



"Sitrep, Over!"

AUGUST 2020

Official Journal of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc

Battle for Milne Bay. 78 Years ago this month

I've been reading a book by Michael Veitch called "Turning Point," about the Battle for Milne Bay in August and September of 1942. Located in New Guinea, the Australian built airfield was virtually the only thing that stood between the advancing Japanese and the Australian coastline. Home to two squadrons of Kittyhawk fighters, the base was constructed hastily after clearing jungle and swamp lands, and installing the newly available Marston Steel Plate Airfield.



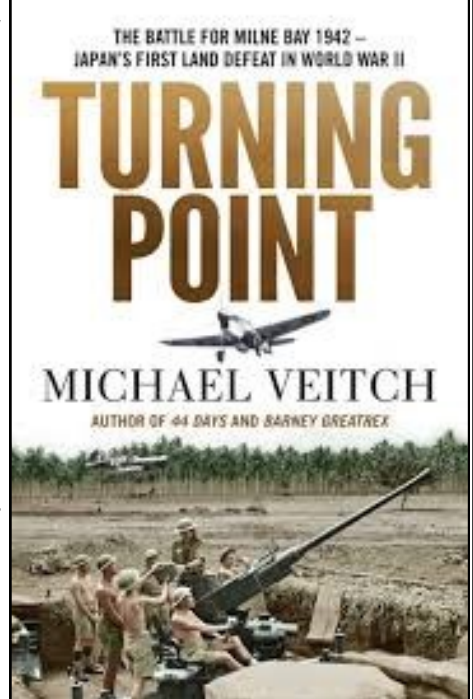
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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The internet was my friend when seeking further details of this battle, and I have decided to publish it over the next couple of months for your pleasure. Wikipedia tells us the cunning and bravery of the Allies helped them defeat the Japanese, who were victims of their own bad planning and were unfortunate to experience extreme bad

luck due to this bad planning.

Battle for Milne Bay starts on Page 8



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VALE

It is with extreme sadness we advise of the passing of much loved Associate Member Cheryl Beames, wife of President Rod. Cheryl passed away in the early hours of Wednesday 29th July after a long battle with cancer, with Rod by her side. Cheryl stood alongside Rod at every RSARA function, assisting with purchasing, preparing and serving food to the soldiers of the Battle Group. Her passing comes as a great shock to the RSARA family and the Defence community. In line with Cheryl's wishes, a private family funeral will be conducted.

LEST WE FORGET



Finally, our Luncheon goes ahead



After nearly 6 months, our Luncheon is now going ahead as the worst of the COVID-19 crisis slowly fades out of our lives.

After much ado, we have secured the speaking services of the Chief Officer of the Country Fire Services, Mr Mark Jones QFSM for our Luncheon, to be conducted at the **Avoca Hotel on Sunday 4th October 2020.**

Mark literally started his new appointment in the depths of this summer's fire cauldron, and quickly came to grips with the severity of the Australian conditions.

Mark, who previously worked in the United Kingdom as chief fire officer for the Buckingham Fire and Rescue Service and as Deputy Chief Executive of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, was named late last year after an extensive interview period. He has also worked as an executive with the ACT Emergency Services Agency.

Emergency Services Minister Corey Wingard said Mr Jones had been recommended because of his extensive experience with volunteers and knowledge of the emergency services sector, which includes time with the International Firefighters Association - a largely volunteer organisation.

"Mr Jones is about as highly-credentialled of an applicant we could have hoped for and will be an asset to the CFS and the Emergency Services sector as a whole," Minister Wingard said.

"His achievements in helping deliver a volunteer-centric culture between firefighters was also noted by the selection panel." Mr Wingard said.

Numerous members of the RSAR Association have contacted me asking if we were ever going to have luncheons again. Now is the time for you all to come along and enjoy the experiences of Mark Jones as he talks about service with emergency services overseas, and his short time with the CFS.

The Luncheon will commence at 1100 hrs with Mr Jones talk, after which members will adjourn to the dining rooms for lunch around midday, until about 1400 hrs. Lunch is at Members expense, and the Avoca menu allows you to dine small or BIG!

