

The North-Western Ranger



8th/7th BATTALION – 2RVR ASSOCIATION Inc.
VICTORIA'S OWN COUNTRY BATTALION
(Including the Ballarat Ranger Military Museum Newsletter)



Patron: The Commanding Officer, 8/7 RVR, Lt Col Derek Sonogan

Vol 28 No 2 June 2024

Contents:

P2	ANZAC Day &
P3	ANZAC Day at Rupanyup
P5	Simpson Barracks Visit
P6	Upcoming Events
P7	Vale: Bill Allen
P8	Vale: Rev John Furness
P9	British National Service & Durham Light Infantry
P10	Hawkei & Tom Chambers in Japan
P11	Bits & Pieces
P12	Ballarat Ranger Military Museum
P15	Merchandise

Committee:

Vice President	Chris Liston
Secretary	Jason County

Property Officer	Jason County
Editor	Neil Leckie

87th2vrassoc@gmail.com

Committee Members:	Greg Code
	Lindsay Govan
	Bruce McKinnon
	Ian Nunn
	Les Taylor
Warrnambool:	Lyndon King

8/7 Battalion – 2 RVR Association

Annual Activities:

ANZAC Day – Ballarat & Warrnambool
Annual Dinner – Warrnambool, October
Annual Dinner – Ballarat, November
AGM – Ballarat, November

This newsletter was printed by the office of:

JULIANA ADDISON
MEMBER FOR WENDOUREE

Monthly Activities:

Committee Meeting – Normally the First Tuesday of the Month, Alfredton Sports Centre, Cuthberts Road.

The Association's Newsletter Editor's email address is 87th2vrassoc@gmail.com

For urgent newsletter matters please use nkaleckie@outlook.com.au

RECENT EVENTS

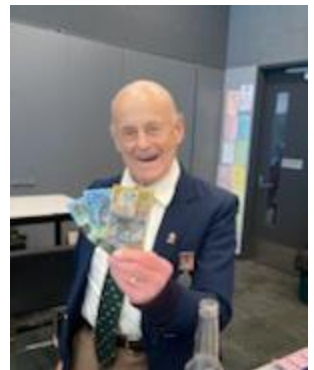
ANZAC Day (with Jason County)

ANZAC Day this year saw members of our association attend Dawn Services and march in many parts of our state. Our main events were at Ballarat and Warrnambool, with members marching in the parades and attending post march functions. Some members also marched in Melbourne. There were lots of great catch ups and yarns at all events! Our Editor, Neil Leckie, was the Guest Speaker at the ANZAC Day service at Rupanyup in Western Victoria. (See later article). Well done to those who attended and marched and especially to all who helped behind the scenes and on the day.

Ballarat: Association members attended the Dawn Service, the other smaller services (Grieving Mother and Arch of Victory and PoW Memorial) and the main ANZAC Day Service. After the main service association members and their partners went to lunch at the Alfredton Sports and Community Club where they were well received by the football crowd waiting for the game to start. A Guard of Honour was formed on the ground for the Umpires by the footballers, netballers and our association members. Prior to the game Barry Harris recited The Ode, while Noel Sutherland tossed the coin. In the clubrooms, a bar for the association was run by a Volunteer and the proceeds presented to the association by the Dennis Storer Memorial Wrong Bias Bowls Club (see below right).



Warrnambool: Association members attended the Dawn Service and the main ANZAC Day Service where Lieutenant Colonel Katherine McGregor was the Guest Speaker. A smaller than usual association contingent this year. Afterwards, about a dozen association members and their partners went to lunch at the Warrnambool RSL.



Association members were requested to forward reports of their ANZAC Day activities. The only ones received were from Warrnambool and Ballarat. I have provided my Speech from Rupanyup – Ed..



Left: The Horsham Pipe Band leads the Rupanyup ANZAC Day Parade (for the 75th time).

Speech by Neil Leckie:
Thank you for the invitation to join you today. As we meet here today, there is a lot of tension between the countries in Europe and in the Middle East, with a war raging between the invading Russian forces and the defending

Ukrainian forces. It is not so different to 1879 when Germany formed an alliance with Austria-Hungary, with Italy joining three years later. The fear of Germany's growing strength led to Russia and France entering into an alliance in 1893. Britain joined them in 1904.

By 1914, relations between Austria-Hungary and neighbouring Serbia were tense and on 28 June 1914 a Bosnian-Serb terrorist shot dead Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, and his wife. That first shot caused a war that would last four and a half years. Australia then was a part of the British Empire and when Britain declared war on 5 August 1914, Australian time, under the 1839 Treaty of London, which guaranteed the independence and neutrality of Belgium, Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and South Africa were also at war. That day, a German merchant ship SS Pfalz tried to escape from Port Phillip Bay. However, in the earlier colonial days, the Colony of Victoria had set up artillery emplacements around the entry to Port Phillip Bay. The Point Nepean Artillery Battery, controlled from Queenscliff, opened fire on the Pfalz causing it to turn around, return to Melbourne and surrender. Consequently, Australia had fired the first shot by the British Empire forces in the war.

