



ESTABLISHED 1946

October 2014
Issue No. 472

Journal of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association NSW Inc
Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Paddington NSW, 2021 . Website: www.raacansw.org.au
Email: 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 Baczocho

SPONSORING THE NATIONAL BOER WAR MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION INC.

1899



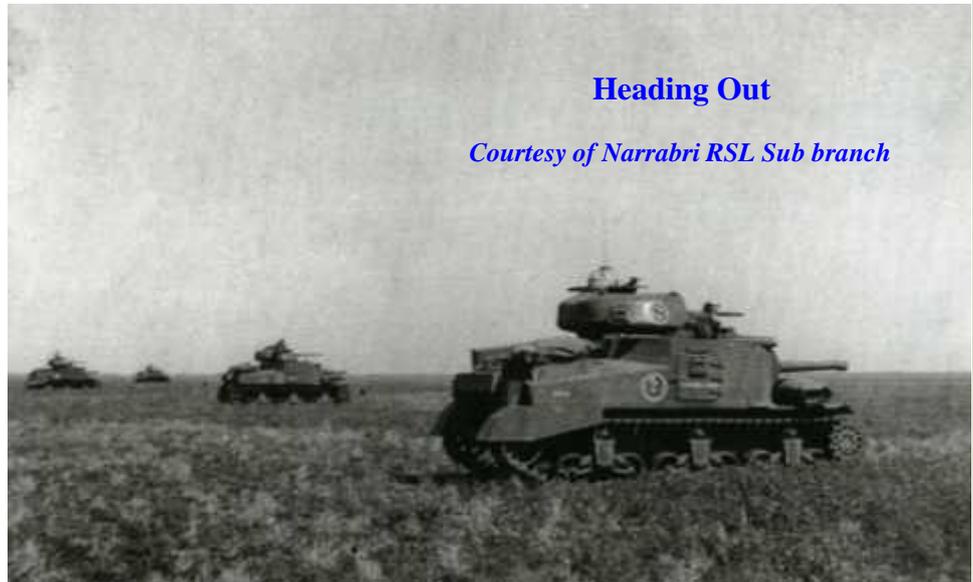
1902

email: george.baczocho@defence.gov.au . Tel: (02) 8335 5209 . fax: 8335 5357 .
www.bwm.org.au . ABN 29 293 433 202

The "Battle" for Bald Hill Part II

Cate Clarke

Whilst known as the 'Battle for Bald Hill' or the 'Battle for Narrabri', the three days of 1 Australian Armoured Division (1 Aust Armd Div) manoeuvres focusing on the defence of the north west of NSW, occurred from Gunnedah in the south very nearly to the Queensland border. The 2 Australian Armoured Brigade and the 2/11 Australian



Heading Out

Courtesy of Narrabri RSL Sub branch

Armoured Car Regiment (as well as the 1 Australian Armoured Brigade described in Part 1 in the previous edition of *Armour*) were a key part of that action, defending the region from (imaginary) Japanese paratroopers. As part of this exercise the 2/11 Australian Armoured Car Regiment (2/11 Aust Armd Car Regt) was required to move to recce an area from Walgett to Collarenebri on the 26th of August where *landing of hostile paratroops ... had been reported*. However, in between that day and the 29th of August 1942 something happened that was crucial to the exercise being played out.

The 2/11 Australian Armoured Car Regiment Deserts

Working directly to the headquarters of the 1 Aust Armd Div the 2/11 Aust Armd Car Regt HQ were told that they were to desert to the (imaginary) Japanese side. At the time of their desertion on the 29th of August 1942, the unit had been acting as

Inside this Issue

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| The Battle for Bald Hill Pt.2 | 1 |
| Technical Notes & News | 5 |
| Message Board | 9 |
| 9th Div, Syria July 1941 | 14 |
| Boer War Memorial | 16 |

(Continued on page 3)

Coming Events



| | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 22 November 2014 | Cambrai Dinner | RACA, Macquarie Street |
| 4 December 2014 | RAACA Committee Meeting | Victoria Barracks, 1130 hrs |

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.

Notes From the President



FUNERALS

Guardian Funerals have now made the offer for discounted funerals. A brochure with the details is distributed with this Armour. Please note the offer expires in Dec 2015. Should members wish prepay for a funeral a discount of some \$700 is available if RSL membership is held.

THE RAAC CORPORATION

As this Armour goes to press the second Congress of the RAAC Corporation is being held in Albury. We are being represented by our Vice President Bob Ferrari.

Although we had hoped the meeting would have been held at the Armoured School to which a number of representatives from us could have attended the Corporation staff have restricted attendance at Albury

ATOMIC VETERANS

We must continue to try to find our RAAC atomic veterans and their widows. The change in the cover to the Veterans' Entitlement Act a couple of years ago means that they could all be entitled to pensions and few may be aware of the changes to the legislation. Further, the widows would be less likely to realise that they could be entitled to the War Widow's Pension. That's now \$868 per fortnight tax free plus a Gold Card. In this Armour our list of those identified so far is shown. If you know of any other names and any whereabouts, please contact the Office.


John Haynes, President

(Continued from page 1)

reconnaissance for the Division. When it is considered that the disposition of the 2/11 Aust Armd Car Regt was from Walgett to Warialda, a distance of around 300kms, it is remarkable how quickly they then moved to play their part as the enemy around and about the region.

The Walgett area of North West NSW was within 'shooting' distance of the 2 Australian Armoured Brigade's harbour area at Wee Waa. And it was some of their outlying units who were first caught on the hop by this action with the newly 'turned' 2/11 Aust Armd Car Regt capturing three light Rover armoured cars, one scout car and two other vehicles in the morning of the 30th August.

