



## *The North-Western Ranger*

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



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This newsletter was printed by the office of:

**JULIANA ADDISON**  
MEMBER FOR WENDOUREE

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

Vol 28 No 3 September 2024

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## **Committee:**

President	Dick Wilkie
Vice President	Chris Liston
Secretary	Jason County
Treasurer/Welfare/Membership and Warrnambool	Barbara Birthisel
Editor	Neil Leckie
<b>Committee Members 2023/24</b>	Greg Code Lindsay Govan Bruce McKinnon Ian Nunn Les Taylor Barry & Heather Harris

[richardwilkie@outlook.com](mailto:richardwilkie@outlook.com)

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## **8/7 Battalion – 2 RVR Association**

### **Annual Activities:**

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

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### **Monthly Activities:**

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

The Association's Newsletter Editor's email address is [87th2vrassoc@gmail.com](mailto:87th2vrassoc@gmail.com)  
For urgent newsletter matters please use [nkaleckie@outlook.com.au](mailto:nkaleckie@outlook.com.au)

## RECENT EVENTS

### Ballarat Dinner, 5 October 2024

The Ballarat dinner for 2024 was held at the Sebastopol Bowling Club. The association was pleased to have battalion members Major Robert Powell, OC C Company, Ballarat, outgoing RSM WO1 Matthew and Mrs. Elisha Vermey (Ballarat), and Lance Corporal Daniel Ryan (Sniper Platoon, Support Company) and his sister Kiara. During the evening, Lance Corporal Ryan was awarded the Junior Leader of the Year award, presented by the association. The RSM read out his achievements, which for a young man, were considerable. Major Powell spoke of the battalion's training for 2024. Private St Ares Gillardi was awarded the Soldier of the Year award, but unfortunately was not available to attend the evening.



Above: President Dick Wilkie presents LCpl Ryan his award.

### Warrnambool Annual Dinner, 12 October 2024, Warrnambool RSL

The Warrnambool Annual Dinner for the association was held, as usual, on the second Saturday of in October. After a few late withdrawals, 42 attended, including the Guest Speaker, Lieutenant Colonel Catherine McGregor, who had been the Guest Speaker at Warrnambool on ANZAC Day. The Master of Ceremonies for the dinner was Lyndon King. Also in attendance was association President Dick Wilkie. All attendees were subsidized in some form by the association.

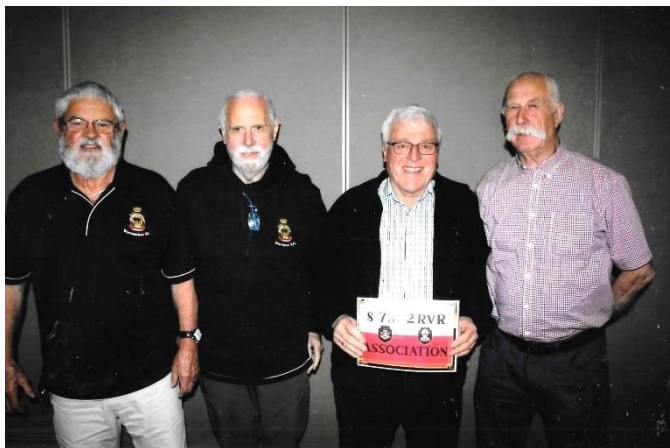
Right: President Dick Wilkie and Treasurer Barbara Birthisel have a chuckle with the Guest Speaker, Catherine McGregor, addressing the diners at Warrnambool. Photo Max Humphrys.



Catherine Elizabeth McGregor was born in Toowoomba Queensland, on 24 May 1956 and at 17 years of age joined the Army as an Officer Cadet at the Royal Military College, graduating after four years with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours). Junior Command appointments with 8/9 RAR and the Jungle Training Centre followed. McGregor was promoted to Captain but then resigned from the Army and worked as an Articled Clerk for law firms before becoming a speech writer for the Labor Party, including for NSW Premier Bob Carr and Federal leader Kim Beazley and in 1993 for the Liberal party's election campaign. Seeking an operational deployment McGregor returned to the Army in 2001 and was deployed to East Timor. Then followed staff appointments at Army Headquarters, including as a speech writer for the Chief of Army from 2001 to 2014.

On Australia Day in 2012, then Lieutenant Colonel McGregor was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in the Military Division for "exceptional service to the Australian Army as the Director of the Land Warfare Studies Centre". McGregor left the Army, transferring to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Reserve on 20 June 2014 as a Group Captain, to work on projects for the Chief of Air Force. McGregor has since left the Air Force. Catherine McGregor has also worked as a cricket writer and commentator and is a published author.

## ANNUAL DINNER PHOTOS -Ballarat (upper), Warrnambool (lower)



## VALE

Dean Jason Lane Brunt was born in Warrnambool on 24 July 1969 and attended Warrnambool High School.



