

"Sitrep, Over!"



Official Newsletter of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc

An Experience of War

Part 7

On reaching Winterford, I applied a tourniquet to his stump and tied his amputated forearm to his remaining arm above the elbow. Knowing that he would soon be in pain, I dosed him up with morphine and placed him on an improvised green nylon stretcher that I carried in my kit.

Bill was a little bloke with a ton of guts and as I dressed his wound he quipped that he only needed one hand to hold a cigarette. Prowse was also prepared for evacuation and with a party of carriers from 7 Platoon, each with a casualty on an improvised stretcher we began to make our way back to company headquarters.

Our rearward movement was quickly aborted when heavy firing recommenced and mortar bombs were dropped on and around us. The carriers scurried back to their sections and I remained with the casualties in no man's land between 7 Platoon and the relative safety of company headquarters.

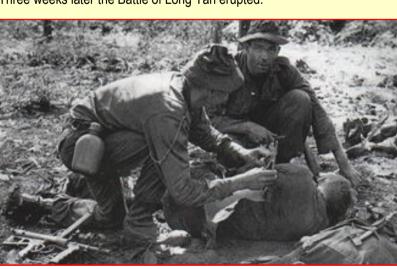
As the enemy force was beaten off a Dust Off helicopter, circling overhead, was brought in and our two men were evacuated. Despite his wound, Rodney Cox was determined to remain in the field so I cleaned and dressed his wound and we hoped for the best. Les Prowse died of his wounds and gutsy Bill Winterford was awarded the Military Medal for his actions before he was wounded.

This was my first experience of intense sustained combat – on the one hand it was exhilarating and on the other very sobering. With my work done I suddenly felt an immediate and overwhelming urgency in my bowel and to my surprise, I passed its contents in an explosive stream the consistency of water.

The loss of Prowsey affected me badly as I could not conceive of any of my casualties dying. In training no one ever died of wounds. I felt very flat.

The following day I was fortunate to run into our battalion Signals Officer, a World War II and Korean War veteran. He understood how I felt and he talked to me about the reality of the situation. This old soldier's wisdom and encouragement made me feel better and I was able to lift my head and move on. These days such a talk might be called counselling; in those days, it was called leadership. Give me good leadership any day.

Three weeks later the Battle of Long Tan erupted.



6 RAR Medics treat a wounded Australian soldier at Long Tan

Continues next month

SEPTEMBER 2014



Points of interest

- Did you know that
 German submarine
 U-120 was sunk by a
 malfunctioning
 toilet. More Odd
 WW2 facts on Pg 7
- In 2001 the Torrens

 Parade Ground was
 broken up and
 resurfaced before
 being handed to the
 State Government.
 Members of the
 Regiment were on
 hand to "liberate"
 pieces of this historic
 and sacred ground.
 Now you have the
 unique opportunity
 to purchase part of
 this history. See Pg 5

Inside this issue:

- ANZAC What it 2 stands for
- Look at who got 2 married!
- Just Soldiers 3

SGT William Wass MM

- VC WINNERS 4
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In the Centenary Year—The Origin of ANZAC

A Australian

New

Z Zealand

A Army

Corps

Australian war historian C.E.W. Bean attributes the acronym ANZAC to a Lieutenant A.T. White, one of General Birdwood's 'English clerks'. The first official sanction for its use was at Birdwood's request to denote where the Corps had established a bridgehead on the Gallipoli Peninsula. However, there is little argument that ANZAC was first used as a simple code in Egypt.

A later historical work, Gallipoli, by the English historian Robert Rhodes James states:

"Two Australian Sergeants, Little and Millington had cut a rubber stamp with the initials 'A & NZAC' for the purpose of registering papers at the Corps headquarters, situated in Shepherd's Hotel, Cairo. When a code name was requested for the Corps, a British officer, a Lt. White, suggested ANZAC. Little later claimed that he made the original suggestion to White. It was in general use by January 1915."

