



Edition 56.. Newsletter of the 7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment.. April 2021



#### From the President

Firstly, on your behalf I would offer our congratulations to LTCOL Roland Spackman and WO1 John Craig, the new command team at 7 RAR, and wish them well for their tenure.

I know all of us had hoped to have COVID-19 behind us by now but as demonstrated by the recent outbreaks in Sydney over Christmas and more recently in Brisbane, we are not yet out of the woods. I

understand that most States have given approval for ANZAC Day commemorations to be held in the traditional format with some States requiring registration, however, we have all seen restrictions reimposed very quickly and it may prove to be another year where you may need a Plan B. Smaller local commemorations may be more likely to proceed than large events.

In recent months the executive has been targeted with a series of emails from financial scammer. The email addresses and technique they use have been believable and persistent, and I know a number of you have been targeted by very convincing on-line scammers. The top tips from the ATO and our Commonwealth Cyber Security organisations is now posted on our website, but if you do nothing else, use strong passwords with a minimum of eight letters and

characters but preferably sixteen characters in phrase or combination of words that only you will know, use up to date virus software or ensure you have run the latest update for iPhones, iPads and Mac devices, and don't open email attachments from people you don't For **Facebook** know. users. maximise your privacy settings (you may need to get a teenager to do this for you).



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Finally, on your behalf I would like to thank Karl Metcalf for setting the 2nd Edition of Seven in Seventy. The original book was a great record of the second tour but this provides a significant amount of updated detail such as names to photos, the nominal roll, etc. Karl, a Platoon Commander on the second tour, gained an interest in type setting when he helped Adrian Taylor set book "From Nui Dat his Discharge".

Karl spent months researching Army archives tracking down posting orders and Routine Orders and posting photos on the media and inviting people to identify those pictured resulted and in our view the result is a "good as it gets" production. Distribution is currently underway, another detailed effort led by Rachel Hopkins and a team in Adelaide including current soldiers from 7 RAR. Our Association is one of the Australian Regiment's Royal strongest associations because of members like Karl.

Mick Garraway

**President** 

## MEMORIES OF DAYS GONE BY

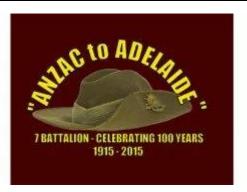






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Rest ye oh Warrior, You will battle no more,
No longer to live the horrors of war,
Your duty was done with honour and pride,
Farewell oh brother, until we march by your side.

It is with deep and sincere sympathy that I report the death of former friends and comrades in arms.

235041 David Aloysious Drabsch, AO, MBE, 2IC 7RAR 1st tour, passed away, Thursday 28 January 2021.

5716643 John Gregory Dorrington, A1 2<sup>nd</sup> tour, passed away, Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

5714954 Glenn Kenneth Moore, B5 1st tour, passed away, Wednesday 10 March 2021.

2791894 James Francis Donnelly, B4 2<sup>nd</sup> tour, away Wednesday 17 March 2021.





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# From the: EDITOR'S DESK

Well here we are in 2021, it only seems like yesterday that I enlisted in the ADF in January 1961, to everyone I met and served with over those egalitarian years they were the best years of my life as I had the pleasure in meeting all my long standing friends of those years and of course those I met during the years I have spent being involved with the 7RAR Association.

Well as we all should know by now that ANZAC Day services throughout Australia have now been set back to normal with restrictions on gatherings. We all must make sure that if we do attend the activities we abide by all the rules laid by each State authorities. As is obvious all the Association members from The Vietnam era are getting older and we must keep contact with our mates all round the world if necessary. As you can see via the Vale lists in each of our Seven News editions our ranks are getting smaller.

COVID-19 restrictions on assemblies have disrupted all gathering activities to date. Please make sure you check with all around you that if there is something happening your make time to get together as we all are getting older and we need to keep in touch with one another.

#### **ASSOCIATION MEMORIBILIA**

You can put down that I provide hats, stubby holders, ties, shirts, stickers and coffee mugs at this stage and will be looking to expand the range depending on what members want. Everything can be bought securely online at: Once on click SHOP.

www.belligerentdigger.com Carl Sengstock.

