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News

Edition 17 ~ 2019





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Mrs Marilou Carceller

The Australian Commando Association's membership consists of Servicemen & women who have served with WW2 Independent Companies, Commando Squadrons & Regiments, "M" and "Z" Special units, 1st & 2nd Commando Company's, 1st Commando Regiment, 4 RAR Commando & the 2nd Commando Regiment. The Association also consists of Associate Members who have served in units who directly supported Commando units in time of war and peace and Social members who's direct family member was either Killed In Action, Died In Service or Killed in Training or a member of the ACA who has passed.

DISCLAIMER: Opinions expressed within this publication are those of the authors, and are not necessarily those of the Editor, Publisher, Committee Members or Members of our Association. We welcome any input as long as it is not offensive or abusive but if any member has a problem with a printed article we would like to be informed in order that the author may be contacted. We do encourage your opinion.

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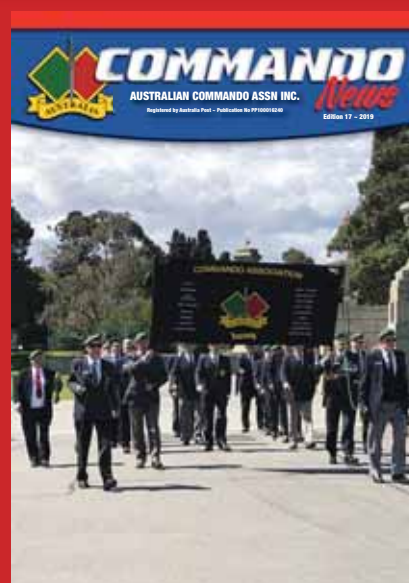
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Deadline for next edition (Issue 18):

SUNDAY, 15th MARCH 2020

All news on members and interesting articles accepted.
(Subject to editors' approval.)

Nick Hill



FRONT COVER:

Some of the ACA VIC Members march on to the forecourt at the Shrine of Remembrance for their Annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine on Sunday, 29 September 2019.



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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

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G'day all and welcome to Edition #17 of Commando News (Summer Edition) December 2019 – March 2020. A lot has happened over the past few months since our last magazine and we all trust that you are well and getting ready for that crazy festive season of wrapping paper, egg nog and about two belt holes or dress sizes bigger!

Thank you to all those who have submitted articles for the magazine, please keep them coming so we can share these stories whether they are recent or from years ago. Our heritage is important to keep and having it in print keeps it somewhat alive for those younger Commandos coming through the system or for our families to have a better understanding of what has happened and kept our loved ones away for months or even years on end. Please note that when you send your articles in please have them sent as a Word Document and if you have any images attached please have them as Hi Resolution as this aides in the final quality of the image both electronically and as a hard copy formats.

So from all of us here at the Commando News print and editorial team, we wish you all a very happy Xmas period and hope 2020 is a prosperous year for all and if you are down range, keep your sights straight and your powder dry!

Commando For Life

Nick Hill

Editor Commando News Magazine

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CORRECTIONS FROM ISSUE #16

Page 72 Upcoming ACA Events – ACA VIC should read Sunday 17 November.

NOTE

Some images throughout the edition are pixilated due to the low resolution of the image and high resolution images were not possible. Please try at your best ability to supply high resolution images for your articles. Thank you.

Commando News



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SIGNIFICANT COMMANDO EVENTS

DECEMBER

December 1941

2nd/3rd Independent Company sent to New Caledonia to support the Free French against a Japanese invasion.

The 2nd/4th Independent Company was re-raised at Wilsons Promontory, Victoria

17 December 1941

2nd/2nd Independent Company arrives in Dili, Portuguese Timor and begins to provide protection to the Dili Airfield.

December 1942

2nd/2nd & 2nd/4th Independent Company's begin withdrawing from Portuguese Timor.

11 & 13 December 1944

2nd/7th Commando Squadron is involved in significant engagements against the Japanese in Yourang & Kumbun New Britain, New Guinea.

December 1944 – August 1945

This eight-month period saw the 2nd/8th Commando Squadron in action almost continuously in the Bougainville area against the Japanese.

JANUARY

22 January 1942

1st Independent Company began its fighting withdrawal from Kavieng New Ireland, New Guinea.

January 1943

2nd/5th & 2nd/7th Independent Company's fly into Wau Airfield to repel the Japanese invasion.

January 1944

2nd/9th & 2nd/10th Commando Squadrons were raised as part of the 2nd/6th Commando Regiment and 2nd/11th & 2nd/12th Commando Squadrons were raised as part of the 2nd/9th Commando Regiment.

FEBRUARY

February 1941

No.7 Infantry Training Centre was established at Wilsons Promontory Victoria, the home and birthplace of Australian Commando.

19/20 February 1942

Japanese troops land in Dutch & Portuguese Timor, beginning the guerrilla campaign by the 2nd/2nd Independent Company, which would last until February 1943.

February 1943

2nd/2nd Independent Company arrives in Port Moresby.

February 1945

2nd/10th Commando Squadron begins combat operations protecting the flanks of the 2/5 & 2/7 Battalions AIF, pushing south towards Maprik, New Guinea.

1 February 1983

1st & 2nd Commando Company's come under direct command of the 1st Commando Regiment when it was formed at Randwick Barracks in NSW.

1 February 1997

4 RAR was re-rolled into a Commando Battalion at Holsworthy Barracks, NSW signifying the first full time Commando Capability since WW2 and would be commonly known as 4 Cdo until it was renamed the 2nd Commando Regiment on 19 June 2009.

MARCH

March 1943

After returning from New Guinea, the 2/6 Cdo Coy reforms as the 2/6 Cdo Sqn of the 2/7 Cdo Regt at the Jungle Warfare School at Canungra, SE Qld.



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NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello Members,

A great day was had by all at the annual pilgrimage and commemoration hosted by ACA Victoria at Tidal River, the birthplace of Australian Commandos.

Two 'originals', Sgt Jim Burrowes OAM and Coder 1st Class 'Dixie' Lee, attended and received special plaques along with family members of Lt Bruno Reymond and Sgt David Gooley both of whom lost their lives as a result of Operation Rimau. Jim and Dixie are both fast approaching their centenaries but are still very active and mobile as shown in the photographs on Jim's website at <https://thelastcoast-watcher.wordpress.com/post-war/>. BTW the website contains a very interesting snapshot of our early days.

Moving on to other matters. Most of you will be aware of the debate that is taking place regarding the need for a Royal Commission into the important matter of ADF Veterans' suicide. Given this issue has already touched the families of some of our members, it is right that we share our opinions and as our erstwhile ACA Secretary Jack Thurgar said as we prepared for our last national Committee Meeting for 2019, "debate is healthy" and as usual, Jack is on the money. My opinion is now well known having been published as a result of my role as National President of The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL). The RSL and major veterans organisations do not support the conduct of a Royal Commission into veteran suicide in Australia as many initiatives and programs have been developed and are in progress to support veterans and these are starting to have a positive impact. A Royal Commission would cost an enormous amount of money that could be better spent in other areas to assist veterans and would also create a serious distraction for those who are working hard to support ex-servicemen and women.

Let's look at what we already know. The suicide

rate of veterans still serving is about half that of the Australian general population but the suicide rate for males aged 18 to 30 who are former members of the ADF is about twice the national average. Obviously, this is unacceptable, but we've already had many reviews, the most recent being that of the Productivity Commission, which have identified significant issues. Too many of these issues have yet to be addressed and the time, money and effort involved in Royal Commission should be directed to addressing these issues, where the solutions to many of which are self-evident. We know what needs to be fixed so let's get on with it as several more years delay as a Royal Commission drags on will not be helpful to anyone.

In conclusion it is fair to say that this was not the unanimous opinion of all State delegates at the recent ACA National Committee meeting held prior to the annual Tidal River pilgrimage, however one thing we did all agree on is that any and everything should be done even if it stops just one veteran taking their own life. This is an area where organisations such as the ACA can work with its members and in turn with their individual circles of former brothers in arms. Reach out to a few of your former comrades next week, and the week after, especially as the holiday season approaches given it is not always a great time for everyone especially veterans and others who are feeling marginalized - not included. A phone call and a chat may well be the best gift you could give such a person at this time of the year.

I wish you all a peaceful Christmas season and I look forward to working with you all for the well-being of all of our members in 2020 and beyond.

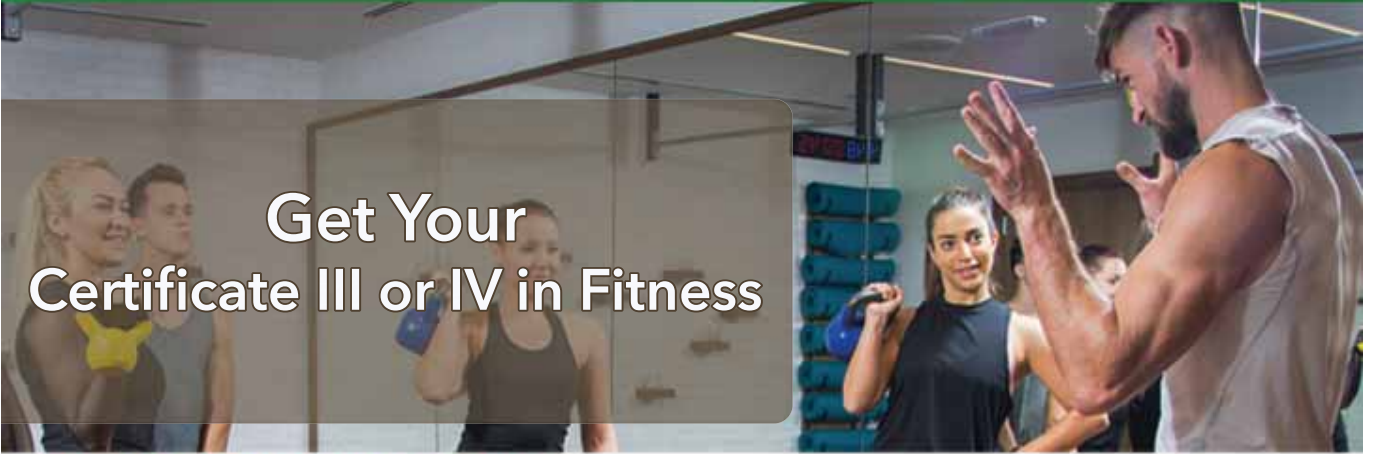
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REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE – MV KRAIT

By Tony Marsden, ACA NSW Vice President

This year we conducted our annual pilgrimage to the MV Krait for our Remembrance Day Service held at the Australian National Maritime Museum (ANMM) in Darling Harbour, Sydney.

The service was conducted by Dr. Reverend Dennis Nutt and the welcome address by Assistant Director for ANMM Mr Michael Harvey. There were several VIPs guests including the Consul General Mr. Luciano Valentim da Conceicao, Timorese United President, Mr. Andre Monteiro his wife Filomena Monteiro and the Vice President, Carlos Pereira. We also had students from Amaroo School in the ACT attend and we were well represented by our members.

The service was conducted next to the WW2 vessel Krait and wreaths were presented to ANMM restoration staff that helped restore her to lay on the deck. Some of Horrie Youngs family were present and Dianne, Gary and Jason laid a wreath in his honour. Yvonne Langley-Walsh laid a wreath in memory of the 2nd/2nd and 2nd/4th Commando Companies.

Readings during the service were done by our President Wayne Havinaar, Vice President Tony Marsden and after the Last post, Minutes silence and Reveille Zack Lynch who's the Australian youth Ambassador for War and Peace in the Pacific spoke on Why it's important for us to remember. Matthew Gategood of Amaroo School in ACT spoke of Operation Jaywick and Gemma Steele for Amaroo School spoke about what Remembrance Day means to her.

Commando 4 Life
Tony Marsden
Aust. Cdo Assoc. NSW



The Consul General of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste, Mr. Luciano Valentim Da Conceicao lays a wreath on the deck of the MV Krait during the Service.



Left: Members of ACA NSW pose for a pic at the ANMM for the Remembrance Day Service 2019.



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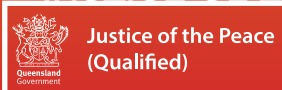
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PRESIDENT'S WORD

Hello all, I hope you are all well and keeping the porch light on. This period has been pretty interesting for some of us Queenslanders with some of us having to dodge bushfires a few times or others travelling during the quiet time. Our membership has grown by 22 new members since this time last year, 20 of those as full members and one Associate and one Social member.

Welfare - Some of our committee members have been traveling around the South East visiting some WW2 Commandos and presenting them with certificates of appreciation. The old boys, Bill Justo, 2/9 Cdo Sqn, Eric Geldard, 2/5 Cdo Sqn & Jack Hansen, 2/2 Cdo Coy were also presented quilts from Quilts of Valour which was a huge hit with them. Jack Hansen is the last surviving 2/2 Ind Coy member and veteran of the Timor Campaign in 1942.



Bill Justo, 2/9 Cdo Sqn with ACA Qld Secretary Graham Gough (L) & ACA Qld Web Manager, John Roxburgh (R).



Eric Geldard, 2/9 Cdo Sqn with his certificate and ACA polo shirt.



Left: Jack Hansen, 2/2 Ind Coy, with ACA Qld Social Member Mark Stanieg.

The Z Special Plaque and Coin was presented to Mr Darcy Hardy the youngest brother of LCPL John Hardy, Z Special Unit, OP Rimau (The Second raid on Singapore Harbour by Z Special Unit) on behalf of all members of ACA Qld. John Hardy was Executed on 7 July 1945 in Singapore. The coin and plaque were struck to coincide with the 75th Anniversary of OP Rimau. Plaques are available through ACA Vic Q Store or contact our Secretary directly.



The Z Special Unit Plaque presented to Darcy Hardy, (brother of John Hardy). John was executed 7 July 1945 in Singapore as a Member of OP RIMAU.

Social Events - Sunday, December 8 sees our End-of-Year Get-Together and our Perpetual Shooting Competition against the ASASAQ. This year's competition will be held out at the Sports Shooters Association of Australia, 1494 Ripley Rd, Ripley from 9am with a BBQ lunch after the shoots.

This year the ASASAQ had donated the Gunfighters trophy which is an inert .303 rifle donated by Al Forsyth, first RSM of 4 RAR Cdo from 1998-99.

Cost is \$60 for competition shooters and \$50 non-competition shooters.

Observers are free. For further details please contact our Social member Mark on 0499 832 754 or acaqlld_social@commando.org.au

Merchandise - Our Web Manager, John Roxburgh, has come up with new and interesting merchandise design which appeals to the younger and older members of the Association. The merchandise is available to all Association members, not just Qld. The merchandise includes T-Shirts, Singlets, Polo Shirts & Hoodies and are made by PALADIN Sports.

All shirts and hoodies have the same designs



throughout with the singlets having just the front and back designs.

Front Left – ACA Badge with AUSTRALIAN COMMANDO ASSOCIATION central and directly below the ACA badge.

Rear – Is a modernised version of our ACA badge with a WW2 Commando in the left diamond and a current Commando in the right diamond. Surrounding the image is the wording "ON THE GUN SINCE 1941".

Sleeves – Left is the Australian National Flag and Right Sleeve is the AAS Dagger.

Colours – Grey Marle & Black and Marle Grey & Sherwood Green for the hoodie only

Cost – Singlets \$50, T-Shirts \$55, Polo Shirts \$60, Hoodies \$85



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Association AGM & Fees – If you haven't already received the email re membership fees, please check your inbox for the new fees from 2020 onwards. The email released to all Qld members which entailed our new membership fees as of 1st January 2020, which will include 1-year, 5-year, 10-year and Life Subscriber membership. Our AGM is slated for the 17 or 18 January in which all Committee positions will become vacant. The President, Vice President, Secretary & Treasurer's positions are only available to Commando Qualified, Full Members, all other committee positions are available to any Full Member.

I'd like to personally thank the Committee Members for all the hard & dedicated work that they have been doing, without you none of this is possible.

On that note from all of us on the Committee we wish you a very Happy Xmas and a very Prosperous 2020 and we hope to see you at our Annual Shooting Comp/Xmas Party or at one of our functions in the new year and if you are down range keep your sights straight and your powder dry!

Commando 4 Life
Nick Hill
President
ACA Qld





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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A CA Vic has been pretty busy with memorials and heritage activities. Below is a few of the things we have been doing.

Development of Audio-Visual Materials for Use at Tidal River

The work on this project has almost been completed with the production of an eight-module year 10 academic training package covering the historical aspects of Wilsons Promontory and the involvement of Australian and New Zealand Commandos and their initial training at Tidal River. Also covered are some examples of operational deployment of Independent Companies and Commando Companies and Squadrons throughout the South-West Pacific during World War II. This project is supported by an eight-minute video which is a compilation of historical and contemporary footage and an interim version was shown during the 2019 Commando Commemoration at Tidal River and was very favourably received. The final version which will include some footage taken at the Commemoration will be available for Christmas and will be uploaded onto the ACA website (www.commando.org.au). The completed project material, less the video, was presented to Matt Jackson, Chief Executive Officer, Parks Victoria on Sunday, 17 November.

Annual Dinner 2019 and Commemoration of the Operation RIMUA Singapore

The dinner was a huge success with current serving Commando members, Roz and Justin Stewart and Teresa McRory, the family of SGT David Gooley, an initial instructor at Tidal River Guerrilla Warfare Training School who later joined Special Operations Australia and Operation RIMAU, as well as Maria Jackman and her family who are related to LEUT Bruno Reymond, RANR, also an operative from Operation RIMAU. Many ACA-VIC members and friends also attended with tickets sold out well in advance of the dinner.

Lynette Silver, a renowned author of JAYWICK and RIMAU operations spoke on Operation RIMAU and the many myths that have surrounded this and Operation JAYWICK. The presentation was well received, and most attendees were very complimentary about the

depth of knowledge and quality of the presentation. The opportunity was taken is also present to the families of RIMAU operatives a number Operation RIMAU commemorative medallion.



Operation RIMAU Commemorative Medallion presented to the families of Operatives.

2019 Tidal River Memorial and Commemoration for 75th Anniversary of Operation RIMAU

The annual pilgrimage to Tidal River for the Commando Commemoration was a major success. Unfortunately, despite requesting to attend in 2018 the office of the CDF advised early in the preceding week that he was unable to attend due to conflicting commitments in Canberra. The Commander, Special Forces Group, Brigadier Craig Shortt, DSC. CSC. DSM. representing the CDF and the Commander, Special Operations Command and Commander Darren Jeffs, CSC. RAN, Executive Officer HMAS Cerberus represented the Chief of Navy. Despite invitations to local, state and federal politicians there were none in attendance. There were more than 175 people in attendance at the Commemoration, which included a significant turnout by locals, ACA members and families of veterans and members of the Foster RSL.

Due to the significance of the Commemoration the opportunity was also taken to make numerous presentations relevant to the Commando and Special Operations heritage at Tidal River. The first of these was the formal handover of the Double Diamond Commando History Audio Visual Project to Parks Victoria and on hand to receive the materials was Matthew Jackson, Chief Executive Officer, Parks Victoria. Special mention was made of the significant funding grant provided by the Victoria Veterans Council which enabled the project to be undertaken.



In recognition of the strong support and assistance provided to the various Commando Associations since the building of the Commando Memorial in 1964 a Certificate of Appreciation was presented to the Tidal River Office of Parks Victoria by the ACA VIC President to Brett Mitchell, Area Chief Ranger, Wilsons Promontory National Park.

The occasion also provided the opportunity to provide commemorative plaques where several ACA



The WW2 Special Operations Australia M Special Unit Plaque being presented to Jim Burrowes, OAM by ACA National President MAJGEN Greg Melick while Dixie Lee looks on.



The ACA National President MAJGEN Greg Melick presenting the Z Special Unit Plaque to Maria Jackman and the family of Lieutenant Reymond, Z Special Unit.

VIC members who are World War II veteran, Coastwatchers. The National President of ACA made presentations of WW2 Special Operations Australia plaques modified by removal of the Z and replaced with an M is the Coastwatchers identified with being from M Special Unit and not Z. The plaques were presented to SGT Jim Burrowes, OAM. and Coder 1st Class Dixie Lee. The ACA also made presentations of the WW2 Special Operations Australia plaques to representatives of the Gooley and Raymond families.

A Commemorative presentation of Operation RIMAU was made to Foster RSL by ACA VIC. The presentation provides details of Private David Gooley who was recruited directly into No.7 Infantry Training Centre shortly after to be renamed the Guerrilla Warfare Training School and when the School relocated to Canungra he went with them and subsequently volunteered for service with the Services Reconnaissance Department (SRD) (administered by Z Special Unit) and was selected for Operation RIMAU. He was subsequently captured and one of the 10 who was executed in Singapore on 7 June 1945, a few weeks short of the end of the war.

Lieutenant Bruno Reymond RANR also volunteered for SRD and joined Operation RIMAU less than a week before the operation departed and participated in a very short familiarisation and training session on the Folboat collapsible canoe. Lieutenant Reymond was killed whilst trying to avoid capture on 21 December



The 2019 Version of ACA VIC World War II Special Operations Australia Plaque.

1944 having conducted an almost 2000mi Escape & Evasion.



Piper Iain Townsley, a former member of UK SAS and 1st Commando Regiment played pipes for the Commemorative Activity.



ACA VIC Members marching off at the completion of this year's Commemoration with the Commando Memorial in the background.

ACA VIC would like to formally acknowledge the significant support provided by Headquarters Special Operations Command and in particular the Commanding Officer and personnel from the 1st Commando Regiment, who provided significant support to Commemorative activity at Tidal River with the provision of representative personnel, a catafalque party, transportation, sound system etc. ACA-VIC would also like to formally express our great thanks to Dana and Jo and other volunteers from the Tidal River Open Space Group put on an outstanding afternoon tea, planned for 75 and catered for more than double that and there was still food left over to donate to Parks Victoria staff, as well as a few single members of ACA-VIC seen departing with plates full of fresh scones and party pies.



The Operation RIMAU Commemorative Presentation showing details of Sergeant Gooley and Lieutenant Reymond and a brief synopsis of the Operation.



The President of Foster RSL Sub-branch, Mr Bruce Lester, a Vietnam Veteran with 2 RAR, accepts presentation and provides a few words about the Wartime Training at Tidal River as his family owned the nearby farm frequently visited at night by Commando trainees.

HMAS Cerberus Remembers

During the commemoration, whilst the President ACA VIC was speaking with Commander Darren Jeffs, CSC, RAN, Executive Officer HMAS Cerberus there representing the Chief of Navy, Commander Jeff's stated that he was privileged to be in attendance representing Navy as Operations JAYWICK and RIMAU had significant RAN participation and that this was often overlooked and seen to be only Army operations. In fact, Operation JAYWICK personnel consisted of eight RAN sailors directly 'recruited' from

the recruit school on HMAS Cerberus, with two Australian Army personnel, two British Army, including Major Ivan Lyon the commander, and one Royal Navy. The raid was initially conceived as a joint Special Operations Executive (UK) and Royal Australian Navy operation and was later transferred to Special Operations Australia.

Commander Jeffs stated that there was a commemorative display in the Headquarters Building at HMAS Cerberus of these operations and the President ACA VIC then decided to 'Strike Swiftly' and an Operation JAYWICK plaque was presented to Commander Jeff's for inclusion in the display at HMAS Cerberus. The presented plaque was installed in the display before 7am the following morning alongside some other memorabilia, some of which was donated by 2 Commando Company Association in 2004.

New commemorative memorabilia

In order to support the commemoration of World War II members of Commando Organisations and Special Operations Australia and supporting in its ACAVIC have recently instigated the creation some additional commemorative items as shown below. These will shortly be available for sale through our website and for those interstate associations who wish to purchase bulk quantities for local resale these will be provided at a significantly reduced cost.



The Clock made from timber from MV Krait includes name of all the Operatives from Operation JAYWICK.



A model of the MV Krait in the Headquarters Building at HMAS Cerberus.

A newly designed plaque showing the various forms of insertion used by members of special operations

Australia to undertake the many operations they performed in the Southwest Pacific and elsewhere during World War II. Only 100 have been produced in priority will go to Australian Special Operations units, ACA members and families of former members of the units.



Five Lapel Pins representing insertion methods used by Operatives from Special Operations Australia.



The 2019 version of ACA-VIC World War II Special Operations Australia Plaque.

Forthcoming activities

ACA VIC have commenced planning for the 2020 anniversary of the Rip Incident were two members of 2 Commando Company, along with a support staff member, lost their lives during an amphibious exercise. The former OC, General Sir Phillip Bennett, AC, KBE, DSO, Life Patron of ACA is hoping to be in attendance to catch up with numerous old comrades of the day. The commemoration on Sunday the 16th of February 2020 will be preceded by Gala dinner on the night of Friday the 14th. Should it be viable it is planned to conduct the dedication of the Special Operations Memorial at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on Saturday, 15 February subject to the availability of selected ADF personnel.

Commando 4 Life
Doug Knight
President
ACA VIC

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ACA VIC PILGRIMAGE TO THE SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

Sunday, 29 September 2019

By Glenn MacDonald, Secretary ACA Vic

Supporting the proud tradition of our WW2 fathers the annual Commando Pilgrimage service was conducted at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on Sunday, 29 September. The service pays homage to the members of the Commando Units and M and Z Special Units who gave their lives during WW2. The ranks of the WW2 veterans have all but disappeared, but it was inspiring to see some WW2 family members present, including Betty MacGregor and her companions.

Parade master was former Victorian Association State President Rob Osborne, who admirably filled the shoes of our recently lost dear friend, and Parade Taskmaster, Keith Hughes. Ossie marched the proud group to the cenotaph where, with the banner lowered, Secretary Glenn MacDonald and Vice-President John Woodruff laid a wreath in front of the Eternal Flame, in the absence of our President Colonel Doug Knight. The party then marched to the now historic area dedicated to the WW2 (and recently, the post-WW2) Commando Units, where the Shrine Guard had taken post.

Master of Ceremonies, Secretary Glenn MacDonald, introduced the Shrine Governor Peter White-law who welcomed the gathering. Secretary Glenn then addressed the gathering with a shortened

expose of the Rimau raid on Singapore (this year being the 75th anniversary of the raid).

Followed Glenn's informative outline of the successful but tragic Rimau operation, members, the Association, family and friends then placed wreaths and poppies on the memorial stone. Former Victorian President, Richard Pelling, then read out the Ode, followed by the playing of the Last Post, the classic minute's silence to allow all to reflect, then the Rouse.

Secretary Glenn expressed our thanks to the Shrine team and the invited guests before the formal service concluded with the National Anthem.