He found employment with K Mart and worked there for most of his life. Dean's brother Sheldon had joined 8/7 RVR and in 1986 Dean followed him, becoming a member of the Mortar Platoon. He attended Exercises Kangaroo '89 (K89) and Predator's Retreat in 1989, the second company deployment on Ex Tasman Exchange to New Zealand and K91.

Dean loved the military, its history, its tactics, its weapons and he loved a drink over which he could talk about military matters. Dean discharged from the Army Reserve in 2000. Sheldon and Dean were estranged from their father and after their parents divorced their mother, Rosalyn, married Ray Taylor. Sadly,

Roslyn died in December 2018. Ray was living in Boort and became ill. Dean, although himself diagnosed with brain cancer, moved to Boort to look after his ailing Step-father. Ray died in Boort on 19 October. Dean succumbed to his cancer and on 6 November also died in Boort. The family held a private cremation for Dean on 9 November 2024. Loved brother and brother-in-law of Sheldon and Stacey, loved uncle of Dylan and Jessica and great uncle of Archie.

Above: Sheldon and Dean (at right) talking military 'stuff' over a beer



Left: from the Warrnambool photo collection: 'Privates D. Brunt and G. Brunt. Hand preparing for deployment on Exercise Martin Revisited.'

### From Army, 10 May 1990:

KAMARIAN forces operating in NSW during the past few months were routed by 5 Bde soldiers following a two-week exercise in the Hunter Valley. The exercise scenario saw 5 Bde troops called in to assist civil police in a low-level operation against an 'enemy' battalion. More than 2,500 reservists from eleven units of the Sydney based 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade took part in the exercise Martin Revisited, named after one of the brigade's early commanders, Brigadier E. Martin,

ARA soldiers from 3RAR began the exercise by parachuting onto the Singleton Range, securing landing areas for the reservists. The 3RAR soldiers then changed roles and acted as enemy for the exercise.

While the infantry and its support elements fought the Kamarians, 2 Field Dental Unit helped out the community by visiting primary schools in the Hunter Valley, while Army engineers built and repaired roads. About 120 soldiers from New Zealand's 116 Field Regiment added an international flavour to the exercise. They were in Australia for the annual exchange exercise, Tasman Reserve.

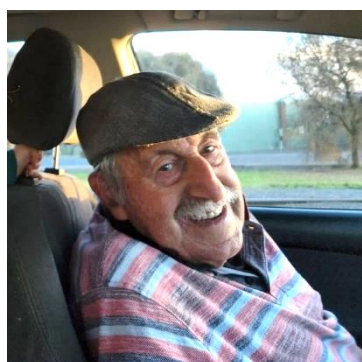
**Arnold John Sheedy** was born on 7 December 1945 and enlisted the Citizen Military Forces with 2 RVR Warrnambool on 22 May 1967. He discharged from The Army Reserve on 16 May 1978. Among other things Arnold worked as a window cleaner and a Crossing Supervisor or 'Lolly-pop Man'. He was from Terang.

Lyndon King reported that Arnold died at home on 25 October 2024 after a short struggle with cancer. He is survived by his children Mick, Tina, Paul, Melody and Melissa. A private funeral has been held.

A memorial service will be held for Arnold's family and friends at Natural Grace Warrnambool, 82 Fairy Street at 11am on Friday 20 December 2024.



Above: Arnold Sheedy with Max Quarrell (at right)



**1971 Assault Pioneer Camp** *Can anyone identify these men?*  
Bernie O'Keefe (LCpl, middle row 2<sup>nd</sup> from left) and  
Arnold Sheedy (front row left).



## REMEMBRANCE DAY, BALLARAT

As usual, Remembrance Day morning in Ballarat was full of activities. Services commenced at the Memorial Wall at the Arch of Victory, followed by the main service at the Cenotaph in the Sturt Street median strip. A few minutes later the Buninyong service commenced followed by Sebastopol. The morning finished with a short service at the National Prisoner of War Memorial in the Ballarat Gardens across the road from Lake Wendouree.

The main Ballarat service attendees included four members of the HMAS Ballarat (below right). Respected Ballarat identity, Reg Mowat, was the Master of Ceremonies. The Catafalque Party (right) and the Guest Speaker, Ballarat's Major Robert Powell, Officer Commanding C Company (below), were from 8/7 RVR, Ballarat.

Sebastopol Army Cadets provided the Flag Party.



8/7 RVR also co-ordinated the wreaths. Music was provided by the Ballarat Vintage Brass Band and the choir was from Sing Australia. A student each from Ballarat Grammar and Loreto College shared the recitation.



After the services hospitality was enjoyed at the Midlands – Ballarat RSL Sports and Services Club.

## REMEMBRANCE DAY, WARRNAMBOOL

The Remembrance Service provided an opportunity for quiet reflection, prayers and an address from RSL President Tony Geyer.



Then there was wreath laying, The Ode, The Last Post, with a one-minute silent tribute at 11am, Reveille and the National Anthem.

