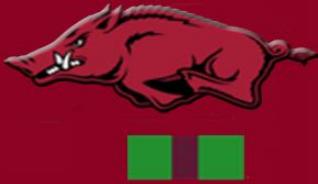




# Porky Seven News



Edition 61..Newsletter of the 7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment..Dec 2022



## FROM THE PRESIDENT



As we head towards Christmas it is timely to offer our best wishes to the men and women serving in our Battalion. 7 RAR has once again had a very busy year, for the third year running they were committed heavily to domestic support tasks but also managed to squeeze in good quality training which was demonstrated very clearly in their result in the Duke of Gloucester Cup. Thanks are due to the outgoing command team of LTCOL Roland

Spackman and WO1 John Craig who have led the Battalion out of the COVID period very well and we welcome the new command team of LTCOL Von Lambert and WO1 Al Ashman.

We are pleased to advise that the Battalion has been awarded a campaign streamer for operations in Iraq. The streamer has been awarded in recognition for the repeated deployments to Iraq from 2008 onwards. These included company sized deployments to Baghdad, numerous deployments of small teams and individuals as embedded staff and the 7 RAR led Training Task Unit deployment to Taji in 2016. The Battalion is planning a ceremonial parade to 'fix' the streamer to the Regimental Colour on the morning of Saturday 30 September 2023, with the parade to occur at the Torrens Parade Ground in North Adelaide.

2023 will be the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Iraq deployment and the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first 7 RAR Afghanistan deployment, and the

10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Afghanistan deployment. I know the Battalion will appreciate having plenty of Association support, and it will also provide a great opportunity for the men and women from those deployments to gather as well as those who served in smaller groups throughout the middle eastern theatre and in Timor Leste through that particular period. The date also coincides with the AFL Grand Final, but the parade will be over well before the match starts. Those of you who attended the Colours Presentation in 2011 or have had Anzac Day in Adelaide will know that Torrens Parade Ground is an excellent location for an event such as this.

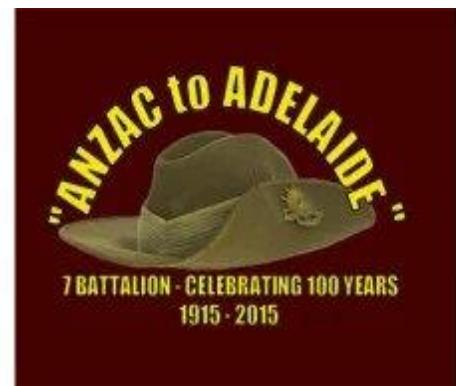
The Association National Exec will work with the Battalion and the SA Branch over the coming months to confirm the arrangements but you may wish to save the date.

Finally, Karl Metcalf's efforts in assembling material for a book on the first tour have continued. I know many of you have been following his work on social media and are as impressed as I am with his effort and his dedication. The drafts look excellent and we look forward to advising members of the details for purchase and distribution in the new year. You can anticipate the cost and the method of ordering your copy to be similar to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of 7 in 70. We are lucky to have men like Carl in our Association and we look forward to seeing the book in hard copy next year.

May you all have a peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

**Mick Garraway**  
**President**

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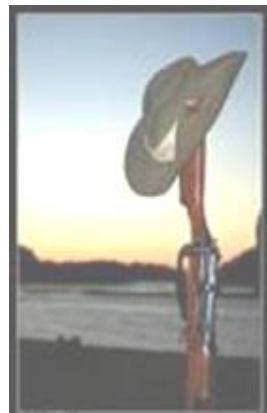
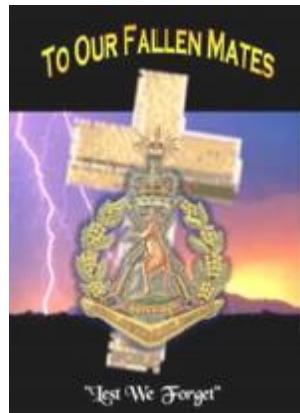
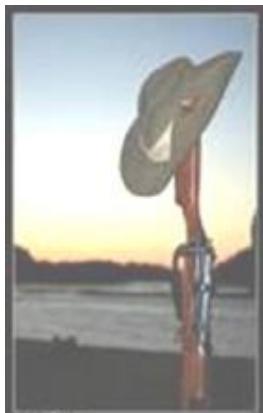
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## CALENDAR DECEMBER 2022 TO APRIL 2023

**Sun Dec 25 2022** Christmas Day all States.

**Sun Jan 01 2023** New Year Day all States.

**Tue Apr 25 2023** ANZAC Day all states.



**"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"**

**2790226 Terrence John Halcroft, 2<sup>nd</sup> tour, passed away Thursday 22nd  
September 2022.**

**216966 James Anthony, (Jim) Fitzsimon, MID, OC C9 1<sup>st</sup> tour, passed  
away Sunday 2 October 2022.**

**5716860 Raymond James Marr, B6 2<sup>nd</sup> tour, passed away Wednesday 19  
October 2022.**

**2412308 John Frederick Scales, 2<sup>nd</sup> tour, passed away Monday 31  
October 2022.**

**38836 Ian James (Bluey) Leslie, 106 Bty, (FO Party C Coy) 1<sup>st</sup> tour,  
passed away Sunday 13 November 2022.**

**2257862 Michael (Shorty) Rusden, 2<sup>nd</sup> tour, passed away November  
2022.**

**3788954 Patrick James Crough, A1 1<sup>st</sup> tour, passed away Tuesday 29  
November 2022.**



## **“FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK”**

Very interesting to note that Jim Fitzsimon, MID, left 7RAR and served in HQ 1ATF 5 Oct 1967 to 09 Apr 1968 and then returned to SVN on AATTV 15 Oct 1970 till 31 Mar 1971. Jim passed away on Sunday 2 October 2022, aged 77.