After the usual casual catch-up conversations, the attendees adjourned to the reception area within the Shrine Display Centre to enjoy afternoon tea and the opportunity to meet with old friends, and perhaps establish new contacts, with a sharing of common interests.

Again thank you to the Shrine administration for all their support and to the guard party, the Victoria Police Protective Services Unit Shrine Guard, for adding dignity to the service.

Thank you also to all members and supporters who attended and offered their respects to our WW2 comrades - many of whom attended this service in earlier years, but are sadly no longer with us.



The ACA Vic Members march on to the Shrine Forecourt.





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COMMANDOS OUTSHOOT THE SAS

Presidents' Cup Pistol Shoot

ACA Victoria vs Australian SAS Association Victoria

By Glenn MacDonald, Secretary ACA Vic

Our annual ACA vs SAS pistol shoot was held on Sunday 6 October 2019 in very reasonable Melbourne weather. The event was again extremely well hosted by the Yarra Pistol Club.

Following registration, a settling coffee and the obligatory safety briefing, a total of 35 "shooters" demonstrated their skills on the 15-metre range, each firing six practice shots from two types of pistol, followed by 12 scoring shots from the pistol of choice. As the scores came in, it was apparent that shortening the range enabled the older members (most of us) to get their eye in with many scores over 115 (out of a possible 120) recorded – a great effort!

This year the Commando family top shooters were a little more on target than their SAS counterparts, with the final results in the static element giving a narrow lead of 1.2 points to the ACA Vic team.

The top three shooters in each Association from the static element then went on to a fire and movement one-on-one shootout, each using a Glock 9 mm pistol.



The Annual ACA Vic vs ASASA Vic Shooting Competition Trophy, the Presidents Shield.

The ACA team comprised Ian Storey, Rob Osborne and David Watts, while the SAS team had Ash Murphy, Douglas McCarty and Adam O'Donnell. The Commando team continued their good form to take out this element with two of our three ACA shooters besting their SAS counterparts.

So, the Presidents' Shield will sit in the ACA Vic trophy cabinet until **Sunday, 4 October 2020** – please put this date in your calendar now and come along to help your Association retain the Shield for another year.

Many thanks once again to the Yarra Pistol Club for their support and hospitality.

Final Results. Presidents' Shield. ACA Vic 118.0; SASA Vic 116.8.

Individual shooting. ACA Vic top shooter: Ian Storey 120 (Perfect score). SAS top shooter: Adam O'Donnell 120 (Perfect score). Men's top shooter: Matt Smith 120 (Perfect score). Women's top shooter: Aimee Stevens 116.

FOR THOSE WHO NEVER WENT INTO THE ARMY

A Rhodesian Experience - Author Unknown

When you happen across some older men telling their army stories, you might laugh or sneer at the "old toppies talking army" again, but pause for a moment, look at their faces and you may just see that small tear forming, the slight tremble of a lip or that sad look in their eyes then consider this:

They went to the army some by choice but most by conscription. They went in at an early age - many at 17. Just out of school. Birthdays were not spent with Mommy and Daddy and friends in celebration but most likely training, in the bush or busy with something military and birthdays were forgotten.

They built a Brotherhood which outshines any friendship. This Brotherhood came from seeing and experiencing things that youngsters of that age were not yet supposed to experience. Death, fear, exhaustion, pain, hunger, wet, tired. You name it, they experienced it, many of them on a daily basis.

Newly made friends died, friends that became closer than your own family because your very lives depended on each other. Those that did not do battle had their own experiences that took years off their lives as well. When we talk about "our time in the army", it's because we are proud to have won our families just that little extra freedom, and because it soothes the soul.

As we get older, these things catch up on us, and distant memories sometimes come flooding back bringing along with them the smells, sounds and sometimes the horrors. So, next time you have a giggle about us chatting about the old times, spare a thought for those youngsters that never got to your age because they paid the ultimate price so that you could enjoy today.

And lastly, spare a special thought for their parents that never had the privilege of seeing them grow up and have families of their own.



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ACA VICTORIA 2019 ANNUAL DINNER

TPR Les "Bluey" Wright, 2nd/4th Commando Squadron, WW2

The ACA Victoria Dinner this year was indeed a good opportunity to present VX123028 TPR Les (Bluey) Wright, 2/4th Commando Squadron, with the certificate of appreciation from the Commando Association for his WW2 service and his support to the Australian Commando Association. It was wonderful that Les' son Leon, managed to make the arduous journey from Yarrowonga to Box hill RSL accompanied by Les' wife Mavis, Leon's wife Debra, and Leon's sister Julie Wright.

On Behalf of Les 'Bluey' Wright

Better known as 'Bluey', Dad joined the militia at 17 years of age and when the 2/4th Independent Company came off Timor and the call went out for volunteers, Dad joined up with the 2/4th Independent Company, later to be known as the 2/4th Commando Squadron.

Dad saw active service in New Guinea and Borneo. He was in one of the 6 landing ship tanks that came under Japanese attack while waiting to go ashore in the second wave onto Lae. The 2/4th lost 33 members during that attack.

Later during Operation OBOE 1, Dad, along with other members of the 2/4th, went ashore on Sadau Island prior to the attack on Tarakan. Dad was carrying the newly released sniper's rifle 28442. Finding the island unoccupied by enemy forces a couple of days later the Commandos were sent onto Tarakan Island where they were given the task of taking Tarakan Hill. The 2/4th lost 15 men with another 47 wounded during the Tarakan campaign. Dad lost his to good mates, George Merchant and Tony Kayes during that campaign.

Dad often spoke of the flag that the 2/4th raised on Sadau Island, and again on Tarakan and he was most excited when he saw it pictured in Karl James' excellent book 'Double Diamonds'.

My son, Jason, who is a Senior Chaplain in the Royal Australian Navy, arranged with the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra for a private viewing of the flag for Dad and family. Dad's initials appear on the Federation Star, which was quite moving for all concerned.

We also had an appointment with one of the AWM curators. Dad was concerned about the authenticity of one of the photos that appeared in



TPR Les "Bluey" Wright 2/4 Cdo Sqn
with his sniper rifle.

their Tarakan exhibition, a photo which also appears on page 197 of Karl James' book, 'Double Diamonds'. Dad was adamant that he was Section 9 – C Troop sniper on Tarakan, (not that he has ever been comfortable with the word 'sniper'), not Chicka Donnelly. His job on the sniper's rifle was to help get the advance moving again if his unit's forward scouts were pinned down. Dad had a lot of respect for the forward scouts; he reckons they were 'just targets'. He volunteered for the job once, but a bullet through his hair and another through his shirt sleeve told him it was a bad idea and he never volunteered again.

Presented with the evidence the curator believed Dad's story but said the photo couldn't be changed as it was a propaganda photo but assured him that what he had said would be written on the back of the photo. Often asked by the grandchildren if he had any medals from the war Dad's standard reply was "I got the best medal of all, I got to come home alive."

Many years after the war when discussing the age difference shown on a couple of documents with Military officialdom, Dad said "It's too bad you didn't look a bit closer when I joined up, you were pretty pleased to have me then." It just goes to show that you don't argue with a commando no matter how old he is.



Les "Bluey" Wright, with the ANF with his signature
on the Federation Star that the 2/4 Cdo Sqn raised
on Sadau Island & Tarakan



TPR Les Wrights Reply to ACA VIC Dinner

By Leon Wright (Les' son)

Distinguished guests, members of the Commando Association, serving members of the Australian Defence Force, Veterans, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of my father, Leslie Thomas Wright, his wife Mavis and all of our family I would like to thank you for your kind words and for taking this opportunity to recognise my father's service as part of the Australian Commando Squadrons. It is a kind gesture and very much appreciated by all our family.

My father's long association with the Australian Army Commando Squadron, and the Australian Commando Association have long been a source of pride for dad and a firm foundation for a life well lived.

In September 2016, with grateful assistance from the Australian War Memorial, members of our family were able to take Dad to Canberra to see the Australian Flag that had been signed by members of the 2/4th Commando Squadron when the flag was raised on Tarakan in May 1945. Dad's initials appear in the centre of the Federation Star. Amongst those signatures are not only the names of those young men lost and wounded in the fighting, but also a group of men, who through their service, would be forever linked as Australian Commandos.

We all know and have experienced some of the memory loss that comes with age, but looking at those signatures on the flag, dad was able to remember each soldier and share with us remarkable stories of ordinary men who would do extraordinary things when Australia needed it most. Those signatures, on that flag, were so much more than just names. They represented everything that the Commando Squadrons, the Australian Army, the Australian people and this Association stand for and believe in.

The Australian Army speaks of its core values as courage, initiative, respect and teamwork, and with the friends he has made and the relationships nurtured since he enlisted on 1942 (77 years ago), have given dad a lot of joy and happiness, and personify these values.

As a family we are extremely proud of what our father has achieved. Not just as a soldier but as a husband, father, brother, grandfather and great grandfather. It is difficult to accurately express our thanks for the recognition and honour you have given dad tonight but please be assured that to recognise dad's service in this way, is sincerely appreciated and will not be forgotten.

Again, thank you for your kind words and this incredible honour.

Leon Wright





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VX133609 LIEUTENANT TOMAS HENRY - Z SPECIAL UNIT 100 YEARS YOUNG

WW2 AIF and Z Special Unit member Thomas (Tom) Henry celebrates his 100th Birthday.

Sunday 22nd September 2019 was a milestone for Tom Henry as he achieved the magic Century, and among his many well-wishers he received congratulations from the Queen, the Prime Minister Scott Morrison, the Governor General David Hurley AC DSC (Ret), and the Premier of Victoria Daniel Andrews MP.

Tom's sons, Denis, Wayne and Gary and the silent family workers in the background put together a magnificent luncheon for over 100 guests at the Dingley International Hotel.

Tom who has been a 'Freemason' for an incredible 75 years, is a man in remarkably good health, was gracious in thanking all for attending his special birthday celebration. He spoke with wit, humility and modesty about his association with industry, and of the love and affection he has received from his family, including his 22 great-grandchildren.

Tom's military service consisted of volunteering twice, the first for AIF, and then volunteering for Z Special unit as a cipher operator.

VX 133609 Lieutenant Thomas Henry AKS15 was stationed at the Luger Maintenance Section Darwin, so called so Japanese spies would not get suspicious. Z Special members would dress up as sailors and lug small ships through the base. It was 17 kilometres by road or 4 km as the crow flies from Darwin, and was a major WW2 Z Special Unit operational base. Selection of Darwin to host a major LMS base reflected the proximity of Darwin to the frontline of the war and to the strategically significant islands just to its north. The base operated from 1942 to 1945 and at its peak accommodated 500 personnel.

In 2016 Tom and his sons Denis, Gary and Wayne were invited guests at the Z Plaque unveiling ceremony in Canberra to hear a wonderful address, paying tribute to the WW2 members of Z Special Unit by the head of the Australian War Memorial Canberra, Dr Brendan Nelson AO.

Post WW2 Tom's professional life was as a successful mechanic, gradually building his workshop until in 1968 he established a one-man business, the Melbourne Trailer and Caravan Supplies (MTCS) with a single shop in East Bentleigh. He then established a small factory in Cheltenham to do warehousing, welding, and repair work, followed by a move to larger premises in Cheltenham and Moorabbin. In 1976 MTCS was appointed the exclusive Australian distributors for the Dexter Axle Company. MTCS progressed and grew, employing a staff of 32. CNC machinery was implemented, and in 2000 MTCS again outgrew premises and moved to a 4500 sq m facility in



Tom Henry (c) being presented his Life Membership Certificate to ACA Vic by ACA Vic Secretary Glenn MacDonald (l) and ACA Vic member Dick Pelling (r).

Chelsea Heights consisting of offices, machine shop, repair and service centre, showroom and warehouse, and in 2016 Dexko Global Inc acquired MTCS.

Tom was recently inducted into the Caravan Industries' Hall of Fame, after an amazing 52 successful years in the industry.

**By Dick Pelling
ACA VIC**

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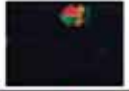
















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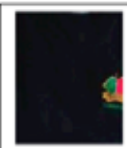
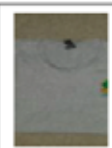
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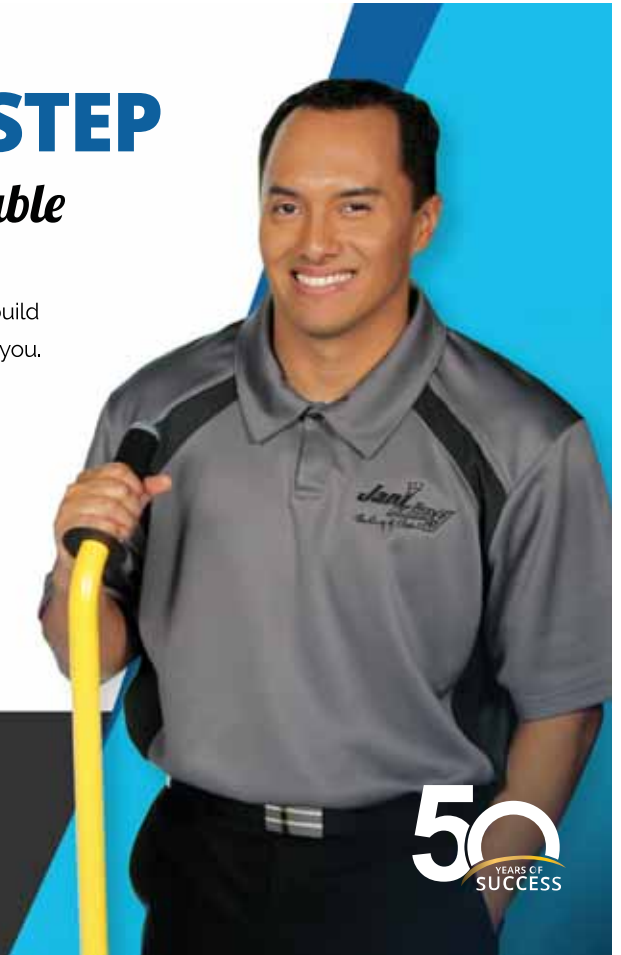
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PRESIDENT'S WORD

The last eight months has been good for the Western Australian branch.

Our committee was returned unchanged at our Annual General meeting and we had a lovely lunch and afternoon in the beer garden at the Rose & Crown in Guildford after the formalities of the meeting. We've also had two more members join this year, Mal Carter and Steve Butler. A special shout out to Darren Freeman and Rob Murray. As Treasurer and Vice President respectively they have jumped in and organised activities and ensured we continue to flourish as a group.

We had a good turnout for Anzac Day in Perth and got to lead the other Commando Associations for the first time.



Rob Murray showing he has still got it!

In June, we had a day on the range hosted by the Perth Lever Action Rifle Club. We were joined by a contingent from the Western Grunts Motor Cycle Club to offer some friendly competition.

The weather held off just long enough for us to complete our events. Our home in WA is the Eastern Regional RSL, Bassendean and they have recently given the place a facelift. With some slick negotiating skills our Treasurer managed a small coup with the wall facing the busy Guildford Rd being adorned with two outstanding Commando's W02 Ray Simpson, VC. DCM. and CPL Cam Baird, VC. MG.

With Cam's painting on the wall who better to endorse it than his outstanding Ol' Man, Doug Baird, coming to honour us with

his presence and carrying on the work of Cam's Cause, continuing to espouse the motto of "Aspire to Inspire". What a champion bloke!

A final shout out to another champion bloke, Dave Beacham, the Bassendean RSL's Veterans Advocate. He has very kindly offered to represent our members in the DVA space.

Our quarterly general meetings have been a chance to catch up, plan, socialise and of course to remember times past and we welcome members of other states and associations to join us for these events.

In 2020 we are planning to hold more activities and social events as well as a plan for fund raising to support our initiatives.

Commando 4 Life

Paul Shearer
President
Aust. Cdo Assoc WA



ACA WA Members on ANZAC Day 2019 in Perth



Eastern Reginal RSL @ Bassendean



The murals of both Ray Simpson, VC. DCM. & Cam Baird, VC. MG.
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ACA WA President Paul Shearer
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COMMANDO WELFARE TRUST

The Corporal Tim Pereira's Story

Tim was born in Singapore and moved to Australia with his parents when he was 3 months old. He grew up in Melbourne the eldest of three siblings. He excelled at school and considered joining the police, however, decided to join the Army due to the global issues at the time, as well as a keen interest to travel and experience other cultures. Tim joined the army at age 18, as an Electronic Warfare operator and was awarded the student of merit on his Initial Employment Training course. He then studied 2 languages, Indonesian and Pashto and first deployed to Afghanistan in 2010 as part of the mentoring taskforce.

In 2012 he returned to Afghanistan, this time with the 2nd Commando Regiment as part of the Special Operations Task Group, as a platoon Electronic Warfare operator. On the 19th December 2012, five days before his mid-tour leave, he was on a mission manning the rear gun in a Bushmaster Armoured Vehicle. This particular mission had been cancelled several times in previous days due to bad weather and Tim had volunteered to swap roles in the vehicle with another soldier. Tim had also volunteered to stay and cover the winter rotation instead of returning home with his platoon from the previous rotation.

During this mission, Tim's vehicle was involved in a collision due to bad weather conditions, and he suffered a C4 burst fracture in his spine and was knocked unconscious. When he regained consciousness, he realised he was paralysed from the neck down. At the time he could not breathe and thought he was about to die. A medic travelling in the same vehicle, acted swiftly and kept him alive. You can all imagine this accident has changed Tim's life profoundly and permanently. The terrible irony is also that Tim should not have been in country on this day.

Post medical evacuation, Tim spent the following six weeks in Intensive Care in Germany, where his family travelled to be with him. He had no movement from the neck down and could not speak effectively due to a tracheostomy. He was then transferred to Australia and spent six weeks at the Royal Talbot Hospital spinal unit in Melbourne. Once well enough he was transferred to the spinal rehab ward. The only movement he had was a slight muscle twitch in his right bicep. Over the next 6 months his goal was to be able to strengthen his right bicep enough to be able to push the joystick on an electric wheelchair, so he did not have to use chin controls.

Tim spent over 18 months in rehab, and now still requires carer and nursing support 24/7. Tim moved to Canberra under a promise that he would always have a job in Defence if he wanted one. He took up a work opportunity in the Australia Signals Directorate doing a

few days a month. Even with his physical limitations he commenced studying for a degree in computer science. Unfortunately, due to his health situation Tim was discharged from the ADF earlier this year (2019). Prior to his discharge he realised that as a result, he would lose his service residence and decided to purchase his own home and seek modifications through DVA which are currently being carried out.

Tim used his compensation payout to fund the purchase of a house and had to take out a significant mortgage to accommodate his special needs and round the clock care, which has placed a significant burden on his Military pension. But even under this pressure, Tim wants to continue donating to the Royal Talbot spinal rehab ward, which played a significant role in his treatment and recovery. Tim has never asked for support from any institution or person. However, on hearing of his circumstances, the Commando Welfare Trust (CWT) is now funding Tim's mortgage interest payments. In addition, the Trustees, on the recommendation of the CWT Military Advisory Board made up of the Commanding Officers and Regimental Sergeant Majors of both 1st and 2nd Commando Regiments, have pledged to seek support in paying off Tim's mortgage. The CWT is aiming to raise \$300,000 to reduce his mortgage payments to zero, since we launched this campaign, we have raised over \$125,000 towards the target, so we have a way to go.

Tim is a deeply private person but has given permission for his story to be made public in order that people will become more aware of the support that is provided currently and required in the future to other members who have served as part of Special Operations Command (less the Special Air Service Regiment – who have their own trust) and their families. The CWT provides timely and rapid support to these people who find themselves in circumstances that require a special level of attention and support that is not provided by the Australian Government or other support agencies. Should you wish to support Tim Pereira, who has paid a massive price in the service of his country, please donate to:

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AMBUSH & OPERATION PERTH

By Sam Bush – ACA QLD

This is a story of how we survived the night our Platoon of 30 from Delta Cdo Coy, 4 Cdo was ambushed by approx 300 Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. This is from my own recollections on what happened.

In July 2006, I was the lead driver in a vehicle patrol tasked with covering the withdrawal of a Canadian Special Operations Forces (CANSOF) team by CH47 Chinook during a village raid to capture a top Taliban leader. The mission was supposed to be simple for us, with intelligence reports suggesting there would be only a couple of Taliban bodyguards¹ in the area. But as the Canadians left via the Chinook, our platoon came under heavy fire. We found ourselves hungered down in a compound fighting for our lives like James Bowie, Davey Crocket and the Texians at the Alamo.



Myself (2nd from right) with the other members of my team with our SRV in Afghanistan in 2006. You can see the Mk19 mounted on our vehicle.

Unbeknown to us, every Taliban Commander in the district was meeting in the village that night, each bringing their own fighters and bodyguards for protection. Surrounded on all sides in the compound, a US Air Force AC-130 gunship also commonly known as "Spooky or Spectre" was monitoring the situation above, counting as many as 300 heat signatures converging on our Platoons location. The Gunship crew were relaying information to our Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) of group after group after group of fighters, they were all coming together and coming for us. The AC130 unleashed its powerful 25mm Cannon, 40mm Bofors Gun and 105mm Howitzer until it ran out of ammunition², raining hell on the Taliban below as we tried to fight our way out.

¹Most if not all Taliban Commanders moved around with a bodyguard team 24/7. Depending on the importance of the Commander (or the more money he had) the bigger the team became. It was not uncommon for them to have 5-6 man teams and sometimes up 15-20.

²This is known as going "Winchester". An AC130 running out of ammunition is a serious situation as this means there is more enemy fighters fighting you than the AC130 can carry ammunition.

With the Gunship being forced back to base as dawn broke and an F-16 fighter jet at least 15 minutes away, we were in a serious situation and we were left with no close air support (CAS). Getting pounded on all sides by AK-47 fire and rocket propelled grenades (RPG), we slugged it out for the next eight to 10 hours. We were lucky we had our cut down and modified Land Drovers with us, which had extra ammunition on board as well having .50cal Machine Guns, 40mm Mk 19 Automatic Grenade Launchers, 66mm SRAAW and 84mm Carl Gustav's, which I fired as many as 20 rounds and used up all of my frag grenades in what was now the fight of our lives.

We eventually were able to get out of the compound but we got bunched into a little circle where I tried to punch out in my car through the gap. As I got on to the road, I could see off to my right there were two men set up with a machine gun and they basically opened fire on our vehicle. Spotting a tree nearby, I veered left, pulling up behind it. Exposing my own side directly to enemy fire, my co-driver and passengers were able to leap out and take cover behind the vehicle. I dived out and took cover behind a tree in a ditch. I rolled out of the side with my weapon. I could see tracer going across and pinging the side of the vehicle, and I remember sitting there thinking, one of these guys is just going to walk up over the top and kill me. I thought, 'this is some serious shit'. When they stopped firing, I neutralised those threats at which point we made sure that we were all good, jumped back in our seats and kept moving firing our 50 Cals and Mk19s until we made a break for it back to base.

It's relatively easy to remain focused in situations like that. We trained to such levels and repeat it hundreds if not thousands of times that when it occurs for real it becomes almost automatic, muscle memory. Because I had a head wound, I was bleeding profusely but I didn't realise at the time how bad it was. The wound was from a bullet fragment, a telling reminder of just how lucky I was to survive. We only suffered minor injuries, and we survived without taking a single serious casualty requiring AME. An estimated 100 Taliban fighters were killed that night.

I broke my back in the middle of Operation Perth but remained with the Platoon until the end of the Operation dosed up on pain meds. When I got back to our Base at Tarin Kowt and the meds wore off, I couldn't walk, so I had an MRI and they revealed the damage to my vertebrae and sent me back home to Australia. I spent the next 6-12 months training to get back to Med Class 2 so I could deploy again, I got to Med Class 2 in about Feb/Mar 2007. It was a conversation with my now wife that led me to put my discharge papers in for June 2007 and eventually made my way to Tropical North Queensland.



Nowadays, I often visit Yungaburra's Avenue of Honour – a place of healing for many of us veterans who want to remember those mates who didn't make it home. I visit fairly regularly. I along with so many of us from the Unit have over a dozen mates on that wall. I think about the fun times we used to have.

I'm now involved with numerous Veteran Charities



An AC130 similar to this one went 'Winchester' supporting our platoon during the battle against the Taliban.

and I hope to reach out to other veterans in the Far North Queensland through the game of golf. We're trying to start a social golf club, where veterans can come and play golf with other veterans, yet at the end of the day, it is the simple things in life I appreciate the most, far from my time in the Ghan. I have a beautiful wife and two beautiful girls. I'm probably the happiest I've ever been.



The Meritorious Unit Citation (MUC) awarded to 4 RAR Commando in 2006 for Afghanistan,

4 RAR Commando, now known as 2nd Commando Regiment, was not only awarded the Unit Citation for Gallantry (UCG) but as a result of the Ambush & OP Perth the first Star of Gallantry (SG) ever awarded to an Australian Soldier (only second to the VC) to a number of Medals of Gallantry.

Sam Bush
Commando 4 Live

Note: The above article has been edited from the original article that was published in The Cairns Post on 21 February 2015.



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FROM THE PEN OF HARRY BELL

2nd/9th Commando Squadron, WW2

My Last Letter Home From The War 28th of September 1945



The Regiment was then at Karawop, a half-day's barge trip west of Wewak and we were receiving the Japanese prisoners who were straggling in from the Upper Sepik, across the Torricelli Range, to a reception area at Boiken, close to Karawop. May I quote: "I have had a letter from Harry Dean [a school friend who was serving in Bougainville with 2/8 Commando Squadron] and they are in just about our own position with regard to leave - rumours, rumours, but no movement. And they've been away since July 44, piling up very big scores of Japanese. [When we finally got home, in June 46, it was two years since we had had leave.]



Eric Geldard, 2/9 Cdo Sqn (L); Kathie Bell (Harry's wife) seated (C) and Harry Bell, 2/9 Cdo Sqn (R).

Our own Japanese have been coming in fairly regularly - 700 so far at Boiken. It's only 4 miles from here, though I haven't seen any of them yet. It's out of bounds for sightseers and anyway, I wouldn't walk a 1/4 of a mile to see a million bloody Japanese! Don MacPherson has to go down daily to check their arms in but so far, looting has been very restricted. Very few flags are found (they must burn them in preference to having them surrendered) and when you try to lift their watches they scream for the Interpreter. . . .

We had a couple of good shows last week . . . "To Have and to Have Not" an Ernest Hemingway yarn, was nothing extra special but it was our first look at Lauren Bacall & whew! Boy!! She doesn't go in for leg art or the usual methods of sex appeal but she amply justifies her "nomme de Guerre" "The Look". Whew! If she looked at me like that at 5.30 p.m. on Wynyard Station . . .