After the service, light refreshments followed at the Saltwater Bistro.

## **'8/7 RVR OLDS & BOLDS' JOIN EX-22 RVR-A FOR DINNER AT THE SHEPPARTON RSL**

22 RVR drew its soldiers from all across Victoria, along with some from Tasmania and a few others from other states. The Ex-22 RVR Association was formed in 1988 and each year holds an AGM weekend usually in a Victorian country town. The 2024 AGM Weekend was held in Shepparton, with most activities being held at the RSL.

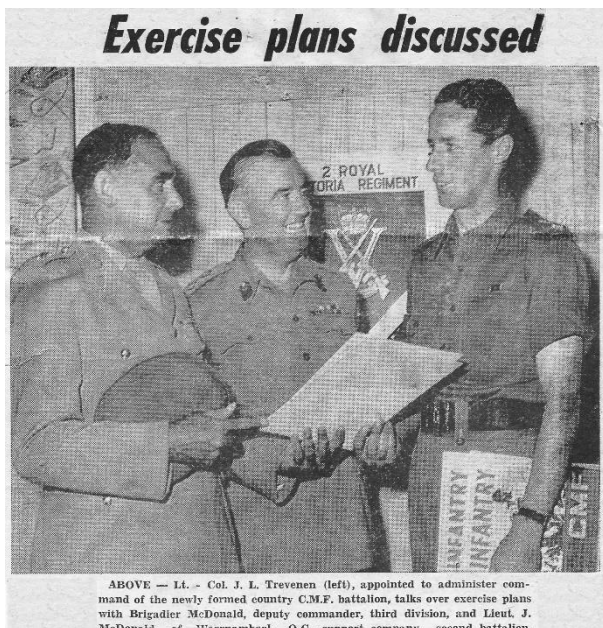
On Saturday 19 October the dinner was held in the RSL Bistro. The Ex-22 RVR Association was joined by five members of a loosely-bound group known as '8/7 RVR Olds and Bolds' who keep in contact through Facebook. This group is made up of mainly locals who served with 2 RVR and/or 8/7 RVR. After the meal was over the association's voluntary Piper, Jason Blake, entertained us with a few tunes on the 'blow stick' from his bagpipes (below).



Right: Travis Rosenow of the '8/7 RVR Olds and Bolds' thanking the Ex 22 RVR-A for the invitation to join the Saturday night AGM Weekend dinner.



## **NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS FROM WARRNAMBOOL (Lyndon King)**



Left: 1965, newly appointed CO, 2 RVR, Lt Col John Trevenen, with Brigadier Stuart McDonald with newly appointed OC Spt Coy, Lt John McDonald.

Right: 6 February 1978, WO2 John McKenner (ARA) with newly appointed OC A Coy, Captain Lex Neville and outgoing OC Major Les Earl.

## FAREWELL FROM THE REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR, WARRANT OFFICER CLASS ONE MATTHEW VERMEY

It had been ten years since I last served in the Royal Victoria Regiment albeit in 5/6 RVR at that time. So, it was with much excitement and anticipation that I looked forward to returning to the Regiment this time as the Regimental Sergeant Major of 8/7 RVR. It has been great being back.



And what a couple of years we have had! Firstly, with the numerous changes under Land Capability Review and the re-introduction of the Reconnaissance and Sniper Capabilities into the Battalion. Secondly, the Defence Strategic Review which has completely restructured and refocussed the 2nd Division. It definitely is an exciting time to be a soldier!

The list of activities over the last few years has been long and at times exhaustive. As some of you have observed during your visits, the tempo has been high as the Battalion completes traditional training blocks whilst modernising and re-structuring at the same time. Our training cell deserves a mention! With the Mod 2 RAINF training returning to the Battalion, our training cell developed and trialled several methods of delivery which has resulted in a successful model being adopted across the Brigade and is starting to see soldiers successfully progress through the training.

Without a doubt, the most challenging focus of the Battalion has been the transition to motorisation. In this space, the Battalion has lead the Division in innovative training opportunities and the development of soldiers and officers alike. In fact, I believe we are so well advanced in our thinking, direction and training that we are hindered in our progression while our direction is discussed and debated at higher levels. I strongly believe our approach to motorisation will be successful and will become a test model for other Battalions going forward.



(Above: Battalion Warfighter November 2023)

One area I am continuously amazed by is the amount of diverse opportunities there are for our soldiers. At any one time, the Battalion could have members on deployments, military courses, training support requests, training in foreign countries, ceremonial activities, sporting events, and the list goes on. Soldiers are only limited by their availability, however, the commitment and contribution of many of our soldiers need to be acknowledged.

To the Association, I thank you for your support and encouragement you have given the unit throughout recent years. Our continued connection with you enables the new generation of soldiers understand the proud history of the Battalion and what it means to be in “Country Victoria’s Own”.

