"SITREP, OVER!"

Official Newsletter of The Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc

FEBRUARY 2013

Editor—David Laing 0407 791 822

UPCOMING LUNCH DATES & COM Meetings

LUNCHES
- 22nd February
- 25th April (ANZAC)
- 28th June
- 25th October
- 15th December

CoM MEETINGS
- 24th May
- 27th September

The location and timings of all events will be published in the monthly newsletter.

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And it saves paper!

Australia in the Vietnam War   Part 1

Australia's military involvement in the Vietnam War was the longest in duration of any war in Australia's history.

The arrival of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV) in South Vietnam during July and August 1962 was the beginning of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. Australia's participation in the war was formally declared at an end when the Governor-General issued a proclamation on 11 January 1973. The only combat troops remaining in Vietnam were a platoon guarding the Australian embassy in Saigon, which was withdrawn in June 1973.

The Australian commitment consisted predominantly of army personnel, but significant numbers of air force and navy personnel and some civilians also took part.

From the time of the arrival of the first members of the Team in 1962 almost 60,000 Australians, including ground troops and air force and navy personnel, served in Vietnam; 521 died as a result of the war and over 3,000 were wounded. The war was the cause of the greatest social and political dissent in Australia since the conscription referendums of the First World War. Many draft resisters, conscientious objectors, and protesters were fined or jailed, while soldiers met a hostile reception on their return home.

Australian support for South Vietnam in the early 1960s was in keeping with the policies of other nations, particularly the United States, to stem the spread of communism in Europe and Asia. In 1961 and 1962 Ngo Dinh Diem, leader of the government in South Vietnam, repeatedly requested security assistance from the US and its allies. Australia eventually responded with 30 military advisers, dispatched as the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV), also known as "the Team". Their arrival in South Vietnam during July and August 1962 was the beginning of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. In August 1964 the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) also sent a flight of Caribou transports to the port of Vung Tau.

By early 1965, when it had become clear that South Vietnam could not stave off the communist insurgents and their North Vietnamese comrades for more than a few months, the US commenced a major escalation of the war. By the end of the year it had committed 200,000 troops to the conflict. As part of the build-up, the US government requested further support from friendly countries in the region, including Australia. The Australian government dispatched the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR), in June 1965 to serve alongside the US 173d Airborne Brigade in Bien Hoa province.

Sourced from www.awm.gov.au

Part 2 next month

Some members have indicated that although they have paid their fees their names are not showing up on the Members List. This may be caused by computer error, or may be caused by an error on the part of the Editor, but is probably computer error!!! All FINANCIAL members have now been restored to the list as it was prior to the computer malfunction!

Thank you - Editor

Chaplain Alfred Goller   Part 2

With the two conscription referendums defeated at home, the number of reinforcements was decreasing. The AIF Divisions were continually going into action undermanned, yet pressure was being applied by the British Government for more Australian recruits. Something had to be done to bolster the ailing Divisions.

AWM C01592. The transport HMAT Ballarat after being torpedoed by a German submarine off the southern English coast. In the background a British destroyer is standing by to take the troops

A decision was made to disband some battalions to provide additional men for the others. The 37th, which had been reduced to little more than company strength, was one of those chosen to suffer this fate. The Diggers were horrified. 'Why us?' was the cry. A meeting was convened by the men. They were adamant they were staying with the 37th and all agreed that they would carry out every order except the command to 'fall out'. The final parade was scheduled for 10 am. The brigadier assumed his position and gave the order for the men to fall out to their new battalion. The officers, warrant officers and most of the senior non-commissioned officers obeyed the command. One soldier fell out and was applauded by the rank and file for having the courage to stand by his convictions. The soldiers encouraged the remaining sergeants to follow— to save their rank. Padre Goller stood fast. The commanding officer (CO) said, 'You can fall out too, Padre'.

'No Sir', was the reply. 'If ever the men needed a chaplain, they need one now'. The senior officers tried to persuade the men to carry out the order, but they would not be swayed, so they were left to ponder their fate. A corporal was elected 'CO', parades were held, guards and piquet lines were maintained and battalion administration was conducted as usual. The men were out to prove that, within their old battalion, there was a bigger issue than insubordination— one of honour and commitment. The battalion and all it stood for meant everything to the men.

Padre Goller, always available when they needed him most, was instrumental in maintaining the morale of the protesting Diggers. He often toured the piquet line late at night to bolster their spirits and reinforce the morality of their resolve to stand up for their beliefs.