Hey members, as we all get older and we have a great deal of our 7RAR memorabilia from your time in the Battalion, if you would like to donate some of it to our great Battalion to place In their Museum then let us know and we will organize how we can do this.

OK all, please remember that as time marches on we are all getting older so please keep in touch with those of your close mates around the world and keep a place in your heart for all the younger members of the “PIG BATTALION”, oink oink.

I remember our first time in our first base at Pucka and as those of you who were there for the birth of the 7<sup>th</sup> most of the accommodation was older than I say nearly all of us and the areas that we could visit between getting ready for our deployment to Vietnam were a little scary at times but we stuck together and believe it or not when we returned back home to Australia the locals around Pucka were a little peeved that we did not return to Pucka.

To all members of the Association and especially all the young Diggers serving in the GREAT 7RAR have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy 2023.

UP THE OLD RED ROOSTER AND MORE, ????????????????

TONY KEECH XO/ED

### **National Service Research Project - Invitation to Participate**

Between 1965 and 1972, 63,740 young Australians were called up under the National Service scheme. 15,381 of them saw operational service in Vietnam. Of these, 200 died and 1279 were wounded.

The history of this period has been extensively chronicled in the Australian literature, but very little research has been conducted into the choices offered to these soldiers, and their attitudes to service.

Their service, like that of all soldiers, sailors and airmen, deserves to be thoroughly researched, remembered and chronicled.

In an effort to address this anomaly, I am working on a master's thesis supervised through the University of Southern Queensland. If you are an ex-national serviceman, you are invited to participate.

I am seeking to recruit two groups of ex-national servicemen for interview.

The first group are those who volunteered for national service after reaching the age of eighteen years and nine months (early registration).

The second group are those who had their birthdates drawn in one of the sixteen ballots held between 1965 and 1972.

If you would like to participate, please make contact using the following email address – [x0074487@usq.edu.au](mailto:x0074487@usq.edu.au)

Please indicate which group you belong to. Detailed information, including a more comprehensive outline of the project will be provided to respondents. Deadline for completion of the project is July 2023.

*From All Members of 7RAR (WA Branch)*

*(Don Cruden)*

*The Battalion Prayer*

*O Lord God, We Thank you for  
the protection given to the Seventh Battalion.  
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*

*Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New Year*



*We hope your Christmas is filled  
With laughter and memories.  
Family and Friendships rekindled  
And you enjoy a happy and healthy new year.*



### News from South Australia

With the Suoi Cha Pha commemorations done and dusted we moved into our quieter time of the year which continued with our monthly lunches and preparations for Remembrance Day. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> August I received an email from Peter Lutley in W.Aust. Peter was responding to the call, by the 2IC of 7RAR, for suitable Vietnam era items for their 7RAR history building. Peter had been progressively collecting almost everything that he, as a Company Sig in B Coy, Vietnam 70/71, had worn or carried ... including an M16 rifle replica!! I phoned Peter and requested photos which he sent at a later date. I sent the images to the 7RAR 2IC and he was very impressed with the collection and is currently arranging its relocation to Sth Aust. Below is a small sample of the items that Peter Lutley has donated to the Battalion.



## The full list of the items that 7RAR will receive is below.

77 Set radio i.e. the old 25 set upgraded internally, (a mate actually bought it for me in a Saigon market several years ago!!), plus several spare batteries;

Radio "golf bag" with antenna and hand set;

M16 rifle replica. This is made by a Spanish firm called Denix. It is exactly the same as carried in the '70-'71 period by the signaller and many others of course, except it doesn't fire, its innocuous;

Pack. This is the American special forces tubular frame pack issued to most signallers for that period;

I have GP boots, clothing, giggle hat, sweat rags, Paradine secateurs (same brand as issued);

"Mickey Mouse" issue watch;

M16 Bayonet and sheath;

M16 cleaning kit;

Magazine bandoliers for the M16 magazines carried across the chest or slung over the pack;

Webbing including belt and "H" harness and two 'Bren Pouches' as most wore;

Water bottles cup and pouches, water bladder;

Toilet bag, i.e. the green small bag for shaving brush, razor and spare blades, soap container and soap, toothpaste, toothbrush;

Viewy Tewy plastic insert booklet for various reports to send by radio e.g. for sitreps, contact report etc, plus secure codes for radio message use;

"Smocks Psychological" raincoat, it made you feel dry but it didn't make you dry!;

Sleeping gear including poncho (tent), plastic ground sheet (which was made for the air inflated mattress tubes that were useless) and no one used! "Silk" outer used by most as a sleeping bag;