I am writing this by lantern light in my hut, as the YMCA is full. And I didn't have much time during the day, for we were swinging the banjo, carting earth for the roadways round RHQ.. Tomorrow, I'm going out on the barge and will spend the weekend either with Humph Lingard [a school friend, serving at Wewak with 2/6 Survey Battery] or with 2/3 Mug Gunners [Machine Gun Battalion, where I had a couple of mates] I'll see Bill Lester [2/9] at the CCS [Casualty Clearing Station].

Mother asks if all the Japanese will come out. Well,

since Hirohito surrendered personally, while still Emperor, I've never had any doubt. The army has officially surrendered and if you can hold any Japanese or group of Japanese in that jungle with 20 teams of wild horses, you're doing very well. They must hate this far more than we do and now they've been given the official OK, it's just matter of letting them know.

Well, I'll say so long; much love . . . "

On boxing day, 1944, the 2/9 squadron set off, on foot, from Aitape to Wewak. Well, that's looking ahead a bit; it was some months before we got there. Xmas day was spent breaking camp and tidying up, so we celebrated Xmas on Xmas

eve. Here is part of my letter home, dated 24/12/44: *well, by the calendar, it's only Xmas eve but actually it's mum's birthday and our Xmas Day. It's my first Xmas Day in the army, and though I hope I don't have any more, it's not because I didn't enjoy this one. At first it seemed as if it wouldn't be like Xmas at all, for the much-advertised turkeys didn't arrive, nor did any parcels from home. But last night the Aust Comfort Fund hampers arrived (*and very acceptable they were too) and this morning we got our beer (4 bottles per man) and then they turned on our dinner. There was a duty roster posted on the board - all officers, identified by their nicknames. They waited on us at table, served us, did the washing-up and incinerators. And how was it when Buff (Oxlade) came racing round, blind as a bat, to announce mess parade. The dinner consisted of ham, dehydrated veges, plum pud (we all dubbed in the tinned ones from our hampers) and cream: unsweetened condensed milk, and very nice too. Most of us took a bottle over and the tables were laden with biscuits, makeshift mince pies, chutney, sweets, dried fruits and Xmas cake. So we sat down to Xmas dinner, on Xmas eve, by a New Guinea surf and ate till we could eat no more, much as the "waiters" pressed us! In short, she was a grouse show and the parcels will be all the more welcome when they do arrive. [It was some months before they did.]*





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Background

The United States Army Rangers are designated U.S. Army Ranger units, past or present, or are graduates of the U.S. Army Ranger School. The term *ranger* has been in use unofficially in a military context since the early 17th century. The first military company officially commissioned as rangers were English soldiers fighting in King Philip's War (1676) and from there the term came into common official use in the French and Indian Wars. There have been American military companies officially called Rangers since the American Revolution.

The 75th Ranger Regiment is an elite airborne light infantry combat formation within the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC). The six battalions of the modern Rangers have been deployed in wars in Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq, and saw action in several conflicts, such as those in Panama and Grenada. The Ranger Regiment traces its lineage to three of six battalions raised in World War II, and to the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional)—known as "Merrill's Marauders", and then reflagged as the 475th Infantry, then later as the 75th Infantry.

The Ranger Training Brigade (RTB)—headquartered at Fort Benning—is an organization under the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and is separate from the 75th Ranger Regiment. It has been in service in various forms since World War II. The Ranger Training Brigade administers Ranger School, the satisfactory completion of which is required to become Ranger qualified and to wear the **Ranger Tab**.

The Colonial Period

Rangers served in the 17th and 18th-century wars between colonists and Native American tribes. The British regulars were not accustomed to frontier warfare and so Ranger companies were developed. Rangers were full-time soldiers employed by colonial governments to patrol between fixed frontier fortifications in reconnaissance providing early warning of raids. In offensive operations, they were scouts and guides, locating villages and other targets for taskforces drawn from the militia or other colonial troops.

In Colonial America, "The earliest mention of Ranger operations comes from Capt. John "Samuel" Smith," who wrote in 1622, "When I had ten men able to go abroad, our common wealth was very strong: with such a number I ranged that unknown country 14 weeks." Robert Black also stated that,

In 1622, after the Berkeley Plantation Massacre ... grim-faced men went forth to search out the Indian enemy. They were militia—citizen soldiers—but they were

learning to blend the methods of Indian and European warfare...As they went in search of the enemy, the words *range*, *ranging* and *Ranger* were frequently used ... The American Ranger had been born.

The father of American ranging is Colonel Benjamin Church (c. 1639–1718). He was the captain of the first Ranger force in America (1676). Church was commissioned by the Governor of the Plymouth Colony Josiah Winslow to form the first ranger company for King Philip's War. He later employed the company to raid Acadia during King William's War and Queen Anne's War.

Benjamin Church designed his force primarily to emulate Native American patterns of war. Toward this end, Church endeavoured to learn to fight like Native Americans from Native Americans. Americans became rangers exclusively under the tutelage of the Indian allies. (Until the end of the colonial period, rangers depended on Indians as both allies and teachers.)

Church developed a special full-time unit mixing white colonists selected for frontier skills with friendly Native Americans to carry out offensive strikes against hostile Native Americans in terrain where normal militia units were ineffective. His memoirs *Entertaining Passages relating to Philip's War* is considered the first American military manual (published 1716).

Under Church served the father and grandfather of two famous rangers of the eighteenth century: John Lovewell and John Gorham respectively. John Lovewell served during Dummer's War (also known as Lovewell's War). He lived in present-day Nashua, New Hampshire. He fought in Dummer's War as a militia captain, leading three expeditions against the Abenaki Indians. John Lovewell became the most famous Ranger of the eighteenth century.



Colonel Benjamin Church (1639-1718) from the Plymouth Colony, father of American Ranging

During King George's War, John Gorham established "Gorham's Rangers". Gorham's company fought on the frontier at Acadia and Nova Scotia. Gorham was commissioned a captain in the regular British Army in recognition of his outstanding service. He was the first of three prominent American rangers—himself, his younger brother Joseph Gorham and Robert Rogers—to earn such commissions in the British Army. (Many others, such as George Washington, were unsuccessful in their attempts to achieve a British rank.)

Rogers' Rangers was established in 1751 by Major Robert Rogers, who organized nine Ranger companies in the American colonies. These early American light infantry units, organized during the French and Indian War, bore the name "Rangers" and were the forerunners of the modern Army Rangers. Major Rogers drafted the first currently-known set of standard orders for rangers. These rules, Robert Rogers' 28



"Rules of Ranging", are still provided to all new Army Rangers upon graduation from training, and served as one of the first modern manuals for asymmetric warfare.

The American Revolution

When the American Revolution began, Major Robert Rogers allegedly offered his services to General George Washington.

Fearing that Rogers was a spy, Washington refused. An incensed Rogers instead joined forces with the Loyalists, raised the Queen's Rangers, and fought for the Crown. While serving with the British, Col. Rogers was responsible for capturing America's most famous spy in Nathan Hale. Not all of Rogers' Rangers went with him, however, including such notable figures as Israel Putnam. Later on during the war, General Washington ordered Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Knowlton to select an elite group of men for reconnaissance missions. This unit was known as Knowlton's Rangers, and is credited as the first official Ranger unit (by name) for the United States. This unit, however, carried out intelligence functions rather than combat functions in most cases, and as such are not generally considered the historical parent of the modern day Army Rangers. Instead, Knowlton's Rangers gave rise to the modern Military Intelligence branch (although it was not a distinct branch until the 20th century).

Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox" Revolutionary commander of South Carolina, developed irregular methods of warfare against the British army. As one of the fathers of modern guerrilla warfare, he is credited in the lineage of the Army Rangers, as is George Rogers Clark who led an irregular force of Kentucky/Virginia militiamen to capture the British forts at Vincennes, Indiana and Kaskaskia, Illinois.

War of 1812

In January 1812 the United States authorized six companies of United States Rangers who were mounted infantry with the function of protecting the Western frontier. Five of these companies were raised in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky. A sixth was in Middle Tennessee, organized by Capt. David Mason. The next year, 10 new companies were raised. By December 1813 the *Army Register* listed officers of 12 companies of Rangers. The Ranger companies were discharged in June 1815.

The Black Hawk War

During the Black Hawk War, in 1832, the Battalion of Mounted Rangers, an early version of the cavalry in the U.S. Army was created out of frontiersmen who enlisted for one year and provided their own rifles and horses. The battalion was organized into six companies of 100 men each that was led by Major Henry Dodge. After their enlistment expired there was no creation of a second battalion. Instead, the battalion was reorganized into the 1st Dragoon Regiment.

American Civil War

The American Civil War included Rangers such as John Singleton Mosby, who was the most famous Confederate Ranger during the Civil War. His company's raids on Union camps and bases were so effective, part of North-Central Virginia soon became known as *Mosby's Confederacy*. After the Civil War, more than half a century passed without Ranger units in the United States.

World War 2

1st Ranger Battalion

On 8 December 1941, the United States entered World War II the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan. At

the time, Major William Orlando Darby, the founder of the modern Rangers, was assigned to be on duty in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Darby, frustrated with his lack of hands-on experience as General Russell P. Hartle's aide, was put in charge of a new unit. General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, envisioned an elite unit of fifty men selected voluntarily from the 34th Infantry Division. He believed Darby was the man to do the job. On 8 June 1942, Darby was officially put in charge of the First Ranger Battalion under General Hartle.

On 19 August 1942, fifty Rangers fought alongside Canadian and British Commandos in the ill-fated Dieppe Raid on the coast of occupied France. Three Rangers were killed and several captured.

The first American soldier killed in Europe in World War II, Ranger Lieutenant E. V. Loustalot, was part of this raid. During the mission, he took command after the British captain leading the assault was killed. Loustalot scaled a steep cliff with his men, was wounded three times, but was eventually cut down by enemy crossfire in his attempts to reach the machine gun nest at the top of the cliff.

In November 1942, the entire 1st Ranger Battalion entered combat for the first time when they landed at Arzew, Algeria. The First were split into two groups in hopes of assaulting Vichy-French batteries and fortifications before the 1st Infantry Division would land on the beach. The operation was successful, and the unit sustained minimal casualties.

On 11 February 1943, the Rangers moved 32 miles (51 km) to raid an Italian encampment at Sened Station. Moving at night, the Rangers slipped to within 50 yards (46 m) of the Italian outpost and began their attack. It took the battalion only 20 minutes to overtake the garrison and achieve their objective. Fifty Italians were killed and another ten were made prisoner. Darby, along with other officers, was awarded the Silver Star Medal for this action. The battalion itself gained the nickname the "Black Death" by the Italians.

At the time, the Italians still held the pass at Djebel El Ank, located at the far east edge of El Guettar. The Rangers linked up with engineer elements of the 26th Infantry, First Infantry Division, to attack the area. The First Rangers orders were to move overland, on foot 12 miles (19 km) to outflank the enemy's position. In eight hours of fighting, the Americans captured the objective; the First Rangers took 200 prisoners.

Creation of the 3rd & 4th Ranger Battalions

With the success of the First Ranger Battalion during the Tunisian campaign, Darby requested that the Rangers be expanded to a full Regiment. The request was granted. The Third and Fourth Ranger Battalions were authorized shortly after and were trained and led by veteran officers and NCOs from the First Battalion. After getting the "green light" to expand, Darby ran into a problem: The Rangers only took volunteers.



WW2 "Lozenge" Patch





Members of 5th Ranger Bn @ Pointe du Hoc, D Day
6 June 1944

Darby, knowing that the best man for the job was not always a volunteer, sought out men around Oran. Although he was still limited in that he could only accept volunteers, he began to find ways around this. For instance, he began to give speeches, put up posters and encouraged his officers to scout around for eligible candidates. By June 1943, the three Ranger battalions were fully operational. 1st Rangers were still under Colonel Darby; the 3rd under Major Herman Dammer, the 4th commanded by Major Roy Murray.

1st and 4th Ranger Battalions were paired together, and positioned to spearhead General Terry Allen's 1st Division, on the Sicily campaign. Landing outside Gela, the Rangers took the town just after midnight, and were quickly sent out to San Nicola. The Rangers seized the town with the help of an armored division. Despite the fact that they were under a constant attack from enemy artillery, tank, and air forces, they still succeeded in the completion of their mission. This 50 hour barrage would be one of the most unbearable experiences for the Rangers.

Following their success, the two Ranger battalions were then ordered to take the town of Butera, a fortress suspended on the 4,000-foot (1,200 m) high edge of the cliff at Butera beach. After almost withdrawing from the battle, and requesting artillery to level the city, a platoon of Rangers volunteered to breach the city. Two privates, John See and John Constantine, sneaked in behind enemy lines and tricked the Italians and Germans into surrendering the city.

Meanwhile, the 3rd Ranger Battalion headed out into the area of Agrigento, where they marched through Campobello, Naro, and Favara, successfully occupying each town. The 3rd was ordered to back track to the shores of Porto Empedocle. The beach itself was not occupied, but high in the cliffs heavy machine gun and cannon fire poured onto the Rangers. Scrambling, the Rangers made their way to each machine gun nest and disabled all enemy opposition before the supporting infantry battalion even hit the shore.

Colonel Darby was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and was promoted by General George Patton; Darby, wanting to be closer to his men, turned down this promotion.

Fall of the 1st 3rd & 4th Ranger Battalions

On 30 January 1944, after Christmas break the Rangers were put together for a joint operation, to occupy the town of Cisterna, before the main infantry division moved in. That night the 1st and 3rd battalions moved into the town, passing many German soldiers that did not appear to notice the Rangers slip by. The 4th Ranger Battalion met opposition almost immediately taking an opposite route by the road. During the night the 1st and 3rd Ranger battalions separated out about 2 miles (3.2 km), and when daylight caught the 1st Ranger Battalion out in an open field, the Germans began their ambush. Completely surrounded and unable to escape, the two Ranger battalions fought on until ammunition and resources were exhausted. The 4th Ranger Battalion tried to make a push to save their comrades but were unsuccessful and had to withdraw. After five hours of fighting, German tanks and motorized infantry defeated the Rangers. Out of the 760 men in the two battalions, only six escaped and the rest were killed or captured. US Army records indicate over 700 Ranger prisoners.

This marked the end of the three Ranger battalions. The remaining 400 Rangers were scattered around the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, and the 137 original Rangers were sent home. On 26 October 1944, the three original Ranger battalions were deactivated at Camp Butner, North Carolina.

2nd & 5th Ranger Battalions

The 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions were trained at Camp Forrest, Tennessee, on 1 April 1943.

They first saw action 6 June 1944, during Operation Overlord.

During D-day 2nd Rangers companies D, E, and F, were ordered to take a strategic German outpost at Pointe du Hoc.

This coastal cliff was supposed to have several 155 mm artillery cannons aimed down at the beach. Once they arrived at the bottom of the cliff, they had an enormous climb to make up rope ladders while receiving a barrage of machinegun fire from the Germans above. The 2nd Rangers were successful in taking the area even with the intense German resistance but the guns were not in sight. A patrol scouting the area found the 155 mm coastal guns a mile away; the patrol party quickly disabled the guns and any resistance in the area. In the article "Rangers take Pointe" Leonard Lomell and Jack Kuhn are interviewed on the events that took place that day. Lomell explains;

The guns had to have been taken off the Pointe. We were looking for any kind of evidence we could find and it looked like there were some markings on the secondary road where it joined the main road. We decided to leapfrog. Jack covered me, and I went forward. When I got a few feet forward, I covered him. It was a sunken road with very high hedgerows with trees and bushes and stuff like that. It was wide enough to put a column of tanks in, and they would be well hidden. We didn't see anybody, so we just took a chance, running as fast as we could, looking over the hedgerow. At least we had the protection of the high hedgerows. When it became my turn to look over, I said, "God, here they are!" They were in an orchard, camouflaged in among the trees.

Meanwhile, the rest of the 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions spearheaded the 2-16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry



Division, on the beach at Omaha. This is where the famous Ranger slogan comes from, when Major Max F. Schneider, commanding the 5th Ranger Battalion, met with General Norman Cota. When Schneider was asked his unit by Cota, someone yelled out "5th Rangers!", to which Cota replied, "Well then Goddammit, Rangers, lead the way!" This drive cut the German line allowing the conventional army to move in. The 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions worked on special operation tasks in the Normandy Campaign. The two battalions fought in many battles such as Battle for Brest and the Battle of the Hurtgen Forest. The 2nd Rangers were responsible for capturing Le Conquet Peninsula, where they disabled a 280 mm gun and took many German prisoners. The 2nd Ranger Battalion also went on to take several tactical German positions, cutting the German line in the Rhineland. In Saar west of Zerf, the 5th Battalion took an overlooking German position cutting off all supply routes to German forces.

6th Ranger Battalion

The 6th Ranger Battalion was stationed in the Pacific, and served mostly in the Philippines and New Guinea. All operations completed by the 6th Battalion were done in company- or platoon-size behind enemy lines. They were the first soldiers to hit the Philippines, three days before the army would launch the first invasion. The 6th Ranger Battalion conducted long-range reconnaissance, operating miles past the front line.

At Cabanatuan, on the island of Luzon in January 1945, a company of the 6th Ranger Battalion executed the Raid at Cabanatuan. The Rangers penetrated 29 miles (47 km) behind enemy lines, including crawling a mile (1 mile (1.6 km)) across an open field on their stomachs. During their final assault the Rangers destroyed a garrison of Japanese soldiers twice their size and rescued 500 POWs.

The 6th Ranger Battalion's final mission was to secure a drop zone for paratroopers 250 miles (400 km) into enemy territory. They linked up with the 37th Infantry Division and ended the war in the Philippines.

Merrill's Marauders

In August 1944, after five months of fighting in China Burma India Theater with the Japanese Army, Merrill's Marauders (5307th Composite Unit (Provisional)) were consolidated into then 475th Infantry, afterwards 75th Infantry. As a special force group led by Brigadier General Frank Merrill, to commemorate its companion Chinese Expeditionary Force (Burma), Merrill's Marauders put the National emblem of the Republic of China on its badge. The sun also represents daylight operations, the lightning bolt signifies the swiftness of their strikes, and the white star signifies night capabilities.

The Korean War

The outbreak of hostilities in Korea in June 1950 again signaled the need for Rangers. Fifteen Ranger companies were formed during the Korean War. The Rangers went to battle throughout the winter of 1950 and the spring of 1951. They were nomadic warriors, attached first to one Regiment and then to another. They performed "out front" work—scouting, patrolling, raids, ambushes, spearheading assaults, and as counterattack forces to regain lost positions. In all six airborne Ranger companies, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 8th, averaging 125 soldiers in each company served during the conflict. Two other companies, the 10th and 11th, were

scheduled for Korea but were deactivated in Japan. During the course of the Korean War, 100 Rangers were killed in action and 296 were wounded in action.

The Vietnam War

The history of Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP—pronounced "Lurp"), LRP, and Ranger units deployed during the Cold War in Europe and Vietnam is based on three time periods: 1) LRRP from late 1965 to 20 December 1967; 2) LRP from late December 1967 through January 1969; and 3) Ranger from 1 February 1969, to 1972 when the Vietnam War drew down and the U.S. Vietnam Ranger units were deactivated. However, in 1974 their colors and lineage were passed to newly formed Ranger Battalions based in the United States.

The first period above began in Vietnam in November 1966 with the creation of a provisional LRRP Detachment by the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile); followed by the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division; the 1st Infantry Division; and the 25th Infantry Division in June 1966. General William C. Westmoreland, commander of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), ordered the creation of provisional LRRPs in all Infantry brigades and divisions on 8 July 1966. By the winter of 1966 the 4th and 9th Infantry Divisions had operational LRRP units, and in January 1967 the 196th Light Infantry Brigade had the same. The 101st Airborne Division "main body," while still at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, converted its divisional Recondo School into a provisional LRRP unit in the summer of 1967, before the division deployed to Vietnam. This provisional company arrived in Vietnam in late November 1967.



7 April 1968, Company E LRP team at LZ Stud awaiting Khe Sanh patrol

The second period began in late June 1967, when the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earle G. Wheeler, authorized the formation of two long-range patrol companies for I and II Field Forces. Company E (Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol), 20th Infantry (Airborne) was activated on 25 September 1967 and assigned to I Field Force and stationed at Phan Rang. The nucleus of this unit came from the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division LRRP Platoon, along with soldiers from the replacement stream. Company F (Long Range Patrol), 51st Infantry (Airborne) was activated on 25 September 1967 and assigned to II Field Force stationed at Bien Hoa. Its nucleus came from the LRRP platoon of the 173d Airborne Brigade, along with soldiers from the replacement stream. Each of the two Field Force LRP



companies had a strength of 230 men, and was commanded by a major. In an apparent response to division commanders' tactical requirements, and bolstered by the combat effectiveness of the provisional LRRP units, in the winter of 1967 the Army authorized separate company designations for Long Range Patrol (LRP) units in divisions and detachments in separate brigades. The divisional LRP companies were authorized 118 men and the brigade detachments 61 men. The wholesale renaming of existing divisional LRP units occurred on 20 December 1967 in the 1st Cavalry, 1st Infantry, 4th Infantry, 9th Infantry, 23d (Americal), and 25th Infantry Divisions. LRP detachments were created in the 199th Light Infantry Brigade on 10 January 1968, in the 173d Airborne Brigade on 5 February 1968, and in the 3d Brigade 82d Airborne Division and 1st Brigade 5th Mechanized Division on 15 December 1968.

On 1 February 1969, the final period of the existence of these units began when the Department of the Army redesignated the LRP companies and detachments as lettered Ranger companies of the 75th Infantry Regiment under the Combined Arms Regimental System (CARS). The "re-flagged" Ranger companies were: "A" V Corps Rangers, Fort Hood, Texas; "B" VII Corps Rangers, Fort Lewis, Washington; "C" I Field Forces, Vietnam; "D" II Field Forces, Vietnam; "E" 9th Infantry Division, Vietnam; "F" 25th Infantry Division, Vietnam; "G" 23rd Infantry Division, Vietnam; "H" 1st Cavalry Division, Vietnam; "I" 1st Infantry Division, Vietnam; "K" 4th Infantry Division, Vietnam; "L" 101st Airborne Division, Vietnam; "M" 199th Light Infantry Brigade, Vietnam; "N" 173rd Airborne Brigade, Vietnam; "O" 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, Vietnam; "P" 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), Vietnam; "D/151" Indiana National Guard; and "F/425" Michigan National Guard. The third period ended when the Ranger companies were inactivated as their parent units were withdrawn from the war between November 1969 (starting with Company O, 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division), and on 15 August 1972 (ending with Company H, 1st Cavalry Division). On 9 June 1972, H Company (Ranger) lost SGT Elvis Weldon Osborne Jr. and CPL Jeffrey Alan Maurer to enemy action. Three other US soldiers were killed by non-hostile action that day, but SGT Osborne and CPL Maurer were the last US Army infantrymen killed on the ground, as well as the last Rangers killed in the Vietnam War.

The Post Vietnam Era 75th Ranger Regiment

In January 1974, General Creighton Abrams, Army Chief of Staff, directed the formation of a Ranger battalion. General Kenneth C. Leuer was charged with activating, organizing, training and leading the first battalion sized Ranger unit since World War II. The 1st Ranger Battalion was activated and parachuted into Fort Stewart, Georgia, on 1 July 1974. The 2nd Ranger Battalion followed with activation on 1 October 1974. The 3rd Ranger Battalion and Headquarters Company received their colors on 3 October 1984, at Fort Benning, Ga. The 75th Ranger Regiment was designated in February 1986. The modern Ranger battalions were first called upon in 1980. Elements of 1st Ranger Battalion participated in the Iranian hostage rescue attempts.

In October 1983, 1st and 2nd Ranger Battalions spearheaded Operation Urgent Fury, conducting a dangerous low-level parachute assault to seize Point Salines Airfield and rescue American citizens at True Blue Medical Campus in Grenada.

The entire 75th Ranger Regiment participated in Operation Just Cause. Rangers spearheaded the action by conducting two important operations. Simultaneous parachute assaults were conducted onto Torrijos/Tocumen International Airport, Rio Hato Airfield and General Manuel Noriega's beach house, to neutralize Panamanian Defence Forces. The Rangers captured 1,014 Enemy Prisoners of War (EPW), and over 18,000 various weapons.



75th Ranger Regiment Shoulder Patch

Elements of Company B, and 1st Platoon Company A, 1st Ranger Battalion, deployed to Saudi Arabia from 12 February 1991 to 15 April 1991, in support of Operation Desert Storm. They conducted raids and provided a quick reaction force in cooperation with Allied forces. In December 1991, 1/75 and the Regimental headquarters deployed to Kuwait in a show of force known as Operation Iris Gold. The Rangers performed an airborne assault onto Ali Al Salem airfield, near Kuwait City, conducted a 50 km (31 mi) foot march through devastation (including mine fields) left from the ground campaign, conducted a live fire exercises and exfiltrated by foot.

In August 1993, elements of 3rd Ranger Battalion deployed to Somalia to assist United Nations forces attempting to bring order to the chaotic and starving nation. On 3 October 1993, the Rangers conducted a daylight raid with Delta Force. The Battle of Mogadishu ended in chaos as the American forces were trapped for hours inside the city by Somali militias, due to a series of planning and commanding errors, resulting in the death of several American soldiers. Nevertheless, the Rangers held improvised positions for nearly 18 hours, killing between 500-1,000 Somalis before UN-troops with tanks reached them and the American troops could start a coordinated retreat. The mission was accomplished as the high-value targets were captured, but is seen as pyrrhic victory.

On 24 November 2000 the 75th Ranger Regiment deployed Regimental Reconnaissance Company (RRC) Team 2 and a command and control element to Kosovo in support of Task Force Falcon.

Post 9/11 Conflicts

Operation Enduring Freedom - Afghanistan

After the events of 11 September 2001, Rangers were again called into action, in support of the War on Terror. Ranger protection force teams were part of Task Force Sword, the TF was a black SOF unit, whose primary objective was of capturing or killing senior leadership and HVT within both al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

On 19 October 2001, 200 Rangers of 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment spearheaded ground forces by conducting an airborne assault to seize Objective Rhinoduring the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan; Spc. Jonn J. Edmunds and Pfc. Kristofer T. Stonesifer were the first combat casualties in the War on Terror when their MH-60L helicopter crashed at Objective Honda in Pakistan, a temporary staging site used by a company of Rangers from 3rd Battalion.