Whatever its origin, the acronym ANZAC became famous with the landing of the Corps on the Gallipoli Peninsula at the Dardanelles, on 25 April 1915. It has since become synonymous with the determination and spirit of our armed forces. The significance of the day, and the acronym, in Australia's heritage is probably best

stated by Dr. Bean in the following excerpt from his official war history:

"It was not merely that 7600 Australians and nearly 2500 New Zealanders had been killed or mortally wounded there, and 24,000 more (19,000 Australians and 5,000 New Zealanders) had been wounded, while fewer than 100 were prisoners. But the standards set by the first companies at the first call - by the stretcher-bearers, the medical officers, the staff, the company leaders, the privates, the defaulters on the water barges, the Light Horse at The Nek - this was already part of the tradition not only of ANZAC but of the Australian and New Zealand peoples. By dawn on 20 December, ANZAC had faded into a dim blue line lost amid other hills on the horizon as the ships took their human freight to Imbros, Lemnos and Egypt. But ANZAC stood, and still stands, for reckless valour in a good cause, for enterprise, resourcefulness, fidelity, comradeship and endurance that will never own defeat."

The acronym survived Gallipoli. I and II ANZAC Corps fought in France and the ANZAC Mounted Division fought in Palestine. The decision to separate the Australian and New Zealand components of the ANZAC Corps was taken on 14 November 1917 when it was announced that the Corps would cease to exist from January 1918. An Australian Corps was then created to absorb the Australian divisions.

There was a brief period during World War 2 when ANZAC was resurrected. On 12 April 1941 in Greece, General Blamey declared I Australian Corps to be the ANZAC Corps, much to the delight of its Australian and New Zealand formations.

ANZAC was again a reality during the Vietnam conflict where, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, an ANZAC battalion served in Phuoc Tuy Province. These battalions were created by absorbing two companies and supporting elements from The Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment into a battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR). Our 2nd, 4th and 6th Battalions held the distinction of being titled, for example, 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Battalion.

MEMBERS TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

After courting his lady for 5 years, Member Pat Lee decided to take Associate Member Anne McCullagh up on her offer! Anne said "It's my way, or the highway!" so Pat "bit the bullet" and the two were recently wed in a small ceremony, attended by family and close friends. We at the RSAR Association extend our heartiest congratulations to Anne and Pat and wish them a long, happy future together. Well done, guys!



UNKNOWN PAYMENT TO THE ASSOCIATION - Is it yours???

Payments to the RSAR Association by members are sometimes made with cheques, money orders, direct credit via EFT or even cash. This is great, as it shows how flexible we are, but sometimes our record keeping (mine, in particular) can fall into disarray if we can't match payments to members. *One such payment occurred this year when we received an Australia Post Money Order for \$30, purchased at the Morphett Vale Post Office on 29th May 2014*. The Money Order was made out to "David Laing RSAR," and the letter it came in an envelope with no other identification.

If you are the sender of this \$30 Money Order (possibly for 1 x Member and 1 x Associate) can you please contact the Secretary David Laing so we can match the payment to you, and update our records accordingly? (See Page 6 for payment methods)

Just Soldiers

Sergeant William Wass MM

Part 2

That first night, the ANZAC forces held a grim toehold on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Maintenance of communications was critical to the defence of the beachhead. Wass had his signallers fully operational as semaphore positions were sited, runners briefed and telephone cables laid to the companies. The job done, he screwed the last two wires into the telephone set then briskly turned the

August 1915. A front line trench after the attack on Lone Pine, with dead or wounded lying in the foreground. A soldier watches anxiously from the shelter of the sandbags as a comrade makes his way over the top of the trench, only his legs being visible.

manding officer.

That night the Turks counterattacked in force, but the Diggers held on and retaliated with deadly efficiency. When a line was severed and communications lost, Wass would send runners to the forward companies to deliver vital messages. If it became

handle. 'All lines are working, Sir', Wass said as he passed the handset to his com-

too dangerous, he would deliver the messages himself.