Being trained in reconnaissance, and the usage of vehicles associated with the same, meant that the new enemy had done their homework well in outwitting the recce elements of both the 1 and 2 Australian Armoured Brigade (1 and 2 Aust Armd Bde). The newly captured machinery would have been prizes with more machinery equalling more miles covered and more details of the opposition being discovered and disseminated to the 2/11 Aust Armd Car Regt's allies.

Over the next forty eight hours the 2/11 Aust Armd Car Regt worked hard carrying out recce toward Bellata and Gurley. Their reach extended across the Newell Highway to Terry Hie Hie in the East and as far south as Gunnedah and Boggabri. The Regiment quickly established the dispositions of the 1 Aust Armd Bde after successfully engaging their patrols and generally creating a climate of uncertainty in all ranks and units as they were able to travel vast distances very quickly. There were glimmers of hope though for the 1 Aust Armd Bde.

Limited Victories

Responding to the 2/11 Aust Armd Car Regt's succession of wins the 1 Armd Bde parties began to exacerbate their prowling along long lines of defence. Squadrons from the 2/6 and 2/7 Australian Armoured Regiments patrolled a 50 km area from Mt Waa in the east to Millie in the west keen to scent out and destroy the enemy.

Special patrols consisting of one troop from the 1 Australian Armoured Brigade Reconnaissance Squadron, a field battery and three sections from motor regiments, were sent out north of this line in an attempt to destroy the enemy HQ, their communication lines and/or to capture their vehicles. This led to an important action by the 1 Aust Armd Bde as *enemy agents [were] located in a hotel at Gurley and another force, believed enemy were located in scrub approx 11 miles north of Gurley*. The squadron made short work of the rather surprised (and inebriated) troopers.

A complement of the 1 Aust Armd Bde also surprised one of the Troops from the 2/11 Aust Armd Car Regt. Ron Stafford of A Sqn 4 Tp explains: *we were not far from the Barwon River at Pocketaroo and were bedded down for the night and we had sentries posted when . We were surrounded by troops from one of the other regiments and they took us prisoner. So we spent two days in an imaginary prisoner of war camp on the Barwon River.*

Heading Home against a Crimson Sky

Courtesy Narrabri RSL Sub branch



(Continued on page 4)

However, the anticipated attacks at the flank of the Division – through their ordnance and service corps troops, didn't eventuate. Although some of the enemy did reach Gunnedah and successfully disrupted communication lines prior to the cessation of hostilities at 3pm on Wednesday the 2nd September.

The Amazing Armoured Cars

From a concentration base in the Walgett/Collarenebri area the 2/11 Armd Car Regt in the course of the exercise, covered approximately 650kms (400miles) and some squadrons/troops even further.

A report from HQ 1 Aust Armd Div noted: *A bold aggressive and highly mobile enemy can have an effect entirely disproportionate to his fighting strength.*

A great deal of the movement was by night without lights, over ill-defined tracks or across country by compass-bearing. As a result reliable information of their movements or strength was very difficult to obtain and a sense of insecurity was felt throughout the Div area, particularly by those Units and Installations on the L of C having little with which to protect themselves.

The great value of the ability to carry out long marches by night to deceive and surprise is emphasized. It needs much training and practice. It also needed expert wireless operators. Phil James from HQ's Sqn, a driver/signaller, was ... in the back of the ute with a radio or wireless keeping communications going –speaking to the different units up there that were doing the exercise. And if necessary I could drive the ute or truck or scout car. This adaptability was echoed by Ron Stafford who drove a scout car: There was the driver, the commander who sat behind the driver and he could stick his head and shoulders out of the top of the turret of the car, then there was the radio operator who sat in the back with his radio, and there were two other people. There were five in a crew. All the crew were trained to interchange with each other. The gunners could drive if need be and the drivers if need be could operate the radio and vice versa. That was the story

Knowing Morse code as well as radio, people like Phil were critical in receiving and disseminating key information. With dispatch riders at the ready, up to date information was essential in keeping one step in front of the enemy. And, at this time – the whole remaining 1 Australian Armoured Division was the enemy! The major realisation was that the ability of fast moving reconnaissance units who can travel at *night without lights, over ill defined tracks or across country by compass* can prove highly successful. And, as a result, reliable information of their movements or strength was very difficult to obtain.



Major Ken Gray giving orders in the 2nd 7th Aust Armd Regt
Courtesy George Borrowman

Poor Information and Ineffective Observation Skills

This was reflected in official reports inside the Division with the military noting that information was not being received in a timely manner and, realistically, if it was late it was useless. Delays in the receipt of information also led to faulty and hesitant action. Information received was also, at times, sketchy and indefinite.

This was in part due to the 'novelty' of having a fast moving armoured enemy but was also due to ineffective communication devices and ineffective reconnaissance.

(Continued from page 4)

The No 11 Wireless Sets in use were determined to be incapable of *maintaining communications over the distances to which the Armd Car Regt was dispersed or from mobile columns sent out by 1 Armd Bde. On the move, range was very limited [and] battery charging facilities were unable to keep up with the demand.*

Poor reconnaissance skills, with some patrols not leaving behind a party to maintain observance of the enemy when returning to base, was common with the result of such actions pretty obvious; the enemy being lost and information relating to same being almost useless because of the loss of currency. It also became quite apparent that not all personnel knew what they were meant to be doing on individual patrols (in part due to poor equipment for communication) – which was a recipe for misadventure, if not disaster.

