

"Sitrep, Over!"

Official Newsletter of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc



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July 2016

Long Tan - 50th Anniversary Service

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In the gathering dusk of 18 August 1966, 108 young, inexperienced Australian soldiers from Delta Company, 6th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment were separated from their main force in Nui Dat and surrounded, fighting for their lives, holding off an overwhelming force of 2,500 battle-hardened Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers. In the pouring rain, amid the mud and shattered trees of a rubber plantation called Long Tan, with their ammunition running out and another Vietnamese battalion massing for the final assault, the digger's situation seemed hopeless. Through the night and into the next day they fought a vastly superior enemy force, and only after support from NZ artillery and ammunition resupply

from Huey helicopters and M113 Armoured Personnel Carriers did they turn the tide of battle. After losing an estimated 800 dead and wounded the enemy disengaged and withdrew.

18 brave Australian soldiers paid the supreme sacrifice during the battle.

On **Saturday 20th August**

2016 the Murray Bridge RSL will conduct a March and Service to commemorate the 50th anniversary of that battle, to honour the fallen.

The March will leave Diamond Park, Adelaide Rd, Murray Bridge at 1000 hrs and proceed to the Murray Bridge Town Hall, where the service will take place from 1015 hrs. Former and Serving personnel who wish to march should report to Diamond Park by 0945 hrs. Full medals should be worn.

The Murray Bridge RSL respectfully invites the community to attend the commemorative service at the Murray Bridge Town Hall, and to view the marchers as they arrive. Drinks and nibbles will be available At The Murray Bridge RSL after the service.

All enquiries to David Laing on davidlaing49@bigpond.com or 0407 791 822



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

EKN/69/0085/VN

LEST WE FORGET

What's happening in Afghanistan?

We always try to bring you the latest news from around the globe, and especially from war zones like Iraq and Afghanistan. This edition we feature our very own RSARA member, LTCOL Graham Goodwin, who is on active deployment to Afghanistan as part of the Australian Army Mentoring Team, aiming at training the Afghan Security Forces and bringing further stability to the region. We intend to include parts of Grahams newsletters here whenever he gets them through, and we wish him well in his endeavours, and know we'll talk soon.

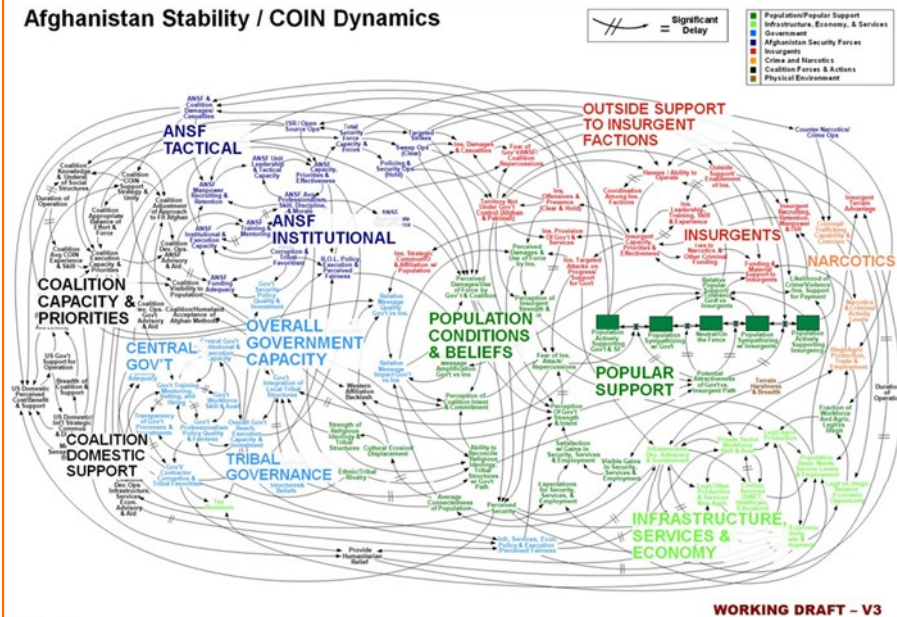
Kabul Kronicle

JULY 2016



I would like to start this months newsletter off with a topic that's very close to my heart. No its not battlefield tourism by the higher headquarters (as many as they are) of course they are always welcome to waste my time on the regular basis they do. This months topic under the microscope is Powerpoint. Yes the modern version of the old butchers paper has a great role to play here in Afghanistan. I will start with one of the more famous slides used here, and the quote that went with it. Its creation led the ISAF Commander at the time, US military General Stanley McCrystal to declare that "When we understand that slide, we'll have won the war". Needless to say, it has not been understood! As some critics have said, "the diagram has an undeniable beauty. Done the right way (embroidered perhaps) it would make a lovely wall hanging and an ideal gift for the foreign policy-maker in your life."

