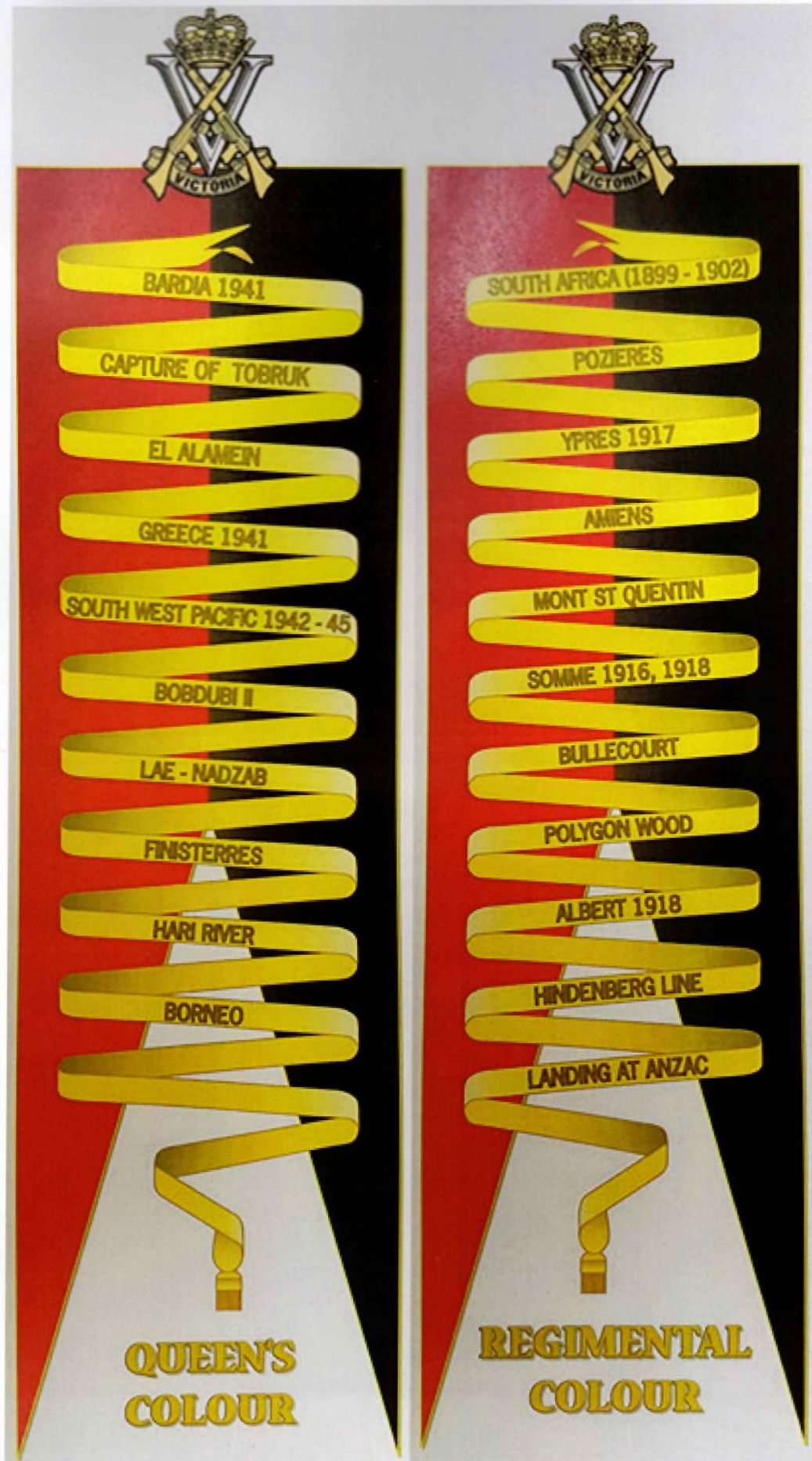
As my days as a member of the 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment, draw to a close and I take up my new posting at 4 CSSB; I would take this opportunity to pass on a few more words of wisdom to all of our soldiers within the unit.... train hard, take every opportunity to complete any of your training/ Operational Service that is offered, (especially Operational Service), because you will never know when the next opportunity will arise.....take pride in the achievements you have made, no matter how small.... because you have contributed in some, way, shape or form to the overall defence of one of the greatest countries on this Earth. Equally importantly you are also part of one of the Battalions that has a very long and proud tradition of service to Ballarat, Western Victoria and Australia since 1858.

We are the soldiers of the 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment.

Wear the badge with Pride.

**WO2 Mark Broemmer**







**Army**