

January 2019

"Sitrep, Over!"

To Perpetuate the Regiment



Editor David Laing

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Special points of interest

- Out now. 2018 Pro Patria Journal available on our website. www.rsara.asn.au
- Volunteers required for RAAF Edinburgh BBQ.
- Vietnam Remembered. Stories of RSAR members in South Vietnam

The comments contained in this newsletter, do not necessarily reflect those of the RSAR Association

More Support Required!

The Association have once again been asked to provide catering support for the Regiment.

On **Sunday 9th February 2019** around 200 of our finest will be participating in a training exercise at RAAF Base Edinburgh, and our task is to feed them with a BBQ lunch on the final day. We did it in February 2018, and the diggers enjoyed it so much they've asked us to help again.

Last year we had 17 Association volunteers, including wives and partners, and they worked like a well oiled machine for about 2 hours, with the soldiers eating everything laid out in front of them, including my hat!

This year we've asked for help from the South Australian Mounted Rifles Association (SAMRA) and the Royal Australian Engineers Association (RAE Assoc), and we hope to divide the work amongst the 3 associations.

We'll need about 20 volunteers all up, and those interested will need to provide me with some personal details (Full name, DOB, Country of origin, Address etc) in order to get Security Clearance on the day. I'll need that info 14 days prior to the exercise.

We will meet in the RAAF Base Edinburgh car park at 0930 hrs on the day and be transported into the facility in Defence vehicles, and returned to the car park at the end of the exercise.

Volunteers need bring only themselves. The RSAR Association will provide all food and cooking implements.

Last year, as a thankyou bonus at the end of the exercise, we all traveled to the WTSS (Weapons Training Simulation System) and had a go firing the F88 Steyr and other weapons. We may be lucky again this time!



Membership

Becoming a member of the RSAR Association is a simple process. You can download a copy of the Membership Application Form from our website at www.rsara.asn.au. Return the completed form to the Secretary (address on Page 5) pay your membership fees to the Treasurer (right) and you're 2/3 on the way to becoming a member of the most progressive, proactive ex services association in Australia.

Simples!



Fees and Merchandise can be paid by EFT through the following Bendigo Bank account:

RSAR Association
BSB 633 000
Acc. 1616 585 88
Cheques etc can be mailed to
David Hope
The Treasurer RSAR Association
20 Katoomba Rd
Beaumont SA 5066

Exercise Jacka Crawl

By Sergeant Mark Blondell
Platoon Sergeant, 4 Platoon, B Company

Exercise Jacka Crawl was held in March 2018 and was the first activity on the 'road to war' for Battlegroup Jacka. It began on Friday, 16 March, when members of 10th/27th Battalion arrived at Keswick Barracks at 1900 h with kit on backs, ready to board the transport to Puckapunyal for a nine-day field exercise. Roll call was called, soldier combat ensemble (SCE) webbing was issued and platoons were placed onto relevant buses.

At 2000 h the transport pulled out onto Anzac Highway. At 0600 h the next morning, after a tedious 10-hour overnight journey, we arrived at Puckapunyal. The combat team was then herded into the mess for a well-needed cooked breakfast; things were starting to look up. Personnel from 10/27 then moved to the parade ground to wait in the ever-increasing heat for stores to be issued. This happened by midday, with some discrepancies due to the lack of equipment as priority had gone to local units.

Then came the arrival of our brothers from Tasmania: one private; two non-commissioned officers; and two lieutenants! Lieutenant Gregg, a former Naval Commander (equivalent to an Army Lieutenant Colonel), who had been in the Army for about 6 weeks, was given the role of Platoon Commander of the South Australian and Tasmanian personnel, under the guidance of Lieutenant Ingram and the Platoon Sergeant (me). The PL began conducting rehearsals for tasks they thought they might be given during the Exercise. This was difficult because information had not been passed down the chain at this point as to the sequence of events.