The ANZAC forces soon settled into the rigours of trench warfare on the inhospitable peninsula. Turkish snipers were ever present and caused havoc from their vantage points on the high ground. The signallers were their prime targets, but to ensure vital

communications were maintained Corporal Wass had his men work in parties of

three—two to conduct repairs and one to cover the others with a rifle.

Some became victims of the snipers, but another always stepped forward to fill the gap. William's abilities did not go unnoticed and soon he was promoted to sergeant.1 Many commented that the 2nd Battalion's communications were as 'sound as a pound'.

In August, the battalion took part in the assault on Lone Pine. The blast from the whistle was the signal for the troops to attack. Racing across the open ground, the signallers carried the spools which spewed out the vital telephone cable as they ran. On reaching the enemy lines, the Diggers dropped into the darkness of the covered trenches and engaged the Turks in fierce hand to hand combat. As the battle raged, the commanding officer turned to Wass and yelled, 'Get me headquarters, Sergeant!' Wass tried the line but it was dead. Grabbing a rifle, he paused to survey the open area towards the old trenches where bullets were flying in all directions. Taking a deep breath, Wass scrambled from the trench and raced across the open ground, weaving as he ran. He let the cable run over the top of his cradled rifle, all the time looking for

the break in the wire.

Suddenly there it was: the two shattered ends of the line lying about ten yards apart. Snatching up one piece of wire, he lurched forward to retrieve the other. Suddenly, the concussion of a round threw him backwards and as he struggled to regain his senses he felt the warm trickle of blood dripping from his forehead.

Crawling forward, he retrieved the other end of the line and, baring the wires, tied the severed wires together. A burst from a Turkish machine-gun forced him to seek cover in a depression, which barely covered his body. Mission accomplished, once more he ran the gauntlet of enemy fire and, with the machine-gun rounds bouncing round his heels, he stumbled his way back to his commanding officer.

Picking up the receiver, he checked the line. 'Ready, Sir', he reported. 'About time', the commanding officer replied as he grabbed the handset. Suffering blurred vision, Wass checked himself all over. It appeared that his head wound was his only injury. Satisfied he was in no immediate danger, he applied a shell dressing and soldiered on for the next fours days without rest. The men serving with him noticed William was suffering badly and pressured him to report to the unit medical officer. 'It's the beach for you, Sergeant. You're in a bad way', the doctor advised.

The wound was serious and Wass was evacuated, first to Lemnos and then to Egypt.

Final Part next month

By courtesy Darryl Kelly and ADCC Publications. Kelly, Darryl 2004, Just Soldiers, ADCC Publications, Brisbane, pg 227 to 232

OUTSTANDING BRAVERY

VC WINNERS

Part 3

Fear experienced during combat was something Mitchell was prepared to talk about. This officer had won the Distinguished Conduct Medal at Bullecourt in 1917, and the Military Cross in March 1918. In the latter action it was reported that he led his platoon in "an absolutely fearless manner". Still, he wrote about the need to deal with fear when he addressed young officers of a new war in 1940. "Fear," he said, "grips you everywhere; constricting your throat, squeezing your heart. It is like a lump of ice in your stomach. Then panic surges over you and you are ready to run – run anywhere."

The fury of battle affected men in different ways. "In battle," said Mitchell, "you will find men firing with sights set wrong. You will find men, stunned by impact of battle, aiming and snapping empty rifles. You will find men affected by the sight of the dead and wounded round them. You will find men in the grip of fear cowering in dugouts, men without fear exposing themselves recklessly. You will find men carrying on who should be in hospital, you will find malingerers 'swinging the lead', trying to get into hospital."

It was Lord Moran's belief that in battle all normal men felt fear, and most carried on despite it. Some even found exhilaration in action, but still, "no man has an unlimited stock of courage".

