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# CASCABEL

Journal of the

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION  
(VICTORIA) INCORPORATED

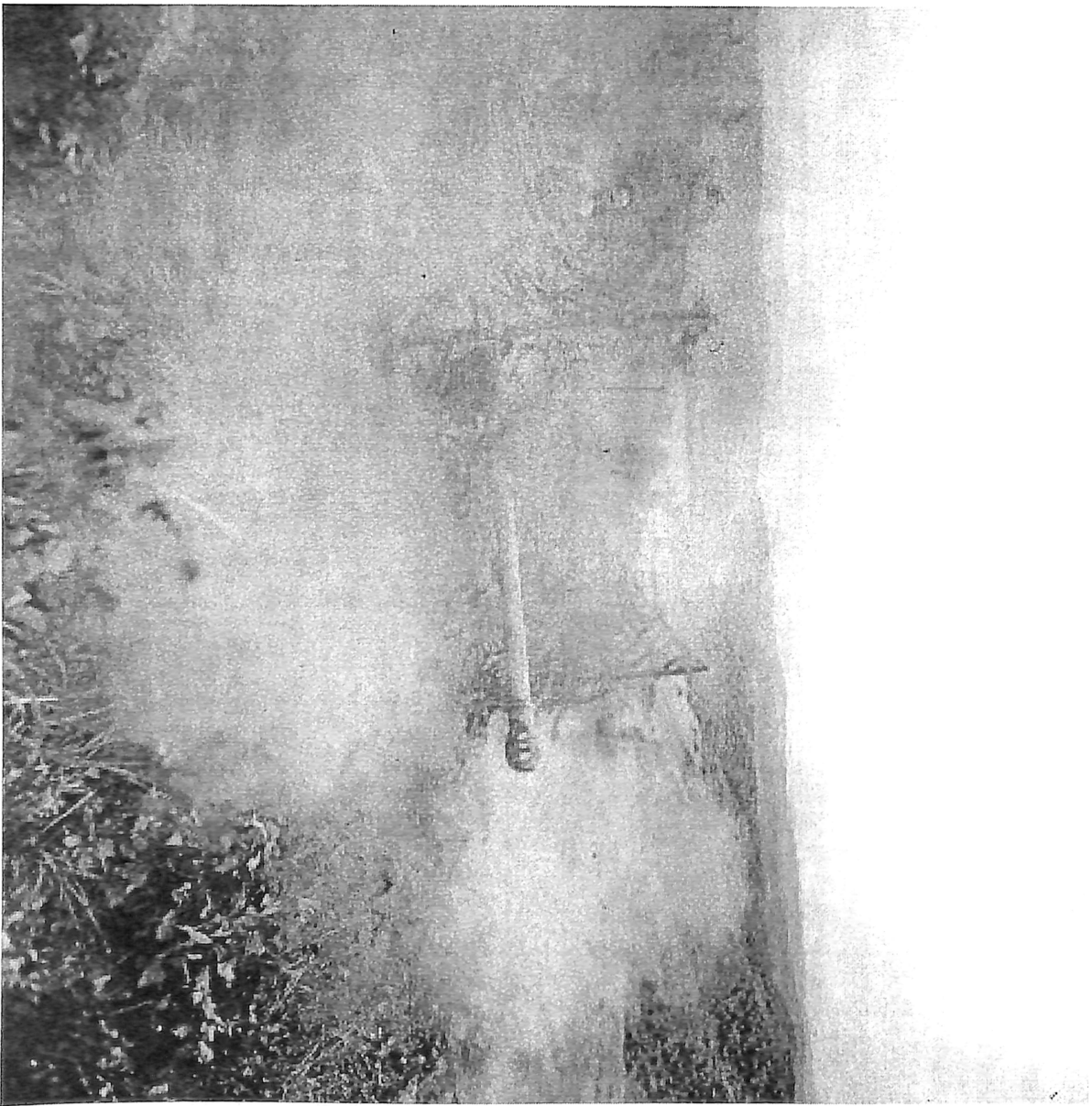
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**Number 84**

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**July 2005**



HOB3292

A 17-pounder anti-tank gun detachment from the anti-tank platoon of 3 RAR fires on communist bunkers during the Korean conflict.

Source <http://www.awm.gov.au/korea/weapons/antitank/hobi3292.htm>

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## CONTENTS AND SUBMISSIONS

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## The President Writes

Anzac Day has once again been and gone for this year. A small number of members attended the Dawn Service at the Chapel Street Depot where I had the privilege of laying the Association wreath. Robin Smith and I then attended the march in the city as spectators. The march took about three hours to pass and was well attended by the public.