The 1903 Australian Defence Act would not allow the Australian Army to serve overseas, so any military force sent overseas would need to be a specially raised force. The first such specially raised force was the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force or ANMEF. The force left Sydney on 19 August 1914, just two weeks after war had been declared. This force captured the German wireless station near Rabaul on the east coast of New Britain with the German forces on New Britain finally surrendering on 17 September. The major force recruited for overseas service in 1914 was known as the Australian Imperial Force, or AIF. Recruiting commenced on 10 August. By 1 November, when the first men left Albany in Western Australia, some 21,500 Australians had been recruited, issued with their uniforms, weapons and equipment and were onboard 38 troopships. The men thought that they were going to England, but they would have arrived there in the middle of winter and where they would not have had sufficient accommodation, so they were diverted to Egypt to complete their training.

While the AIF and their 8,500 New Zealand companions were training in Egypt, plans were being made to use these 'colonial forces' to participate with the British and French forces in a daring amphibious landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula with the aim of rolling up that peninsula and taking the Turkish Army out of the war. When the force was announced, the Australians and New Zealanders were to be combined into one Corps. A Clerk became a bit sick of writing the words Australian and New Zealand Army Corps and had a rubber stamp made with the letters ANZAC. Thus, the history of ANZAC began.

We are all aware of the landing at Gallipoli early on the morning of 25 April 1915. Some 16,000 Australians were landed in a little over 24 hours. Many rushed inland up to about one and a half kilometres until the

Turkish reinforcements arrived to bolster the relatively small number of defenders. The advance was stopped. After a couple of weeks, the Australian Light Horse landed on Gallipoli to fight as infantry, with their horses remaining in Egypt. Among the light-horsemen to land on Gallipoli was Rupanyup born farmer George Cromie. George was serving in the Citizen Force 19th Australian Light Horse before the war and was an early enlistee after the outbreak of war. While on Gallipoli, George was quickly promoted to Corporal and then to Sergeant.

When the Light Horse returned to Egypt, George transferred to the infantry 2nd Division. He soon found himself in England and finally France. In 1917 George returned to England and undertook an officer's course, being commissioned as a Second Lieutenant with the 25th Infantry Battalion. Shortly after returning to his battalion George was gassed. In June 1918, when his battalion undertook an attack near Morlancourt in France, George was wounded in an action that saw George awarded a Distinguished Service Order medal. George saw little action after that wounding. He returned to Australia in late 1918 and was discharged. Cromie Street, the main street here in Rupanyup, is named after George Cromie's family.

While in the end all wars are finally won by the infantry, the infantry cannot survive without what is known as the supporting arms, such as artillery and tanks. None of these arms would survive without the support of the Drivers with their horses and wagons who would supply them with ammunition for their rifles or artillery guns, their food and their water. One such Driver was another Rupanyup born farmer, Frank Starbuck. Frank enlisted in Ararat in March 1916 and went to Melbourne as a General Reinforcement for the Artillery. After his artillery training, he was allocated as a Driver. He came home to Rupanyup on his 'final leave' and on 12 September 1916 was presented with a wrist-watch by the Rupanyup Presentation Committee. While at home he was also listed in the newspaper as a Judge in the 1916 Beulah Show.

On return to Melbourne Frank boarded a troopship and arrived in England in mid-November 1916. He arrived in France in January 1917 during the worst European winter in decades. Frank was transferred to the 4th Division's Ammunition supply. He survived the 1917 battles in France at Messines and Bullecourt and in Belgium at Menin Road, Polygon Wood and the worst of all Passchendaele. In 1918 Frank was still with the 4th Division Artillery and was involved with the battles at Herbutene and Dernancourt in France and was there when the Australians finished their war during the push to the Hindenburg Line in October 1918. Frank was one of the lucky ones, being neither wounded nor gassed. He returned to Australia in July 1919 and was shortly afterwards discharged at the Termination of his Period of Enlistment, unlike so many others, such as George Cromie, who were discharged as Medically Unfit.

Frank returned to farming, married Annie, also known as Sylvia, and lived a normal life. In the 1930s Frank won awards for his Corriedale sheep at the Murtoa and Horsham shows. After war broke out again in 1939, Frank enlisted in the Volunteer Defence Corps, the Australian equivalent of the British "Dad's Army" that we older people knew about due to a British television comedy show. Frank was enlisted into the Volunteer Defence Corps by none other than George Cromie, who by 1942 was a Justice of the Peace. Frank died in 1981 and is buried here in Rupanyup.