**And the items yet to be obtained hopefully by donation from past serving military personnel are as follows**

The items I have been trying to chase up in Australia with no luck have been:

1. Light Weight Dipole radio antenna set for the 25 set; signallers had to throw these up when comms were bad, I remember throwing many of these up into the trees using the metal bobbins.
2. American "C" rations including tinned food, brew gear etc from the Vietnam period;
3. Australian rations from that period. I wanted to display a mixture of both Australian and American rations as broken down and used by a digger for an operation or patrol;
4. Smoke grenades (inert of course) two from that period as I carried. They were called "M18" smoke
5. M16 weapon magazines (20 round types). I have a few but looking for a total of around 20 as I carried;
6. Squeeze Bottle of "white" weapon oil;
7. Issue small shaving mirror;
8. Sterilisation tablets in container; and
9. Copies of the two coding systems we carried out bush for coded radio messages, one we used for sending straight locstats and the other was for more detailed messages in 3 letter groups.

**So guys, that's what one Viet Vet has collected over the years ... but it will only use up a small space in the large 7RAR history building.**

**So please find those precious items that you have 'squirrelled away' in past years and send pics of them to either your State Secretary or myself at [doc@antmail.com.au](mailto:doc@antmail.com.au)**

**As part of the Military Base Security protocol the Battalion 2IC has stated that items must NOT to be sent to the Battalion**

**When items have been selected for the history room the owners will be contacted to arrange their transfer to the Military Base and their movement through Security.**

Our September lunch at Benjamin's on Franklin was well attended as can be seen by the pics below and the eight 7RAR Soldiers who attended mixed in well us oldies.





... and a rare pic of me – now you can see why I prefer to be behind the Camera 😞 Our October lunch was down on numbers. Due to training etc no soldiers attended.

## **REMEMBRANCE DAY**

at Gloucester Residential Care Facility Ingle Farm

Four 7RAR Soldiers attended the Service and stayed for lunch.

I attended the Service, spoke with 7RAR Soldiers, and took pics.

## **REMEMBRANCE DAY 2022**



## **Gloucester Residential Care Ceremony**



## REMEMBRANCE DAY PROGRAM

10.30 am – 10.45am	Residents to Activity A Area  Jenni Garner(CNC) welcomes the Service Personnel from 7RAR - lead by Private Paul Kennedy,  Guest Speakers - Brenda Cooney (Resident) - Tony Caruso  "Welcome to country" – Jenni
10.45 am – 10.55am	"Remembrance Day – Jenni
10.55 am - 10.59am	"In Flanders Field" - Tony Caruso "The Lord's Prayer"
11.00 am	Last Post - Minutes Silence - Revelry  "The Ode of Remembrance" - Brenda  Laying of the Wreath  Australian National Anthem
11.10 am	Jenni - Close of Ceremony
11.15 am	Morning tea with Service Personal 7RAR



## WELCOME

Welcome presented by Jenni Garner (CNC)

We welcome you all to our Remembrance Day Ceremony here at Gloucester Residential Care. We would like to offer a warm welcome to our special guests, the Service Personnel from 7RAR lead by Private Paul Kennedy. We would also like to recognize and welcome our guest speakers Brenda a resident at Gloucester and Tony our office staff.

Before we begin our ceremony, we would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional Country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains and pays respect to Elders past and present.

We recognize and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs, and relationship with the land. We acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to the Kaurna people living today. We also extend that respect to other Aboriginal Language Groups and other First Nations.

In addition, we pay our respects to those Indigenous and non-Indigenous women and men who've served and continue to serve our nation in military and civilian capacities in war and peace.

## REMEMBRANCE DAY

Presented by Jenni Garner (CNC)

Our Gloucester Remembrance Service is our opportunity to respectfully remember those Servicemen and Women who have dedicated their lives in defense of our freedom. It also allows each of us to reflect on the impact that World Wars have had on our lives and on the lives of our families and friends.

On the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month, a minutes' silence is observed and dedicated to those soldiers who died fighting to protect the nation.









**Privates Pellegrino BIANCARDI, Rory WALLACE,  
Curtis AIKEN and Paul KENNEDY**

The Soldiers left GRC at about 1430hrs having spent a bit over 4 hours there mixing with and chatting with the Residents and Staff. I have no doubt that their visit will be discussed by the residents for many days to come.

### **November Lunch**

Michael Grech, one of our members from the past, joined the seven 'regulars' at Benjamin's. Michael had been unable to attend our lunches when they were moved to Tuesdays as that is the day he has J.P. duties. We look forward to him attending many monthly lunches on the third Friday of every month.



**November Lunch**

I-r; Steve CSORBA, Bob LLOYD and Bob WHINNEN



**November Lunch**

I-r; Michael GRECH, Tony CARR,  
Chris ASHENDEN and Geoff CHANDLER

Well, that's 2022 almost done and dusted except for our December lunch at which our wives/partners will be present. It has been agreed by members that only traditional toasts will be honoured. Business and announcements will be dealt with in the New Year. No exceptions.