The major disappointment of the day was that, except for a few Committee members, only Geoff Rebecchi visited the Depot after the march. This again raises the question of the viability of keeping an Association presence at the depot after the Dawn Service on Anzac Day.

On a brighter note, the organisation for the Gunner Dinner 2005 is well under way and we look forward to a good attendance. The RSM of 2/10 FD REGT, WO1 M Johnson will be Dining Mess President this year.

I remind you that the AGM will to be held at the Oakleigh RSL on the 10<sup>th</sup> Nov this year and that the Annual Golf Day has been booked for the 11<sup>th</sup> Nov at Berwick Montuna Golf Club.

Regards to all

Neil Hamer  
MAJ (R)



## Membership Report July 2005

### Current Membership

Life Members	217
Annual Members	83
Affiliates	46
Others (CO/CI, Messes, etc.)	11
Libraries	4
<u>Total</u>	<u>361</u>

### Membership Breakdown

Offr	131
WO/Sgts	110
OR	53
Civ	6
<u>Total</u>	<u>300</u>

We welcome CAPT Garry John Mennie and SGT Vernon John Henry Joseph as Annual Members of the Association

We have lost contact with BDR N C Hill.

### Vale

It is with regret that we acknowledge the passing of BRIG Leslie D King OBE ED Legion of Merit and SGT Harell Ernest Day.

BRIG King Joined the Association as a Life Member in July 1982 and died at the age of 94. We do not have any further information about him as he did not respond to our membership enquiries.

SGT Day joined the Association as a Life Member in July 1985 and died after a long illness in February this year, aged 87. His Service Number was VX773 and he served with 2/2 FD REGT RAA.

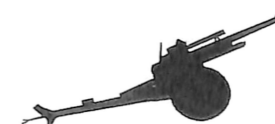
### Lest We Forget

**The usual reminder about the proforma on the last page below the Parade Card.**

If you have not already done so, it would be appreciated if you would provide the information requested so that our files can be kept up to date. This proforma should also be used to notify us of any changes in the future.

Neil Hamer  
MAJ (R)  
Membership Co-ordinator

Contact: Telephone: 9702 2100  
0419 533 067  
E-mail: nhamer@lexicon.net

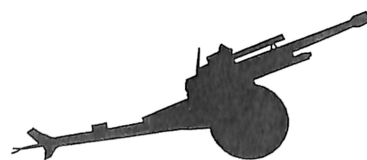


RAA Association (Victoria) Inc  
Corps Shop

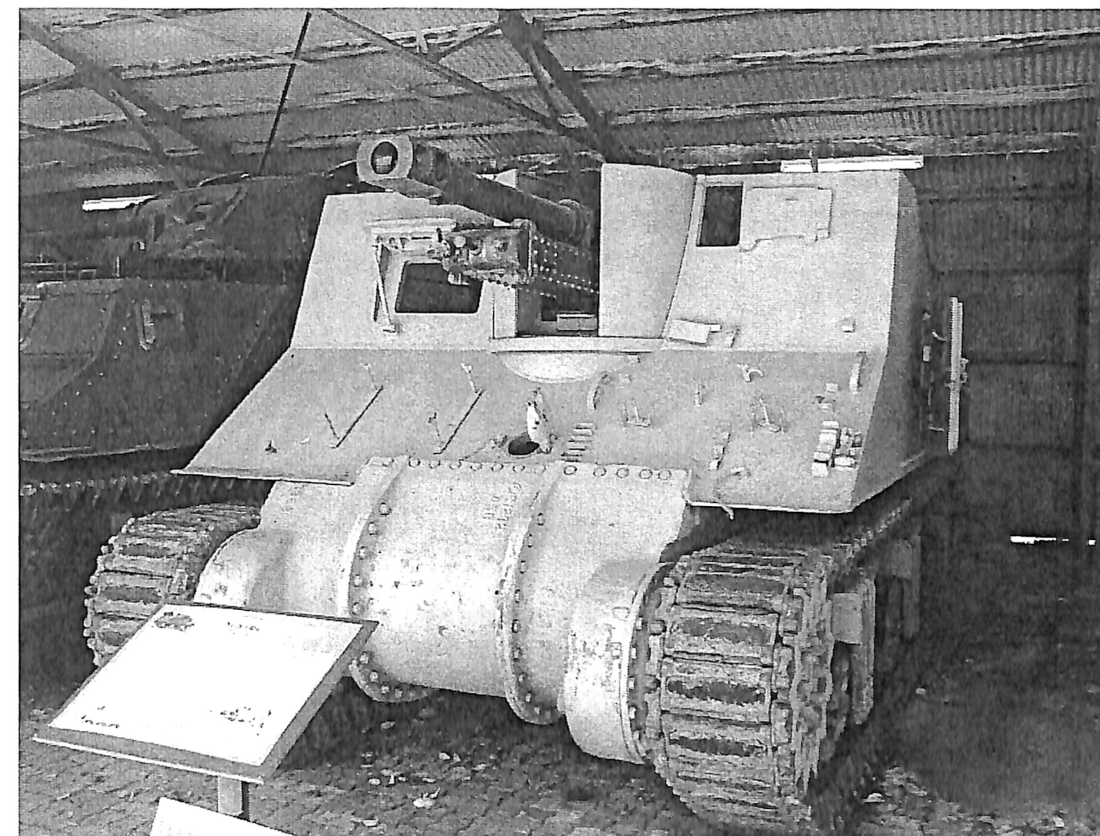
The following items may be purchased by mail, or at selected Association activities.