At around 1600 h, the platoon mounted Bushmasters and headed out into the field. After a 20 minute drive the Platoon shook out and started to patrol to a night location. By 1900 the platoon was 'in loc' ready to start night routine. As a work party was establishing the position a radio call came in that we had a 'NO DUFF' casualty suffering with heat stress. The quick and accurate identification of the casualty's condition by Private Hardy meant that the platoon were able to do an outstanding job of evacuating the casualty in quick time. The Platoon then settled back into the exercise and at around 0100 h the silence was broken with a panicked shout. This turned out to be Private Hornhardt, who had managed to invert himself in his sleeping bag and panicked when he got stuck!

Personnel from B Company 10/27 who attended the exercise were all surprised when the first day's patrol included a platoon attack! A progression from section attacks up to platoon attacks would have been ideal, but the Platoon nevertheless worked hard to achieve the aim. The next few days consisted of more patrols within the area of operations, conducting as many rehearsals as possible under the guidance of Warrant Officer Class 2 Boag.

The next phase of the Exercise was defensive, during which the enemy started to probe the position. A section from B Company repelled one such attack in quick time by conduct-



Lance Corporal McGarry leads his section during a rehearsal of a platoon withdrawal

Exercise Jacka Crawlcontinued

ing a clearing patrol. Standing patrols were sent out whilst the position was developed. The enemy probing increased over the following days. On the final day of the defensive phase, Lieutenant Gregg orchestrated the withdrawal of platoon under fire.

The final phase of the exercise was stability operations. The platoon was tasked with setting up a vehicle check point (VCP). An engineer troop was attached to provide guidance and manpower. After some intense discussions with the engineers, it was decided upon that the platoon plan would be the one used when setting up the VCP. The troop commander was later heard to say that the troop had passed on comments about the professionalism of B Coy personnel during the stability operations phase.

Over the nine days, the platoon carried out tasks in line with offensive, defensive and stability operations, impressing both 10/27 staff and members of other units. The platoon had to work within many limitations and in the face of a lack of information, but it did a great job of all the tasks it was given.

Welcome to the new CO!

For the first time in memory, possibly in history, a Battalion of the Royal South Australia Regiment is to be commanded by an Officer of the Royal Australian Engineers! It was only a matter of time before this happened, as under the new Army restructure, 3rd/9th Light Horse SAMR and 3 Field Squadron RAE now come under the 10th/27th Battalion "umbrella." This now means that qualified officers from all 3 Corps can hold command positions within the battalion.

LTCOL Peter Morgenthaler is the incoming CO and he takes up his tenure in late December 2018. I contacted LTCOL Morgenthaler and asked if he'd be kind enough to provide some information on himself and his background, and he's sent through this insight.

LTCOL PETER. R. MORGENTHALER

Peter Morgenthaler was born in Zurich, Switzerland on 22 September 1976. He immigrated to Australia in 1980 where he settled in Adelaide with his family. He enlisted in the Australian Army in 1998 as an officer cadet. He graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 2000 and was commissioned into the Royal Australian Engineers.

Peter has held a range of regimental and staff appointments. These include: instructor and company second-in-command (2IC) at Adelaide Universities Regiment; Command of Combat Engineer and Construction Troops, as well as the Operations Officer at the 3rd Field Engineer Squadron. He was posted to the Headquarters 9th Brigade as the 2IC of the Recruiting cell.

He completed his Combat Officers Advanced Course (COAC) and Officer Grade 2, and was subsequently promoted to Major in 2011. On promotion he was posted as the Headquarters 9th Brigade (HQ 9 Bde) Intelligence Officer (S2) before commencing as the Officer Commanding (OC) 3rd Field Squadron 2012 and 2013.

He was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 2018 and has just completed his post as the S01 DROCM-A CAG-CW as the senior career advisor to take over command of 10/27 Royal South Australia Regiment.

The Battalion
has a new CO.
And he's NOT a
Grunt!