Unfortunately, none of us can stay in the Battalion forever. As I leave the Regiment for the last time, I look back and reminisce on what makes the Regiment such an enjoyable destination. My answer is simply the people, both serving and retired. The people are very humble, honest, hardworking members of society who understand the importance of service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence. They are very proud to wear the uniform and are always unpretentious of their service. I wish you all a safe and enjoyable Christmas and a Happy New Year. I plan to remain engaged with the Regiment and Associations as I progress through my career. The future is very bright and a great time to be a soldier in the Regiment.



Above: Ex-Prisoners of War 20-year Memorial  
11 February 2024



Right: RSM PRODEV Aug 2023 – SERVOP-C and ARA staff.

### FINANCIAL MATTERS – Making it Difficult for the Treasurer!!!

Our Treasurer, Barbara Birthisel has advised that a Cash Deposit for \$55.00 was paid into the Ballarat Branch of the CBA. Unfortunately, there was no identifying reference of either the depositor's name, or what the money was for. If you paid into the Ballarat Branch, CBA in late October, please contact Barbara and advise the date, how much the amount was and what it was for.

Contact Barbara at [barbarabirthisel@bigpond.com](mailto:barbarabirthisel@bigpond.com)

**Membership is \$25 per year and can be paid by EFT to:**

**8/7 Bn – RVR-A 063 502 1035 4333**

**State your name in the Reference!**

### MERCHANDISE:

**8/7 Battalion-2 RVR Association Merchandise as at March 2024. Postage is separate.**



Item:	Price
Polo Top, Black	\$45
Polo Top, Green	\$45
Cap	\$20
Tie	\$30
Lapel Badge	\$10
Association Patch, Green	\$10
Association Patch, Black	\$10
RVR Emblem Patch	\$10
Cold Weather Jacket	\$96
Cold Weather Vest	\$55
Nametag	\$7



**For orders:** contact Jason on  
email (preferred) at [j\\_county@hotmail.com](mailto:j_county@hotmail.com)

**8<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion – 2RVR Association Inc A0035094M**

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting**

**06th November 2024**

**Held at the Alfredton Sports and Community Centre**

1. **President** Dick Wilkie opened the meeting at 10.45am and welcomed all present.
2. A minute's silence to remember those who had departed in the past 12 months.
3. **Present:**  
Dick Wilkie, Bruce McKinnon, Lindsay Govan, Bob Prewett, Greg Code, Ian Nunn, Neil Leckie, Barry Harris, Heather Harris, Barbara Birthisel, Neil Bailey, Jason County, Chris Liston (13)
4. **Apologies:**  
Peter Kelly, Les Taylor, Bill Burns, Noel Denman, Bluey Franc, Bob Hope (6)  
Moved Neil Leckie seconded Greg Code; that the apologies as noted be accepted. Carried
5. **Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting** held on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 were read out.  
Moved Barry Harris seconded Lindsay Govan; that the Minutes be confirmed as a true and correct record.  
Carried
6. **Business Arising from the minutes**  
Neil Leckie advised, that the Newsletter was now being printed by Julianna Addison – Member for Wendouree.
7. **Reports for 2023 - 2024**

**President report**

- \*Through liaison with Barry Harris the Association now has a meeting place at the Alfredton Sports Centre. Storage space has also been offered for association records etc.
- \*There has been success in our attempts to reconnect with the Unit. The Committee met at Bn HQ receiving support from the RSM assuring ongoing liaison between the Bn and Association.
- \*We need to be more vigilant on Association welfare matters.
- \*ANZAC DAY – Ballarat. Following the march members were made very welcome at the Alfredton Sports Centre joining in with the Netball and Football teams for a small ANZAC service before their matches commenced. Members adjourned to the club rooms for refreshments.
- \*Need to continue connection with Cadet Units.
- \*Members enjoyed a very successful day trip to Watsonia Army Camp.
- \*Another very successful day trip was to the Puckapunyal Firing range.
- \*The President raised and spoke to the fact that our members are the most important component of the Association.
- \*Future day trip is to Point Cook; It is to be held in the future before its closure.
- \*In closing his report, the President commended the efforts of the Committee throughout the year. Thank you to the retiring committee members for their continued support.
- \*Thank you all very much.

**Secretary**

- \*The year has been about re engaging post COVID.
- \*Successful liaison with WO2 Dick for the Watsonia and Puckapunyal day trips throughout the year.
- \*RSM very supportive.
- \*The Association Facebook page has been established and proving very popular.

- \*There has been a re engagement with the “Olds and Bolds Group” – Shepparton.
- \*Merchandise sales have increased considerably.
- \*In closing the future is looking brighter with a prediction of an increase in Association membership.

### **Newsletter**

- \*Neil Leckie reported that it was a pleasure to take on the role of Newsletter editor. The role being a combination of Association and Museum Newsletter.
- \*Anticipated four (4) editions each year.
- \*As previously mentioned the member’s office is printing Newsletters free of charge.
- \*Everything going well. Thanks to Dick and Jason for their input.

