

Centurion

May 2019

1st ARMoured REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC. NEWSLETTER

Reg No AO044180K

Commemorating the 50th Anniversary



1ST ARMoured
REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION INC.

Nominal Roll - Association members

Barry Bennier
Ross Burriss
Peter Chapman
Ray Collins
Roy Dodd
Roger Foote
David Hay
James (Jim) Imlach
Kevin Jaenke
Kingsley McGuire
William (Bill) Morris
Paul Pobar
Robert (Bob) Stewart
Laurie Sullivan
Colin Toll

Battle of Binh Ba South Vietnam June 1969

Theatres of Operation

Japan

Vietnam - Battle Honours

- Coral - Balmoral
- Hat Dich
- Binh Ba

Rhodesia

Cambodia

East Timor

Iraq

Solomon Islands

Afghanistan

Our Soldiers Today

(Click on)

<http://armynews.realviewdigital.com/#folio=1>

Newsletter Contributions

The views and comments expressed in this Newsletter are those of the individual contributor and not necessarily endorsed by the current committee.

Whilst every care regarding all information is exercised, it should not necessarily be taken as absolute historical fact.



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**From The
Editor's Desk**



We need you!!!

to join with us to Celebrate the Regimental Birthday

When: Sunday 7th July

Where: Seymour Club (in a private room)

Action required: Now!!

Essential - please advise attendance

Contact Russ James at secretary@paratus.org.au

Or Iain Reynolds at vicrep@paratus.org.au M: 0411 066 704

The Victorian Branch of the Association is planning a lunch for the Regimental Birthday on Sunday 7 July 2019. At present the lunch (sit-down buffet) is booked in at the Seymour Club (in a private room) at approx. 1200 hrs following a short memorial activity at around 1130 hours. The approximate cost of the lunch is of the order of \$35 per head and drinks are to be paid for by members. The Association will be underwriting the cost of the Buffet meal by \$5 per head. Partners are welcome to attend.

The lunch is open to all members and former members of the Regiment and an invitation is to be extended to all 1st Armoured Regiment personnel who may be in the area at that time.

Payment for the lunch will be required in advance (mid June) to ensure that the Association is able to advise the Seymour Club of approximate numbers.

Russ James

Secretary

1st Armoured Regiment Association



1ST ARMoured
REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION INC.

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MAJGEN Craig Orme DSC, AM, CSC, (Retd)

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Links to Web Sites and Face Book Pages

Web Sites

1st ARMoured REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC.

<http://www.paratus.org.au>

RAAC CORPORATION

www.raaccorpltd.org.au

ROYAL TANK REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

www.royaltankregiment.com

Facebook Pages

1st ARMD REGT ASSOC MEMBERS ONLY

www.facebook.com/groups/112757492512931/

1st ARMD REGT SOCIAL PAGE

www.facebook.com/groups/106848019339045/

1ST ARMoured REGIMENT FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/1ArmdRegt/



Report from the Secretary - Russ James

E: secretary@paratus.org.au

P: Secretary, 1st Armoured Regiment Association Inc.

PO Box 301, Mentone. VIC 3194

Please note new address above

B: Bendigo Bank

1st Armoured Regiment Association Inc.

BSB: 633-000 Account: 161498159



I indicated in my last report that I believed we (the new Management Committee) had kicked some goals and hoped that this trend would continue.

Providing all members with the new membership badge was very popular and we received considerable positive feedback with many members indicating that they 'wear the badge with pride'. We must applaud our Communications Manager, Peter Lukeis for this initiative and his perseverance over 18 months or even longer! We continue to publish Minutes from all Management Committee meetings and we only make decisions within properly constituted meetings. Agendas for each meeting must be distributed to Management Committee members at least seven (7) days prior to a scheduled meeting and no additional issues may be discussed. Despite some criticism, we believe that we are operating in an open, honest and transparent manner.

Membership

Since 14 July 2018, 37 new members have joined the Association and 67 lapsed members have renewed their membership from 2017 and 2018. Efforts to contact lapsed members continues through personal emails, telephone calls and individual letters.

As at 16 May 2019 we have 488 members on the books, but 25 members failed to renew their membership on 1 February 2019. These members remain within the Association until 1 August 2019 but would not have any voting rights if there was a meeting.