A squadron of 1st Special Operations Detachment -Delta (1 SFOD-D) operatives, supported by Rangers from TF Sword conducted an operation outside of Kandahar at a location known as Objective Gecko, the target of the mission was missed but the Delta Force operators and Rangers engaged a large Taliban force which developed into a heavy firefight, killing some 30 Taliban fighters.

In November 2001, the 75th Ranger Regiment carried out its second combat parachute drop into Afghanistan: a platoon-sized Ranger security element, including the Regimental Reconnaissance Detachment Team 3 conducted the missions: Objective Wolverine, Raptor and Operation Relentless Strike. During the Battle of Tora Bora in December 2001, a CIA Jawbreaker team (small group of CIA SAD ground branch operators) requested that the 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment be inserted into the mountains to establish blocking positions along potential escape routes out of Tora Bora into Pakistan. They would serve as an 'anvil' whilst Green Berets with the AMF (Afghan Militia Forces) would be the 'Hammer,' with attached Air Force Combat Controllers, the Rangers could direct airstrikes onto enemy concentrations or engage them in ambushes, but this was denied.

In March 2002, 35 Rangers from 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment had been assigned as QRF for all Task Force operations, but only half of the platoon was available for the Battle of Takur Ghar. In the final days of Operation Anaconda, a mixed force of Rangers travelling in Blackhawk helicopters backed up operators from DEVGRU who intercepted a convoy of al-Qaeda fighters travelling in 3 SUVs via 3 MH-47Es, after an ensuing firefight, 16 al-Qaeda fighters were killed and 2 seriously wounded were captured. On August 18, US Army Rangers and other coalition special forces joined the 82nd Airborne Division in Operation Mountain Sweep, carrying out five combat air assault missions on the area around the villages of Dormat and Narizah, south of Khowst and Gardez. The force found an anti-aircraft gun, two 82mm mortars, recoilless rifles, rocket propelled grenade launchers, machine guns, small arms and ammunition for all of them and detained 10 people. Later in 2002, a small JSOC element was established to replace TF 11, it was manned by SEALs and Rangers to carry out a similar role to its predecessor.

In 2003, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was arrested in a joint CIA and ISI operation in Pakistan and had to be flown out to a US Black site prison. Companies from the US Army Rangers and 82nd Airborne Division secured an improvised desert strip in a dry river bed near the Pakistani border, an MC-130 Combat Talon plane landed and lowered its ramp. SEALs from DEVGRU appeared in Desert Patrol Vehicles carrying the detainee arrived and drove up the ramp into the back of the plane, which then taxied and lifted off.

In the summer 2005, during Operation Red Wings, a Ranger patrol found HM2 Marcus Luttrell of SEAL Team 10, 5 days after he went missing. Marcus later wrote the book "Lone Survivor".

In July 2006, in Helmand Province, 2 MH-47Es from 160th SOAR attempted to insert a combined strike element of DEVGRU, Rangers and Afghan commandos so they could attack a target compound. With some troops on the ground, a large insurgent force ambushed them, both helicopters were struck by small arms fire, one MH-47E pilot put his aircraft directly in the line of fire protecting the other MH-47E whose assault team it was carrying was still disembarking. Inevitably the MH-47E was hit by an RPG which caused it to

crash-land, the skill of the pilots saved the operators and the aircrew, no one was seriously wounded in the crash. The Ranger commander and an attached Australian Commando organized an all-round defense while the other MH-47E held back the advancing insurgents until its Miniguns ran out of ammunition, an AC 130 Spectre Gunship joined the battle and kept the down crew and passengers safe until a British Immediate Response Team helicopter successfully recovered them, the AC-130 then destroyed the MH-47E wreck - denying it to the Taliban. Also that year, a six-man RRD (Regimental Reconnaissance Detachment) team from the 75th Ranger Regiment attached to the JSOC Task Force inserted into the Hindu Kush mountain range after intelligence indicated an insurgent chief, Haqqani, would be entering Afghanistan from Pakistan. After establishing an OP at a position almost 4,000m above sea level, the RRD team waited and watched for their target, as insurgents arrived into the area, the Ranger team was spotted and fired upon. In response, the RRD's attached JTAC called in an orbiting B-1B strategic bomber to 'pummeled' the insurgents, an estimated 100 were killed in the airstrikes but Haqqani was not among them.

In 2007, a CIA source reported seeing Bin Laden in Tora Bora, a significant proportion of the ISR assets available in the theatre converged on the area, the initial plan based around a small helicopter assault force soon expanded to include Green Beret ODAs and a Ranger element to provide a cordon for the SEALs. Eventually the operation was launched under the cover of Air Force bombing, but after fruitless searching through the mountains, there was no sign of him.

In June 2009, US Army soldier Bowe Bergdahl was captured by the Taliban, over the 5 years that he was held by the Taliban and Haqqani Network, Rangers and DEVGRU "spun up" operations to rescue him, but each resulted in a "dry hole".



Rangers clearing a room during a night raid in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 26 August 2012.

On 8 October 2010, a troop from DEVGRU and two squads of Rangers conducted a rescue attempt to rescue Linda Norgrove who was being held by the Taliban in compounds in the Korangal Valley, the rescue mission failed when Norgrove was accidentally killed by a grenade thrown by a DEVGRU operator. For actions between November 14–16, 2010, Charlie Company 1/75th, received the Valorous Unit Award for extraordinary heroism, combat achievement and conspicuous gallantry while executing combat operations in support of a named operation.

With ISAFs surge in Afghanistan at its peak in summer 2011, for actions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom between May 15 - August 28, 2011, that included: conducting continuous combat operations, including time sensitive raids and deliberate movement to contact operations while in enemy held terrain out of reach by other



friendly forces, in places like Khost, Paktika and Nangarhar Province, the 1/75th received the Meritorious Unit Citation in particular its Bravo Company received the Valorous Unit Award; 2 Rangers from the battalion were killed during this time. On July 20, Delta Force supported by Rangers and Afghan SOF elements were inserted by the 160th SOAR into the mountainous region of Sar Rowzah District, Paktika Province. They were immediately engaged by insurgents that were heavily armed with DShK HMGs and RPGs, during that night's fighting, approximately 30 insurgents were killed, as the sun rose, dozens of remaining insurgents who had been hiding in bunkers and caves became visible, an armed UAV, AH-6s and UH60-M, Direct Action Penetrators (DAPs) flew in close air support, as did ground attack aircraft. Fighting continued into a second day as bunkers and fighting positions were systematically cleared, some with then-recently issued Mk14 Antistructural Grenades, an estimated 80 to 100 Haqqani and foreign fighters were killed in the two-day battle. On 6 August, a CH-47 carrying 38 American and Afghan servicemen was to be inserted to support a platoon of U.S. Army Rangers who were taking fire while on a mission to capture a senior Taliban leader in the Tangi Valley, Wardak province, however it was shot down by the Taliban, killing 38 US and Afghan servicemen it is considered the worst loss of American lives in a single incident in the Afghanistan campaign.

Operation Iraqi Freedom - Iraq

During the 2003 invasion of Iraq, all 3 Ranger Battalions were assigned to a new Task Force. It was based on the concept of a prior successful Task Force, and its task was to seize key locations, long distance Special Reconnaissance and capturing HVTs. On March 24, 2003, 3rd Battalion 75th Ranger Regiment conducted a combat drop onto H-1 Air Base, securing the site as a staging area for operations in western Iraq. A company of Rangers and Royal Marines from 45 Commando flew into Iraq from Jordan to secure H-2 and H-3 airbases after they were captured by US, British and Australian SOF. On March 26, B Company, 2/75th supported DEVGU operators in the Objective Beaver raid on suspected chemical and biological weapons site north of Haditha, they engaged numerous gunmen but there was no chemical or biological weapons at the site. On April 1, 2003, 290 Rangers from 1/75th and 2/75th took part in the rescue of PFC Jessica Lynch; also that day Delta Force and 3/75th captured the Haditha Dam and held it for a further 5 days.

Following the invasion, the main 75th Ranger element deployed to Iraq carried out operations in northern Iraq and were based out of Mosul or Tikrit, supported by a small element of Delta Force operators. The DEVGRU squadron were supported by a reinforced Ranger platoon as was the Delta Force squadron, as part of the overall effort by JSOC in Iraq. On June 18, 2003, 1 SFOD-D operators and US Army Rangers flew from Mosul via helicopter to chase a vehicle convoy of Ba'ath party Iraqis who were escaping over the border into Syria; JSOC suspected that Saddam Hussein was part of the convoy, the convoy was destroyed by an AC-130 Spectre, then the operators conducted a heliborne assault into a nearby compound that proved to be a Ba'athist safe house for ferrying former regime elements across the border. The operators came under fire from Syrian border guards, leading to a firefight that left several Syrians dead and 17 captured. Ultimately, Hussein was not in the convoy, but several of his cousins were.

On July 23, 2005, in Iraq, Rangers acted as a back-up

force for the British Special Boat Service during Operation Marlborough.

On January 1, 2006, Rangers raided a remote farmhouse outside Baghdad (one of a large number of raids planned that night), the operation almost didn't launch because mechanical problems plagued one of its helicopters. The Rangers reached the farmhouse and breached it, they captured several gunmen without a fight and rescued British freelance journalist Phillip Sands, who had been kidnapped a week earlier. In Ramadi, the Rangers were often forced to launch daylight raids on insurgents despite the risks, as they were finding that their targets were moving out of the city at night to avoid their raids.

On April 18, 2010, ISOF troops, supported by US troops, carried out a night-time raid on a terrorist safe house near Tikrit in Iraq, the ISOF killed Abu Ayyub al-Masri and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, the two leaders of ISI; 16 others were also arrested. A US UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter supporting the mission crashed killing a Ranger NCO from 3/75th and wounding the aircrew.

War In North West Pakistan

In March 2006, DEVGRU operators and a Ranger element carried out an operation allegedly under the codename: Operation Vigilant Harvest. Their target was an al-Qaeda training camp in North Waziristan in Pakistan, they were flown across the Afghan-Pakistan border. The force killed as many as 30 terrorists, including the Chechen camp commandant Imam Asad. The operation has been falsely credited to the Pakistani Special Service Group.

On May 1, 2011, a Ranger element was assigned to support Operation Neptune Spear, the Ranger element and additional SEALs in MH-47E Chinooks would be brought forward as QRF if needed; the Ranger element would also protect the FARP north of Abbottabad. Following the successful completion of the operation, a Ranger team transported the body of Osama Bin Laden to the aircraft carrier USS *Carl Vinson* for burial at sea.

Operation Freedom's Sentinel

In November 2015, the U.S. military sent a company of Rangers to south eastern Afghanistan, as part of the Post ISAF phase of the war in Afghanistan, to help Afghan counter-terrorism forces destroy an al-Qaeda training camp in a "fierce fight" that lasted for several days.

It was reported that on the evening of April 26, 2017, 50 Rangers from 3/75th joined 40 Afghan commandos to conduct a joint US-Afghan operation/raid that was targeting the headquarters of Abdul Hasib, the Emir of ISIS-K, in a village in Achin District, Nangarhar Province. The force was flown into Mohmand Valley and within minutes were engaged in a heavy, close-quarter firefight, AC-130 gunships, Apache helicopters, F-16 fighters and drones were called in to support the force firefight with ISIL-KP militants. The firefight lasted for 3 hours, resulting in 2 Rangers from C and D Companies died of injuries (possibly caused by friendly fire) after being medevaced and a third was also wounded, 35 (including Abdul Hasib and an unspecified number of ISIL-KP leaders) ISIL-KP militants were also killed.

Operation Inherent Resolve

In March 2017, as part of Operation Inherent Resolve, CNN reported that approximately 100 US Army Rangers in Strykers and armored Humvees, deployed in and around Manbij, Syria, to deter hostilities towards the deployment of



the 11th MEU, whose purpose was to support (particularly providing artillery support) US-backed forces in the battle to liberate Raqqa from ISIL, rather than the typical mission of training, advising and assisting local forces. US officials took the unusual step of publicly talking about the Ranger deployment and where they are located to protect against them inadvertently coming under fire from forces fighting in the region or Turkish, Russian or Syrian forces.

Global War On Terrorism (GWOT),

The Regimental Special Troops Battalion (RSTB) was activated on 17 July 2006. The RSTB conducts sustainment, intelligence, reconnaissance and maintenance missions which were previously accomplished by small detachments assigned to the Regimental Headquarters and then attached within each of the three Ranger battalions. The activation of the RSTB is part of the shift of the Ranger force's focus from short term "contingency missions" towards continuous combat operations without loss in lethality or flexibility.

In October 2007, a D Company was added to all 3 battalions of the 75th Ranger Regiment.

As of 2012, the 75th Ranger Regiment is conducting sustained combat operations in multiple countries, deploying from multiple locations in the United States — an unprecedented task for the Regiment. Rangers continue conducting combat operations with almost every deployed special operation force, conventional and coalition force in support of both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Ranger Regiment executes a wide range of diverse operations that include airborne and air assaults into Afghanistan and Iraq, mounted infiltrations behind enemy lines, complex urban raids on high-value targets (HVTs), and rescue operations. Ranger battalion operational tempo while deployed is high. The 1st Ranger Battalion conducted more than 900 missions in Afghanistan in one deployment: the battalion successfully captured nearly 1,700 enemy combatants (386 high-value targets) and killed more than 400. While the Ranger Regiment has traditionally been considered an elite light infantry force, operations. By mid-2015 each Ranger battalion had completed its 20th deployment in support of both Afghanistan and Iraq operations.

Army Times reported that in December 2016, the first female officer completed RASP, making the 75th Ranger Regiment the first special operations unit to have a female soldier graduate its selection course. Over the past decade have demonstrated the Rangers' capabilities of conducting a full range of special operations missions.

Selection & Training To Become A Ranger

Every volunteer for the Regiment, from every new recruit to every officer and any senior leader selected to command in the Regiment, will go through the Ranger Assessment and Selection Program (RASP) to assess their ability and provide the basic skills required to be an effective member of the 75th Ranger Regiment.

For new soldiers, RASP is conducted after applicants successfully complete their basic Military Occupational Specialty course and graduate from the Army's Parachutists Course (Airborne School). For soldiers, both enlisted and officer, who have successfully completed their first tour of duty, and meet the recruiting qualifications, a RASP date will be scheduled upon application and conditional acceptance to the 75th Ranger Regiment.

RASP is broken down into two levels of training: RASP 1

for junior non-commissioned officers and enlisted soldiers (pay grades E-1 through E-5) and RASP 2 for senior non-commissioned officers, officers and warrant officers. Candidates train on physical fitness, marksmanship, small unit tactics, medical proficiency and mobility. Training is fast-paced and intense, ensuring Ranger candidates are prepared to employ their skills in both continued training and worldwide operations upon reaching their assigned Ranger unit. Throughout the course all candidates will be screened to ensure that only the best soldiers are chosen for service in the Ranger Regiment. Regardless of the course, all candidates must meet the course requirements in order to serve in the Ranger Regiment. Upon successful completion of RASP, candidates will don the tan beret and 75th Ranger Regiment Scroll.

Ranger Assessment & Selection Program (RASP) 1

RASP 1 is an 8-week selection course for junior non-commissioned officers and enlisted soldiers (pay grades E-1 through E-5) that is broken down into two phases.

Ranger candidates will learn the basics of what it takes to become a member of an elite fighting force by a gruelling test of physical and mental endurance, road marches with rucksacks, land navigation, leadership skills, and weapons training—performed under continuous food and sleep deprivation.

Graduates will achieve the advanced skills all Rangers are required to know to start their career with the 75th Ranger Regiment. Phase 1 focuses more on the critical events and skill level 1 tasks and Phase 2 focuses on training in marksmanship, breaching, mobility, and physical fitness.

RASP 2

RASP 2 is a 21-day selection course for senior non-commissioned officers, officers, and warrant officers. Candidates are tested on their physical and mental capabilities while learning the special tactics, techniques and procedures of the Regiment, as well as learning the expectations of leading and developing young Rangers.

Continued Training

To maintain readiness, Rangers train constantly. Rangers focus on the Big 5: marksmanship, physical training, medical training, small unit tactics and mobility.

Throughout their time in the Ranger Regiment, Rangers may attend many types of special schools and training. Depending on occupation and job requirements, members of the 75th Ranger Regiment enjoy unparalleled access to countless military schools, including Jumpmaster, Sniper, Pathfinder, Military Freefall, Scuba, Survival-Evasion-Resistance-Escape (SERE), and others. Before serving in a leadership role within the Regiment, Rangers are also expected to attend and graduate Ranger School. Additionally, members of the regiment at all levels are afforded opportunities for joint training and non-traditional military and civilian schooling.

Rangers are trained in "do-it-yourself" emergency medicine. Based on the premise that 90% of deaths from wounds are suffered before reaching medical facilities and that there are not enough medics and doctors to go around, the Regiment began to train Rangers to give themselves immediate, preliminary treatment. A 2011 study found a 3 percent death rate from potentially survivable causes in the 75th Regiment between October 2001 and April 2010. That compares with a 24 percent rate in a previously reported set



of U.S. military deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan, which included troops who didn't have the Ranger-style training.

Released For Standards (RFS)/Released For Medical (RFM)

As a U.S. Army Special Operations Command unit, the Rangers maintain more stringent standards for their personnel. If at any point a Ranger is deemed to be failing to meet these standards, he may be relieved and removed from the Regiment. This is commonly referred to as being RFSed, short for "Released For Standards". A Ranger can be RFS'd for virtually any reason, ranging from lack of motivation to disciplinary problems. Similarly, a Ranger physically incapable of performing his mission through prolonged illness or injury can also be removed from the Regiment through a process referred to as RFM or "Relieved For Medical reasons".

Battle Honours, Creed, Moto

The 75th Ranger Regiment has been credited with numerous campaigns from World War II onwards. In World War II, they participated in 16 major campaigns, spearheading the campaigns in Morocco, Sicily, Naples-Foggia, Anzio and Leyte. During the Vietnam War, they received campaign participation streamers for every campaign in the war. The Regiment received streamers with arrowheads (denoting conflicts they spearheaded) for Grenada and Panama. To date, the Rangers have earned six Presidential Unit Citations, nine Valorous Unit Awards, and four Meritorious Unit Commendation, the most recent of which were earned in Vietnam and Haditha, Iraq, respectively.

Sua Sponte, Latin for *Of their own accord* is the 75th Ranger Regiment's Regimental motto. Contemporary rangers are triple-volunteers: for the U.S. Army, for Airborne School, and for service in the 75th Ranger Regiment.

The motto "Rangers lead the way!" dates from 6 June 1944, during the Normandy Landings on Dog White sector of Omaha Beach. Then Brigadier General Norman Cota (assistant CO of the 29th ID) calmly walked towards Maj. Max Schneider (CO of the 5th Ranger Battalion) while under heavy machine gun fire and asked "What outfit is this?" Someone yelled "5th Rangers!" To this, Cota replied "Well then Goddammit, Rangers! Lead the way!"

The Term "Ranger"

Organizations define the term "Ranger" in different ways. For example, the annual "United States Army Best Ranger Competition," hosted by the Ranger Training Brigade, can be won by pairs of participants from the 75th Ranger Regiment, or by ranger-qualified entrants from other units in the U.S. military. For an individual to be inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Association's "Ranger Hall of Fame," he "must have served in a Ranger unit in combat or be a successful graduate of the U.S. Army Ranger School." The Ranger Association further clarifies the type of unit: "A Ranger unit is defined as those Army units recognized in Ranger lineage or history." Acceptance into the U.S. Army Ranger Association is limited to "Rangers that have earned the U.S. Army Ranger tab, WWII Rangers, Korean War Rangers, Vietnam War Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol members and Rangers, and all Rangers that participated in Operations Urgent Fury, Just Cause, Desert Storm, Restore Hope, Enduring Freedom, as well as those who have served honorably for at least one year in a recognized Ranger unit."

Ranger Beret Change

In June 2001, Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki

gave the order to issue black berets to regular soldiers. At the time, black berets were being worn exclusively by the Ranger Regiment. This created discontent within the 75th Ranger Regiment and even led to retired Rangers going on nationwide road marches to Washington, D.C. to protest against the decision. Because there was not a Presidential authorization to the regiment for exclusive wear of the black beret, they switched to wearing a tan beret to preserve a unique appearance, tan being reflective of the buckskin worn by the men of Robert Rogers' Rangers during the French and Indian War. A memorandum for the purpose of changing the Ranger beret from black to tan was sent and approved in March 2002. Press releases were issued and articles were published all over the nation about this change in headgear after it was formally announced by the Regimental Commander, Colonel P. K. Keen. In a private ceremony, past and present Rangers donned the tan beret on 26 July 2002. The Army G-1 released a memorandum in October 2017 stating the following: WEAR OF THE TAN BERET OUTSIDE OF RANGER REGIMENT. The memo from the Army G-1 expands authorization for wear of the Tan Beret in the following assignments: Headquarters elements of Combatant Commands, The Joint Staff, Department of the Army Headquarters, U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, U.S. Special Operations Command Joint Task Force, Theater Special Operations Command, and Joint Special Operations Command. The Tan Beret is authorized for Ranger-qualified Soldiers in the above listed assignments if they previously served in the 75th Ranger Regiment and departed on honorable terms. This change will be reflected in the next update of DA Pam 670-1.



COL Richard Clarke wearing the Regiment's tan beret.

Source: Wikipedia

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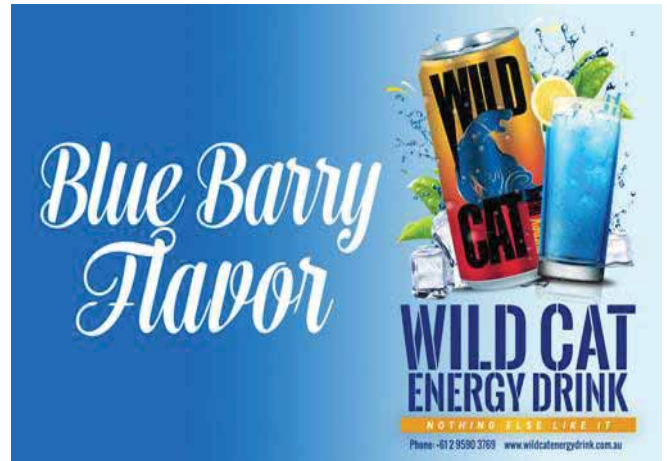
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THE LAST SIGNALLER COASTWATCHER

PART TWO

How Survivors of the 1st Independent Company became 4th Dimension Coast Watchers

By SGT James (Jim) Burrowes, OAM. – M Special Unit

Former AIF Sergeant James Burrowes (now age 96) served four years, including 2½ years as a signaller Coast Watcher in 'M' Special Unit of the Allied Intelligence Bureau and nine months with the US 7th Fleet Amphibious Landing Force. He spent ten months in enemy-occupied territory over-looking Rabaul and is believed to be the last signaller Coast Watcher survivor in Australia with the research to tell the story. He is a member of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia, the Box Hill RSL Sub-branch, and a life member of the Australian Commando Association Victoria.

In my report on the role of Native Troops I proclaimed that 'The three basic components of a Coast-watchers' party were the expatriate leader, the radio operator and the natives, so without our indigenous allies, there would have been NO Coastwatchers!' However, following further research, I now wish to pay homage to a fourth component of the coastwatching enterprise: the AIF's 273 1st Independent Company soldiers who had endured the arduous training at Tidal River and who accompanied the 1,454 soldiers of Lark Force on the troopships *Neptuna* and *Zealandia* to Rabaul and New Ireland in mid-1941. They were then deployed as far north as Manus Island and as far south as Guadalcanal.

While Lark Force was intended to play a defensive role against any invading force, the men of the 1st Independent Company had specifically been trained to be offensive, including while in enemy-occupied territory.

As it turned out, the invading forces of the Japanese proved to be disastrous for Australia, with their forces occupying the islands of Timor, Ambon, New Britain (Rabaul) and Bougainville.

This resulted in the capture of 132 1st Independent Company escapees from New Ireland and their subsequent drowning on the ill-fated POW ship *Montevideo Maru* sunk enroute to the coal mines of Hainan Island. However, the remaining 136 men (excluding the five officers who had been transhipped to Tokyo and returned home safely at war's end) found themselves as de facto Coastwatchers, spread into separate parties throughout the various islands. Accordingly, they fulfilled the lacking element of basic military experience, particularly in jungle warfare, which Eric Feldt had needed as Commander of the Coast-watchers.

Consequently, following extensive research, including that of the Nominal Rolls of WWII, it is recorded that many of the men's military unit on discharge was 'M' Special Unit which proved that they had technically been transferred to 'M' Special Unit, thus becoming Coastwatchers. Moreover, as further evidence, they are listed as such in the Appendix and Index of Eric Feldt's book *The Coast Watchers*. However, despite the fact that in over 33% of the pages in Feldt's book the AIF and 1st Independent Company rate a mention, there is not one word to record their status as Coastwatchers! I believe this disclosure is unique in the sense that it has not been released previously.

In any case, their involvements in coastwatching became legendary. In the performance of their duties as Coastwatchers, of the surviving 136, 12 were killed in action (KIA) and 40 were awarded various medals of honour by the Australian and US Governments.

Of direct relevance, the leader of Section 3 of the A.I.F. Independents, Captain John Mackie with a segment of his 25 men, became the military force assigned to support and protect the activities of Read and Mason on Bougainville. In fact, it was following a message from Mackie that there were enemy warships anchored in Queen Carola Harbour that Read subsequently signalled the departure of these warships to the Allied Fleet. This enabled the Allied Fleet to meet and defeat the Japanese invasion force in the Battle of the Coral Sea as explained in 'How the Coastwatchers turned the tide of the Pacific War'.

By the end of the war, the decorations won by members of No. 3 Section were three US Silver Stars (including John Mackie), one British Empire Medal, three Military Medals, three Mentions in Despatches (as reported by Private A.S. 'Sandy' McNab of that No. 3 Section).

As elsewhere recorded, the coastwatching contribution to the war was recognized by US Admiral William F. (Bull) Halsey. But other acknowledgments included these:

Admiral Turner, US Navy: *Large share credit of our success against enemy due to splendid men in coast watching service.*

General Patch, US Army: *Your magnificent and courageous work has contributed to success of operations on north Guadalcanal.*

As an aside, the Double Diamond badge of the Australian Commando Association (R) includes the letters 'M' and 'Z' emblazoned on the green background colour of the 1st Independent Company. The letter 'M' represents M Special Unit (the Coastwatchers), the Intelligence arm of the Allied Intelligence Bureau, and the letter 'Z' represents Z Special Unit, the sabotage arm of the AIB.

We acknowledge and salute you!



