



Porky Seven News



Edition 57 .. Newsletter of the 7th Battaion, The Royal Australian Regiment Association .. August 2021



From The President

I was reflecting on the article I wrote for the April newsletter and at that time we were hopeful in regard to easing of

COVID19 restrictions. We had a reprieve through April and May, but the Delta strain has changed the game in recent months.

Here in Sydney ANZAC Day commemorations were able to be held with some restrictions. I had the pleasure of attending a community conducted service in Lane Cove. I found it to be refreshing after attending larger events over recent years. Although it didn't provide the opportunity for a big catch-up I did find the more relaxed approach to be more personal than the big events I've attended in the major cities in recent years. I think the smaller local commemorations may be the norm for the next while and if that gets more younger veterans to make better connections within their immediate community, then it may be one of the few small blessings that come from our present circumstances.

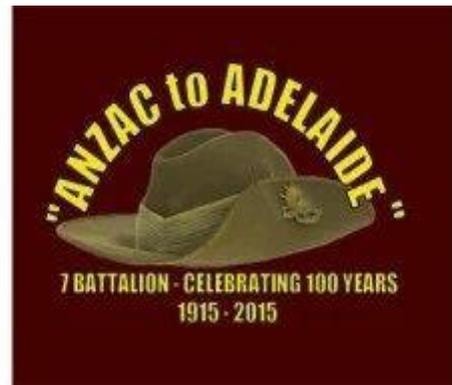
We mentioned the release of the 2nd Edition of Seven in Seventy in the last edition of the news. The distribution team in Adelaide did a tremendous job and I note the feedback to Karl and

Rachael have received on the Facebook group, but once again I thank them and the team soldiers at the Battalion who distributed the new edition.

Our Battalion continues to do great work over in South Australia. Many of them have now had repeated deployments on tasks supporting the community through 2020 and 2021. None of them joined the army to become the go-to workforce for pandemic and disaster response, but their training, discipline and adaptability means that they are a trusted group. The Battalion has spent two years as the Ready Battalion Group. Maintaining that level of readiness concurrent with multiple domestic support responsibilities was a very significant achievement. I also note the large number of soldiers who've done well on promotion courses and a high level of community engagement, but you can read all about that in the article in this edition.

Finally, I wish you all well in these unusual times. The lockdowns and border closures have effected all of us in some way. For those of you not subject to lockdowns I might ask that you take the time reach out to one of your mates who is.

Mick Garraway President



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CALENDAR AUGUST TO DECEMBER

- | | |
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| 18 Aug 2021 | Vietnam Veterans Day, National. |
| 01 Sep 2021 | 7RAR 56 th Birthday. |
| 11 Nov 2021 | Remembrance Day, All States. |
| 19 Nov 2021 | Cut-off date for 3/21 Seven News. |



"FROM THE EDITORS DESK"

As has been decided by the Government there will be a Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicides.

Good afternoon ESORT members

Today the Prime Minister the Hon Scott Morrison MP announced that the Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency, General David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), has signed the Letters Patent, officially establishing the Royal Commission. The Letters Patent formally appoint the Commissioners and outline the Terms of Reference for the Royal Commission. These are available for your awareness at the following [link](#).

I believe this Royal Commission is our opportunity to work towards solutions to tackle the devastating issue that impacts our Defence and veteran communities. I look forward to continuing to

Regards

Liz Cosson AM CSC

Secretary

Department of Veterans' Affairs

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work with you to support our veterans and their families during what may be a distressing and difficult time for many. I am committed to ensuring we continue to support our veterans and their families as a priority.

As the Royal Commission has now commenced the Government, Defence and DVA remain completely independent of the process and your inquiries should be forwarded to the Royal Commission directly. The Royal Commission website allows for all interested parties to subscribe to their mailing list [here](#).

Submissions can now be made to the Royal Commission website either through an [online form](#) or a paper version can be downloaded via this [link](#) and mailed to: GPO Box 3273, Sydney NSW 2001. If you have any issues making a submission or you would like the submission form posted to you then you can ring the Royal Commission on 1800 329 095 between 09:00 and 19:00 AEST Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

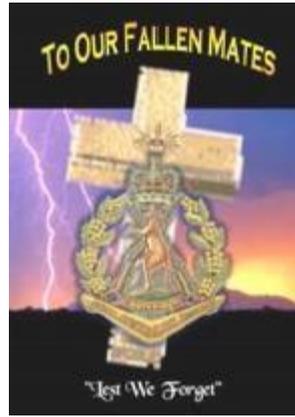
With the turmoil that has been brought on by Defence investigations into the SAS activities in Afghanistan, The Defence Force is under a great deal of scrutiny and there appears a lot needs to be done to bring this under control. As we all now know the Australians and United States have withdrawn all troops from Afghanistan.

As we all should know by now the passing of Lorrae Desmond, one of the most enjoyable members of the Overseas Entertainment groups that provided all those wonderful concerts in Vietnam especially Nui Dat during our tours in Vietnam, may she rest in peace.

On behalf of all members of 7RAR "The herd of Pigs" great thanks to Karl Metcalf for the re-write of 70 in 70, and all those who helped in packing and posting with the great assistance of the CO, ADJT and RSM, 7RAR in Edinburgh SA. Karl is now working on setting up production of 7 in 68.

Please note the article from the Battalion on pages 23 to 27. It is apparent that the Battalion has been involved in a great number of activities being committed to support and participate in Defence Force and civilian activities. Also I would like to thank them for their great assistance in packing and posting of the 7 in 70 reprint.

As we draw closer to Vietnam Veterans day on 18 Aug it is apparent that NSW will not be celebrating this day in Sydney due to the extension of the COVID-19 LOCKDOWN. I hope all other States conduct this activity in their areas.



**“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”**

**3788360 Leonard Bruce Dewsnap, A2 first tour
passed away Friday 30 April 2021.**

**219020 Allan James Howarth, CHQ B 2nd tour,
passed away Tuesday 20 July 2021.**

LEST WE FORGET

**ANGLICAN MILITARY SECTION
ROOKWOOD CEMETERY
TUESDAY - 20 OCTOBER 2020**

On Tuesday 20th October 2020 [8 days prior to Marvin 'Junior' Walter 'Mick' AYRES 76th birthday - 28th October, 2020], it was a special occasion when his three (3) sisters :-Madeline Dawn AYRES [STRACHAN]. Maxine Leslie AYRES [HILLS]. 'Jacqui AYRES [MOSS] visited the recently upgraded area of the War Cemetery at Rookwood. The site had been recently been completely upgraded into an excellent condition with all previous rubbish having been cleared and is now an open cemetery with much easier access.