New Initiatives, Policies, Procedures and Documentation:

- The acquisition of coffin drapes for a value not to exceed \$2100 was approved at the Management Committee on 28 February 2019 (delivery is expected shortly)
- New Sub-Committee was formed (Discretionary Expenditure Review) was formed to examine all existing Discretionary Expenditure as well as new areas of discretionary spending
- Criteria for nominating and the process for approving life membership of the Association was approved at the Management Committee meeting on 28 February 2019

- Expression of Interest and Terms of Reference for the 2021 Reunion was published as Annex C to the Minutes of the Management Committee meeting of 28 February 2019
- A document outlining the Association's attitude to the provision of services (welfare, health and well-being) provided by Ex-Service Organisations and Groups for Veterans, Ex Service people and their families was finalised and published

The Immediate Future

- Paper on the Membership year, membership fees and accounting for membership fees is close to completion for consideration by the Executive
- Communication Strategy – still in the pipeline
- By-Laws – subject to other demands, commencement of the drafting process is still a month or two away. Watch this space.

News Members:

Peter Graham
Rodney Lang
Brian Slocombe
William Harrison (Affiliate Member)
Peter Beauchamp
Grant Black
Scott Graham

Donations:

Bob Kennard
Bob Williams (Centurion)



Unidentified Membership Fees

During 2018 the Association received five (5) membership payments without any Membership details. If you paid your membership fees during 2018 and did not receive a new membership card or you have stopped receiving Association emails and newsletters, please contact the Secretary at secretary@paratus.org.au

IMPORTANT

Contact Details – as indicated in the last newsletter it is important that our membership contact details are up to date. If in doubt, please advise the Secretary at secretary@paratus.org.au if you have changed your address, your phone numbers or your email address/s in the last couple of years!

Recollections of the Battle of Binh Ba, 6th June 1969 David G. Hay 2019

I need to say at the outset that the following comments are my own personal recollection of what took place on the morning of 6th June 1969 at Binh Ba. There were many other Australian soldiers there that day, including tank crews, APC crews and 5 RAR infantrymen, and each will have his own version of events, which may well differ from mine. I also spent most of the morning inside the turret of a tank with no direct vision or contact with what was happening outside.

During the early part of June 1969, tanks and crew from both 2 troop and 1 troop, B Sqn., 1 Armd. Regt. were simultaneously in Nui Dat. It was an unusual situation as the fighting troops spent most of their operational time in SVN away from 1ATF home base at 'the Dat'. The 2 troop leader, 2 Lt. David Ritchie, decided that half the troop would have the opportunity for 2 days R&R at Vung Tau. I drew the short straw, and both I and the crew commander, Cpl Barry 'Benny' Bennier, stayed at Nui Dat. I was cheesed off to find that I was scheduled for mess duty in the OR's mess on the morning of June 6th.

I was in the mess early and Benny had driven our tank (C/S 22B) up to the LAD workshop within the Armd. Regt. area perimeter. We were to have repairs done to the auxiliary generator motor and one of the radios replaced, as well as some less significant repairs. I was clearing and resetting tables in the mess, when I was told to report immediately to my tank. A composite troop of tanks was called out as part of a ready reaction to enemy activity at Binh Ba, just 5 Km north of Nui Dat. I recall a great sense of relief at getting off the day's mess duty – I also remember a string of swearwords from the cook who abused me for walking off the job around 8.30 am.

When I got to the workshop, the repairs to the auxiliary generator were complete but the radio replacement was still being worked on. I was the regular operator for 22B, and we had two stand in crew that morning, both regular crew from C/S 22C. Bill Morris was our driver, and Peter Matuschka the gunner. Benny told me about the situation: in short a convoy travelling up Route 2 had been fired on from Binh Ba and the Ready Reaction Force (RRF) had been called out of Nui Dat. He also told me that the other 3 tanks (C/S 21, C/S 22 and C/S 21C), an APC troop (3 troop) from 3 Cav. Regt. and D Company 5RAR had already left and were assembling immediately south of Binh Ba.

However, the LAD work was not completed until around 10.45 and it was only then that we could head north up Route 2 to join the remainder of the RRF. The group had already engaged the enemy, having had machine gun and RPG7 fire directed against them from Binh Ba.

They retaliated with HE rounds to the nearest houses from where this fire had come. We pulled up to the left of C/S 21 (crew commander 2Lt Brian Sullivan) whilst on his right was C/S 22 (Ritchie), then C/S 21C (Bennett).

About 11.20am we were cleared to start an assault on the village. The four tanks moved off in formation, line abreast. The infantry were dismounted with the APCs bringing up the flanks and rear. The tanks were moving towards the edge of the village flanking Route 2, and we were at the extreme left. Progress was initially quite slow and I had my head down inside the turret and could not see what was happening on the ground outside. There was only light enemy fire coming from the village and we were told to lay down 'speculative fire' with the 30 cal. I recall Pete Matuschka, not knowing what to fire at, shot up some chooks that were wandering in the cleared area in front of the village. His idea of 'speculative fire'!

