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Email: [raacansw@defence.gov.au](mailto:raacansw@defence.gov.au) . Tel: (02) 8335 5209 . FAX: 8335 5357 . ABN 49 709 547 198

# ARMOUR

Patron: Lieutenant General Laurie O'Donnell AC  
President: Colonel John Haynes OAM . Editor George Baczocha

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email: [george.baczocha@defence.gov.au](mailto:george.baczocha@defence.gov.au) . Tel: (02) 8335 5209 . fax: 8335 5357 .  
[www.bwm.org.au](http://www.bwm.org.au) . ABN 29 293 433 202

## The "Battle" for Bald Hill

Cate Clarke

*Seventy two years ago the 1 Australian Armoured Division created history when they took part in Australia's largest military manoeuvres to date. Held in the North West of NSW nearly 20,000 men participated in training aimed at making them a cohesive fighting force. While that particular event isn't well known, what is even less well known is how the Division's exercises were strategised, photographed and then publicised to the Australian population. This article looks at why and how the largest ever Australian armoured division was used as a public relations exercise during the dark days of 1942.*

Seventy two years ago (August 1942) with Japanese incursions into the South Pacific and the recent bombing of Darwin the Australian populace was concerned, quite rightly, that invasion plans were afoot.

The Japanese had marched through China, the Philippines, Burma, Malaya, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) with relative ease, decimating any resistance effectively and without mercy. They had claimed a long list of victories and a reputation as an almost indefatigable enemy determined, as a matter of honour, to claim or destroy anything in their way.

And, whilst the Battle of the Coral Sea (May 7-8 1942) halted Japan's thrust south, on paper, when looking at the losses sustained by each side, it was only a victory in so far as, for the first time, it stopped the enemy. Rightly, veterans and historians and those that were witness to the time, say that the Coral Sea was decisive because the Japanese were halted, but what they were also painfully aware of was that the advancing army was not defeated, not destroyed and certainly not cowed.

Certainly, at this time, Prime Minister John Curtin and the majority of Australians believed that Australia was next and whilst the Coral Sea had stopped the dominos collapsing it was felt likely that Japan would push for Australia to become the next tile to fall. Darwin being bombed regularly and the recent shelling of Sydney and Newcastle could only mean one thing – it was only a matter of time until a Japanese invasion force would land in Queensland, the Northern Territory or Western Australia.

### In The North West of NSW

In the North West region of NSW it was certainly believed that the Japanese were coming – at Baan Baa Margaret Illingworth recalled her mother keeping fresh water and stores in a hollow tree in the middle of our scrub paddock ... because if the Japs came over the hill she would hide in the hollow tree with us two kids.



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# Coming Events



7 August 2014	Committee Meeting	B11, Victoria Barracks, 1130hrs
2 October 2014	AGM	B11, Victoria Barracks, 1130hrs
22 November 2014	Cambrai Dinner	RACA, Macquarie Street

**Nominations for President and Secretary urgently required**

All members are welcome to attend these meetings. We usually adjourn to the Officers' Mess for a luncheon snack.

Your Association now has facilities for any member to attend committee meetings by telephone. The offer to attend in person remains of course. Anyone wishing to attend in person should advise in advance to enable entry to the Barracks to be arranged.

Would any member who wishes to attend by phone please provide their telephone number and we will call them just before the meeting commences. Meetings start at 1130 hrs on the first Thursday of every second month starting in February.



Members should be aware of the ADF Assistance Trust. It has cash and other support mechanisms to assist Service people, past present and their families who need help of any nature.

Apply to [www.adfassistancetrust.org.au](http://www.adfassistancetrust.org.au).

## **Boer War Memorial**

This is just a reminder to all Black Hats that your Branch in 2005 initiated the quest for a National Boer War Memorial to be erected in Anzac Parade Canberra. It is a memorial to Australia's first troopers being the predecessors of today's Black Hat troopers. They were at war on the day Australia became a nation and on the day of the Army's birthday.

The first of the four mounted troopers, 150% life size in bronze, will be completed in August this year. We hope to have the fourth completed by Dec 2016 so we can dedicate the completed Memorial in May 2017.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Haynes'.

John Haynes, President

(Continued from page 1)

Similarly, at Rowena, Helen Mackie remembers the children (including herself) taking the pins out of the tricycle pedals rendering them useless to Japanese invaders to steal - as the pedals would just go round and round not catching in order to make the wheels turn.

These examples aside though, did Australians believe that Australia could be defended? Did they believe that the Japanese could be stopped? The Government needed Australians to believe they could be; so in conjunction with some scheduled expansive manoeuvres in the North West, the military put on one of the largest and greatest press opportunities of the War. The unit to be the public face of Australia's defence in the spring of 1942 was the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Armoured Division.

### The North West of NSW

The 1 Australian Armoured Division under the command of Major General Horace 'Red Robbie' Robertson had made its way to the North West area of NSW during July 1942. Robertson, together with able Brigadiers Macarthur Onslow and Fergusson (both holding DSOs), was determined to bring all of the Divisions far flung elements together for a series of exercises with the express aim of teaching the Division how to fight as an effective fighting unit.

The geography of the North West was considered highly suitable for the manoeuvres and the Division soon located its two brigades and support group near Wee Waa and Narrabri. Supply, ordnance and medical were further south at Boggabri, Baan Baa and Gunnedah. The Division was at its height with between 16,000 and 20,000 men, and the small towns in the area soon witnessed large scale mock battles the like of which have not been equalled since.

### The Premise of the Exercise

Prior to 'action' a memo was released to unit commanders and the attending press giving a premise to the action. It read ... *all military activity in the North West region was aimed at defending it, as a key strategic area, from the Japanese since their invasion into Queensland in the month prior to the Division's arrival. Whilst the major part of the invading force was still being held off ... forays by Japanese commandos ... were increasing.* Troops were advised that *twenty five enemy paratroops had been spotted ... with prisoners from the 2/9 Australian Armoured Regiment near Carbeen Siding on the 26th.*



A TANK CREW RUSHES to positions at a given signal to attack "enemy" posts. On the day the "enemy" was forced to withdraw from 4 prepared positions, honours going to the tanks.



CREW OF A LIGHT M3 TANK surrenders to infantrymen after being captured in a dry river bed.

The Division was summarily advised that the Japanese were *testing resistance, seeking a way south in order to cut communications and supply lines* – therefore they were being called to defend the North West. The 'Battle of Bald Hill' was to be a small part of that defence and the only part fully open to all of the press to witness.

Every moment of this display, of 1 Australian Armoured Brigade's forward strength against the enemy at Bald Hill, was planned and controlled in detail. The six Staff Cars full of reporters attending included editors from *The Argus*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *Sun News Pictorial*. In short all major Australian papers were covering the event. It was THAT important.

For the purpose of the battle the 15 Australian Motor Regiment and the 47 Field Battery were the enemy and the 1 Australian Armoured Brigade were the soldiers striking hard at the foe. For the remainder of the manoeuvres carried out in this particular action the enemy was to be the imaginary Japanese in the form of the 2/11 Australian Armoured Car Regiment (more on this in part 2 of the Bald Hill story to be published next edition of *Armour*).

### The Thrust of the 1 Australian Armoured Brigade

Whilst known as the 'Battle for Bald Hill' or the 'Battle for Narrabri', the three days of manoeuvres that started with a thrust into enemy lines were enacted from Gunnedah, in the south, very nearly through to the Queensland border.