This luncheon is open to EVERYONE, however RSARA members will get first preference for seating IF THEY BOOK FIRST! First come, first seated. Seating is capped at 60 maximum.

If you wish to attend please contact the secretary on davidlaing49@bigpond.com or his mobile of 0407 791 822 NOT LATER THAN Friday 4th September.

If you don't register, you won't get a seat.

POLO TOPS selling well.

We have been inundated with orders for our discount Polo Tops. The following sizes are left.

Medium 3

Large 2

XL 2

Hurry, before they're all gone. Only \$10 plus \$9 P & H or arrange pick up from Grange

Orders to the Secretary, in the first instance.



Book Review and Special Offer

In Kilted Company is the story of an Infantry rifle company known to the majority of those who were associated with it simply as 'A Company'. For over fifty years 'A Company' has provided a venue through which citizens of the South East of South Australia have been able to contribute part time military service. *In Kilted Company* provides a vivid insight in to what it was like to be a member of a South Australian country reserve unit.

However as Major General Neil Wilson suggests in the book's foreword, if the names, places and anecdotes are changed, *In Kilted Company* could be the unofficial history of any sub-unit in the Australian Army Reserve.

From the various military organizations that preceded the establishment of 'A Company' as part of 27 Battalion South Australian Scottish Regiment, through the Company's employment as part of the Citizen Military Forces within the Royal South Australia Regiment, to its most recent allocation within the Army Reserve as an element of 10/27 Battalion Royal South Australia Regiment, *In Kilted Company* follows the latter-day development of the Company through the eyes of the many individuals who have filled its ranks, signposting significant milestones in the life of 'A Company' and detailing the effects of political and bureaucratic decisions that effected the Company and its members.

I purchased my copy back in 2011, and Author Max said he still had some copies available. In a very generous offer, he said if any member would like a SIGNED copy of the book, all you need to do is pay postage (\$6) and a small donation to Legacy, (\$10 is suggested) and the book is yours.

The book retailed previously for \$39.95.

Contact the Secretary to get your copy.



Random Thoughts For The 60's and over

- Wouldn't it be great if we could put ourselves in the dryer for ten minutes; come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller!
- Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven't met yet!
- I don't need anger management. I need people to stop pissing me off!
- Old age is coming at a really bad time
- When I was a child I thought Nap Time was a punishment ... now, as a grown up, it just feels like a small vacation!
- The biggest lie I tell myself is "I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it."
- Lord grant me the strength to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change things I can and the friends to post my bail when I finally snap!
- I don't have grey hair. I have "wisdom highlights". I'm just very wise.
- My people skills are just fine. It's my tolerance to morons that needs work.
- Teach your daughter how to shoot, because a restraining order is just a piece of paper.
- If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would've put them on my knees.
- The kids text me "plz" which is shorter than please. I text back "no" which is shorter than "yes".
- I'm going to retire and live off of my savings. Not sure what I'll do that second week.
- I've lost my mind and I'm pretty sure my wife took it!
- Why do I have to press one for English when you're just gonna transfer me to someone I can't understand anyway?

Captain Paul McKay The Disappearing Soldier Part 4

Van Laer knew there was an ice floe on one side of the mountain covered so thickly with evergreens the searchers in police helicopters wouldn't have been able to see through. He walked out his backyard, up into the woods, and worked his way toward the floe.

"When I started out that day I didn't believe I was going to find him; I thought there was no chance," he recalls. At first he thought that he'd come upon an illegal hunting camp. "And then I got closer and I thought, 'Oh. We've ended the search.'"

McKay's body was lying on the ground next to a boulder, his hands in his pockets, just beside a shallow trench. His belongings were tucked between the rocks, and the shovel lay nearby. Staff at the complex in Ray Brook had become accustomed to the sound of helicopters moving back and forth over the mountain. But that afternoon, as they looked out their windows and saw a helicopter return bearing a litter, they knew Paul McKay had been found.