We entered the village and were moving forward in fits and spurts, from house to house across cleared areas. For the first few minutes there did not seem to be much action occurring, with only occasional return of machine gun fire to the tanks. However, we moved through a more open area and the two tanks to the left of the formation were forced to adopt a formation with one behind the other because of the village layout – we were in front with C/S21 directly behind us. The other two tanks were on our right, moving down a parallel track. It was about this time that C/S 22 took off towards the south-west corner of the village to cut off escaping enemy, spotted by the pilot of 'Possum 22', an observation helicopter.

The level of return fire had suddenly increased dramatically and things became hectic inside the tank. The noise was deafening, and we had our hands full keeping all guns firing, clearing jams, etc. It soon reached a point where we could no longer choose what was loaded in the main armament (HE, canister or AP), but simply fired what we had at hand. There were problems getting to some of the main armament rounds in the floor bins as the turret had to be traversed to access them, and we had to carefully choose the time to do so. I also had trouble keeping up with tossing the shell cases out through the top of the turret and the inside of the turret was clogged with spent cartridge shells. During one lull in the firing I was busting for a leak: I relieved myself into one of the cartridge cases before tossing it out, hoping there were no infantry sheltering beside the tank.

Because I was busy loading and clearing guns, I was not wearing a headset and was unaware of any radio traffic. I was alerted to the fact that Benny had been hit (in the neck) by shrapnel when he slumped down into the turret, apparently unconscious. It was only later that we found this was from an RPG that had struck the engine rails on the back of the tank. We were still firing frantically; the tank had not moved for some time and some few minutes later I was relieved to see that Benny had apparently recovered and was back up and firing the crew-commander's 30 cal.

It was soon after this that we were struck by an RPG7 that disabled the tank. I was leaning over the 50 cal. clearing a blockage when there was a huge flash ... my immediate thought was that the gun had exploded. The projectile entered the turret immediately above the driver's head, passing through the heavily armoured mantle, then across the top of the main armament and into the turret. It went past my face and across my left shoulder into the back of the turret. Bill Morris, told me later that he saw the group of enemy soldiers reloading the RPG weapon and tried to fire at them with his personal weapon, a 9mm pistol, but it jammed. However, luckily for us they were taken out by rocket fire from an Australian gunship only seconds before they had a chance to re-fire the weapon.

I had been temporarily blinded by the flash. When the smoke settled, Benny asked me to test the firing circuit for the main gun; this was done by loading a dummy shell which contained a small light globe and noting whether it lit up when the gun was fired. I loaded the shell, but couldn't see a thing when Matuschka pulled on the trigger. It turned out later that the wiring across the top of the gun had been cut so we couldn't fire anyway. The only operable weapon we had was the crew commander's 30 cal.

The battle continued for some time after this event, but I don't recall much of the detail of getting out of the village and into the dust off helicopter that took us down to the field hospital at Vung Tau. It was about 2.00pm when we (Benny, Matuschka and myself) were evacuated, and it was only then that I started to recover my sight. Once the medevac chopper took off, the pilot gained height quickly, getting away from Binh Ba as fast as possible. I clearly recall time spent in surgery at Vung Tau, particularly having shrapnel removed from my eyes and face under local anesthetic. The action at Binh Ba, Operation Hammer, was to continue for two days, with two more passes through the village supported by tanks of 4 troop 1 Armoured Regiment, but the crew of 22B was to take no further part in the battle.



Thanks Dave,
You know I reckon if we had broadcast to the VC, the picture of you amongst the ammunition, then we would have stood a good chance that they would have surrendered en masse.
Best regards

Peter
Hi Peter,
I reckon it's more likely they would have all died laughing!
The back story of the photo is that we had come back in to Nui Dat to change to a new tank from Forward Delivery Troop in late May 1969. All the ammo was removed from the old tank and put on a tarpaulin for cleaning and subsequent replacement in the new tank (C/S 22B, VN 169064). Ironically all this ammunition was fired in anger at Binh Ba just a few days after the picture was taken. I took the opportunity of taking a 'selfie' with a full tank bomb load.
Cheers
David



Crew Commander Joe Dziedzic and Loader Roger Foote



Special thanks to Roger Foote for this selection of his outstanding photos taken at Binh Ba, a sample of which will be incorporated at the Australian War Memorial in a small photographic exhibition for the forthcoming Binh Ba anniversary.

Honour Roll



1ST ARMoured
REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION INC.