Extreme ordeals and long exposure to combat could have an accumulative effect. In one case, an Australian Victoria Cross winner of 1916 was charged with desertion the following year; he was sentenced to two years hard labour, although this was suspended.

The strain of battle even affected great heroes such as Arthur Maxwell, Harry Murray and Albert Jacka. Maxwell, who had been decorated for bravery at Mouquet Farm and Messines, told Charles Bean that at one point in 1917 after a mate was killed, "I went quite off the handle. When I got back ... I couldn't speak without crying – broke up like a baby altogether." Harry Murray was a VC holder and the most decorated officer



in the AIF. He said: "You know, with me it has come to this. I have to go up the line myself now, so that they do not see me duck the shells."

Sergeant Claude Castleton was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross during one of the few times in the war that it was given for rescuing wounded.

Inspirational Guest Speaker for October 19th Luncheon

The RSAR Association has been successful in securing the services of Special Guest Speaker for the **October 19th luncheon** of well respected and sometimes controversial journalist and radio presenter **Peter Goers OAM**.



Peter Goers OAM is an actor, director, reviewer and current host of the radio program *The Evening Show* on 891 ABC Adelaide which broadcasts throughout South Australia and to the city of Broken Hill. His career has spanned over 40 years in the entertainment industry across a range of different mediums and formats including television, print, radio and theatre, and he is frequently engaged as a guest speaker. In the Australia Day Honours, 2013, Goers was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to the community as a radio broadcaster.

Most members would also know Peter from his regular column in the Sunday Mail, which is at times confronting, but at all times entertaining.

Peter, who describes himself as a "reformed social irritant" has given his own time to an impressive list of local boards, charities and community organisations that have benefited from his generosity.

His career includes theatre, television, press and radio. With merely a few regular guest spots and fill-in shifts under his belt, he joined 891 ABC Adelaide as the presenter of the "Evenings" program in 2004 and at the time said it would be his most difficult role yet – being himself.

The original date **AND** location for the luncheon have changed to <u>Sunday 19th October 2014</u> to fit in with Peters' very busy community support schedule. The function will be held at the <u>Hackney Hotel, 95 Hackney Rd, Hackney at midday</u>. The President Rodney Beames will pay for meals initially, and tables of 10 will be required to reimburse him prior to departure. This is a unique chance to hear a unique personality, so book early. <u>Seating is limited to 60, therefore those wishing to attend</u> are asked to contact THE SECRETARY David Laing *ASAP* to reserve their seat. *ALL WELCOME*.

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HOW TO CONTACT US

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Find us on FACEBOOK

www.rsara.asn.au

LOOKING FOR 1 RSAR

Over the years our members have served with many Battalions of the Regiment, but one that has so far avoided our efforts to reveal it's details is the 1st Battalion, RSAR.

We know the Battalion was raised in 1960 and served until 1965 when it was split up into the 10th & 27th Battalions, and later added to in 1966 by the raising of the 43rd (Remote Areas) Battalion (Bushmen's Rifles). The colours of all three Battalions were laid up when 10th and 27th Battalions were linked in 1987 to form 10th/27th Battalion RSAR.

But, we'd like anyone who served with 1 RSAR to help identify the Officers, NCOs and diggers, and to tell of their training areas etc. Any information is appreciated.

WO2 Craig Thomson, Training WO at B Coy 10/27 RSAR is also keen to learn of anything that will help his efforts to write an article about 1 RSAR in the bi-annual magazine "Pro Patria."

Anyone with any information at all on 1 RSAR is asked to contact the Editor of this newsletter on the details at left, or WO2 Thomson on craig.thomson@defence.gov.au

1914



2014



YOU CAN OWN A PIECE OF SA's 1914 HISTORY

In October 1914 members of the 10th and 27th Battalions marched out of Torrens Parade Ground into history. They went to the war in Europe. Some were headed for glory. Others never returned home.

In 2001 the original Torrens Parade Ground was broken up and resurfaced, prior to it being handed to the State Government, along with the Training Depot.