### **NSW**

## Restrictions eased for NSW ANZAC Day commemorations.

### **Dear Members**

Some changes have been made to the Exemptions to the Public Health Order in relation to ANZAC Day commemorations NSW in this year. The Premier issued a media release on Wednesday regarding the easing of restrictions across the state. However, restrictions and registrations for contact purposes still apply to events and venues.

The Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism. Seniors. and Veterans, Geoff Lee, and RSL NSW State President, Ray James have **letter** outlining issued this the guidelines to the new Exemptions to the Public Health Order granted by the Minister for Health and Medical **ANZAC** Research for commemorations. An overview of the Exemptions and guidelines are as follows:

# Sydney CBD March

The March cannot proceed 'as normal' this year. The good news is that up to 10,000 people can participate including:

- Current serving members and veterans of the Australian Defence Force
- Descendants of veterans of the Australian Defence Force
- Veterans of a Commonwealth Force and their descendants
- Bands (Invites to be extended by RSL NSW)

Veterans and descendants can march with their relevant unit, ship, squadron, or association and behind their banners.

To comply with the guidelines to the Exemption to the Public Health Order, RSL NSW must collect the names and contact details of all marchers for COVID-19 contact tracing purposes. To expedite this process and mitigate check-in processes at the event the Secretary of all associations has been asked to register their intention to march.

Veterans who have previously registered to participate in the Sydney CBD March will not be required to reregister and tickets will not be issued. To date, RSL NSW has received less





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than 600 registrations to participate so it is expected than any veteran who wishes to march, can do so. Spectators can attend the event and social distancing and COVID check-in will be managed by NSW Police and other agencies of the NSW Government.

A complete overview of the Sydney CBD March event details can be found on the RSL NSW website here.

A11 other **ANZAC** Commemorations outside of Sydney CBD and across NSW. Any march or service can have up to 5,000 people (who must not exceed one person per 2 square meters of space). Participant registration is required for COVID-19 contact tracing purposes. Your local sub-Branch volunteers have been planning commemorations in your community in consultation with NSW Police and Councils since February this year and have adapted to changes to Exemptions to the Public Health Order as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.

Please support your fellow members by offering your support to coordinate commemorations that are proceeding. In some cases, it may not be viable for commemorations to proceed despite their best efforts. If you have any questions about ANZAC Day commemorations, please contact the Member Support Team on support@rslnsw.org.au 1300 679 775 or visit the RSL NSW website.

IF YOU LIVE OUTSIDE NSW PLEASE CHECK WITH THE STATE RSL WHO WILL HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH THE STATE GOVT FOR THAT STATES ANZAC DAY ACTIVITIES.

I have registered 7RAR with the RSL instructions to participate in the March, Ken Ward will bring the Banner if you intend to march please assemble in the area of Bligh and Hunter Streets, look for familiar faces and the 7RAR Banner. The March is due to step off at 0910hrs so those wishing to march be in the assembly area no later than 0845hrs. You may be required to wear a FACE MASK so make sure you bring one with you.

## 7 IN 70 2nd Edition

As we are all aware the Re-print of 7 in 70 is now in progress and the Battalion is heavily involved in packing and posting of the books for all those who have registered and paid for the book and postage. Posting will commence during the

week beginning 12 April so be aware your book can arrive any time after that date. The books are being released from the Printers in batches of 50 at a time and will be posted in the order they appear on the list when they were ordered.

TONY KEECH, OAM - XO/EDITOR

### **VIETNAM REQIUM**

## Dear veterans and families

I am writing on behalf of Chris, the Director of the Vietnam Requiem to ask if anyone would have any colour photographs of Vietnam Veterans marching in either the Homecoming Parade/s, Vietnam Veterans' Day, ANZAC or Remembrance Day from 1972 to the present day? They can be taken from any year and in any town or city. They would need to be 1-2MB so they can be suitable for projection on the big screen during the concert within the last movement. Chris has found it very difficult to find suitable images so far, so I am hoping that by approaching you and the wider veteran community we might be successful in obtaining some that will be suitable.

If you have any photographs in your collection, it would be really appreciated if you could scan them and send them to me via return email, shown below. Thanks so much for any help you can provide. With best wishes always. —

Joanne Fisher General Manager and Veteran Liaison Flowers of War P: 0438 952263 www.theflowersofwar.org

To: Isobel Ferrier <theflowersofwarmanager@gmail.co m>

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## **PEARLS FROM VICTORIA**

### AGM 10 February 2021

Like most organisations we did not do much last year due to COVID and the many lockdowns that Victorians had to endure. Looking at my notes we had a meeting in November 2019 and then had another meeting in November 2020 at which we decided to hold our AGM in February 2021.