So, today, along with Australians everywhere, we gather to remember those who have served to defend Australia. We do this today because it is the anniversary of the day when Australian and New Zealand soldiers, the ANZACs, landed on a beach on the Gallipoli Peninsular in Turkey on 25 April 1915. But it is also a day to remember all those who have fought under the Australian flags, whether they be Army, Navy or Air Force, or the Nurses who supported them, in all theatres of conflict. We especially remember today Frank Starbuck, one of those who kept the troops supplied, and his Rupanyup born friend George Cromie, who was really in the thick of things! Lest we forget!



SIMPSON BARRACKS VISIT (Jason County)

After a recent RSL dinner our association was invited by WO1 Rob Dick to Simpson Barracks, Watsonia, the home of Victoria's 4th Brigade, to observe soldiers from 8/7 RVR and 5/6 RVR as they went through the practical phase of Level 3 of the Army Combatives Program (ACP). Soldiers came from as far away as Warrnambool and Swan Hill to attend the course. The association was hosted by WO1 Rob Dick and the team from the 8/7RVR training cell at 4th Brigade headquarters, who were running the course. Rob also acted as our guide around the base. Seven association members, along with two wives, took up the offer to attend. For the price of the fuel consumed, the Ballarat RSL bus was used, travelling via Bacchus Marsh to pick up one association member.



After arriving at 1030 hours, there was a slight delay getting through the gate, as photos were taken and passes issued. Once in, the first activity was a observing a fighting patrol coming in to contact with the enemy and sustaining a combat casualty requiring treatment and casualty evacuation. This included casualty assessment, first aid and the all important 'nine liner' transmission. Plenty of questions were asked and Rob's knowledge was tested by the wives in attendance, who showed their medical knowledge.

Next was the main event as we observed soldiers being put through their paces on the ACP course. This involved a building clearance. After a 400 metre run at the start of a scenario, a team of 4 soldiers, known as a 'brick' would reach a building, with interior walls made from large rubber blocks and with rubber flooring. Waiting inside was one of more aggressive and cunning combatants. This building would have to be entered by the team and cleared with the threat being neutralised or apprehended and cuffed with plastic cuffs. This required an instant assessment to be made by the soldiers and their brick commander as to whether lethal or non-lethal means would be used to clear any personnel in the building. The scenarios were also regularly changed to keep the troops on their toes. For safety reasons the barrel and butt areas of the training EF88 Steyr rifles used were enclosed in rubber coverings to reduce the risk of injury. The troops involved applied and executed their skills, to adapt and succeed in the challenging scenarios. Some of the 'take downs' were quite spectacular and executed with great enthusiasm.

We also had a chance to mingle with the training team and the troops of both battalions, with many new and some familiar 8/7 RVR faces, such as instructor, Corporal Dale Vistarini. Another was Rob's 'boss', Captain Charles Wright from Warrnambool, who made us feel welcome.

The third activity was a lecture given by Rob on the new structure of the 4th Brigade, which now includes 12th/40th Battalion, Royal Tasmania Regiment. He then explained the process of becoming a qualified infantry soldier in the modern day RVR. This is a thorough step by step process which is long when compared to our experiences but produces a well rounded soldier at the end. Rob was then formally thanked by our President Dick Wilkie for inviting us to the ACP course and for hosting us. Dick then formally 'capped' Rob as a member of our team by giving him an Association Cap as a token of our thanks.

As the barracks food shops do not open on weekends, a visit to Maccas at Yallambie for a late lunch was made before returning to Ballarat via



Bacchus Marsh. We were all left greatly impressed by the hospitality shown to us by Rob and the 8/7 RVR training team, and the high standard of the soldiers. The two wives were amazed at the training. The future of 8/7 RVR & 5/6 RVR looks to be in good hands.

Right: Chris Liston and Bob Prewett



UPCOMING EVENTS

Reserve Forces Day, Sunday 7 July 2024

To honour and recognise those who have served as members of the Reserve Forces in Australia the Reserve Force Day Ceremony will be held at the Shrine forecourt on Sunday 7 July 2024. **All Past and Present Reservists are Welcome to Attend**



1000 hrs: March on of Members/Associations and Banners

1005 hrs: Ceremony to include: Welcome, Guest Speaker, Wreath Laying, ODE, Last Post, Australian National Anthem, and there will be a Fly-over of aircraft from the Pt Cook RAAF Museum.

1035 hrs: Ceremony concludes.

Dress: For Males Beret, suit or jacket and trousers, with medals, black shoes.

For Females a similar or suitable attire is expected

Seating: Seating will be available on forecourt for those unable to march

Light Refreshments: There will be refreshments after the ceremony supplied by the Salvation Army Gold Coin donation

Wet Weather Plan: Ceremony moved to Shrine Sanctuary.

Live Streaming: The Shrine will be Live Streaming the Ceremony

Link <https://www.facebook.com/shrineofremembrance/>



Left:
Reserve Forces Day,
Melbourne 2023.

Puckapunyal Day, 11 August 2024

The association has been invited to attend a day at the range at Puckapunyal on Sunday 11 August. Details will be advised a few weeks before the event.

