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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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Deadline for next edition (Edition 14, 2023):

WEDNESDAY, 26th JANUARY 2023

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

Stephen Carter



The bronze beret fixed firmly to the rock, showing the classic boomerang and dagger 'Strike Swiftly' badge.
Photos courtesy Chris Badrock and Craig Eury.



www.commando.org.au

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

My warmest greetings to all. Welcome to the 13th Edition of **COMMANDO – The Magazine of the Australian Commando Association**.

The Australian Commando Association exists to foster and perpetuate ties of comradeship amongst past and serving members of the Australian Commando and Special Force units and like-minded associations.

COMMANDO – The Magazine of the Australian Commando Association is a key communication channel that is designed to keep our members well informed and to foster the Commando esprit de corps which we have all enjoyed in our various times of service. I can only reiterate that the success of the Magazine is reliant on articles generated by our State Associations and members. I want to thank those who have made the effort to put “pen to paper” as every article advances our collective understanding of the rich history which is Commando.

Commando Graduation

On Friday 4 November 2022, I was privileged to attend the graduation ceremonies for both the Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER) and 1 & 2 Commando Regiments.

I wish to thank the RSM, ADF School of Special Operations for the warm welcome and the opportunity to witness both Graduations.

It was a great honour to present the Ken “Bluey” Curran Award for the best instructor for the 2021/22 selection and reinforcement cycle **Sgt J**.

Immediately following the formal ceremony, I enjoyed a chat with Sgt J. and his colleagues about the course and the extraordinary demands of both selection and reinforcement. Sgt. J is emblematic of the current cohort of Commandos - self-effacing, thoughtful and a consummate professional.

There is no doubt that today's Commandos face an exceptionally complex environment featuring high levels of stress, danger, and hardship. Fortunately, I believe that Ken “Bluey” Curran's views on the “modern” soldier are correct, “I think today they are far superior to the soldier of the past. The soldier of the past came up through the depression days. He had to learn the ropes the hard way. Today's young soldiers in my opinion are far better educated and sophisticated and willing to learn.”

The School of Special Operations is responsible for selecting and training our Special Forces and we can

be truly satisfied that the motto “Relentless Pursuit Of Excellence” is witnessed by the calibre of the staff and graduates

On behalf of the Commando Community, I congratulate the successful graduates of the 2021/22 Selection and Reinforcement cycle.

The Year in Review

2022 witnessed an end to “lock downs” and the seemingly endless restrictions to our activities. As Swift said, “People say you don't know what you've got till it's gone, but the truth is you just never thought you'd ever lose it”.

I am pleased that the worst of those restrictions are behind us and that we are able to meet to celebrate, mourn and pay our respects to lost comrades and absent friends

Our list of Vales grew in 2022 and I wish to thank the authors of the articles that chronicled and celebrated the lives of our Comrades. In our most recent Edition, we paid respects to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II – the end of an era marked by Her Majesty's seven decades of service to the people of the Commonwealth. Service that was unfailing in its dignity, grace, compassion, and intelligence.

Maya Angelou's poignant poem “When Great Trees Fall” is a fitting tribute to those that we have lost this year.

*“When great souls die,
the air around us becomes
light, rare, sterile.
We breathe, briefly.
Our eyes, briefly,
see with
a hurtful clarity.
Our memory, suddenly sharpened,
examines,
gnaws on kind words
unsaid,
promised walks
never taken.*

*Great souls die and
our reality, bound to
them, takes leave of us.
Our souls,
dependent upon their
nurture,
now shrink, wizened.*



*Our minds, formed
and informed by their
radiance, fall away.
We are not so much maddened
as reduced to the unutterable ignorance of
dark, cold
caves.*

*And when great souls die,
after a period, peace blooms,
slowly and always
irregularly. Spaces fill
with a kind of
soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
to be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
better. For they existed."*

We have certainly lost some great souls in 2022 and
we are better for having known them

I wish to thank all of those that have contributed
articles throughout the year. Without their efforts, many
extraordinary stories would remain untold and possibly
lost in time. Accordingly, I urge all our Members to
consider "putting pen to paper" as we have a col-
lective obligation to expand the awareness of the rich
history of Commando operations and training.

My enduring thanks to the ever patient and talented
Marilou Carceller – Assistant Editor and Graphic
Designer for enduring the endless delays in
"deadlines" and the delivery of four Editions and over
two hundred pages. Without her tireless efforts,
Commando would suffer. Also, my thanks to Russell
Maddocks, our Publisher, and all our advertisers –
without them Commando simply would not exist.

Finally, I wish you, your family and loved ones all the
best for Christmas and the New Year. May you be safe
and enjoy the company of family and friends.

Stephen Carter

Editor - Commando Magazine

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AUSTRALIAN COMMANDO ASSOCIATION



Australian Commando
Association Inc

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AUSTRALIAN COMMANDO ASSOCIATION VICTORIA

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

11 November 2022

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Sat 6 August – ACAV Annual Dinner

The Annual Association Dinner was conducted at a new venue being Amora Hotel Riverwalk Melbourne, 649 Bridge Rd, Richmond, VIC 3121. The guest speaker was the Officer Commanding 2 Company, 1st Commando Regiment. 84 personnel attended with a number of current members of 1st Commando Regiment.

Sun 25 September – Commando Memorial Service held at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance at 12:30.

25th September was a glorious spring day for this year's memorial service, the sun shining and warm and, without a wind, made it easier for the banner party which, included Peter Campion, John (Pops) Bennett, Jack Ripa, and Neville Telfer.

Under the watchful eye of parade master Rob Osborne, the parade, this year rather scant in numbers, marched off to the tune of Waltzing Matilda, coming to a halt before the eternal flame, where Association Secretary Glenn (Macca) MacDonald laid a wreath. The parade reformed and continued to the Commando Memorial Tree, where the Banner Party and the Victoria Police Protective Services Shrine Guard took up position around the Commando Memorial Cairn.

With members seated and some standing, Association Secretary Macca, as MC, proceeded to introduce the Shrine Life Governor Peter Whitelaw, who coincidentally has a son who served for some years in 1 Commando Company. Peter welcomed those present and wished them a good service.

Macca delivered the address outlining the history of the Victorian Associations over the years. The Memorial Service was then conducted including the laying of a poppy by all present.

At Service conclusion Macca thanked the Shrine staff for another excellently organised day and stood down the Shrine Guard. He invited those in attendance to visit the Shrine for afternoon tea (including ANZAC biscuits and dare I say, Lamingtons).

16 October 2022 – Annual Pistol Shoot with ASASA

Our annual ACAVIC vs ASASAV pistol shoot was held after a three-year Covid-induced break. The weather finally gave us a break after a week of heavy rainfall, with sun and light winds prevailing during the day.

The Yarra Pistol Club welcomed us back with wide open arms and had their complex in Wellington Road, Lysterfield looking a treat and ready for a great afternoon's shooting.



Photo 1: The Presidents Shield
Source: Glenn MacDonald

Following registration, a settling coffee and the obligatory safety briefing, a total of 52 shooters demonstrated their skills (or slight nervousness if first timers) on the standard pistol range. Each shooter had 5 practice rounds, followed by 5 sighting rounds to allow all to "get their eye in". Every shooter had a Club instructor to expertly assist and/or guide them.

We then had 10 shots, at our own pace, that were counted for the Competition.

This year all the ASASAV Family shot very consistently, and their combined average score was 86.71 (out of a possible 100) just besting the ACAVIC Family who scored 86.28.

A 0.43 margin!! Well done to the ASASAV Team

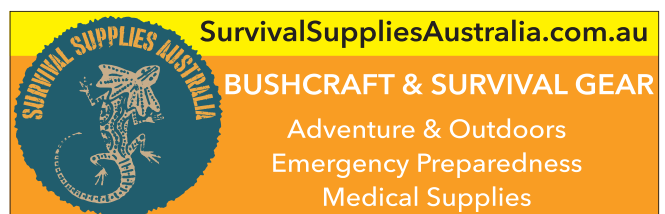
The top 4 shooters in each Association then put on a fire and movement demonstration for the rest of the Group. The ACAVIC team comprised Cameron Burnet, Mel Downing, Trevor Bergman, and his father Don Bergman, while the ASASAV Team had Dwayne Cananzi, Adam O'Donnell, Phil Sullivan and Doug McCarty. The ASASAV Team was a little fitter (faster moving) and a little more accurate on the day to be declared the victors. Don Bergman put in a sterling effort for a 90+ year old Commando (see picture next page).

So, the President's Shield will sit in the ASASAV trophy cabinet until Sunday 15 October 2023 – please put this date in your Calendar now and come along to help your Association retain/regain the Shield for another year

(Continued on page 7)



Thank you to the following companies for supporting Commando.



Final Results

Presidents' Shield

ASASAV 86.71; ACAVIC 86.28

Individual shooting

ACAVIC top shooter: Cameron Burnet 91

ASASAV top shooter: Dwayne Cananzi 95

Non-Association Men's top shooter: Kevin Downing 85

Non-Association Women's top shooter: Summer James 82

Side Note – the shooting gaff of the day saw a shooter (non-Association – reported family member of Committee man Ozzie Osborne?) put a round into the table in front of him as he bought his pistol down to reset for the next shot – it did not count in his final score.

A huge thank you to the Yarra Pistol Club and the staff who turned out on the day. Their hospitality, venue and support for our families is first class and I would be happy to endorse any of our family who might be thinking of joining the Club. They have growing junior and female contingents as well as a very reasonable subscription package. Please call Treasurer Paul Thomas on 0419 368 455 if interested



Photo 2: Still dangerous. Don Bergman at 94 years of age is our oldest member from 2 Commando Coy and Geoff Lander at 87 from Wonthaggi is the earliest living member of 2 Commando Coy joining in 1955.

16 October 2022

Sergeant Terry 'Guffa' Beckwith's Farewell

It was a not so sunny Melbourne afternoon when several hundred friends, and relatives of Guffa gathered at his new foundry facilities in Coburg North to celebrate his life and bid farewell. There were more than 15 members of ACA Vic in attendance and unfortunately the annual pistol shoot conflicted with this event. These new facilities in Coburg North were his dream for many years to greatly improve his business and secure its future for his family.



Photo 3: Members of ACA Vic with Barb Beckwith.
Source Kevin Beasley

Guffa was one of a contingent of 50 who enlisted in 2 Commando Company in June 1966 and a few months later he was one of the few who qualified 1st Class at the Annual Range Practice at Williamstown Range in February 1967 and was entitled to wear the Skills at Arms Badge for the Sub Machine gun. Soon after, in March that year, he qualified as a Swimmer Canoeist (Class 3) and in the same month he qualified at the Basic Divers Course. He qualified at the 34/67 Basic Parachute Course at Williamstown, NSW a few weeks later, in June 1967. Following his initial courses saw him qualifying in many other demanding disciplines including roping and climbing, unarmed combat, Stick Commander Swimmer Canoeist 3,2 and 1 and as a Diving Supervising Officer (Demolitions). He was promoted Substantive Corporal 21 Nov 1969 and Temporary Sergeant on the same day. Guffa discharged at his own request in April 1974 to focus on his family and business activities.

He was also a very strong supporter of the various iterations of the Commando Association and produced many high-quality presentations plaques for use by the Association.

Proudly displayed at the commemoration



Photo 4: The 2 Commando Company pennant carried by Guffa during his first Kokoda Track Walk in 2001.



Photo 5: Guffa's 2 Commando Company plaque.



Photo 6: Guffa's Australian Defence medal



FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

20 November 2022 – Commando Memorial Service - Tidal River

The annual commemoration activity will take place on Sunday 20th and it is expected that some Association members will be joining with the members of the Foster RSL for dinner on the previous evening.

Sat 10 December 2022 - end of year Xmas function with 2 Coy.

HISTORICAL COLLECTION GRANT WITH MUSEUMS VICTORIA

This grant has now been completed and the remaining funds from the grant were utilised to purchase quantities of storage boxes and display materials. The cataloguing of items within the collection is ongoing and full legal and security reasons our holdings of restricted items and weapons has been included in the database but is not available for public viewing.

To view the updates, go to...

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/australian-commando-association-victoria>

There have been several recent donations of World War II items to the Historical Collection, with one being donated by Ian Hamilton, the son of Ron Hamilton a former member of 2/6th Commando Squadron and long-time member and official of the M & Z Commando Association- Victoria. The items donated include a Japanese unit silk flag 76x68 cm (shown below) with the four large Japanese characters are a slogan/motto, translated meaning "protecting our destiny forever". The smaller Japanese writing around the red sun in the centre is the names of members and the English names written in the corners of the flag are members of 2/6th Commando Squadron were presumably involved with the capture of the flag.



Photo 7: Donated Japanese battle flag.
Source: Author

Also donated by Ian was a collection of World War II Japanese occupation currency for the Netherlands East Indies and Borneo regions. In addition, there was a significant collection of World War II Independent Company/Commando Squadron post war lapel badges

(of most but not all the Commando companies/squadrons) and a small quantity of M&Z Commando Association car stickers. These were the remaining stock when the M&Z Commando Association closed and have been handed over to ACA Vic and limited numbers are available through the website store...

<https://www.commando.org.au/shop?page=1>

A second the Historical Collection was from Ian Johnson, the son of Keith Johnson a former member of 2/10th Commando Squadron and long-time member and official of the M & Z Commando Association- Victoria. The items donated include a significant collection of VHS tapes of Association Reunions in the 1980s and 90s, several large photo albums of World War II activities and post war Association functions. These items will be digitised and entered into the collection and will be accessible through the website.

2020 Victorian Veterans' Council Grant

This project has been completed with videos and transcripts of the WW2 Special Operations oral history interviews now being available under the history section of the Association website.

The digitisation of post WW2 M & Z Victoria association magazine 'Double Diamonds' has been partially completed as only 85 of the 250 editions were readily available and are currently being uploaded onto the website. Actions are underway to digitise the remaining Victorian Branch magazines and some recently acquired New South Wales branch magazines will also be digitised and uploaded onto the Association website in the future.

Tidal River Walking Track Open Space Development - Update

The administrative processes regarding the creation of the walking track are underway with Parks Victoria and contractors and it is expected that works will commence in early 2023 when the cultural heritage aspects have been finalised. It is expected that the track will be completed in the latter part of 2023. Consultations are currently underway with Parks Victoria regarding the naming of five benches which are to be located at strategic viewpoints along the walk. ACA Vic seeking to have these named after World War II and recent Afghanistan commandos, who were Victorian based and who have been killed in action.



WELFARE

ACA Victoria continues to liaise and attend regular meetings with the Victorian Veterans Council, Legacy, RSL and DVA network to promote ACAVIC's objectives/expectations and support requirements in the very

crowded Welfare & Advocacy arena. There have been a number of requests for support from former members in the preparation and submissions to DVA for acceptance of liability for injuries sustained whilst in service. Many of these have been successful for former CMF/ARes members who are receiving surgical interventions and ongoing medical support for their injuries.

WEBSITE

ACA Victoria continues to manage the online Merchandise shop along with considerable effort to update and streamline the History, Membership and Memorial (Vale) pages.