At that meeting we decided that due to basically being in recess we would retain our positions as decided in 2019. To keep the niceties all positions were declared vacant but because there were no other nominations the following positions were re-elected as follows.

**President** Bill Anderson

Vice Pres. Allen McGuiness (and

Jan to keep him honest)

Treasurer Alan (Roo) Dowley Secretary Ian Dunn (and still not

allowed to stand down)

Asst. Sec. David Wain

Deckchairs on the Titanic comes to mind but if there were other nominations at the next AGM, they would be more than welcome — especially from our contemporary veterans. All members are always welcome to attend our monthly meetings held at the Noble Park RSL on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month starting at 11:00 and followed by lunch afterwards.

### **2020 President's Report**

No formal report was presented but the help and input from committee members (especially from Ian, Allen Roo and David) was much appreciated.

### Anzac Day 2021

Arrangements for this year's Anzac Day have been somewhat chaotic to say the least. First we had no March, then it was to be a Parade, then after a while we were 'allowed' to have a maximum of 5,500 participants spread over 4 hubs – WW1, WW2, Vietnam and 'Contemporary' (i.e. post Vietnam).

To add to the confusion the Royal Australian Regiment and SAS are to be included under Contemporary on the basis that we and SAS continued to operate post-Vietnam.

The March is proposed to commence at 09:30 and be concluded by 11:30 so that we don't interfere with the football crowd. (Veterans ere here



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first - Collingwood/Essendon have a lot to answer to but I think we've lost that argument!)

Participation in the commemorative march is on the basis of registration and veterans will not be marching behind their Unit but rather in what could be called a 'Column of Blob'. Unit Banners, if they are brought along will be at the head of the group. At the last time I talked about this only the RAR Association banner would be displayed but we may have the 7RAR banner being carried but we have to discuss this later this month in April and there is no guarantee that there will be enough 7RAR members available to carry it.

Registrations are available through register.rslvic.com.au and will be allocated in the order they are received. When I last looked there were about 900 registrations received. Telephone registrations are also available through RSL Anzac House on (03) 9655-5555.

Several of us have decided that we will not participate in this ballot and instead we will be assemble outside Victoria Barracks at the corner of Coventry and St Kilda Roads to acknowledge those veterans marching. You are very welcome to join us – just look for signs of 7RAR (caps, scarves if it's cold and the gonfalon). After the march goes past we intend catching up at Bells Hotel for their usual nice meal.

#### **Bell's Hotel**

They have agreed to look after us again this year and the Hotel has applied for an early opening licence starting at 11:00. We haven't heard yet on the outcome of their application but we have written a letter of support.

# <u>Suoi Chau Pha</u> (All the 7s Shrine Ceremony) – Sunday 8th August

This year's service is scheduled for 10:00 am with more details to come via mailchimp closer to the date. Bells Hotel will be our rendezvous post ceremony.

## **Young Diggers**

For various reasons I caught up with Carole Doyle recently (Joe Doyle was A Coy, 1st Tour) about another matter where I found out that Carole is strongly involved with Young It is another ESO that Diggers. concentrates on younger veterans and very worthwhile to be following up. I suggest you look up website their at www.youngdiggers.com.au and follow through if you think it could provide the sort of help you'd like.

**Parting Shots** 

What can you expect from a pig but a grunt? Swedish Proverb

Bill Anderson 0419-877-463 lastwill@hotkey.net.au





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# G'day from South Australia

Currently we are transitioning from being an incorporated association to a more relaxed, social group under the banner of 7RAR Vets SA. Bob Whinnen is the President, myself the Secretary, Rob Gillies is the Treasurer and Geoff Chandler a committee member.

Our monthly lunches are popular and we have been pleased to see at least three "new faces" start to regularly attend.