We were extremely grateful for the ongoing support from OAWG (Office of Australian War Graves) at the location being in the Rookwood Anglican Military Section - NOT Rookwood War Cemetery, to get the job done. The site and graves were in a terrible state of disrepair. Thanks to the great effort of all those who were involved in one way or the other in having the site cleaned up and beautiful

which now resembles a memorial to those soldiers who are at rest there. We were later to find out that this area/site [Anglican Military Section] has a significant military history. It contains the largest amount of Vietnam veteran graves buried in the one location, in Australia. There is 11 Vietnam veterans who were killed in action, and 2 Vietnam Veterans that had completed their tour of duty, but sadly, died soon after their return to Australia, buried at Rookwood Anglican Military Section. The area has a total of 112 military grave sites dating back as far as 1885.

We, the AYRES sisters, say a BIG thank you to all those involved in fully restoring and beautifying the site to a Memorial, one of which to be proud of.

Madeline Dawn Strachan nee
AYRES

4th May 2021





Figure 1 MICK'S THREE SISTERS

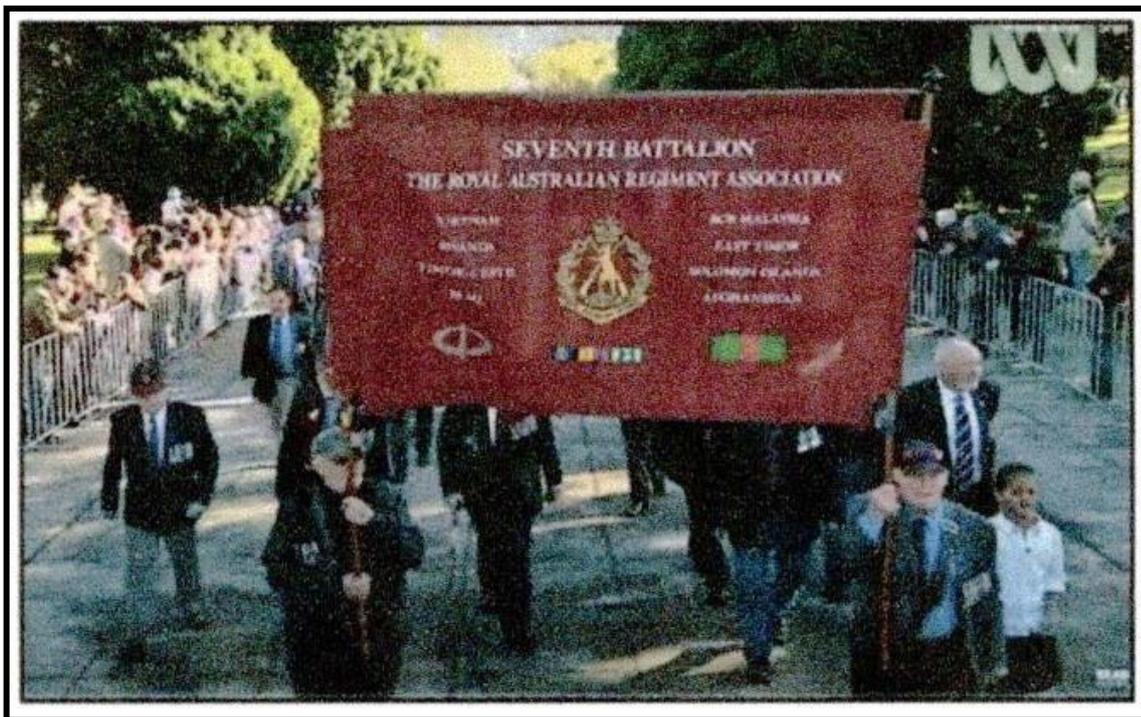
PEARLS FROM VICTORIA

Pre 2021 Anzac Day Service – Caulfield Rehab Hospital



Just before Anzac Day I joined my son for an Anzac Service at Caulfield Rehab. The hospital has had a long relationship with injured service personnel stretching back to WW1 and although the majority of patients are mainly civilians there is still a proportion of DVA clients being cared for. The service itself was simple as it should have been but still thoughtful for all of that and covered all the elements that we look to in remembering friends and comrades. The guest speaker was Chaplain Rabbi Dovid Gutnik who spoke to us in relation of service and sacrifice which related to those of us who were ex-military or in the nursing/medical perspective. He is still active in ARes and strongly involved with Melbourne University Rifles.

Anzac Day



As we outlined in the last Newsletter, arrangements for this year's Anzac Day March were chaotic - not quite reminiscent of the retreat from M pens set up according to the 'vintage' of the marchers involved.

On the day Ian Dunn and Allan McGuinness set up our banner which had the desired effect of attracting other 7RAR veterans so we had a reasonable group of fellow Pigs to march. I believe there was a halfhearted attempt to move the banner away but Allan dissuaded them. Interestingly 8RAR moved their banner in behind us and I later found that the Vietnam Tunnel Rats Association had also brought their banner along - all three banners



forming a rallying point for our various comrades. The whole exercise was badly handling by those charged with the administration of Anzac Day and they should be ashamed of their inability to recognise the place that Anzac Day has for us. On a happier note it was wonderful to see how many contemporary veterans were marching and carrying on the tradition. Because the post-March crush and barriers made it difficult to cross St Kilda Rd three of us decided to pay a visit to the 7th Battalion tree and pay our respects before heading off to Bell's.

Post-March at Bell's Hotel.

With the confusion surrounding the Melbourne Anzac arrangements we weren't sure just how many would turn up and numbers were down on previous years but we still attracted nearly 70 to lunch which also included representatives from 7AIF and 2nd/7th. Full marks to the staff at Bell's because this year we didn't have to wait until noon for first drinks and they had tailored a menu especially for us even though we couldn't guarantee numbers. We also called the 7RAR Roll of Honour whilst remembering losses from the earlier 7s.



Anzac Day Concerns

Based on this and previous year's experiences we have tabled our concerns to the Kindred Organisation & Unit Association meeting but in particular the limiting of our numbers to 8800 (compared with 75000 to the AFL) so that we could clear the area in advance of footy fans and herding numbers into random containment pens without any real organisation being shown by Marshalls. The other concern we are putting forward is the frequent changes to the Order of March from year to year - which always seems to contribute to more chaos - something which other state organisers seem to avoid. It will be interesting to see how many of these concerns are put forward to the Anzac Day Commemorative Committee.

Suoi Chau Pha (All the 7s Shrine Ceremony) – Sunday 8th August

Fortunately Victoria's Lockdown 5 has been downgraded to Lockdown Lite (for now) which means that our combined service commemorating all the 7s can go ahead rather than the virtual service that the Shrine was able to put together for us last year. The service will be starting at 10:00am and finish by 10:30 - followed by lunch at (surprise, surprise) Bell's Hotel. Friends from 106 Fd Bty will also be coming as the occasion will also be remembering Suoi Chau Pha and the Gunners gave A Coy.