Doug Knight

President

ACA Vic

Mobile: 0400 877 323



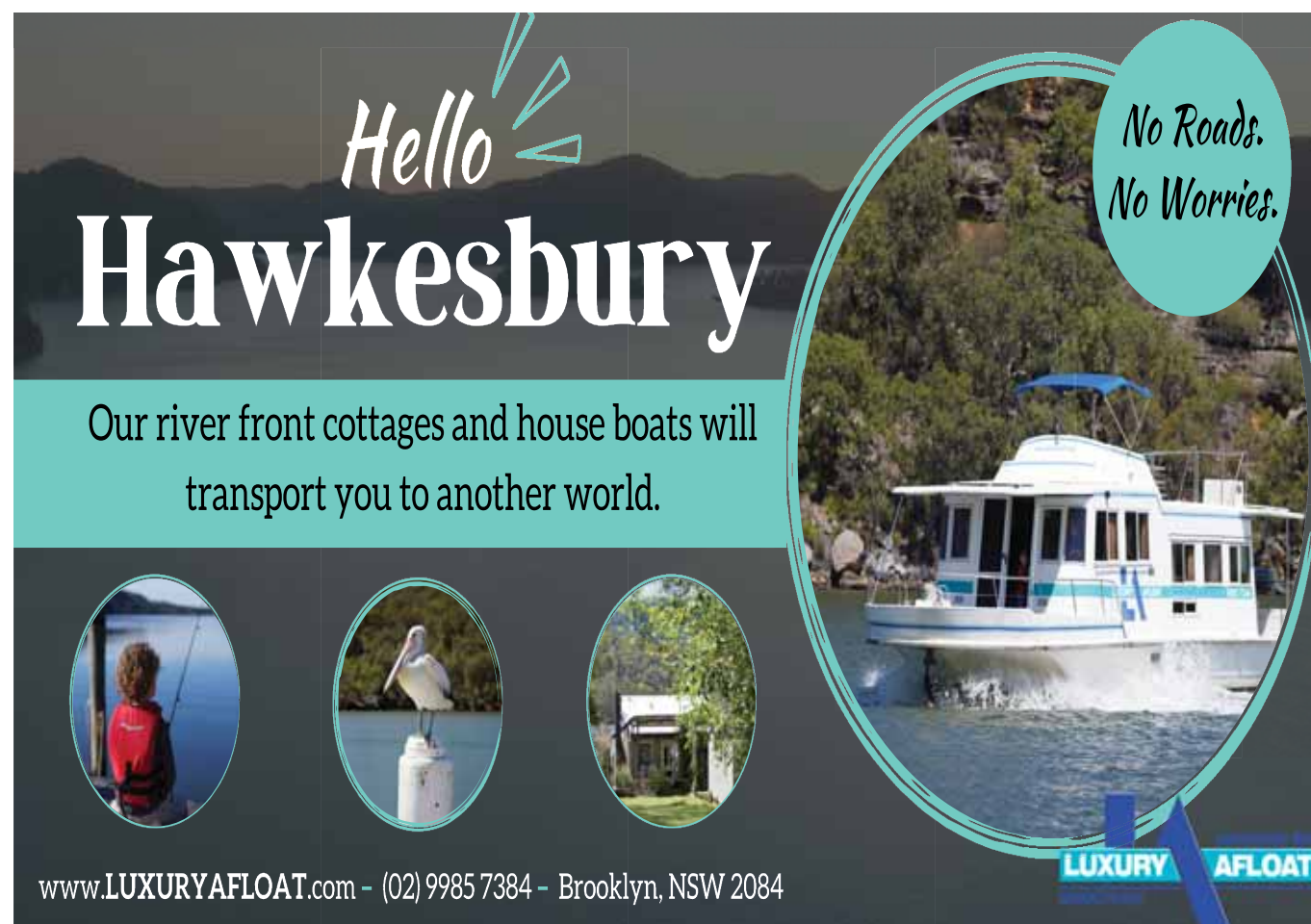
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Presidents' Shield Pistol Shoot

Australian Commando Association Victoria vs Australian SAS Association Victoria

By Glenn MacDonald, Secretary ACAVIC

Our annual ACAVIC vs ASASAV pistol shoot was held on Sunday, 16 October 2022 after a three-year Covid-induced hiatus. The weather finally gave us a break after a week of heavy rainfall, with sun and light winds prevailing during the day.

The Yarra Pistol Club welcomed us back with wide open arms and had their complex in Wellington Road at Lysterfield looking a treat and ready for a great afternoon's shooting.

Following registration, a settling coffee and the obligatory safety briefing, a total of 52 shooters demonstrated their skills (or slight nervousness if first timers) on the standard pistol range. Each shooter had five practice rounds, followed by five sighting rounds to allow all to "get their eye in". Every shooter had a Club instructor to expertly assist and/or guide them. We then had 10 shots, at our own pace, that were counted for the competition.



The Presidents' Shield was regained by the Victorian SAS Association by the narrowest of margins – less than half a point. The final scores were ASASAV 86.71 to ACAVIC 86.28.

This year all the ASASAV Family shot very consistently and their combined average score was 86.71 (out of a possible 100) just besting the ACAVIC Family who scored 86.28. **A 0.43 margin!!**

Well done to the ASASAV Team.

The top four shooters in each Association then put on a fire and movement demonstration for the rest of the group. The ACAVIC team comprised Cameron Burnet, Mel Downing, Trevor Bergman and his father Don Bergman, while the ASASAV team had Dwayne Cananzi, Adam O'Donnell, Phil Sullivan and Doug McCarty. The

ASASAV team was a little fitter (faster moving) and a little more accurate on the day to be declared the victors. Don Bergman put in a sterling effort for a 90+ year old Commando (see the picture).



Old friends. Original 1955 2 Commando Company comrades Don Bergman, left, and Geoff Lander were still going strong at the pistol shoot.



ACAVic secretary Glenn MacDonald, left, and ASASAV president Phil Sullivan proudly display the Presidents' Shield that is hotly contested between the two Associations.

Photos supplied.



So, the President's Shield will sit in the ASASAV trophy cabinet until **Sunday 15 October 2023!** – please put this date in your Calendar now and come along to help your Association regain the Shield for another year

Final Results.

Presidents' Shield. ASASAV 86.71; ACAVIC 86.28
Individual shooting. ACAVIC top shooter: Cameron Burnet 91; ASASAV top shooter: Dwayne Cananzi 95; non-Association Men's top shooter: Kevin Downing 85; non-Association Women's top shooter: Summer James 82.

Side Note – the shooting gaff of the day saw a shooter (non-Association – a reported family member of committee man Ozzie Osborne?) put a round into the table in front of him as he brought his pistol down to reset for the next shot – it did not count in his final score.

A huge thank you to the Yarra Pistol Club and the staff who turned out on the day. Their hospitality, venue and support for our Families is first class and I would be happy to endorse any of our Family who might be thinking of joining the Club. They have growing Junior and Female contingents as well as a very reasonable subscription package. Please call Treasurer Paul Thomas on 0419 368 455 if interested.

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OLD SOLDIERS VISIT THE RAAF BASE

A small cohort of Latrobe Valley – east of Melbourne – Association members recently enjoyed a tour of the nearby RAAF base. Instead of our usual ‘coffee-catchup’ at one of our local RSL branches we travelled to the base at East Sale, 50 or so kilometres further East.

The base became operational in April 1943 and is one of the only two WW2 bases still operational. The other is RAAF Base Williamtown, well known to our Association members as the former home of the Parachute Training School.

The East Sale Base is the Air Force's primary aviation and officer training base, training the next generation of Air Force leaders as aviation specialists including pilots, pilot instructors, mission aircrew and air traffic controllers. The Base is also home to the RAAF aerobatic display team, the RAAF Roulettes.

Former 126 Commando Sigs member Sheryl English arranged the visit through her son Steven, who is a Qualified Flying Instructor at the Base's Central Flying School.

Steven previously served as a pilot flying C130 Hercules in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was also a PC9 pilot in the ‘Roulettes’ RAAF aerobatic display team – one of Sheryl's highlights was when Steven and his Roulette team flew over an earlier Anzac Day march in Melbourne when Sheryl was marching with the Commando Association.

A Flight Sergeant in the Latrobe Valley's 426 Squadron of the Air Force Cadets, Sheryl is the Squadron's admin officer, fulfilling multiple roles – and



After the march. Flight Sergeant Sheryl English with her RAAF sons Terrance and Steven at the Traralgon cenotaph on Anzac Day this year. Photo Latrobe Valley Express.



The (very) old and the bold: Barry, Bruno, Terry and Peter as Steven explains the PC-21 in the hangar. Photo Sheryl English.

is an instructor to the many keen Air Force cadets she teaches and mentors.

The duty of service runs in Sheryl's family. Her other son, Flight Lieutenant Terrance English is a military doctor in the RAAF's 1 Expeditionary Health Squadron. Sheryl is proud of both of her sons. A highlight was when all three marched together in the ANZAC Day parade at Traralgon earlier this year.

The lucky group of Association members comprised Sheryl, who drove us to East Sale, with Peter Beasley, Bruno Saulle and Barry Higgins the relaxed passengers. Fellow 126 Cdo Sigs veteran Terry Jinks drove himself as he had to go to work straight after the visit. Terry is listed on the 126 Sigs 100 jumps honour board and was the first Z Special Unit Association awardee in 1986.

We met Sheryl's son, Squadron Leader Steven English, at the car park and he took us by minibus to the Security check-in station. It was fairly rigorous - we had to produce ID and were photographed before receiving a security card with our photo included.

Our minibus tour of the precinct showed the incredible size of the complex with its multi-million



The cutting edge PC-21, one of the squadron of training aircraft.



How it works. Steven explains the complexities of the controls in the cockpit of the PC-21.

dollar hangars and buildings, constructed only a few years ago.

Steven explained the various aspects of the training program, including the partition of the dedicated RAAF air space, to avoid possible collisions during flight training.

The technology of the premises was ahead of its time and the quality of the aircraft hangars and equipment was cutting edge.

We enjoyed looking at and sitting in the cockpit of the latest PC-21 trainer as Steven explained its complexities and leading edge design. The features



At the controls. Terry Jinks enjoys taking the controls of the high-tech flight simulator.

built into the safe operation of the ejection seats was a dynamic example.

The highlight of the visit was to sit in one of the five aircraft simulators and have a breathtaking view of the virtual surrounding countryside and coastal region as we flew, gyrated, did loop-the-loops and 'touch and go' landings. If you weren't strapped in you would have lost balance with the dizziness of its reality. Steven patiently explained how to operate the controls and maintain stability.

After viewing and absorbing the ethos of the buildings and the outside precinct we returned to the car park with its impressive display of previous models and types of aircraft.

We felt extremely privileged to have had such an eye opening and thoroughly enjoyable experience. Many thanks to Sheryl and Steven for their vision and generosity in arranging such a special day.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings members and friends of the Association.

I once again had the pleasure of representing the Association and laying a wreath on behalf of the Queensland membership during the official Remembrance Day ceremony that was held on Friday, 11th at the Shrine of Remembrance in Brisbane.

Myself and my wife Jenni accompanied by ASAS-Q's Mick O'Mallon and his wife Mai, met up prior to the event with our social team of Richard Johnson, who also laid a wreath on behalf of the RLI Assn Aust & NZ, and Jeff McClean with his wife Thanh. Former SASR

Commanding Officer Mr Tony Young laid the wreath on behalf of the ASAS-Q, and was accompanied by his wife Roz.

The service was well patronised with guests including the Governor and the premier of Queensland, head of the RSL, heads of the three emergency services and representatives of many Ex-service organisations like our own.

Dan Keighran VC was a special guest and read the poem, "In Flanders Fields".

After the ceremony we gathered at the Grand Central Hotel across from the Shrine and had a great lunch in fine company.



The Shrine of Remembrance as seen from ANZAC Square below





*The Governor Her Excellency
the Honourable Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM*



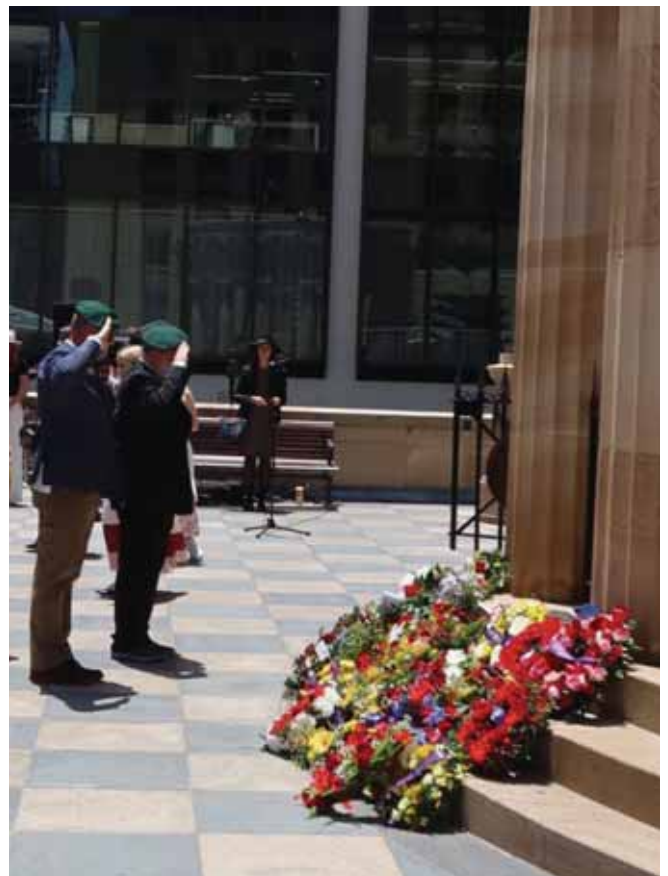
*ACAA President Graham Gough laying a wreath
at the Shrine steps.*



The display of wreaths after the service had finished.



Dan Keighran VC reads "In Flanders Fields"



Graham Gough and Richard Johnson lay a wreath for the fallen.





ACAQ President Graham Gough, ASAS-Q members Doug Fleming and Mick O'Mallon, RLI Commando Richard Johnson and ACAQ Social Jeff McLean.



**Remembrance Day post Memorial Service
Grand Central Hotel BNE City Fri 11 Nov 22**

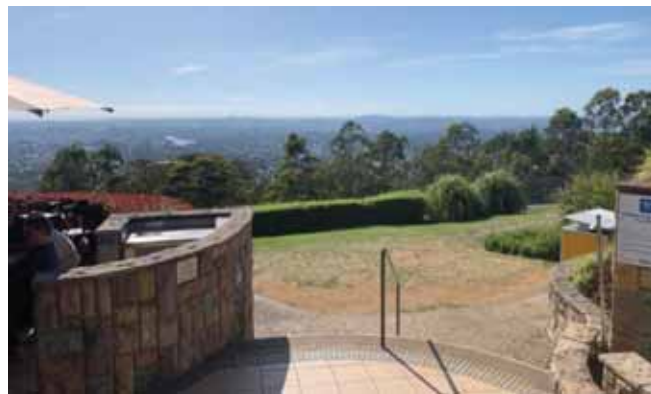
(L to R): Thanh & Jeff McLean (ACAQ Social), ACAQ Pres Graham Gough, Doug Fleming & partner Michele Boylan, Jock Lawson - 153 Sig., Bob Golley & Peter Johnson CSM - 9 Sqn RAAF, Justin "JD" Donnelly - 2 Cmdo, Jenni Larsen (Goughy's partner), Mal O'Mallon.

Our regular catch-up meeting place at Mt Coot-tha lookout became the venue for an official meeting for a change on Sunday, the 13th. It was once again well attended and we discussed the general business of past and future events, along with memberships, welfare and financials.

John Davidson, our secretary, gave updates on his recent trip to NSW as the Commando Welfare Trust Ambassador for QLD, and the amount of money raised during the black-tie dinner.

Queensland remains in a strong financial position and a motion was put forward by me to donate \$2500 to the CWT to assist in its charter of helping all former members of the units and their families, regardless of being beret qualified or not.

By the time this has been published we hope to have conducted our Commando shooting match on Sunday, the 16th after it was cancelled recently due to bad weather affecting the grounds area of the range. We'll let you know the scores and winners in the next edition.



View from Mt Coot-the lookout.

Rounding out the year we have been invited to attend the ASAS-Q Red Claw fishing trip and also the Christmas function at the Ship Inn, Southbank.

The Association is offering three double passes to the Christmas event for current financial members as a free raffle type prize, with details to be announced by email shortly.

Once again as always, thank you to all those who support us by putting this excellent magazine together each quarter, and to those that support the overall membership by being a part of the Association.

Don't forget we have Association plaques and polo shirts available by contacting me directly on the email below.

Regards,

Graham Gough
ACAQ President
acaqlld.president@gmail.com



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WO2 Bluey Curran, OAM Award for Best Instructor at ADF School of Special Operations

Stephen Carter – Editor

On Friday 4 November 2022, I was honoured to be present at the beret presentation ceremony for newly qualified members of the Special Operations Engineers Regiment and 1st & 2nd Commando Regiments.

The Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER) is a specialised unit of the Australian Army. The regiment forms part of the Special Operations Command. The unit was formed in 2002 as the Incident Response Regiment (IRR), they are deployed to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive incidents. The regiment was transferred into the newly raised Special Operations Command in 2003. In 2010 and 2011, its role changed to supporting the army's special forces units, and it was renamed accordingly (Corrigan, Scott. "Special Operations Engineer Regiment". Australian Sapper: 48-49 2011)

The SOER Motto 'Inter Hastas et Hostes', which is Latin for 'Between Spears and Enemies', aptly describes the essential role and demands on these highly trained specialists to operate in the dangerous space between enemy threat forces and Australian Army troops.

Following an arduous selection and training process, it was a fitting celebration and extremely proud moment for the families of the newly qualified women and men of SOER

Immediately following the beret presentation for the SOER, I attended the beret presentation for 1 & 2 Commando graduates.

In a packed auditorium, I was incredibly privileged to witness the graduation of the next generation of Commandos and to present the Ken "Bluey" Curran for best instructor at the ADF School of Special Operations.

To understand the significance of training, it is important to appreciate the roles and tasks of today's Commando.