### **Welfare**

- \*Reported that the Association had acknowledged members who had passed away and also sent the Association’s best wishes to several members who were unwell.
- \*Raised this can only be done if the Committee is advised for the above circumstances.

Moved Greg Code seconded Chris Liston that the above reports as presented be accepted. C’d.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

- \*Barbara Birthisel, presented and spoke to the Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the CBA Working Account and People’s Choice Investment Account. Other matters raised were Membership and Merchandise trading.
- \*The Auditor’s report revealed that there was a good representation of the Association’s finances; deeming a true and correct record.
- \*Moved Barbara Birthisel that her Treasurer’s Report as presented be accepted seconded Greg Code.

Carried

### **Auditor’s report**

Auditor, Bob Prewett advised that there is no need to appoint an auditor for next year. Suggested this matter be addressed on a needs basis.

Moved Jason County, seconded Greg Code that in future annual Audits be held on a needs basis.

Carried.

8. Moved Greg Code seconded Bruce McKinnon that the Secretary be directed to forward the Annual Statement to Consumer Affairs, Victoria within the prescribed time. Carried

### **9. *Recognition of Life Members***

Dick Wilkie, Tom Chambers, Barbara Birthisel, Lyndon King, Bruce McKinnon,  
There were no new nominations presented to the Committee.

### **10. *Membership***

- \*Moved Barry Harris seconded Bob Prewett confirming Membership numbers as at 01.10.2024 as 164

Carried

### **11. *Election of Office Bearers***

Dick Wilkie the outgoing President declared all positions vacant and handed over the Chair to Bob Prewett to conduct the Election of Office Bearers.

Prior to the AGM nomination forms had been received.

PRESIDENT:

Nomination form received for DICK WILKIE, first and seconded.

No other nominations received.

DICK WILKIE declared President, accepted

Carried

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

Nomination form received for CHRIS LISTON, first and seconded.

Nomination form received for GREG CODE, first and seconded.

Following a show of hands for both nominations, CHRIS LISTON was declared Vice President, accepted

Carried

**SECRETARY**

Nomination form received for JASON COUNTY first and seconded.

No other nominations received.

JASON COUNTY declared Secretary, accepted

Carried

**TREASURER**

Nomination form received from BARBARA BIRTHISEL, first and seconded.

No other nominations received.

BARBARA BIRTHISEL declared Treasurer, accepted.

Carried

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Ian Nunn; Neil Leckie; Les Taylor, Bruce McKinnon, Greg Code, Barry Harris, Heather Harris. The listed members were duly reelected/elected

Carried

Appreciation of the Association was extended to Lindsay Govan for his many years of service and efforts given.

Appreciation also extended to other outgoing committee members –

Allan Wettenhall for his service

Lyndon King for his long standing service in providing the catering at the Warnambool dinner and in later years organizing the Dinner at the local RSL.

## **12. GENERAL BUSINESS**

\*Barry Harris advised that the ANZAC DAY matches over the next four years will be held on different ovals as a trial

\*Barry also reported that the Football Club was chuffed with the Association participation at their ANZAC DAY match this year.

## **13. CLOSE OF MEETING** The meeting was closed at 12.07pm



Left: Post-AGM discussions at Alfredton Sports & Recreation Centre

## MEMORIAL ROLL (List of Deceased Members), November 2024

If anyone can fill in the missing gaps in the date and/or place of death or confirm those years or places with a '?', please contact the Editor.