The Commando Association
Badge ~ 1946 - 2012

Jim Burrowes



AFRICA'S COMMANDOS

1st Battalion, The Rhodesian Light Infantry

1st February 1961 – 31st October 1980

Background

1st Battalion, Rhodesian Light Infantry (1RLI), commonly The Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI), was a regiment formed in 1961 at Brady Barracks (Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia) as a light infantry unit within the army of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Barely a year after its creation, it was relocated to Cranborne Barracks (Salisbury) where its headquarters remained for the rest of its existence. The Regiment became part of the Southern Rhodesian Army when the Federation dissolved at the start of 1964 and later that year reformed into a commando battalion — Rhodesia's equivalent of our 1st and 2nd Commando Regiments.

After Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence on 11 November 1965, the RLI became one of the country's main counter-insurgency units during the Rhodesian Bush War, which pitted the government security forces against the rival guerrilla campaigns of Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA).

An all-white regiment, the RLI was made up wholly of professional soldiers until 1973, when capable conscripted national servicemen were first introduced. Foreign volunteers from across the world, many veterans of foreign conflicts, also joined and became a key part of the Regiment. The RLI was nicknamed "The Saints" or "The Incredibles", and regarded, through astounding success with both internal Fire Force Operations in Rhodesia and external pre-emptive strikes against guerrillas based in Mozambique and Zambia, as one of the world's foremost exponents of counter-insurgency warfare.

So prominent were the airborne aspects of typical RLI operations that the battalion became a parachute regiment in 1976. The RLI served under the short-lived government of Zimbabwe Rhodesia in 1979, and the interim British government that followed. After serving under the new government of Zimbabwe for a brief period, the unit was disbanded in October 1980.

The RLI's tactics and training contributed to repeated successes in its counter-insurgency operations. "The advantage this gave them..." says United States Army Lieutenant-Colonel Dave Grossman, "...added up to nothing less than total tactical superiority." Alexandre Binda writes that the RLI "...earned for itself an enviable reputation as one of the world's foremost anti-terrorist forces," while Major Charles D. Melson, chief historian of the United States Marine Corps, calls it "The Killing Machine".



The RLI Cap Badge

The RLI Structure Base Group

Battalion Headquarters (BHQ) was called Base Group, after Support Group branched out from the original Headquarters Company.

Base Group imparted logistical, operational and tactical support at the Front, through specialised sub-units, and organised administrative support (regimental policing, training, store keeping, record keeping and accounting, truck-

ing, catering, nursing, etc.) at the Rear. A sizable portion of the administrative support was performed by other military services stationed at Cranborne Barracks for that purpose (mainly from 2 Brigade).

Commandos

The regiment was assembled into a Headquarters and four company-sized units called Commandos: One, Two, Three, Four and Support (each Commando with \pm 100 men). As a premise, a Commando could have five troops, of which only four troops were normally activated. However, with the arrival of Intake 150 (in May 1976) the Commandos were up to full strength for the first and only time. Some of the Commandos mustered five troops until the end of 1976; with the university students demobbing at the end of 1976, the Commandos reverted to four troops (in 2 Commando's case 9 Troop was deactivated). The troops in each Commando relayed through Rest & Relaxation (R&R) consistently one at a time; therefore, the average fighting strength of a commando in bush mode was just over 70 men. Depending on the deployment and/or purpose, troops were divided into a small headquarters and either two 'patrols' or three "sections." Support Commando had a history dissimilar to all the other units and, for an era prior to 1976, was called Support Group.

Signals & Tracking Troop

Signals Troop and Tracking Troop were specialised sub-units that interpolated into Support Group or Base Group and worked with all the Commandos. Signals Troop focused on front line communications in support of Special Operations and airborne forces, but also provided other essential services (exchange of classified information, etc.) for the Battalion. A high percentage of Signals Troop had served in one or more Commandos before being selected and trained (in-house) as communicators. During the early planning stages for proposed changes to Support Group, it was accepted that Base Group was more suitable as the



cynosure for all signals. The troop headquarters section was relocated to the RLI Joint Operations Command (JOC), and a team of specialist operators — properly cross-trained as proficient riflemen for combat duties — was attached to and deployed with each of the Commandos. So Signals Troop was scattered but still functioned as the vital organ that connected all the detachments in the combined operations network.

Tracking Troop was also sedulous and operated out of Base Group in the same manner as Signals Troop; a number of specialist trackers would be attached to a Commando as/when required to be dropped onto spoor for follow-up work. The new Selous Scouts Regiment had requested some specialist trackers for a combative tracking unit, so Tracking Troop was disbanded and a distinct home found for everyone concerned — primarily within the Selous Scouts unit and RLI, but also the SAS (Rhodesian Special Air Service). The majority were transmigrated to Support Group where they eventually became known as Reconnaissance Troop after the change to a Commando was actualised.

Support Group Commando

As mentioned, Support Commando had been called Support Group and came from the original Headquarters Company; consequently, they had some additional skills and resources.

Support Commando had a Headquarters and four cross-trained Troops: Mortar, Assault Pioneer, Anti-Tank and Reconnaissance..... so, every commando was a similar size (4 troops). The troops were not renamed because they maintained their capacity to provide the battalion with supporting fire and specialised resources in both conventional warfare and counter insurgency operations.

During most counter-insurgency operations Support Commando fulfilled the same role as all the other commandos (viz. Fireforce), which was enough to justify the change from being called Support Group.

Mortar Troop was equipped with 81mm mortars and consisted of a headquarters section and three purposeful sections (two mortars per section).

Assault Pioneer Troop provided the Battalion with combat engineering capabilities through a headquarters section and three purposeful sections.

Anti-Tank Troop was equipped with six 106mm recoilless rifles, and also consisted of a headquarters section and three purposeful sections (two anti-tank weapons per section, each mounted on a modified Rodef 2.5).

Reconnaissance Troop the remnants of Tracking Troop, with additional resources for reconnoitring, were the basis for the fourth troop:

The RLI was a fledgling unit when operations started, and it needed to grow and mature; albeit being very prominent in the permanent forces, its size did not warrant a full Colonel. Sometimes the Officer Commanding a Commando/Group was a Captain. The

ranks above Colour Sergeant were addressed as "Sir" by the subordinate ranks. The Officers would refer to a CSM as "Sergeant Major" and the RSM as "R-S-M". All ranks tended to be called "troopies" by the Rhodesian media.

Operations

The RLI was at the forefront of the Rhodesian Bush War, an arduous conflict between the internationally unrecognised government, made up mostly of the country's minority whites, and communist guerrillas attempting to overthrow it and introduce majority rule. The Bush War had started in earnest on 21 December 1972, when Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) insurgents attacked Altena and Whistlefield Farms near the north-eastern town of Centenary, and lasted until the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979. The country became known as Zimbabwe the following year.



A map showing operational areas of the Rhodesian Security Forces during the Bush War.

The Fireforce

The RLI's characteristic deployment was the Fireforce rapid response operation, first created at Mount Darwin and then tested at Centenary in June 1974. This was an operational assault or reaction composed of a first wave of 32 soldiers (as a rule) carried to the scene by three helicopters and one DC-3 Dakota, called "Dak", with a command/gun helicopter and a light attack aircraft in support.

The latter was a Cessna Skymaster, armed with two roof mounted .303 Browning machine-guns and normally two 37 mm SNEB rocket pods and/or two small napalm bombs called Frantans, and/or two mini-Golf bombs which were manufactured in Rhodesia.

The RLI became extremely adept at the execution of this very technical type of military operation.

A Commando would be based at an airfield with usually four helicopters, one DC-3 Dakota and the Cessna (known as the "Lynx"). One of these helicopters



was equipped with a MG 151/20 20mm cannon and seating arrangement for the mastermind of the engagement, usually the officer commanding of the Commando. This helicopter was called the K-car with a crew of three consisting of the pilot, a technician (gunner), and the Fireforce commander. The other helicopters used in each call-out, known as G-cars, were typically Alouette Mk IIIs, though in 1979 a few Bell UH-1s were used. The G-cars were armed with fully automatic weapons (the original FN MAG was replaced by twin Browning .303 machine-guns) and each carried one Stop - the stick leader, a machine-gunner and two riflemen along with the pilot and his technician, who also operated the helicopter's machine-gun(s). The carrying capacity of the G-car dictated the combat organisation of the Commando: Stop-1 was assigned to the first G-car, Stop-2 to the second, and Stop-3 to the third. Stop-4 to Stop-8 were paratroopers in the Dakota.

In more detail, each Stop of four soldiers (called a "Stick") had: one leader with a FN FAL (SLR) and 100 rounds (also a VHF radio to communicate); one machine-gunner with a FN MAG and 400 rounds; and two riflemen, each with a FN FAL and 100 rounds (plus hand-grenades, rifle-grenades and medical supplies). All the rounds were 7.62 × 51 mm NATO. From early 1979 onward, a radio was also issued to one of the riflemen. The Dakota carried five stops of paratroopers, two on the port side and three on the starboard side. Apart from the parachutes, paratroopers equipment was tantamount to heliborne-troopers equipment; but the paratroopers had other problems akin to jumping. Every machine-gunner had to jump with his weapon strapped to his side.

Together the eight stops, 32 men in total, were described as the "First Wave". Each Fireforce took charge of huge swathes of the country (many thousands of square miles). Inherently there were only three permanent Fireforce bases. Any sighting of the enemy was reported and a siren sounded at the most convenient base. The First Wave of heliborne-troopers, already in a state of alacrity, would grab their weapon and webbing (and everything else that they needed) while rushing to the helicopters. At the same time, the paratroopers would run to a designated place where their equipment was kept ready, and dispatchers (usually assisted by off-duty comrades) would help them kit out. Normally the Second Wave, called the Landtail, rushed to trucks, although if "jousting" or the "scene" was nearby they would wait at the airfield to be picked up by the helicopters after the First Wave had been deployed. Soldiers alternated as Heliborne troopers, Paratroopers, Landtail, and Off-duty throughout the Bush Trip.

The Landtail was often an important factor as they helped with refueling the helicopters and recovering the deceased enemy (and their weapons), the parachutes and other equipment. Sometimes a smaller Third Wave had to prepare if numbers permitted; but

quite often, only the First Wave was engaged in shooting. In general, most soldiers preferred to be in the Heliborne First Wave and, although the number of operational parachute jumps was truly remarkable, the majority of soldiers were carried into action by helicopter.

The most important factors, apart from the reaction of the enemy and the terrain, in a Fireforce operation were the reliability of intelligence and the skill of the operations commander. The majority of successful engagements were enabled by the skills of the Selous Scouts (many of whom were former enemy); they had the capacity to insert observation posts into the bush without being noticed by the inhabitants.

The difficulty of commanding the scene was extreme and good Fireforce commanders were highly prized by the men. Any advance warning for the enemy of the approaching helicopters, and the anticipated reactions caused by surprise and confusion, were decisive factors in the coming engagement. Wind direction/speed, the presence of a tree covered ridge-line, or a multitude of other factors could make the difference between life or death. If the enemy was trapped in adverse terrain, such as a simple village surrounded by open ground, normally no-one escaped unless it was near nightfall.

Tactics

The following paragraphs are for the standard Fireforce air assault of one K-car, three G-cars, a Dakota and the Lynx. Often there was no Dakota involved, or more G-cars. When in 1979 Bell UH-1s were introduced, a Commando might go into action with two or three of these, each carrying two (sometimes three) stops. There were many times when no Lynx was used. The K-car was always the first to arrive at the scene. The K-car Commander, using the radio callsign One-Nine, Two-Nine, Three-Nine, or Four-Nine, depending on the Commando, had to first attempt to confirm the precise area where the enemy had been spotted by the Observation Post. Usually the terrain was extremely broken and covered in vegetation, which made this task particularly difficult. The K-car Commander then had to devise a plan of attack including initial placement of the first stops and where and in what direction to make the main sweep. The first stops to arrive were ferried in by the G-cars, which followed the K-car in a column (sometimes a long way behind, for they were a little slower than the K-car).

Sometimes the stops were dropped immediately, but on many occasions the G-cars would circle the scene several times before the operational commander made his final decisions. Very often the K-car occupants would spot the enemy, and then the Helicopter Gunner/Technician would attack them with his 20 mm cannon, using short bursts of fire. The accuracy of this sort of fire was extraordinary, due to the helicopter flying in tight counter-clockwise circles just a few hundred feet above the ground. The 20 mm cannon



poked out of the port side, thus there was no "lead in", and the exploding high velocity shells would impact right next to and often on their intended targets. Very few persons were ever found alive after being hit by fire from the 20 mm cannon.

Typically the first stops were positioned in areas where the enemy was thought likely to pass through, often a riverbed or dry donga, where there was more vegetation impeding enemy movement. If there was a hill or ridge that gave outstanding observation, then stops might be placed there. Depending on the circumstances, the heliborne stops could form the main sweep line immediately upon insertion instead of waiting for the paratroop elements of the force. Whilst the K-car was looking for or engaging the enemy, the operations commander also had to designate a drop zone to drop the Para-stops and direct any strikes by the Lynx. The Drop Zone position was dictated by the enemy's position and the terrain. In the event that there was no suitable drop zone nearby, Para-stops were dropped as close as possible to the combat zone and redeployed by the G-cars. Paradrop altitudes normally varied between 400 feet (120 m) to 600 feet. Usually the Para-stops dropped as close as possible, which resulted on occasions in the Paratroopers taking fire while in the air, usually to little effect. There was also a great variation on the dropping patterns of these stops, as sometimes they were all dropped at once, sometimes individually, or any combination thereof. While all this was taking place, one of the operations commander's main concerns was where the main sweep of the operation would occur. In a perfect scenario, the Para-stops would form the main sweep, and the G-car stops would carry out blocking actions. In reality there was such situational variation in combat operations that there was little functional difference between paratroopers or heliborne-troopers. However, heliborne-stops generally had more contacts and therefore saw the most action.



Stops being briefed before emplaning into a DC-3 Dakota

The Sweep

Each stop made a sweep every time it moved to a new location with all four soldiers moving in a sweepline formation, spaced apart according to the terrain. The distance between the soldiers would vary on flat open land from as great as twenty five metres to

just a few meters apart in heavy vegetation. In heavy vegetation it was common for soldiers to lose sight of their comrades, leaving them alone to push through the dense bush. It was more effective to be spaced as far apart as possible. Whether in the main sweep or in an individual stop's sweep, the same tactics would be applied. The sweepline would proceed forward with each soldier scanning line of sight ahead through the bush and undergrowth. The speed of this movement varied depending on the terrain and density of the bush, but when the troops sensed enemy ahead the sweep slowed markedly, edging forward inch by inch, rifles at ready and pointed ahead with the safety catches off. MAG gunners would bear the gun at the hip, held by a sling from their shoulders.

Usually encounters with the enemy ended quickly: while a typical Fireforce operation could last hours, each fire fight could last only seconds. In the great majority of cases, the enemy were killed outright by swift shooting. Prisoners were taken on occasion and although the Commandos were requested to take prisoners wherever possible, in a close-quarter fire fight and in thick bush, it was often difficult to determine an enemy's intentions. Prisoners were usually extremely valuable as they might reveal important intelligence to Special Branch or Selous Scouts, and captured guerrillas frequently turned to work for the Rhodesian Security Forces, sometimes, from 1978, as Security Force Auxiliaries.

The Stop Positions

The other main experience was for the stops to sweep to positions thought most likely to intercept a fleeing enemy, and to wait there (possibly for several hours) for contact. On many occasions nothing happened but each stop always anticipated and prepared for contact. Usually the enemy came down a stream bed or passed nearby; if there was a clear view then it was easy, once again just a few seconds shooting. Sometimes the process was repeated in the same locality with fire being opened a bit sooner and, if the enemy were noticed behind, the stop immediately pursued them. Pursuit of the enemy often became difficult due to terrain, vegetation, climate or various other spoilers.

Air Power

A Fireforce operation without air power would be impossible to accomplish. The enemy lacked air power and effective anti-aircraft weaponry, so contacts were generally effective as long as the infantry performed correctly. The sound of the circling helicopters during the operation was intense enough to drown the sound of the infantry sweeps, so that on occasion they surprised the hiding defenders, effectively ambushing them. The terrain varied wildly from villages surrounded by open fields to dense vegetation covering rock outcrops on mountain slopes. There was generally plenty of cover.



Where the enemy fled at the sound of the "First Wave", and stops were correctly placed by the operational commander, the operations were efficiently carried out. The difficult thing was to walk up to the enemy hiding in a house or cave or behind a boulder and kill or capture him. Many a troopie clawing through obstacles found himself very suddenly right by another armed man he was supposed to kill or capture. Though the event was shocking (and often results in one or more persons being killed), it is far more efficient than firing or dropping ordnance from air and overall reduces civilian casualties. The cooperation of the Rhodesian Air Force with Army operations was exceptional. Even when patrolling, any unit of the Rhodesian Army could expect prompt G-car response in a crisis.

Patrols & Other Operations

In addition to Fireforce, the four Commandos were often used as special forces in patrolling actions, mostly inside Rhodesia, but sometimes inside Zambia and Mozambique. During these operations troops were required to carry well over 100 lb (45 kg) of equipment for five to ten days on patrol. Upon their return to base for re-supply, they were often required to turn around and patrol again in short order. Attacks were also carried out on enemy camps within Zambia (in the case of ZIPRA) and Mozambique (against ZANLA); these attacks usually involved two or more Commandos. The Rhodesian Special Air Service, used almost exclusively for external operations, often accompanied the Rhodesian Light Infantry on these operations, as did the Selous Scouts.

Most of the Rhodesian Light Infantry's patrol operations took place in Rhodesia, though some patrols occurred in Zambia and Mozambique. Patrolling bush trips were unpopular with the troops due to the arduous nature of the duty and the comparative lack of action to Fireforce operations. A Commando could be more exhausted from a patrolling bush trip than the most intense Fireforce period, even if the unit saw more combat in the latter. However, the nature of patrolling work greatly expanded the minds of the troops. Patrols varied from travelling by day and setting up ambushes at night, to observation post work, where a position was occupied to observe the locality. Extreme precautions were made to be clandestine on these observation posts, though it was suspected that the locals were often aware of the Observation Post's presence. Regardless the type of patrol, a night march would normally be made to the area. Conditions could make this task most difficult, especially when it was so dark that the troopies were completely blind. Scarcity of water could present an issue to the patrol. The civilians were not regarded as hostiles by the troops. There were numerous occasions when they helped each other and process of great empathy took place. If a patrol learned of enemy presence the patrol force immediately moved to engage the enemy. On occasions the patrols were

ambushed. Patrols in Mozambique were considered the most hazardous, due to the violent reaction of FRELIMO (also known as FPML).

External Operations (Operation Dingo)

The RLI carried out external assaults on guerrilla bases in Zambia (against ZIPRA) and Mozambique (against ZANLA); there were many of these, and also one in Botswana. The larger raids combined Fireforce teams and were similarly executed, save for the greater scale of planning and logistics. There were also several raids by individual Commandos where the presence of FRELIMO units led to greater resistance. Just like in a regular Fireforce operation, the element of surprise was most important. Canberra and Hunter jets would bomb the target just before the Commandos arrived; and outcomes could be out of all reason, from total "lemons" to the most successful days in the Battalion's history. For example, when three Commandos of the Battalion participated in an attack on ZIPRA camps in Zambia in October 1978, there were no enemy casualties. In November 1977's Operation Dingo, a joint attack by the RLI and Rhodesian SAS on ZANLA camps in Mozambique at Chimoio and Tembue, is retrospectively described by Squadron Leader P. J. H. Petter-Bowyer as an "astounding success". "Operation Dingo cost ZANLA in excess of 3,000 trained men and something in the order of 5,000 wounded, many too seriously to be of further use," he writes. "Others lost all interest in the fighting and deserted." From the Rhodesian side, six men were wounded and two were killed. The stop of four was used in these raids (though they were organised into larger entities). The plans for these raids varied from sudden and fairly simple operations (subject to change on the fly) to highly intricate. The political situation interfered on occasions and this was much resented: the troops always thought that these operations were most important.

Deployments

Commandos based at Cranborne Barracks were sent on bush trips (usually for ± six weeks duration), where they would motor off to one of the Fireforce bases — the most important being Grand Reef, Mtoko and Mount Darwin, as they covered the hectic Northern/Eastern zone of the country — or any other place from which they would carry out patrolling actions or externals. Most bush trips focused on Fireforce, though there could be a mix of deployments. Some elements could be detached for special operations controlled by Base Group (viz. the JOC), or attached to another Unit/Commando (Slang for those on Special Operations temporarily attached to another Commando or Group was "Slop"). After such junctures they would motor back for twelve to fourteen days when, apart from taking their time to check everything that needed attention, they were set totally free for ten days R&R (military). This routine meant that all the troops could function for years on end at any desired



tempo of service; notwithstanding that a degree of "burnout" in some individuals was unavoidable, especially in 1979.

Medical

Each Commando had attached one trained medic, from the Rhodesian Army Medical Corps, who held the rank of full Corporal and had a much higher standard of medical training than the norm — they were able to prescribe painkillers (like Propon) and stitch. Commando Medics were also para-trained and could be in stops just like any rifleman/gunner, depending on the casualty evacuation (cas-evac), though not officially required to be so. A great deal of training was devoted to first-aid so that all soldiers in each Commando were required to know the basics (including drips). Troop Medics had additional training but to a lesser standard than the Commando Medics, as it interfered with their main duty of being infantry men.

The Enemy Armaments

No more than half of ZANLA combatants were armed with AK-47s, mostly supplied from Soviet satellite states. Around half of them had SKS carbines, all from the People's Republic of China (which also sent some Type 56s). These SKS's were semi-automatic and fired the same round as the AK-47 with a magazine of ten (the normal detachable AK-magazines held 30). Thus, the AK-47s were inevitably held by more determined members of a section. Few RLI casualties were caused by SKS fire. Hand grenades were mostly of Communist Chinese manufacture.

These were stick grenades, with a wood handle at the bottom of which was a screw cap whereupon unscrewing out fell (if holding right) a porcelain-bead with a thread attached. Pull this and in an unknown time (for these were badly stored and old weapons) it might explode. Despite this there were numerous troops wounded by this weapon. RPG-2's and RPG-7's were prevalent, sometimes one or two to a section of ten men, though hardly ever used against Fireforce (there was usually only one present and the difficulties of targeting the helicopters was extreme). The RLI's greatest single loss in one day was due to a South African Air Force Puma being shot down by an RPG-7, wielded by a member of FRELIMO in Mozambique, during a raid. Heavier infantry weapons, like medium mortars and heavy machine-guns, were rare though encountered more frequently on external operations late in the war. So much so that these heavier weapons had a definite effect on Rhodesian policy and strategic planning. There was only one serious attack on a Fireforce base, which occurred in December 1977, at Grand Reef (near the Mozambique border). A force of ZANLA (\pm 60 strong) bombarded and shot for ten minutes, then retreated (leaving one killed by a Commando mortar), with the only effect (beside the very few casualties) that they energised the Commando that was deployed there.

Training, Culture, Foreign Volunteers & Women

Personnel for the Commandos were trained (in-house) at an institution known as Training Troop (Cranborne Barracks); and besides, there were periods when more men were being trained than were serving in any single Commando. Some non-Rhodesians who met certain military criteria (war experience) were exempted from all training except for an orientation requirement. A sixteen-week course was the standard curriculum which was appended with an intensive-2-week parachute course, either at New Sarum in Salisbury or with the South African Parabats (The Pathfinders) in Bloemfontein, South Africa. Most of the Training Troop instructors were trained at the Rhodesian School of Infantry in Gwelo and were a mix of Commando veterans and national servicemen (top recruits from previous in-takes gaining leadership experience). Rhodesians were conscripted by selection to complete their national service with the RLI from 1973. From 1977 onwards around half of the Battalion was composed of these conscripts, who in theory served less time than a regular; however, in practice, there was such a perpetually high turnover that a national serviceman could serve longer than many a regular. Under a program introduced in late 1978 they would return for six-week call-up periods after their national service was over. The overall quality of these national servicemen was initially sub-jacent when compared to the more experienced regular soldiers, but over time they were able to reach the same high standard. Hence, the RLI actively encouraged conscripts to enlist as regulars (with some success); especially those with leadership or human resources management potential who had completed tertiary education, or had started a course of advanced study and intended to finish it after completing their service. An extremely high standard of training was achieved, without bullying by the staff yet of great pressure; independent thought was encouraged. At any time, a recruit could withdraw from this training and most likely leave the Battalion for a less demanding role. Training covered standard Infantry counter-insurgency (COIN) and conventional warfare as well as the usual Commando training such as watermanship, rock-climbing, abseiling, unarmed combat, bushcraft, survival, tracking, demolitions and helicopter drills. Officers were trained at the School of Infantry. Freshly graduated Second Lieutenants had to first prove themselves in action before being given the responsibility of becoming a stick leader. When these nascent officers joined a Commando, they were normally assigned an experienced NCO as mentor and performed the role of a rifleman in a stop; in this way new officers learned lessons concerning war not taught in training.

Numerous foreign volunteers joined the RLI especially 3 Commando, who received the same pay and conditions of service as Rhodesian regulars. South Africans had made up much of the ranks ever since the



RLI was formed, and a major influx of recruits from outside Africa started in the mid-1970s. Many of these were career soldiers, veterans of wars in armies overseas, attracted by the Regiment's reputation. Former British soldiers and Vietnam veterans from the American, Australian and New Zealand forces were prominent, but most First World countries were also represented. "The 'foreigners' soon became an integral part of the Battalion", says RLI veteran Chris Cocks, "and contributed greatly to the fighting reputation of the unit." Volunteers with no military experience were motivated to enlist by various reasons, including anti-communist political views, desire for adventure or even to escape one's past. "In many respects the RLI was a mirror of the French Foreign Legion," Cocks continues, "in that recruiters paid little heed to a man's background and asked no questions. And like the Foreign Legion, once in the ranks a man's past was irrelevant." He gives the example of Lance-Corporal Mathew Charles Lamb, a Canadian volunteer with a history of violence and insanity who became an "exemplary and popular stick leader" in the RLI, serving three years in the Rhodesian forces before being killed in action on 7 November 1976.

Women first became members of the RLI in 1975, when the Rhodesia Women's Service (RWS) opened the regular Army to females. A rank structure for women was introduced in 1977. Almost all women in the Army were given clerical, intelligence or communicational (switchboard, etc.) roles, and the RLI was no exception. All but a few of its RWS members were assigned to Base Group; exceptions included Corporal Dawn Doughty, who served in the 1 Commando Headquarters from 1976 to 1979, and the Australian Corporal Judith Ellison, who joined the 2 Commando Headquarters in the late 1970s.