7RAR Veterans SA - December lunch

back row: left to right - Geoff Chandler, Tony Carr, Kerry Eichner, Steve Csorba front row: left to right - "Doc" Russell, "Noddy" Taylor, Bob Whinnen, Chris Ashenden

Our December lunch was followed by lunches in January and February, which were also well attended at our regular hotel, which is Benjamin's on Franklin. Their menu covers all tastes and their prices are very reasonable (especially for a city square mile hotel).

On the Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February we were invited to the RAR club-rooms where a number of us met the 2021 7RAR Commanding Officer and RSM and four current serving 7RAR diggers.

(see photo on following page)



pictured from left to right
Bob Lloyd, Steve Csorba, unknown, Lt. Col. Speckman, Bob Whinnen,
unknown, RSM Craig, unknown, unknown,
lan 'Doc' Russell and Adrian 'Noddy' Taylor.



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... and Below is a "blast from the past" ... ANZAC Day 2012 when members of 7RAR who had recently relocated to Edinburgh Military Base (near Adelaide) joined us on the march.



And another "blast from the past" ... when 7 soldiers from 7 attended the 2012 Remembrance Day Service at Helping Hand Residential Care, Parafield Gardens.



So 'til the next edition keep Covid Safe – get your jab – have a great ANZAC Day – and above all else, stay vertical and above ground ...

Ian 'Doc' Russell, Secretary, 7RAR Veterans, South. Australia.

#### THE BEST FROM THE WEST

From all PIGS in the WEST, all the best to PIGS everywhere else and hopefully we can all get back to some sort of normality after a very turbulent 2020

# DEVASTATING BUSHFIRES NEAR PERTH

In late January into early February, bushfires broke out just east of Perth, causing widespread destruction of homes and farm properties, amongst those affected were Dave Ingles and Wally Kleszcz, both B Coy 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour.

The fire on Monday 1st February Wally's completely destroyed property, he was left with just the clothes on his back. Everything was including destroyed his service medals. When Dave Ingles tried to replacement medals, arrange found the rules for replacement were completely out of step with the real world. The rules were written about lost or stolen medals with a two month wait in case the medals were recovered and the replacement medals would be engraved with a 'D' for Duplicate. This he considered a





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disgrace, so Dave contacted their local federal member, Ken Wyatt AM and requested his assistance. Ken's office responded and after a couple of emails they forwarded Dave's emails to Minister for Defence Personnel Darren Chester's office with appeal for urgent advice. Minister Chester agreed to the urgent replacement of the medals without dreaded 'D', including replacement ICB. On Friday 9th April, Ken Wyatt AM presented Wally with his new medals. At the same time, Disaster Relief Australia (DRA) heard of what Dave had done and offered to mount Wally's medals in time for Anzac Day but we ran out of time so they actually presented Wally with a court-mounted set of replica medals

after Ken presented the original replacement medals. The medal presentation went well, with food and drinks supplied by Ken Wyatt, well done Ken. Wally during his thank you speech even broke out and sung the first verse of "Cheap Charlie", a song we'll all never forget.

Among those who attended the medal presentation were: Wally Kleszcz, Dave Ingles, Don Cruden, Jock Henderson, Casey Epskamp and Robert "the wog" Cusack, a representative from Disaster Relief Australia and Hon. Ken Wyatt AM.

Well done Dave for all your efforts in assisting your good mate Wally to receive his replacement medals.



L to R: Casey Epskamp, Jock Henderson, Don Cruden, Dave Ingles, Bob Cusack, Wally Kleszcz



Wally being presented with his original medals by the Hon. Ken Wyatt AM





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Wally being presented with his mounted replica medals by Disaster Relief Australia

# VALE JOHN DORRINGTON 2ND **TOUR**

We commemorated the death of 5716643 John DORRINGTON 1 Pl A Coy 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour on Wed 9 Mar 2021. Regretfully John lost his life to cancer. The service was conducted in Lifesaving the City of Perth Clubhouse, so close to the ocean that John loved. There was in excess of 150

people in attendance, showing the strength of his popularity both by family and numerous friends. We had in attendance: Steve Chamarette, Spunky Fieldhouse, Don Cruden, Peter Wilson, Val O'Brien (Sister of Noel Crouch, KIA 2<sup>ND</sup> Tour who was a great mate of John's) and Gordon Dickson, who served with both Noel and John in 1 Pl A Coy. A wonderful



service and a fitting remembrance of John and so sad because just in November 2020 at Noel Crouch's remembrance service in Katanning, Gordon and John had met again for the first time since 1970.