**So, from all of us in South Australia ...  
we wish you all a great Christmas ...  
and a very Happy and Healthy and Safe 2023**



**'Doc' (Ian M Russell)  
State Secretary,  
7RAR Veterans, Sth Aust.**

## PEARLS FROM VICTORIA

### Vietnam Veterans' Day 18 August



As this was signalled as the last full-on Vietnam Veterans, Day a large crowd of veterans attended from all around Victoria. I was happy to

see some old friends including Les Bray (above, left), who came with about 20 of his friends from along the Murray River. Also shown above was Les's mate along with Peter Kerley and myself. Most of the marchers formed up behind their Vietnam Veteran sub-branches but several of us old Infantry veterans did form up in Battalion groups. Despite not having our Gonfalon (I forgot to bring it) we had a reasonable roll-up. Whilst waiting for the step-off Les Myers (B6 2<sup>nd</sup>) took the



opportunity to refresh both himself and his very good friend Pepper.

The Service itself went well but the audio left something to be desired as it was not always possible to hear what was going on. Entertainment was provided by some wonderful performers well known to us -

Normie Rowe, John Schumann, Mike Brady, Denise Drysdale, Marcie Jones and the Playboys band. Normie Rowe (3 Cav SVN 1969) also led us in The Ode.+

### Victorian Veterans' Education Team

Several years ago I was a member of the Education Team with our particular team concentrating on schools and clubs in Melbourne's North Western suburbs, as well as some visits to schools in Geelong. It was with some delight to read about the current Education Team headed up by 7RAR veterans Jim Dewar (67-68) and Rob Edgell (1970) featured in the October issue of 'Mufti' and to find that students are as keen as ever to learn more about the Vietnam War, with similar questions (Did you kill anyone?). Their full story can be read in the online version of this magazine and it might bring some memories back to you.



### Vale Graeme Nicholas 17/12/1945 - 29/10/2022

Graeme arrived in SVN August 1967 and eventually served with 7RAR Jan-Apr 1968 (A1 1<sup>st</sup>). He followed a life-long interest in photography which led on a career in film/TV production being involved with programs such as '7.30 Report', 'Insiders' and 'Couchman'. He was involved in the production of our 1987 Welcome Home Parade in Sydney.

He was also instrumental in keeping East Malvern RSL solvent at a time when the club was facing closure by keeping a close watch on their finances and through fund-raising. He died after long years of illness and will be missed by his family and many friends. Our condolences to Susan, Sarah and Richard.

## Remembrance Day 2022



I attended my local service at Keilor East RSL where John Johnson (B5/CHQ 1<sup>st</sup>) is the President. The service itself was well attended with local parliamentary members Bill Shorten(Federal) and Ben Carroll (State) participating by reading 'Why We Must Remember'. Another fine feature of the Service was the singing of both the New Zealand Anthem (in Maori and English) and the Australian National Anthem. The vocalist, Amanda Stevenson, doesn't speak Maori but she still managed the NZ verse

## Cambrai Day Luncheon 20 November 2022



Greensborough RSL provided the venue for this year's commemorative lunch to celebrate in what was to be the first effective use of massed armoured vehicles on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1917. The Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association (Vic) used to run this commemoration at Puckapunyal but they moved to Greensborough for easier access for members and less problems arranging security arrangements and accommodation. One of the minor better results due to covid. The guest speaker was

Peter Branagan (President RAACA) who stepped in at short notice as the scheduled speaker was caught in Canada pending a medical clearance to fly. He titled his talk '24 hours with Deborah', but was very quick to point out that this was not a report on his romantic day, rather it was the story of a Mk 4 Tank 'Deborah'.

**It was knocked out on the first day of Cambrai and ended up being buried under 2 metres of soil until she was discovered by a publican and local WWI historian.**

**Deborah has now been moved to Flesquieres on permanent display, next to the British War Cemetery where four of her crew are buried. As a matter of interest, Deborah was a female tank which meant she carried 2 machine guns mounted in sponsons on either side – male tanks carried 6 pounder guns.**

#### **Vale Michael 'Shorty' Rusden**

**Earlier this month, via Veteranweb, I found out about the passing of Shorty Rusden (7RAR 70-71) as his daughter had put out the call for any 7RAR members to attend his funeral at Southport Lawn Cemetery on 21 November. The request was passed on by Tony Scroope (4 Fd Regt Jun-Oct '67). Apparently Shorty was a loner and it would appear that he didn't have much to any ex-service organisations.**

**He was a regular soldier but I don't have any details of any subsequent service. Whilst it's difficult to keep track of all our veterans (especially if they didn't join our Association), we need to advertise that we still care about them. If the committee finds out in time we have 7RAR sashes that are available to the family to drape over the member's coffin – contact either Ian Dunn or Bill Anderson.**

#### **Christmas Lunch 13 December**

**Our final meeting for 2022 is scheduled for Tuesday 13 December, 11.00am followed by a Christmas lunch at Noble Park RSL. The cost is \$20 per head and consists of a Roast and plum pudding.**

**Please let Ian Dunn (0402-047-235) or Bill Anderson (0419-877-463) if you can come along – we'd look forward to new faces.**

## Final Word

On behalf of the Vic Committee we'd like to wish all readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year - with covid to be an unhappy memory.