Noted items of consideration for further thought included the lack of qualified and experienced motor transport drivers. There simply were not enough. Many drivers were not getting any sleep in a two – three day period of intense training. It was also found that it was necessary to change them every couple of hours in order to keep them fresh and alert - and it simply wasn't possible with the few reserve drivers available.

In the End

*This exercise, the largest so far undertaken, was the climax of long months of work and planning towards the creation ... a self-contained Australian army with its own armour ... **The West Australian***

In the end it is hard to comprehend that such a Division never saw active service - being kept at home in case the threatened Japanese invasion occurred; their final ignominy occurring when the Division was disbanded in 1943 with only some of its members ever seeing overseas service. This is perhaps why the Division's story is not widely known now and was widely disregarded after the War; but in their short time together the various units showed the real possibilities of an infantry working with a highly and effectively functioning armoured division.

Cate Clark is the author of *To Fight and Do Our Best: The 1st Australian Armoured Division in Gunnedah* and also *The Black Soil Plains and Beyond: Recollections of the 1st Australian Armoured Division*. Both books are still available through www.writerightmedia.com.au or by ringing 0408 425564.

Vale

Colonel Michael William Lovell Fairless RFD ED (Retd). Mick passed away suddenly and peacefully at his home at Fingal Bay on 28 August 2014, aged 85 years. A private funeral was held. Mick was well known to many in the Army of his generation. He enlisted in the CMF at 7 Fd Regt RAA, Willoughby in 1948. Following commission he served in 16 HAA RAA at Dee Why and then as a Battery Commander in 9 HAA RAA at Haberfield.

In 1962 Mick was posted to Albury with the Commonwealth Bank. He Corps transferred to RAAC to serve in 8/13 VMR as Second in Command.

In 1964 Mick was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and was appointed Commanding Officer. He went to South Vietnam as a CMF observer and was attached to AUS and US armoured units. After 8/13 came a number of training and staff appointments. In 1972 Mick transferred back to the RAA to command 9 LAA Regt at Dee Why.

Promotion to Colonel came in 1974 with his appointment to HQ 2 Div as the first Colonel (MS) ARes. Mick retired in 1979.

Mick is survived by his wife Evelyn, his four children, ten grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Technical Notes & News

Iraqi Abrams losses revealed

The armour on five of Iraq's M1a1 Abrams tanks was penetrated by anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs) and six helicopters were shot down between 1 January and the end of May, the New York Times quoted an unnamed US official as saying on 13 June.

The official said 28 Iraqi Army Abrams had been damaged in fighting with militants, five of them suffering full armour penetration when hit by ATGMs. The US supplied 140 refurbished M1A1 Abrams tanks to Iraq between 2010 and 2012. While they have new equipment to improve situational awareness, they do not have the depleted uranium armour package that increases protection over the tank's frontal arc.

The penetration of a tank's armour by a shaped-charge warhead increases the likelihood of crew casualties, but does not necessarily result in the destruction of the vehicle, especially if it has a dedicated ammunition compartment, as in the case of the Abrams.

However, the US official said the Iraqi Army has problems maintaining its Abrams, suggesting it will struggle to get damaged tanks back into service. At least one video has emerged showing an Abrams 'blew up' after being hit by an ATGM during fighting this year in the western province of Al-Anbar.

Militants operating in Al-Anbar have also released images of numerous attacks on other Abrams tanks, including ones involving a 9K11 Kornet ATGM, RPG-7 rocket propelled grenade launchers, and a M70 OSA rocket launcher. The latter is a Yugoslavian weapon that has been widely used by insurgents in neighbouring Syria, but is rarely seen in Iraq. - Janes HIS



HEARTY WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE

Mr. Gillman, B (Ben) Mr.
Kovacs, J.W (James) Mr.
Hamilton, R (Rob) Mrs.
Longbottom, E (Erin) Mr.
Walker, K (Ken)
Mr. Beaman, K (Ken)
Mr. Brown, K (Ken)

Puma – one of the many contenders for Land 400 Armoured vehicle replacement program



Last year Germany's new armoured infantry fighting vehicle – Puma went through extensive hot, dry desert testing in the UAE, as part of the vehicle's extensive climatic performance qualification. Photo: PSM

Puma developers Krauss-Maffel Wegmann and Rheinmetal are making an early start in promoting their Puma Infantry fighting vehicle. The German PSM group, the manufacturer of the Puma armoured infantry fighting vehicle, is displaying this armoured vehicle at the Eurosatory exhibition following a successful series of tests demonstrating the vehicle's

performance under extreme climatic conditions. The Puma underwent hot, dry testing in the UAE 2013. This was followed by cold weather testing in Norway in 2012.

The vehicle's combat performance were also evaluated during live-fire trials conducted in cooperation with experts from the Federal Office of Bundeswehr Equipment (BAAINBw) and the German Army. Germany's new armoured infantry fighting vehicle combines high tactical and strategic mobility with maximum crew protection and massive firepower provided by the 30mm cannon, backed by extensive optronic, target acquisition and fire control systems.



Among the vehicle's unique attributes are its effective modular protection concept, a remote-control, stabilized turret armed with an ABM capable 30mm automatic cannon, and decoupled running gear with hydro-pneumatic shock absorber elements. Photo: PSM

On the desert trials, testers from the German Defence Technology Detachment (WTD) 91 evaluated the firing accuracy of the Puma's main and secondary armament. Both MK30-2/ABM automatic cannon and the MG4 machine gun were put to the test. Live firing was conducted in stationary mode as well as on the move, both day and night.

Temperatures at the modern firing range in the northwest UAE ranged between 35 and 50° C in the shade.