Killed In Action

WO2 J.A. Bond
WO2 J. Stone
TPR J. Kerr

Died of Wounds

TPR M. Hannaford
WO2 T. Phillips

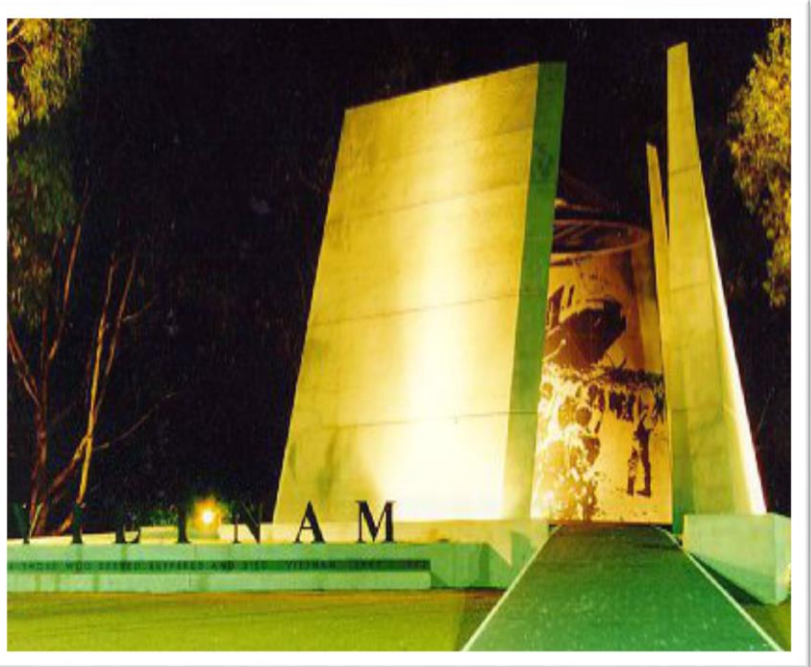
DOW Post-Vietnam

WO1 L. S. Swarbrick
WO2 N. Lowes
TPR P G. Barwick
TPR R. S. Bellott

Killed Accidentally

LT A. J. Massey
SGT R. Morrison
SGT R. G. Murray
TPR A. M. Jordan
TPR A. Patterson
CFN B. Silver (LAD)

**Dedicated to those 1st Armoured Regiment
Soldiers that made the ultimate sacrifice**



VALE:



Gregory Andrew SUMMERS passed away February 2019

Greg Summers joined the Australian Army in 1971 after a short stint with 4/19 PWLH in 1969/70.

Greg was initially trained and employed as a Centurion Driver in both C and B Squadrons. Greg was the inaugural recipient of the 'Soldier of the Year' award in 1972 – the award was the initiative of Lt Col Doc Kepper but was presented by Lt Col Bird after Doc Kepper suffered a sudden illness.

After a number of years, Greg realised his true potential when employed in the Intelligence Office at Regiment Headquarters of 1st Armoured Regiment; he performed in this capacity until 1978 or so when he corps transferred to the Intelligence Corps (RA Int) after successfully completing an Intelligence Operators course. After corps transfer, Greg had a number of postings in HQ units, Military Intelligence School and Units.

Greg served overseas in Malaysia, New Zealand and East Timor. Greg separated from the regular Army as a Warrant Office CI 2 in 1997 after 27 years' service but remained with Active Reserve (both full time and part time) until 2012.

Greg was highly regarded as a young soldier in his time at the 1st Armoured Regiment and it is believed that this carried for his remaining time in the Australian Army.

Edward Thomas MCPHEAT passed away unexpectedly 25 February 2019, aged 69 years

Ted McPheat was called up (September 1970) in the National Service lottery and was selected for Officer Training. He then transferred to the Regular Army and graduated from the Officer Cadet School Portsea to the RAAC. After Corps Training, he arrived at 1 Armd Regt on 16 June 1973".

He served with 1st Armd Regt (A Sqn) from 1973 to December 1975 when he was posted to 4 Cavalry Regiment. Ted served for various periods with HQ 11 Field Force Group, 2 Cavalry Regiment, 3/4 Cavalry Regiment, HQ 1 Military District, 1/15 Royal New South Wales Lancers and 1 Training Group.

Ted had overseas service in the United States of America (1976) and New Zealand (1985). After his retirement in 1992, Ted was on the Inactive Army Reserve for five years. Ted was described by one of his peers as, 'One of the most likeable people you could ever meet.'

Ted was a highly respected member of the Armoured Corps.

May he rest in peace in the Greenfields beyond.

John Roderick MACDONALD passed away 8 April 2019

John joined the Australian Regular Army on 20 May 1970 and was discharged on 19 May 1976.