## Almost an RAINF breakfast



## Parting Shot

Confucius says:-

"If at first you don't succeed – do it like your wife told you"

*Bill Anderson*

0419-877-463

[lastwill@hotkey.net.au](mailto:lastwill@hotkey.net.au)

## THE BEST FROM THE WEST

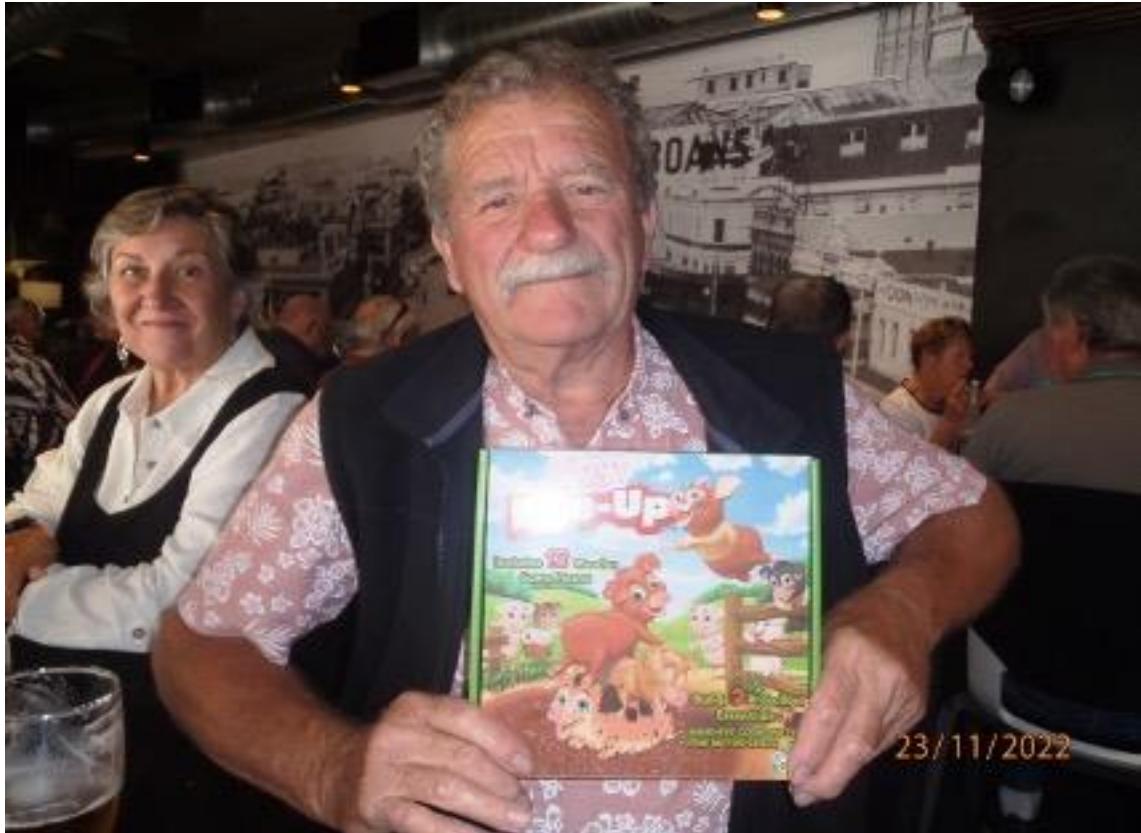
Hello PIGS everywhere, wishing you all a very merry Christmas and peace, prosperity and good health for you and your loved ones for 2023.

### WA PIGS CHRISTMAS "PIGS SWILL" 2022

Our annual 'PIGS SWILL" was held at "The Shoe" bar and restaurant on Wed. 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. and was attended by approximately 40 who had a wonderful time. One of our regular attendees, Nicole Anderton, daughter of the late Ron Anderton, 1<sup>st</sup> Tour, was unable to make it this year due to work commitments but wished us all the best for the day. Next time Nicole. Also, a late withdrawal was Les Kail, due to Covid, never mind Les we'll catch up soon. Don Cruden welcomed us all and gave us an update on Dave Ingles, who has had a real tough time recently. Don will try and see Dave shortly and, Dave, we're all thinking of you mate. Don then thanked all those who had assisted throughout the year, with a big "thank you" to Allan and Betty West for all the work they do with the raffle



Graham Steele



Ted Paleske with his "Piggy" raffle prize.



Bruce Wallis



Garry Mills, Charlie Matheson in background



Allan and Melanie West



**Betty West and Peter Davies**

Graham Steele read out the Honour Roll from the 1<sup>st</sup> Tour, Peter Vlachou read out the Honour Roll from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour and Garry Mills read out the Honour Roll from Afghanistan. Bruce Wallis then recited the Battalion Prayer and Steve Chamarette gave us a Prayer of Remembrance. Then Graham Edwards recited "The Ode" and Ian McNee said grace, then we got stuck into eatin' and drinkin'. Lunch was great and the beers cold, what more could you want.

Photos above by "RSM" John Davies

Notice anything about these two “PIG SWILL” photos?