### DECEASED LIST, November 2024

Bill	Allen	2024, Kyneton	Max	Crellin	2020, Ballarat
Ian	Archibald	2018, Ballarat	Graeme 'Diesel' Cummins		2014
John	Armstrong	2021 (96), Ballarat?	Barry	Cushion	
Peter	Ashton	2019, QM, Ballarat	Graeme	Curtis	2007
(Carl) Tony	Augustine	2003, Mildura	Ted	Dalley	
Kevin	Bacon		Alf	Davis	2022 (88), Mildura?
Danny	Bailey		Bill	De Jong	2006
Kevin	Barker		Colin	Dellavedova	
Alan 'Pom'	Barry	2016	Ron	Disney	2020
John	Barnes		Ron	Ditchfield	2009
Max	Baudinette		Bill	Dobell	2015, Ballarat?
Frank	Beacham	2007?	George	Douglass	2021, Ballarat
Leslie	Beacham	2016	Don	Dow	2023, Geelong
Cedric	Bennett	2017	Kevin	Dower	2013, CO, Ballarat
Frank	Bird	2023, Ballarat?	Warren	Dower	2003
Colin 'Col'	Bish	2024, Mareeba, Qld	Graeme	Dowrick	2006
Peter	Bogart		Brian	Driscoll	2023, Warrnambool
Eddie	Boucher	2002	Les	Drury	2017 (84), B'rat?
Harry	Bowman	2014?	Wayne	Dunbar	2019, CO, Deni, NSW
Wally	Boyd	2010		Durston	
Eric	Boyle		Darryle	Eccles	
Craig	Brereton		Hugh	Eckel	2007, Darwin, NT
Len	Brereton	2001	Don 'DB'	Edwards	2009
Mark	Broemmer	2023	Ross	Edwards	
Ken	Brown	2016	Don	Ellis	2016, CO, Melb
Dean	Brunt	2024	Charlie	Elliott	
John	Brunt		Jack	Elliott	2008, Ballarat
John	Burke	2021	Robert	Elliott	
	Burton		Don	Eltringham	
Ian	Cameron	2010?	Sid	Eltringham	
Philip	Cameron	2021, Ballarat?	Ron	Ferrell (Wade-F)	2003, Hobart?
Lindsay	Campbell	2013?	Tony	Fitzgerald	
Pat	Carney		Kevin	Fiscalini	2018, Ballarat
Les	Casey	2006	Graeme	Foy	2023, Ballarat
Ken	Cavanagh	2008	Laurie	Frazer/Fraser	2010, Ballarat?
Tom (Snr)	Chambers		Ern	French	2018
Graham	Ching	2011, Ballarat	James	French	
'Pat'	Christopherson	2006	Bert	Fry	2010, CO, Ballarat
Bill	Clayden	2022, Mildura?	Henry	Fumberger	
John	Cleary	2010?	Vince	Fundak	2009
Bob	Cockral		Laurie	Gallagher	2004
Brian	Colbert	1982, CO, Ballarat	Malcolm	Gent	2014?
George	Collins	2010 (81), Qld?	Hugh	Gibson	2013?
Edmund	Cook		Frank 'Mick'	Gilshenan	2011, Mildura?
Brian	Cooper		Stan	Godfrey	
Dick	Cornwill	2020, Shepp?	Les	Gollop	
John	Coull	2021, Ballarat	Marinneus	Goosens	2017, Bendigo
George	Cox	2021, Qld?	Harry	Gordon	
Ted	Crane	2005, Mildura	Greg	Graham	2022, Ballarat
Bob	Creelman	2020, Ballarat	Bill	Green	

Donna Green (Nee Malone)	2011, Ballarat	John 'Jack'	Nhill/Nihill	2001, Ballarat?
Bob Grey		Henry 'Hank'	Nolan	2007, Chap, B'rat
Digby Hammond	2006, ARA, T'ville	Brian Noonan		
Les Keith Hatfield	2013, XO, 2 RVR	Frank Norton	2017, W'bool	
Wayne Harris	2024, CSM, C Coy	Edward 'Ted'	O'Flynn	2012
Norm Harvey	2006	David O'Grady	2007, W'bool	
Arthur Hems	2008	Bob Parker		
Neville Henry		Bob Paterson		
Bill Hermans	2016?	Gary Pearse	2023, Mildura	
Harold 'Ned' Heslop	2024	Frank Peebles	2004, Ballarat	
Phil Hicks	2023 (77), W'bool?	John Pemberton		
'Barry' Ingram	2021, Melb	Albert Penny		
Bill Jenkins		Ron Pentland	2001, WA?	
Bernie Jones		Peter Phillips		
Darryl Jones		Graeme Pickens	2017, Perth	
David Jones		Ken Pole/Poll		
Ivan Jones		John Porrit		
Trevor Johnstone		Peter Powers	2010?	
Llewelyn 'Lou' Jones-Owen	2018	Noel 'Mick' Prebbles		
Creighton Kaye	2023, Melb	Brian Prentice	2007?	
John Kerwin	2024, Echuca	Frank Punch	1992/1997/2005?	
Alan Kidd		Stewart/Stuart Pyers		
Tom Laffey	2004, Ballarat	David Rae	1997, Melb?	
Russell Lawry		Donald Rae	2008, Ringwood?	
David Lawson		Noel Rae	2021 (84), Courier	
Ken 'K G' Lee	2023, Ballarat	Peter Ramm	2018	
Ken Lempke		Harry Rasmussen		
Ken Letcher		Kevin Rees	2024	
Bob Lingham	2022, Wodaonga?	John Respini	2005	
John 'Jack' Littlewood (Snr)	1988, Qld	Gill Richards		
John Littlewood (Jnr)	2007, Canada	Peter Robinson		
Bill Lock		Dave Romein	2003	
Gerry Logan	2011	Alex Rossoli		
Tassie Long	1999, Tasmania	Ron Rumble	2018, Courier	
John Loveridge		Tom Sainty		
Ken Loveridge	2019, Ballarat?	Brian Sanderson	2019, W'bool	
Edward 'Ted' Lynes	2016, CO, Ballarat	Colin Sandow	2022, Perth	
James 'Jim' Mack	2021, CO, Ballarat	Harry Scurrie		
Tom Maher		John Schepis	2019	
James 'Jim' Malone	1995, Ballarat	David Schneider	1983?	
Alan Mathieson	2021, Ballarat	Alan Scott		
John 'Jack' McDonald	2002 (64), W'bool?	Dennis Shanley	2023, Port Fairy?	
Oska McGeary/McGery		Alan/Allan Sharp	2012, Ballarat	
Stewart/Stuart McLeod		Sid Sharp	2006	
Barry McMaster	2006, Ballarat	Peter Shilston	1993, Ballarat	
Kevin McSween	2020	Bob Sliver/Silva		
Bryan Moore		Elizabeth 'Betty' Smithson	2011, Ballarat	
Peter Morgan	2006?	Frank Smyth		
George Morrison	2002, Ballarat	Adam Spiteri	1992, Ballarat	
Bluey Mould		Andrew 'Jock' Stewart	2021, Ballarat/	
Russell Muir	1981, Creswick	Ray Stowe	2018	
Peter Murghy		Bert Strange		
Pater Murphy		Robert 'Bob' Suggett	2022, Geelong	
Laurie Murray/Murry		Gary Sutherland	2018 (80) or 2016 (82)	