As a retaliatory measure, the high command cut off the men's rations—but other units in the area readily gave up half of theirs to feed the protesters. Supply units changed the routes of their convoys and arranged for boxes of food to 'fall off' as they passed the 37th's lines. As a contingency, the battalion had a specially trained party ready to raid the nearby light railway at Mont St Quentin.

Days later, the CO visited the rebelling troops and approached the chaplain. 'Well Padre, the men have got their wish.' With a wisdom that matched the pride of these men, the authorities allowed the 37th to retain its identity and return to the battlefront, its burden made more onerous by its lack of numbers. It is unlikely such an incident would have been allowed to take place in the army of any other country in the world.

A brisk autumn wind was blowing as the CO placed a whistle to his lips and checked his watch. The second hand moved slowly towards the twelve. The shrill blast of the whistle broke the silence and the men surged forward, their mission to breech the reportedly impregnable Hindenburg Line.

As the battalion reached the belts of black barbed wire entanglements, the German machineguns opened fire. The deadly salvos destroyed the front ranks of the 37th. The remainder of the battalion consolidated in a hollow and readied themselves for the next push. To the front, the wounded could be heard moaning. Without hesitation, Padre Goller crawled forward and dragged the injured men back to the safety of the depression.

When the battalion again sortied forward, the padre stumbled across the bodies of three 'A' Company men. As he collected their personal belongings, he paused and offered a silent prayer over each of the bodies. Suddenly, a single shot rang out and the padre fell dead.

The men of the battalion were deeply traumatised. Not only had they lost their padre, but a mate as well. They reflected on the man who had been Alfred Goller. His Christianity was exemplified by his life. Chaplain Alfred Goller was no 'fire and brimstone' preacher, but one who earnestly lived to serve his fellow man and selflessly chose to share the risks taken by the brave Diggers to whom he had ministered.

Sadly, the padre was killed just prior to his scheduled return to Australia—his period of service almost completed. Ironically, not only was it to be the last battle for the gallant padre, but also the final action for the 37th Battalion.

The admiration of his men can be summed up in the words they placed above his grave:
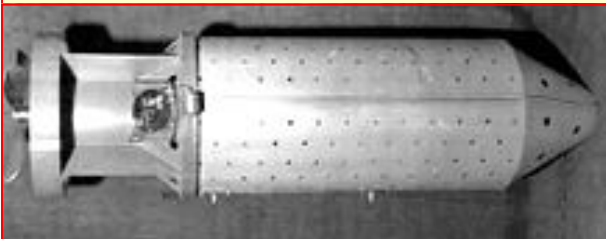Our Padre - Semper Idem - Passed from Death to Life

ANIMALS IN WAR   Part 3

BAT bombs were bomb-shaped casings with numerous compartments, each containing a Mexican Free-tailed Bat with a small timed incendiary bomb attached. Dropped from a bomber at dawn, the casings would deploy a parachute in mid-flight and open to release the bats which would then roost in eaves and attics. The incendiaries would start fires in inaccessible places in the largely wood and paper construction of the Japanese cities that were the weapon's intended target.

USAAF Bat-bomb canister later used to house the hibernating bats. Ideally, the canister would be dropped from high altitude over the target area, and as the bomb fell (slowed by a parachute), the bats would warm up and awaken. At 1,000 ft. altitude, the bomb would open and over a thousand bats, each carrying a tiny time-delayed napalm incendiary device, would fly in a 20-40 mile radius and roost in flammable wooden Japanese buildings. The napalm devices would ignite simultaneously, and thousands of small fires would flare up at once.

In China **MONKEYS** were used in the beginning of the Southern Song Dynasty, in a battle between rebels of the Yanzhou province and the Chinese Imperial Army, led by Zhao Yu. The monkeys were used as live incendiary devices. The animals were clothed with straw, dipped in oil and set on fire. They were set loose into the enemy's camp, thereby setting the tents on fire, and driving the whole camp into chaos.
Successful for the invaders but not so nice for the monkeys!

In 1871 during the Franco-Prussian War, when Paris was surrounded by Prussian troops, the French military used hot air balloons to transport **HOMING PIGEONS** past enemy lines. Microfilm images containing hundreds of messages allowed letters to be carried into Paris by pigeon from as far away as London. More than one million different messages travelled this way during the four month siege.

Member (and whiz kid Webmaster) **Frank Morony** has sent me some information about a South Australia-born soldier from the 10th Battalion AIF called **Lancelot De Mole**. He served on the Western Front in France during the Great War, but what was not known about him was how he had designed an armoured vehicle that could traverse rough and rocky ground. In effect, he had invented the Tank!
He submitted his design to the British War Office, but before he received a reply he was transported to the battle front alongside the rest of the 10th Battalion AIF.
The intriguing story of **Lancelot De Mole** and his invention will be featured in a future edition of this newsletter.
David Laing - Editor.