Last to leave 2021 - Ross DeGray, Geoff Brophy, Peter Hedrick



Last to leave 2022 - Ross DeGray, Geoff Brophy, Peter Hedrick

(Photos courtesy Alli DeGray)

## ONLY TWO YEARS AGO - HOW TIME FLIES

Don Cruden's grandson sent him this photo from two years ago, when we all trooped down to Katanning for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Service for Noel Crouch, KIA 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour. It was previously planned for May 21<sup>st</sup> but Covid forced us to defer it until later in the year and we were able to combine it with the Shire of Katanning Remembrance Day Service on Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>. I just think this is a great photo so I have included it here two years on.



L to R: Peter Vlachou OAM, Gordon Dickson (obscured), Charlie Matheson, Ian Jury (obscured), Geoff Murray, Glen Moore (dec), Graham Edwards AM, Les Kail, Mick O'Halloran, Dale Marshall, Liz Guidera, Katanning Shire President, Steve Chamarette OAM, Don Cruden, Bob Sexton, Gary Williams, John Davies, Ian McNee, Allan West OAM, John Dorrington (dec), Ted Paleske. Delta Coy 2nd Tour Vietnam Reunion Seymour Victoria Oct. 2022 After the last D

**Company 2021 reunion at Maroochydore, 25 veterans and 21 partners enjoyed meeting up, sharing time and the retelling of colourful past adventures in Seymour Victoria. Besides the pleasure of gathering together, highlights of the four-day event included an excursion to the remarkable Kerrisdale Mountain Railway Museum, a visit by the veterans to the Australian Army Tank Museum at Puckapunyal, a high tea for partners, a formal dinner at the RSL and a Service held at the unique monument of Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk. After fine weather for the first two days, rain commenced on Wednesday evening and by 3pm Thursday Seymour was being evacuated. All our group departed without any major mishaps.**

### **Flooding Goulburn River**





D Coy Vets



## Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk

### GORDON "DICKO" DICKSON'S TRAVELS

August 22<sup>nd</sup> - Just a picture of our 7RAR flag flying at Shark Bay, it does attract ex-diggers. On our way to Broome to catch up with Peter and Sandra Vlachou next week.



October 13<sup>th</sup> - Tonight we caught up with Dookie Brooks and his wife Lyn at the Pier Hotel in Esperance. Dookie was the number two on the Gun. They are heading back to Victoria and Di and I were heading home from our half lap of OZ.



## An update from the 7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment

It has been an extremely challenging 2022, and the 7th Battalion (7 RAR) is preparing to enter a well-earned period of reduced activity and the CDF stand-down.

After the BOARS series of exercises, Alpha Company represented the Battalion at the Suoi Cha Pha memorial ceremony at the Torrens Parade Ground in August. Members of the 7 RAR Association and other Vietnam veterans participated in the service, commemorating a significant battle for the 7th Battalion.

At the same time, the conduct of the Duke of Gloucester Cup took place at the School of Infantry. The squad from 7 RAR commenced an intense lead-up training program for the competition. The 7 RAR team performed exceptionally well and was awarded the Royal Ulster Rifles shooting trophy. The overall results had 7 RAR finish in second place, the highest in Battalion history.

Next, the Battalion began preparing for the 1st Brigade warfighting activity, Exercise PREDATORS RUN. The multi-nation exercise was conducted in the Mount Bunney Training Area and focused on littoral operations. Bravo Company was attached to the 1st Armoured Regiment, and the remainder of 7 RAR assumed the role of the opposing force.

OC A Coy and Mr Rob Gillies at the Suoi Cha Pha memorial ceremony



### Once back from Exercise

PREDATORS RUN, the men and women of the Battalion commenced the refit to fight, followed by a reduced tempo period to rest, recover and spend time with family.

Additionally, the Army realigned its command structure with the Transition of Authority (TOA) of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion from the 1st to the 9th Brigade. This saw other Adelaide-based 1st Brigade units brought under the command of the 9th Brigade. This transition culminated in a TOA parade held on the 27th of October, 2022.

Post the TOA parade, the Battalion began a suite of internal courses, which included the Soldier Commanders Battle Course, Basic Recon Course, Basic Mortar and Mortar Fire Controller Course and Basic Direct Fire Support Weapons Course. These courses are critical to maintaining capability and growing our future leaders.



**The Battalion also supported the Fort to Fort charity walk held on the 6th of November at Largs Bay. The walk involved many, veterans, veteran support agencies, and 7 RAR was well represented with soldiers from the Battalion giving up their Sunday to support the event.**

**The Battalion bid farewell to the officers and SNCOS posting in 2023. This was conducted on the 25th of November at the dining out night. This included the current CO and RSM. The command team's impact on the Battalion has been immense, and they will both be missed. It has been an honour to serve with such a dynamic and professional leadership team during 2021 and 2022.**

**The CO and RSM participating in the Fort to Fort walk**



**After an outstanding year, the CO, RSM and the men and women of the 7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, wish you and your families a happy, safe, prosperous Christmas and New Year.**

**K1 – Alpha Company**

**Alpha Company deployed on Exercise PREDATORS RUN (Ex PRED RUN) as part of Battle Group (BG) BOAR and conducted the Section Commander Battle Course (SCBC), training the future section commanders of both the 7th and 5th Battalion.**

Alpha Company was first in the order of march for the 43-hour route clearance of Explorer's Way (Adelaide to Darwin) to board HMAS *Robertson* Barracks. Next, we inserted into Mount Bundy Training Area (MBTA) to facilitate an enemy party for Ex PRED RUN. The ten-day full mission profile exercise was an excellent success for BG BOAR, particularly Combat Team Alpha's numerous victories over our rival BG LION (1st Armoured Regiment and K2).