As described at <https://army.defencejobs.gov.au/>, "a Commando is a Special Forces soldier who is screened, selected, trained, and equipped to conduct Special Operations. They are a close combatant with responsibilities that extend across a broad operational spectrum, including participation short notice operations in Australia and overseas. Commando operations are typically offensive and expeditionary in nature and specialise in discriminate and precise targeting.

A Commando is trained to employ a variety of non-standard weapons and equipment, and maintains multiple specialised close combat, insertion, and extraction skills. They must be capable of operating in

environments characterised by high complexity, isolation from friendly forces, high levels of stress, danger, and environmental hardship."

Training is the very cornerstone of our military capability and nowhere is that more evident than in the selection and reinforcement cycle for Commandos

The Bluey Curran Award celebrates the tradition of outstanding leadership and instructional standards which has been at the very core of Commandos since 1941.

It was with great honour that I presented the award to Sgt J for his outstanding contribution to the 2021/22 Selection & Reinforcement course.

Background to the Award

1. In late 2019 it was proposed by the Western Australian Branch of ACA that a perpetual award be made by ACA at what was then the Special Operations Training and Education Centre (SOTEC) now ADF School of Special Operations (ADFSSO).
2. The award was to be made to the best instructor for the year and the details and selection process will be left to the senior management of ADFSSO.
3. The proposal was agreed to by the ACA National Committee in late 2009 to make this an annual award sponsored by ACA National.

Overview

4. The award is named after Warrant Officer Class 2 Ken 'Bluey' Curran, OAM
 - a. Born 9th September 1925 in Waverly NSW
 - b. Joined AIF in 1943 at 18 years of age and was initially posted to the 33rd infantry battalion
 - c. Passed selection and joined 2/11th Commando Squadron in 1944.
 - d. Theatres of Operations
 - i. Moratai,
 - ii. Labuan,
 - iii. British Borneo and
 - iv. Rabaul before the end of the war.
 - e. Returned to Australia and was "demobbed" in 1946
 - f. In September 1954, the Military Board issued the authority to raise two Citizen Military Force (CMF) commando companies: the 1 Commando Company in Sydney and the 2 Commando Company in Melbourne
 - g. In 1955, Bluey immediately joined as a foundation member of 1 Commando Company unit and served until his mandatory retirement at age 55. Not to be disheartened he found another unit that needed a Drum Major, so he reenlisted, with



an age extension, to perform that task for a few more years.¹

- h. During his extensive service with 1 Commando Company, he delivered unarmed combat training to the newly formed SAS company in 1957 and continued to be involved military unarmed combat training until his retirement.
- i. With extraordinary experience and skills relating to Military Unarmed Combat (MUC) training over the years he was retained as a consultant to conducted training for commandos, infantry battalions and other unit's right through to 2000. From 2004 to 2007 he was requested by the Infantry Training Centre at Ingleburn to conduct training in bayonet fighting
- j. In addition to his service to the military WO Curran has also trained the first members of the then newly raised NSW Police Tactical Response Group (TRG) and numerous law enforcement groups, prison services and members of the Sheriff's Department.



"The Thin Blue Line" Australian Police November 4, 2019.

- k. In 1980 WO Curran was officially acknowledged for his services related to MUC training within the military and was awarded the Order of Australia Medal. In later years he was recognized further by membership to the International Close Quarter Fighting Instructors Association.
- l. WO Curran passed away peacefully on 26th June 2019

¹Pending verification

WO2 CURRAN "In his own words"

Recorded by Glen Gardiner 1st April 2010, Sydney

Published "The Australasian Martial Arts Hall of Fame" (Date unknown)

I first joined the army in 1943 when I was 18 years old. I went to recruit training in Warwick in Queensland and returned to Sydney where I was posted to a young soldier infantry battalion.

At that time, you could not be deployed overseas on operations until you were 19 years of age. So those of us who were under 19 years of age would end up in these young soldier battalions. There were three of these battalions located in Sydney at the time.

While posted to Sydney I was involved in the development of beach defences in and around Sydney. I attended my first Military Unarmed Combat (MUC) course in Sydney which was run by an ex professional wrestler named Alf Vockler. He was a Warrant Officer 2nd Class (WO 2) and the only instructor on the course. In those days MUC was virtually unheard of. To the best of my memory, he was posted to the military as a Sgt because of his wrestling experience. He may have come from a corps of instructors, but I am not certain.

The MUC course was conducted in the French's Forrest area at Terry Hills around the Xmas period of 1943/1944. The course duration was for a period of 2 weeks, the courses official title was Physical Training and Unarmed Combat Course. There were approximately 20 participants on the course from the infantry corps. To my knowledge all passed the training and qualified as an exponent. In those days the army did

not run instructors courses that I am aware of and relied on military personnel with previous experience recruited specifically to instruct.

The training consisted mostly of holds and restraints with a heavy focus on wrestling. There was a little bit of disarm techniques related to pistols. Not much was done with rifles or knives even. Counters to open handed attack with the counters mainly being throw downs was also conducted. There was a very heavy amount of work related to physical fitness training.

Later that year after completing the MUC course I was sent to Cowra as a reinforcement when Japanese POW's made an attempt to escape. After that I returned to Sydney where I turned 19 and was then sent to Canungra. The course at Canungra was jungle training before we were deployment north on operations. After completing training at Canungra, I and 3 others volunteered to be transferred from infantry to Commandos. 3 of us were accepted into 2/11 Commando Cavalry Squadron. This unit had formally been a cavalry unit in the Middle East with the 9th Division prior to their return to Australia. From Canungra I was posted to the Atherton Tablelands with 2/11 Commando Sqn (Divisional Commando with 3 Commando units attached to each Division) at Ravenhoe where we conducted pre deployment training. We concluded commando training here in 1944. It included infantry



training, MUC, explosives training, etc.

I was used to conduct the MUC training as an instructor for the unit as I was the only one in the unit who had done an MUC course that I was aware of. During this period at Ravenhoe which was only several months. During this time, I trained the personnel in platoon sized groups. I think I would have trained 2 platoons in this period. It was difficult to train more or formalize the training as in those days the members of the unit were scattered all over the place conducting various forms of training before deployment. This was all preparatory to us doing invasion training which was later conducted near Cairns, if my memory is correct. Members of the unit would conduct training at the Atherton Tableland and then go to Cairns to do training changing from ships to landing craft, cargo nets and practicing beach landings. The troops would then return to the tableland and do other forms of training some of which included MUC depending on availability. We then were deployed in the invasion of Morotai in 1944 (2/11 Cmdo Cav Regt, 24 Bde, 9 Div.). After Morotai we boarded steamers and conducted the invasion of Labuan (1944). After the capture of Labuan, we were deployed to British Borneo, Papar on the Padus River pushing up the rail link to Jesselton. While we were in Jesselton we received news that the war was over.

The 2/11 Cmdo Cav Regt was disbanded, and I was sent to Rabaul for several months guarding prisoners as well as being involved in infrastructure rebuilding. I then returned to Australia and after a period when I was hospitalised with malaria. I was demobbed at the School of Artillery at North Head after I had recovered from my bout of malaria.

After the war I completed my apprenticeship as a photo engraver and joined the NSW police force from 1950 to 1956. I then worked for the NSW railway as a fireman on the steam engines for a year. I then returned to my trade. During my working life I did a lot of different jobs.

In 1955 I joined the Citizen Military Forces (CMF) the pre cursor to the Reserves. I did my CMF recruit course at 1 Commando Company at Georges Heights, Mossman. I remained in that unit until 1975. During this period, I instructed MUC courses for the unit and other members of the Army. The chief instructor for MUC training at 1 CMDO at this time was WO 2 Lionel Currell ("PUP" Currell).

It was during this period that I requalified as a MUC exponent and later qualified as an Instructor. During my time with Commandos, I later assumed the position of chief instructor teaching MUC at 1 Commando. WO2 Lionel Currell was a regular army soldier and a WWII commando veteran. When I joined 1 Cmdo, he was the 1 Cmdo Coy, Company Sergeant Major (CSM). He was posted to the unit from Western Australia where he was involved in a parachute unit. I have no idea where he learnt MUC, but he was very proficient, a disciplinarian and I was his assistant instructor. After

his 4-year posting to the unit he was reposted, and I became the senior instructor for 1 Cmdo Coy. Prior to his leaving I had risen through the ranks, and I was promoted to the position of CSM 1 Cmdo Coy, the first CMF member to reach this position. The Officer Commanding (OC) of 1 Cmdo Coy during this time was a regular army officer, Major Grant, a veteran of WWII and Korea who was later promoted to Brigadier and an ex-WWII Commando.

During my time with 1 Cmdo I trained many units over the years in MUC. I trained the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) on 4 occasions in Perth as well as their members at 1 Cmdo Coy. The majority of SAS instructors came from 1 and 2 Cmdo with a lot of their first members coming from these units as well. I also gave training to 3rd battalion Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) and the 1/19 battalion CMF Bushman's Rifles at Ingleburn.

It is hard to remember all the courses I instructed on. A lot of the courses would be conducted at 1 Cmdo Coy. After I retired from the CMF in 1975, I would still be asked to conduct MUC courses for my old unit and others. In 2004 I was called by Major Davis at Singleton to teach bayonet work in trenches. I did this as a volunteer for a period of 3-and-a-half years.

I think while I was at 1 Cmdo I ran approximately 2 courses a year from 1955 to 1975. In addition to this I was also involved in conducting training for police instructing the first course for the NSW Police Tactical Response Group (TRG) at 1 Cmdo Coy. In subsequent years I conducted follow up training with the police as well as the NSW prisons department and later the Corrective Services, Australian Protective Services, and Sheriff's Department. I have also conducted numerous self-defence and training courses for commercial security personnel in the security industry. I am currently 84 years young and still conducting self defence and security officer training teaching self-defence, batons, and handcuffing techniques.

"Blue", who were the Instructors of MUC and what was their backgrounds when you first started training and then through your subsequent time teaching MUC?

The first MUC instructor I met was WO2 Alf Vockler who was a professional wrestler. As a young digger this man was God to us. I believe he had joined and was recruited by the military to teach MUC. Later in the 1950's while at 1 Cmdo Coy I met WO2 Lionel Currell who was the senior instructor for MUC at 1 Cmdo Coy before being posted from the unit. I am not sure where he learnt MUC, but he was quite good at it. I believe Lionel was initially trained possibly by British instructors. I am not aware if he had previous training in martial arts other than MUC. I remember that he was a strong disciplinarian.

To your knowledge "Blue" was MUC also being trained in other non-commando units and was it widespread in the Army as well as other services during WWII?



I am not certain about that because during this time you only knew about what your particular mob was doing. But thinking about it, it is quite possible that this was the case.

After World War II can you describe the attitude toward MUC training by the military command in commandos and the wider military?

After WWII MUC training disappeared within the Australian military. It did not gain resurgence until the formation of the CMF commandos in 1955.

Senior military commanders had lost touch with MUC and felt that it was a specialist skill and not something that was regularly conducted within the wider Army. It was thought of as being more relevant for Special Forces (SF). However, non-SF units would contact 1 Cmdo Coy requesting this form of training.

"Blue", was there a resurgence of MUC training with the onset of the Korean War and if so, who were the instructors and where were the courses conducted and what did the syllabus contain?

I am not sure if MUC was taught for the Korean War, but it was 1 and 2 Cmdo Coy which revitalized MUC in the Australian army from the mid 1950's. In 2 Cmdo Coy the main Instructor was Ted Malone. I also qualified Major Greg Mawkes from the SASR in Swanbourne in the 1960's. He later became OC of 2 Cmdo Coy and then was responsible for MUC training in the SASR.

John Whipp was another instructor qualified by me in 1962 prior to going to Vietnam. He was in an infantry battalion at the time and did the course at 1 Cmdo here in Sydney. John and Greg would both later play important roles in MUC training within the Australian military.

During this period the syllabus for MUC had changed dramatically to that of WWII. The main emphasis now was on killing techniques. This was developed through seeing what was being done in military circles as well as civilian martial arts and then adapting that information for the various roles required in the military. The courses were continually updated for current techniques of the day with the syllabus still displaying a strong emphasis on physical training, rolls and break falls, pressure points, throws, striking techniques, defence against weapons including firearms, knives, machetes, bayonet fighting, elimination techniques and prisoner control.

"Blue", did you feel that the support for MUC by the military command was cyclic and stop and go during your years of association with MUC training?

Yes, support for MUC in the Australian military was very up and down dependent on the individual interest of senior commanders within the army. Some military commanders understood the value others did not and MUC either benefited or not from this situation.

The problem was, however, that after a period of non-support the Army would need to re-invent the wheel again and had to either find remaining qualified personnel or start again. I think the cycle now is going downhill once again after some support in recent years.

"Blue", was there a renewal and subsequent wane of interest in MUC in the Vietnam War era?

Prior to going to Vietnam there was interest by personnel to conduct training however, this conflicted with the need for unit commanders to train troops prior to deployment in normal infantry soldier skills and not ones seen as value added such as MUC.

"Blue", do you feel that MUC in the Australian military developed in different directions as members of the defence force promoted MUC in the Army as well as the other services for different needs, what can you tell us about this?

Yes, I did see MUC go in different directions, but I still think that MUC should be under one banner with different corps requirements being managed under one guiding direction. Each one has its own core requirement but needs to be managed so that MUC heads in one direction; to make my point Military Police don't need to be taught how to kill for example. But they also need to know techniques for an operational focus.

"Blue", during the period that you have been involved with MUC training in the military have you seen it evolve and if so, what are your thoughts about that evolution?

Yes, MUC has evolved, and I think for the best as new techniques are added that support the soldiers role for today.

"Blue", in your opinion do you feel that there is still a place for MUC training in the military in the 21st century and if so, what it is?

Yes, without a doubt. MUC is required to enable our Army to stay relevant with other nations and to develop soldierly skills and techniques that are required on operations.

"Blue", what is your opinion concerning the military sourcing civilian martial artists to teach soldiers, do you think it relevant and are these instructors suitable to teach for various operational roles?

I maintain that an instructor needs to have a military background, but it is common-sense to take knowledge from wherever we can find it and adapt it for the military role. You must update to stay current. I don't think civilian instructors though are the complete answer. But certainly, take the knowledge and adapt it for the military using military instructors or previous civilian instructors who are in the military.

"Blue", in your opinion what do you feel would be the way forward for MUC training today for today's military?

Training needs to be relevant to the needs of the Army, it is unfortunate that currently MUC in today's military is not as widespread throughout the military as it should be as in other nations. I think that it is difficult for military commanders to recognize the value of MUC and to support MUC. Until this happens MUC will remain as it always has and will be reliant on the support of individual commanders as they come and



go. In today's Army MUC should be integral in training developing skills and confidence.

"Blue", can you describe what the training was like? How hard? Injury rates etc

Injury rates in the WWII MUC courses were very low and the same applied during my time teaching MUC. High injury rates are a sign of bad instruction. Training was hard, we had to prove a point, and a lot of the techniques were designed for killing. Physical fitness was a big part of training, it was important to teach soldiers to develop the will to still keep going. It still is important.

"Blue" you have lived to a very fortunate age what pearls of wisdom can you impart to the younger generations on conducting self-defence/defensive tactics training?

As is, keep it up and keep it going, it is something that is needed. Use common-sense, make sure there are no injuries and impart knowledge as best you can.

"Blue" what advice would you give people regarding avoiding fights and once in a fight what should they do?

Walk away from it, if possible, if you cannot walk away you have to do the best you can. If you are in it, you are in it to win. I don't care if I have to use dirty tactics to win and survive.

"Blue", what are your views of the Australian soldier from when you were serving and the current Aussie soldier today?

I think today they are far superior to the soldier of the past. The soldier of the past came up through the depression days. He had to learn the ropes the hard way. Today's young soldiers in my opinion are far better educated and sophisticated and willing to learn. A far better type of lad mentally and physically to previous years. As an example, one participant as a private learning MUC was a qualified medical doctor and he had a genuine desire to learn.



"Manly Daily Telegraph" July 2019



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Remembrance Day

Krait Memorial Service

Friday, 11th November 2022

Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney

Every year, on 11 November at 11 am — the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month — we pause to remember those men and women who have died or suffered in all wars, conflicts and peace operations.

History of Remembrance Day

In late 1918, after more than four years of bitter fighting, Allied forces finally broke stubborn German resistance and forced Germany to sue for peace. Entire nations cheered as fighting ceased and the armistice that ended fighting in the First World War took effect at 11am on 11 November 1918.

Fighting continued up to 11 a.m. of the 11 November 1918, with 2,738 men dying on the last day of the war.