Point Cook Museum - September, date tbc

We are advised that the Point Cook Museum is to close, so the association is planning 'one last visit'!

Ballarat Dinner. To ensure that we are not clashing with other events, such as the battalion being on exercise, the Ballarat Dinner will be held this year on Saturday 5 October. Details to be advised closer to the event.

AGM. To keep the regular tradition going, the association's AGM will be held on Sunday 6 October on the same weekend as the Ballarat Dinner.

Warrnambool Dinner: This year's dinner will be held on Saturday 12 October. Details to be advised.

A Day at Dunolly. The association has been invited to go to Dunolly and see a privately owned Centurian Tank! Details tba.

A CORRECTION

In the photograph of the 1967 Clunes Walk Team the names of the participants showed that Jeff Thornell was a member of the team. Norm advises that it was him, Norm Thornell, in the team and not Jeff!

VALE:

William Ernest Allan 'Bill' Allen was born in England on 5 February 1934 a brother to Percival Richard Allen. In 1947, it was announced that all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 30 were to be called up. This was quickly changed to all 17 to 21-year-olds. The conscripts initially served for 18 months but in 1950, during the Korean War (1950-53), this was increased to two years. Bill was called up. Many British 'Nashos' served overseas. Bill was one of them. He served with the Army with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. Some of his service was in Bermuda! Between 1949, when the National Service Act came into force, and 1963, when the last National Serviceman was demobilised, more than 2 million men had been conscripted to the British Army, Royal Navy or Royal Air Force.



Bill married Joyce Hart and the couple had two children: Peter and Penny (Potts). When he reached Australia, Bill transferred to the Citizen Military Forces and joined 2 RVR as 3177028 on 16 July 1966. A year later Bill was a member of the B Company Marching Team that marched from Ballarat to Clunes on a Saturday and marched back on the Sunday. Bill discharged from 2 RVR on 11 December 1975.



Left: In 2017, Bill attended a gathering for the 50th Anniversary of the march. (Bill is front in black)

After Joyce died, Bill found a long-time friend and companion in Jacqueline Gander - they were friends for 32 years. Bill was a grandfather to Robin and Ross, grandfather-in-law to Renee and great-granddad to Melanie, a supportive step-father and friend to Robert & Theresa, step-grandfather and great-grandfather to Jason, Jared, Tasha & Riley.

was a long-time member of the Lodge and was a long-time member of the 8/7th Battalion-2 RVR Association and even in his later years attended the association annual dinners in Ballarat. Bill passed away peacefully in Kyneton on 25 Apr 2024, aged 90 years.

Bill had many interests, one being Fly Fishing. He



A Funeral Service to celebrate the life of Bill Allen was held at the Thomas J. Scott Memorial Chapel in Kyneton on Thursday, 9 May 2024. A Private Cremation followed. Bruce McKinnon attended the funeral.

An Obituary for William Ernest Allan Allen was placed online: 'It is always difficult saying goodbye to someone we love and cherish. Family and friends must say goodbye to their beloved William Ernest Allan Allen (Kyneton, Victoria), who passed away at the age of 90, on April 25, 2024. ... As we bid adieu to Bill's earthly form, let us not dwell on the void left in his wake, but rather celebrate the legacy of love and inspiration Bill has bequeathed us. For though he may have departed from our sight, his spirit remains a timeless beacon, guiding loved ones through the labyrinth of life's journey.'

Rev John Furness: Ex-military people in Ballarat will have come across the Reverend John Furness at many Ex-military activities, such as Legacy, the Vietnam Veterans or the Air Force Association.

At the Clifton Hill Methodist Church on 7 August 1938 the Rev. Oliver Furness and Miss Edna Hall (a member of the Young Women's Missionary Movement) were dedicated to missionary service. They were appointed to Rotuma, Fiji, by the Methodist Overseas Mission, and were married before their departure.

John Frederick Furness was born at Nurse Morrison's Hospital in Suva, Fiji on 24 August 1940 to The Reverend Oliver and Mrs Edna Furness, the first of four sons. In 1942, as the war in the Pacific escalated, the family moved back to Australia. Three more sons (Wesley, Ian and Ross) arrived, the youngest being Ross, who was born 11 May 1948. Ross worked at the School of Mines, Ballarat, and has been involved with the Ballarat Mechanics Institute for many years.

Right: Ross, Ian, Wesley and John Furness



Just like happens with the Regular Army, Ministers were regularly moved around. The Furness family had many moves while the boys were at school. John's education was undertaken at Longford and Sandy Bay State Schools in Tasmania then Hobart, Melbourne and Box Hill High Schools and finally Burwood Teacher's College from where he graduated in 1958 as an 18-year-old State School Teacher. Some of John's teaching positions were at Laverton State School, Pomborneit and Arawata State (Head Teacher), Geelong West Technical School and the AI Mine Settlement and Fiskville State School (Head Teacher). John enjoyed sport and was good at Aussie Rules Football, Cricket and Table Tennis. At 23 years-of-age, on 19 April 1962, John married Dianne (born 23 November 1940). They would have three children: Sharon, Greg and Michael, then three grandchildren: Taylor, Ashleigh and Clint and three great-great grandchildren: Ella, Grace and Annie.