PRICE LIST

<b>Badges, etc</b>		<b>Stationery</b>	
RAA Assn (Vic), members	\$5.00	Card, RAA badge, with envelope	
RAA badge cuff links	\$9.00	Christmas message	\$0.20
Key ring, RAA badge	\$4.00	blank inside	\$0.20
Key ring, RAA (Pewter)	\$4.00	<b>Stickers</b>	
<b>Ties</b>		Bumper: <i>Gunners do it</i>	
Blue with single red gun	\$30.00	<i>with a bigger bang</i>	\$2.00
RAA Burgundy with gold gun	\$43.00	Square: gold badge, red	
RAA Navy with gold gun	\$43.00	and blue background	\$2.00
St Barbara Stripe	\$43.00	<b>ORDERS:</b>	
<b>Books</b>		Most orders will require an additional FIVE	
<i>Kookaburra's Cutthroats</i>	\$39.00	DOLLARS packing and postage, which will	
<i>Aust Military Equip Profiles</i>	\$13.50	cover one to several small items. If in any	
<i>AMEF Profile – Leopard Tank</i>	\$17-00	doubt concerning this, or availability, please	
<b>ENQUIRIES:</b>		contact one of the enquiries numbers above.	
BRIAN CLEEMAN	(03) 9560 7116	Cheques should be made payable to RAA	
REG MORRELL	(03) 9562 9552	Association (Victoria) Inc, and be crossed <i>Not</i>	
		<i>Negotiable.</i>	
		Orders to: Mr B. Cleeman	
		28 Samada Street	
		Notting Hill VIC 3168	



A "Great Piece of Artillery"



The post – Second World War Yeramba was Australia's only self propelled field gun

Australia's first and only self propelled field gun was officially designated "ordnance QF 25pounder Mk2/1 on Mounting Self Propelled 25 Pounder (Aust) Mk1 on Carrier, Grant, SP 25 Pounder (Aust) Mk 1" when it went into service in 1950. Little wonder that the Army decided a shorter, handier title was needed!" Warragul was put forward, but rejected because of its geographical overtones and possible confusion with Warragul, the Victorian country town. Finally, "Yeramba", the name of an aboriginal instrument for throwing spears, was accepted, and the vehicle was officially given the short title "25pdr SP Yeramba"

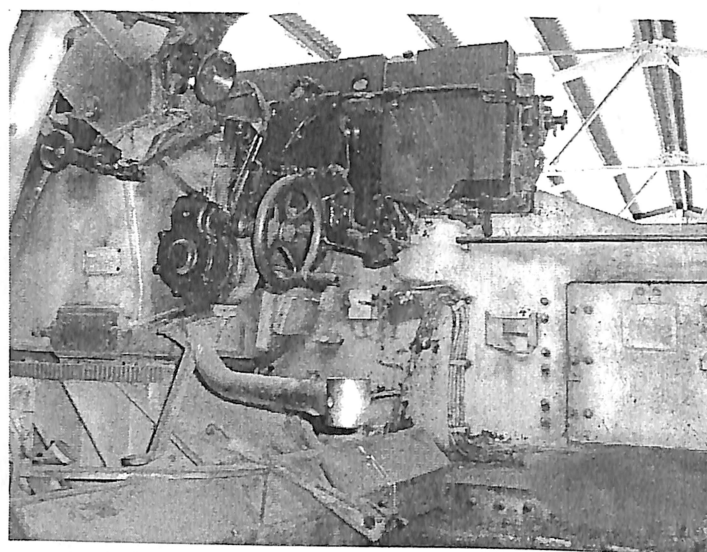
Although there had been some moves toward an Australian SP artillery piece during the Second World War, the idea did not go beyond the drawing board as it was not then an operational requirement. But in the immediate post war period, with the creation of three armoured formations, the need for artillery that was as mobile as the tanks themselves rekindled interest in the SP gun.