On this day we also gather to pay tribute to those who served as part of operation Jaywick and also Rimau

Let us remember those that paid the ultimate sacrifice during and as a result of their service.

The Australian Commando Association New South Wales Inc. gather each year to remember those who served Australia and have suffered, some paying the ultimate price, giving their lives.



Representatives from:

1st Regiment Commando, 2nd Regiment Commando

The Australian National Maritime Museum

The General Consulate of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste

The Timor United Association

Australian Peacekeepers and Australian Peacekeeper Veterans Association

Members of the Australian Commando Association NSW; all met at the Museum to remember and celebrate Remembrance Day.

Photos by Tony Orr



Tributes laid on the Krait by representatives from the following Regiments, Individual and organisations laying wreaths

- 1st Regiment Commando - Lt. Col K and WO M
- 2nd Regiment Commando - Major B
- Richard Wesley for Australian National Museum
- Jim and Greg Pullin for Australian Commando Association NSW
- Dianne Wills and Jason Young for Horrie Young—Krait
- Helen Page-Snyders for Z Special and Captain Robert Page DSO and his father
- Sonia Maia with Carlos and Aldo for the Consulate General of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste
- Carlos Pereira and Ana Ferreira for The Timor United Association
- Michael LuLyons for the Australian Peacekeepers and Australian Peacekeepers Veterans

Australian Commando Association NSW is grateful the Australian National Maritime Museum for providing the *Krait* and allowing the wreaths to be laid in the deck of the vessel.

The Krait

Built in 1934 in Japan and originally named *Kofuku Maru* (Happiness or Good Fortune), *Krait* collected fish from fishermen and ports around the Rho Archipelago and took the catch to the Singapore markets. Confined to port early in World War II, the boat was used by Captain Bill Reynolds to evacuate hundreds of civilians to nearby Sumatra and when the Japanese continued to advance, he took it to Colombo. It was soon proposed that the vessel be used as part of a covert operation.

Renamed *Krait* (after a deadly species of snake) its most famous hour came in 1943 when a 14-strong company of British and Australian army and naval



personnel set out on a daring commando night raid on shipping in the Singapore Roads. Codenamed Operation, Jaywick, *Krait* was disguised as a Japanese fishing boat and successfully sailed to within striking distance of Singapore.

Six operatives then deployed three two-man folding canoes to island hop over three nights and finally reach Singapore Harbour where they attached magnetic limpet

mines to the hulls of Japanese merchant vessels. Six of the mines exploded damaging some 37,000 tonnes of shipping.

This year is the 79th anniversary of that daring raid.

To commemorate the event during the year marking the 75th anniversary of Jaywick, the museum fleet staff and curators returned the *Krait* to its WW2 configuration.

oOo

Remembering the Santa Cruz massacre in Timor-Leste 12 November 1991



ACA NSW Treasurer Ivan Kelly and ACA NSW member Rod Hilliker at the Remembrance Day with Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste, Ines Ameida.

The Australian Commando Association NSW was privileged to share the Santa Cruz Massacre Remembrance Day celebration with the Timorese United Association at Ashcroft in Sydney.

The Santa Cruz massacre was the murder of at least 250 East Timorese pro-independence demonstrators in the Santa Cruz cemetery in the capital, Dili, on 12 November 1991, during the Indonesian occupation of East Timor and is part of the East Timor genocide.

During a brief confrontation between Indonesian troops and protesters, including a girl carrying the flag of East Timor, some protesters and a major, Geerhan Lantara were stabbed. When the procession entered the cemetery some continued their protests before the cemetery wall. Around 200 more Indonesian soldiers arrived and advanced on the gathering, weapons drawn. In the graveyard, they opened fire on hundreds of unarmed civilians. At least 250 East Timorese were killed in the massacre. One of the dead was a New Zealander, Kamal Bamadhaj, a political science student and human rights activist based in Australia.

The massacre was witnessed by the two American journalists — Amy Goodman and Allan Nairn — and caught on videotape by Max Stahl, who was filming undercover for Yorkshire Television. As Stahl filmed the massacre, Goodman and Nairn tried to "serve as a shield

for the Timorese" by standing between them and the Indonesian soldiers. The soldiers began beating Goodman, and when Nairn moved to protect her, they beat him with their weapons, fracturing his skull. The camera crew managed to smuggle the video footage to Australia. The video footage was used in the First Tuesday documentary *In Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor*, shown on ITV in the UK in January 1992, as well as numerous other, more recent documentaries. The Massacre of East Timor was the overall winner at the inaugural Amnesty International UK Media Awards in 1992.

After the Santa Cruz massacre, almost all countries began to support Timor-Leste and recognized the right of their population to determine whether or not Timor-Leste should be independent, which came to pass with the referendum eight years later, on 30 August 1999.

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Vale ~ Michael Revell

30.10.44 – 17.09.22

Former member of the ACAWA and good mate

I first met Michael in 1969 at Fort Gellibrand, Williamstown in Victoria, where 2 Commando Company was located at the time. He was a corporal, and together with another popular corporal in the unit, John Addison (also passed away), became very close friends. Mike went up the ranks very quickly due to his previous service with the British Paratroopers before immigrating to Australia.

Mike was very easy to talk to, and we enjoyed our time socially while we served in that unit, which for me, was a period of 4 years.

I am not certain as to when Mike joined 2 Commando, but in 1971 Mike decided to move to WA with the intention to join Norforce, (if my memory serves me right), and left the unit for WA in early 1972. That same year, I moved to Hobart in Tasmania to take a job with the Lands Department, and transferred to D Company 40 Battalion as a reservist, and completely lost contact with Mike.

In 1976, my late wife Barbara and I decided to move to WA and took up residence in the suburb of Attadale which is very close to the port city of Fremantle. As the Fremantle Markets was very popular venue, Barbara and I checked it out, and while sitting at a table of a food stall, a burly 1st/class constable, with another colleague of the WA Police, made their way to our table, and there standing over me was Mike Revell. Well could have knocked me over with a truncheon... it's a small world. We couldn't talk much as he was on duty, but invited me to join him at the Police mess which was located at WA Police HQ in Perth.



Figure 1: Mike in WA Police uniform

On meeting again, we had plenty to talk about concerning the previous 4 years of our respective careers, and what we been up to generally. Whilst I transferred to 16th Battalion for a short stint, Mike continued serving in the WA Police all over WA, with his final position being a Sargent with the Tactical Response Group which was situated at the Police HQ in East Perth directly across compound from my office where I performed the role of Forensic Exhibits Officer. Working in close proximity, we of course met regularly after work at the Police mess for drinks. Mike retired from the force in 1993.

After taking on another role with the WA Police at a different location, I lost contact with Mike again until I joined the ACAWA where we met again at the General Meeting. We caught up on a couple occasions socially at a local pub, and as always, talked about our time in 2 Commando.



Figure 2: Mike, second from the right, with ACAWA members.

My final meeting with Mike was early this year at a funeral of one of our ACAWA mates, where we arrived early and sat down together for a coffee and a chat. Mike had a severe hearing problem, so I needed to up the volume a bit.

Through all those years, it was a pleasure to know Mike and how our paths crossed in different ways, but when we got together, laughed at the enjoyable times we spent at 2 Commando, and the boys we knew back then.

Rest in peace old mate.

John Ashworth
ACAWA
Commando 4 Life
4 October 2022





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1st Commando Regiment Cap Badge

THE ORIGIN OF THE DESIGN OF THE REGIMENTS BADGE

By Brigadier W.H. (Mac) Grant as printed in the Strike Swiftly Magazine

We repeat the history of our badge which has been often misquoted, and sometimes incorrect versions exist.

In November 1954, Army Headquarters issued the necessary authority for the raising of two new units in the Australian Army.

The units were to be designated 1st Commando Company, to be raised and based in Sydney and 2nd Commando Company to be raised and based in Melbourne.

The parent corps for both units was the Royal Australian Infantry. At that time I was on strength of the Royal Australian Regiment, having recently to Australia after service in Korea and Japan.

I was appointed to raise and command 1st Commando Company. Major Peter Sneddon RAA was appointed to raise and command 2nd Commando Company. Peter and I were old friends which was a great advantage for us both.

Army Headquarters were then located in Melbourne. At the first opportunity, I was called to Melbourne for a joint briefing with Peter by the General Staff. Nobody really knew very much about what was required of us and to a large degree we were given 'Carte blanche' as to how we went raising the new units.

Australian Army Staff, London, tried to be as helpful as possible and sent us copies of establishment and equipment table for the Royal Marine Commandos. However, there was a great deal we did not know and both Peter and I became avid readers of anything to do with Commandos, including an official British publication entitled "The Green Beret". We were fortunate that a British training film of the same name was available for special screenings in both Sydney and Melbourne to all volunteers for the new units.

In October 1955, I went to the UK with Major Jack Anderson, OC Designate 2nd Commando Company, Warrant Officer Smith and Warrant Officer Tarr, both of whom were to become training instructors with the Royal Marines. Sadly Major Anderson was killed during the last week of the basic commando course at Bickleigh in Devon. He was replaced with by Major John Hutcheson.

I returned to Sydney in May 1956 and went to Melbourne for liaison with Peter Sneddon as soon as possible. The knowledge I had acquired during my seven months with the Royal Marines now provided invaluable and Peter and I had very useful discussions.

However, one area where it was obvious we must make our own way was the selection and design of a suitable commando badge. The front piece photo in "The Green Beret" showed a beret with a bursting grenade badge. Perhaps because he was a gunner. Peter was very keen on adopting his as the badge for Australian Commandos. I pointed out that throughout World War 2 the commandos of the British Army had continued to wear the badge of their previous unit. We agreed finally that a completely new design was called for and decided to run a competition for all ranks in both units.

Some excellent drawings were submitted and in the end Peter sent all the proposed designs to me in Sydney and requested that I should make a selection. Although very impressive, many of the designs were completely impracticable from a manufacturing viewpoint. Daggers of various designs were common to many of designs and finally I came to the ideas of combining two proposals, one from Melbourne and one from Sydney. The result was the present badge.

At the time I was reading a British commando book, from memory, the history of No. 4 Commando of the British Army, entitled "Swiftly They Struck". The thought came to me that by transposing some of the words "Strike Swiftly" would make a very suitable motto for inclusion on the badge. Peter Sneddon agreed and so the present regimental badge came into being.

Signed Brigadier W.H. Grant
Patron First Commando Association Inc.





Cutting-edge Tasmanian tactical defence vessel making waves

As Australia focuses on boosting its national defence capabilities, one Tasmanian business has emerged as a leader in the development of a new breed of tactical response vessels.

Tasmanian advanced manufacturing group PFG has officially launched The Sentinel 1100, the latest in its Family of Seaboats designed for high-performance defence, security and emergency services.

The stealthy, low-profile vessel has a reconfigurable design for elite defence requirements, such as high-speed pursuits, air drops, hard beaching, or the insertion of troops. The next generation 11m boat can be networked with cloud-based monitoring and control systems for optional autonomous operation.



"A major point of difference for The Sentinel 1100 is its innovative construction from high-density polyethylene (HDPE)," says PFG Chief Executive Officer, Rob Inches. "This is the next evolution of a material PFG has pioneered for decades; tried and tested in harsh Southern Ocean environments to be near-indestructible and rapidly repairable in action.

"Duty of care is paramount when our elite defence forces deploy into the field. HDPE has unique vibration-dampening properties, meaning The Sentinel 1100 can achieve maximum speed, stability, and handling with minimal personnel fatigue.

"It brings our service men and women home safe."

The Sentinel 1100 is designed in partnership with Sydney-based One2Three Naval Architects, informed by the operational experience of PFG's Defence Capability Advisory Committee – a board of navy and security veterans.

The vessel has already generated buzz when previewed at defence trade shows in Australia and the US this year. The Hon. Madeleine Ogilvie MP, Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries officially launched The Sentinel 1100 in Hobart on Tuesday.

"It's so exciting to see innovative Tasmanian businesses like PFG come to the fore, as Australia looks to strengthen its sovereign defence capability and do all we can to keep our people safe," Minister Ogilvie said.

"The Australian Defence Force has identified shipbuilding as a priority area to be delivered by local industry, and



'specialised watercraft, maritime products and advanced services' is also a priority area under the Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy.

"In Tasmania, we are building the essential skills, technology and intellectual property to keep Australia secure."

"We're confident The Sentinel Family of Seaboats puts PFG in a competitive position for upcoming ADF tenders next year," says Mr Inches.

Contact: Robert Inches, PFG CEO

m: 0419 387 067 e: roberti@pfg-group.com.au

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THE LAST COASTWATCHER

Interview of Beryl Burrowes (nee Sexton)

By James Burrowes OAM

This is the transcript of an interview of my wife Beryl (now aged 98 and to whom I have been married for 71 years) about her 3 years service in the WAAAF (Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force) during World War II. Beryl and her older sister, Maureen, joined up in April 1943. See the photo on the front page of The Sun newspaper below. The interview was conducted in August 2020 by our grandson, Quinn Burrowes (aged 15 at the time), for a school project about World War II. JB

Why did you want to enlist?

Actually when I was to go in at the age of 18 it was called 'enrol'. You had the choice of enrolling or enlisting. If you enlisted they could send you anywhere, if you enrolled you stayed in Australia. Anyway, the next election the prime minister that got in was the one who said he wouldn't send Australian women out of Australia. Anyway I wanted to enlist to help the war effort. I had no money to chip in so I joined up, and for the experience as well.

What were you doing at the time?

I was working in Bendigo. I had moved to Bendigo to be near my grandparents who lived in Elmore looking after my younger sisters. So when all the bombing was going on by the Japanese around the place I thought I better help them. So then I enlisted and I couldn't help my grandparents anymore.



Beryl during World War II and in 2016 wearing her Defence Medal and War Medal 1939-45

What was the first thing that happened once you enlisted?

The day we called in there were quite a lot of other girls joining. We were all taken to Larundel in Preston; it was a big place built for retarded children. They didn't use it, they turned it into a camp for service women. I was there for five weeks doing a rookies course.

We learned about all the services and what they do. And marching; we did a lot of marching. And discipline. We learned all those things. We even learned about gas and had a test in a gas chamber which was interesting. We did that for five weeks, and after five weeks we were sent out to other places.

And I went to the Air Force hospital offices at Heidelberg hospital. I was there for ten weeks working in the offices and interacting with all the injured airmen. And they were in terrible condition, shocking burns, it's something I'll never forget what those poor men went through.



Maureen (left), Aunt Kate and Beryl.



Beryl (second from left) and her older sister Maureen (left) joining up in mid-April 1943. Ph: The Sun

What did you think would happen to you?

I didn't really know but I was looking forward to a different experience, which it was. Because I went into the service with no confidence at all, but came out full of confidence.

What role did you play in the war?

After the first 10 weeks I was posted to Air Force records, and worked on all the records. I had a set of books of 2000 men which I took the records of where



they were and what they were doing. But we didn't tell people anything about it, we just kept up all their bookwork. So I was there for about 2 and a half years because I had 3 years in the Air Force.

How were supplies distributed in the war?

We lived on strict orders of what we did, regarding time etc. The rationing meant we had coupons for so much butter a month, so much tea, so much meat. It was very short but we always managed to get enough to eat.

When I was in records they didn't have enough accommodation for the service women so we girls that worked at records had to find our own accommodation. So I found a nice bed sitting room with the use of kitchen and amenities. It was quite lovely because it was serviced, but we cooked and looked after our food ourselves.

We managed and we had a lot of fun. We were all in the same boat, we used to have fun. They used to have volunteer people who were very good. They used to have service places for service people and they had nice meals for one shilling, which is the value of 10c, because the pay back then was a lot less than now. We got 30 shillings, that's \$3, for a week: that was our allowance so we had to make sure we managed on that.

And anyway we had a lot of fun laughing with all the girls, all around 19 and 20 or 21. There were no fellas around because they were all away so we just had to go out ourselves together to the pictures, altogether

talking and laughing. All the men were away in the war, a lot of the girls had brothers and fathers and we used to worry if they were all right. I was very lucky because I didn't have brothers to worry about; that was lucky.

What did you think of being in the war?

I thought it was great. I remember the day the war ended, we were given the day off. We went into town but we had to leave because it was such a crowd in

town. All the fellas around, older fellas, were pulling our caps off and throwing them in the air. But we would get a fine if we lost any part of our uniform so we went home again. We were only given one uniform. That was a funny day.

I wasn't discharged until 6 months after the war finished because I had been transferred to the records of men being discharged from the services so I was in 6 months longer. So I enjoyed that, I didn't mind that either.

What was the hardest thing about it?

I didn't find it hard I must admit. We were young and it was fun and I met girls from every state in Australia so it was all a learning experience. So I can't say it was a hardship for me: we were still in Australia.