Our link with the 'other' 7s

Some weeks ago the manager of a regional military museum asserted that there was no lineal descent from other 7th Bns and there was “no reason to involve 7RAR with any historical connection with the 7th Battalion”. There is no lineal linkage but there is that strong feeling of carrying on a tradition. The veterans of the 7th Bn RAR were very fortunate in being always accepted by the earlier 7th Bns as part of the 7th Battalion brotherhood. The relationship started before we went to Vietnam, with veterans of the 2/7th visiting us and wishing us well before we embarked. They were continuing a tradition started by the 7th Bn AIF and the 2/7th. After Vietnam, when we formed our own battalion association, we were routinely invited to the functions organised by the 7th Bn AIF, the 2/7th Bn and the 7th Bn AIF (193945). And we were always made very welcome at those gatherings by the men of those earlier battalions. That relationship continues, with all the four 7th Bns which served Australia in war participating in an annual service at The Shrine to mark the anniversary of the service of the original 7th at the Battle of Lone Pine and to commemorate the sacrifices of the soldiers of all our units. This year that ceremony will be held in The Sanctuary on Sunday 8 August, at 10am. Our four associations regularly communicate on matters of common interest— just as we support one another at meetings of the KO&UA at ANZAC House, and gather together after the ANZAC Day March in Melbourne. That connection was established more than 50 years ago; it’s alive and well, and we want it to continue.

Some 2/7 AIF History

Recently whilst Ian Dunn hunkered down to escape the foul weather, he was doing an online search for *The glory of the 2/7th* by Stanley Savage which he eventually found the book at

<https://viewer.slv.vic.gov.au/?entity=IE2274320&file=FL19078159&mode=browse>.

It’s a great read for anyone with an interest in the 7th Battalions— only 15 pages in length, it comprises two letters written by Brigadier Savage to members of the original 7th Bn AIF, telling them of the great work done by the 2/7th in North Africa, Greece and Crete.

It's really inspirational stuff, with lots of references to the outstanding battalion he knew as "Walker's mob". It can be read online at the above address.

Vietnam Veteran Day Wednesday 18th August

Vic Gov. has given VVAA VIC approval to conduct a Commemoration Service at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on Wednesday 18th August 2021. Subject to COVID getting in the way (like last year) we all gather at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance for a Service in the usual format. Should we be unable to gather (COVID) a *Streamed Service* will be put to air for public viewing - over 40k viewings last year. 2021 will also be the last time VVAA VIC will host a large scale VV Day Service at the Shrine. Future years will be much lower key gatherings.

Parting Shot

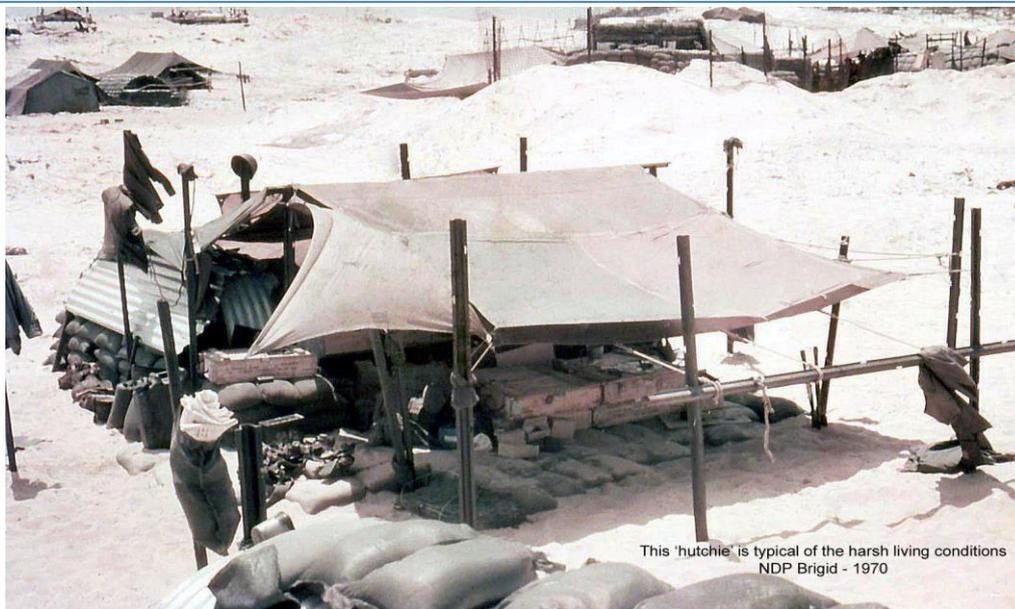
I am very proud to be called a pig. It stands for pride, integrity and guts

Ronald Reagan

Bill Anderson

0419-877-463

lastwill@hotmail.net.au



This 'hutchie' is typical of the harsh living conditions
NDP Brigid - 1970

THE BEST FROM THE WEST

Hello PIGS everywhere, we hope you are all fit and well and coping with the Covid restrictions.

PIGS GET-TOGETHER IN JULY

With our Anzac Day parade cancelled for another year, it seemed like a good idea to get together for a feed, a few drinks and a few laughs. So on Friday July 16th a group of us met at a small bar in St Georges Terrace and in attendance at our luncheon were: Don Cruden, Chris Clowser, Spunky Fieldhouse and daughter Lisa, Steve Chamarette, Peter Vlachou, Lee Williams, Darryl Lovell (both 5 RAR), Peter & Rose Wilson, Charlie & Pam Matheson, Les Kail, Mick & Joan O'Halloran, Allan, Betty & Melanie West, Ted & Sharron Paleske, John Davies, Gary & Teresa Williams, Garry Mills, Ian McNee, Bruce Wallis, Graeme Hayward, Noel & Patricia Bell, Nicole Anderton and Ray Pack.

The surprise attendee was Ray Pack and members like Gary Williams and Mick O'Halloran had last seen "Packy" 51 years ago in Vietnam. They certainly had a lot to catch up with. Just goes to show - if you are a member, join us with our functions and get to meet and greet each other. A few photos of attendees follow.