The local coroner determined McKay's death was a suicide, due to intentional hypothermia and emaciation. Saranac Lake Mayor Clyde Rabideau announced the news on Facebook that afternoon. Within hours, the post was viewed and shared thousands of times. Locals wrote to express their sorrow, to say how they'd felt that they'd somehow known

McKay. Australians commented in droves, thanking Saranac Lake for treating a stranger as one of their own. Others wrote with more bitterness: "RIP Paul, another soldier let down by the system."

A State Police escort was arranged to accompany McKay's body to New York City, from where he was flown home. At 7.30 on the frigid morning of January 23, with thermometers hovering on 20 below, some two dozen locals lined the streets of Saranac Lake and Ray Brook to see him off.

The reception in Australia wasn't as warm. There was no ceremony to welcome him home, as would have been the case if he'd died in combat. His name wouldn't be engraved outside the Hall of Memory at Canberra's Australian War Memorial so that visiting children could participate in the ritual of placing a plastic poppy alongside it. At the funeral



Photo supplied by Mrs Angela McKay. She said "Paul's coffin was carried by people involved with the search - police, park rangers, veterans etc. There was a US flag draped over his coffin which is an incredibly high honour to award to a foreign national.

reception, McKay's friends speculated over why he'd gone where he had. To his mother, a devout Anglican, it seemed that he was on a religious quest, like the biblical wise men, following a star he didn't quite understand. Other friends thought it must have been the proximity of the 10th Mountain Division, which was in Afghanistan, or just the appeal of a completely foreign environment. Or maybe something as simple as a postcard he'd once seen or something he'd

Captain Paul McKay The Disappearing Soldier Part 4

read in a book.

What stuck with van Laer was the unmistakable impression that McKay had wanted someone to look for him, and one day to be found. "But why would he want there to be a search?" he asked. To Australian veterans, the answer was obvious.



The funeral of Captain Paul McKay at St Peter's Cathedral, Adelaide. Copyright: Commonwealth Australia

Since 2000, estimates suggest that nearly three times as many active Australian soldiers and nearly five times as many veterans have committed suicide as have died fighting in Afghanistan. But before McKay, almost none had been nationally recognised.

"He could have easily died in Australia," said Troy Rodgers, a veterans' assistance worker. "Obviously he had a clear thought in his mind that he's going to do it and do it in a way that will make some noise."

John Bale, CEO and co-founder of Soldier On, a national veterans' support group based in Canberra, agreed. Before McKay's death there had been a near blackout on news of the growing number of soldier suicides in Australia. It wasn't so much that McKay changed the conversation, said Bale: "It didn't exist in conversations before this. It does now."

On April 25, 2014, Saranac Lake declared its first-ever observation of Anzac Day, and a procession of local and Australian authorities climbed up Scarface Mountain to where the forest rangers had constructed a small stone cairn and a wooden cross, to which one of them tied a poppy while another poured a can of Foster's on the ground. McKay's parents came that summer, bringing their son's ashes to the mountain and scattering them above the cairn.

Why McKay did what he did will probably remain a mystery. Perhaps his unforgiving drive and

Concludes next month

Member Phil Brookes sent this one in. Like he says, wait for the roar to reach a dull crescendo before acting. **Editor**

Going through some old Army stuff and came across this recruiting poster for the Special Air Service.

Trust the Army to con us. There was a great rush of applicants - the SAS motto is *Who dares wins* - many dared, but few won.

Can just imagine the PC mob going ballistic – no pun intended – over this one.

UNCOVER YOUR POTENTIAL



THE
SPECIAL AIR SERVICE
NEEDS MEN OF THE
RIGHT CALIBRE!

Do you want a challenging responsible and satisfying career?
See your Orderly Room for application forms now.

PRIVATE TED'S HUMOUR

NEW FROM IKEA



SOCIAL DISTANCE BENCH

First day at the beach after quarantine.