Were you concerned Australia would be invaded?

Oh yes, yes. There were quite a lot of rumours and a lot turned out to be true but you were always hoping it wouldn't happen. But I must admit being in Melbourne we'd be the last place to reach; that's a selfish reason.

How did you feel when the war ended?

We were very happy, all of us, but sad we were going to be separated. I missed the job and missed all the girls we had fun with. Did you know I kept in contact with about 10 of them until they all died. I'm the only one left. They've all gone. The last one went about 3 or 4 years ago. I have lovely memories of who I met.

Looking back, would you do anything differently?

Yes. Because I was offered to do 2 or 3 very good courses or training and I didn't have the confidence to do it. And I've always regretted that. If it happened again I'd hop in and do them. The best one was to be in radar when that first came out. Later I was offered to do a fitter and turner course, to do with engineering, mechanics. I stayed with my pushing a pen.

What did the war do for women?

As far as I'm concerned it was a good experience. The women did a lot for the war, there were the farm girls: that was one of the hardest working services. The farm girls worked on and ran all the farms and food for Australia and the army, they were the land army while the men were away.

Women became train, bus, tram drivers and conductors. They weren't allowed to do any of that before. And even Melbourne finished a bridge that was being built somewhere – I can't remember which one – and women finished it. So they really broke out. We weren't allowed to do these jobs, we weren't any good [laughing].

I always said men had one war too many, because in World War II the women had to run the country and then they wanted to keep their education and do it

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then. You couldn't join the army if you were married; if you got married you were tipped out. Or you couldn't work if you were married. Any ordinary job you had if you married you left.



Beryl's Certificate of Appreciation received on the 75th anniversary of her service in World War II.




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70% of the world is underwater, with 80% of the ocean yet to be explored. We are regularly finding new things under the ocean. But more surprising is how many veterans, like me, are finding themselves there too. It's a whole new world down there, one where we can learn to cope with mental health and physical conditions; perhaps even find peace.

My name is Jason, and I am a Scuba Diving International (SDI) Ambassador. I am also an SDI TDI Instructor Trainer, living on the Great Barrier Reef in Townsville, Australia. Looking back, teenage me would never believe I would end up here as an adult. Coming from a strong military family, I joined the Australian Army at the age of 18 and fully expected to make it a lifetime career.

Unfortunately, it was cut short with 13 years of service after injury forced me medically out of my dream job. Leaving the Army was not just the end of my career; I lost my job, my friends, and my sense of purpose. The only things I had were my family and my hobby of Scuba Diving. However, neither my family nor my hobby could understand what I was going through. Both were soon replaced by alcohol and dark thoughts, anything to numb the feeling I had.

After about a year, I decided to get back into diving and try to recapture the passion I once felt. It started small, with a job cleaning the big tanks at the local aquarium. I'll never forget my first time back in the water, a day with no expectations and a moment that sparked everything. I remember assembling my equipment, doing my buddy checks, and jumping in the water to clean the windows. It took but a few minutes to adjust to my surroundings, and then it hit me: silence. Peace. The sense of freedom. Becoming neutrally buoyant underwater and just floating lifted the weight off my back; both figuratively and physically. I felt myself relax as I floated underwater. Nothing could weigh me down.

This is the peace of scuba diving. It is the ability to focus on your breathing and think about your surroundings there and then. It is a feeling like no other. And from there, I knew I had to do this on a continued basis. From that moment, I started to dive on a more regular basis and turned my hobby into a passion. In turn,

it brought a more positive focus to my life. I was drinking less (because alcohol and diving do not mix), and I was socialising – rather than social distancing in the darkness of my house. The scuba diving community is both supportive and very social, which helped me manage another great hurdle. For me, scuba diving changed everything.

Over four years, I continued to dive and work at my local dive shop Remote Area Dive. I started to meet other local veterans from around my area. One veteran, in particular, made a big impact on me. I first met him when he walked into my shop and asked about scuba diving. He was a bit rough looking, smelt like alcohol, and looked like he was being forced to be there. After introducing

myself, we started to chat about his service and tours overseas. Our light chat turned into a two-hour conversation with his first booking for a dive course. A couple of weeks later I got to introduce him to day one of the course in the pool, I saw him smile. The following day, his partner called me to say thank you for the pool session. He had gone home so excited, eager to tell his wife and their son all about it. Since then, we have become very good mates, sharing stories and lives together. He later told me that the night before he walked into my shop, his wife had found him sitting in the bathtub with a loaded shotgun in his mouth. Seeing such a strong person go from that state of mind to the person he is today – it's hard to describe. He is such a happy, loving father and husband, and it makes me so proud to be his friend. It also is a stark reminder of the power of scuba diving and how it has the potential to be a tool in treating pain and PTSD.

Since then, Remote Area Dive runs Scuba Diving programs for current and ex-service members of the Military. Through our ongoing programs, we have seen people break the cycle of alcohol abuse and isolation at home through these programs. They have become regular divers; some even progress to Scuba Diving instructors, mentoring other veterans in the process. On average, we are certifying around 50 veterans a year. None of this would be possible without the help of my fellow Australian Defence Force veteran Michael Wood and the ongoing support from Oasis Townsville. Physically, scuba diving gives us an environment to feel strong and independent. But socially, it gives us just as much strength in a healthy community.

Our dream, our passion, is to save a life through engagement of Scuba Diving. If we could prevent all veteran suicides, that would be amazing. But we know we cannot. What we can do is let every veteran know we are here to talk. We are here to help in any way we can. Perhaps we can prevent the cycle of suicide through an introduction to scuba diving. We can show them that moment of silence and freedom and give them the at ease feeling again. You never know when it might be the thing that changes your life for the better.



'Our movement was....little known'

Captain Norman Roy Howard

2/1st Independent Company, AIF, Reinforcements,

Service Number NGX174

"I am reluctant to appear in print, but I feel obliged to do so".¹ With these words, Roy Howard began a letter to the editor of the Courier Mail, Brisbane, May, circa 1970, to rectify a statement published in the weeks before in which H.T. Kienzle had made the claim that he had been the first to take his troops across the Owen Stanley Ranges. He wrote not for himself but for "the officers, NCOs and men of my unit who would hope for a reply". Typical of the man, after going into some detail of the crossing he and his unit made, he wrote: "However, in fairness to Mr Kienzle, I must state that our movement from Port Moresby to Wau-Lae-Salamaua was little known".

This feat of successfully leading the first army crossing over the Owen Stanley Ranges was not all that was 'little known'. There were other 'firsts' during his active service and in the years following. They too are 'little known'.

At the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, Norman Roy Howard was working in the Territory of New Guinea on the goldfields where he remained throughout 1940. Not long into the new year he enlisted at Rabaul. Following a successful medical examination at Salamaua on 21 February, he was dispatched along with others identified as 'New Guinea Enlistments', back to Australia arriving in Brisbane on 4 March, 1941.

Unknown is the name of the paper that ran the story on the group, newly arrived from the Territory of New Guinea. Handwritten on the top left hand corner is 'March 1941'. Under the photograph it reads,

'Five men enlisted for the A.I.F. in New Guinea, have arrived at the Reception Depot at the Exhibition Grounds. They presented the camp commandant (Major C. (torn) S. French) right, with a (torn) drum and an war axe. Their names are (torn), J. Roche, N. R. Howard, (torn) Pearson and (torn).'² Roy is the one seated on the right looking up towards the 'drummer'. Two days after arriving at the Reception Camp Roy was sent to Redbank where the months of training began.

Initially, Roy was ranked as a Private, however he quickly showed aptitude for leadership moving to Lance Corporal within the month and Corporal within the next three weeks. As with everything he undertook,



Captain Norman Roy Howard
NGX 174



Green Double Diamonds
2/1st Independent Company
AIF

he applied himself diligently to his training, signalling himself out as having the capacity, the character and the commitment to undertake Officer Training. By 11 May, he had been sent to the Royal Military College, Duntroon in Canberra for an intensive course in which not all would succeed. In a letter written to Veronica Hogan, his fiancé, he explains the atmosphere before and after the Entrance Exam that took place on the Monday morning following the arrival of candidates from every State, sixty in total:

'.....During the whole weekend, all the lads were most serious, long-faced and worried. To laugh or sing sounded like sacrilege.....The atmosphere is different altogether now – charged with song, laughter and merriment for we who are left are safe – for the time being anyway..... We were examined on six military subjects..... Out of the 60.....52 of us passed outright of which I was one. Whoopee. I hope I'm on the list of

successes when the final lists are posted at the end of the course..... It is a wonderful College here – beautiful buildings and surroundings and everything most convenient. For example, in each of our rooms there is a radiator for warmth and I might add that we need them too. It is mightily cold down here....'³

Roy's hope was fulfilled, his name posted on the Final List at the end of the course. He qualified gaining 72% in the final exams. The Confidential Report deemed him suitable as a 'Platoon Commander' while noting him to be 'a good type though appearance not impressive'! It also noted, 'Quiet disposition. Keen and does good work.'⁴

Roy was appointed to the Commissioned Reserves awaiting a posting. Following his return to Redbank, he received word on 22 August that he now held the rank of Lieutenant attached to the 2/9 Battalion. As Japan had not yet entered the war, it was assumed he would eventually be posted to Europe or the Middle East. This changed however when Pearl Harbour was bombed on 7 December, 1941. By 23 January 1942, the Japanese Navy had taken the strategically advantageous township of Rabaul on New Guinea's northern coastline and had its sights firmly set on moving from there, across and down to Port Moresby. Roy's specific knowledge of the area and his



experience working with the local people became invaluable.

Volunteers were sought for a specialist unit and Roy stepped forward thinking he was signing up to be a paratrooper. Instead he found himself heading to Wilson's Promontory, the most southerly point of the Australian mainland where he would be trained in the Guerrilla Warfare School. He had been 'transferred to No1 Reinforcements, 1st Independent Company'.⁵

Early in 1942, with his training completed, Roy travelled by train to Sydney. On 27 February he embarked on the M.V. 'Macdhui'.⁶ The ship stopped at Brisbane to pick up more troops. This gave him the opportunity to see his fiancé Veronica Hogan and his mother, Julia, before sailing north on a voyage with which he was very familiar.

The *Macdhui* arrived safely in Port Moresby on 14 March. Anchoring in the harbour, Roy and his unit were assigned to protect the ship, so remained on board for two days until it was unloaded and restocked for its return trip.⁷ He describes his first foray into war to Veronica, '...About three hours after we berthed, the air-raid alarm sounded, and the Japanese bombers came over.' He tells her he had often tried to imagine what the experience would be like, how he would feel and react. He was surprised that he felt 'normal', noting that it's good 'to be able to keep calm'.⁸

They were next assigned to the defence of Seven Mile Drome on the outskirts of Port Moresby. In fulfilling this undertaking his unit was the first to bring down a Japanese plane using ground fire.⁹ While this 'first' is recorded by historians, none tell the whole story, known perhaps only to the families of the men who were there that day. When quiet eventually fell, Roy and his men went out to the sight where the plane had crashed. They recovered the body of the pilot and buried him with dignity. 'There was a patrol organised with Capt. Roy Howard and a firing party and they buried the Japanese pilot at the sight of the disaster.' Ever after and every day that followed, Roy prayed for 'the Japanese pilot', recorded as such in his notebook, one among the list of people to be remembered daily in his prayers.

Roy's platoon had been raised as reinforcements for the 1st Independent Company which was engaged in defending the island of New Britain. However by the time they disembarked in Port Moresby the Company had been decimated, either killed or captured and the island under Japanese control. This loss created a kind of limbo for the reinforcements as they waited in Port Moresby for new orders. With the invasion spreading towards the north east coast of New Guinea around Rabaul, Salamaua, Lae and Wau, Roy approached Major-General Basil Morris, Commander of the New Guinea Force, to press his case for proceeding over the Owen Stanley Ranges in order to support the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR), tasked with providing intelligence on enemy numbers and movements. He was convincing! In early April, he and the fifty men who formed his platoon set out on schooners travelling along the southern coast via Yule Island then out into open sea until the yellow water guided them towards the coast where they began the 'extraordinary journey via the Lakekamu River and the trek from Bulldog Camp during which they became the first army unit to cross the Owen Stanley Ranges'¹⁰

'The track begins near a small settlement on the upper reaches of the Lakekamu River on the south side of the ranges. After penetrating dense equatorial rain forests it winds up around jungle clad ridges for some sixty kilometres to over 9,800 feet (3,000 metres) on the Central Ranges before dropping down to the township of Wau in the Bulolo Valley. The track ... crosses some of the most rugged and isolated terrain in the world, combining hot humid days with intensely cold nights, torrential rainfall and endemic tropical diseases such as malaria. The Bulldog Track was longer, higher, steeper, wetter, colder and rougher than Kokoda Track.'¹¹

Surviving from this trek over the ranges to Wau, is a letter Roy wrote to Veronica dated 6 April 1942. In part it describes the experience:

'.....Please forgive me, Ronnie, for writing to my darling in pencil. But the only ink I have is that which is in my pen, so I must conserve it. And I hope you can understand the writing, darling. I am perched up on



Left: New Guinea Enlistments, Exhibition Grounds, March 1941

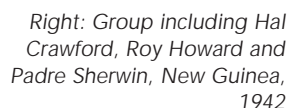
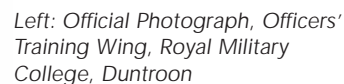


Right: Letter from Royal Military College, Duntroon, 1941



Eventually arriving at Bulwa on 12 April they rested for a couple of days before Roy 'sent one of his sections out to Salamaua and the other two down to Markham.¹³ 'On 19 April it was suggested that no action be taken against the enemy in the Salamaua area until the forces in the Lae area were ready to undertake a similar action, thus ensuring surprise.¹⁴

The 2/5 Independent Company arrived at Wau on 23 May having been flown over the Owen Stanley Ranges in a risky air manoeuvre such that had never been attempted before. With their arrival, Kanga



Force,¹⁶ the broad name given to a composite of Roy's Platoon, NGVR and 2/5 Independent Company, was at its full compliment and preparations began for the offensive against Lae and Salamaua.

'.....It is in Salamaua, in the early hours of June 29, 1942, that Australian Commandos struck the first blow in the Pacific land war.....The task of planning and leading the attack.....went to Captain Norman Winning.....scouts (went) up to the houses where the Japanese were sleeping to assess the enemy strength. Then, as silently as they slipped in, they returned to the Australian forward base, only 5km from Salamaua, to transfer their vital intelligence....With Winning, they planned the raid down to the last detail.'¹⁷ Roy and his men were numbered among the scouts who, with nerves of steel, stalked out the Japanese positions providing key information that led to the successful raid. The element of surprise was paramount. Had these scouts been discovered, the raid would have been called off.

'The night was black. It rained heavily but at midnight the moon broke through. At 3.14am, one minute before zero hour, almost everyone was in position. A Japanese sentry walked out to relieve himself and found himself staring at a blackened-face commando. He screamed the alarm and was immediately cut down by a burst of machine-gun fire. The raid was on..... After three-quarters of an hour of destruction, killing 120 of the enemy, two flares signalled the withdrawal....The great prize of the operation was a bag of documents a Japanese pilot was trying to fly out when he was killed. They contained the plans of the landings at Buna and Milne Bay.'¹⁸

Japanese retaliation was swift! Marines destined for Milne Bay were diverted to Salamaua. For two days following the raid, bombers circled seeking out the raiders traversing the Kunai grass which 'cut us and stifled us but did not hide us.....like hiding from heavy rain under a handkerchief'.¹⁹ The effectiveness of the commando's cat and mouse game tricked the enemy

into thinking there were many more in their number than was the case.

With the 2/1st Independent Company disbanded due to heavy losses and casualties, all surviving members were transferred to other commando units. On the 29 July, Roy's platoon was officially transferred into the 2/5th Independent Company.