In addition to the firing test and the air-conditioning system were also evaluated. Operating at high temperatures for weeks on end, the trials provided an effective test series for extensive, daily operation of the system. The participants also gave high marks to the IFV's Multifunctional Self-Protection System (MUSS).

The Puma IFV demonstrated its mobility at two other proving grounds in the north and northeast of the UAE. Experts from

WTD 41 were in charge of the mobility trials. Displaying excellent staying power with no breakdowns, the Puma proved that it could handle a great variety of different terrain types, including sand dunes, steep loose-surface tracks and a rocky desert streambed. Successful completion of the summer trials represents another important milestone on the path to getting the Puma to the troops later this year.

The vehicles delivered to the Bundeswehr are fitted as 'network-enabled warfare capable', provided with battle management systems and supporting 'future soldier systems' and digital communications equipment. In addition to their combat capabilities, the vehicles can also be operated in 'training

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)



The Puma undergoing firing trials in the UAE, summer 2013. Photo: Rheinmetall Defence

mode', providing an autonomous training platform, functioning as a realistic combat simulator for crew and unit training. Multiple vehicles can also be networked, makes it possible to connect up to four vehicles in a training formation.

Its fighting compartment offers nine cubic metres of armour protected space, enabling enough room for integration of specific mission equipment kits. These can include mobile tactical operations centres, field ambulances,

armoured recovery systems or scouts.

http://defense-update.com/20140612_puma_desert_testing.html Jun 12, 2014



The German PSM group, the manufacturer of the Puma armoured infantry fighting vehicle is displaying this armoured vehicle at the Eurosatory exhibition following a successful series of tests demonstrating the vehicle's performance under extreme climatic conditions. Photo: PSM

Vale

BRIG Colin Wilson OAM RFD ED who died late July. He was the former CO of 2/14 Light Horse (QMI) Regiment and was the National president of the RAACA. His funeral was held in Brisbane on Friday 1st of August and was attended by many former Black Hats from both RAACA QLD and the 2/14 LH (QMI) Association members.



The South African Campaign

Remaining Light Horse Units Converted to Motor Regiments -24 Jul 1941

This step was seen as an intermediary stage in the complete mechanisation of the cavalry. Ultimately both cavalry divisions would become motor divisions. Div Recce Regts were to be provided to the CMF infantry divisions and four regiments were become armoured as soon as tanks were available. This improved the prospects of the former Light Horse soldiers to serve in war.

The units involved in the first batch of conversions were posted for duty as follows on 1 Dec 1941:

6 LH- Motor Regt for Support Group 1st Armd Div
15 LH-Motor Regt for 1st Armd Bde
20 LH-Motor Regt for 2nd Armd Bde
26 MG-MG Regt Mech Bde 2nd Cav Div
21 LH-Div Recce Regt for 2nd Div
8 LH-Div Recce Regt 3rd Div

Plans for CMF Armoured Regiments forecast the progressive development of CMF armoured formations. They would become :

1st Armd Car Regt (Horsham Victoria) Commenced 1933 as 19th Armd Car Regt
2nd Armd Regt (Sydney NSW) From 2nd Armd Car Regt Jan 1940
3rd Armd Regt (Randwick NSW) Commenced Mar 1941 by expansion of 1st Light Tank Coy
4th Armd Regt (Ballarat Vic) Raised by expansion of C Sqn 17 LH (MG) Regt as part of 2nd Cav Div 1941

AWM This Day In The RAAC
Ref O p86-8

Australian Troops Committed to Korea - 26 Jul 1950

Acting Prime Minister Fadden announces the commitment of Australian ground forces for service in Korea.

Reference: AWM This Day In The RAAC



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.

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: Ed [mailto:poppa.e@bigpond.com]
Subject: JULY 14 issue-Don Gazard memo re Bsqn



Hello all .

Your note certainly stirred some memories in this old mind about B Sqn. I was fortunate to be the SSM of the Sqn for a couple of years from 1961 and well remember the people you mention in particular "Daddy" Duncan an exceptional leader as I recall. Must not forget Dave Lawrence, who performed so memorably in SVN, despite his great tank suit "drama" one time.

We'll remember Tom Phillips , Nev Ruff and Peter Simpson too.

Thanks for the memories of some great officers and troopers it was my honour to serve with.

Cheers to all

Ed Keogh

From: [James Jeans](#)
Subject: The September Parramatta Parade

Gentlemen of the Cavalry !

Just to say how very much I enjoyed watching the parade on TV last week-end; wish I'd been there. Especially the Centurion rumbling down the road. Did the local council ask for road damage in advance?

I tried to get my lady-friend to understand that to start the main engine (and this is from my memory, 1949 at Catterick) you reached behind you, (and this was difficult wearing the then British tank-suit), turned a handle then pushed the start-button and this started a small motor which gave you power to start the main engine - if I've got it wrong please tell me; 65 years is a long time.

So congratulations to the Cavalry, who in battle, as we used to say, add elegance, style and class to what would otherwise be a vulgar brawl.