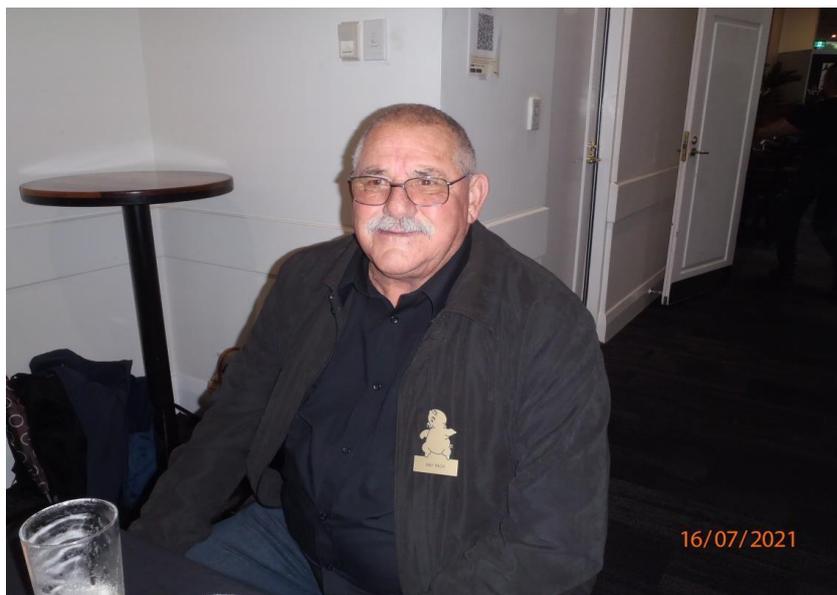
L to R: Don Cruden, Spunky Fieldhouse



L to R: Steve Chamarette OAM, Peter Vlachou OAM



Allan West OAM



Ray Pack

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST

Most hearty congratulations and well done to our two most esteemed members who were awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, Steven Chamarette OAM and Allan West OAM. They now join Graham Edwards AM, John Burrows OAM and Peter Vlachou OAM as recipients of awards within our state association and we are all very appreciative of the wonderful work they have done and are still doing. Congratulations once again and congratulations also to all 7RAR Association recipients throughout Australia who may have been similarly recognised.

FEBRUARY BUSHFIRES - WALLY KLESZCZ UPDATE

After some delays and a few frustrating months, Wally has finally poured the concrete slab for his new house and it is going to be as fireretardant as he can possibly make it, with concrete slab, concrete block construction, steel roof frames and steel colourbond roof.

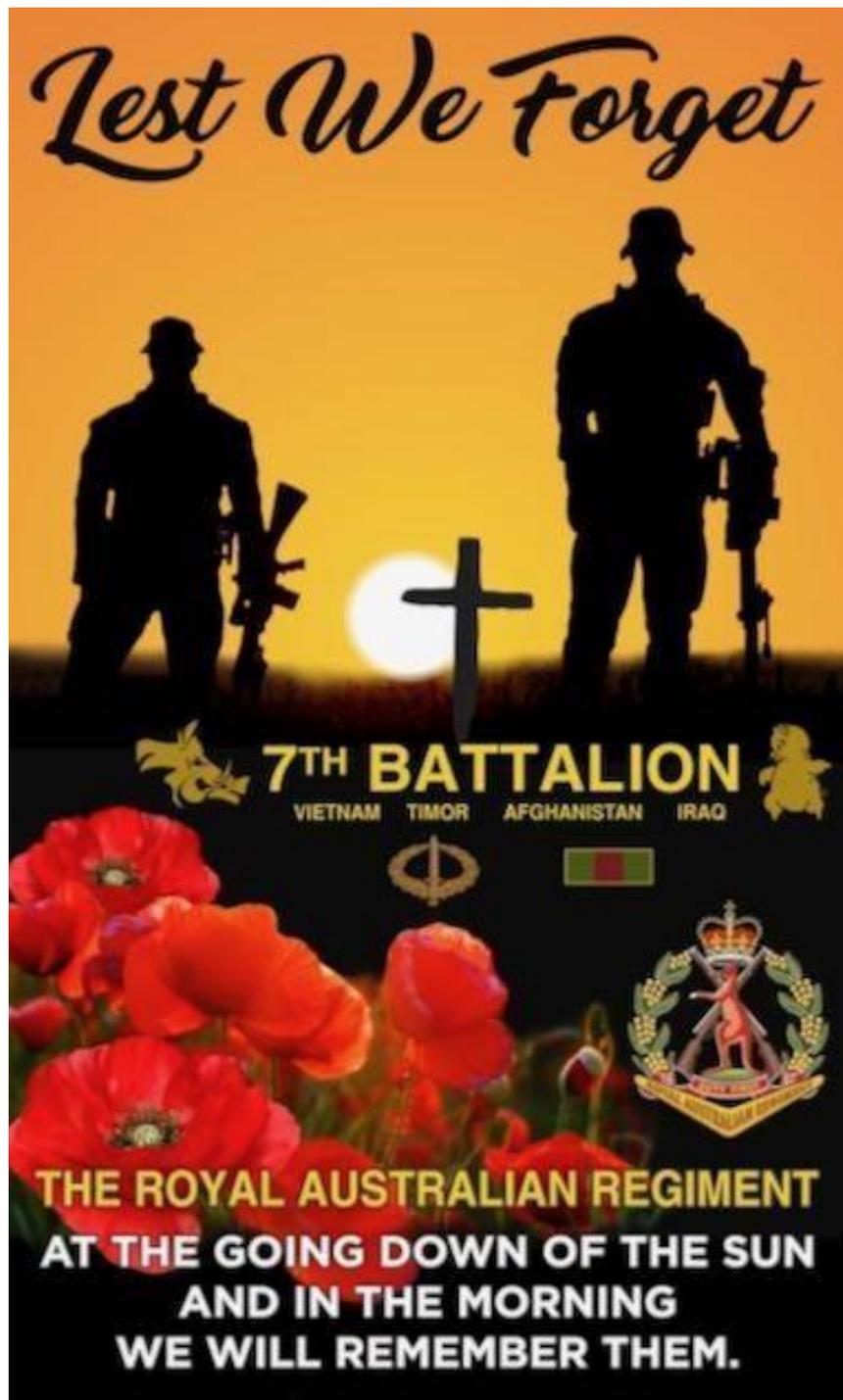
He is currently enjoying temporary accommodation in converted shipping container dongas courtesy of "Twiggy" Forrest's FMG. Thanks to all who have contributed to getting Wally back on his feet.

DON'S MERCHANDISE - FLAGS

Don has new flag designs for sale, but at this stage he is only after an expression of interest to gauge interest. If you are interested in either of the flags, please contact Don by email on dcruden1@bigpond.com not later than August 31st. Do not send money at this stage. If sufficient orders are placed you will be advised regarding payment and delivery etc. Note all flags are complete with eyelets and rope loops.