After the normal three-month stint at 1 Recruit Training Battalion, John was posted to Armoured Centre where he was trained as a Gunner Signaller on Centurion.

He was posted to the Regiment in October 1970 and spent much of his time as a Gunner Signaller and Crew Commander with the M60A1 during the Medium Tank Trials. He is remembered warmly by his mates who recall the occasional antic in Far North Queensland.

Prior to his discharge in 1976 John spent some time in Headquarters Squadron.

May he rest in peace in the Greenfields beyond.

Norman Leonard (Len) ALLEN passed away 10th March 2019

Len Allen joined the Australian Army on 4 November 1957 and after four months at Recruit Training (1RTB) was posted to the 1st Armoured Regiment on 26 March 1958. Len was trained as a Crewman Gunner/Signaller and ultimately moved into the Crew Commanders seat.

On 20 June 1966 Len was posted to 2RTB (Puckapunyal) as an instructor and no doubt helped many young soldiers in their transformation from civilian to soldier. In October 1967 Len was posted to C Squadron 1st Armoured Regiment. He served with C Squadron in Vietnam from 12 February 1968 to 11 February 1969. During the action at Fire Support Base Balmoral Len was the Troop Sergeant of 2 Troop and Crew Commander of 32A.

On return to Australia Len was posted back to 2RTB and stayed there until he took his discharge on 3 Nov 1969. Len served his country for 12 years.

Len was a highly respected member of the Armoured Corps as well as his local community (Broadford) and this was reflected in the number that attended his funeral on 22 March 2019.

May he rest in the Greenfields beyond.



Len's Honour guard

Andy Zsolt, Peter Branagan, Ivan Maher, Ian Tregenza, Rex Harris, Icky Smith, Bob Ambrose, Rus Kiellerup, Eric Rowley, Ian 'Shorty' Britten, Ray Wood, Bill Van Der Schoot, John 'Tubby' Brooker, Mick Butler, John Fogarty, Dave Thompson.

Start-up day - Puckapunyal Tank Museum, 30th March 2019



Afghanistan veteran's brutal off field battle after decade-long service

By Tom Scambler 9 Nine. MSN



Christopher May has completed two deployments in Afghanistan during his decade-long service with the Australian Defence Force, yet he has an excel spread sheet with more than 220 jobs he's been knocked back from.

May 28, joined the Australian Army at just 17. He was injured in 2011 after the vehicle he was travelling in was struck by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan. Soon after, he was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety.

Since leaving the Royal Australian Armoured Corps in 2017, the Corporal has struggled to secure full-time employment as a civilian and still serves as an Army Reservist. "I have been knocked back from plenty of jobs and almost assured it was because I was a defence veteran," Mr May told nine.com.au. "When I asked them [employers] for the reasons why, they said, 'you are not cut (out) for the job' and 'we are afraid you might use your initiative too much and work outside of your scope.'"

After constant failure, including trying his luck as a truck driver, Mr May became a Victorian firefighter. He works five months of the year during bush fire season and continues his search for a full-time job.

May isn't the first Australian soldier to struggle to find work after combat, after witnessing many mates face rejection from employers. It was this experience that prompted him to co-found Young Veterans - an organisation established to help former soldiers transition back to civilian life and cope with any mental health issues.

The Black Dog



The Black Dog

"I have seen so many of my mates... settling for a job [they don't enjoy], and that's where they start building real frustration...," he said. "They don't have purpose or the drive to go to work. That's when the 'Black Dog' sets in."

In 2017-18 the Australian government provided \$13.2 billion of funding to compensate and support the health and wellbeing of over 290,000 Australian veterans. Despite this, the veteran unemployment rate - after 13 months of discharge - sits almost three percent higher than the national average of 8 percent.

Neil James from Australia Defence Association told nine.com.au he it was common for employers not to employ veterans, something he equated to a general misunderstanding. "There has certainly been an element of not understanding the advantages the veterans can bring to the employer," he said. "The problem isn't so much the efforts of government, it's the ability of Australian society more broadly to value the life skills that veterans bring

Fresh hope



On November 6 this year, less than a week before Remembrance Day commemorations, Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Darren Chester, jointly announced new employment opportunities for Australian veterans. The initiative, known as the Veterans Employment Commitment, aims to connect thousands of veterans to businesses across the country, providing relief to those who have struggled to transition into a civilian lifestyle and find adequate employment. "Australians have enormous respect for the service of our veterans. Many employers already recognise the value of the skills and experiences of our veterans," Mr Chester said. "We want to translate Australia's culture of respect for veterans into action. Simply put, hiring a veteran is good for business."