(Continued on page 4)

However, commencing on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August at 3pm, the first critical battle/manoeuvre, took less than an hour. Prepared for diligently and enthusiastically, it went like clockwork as the well oiled machine of the 1 Australian Armoured Brigade was placed on display for the journalists to observe.

To give an idea as to the precision planning an excerpt from an August 1942 entry for the *War Diary* of 1 Australian Armoured Brigade G Branch HQ, is warranted. It noted:

- At 3.00pm the 2/1 Armd Bde Recce Sqn moved forward to ascertain strength and flanks of enemy at Bald Hill.
- At 3.10pm the enemy, 15 Mot Regt commenced its attack on left flank so as to stop Recce Sqn.
- At 3.15 pm one troop of the enemy the 47 Fd Bty, detached from the 16 Fd Regt and on secondment to the 1 Armd Bde, comes out of action at posn near Edgeroi homestead where it has been Recced and 15 Mot Regt proceeded to new position.
- At 3.20 pm the 2/5 and 2/7 Armd Regt followed by Bde HQ commenced frontal attack.
- At 3.25 pm the 2/6 Armd Regt attacked from right flank.
- At 3.35 pm the 15 Mot Regt is pinned by 1 Armd Bde within 40 yards of Bald Hill. One troop of 47 Fd Bty comes into motion in new position. The 47 Fd Bty less one troop put out of action at Edgeroi Homestead.
- At 3.40 pm the 2/5 and 2/7 Armd Regts, followed by Bde HQ, halt before reaching objective. The 2/6 Armd Regt help on right flank before reaching objective.
- At 3.45pm the demonstration of efficiency of the Brigade concluded and all units move into form prior to inspection.
- At 3.50pm the spectators inspect the Brigade.

Later, respected WW2 journalist Mervyn Weston was to note about his experiences with the troops during that time:



*An Australian armoured division, with which war correspondents have just spent 2 days, has been developed into the greatest military striking force Australia has possessed.*

*Manoeuvres being carried out are historic for hundreds of tanks and some thousands of armoured cars, scout cars, carriers, jeeps, supporting artillery AA and anti tank guns, troop transport, supply trucks, field workshops and medical units ... For more than 2 weeks this tremendous striking force has been on the move deployed in battle formation as it advances to meet an imaginary enemy.*

*The objective is to see that the whole organisation of the division functions perfectly. The exercises will be continued until it does ... and after 2 days in the field with units it can be said that the goal is rapidly being reached.*

The aim of such reporting was of course to dispel fear and promote national unity – which it helped to do. However, aside from the PR exercise, what did the Army learn from the Bald Hill manoeuvres about one of its elite Divisions?

**Part two of this series will explore the logistics of the exercise.**

## Technical Notes & News

### Australia's LAND 400 project to revolutionise combat vehicles

27 March 2014 Berenice Baker

The Australian Defence Force's (ADF) LAND 400 – Land Combat Vehicle System (LCVS) project will replace the Land Force's existing armoured vehicles fleet of M113, ASLAV and Bushmaster PMV with a new mounted close combat capability from 2025. Worth around AUD 10 billion, LAND 400 will be the Australian Army's largest, most expensive and most complex major capability equipment project to date.

Around 1,100 new vehicles will be supplied under the ADF's LAND 400 - Land Combat Vehicle System (LCVS), which forms part of the Army's Combined Arms Fighting System (CAFS). This series of measures was set out in the Defence White Paper 2009 to support the Army Objective Force (Force 2030), an overarching plan to secure Australia at a time of significant strategic change and uncertainty in the Asia-Pacific region.

#### Current status and milestones

Before the project was launched in the 2009 Defence White Paper, the government issued a Request For Information (RFI) in 2006, followed by a second RFI in 2010. LAND 400 will be a key topic under the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO) Defence and Industry Conference in Adelaide occurred in July 2014, with Government First Pass approval expected during 2013-2015. The draft Request For Tender (RFT) will also be released on the same timescale for industry to comment. The programme is being managed through a Department of Defence Integrated Project Team (IPT), which consists of specialist staff from a number of key Defence agencies.

#### Fit for purpose

With a key decision date due this year, Australia must decide whether its future fleet will be aimed more towards supporting non-conventional stabilisation missions or more traditional warfare.

Operational drawdowns are underway in Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands. The 2013 Defence White Paper said it would free resources to be used to increase the ADF's capacity to conduct stabilisation, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief reconstruction and peacekeeping operations in the Indo-Pacific region and particularly in the South Pacific. However, LAND 400's operational guidance focuses on high-intensity conventional warfighting in the Asia-Pacific region, with its Concept Of Operation stating candidate platforms must be capable of defeating a 'comparable' and 'adaptive' enemy, including through amphibious assaults.

While modern platforms offer a large degree of flexibility and adaptability, the Australian Government needs to decide which type of warfare fits best into its strategy going forward, or risk ending up with a compromise that supports neither to its best capacity.

#### State debate

With the key decision gate due this year, a bidding war has sparked off between state governments to take on the valuable manufacturing work. South Australia is putting forward a strong case to host the new capacity after the collapse of carmaker Holden, which is forecast to result in AUD1.2 billion hit to gross state product and 13,000 job losses. It has proposed that the Hoden manufacturing plant could be repurposed and skilled workers retrained, along similar lines to the state's Techport naval shipbuilding precinct.

While South Australia is far from the sole candidate, the Australian Government has dropped strong hints that it would like production work to remain domestic. In February 2014, Assistant Minister for Defence Stuart Robert told attendees at the Australian Defence Magazine Congress he would be lobbying very strongly for the vehicles to be either manufactured or assembled in Australia.

"And it is here that I am looking to both you in industry and State Governments to get together and look at creative ways of constructing competitive tenders once the project has received First Pass approval later this year," he said.



*The Australian Defence Force's (ADF) LAND 400 – Land Combat Vehicle System (LCVS) project will replace the Land Force's existing armoured vehicles fleet of M113, ASLAV and Bushmas-*

# Is Poland's Stealthy PL-01 The Tank Of The Future?

Tyler Rogoway

<http://foxtrotalpha.jalopnik.com/is-polands-stealthy-pl-01-the-tank-of-the-future-1554395391>



Has Poland's OBRUM and its partners designed the tank of the future? The PL-01 does pack some incredibly valuable features into a fairly compact and modular concept, and yes, it also looks cool as hell! The idea of the PL-01 is to try and eliminate the infrared, radar and visual signature of the traditional tank to a large degree, while also relying on guile to take identity masking a step further. In addition, the PL-01 concept aims at bringing to market a tank packed with relevant modern features, many of which already exist off the shelf, while others are still on the developmental horizon.

The vast majority of targeting sensors on the battlefield today rely on the infrared band of the electromagnetic spectrum to do their bidding. The PL-01 attempts its almost magical infrared signature reduction via the installation of temperature controlled wafers that blanket its exterior. This chameleon's skin of sorts, allows the tank's skin to match the infra-red signature of its surroundings. It does this by processing what small infrared sensors mounted around the tank detect, and then displays a pattern on the tank's honeycomb-like covering that best matches the infrared data collected. As a result, the tank all but disappears to infrared sensors. Even more outstanding, these wafers can also be used like pixels, as each can be manipulated in temperature. This allows for the tank to use active infrared camouflage, such as tiger striping its infrared signature in the jungle, or making it flat like the sand in the desert. The PL-01 also lowers its infrared signature through cooling and dispersing the exhaust from its 940 hp diesel engine.