An old man walks into the barbershop for a shave and a haircut, but he tells the barber he can't get all his whiskers off because his cheeks are wrinkled from age.

The barber gets a little wooden ball from a cup on the shelf and tells him to put it inside his cheek to spread out the skin.

When he's finished, the old man tells the barber that was the cleanest shave he's had in years. But he wants to know what would have happened if he had swallowed that little wooden ball.

The barber replies "You would just bring it back tomorrow like everyone else does!!"

See youse next month...

The TEN Shortest Wars in History   No. 10

No. 10. The Falklands War

Year Fought: 1982
Between: Argentina vs United Kingdom
Outcome: British victory

The Falklands war was fought in 1982 between Argentina and the United Kingdom over the disputed Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. The Falkland Islands consist of two large and many small islands in the South Atlantic Ocean east of Argentina, and their name and ownership have long been disputed. The war was triggered by the occupation of South Georgia by Argentina on 19 March 1982 followed by the occupation of the Falklands, and ended when Argentina surrendered on 14 June 1982. War was not actually declared by either side. The initial invasion was considered by Argentina as the re-occupation of its own territory, and by Britain as an invasion of a British overseas territory, and the most recent invasion of British territory by a foreign power. The political effects of the war were strong in both countries. A wave of patriotic sentiment swept through both: the Argentine loss prompted even larger protests against the military government, which hastened its downfall; in the United Kingdom, the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was bolstered. It helped Thatcher's government to victory in the 1983 general election, which prior to the war was seen as by no means certain.

Next month: The Polish/Lithuanian War   Sourced from wikipedia.com

Technology. Ain't it grand?

I know some people my age (and some younger ones) who grimace when I start talking about computers, and think that Google has something to do with one's crossed eyes! Yahoo is a shout of joy, and a Webmaster is someone who raises spiders!!

How long will it be before we are all required to use computers as part of everyday life? It's not too far off now!

My wife and I shirked at the idea of using the "Self Check Out" at the supermarket, until one day the "normal" queue was 20 long! It took us a couple of tries, but with the help of a young employee (he must love people like us!) we were soon on our way! These days we don't carry much cash with us as there is no need to. We pay for groceries, fuel, most entertainment and a good meal in a restaurant all using the plastic card, and it's only a matter of time before some outlets will no longer accept "old fashioned folding money!"

For those of you who still don't have a computer at home………. resistance is futile, **_they_** already know where you live!!!"

Story by David Laing.   *Picture courtesy of Frank Morony*

"No, Grandpa, you're not listening, Double-Click the little picture on the screen.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Member Max Sanderson sent in this photo of himself and mates at Cultana in 1964. They are from left: Max, Dave Russell and Rod Gaskin. Sadly, Dave and Rod are now parading with "that battalion in the sky" and Max is the surviving warrior. Important to note is the landscape at Cultana hasn't changed much in 50 years, although the Defence Department has committed to not only upgrading the facilities there, but also adding surrounding land to the existing area.

From Department of Defence*: Expansion of the Cultana Training Area is required to support future joint training needs and the capability of 1st Brigade and 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (7 RAR) Battle group, which is established at Edinburgh, South Australia. An expanded Cultana Training Area also offers an environment to conduct future air to ground, ground to air and ship to shore training activities. Defence proposes to expand the existing Cultana Training Area westward, increasing its total size from approximately 50,000 hectares to approximately 209,300 hectares. This will be achieved through the acquisition of surrounding pastoral leases.*

The difference between EMAIL and SNAIL MAIL By the Editor

There are two ways in which this newsletter is sent out to members and supporters of the RSAR Association. The first is by EMAIL. The second is by SNAIL MAIL. I shall explain the difference, and how it impacts on the Distribution Team, which numbers a staggering TWO personnel. Myself and my beautiful and forgiving wife.

EMAIL METHOD.

1. Produce Newsletter
2. Open email distribution list.
3. Attach Newsletter.
4. Hit "SEND" button.
5. Drink beer.

Total time taken (not including production of newsletter or drinking of beer)   **1 MINUTE**

SNAIL MAIL METHOD.