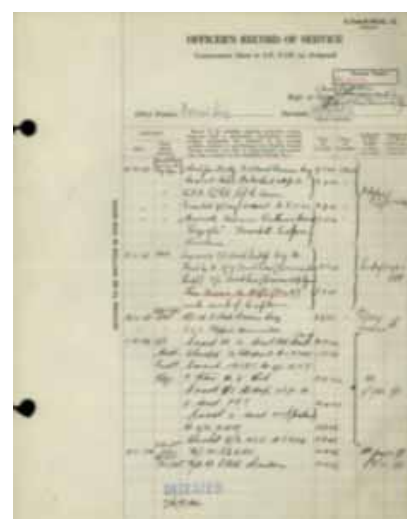
Roy reassured Veronica in a letter dated 16 August, 'I am fit and well.'²⁰ though this was not exactly true. Into his seventh month of jungle warfare, sleeping rough, often soaked by rain, in extremes of temperature, mosquito and leech bitten, cut and scratched by foliage, and hungry, always hungry, he writes, 'There's still no word as to whether we remain here, or whether we return to Australia. We ought to get news soon.'²¹ The bulk of the letter is imagining what she is doing and how they will spend the time together when he returns. In its pages he is taking himself home. He also points out that he now has the rank of Captain. In his service records, this is entered on 1 June, 1942 as 'Promotion to be Temp Captain (2/1st Independent Company)'.²²

Eventually Roy succumbed to the ravages and deprivations he endured. On 26 September, he was evacuated to the 14th Australian Field Ambulance in Port Moresby.²³ According to his own words, the journey was slow, 'It's nearly three weeks since I wrote to you. That's because I've been on my way back here.'²⁴

Malaria, repeated doses, he tells Veronica was the reason for his being evacuated. At Port Moresby now he waited to see whether he would be sent back to Australia. The letter concludes, 'I'm very tired at the present time, darling, so forgive me for terminating the letter so soon. All the malaria I've been getting seems to have taken my energy away.'²⁵ Still in Port Moresby on 4 October, he writes again allaying her worries, 'At the moment, I am quite well. It is just that I get these attacks of malaria frequently.'²⁶ Blood tests and medical examinations returned results that confirmed his need for treatment in Australia. He was hopeful it might be



Site of Australian 2/2nd Army General Hospital, Hughenden, 2015



Officer's Record of Service
Captain N R Howard



in Brisbane close to her but believes it more likely to be a hospital in North Queensland.

Close reading of Roy's Service Record reveals an unknown word related to his hospitalisation, 'Neurasthenia'. It is defined as: 'An ill-defined medical condition characterized by lassitude, fatigue, headache, and irritability, associated chiefly with emotional disturbance.' While it was not surprising that Roy should be diagnosed with Neurasthenia it was unexpected. Family lore has always focussed on Malaria which obviously was a major contributing factor as well as his being utterly exhausted. All the more extraordinary then is the manner in which he eventually put it behind him, showing no ill-effects save for the physical.

Roy's assumption that the hospital to which he would be sent was in North Queensland proved to be correct. After the ship docked in Townsville, he was taken to the 2/2 Australian General Hospital (AGH) outside Hughenden. The contrast between the two environments could not be more stark! From dense mountainous jungle to flat grassy plains as far as the eye could see.

Why set up a hospital in this desolate location? One wonders what therapeutic value such a landscape could have. In Roy's first letter to Veronica once back in Australia, he tells her of his arrival in Townsville, his subjection to a battery of medical tests and his eventual arrival at the location, '.....well out in the west, some 250 miles west of Townsville'. There is no indication of the means by which he travelled. He continues, '....The country round about is flat for miles and miles and miles. Thank God. It is a pleasant change to be able to look around and not see great mountains everywhere.' So, at least for Roy, this desolate place was the perfect antidote giving him visual reprieve from the landscape that had sapped him of his health and energy.



Roy started a twenty-day treatment regime that included taking three different drugs, each as he describes, 'vile! The only aspect that he thoroughly enjoyed was one bottle of beer each day also part of the prescribed medication! There is tiredness in the letters he writes from the 2/2 AGH: 'I expect it will be another three weeks before I leave here and after that, what? I feel I could do with a bit of leave, but whether I'll get any before going back, or whether I'll be sent straight back, I do not know.'

Left: Captain Roy Howard,
New Guinea, 1942

'Fourteen days of my treatment are completed. I have four days to go. After that I stay on about a week, getting strong and some weight back. After that I hope to get some leave before getting back into the war again.'

Roy's 'stay on about a week' to get 'strong' and regain 'weight' lasted two days according to the entry in his service record. It indicates that on the third day he 'M/O (marched out) to GDD Brisbane' which is to the General Duties Depot, presumably at Enoggera.²⁸ Deciphering the haphazard record entries which have no sequential order and often repeat the same information, as well as interpreting the acronyms, was a challenge.

On 27 November 1942 the Training Centre at Wilson's Promontory was relocated to the area around Lamington Plateau south of Brisbane, which was deemed a more suitable training environment given its similarity to the landscape and climate in which the recruits would be fighting in New Guinea. It included 'a Commando Training Battalion supplying reinforcements for the independent companies and an officer-training program which turned out 60 platoon commanders every six weeks. Training was realistic and physically demanding and instructors were drawn from men with recent combat experience in either the Middle East, South-West Pacific, or both.'²⁹ Was he deemed unfit for combat due to the recurring bouts of Malaria? Or was it that his experience coupled with his years of knowledge of the terrain was seen as an indispensable asset? Perhaps a combination of both. Roy was transferred to this recently opened Jungle Warfare School at Canungra.

In a letter to Veronica, dated 15 January 1943, Roy writes 'I have been fortunate to be able to write every night lately.' There are snippets in the letters he writes 'every night' that add insight into the work he was doing. He explains why she may not receive a letter for a few days. 'I'm to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning, and go bush for five, or perhaps six, days on Army work, and in those days I'll be in some very rough country.'³⁰ The address on the letters also provides details not easily interrupted from the Service Record. The early letter identifies him as being in 'L' Company at the Land Headquarters Training Centre whereas the last surviving is addressed, 1st Australian Commando Training Battalion.

A puzzling entry on Roy's Service Record dated 21 May 1943 has him transferring to the 2/7 Australian Cavalry (Commando) Regiment. This pre-dates the last of the surviving letters written on 25 May from Canungra. Interestingly there is no reference in that letter to his being transferred. Researching the Regiment indicates that in 1943, it was based at Canungra which could account for Roy's not deeming it newsworthy. From his perspective, it made little difference to his role in the training school except that now he was attached specifically to this regiment.

By July, Roy was again overwhelmed by exhaustion



and recurring Malaria to the point where he was hospitalised at the 112 General Military Hospital for a period of two weeks, (26 July – 7 August). Neurasthenia again being recorded as the condition for which he required treatment. It was after this second significant relapse that Roy was transferred to the 2nd Australian Canine Coy presumably his health preventing him from resuming his role at the Commando Training School.

There is no clear indication on Roy's Service Record regarding his discharge from active duty. The only evidence, held in the family archive, points to it being 19 October 1943, when his Special Clothing Ration Book for Demobilised Personnel was issued. The Service Record does however show that as of 8 November, 1943 he was placed on the Reserve of Officers (RoFO), indicating that in the event of the conflict reaching Australian shores he would again be called to defend freedom and his country.

Captain Norman Roy Howard, NGX 174, is cited in multiple publications both print and digital, for his service in the 2/1st Independent Company and later as part of the 2/5th Independent Company. Most extraordinary of all that he achieved, and the most unsung, was the feat of leading his platoon across the Owen Stanley Ranges, being the first army unit to do so.

Also 'little known', except by the early few who benefitted by the support and camaraderie his action ensured, Roy formed in 1946, a Commando Association: 'Roy's at a Returned Soldiers' Meeting – he is trying to form an association of all Independent Companies.'³¹ He was successful in this endeavour becoming the first and founding President of the Qld Commando Association. In the Commando News, October, 1986 Edition, Alf Boyland wrote: 'Vale. The Founder of our Association and our First President,' further to giving a brief outline of Roy's service he continued, 'He and his Constitution gave a solid foundation from which our Association could make and has made very satisfying development.'

These men, who fought alongside him attended his funeral and honoured him at his internment in the ANZAC Section of Mt Gravatt Lawn Cemetery, Brisbane. '.....our President, Don Warren, acted as a Pall Bearer and other members of the Commando Association formed a guard of honour.' In this same edition, Norm Phillips wrote in tribute: 'It was indeed a great honour to have known Roy and to have served under him; I feel sure that we have indeed lost a great man who was liked by many, a man so honest, considerate and a good Christian. Yes, Roy, we will miss you. You will be in our memory for as long as we live. R.I.P.'

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WHY TODAY'S COMMANDOS TRACE THEIR LINEAGE BACK TO SOUTH AFRICA'S BOER WARS

While Australians may be familiar with modern Special Forces units like the 1st & 2nd Commando Regiments and the Special Air Service Regiment and most likely they do not realise the term "Commando" actually originated in South Africa during the Boer War.

The Boer Wars — the First Boer War (1880-1881) and Second Boer War (1899-1902) — resulted from diminishing relations between the Boer South African Republic and the British Empire. When the British seized the Dutch Cape Colony during the Napoleonic Wars in 1806, the action created an irreparable rift between the two sides. In the 1830s and 1840s, some 15,000 Boers began the so-called "Great Trek" from Cape Colony across the Orange River to form two independent Boer republics called the Orange Free State and the South African Republic, sometimes called the Transvaal Republic. When the wars kicked off, and in the face of a numerically superior British force, the Boers enacted an unconventional fighting style that led to the world's first commandos.

This short article will examine the origins of the term "commando."



*The Boer Kommandos near Ladysmith, Natal, South Africa, 1900, during the Second Boer War.
Wikimedia Commons photo.*

"Kommando, or the way the Afrikaners spelled it, is Dutch," West said. "They were these hit-and-run type guys — think of the American Revolution and Roger's Rangers. These guys were hunters and trappers and were really good marksmen. Very similar to the Kommandos." The singular "Kommando" referred to a unit of those guerrilla warriors. These attack-and-flee tactics proved to be effective against the largely conventional strategies employed by the British Empire. Columns of marching British soldiers were regularly surprised by Boer Kommandos on horseback.

"The big thing with the Kommandos is they were an all-volunteer force because Afrikaners were farmers and didn't have a professional military force,"



Many Boer Kommandos consisted of skilled horsemen who had grown up in the saddle. They were also fine shots, having spent years hunting and protecting cattle out on the veldt. Highly mobile, they preferred ambush to other methods of combat, as it minimized casualties. They disliked hand-to-hand fighting, and their traditional method of attack was to lie in wait among the rocks on a kopje (hill), behind which their horses would be held ready. Photo courtesy of the National Army Museum. Since the Kommandos were rural people, they were loosely organized, didn't wear uniforms, and typically engaged in battles near where they lived.

In addition to the heavy Dutch presence in South Africa, the 88,000-strong Boer army used advanced rifles purchased from the German company Deutsche Waffen- und Munitionsfabriken during the Second Boer War. Armed with some 55,000 German Mauser M1896 7.92mm bolt-action rifles, the Boers picked off advancing British soldiers with ease.

"They would do a lot of small-unit things and just chip away at these big columns of British," West said. "It was very difficult for the British to handle Kommandos traveling light on horseback. It was like death by a 1,000 cuts."

Gen. Louis Botha, who assumed command of all Boer forces in 1900, understood how effective sabotage could alter the conflict from his experience in sabotage during the First Boer War. On one occasion in 1880, he overheard British spies were crossing into the Transvaal via rowboats belonging to nearby farmers. Botha reportedly snipped the lines tying every boat and pontoon near the shoreline, effectively preventing





Remains of the armoured train ambushed by Gen. Louis Botha's Kommando on Nov. 15, 1899. The grave of four members of the Border Regiment killed in the attack can be seen in the left middle distance.

Wikimedia Commons photo.

the British from crossing the river. When he reached a position of authority during the Second Boer War, he ordered similar tactics, leading raids against British railway supply lines.

The Boer Kommandos may have travelled light, but they also remained self-sufficient.

"Biltong is a beef jerky that is found in South Africa," "They [Boer Kommandos] would take strips of meat and put them on their horse's neck while traveling around doing guerrilla warfare. The sweat from the horses would get into the meat and help dry and preserve it under the African sun.



This canvas, titled *An Ambush*, Boer War, 1900, depicts a burgher being shot by two British infantrymen concealed behind rocks — an example of Boer tactics being used against them.

Photo courtesy of the National Army Museum.

As is evidenced by the diary of a British Army schoolmaster named W.H. Gilbert, the British weren't as resourceful, "Our provisions are getting very scarce [...] coffee, tobacco, jam, pickles and other necessities," Dec. 19-22, 1899, entries from Gilbert's diary read. "I don't think I will ever again grumble at dry bread for tea or complain if there's no milk in the jug [...] The Boers are beginning to use their guns properly. This morning at 7 while some men of the Gloucester-

shire Regiment were eating breakfast, a shell burst on one of the sangars with terrible results, killing 7 men and wounding 10 others [...] it broke right in amongst them. All this afternoon shrapnel shells were flying."

Although the Boers ultimately lost the Second Boer War against the British Empire, the Kommandos' legacy lives on through all special operations forces around the world and in Australia who proudly claim the title "commando."

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RAN Beach Commandos

By Petar Djokovic

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This is the second and final article on RAN Beach Commandos with the previous one in Edition 11 2022

The Naval Beach Commandos hold a unique place in Australian naval history. From 1942 to 1945, around 1000 Royal Australian Navy (RAN) sailors trained in amphibious warfare alongside their compatriots from the army and air force, and large numbers of United States (US) servicemen. These sailors played an instrumental role in the Operation OBOE landings at Tarakan, Brunei Bay and Balikpapan.



Photo 1. Amphibious training with HMAS Kanimbla.
Source. AWM

In March 1942, the Australian Government, recognising the importance of an amphibious capability in any effort to drive the Japanese out of the Pacific, began exploring the requirements for combined operations training in Australia. Two training centres were established before the end of the year. The army established the Combined Training Centre at Toorbul Point, Queensland, while the Joint Overseas Operational Training School was established at Port Stephens, north of Newcastle. With construction work progressing ashore at Port Stephens, HMAS *Assault* was initially commissioned aboard the armed merchant cruiser HMAS *Westralia* and began providing instruction for landing craft crews, beach parties (naval Commandos) and combined operations signals teams. *Assault* transferred ashore on 10 December 1942. An American Amphibious Training Group was also established nearby, and the two facilities were combined as the Amphibious Training Centre in February 1943 under the overall command of the commander of the Seventh Amphibious Force, Rear Admiral Daniel E Barbey, USN. HMA Ships *Kanimbla*, *Westralia* and *Manoora*, were all converted into Landing Ships Infantry (LSI) during 1943.

Training at *Assault* was intense covering every aspect of landing operations on hostile shores. Sailors had to partake in assault courses, instruction in various weapons and explosives as well as hand-to-hand combat. Former Naval Commando, Able Seaman Ted Jones, recalled training with his unarmed combat instructor, Lieutenant Donald Davidson, a member of the Operation JAYWICK raid and former instructor at the Fraser Commando School: "Over and over again he would impress upon us that we were being trained to fill a Commando role and in such a role we could quite easily find ourselves in a position where we had to depend on our hands, eyes and senses to prevent an enemy in hand-to-hand combat from killing us...it was - kill or be killed - and this was a reality, not a supposition."^[1]



Photo 2. RAN Beach Commandos in training.
Source. AWM

The Commandos also had to learn how to conduct in-water beach surveys which would often leave them immersed fully clothed for hours on end, as well as constructing makeshift metal 'roadways' on the beach enabling the landing of vehicles as large as a tank.

Having trained some 20,000 US soldiers and marines, 2000 Australian soldiers and 1000 RAN personnel, the Amphibious Training Centre closed in October 1943, although HMAS *Assault* continued operating on a reduced basis. Thereafter, all amphibious training facilities were based at Toorbul, which became the centre for amphibious activities in the Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA). Most of the RAN's 120 naval Commandos as well as *Kanimbla*, *Westralia* and *Manoora*, were also transferred to Toorbul. In addition, shortly after training at Port Stephens ceased, a detachment of naval Commandos proceeded to Cairns for training with the army's Australian Beach Group.



In December 1943, the RAN decided to raise a dedicated naval Commando unit. The Naval Beach Commando was formed on 6 January 1944 under the command of Principle Beachmaster Commander Robert S Pearson, RAN. By the end of 1944, three additional units had been raised along with boat crews and signal units. The title RAN Beach Unit was adopted for each and Commander Pearson became Senior Naval Officer, Beach Unit. Although these highly trained, elite units were desperate to prove their skills in action they nevertheless had to endure a long wait while US formations took priority during subsequent amphibious assaults across northern New Guinea and the Philippines.



Photo 3. Commander Robert Pearson, RAN.
Source. AWM

The RAN Naval Commandos saw action for the first time on 1 May 1945 during Operation OBOE I, the assault on Tarakan Island off Borneo. Tarakan has an area of only 135km², and largely consists of mangrove swamps with a hilly, forested centre. The port of Lingkas was selected for the landing as it had the Island's best beach, though hardly ideal being 2 km long by 90m wide and composed mainly of soft mud up to three metres deep. *Westralia* and *Manoora* formed part of the RAN contingent at Tarakan. The LSIs carried Naval Beach Commando B, comprising 14 officers and 107 ratings under the command of Lieutenant Commander Bernard Morris, RANVR, five observers from Beach Commando D, as well as elements of the army's 9th Division. Six telegraphists from Naval Beach Signal Section D were also loaned to USS *Rocky Mount* and later landed on Tarakan to replace casualties. The Commandos were divided into four beach parties: Red, Green and Yellow beaches at Tarakan, and Blue beach at Sadau Island 8km distant.