Welcome to the new CO!continued



LTCOL Peter Morgenthaler

In 2014, Lieutenant Colonel Morgenthaler completed six months Continuous Full Time Service (CFTS) to deploy on Operation Resolute as the OC of the Transit Security Element (TSE) rotation 73. In 2015 he completed Australian Command and Staff College (Reserve) and the Joint Operations Planning Course

In his civilian career, Peter completed his Bachelor of Engineering (Electrical and Electronic Engineering) in 1998 and went on to complete his Masters of Engineering (Information Technology and Telecommunications) in 2000. In 2015 he also completed his Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

Peter has worked for BAE Systems Australia since 2000 as a Software and System Engineer on some of Australia's largest Defence projects. These include the following projects: Parakeet Phase 4 (Army), Jindalee Over the Horizon Radar system (RAAF), Wedgetail - Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft (RAAF), M113 vehicle upgrade (Army), Landing Helicopter Dock ship (Navy) and the Land 400 phase 2 bid (Army). These projects combined with his deployment on Operation Resolute working in the JTF 639

Headquarters and the Joint operations planning course have provided him a sound background in the Australian Defence Force's capabilities in Joint Operations.

Post unit command Lieutenant Colonel Morgenthaler would like to deploy into a joint international HQ to gain further proficiency and experience in joint operations.

Peter and Katherine are engaged and due to be married in late 2019. They have an 11 year old daughter. Peter is well travelled and enjoys most sports, particularly soccer and beach volleyball, and loves fishing and boating.

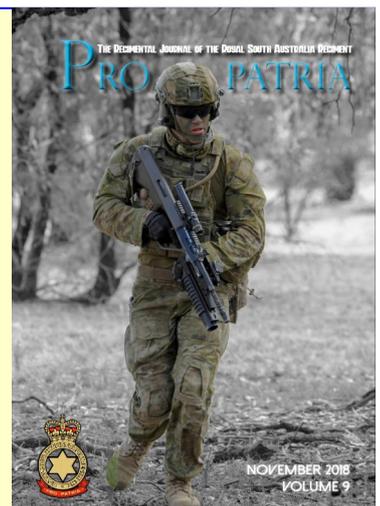
There you have it, straight from the new CO's pen. The RSAR Association welcomes LTCOL Morgenthaler to the Regiment, and wishes him all the best in his new posting. We also look forward to continuing the strong bond we have with the serving members of the Battalion, and assisting them whenever and wherever we can.

David Laing - Secretary/Editor

Pro Patria Journal 2016 - 2018

NOW AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

www.rsara.asn.au/links/pro_patria





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ment. It was to be used to house various veterans organisations and the History Trust of South Australia. Our RSAR Association has been meeting there since before I joined in 2007, and I recall having lunch in the Combined Services Mess upstairs, before retreating with the committee to the Memorial Room downstairs for a 1 hour long meeting.

We have continued meeting there right up to November 2018, when suddenly we were asked by the RSL (the main tenant of the building) to show a copy of our public liability insurance before we could book any future meetings. Of course, with an annual turnover of only around \$2,000 there is little chance we can afford the \$600 it would cost us for public liability insurance. I took our plight back to RSL HQ and advised them of this situation, but they were adamant that if one of the committee should fall and injure ourselves, we would need public liability insurance to cover any outcomes.

So, sadly, our committee are now forced to find an alternate meeting place for our quarterly meetings, after proudly using the Torrens Training Depot, "now owned by the people," but apparently, not by us.

We have become victims of the "litigious society" in which we live, and after shedding blood, sweat and tears in that "sacred" place, our mission "to Perpetuate the Regiment" just became a whole lot harder!

Isn't it a Pity?

David Laing Editor

Isn't it a pity?

I remember marching amongst a body of soldiers past the RSM who was standing on the parade ground at Torrens Training Depot in 1972, as he screamed at me to keep my "head and eyes to the front" as I dared look at him!

I remember sleeping on the hard timber floor of the Drill Hall, as our 1974 ANZAC Day Catafalque Party duties approached.