Nicknames, Mascots & Commando Insignias

The Rhodesian Light Infantry was nicknamed "The Saints" soon after it was formed, as a result of its adoption of *When the Saints Go Marching In* as its



Members of a Commando before a Bush Trip.

military step Regimental Quick March (at 140bpm). A second or consequential nickname, expressly "The Incredibles", came from a toast "...to the incredible Rhodesian Light Infantry" by Prime Minister Ian Smith on the regiment's seventh birthday, 1 February 1968. "The Incredibles" is also the name of the Regimental Slow March composed especially for the RLI by Major Frank Sutton.

The Regimental Mascot was the Cheetah: originally there were two cheetah cubs who served as mascots. Unfortunately, following their ill-fated deaths during a grenade drill on 6 October 1963, the role became applied to the animal in general.

However, in February 1975 a nine-month-old cheetah cub was kindly donated to the regiment by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management; this cheetah became "Trooper Saint", the RLI's permanent mascot who was trained to participate in drill-parades and grenade drills.

Most units in the Battalion were allocated a colour for general recognition: Red for 1 Commando ... Blue for 2 Commando ... Green for 3 Commando ... and Yellow for Support Group/ Commando. The specialised sub-units operating conspicuously out of Base Group (such as Signals Troop) used Black and the Regimental Police used White.

1 Commando nickname, the "Big Red", came from a memorable incident in July 1971 subsequent to Major Dave Parker (the OC) being late for a tough early morning session of physical training (06:00 every day if possible). Parker himself despised these early parades, and would usually delay rising for as long as he possibly could. One day the men were already formed up when Parker, a physically large man, emerged from his quarters wearing a set of bright red pyjamas. "It's the Big Red One", remarked Sergeant Bruce Antonowitz, with reference to the infamous "Big Red One" — First Infantry Division of the US Army — from World War I and II. The nickname was initially applied to the Major alone, but gradually evolved to refer to the entirety of the Commando. 4 Troop (a sub-unit of 1 Commando) was nicknamed "F Troop". The emblem of 1 Commando was a numeral "1" and a cheetah contained within a large letter "C". The letters "DO" appear in smaller type to the right, completing the abbreviation for Commando (CDO).

2 Commando insignia was a double-edged dagger with cross-guard, centralised on a blue diamond and traversed by a numeral "2". "Commando" was inscribed on a ribbon banner below the diamond. In effect, the diamond with the dagger tacitly depicted the Commando's nickname: "The Cut" (diamond from the rough). In the same vein, "The Cut Above" was gleaned as a more popular nickname in 1976 once all the troops were para-trained airborne forces. Taking inspiration for banter from 1 Commando's nickname (Big Red), by using IBM's customary caption (Big Blue)



to purport "In Bush Mode" (I-B-M), 2 Commando regularly alluded to the mobilised troops as "Big Blue" and the troop away on R&R as "Baby Blue" — from Bringing It All Back Home ("The Saints are comin' through... It's All Over Now, Baby Blue") by Bob Dylan. They enjoyed having animals around the base-camp, roaming free as pets. Examples could include a fan-tailed Raven called "Swarthy" or "Swar-T" (Soldier-Warrior to a T) who just would not fly away (probably because its natural habitat was North/East Africa), and a Warthog called "Hertzog" who loved bacon and egg every morning. Swarthy was blue-black in bright sunlight and usually stayed at the base-camp, but would sometimes follow trucks to other locations. All the animals had a connection to someone in the Commando.

3 Commando was nicknamed the "Lovers", or sometimes "The Green Machine" — the latter coming from the green jerseys its men wore in intra-regimental sporting competitions. The "Lovers" nickname emerged during the mid-1960s and had its origin in the off-duty reputation of its soldiers, who were reportedly very popular amongst the young women of Salisbury. This reputation also contributed to the design chosen for the Commando emblem and flag in 1968, during Operation *Cauldron*. The Commando's "Lovers" wanted to use a phallus (erection) as their symbol, to demonstrate cockiness as they had not yet seen action on Operation *Cauldron*. Captain Spike Powell and Lieutenant Chris Pearce suggested that a more suitable emblem (other than anything military) might be a banana. Whether serious or not, the banana was duly adopted and the Commando's insignia became a banana, partially obscured by a numeral "3", with the word "Lovers" (in quotation marks) above and "Commando" inscribed on a ribbon banner below — all on a green shield. The emblem endured for the rest of the RLI's history. Flags were adopted by each 3 Commando troop during the same operation: 11 Troop followed a similar vein to the Commando itself in its adoption of the nickname "Legs Eleven", and a flag depicting a pair of female legs on a green background. When, around the same time, 12 Troop became the first unit in the Rhodesian Army to recover one of the hammer and sickle flags used by ZIPRA, its men began to use the "Russian flag" (as they called it) as their own. An unsuccessful bombing run by the Rhodesian Air Force during Operation *Cauldron*, which nearly wiped out the men of 13 Troop rather than the insurgents they were fighting, motivated 13 Troop's depiction of a large bomb as its emblem. The most orthodox flag of the Commando was perhaps that of 14 Troop, which around the late 1960s became known for returning to Salisbury from operations with kudu horns prominently mounted on its vehicles. Its emblem therefore became a kudu head, and its nickname "the Poachers". All of these flags and nicknames remained in use until the RLI was disbanded.

Support Commando's emblem was a black eagle on a yellow background with wings spread wide — similar to the coat of arms of Germany — as it held a bomb in each of its talons. "Support Commando" was inscribed on a ribbon banner above the eagle, and the full name of the regiment appeared beneath it. In January 1976, Colonel T. M. Davidson presented the Commando with a Wahlberg's eagle to use as its mascot. This eagle was never named, and was lost by Captain Pete Farndell in April 1976, at Grand Reef near Umtali. Having lost the eagle, Farndell was ordered to replace it and in August 1976 he acquired an African hawk-eagle chick from near Gwelo, which became the Commando's new mascot named "Henry Hawk-Eagle". Henry remained Support Commando's mascot until October 1979, when he was released unawares and escaped from the company of his accustomed keeper, Lance-Corporal André MacDonald, and flew away. Support Commando was nicknamed the "Heavies", due to the extra ordnance (also Henry's Heavies from 1976), but sometimes called "The Elite".

RLI Casualties

The Rhodesian Light Infantry Regimental Association maintains a Roll of Honour which lists 85 men killed in action from March 1968 to December 1979. A further 15 are listed as having died on operations from September 1961 to December 1979. Another 34 are listed as deceased from other causes, from 1961 to December 1979. Of the 85 killed in action, 66 occurred in the last four years of the war, thirty-one in 1979 alone. These figures mirror fairly accurately the ratio of combat the Battalion was in. The number of wounded is not known. It is known that in one of the Commandos there were more than 50 wounded in action in a two-year period where it had 21 killed in action. There were of course many other casualties, from accidents and illness/disease, or bad landings on jumps. These figures are very low for a battalion that was involved in so much combat, though it must be remembered that the Commandos were both smaller than the companies of the average strength infantry battalion of modern warfare and fighting with modern weapons and tactics against a relatively untrained, though well equipped, foe.

United States Army Lt-Col Dave Grossman wrote: Rhodesia's army during the 1970s was one of the best trained in the world, going up against a very poorly trained but well-equipped insurgent force. The security forces in Rhodesia maintained an overall kill ratio of about eight-to-one in their favour throughout the guerrilla war. And the highly trained Rhodesian Light Infantry achieved kill ratios ranging from 35-to-one to 50-to-one. The Rhodesians achieved this in an environment where they did not have close air and artillery support ... nor did they have any significant advantage over their Soviet-supported opponents. The only thing they had going for them was their superior training,



and the advantage this gave them added up to nothing less than total tactical superiority.

— Lt-Col Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, 1996

Conclusion

The 1st Battalion, Rhodesian Light Infantry, was a special forces light infantry unit highly capable of performing any task ordered, no matter the means of transport (whether crossing the Zambezi river in little boats, walking long miles with huge weights, or riding high in G-cars and Daks), no matter what type of operation. Supposing the enemy was always at a disadvantage, with no air support and very limited means of communication, the soldiers always continued to seek them — even when left without conveyance. The men liked to walk close to the enemy, believing it to be the most efficient way of finding them, and dealing with them. In the words of Alexandre Binda, the RLI "...earned for itself an enviable reputation as one of the world's foremost anti-terrorist forces."

Following the creation and independence of the Republic of Zimbabwe (April 1980), the ultimate military parade of the RLI, for the ceremonial laying-up of its regimental colours, took place at Cranborne Barracks on 17 October 1980. The unit's last commanding officer, J. C. W. Aust, recalled being "amazed" by the large crowd of allegiant spectators surrounding the parade square, including the former government minister P. K. van der Byl who attended unannounced. A Rhodesian Air Force Alouette III helicopter unexpectedly arrived overhead, during the final ceremony, in Aust's words "circling in a moving salute and farewell". Two weeks later, the Rhodesian Light Infantry was disbanded forever on 31 October 1980.

A nucleus of RLI officers and other personnel (instructors) became involved in training and helping to form the First Zimbabwe Commando Battalion of the Zimbabwe National Army. The regimental statue, "The Trooper" (or "The Troopie"), left Zimbabwe on 28 July



The "Trooper", the RLI Regimental Statue on the grounds of Hatfield House in England, 2014.

1980 on a South African Air Force C-130 Hercules, together with the regiment's documents/records, trophies and other paraphernalia. By arrangement, everything was put into storage at the South African National Museum of Military History in Johannesburg ... and thereafter moved to the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum in Bristol, England. The Trooper statue now stands on the grounds of Hatfield House, country seat of the Marquess of Salisbury, where it was re-dedicated on 28 September 2008.

Footnote: The Australian Commando Association is proud to have 1 RLI members as Associate members in several ACA State Associations. Once a Commando Always A Commando/Commando 4 Life.



ACROSS THE TIMOR SEA

*By Jan Roberts, ACA WA Social Member &
Niece of Norm Nicolau 2nd/4th Independent Company, WW2*

As I have done annually for the past 10 years, I returned to Timor Lesté in August, 2019. My visit coincided with the celebrations for the 20th Anniversary of the vote for Independence in Timor Lesté and dignitaries attending were on the same plane from Darwin.



Dignitaries being welcomed @ Dili Airport

August the 30th 1999 was the culmination of years of turmoil in the fight for freedom. Well over 78% of voters, risking retaliation, voted for Independence. About 80% of the infrastructure was destroyed during the turmoil and there are burned-out skeletons of buildings still evident today. However, there has been much reconstruction in the past 20 years and this bodes well for the future.

This year I stayed at Moby's Hotel with David Green who travelled with me to Ailalec (his uncle was a 2/2nd Commando during WW2). The accommodation was basic, but clean and very affordable. The staff were very accommodating, cheerful, and the chef served up beautiful meals. We used Microlets [small bus] exclusively for getting around the city. They are very affordable (25cents) and enjoyable to ride in. They are used by the Dili locals, visitors using them get to mingle and travel with an array of people who are going about their daily lives.

After hiring a utility and driver then picking up Judite Martin, Manager of Rotary DIK Dili, we began our five-hour journey to St Francis of Assisi School, where we planned to stay with the Sisters. That evening the boys from the Boarding House had prepared a welcome of music. We had speeches, songs and a lovely dinner. Domingas Barretto (who is the granddaughter of Uncle Normans Creado) Domingos Barretto and one of the graduating students) sang for us accompanied by the school band.

The next morning, we set off for a further five-hour journey up into the mountains to Ailalec with the nine scholarship children who were looking forward to meeting up with their parents and participating in the inauguration of the new Kindergarten. Along the way we stopped to gather supplies to contribute to the occasion, such as rice, oil and various other staple items which would not go amiss and buying them from roadside shops in the mountains was most welcomed by the locals.

On entering Ailalec we received a warm welcome and of course much laughter and hugs, especially from the parents of the children. The kindergarten looked

most substantial with its three rooms. This building was made possible by the generous donation from the Sangora Foundation without which this would not have been possible. The kindergarten is now up and running and beautifully fitted out thanks to DIK Scarborough Rotary's contribution of furniture such as tables, chairs, cupboards and desk for the headmaster, also various donations of books and educational goods from the good standing people of Perth. These things would not have been sent if not for the generous help from DIK Scarborough's container programme.

The ceremony itself included speeches and gifts of Tais and then a lunch which included a freshly killed



Being welcomed In Ailalec

pig, rice, chicken and various freshly grown vegetables due to the installation of 9 water pumps. We left for the five-hour journey back to Ailalec, traversing three rivers, thankfully with not much water, arriving back rather late but the thoughtful Sisters had prepared a meal for us and we retired early, exhausted but happy.

The following day the whole school was assembled to show their appreciation of Across the Timor Sea and their sponsor's contribution to the scholarship programme which now has nine children for 2019. There were speeches and more presentations of the beautiful Tais the Timor people weave. We also had a tour of the school and saw many happy faces of the children attending. We also visited the Sisters at Natabura's medical centre and they proudly showed us their scrupulously clean medical centre, however supplies of basic medical equipment is scarce, which is also the case at St. Francis of Assisi boarding houses for boys and girls.

Next day saw us set off on our five-hour return journey to Dili. The 20th Anniversary of Independence was in full swing with various marching bands parading in the streets. We visited the Rehabilitation Centre, where we were shown around by the manager Alex Morais. The Rehabilitation Centre receives, fits and distributes wheelchairs for children sent by 'Wheelchairs for Kids' in Perth, to various outlining districts of Timor. At the Centre they also construct and fit artificial limbs and we were told crutches and walking sticks are in short supply.

We also had the privilege to visit the Australian Sparrow Force memorial the next day which Dave



found very illuminating and we spoke with an officer who told us of the two 'State of the Art' patrol boats the Australian Government are gifting the government of Timor Lesté. These boats will be manned by Australian and Timor Lesté personnel.

In conclusion, Across the Timor Sea is thrilled to announce that three of the scholarship children are graduating this year after having spent the last six years at St Francis of Assisi. All three children have done extremely well. Their final exams in December will govern whether they get places at university. In any case, their time spent at St. Francis has not been wasted and they will leave with life skills they can take with them back to Ailalec. Two new children will be added to the programme for 2020.

Arriving back from our sojourn to Timor both Dave and I said it was a great experience and I look forward to 2020 with optimism.

Jan Roberts



*Marching Band In Dili
for the 20th Anniversary Celebrations*

The Positive Relationship between Physical Activity and PTSD

Exercise has a positive clinical effect on depressive symptoms and may be as effective as psychological or pharmaceutical therapies for some individuals with PTSD. Rosebaum et al, 2014 suggests Physical activity/exercise is a highly effective method in reducing symptoms of depression and for people experiencing other mental health disorders.

Evidence demonstrates that an appropriate exercise intervention can achieve significant benefits to symptoms, depression, anxiety and stress, changes in body shape and sedentary time associated with PTSD, and non-significant trends for sleep quality improvement according to Rosenbaum, 2013.

The associated symptoms and the improvements may be related to psychosocial benefits of the intervention, rather than functional capacity, but there is also a strong empirical (observational) link between improvements in functional capacity and psychological status according to the author, 2016.

People with PTSD are four times as likely to have type 2 diabetes (Lukaschek et al, 2013) and rates of overweight and obesity are as high as 92%. To add to these statistics, suffers of PTSD are shown to be less physically active due to a number of factors including pain, dysfunctional and general lack of desire or both, according Boscarino et al, 2004.

Adding some form of regular physical activity can have a significant effect on a sufferer of PTSD. It's important to note, the type of activity doesn't matter, what matters is that the person is moving and also having fun doing it. If you would like to become physically active again and help to combat some of your PTSD related symptoms then please consult your GP and discuss your options for referral to another health care professional (exercise physiologist or physiotherapist) for help with your other associated or co-morbid conditions ie lower back pain, arthritis and or obesity.





Leaving the ADF



At some point in their career, all ADF members will leave the military and transition to civilian life. It's a significant decision that can involve your family. Planning early will make sure you're informed and ready to enter the next phase of your life.

You must complete your transition with ADF Transition Support Services so you understand the process, your administrative requirements, and the support available to you. We encourage you to involve your family throughout your transition experience.

Transition support network

Transitioning to civilian life is a shared responsibility. When you decide to leave the ADF you should engage with your family, your Unit, and ADF Transition Support Services.

Your Unit can speak to you about the transition process and connect you with your local ADF Transition Centre. Your Centre will introduce you to a Transition Support Officer who will help you and your family through the transition process and:

- provide you with an individual transition plan
- offer career coaching during your transition and up to 12 months afterwards
- help you meet your administrative requirements
- help you leave with all documentation like service, medical, and training records
- facilitate connections to Defence and government support services

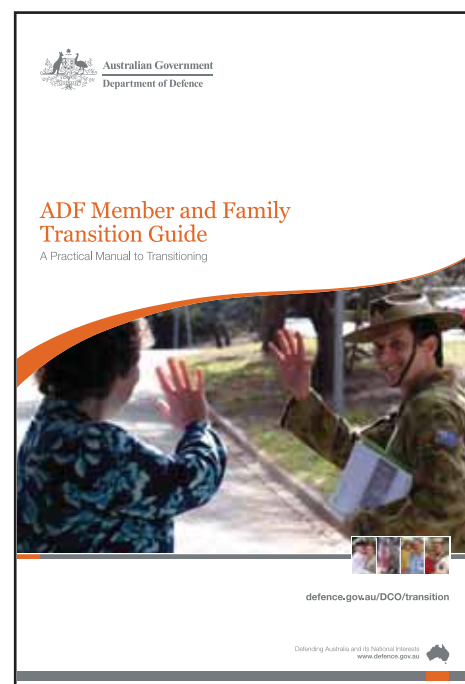
ADF Transition Seminar

You and your family can attend an ADF Transition Seminar at any time during your ADF career to help you prepare for your transition. Seminars are held

nationally throughout the year. You'll receive information from Defence and other organisations on topics like finance and superannuation, health, relocating, employment, and ex-service organisation support.

ADF Member and Family Transition Guide

The ADF Member and Family Transition Guide – A Practical Manual to Transitioning contains detailed information on the transition process for ADF members. The Guide includes information on support services and administrative requirement. It includes checklists to help you navigate transition process.



#1 Thing ADF Candidates Do to Block Their Own Career Transition

By Next Job Now, ADF Career Transition Experts – 1300 112 114

...When it comes to job interviews, Navy, Army and Air Force candidates just don't see shades of grey. Ask any of the thousands of Defence members I've coached over the years and you'll almost always get the same response.

The answer to one simple question is a major reason why military professionals struggle to transition quickly and effectively.

So here's the 64,000 dollar question...

'Do you have **EXPOSURE** to....(DESIRED SKILL)?'

When we hear that little gem of a question our military training kicks into gear. In fact, the preferred answer to this common question is:

'Oh no... **I couldn't claim to be an EXPERT** in that...I'd be lying.'

After so long collecting the Queen's coin and working in an environment where integrity is paramount...**we self-impose a rule** that we need to be considered a Subject Matter Expert before we can stake a claim to even having 'exposure'.

Civilians aren't normally burdened by any such impediment: You can almost picture the worst offenders sitting across from the interviewer explaining, *'I've got a friend who knows someone that can spell that word...so I've had some exposure.'* Sure, I'm exaggerating...but not by much if the latest research into resume fraud is to be believed.

So, we have two groups of candidates (military and civilian), each at different ends of the spectrum (black and white). The big question now is **'How do we get ADF folks to start seeing shades of gray and move them closer toward the other end of the spectrum whilst still holding true to their values.'**



Think about the reality of the situation. Even a soldier who graduated Kapooka yesterday has exposure to leading teams, since they can't graduate without being assessed as a supervisor even for a short period. So rather than say *'I'm not a supervisor'* that sailor could say *'I've had some exposure to supervising teams in a training environment for specific work activities.'*

Similarly, a Sergeant might be slow to claim expertise in human resources (perhaps due to an ADF understanding of what a civilian views as HR) but when prompted they typically agree that they have **exposure** to specific HR skillsets such as coaching, mentoring, training, counselling and leadership development.

At the end of the day saying that *'I've had some exposure to XYZ'* could be validated by the fact that you've seen it done, maybe assisted once, and can read the policy if needed.

Opportunity helps those that help themselves

If you want to give your Defence transition the best possible chance of success, then you need to start seeing shades of grey. 'Exposure' is your new best friend.

Stop being your own worst enemy. Never claim what you don't have, but always claim what you do have...to the degree that you have it!

David Penman is a Certified Professional Resume Writer, ex-Commando and one of Australia's leading ADF career transition experts. Call 1300 112 114 to enquire about NJN's ADF resume services.

Nuance is the key

The answer lies in our willingness to accept that its okay to be 'less than an expert'...and that we do indeed have exposure to a great many skills that we can talk about in an honest fashion. Its simple. If you are an expert, then claim expertise. If you are not, then just claim whatever level of skill you possess. Here are a few suggestions for claiming different levels of capability:

- I do have an awareness of...
- I've had exposure to...
- I'm okay at...
- I'm good at...
- I'm very good at...
- I'm competent at...



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FROM DESERT STORM TO BLACK HAWK DOWN AND THE COURAGE FOR PEACE

By David Vinen - ACA E-Member

I joined the Army in 1984 and was allocated as a Combat Engineer. In 1988, I transferred to the Australian Intelligence Corps and became an Operator Intelligence. In 1990 I was posted to the Defence Intelligence Organisation in Canberra. In August of that year Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. The team I was in were specialists in the Middle East. When Kuwait was invaded, the team I was in formed an analytical team where I although a Corporal, I became one of the senior advisors for Defence, the Federal Government and other Government agencies. Quite regularly, I was called personally a number of times to brief the Chief of the Defence Force. Following the conclusion of Operation Desert Storm, I was awarded a Chief of the Defence Force Commendation. I spent 8 months in the analysis group when the surrender of the Iraqi Forces was accepted.

In 1992, I was posted for 5 months to the U.K. This was during a time of troubles with the IRA. This included random mortar attacks on Defence facilities and random bombings. I was trained by and worked with the U.K. Army in Anti-Terrorism operations across the U.K. By the time I arrived from the U.K., I had experience in two types of warfare. Something rarely seen in the early 1990's.

At the end of 1992, I was approached by the Intelligence Officer of the 1st Commando Regiment. I was asked if I would like to be posted to the Commandos into the Intelligence Sergeant slot. I immediately said yes and in January 1993, he was posted to the 1st Commando Regiment.

In early February 1993, my boss asked if I would like a deployment to Somalia¹. Since returning from the U.K. I had been watching every news report as to what was unfolding in that country. I was told that due to his work during the Gulf War and in the U.K., he was chosen by the Chiefs of the Defence Force Committee, along with 4 others to form the advance party for what was to become a force expansion to keep the food supply routes open in order to provide nutrition during a most severe drought. In addition, the main goal of the reinforced U.N. contingent had also turned its

focus to shutting down the violent activities of Mohammad Farah Aideed²; he was the main obstacle with returning Somalia to a more peaceful state.

In mid-April 1993, it was determined by Lawrence and I that the Aideed's Militia had removed heavy weapons from a number of U.N. designated storage sites. A number of Somali utes had heavy machine guns mounted on the tray. This was against the agreement set in early 1993 where, no Somali faction was allowed heavy weapons.

On 5 June, inspections were carried out on 6 weapon storage sites. Myself and 5 others were assigned to Radio Mogadishu. My team found no weapons after a two-hour search. When the inspection was completed, my team saw well over 200 Somalis forcing themselves against their Pakistani protection party of 35 soldiers at the gateway to the radio station. The Pakistanis suffered numerous deaths and casualties whilst protecting my team's attempt to get vital information back to U.N. HQ. On this day 24 Pakistanis were killed by Aideed's militia. The Pakistanis suffered numerous deaths and casualties while protecting my team's attempt to get vital information back to U.N. HQ. On this day 24 Pakistani's were killed by Aideed's militia. My team barely escaped with our lives.

Following the 5 June attack against U.N. Forces, a bounty was placed on Aideed's head. He returned the favour by placing \$50,000 USD bounties on those in the Intelligence Group, Lawrence's group and much more on their heads and the heads of the U.N. operation.

Hostilities continued to increase and eventually in August 1993, Task Force Ranger³ was deployed from the U.S. to kill or capture Aideed and his Lieutenants. Task Force Ranger failed in three of its missions. The first two targets were against U.N. staff.

On 3 Oct 1993, I was visited by a Captain from Task Force Ranger. The Captain wanted to know "is it safe to raid the Bakhara Markets?" I advised against going into the heart of Aideed's territory. This would be an absolute disaster. His information was ignored. The result was the famous raid now known as "Black Hawk Down". During 3/4 Oct, the Somalis had killed 18 U.S. soldiers (5 from the two Black Hawk crashes) and

¹My involvement in Somalia is extensively reported in the Official History of Australian Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations, Volume IV, The Limits of Peacekeeping. I was the founding person of the U.N. Intelligence Group, even though the U.N. had about 28,000 troops in the country. His group eventually expanded and became a mix of nationalities and differing ranks. I was central to some of the most pivotal moments that occurred, particularly in Mogadishu as he was trusted by the U.S. Forces deployed to Somalia due to the ANZUS agreement. I was one of two people entrusted with information that came from U.S. sources. The other person was Lawrence Stein, one of the other four who were selected along with myself. Lawrence, a resident in Manila was also a Corporal.

²Mohammad Farah Aideed was a Somali military commander and political leader. In 1992, Aidid attacked United Nations troops in the nation. He was one of the main targets of the Unified Task Force.

³Task Force Ranger, was a collaboration of various elite special forces units from the United States Army Special Operations Command, the Air Force Special Operations Command, and the United States Naval Special Warfare Command. It consisted mostly of members from the 75th Ranger Regiment and Delta Force.



captured Chief Warrant Officer 4 (CWO4) Michael Durant⁴.

The bodies of 2 U.S. Soldiers were dragged through the streets which outraged the world as it had been broadcasted live across the world. Following these events, Task Force Ranger was ordered to conduct no more raids. The priority of the U.S. and subsequently, the U.N. became the recovery of the five dead from the Black Hawk Crashes and hopefully Durant, alive. This was done by a select few people including myself and Geoff Raftery (also from 1 Cdo Regt). The recovery of the dead was conducted over a period of several days.