While he enjoyed teaching, John was called to the Ministry and undertook Theological Training at the University of Melbourne. This was followed by Student Pastor Training at Castlemaine, West Brunswick and Ferntree Gully. He was ordained into the Methodist Church in 1971 (later The Uniting Church, from 1977).



John commenced his Ministry at Yanac (2 years), Canterbury (3 years) and finally at St Andrews in Ballarat for 7 years. He retired from full-time preaching at 65 years-of-age) in 2005. In 1974 John had joined the Regular Army. He was posted to 21 Supply Battalion in NSW for three years before discharge. He later joined the Army Reserve in 1982 and served at Headquarters 3rd Military District (Melbourne) and from 1982 – 84 at Monash University Regiment. This service put him in good stead to provide Chaplaincy to numerous schools and colleges including Ballarat and Clarendon College and serving many ex-military organisations

including Legacy, the Vietnam Veterans and the Air Force Association here in Ballarat. Above left: Reverends John, Wesley and Oliver Furness

Dianne died on 2 October 2021, aged 80 years. Since then, John had slowed down, but he was alert right to the end with his incisive questions and humour. He died at Gandarra in Ballarat on 18 May 2024, aged 83 years. His funeral service was held at The Doveton Park Funeral Centre (Tobin's) on 23 May 2024 and was attended by almost 200 mourners, many being from the Veteran Community. Right: Rev John Furness in Ballarat (Courier photo)



SAD NEWS:

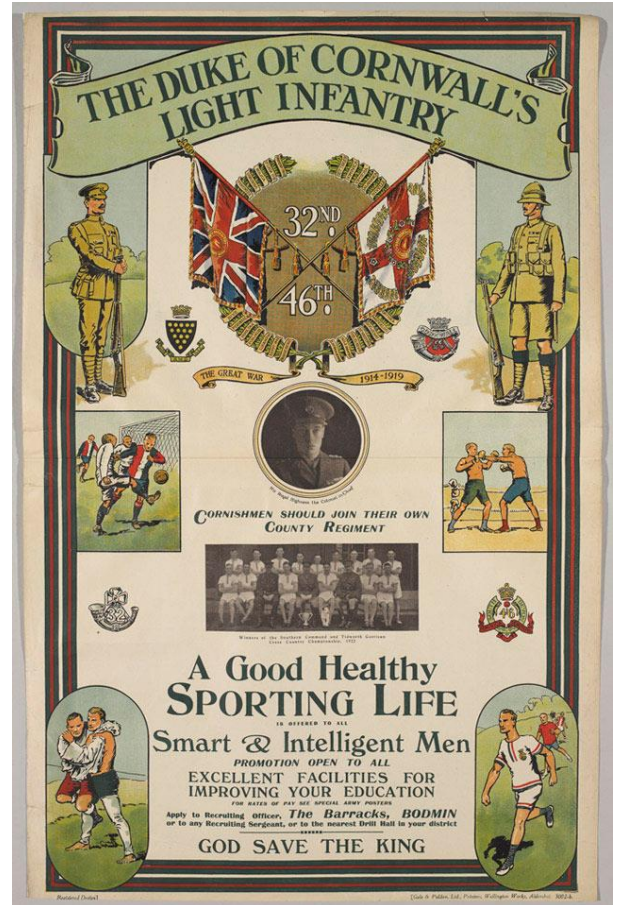
Notice was received from Col Bish, resident in Mareeba, Queensland, of the death of his wife Jill on 10 June 2024. 87-year-old Col has himself been diagnosed with cancer. Further information in the next newsletter.

OF INTEREST

British National Service

National Service in Britain was a standardised form of peacetime conscription. In 1947, it was announced that all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 30 were to be called up. This was quickly changed to all 17 to 21-year-olds. The conscripts initially served for 18 months. But in 1950, during the Korean War (1950-53), this was increased to two years. Between 1949, when the National Service Act came into force, and 1963, when the last National Serviceman was 'demobbed', more than 2 million men were conscripted to the British Army, Royal Navy or Royal Air Force.

The **Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry (DCLI)** was a light infantry regiment of the British Army in existence from 1881 to 1959. The regiment was created on 1 July 1881 by the merger of the 32nd (Cornwall Light Infantry) Regiment of Foot and the 46th (South Devonshire) Regiment of Foot. The DCLI also incorporated the militia and rifle volunteers of Cornwall. In 1959 the regiment merged with the Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's) to form the Somerset and Cornwall Light Infantry. However, this was amalgamated with the Durham Light Infantry, the King's Shropshire Light Infantry and the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry to form The Light Infantry which was also merged, in 2007, with the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment and the Royal Green Jackets to form The Rifles, which continues the lineage of the DCLI.