"The commitment to a Veterans' Covenant recognises the unique service of our ex-serving men and women and their families and our promise as a grateful nation to support them after their military service."

Mr Chester said the Veterans Employment Commitment is an extension of former Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull's Veteran's **Employment Program**.

Needs to go further

While Mr May believes Australians are becoming more understanding of the struggles veterans face, initiatives such as the one posed by the government will improve long term support to veterans.

“The Australian community are doing a lot better than we used to do and in the past few years we have seen a lot of programs, ex-service organisations and veteran groups pop up... it’s fantastic to see,” he said.

“Where we are heading at the moment is better and more productive than the last 10-15 years. I think it [Veterans Employment Commitment] will be good and received quite well.”

He said he and other veterans are trying to “break stigmas” and show that veterans have a skillset that is unmatched in workforces.

Mr Chester said he is determined to keep “putting veterans and their families first” and working to achieve better outcomes across the veteran community. “Our former serving men and women have skills which are readily transferable to civilian life. Their work ethic, leadership and capacity to work as part of a team are all great attributes,” he said. “In this, the final year of the Anzac Centenary, it is vitally important that we instil an ongoing sense of remembrance, respect and reflection in future generations.”



If for some reason you haven't received your 1st Armoured Regiment Association badge as yet please contact Russ James secretary@paratus.org.au

Newsletter Editor Wanted for the 'Centurion'

**See Editors Desk
Page 2**



Website Administrator (Webmaster)

**Wanted for the 1st Armoured
Regiment Association Web Site**

www.paratus.org.au

See Editors Desk Page 2

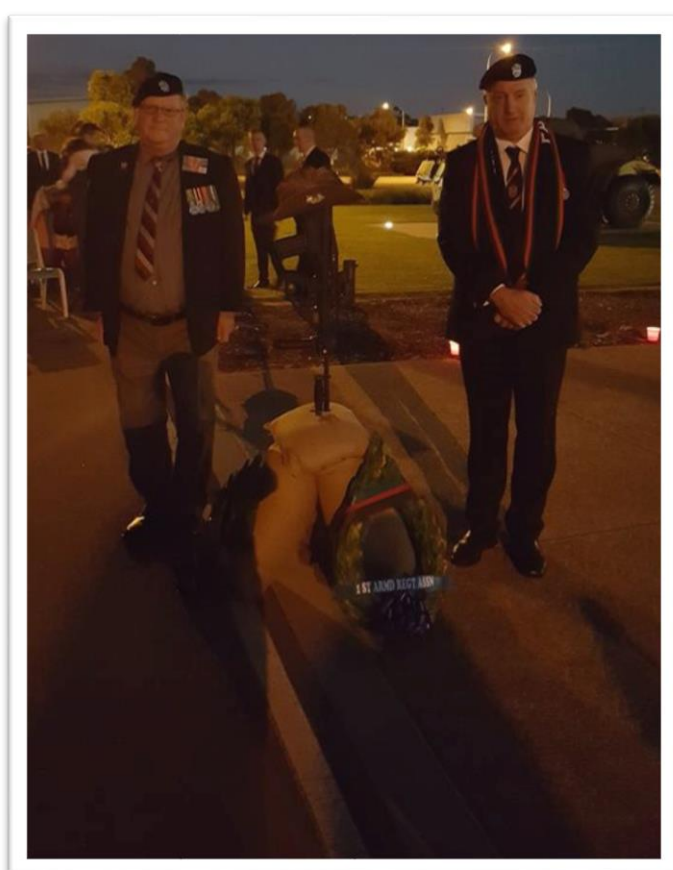


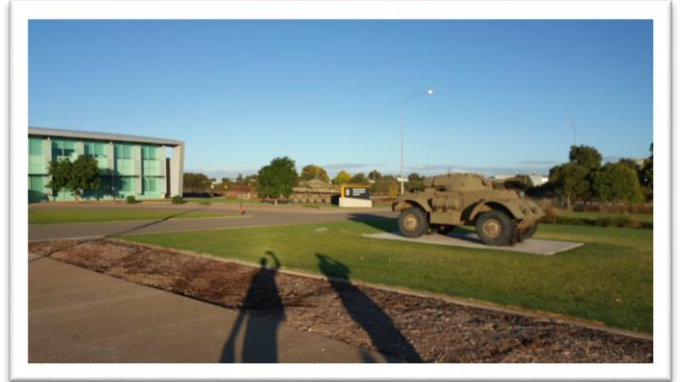
Anzac Day Roundup around our Nation QLD...