The main invasion force entered Lingkas before dawn on 1 May. A shore bombardment swept the area before the landing craft thrust up onto the beach giving the Commandos a dry landing. Throughout the course of the day and into the night, hundreds of tons of equipment and personnel were disembarked from *Westralia* and *Manoora* and the LSIs departed at around noon the following day. The beach Com-

mandos landed with the first wave of each forward battalion. They carried out reconnaissance, marked beaches, established and maintained signal communications, organised and furthered the unloading of landing craft, salvaged craft which became stranded, and generally organised and conducted all the work on the beaches.^[2] This was no easy task as the jetties were damaged and the tide had receded.



Photo 4. RAN Beach Commandos on the beach at Tarakan with a pet monkey.
Source. AWM

All of the RAN's casualties during this operation were beach Commandos; Telegraphists John Brady and William Ryan were killed, and a Signalman wounded when a Beach Control Point came under shellfire on 2 May. Lieutenant Commander Morris continued to act as Port Director until relieved on 17 May.

All three Australian LSIs took part in the amphibious phase of Operation OBOE VI,^[3] the assault on Brunei Bay on 10 June 1945. Beach Commando A, under the command of Lieutenant Commander Ron McKaige, DSC, RANVR, was embarked on this occasion, once again in company with elements of the Australian 9th Division. This time the Naval Commandos, numbering 20 officers and 157 ratings, were divided into three beach parties. The main body of the assault group landed on Labuan Island, dubbed Brown Beach, while a smaller force, from *Kanimbla*, landed at Muara Island and Brunei Bluff - White and Green Beaches respectively - which were some 32km from the main assault. The selected beaches in Brunei were wide and sandy, much better suited to amphibious landings than those at Tarakan.

The assault group entered Brunei Bay before dawn and, in spite of the shore bombardment, landing craft came under sporadic sniper fire as they entered the water. The snipers, however, only succeeded in revealing their positions and were soon stopped by Allied guns. The Beach Commandos were first ashore at 09:15 and little more than an hour later all three beaches were secured without casualties. The Commandos again played a leading role during the assault as well as in organising the follow-on Allied



forces. General Douglas MacArthur expressed his satisfaction to the Commandos, remarking "The execution of the Brunei Bay operations has been flawless...convey to your officers and men the pride and gratification I feel in such a splendid performance."^[4] When the amphibious fleet departed, the Beach Commandos stayed behind, employed in various duties including patrol and survey. They were withdrawn on 27 June through the Australian Beach Group Camp on Labuan Island.

The Beach Commandos' final action in World War II was during Operation OBOE II, the Australian 7th Division's amphibious assault at Balikpapan. In addition to the army contingent the three LSIs embarked 17 officers and 150 ratings of Beach Commandos B and D, under the command of the experienced Lieutenant Commander Morris. Klandasan, at the southern end of Balikpapan Bay, was identified as the best landing site despite the relative shallowness of the water and the strength of enemy defences. Some 25km of coast was protected by a log barricade and around 3500 Japanese and 6500 local conscripts covered the beaches with automatic weapons. Heavier installations farther inland provided defence in depth. The Australian landing force had also to contend with an extensive shallow-water minefield, laid originally by the Allies, which took 16 days to make safe. Three beaches, designated Red, Yellow and Green, were selected for the landing.



Photo 5. A RAN Beach Commando signals with an Aldis Lamp.
Source. AWM

The Balikpapan assault group arrived before dawn on 1 July and the beach parties started transferring to the landing craft at 07:10. The shore bombardment began ten minutes earlier and, apart from a well-protected 3-inch gun which did little but force the troops to take cover, effectively destroyed the larger shore defences. The Beach Commandos, as always, were first ashore at 08:55 and although they suffered no casualties during the landing, some of their mates in the 7th Division were not so lucky. The Commandos in the first wave directed naval gunfire and by the time the third assault wave landed at 09:03, the Japanese

mortars and pillboxes had been destroyed. During the day the beach parties directed the landing of 10,500 troops, 700 vehicles and 1950 tons of stores over difficult beaches with more than a metre of surf running.^[5]

The assault at Balikpapan was the last amphibious landing of the war. The Naval Beach Commandos were disbanded shortly afterwards, and its men were reassigned throughout the RAN, many remaining in the SWPA and some returning to Australia. They went about their job with a minimum of fuss and a great deal of pride, and though their important role is sometimes overlooked, their exemplary performance was recognised by Rear Admiral Barbey, who reportedly "chided his American Commanding Officers...for persistently being outperformed by those God-damn 'Ossies' in our speed of over beach unloading, consistent timing and very low landing craft damage."^[6] This was high praise indeed, for some of the RAN's most unusual sailors.

Although the Australian Defence Force no longer has a dedicated beach unit, the tasks undertaken by the RAN Beach Commandos during World War II remain relevant, and therefore continue as an essential component of our current and future amphibious operations.

In 1995 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War Two a monument was dedicated to the RAN Beach Commandos and initially located in Coastwatcher Park, Cairns. In April 2005 with the generous assistance of long time Trinity Beach Hotel owners Mr & Mrs. H. A. Mellick the memorial was relocated to Vasey Esplanade, Trinity Beach and is now known as the Marlin Coast Memorial



Photo 6. RAN Beach Commando memorial at Trinity Beach, Cairns, Queensland.
Source. Wikipedia

The memorial is three components. On the top is an inscribed compass rose which carries fifty-six inscriptions with compass headings and distance describing World War Two activities which were pertinent to the Marlin Coast. A full description of the compass rose and details can be found at.....





Photo 7. Top of memorial showing compass rose and details.
Source: Monuments Australia

A second plaque states that Royal Australian Navy (R.A.N.) Beach Commandos trained on this beach during 1944.



Photo 8. RAN Beach Commando memorial at Trinity Beach, Cairns, Queensland.
Source: Monuments Australia.

Inscription

Be it known that

R.A.N. Beach Commando Units
Aust. Beach G.P.S.

Trained Australian Army units for amphibian
operations on this beach during 1944.

The third is a Relocation Plaque which was added in 1995.



Photo 9. Marlin Coast Memorial Relocation Plaque.
Source: Monuments Australia.

References

1. Jones, AE (Ted), *Sailor & Commando: A Royal Australian Navy Special Service Beach Commando 1942-1946*, Hesperian Press, Carlisle Western Australia, 1998.
2. Gill, G Hermon, *Australia in the War of 1939-1945, Series Two, Navy Volume II, Royal Australian Navy 1942-1945*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1968.
3. Operation OBOE II had been postponed and Operations OBOE III, IV and V had been cancelled. The objective of Operation OBOE VI had also been changed. The result was that the OBOE operations proceeded out of sequence.
4. Jones, AE (Ted), *Sailor & Commando: A Royal Australian Navy Special Service Beach Commando 1942-1946*, Hesperian Press, Carlisle Western Australia, 1998.
5. Gill, G Hermon, *Australia in the War of 1939-1945, Series Two, Navy Volume II, Royal Australian Navy 1942-1945*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1968.
6. RUSI Address by Commander J Hume RAN (Ret'd) 15 August 1995.



Operation Archery – the First British Tri-Service Operation

Vaagso and Maaloy, 27th December 1941

Stephen Carter ~ Editor

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Geoff Slee, publisher, and host of the Combined Operations website, www.combinedops.com for extensive use of his webpage "Operation Archery" in the preparation of this article.

The Australian Tie

This early WW2 operation was conducted by the British Independent Companies which were later to become British Army and Royal Marine Commandos. The British Army members of Mission 104, which established No. 7 Infantry Training Centre in January 1941 for the training of Australian and New Zealand personnel, based their training model on the UK Independent Companies. Both Captains Michael Calvert, Royal Engineers and Freddie Spencer Chapman, Seaforth Highlanders who were instructors with Mission 104 to Australia had training with the British Independent Companies and operational experience in Norway prior to coming to Australia in November 1940.

Early Days

In Andrew Roberts acclaimed biography **Churchill Walking with Destiny** (Penguin, September, 2019) he details Churchill's direct role in the creation of the Independent Companies; the forerunners to the better-known Commandos.

Churchill ordered that the military create a force that could carry out raids against Nazi-occupied Europe. "Enterprises must be prepared, with specially-trained troops of the hunter class, who can develop a reign of terror down these coasts, first of all on the "butcher and bolt" policy..." – the Independent Companies were born.

"Raised in April 1940 from volunteers serving in the Territorial Army. There were 11 Independent Companies formed, the 11th being only for one specific operation. The first 5 Independent Companies sailed to Norway in May 1940 under the name Scissors Force to join Operation Avonmouth - the British Expeditionary Force.

Each Company consisted of 21 Officers and 268 OR's.

- No.1 Independent Company from 52nd Lowland Divn.
- No.2 Independent Company from 53rd Welsh Divn.
- No.3 Independent Company from 54th East Anglian Divn.

- No.4 Independent Company from the 55th (West Lancs) Division. At the time the 55th were a two Brigade Motor Divn consisting of 164 Bde. : 9th Btn. Kings Regt, 1/4th Btn The South Lancs Regt, and 2/4th Btn. the South Lancs. Regt; 165 Bde. : 5th Btn. Kings Regt, 1st Btn. Liverpool Scottish QOCH, and 2nd Btn. Liverpool Scottish QOCH.
- No.5 Independent Company from the 56th (1st London) Divn.
- No.6 Independent Company from the 9th Scottish Divn.
- No.7 Independent Company from the 15th Scottish Divn.
- No.8 Independent Company from the 18th Eastern Divn.
- No.9 Independent Company from the 38th Welsh Divn.
- No.10 Independent Company from the 66th East Lancs Divn.
- No.11 Independent Company formed 14 June 1940 under Major R. Tod. with 350 OR's

In June 1940 the first of the new army commando units were also being raised. On 11 October 1940 the Independent Companies were reorganised into Special Service (SS) Battalions merging with some of the new Commando units.

- 1st Special Service Bn., A and B Coys., formed from Nos.1,2,3,4,5,8 and 9 Independent Companies.
- 2nd Special Service Bn. formed from No.6 and 7 Independent Companies and the only recently formed No.9 and 11 Commandos;
- 3rd Special Service Bn. formed from Nos.4 and 7 Commando;
- 4th Special Service Bn. formed from Nos.3 and 8 Commando;
- 5th Special Service Bn. formed from Nos.5 and 6 Commando" *

*Commando Veterans Archive (www.commandoveterans.org)

Although they would serve with distinction in every theatre it was in Norway where the Commandos would first earn their fame by conducting various raids on German installations and try to get the Germans to divert more troops to defending Norway that may have been used on the Eastern Front.

Operation Archery, also known as the Måløy Raid, was the first "tri-services" raid conducted by British Combined Operations during World War II against German positions on the island of Vågsøy, Norway, on 27 December 1941.



British Commandos of No. 3 Commando, two troops of No. 2 Commando, a medical detachment of No. 4 Commando, a demolition party from 101 Troop (canoe) of No. 6 Commando, and a dozen Norwegians from Norwegian Independent Company 1 conducted the raid. The Royal Navy, led by the light cruiser HMS *Kenya*, with the destroyers HMS *Onslow*, *Oribi*, *Offa* and *Chiddingfold*, provided fire support. The submarine HMS *Tuna* was in support as the force navigational check. *Prince Charles* and *Prince Leopold* transported the troops. Also in support were Royal Air Force bombers and fighter-bombers,



[Google Map Data 2017.]

Plans & Preparations

Following his appointment to the post of Combined Operations Adviser in October 1941, Vice Admiral Mountbatten decided that a sizeable raid was required to cause the enemy to deploy larger numbers of troops in Norway than would otherwise be the case. The target also provided an opportunity to damage or destroy German military establishments in the area.

This was not the first such planned operation. On December 9th, No. 6 Commando, and half of No. 9 Commando, under the codename Operation Anklet, steamed for the Norwegian town of Floss in the landing ship HMS *Prince Charles*. An accidental grenade explosion on board caused casualties including those skilled in navigation. With his navigational capability severely compromised, the Senior Naval Officer called the raid off.

The small island of Maaloy (also known by other names) was less than 500 metres by 200 metres. It had a concentration of 4 coastal defence guns, ammunition stores, oil tanks and barracks for the troops. Its position, at the southern mouth of main sea access to the Maaloy and South Vaagso communities, was ideal to protect them, their oil factory, fish factories and a power station, from attack. It was known that enemy convoys assembled further north in the fjord, offering the possibility of another target.



Photo: The press party on board HMS *Prince Leopold* relaxing on their way to Vaagso. Official photographer, Edward G Malindine is in the foreground. Photo courtesy of the Malindine family.

By the 15th of December, the raiding forces had assembled, and training exercises were largely completed. The flotilla, comprising the Cruiser HMS *Kenya* fitted with 6-inch guns, four destroyers and two landing craft, HMS *Prince Leopold*, and HMS *Prince Charles*, left Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands on Christmas eve. After about 100 miles on their northerly journey, they were forced to divert to Sullom Voe in the Shetland Islands due to a severe westerly gale, that was causing material damage. *Prince Charles* took onboard 145 tons of sea water, which was pumped out and other damage was repaired. The men enjoyed the respite and Christmas dinner in relative comfort. They resumed their journey of 300 miles to the north west, on the evening of the 26th.

The Raid

At 07.00 hours on 16th December, the flotilla rendezvoused with HMS *Tuna*, a submarine on station at Vaagsfjord to provide an accurate navigational reference point and general assistance. Landing Ships Infantry, (LSIs), were positioned out of view of the main batteries on Malloy.

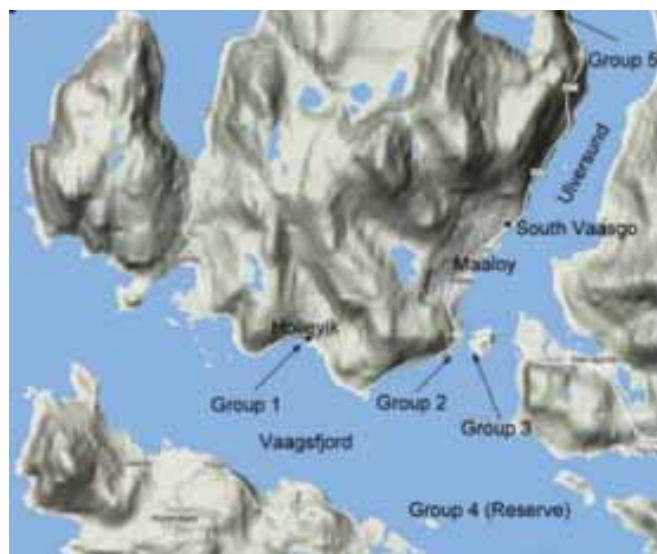
Fire was opened on the coastal defences by the warships at 08.48 hours, initially with a salvo of star shells from HMS *Kenya* to light up the island, followed by a heavy bombardment of 500 shells in 10 minutes from all five war ships. Smoke bomb screens, to obscure the path of the advancing troops as they landed on the beaches, were provided by Hampdens from RAF Bomber Command.

Throughout these carefully choreographed procedures, air cover was provided by Beaufighters and Blenheim's from Wick on the Scottish mainland and Shetland, round trips of 650 and 400 kilometres respectively.

The Commandos were formed into 5 groups. The 1st group landed at Hollevik, about 2 kilometres south of South Vaagso, to disable a German stronghold there. The 2nd group landed just south of the town itself, while the 3rd group landed on Maaloy Island to mop up after



the bombardment. The 4th group was held as a floating reserve and the 5th group passed by Maaloy into Ulvesund on the destroyer HMS *Oribi*. They landed to the north of South Vaagso to prevent German reinforcements getting through from the north.



The Germans garrison which was reinforced by 50 men of a Gebirgsjäger (Alpine, mountain) troops on leave from the Russian front, were taken completely by surprise but fought tenaciously. On Maaloy, three of the four coastal guns were knocked out by the accurate bombardment, which was lifted only when the invading troops were about 50 metres from the landing beach. Because the Germans had so little time between the end of the bombardment and being overrun by the 105 Commandos, fighting there was over in just 20 minutes.

The German survivors were rounded up, demolition work completed, and the group crossed the short stretch of water to join the fighting in South Vaagso. Meantime, group 1 at Hollevik experienced less resistance than expected, since 8 defenders were having breakfast in South Vaagso. Group 1 also joined the South Vaagso skirmish and later group 4, the floating reserve, was called in since German resistance was greater than expected.