Following the WW2 the regiment reverted to two battalions. Between 1946 and 1954, the 1st Battalion served in Palestine, Cyprus, Somaliland, England, and the Federal Republic of Germany. The 2nd Battalion, between 1946 and 1948, served in Greece (including Eastern Macedonia). In 1948, it was reduced to a skeleton "representative cadre", before being amalgamated into the 1st Battalion in 1950.

In 1954, the 1st Battalion was posted to Jamaica, the last battalion to be posted to the West Indies for a full, three-year term. In March 1954 A Company detached on transit, posted to Prospect Camp, in the Atlantic archipelago of Bermuda. The Bermuda Garrison no longer received a full regular army infantry battalion, as the part-time Bermuda Volunteer Rifle Corps (BVRC) (retitled Bermuda Rifles in 1949) and Bermuda Militia Artillery (BMA) had long-since taken on most of the responsibility for local defence. A Company was the last regular unit posted on garrison to Bermuda, with its departure in July 1957 constituting the withdrawal of the garrison from the one-time Fortress Bermuda.

The officer commanding A Company, Major J. Anthony Marsh, DSO, a Second World War veteran of the Special Air Service, took permanent residence in Bermuda after leaving the regular army, retiring from military service in 1970 as a lieutenant-colonel, having commanded the Bermuda Militia Artillery and the Royal Bermuda Regiment (a 1965 amalgam of the BMA and the Bermuda Rifles). Also detached was E Company, being posted to British Honduras. In 1957, A and E companies reunited with the rest of the battalion in England, before being posted to Osnabrück in Germany, where it remained until 1959.

On 6 October 1959, the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry merged with the Somerset Light Infantry to form the Somerset and Cornwall Light Infantry.

Hawkei, Japan, 5 March 2024: (Jason County)

The Australian designed and manufactured Hawkei Protected Mobility Vehicle - Light (PMV-L) is currently engaged in competitive field and laboratory selection trials for a major Japanese Ground Self Defence Force (JGSDF) acquisition program. The Thales Hawkei PMV-L has been now selected (for trialling) for the Japanese Ground Self Defence Force's replacement program for its legacy fleet of Komatsu LAV Light Armoured Vehicles.



Photographs of a JGSDF trials Hawkei have been appearing on Japanese social media platforms since mid-2023, revealing a four door Hawkei modified with a WE Platt MR Series Ring Mount weapons station and dual four round 76mm obscurant/smoke munition launchers.

The trials Hawkei PMV-L has been repainted in the JGSDF's traditional two-colour jungle green and olive drab colour scheme with the canvas cargo bay cover in a light jungle green making the vehicle distinctively differently than those in Australian Army service.

The Hawkei is being offered to the Japanese military by a consortium spearheaded by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) and Thales, with the trials vehicles featuring the Mitsubishi badge on the grill. The Hawkei PMV-L is engaged in competitive trials against the General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS) Mowag Eagle V MRAP mine resistant ambush protected light armoured vehicles.

Tom Chambers from Japan

Tom and Lorraine have just completed a holiday in Japan. While there they visited the 'Kamikaze Museum. Tom sent some photos!

The Imperial Japanese Army airbase at Chiran, Minamikyūshū, on the Satsuma Peninsula of Kagoshima, Japan, served as the departure point for hundreds of Special Attack or 'Kamikaze' sorties launched in the final months of World War II. A peace museum dedicated to the pilots, the **Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots** now marks the site. The airbase, with its two runways, was the principal base of the kamikaze pilots during the Battle of Okinawa. Of the 1,036 army aviators who died in these attacks, 439 were from Chiran. Of the total number, 335 were classed as "young boy pilots"



BITS AND PIECES

From Newsletter 4 of 2023: Names added to photo captions:



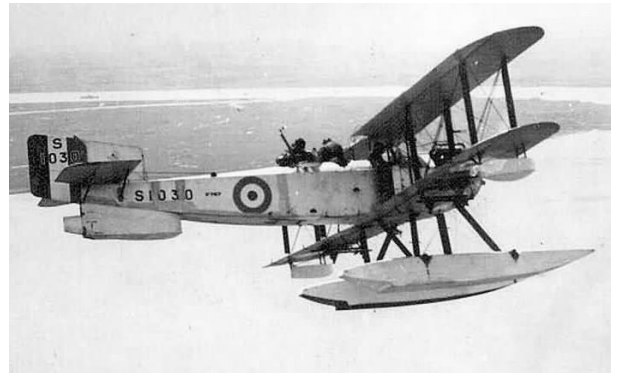
Rear: Jeff Zala then **five Unknowns**
Front: Unknown, Cpl Jeff Whitten,
WO2 Alan Douglass, Sgt Dick Wilkie,
Cpl Peter Kelly, Pte Peter Bogart



Left: Jeff Zala, **Cheryl Kirk**, Les Taylor
Right: **Rod Neaves**, **unknown lady**,
Miss Sandow and **Colin Sandow**.