Kindest regards

Ex 22285878 Trooper Jim Jeans 17/21 Lancers 1949

From: JOHN NEENAN Subject:

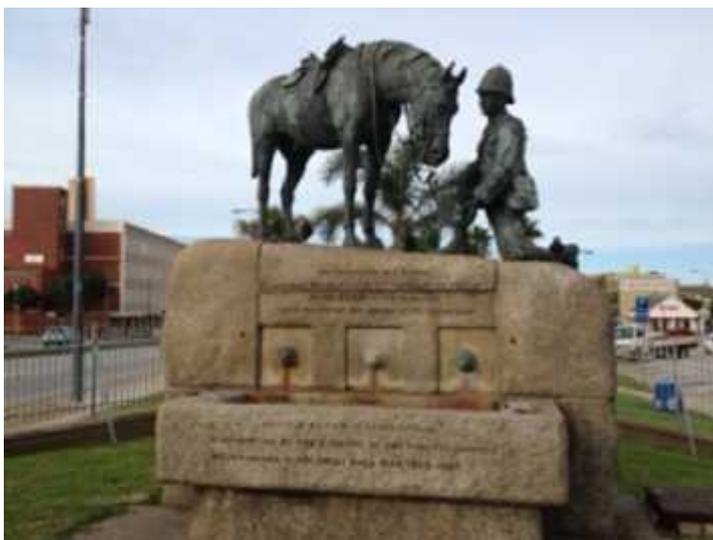
FW: From Port Elizabeth

G'day all,

A friend of mine was travelling around South Africa and stumbled upon this Boer War memorial dedicated especially to the horses who never

returned.
Yours aye,

John N.



Operation Hammer, Battle of Binh Ba, Sth Vietnam, Jun 1969

Binh Ba, located north of the Australian base at Nui Dat, was the site of a battle between a combined force of Viet Cong guerillas and North Vietnamese Army troops who occupied the village and an Australian combined arms ready reaction force (RRF).



More than 100 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong perished in the battle, with many more wounded after a day's fighting by a ready reaction force of a composite tank troop commanded by 2Lt Sullivan (awarded MC), a cavalry troop commanded by Capt De Vere (awarded MC) and by Major Blake Infantry (awarded MC). Cpl Strudwick RAAC awarded MM.

The initial RRF was quickly reinforced by another inf coy, APC tp (Arrowsmith) and tank tp (Browning).

The battle illustrates the significant strategy of using aggressive and decisive mutually supporting tanks and APCs backed by infantry in house to house battles in an Asian context. The action was successful due to the

employment of basic armoured operational procedures. This was the last large-scale clash in Phouc Tuy.

RAAC Related Units Involved: 3 Tp (+) B Sqn 3 Cav Regt
4 Tp (+) B Sqn 1 Armd Regt

Other Significant Units Included: D & B Coy 5 RAR

Reference: SOArmd Operational Examples. Annex F significant Actions No 14

RAAC Bibliography

Ref O p270 -5

Ironsides 1994.

Ref FF p195 - 213

Ref ZZ p169-180

Ref 33 Conversation 13 Mar 0-8

AWM This Month-Jun



Paramatta Lancer Parade—August 30, 2014

The nation's military history came alive as Parramatta celebrated more than 125 years of the Royal NSW Lancers with a street parade through the CBD on August 30.

The Parramatta Lancers Parade, which marks the raising of the 1st Light Horse (Australian Imperial Force) in 1914, now known as the 1st/15th Royal NSW Lancers, commemorates 100 years since the declaration of World War I.

The historic parade was attended by the Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove and depicted an overview of the Lancers' history from 1885.

Source: Parramatta Sun News - 9/10/2014



Lost Souls

If anyone knows the whereabouts of the following members would they please contact the RAACA Office

| Members Name | Last Address |
|---------------------------|--|
| Cpl K.D. (Kevin) Sparkes | 164 Royal Pde, Alderley, QLD 4051 |
| Mr J. Cooke | NSW |
| Mr. R.L. Gordon | 29 Shanahan St, Redland Bay, MT Cotton, QLD 4165 |
| Mr. P.R.A. O'Toole | 31 Gibson St, Kingscliff, NSW 2487 |
| Mr. B.M. (Bruce) Gregor | 1/25 Lloyd St, Tweed Head South, NSW 2486 |
| Mrs E. Williams | 11 Racecourse Rd, Broken Hill 2880 |
| Mr. C.J. Watson | Lakewood, 6 Mangrove Cl, Laurieton, NSW 2443 |
| Mr. R.P. Johnston | 85 The Parade, North Haven, NSW 2443 |
| Mr. K.T. Peters | 36 Kite St, Orange, NSW, 2800 |
| Mr. S.M. Hill | 118 Mimosa Rd, Greenacre, NSW 2190 |
| Mr. B. (Bernie) Flynn | 1 Sim St, Braybrook, VIC 3019 |
| Mr. B. (Brad) Golding | PO Box 6061, Kincumber, NSW 2251 |
| Mr. B. (Barry) Follington | 39 Bell St, Tamworth, NSW 2340 |
| Mrs. N. (Norma) Aussell | 33 Kobina Av, Glenmore Park, NSW 2745 |



ANZAC DAY MARCH UPDATE No. 2

This update is to remind sub-Branch and Association members of the criteria for participating in the Sydney ANZAC Day March and provide some general guidelines. Once again it is important that this information is disseminated as widely as possible.

There are three ways by which an individual can participate in the March: (i) as an Australian veteran, (ii) as the descendant of an Australian veteran (iii) as a veteran or descendant of a Commonwealth or Allied force.

Australian Veteran

Veteran eligibility to march is based on the criteria to become a Service Member of the RSL i.e. any person who has served in the Australian Defence Force for at least 6 months. Veterans should assemble with one of the service units of which they were/are a member. The choice of where to march is a personal one however; it is recommended that those who served together should march together as an act of remembrance and mateship.

Descendant of an Australian Veteran

A descendant of a veteran can march with veterans as a carer (one per veteran marching), banner party or flag carrier regardless of whether they are entitled to be a member of the RSL or not. All other descendants are invited to march with the descendants associations in a place of prominence in front of the Commonwealth and Allies contingent. One descendant only of a deceased veteran may honour their relatives service by wearing his/her medals on their right breast.