Following the recovery of the five dead, Myself John Boyle, (a Captain from the U.S.), who was my immediate superior, were warned that they would recover Durant. On 14 Oct 1993, myself and John were given orders to meet a small convoy that had Durant and a Nigerian Corporal who was captured over a month before Durant was. Expecting only 2 Red Cross Ambulances, they were followed by 2 of Aideed's technicals. Each had a heavy machine gun and about 8 militia in and on each vehicle. They were intercepted by John and myself when the 2 ambulances drove past them to the U.N. hospital. John and I then prepared to engage the technicals. They immediately withdrew. Durant and the Nigerian were then taken to the hospital for examination. That was my last task, as myself and the other 4 who arrived in March with him were told they were leaving for home in a little over 2 weeks. We departed Somalia in November and were the longest serving Australians in Somalia. A deployment of 9 months.

We were never recognised or acknowledged for being in the team that recovered the bodies of the 5 dead and the recovery of Durant. I left the Army in mid-1995 due to PTSD after being involved in 3 different conflicts covering 4 consecutive years.

Below is an excerpt from Barraba Gazette which was originally published on 14 November 2019 as part of the Memorial Day Edition.

A new exhibition, "The Courage for Peace," has been unveiled at the Australian War Memorial. While the Australian War Memorial devotes a majority of its space to honouring the work of Australians serving in conflict, its Director, Dr Brendan Nelson, says the work of those aiming to prevent conflict overseas hasn't been given as much of that same recognition in the past. "It's embarrassingly small and totally inadequate," Memorial Director Brendan Nelson said. "It doesn't do justice to what over 40,000 Australians have done on Peacekeeping."

⁴CWO4 Durant was the pilot of helicopter "Super Six Four." His was the second MH-60L of two Black Hawk helicopters to crash during the Battle of Mogadishu on October 3, 1993. After his helicopter was hit on the tail by a rocket-propelled grenade, it crashed about a mile southwest of the Operation's target building.

This new exhibition, launched at the Memorial recently, is hoping to change that. The Courage for Peace aims to tell the story of Australian Peacekeeping efforts around the world across the decades from Rwanda to Cambodia, East Timor to the Solomon Islands. Dr Nelson said the idea for the exhibition came four years ago, following a suggestion by a visitor to the Memorial. "They said why don't we tell the story of what Australia does to stop war in the first place," Dr Nelson said. "As Australians, we are at our very best when we do everything, we can to prevent conflict and make peace, and participation in war is evidence of failure of political leadership around the world." Large parts of the exhibition have been sourced from Memorial's own collection, along with items loaned from the National Museum of Australia, the AFP museum and personal items from those who were involved in a Peacekeeping Operation.

David along with his wife Jacki, were invited to attend the official unveiling of the exhibition, recognising the involvement of Australian Peacekeeping Forces since 1947.

The Courage for Peace will be on display in the special exhibition's gallery of the Australian War Memorial until late 2020. "The Limits of Peacekeeping" which gives a detailed report on David's service in Somalia and the Black Hawk Down helicopter rescue for us to read. If you have a chance to view this history book, you will find it most interesting.



Quick Snap before an Air assault onto some bad dudes in Mogadishu



My wife Jacki & I at the unveiling of the Courage for Peace. I'm standing in front of the cabinet that displays my map and the Bofors shells first fired at Radio Mogadishu.



A REDEDICATION OF A MEMORIAL TO SGT IAN WARD

AUSTCIVPOL 12 NOVEMBER 2019

By MAJ John (Jack) Thurgar, SC, MBE, OAM, RFD (Retd.)
ACA National Secretary

On 12 Nov 1974 a young Australian policeman from Ryde NSW, a veteran of the Vietnam War, was deployed on a humanitarian mission in war torn Cyprus.

Five days after arriving on the island, together with his Australian colleague he was tasked with transporting a family of five Turkish Cypriot refugees from Ayios Nicolaos over the Troodos Mountains to Lefke after a second truce had been called following the Turkish incursion into Northern Cyprus.

In the heavily mined area of what was then, and remains today, contested territory, their Land Rover struck an anti-tank mine, detonating a charge that would end a 24-year-old's life, as well as the life of 58-year-old Abdullah Omer.

A rededication ceremony was held 45 years to the day at the place where Sgt Ian Donald Ward and Abdullah Omer lost their lives.

In attendance were Ian's sisters, Rosemary Bond and Barbara Teaken.

In attendance were the Australian High Commissioner to Cyprus – H.E. Mr Sam Beever, Deputy Commissioner Jeff Loy, representing the New South Wales Police, Commander Jennifer Hurst, Commander for Europe, Middle East and North Africa for the Australian Federal Police, MAJGEN Cheryl Pearce - Force Commander of UNFICYP and the Commanding Officer of Sector One, LTCOL Vitola (Argentinian Army).

H.E. Sam Beever, the Australian High Commissioner to Cyprus gave (in part) the following address to those assembled:

"On 14 September 1947, Australia was the first country to deploy military observers to the Dutch East Indies as part of UN Consular Commission.

Those first military peacekeepers were charged with monitoring and reporting on the ceasefire between Dutch and Indonesian nationalists.

Seventy years later, Indonesia has now become a major UN peacekeeping contributor.

Australia was also a founding partner with the UN in deploying civilian police as peacekeepers.

Police peacekeeping was born here in Cyprus.

And this year, we mark 55 years of Australian police contributions to United Nations peacekeeping.

But it all began in May of 1964.

The City of Brisbane with its Qantas flying kangaroo livery touched down in Nicosia carrying the first Australian police contingent to be seconded to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus.

SGT Ward was a member of the 11th Australian contingent.

His would be followed by another one hundred contingents before the Australian flag was lowered in



MAJGEN Cheryl Pearce, AM, CSC, Force Commander UNICYP giving her speech at the Rededication Service.

2017 bringing to an end our longest continuous contribution to any civilian peacekeeping mission.

A contribution that spanned 53 years and involved more than 1,600 police men and women.

Peacekeeping missions are not easy to compare and contrast. And nor should they be.

They are products of their time, their place and their mandate.

They have vastly different purposes and political ends.

But what they do have in common, at least in our experience, is a legacy of which all Australians can be proud.

Australian peacekeepers have bequeathed to Australia a reputation for getting things done in a direct, compassionate, understated and empathetic way.

That reputation, earned on the back of police serving in dangerous locations across the globe, is one of our nation's great foreign policy and diplomatic assets.

Police are the public face of security, to whom people turn for protection and to feel safe.

At this time, I would also like to acknowledge the police, fire service, ADF and volunteer personnel working to protect lives and property from the devastating fires tearing across four states in Australia in catastrophically dangerous conditions.

Police peacekeepers can repair community faith and trust in local authorities, build a sense of safety and security, and lay the groundwork for long-term stability and development.

And through our peacekeepers, the world gets to know Australia.



On Cyprus, they know Australia well.

As a result of this monument, the people of Cyprus both now and into the future will know of the sacrifice of SGT Ian Ward from New South Wales."

During the ceremony, the current UNFICYP Force Commander, MAJGEN Cheryl Pearce AM CSC, read out a letter from Senator the Hon. Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women:

"Service, Sacrifice, and Courage: Remarks for the rededication of the memorial to Sergeant Ian Ward – 11th Australian Civilian Police Contingent to UNFICYP.

On the 17 October this year, I launched the new exhibition at the AWM titled: 'The Courage for Peace'.

I said that while Australia has contributed troops to a dozen wars, I believe we should be equally proud that Australia has contributed to more than three times that many peacekeeping operations – most of those unarmed.

While the total number of Australians serving in peacekeeping operations is only a fraction of the number who served in our wars, we should not lose sight of the fact that, as a country, we do not shrink from the task of bringing peace and saving lives, even at the risk of our own.

Indeed, generations of Australian governments have decided that the building of peace is at least as important as the making of war.

Australia makes our peacekeeping contributions because we believe that certain established principles and values are worth preserving.

We step in to protect those values and principles when they are at risk or under clear threat. In this regard, there is no distinction to be made between civilian, military or police peacekeepers.

Since May 1964, Australia has deployed 111 civilian police contingents to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. More than 1,600 Australian police officers have served on the island.

They have helped maintain peace and stability in the United Nations Buffer Zone, carried out humanitarian assistance and provided liaison duties between the two resident police forces on Cyprus.



The NSW Police Force Representative, saluting the Memorial after laying a wreath at the Rededication Service.

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs, as a former Minister for Defence, and as a Senator for New South Wales, I offer my sincere condolences to Sergeant Ward's sisters, Barbara Teaken and Rosemary Bond, who are with you today.

Sergeant Ward's actions on the day of his death are in the highest traditions of police service to the communities they protect through selflessness and dedication.

Knowing well the danger, Sergeant Ward put the safety of civilians above his own safety.

We ask this of all police officers, regardless of their jurisdiction. Sergeant Ward answered this call and made the ultimate sacrifice in doing his duty. Remembering Ian's service, and the sacrifice he made in the service of peace, is now our solemn duty.

We have much to be proud of with Australia's legacy of peacekeeping and peace-building.

I know that Australia's reputation as a valued, ethical, honest, hardworking, open-minded, empathetic, straight-talking partner is one of our nation's great foreign policy and diplomatic assets. Australia's peacekeeping work is respected around the world.

Service is a powerful thing.

The courage to serve for peace is immensely powerful."

LEST WE FORGET

Photographs kindly supplied by Mr Sam Beever, Australian High Commissioner to Cyprus.


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14 December 1955
MAJ John Anderson
2nd Commando Company
Killed In Training
Plymouth, United Kingdom



04 January 2009
PTE Gregory Sher
2CC, 1st Commando Regiment
Killed In Action
Urazghan Province, Afghanistan



06 February 2017
SGT Peter Cafe
DCC, 2nd Commando Regiment
Died In Service
Sydney, New South Wales



13 February 1963
REC Anthony Matulis
1st Commando Company
Killed In Training
Sydney, New South Wales



14 February 1981
LCPL Stephan Kennedy
1CC, 1st Commando Regiment
Died In Service
Gosford, New South Wales



30 March 1966
PTE Phillip Stewart
1st Commando Company
Killed In Training
Gan Gan, New South Wales



17 February 1960
WO2 George Drakopoulos
PTE Edward Myer &
PTE Roger Wood
2nd Commando Company
Killed In Training
The Rip, Victoria



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From Royal Navy to Successful Business Ownership

Former Royal Navy engineer James Griffin, talks about his transition from military duties to becoming a franchisee at InXpress.

James Griffin went from being a weapon engineer for the Royal Navy to a successful business owner within five years. This was made possible through franchising, an industry that allows talented people from all backgrounds to take charge of their career. "I had no experience in logistics, or sales. I had served in the military, so by rights, there's no way I should be successfully running my own business," explains James.

He decided to research franchising after deciding to leave the armed forces, and found that it appealed to him. While he knew that it was the direction he wanted to take, there was still the issue of what business to partner with. "Having spent six years in the Royal Navy as a weapon engineer, I decided that my time had come to consider leaving the forces and start a life in franchising. Luckily my last two years were based shoreside at NATO Northwood Headquarters, London, which allowed me the time to research franchising and the different franchising options available to me. I knew I wanted to buy a franchise, but I was unsure on what industry/type of franchise.

The franchise industry has grown substantially over the years, with the total annual sales revenue for Australia's entire franchise sector estimated at \$182 billion. There are over 1,200 recognised business format franchise units in Australia, with over 80,000 franchise units, covering a wide range of businesses, from small pet sitting businesses to fast food conglomerates, so it can be hard to know which business will fit your personality and passion.

James found this difficult too, seeking help to find the perfect match: "I visited a number of franchises, including some in the fast food, coffee and automotive sectors. I also went to the National Franchise Exhibition, where I picked up some really useful information, but was still none the wiser regarding the right franchise for me.

Feeling a little confused by the whole ordeal, I contacted a company called MatchPoint UK who are matchmakers for potential franchisees and franchisors and together we decided InXpress would be the perfect fit, and it was! I eventually bought the franchise in November 2015."

Finding the right franchise is an important step in the due diligence. This is a partnership between you and the franchisor. The franchisor wants you to succeed and an unsuitable match will be bad for both parties. When looking for a franchise, I believe it is essential to first research franchises that are members of your local regulatory board to be certain that they follow standards of international best practice in business format franchising. From there, take a look at the attendee list and note all the franchises that you believe match your skills, personality and interest. It's important to take time with the franchise - a good franchisor will not rush you into any decisions, and will encourage you to thoroughly look into the business and speak to other franchisees in their network.

James found that taking the time to find the right franchise has resulted in a match made in heaven. Being a franchisee for InXpress, a global shipping franchise organisation, has provided him with the training and support necessary to own and operate a business successfully.

James has some advice for any ex armed forces looking for a new career start: "I strongly believe the skills and attributes I developed while serving have really helped me in running my franchise and if there are any soon-to-be civvies heading in to resettlement, a little bit bewildered, then I really would suggest considering franchising. It has been life changing for me, I have a comfortable lifestyle and I am able to take plenty of time off (not that I do) and the future is looking very bright."



WX28219 Graham L ("Dolly") Dolton

1924 – April 2019

2nd/9th Commando Squadron, WW2

Eulogy by Harry Bell ~ 2nd/9th Cdo Sqn, WW2

Dolly died after a short final illness, but a fairly long battle with a dicky heart, just in time to be buried on Anzac Eve. I penned the following eulogy which was read at his funeral:

"Through the mud and the blood to the green fields beyond". That was the motto, matching its brown, red and green, rectangular colour-patch, of the senior unit in the Second A.I.F: the 2/6th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment, better known to old soldiers as "6 Div Cav". That is because it began its life, on 3rd November 1939, as the 6th Aust. Div. Reconnaissance Regiment, "the eyes and ears of the Division". It took the colours of The Royal Tank Corps which fought on the Western Front in 1918. It was given various names before it acquired its last one in 1943. During that time, mounted on Bren carriers, in tanks captured from the Italians or the Vichy French, on horses (yes, horses! In Syria it contributed riders to a somewhat irregular mounted unit, known familiarly as "The Kelly Gang") on skis (several of its members, included Graham's good mate, Doug Blom, joined an impromptu ski unit in Syria) and, finally on the most reliable of all, Shanks' Ponies, it fought with each and every one of the King's enemies, the Italians, the Germans, the Vichy French and the Japanese.

Why am I telling you this? Because that's where Graham ("Dolly" to his mates) finished up in 1943. From a family with a military history, he naturally joined the Army when old enough to look like 18. He was in fact 16 and was eventually discharged, rejoining when he really was of the permitted age. His military career began in a Western Australian Machine Gun Battalion. When that unit became surplus to requirements, he completed an Infantry conversion course, including a jungle warfare course at Canungra in SE Queensland. but, feeling adventurous, then volunteered for training as a Commando. After completing another - and even more strenuous - course at Canungra he was drafted to 2/9 Aust. Commando Squadron, a newly formed unit that was training at Wondecla on the Atherton Tableland.



Dolly Dolton in January 2016 visiting Benny Mundy (2/7 & 2/9 Cdo Sqn's) in Perth

By that time, the Cav. Regiment had returned from the Middle East with the rest of the Division and had completed a lengthy stint patrolling the far North of the continent. There was no role for Bren Gun Carriers in the jungle, so it had to be dismounted. Many of its personnel were fit and willing to undertake the new life, but there were not enough of them to form a complete unit, so it was decided to form two new Commando Squadrons, 2/9 and 2/10, and to join them with a very experienced unit, 2/7 Commando Squadron (originally known as 7 Independent Company). These 3 units were added to the remaining cavalymen, and the whole became known as 2/6 Cav (Com-

mando) Regiment. It then spent a year training at Wondecla in the Atherton Tableland, before sailing to Aitape from Townsville on 14.10.1944.

Dolly had become a specialist signaller, a task which required expertise in sending and receiving Morse Code as well as skill in handling the primitive wireless transceivers which were on issue. And not merely skill, but strength, for the Sigs had not only to carry their rifles, hand grenades and rations like everybody else; they had also to manhandle their bulky sig sets up and down razor-back ridge and across- and along - fast flowing, boulder-strewn mountain streams. He was initially posted to B Troop (each Squadron of about 250 men, was divided into three fighting Troops and a Headquarter Troop) and had the doubtful privilege of being on Patrol with 5 Section when the Squadron suffered its first battle casualties: one man wounded and two Killed in Action - and two decorations won.

He remained with B Troop, along with his friend and tent-mate, Reg Davis (who died last month) for a two-month stint in the jungle, during which we saw out two different Infantry Brigades (16th & 19th) during the advance along the coastal side of the rugged Torricelli Mountains, from Aitape to But [pronounced to rhyme with put], West of Wewak. Then, for the amphibious landing at Dove Bay, between Wewak and the Sepik River, his services were required in Squadron Headquarters, so we lost him from B Troop. The



landing was accomplished with little opposition from the foe, though our own Water Transport emulated the Navy at Gallipoli by under-estimating the strength of the current and landing us in the wrong place.

HQ turned out to be as risky as the forward section, for the Nips, who knew the area well, carried out a number of night raids, causing casualties. Our precaution against this was to double the listening posts and to set our own booby-traps outside our perimeter. This was a task usually performed by a section-member other than a sig, so when detailed to set the traps, Dolly was unsure of the procedure. Another sig, an experienced NCO who had served in the Middle East with the Regiment, offered to instruct him – and then occurred an incident which had a lifelong effect on Dolly.

The booby traps consisted of grenades, placed inside empty bully-beef tins and suspended at about ankle height, attached to a trip-wire. The safety pin was removed from the grenade, thus releasing the sprung lever which activated the detonator. The trap-setter, however, had to hold the lever in place with one hand, and slip the grenade into the tin, which was just the right size to hold the lever in place. While in the tin, it was safe. Doug Blom, a most delightful fellow, who had performed the operation many times, somehow managed to drop the grenade after removing the pin. The 4 second fuse did not allow him to escape and he suffered wounds from which he died a few days later. Dolly was fortunately unharmed – physically. Thereafter, he – quite needlessly – blamed himself for Doug's death. Nobody else, including Doug, attached the slightest blame to Dolly, but he carried that undeserved feeling of guilt all his life.

From then on, things could only get better. After being relieved from the Dove Bay area, 2/9 Squadron was lucky and had no further direct contact with the foe, unlike 2/7 and 2/10 Squadrons. 10 Squadron in particular, suffered a number of casualties in the last few weeks of hostilities. The Japanese 18th Army eventually realised that the war was over and formally surrendered on 13.9.45. Dolly and I were both in the Regimental Guard of Honour that witnessed the handing over of the Japanese Commander's sword to our "Red Robbie" in an impressive ceremony on an airstrip at Cape Wom, near Wewak.

Dolly was duly repatriated and, many months after war's end, discharged. His brief formal education had left him with few of the skills necessary for civilian life, but he sensibly returned to agriculture. There were no Soldier Settler's wheat blocks available, but he took out a War Service loan and went into partnership with his father and brother and after much very hard work: swinging an axe, clearing virgin scrub and learning the finer points of agriculture, he became a skilful and efficient farmer, whose skills were utilised by the UN to teach new methods to primitive farmers in North Africa.

Our paths next crossed in the 21st Century when I saw his name among the list of apologies for a ceremony at the AWM, Canberra. I found his address, made contact, and suggested that he honour the Eastern States with his presence on Anzac Day. He and Shirley made the trip – I think that was about 2010 – and Dolly, Reg Davis and I marched together in Sydney. Thereafter he was a regular attendee at either Sydney or Melbourne on Anzac Day, and was a great host to Kathie and me when we visited Perth in 2017, linking me up with Ben Mundy, ex 2/9 and 2/7 Squadrons – and ex-10th Light Horse – as were many of the 1944 input to the Regiment. He wowed us all at our Regimental lunch in Sydney with film footage of his 90th Birthday celebrations: jumping from an aeroplane and sky-diving like a dinki-di paratrooper.

He impressed us, too, with his constant globe-trotting, especially when he had been selected by DVA to attend the ceremony in PNG for the 70th anniversary of the Japanese surrender. He had a slight stroke just before he was due to leave and DVA, playing safe, refused to take him. So what does Trooper Dolton do? He recruits his son as a carer and pays his own way to New Guinea, witnessing the ceremony at the very spot where he witnessed the actual surrender on 13.9.45! And then he follows the official party as a kind of honorary member. Stroke? What stroke?

We will miss him on Thursday – but what a great idea to hold the funeral on Anzac Eve! He would have cracked some wry joke about it if he'd known – or did he plan it this way?

A good mate of mine, no longer with us, was that great Western Australian ex-commando and man of letters, Tom Hungerford. 2/8 Squadron. His poem, *Anzac Day*, after describing a typical 1950s reunion, and the jeep-loads of WW1 Old Diggers leading the march, concludes, in the imagined words of one of his mates:

*That's us in a few years! Medals and ribbons,
Hair brushed, bums wiped, shoes shined, our teeth
in,
"Wheeled out once a year for the Anzac Day
shindig,
And then carted home."*

That was never going to suit Trooper Dolton G.L; WX28219. He did it his way. In Sydney tomorrow [Anzac Day] the children, grandchildren and widows of former members, lunching together – about 30 of them – will drink to the memory of those two great old Signallers, Graham ("Dolly") Dolton and Reg Davis. Through the mud, through the blood, to the green fields beyond."

This indeed we did, for Dolly and Reg (see Commando News 15) were very popular with both their few surviving contemporaries and the younger generation which has supported us in recent years.



NX114020 Alex Rex Stubbings

25 September 1922 – 23 August 2019
2nd/6th Commando Squadron (The Purple Devils)

Eulogy by Alex's Grandson

Pa, **Y**ou were truly a hero and an inspiration to myself and everyone around you. You were a man full of knowledge and always had the right words to say to make any situation better.

I have never met a man as tough and strong as you. The things you've been through were truly amazing. The stories you shared from your upbringing, your experiences in WWII and the life after the war with nanna which really assures me that hard work and dedication pays off.

Pa, we are all here because we love you so much. My heart breaks to be laying you to rest today but it makes it easier knowing you're now reunited with nanna and hanging out having a cup of tea with dad too. You will be truly missed but we all know if we are ever feeling down and want to have a chat with you all we need to do is pick up a bottle of red wine.

I still can't believe that's all you were asking for in hospital. You've asked that much that even one of the nurses was going to bring you one.

Over the past six months or so mum would go down to Pa's house every morning to make sure he was up and eating and getting ready for the day. She would ask whether he had dinner the night before or lunch or what he did yesterday, and he could never really remember exactly but one thing's for sure, he definitely remembers having his glass of wine. Bloody alcos these days, aye.

I would just like to share a few stories that really stick out to me from my childhood and teen years that really show what kind of man Pa was.

When I was 14 I had an accident at the local skate park and broke my ankle and need surgery. Problem was I wasn't meant to be at the skate park and my parents didn't know. When they found out both mum and dad lost their minds. A few days later when I got out of hospital Pa came around to see me. I wasn't looking forward to this at all because I was waiting to cop a spray off him too. The first thing he said to me was... "too bad your parents found out, isn't it?"

I was gobsmacked. I asked him what he meant? He said: "I'm gathering you've been there a few times



Alex Rex Stubbings
2/6 Cdo Sqn WW2

before and you only got caught because you hurt yourself." I was still so confused. He then started to tell me the story about how he rode horse rodeo when he was about the same age and had a mini arena set up at the back of the farm that his parents didn't know about and they never knew nor found out because he never got hurt. As he said: "Mate, you do know sometimes what they don't know won't kill them."

I couldn't believe the words that just came out of his mouth.

There was also the time that I used to take Pa once a month to Auburn Tennis Club for his Auburn RSL Sub Branch meetings. He loved going and catching up with some old mates

having a wine, that goes without saying, and having dinner. I would always offer to buy dinner and buy him his wine but every time he would say the same thing: "Mate you're going out of your way to bring me. It's my shout." So I just went along with it. After a few months Pa then got me a 2-year membership to the Club also which I found a nice offer as well.

It wasn't until a few months later when I was speaking to one of the old diggers there and was saying how Pa shouted me dinner and a drink every time and paid for my Club membership and he started laughing his heart off and shouted "Rex, you funny bastard". I was looking around all confused and the gentleman said to me: "Mate the Sub Branch pays for the food and drinks for everyone." I looked at Pa and he just nodded his and kept drinking his wine. When the gentleman says, "as for the membership, it's \$2.50 for 2 years." Here I am thinking Pa is spending all this money and the membership was in fact a birthday present for me.

Pa really never had a bad word to say about anybody and anyone who had the pleasure of meeting him would said it was the definition of a gentleman.

These are only a few stories of many and I look forward to talking to you all later and hear some from you guys too.

Let's all tonight raise a glass for Pa and remember him as the kind hearted father, grandfather, great grandfather and proud soldier that he is.

Thank you.



NX136161 Lieutenant Pierre William (Bill) Beiers

Z Special Unit WW2

21 February 1921 – 26 August 2019

A Long Life Fully Lived By A 'Z' Special Veteran

I feel humbled to be writing about a man who served his country with such distinction. The son of Harold Beiers who received the Military Cross in France while serving with the 17th Australian Infantry Battalion in WW1, Bill was born on the 21st February 1921 in Newcastle NSW.

Bill's father Harold - also an engineer - was from a Danish family who had immigrated to the Maryborough area in Queensland during the 1870s. Harold was a Lt-Colonel in the First World War, and finished the war as officer in charge of the demobilization and repatriation of troops from the south of France.

At a meeting with a local MP in Marseilles, Harold met the MP's sister-in-law, Jeanine Levy, a Swiss Jewish woman. Harold and Jeanine soon married and they returned to Australia, where they had two children – Bill's brother George, then 2 years later Bill, who arrived in 1921.

With WW2 looming, Bill went straight from school to the AIF. After a year or so in the AIF, he was selected to enter RMC Duntroon. Graduating in 1942 Bill transferred to the Parachute Battalion where he became a jumpmaster. There, while training parachutists, he crossed paths with soldiers from the newly formed "Z" Special force, who convinced him to join them. He saw out the rest of the war serving in operations in Borneo, Indonesia and New Guinea. During this time Bill was posted with Special Operations Australia – SRD, and was a member of the following operations: Semut 112 3 guerrilla warfare and intelligence collection in Sarawak, Apr-Oct 1945; Squirrel – Tarakan, 5th Apr-9th Apr 1945; Phase 1 Mission 3, an intelligence source (Kamjir) extraction, 24th Apr-3rd May 1945 Phase 2, an intelligence collection patrol; Magpie 1 Phase 2, reconnoitre of Majoe and Tifore Islands, 28th Jun-3rd July 1945 Finch 1, intelligence collection patrols of Batjan Island, 7th-8th July 1945

After the war Bill went on to study engineering at Sydney University as an early "Mature Age" student. He moved in with a well-known artist colony in the Sydney mansion-boarded house called Merioola in the suburb of Woolarah. Bill lived in the gardener's cottage, as his brother George studied architecture and artists like William Dobell, Russell Drysdale, Donald Friend and Geoffrey Smart, lived and painted in the house.