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#### CITY OF ROCKINGHAM AWARD TO ALLAN WEST

Allan West was awarded the City of Rockingham Senior Citizen of the Year Award on Australia Day 2021

A very proud time for Allan's wife Betty to see him receive an award for all the hard work Allan has done in the Rockingham community over the last 50 something years and especially all the Advocacy work he does for Veterans, as well as the work he does for the 7RAR Association. Well done and very well deserved Allan and congratulations from all of us PIGS.



### The Mayor of Rockingham presenting the award to Allan West



Allan West receiving his award from the mayor of Rockingham

#### **VALE GLEN MOORE 1st TOUR**

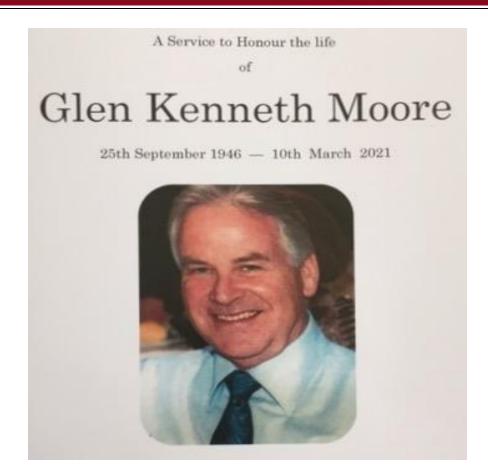
Glen Moore 1st Tour passed away suddenly on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2021. Glen was called up for National Service in 1967 and he saw served in Vietnam with 2RAR, 7RAR and then 1RAR, which would have been quite unique for a National Serviceman. After the Army, Glen joined the WA Police Force and served in stations around the state but eventually spent most of his Police Service as a Police Prosecutor.

Glen's funeral was a real tribute to his standing within the community with a crowd approaching 200 in attendance. Noel Bell gave a wonderful eulogy to Glen, recounting many funny memories of their time in the Army together. Don Cruden recited the "ODE" and then Spunky Fieldhouse presented a folded Australian Flag to Glen's partner Vicki Sheppard. Amongst those PIGS in attendance were: Don Cruden, Spunky Fieldhouse, Steve Chamarette, Noel and Patricia Bell, Joe Van der Wal, John Davies, Geoff Murray, Ian Jury and Ted and Sharron Von Paleske.





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L to R: Ian Jury, Steve Chamarette, Don Cruden, Geoff Murray, Spunky Fieldhouse, Noel Bell, John Davies.



# VALE JOHN BEEVIS 1ST TOUR

Don Cruden and Allan WEST attended the committal service held for our late member John Beevis ex D Coy 1<sup>st</sup> Tour on Fri 8th Dec. 2020 in the suburb of Rockingham. The Australian and 7RAR flags were placed each side of the 7RAR metal sign at the service and this gesture was very much appreciated by John's wife Pauline and family members. John will be sadly missed.

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#### **ANZAC DAY 2021**

It's great that Anzac Day will be taking place this year so hopefully by the time you are reading this, the Anzac Day march will have taken place and everyone will have had a great catch-up with mates after attending marches and services all across Australia.

#### **MEMBERS HEALTH**

Please let us know if you are hospitalised or recuperating at home so we can organise a visit or just let others know that you may not be feeling too well and would appreciate a chat and a cuppa.

#### TALENT AMONGST OUR 7RAR FAMILY

Take a look at this quilt that Spunky's daughter Lisa made. Great job Lisa and it's amazing what talent we have within our 7RAR family, from Val O'Brien's (Noel Crouch's sister) paintings to Lisa's quilt making I'm sure there are many more talented people that we are unaware of.



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## Pigs in Paradise (Qld)

### **ANZAC Day**

We are to form up at SECTION B towards Stephens Lane, alongside Commissariat Store Museum Near the corner of George and Charlotte Street.

Expected step off time 1055 hrs

- 49. THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QLD
- **50.5 RAR ASSOCIATION**
- 51. 6 RAR ASSOCIATION
- **52.7 RAR ASSOCIATION**

#### **Transport**

If you need help then read the following

13CABS have generously offered support to the Parade with both individual pickup from home and operating a Maxicab shuttle service to transport veterans from the Taxi Rank at Roma Street train station to the Buggy Shuttle area on Creek and Elizabeth Street junction (outside Commonwealth Bank).