Flag 1 600mm x 900mm, expected cost \$50 including postage



Flag 2 600mm x 1000mm, expected cost \$70 including postage WARNING ORDERS

After missing out on the Anzac Day march, we will be looking for a large group of PIGS to march in Kings Park for Vietnam Veterans Day, this year to be held on Sunday August 15th at the Vietnam Pavilion, with the march commencing about 1045 and the service about 1100 hrs. Don will be present with our banner so we are looking for a big herd of PIGS to march.

The annual PIGS SWILL will be held at the same venue as the July Get-together, BS & Co in St Georges Terrace, approx. 20th November.

Date and time will be confirmed when finalised.

The Bruce Rock "Back to the Bush" veterans' reunion is on again, see flyer below.



..... CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

Back to the Bush Veterans Reunion 2021

1st November - 7th November
Bruce Rock, WA

WELCOMING ALL MILITARY PERSONNEL PAST & PRESENT
ACTIVITIES ALL WEEK. COMMEMORATIVE MARCH, MARKETS & ARMY BAND
CONCERT ALL ON SATURDAY 6TH NOV.

ENQUIRIES & PROGRAM OF EVENTS - CDO@BRUCEROCK.WA.GOV.AU OR 9061 1377



BRUCEROCK.WA.GOV.AU/BACKTOTHEBUSH

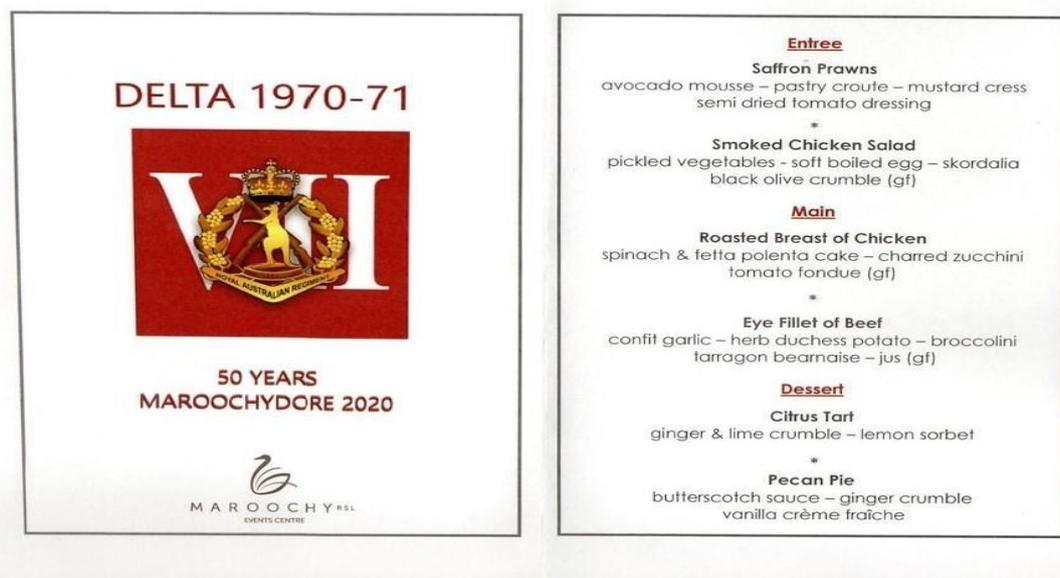
D2 REUNION - MAROOCHYDORE (By Peter and Charlie)

After being rescheduled twice in 2020 the Delta (2nd Tour) Company Reunion finally happened at Maroochydore from 24-27 May 2021. An excellent attendance of 84 veterans and partners came together for a wonderful few days of re-telling of stories that keep getting "richer" each time vets meet and sharing the latest medical episodes. Charlie and Pam Matheson, Peter and Sandra Vlachou attended from WA with Bob and Valma Wood, Jim Wilson's partner Cheryl Macaulay having to unfortunately withdraw at the last minute.

In a difficult stop-start and Covid challenging time D2 Reunion organisers Kev and Sue Pattle and Jim and Jan Hardie did a "top job". The well-

planned daily event highlights were: Meet and Greet at the Maroochydore RSL Scenic bus trip thru the Sunshine Coast hinterland with Mystic Mountain Bus Tours (Glass House Mountains, Maleny, Winery etc)

- Meet and Greet at the Maroochydore RSL
- Scenic bus trip thru the Sunshine Coast hinterland with Mystic Mountain Bus Tours (Glass House Mountains, Maleny, Winery etc)
- Memorial Service Cotton Tree Cenotaph Maroochydore (Situated on the Maroochy River with piper playing)
- Main night, Ceremonial Service then three course meal. (Music, Elvis floor show, Auction & Raffles)
- Final Session Chit Chat; general discussion, next reunion.





The Reunion PIG

7 RAR Article for 7 RAR Association Newsletter *Seven News*.

K0 – Battalion Headquarters

2021 saw the 7 RAR Battalion Headquarters begin with planning Exercise MAROON DAWN, which focussed on mechanised platoon operations in the Cultana Training Area, whilst concurrently supporting Hotel Quarantine Compliance Management in South Australia. Following this, the Headquarters then focused on enabling Project LAND 400, Phase 3, the Infantry Fighting Vehicle procurement process to replace our M113 fleet, and subsequently planning 7 RAR's contribution to Exercise KOOLENDONG. This is a joint activity between the Army's 1st Brigade and the United States Marine Rotation Force - Darwin. Looking ahead, the Headquarters will end the year planning and conducting 7 RAR's contribution to the Battlegroup Warfighter Exercise in support of 1st Armoured Regiment, and the Australian Army Skill at Arms Competition at the Murray Bridge Training Area, facilitated by 7 RAR, closing out a very productive year for the Battalion.

Our ceremonial events have focussed on ANZAC Day and several commemorations around South Australia. We hosted a dawn service at Horseshoe Lines, inviting our close friends from the 1st Armoured Regiment and 1st Combat Service Support Team. We were able to achieve an exceptional event despite COVID-19 restrictions, and would like to thank all that were in attendance. Our next ceremonial events for the year will be commemorations for Suoi Chau Pha

Day, Long Tan Day and Vietnam Veterans' Day.

The Commanding Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major were able to meet with the South Australian Premier and Port Lincoln Mayor. This reinforces our commitment to the veteran community in South Australia and close ties with our regional centres. We look forward to continuing to develop our relationship with the local community in South Australia through 2021 and each company through their regional centre affiliations.

7 RAR has seen some outstanding achievements by our people in 2021. Our junior soldiers continue to receive the student of merit award on their promotion courses for corporal and represent the Battalion across a variety of specialist courses, including the Visual Trackers course. Several junior soldiers have acted quickly and courageously on several occasions, providing immediate assistance and direction to the public as first responders to road vehicle accidents. Their actions have been held in high regard by the Battalion, South Australian Emergency Services, and the public.