I attended the Brisbane March as I was up that way for work. Attached a couple of pics.
Kindest Regards
Dean Martin

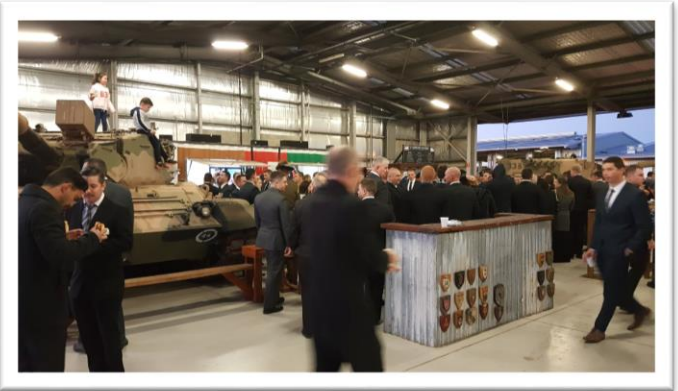


SA...





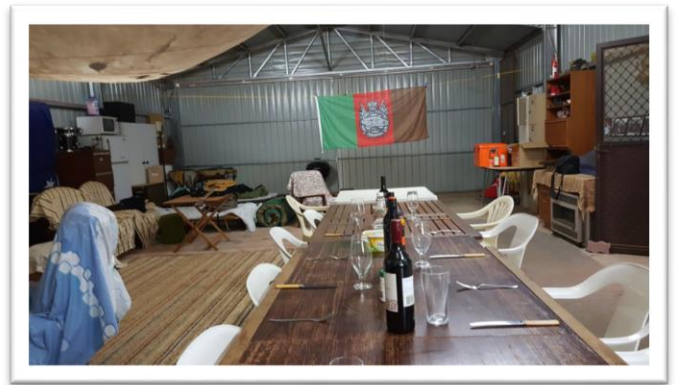
Pat Vr, Capt. Croc and the New Hampshire USA Aussies celebrate ANZAC Day 2019



Croweaters Camping Trip 2019, Quorn Weekend SA

The Camp Fire', the 'Inaugural Bowling Tournament' and 'The Dinner'. Thanks to all that attended. Lou, Mick, Richard, Angus, James, Eric Thompson Andy Rule Inaugural' winners 1 Armd Regt Quorn Bowls after much debate Mark Richard and Angus Great meal again by Lou. Thanks to the Residents of Quorn for a great weekend. Thanks to the property owners and thanks to Barb for her bake house specials and soup.





The Seventies from the Seventies



Left to right are:

Jim McKenzie, Des Thompson, Doug Peel, Dal Crocker, Paul Giles, Martin Craze, Tony Dennis, Ian Roberts, Rob Millsted, Geoff Lowe and John Sibly

Anzac Day 2019: RSL finds 14 unmarked military graves

Jacob McArthur

Manilla's military graves

Photos: Peter Hardin



FLY THE FLAG: Manilla RSL Secretary Ian Bignall has dedicated countless hours marking the graves of local returned and ex-servicemen. Photo: Peter Hardin 160419PHB021

Whether they like it or not, people end up spending a fair bit of time in cemeteries.

Ian Bignall reckons he has cumulatively spent about one month, of his life, doing a fairly repetitive circuit through the rows of Manilla's cemetery during the last couple of years.

It's nowhere near the amount of time some people have spent in the cemetery.

Some have been laid in rest for more than five decades in unmarked graves, almost forgotten.

Mr Bignall, the RSL sub-branch secretary, has spearheaded a project to install Australian flags on the headstones of all of the ex-servicemen's graves.

This year, 263 flags will be fluttering on Anzac Day in the Manilla cemetery.

It's the second year Mr Bignall has put out the flags and in the intervening months, poring over military and cemetery records and running his countless laps of the site, he has found more than 80 additional graves belonging to ex-servicemen.

Fourteen of those graves were unmarked.

"It's sad to look here where some of these graves have been unmarked for 50 years," he said.

So Mr Bignall manufactured some crosses out of scrap metal and had a sign-writer add the names, military number and date of death to ensure they didn't go unrecognised.

"Now they have a cross and they'll have a flag flying on Anzac Day."

It has been a time-consuming process for Mr Bignall but he was very certain in his motivation behind the project "It's something as a returned serviceman, you know these people gave up a lot of their time and they were prepared to die for their country and we should not forget them," he said.

"It's just as simple as that, we will remember them." Mr Bignall will spend his Easter Sunday popping flags on headstones in preparation for Anzac Day next week. He hoped the sight of all the flags flying would be a stirring image for the town.