In 1952 Bill and a friend headed off to London by ship and it was while the ship was going through the Great Australian Bight in rough weather that he met Vona. It just happened that they were the only



Vona & LT Bill Beiers at a Service.

passengers on deck at the time. It must have been providence. Bill and his friend invited Vona and her friend to get off in Naples, which they did, then travelled up to Rome where they met up with Sylvia Franklin, a family relative who telegraphed home to Vona's mum, to reassure her saying "don't worry they are with a couple of 'gentlemen'". They arrived in London and not too long after Bill and Vona were married. It was July 1953 (Bastille Day).

As an engineer Bill's work took him to Bombay to build a wharf that he had been designing for the engineering company he was working with in England. After combining work and adventures in India, Bill and Vona returned to Australia to start a family. After a life with no children and three servants they were now with three children and no servants.

Bill soon settled down to building bridges and wharves in Sydney, Townsville and Hobart. Having a child in each city really combined these two modes of production, with daughter Sophie's head size a measure for the fence of the Tasman Bridge, that worked perfectly.

In the 70s Bill moved to Lysaghts BHP in Hastings, and in 1982 bought a property in Merricks, finally retiring from work in 1986. Bill then became involved in volunteer work where he became a permanent feature at the BHP Mill over the next few years as tour guide.



He served breakfasts for homeless people for 10 years at a community centre in Frankston, and performed as a Court Network volunteer in Rosebud Magistrates Court.

Later in life his war years became more important to him. Bill joined in the Anzac Day marches and became more involved in the Duntroon and "Z" Special Unit events. He would have had his original 'Z' Special tie to wear except his middle son lost it at primary school. Typical of Bill's calm and self-controlled nature he did not get angry or remind his son of his carelessness when he later found out.

Bill liked to keep fit – he played rugby for a team in Bombay and also played for Sydney Uni, and played squash and tennis regularly with his good friend Phil Robinson, and at the local over-70s club, until he was 93 years of age. Bill then opted for the reduced aerobic requirements of Petanque (Boules).

Bill enjoyed a huge social and cultural life that continued until just three weeks ago (August 2019). He would have been to nine plays during the early part of this year (2019) at the MTC/Malthouse/Frankston Civic as well as several MPMS concerts, several Mornington Film Society films, and a couple of gallery visits.

At Bill's memorial service Major Steve Pilmore OAM RFD (Ret'd) gave an address on behalf of the Australian Commando Association (ACA). He conveyed the best wishes of the Special Forces community and the condolences of the national president of the Australian Commando Association, Major General Greg Melick AO SC, who was unable to attend the service and who

sent his apology. Col Doug Knight (Ret'd) president of ACA Victoria sent his condolences and regretted his absence due to being overseas.

Major Pilmore said he had known Bill since the mid-70s when his 126 Sigs Squadron had formed a relationship with the men of the "Z" Special Unit Association of Victoria and their families, and had come to know Lt Col Sir John Holland, Doug Bower, Alec Boast, Lawrie Black, Bert Conquest, Dr Bill Dwyer, Gordon Richter, Peter MacDougall, Bill Jenkins, Lindsay Cottee, Frank Ball (Flight 200) and others, and of course Bill Beiers.

Others to send their condolences were Brig Craig Shortt, and the former director of the Australian War Memorial Dr Brendan Nelson, who said of Bill, "A good man and a good life". Steve continued with a message from the "Head of ASIO", a former Special Operation Commander Maj Gen Duncan Lewis, who said he was proud of what Special Forces had done in Australia and overseas in the last 25 years. But what has been achieved however was possible because, "We stood on the shoulders of the giants who came before us - those men, like 'your father' who laid the foundations for what Brig Shortt's group and Gen Duncan Lewis' team before him have achieved since.

Major Pilmore concluded, to Bill's family, "So I say to you, on behalf of the Australian Commando Association, General Lewis, Brig Shortt, and Dr Nelson, what your Dad was part of, was incredibly significant to what we do today. The contribution of Bill and his band of brothers is fully acknowledged, and the flame burns bright in today's young Special forces soldiers".

"We shall never forget them".

For many of Bill's contemporaries the war years demanded of them courage, resilience and tenacity, which Bill displayed both during and after those dangerous times, and he will be remembered by his family for his caring and compassionate qualities.

'Non, je ne regrette rien.' (Edith Piaf)

ACA members Dick Pelling, Marc Preston, Steve Pilmore, Tom Hood and John Baade attended Bill's service.

COMMANDO VALE

LIEUTENANT JAMES DARCY LEROY HASSETT

14 August 1933 – 15 November 2019

1 Commando Company

1st Commando Regiment



THE ARTHUR "ROBBIE" ROBINSON, BEM, DCM STORY

The Rifle Brigade (UK Army), 1 RAR, Parachute Training Wing, AATTW

By Barry Grant, Immediate Past President, ACA NSW

Arthur "Robbie" Robinson enlisted in the British Army in 1945 just prior to the end of WW2, undergoing training at Winchester with the Rifle Brigade, but at the end of the War was trained as a Gunner Mechanic.

At the completion of his training, Robbie became a PTI Instructor in the Army Physical Training Corps at the age of 18. He was later posted to Egypt and served with the British Protectorate Troops, Betchuna, Basuto and Swazi, responsible for the fitness of the various Units doing Guard Duty on the Suez Canal and in 1948 he was sent home for demobilisation.

Robbie did several civilian jobs but could not settle down and eventually re-joined the Army in 1950 and was sent to Arborfield Apprentice School as a Corporal PTI. At that



WO2 Arthur "Robbie" Robinson, BEM, DCM
at a Formal Dinner.

time Australia started advertising for ex British Army Instructors as the Korean War had commenced. Robbie secured release from the British Army and joined the Australian Regular Army and was posted to 1 RAR at Ingleburn. Robbie was not allowed to go to Korea but in 1951 was promoted to Sergeant and sent to 19 National Service Training Battalion, (later known as P&RT) as a PTI. At a later tour of duty in 1953 at Kapooka, where the Battalion was stationed, he was sent on a Parachute Course, and in December of that year made up to a temporary WO2.

At the School of Land Air Warfare completed the first Parachute Jump Instructors Course run in Australia at the newly formed

Parachute Training Wing by the RAAF. Robbie later instructed on courses designed for Special Forces including 1 Commando Company, also trialling new equipment and was the first Instructor to do a water jump. For his dedication to Parachuting Robbie was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM).

Robbie also hoped to be transferred to the newly formed SAS Coy, but was sent to North Head Military Gymnasium, where he re-qualified as a PTI, but in an accident on a vault horse broke his neck. He was then posted to 1 RTB until September 1963 when he again discharged from the ARA,

Robbie moved to New Zealand where he took up swimming coaching however, returned to Australia to join the Army Reserve. Not long after he re-joined the ARA in Kapooka, where he completed various courses in Language, Small Arms, Heavy Weapons, Infantry Tactics and Communications. In December 1967 he was posted to Vietnam with the AATTW, taking part in approx 40 Operations. During his tour of duty, he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM), the United States Silver Star, the Army of Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) Cross of Gallantry Gold Star, the Bronze Cross of Gallantry, the Armed Forces Honour Medal, 5 letters of commendation from various US Army Commanders and one from CO of the South Vietnamese Rangers. On return to Australia, he decided to once again leave the Regular Army and after service in the CMF, finished his service in 1976.

In 1999 Robbie was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame. He is the only Non-US member to be inducted.

Robbie was a long-time member of ACA NSW.

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WO2 KEITH HUGHES FINAL PARADE

The Farewell Service For WO2 Keith Hughes

2 Commando Company, 1st Commando Regiment

Following his passing last July, a service to celebrate the life of Keith Hughes was held at the Box Hill RSL, following his earlier private cremation. Celebrant Diane Storey said she was privileged to join with the large congregation of family, friends and military comrades in honouring Keith at the service. Di's husband Ian was a long-time 2 Cdo Coy comrade and good friend of Keith. Di said the gathering allowed the fellowship of family and friends to farewell Keith in a manner that befitted his personality. "Yes, expect a little romance, levity - lots of that! - reflection and affection, respect and love in abundance, such was the nature of this good man", Di explained. To commence the ceremony, Keith and Kris's sons Brendan and Nathan lit a candle that Kris extinguished at the conclusion of the service.

*A candle lit as we become still and calm,
a candle lit for personal peace
and most importantly,
a candle lit in thanksgiving
for all Uggs' life meant to you.*

Keith and Kris believed in service to their country through the Army which led to their meeting 38 years ago when Kris served with 126 Sig Squadron. Kris operated a signals detachment from the 2 Cdo Coy HQ at Williamstown and had to report daily to 'Uggs' as the 2 Coy CSM. Early in their joint service, when the Company left on exercise Kris saw an opportunity for adventure, so stowed aboard the C-130 Hercules to Sydney. After discovery and a severe scolding by the 1 Cdo Coy CSM Kris was tasked to command the advance party for the exercise. The exercise came to an end and all parties then consolidated socially. This was the beginning of their relationship.

Kris recalled Keith had an abiding appreciation of nature in all its colour and abundance. He loved the mountains, the sea, sunrise and sunset. The natural world and the universe deeply interested and inspired him. And he loved animals.

Close friend Ian Storey said, "Uggs was the soldiers friend, though some may have difficulty with that! Uggs - loud, profane, rough, the original wearer of



WO2 Keith Hughes (c) during the Freedom of the City Parade in Williamstown, Vic, March 1980

hessian undies. Good hearted, generous, strong and loyal to his friends. No respecter of rank or position, if a person was "talking s**t", Keith would tell him, despite his rank - or maybe because of it". Ian recalled, "At Point Roadnight near Anglesea: coming through the heavy surf in a Gemini and laughing like a fool, shouting 'Down into the coal mines' as we screamed down the face of a wave. Then, coming out through the surf he went the length of the boat, grabbing soldiers by the ankles and tipping them into the water to hang onto the side and balance the boat in the surf and the longshore rip." On Port

Phillip Bay, on a Navy Oberon class submarine, Keith and I were developing drills for wet-deck launch and recovery, with an inflatable and four canoes being recovered by the 'float-on' technique. The merging fin capsized one canoe and the other three were perched precariously athwart the fin as it rose three or more metres out of the water. Keith abandoned the inflatable, scrambled onto the fin and tipped the three canoes into the water, complete with the soldiers manning them", Ian said.

At Puckapunyal Eddie Nicholas and I were in sleeping bags on their stretchers in a hut, with the soldiers assembling outside for PT. Ed and I had agreed we were not getting out of bed for any bastard! The door crashed open and Uggs came roaring in, "Alright you pair of bastards - OUT!" Following an exchange of verbal abuse, complete with stretcher, and still in my sleeping bag, I was turfed out the door with arms flailing, bracing myself for a break fall. Eddie 'Nic', also fondly remembered today, was a turncoat - out of bed, boots on, buttoning his pants and running on the spot to convince Keith he was already doing PT. Amazing memories for many here present. Truly, a legend."

In the light of Keith's long service to the Commandos, Doug Knight, the Australian Commando Association Victoria president, spoke at length of Keith's abilities and commitment.

Former Victorian Commando Association President Bruce Parker also spoke to the large assembly about Keith's friendship and his many achievements. Bruce described Keith, who he had known for 56 years, as "a

good mate, an outstanding soldier and an excellent leader". He said Keith served in 2 Commando Company for an unimaginable 27 years. Bruce explained that the nickname 'Uggs', with its variations, was bestowed on Keith by Bluey McDowell, and was somehow related to an early motor vehicle accident. Bruce outlined a number of the highlights of Keith's military career and also his personal life, from the early years up to the present time. He said, "When things became hot, or tough, Keith was one of the people I would want alongside me." At one time Keith, Bruce and John Hoszylyk were joint instructors across a 12-month Officer's Conversion Course, involving small craft operations, climbing, diving and parachuting. Keith had enormous involvement with many people, both within the Commando Regiment, and with many old friends inside and outside the military over many years.

"Respected by all, you will be sadly missed, old soldier and old mate", Bruce concluded.

Keith's brother Barry said for most people who knew him Keith was a larger than life character, "And for those of us involved in his life, we knew just where we stood with the big fella. With Keith, respect was something you earned, not something that came with a position or badges of rank, issued from the Q-Store. His maxim was 'Fools are not tolerated - not negotiable'. But he was always fair." Barry said Keith had a soft spot for kids and animals and a natural respect for women. He approached his work and life with a dedication and professionalism hard to match. There would be more than a few people walking around today who were beneficiaries of his dedication and professionalism, considering the rather risky pursuits in which he instructed and counselled. As my brother he was always there if asked. We were two different characters, with much friendly sibling rivalry and although we never did live in each other's pockets, we trained together for several years. He was a hard taskmaster and somehow managed to teach me to drive all manner of trucks while with 33 Coy in the Service Corps. For a while there I think I was one of the few people who frightened him. We then moved to 2 Commando, which literally become our life for several years. During this time, we competed and co-operated and become closer - even though he managed to put a fighting knife in my forearm at one point! He had an uncanny knack of finding me on the drop zone of every night jump we did, no matter which plane load or stick we jumped in. He'd come out of the dark with 'You OK Baz?' My answer was 'Yes - and you?' and we would wander off together with our gear. Keith eventually met and married Kris and they raised two fine sons, Brendan and Nathan, both of whom looked to Keith as a role model. Keith will be sadly missed.

Kaare Foy, a 1960s 2 Coy colleague of Keith explained he was in Montenegro attending a

conference of Honorary Consuls. "When I heard life had lost Uggs. I could not get home to Melbourne for his funeral. My good Montenegrin friend, Sasa Labudovic, a former officer in the Yugoslav Army, said, 'as one ex-soldier to another, let's honour him over here'". Coinciding with the day and time of his service, a commemorative wreath in memory of Keith was laid at the National Military Memorial in Podgorica, the capital of Montenegro. Another good friend of Kaare, a former officer in the Yugoslav Army, Sasa Labudovic, kindly inserted a notice in the daily newspaper. Along with the large attendance, many other friends who could not be there sent their apologies and messages of condolences to Kris and the family. These included Robert McDowell, Frank Read, George Saalman, Paul Riley and others. Paul wrote, "We are all richer for having Keith in our lives and collectively poorer for his passing". There is no doubt Paul summed up the feelings of all who knew Keith.

ACA VIC later presented Kris with a certificate of appreciation to Keith, recognising his more than 40 years of service to 2 Commando Company and the Victorian Commando Association. Beyond his exemplary service in 2 Coy, Keith was present at the Association's inaugural meeting in March 1983, and was active in supporting it ever since.

All members of the Association offer their thoughts and sympathy to Kris, Brendan and Nathan, and also Barry, Barbara and family, and all members of the Hughes and Leeds families.



Kris Hughes was presented a Certificate of Appreciation for Keith's outstanding service by ACA VIC



ADDITIONAL COMMANDO NEWS

New Commandos Presented Their Sherwood Green Berets

Brigadier Craig Shortt, DSC, CSC, DSM, Commander Special Forces Group, returns the salute of one of the Army's newest Commandos during the Special Operations Training & Education Centre beret parade at Holsworthy Barracks, Sydney, on Friday, 15 November 2019.

Three dozen Australian Army soldiers from the Special Operations Training & Education Centre were awarded their Sherwood-green berets as qualified Commandos during a parade at Holsworthy Barracks, Sydney, on Friday, 15 November 2019.

Brigadier Craig Shortt, Commander of the Special Forces Group, personally awarded berets to the 30 soldiers and six officers who graduated from the 14-month-long Commando reinforcement cycle. All 36 new commandos will now join the 2nd Commando Regiment.

Three Royal Australian Air Force combat controllers also completed the course and were awarded their grey berets. The air superiority grey colour of the combat controller beret symbolises the close association between Air Force strike aircraft and the combat controllers.

Brigadier Shortt addressed the parade and emphasised the need for all graduates to continue to embrace Army and Air Force values as they undertake their new roles.



BRIG Craig Shortt, DSC, CSC, DSM, Commander SF Group, returns the salute of one of the 36 new Commandos at the Beret Parade in Sydney, 15 November 2019.

From all of us at The Australian Commando Association, congratulations to all 36 new Commandos who received their Commando Berets as well as the three RAAF Combat Controllers who received their Grey Coloured Berets.

Welcome to the Brotherhood and Commando 4 Life.

"Without Warning"

COMMANDO FOR LIFE

The Australian Defence Veteran Covenant

During the month of November, the Australian Defence Veteran Covenant has started to roll out across the country.

The Covenant

The Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant serves to recognise and acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the contribution of veterans and their families. The Covenant is supported by the Veteran Card, Lapel Pin and Oath. These provide the opportunity for Australians to identify veterans when they are not in uniform or wearing their medals, and offer respect to them and their family.

Employers, businesses, local community groups and the broader Australian public are able to commit their support for the Covenant. The Covenant provides the framework that enables veterans and their families to better connect with their community.

The Lapel Pin

The Lapel Pin allows the wider community to acknowledge your service regardless of whether you served in the Navy, Army or Air Force. Reserve members will receive a different Lapel Pin.

The Oath

The Oath is a declaration on behalf of the Australian people recognising the valuable contribution that current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and their families make and have made for our country.

The Veteran Card

Use your Veteran Card to gain access to treatment for service-related conditions or injuries that DVA has approved, and access to DVA-funded mental health treatment, if required.

Support or benefits from participating businesses and organisations.





The Australian Defence Veteran Covenant



The Lapel Pin



The Veteran Card

Eligibility

Veterans

Veterans who have served in the permanent ADF are eligible to apply for all components of the Covenant including the Veteran Card, Lapel Pin and Oath.

Reservists

Reservists who have served one day of Continuous Full-Time Service (CFTS), have engaged in Disaster Relief Service, Border Protection Service, or involved in a serious service-related training accident, are

eligible to apply for all components of the Covenant including the Veteran Card, Lapel Pin and Oath.

Reservists not included in the above are eligible to apply for the Lapel Pin and Oath.

How To Apply

Veterans and Reservists can now apply for the Covenant, including the Veteran Card, Lapel Pin and Oath, online using MyService. Depending on your type of service, you may be eligible for all, or some, of the Covenant items. These items will be sent in the mail, noting that the Lapel Pin and Oath will be sent separately to the Veteran Card.

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A NEW GONG FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS

The Australian Operational Service Medal – Special Operations

Introduction

On the 1st of November 2019, the Australian Service Medal (ASM) with Clasp Special Operations became obsolete on the Honours and Awards system and was replaced with the Australian Operational Service Medal – Special Operations.

Service on special operations, as determined by the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), has been recognised by the awarding of the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 (ASM45-75) with Clasp 'SPECIAL OPS' and the ASM with Clasp 'SPECIAL OPS' since 1975. Commencing 1 November 2019, service on special operations will be recognised with the Australian Operational Service Medal (AOSM) – Special Operations.



AOSM – Special Operations

Background

Following a review of Medal Instruments, the AOSM was introduced in 2012 to succeed the Australian Active Service Medal (AASM) and the ASM. Since then, differing ribbons have been introduced to recognise different awards within the AOSM Medal, these are:

AOSM – Border Protection Three equal stripes of dark blue, ochre and dark green which denote the seas and sky, the deserts and the forests and grasslands.	AOSM – Greater Middle East Operation Bone, green, black and blue which represents sand, Australia and hope, anti-piracy, and maritime and air aspects.	AOSM – Civilian Green, gold and purple stripes with the green and gold representing Australia, while the purple represents Defence.
		

On 31 October 2019 the ASM with Clasp SPECIAL OPS will transition to the Australian Operational Service Medal – Special Operations, with a black medal ribbon with a central thin red stripe. The black represents the non-conventional conduct of special operations, while the single red stripe represents danger, strength and the great sacrifices made by recipients in defence of Australia.

The new medal ribbon is black with a central thin red stripe. The black represents the non-conventional conduct of special operations, while the single red stripe represents danger, strength and the great sacrifices made by recipients in defence of Australia.

From 1 November 2019

Special operations which conclude on 1 November 2019, as determined by CDF, are eligible for recognition with the AOSM – Special Operations. All operations prior to this date will be recognised under the appropriate awards for that period, such as the ASM with Clasp 'SPECIAL OPS'.

The AOSM – Special Operations will be awarded under the same conditions to the ASM with Clasp 'SPECIAL OPS', in that CDF determines eligibility for those to be awarded the AOSM – Special Operations. The Directorate of Honours and Awards are provided with a nominal roll of eligible persons, which is then utilised to issue the award directly to persons without the need to apply.

Persons who have previously been awarded the ASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'SPECIAL OPS' or the ASM 75- with Clasp 'SPECIAL OPS' can also be awarded with, and wear, the AOSM – Special Operations for eligible service.

Applications for the AOSM – Special Operations are not accepted.

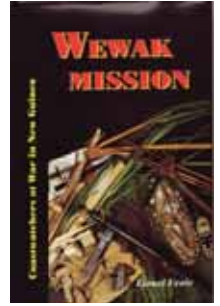
The new medal ribbon is black with a central thin red stripe. The black represents the non-conventional conduct of special operations, while the single red stripe represents danger, strength and the great sacrifices made by recipients in defence of Australia.



BOOKS OF INTEREST

WEWAK MISSION

By SGT Lionel Veale OAM. MiD.



In the ultimate Second World War victory in the South-West Pacific, a group known as the Coastwatchers played a very significant role.

Their numbers were small but the contribution they made to the war effort was invaluable.

The Coastwatchers Unit was made up mainly of people who were living in New Guinea at the time of the Japanese invasion. They were plantation owners, Government staff and officials of various kinds, and people who were involved in the everyday businesses and industries of the Territory.

The Unit also included members of the Royal Australian Air Force, the Royal Australian Navy and various Army Commando units.

The role of the Coastwatchers was to observe the actions of the Japanese throughout New Guinea and the islands of the South-West Pacific. Their work was extremely hazardous as they searched out the intelligence behind enemy lines.

This book tells the story of a Coastwatchers mission

which took four Australian soldiers on an amazing expedition deep into Japanese held territory in the north of New Guinea. It is a story of outstanding courage, dedication and endurance, a fitting tribute to the fine efforts of all the Coastwatchers during the war in the Pacific.

The Author

SGT Lionel Veale, OAM, MiD, was an original member of 1st Independent Company in 1941 and he transferred to M Special Unit in 1942. He was Mentioned In Dispatches (MiD) during WW2 and received the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in 2016. Unfortunately, Lionel passed away just 11 days shy of his 100th birthday on 19 August 2018.

He was also both a Life Member of The Queensland Commando Association and The Australian Commando Association Queensland.

Lest We Forget

Commando 4 Life

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Franchising Agreements

Buying a franchise can be an exciting experience. However, before you commit to a franchise opportunity, it's important that you understand your rights and obligations under the Code.

- Franchise agreements
- Before entering a franchise agreement
- Doing your due diligence
- Know your 'cooling-off' rights
- Marketing funds
- Sourcing stock and services
- What is 'churning'?

Franchise agreements

A franchise agreement is a contract (written, verbal or implied) under which:

1. one party (the franchisor) grants another party (the franchisee) the right to carry on a business in Australia supplying goods or services under a specific system or marketing plan substantially determined, controlled or suggested by the franchisor or its associate
2. the business is associated with a particular trademark, advertising or a commercial symbol owned, used, licensed or specified by the franchisor or its associate
3. the franchisee is required to pay, or agree to pay an amount to the franchisor or its associate before starting or continuing the business (this excludes certain payments).

If an agreement meets this definition, it will be covered by the Code regardless of whether it's referred to as a 'franchise' or not.

Note: A motor vehicle dealership agreement (including a motor boat dealership agreement) is taken to be a franchise agreement even if the above definition has not been met.

Before entering a franchise agreement

The Code requires franchisors to provide you with certain information, including:

- a short document setting out some of the risks and rewards of franchising.

The Information statement for prospective franchisees (PDF 102.79 KB | DOCX 53.38 KB) must be given to you when you formally apply, or express interest in, buying a franchised business.

If you decide to proceed with the franchise, the franchisor must also provide you with:

- a disclosure document
- the franchise agreement (in its final form); and
- a copy of the Code.

You must receive these documents at least 14 days before you sign an agreement or make a non-refundable payment.

Note: Make sure you receive, read and have a reasonable opportunity to understand each of these documents.

Doing your due diligence

When considering a franchise opportunity you should also:

- seek advice from a lawyer, accountant and business adviser with franchising expertise
- speak to current and former franchisees about the system and their relationship with the franchisor
- take steps to identify it's a genuine business and reconsider a business opportunity if you see warning signs
- undertake some franchising education to help you assess business opportunities and decide whether franchising is right for you. For example, FranchiseED offer a Free franchising education program.

Know your 'cooling-off' rights

You are entitled to terminate a new franchise agreement (not a renewal, extension or transfer) within seven days of:

1. entering into the agreement (or an agreement to enter into a franchise agreement); or
2. making a payment under the agreement.

Note: The cooling-off period will commence from whichever of the above occurs first.

If you choose to exercise this right, you are entitled to a refund of the payments you have made. The franchisor must provide this refund within 14 days, although they may keep an amount to cover their *reasonable* expenses if the franchise agreement allows this.

Marketing funds

Marketing fund income must be kept in a separate bank account from other money held by the franchisor. Under the Code, the marketing fund can only be used to meet expenses that:

- have been disclosed in your disclosure document
- are legitimate marketing or advertising expenses
- have been agreed to by a majority of franchisees; or
- reflect the reasonable costs of administering and auditing the fund.

The marketing fund financial statement must be prepared, and audited, within four months of the end of your financial year. Copies of these documents must be provided to contributing franchisees within 30 days of their preparation.

Note: It's the franchisor's responsibility to provide these documents. A franchisee shouldn't have to request this information.

The marketing fund doesn't have to be audited if 75 per cent of franchisees who contribute to the fund vote against undertaking an audit.

Sourcing stock and services

In franchising, it's common for franchisors to request that franchisees purchase products or services from either the franchisor, a related entity or a specified third party.

Such arrangements are illegal if they *have the purpose, effect or likely effect of substantially lessening competition in a market.*

In most situations, franchisor-imposed limitations are unlikely to raise competition concerns.

What is 'churning'?

Churning is the repeated selling of a franchise site by a franchisor in circumstances where the franchisor would be reasonably aware that the site is unlikely to be successful, regardless of the individual skills and efforts of the franchisee. Although churning is not prohibited under the Code or the Competition and Consumer Act, a franchisor's conduct may raise concerns if it is false, misleading, or unconscionable. If you suspect churning, you should contact the ACCC.





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