AFTER ALL THE STUPID, STUPID THINGS I'VE DONE IN MY LIFE...IF I DIE BECAUSE I TOUCHED MY FACE, I AM GOING TO BE SERIOUSLY PISSSED.

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS
GOING OUT TO ALL THE
MARRIED MEN WHO'VE SPENT
MONTHS TELLING THE WIFE
I'LL DO THAT WHEN I GOT TIME



**B cup works
better than D cup**



GOING INTO A TEENAGERS
ROOM IS LIKE TAKING
A TRIP TO IKEA.....

YOU POP IN JUST TO LOOK
AND END UP LEAVING
WITH 6 CUPS 2 PLATES
3 BOWLS A TEA TOWEL
AND SOME CUTLERY

Battle for Milne Bay

Part 1



Milne Bay, highlighted in **RED**

(25 August – 7 Sept 1942)

Also known as **Operation RE** or the **Battle of Rabi** (ラビの戦い) by the Japanese, was a battle of the Pacific campaign of World War II. Japanese naval infantry troops, known as *Kaigun Tokubetsu Rikusentai* (Special Naval Landing Forces), with two small tanks attacked the Allied airfields at Milne Bay that had been established on the eastern tip of New Guinea. Due to poor intelligence work, the Japanese miscalculated the size of the predominantly Australian garrison and, believing that the airfields were defended by only two or three companies, initially landed a force roughly equivalent in size to one battalion on 25 August 1942. The Allies, forewarned by intelligence from Ultra, had heavily reinforced the garrison.

Despite suffering a significant setback at the outset, when part of their small invasion force had its landing craft destroyed by Royal Australian Air Force aircraft as they attempted to land on the coast behind the Australian defenders, the Japanese quickly pushed inland and began their advance towards the airfields. Heavy fighting followed as they encountered the Australian Militia troops that formed the first line of defence. These troops were steadily pushed back, but the Australians brought forward

veteran Second Australian Imperial Force units that the Japanese had not expected. Allied air superiority helped tip the balance, providing close support to troops in combat and targeting Japanese logistics. Finding themselves heavily outnumbered, lacking supplies and suffering heavy casualties, the Japanese withdrew their forces, with fighting coming to an end on 7 September 1942.

The battle is often described as the first major battle of the war in the Pacific in which Allied troops decisively defeated Japanese land forces. Although Japanese land forces had experienced local setbacks elsewhere in the Pacific earlier in the war, unlike at Milne Bay, these earlier actions had not forced them to withdraw completely and abandon their strategic objective. Nor did they have such a profound impact upon the thoughts and perceptions of the Allies towards the Japanese, and their prospects for victory. Milne Bay showed the limits of Japanese capability to expand using relatively small forces in the face of increasingly larger Allied troop concentrations and command of the air. As a result of the battle, Allied morale was boosted and Milne Bay was developed into a major Allied base, which was used to mount subsequent operations in the region.



'Polly' was one of the American-built Curtiss P-40E Kittyhawk fighter aircraft which were instrumental in the defence of Milne Bay. 'Polly' was named, and usually flown, by Pilot Officer Bruce 'Buster' Brown, 75 Squadron RAAF

Geography

Milne Bay is a sheltered 97-square-mile (250 km²) bay at the eastern tip of the Territory of Papua (now part of Papua New Guinea). It is 22 miles (35 km) long and 10 miles (16 km) wide, and is deep enough for large ships to enter. The coastal area is flat with good aerial approaches, and therefore suitable for air-strips, although it is intercut by many tributaries of rivers and mangrove swamps. Owing to the swampy lands and high rainfall, about 200 inches (5,100 mm) per year, the area is prone to malaria and flooding. After floods, the coastal plains become "virtually impassable quagmires of glutinous mud", and the ground is not suited for development. The bay is bounded to its north and south by the Stirling Ranges, which at points rise to 3,000–5,000 feet (910–1,520 m) and are covered in Kunai grass and dense scrubland. The main area of firm ground suitable for construction and development is found directly at the head of the bay. In 1942 this area was occupied by plantations of palm oil, coconuts and cocoa, as well as a number of jetties and villages, connected by what was described by Major Sydney Elliott-Smith of the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) as a "modest 'road' system" that was, in actuality, only a dirt track 10–12 metres (33–39 ft) wide. The area was sparsely populated, although there were a number of villages along the track. Ahima was situated the farthest east, and together with Gili Gili in the west, it bounded Lilihoa, Waga Waga, Goroni, KB Mission, Rabi and Kilarbo.