Commonwealth or Allied Veteran/Descendant

Veterans:

Veterans should be clearly identifiable by their campaign medals and should be at the head of each national group.

No medals or awards earned whilst a nation was in conflict with Australia or the Commonwealth shall be worn in the Sydney ANZAC Day March.

Dress should reflect the occasion i.e. traditional/national costume or dress (including headdress) is not appropriate.

Both the British Commonwealth and Allied contingents will form up in alphabetical order as printed in the March Broad Sheet and under the direction of the March Marshals.

Displays of foreign national flags are restricted to 1 per group.

No flag of a nation that was used when that nation was in conflict with the Commonwealth or Australia is permitted to be displayed.

Display of historical flags or ensigns of countries that no longer exist is inappropriate.

Banners are restricted to 1 per group and are not to contain any political slogans.

The display of photos or other memorabilia is not permitted.

Descendants:

Descendants of veterans are encouraged to participate to honour the fallen at the express invitation of the contingent leader/organiser.

Descendants are to march behind the veterans within the national group.

Once again, dress should reflect the occasion i.e. traditional/national costume or dress (including headdress) is inappropriate.

The national group may have no more than 30 descendants of veterans participate including banner party and flag bearers.

General Policies

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

Veterans who are unable to march should make use of the taxi service provided at the beginning of the March (contact ANZAC House for bookings).

Standing in Army Land Rovers is prohibited. Apart from the danger, there are significant insurance and legal implications for the March organisers as well as the military drivers, who are all volunteers for the day.

The Sydney ANZAC Day March is not a parade and therefore no vehicle, animal, weaponry or memorabilia (including historical uniforms) may be included without the prior approval of the March organisers.

Escorts to Colours etc. and catafalque parties may carry arms. Otherwise service contingents should only carry arms when specially authorized by the ANZAC Day March Executive Committee c/- ANZAC House.

As the head of each unit approaches the Cenotaph, hats are to be removed (by following the unit leader's movements or by order) and the right hand held over the heart and kept in that position until the unit is clear of the Cenotaph, when the reverse is to be followed.

Heads are to be turned towards the Cenotaph when passing it. Banners and Flags are to be dipped. Defence Force formations are to salute the Cenotaph as they pass it.

JOHN HAINES
CHAIR
ANZAC DAY MARCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Many Members would know our Vice President Bill Cross who was awarded the OAM for his many decades of work for the RAACA.

Here he is at Government House Queensland with his wife and two sons on the day of his investiture.

Well done Bill Cross!



Left to Right: Tom, Terri, Bill, Alex

C Sqn 9 Aust Div Cav Aided by Circassian Horsed Cavalry Fought in the Hills behind Qatana, Syria.- 2 July 1941

A daring patrol was made by a troop of 9 Cav to the Joel Bourkoch. The squadron was then attached to the Indian brigade in the Qatana area. As it neared Bourkoch early in the morning it ran into heavy fire and its retreat was cut off. The remainder of the squadron, a squadron of Circassian Cavalry and a party of batmen, cooks, clerks and others from RHQ hastened to their rescue. After a long exchange of fire the patrol, except for the officer commanding, Lt J.L.D. Ferguson and Sgt J.C. McEachern and a trooper, managed to withdraw; Ferguson and McEachern made their way back after dark, but the trooper was captured.



“The Fight on the Mountain –Qatana, Syria, July 2, 1941

An unusual kind of action, in which the old and new cavalry joined forces, developed in the mountains behind Qatana on 2nd July. We were assisted by a troop of Circassian horsed cavalry, some of whom were newly recruited from the Vichy side.

Qatana is a village south-west of Damascus. “C” Squadron were sent there, on the left flank of the 5th Indian Brigade, to investigate reports of enemy horsed cavalry in the Mt Bourkoch area. British 6th Division had ordered all their units to carry out vigorous patrol recce work, and “C” Squadron set about its job with such enthusiasm that a major action almost resulted.

Early in the morning a patrol led by LT Lindsay Ferguson climbed a steep gully or re-entrant. They took their vehicles as far as they could, but the rugged ground became tank-proof, so they continued on foot. The enemy, French colonial troops, were waiting for them on a ridge which crowned the re-entrant. They held commanding positions in the ruins of an ancient hunting lodge. When our men got within range, bullets began to zip and ricochet among the rocks in a manner reminiscent of “Lives of a Bengal Lancer.” Finding themselves exposed to fire from machine guns and snipers the patrol took what shelter they could and remained there, pinned down on the hillside.

Lieut. W.K. Hope, who was with Ferguson’s patrol, was badly hit. Bill Hope, a good officer and a fine type of man, had arrived back from a school in Egypt only the previous day, and it was his first time in action. He died of wounds in a Damascus hospital, and was buried in the cemetery there.

One man who did a splendid job that day was Trooper R.S. Moss, known to the regiment as “Tich”. Although a small man, he did a big job. Moss helped Hope to gain cover, and dressed his wounds as best he could. Then he got away down the mountain side under the fire and told squadron headquarters, in the village of Qatana, what had happened. He arrived covered in blood from rock splinters chipped off by the bullets, but otherwise unhurt, and he led the squadron out to extricate the patrol.

Regimental headquarters at Mouaddamiyi heard the news by wireless, and the C.O. set out for Qatana. It was the colonel’s birthday, although he did not tell us that at the time. All available men who could be mustered from R.H.Q. and Headquarter Squadron – cooks, batmen, armourers, mechanics, pay, postal and office staff – were sent on to Qatana as reinforcements.