Geoffrey	Swan	2013, CO, Melb	Ron	Walsh	
Dean	Swift	2008, Bendigo	Mal	Waterhouse	2013
Robert "Bob"	Taylor		Lindsay	Webb	
Gary	Thornton		Mick	Wethling	
Kie	Tinker	1993, W'bool	Shane	Wethling	
Brian	Tobin	2000s, Ballarat	Peter	Wertheimer	2019
Gerry	Tobin	2023, Ballarat	John	Whateley	2018, Ballarat
Leonard	Toohey	2002 (59)?	Max	Whiting	1993 or 1997?
Peter	Torpy	2006	Bruce	Wilson (Snr)	2000s, Ballarat?
John	Trevenen	2002, CO, Ballarat	Ron	Wilson	
Robert	Tung	2018	Victor	Wilson	
Gordon	Vivash		Gerry	Wright	
Bill	Walliker	2018			

## BALLARAT RANGER MILITARY MUSEUM MATTERS

### Sam Pearce VC MM's Body Found In Russia

While Sam Pearce served in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, his medal is not counted as being awarded to some-one in the military history of 8/7 RVR and its Predecessor Units!

**Samuel George Pearce** VC MM was born on 16 July 1897 at Penarth, Glamorganshire, Wales, to George Stapleton Pearce and his wife Sarah Ann, née Sellick. Initially educated at Penarth Boarding School, he moved to Australia with his family in 1911. His father acquired a property at Koorlong, near Mildura, Victoria. Pearce later worked as a fruit-picker, labourer, trapper, and as a deck-hand on a paddle-steamer.

Pearce served in the Militia for two years with the 73rd Infantry (Victorian Rangers), before volunteering for overseas service with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). At the time of his enlistment in July 1915 just before he turned eighteen, Pearce's occupation was as a rabbit-trapper. He sailed from Melbourne on 10 September 1915 aboard the *Star of Victoria*, assigned to the 9th Reinforcement for the 7th Battalion, landing on Gallipoli and spending two weeks in the line before the evacuation in December 1915.



After transferring to the 2nd Machine Gun Company, assigned to support the 2nd Brigade, Pearce subsequently saw action on the Western Front where he was wounded on 24 August 1916 but soon returned to his unit. On 28 September 1917 he was awarded the Military Medal for an action in single-handedly raiding a German machine gun-post east of Ypres in Belgium:

‘Normally this man is a runner ....and throughout he showed an utter disregard of danger in carrying messages, guiding parties and in bringing in wounded men on every return run’.

Pearce was awarded his Military Medal Ribbon by General Sir William Birdwood, there not being enough medals available. Apart from his awards for valour, Pearce's Service Record includes entries for neglect of duty, absence from guard and disobedience to orders. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on 21 November 1917. While on leave in England in January 1918 Pearce met Kitty Knox, an ambulance driver serving in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. Pearce was promoted to Corporal on 10 April 1918. Wounded a second time on 19 May 1918, he went to England to recover. Pearce and Kitty were engaged in May 1918 and spent time together while Pearce was convalescing after suffering a foot wound. He did not return to his unit until the end of the war. After undergoing training at the Machine Gun Depot, he was posted to the 1st Machine Gun Battalion on 1 December 1918.

Following the Armistice, Pearse was attracted by the prospect of a tour of duty with the North Russia Relief Force. He and Kitty were married on 1 June 1919 in Durham and when Kitty became pregnant they had decided to delay returning to Australia. Like the other 150 Australian soldiers who volunteered for the Relief Force, Pearse was discharged from the AIF on 18 July 1919 and enlisted in the British Army as a private soldier. Many of the volunteering Australians had come late to action in the war but Pearse was a battle-hardened veteran and was 22-years-old when promoted to Sergeant in the 45th Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers.