1. Produce Newsletter.
2. Pick up box of A5 "OHMS" envelopes.
3. Print out "return address" on top left hand corner of each envelope.
4. Print out "address label" for each envelope.
5. Attach "address label" to each envelope.
6. Print out 35 copies of Newsletter, totalling an average of 210 pages.
7. Staple each copy together.
8. Fold each copy in half.
9. Place each copy in envelope.
10. Seal envelope.
11. Take batch of envelopes to Distribution Point in Adelaide and post.

Total time taken (not including production of newsletter but including travelling to and from printers and Distribution Point.)   **6 HOURS PER MONTH**

As you can see, the EMAIL METHOD is labour effective AND FREE!! The SNAIL MAIL METHOD is very labour intensive and expensive, as costs of printing cartridges, copying paper, envelopes, address labels AND postage are not cheap, but these costs have to be absorbed by the Association every month, just for 35 people who don't have a computer.

If we could reduce our snail mail list to ZERO, we could afford to spend more money on worthwhile causes, AND give more support to the soldiers of 10/27 Battalion by way of Awards and Encouragement Certificates throughout the training year.

If you are receiving this newsletter by SNAIL MAIL, but know of someone with a computer who could print out ONE copy per month of this newsletter, please speak to them and pass on their email address to me, and they will be included in our email distribution list. We need to move with the times to reduce our carbon footprint, for the benefit of those who will follow us.
The rest is up to you!

METRO MEMBERS

Ayles, Jeff
Attenborough, Geoff
Baldwin, Bob
Bates, Allan
Beames, Rod
Boath, Ian
Boscence, Bob
Brookes, Phil
Brown, Bruce
Brown, Harry
Carnachan, Ian
Castle, Graham
Chittleborough, Jeff
Cooke, Nat
Cotton, Bob
Davey, Trevor
Davey, Jack
Demosani, Tony
Dubsky, Eddie
Dunn, Peter
Dunn, Bob
Durdin, Russell
Elliott, Graham
Eva, Keith
Ewens, Mimi (nee Kusmuk) **SM**
Field, Don
Flanagan, Ted
Fridday, Ross
Gaborit, Lyndon
Genovese, John
Gibson, Lindsay
Giles, John
Gill, Alan
Gilmore, Graham

Gordon, Frank
Guerin, Rob
Hawking, Don
Hawkins, Des
Hogan, Mark
Hook, Alan   **LM**
Hope, David
Hudson, Rick
James, Grant   **SM**
Jeffrey, Scott
Johnson, Barry
Jolly, David
Jones, Brett
Kilford, Brian
Klopf, Alex   **LM**
Klopf, Paul
Loveder, Peter
Lockett, John
Laing, David   **LM**
Lampard, Ross
Lee, Pat
Longstaff, Paul
Main, Brian
Marcus, Ray
Morony, Frank
Martin, Bob
Matchett, Bill
Mau, Mark
McCulloch, Don
McDougal, Doug
McMullin, Jim
Mitchell, Barry
Mitchell, David
Monro, Ron
Moore, Jeffrey
Moore, Terry
Oliver, Peter
Orrock, Alan

Ockenden, Marc
Oswald, John
Pollard, Barry
Phillips, Don
Phillips, Trevor
Payne, Bob
Parslow, Howard
Preece, Brian
Ranger, Denis
Rathmann, John
Rathmann, Norm
Ramm, Hank
Robertson, Jim
Rossetti, Lee
Sage, Andrew
Salamon, Peter
Sanderson, Max
Sprigg, Rob
Standing, Michael
Steer, Phil
Stewart, Rob
Tiller, Garth
Thomson, Jim
Tregenza, Norm
Trezise, George
Vella, Joe
Wake, Stephen
Waters, Ian
Westover, Rhys
Wheeler, Chris
Wilson, Neil
Wood, George
Woore, Phillip
Yorke-Simpkin Reg

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Caccilla, Carmen
Carnachan, Dom
Demosani, Gail
Elliott, Julie
Eva, Gail
Field, Shirley
Gill, Maureen
Gilmour, Helen
Hawking, Lorraine
Hook, Phillipa
Hudson, Margaret
Jolly, Sandra
Jones, Associate
Klopf, Josie
Laing, June
Lampard, Kay
Lockett, Mrs
Main, Raelene
Marcus, Yvonne
McCullagh, Anne
Mitchell, Roma
Phillips, Heather
Sanderson, Lorraine
Tregenza, Lyn

LM denotes **LIFE MEMBER**
SM denotes **SERVING MEMBER**

130 members as at 15/1/13

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We now have our own website, which conveys our existence to the world. You can visit us by going to:

www.rsara.asn.au

Or click on the Facebook icon below:

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