I remember forming up in 1976 on the hallowed Parade Ground with 400 other soldiers of the Regiment, brass shining and bayonets gleaming, to march in quick and slow time past the Governor of South Australia, Sir Mark Oliphant.

I remember a lot of my mates who were there during those times, but are sadly no longer with us.

And I remember having a feeling of "ownership" of that Parade Ground and Drill Hall, as had thousands of the Regiment's soldiers before me, and the thousands after me. The Army has utilized the Drill Hall since it was built in 1936, and continued to do so right up to 2002 when it was handed back to the "people of South Australia" by the Commonwealth Govern-



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Exercise Jacka Walk

By Lieutenant Roberto Cardone
Commander 5 Platoon, B Company

Exercise Jacka Walk was conducted in Puckapunyal Range, Victoria, from 20 to 28 October 2018. The live fire (LFX) and field training (FTX) components of the exercise consisted of a combination of live-fire ranges and field training, leading into the main effort of the exercise, which was a live-fire platoon attack as part of a Combat Team scenario. This exercise was part two of the three-part training continuum for Battlegroup Jacka on the path to Exercise Hamel/Talisman Sabre 2019.

The order of battle (ORBAT) confirmed on arrival at the range was three sections of eight members, led by section commanders Corporal Healy, (then) Lance Corporal Findlay and Corporal Sanders, all from B Company 10th/27th Battalion, The Royal South



Members of I31 at Exercise Jacka Walk

Australia Regiment (10/27 RSAR). Platoon Headquarters (PHQ) consisted of Signaller Private Harland from A Company 10/27 RSAR, Sergeant Blondell as Platoon Sergeant and myself as Platoon Commander (both from B Company 10/27 RSAR). There was depth in experience yet also a young eagerness within the platoon, with several new members from both A and B Companies, 10/27 RSAR attending their first exercise.

Within a few hours of arrival at Puckapunyal, the platoon, now designated call-sign I31, was mounted and pushed out to the Marksmanship Training Range (MTR) in preparation for a Live Fire (LF) 5 shoot for gunners and a LF6 shoot for all other personnel as part of the training progression. Of five platoons participating in the LFX, I31 was one of the only two platoons in which all members passed without reshoot, and was the fastest to be moved onto the Individual Sneaker Range for its next shoot.

After two days, I31 transitioned from live-fire to field training and the platoon inserted to field to conduct a full day of PHQ-planned training followed by a dawn blank-fire platoon attack. The section commanders had the opportunity within the training day to conduct over ten section attacks in which they reaffirmed their knowledge of the capabilities of their

section members and developed their standard operating procedures (SOPs). This would later prove to be a decisive event in building I31's reputation for good field craft and drills. On completion of the blank-fire platoon attack, I31 was transitioned back into live-fire training, moving smoothly through pairs and fire-team assault drills and completing live-fire section attacks in preparation for a live-fire platoon attack that was conducted on D+7.

The platoon attack was the clearance of an enemy standing patrol position that was providing early warning for a platoon position 400m to its rear. The attack was a two up, one back, up the guts assault with no smoke (an exercise constraint for safety rea-



Live-Fire range safety lesson being conducted by Sergeant Blondell (centre right). L-R: Corporal Sanders, (then) Lance Corporal Findlay, Sergeant Blondell, Lance Corporal Scown.

sons). A support by fire (SBF) position was also established using two Bushmasters. After clearing its objective, I31 then established a platoon-level SBF to allow I11 to move swiftly across 400m of open terrain to clear the enemy platoon defensive position while I21 conducted a third attack on another objective that was two kilometres to the south.

The conduct of the platoon attack was of a very high standard and the platoon SBF conducted by six F89 Minimis under the command of Sergeant Blondell was executed exceptionally well. The Regimental Sergeant Major of 8th/7th Battalion, Royal Victoria Regiment, who was acting as an Observer Trainer, commented specifically on the SBF position's outstanding effort. After this successful live-fire platoon attack, I31 was tasked to complete the same platoon attack and SBF again the next day to support I22 and I32 and give them the opportunity to complete a live-fire platoon attack.