On a sad note for the Battalion, 2021 has seen the passing of two of our serving members. As we reflect on their service, we are currently updating the plaques at the Battalion memorial to include all four members who have died in service since delinking from 5 RAR. Lest we forget.

7 RAR will hand over the contingency force element responsibility in the

coming weeks to the 3rd Brigade. This has been an excellent accomplishment for the Battalion, maintaining this high-readiness capability for two years. Well done to all of those who have contributed to maintaining this capability, including families.

K1 - Alpha Company

Alpha Company has taken part in or supported every major activity 7 RAR has conducted this year. Our soldiers were able to incorporate a wide range of warfighting tasks from individual soldier skills to achieving combined arms live fire at combat team level. Alpha Company worked closely with the 1st Armoured Regiment to achieve a live fire obstacle breach with tanks, artillery, engineers, air defence, snipers, reconnaissance, and anti-armour with mechanised infantry as the nucleus for the combat team. Alpha Company is now preparing for the Battlegroup Warfighter Exercise scheduled for the end of the year. This will again see Alpha Company conducting high end conventional operations whilst working in a combined and joint task force.

Alpha Company participated in NAIDOC Week activities in Victor Harbour, South Australia. This was an excellent opportunity for the company to celebrate the achievements of our indigenous community and reinforcing the close ties with the local community. Alpha Company will continue visit and support the Victor Harbour community and engage through our indigenous liaison officer.

K2 - Bravo Company

2021 has been a rewarding year for Bravo Company, with the conduct of

several Battalion and company led exercises, with a focus on taking the lead in the Infantry Fighting Vehicle trials.

Bravo Company deployed of personnel in support of the Infantry Fighting Vehicle activity in Puckapunyal Military Area, followed by an additional activity in Cultana. This activity saw Bravo Company utilise the trial vehicles in a combat team setting, across several full mission profiles, through challenging terrain and conventional and unconventional operations.

Bravo Company has planned and executed the Atlas Fitness Challenge, a fundraising event to raise money for an Adelaide-based charity, Kickstart for Kids. The challenge and fundraising event were a massive success and saw the Battalion raise \$2000 for Kickstart for Kids. Bravo Company also holds a close connection with the Port Adelaide Club Veterans Program for 2021. Bravo Company's regional centre affiliation is with Port Lincoln, and we look forward to an opportunity for community engagement in 2021.

K3 - Charlie Company

Charlie Company commenced the year with preparations for Exercise MAROON DAWN, focussing on individuals progressing from individual static zero shoots to team manoeuvre. This exercise included members from 1st Combat Engineer Regiment and 8th/12th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, concentrating in Adelaide and participating in the lead-up training with the company.

There was a large emphasis on the mechanised phase of the exercise, due to

the recent qualification of new crew commanders and drivers. This included a series of platoon advances which tested the crew commander's ability to manoeuvre as part of a platoon. This involved the vehicles bounding to overwatch positions before clearing on a series of suspected enemy locations, using a combination of direct and indirect fires. Mechanised manoeuvre is the centre of the 7th Battalion's capability and Charlie Company was able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge on these platforms to an excellent level.

Charlie Company now looks forward to participation in the key activity for the year, Exercise KOOLENDONG. We are excited to integrate with the United States Marines Corps over a series of blank and live fire activities, to learn and teach as part of a coalition exercise in the Northern Territory.

Charlie Company's regional centre affiliation is with Streaky Bay, and we look forward to an opportunity for community engagement in 2021.

K5 - Administration Company

Admin Company has so far contributed to all Battalion and Brigade exercises. Admin Company has deployed both the A1 and A2 echelons in support of these exercises, whilst continuing to maintain and improve our vehicle fleet across the Battalion.

Admin Company was able to improve our people through attendance through specialist and career courses and in-barracks company training. The physical training program improved physical fitness and robustness while

improving morale through platoon vs platoon sports.

Admin Company personnel were able to visit Whyalla, integrating our indigenous soldiers with their school children. This enabled us to demonstrate the opportunities that Army can provide to those looking at careers post-graduation. It also reinforces our close ties with the Whyalla indigenous community, which we plan to expand upon throughout 2021.

K6 - Support Company

Provided by Direct Fire Support Platoon (DFSW)

The start of this year, the platoon had an emphasis in camouflage and concealment whilst conducting anti armoured and support by fire missions. We trialled head and shoulder ghillie suits whilst firing all weapon systems including high explosive 84mm rounds, with the end state being integrating with Reconnaissance Platoon in tactical tasks.

DFSW Platoon achieved an excellent standard in specialist skills, firing weapon systems out to maximum effective range accurately, firing from heavy machine guns to anti armoured weapon systems. This culminated in supporting the rifle companies in live fire support by fire and anti-armour counter attack missions. Ex MAROON DAWN highlighted the larrikinism which still exists in the *Pig Battalion*, a healthy balance of hard training and tomfoolery established an excellent rapport in all command relationships.

Support Company's regional centre affiliation is with Ceduna, and we look

forward to an opportunity for community engagement in 2021.





Pigs in Paradise

I have instituted a monthly lunch in Brisbane at the Grand Central Hotel. Strategically situated under Brisbane's central Station (so I don't have to walk far) it is proving popular. Wives have attended in the past but coincidentally, last week it was just the happy crew you see below in the pic.



Around the table L to R: Darryl Blackwell, Shane Gabriel, Kev Gillett, Sam Giacomantonio, Leigh Christie, Michael O'Mallon, Mick King, Bob Brett and Neal Schneidewin.

A part of my reason for doing this is to get the younger set involved and I've had some success with Shane Garabriel gracing us with his presence.

The uncertainty brought about by COVID 19 makes any planning difficult. With Vietnam Veterans Day and the Battalion birthday imminent we can only say; Providing the politicians let us, let's gather at the eternal flame in Anne Street on 18 August. I will send out an email next week if I think it'll be allowed.

A Bit of History

7RAR in Iraq ANZAC Day 2016

THEY fly up the Persian Gulf, past uncertain friends and semi-hostile nations seen out either window of the RAAF Hercules C130, through Iraq's barren seas of sand to a base just north of Baghdad, where the history of ANZAC rings loud.

Some 300 Australians and 100 New Zealanders have come together for their biggest shared mission since Gallipoli, 101 years ago, joined by a will to do their part ridding the world of the Islamic State.



Many Aussie diggers currently serving in Iraq have strong connections to ANZAC Cove and the Western Front. Pictured on the right is Sergeant Brenton East, 31 years old is from Nowra NSW. Picture Gary Ramage/News Corp Australia. *Source: News Corp Australia*

Among those on this mission to train Iraqis to better skill themselves in fighting the enemy known as Daesh are Australians with [direct connections back to ANZAC Cove and the Western Front](#).