The PL-01's proposed active infrared camouflage system can even go a step further, from concealment to trickery. The tank can even make itself look like a car or another common object, via matching the temperature of its surroundings and then displaying a pre-programmed image on its temperature controlled wafers. This is an amazing countermeasure that, if reliable, can make enemy detection and the creation of a firing solution almost impossible during night-time operations for a large percentage of any enemy's anti-tank weapon systems. Active camouflage for military vehicles is nothing new, in fact it has been tested as far back as the 1940's via mounting lights on aircraft, and later ones that change intensity and shade depending on their background. There are rumours that "visual stealth" was tested on aircraft as late as the 1990's.

Even Boeing's Bird Of Prey program was said to have tested some forms of visual signature reduction. We have also seen YouTube videos of LED suits that use light sensitive receivers to "cloak" an object, or even more incredible this new capability that is straight out of the Predator movie franchise. This is precisely what the PL-01's designers say they are working on for their tank now, and future models are claimed to offer both infra-red and visual "cloaking" and "spoofing" capabilities. Such a technology would work in the same way as the tank's infrared masking capability, basically by using data from video or light sensitive receivers mounted around the tank and displaying the image taken from one side of tank on the opposite side. This is similar to putting a camera behind a flat panel TV and viewing the camera's feed on the TV. If the magnification was right the TV would all but disappear from a distance.

With the miniaturization of technology, I would not doubt if a similar system has been tested on aircraft and even ground vehicles in the US as well. Infrared, and even visual detection, remains a low observable aircraft's "achilles heel," and so called "silver bullet" platforms, meant to kick down the enemy's air defences, or to spy on an enemy without being detected, could greatly benefit from this technology. Although putting such an elaborate system on a 40 ton tank is very different than installing it on a 15 ton fighter, where weight is always an issue. The infrared spectrum continues to dominate the ground side of the modern battlefield, especially after dark, so having the ability to blend into your thermal surroundings, or to even look like something totally different than what you actually are, should drastically increase your survivability.

The PL-01 tank is also said to be almost entirely coated with radar absorbing material, and the vehicle's very low-profile and faceted design is said to reduce radar returns in a sizeable manner. This could be quite valuable, as

*(Continued on page 7)*

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detection of armoured formations via standoff strategic platforms using ground moving target indicator (GMTI) radar will increasingly be proliferated throughout the world.

Additionally, radars and missiles that use millimetre wave radar for detection and guidance, such as what is found on the Mi-28N and the AH-64D attack helicopters, are also becoming more common place as a means of attacking armoured targets under adverse weather conditions.

Finally, modern fighter and attack aircraft can use their radar systems to detect, and even target armoured



vehicles, even while those vehicles are moving. With this in mind, lowering the radar signature of a main battle tank, thus decreasing its detection range, can mean the difference between life and death when a roaming pack of enemy multi-role fighters is out hunting for tanks to plink.

The PL-01 is also quite intuitive and efficient with its general design, as it only uses three crew, and has an auto-loading system in its turret that

carries 16 rounds (24 more are stored in the hull). The turret, which is unmanned, is modular in nature, and may allow for different turrets, with different capabilities, to be interchanged if need be. The PL-01 was designed to field a 105mm or 120mm smoothbore cannon that will be capable of firing sabot, high explosive, or guided missile rounds. In addition to the main gun, the PL-01 will have a 7.62mm coaxial gun internally mounted in the turret right next to the main gun, in a similar configuration to the Abrams, as well as a detachable remotely controlled 7.62 or 50 calibre independent gun turret system.

For the tank's commander, gunner and driver, the latest multi-spectral sensor and targeting systems from BAE and its affiliates are also proposed to be integrated into the stealthy tank. This may include a distributed aperture system (DAS) like spherical situational awareness visual system, similar to what is found on the F-35. Similar systems, albeit of a less complex design than the one found on the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, are now being adapted for nautical and land-based applications. In the case of a tank, this could mean that the Tank Commander could potentially wear a helmet mounted sight that would allow him to "see clearly through" the walls of the tank, day or night.

This is done by taking a constellation of staring camera sensors placed on the outside of the vehicle, and then stitching their video images together using software and sheer processing power. This virtual visual sphere can then be projected into the tank commander's helmet mounted site. Think of a virtual tour of a room in a home, but real-time imagery. In effect, such a system would provide a tank commander a full 360' day or night view of the outside of his tank. Additionally, this system could also automatically detect targets, both in the air and on the ground, or even movement around the tank if it is set to do so.

The PL-01 will also sport active defences in the form of a trophy like system, where electronic actively scanned array (AESA) radars will be installed around the turret. Once a high-speed projectile is detected moving at a threatening vector, the system will fire one of its countermeasure rockets to intercept and detonate in front of the incoming projectile, thus killing it, or greatly decreasing its kinetic energy, before impacting the tank. Also, laser detection sensors will be distributed around the tank so that early warning of an imminent enemy attack could initiate automatic ejection of infrared and laser masking smoke mortars, which are mounted flush with turret to keep the tank's radar signature low.

The PL-01 basic tank will have level 5 ceramic-composite armour installed on its frontal hemisphere and level four armour on its flanks. Additional plug and play armour is said to also be an option for working in extremely high-threat environments, such as urban battlefields. Currently the PL-01 weighs in at about 33 tons, with the

*(Continued on page 8)*

additional armour it is projected to weigh close to 39 tons. This would put it in at about 3/5's the weight of an Abrams and about ten tons lighter than the fully loaded Russian T-90 main battle tank. What is also very exciting is that the PL-01, which is based on the Combat Vehicle 90 chassis, will be offered in multiple formats, including a command vehicle, an armoured repair vehicle and a mine clearance vehicle. This will allow a forward deployed armoured column to work as a single team, using common parts, to accomplish various tasks.

What is also smart, is that designers did not include an ambulance, an armoured personnel carrier and other disparate capabilities that would have compromised the effectiveness of its baseline design and most certainly would have added to the PL-01's final cost and overall complexity.

The PL-01 seems like a fantastic concept as it takes a modular approach to proven and effective tank design, while also incorporating new technologies and signature control capabilities that are very intriguing to say the least. Although, as with so many "concept" vehicles and weapon systems, it will be interesting to see if BAE and OBRUM can delivery on their many promises and successfully integrate all these attributes into a reliable and effective weapon system. With that said, the choices as to which technologies to integrate into the PL-01, and how to properly integrate them, seems to be incredibly well thought out and truly intriguing. A full working prototype will be fielded in 2016, with initial production beginning near the end of the decade according to OBRUM, so we will just have to wait and see if Poland and their British friends have truly revolutionized the tank as we know it.



### Tell Me About It!

"I've just been reading Volume one of the History of WW11 "To Bengahsi by Gavin Long. At the end amongst other seeming trivia is a long story about the System trying to change unit colour patches. it concludes with "Other complication were the result of differing interpretations by individual unit commanders. Cavalry units, for example, are unanimous that their colour patches were based on the Royal Tank Corps colours, which are interpreted as "Through mud and Blood to the Green Fields beyond" according to one cavalry commander accepting this principle entailed placing the Brown of the colour patch to the front, but according to another , who assumed an advance from the rear to the front . it entailed placing them in the opposite order"

Thankfully our current CA has got the message - leave long standing dress emblems alone!