"They're in every corner of the cemetery and every denomination and it is quite something to see," he said. "In my research, there was over 700 people in WWII who were born in Manilla and the population around then was about 2000.

"That's an amazing percentage of people born in Manilla that enlisted."

The Manilla project is part of a nationwide campaign, 'honour our fallen', which aimed to put a flag on every military grave in Australia.

The Manilla RSL has helped Anzac Day organisers in Bendemeer identify 20 graves in the village's cemetery and there is some desire to expand the project in the North West.

"I had 20 years in Gunnedah and I know a lot of the sub-branch people there and I will probably go and help them next year if they are interested," Mr Bignall said.

"I have contacted Boggabri and Shirley Coote who did the cemetery records here has records for Boggabri, Gunnedah, Tambar Springs and Mullaley, so they could be all on board next year."

Mr Bignall said a large committee would need to be formed before any thought of a Tamworth project was entertained.



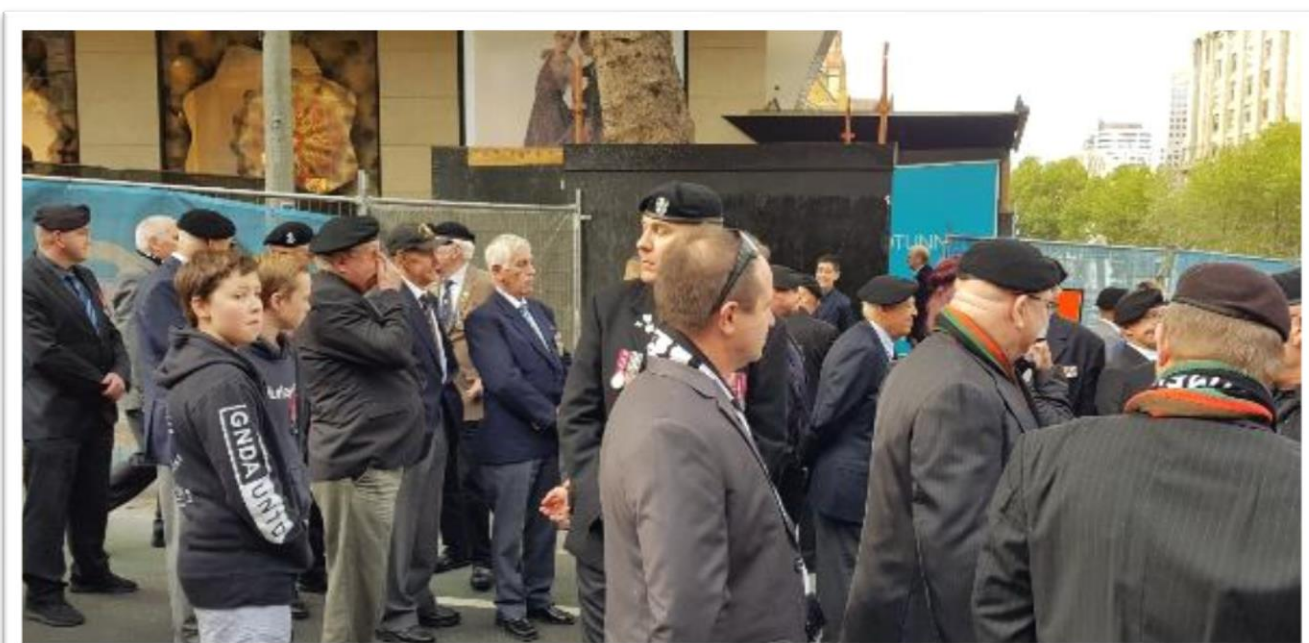


MELBOURNE - ANZAC MARCH 2019

We had fine weather again this year for the ANZAC Day march to Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance. We had approximately 40 members that did the march, with another 3 that needed a ride up to the Shrine. We stepped off an hour earlier than usual due to the falling number of older Veterans taking part. Coordination & timings for the march was much better this year & we stepped off on time & not early like we did last year leaving behind half the members. Dinks afterwards was held at the Rising Sun Hotel in South Melbourne. We didn't get a huge turnout of members coming back for a drink & meal, but what did had a great time mixing with members from 4/19 & 3 Cav.

Iain Reynolds State Rep for Victoria 0411 066 704





MELBOURNE - ANZAC LONG LUNCH

The ANZAC Long Lunch was held on the 3rd May. We had 11 members attend the Emerald Hotel for lunch that day. Russ James gave us a run down with what's happening within the Association & membership. All those that attended enjoyed the afternoon & the meals were excellent as usual.