Former members of the Regiment were on hand in 2001 to "liberate" pieces of this sacred bitumen, and we have been offered 11 or them to sell in order to raise funds for the Band of the 10th/27th Battalion.

These sacred relics are mounted on pieces of polished pine and each measures approx. 90 mm x 60 mm. Contrary to the label, only 500 were produced, and these 11 are the last ones left.

Your relatives may have marched over this bitumen to defend King and Country. At the least, members of our Regiment did.

We intend to sell any remaining pieces for **\$500 each** at the November 22nd Gala Ball to be held at Torrens Training Depot, so you (or your organisation, club, RSL or museum) need to place their order very quickly.

This is a unique opportunity to own a piece of history, a piece of a Sacred Site that can NEVER, EVER BE REPEATED.





MEMBERS LIST

Abareh, Wadi SM Acton, Chris SM Adams, Aaron Apostolides, Chris Attenborough, Geoff Ayles, Jeff Baldwin, Bob Barrass, Mark Bates, Allan Beames, Rod CoM Beckett, David LM SM Bennet, Graham Bilsborow, Jason SM #Blackmore, William Blake, Sam SM Blondell, Mark SM Bloomfield, Max Bourne, Ian SM Boath, Ian Boothroyd, Lincoln SM Boscence, Bob SM Bras, Riley Broadbent, Robert SM Brookes, Phil Brown, Bruce Brown, Harry Burton, Ray Carnachan, lan Chittleborough, Jeff Clyne, Lachlan SM Cooke, Nat CoM Contibas, Nikolaus SM Cotton, Bob Cram. Kevin Dart, John Davey, John Davey, Trevor Davey, Jack Del Vecchio, Victor Demasi, Nathan SM Demosani, Tony Dubsky, Eddie Dunn, Peter Dunn, Bob Dunn, Jeff Durdin, Russell Durrant, Chris Edson, Roger Elliott, Graham Elliss. Scott SM Eva, Keith Ewens, Mimi SM Field, Don Flanagan, Ted Fridday, Ross Gaborit, Lyndon LM

Genovese, John Gibson, Lindsay Giles, John Gilmore, Graham CoM Gordon, Frank Hardy, Robert SM Harrington, Malcolm Harrison, John Hawking, Don Hawkins. Des Haynes, Scott Hogan, Mark LM Hook, Alan LM CoM Hope, David Hudson, Mick Hudson, Rick Humphrys, Jesse SM CoM James, Grant SM CoM Jeffrey, Scott SM Johnson, Barry LM Jolly, David Jones, Brett Keenan, Alan Kilford, Brian Klopf, Alex LM CoM Klopf, Paul Laing, David LM CoM Lampard, Ross Lee, Bob Lee, Pat Lloyd, Elmer Lockett, John Longstaff, Paul Loveder, Peter Main, Brian Marcus, Ray Martin, Bob Matchett, Bill Mau. Mark McCulloch, Don #McGree, Barry McLachlan, Joshua SM McMahon, Tyler SM McMullin, Jim Meissner, Terry SM Milde, Peter SM Mitchell, Barry Mitchell, David Morony, Frank CoM Moore, Jeffrey Moore, Terry LM Moschis, James SM Munro, Ron Oliver, Peter Orrock, Alan CoM Ockenden, Marc Oswald, John Pach, Chol SM

Paul, John

Perkins, Bob Pollard, Barry Phillips, Don Phillips, Trevor Payne, Bob Parslow, Howard Preece, Brian Ranger, Denis Rathmann, John Rathmann, Norm CoM Ramm, Hank Robertson, Jim Rorie. Graham SM Rossetti. Lee Sage, Andrew Salamon, Peter Sanders, Ashley SM Sanderson, Max Sands. Mike Sexton, Mark SM Sprigg, Rob Staker, Cameron SM Standing, Michael CoM Stone, Eddie Strain, Doug Steer, Phil Stewart, Rob LM Stuart, Matthew SM Tiller, Garth Thomson, Jim Tolotta, Tarrant SM Tregenza, Norm CoM Trezise. George Ullrich, Andreas SM Vella, Joe Wake, Stephen Waters, lan LM Weightman, Aidan SM Westover, Rhys Wheeler, Chris Williams, Darrian SM Wilson, Graham LM Wilson, Neil Wood, George Woore, Phillip Yorke-Simpkin Reg LM Zuromski, Paul SM