Around Australia Flight

The first flight around Australia was in a Fairey IIID, a modified land plane - the wheels had been removed and replaced with floats! The pilots were RAAF officers Stanley Goble and Ivor McIntyre. The trip began at Point Cook, Victoria, on 6 April 1924 and concluded 44 days later. The duo covered 8,450 miles in 93 hours flying time.



The centenary of that epic flight was undertaken by Michael Smith, the owner of Yarraville's Sun Theatre and the 2016 Australian Geographic 'Adventurer of the Year'. Smith spent five years planning the centenary flight. He flew in a modern SeaBear L65, an amphibious seaplane he affectionately calls Southern Sun. Smith followed the same route and took the same time to follow the original flight path. As Goble and McIntyre did, Smith left RAAF Pt Cook on 6 April. His flight took him to Corner Inlet, Eden, Sydney, Myall River, Southport, Gladstone, Townsville, Cooktown, Thursday Island, Elcho Island, Darwin, Napier, Broome Bay, Port Headland, Onslow, Carnarvon, Geraldton, Perth, Albany, Esperance, Israelite Bay, Ceduna, Port Lincoln, Beach Port, St Kilda and returning to Point Cook at 2.10pm on 19 May, the exact same date and time as Goble and McIntyre. During his flight he kept the coastline of Australia on his left, just 500 feet below.



The main difference between the two flights were that on the original flight ended each night at a beach and refueled, whereas Smith, after landing at the same beach, was able to take off again and land at an airport, staying there for the night.

Left: Wing Commander Rob Gill (left) receives the RAAF Ensign that was carried on the flight from Mike Smith.

BALLARAT RANGER MILITARY MUSEUM

The museum expansion project progresses, albeit slowly. The two 40' containers are connected into a 'U' shape and the insulation has been fitted into the ceiling of each of the containers. Both containers now have the hessian ceilings covering fitted, giving it a look and feel of being in a underground bunker, and the lighting tracks are in place. New display cabinets have been ordered and the air conditioner installed. The lining of the walls continues. The aim is to have the new place for the Battalion Birthday on 9 August 2024.



Cadet Medal

Gavin Cormack, from Tocumwal, found an unusual medal and sent it to the Ranger Museum. The medal, awarded to the Champion Team, District Competition, Commonwealth Military Competitions, Senior Cadets 1911-12, was presented to Cadet G. Muntz of the 49th Battalion.

Compulsory Military Training (also known as Universal Training) was introduced in July 1911 when 17-year-olds commenced as Senior Cadets with their local Commonwealth Military Forces (the first use of the term CMF) 'Militia' unit. In July 1912 the full scheme commenced with the old 'Militia' forces closed down and new units formed to cope with the expansion of the 'Militia'. In July 1912, the original Senior Cadets, many by now 18-year-olds, transferred to the 'Militia' unit. 12 to 14-year-olds commenced as Junior Cadets with their school and 15 to 17-year-olds as Senior Cadets with the 'Militia'. From researching the history of the competition, it was found that the Senior Cadets in 1911 were named after the units to be formed in 1912. Consequently, Muntz's 49th Battalion would have actually become the 49th Infantry, later the 49th (Pahran) Infantry. Note: changing from Junior to Senior Cadet and then into the 'Militia' occurred during the year the Cadets turned 14 and 18.

No further information could be found on G. Muntz – there was no-one of his name and age who served in 'The Great War', and no death notice or grave could be found for a G. Muntz that would have fitted. However, information was found on the Cadet Competition. Each company of Senior Cadets in a unit was to provide a team of 40 members and the unit would undertake a competition to select a team to represent it. The winning team would compete against the teams selected from the other units in its brigade. The brigade's winning team would then compete against the winners from the other brigades in its Military District to represent that district in a national championship.

The competition included: Rifle shooting, Inspection, Physical Training and Company Drill and Skirmishing. The competing teams in the 3rd Military District (Victoria) were:
48th Battalion 'F Company', Canterbury; (12th Brigade),
49th Battalion 'K Company', Wesley College; (13th Brigade) – G. Muntz's team,
54th Battalion North Fitzroy, (Merri), 14th Brigade,
59th Battalion 'B Company', Coburg, 15th Brigade,
64th Battalion Continuation School, 16th Brigade, and
66th Battalion Castlemaine, 17th Brigade.

Ballarat's 18th Brigade was not a part of the competition.

The competitions were held at the Williamstown Rifle Range and the Exhibition Building in Carlton on 21/22 June 1912. The teams who competed were:

New South Wales: "G" Company, 19th Battalion (Hornsby),
 Queensland: "I" Company, 5th Battalion (Nudgee College),
 South Australia: "A" Company, 80th Battalion (North Adelaide),
 Tasmania: "F" Company, 93rd Battalion (Hobart), and
 Victoria: "J" Company, 64th Battalion (Melbourne High School –
 formerly Melbourne Continuation School).