The Exercise Jacka Walk LFX and FXT were a success not only because I31 achieved the main effort but also because of the reputation it earned for high performance, which was demonstrated through every milestone of the exercise. At each transition debrief, I31 and the conduct of its members was noted as professional, competent and capable. This was achieved through the effective command and leadership of the section commanders, which created team cohesion and provided engaging training for their members from very early in the exercise. As result, I31 was formally recognised as equal top-performing platoon amongst the five within the exercise.

Platoon training conducted throughout the week included platoon attacks, section attacks, patrolling, close-assault drills, reconnaissance, combat-shooting, equipment packing, basic field craft, Bushmaster familiarisation, radio communication procedures, judging distances, target indications, fire-control orders, casualty care, live-fire range safety and several other components. Achieving this wide variety of training activities was only possible due to competent and engaging section commanders and the eager and focused members who applied themselves. If you speak to any member who participated in Exercise Jacka Walk as part of I31 they would say it was a successful exercise and one in which 10/27 RSAR, through the conduct of I31, was recognised for its capability and high calibre of professionalism.



The I31 support by fire group during the platoon attack on D+7

A new home for the Committee! (See story Page 4 first)

After being “shown the door” by RSL SA/NT, the RSAR Association committee were forced to find a new meeting place for the quarterly committee meetings. Emails bounced back and forth for all of 2 hours before Veterans SA’s Chantelle Bohan offered the use of their Board Room in Wakefield House free of charge. A fantastic and commendable gesture, which fully supports the work we endeavour to carry out.

A second offer came in from the then CO of 10/27 Battalion LTCOL Trent Burnard to use either the Bravo Company Lecture Room or the Roy Inwood VC Club, both located at Keswick Barracks. We see this as the Battalion supporting the Association which supports the Battalion. A sort of “pay it forward” gesture.

Wakefield House has no parking, so it was suggested we park at TTD and make our way up Gawler Place to Wakefield House. Sadly, we cannot be guaranteed parking at TTD due to other circumstances.

Keswick Barracks has ample parking, especially on a Friday at midday (which is when our committee meetings take place) therefore the offer to meet there was discussed and accepted.

I have written to Ms Graham at Veterans SA and thanked her for her support, and have graciously declined their generous offer.

There you have it. The Regiment and sundry units (us) will now occupy the same barracks for the first time, thanks to LTCOL Burnards offer.

David Laing - Editor/Secretary

MEMBERS OF THE RSAR ON ACTIVE SERVICE

Member Don Hawking wrote thanking me for the advice on the passing of former members Trevor Phillips and Mark Mau, both colleagues of Don's. He mentioned how he had written an article for "Pro Patria" in 2014 about members of our Regiment who had served on active service in Vietnam as CMF Observers.

The article was featured in the journal, but for those who never had the opportunity to read it, here it is, thanks to Don.

CMF Observers—Vietnam

Background

As Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War escalated in the 1960's, active consideration was given to the deployment of composite CMF Battalions to be made up from Infantry units from around Australia. This proposal had significant merit as CMF units at the time contained a good balance of young volunteers, former National Servicemen from the 1950's NS scheme, plus a sprinkling of WW2, Korea and Malaya campaign veterans. Unfortunately the Military Board at the time determined that the Australian involvement in Vietnam would involve only Regular Army units, and the Board was able to influence the Government of the day to re-introduce controversial conscription for National Service.

Concerned at the snubbing of CMF units with long and gallant histories, the CMF Member of the Military Board, Major General Paul Cullen fought long and hard for the proposal of a composite CMF Battalion but was unsuccessful and ultimately settled on a deal whereby, in return for his dropping the composite Battalion proposal, the Board would allow selected volunteer CMF Officers to go to Vietnam on attachment for two to three weeks.

Approximately 600 CMF Officers volunteered to undertake this hazardous duty, and it is a matter of public record that until the Veterans Entitlement Act was amended in 1986, these Officers were specifically denied any repatriation benefits or the protection of the Repatriation Act unless killed or wounded.