Military situation

The Japanese thrust into the Pacific region had begun in early December 1941 with attacks against British and Commonwealth forces in the Battle of Hong Kong and the Malayan campaign, and against the US Pacific Fleet, much of which was caught at anchor in Pearl Harbor. They rapidly advanced south, overwhelming resistance in Malaya, capturing Singapore in February 1942, and successfully occupying Timor, Rabaul and the Dutch East Indies. While a Japanese naval operation aimed at capturing Port Moresby was defeated in the Battle of the Coral Sea in May, elsewhere American forces in the Philippines capitulated, and Japanese forces advanced towards India through Burma.

Although the Japanese had been defeated in the Coral Sea, another attempt at capturing Port Moresby was anticipated. The Allied Supreme Commander of the South West Pacific Area, General Douglas MacArthur, decided to establish airbases to protect Port Moresby. To the west, he authorised the construction of an airbase at Merauke in Netherlands New Guinea. Another, codenamed "Boston" was authorised to the east in the largely unexplored Abau–Mullins Harbour area on 20 May. Any Japanese force approaching Port Moresby by sea would have to sail past these bases, allowing them to be detected and attacked earlier; but the base in the east had other advantages too. Bombers flying missions to Rabaul and other Japanese bases to the north from there would not have to overfly the Owen Stanley Range, and would not be subject to the vagaries of the weather and air turbulence over the mountains. For that reason, an airstrip suitable for heavy bombers was desired so that they could stage there from Port Moresby and bases in northern Australia.



At Milne Bay, leading Aircraftsman J. F. Donegan, RAAF, owed his life to the bravery and care of Maigura, a local mission nurse. Villagers rescued him after he had drifted, semi-conscious, for over 18 hours after the launch in which he was a crewman was sunk by Japanese gunfire.

The Commander in Chief of Allied Land Forces, General Sir Thomas Blamey, selected a garrison for Boston on 24 May. The troops were informed that their mission was only to defend against Japanese raids, and in the event of a major attack they would destroy everything of value and withdraw. The Boston project fell through, as a reconnaissance of the area gave an unfavourable report and Elliott-Smith suggested Milne Bay as a more suitable alternative site. A party of twelve

Americans and Australians set out to explore Milne Bay in a Consolidated PBY Catalina flying boat on 8 June. They were impressed by the flat areas, the roads and the jetties, all of which would ease airbase construction. On receipt of a favourable report from the party, MacArthur's General Headquarters (GHQ) cancelled Boston on 11 June and substituted Milne Bay. Milne Bay was given the codename "Fall River". The use of place names as code names proved to be unwise, as some supplies were mistakenly sent to the real Fall River, in Massachusetts.

Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc.

Pro Patria



EDITORIAL

All correspondence to:

The Secretary David Laing
Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc.
PO Box 5218
Murray Bridge South. SA 5253

Email: davidlaing49@bigpond.com
Phone: 0407 791 822



Find us on
Facebook

www.rsara.asn.au

Hard copies of this newsletter are kindly printed by the office of the Member for Barker, the Honourable Tony Pasin MP, in Murray Bridge.

Some members don't have internet access or email, therefore the only way we can keep them informed is by snail mail hard copies. This is made much easier thanks to Tony and his hard working staff.

Thank you Tony Pasin MP and Staff.

Fees are due at the AGM or within 2 weeks of it.