SCBC was divided into two parts, the SCBC Range phase and SCBC Field Phase. SCBC Range phase aimed to qualify potential RAINF Section Commanders in safety appointments in all Permanent Basic, Permanent Complex and Dismounted Manoeuvre Ranges. As a result, Alpha Company qualified 39 trainees from 7 RAR and eight trainees from 5 RAR. After a short break over the school holidays, SCBC deployed to Cultana Training Area in November to conduct the practical Field Phase. This saw Alpha Company soldiers deploy to the field as the enemy party in support of the course as the course completed numerous training activities to qualify as the next junior leaders of the RAINF.

As we end a brilliant year for the company, we farewell a number of our key appointments. LT Jay Deeming, SGT Chad Whitehead, SGT Luke Sunley, SGT



LCPL Lowey, Alpha Company, 7 RAR, delivers Section orders prior to a dismounted patrol in Cultana Training Area.

Darwish Sin Shepperson are all departing at 7 RAR. We thank them for their exceptional performance at 7 RAR and wish them all the best in their future postings and endeavours.

### K2 – Bravo Company

Quarter three was a busy period for the members of Bravo Company, who were conducting vital training and

preparation to deploy to Darwin for Exercise PREDATORS RUN. Soldiers completed first aid, UAS recertification, Exercise BOARS REMEDIATION and additional weapon training. In addition, the early stages of integration commenced with K2 and 1 ARMD as Battle Group (BG) LION by establishing standard operating procedures (SOP) and forming strong working relationships.



K22 moves through Mount Bunney Training Area

As Bravo Company elements attached to BG LION arrived in Darwin, they began moving into acclimatisation training, a robust conditioning program for deployment into the Mount Bunney Training Area (MBTA). This saw the opportunity for our soldiers to teach and learn from our Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) partners, who would support 6 platoon. With additional familiarisation training on our M113AS4s, the BG LION integration was complete.

The deployment into the MBTA saw soldiers exposed to terrain and a climate unfamiliar to most. It allowed them to test individual and collective battle procedures

by adapting to the changing enemy picture and complexities of the modern battlespace. These complexities saw consistent regrouping of the Combat team. They enabled Bravo Company to take the lead in most of the offensive and to enable activities, delivering mission success on all objectives. The live fire training for Exercise PREDATORS RUN had a regrouping that saw integration from 1 CER, 1



K2 harbour up in a defensive position

MPB, K2 and the MAF. This variety of skills allowed all soldiers to observe and learn from each other and test their collective skill sets during the urban and combat shooting phases.

Upon returning to Adelaide, the soldiers of K2 began preparing and subsequent participation in their respective promotion and support courses. Never missing an opportunity for good training, K2 had the opportunity to conduct a navigation exercise at the Murray Bridge training area to foster their confidence and basic soldiering skills and test each participant's map and terrain reading ability. As the end of the year approaches, all K2 soldiers look forward to participating in the end of year's sporting and social events and spending time with their families over Christmas.

**K3 - Charlie Company** During this period, K3 deployed with the Battalion to Darwin on Ex PREDATORS RUN. The Company's resilience was tested before the exercise began, with a 48-hour bus ride to Darwin.

After a quick acclimatisation at Robertson Barracks, the Company deployed to Mount Bunney to prepare defences against the impending advance of the Blue Force.

Charlie Company was pitted against the most likely approach for the US Marine Corps. After arraying the platoons to cover key avenues, the Company sat



A K3 soldier sends a LOCSTAT and a navigation check



Soldiers from K3 clear the urban area in Mount Bunney

moved to assault 7 platoon. At the same time, 8 Platoon was teaching the Marines a lesson in ambushing and destroying many vehicles.

For those new soldiers who had not been exposed to this sort of activity before, they will remember the M1A1s unleashing main armament next to the trenches as mortars and artillery crashed down on the horizon. After completing our rotation, the Road Runners returned to Robertson Barracks for rest in Darwin.