Earlier in the Book some smart British general reports that "tanks save lives"

Lastly for those who new General Allan Murchison, ex Commander 2 Div he gets a mention twice including the story of his being awarded the MC.

John Haynes



### Fragments of War—VIETNAM

Members will recall that we had copies of the Tape of this video, which is narrated by Jack Thompson, for sale some years ago. We still have one or two of those tapes left at \$25 each.

Now we have had the Tape converted to DVD for sale at \$10 with postage free.

It is an excellent résumé of the War.

Please contact the office for your copy

# Message Board

TV change to digital.

There is a Household Assistance Package available to eligible people eg a high definition set-top box fitted free and other support

Ring 1800201013 for details

From: don gazzard [mailto:[dongazzard@bigpond.com](mailto:dongazzard@bigpond.com)]

Subject: RE: Armour Feb 14 Issue [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hello all (in particular John Haynes)

A little correction on the disbandment of A Sqn 1 Armoured Regiment in 1960.

A complete troop was allocated to each of B Sqn and C Sqn. I was shifted into the troop which went to B Sqn and became troop leader's gunner. Dave Lawrence was our leader. I have a photograph of the troop celebrating something in the Jacka Club. Our tanks were named "Bewitched [169085](#), Bothered [169108](#) and Bewildered?"

It is of interest in that Tommy Phillips and Neville Luff are in the picture. These two were the first and last of our corps to die in SVN.

Just for the record if not known, John Clarke had 1 Tp, Lloyd Streeting 2 Tp, D Lawrence 3 Tp and Tony Larnach-Jones had 4 Tp. "Daddy" Duncan was the sqn commander.

I also have a newspaper clipping showing Peter Simpson taken when Fraser was Min of Army.

I hope this adds a bit to our history

Regards to all

Don Gazzard

-----Original Message----- From:  
David Mercer  
[mailto:[david Mercer@adam.com.au](mailto:david Mercer@adam.com.au)]  
Sent: Thursday, 5 June 2014 07:54  
To: David Mercer  
Subject: Centurion MBT

Hi there

Noticed this on the side of the road in Coomandook on the way to Melbourne at Easter.



Judging by the A-frame attached in front it is not a goer at the moment.

Wish I had a bigger back yard sometimes.

John Masson

David Mercer  
Hon Secretary  
South Australian Mounted Rifles Association Inc

From: James Jeans [mailto:uglich@iprimus.com.au]  
Sent: Saturday, 15 February 2014 09:42  
To: Haynes, John COL  
Cc: John Neenan  
Subject: Jim Jeans and how he came to know something about tanks.....



Good Morning John,

further to our conversation yesterday at the RAC it all went like this:

On the 27th June 1949 I reported to a recruiting office in London where I was asked in which regiment I'd like to serve. I was shown a large chart depicting the cap badges of every regiment and corps under the sun, and in 1949, only four years after the war, there were a great number; the empire still existed, and there were garrisons all over the world.

My (widowed) mother had a boy-friend in the RASC, and he had advised me to go for the RASC, because you'll never have to walk, there will always be wheels, anyway I wanted something more exciting so I opted for the Royal Armoured Corps, in particular the Scots Greys, nowadays the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. I think I liked the cap badge.....a two-way facing eagle of some sort.

Eventually I was ordered to report to the 17/21 Lancers at Catterick, which was the training regiment for the whole RAC. This regiment had a real eye-catching cap-badge, skull and cross-bones, and it's motto was "or glory", these words appearing below the skull. I have the badge in front of me as I write.

The regiment was equipped with Comets, and we trained on these tanks until they were withdrawn and the first model Mk 1 Centurions arrived.....so we roared up and down the training roads on the Yorkshire Moors for a few months in late 1949, before going to Sandhurst in early 1950. The idea was that four/five months in the ranks would cut you down to size and prepare you for the rigours of Sandhurst, and of course the Lancer NCOs had a ball chasing young future officers, so did the other troopers. We POCs (Potential Officer Cadets) really had a pretty hard time, but it did us good, I'm sure.

On the training drives up on the moors ( and 1949 was a very harsh winter), there was a small cafe at the end of the road where we bought hot apple pies etc., then went back to the tank, opened the engine hatch and kept warm from the heat of the huge RR engine. We were issued with a marvellous piece of kit, the tank-suit; in those days heavy yellow canvas -type overalls with zip fasteners everywhere, which we could open up to form a blanket to keep warm at night.

Yes, we were accommodated in WW2 huts, in Waitwith Lines, established by Julius Caesar we thought, but because the stove had to be immaculate for inspection every morning, we never lit it. It just stood there, black-leaded and standing in a white-washed concrete base. It was bitterly cold, so the tank-suit was a life-saver.

Anyway, I could not afford to join regiments like the Greys or the 17/21 Lancers, and ended up in the RASC, and I have no regrets whatsoever. Later in life I got the odd chance to drive a Centurion, at Pucka, Bandiana and when I went out with Bruce Cameron in Vietnam.....just once-offs, so to speak.

So there it is John.....hope you can make some use of this potted history.

Kind regards.....let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Jim



Perhaps they should have held on to them: more than 400 abandoned rusting tanks in a secret Ukrainian depot unveiled as Russia's armoured units mass on its borders

This incredible photograph shows a huge tank graveyard in the Ukraine - home to hundreds of the abandoned vehicles which the country may desperately need if tensions with Russia continue to escalate.

Filled with rows upon rows of slowly rusting relics, the once deadly war machines now lie dormant in a secret depot in the city of Kharkiv in the Slobozhanshchyna region of eastern Ukraine - just 20 miles from the border with Russia.

Despite it being heavily guarded, photographer Pavel Itkin, 18, was able to sneak into the plant and spent several hours taking photographs. By [JOHN HALL](#), 3 March 2014 Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2572149/>

### **1 Tp A Sqn 4/19 PWLH Departed for Vietnam. (28 May 1965)**

Number One Troop of A Squadron of the Fourth Nineteenth Prince of Wales's Light Horse (1 Tp A Sqn 4/19 PWLH) became the first Australian Armoured unit to see active service since WW2.

**“Troop War Diary: .28 May1965, 0130 hrs Departed Sydney for Vietnam. Escort HMAS Duchess” (Ref No MMM p5)**

The troop sailed to Vietnam aboard HMAS Sydney and arrived in Vung Tau on 8 June 1965. The troop included eight M113 and two FFR Landrovers. The troop was formed into an APC troop as part of the 1st Australian Logistic Support Company, supporting 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment (1 RAR). In the absence of any official title, other than "RAAC detachment", they retained their Regular designation.

**Comment: Peter Ferguson and LT Col Bruce Cameron MC (Retd) May 2010:**

*"1 Tp A Sqn 4/19 PWLH were officially redesignated 1 APC Tp (1 APC Sqn) on 14 Sep 65. The Commander, 173 Airborne Brigade so liked the 4/19 PWLH title, however, that he insisted it be retained while the APCs were under his command. As a result, the designation 1 APC Tp was only used in Vietnam for the period 1--30 Apr 66; after which, it became 1 Troop, 1 APC Sqn."*

## OAM for Bill Cross our Vice President

We congratulate Bill Cross on his being awarded an OAM in the Queen's Birthday List. Bill's dedication to things Armour during the best part of his life certainly deserved such an award.