Pearse was killed after charging a machine gun post during an action at Emtsa, in North Russia, for which he was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross

‘For most conspicuous bravery, devotion to duty and self-sacrifice during the operation against the enemy battery position north of Emtsa, North Russia on the 29th August 1919. Sergeant Pearse cut his way through enemy barbed-wire under very heavy machine-gun and rifle fire and cleared a way for the troops to enter an enemy battery position. Seeing that a blockhouse was harassing our advance and causing us casualties, he charged the blockhouse single-handed, killing the occupants with bombs. This gallant non-commissioned officer met his death a minute later and it was due to him that the position was carried with so few casualties. His magnificent bravery and utter disregard for personal danger won for him the admiration of all troops.’

Samuel Pearse was buried in a military graveyard near the Obozerskaya Railway Station, between Emtsa and Archangel, North Russia. A photo taken in September 1919 shows his grave to be intact, but all visible traces of the graveyard eventually disappeared and the location forgotten. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission records him being buried in the Obozerskaya Burial Ground and then commemorated at the Archangel Allied Cemetery. The Allied War Cemetery in Archangel has plaques on its walls listing the names of all those buried elsewhere.

In 2018, a small team of Russian volunteers found a grave believed to be that of Sergeant Pearse after part-time searching for more than ten years. Guided by a 1925 map and 1919 aerial photograph, the remains were exhumed and are currently being stored at the Archangel Morgue. As of 2019, formal DNA identification of the remains has not yet been undertaken but the skeleton is the same height as Sergeant. Pearse (5'6"); the remains of a slouch hat were found in the grave; the grave was precisely as shown on the 1925 map; a toe was missing from the right foot, as mentioned in Pearse's Australian Army records; and the whitewashed stones found during the exhumation appeared to be those shown in the 1919 photograph.

On 29 August 2019, a brief ceremony with nine people in attendance took place at the remains of the bunker where Pearse died, unofficially commemorating the 100th anniversary. Those in attendance included seven Russians: three members of the search team, a priest, a female interpreter, a female reporter and her cameraman, and two Australians, Richard Christen (front at left), grandson of Pearse, and Damien Wright (rear), historian and author.



Kitty had a daughter, Victoria Catherine Sarah Pearse, born in February 1920, after Pearse's death. Kitty and Victoria later emigrated to Australia in May 1920 and Kitty married Albert Rose.

Pearse's Victoria Cross, Military Medal and 1914–15 Star are on display under his photo in the Hall of Valour at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra. Two other service medals were issued but their whereabouts is unknown. Sergeant Samuel Pearse is memorialised in Henderson Place, between 10<sup>th</sup> and

11<sup>th</sup> Streets, Mildura. (The above is based on a Wikipedia entry)

Following the rule that WW1 dead will not be repatriated to Australia: "If the exhumed remains are (positively) identified as being those of Sergeant Pearse VC MM, he will be interred and commemorated in a marked grave in the nearest CWGC cemetery, most likely in Archangel Allied Cemetery in Northern Russia."

### Homes For Some Ex 22 RVR Association Memorabilia



Those who attended Ranger Barracks and were able to visit the outdoor area of the messes would have noted the 22 RVR sign that once stood proudly in front of the Officers Mess at 'S' Block, Puckapunyal, facing the parade ground.

The sign had been recovered from a farm near Heathcote and was unveiled at the Ex 22 RVR Association Day at Puckapunyal celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Presentation of Colours on 27 February 1972.

The sign was taken to the Ballarat Ranger Military Museum and was to be fitted to the side of a container at the museum. However, an enterprising Army Reservist, Private George Brown, who is currently on a full-time contract with 8/7 RVR in Ballarat, found a place for the sign outside the Regimental Mess.

Sergeants and officers in Reserve Units now share a Mess, known as a Regimental Mess. George has also put up the notice beside the sign that tells of the connection between 22 RVR and 8/7 RVR (as 2 RVR). Above: Neil Leckie, Manager of the Ballarat Ranger Military Museum with the sign and notice. Below left: Pte Tony Melis and the sign at 22 RVR.



Below right: The OTU (Scheyville) plaque presented to the 22 RVR Sergeants Mess in 1970 will be donated to a new museum being set up at Scheyville (near Windsor, north-west of Sydney). The Officer Training Unit at Scheyville trained National Service Officer Cadets and Regular Army Air Cadets.



### Museum Expansion

The Ballarat Ranger Military Museum has started to move displays into its container expansion. The carpets have been installed and the final power points ready to be fitted. The new display layout will see the various eras of the Army in Ballarat displayed in new display cases, which all have inbuilt lighting. The funding of the expansion did not come from the government but came from a deceased estate. The government would not allow a new building to be paid for by a non-government source, consequently the 'temporary' display in the containers idea was undertaken. In 2025, when you next visit the museum, the display will be ready to do a walk-through. The existing hut will revamped to include a library and research centre with a uniform display among other items.



Right: the last of the wall linings is up, the carpet is laid and the first fifty years of memorabilia is now in the new display cases.