It should be remembered that:

- *All CMF Officers who served in Vietnam were volunteers. CMF Officers served for the period of time that was decreed by Government; had this decreed time been longer they would have met this requirement.*
- *By their willingness to serve in Vietnam, they showed physical support for our troops in the most tangible form, at a time when those troops were being criticised, vilified and humiliated by elements of the Australian public.*
- *A number of Officers suffered injury during their time in Vietnam, including Capt PM Toms of 2nd Battalion RNSWR who was wounded in action when on patrol attached to 5 RAR.*
- *The degree of risk in Vietnam was significantly higher than in later ADF deployments such as Kuwait, Somalia, or East Timor. Many of our casualties were caused by Australian anti personnel mines, which had been recovered by the Viet Cong and used against our troops in the years 1967 –1971.*

The nature of the war in Vietnam was such that there were NO safe areas. The Task Force base at Nui Dat, and the various Fire Support Bases and Night Defended Positions, were subjected to infantry, rocket and mortar attacks, and the dangers of ambush or mine incidents which faced our troops who operated outside the wire, are well known to any student of field operations in Vietnam. Danger was present from day one in Vietnam, and this is illustrated by the experience of 3 RAR who arrived in Vietnam for their second tour on 25 February 1971. The 3rd Battalion commenced "In Theatre" training on 27 February, experienced their first contact on 1 March 1971, then suffered the loss of a Platoon Commander and one soldier killed, and a further two soldiers wounded on 2 March 1971. Another Platoon Commander was killed and two soldiers wounded on 20 March 1971

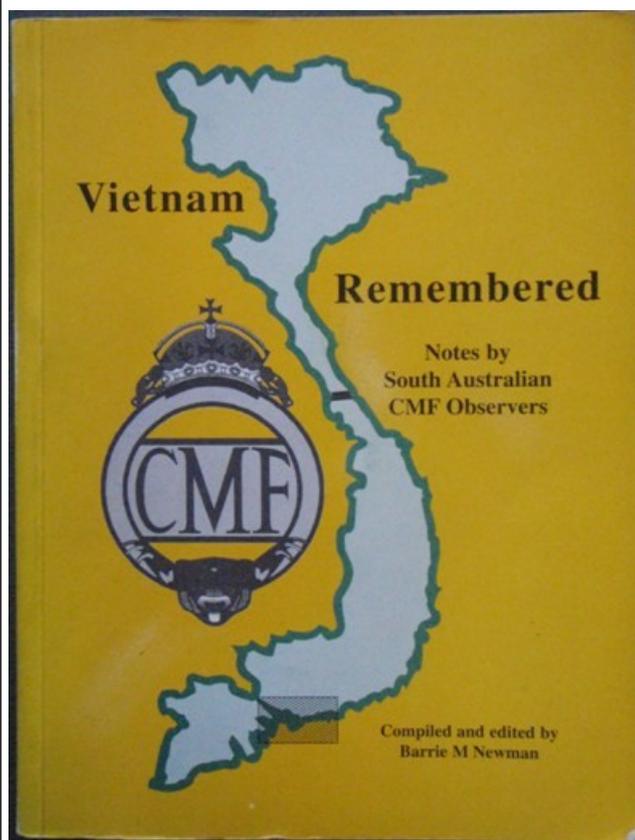
In an interview on the ABC's "Talking Heads", aired on 2nd July 2007, the former CDF General Peter Cosgrove summed up operational service in Vietnam thus:

"It was where the training wheels were taken away, there was no longer somebody to say; "now we got that wrong, lets go back and do it again". it was a really high intensity and dangerous war Vietnam".