## Our Treasurer Mike Lewins stands down

On 9 July at the Victoria Barracks officers' Mess your committee and their ladies farewelled Mike Lewins with his bride Liz. Mike has done a great job in the important position of Treasurer having come to the Association's rescue when our WW1 stalwart Donald McMillan stood down. We are lucky to have Brian Walters agree to takeover from Mike.

## 1/15 RNSWL Regimental Birthday (3 Mar 1885)— Brief Regimental History.

The Regiment dates from the inauguration of the Sydney Light Horse and other cavalry troops in New South Wales in 1885. In those pre federation days, the raising of such units sprang from a public-spirited wish to give voluntary service, and was not sponsored or directed by the government of the day. In 1899, a squadron of the Regiment, which had been training in England, became the first colonial troops to arrive in South Africa for active service against the Boers in the South African War. In the 1914-1918 war, the Regiment being militia, did not serve abroad however, most of its pre-war members joined the AIF.



Subsequently the Lancers were designated as successors to the 1st Light Horse Regiment of the AIF. It had fought at Gallipoli and later in Sinai and Palestine as part of the Desert Mounted Corps. In 1956, the "1st" was linked with the "15th" (15th Northern River Lancers) making the Regiment also the successor to the 15th Light Horse Regiment AIF which had been formed in Palestine in 1918 from personnel of the Camel Corps.

The Lancers were granted the title "Royal" in 1935. It was horsed until 1936, when it was motorised as a mechanised machine gun regiment. In 1942, the unit was incorporated into the AIF as an armoured regiment. Equipped with Matilda Infantry Support Tanks in the New Guinea jungle. Later in the seaborne assault the 7th Division on Balikpapan in Borneo, the Regiment made the heaviest Australian Tank attack of the war. After the war the Regiment was equipped first with Centurion tanks until 1971, when it was converted to a Reconnaissance Regiment, and equipped with the M113 family of track light armoured fighting vehicles.

In the last decade members of the Regiment have served with full time units in Bougainville, Rifle Company Butterworth (Malaya) and in East Timor. The Regiment, with 21 battle honours, is one of the most highly decorated unit in the Australian Army.

[http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/Sites/1\\_15RNSWL/comweb.asp?page=59765&Title=Unit%20History](http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/Sites/1_15RNSWL/comweb.asp?page=59765&Title=Unit%20History)



## 6 Div Cav Regt Secured the Airfield North of Giarabub, North Africa (21 Mar 1941)

Whilst A Sqn were advancing from Bardia to Benghazi, the rest of the regiment had been occupied in containing Italian forces at Giarabub.

“Here Lieut-Colonel Fergusson could only find about 200 men for his main task while the Italians numbered 2000 with artillery and strong defences. The regiment, however, maintained its offensive spirit. In one typical cavalry operation, in order to defeat an attempt to reinforce the garrison, Colonel Fergusson moved his maximum strength into the desert on a wide front; the enemy was successfully located and delayed until he could be dealt with by air attack.

Although 6<sup>th</sup> Australian Cavalry was constantly probing and patrolling, it needed a larger force to gain material advantage. This was finally provided by 2/9<sup>th</sup> Bn of the 18<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade which captured Giarabub from the south on 21 March. The Cavalry had helped by reconnoitring a track for the main thrust through a wide belt of marshy ground. In the final attack, they pressed the enemy from the north, drove in a number of his defensive posts and secured the landing ground.” (Ref O p36)

### 6th Div Cav Cdo Regimental History:

“The plan for the final attack of 21 March was a simple one. Artillery would pound the southern defences for ten minutes, following which three infantry companies, supported by mortars and Vickers guns from Ship Hill, a feature close the fort, could advance and assault. With these captured, two companies could move into the town. The cavalry, accompanied by O’Grady’s guns, could destroy the defences to the north and the post at the entrance to Pipsqueak Valley. It would then advance to a line drawn through the aerodrome. Being mobile, it would prevent the escape of the garrison.

The first hill the infantry would take after it crossed the knoll which it had vacated the previous morning was a steep rocky outcrop about 100 feet high: a fortress of some 35 acres in extent which was heavily defended and into which communication trenches had been cut. In the piercing pre-dawn wind and the raging sand, the infantry advanced to within 50 yards of the barbed wire which surrounded it. At 5.15 a.m. the Royal Horse Artillery guns began to bellow.

The first shells landed amongst the right flank company. The company commander and 11 others were killed and 20 men wounded. The rest clawed into the sand to escape the shrapnel from the British guns which blasted them. The guns were firing into the headwind of the storm, having registered on the target the previous day with the wind behind them. The corrections made had been inaccurate.

When the barrage lifted to the second hill the infantry advanced and, because their rifles were clogged, grenaded the Italians from the emplacements. There was only slight resistance. Although having possession of the high ground and protected by trenches and parapets they had little fight in them. The second hill was more difficult to take. Here the defenders were dug in on the northern side and to reach them the infantry had to move through accurate fire from the fort and the plantation area. The attack was made with bayonets and a fresh supply of grenades against posts which resisted more stubbornly than the previous ones. Grenades flew through the air from both sides, and although some Australians were killed by Italian grenades, it was the defenders who suffered heavily. As resistance slackened and weapons were cleaned, the assaulting infantry was able to increase the intensity of decimation. It had never heard the interestingly curious aphorism Fergusson had pronounced to his troops at Helwan that “the best way to destroy an enemy’s morale is to kill him”, but it obviously believed in its efficacy. Soon after 9 a.m. 100 Italians in the redoubt surrendered. About the same number had been killed.

During this action the cavalry had been equally successful in its tasks. Reveille was called at midnight and at 1.30 a.m. the two squadrons moved to their positions. At 6.15 a.m., with the wire fence as the axis of advance, they started forward to the first objective which would be an eastward line drawn through Mount Egbert. The second and final objective would be the aerodrome. Under overhead shells which sounded like rushing express trains the cavalry advanced down Pipsqueak Valley with B Squadron on the east of the wire and C Squadron on the west. Owing to the roughness of the ground near the escarpment, most of the movement was on foot with the Vickers



6th Aust. Division

*(Continued on page 14)*

(Continued from page 13)

guns held in reserve. At 7 a.m. Cory's troop in the B Squadron area moved on Egbert, woke under a machine-gun nest and cut the signal wire which ran to the Italian artillery. The men climbed to a higher ledge where "Haggis" Mackenzie, a non-smoker, sniffed acrid Italian cigarettes. An Italian poked an inquiring head from the stones and Mackenzie with a hurried rifle shot knocked his hat off. Five of the enemy came out and surrendered, but a shower of grenades was thrown down, slightly wounding Cory and Trooper D.D. Inglis. The three throwers also were taken prisoner.