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

They were led by Lieut. H.G. Fyffe.

We found battle headquarters on a patch of flat ground at the mouth of the re-entrant. The enemy positions were clearly visible, but we were out of range of their small arms fire, and we hoped that they had no artillery or mortars. The ruins on the ridge looked very close in the clear hot air.



Tich Moss pointed out to us the rock near which Bill Hope was lying. The Medical Officer (Capt. R.W. Weaver), his N.C.O. (Lance-Corporal .J. Wilshire) and Moss began to climb the re-entrant. They were fired on until the enemy realised they were a stretcher party, and then an unofficial truce was declared on both sides. While Hope's wounds were being dressed, and until he had been carried down the mountain side, enemy snipers came out and perched on the rocks, watching the scene below. They looked like Moroccans to us. Our men did not fire on them until the stretcher party had done its job, and then the enemy hopped back into position and the war went on. They put Hope on the back of a carrier and brought him to battle headquarters. Although conscious, he could not speak very well, but managed to say to the colonel: "Sorry to let you down on your birthday." While he was being carried down, he seemed more worried about the safety of the stretcher bearers than about his own condition.

Like a breath from the past, a troop of Circassian cavalry arrived to help us. They were shaggy-looking horsemen, armed with short French carbines and a few machine guns, and they seemed to be spoiling for a fight. Peter McArthur got out of his carrier and mounted a horse, and accompanied by Trooper Ray Pettit, he led the Circassians off to the right flank, with the idea of forcing home an attack and releasing our pinned – down patrol. Some of the horsemen carried green flags so that our chaps could tell them from the enemy.

W.O.H. Maurice Tapfield took his APC as far as he could up the re-entrant, got hull-down behind a crest and began to fire at the enemy. Bob Fyffe surveyed his mixed band of reinforcements and either because he wanted to impress on them the importance of their task, he gave the order: "*Form single file, Into battle, follow me,*" and led them up a hill on the right side of the gully, where they lay among the rocks giving covering fire to the Circassians.

McArthur's horsemen climbed a couple of thousand feet in three miles and found themselves confronted with a cavalry-man's dream – a position behind and overlooking the enemy's headquarters, which in this case were a barracks of native huts. The enemy, however, had foreseen their attack, and before they could take up positions they were met on the ridge and there was an exchange of shots.

A period of confusion followed. The Circassian interpreter told McArthur that the rifles firing at them were English pattern, and that therefore they were being fired on by our own men who had mistaken the horsemen for Vichies. After some argument, and much abuse hurled at the opposing force, it was decided that they must be enemy after all. Further doubt was eliminated when the green flag was shot out of one of the Circassian's hands. This riled them considerably, and they began blazing away without waiting for fire orders

(Continued on page 17)

and with little method. McArthur began to suspect that this was the first time they had heard an English rifle fired behind them and a French rifle fired at them, so to speak.

By the time, he had made a recce and decided to get the machine-guns to fire on the barracks while a small retaining force kept the enemy positions quiet, he found that the Circassian machine-gunners had fired all their ammunition away. Enraged at this, he kicked their commanding officer in the behind, and as the latter was formidable-looking man, Peter thought that he himself might be the next casualty. However, the kick was accepted in the spirit with which it was bestowed.



As the party now had no water and no more machine-gun rounds, Trooper Pettit was sent back to report the situation and bring up more ammunition. Reaching battle headquarters he received orders to call the war off for the day.

A senior British officer had arrived in a hurry to tell the colonel that the clash was developing into a major action and was interfering with plans for a big attack further to the north, which was due to come off shortly. So McArthur, who by this time had lost his horse, arrived back with the Circassians. The horsemen had taken several of the enemy, and both captors and captives seemed highly pleased with the turn of events.

When our supporting force withdrew from Mount Bourkoch that evening, Ferguson, Sergeant Jock McEachern and Trooper D.W. Starke were missing, believed killed. Ferguson and McEachern got away in the darkness and rejoined their squadron.”

(Ref 80. p41-44)

RAAC Related Units Involved Included: 9 Aust Div Cav

Reference:RAAC Battle Chronology

RAAC Bibliography

Ref No 60 p477

Ref No 80 p41-44





The National Boer War Memorial

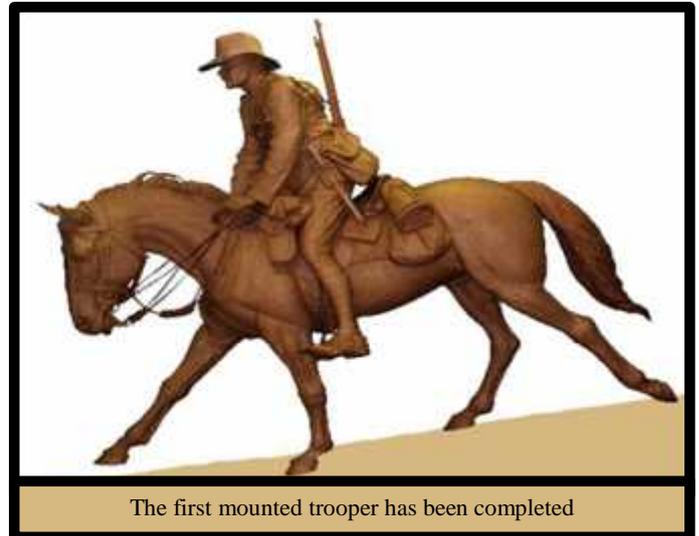
An update

By Colonel John Haynes OAM (RL)

The National Boer War Memorial Association Incorporated (NBWMA) came into being at its inaugural general meeting on 6 February 2011, but *Ironsides* readers are well aware that moves to erect a memorial to the Boer War in the nation's capital had begun some seven years before that under the auspices of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association. Major events in the long saga have included observance of Boer War Day each year on the last Sunday of May throughout the nation; the creation by Lieutenant-colonel John Howells of a magnificent NBWMA website; appointment of now Major-general Iain Spence CSC RFD by the Chief of the Defence Force as his representative on the Committee of Management; allocation of the memorial site on Anzac Parade Canberra in April 2007; and its on-site dedication on 31 May 2008.