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 at:

The Treasurer David Hope

RSAR Association

20 Katoomba Rd

Beaumont SA 5066

When you get to be my age, every day brings new pains, new challenges and new delights. Looking after a 4 year old grand daughter whilst her Mum attends CFS and Army courses is one of the delights, although my wife does most of the caring, while I just act the fool running around with a paper bag on my head pretending to be an ambulance. And then someone you admire, who has been unwell for quite some time, passes away suddenly leaving a grieving husband and adult children. That's what happened to Cheryl Beames on the 29th July in the early hours. Dear Cheryl was "always there!" She was beside Rod at Battle Group BBQs and sat along side him through some extremely boring Dining In nights, plus a few fun ones as well. Rod has been overwhelmed with phone calls and messages from people right throughout the Defence and RSARA families, and he says he never realized just how tight knit and caring our friends were. The Beames family are supporting one another through this sad time, and we send them our best wishes and sincere condolences. RIP Cheryl.

I intend taking some time out of my busy schedule (of being an ambulance) and travelling to Kangaroo Island for a few days, just to see for myself the damage done in the recent bushfires, and also put a few dollars into the local economy. Friends have told me of their recent visits and their thoughts that the landscape will never be the same. I beg to differ, but will reserve my judgement until I have seen it for myself. I'll have my photographer take some pics for the next newsletter. The last time a lot of our Serving Members were on KI was to assist the Emergency Services in fighting the fires and the mammoth cleanup task afterwards. And what great job they did too.

This year hasn't even ended but everyone is looking forward to a better year in 2021. Hopefully we'll be getting back to normal and putting the horrid COVID-19 crisis behind us. We'll be putting the bushfires behind us, and we'll have enough rain to put an end to the drought that still curses most of the inner mainland. Hundreds of thousands of people will restart their lives and hopefully get their jobs back and kick start our failing economy. A new vaccine will be developed and released and we can get on with our pre-virus lives. Hopefully!

That's what I think!

David Laing

Editor

AGM & LUNCHEON

NEW

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This years Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 30th August at 1100 hrs. The venue will be the **Avoca Hotel**, South Rd Clarence Gardens. Members are welcome to dine in the dining areas after the meeting, and an extensive menu is available, with prices ranging from \$10 to \$50 if you want a Crayfish!

LUNCHEON

Our Luncheon, earlier planned for May this year, will now be held at the same venue, on Sunday 4th October at 1100 hrs. Our Guest Speaker will be Mark Jones QFSM, Chief Officer of SA's Country Fire Service. Again, members are welcome to adjourn for lunch after the presentation.

SUPPORT THE ASSOCIATION AND RESERVE YOUR SEAT NOW

If you wish to attend either date, please advise the Secretary David Laing, on 0407 791 822 or his email of davidlaing49@bigpond.com for seating and purposes.

AGM

Sunday 30th August 1100 hrs

Venue: Avoca Hotel

LUNCHEON

Sunday 4th October 1100 hrs

Venue: Avoca Hotel

Note: This information is subject to change due to COVID-19 restrictions



'Viagra' is now available
in tea bags.

It doesn't enhance your sexual
performance
but it does stop your biscuit
going soft.



"Not tonight. Didn't you get my email?"

2RAR Samichon Day



2ND BATTALION
THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION, Inc

A Memorial Service was conducted at the 2 RAR Memorial Pathway of Honour on Friday 24th July to commemorate the Battle of The Hook, fought in Korea from 24th to 26th July 1953. 2 RAR were awarded the Battle Honour "Samichon" for their part in the battle.



Ex 2RAR blokes - L to R - Major Russell Scutchings (OPSO 10/27 RSAR), 90 year old Lt Colonel Patrick Forbes MC (Ret'd) who served at "the Hook" (Samichon) Korea and WO1 John Craig (RSM 10/27 RSAR) walking down the Adelaide Rifles Pathway to the Torrens Parade Ground after attending the Samichon Day Observance at the 2RAR Memorial, Pathway of Honour, Adelaide on Friday 24th July, 2020. Major Scutchings was WO1 Craig's 2RAR platoon commander in Iraq in 2003.