Initially the adoption of the Canadian designed Sexton was proposed and an order placed with the United Kingdom; however, this was eventually cancelled for several reasons, including a shortage of spares, and the Sexton's incompatibility with equipment already in service in Australia. Moreover, sufficient M3A5 Grant tanks and 25 pounder field guns were available within Australia for conversion to an interim SP mounting suitable for training purposes. This was also considered to be the cheaper alternative.

And so, in July 1949, approval was given to precede with the conversion of one Grant to an SP 25 pounder, the project being undertaken by the Development and Proving Establishment at Monegeeta (now the Land Engineering Agency). Sexton produced drawings, obtained from Canada, provided the basis for the local design, which was essentially a Grant M3A5 chassis with the turret and much of the frontal armour replaced by an open topped fighting compartment. The driver's position and controls were moved down and to the right of the vehicle.

The 25 pounder ordnance and a strengthened saddle were mounted on a bolster and beam assembly welded to the track sponsons of the Grant Chassis. Only 25 pounder guns with threaded barrels for fitting a muzzle brake were used, these having come from a limited production run late during the Second World War, when the local fitting of muzzle brakes had been considered.

The Yeramba crew consisted of the driver, seated at the controls in the extreme front right of the fighting compartment, and the gun detachment commander, located on a seat in the rear left corner adjacent to the No. 19 Wireless set. Another seat was provided to the left of the gun for the gun layer, while the other three crew members stood or sat on the sponson plates.



Trials with the prototype were conducted at the military training centre at Puckapunyal, in Victoria during December 1949, less than six months after approval to construct the vehicle was given. Following stowage and user trials, the prototype was accepted, and authorisation was given in February 1950 to convert another 13 tanks to SP mountings.

Further trials were conducted in March 1950, before the prototype was sent to the Ordnance Factory at Bendigo (now ADI Bendigo) for use as production guide. The first Yeramba was completed in November 1950, with the last delivered in August 1952. Including the prototype, 14 vehicles were converted, this being the minimum number required for training.

Only the Victorian based 22 Field Regiment, whose headquarters were in Lancoc Street, Brighton were equipped with the Yeramba. The regiment's role was to provide fire support to 2<sup>nd</sup> Armoured Brigade.

However most Yerambras stayed at Puckapunyal, where they were housed at the Armoured Centre (now the School of Armour), with one kept at Brighton for drill training purposes. More than once, "training" included late night races around the depot yard (being careful to avoid the veranda posts!)

The regiment was highly enthusiastic about its equipment and its unique role of being self propelled. With a name change to 22 Field Regiment (Self Propelled), personnel also adopted the Armoured Corps black beret, resplendent with the Royal Australian Artillery cap badge, and were issued with Armoured Fighting Vehicle crewman's rubberised canvas soled boots.

But with the élan of a unique regiment also came hard work, or, as one unit member recalled, "maintenance, maintenance and more maintenance: one hour driving – six hours maintenance".

Despite the gruelling labour associated with maintaining any large tracked vehicle, the Yeramba was considered a very good weapon by its crews: "the gun lent itself to the mobile role even in live other formations".

Once in action the Yeramba's suspension and inherent stability made laying the gun back on target after each shot much easier as "the recoil was absorbed so easily by the tank suspension that at gunfire the bubble finished up level.....the accuracy of the gun was exceptional and its rate of fire first class".

Their pride in being the only SP regiment in the Australian Army was short lived, however, as the Yeramba was declared obsolete in 1956 and withdrawn from service, the unit was disbanded a year later. The only Australian SP field artillery weapon ever introduced into service, it is fondly remembered by members of the unit: "The impression of all who served the Yeambras of 22 Field Regiment (SP) will, I think, be the same as my own – a great piece of artillery"



Technical Data	
Short Name	SP 25 – pdr Yeramba
Combat Weight	29 t
Radius of Action	200km
Maximum Speed	40km/h on hard roads
Main Armament	25 – pdr gun fitted with muzzle brake and counterweight, recoil adjusted to 20 in. (508mm) maximum
Main Armament Ammunition	102 normal 25 – pdr cartridges 16 super 25 – pdr cartridges 88 projectiles, High Explosive and Smoke (mixed proportions) 16 projectiles, Armour Piercing Shot
Secondary Armament	2 X .303 in. Bren Light Machine Guns 2 X 9mm Owen Machine Carbines 2 X .303 in. No.1 MK 3 SMLE rifles
Secondary Armament Ammunition	844 rounds .303 in. 840 rounds 9mm 6 X No. 36M hand grenades