There is Leigh Trevan, 29, from Brisbane, whose great-grandfather Harold Trevan was awarded the Military Cross and France's Croix de Guerre for his actions in 1917.

A machine gunner, Second Lieutenant Harold Trevan displayed "conspicuous bravery and coolness" by leaving his stricken gun pit, fixing a bayonet and charging solo. His citation notes he "accounted for a large number of Germans" while being shot twice.



Corp Australia. *Source: News Corp Australia* Corporal Kenneth Horton has carried on the family tradition of playing the pipes. Picture: Gary Ramage/News,

"No he was not the reason I signed up," says Ms Trevan, whose grandfather also served in WWII. "It was never spoken of in my family. All I know is my grandfather had nightmares.

"I joined for the challenge, physically and mentally."

In the blistering heat of central Iraq, in the fortified Camp Taji compound where IEDs go off outside the walls, and ballistic vests and loaded weapons are mandatory beyond the accommodation area, Ms Trevan and the other Australians are getting that challenge.



Corporal Kenneth Horton said playing the bagpipes is how his family tell their history and culture. Picture: Gary Ramage/News Corp Australia Source: News Corp Australia

Corporal Kenneth Horton's Scottish great-grandfather James Taylor served in the Boer War and then came to live in Australia, where he went on to fight in Gallipoli.

FROM NEWS.COM.AU

Between battling the Turkish army, Second Lieutenant Taylor played the bagpipes, and was called upon to pipe too many laments for Australians who fell at Gallipoli.

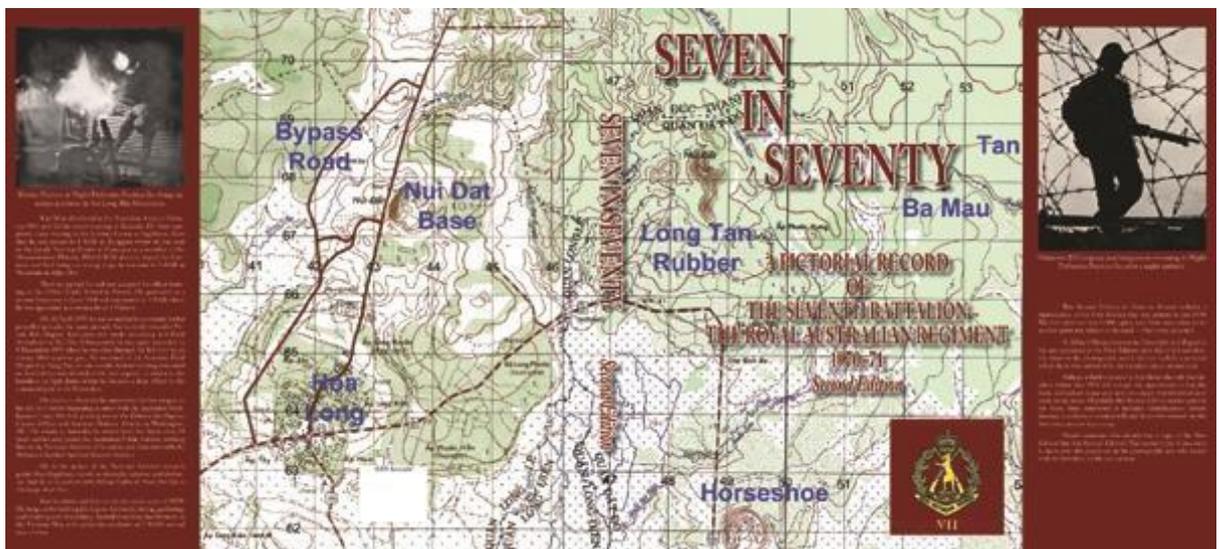


On the 101st anniversary of the battle of the Somme, Australian and New Zealand soldiers will stand shoulder to shoulder on Anzac Day in Taji Iraq. Picture: Gary Ramage/News Corp Australia
Source: News Corp Australia

Corporal Horton, 35, from Mittagong in NSW, tasked to play the pipes at the ANZAC Dawn Service in Camp Taji, says his great-grandfather put his pipes under his bed and “never played them again after the war”.

His father played the pipes with 7RAR, and his uncle plays too, treasuring and putting new life into the old ivory and wooden pipes that stayed under the bed for years. “It’s the way we tell our history and culture,” says Corporal Horton.

Seven in Seventy 2nd edition



If you paid for a copy and haven't got it yet it's because I don't have your address. If you fall into this category phone me on 0429 054 805 and I'll sort it. If you want a copy then deposit \$120 per copy required in the association's ANZ bank account:

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Bank: ANZ Penrith

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There are still copies available

Census

Brought to my attention by Steve Chamarette

As you may already be aware, the latest [Australian Census is taking place on 10 August](#) and it is a particularly important one for veterans.

This is because for the first time, the Census will include a question about service in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), which is the result of a great deal of lobbying by the RSL.

The reason this is important is because currently there is no comprehensive data on the total number of veterans living in Australia. Estimates indicate this may be as many as 630,000 people.

The 2021 Census will give government and the wider community more accurate information on how many veterans live in Australia and their geographic spread. At the very least, this will enable better targeted training and information about caring for veterans to health care professionals as well as lead to improved service delivery to veterans and their families.

For example, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is one of the largest purchasers of healthcare services in Australia. Census data will assist DVA to plan and cost future services to ensure veterans and their families are provided with the right services, when and where they are needed.

It will also help inform our own decisions as we plan for the future and execute our Strategic Plan which is all about meeting the changing needs of veterans going forward.

I encourage everyone to complete the Census. [This page on the Census website](#) provides guidance on how to complete it. The good news is you don't need to wait until 10 August if you would like to complete it now.

Please be assured that under the Census and Statistics Act 1905, no identifiable information can be released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics about any individual, which means the data collected is "anonymised" (i.e. cannot be traced back to you personally).

Yours faithfully

Ray James
RSL NSW President

That's all from Queensland

Kev Gillett

G'day again from South Australia

We have continued on with our monthly lunches and photo's of those occasions are posted toward the end of this item.

Planning for our Suoi Chau Pha commemorative service commenced just after ANZAC day and was progressing well through May and June however an outbreak in Adelaide of the delta variant of Covid19 put us into an immediate statewide hard lock-down on the 20th of July. Seventeen days before our Suoi Chau Pha service!

Hoping for the best, our planning continued, and fortunately seven days later some restrictions were eased which would allow us to hold the service and seven days later, at midnight Wednesday 5th August, more restrictions were lifted which then allowed 70 persons at the lunch. We had been very, very lucky.