From the Buggy Shuttle area participants can catch the large shuttle vehicles up Elizabeth Street to either the Jeep/Buggy Loading area (rear of the Myer Centre for non-marchers) or to the junction of Elizabeth and George Streets for those marching in the Parade.

This service will run from 8:30am-11:00am and they will have water and Anzac biscuits at Roma Street. 13CABS representatives will be on-site to

answer queries and direct personnel, this is likely to be a better option than disembarking at Central Station and walking to either the Buggy Shuttle at Creek/Elizabeth or direct to George/William Street to form up. Dependant on take up by veterans participating in the Parade the service may be offered again in 2022.

Should veterans wish to be collected from home and participate in the Parade inside a taxicab they should call 07 3556 5788 direct, cut off for Registration is the 19<sup>th</sup> April (subject to volunteer driver availability). Veterans will remain in the cab throughout then be transported home after the event.

You are asked to pass this information to your membership to make best use of this service to those utilising public transport to access the Parade, as well as being dropped directly to the Buggy Shuttle area via private means.

There is no requirement to re-submit Veteran Transport requests, this update is aimed at those veterans unable to march in the Parade on a first come, first served basis to participate inside a taxi within Group 1 and those wishing to take advantage of free public transport and utilise the shuttle from Roma Street train station.

#### **After March Reunion**

I tried The Westin where we met two years ago but they have been taken over by the Government for COVID quarantine. Grand Central, Pig and Whistle and the Victory are booked out by too many associations for us to get to the bar.

Thus, I have booked us at the Port Office Hotel. Recently renovated it has a great public bar and a good public bar menu. Talking about the menu remember the Liquor laws that forbid the sale of alcohol without a sit-down meal before 1300 on ANZAC Day. I actually think it's a good idea to have a something substantive in our belly before we indulge in alcohol.

The manager said a bowl of chips won't cut it.

Address: 40 Edward Street (The gardens end of Edward Street)

Tele: <u>3003 4700</u>

Website: **Here** 

Public Bar Menu: <u>Here</u>

Remember: COVID is still with us and we'll have to register at the pub.

And, this from Qld Health

• The event organiser must ensure that there are processes put in place to collect contact information for event staff/volunteers and people directly involved in the event. Where there are multiple groups represented in the march or parade, the organiser can delegate responsibility to the individual groups to collect the contact tracing information for their group

I think this means I will have to provide authorities with a list of names, mobile phone number and address of marchers. To this end you might email me on <a href="https://kev@7rar.asn.au">kev@7rar.asn.au</a> with the above details if you intend to march to give me a head start. I can't imagine how they are going to police it but we musts be seen to be trying.

On a lighter note have we changed with age?

From a 1RAR mate Bill Charlton

ANZAC DAY
ONE BEER TOO MANY

I am with the old men marching But have not seen a familiar face The soldiers that I fought beside Were lean and mean and chaste

The diggers that I drank with Could drink and drink all day. Not say "no thanks I have diabetes" And meekly walk way! The blokes I knew would front the bar And order schooners for the mob. But since have joined the short arm- long pocket brigade For now they will not spend two bob.

Like the monument in city square
They look grey and dull with age
You speak out loud but they cannot hear.
We're not on the same page.
Not trying to be difficult.
Just saying how it is.

The once all day, all night party parade Has turned into a fizz!
He can't drink this, he can't eat that This old soldier has me shaking my head. Can't do that, and can't go here.
May just as well be dead.

The band strikes up and off we stride.
Our marching is inept.
Left, right, left right, skip a bit
Until we're both in step!
"Speech is long, don't get me wrong.
I'm as sorrowful as you.
But unless I find a toilet soon.
I don't know what I'll do!"

"What's that you say, you're feeling giddy. Funny thing is, I am too.
I think we'll sit on the next park bench.
Might be the best thing to do!"

"Who did you say you were again? Oh! We fought together! Did we really? Thought I'd seen you somewhere before But then again I don't see very clearly!" "We must do this again sometime!

Maybe next year if we're still here. Okay mate, I can hardly wait! And next time I'll shout you a beer!"

Bill Charlton c 2021





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"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"