In the meantime C Squadron had reached the edge of the escarpment under shell fire. Covered by guns from Lieutenant Reymond's machine gun troop it had moved forward and Lieutenant Laphorn's troop on the left flank had taken the surrender of six prisoners who manned three heavy machine-guns. With the height of Mount Egbert, which had been used for enemy artillery observation, now occupied, B Squadron's right flank was in a position to give support to Laphorne's troop. While the 25-pounders shelled the enemy strong post at the mouth of the re-entrant, the troop with support from B Squadron's right and C Squadron's centre advanced on the post which quickly surrendered. In it were two officers and 30 men who had survived the shelling. Three were dead. The way to the aerodrome, 600 yards away, was open and the cavalry occupied it at 10.15 a.m. after five Libyans who manned a machine-gun there had raised their hands.



While the cavalry was engaged in these tasks a German plane had appeared and bombed B Squadron and regimental headquarters. Miell, his batman and a few others fired at it with rifles, Mielle loosing off ten rapid rounds and carefully remembering to take a 12 degree lead. The plane had quickly swung to the west and disappeared into the sand clouds of the storm.

In the southern sector the infantry had advanced towards the fort, meeting some opposition and stopping to disarm a minefield which the Italian Signals officer had previously pinpointed. By 11 a.m. 500 prisoners had been taken and at 12.30 pm. The Italian flag thrashed in the wind as it was hauled down. *Ridotta Jaghub* had fallen. Some 250 enemy dead lay along the way, their bodies rapidly being covered by drifts of hurrying sand. Seventeen Australians had been killed and 77 wounded, although British guns had accounted for a heavy percentage of these." (Ref No p 105-108)

**Note: 2 Cav Regt are the custodians of the Battle Honours of 2/6 Cavalry (Commando) Regiment**

**6 Aust Div Cav casualties from Dec 4-Mar 41 in Giarabub Campaign were 2 KIA & 6 WIA**

**RAAC Related Units Involved Included:** B Sqn & C Sqn 6 Aust Div Cav Regt

**Other Significant Units Involved Included:**

2/9<sup>th</sup> Bn (Queensland)

2/12<sup>th</sup> Bn Machine Gunners

2/10<sup>th</sup> Mortar men

Tp 8 Fd Regt (O'Grady)

Bty Royal Horse Artillery

Engineers

**Reference:**

RAAC Homepage Defence Intranet

<http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/RAAC/comweb.asp?page=143239&Title=Corps%20History>

## Exercise Paratus Benchmark, California, March 2014.



From 01-19 March 2014 six members of 1st Armoured Regiment deployed to 1st Tank Battalion at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Centre in 29 Palms California to participate in Exercise Paratus Benchmark. The purpose of the activity was to benchmark the current Australian M1A1 Abrams Tank capability against that of the United States Marine Corps, specifically focusing on technical gunnery and tactical skills. The activity also reaffirmed the important beneficial relationship between the Australian Army and the USMC, as well as enhancing mutual training on a like platform, and developing knowledge, skills and training methods in order to establish best practice. The ability to

benchmark the tank capability against a similar force was particularly beneficial, considering 1st Armoured has no other Australian Army tank regiments to measure itself against.

The tank crew consisted of Sergeant Matt Watt (B Sqn) as commander, Trooper Clinton Chettle (HQ Sqn) as gunner, Trooper Dylan Howorka (HQ Sqn) as loader, Trooper Bart Bronicki (HQ Sqn) as driver and Trooper Christopher O'Shannessy (B Sqn) as reserve. The crew spent the first week of the activity preparing their tank for the field, practicing their crew skills and conducting simulated engagements in the AGTS simulation system.

Following this, the contingent deployed to the field where they married up with Alpha Company, 1st Tank Battalion to conduct the live fire component of the activity. Each day the crew conducted night and day engagements, progressing through dry fire, machine gun and main gun serials, finally combining it all together for a final scored qualification shoot. The crew scored a total of 914 out of 1000 points, earning them the honour of a distinguished qualification, and a top four score out of the fifteen tanks that shot. While in the field, members of the contingent were able to socialise with the Alpha Company Marines, and also had the opportunity to observe other training events, such as a tank heavy combat team live fire breach.

Overall, Exercise Paratus Benchmark was a very enjoyable and eye-opening activity for those in the contingent as well as their USMC counterparts. It allowed the Australian Army tank capability to benchmark itself against a like organisation, and strengthen the already strong relationship between 1st Armoured Regiment and 1st Tank Battalion, as will the continuing iterations of the exercise over the coming years. *(Extract from RAAC NT Newsletter April 14 2014)*



Every good Armoured Corps Officer had his grounding as a mounted trooper this young trooper was no exception.

Who can guess the name of this future RAAC Officer.



Photo: George Baczo

Centenary of Boer War Parade at Canberra Showground 1999

Formed as the Imperial Bushmen's Brigade with a regiment of horse on parade, lead by LTCOL Mike Annetts

**Lest we Forget**  
**We regret to advise the passing of the following members**

Mr PJ Byrnes  
 Mr F Ricketts (2/7 AR)  
 Mr AC Diggerson (2/4 AR)

Mr L Barnes (2/6 AR)  
 Mr ST Stuart 2/4 AR)

**NATIONAL BOER WAR MEMORIAL  
 PROGRESS**



The first horseman is about to be cast in bronze. As you can see from this clay model is 150% life size realism. The final bronze will be completed by late August. Work has begun on the second one.



We are lucky to have the new Chief of Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin AC honour us by becoming our national Patron. The new Governor General while continuing to assist us with announcements of support for our commemorative activities will not become our Patron in Chief.

**2013-2014 NBWM Assoc - Donors with Unknown Addresses.**

If anyone knows or you are one of the people below please contact the Treasurer on 02 8335 5309. We need your addresses so that a receipt can be sent out.

1. Mrs Oriana Charleston	25/9/13	2. CP Breust	29/11/13
3. JW Merrett	3/12/13	4. JS Calvert	16/12/13 & 23/1/14
5. Douglas Ermington	7/2/14	6. Bill McKeich	7/2/14
7. Robert Scott	24/3/14	8. Nutak Pty Ltd	16/4/14
9. John Hennessy	13/5/14	Gilbert Thomas	27/6/14
1. PM Firth	27/6/14	Monica Agnes	27/6/14

Ian Guild, Treasurer, 30/6/14

## Vale

From: [arthleen@hotmail.com](mailto:arthleen@hotmail.com) On Behalf Of Arthur Harvey

Sent: Friday, 14 March 2014 14:46

To: VBS RAACANSW

Subject: Vale

Hi....Re Lost Souls...Re Alf Diggerson... (Darkie).. He passed away last year.....ex 2/4th Armd . Reg.....a good mate of mine....around the same age as me....I will be 90 yrs old on 20th June..

Hoping this is correctly done ....By a getting long in the tooth ...ex trooper..  
Arthur L Harvey ...Bye.

## Vale

From: grantleyk923@gmail.com [mailto:grantleyk923@gmail.com]

To: Faye Murphy

Subject: VALE MAJOR PETER J. MURPHY MID: LATE 3 CAVALRY REGIMENT

It is with deep sympathy and sadness that I of Peter's passing last November 7.

In Vietnam, in 70-71, we served together in 2 Troop A/B Sqn 3 Cav Regt -mainly at the Horseshoe. I was his Tp Sgt - after Blue O'Reilly - as I remember. Our Squadron Comd was, at that time MAJ [later LTGEN] John Coates.