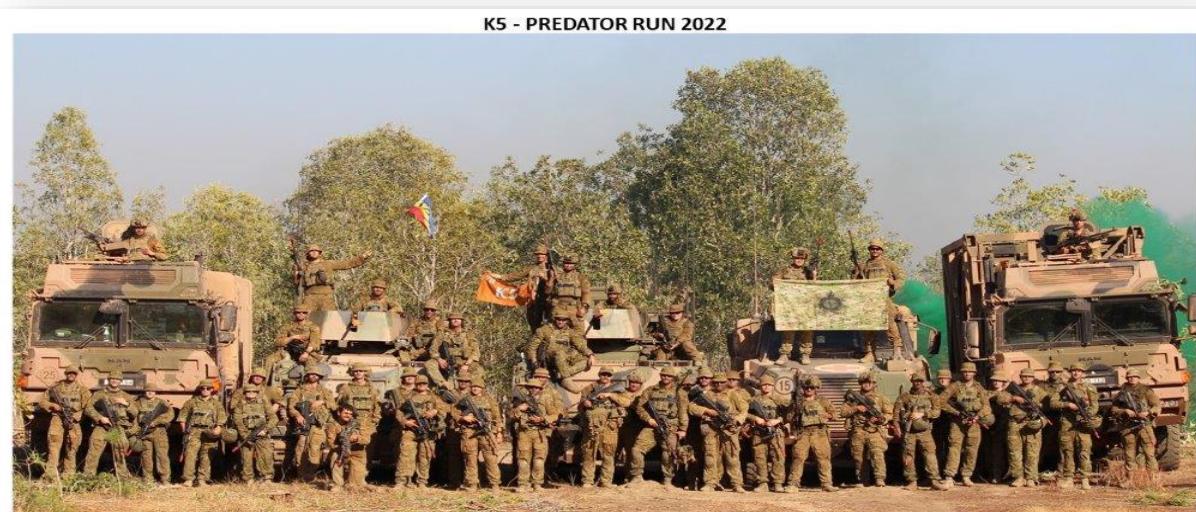
patiently, waiting for the Marines to break out from their assembly area. The following days showcased the small team skills, with the section commanders delaying the Marines along their two lines of advance. The Marine's lead elements were easily spotted on their quad bikes and were no match for the AS4s armament and the Company's mechanised soldiers. Shortly after, we started seeing our exercise casualties as the Marines, and their assets

**Company supported the Unit's transition to the 9th Brigade, sent our JNCOs on the Section Command course and sent soldiers to gain their Support Company qualifications. The remainder of the year will see Charlie Company compete in the Battalion sports week, farewell our posting members and enjoy a well-deserved break with loved ones.**

### **K5 – Admin Company**

**After Exercise PREDATORS RUN 22, Admin Company immediately entered a modified tempo period, enabling our members to take a well-earned break. Upon return to the unit, the company juggled several competing priorities; it commenced a phase of Supply Customer Account (SCA) handovers, stocktaking and preparation of vehicles for the last field activities of 2022.**

**Logistics Platoon began handing over its equipment in preparation for next**



**year; the Transport Cell provided driver support to the Section Commander's Basic Course, the Support Company courses conducted in Cultana, and the Simpson's Trophy held in Murray Bridge. Concurrently, Technical Support Platoon commenced rectifying the maintenance backlog that built up due to the busy period throughout quarter three of the training year. Additionally, they have committed Forward Repair Teams to assist with the suite of courses held within the Battalion.**

**With the training year closing, Admin Company is as busy as ever as it sets the conditions for a seamless handover of authority to the oncoming Commanding Officer and a successful 2023.**

### **6 – Support Company**

**At the beginning of August, Support Company departed Adelaide for Darwin to participate in Exercise PREDATORS RUN. During the exercise, the soldiers of were able to conduct their specialist capabilities in support of BG BOAR.**

**Most notably, during the exercise, the Support Company soldiers were allowed to trial the six-wheeled ATVs loaned to the Battalion by SASR. A small team comprising of members from each platoon was established and became a pivotal ISR capability for BG BOAR during the exercise. The trial results were positive, with an appetite to see these introduced in the future.**



K6 mounted on ATVs



A K6 soldier engages a target in the distance on the live fire range

**After the field phase of the exercise, the Company re-constituted and prepared to execute a Combat Team defensive live fire range. The live fire range was a powerful demonstration of combined arms effects with the synchronisation of various weapon systems. Support Company hosted soldiers from the 1st Brigade, Philippine and Malaysian foreign forces, with the soldiers noting the Combat**

**Team's defensive range as the highlight of Exercise PREDATORS RUN 22.**

Since returning from Darwin, the Company has conducted its re-fit to fight routine while also preparing for and executing specialist infantry courses, including Basic Mortar Course, Basic DFSW Course, Basic Recon Course and Specialist Combat Communications Course. These courses will end in early December when the Company will begin its transition into the reduced tempo period to enjoy a well-deserved holiday break.

**Duty First**

**Pigs in Paradise**

Things are quiet on the northern flank while I've been medically indisposed however have maintained our End of Month lunches.

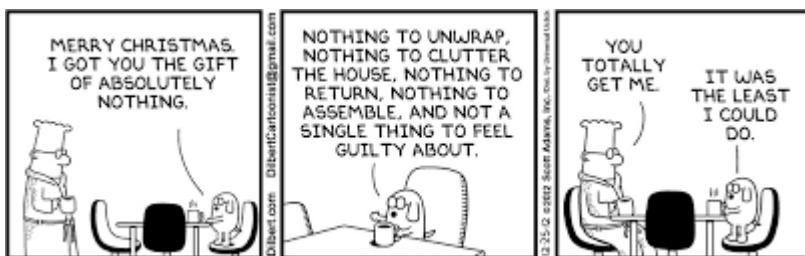
Just last week Noel Schneidewin, Mick King and Claire Nolan, Leigh and Vicky, Sam and Adriana Giacomantonio, Daryl Blackwell and self spent a couple of hours RinC at the Grand Central Pub in Brisbane. At the next luncheon, (Jan 27) perhaps I'll remember to take pics.

### From yesteryear



Enough's enough. I'm going home. Recce Pl 1971

Merry Christmas to your all



Kev Gillett

Brisbane