A number of apologies were received including that of Lt Colonel Adam Gower, the current CO of 7RAR who was formerly a Company Commander and OPSO of the Battalion. The 2RAR Memorial was unveiled by Lt Colonel Forbes during the 2RAR Adelaide Reunion, ANZAC Week 2014.

The **Battle of the Samichon River** in 1953 was fought during the final days of the Korean War between United Nations (UN) forces—primarily Australian and American—and the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA). The fighting took place on a key position on the Jamestown Line known as *The Hook* and saw the defending UN troops, including the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (2 RAR) from the 28th British Commonwealth Brigade and the US 7th Marine Regiment, fight off numerous assaults by the PVA 137th Division during two concerted night attacks, inflicting numerous casualties on the PVA with heavy artillery and small arms fire. The action was part of a larger, divisional-sized PVA attack against the US 1st Marine Division, with diversionary assaults mounted against the Australians. With the peace talks in Panmunjom reaching a conclusion, the Chinese had been eager to gain a last-minute victory over the UN forces and the battle was the last of the war

before the official signing of the Korean Armistice.

During the action the PVA had attempted to make a breakthrough to the Imjin River along the divisional boundary between the US 1st Marine Division and the 1st Commonwealth Division in order to turn the Marine division's flank. Yet with well-coordinated indirect fires from the divisional artillery, including 16th Field Regiment, Royal New Zealand Artillery, and support from British Centurion tanks of the 1st Royal Tank Regiment, 2 RAR successfully thwarted both assaults, holding *The Hook*. It was estimated that PVA casualties numbered between 2,000 and 3,000 killed, with the majority of them inflicted by the New Zealand gunners. Meanwhile, on the left flank, US Marines had endured the brunt of the attack, repelling the PVA onslaught with infantry and artillery. Only a few hours later the Armistice Agreement was signed, ultimately ending the war. Both sides subsequently withdrew 2 kilometres (1.2 mi) within 72 hours to create the 4-kilometre (2.5 mi) Korean Demilitarised Zone.



LEFT: RSM 10/27 Bn RSAR WO1 John Craig who previously served with 2 RAR.

ABOVE: International Pipe Major Andrew Fuller provided the bagpipe accompaniment for the service.



Heavily damaged trenches on "The Hook" in July 1953



Members of 2 RAR observe the aftermath of the Battle of "The Hook" the day after the Chinese forces withdrew.



The Hon Darren Chester MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Minister for Defence Personnel

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 29 July 2020

COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLION AND CERTIFICATE RECOGNISE SECOND WORLD WAR VETERANS

A special commemorative medallion marking the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War is now available to every living Second World War veteran to say 'thank you for your service'.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester today launched the medallion and certificate in the lead up to the end of the Second World War commemoration on 15 August, awarding the first medallion to Sale veteran Rose Jackson.

"As we approach this special anniversary, we recognise that it will be one of the last opportunities we have as a nation to publicly acknowledge the remaining veterans of the Second World War, of which there are around 12,000 still with us today," Mr Chester said.

"These brave Australians served our nation in the far corners of the world, fighting in theatres of war from Europe to North Africa, the Mediterranean and the Middle East, to Asia and the Pacific, with the conflict also reaching Australian shores.

"Australia can never fully repay the debt we owe these amazing men and women but, to mark their service, the Federal Government is producing this Commemorative Medallion and Certificate of Commemoration for the remaining living Second World War veterans.

"I am delighted to be in Sale today to present the first of the Commemorative Medallions to an Australian Second World War veteran, Rose Jackson.

"Rose served in the Australian Army during World War Two and served as a private. She was posted to Bandiana, Victoria after undertaking training and worked in a clerical role.

"Thank you for your service, Rose."

The medallion, available to all living veterans who apply, will be presented in a display case and is a gesture of appreciation from a grateful nation to those veterans who fought to protect our way of life in the terrible conflict that ended 75 years ago.

Second World War veterans, or their families on their behalf, can apply online at dva.gov.au/medallion or, for those without internet access, by phone on 02 61918217 during business hours. The Commemorative Medallions and Certificates will be distributed during August.