A design featuring four mounted troopers on patrol was approved by the National Capital Authority, and unveiled in Canberra on 1 March 2012 by the then Chief of Defence Force and National Patron of the NBWMA, General David Hurley AC DSC. The first statue is finished and paid for.

More recently, a dedicated Funding Sub-committee has been formed, with industrialist Mr Michael Crouch AO as its Chairman, and 2nd Lieutenant T.A. "Tim" Fischer AC GCPO (RL) as its Patron. Its job is to garner the \$3.5m needed to pay for troopers two, three and four.



The first mounted trooper has been completed

A national database of Boer War veterans' descendants and relatives, and any other persons interested in the NBWMA's objectives, now exists. Australians in those categories are invited to register. They that do will receive *gratis* a copy of the Association's, informative newsletter.

To register, go to the www.bwm.org.au and follow the prompts, or phone (02) 8335 5209 when the office is manned which, by the voluntary nature of the NBWMA, is not all the time. Mail can be addressed to NBWMA c/- Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Paddington, NSW 2021. To make a tax deductible donation, consult the website. And Blackhats everywhere are reminded that the ACT memorial will be dedicated to the mounted men of the Boer War, the predecessors of today's RAAC troopers.



Artist's impression of the finished memorial.



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 14 November 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.

Lest we Forget

We regret to advise the passing of the following members

Mr James H Longbottom
Mr Ralf W Berman OAM (2/4 AR)
Mr John Young (2/4 AR)
Mr. A.R. George (12/16 HRL)
Mr. Leroy D Seriser
Mr. Brook B Murphy (1 AA Bde HQ)
Mr Alan Barnham (2/6 AR)

Sgt Arthur R Yager(1 AR)
Mrs Grace Watson
Mr. Kenneth Martyr (12/16 HRL)
Mr. H. H Handicott (2/2 Comando Sqn)
Mr. Samuel A Roughley
Mr. Robert Hughes
Mr. Harry Wolters (2/7 AR)

Request for Information

Subject: World War 1 Tank statistics and other data

I am a member of Jim Barry's Spirit of Australia Foundation.

Jim has suggested that you might be able to help me with information or point me in the right direction to find it.

I am trying to find out:

1. The number and date of arrival at the Somme of the Mark V tanks, shortly before the Battle of Hamel; were there Mark V tanks already on the battlefield and available for battle on the Somme in the second half of May?

At page 245 of Volume 6 of the Official History of Australia in the War 1914-1918, Bean wrote –

But, on the very day on which Gellibrand and MacLagan made their suggestions to Monash, there arrived on the railway beside the main Amiens-Doullens road, a few miles from corps headquarters, a succession of trains loaded with the 13th Tank Battalion monsters of the latest type, which crawled from the trucks to relieve another battalion, the 1st, furnished with the older type of tanks of which the 4th Australian Division had such disastrous experience at Bullecourt. With this arrival the 5th Brigade of tanks, lying in support of the Fourth Army's front, became a completely modern force.

From the context (see top of page 243), I gather that this may have been on or about 13th June 1918(?).

2. The shipment and arrival of tanks in France and their location in the first half of 1918.

In Volume 6, Chapter X111, The Origin of "August, 8th", Bean makes much of a claim by White that he and Birdwood drew up a plan in the last two weeks of May for a grand offensive north and south of the Somme, including the Canadians and using the tactics developed by Monash for Hamel.

Bean claims that Birdwood and White were also offered 200 tanks by Haig for this project, which Bean claims really was master plan for the 8th August Battle that Rawlinson and Montgomery "induced Monash to believe was his own plan", out of fear that Hughes would otherwise have the Australians taken out of the front line for a rest.

All of this is contained in letters between White and Bean in 1935, just after publication and newspaper serialisation of Cutlack's *War Letters of John Monash* and the sudden "refreshing of White's memory", a mere 17 years after the 1918 battle!

Did Haig have 200 tanks available in May? Were they Mark V tanks?

What I am trying to do is establish the credibility of White's Grand Plan (which by the way they were asked to keep secret, even from others at the Australian HQ). Bean wrote in the History that a copy of the plan in their hand-writing is in papers Montgomery presented to the Staff College. These papers are now held by the UK Joint Services College and Jim Barry is seeking to obtain a copy for our examination.

I am finding it hard to overlay White's Grand Plan on events as they stood on the ground. e.g. the 2nd Division had already advanced on Morlancourt in May, yet White seems to show them still way short of Morlancourt before the battle in his Grand

Plan. Also, it seems that as preliminaries to the actual 8th August, the Fourth Army had to advance not only north of the Somme at Morlancourt and south of the Somme at Hamel, as well as east of Villers-Bretonneux to establish suitable sites from which to launch the battle. Therefore White seems to be claiming in his Grand Plan that he planned to advance on Morlancourt, Hamel and go then nearly as far as planned for 8th August all in one go. Really?

All the best,

Ken Crompton

E: Crompton2@optusnet.com.au

M: 04174 354 107