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Ayles, Denise Beames, Cheryl Carnachan, Dom Dart, Caroline Demosani, Gail Elliott, Julie Eva, Gail Field, Shirley Gill, Maureen Gilmour, Helen
Hawking, Lorraine
Hook, Phillipa
Hudson, Margaret
Jolly, Sandra
Klopf, Josie
Laing, June
Lampard, Kay
Main, Raelene
Marcus, Yvonne
Lee, Anne
Mitchell, Roma
Phillips, Heather
Sanderson, Lorraine
Tregenza, Lyn

LM denotes LIFE MEMBER SM denotes SERVING ADF MEMBER # Denotes NEW MEMBER

187 members as at 30/08/14

FEES

Fees can be paid by posting a cheque or Money Order to:-

The Secretary, David Laing RSAR Association Inc Riverglen Marina, RSD 3152A Murray Bridge SA 5253

Make the cheque or Money Order out to the "Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc" or the "RSAR Association Inc"

Payment may be made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to:-

BSB 015 211 Account 482 441 406

In the name of Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc. or RSARA Inc

Please remember to include an identifier such as your surname, so the payment can be matched to you.



Private Gomad reckons......

'OLD' IS WHEN...

Your sweetie says, 'Let's go upstairs and make love,' and you answer, 'Pick one; I can't do both!'

'OLD' IS WHEN...

Your friends compliment you on your new alligator shoes and you're barefoot.

'OLD' IS WHEN...

A sexy babe catches your fancy and your pacemaker opens the garage door,

'OLD' IS WHEN....

Going braless pulls all the wrinkles out of your face.

'OLD' IS WHEN...

You don't care where your spouse goes, just as long as you don't have to go along.

'OLD' IS WHEN...

You are cautioned to slow down by the doctor instead of by the police

'OLD' IS WHEN...

'Getting a little action' means you don't need to take any fibre today.

'OLD' IS WHEN...

'Getting lucky' means you find your car in the parking lot.

'OLD' IS WHEN...

An 'all nighter' means not getting up to use the bathroom.

AND'OLD' IS WHEN...

You are not sure these are jokes !!!

Geez, I must be old!!! See youse next time!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear David

Thank you for allowing me to have my wife Margaret accompany me to the October 19 Hackney Hotel event. (I may need a driver.)

And I compliment you on the newsletter, website, Facebook page and everything else about the Association that I can find on my computer.

I was talking with Paul Longstaff the other day and he reminded me of Des Lynch's death. And there it was, in an old newsletter - a photo of Des.

You have recorded many memories. Well done, and thank you.

Kind regards

Hank Ramm

ODD WW2 FACTS

You might enjoy this from Col D. G. Swinford, USMC, Ret and history buff. You would really have to dig deep to get this kind of ringside seat to history:

The first German serviceman killed in WW II was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937), The first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940); The highest ranking American killed was Lt Gen Lesley McNair, *killed by* the US Army Air Corps.

The youngest US serviceman was 12 year old: Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded and given a Dishonourable Discharge for lying about his age. His benefits were later restored by act of Congress.

At the time of Pearl Harbor, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced 'sink us'); The shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry division was the swastika. Hitler's private train was named 'Amerika.' All three were soon changed for PR purposes.

More US servicemen died in the Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions, an airman's chance of being killed was 71%.

German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.

German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City, but they decided it wasn't worth the effort.

More Odd WW2 facts next month.