Covid Plan, Covid Marshall, car parking, advise Police etc was planned and put in place along with a lot of compliance paperwork ... all essential in this Covid era. The Service commenced at 10:30 with Bob Whinnen, President, 7RAR

Veterans SA welcoming all those present, followed by the lowering of the flags and the mounting of the 7RAR Catafalque Party commanded by Sgt. Pilia'E-Smith.

Padre Ceder Lopez gave an opening prayer. This was followed with Tony Carr speaking about The Battle of Suoi Chau Pha, at which he was present in the lead section. Chris Ashenden then read the first tour Honour Roll.

Geoff Chandler then read about the contact alongside the *Song Rai River* during which Pte Bob Hughes was fatally wounded whilst elements of 4 platoon attacked a very secure bunker system. 'Doc' Russell then read the second tour honour roll.

The Afghanistan Action Report and Honour Roll was given by Pte. James Usher a current serving 7RAR soldier.



Wreaths were then laid by Lt. Col. Roland Spackman, Commanding Officer of 7 Battalion, RAR and Bob Whinnen, President, 7RAR Veterans SA

This was followed by the Ode, followed by the Last Post, 2 minutes silence and Reveille.

The Padre gave the Battalion Prayer followed with the Benediction and with that the Catafalque Party demounted. Bob Whinnen then closed the proceedings.

54th Anniversary of Suoi Chau Pha

On this day we commemorate not only the Battle of Suoi Chau Pha, but also every battle, contact and incident during which the mettle of the 7RAR soldiers has been tested ... a test which has never been failed.

And on this day we also remember with deep respect those who returned to Australia and eventually lost their battle with life.



Commemorative Service organised by
7RAR Veterans SA
6 August 2021



Commemorative Service

Welcome - Bob Whinnen

Lowering of the Flags

Steve Csorba and Lindsay Kealy

Mounting of the 7RAR Catafalque Party

Prayer - Padre Cedar Lopez - 7RAR

The Suoi Chau Pha Battle - Tony Carr

Honour Roll - 1st Tour Vietnam - Chris Ashenden

2nd Tour Action Report - Geoff Chandler

Honour Roll - 2nd Tour Vietnam - 'Doc' Russell

Afghanistan Action Report and

Afghanistan Honour Roll - Pte James Usher

Laying of Wreaths - Lt. Col. Roland Spackman

Commanding Officer, 7 Battalion, RAR

- Bob Whinnen

President, 7RAR Veterans SA

Reciting of the Ode - Bob Whinnen

They shall not grow old,
as we that are left grow old
age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun,
and in the morning

We will remember them.

LEST WE FORGET

Response (ALL) "Lest we forget"

Last Post - Bugler - William Madden

Two minutes silence

Reveille/Rouse - Bugler - William Madden

Battalion Prayer - Padre Cedar Lopez - 7RAR

(ALL)

O Lord God, we thank you for the protection
you have given to the Seventh.

Help us to be men of humility, courage and love.

We thank you that we are a united force.

Keep us always so united that we may be worthy
to advance and guard your kingdom in justice,
love and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

Benediction - Padre Cedar Lopez - 7RAR

7RAR Catafalque Party demounts

Acknowledgements and Farewell - Bob Whinnen

and then ... time for reflections at the
Vietnam War Memorial

and then ... adjournment to
Benjamin's on Franklin, Franklin St, City
for drinks and pre booked lunch

Our very grateful thanks to the 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment for providing the Catafalque Party.
Commemorative Service organised by the 7RAR Veterans SA.

lest we forget

After some members spent some time for reflection at the Memorial we all adjourned to Benjamin's on Franklin. At Benjamin's there were twenty two 7RAR veterans and their guests as well as fifty current serving soldiers. Conversations flowed, as did some wine and other beverages, ties were sold and Benjamin's staff looked after us well.

Our thoughts and good wishes are extended to our interstate colleagues and all fellow Aussies as our nation travels through this often difficult but surmountable Covid era.

ANZAC day march 2021



As you can see from the preceding image the Vietnam ranks are thinning so it was great to see past and current serving 7RAR soldiers boosting our numbers.

... and yet another pic ... this time of the 'boys' who attended our June lunch



seated l-r – Lindsay Kealy, Chris Ashenden, Kerry Eichner, Geoff Chandler back row –
'Doc' Russell, Bob Whitford, Adrian Taylor, Steve Csorba. Bob Lloyd.

Think that'll do for now ... til next time ... keep vertical and above ground

Doc

State Secretary, 7RAR Veterans SA

THESE PHOTOS FROM RACHEL HOPKINS



Battle of Suoi Chau Pha service begins. Bob Whinnen giving the welcome. In the background are some of our very own current members of A Company, 7RAR.



Pte James Usher of 7RAR giving the Afghanistan report/honor roll.



Bob Whinnen (7RAR vets SA) and 7RAR CO LtCol Roland Spackman, In the background are some current members of A Company, 7RAR.



7RAR RSM, John Craig. A highly experienced and friendly man who kindly gave his time to explain to Anne and I some of the citations/medals on his chest. Tony Carr and Kerry Eichner in the background.



Defence releases Afghanistan Inquiry Reform Plan

CDF General Angus Campbell has released the Afghanistan Inquiry Reform Plan, setting out Defence's strategy for responding to the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry. The reform plan establishes the Afghanistan Inquiry Reform Program and provides an overview of work already under way, the manner in which future work will be delivered and timeframes for delivery of this work.

General Campbell said Defence's response to the Afghanistan inquiry, through the reform plan, would embed enduring change across the organisation. "The issues

identified by the Afghanistan inquiry are very serious and, as a defence force, it has been confronting, but we must look forward," General Campbell said.

"We are committed, through the reform plan and reform program, to implement change and ensure the war-fighting capability of our future force is optimised and maintained.

"As an organisation we are better when we learn, train and fight together as a team.

"Implementing the work, as outlined in the reform plan is no different.

"We will do it as a team."

Defence said that since the release of the [Afghanistan inquiry report](#) last November, and while the reform plan has been under development, considerable work had already commenced to address the complex issues arising from the inquiry. Defence Secretary Greg Moriarty said all Defence personnel would play a critical role in supporting Defence's ongoing response to the inquiry.

"The Afghanistan Inquiry Reform Plan is a considered and comprehensive way forward for Defence and we will become more effective and efficient as an organisation because of it," Mr Moriarty said. "It will take the effort of each and every one of us to ensure a future-focused enterprise approach to reform, which will be fundamental to our success."

The Afghanistan Inquiry Reform Plan is available for [download here](#).

Anyone affected by the Afghanistan inquiry and reforms is encouraged to seek help early.

A full list of welfare support services is [available here](#).