Members of RSAR Who Served in Vietnam. (Ranks and Parent Unit plus Attached Unit as at deployment)

Capt Geoff Attenborough	10 RSAR	2 RAR/NZ	
Lt Col Hugh Barnard-Brown	27 RSAR	HQ 1ATF	*
Maj Peter Cameron	10 RSAR	8 RAR	*
Capt Wally Elliott	10 RSAR	6 RAR/NZ	
Maj Don Field	27 RSAR	6 RAR	
Lt Don Hawking	10 RSAR	7 RAR	
Capt Bill Johns	10 RSAR	3 RAR	*
Lt Col Ian Kennedy	27 RSAR	3 RAR	*
Maj John Kerr	27 RSAR	8 RAR	
Capt Mark Mau	27 RSAR	3 RAR	*
Maj Robin Millhouse	27 RSAR	2 RAR	*
Lt Barry Mitchell	27 RSAR	8 RAR	
Capt Grant Paltridge	27 RSAR	2 RAR	*
Capt Ron Pearson	27 RSAR	9 RAR	*
Lt Col Don Phillips	10 RSAR	7 RAR	*
Capt Trevor Phillips	27 RSAR	8 RAR	*
Maj Bruce Ridland	10 RSAR	6 RAR	
Capt Max Sanderson	27 RSAR	7 RAR	
Lt Col Alwyn Shepherd	27 RSAR	7 RAR	*
Maj Brian Silcock	10 RSAR	2 RAR	*
Capt Neil Solly	10 RSAR	3 RAR	
Capt Jack Trenerry	27 RSAR	6 RAR	*
Lt Col Gratton Wheaton	10 RSAR	7 RAR	*

* Denotes deceased as at 29 Nov 18.



Footnote:

Barry Newman (Maj retd) wrote an excellent book called "Vietnam Remembered" on the experiences of some South Australian CMF Officers who went to Vietnam as Observers. The book is out of print and has been for some time, however I happen to have a digital pdf copy on file, thanks to Barry Newman (Capt, retd), and will happily forward it to anyone who is interested.

The book contains stories from a lot of those CMF officers mentioned in Don Hawkings' article, and is a great read for those with an interest in our lesser known military history.

Just drop a line to me on davidlaing49@bigpond.com and I'll wiz a copy through the ionosphere just in time for tea.

Editors Note: When Australia sided with the US in South East Asia, the government of the day had 10 fully trained Infantry Battalions at their disposal in the CMF, but said they wouldn't send our "civilian soldiers" to war. Instead they instigated a National Service scheme where civilian soldiers were selected in a ballot and sent off to Vietnam anyway. The rest is history.

CPL DAVE'S PAGE

A 54 year old woman had a heart attack and was taken to the hospital.

While on the operating table she had a near death experience. Seeing God she asked 'Is my time up?' God said, 'No, you have another 43 years, 2 months and 8 days to live.'

Upon recovery, the woman decided to stay in the hospital and have a face-lift, liposuction, breast implants and a tummy tuck.

She even had someone come in and change her hair colour and brighten her teeth!

Since she had so much more time to live, she figured she might as well make the most of it.

After her last operation, she was released from the hospital.

While crossing the street on her way home, she was run over and killed by an ambulance.

Arriving in front of God, she demanded, 'I thought you said I had another 43 years? Why didn't you pull me from out of the path of the ambulance?'

(You'll love this) -

God replied: 'I didn't bloody recognize you.'



The only reason they say 'Women and children first' is to test the strength of the lifeboats.



2018 End of Year BBQ

A record turn up of over 50 members, wives, partners (sometimes both) and children made the last function of the year a great success. Bolstered by nearly 20 serving members, those assembled enjoyed the camaraderie of mates and their partners at the Kibby VC Club for the annual BBQ. Secretary David Laing spoke of the sadness of losing 3 RSAR member in 2 weeks, but said those left would continue the association legacy. With President Rod Beames not long out of the RAP he spoke of the success of the Association over the past year, and warned that we "can't take our foot off the pedal in 2019 as we were already tasked for a Catering Support Role at RAAF Edinburgh in February. The food was prepared, cooked and served by Norm Tregenza and Graham Elliott under the watchful eye of Col Abel, and many left with full tummies. Rod Beames wished all members a great Christmas and a happy, safe new year.