Peter was inclined to irreverence clearly demonstrated during an all stations radio call around 19:00hr each night regardless of where the troops were in the Province [or out of it], which Big John called *happy hour*. Peter, often, was cheeky, in the extreme during these radio conversations which the OC always publicly tolerated without umbrage. I suspect that it was due to the fact that Peter was a very good tactical Commander that the Man [as with Ron Gray (then) CO 7RAR] didn't turn a hair to his thinly veiled insolence. Sort of like when your top salesman tells you to "Go fly a kite;" while he's turning in the figures, a Circumspect manager is inclined to get one's kite out.



This is the ambush position 21p(-) on beach, below R23. Picture after Claymores were blown refers. Peter wanted to go for a foot recce before dusk. I went with him and one other. Carried a 1911 Springfield bolt action. We saw footprints on way back in the sand – not ours – started to worry me a bit.

John Coates was awarded an MBE (among other exemplary acts of Dedication to Duty) for an operation which might loosely be entitled the relief of Dat Do. At a stage of the operation an Armoured Column of Tanks and Pers Carriers was despatched to the outskirts of a town called Dat Do in Eastern Phuoc Tuy Province and 2 Troop under Command of Peter Murphy joined in the column as it passed the Horse Shoe Fire Support Base en route for the objective. We were scrambled in short time and were hard pressed to keep up with the Battle Tanks on a rough road. But we [the column] helped to accomplish the mission as directed by Coates, during the next couple of days without sleep. When we returned to the Horse Shoe, Peter rewarded me with orders [from Battalion HQ] to take out a mounted ambush to a position around the Horse Shoe [Stand 1].

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued from page 17)

And when I queried that with "As troop Sgt I don't normally do ambushes;" mainly because I checked on the activities of those that did. Peter said "You are the only one I can trust to stay awake." And when we arrived in position for that I realised that I was the only one I could trust to stay awake.

For 2 hours I stood watch lacking sleep. When my knees buckled - as they do when I badly need sleep, I used to hit the side of the turret and wake myself up again [Yes Sir, it was painful and thanks for asking].

After about 2 hours I woke up 2 other worthies from my little band to do sentry with the admonition - "If you go to sleep, don't worry about the Cong - I will shoot you!! And they thought I was joking.



Peter could pick his man, always. When any driver in the troop "screwed up" they would find themselves in my driver's seat.

We put in an Ambush on the Beach at Binh Chao and Troop HQ, including 20A [pic below] were with half of the troop and a 98A [fitters Track]. Peter and I were going around before sunset and talking to the Crew

Commanders [Fields of Fire etc] and met, in the middle finally. Peter said, "Those spanners [RAEME Fitters] are so nervous, I reckon they will blow their Claymore's [Mines]." I said "Ahhh they should be all right, they're a bit nervous but they've got some bushtime up." So we climbed on our tracks - me sitting on a

folding stool on the engine grille watching the sun go down - then kaboom!!! My left ear out of action for a while.

Fond Regards

*In the Arms of our blessed Lord, comfort of Warriors, in his name.*

Major Grantley Kemble

### Got a Story to Share?

Do you have a story to share with your fellow troopers? We are always on the look out for new writers and new material for our newsletter.

At the moment we are looking for:

- Personal experiences with your life in an armoured corps unit.
- Stories and photos from our recent overseas operations in Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan
- Technical articles on vehicles and equipment used .

Everyone who has served in the Army has at least one story that would be of interest to RAACA Members, so get in touch with us and get it into print for posterity. We can provide help and advice if you are not confident of your writing ability. Email [raacansw@defence.gov.au](mailto:raacansw@defence.gov.au) or ring on 02 8335 5209



## Cambrai Dinner 2014



Last year again saw us meeting up for dinner at a smaller venue at the Royal Automobile Club (RACA) in Macquarie street. The function was a great success and those present were keen to ensure that we did not miss out on celebrating Cambrai Day in 2014.

We have secured the Imperial Service room at the RACA for 22 November 2014. Last year we had 34 present and this year we have plenty of room for more.

Please put the date in your calendar and make your booking early to assist with the next steps in the dinner planning process. November seems a way off but we need to get the message around to ensure that as many members as possible attend this important date in the calendar for the Black Hat community.

Members are cordially invited to attend a formal dinner  
To celebrate Cambrai Day at the Royal Automobile Club Of Australia  
Macquarie Street, Sydney  
On Saturday 22 November 2014, 1830 for 1900 hrs

Guest Speaker BRIG Mark Brewer, Director General Training, Headquarters Forces Command

Dress Black Tie or Lounge Suit with miniatures

### Dinner Information:

Cost: \$95.00 per head  
Payment: Cheque made to RAACA and sent to RAACA, Building 96, Victoria Barracks  
OR EFT transfer to Def Credit BSB 803205 A/c 20539747 indicating Dinner payment.

**Please note that payment MUST be made by NLT 24 October 2014 as no monies will be handled at the dinner.**

Parking: Some limited parking is available in the RACA car park after making arrangements with the Club.  
Transport: Trains to Circular Quay will take you within 100m of the Club  
Taxis: Generally available outside the club after the dinner.



### Training Territory Style:

This photo was taken outside Robertson Barracks in July 2014 by Josh Alderson from "The NT News"



From: Bazz & Chriss [mailto:[bazz\\_chris@one.net.au](mailto:bazz_chris@one.net.au)]  
Subject: Anzac Day 2014

Anzac Day 2014 on the Darling River.  
Karoola Station (Far Western NSW)  
Bazza Hodges 1st Armoured Regiment A & B Squadron 69-70

## Squadron Commanders Course

Puckapunyal 1979



BACK ROW MAJ Baker CAPT White MAJ Williams CAPT Wright CAPT Cole  
FRONT ROW CAPT Kennelly CAPT Long CAPT Moore CAPT Thorpe

## New South Wales Contingent - Boer War



**We are extremely grateful for the following individuals and associations for their donations to the National Boer War Memorial project between March 2014 to June 2014**

J. Haynes	David Sheekey	Bill Woolmore	John & Carmen Shaw
Charlie Barnett	Roger Tingley	Mr A Munro	Mr W. Cleland
Culcairn RSL Sub Br	John Reddington	Eileen Sharp	Guyra RSL Sub Br
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P. Kemp	Gilbert Thomas	John Binnie	PM Firth
Trevor Jones			



B Sqn  
4 Cav

From: don gazzard  
[mailto:dongazzard@bigpond.com]

Subject: Early Wacol days

Hello John

This is to lodge some facts about the happenings at Wacol during 1965 and 1966.