On board the destroyer HMS *Orbis*, No. 5 group were by then north of Malloy, accompanied by HMS *Onslow*. The men landed without opposition and blew craters in the road to prevent enemy reinforcements from North Vaagso joining the battle. They also destroyed the telephone exchange at Rodberg. Merchant ships, the RE *Fritzen* and an armed trawler, the *Fohn*, came into view. Those under power beached themselves when they saw the White Ensign.

Resistance was not completely overcome in the street fighting, but all the major demolition jobs were accomplished including the power station, coastal defences, the wireless station, factories and lighthouse. 150 Germans were killed, 98 Germans and 4 Quislings made prisoner and 71 Norwegians took passage back to England. Further up the fjord, the destroyers sank 9 ships, totalling 15,000 tons and shot down four



Photo shows Lieutenant O'Flaherty being helped to a dressing station with an injury that resulted in the loss of an eye. He remained in the army and eventually became a Brigadier. The soldier on the right is Derek Gordon Page - a commando. He subsequently left the commandos and served with the Gurkas in India, fighting in Burma and eventually ending the war in Indonesia. © IWM (N 495).

Heinkels. Both Herdia and Stavanger airports were bombed, the wooden runway of the former suffering sufficient damage to limit activity.

There were many instances of bravery on both sides in the taking and defending of entrenched positions. At 13.45 hours, Colonel Durnford-Slater ordered the withdrawal from South Vaagso to begin. It was led by No 2 troop with No 1 in rear-guard. The force re-embarked at 14.45 hours, as the short Arctic day ended.



Photo: Wounded being helped onto a landing craft at Vaagso, 27 December 1941. © IWM (N 481).

The Outcome

This was the first time all three services combined in support of an amphibious raid against a defended coast. As Mountbatten said at the outset "... nobody knows quite what is going to happen and you are the ones who are going to find out." The RAF provided air cover for over 7 hours and undertook diversionary raids elsewhere. None of the British ships was hit by enemy bombs but a phosphorous bomb from a disabled British plane hit one of the landing craft, resulting in some casualties.



Much had been learned by both sides. The Germans later reinforced their Norwegian Atlantic wall with the deployment of 30,000 extra troops. Hitler perhaps had concerns that Norway might well be "the zone of destiny in this war."

Much had been learned by both sides. The Germans later reinforced their Norwegian Atlantic wall with the deployment of 30,000 extra troops. Hitler perhaps had concerns that Norway might well be "the zone of destiny in this war."

The British Press Unit was very active during the raid and some of the most graphic and dramatic photographs in WW2 were taken on this raid. These photos and eye witness reports were later used in morale boosting propaganda initiatives, to boost the morale of the British public and armed services, when the tide of the war favoured the enemy.

Operation Archery established both a "template" for future operations and the need for tri-service interoperability.



Photo: British troops with Norwegian civilians on HMS PRINCE LEOPOLD after the raid. © IWM (N 474).

Summary of Action

Forces:

Air - Bomber Command and Coastal Command;

Sea - Cruiser HMS Kenya, Landing Ships HMS Leopold and Prince Charles, Submarine HMS Tuna plus four destroyers;

Land - No 3 Commando, two troops of No 2 Commando, a medical detachment from No. 4 Commando and demolition experts from No. 6 Commando, a Royal Norwegian Army Detachment.

Mission - successful destruction of coastal defences, oil and fish factories, radio transmitters, stores, a lighthouse, a power station, 9 merchant ships totalling 15,000 tons and four Heinkels. 30,000 additional German troops deployed to the Norwegian sector taken from other fronts but notably the Atlantic Wall. 150 Germans killed, 98 captured and 71 Norwegians took passage to the UK.

Losses - Commandos: 2 Officers and 15 OR killed, 5 Officers and 48 OR wounded, Norwegians: 1 Officer killed and 2 OR wounded, Royal Navy 2 OR killed and 2 Officers and 4 OR wounded and the RAF lost eight aircraft along with their crews.¹



Photo: An oil factory burns in Vaagso, 27 December 1941. British troops can be seen on the quay in the foreground. © IWM (N 459).

¹The Army, Norwegian and Naval casualties come from PRO document DEFE 2/83. The RAF casualties come from DEFE 2/83 (for the Coastal Command losses) and Bomber Command losses 1941, W.R. Chorley, Midland Publishing (for the Bomber Command losses).

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SPECIAL WARFARE IN THE GREY ZONE

By Luke Gosling OAM MP

Special forces operations are the stuff of legend in our culture. The Australian commandos who worked with Timorese people to resist the Japanese onslaught in 1942 have remained the model of what even a small, starving band of soldiers can achieve deep behind enemy lines.

It's an example that inspired me to become a Commando and that continues to shape my service in political life. Australia has raised world-class special forces since the famed Z Special Unit, the ancestor of our modern forces, so bravely raided Japanese ships in Singapore harbour during the war.

In recent times, Australia's SAS and Commando units carried the burden of our high operational tempo in Iraq and Afghanistan, being over-used for their skill and because leaders saw them as less politically risky.

While their mission has always been broader than counterterrorism and direct-action tasks, special forces operators are set to be on the frontline of Australia's broader responses to a continuum of threats ranging from grey-zone tactics to conventional warfare.

To grasp the enduring centrality of special forces in modern war, look no further than Ukraine's heroic resistance against Russian aggression.

In the opening days of the war, the Russian strategy of regime change hinged on assassinating the president and deploying tanks to Kyiv as soon as possible.

To achieve this, Russian airborne troops needed to land at Antonov Airport in Hostomel.

But a small Ukrainian special forces unit and some drone pilots and militias defended the airport, completely throwing off Russia's initial war plan.

The lesson that special forces can turn the tide at the strategic level is vital for Australia to re-learn because, while our conventional forces lack the mass to change the course of a major war, we train first-rate special forces soldiers.

In an ASPI seminar, Dr David Kilcullen and Major General (Rtd) Professor Adam Findlay recommended ways to use that capability in an era of grey zone warfare.

The first key point was that Australia's special warfare role should be strengthened, which could mean training the indigenous forces of a neighbouring country to help them better defend against aggression by a third country.

Kilcullen points to the experience of the Baltic states' special forces in conducting support to resistance, the training of civilians in resistance warfare, as a potential model.

Kilcullen's second point is something the Defence Strategic Review should consider. He calls for the ADF to get out of its War on Terror "defensive crouch".



A Norforce soldier receives the Australian Defence Medal at a recent graduation ceremony in Darwin.

Instead of just scanning for threats, he says we should get in the habit of thinking of ourselves as the grey zone threat. With that mindset, special forces could train in small teams for long periods in remote locations to simulate potential missions.

And crucially, Kilcullen calls for "think[ing] about ethnically appropriate [special forces]. It's going to be extraordinarily difficult to be running around some of the areas of operation that we are going to be operating in with a bunch of guys that look like me."

Major General (Rtd) Findlay also called for ethnically diverse operators, and not just tall white men, who are also area experts and linguists. Such a capability should either be evolved from the current special warfare capability or be raised as an entirely new unit (or sub-unit) with clear responsibility for special warfare, including support to resistance, with particular skill sets relevant to our Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

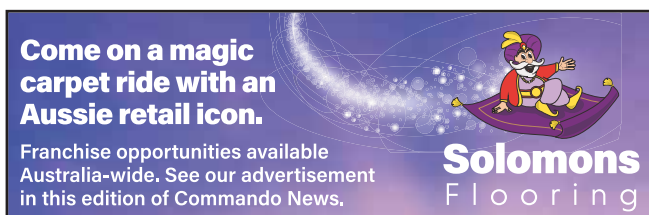
With our principal special forces units presently based in Sydney and Perth, there is a case for basing a new unit (or sub-unit) in the Northern Territory to acclimatise it to conditions closer to those in our region.

While Commandos and SAS have talented linguists, a new special warfare unit could distinguish itself as a unit by and for those diverse regional experts and linguists that we will so direly need in future operations.

(Continued on page 51)



Franchise Opportunities



Operators could train with Norforce in tasks like resistance warfare against a conventional force, as was originally envisaged for that unit in the event of an invasion.

This unit should have broad coverage of Northern Australia, with many members on days' notice to move as with the southern units, reinforcing our national readiness and response options.

Given the vast training opportunities with 1st Brigade and other ADF units; with the US Marines and soon the US Army, Navy, and Airforce, and increasingly Japan, there is a strong case for basing this special operations capability in Darwin, our northernmost garrison city.

Darwin remains key and decisive terrain in our

defence. As the scholar John Osborne Langtry assessed, "Darwin is clearly a vital keystone in the defence of Australia".

An enemy couldn't operate freely "as long as Australia still held and was able to operate offensively from Darwin."

A forward-deployed unit in the North can leverage our multiculturalism and proximity to the Indo-Pacific to defend Australia and our partners in the grey zone.

Luke Gosling OAM is the Federal Labor Member for Solomon in the Northern Territory, representing Darwin and Palmerston in Canberra. He served in the Australian Defence Force for 13 years, including the 1st Commando Regiment and Norforce.




The Commander Regional Force Surveillance Group presents Army Indigenous Development Program graduates with awards and academic certificates.

Authorised by L. Gosling, ALP, 3/266 Trower Road, Casuarina NT 0810

The Federal Labor Govt delivering for veterans:

- \$47 million for 10 Veterans and Families Hubs around Australia
- \$3.6 million for Darwin's Scott Palmer Centre
- \$24 million for the Veteran Employment Program
- \$234 million for 500 new DVA staff to reduce compensation claims backlog
- \$24 million for more support for veterans having DVA claims processed
- \$46 million to boost Defence personnel and veteran home ownership

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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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Defence Personnel Primed to Thrive In Franchising

Kerry Miles, Director, FranchiseED

While entering the world of franchising may not be top of mind for most Australian Defence Force personnel planning a transition to civilian life, it is a career path that presents many synergies and can play to your proven strengths.

The battleground of franchising requires strict adherence to systems and procedures, hard work, dedication, leadership and teamwork to achieve the shared mission of business success.

This makes those leaving the Australian Defence Force perfect candidates to conquer the challenge of franchising when returning to civilian life. The structure of a franchise system provides franchisees with the ability to work to set policies and procedures while at the same time allowing the independence to lead, inspire and develop their own teams to achieve shared goals.

These are all concepts very familiar to those who have train and served in the Australian Defence Force, and ones that make you suited to forging your own path to business success in franchising. Indeed, the transition from defence to the franchise sector can be a 'win win' situation for franchisors and franchisees alike.

Franchise businesses are actively seeking out high quality and committed candidates as franchisees, while you may be targeting a new autonomous career where you are calling the shots and putting your considerable skills to good use.

Where others may fail, those trained in the Australian Defence Force bring an appetite for hard work, a hunger for success, the proven ability to lead teams and the discipline to adhere to set systems to survive and thrive in the world of franchising.

Your life experiences and skills sets could be highly suited and transferrable to owning and operating your own franchise business, of which there are countless options to choose from. Everything from fitness franchises, food franchises, home improvement franchises and everything in between are available. It all depends on what you love doing and where you see yourself thriving.

There are over 1200 franchise systems operating in Australia, from the world's biggest consumer brands to local success stories and up-and-coming franchisors providing just about every product or service imaginable. Within these systems, there are nearly 100,000 franchise units in Australia, which are local and usually individually owned and operated businesses.

The opportunities are endless in franchising and whatever path is chosen, it is one in which the owner-operator is in charge and driving their own destiny, with the security of a set plan of attack and supporting systems for long-term sustainable success.

As former Australian Defence Force personnel are



comfortable with following systems and procedures in order to successfully complete a mission, you are therefore very well equipped to deal with the challenges of franchising and make a new owner-operator business work.

While having the right skills set, experience and attitude is a competitive advantage in franchising, they do not alone guarantee success. Just like in the Australian Defence Force, preparation is the key to setting the course for victory.

Knowledge is power and nowhere more so than in the world of franchising where new franchisees are taking the ultimate leap of faith into owning and operating their own business.

Thoroughly researching the sector, the options that are available and are best suited to each individual circumstance, and fully understanding and managing the financial and lifestyle expectations and demands, should be the starting point in any franchising journey. I cannot emphasise this point enough. While there are considerable opportunities in franchising, you need to work out which one is right for you and to ensure the franchise you choose is both ethical and sustainable.

While a franchise provides a set structure to follow, compared to buying an independent business, this in itself is no guarantee of success. Seeking out quality information and resources on franchising in order to make informed choices, and exploring the reality of being a franchisee, is the logical starting point for any former Australian Defence Force personnel considering their future career options.

If you are wanting to educate yourself about franchising, there's a lot of free information at www.franchise-ed.org.au.

If you are looking at buying a franchise and would like to understand how FranchiseED can help you, book a free 15-minute conversation with Kerry at <https://calendly.com/kerry-franchise-ed/meeting-with-kerry-miles-1>

About the Author:

Kerry is at the forefront of understanding what it takes to create thriving franchises with a comprehensive perspective encompassing both the franchisor and franchisee. Shifting from 5 years owning a business within the franchise sector, to more than 10 years heading up Griffith University's Franchise Centre as General and Business Manager Kerry's work is unique and driven by maintaining an independent perspective. Her clients include prospective franchisees, large and small franchise organisations and not-for-profits looking to scale up their operations. For more information visit www.franchise-ed.org.au. You can connect with her via LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/in/kerry-miles-franchiseed/





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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

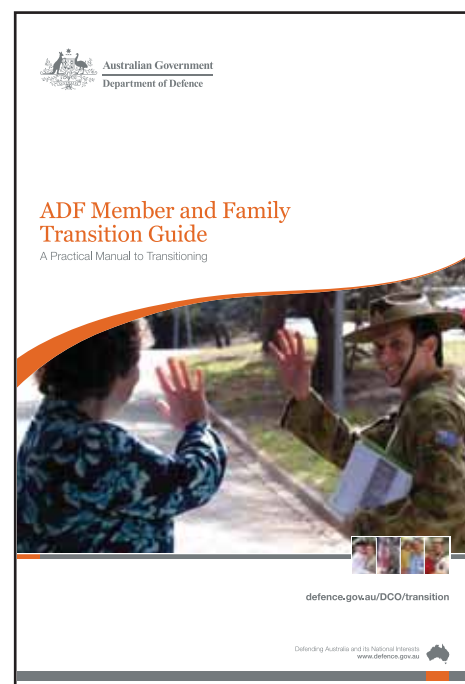
ADF Transition Seminar

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.



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We have big plans for 2023 and are expanding across all major capital cities and all regional areas as well. Now it is your chance to join our rapidly growing business by becoming a franchisee and making a great living while doing something you love, and as a special thank you to our ex-military members, we are offering a credit of 400 square metres of our most advanced grass ranges for free!

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Grahams is unique in that its business model is founded on its franchisees earning a good income from their first week in business. Our fee options are extensive and 'moulded' to the needs of our prospective franchisees. You can become a franchisee for as low as \$495 or join at our more comprehensive levels at our Silver, Gold and Platinum levels. We also offer financing options for those looking to invest at our more exclusive levels. Grahams has an over-abundance of job leads and clients – we look after all the marketing and advertising activity so that you don't need to waste valuable 'earning time' trying to increase your job leads or build your own brand.

- We do NOT charge a commission or sales-based fee.
- We have a fantastic income guarantee program – on new Gold and Platinum franchises.
- Our franchisees enjoy the flexibility and lifestyle choices that owning a business provides.
- Our franchisees enjoy good tax advantages.
- Our franchisees earn on average between \$1700 and \$2500 (and more) per week in sales revenue.

Our business model is based on supporting our franchisees to create a good business – we empower our franchisees to achieve a very good financial return from their business and we do all we can to make sure this happens.

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#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 it's 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. It's 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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The Positive Relationship between Holidays/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, sufferers 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.



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The Heart Health Program is flexible and able to accommodate participants living in metropolitan areas, rural or remote areas, those still working or retired, studying or with other time constraints.

www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/eligibility



Am I eligible?

Started over 20 years ago for those returned from Vietnam, the Heart Health Program is free and open to all veterans with operational service, peacekeepers and those covered under the ADF firefighters scheme who have not previously participated in the Heart Health Program before.



Program Exercise Resource - Exercise how you like to

The program can provide an exercise resource to help participants to exercise the way they like to or provide an opportunity to try something that's different than the usual.



Registering Your Interest

Registering your interest or checking eligibility is easy.

Simply visit our website and follow the steps.

Call the program phone number 1300 246 262 at any time to speak to one of our team.

Heart Health Team - DVA Heart Health Program

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