Afghanistan Stability / COIN Dynamics



I tend to agree, lets not worry about the carpets or jewelry made here, I am thinking suitable gifts may be a framed print of a ppt slide. Just think, it could capture a moment in time when it actually influences the battle space. I have not actually seen that myself yet, but I have no doubt in the thousands (perhaps hundreds of thousands) presentations that exist there is some value out there. There has to be. Let me give you bit of an insight into their NATO'ish construction. These are not things that are simply thrown together to convey a simple message. They are at times the main effort where a millimeter means the difference between if that key strategic bullet point makes the slide, a point that may have taken months to develop, or not. The architect (AKA The slide monkey)

is all powerful, they start with a blank canvas and then build, it truly is a site to behold.

Some take weeks to construct with graphics and the like flying in on top of each other. Some are so dense, that its hard to remember what the original point was but that is immaterial, the show must go on. Then the work of art is sent out via the email

KABUL KRONICLEcontinued



system and because they are so big it crashes your system. Job complete, and ultimately it is deleted to make space and the process starts again.

But there's a difference, we now introduce the critic. More color, less movement, more bullet points, nothing is off limits. The whole process is realigned to accommodate and off we go again. I just wonder if the thousands of hours invested in this process is worth it! You be the judge, personally I think it's a ploy for those paid to make decisions abrogating their responsibility. But I may be in the minority, and look forward to bringing back the benefits of this process to Oz so we can suffer the same level of enjoyment.

Having said that I like the quote in reference to what happened to the good General McCrystal and his fall from grace

relating to an interview with Rolling Stone Magazine!

"So this general with the background in intelligence who is supposed to conquer Afghanistan can't even figure out what Rolling Stone is? We're not talking Guns & Ammo here; we're talking the antiwar hippie magazine."

— [Maureen Dowd](#)
[That's life!](#)

Again a busy month, but again not really much I can say. Ramadan is about to end and then the celebration of Eid will take over. Very much looking forward to this as it's a lot harder to get things done. Eid is also a good time to dish out all the Tim Tams people have been sending over. (you didn't think I was eating them all did you!) I try and direct them towards the children of the families, whilst this is a big celebration (think same as Christmas for us) generally they really don't have much so are very appreciative of the support we give.

We continue to work hard on our mentoring efforts and do seem to be getting some traction. We have also been getting on and working with them in many different areas and locations. It is easy to sit in an office and talk/point but its another story to stand with them and do some of their work with them. We call it Shana ba shana and it is very much what we subscribe to. We have even included it on our patch that I am glad to say I designed.

Some of these tasks take us away from their headquarters but we have some good force protection so no major issues there. But I must say it does keep you on your toes! Most are around the streets of Kabul but had to do a patrol the other day. Was a bit hilly but very glad to say can still mix it with the young fellas. Hopefully can keep up the level of fitness when I return home!

There continues to be a number of bad incidents and the insurgents have been proving themselves to be very resourceful fighters. Their latest work is attached below where they targeted buses with a number of new police cadets on board. Very sad as they are very much needed to provide police services both in Kabul and the regions. They are poorly trained and poorly paid,



“Sitrep, Over!”

KABUL KRONICLEcontinued

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coupled with high corruption, it does not make for a good platform for community policing. I have provided advice re this but it is such a massive task I am not sure there is much appetite to making wholesale change. This was also very much the situation in East Timor. Police were employed initially for a specific purpose and as things developed it is very clear they don't have

the skills to develop at the same pace. Such a stance dominates the landscape, long term planning does not appear to have been a strong feature.

Have the pleasure of working with some really good US (and other coalition) members. One is a guy called Raja Stoble. He looks exactly like Uncle Fester out of the Adams Family, and is a bit goofy like that as well (he is always dropping his phone). Anyway he is a reservist as well-in civilian life a nuclear engineer, in military an engineer on a nuclear sub! Funny guy, but good to have around when looking at some of the things that we do. He certainly knows what to touch and what not to!