About the middle of 1965 the squadron was reorganised from antitank to cavalry. TFH Walker was OC, having taken over from GB Sims, Paddy O'Brien was 2i/c. Geof Howard was tp ldr 2 Tp and I had 1 Tp with Bill Matthews as my sgt. For a time my troop consisted of Sgt Bill Matthews, Cpl Shorty Miller and myself; we had three gun cars, one Landrover ffw C42/b47 and one Landrover GS with trailer to carry extra ammo. There



B Sqn Vehicle compound, Wacol circa 1966  
Photo G. Baczocha

was an Admin tp with 5 x Leyland 2 1/2 tonners plus SHQ of a MK 1 Ferret and a LR. We had difficulty manning a ceremonial guard at Vic Barracks at that time, that needed 54 incl comd. During a firing exercise at Wide Bay Range we had to go looking for some 106mm HEAT ricochets; could not find any shells but we did find a flying helmet belonging to Holgar von Munchausen who was flying Sioux helicopters by that time. He was very pleased to get it back. So in the second half of 65 four Mk2 Ferrets duly arrived, I think they were set up for C42/B47 radios. Then two new M113A1s arrived still with their shipping frames and price tags, \$23 k something. The vehicle numbers were 134163 and 134173. 6 RAR did their pre SVN workup at Shoalwater bay supported by the squadron with the limited resources available to us. We were the first to use the training area, just after Easter 1966 I think. We borrowed two APC from Sydney, with crews, to make up a so-called cavalry troop. So under the watch of TFH Walker we entrained to Rockhampton on a special train with our vehicles on flat cars and us in a solitary passenger car. The trip took 26 hours with Terry and myself playing 500 against several teams of soldiers. During the exercise we acted as a cavalry troop ha ha. Our M113s had no radio at all and the two from Sydney had lashup sets of C13 and B47. PRC10 sets were used for our two vehicles but were very restricted in range in the wooded areas of the Shoalwater Bay. During the exercise the battalion marched across the training area from West to East into an area alleged secured by us. In the afternoon I took my vehicle to meet the battalion HQ. I then took the packs off the lead company and headed to their assembly area. There we dropped the packs and took a dozen cans of water and headed back West. The soldiers emptied the water very quickly and we headed off with another load of packs. We repeated this until the battalion had concentrated. During the time there I have vivid memories of driving through the bivouac area and flicking a fallen branch which flew through Col Townsend's hutch, fortunately he had just left it. The exercise ended up the peninsular with a final assault on an 'enemy' camp in which our only role was to dismount our 50 cal MGs for flanking fire, never again! None of us had any idea of the range of these guns in scrub so it was just as well we had no live ammo. Anyway we all prepared to move back to the base camp at Raspberry Junction. The Bn 2ic headed off at dawn with six Landrovers; we were last in the order of march. So as we ambled along off the track, so as to not damage it for the wheels we suddenly got a call to go to the front of the column. On arrival we found a king tide had cut the track and the BN 2 ic was standing on his seat with water lapping the top of his boots. All the battalion's Landrover had tyre chains but no tow ropes. Working on two tyre chains will equal one tow rope we daisy-chained three LR together and eventually hauled all the unit's LR through the low point and out of the area. On our way back we (the cav tp and TFH) stopped at Yepoon to clean the vehicles on the beach. The driver of 134173 took it in too far and swamped the engine. It was hauled out using the nylon rope and 134163. The vehicle was backloaded to Brisbane again by train. Hence the name of 134173 became BISMARCK. I was surprised to see the bilge pumps still going full bore when the vehicle was back on the beach. It was a sad end to the exercise and repairs took months. When we returned to Wacol I used to take our one remaining carrier to Ennogerra to familiarise 6 RAR with the vehicle. I would spend the whole

day there and thoroughly enjoyed working with the battalion. Near the end of 1966 two Saladins arrived. What a waste of time and effort they were. There was only a very basic driver's tool kit with about six spanners and a screwdriver and nothing else. I think I was the only qualified driver in the unit at that time. I had done the Ferret/Saladin and Saracen course during NS under Alec Heathwood at the start of 1959. In November 1966 I was posted to 3/9 SAMR and Adrian Roberts went to 10 LH. We had talked on the phone as originally Adrian was to go the 3/9<sup>th</sup> and I was to go to 10 LH. We agreed to the swap and off we went.



Speaking of Saladins! Trooper N. Baker Wacol 1966  
Photo G. Baczocha

soldiers and ordered many things he thought would be nice for the lads such as the nylon rain coats which were on restricted issue. It did take six G982Es to get them with four being rejected. As a further comment on the supply system the CES for I

The SQMS at Wacol was Kev Kludas and his sgt was Bernie Priest. It was great to have an SQMS who looked after the

think Saladins had D10 cable as an expense item so Kev always indented for cable using that CES; all other had D10 cable as NX. Just before I left an ACV arrived, I cannot remember its number but it had been fitted out at ADE with C11/R210, C13 and B47. It came with its own CES listing

We shared accommodation with 4 Fd Regt and ate in their messes. My next door neighbour was Peter Tedder who as BC had that soldier (Gunner O'Neil) to deal with. I felt very sorry for Ann Tedder as the press camped outside her MQ for over a week.

I hope that the above is of interest.  
Regards

PS: From John Haynes Kevin Kludas visited the office at Victoria Barracks recently and we had a great yarn about the 1 Armoured Brigade days.

From: David Pakes [mailto:[david.pakes@gmail.com](mailto:david.pakes@gmail.com)]  
Subject: ANZAC DAY MARCH SYDNEY

Hi John and Mike,

Please see attachments of (edited) photos that were taken off our TV by my wife Jenny during last year's march. Could I ask that these be forwarded on to anyone interested.

Cheers



From: Ron Baikie [mailto:[baikieron@yahoo.com](mailto:baikieron@yahoo.com)]  
Subject: Anzac Day in AC

Another great Anzac Day in Angeles City. I particularly want to thank my son David for coming again – he's the good looking young bloke with all the gongs.



(L to R): Peter Whiteman (2 Cav), Ron Baikie (1AR), Paul Baker (1AR), Lee Townsend (PWLH), Doug Errington (3 Cav), Peter Studwick MM (3 Cav)



Aust, NZ, Philippines, US flag raising at Clark Cemetery

# Lost Souls

**If anyone knows the where-abouts of the following members would they please contact the RAACA Office**

Members Name	Last Address
Mr Anthony, Brown	86 Griffith Ave, TAMWORTH, NSW, 2340
Mr Noel, Whittle	56 Condong St, MURWILLUMBAH, NSW, 2484
Mr Michael Hayes	21 Speet Place ORANGE NSW 2800
Mr Gardiner	32 Jenkins St DUNDAS NSW 2117
Mrs Cabban	PO Box 127 KOOTINGAL NSW 2352
Mr Kett	13 Kingfisher Loop WILLETTON WA 6155
Mrs Bell	Villa 243 Brentwood Village Scaysbrook Drive KINCUMBER NSW 2251
LTCOL Neels Halgryn	National Sec South African Armour Association ZA
Cpl Kevin Sparke	164 Royal Pde ALDERLEY QLD 4051
Mr Lewis	2/69 Tarrants Ave EASTWOOD NSW 2122
Mr Samuel Roughley	39 Porters Rd KENTHURST NSW 2156
The Editor, BCOF (Vic)	PO Box 29, Forest Hill VIC 3131
Mr RW Vippond	1/35 Kurrajong Cres, Taree NSW 2430
Mr JP Herps	PO Box 12, New Farm QLD 4005
Mr D McRoberts	PO Box 4021, Croydon Hills VIC 3136
Mr RP Bennett	11/14 Wilpark Cres Currumbin QLD 4223
S/Sgt RC Pullinger	54 Miri Cres, Holsworthy NSW 2251
Mr B Golding	PO Box 6061, Kincumber NSW 2251
Mr R Martlew	PO Box 265 Millicent SA 5240

## Change of Address

To change your mailing address, please fill in the new address below and return **the complete page** to: RAACA (NSW Branch) Membership Officer, Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Paddington NSW 2021

Name: .....

Address: .....Post Code:.....

Mobile No:.....

Phone No.:.....

Email:.....

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