(For logistical reasons there was no West Australian team).

The Victorian 64th Battalion won the competitions!

Muntz's team did not win the District Competition, so why he was presented with the medal in unknown. Perhaps all competing teams received such a medal!

Further to the introduction on Compulsory Military Training, in the 18 November 1912 newspapers it was reported 17,370 Senior Cadets marched through Melbourne (right) in a parade of Cadets taking over an hour to pass the Saluting Dais at Parliament House, where the Governor-General and State Governor stood. Geelong held a similar event where some 1,200 Cadets marched.



A Photo from 2 RVR Days



From Jeff Zala's collection: The Old Black Dog (4 Platoon, B Company, Ballarat).

Standing right side Jacka Smith

Seated 3rd from left Jeff Zala, 2nd from right Jeff Whitten

Can anyone add names and the time and place?

(Probably taken at the Russell Street Barracks!)



Another from the Zala Collection.

Can anyone add names and the time and place? (Tents in the background!)

Jeff Whitten, kneeling in the centre.

Know Your Barracks:

Shepparton: In the early days of the militia in Shepparton, training was held in the public hall in Welsford Street (opposite the police station).

With the introduction of Compulsory Military Training in 1912 the cadets trained at the Shepparton Agricultural School. The Drill Hall was built in 1915-16. It was initially used by the 7th Light Horse and Senior Cadets of the 57th and 60th Infantry. It was named Somme Barracks after the battles of the Somme, in which all country Victorian battalions fought. The Drill Hall has been used by infantry in Shepparton under the 57th Infantry (Merri Regt), the 60th (Brunswick-Carlton) Infantry, the 58th Infantry and the 59th Infantry. Since the Second World War it has been used by the 59th Battalion (Hume Regiment), 2 RVR, 22 RVR and 8/7 RVR.

On 28 July 1989, the Soldiers' Club was named the Gordon Ayre, MM, Club after Sergeant Gordon Ayre, a stretcher bearer in the 58th/59th Battalion in the Second World War. It was opened by his widow Norma and Wally Johnson, the man seen being helped across a river by Ayre in Damien Parer's famous photograph (right).



Swan Hill: With the introduction of national service in 1951, a CMF depot was needed in Swan Hill. A Company, 38th Battalion was raised with two platoons there and one in Kerang. The Swan Hill members paraded in the scout hall at the showgrounds before moving to a hall at the racecourse. On 30 November 1956 the new training depot in Grey Street was opened. It was later named Messines Barracks after the WW1 Battle fought in by the 38th Battalion, 10th Brigade, 3rd Australian Division. At the end of National Service in 1959, the depot was closed, until a platoon of A Company, 2 RVR was raised there in 1981.

Staff from the 3rd Division inspected the building to assess the repairs needed so that it could be used by the platoon. The depot had been vacant for some years, and there had been some vandalism. Most windows were without glass. After waiting for repairs to commence, members who were qualified tradesmen decided

to start the work themselves. Soon after they had completed the soldiers' club and some of the other main repairs, the long-awaited repair program started.

The depot was completely refurbished in 1998. A mezzanine floor was installed inside the main hall and a lecture room constructed under it. A new shed, originally planned for the Cobram depot, was built behind the existing depot.



MERCHANDISE:

8/7 Battalion-2 RVR Association Merchandise as at March 2024.



Item:	Price
Polo Top, Black	\$45
Polo Top, Green	\$45
Cap	\$20
Tie	\$30
Lapel Badge	\$10
Association Patch, Green	\$10 (one remaining)
Association Patch, Black	\$10 (one remaining)
RVR Emblem Patch	\$10 (one remaining)
Cold Weather Jacket	\$96 (One Size L only available)
Cold Weather Vest	Nil Stock

To order: contact Jason on email (preferred) at j_county@hotmail.com

2024 ROTARY RAFFLE

The association sold 50 Raffle Books this year – a 'nice little earner!' the winners were:

1 st Prize – Hyundai Tucson: Kathleen (Colac). Ticket # 050668

2 nd Prize: \$1000 Bunnings vouchers: Thomas (Grovedale). Ticket # 030397

Front Door Bell

Visitors not Welcome!!

From Warren Block (RVR-A)
via Bob Prewett





The North-Western Ranger

8th/7th BATTALION – 2RVR ASSOCIATION Inc.
VICTORIA'S OWN COUNTRY BATTALION
(Including the Ballarat Ranger Military Museum Newsletter)



If undeliverable, please return to:
8/7 Bn – 2 RVR Association
c/- 3/519 Peel St North
Ballarat, Vic, 3350

Vol 28, No. 1, March 2024

Right: Lesson time at Watsonia
Dick Wilkie with a 'protected' Steyr and Chris Liston

This newsletter was printed by the office of:

JULIANA ADDISON
MEMBER FOR WENDOUREE