One of the benefits of being where I currently am is that I have not had to suffer the long, and I have no doubt nauseating election campaign going on back in Australia. In actual fact have really heard nothing at all! I guess the Brexit vote and a few other international incidents have taken precedence. I guess it will be an interesting time, the government here is always under attack (literally and by the opposition) and again appears to be quite dysfunctional, but having said that I really don't think we have the high moral ground here. Anyway will see how it goes.

Talk next month!

Graham Goodwin

Lieutenant Colonel (OF-4) Australian Army
Kabul Garrison Command-Advisor Team
(KGC-AT) J2



KABUL GARRISON COMMAND ADVISOR TEAM



Shana Ba Shana

I got a letter from a mate yesterday, and he explained how he'd just busted up with his missus. Here it is.....

Why I Am now Divorced

Last week was my birthday and I didn't feel very well waking up on that morning.

I went downstairs for breakfast hoping my wife would be pleasant and say, 'Happy Birthday!', and possibly have a small present for me.

As it turned out, she barely said good morning, let alone 'Happy Birthday.' I thought....Well, that's marriage for you, but the kids.... They will remember. My kids came bounding down stairs to breakfast and didn't say a word..So when I left for the office, I felt pretty low and somewhat despondent.

As I walked into my office, my gorgeous boss Jenny, said, 'Good Morning, lovely man, and by the way Happy Birthday!' It felt a little better that at least someone had remembered.

I worked until one o'clock, when Jenny knocked on my door and said, 'You know, It's such a beautiful day outside, and it is your Birthday, what do you say we go out to lunch, just you and me.' I said, 'Thanks, Jenny, that's the greatest thing I've heard all day. Let's go.'

We went to lunch. But we didn't go where we normally would go.

She chose instead a quiet bistro with a private table. We had two martinis each and I enjoyed the meal tremendously.

On the way back to the office, Jenny said, 'You know, It's such a beautiful day... We don't need to go straight back to the office, Do We?'

I responded, 'I guess not. What do you have in mind?' She said, 'Let's drop by my place, it's just around the corner.'

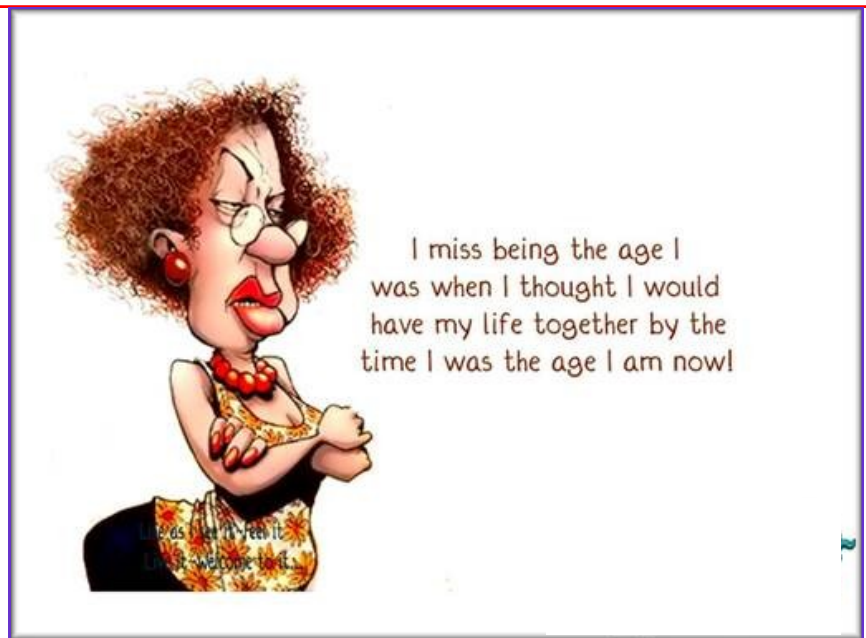
After arriving at her house, Jenny turned to me and said, 'If you don't mind, I'm going to step into the bedroom for just a moment. I'll be right back. "Ok.' I nervously replied.

She went into the bedroom and, after a couple of minutes, she came out carrying a huge birthday cake followed by my wife, my kids, and dozens of my friends and co-workers, all singing 'Happy Birthday to you.'

I just sat there on the couch, stark bollock naked!



Private Gomad reckons.....



CONTACT US!-

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Denotes NEW MEMBER

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as at 4/7/16