*All quotations and notes are provided by Major D Dennis, former member 22 Field Regiment (Self Propelled)*

*Article by Steve Gower and Mike Cecil Reprinted from Issue 27 Wartime (Official Magazine of the Australian War Memorial)*

*Article submitted by Perce Cooper*

*Photos by taken by Lindsay Pritchard at the Tank Museum at Puckapunyal*

## 22 FIELD REGIMENT ( SP ) RAA

Members of 22 Fd Regt ( SP ) RAA at Hotel Devon Bourke Street Melbourne on Friday 7 June 1957.

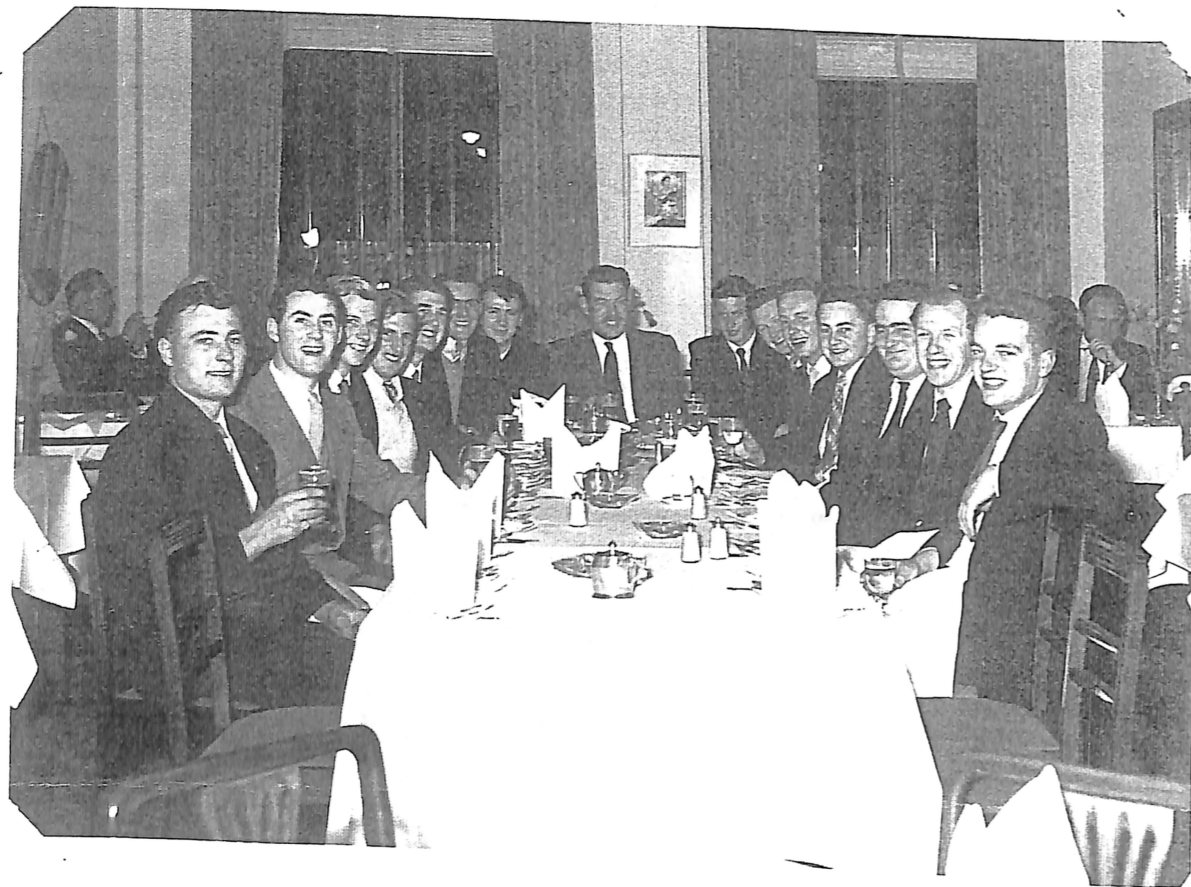


Table Head  
Val Stokes

Left Side Front to Head  
Wally Zemataitius  
Ralph Bailey  
Colin Sinclair  
? Goldsmith  
Graham Gillard  
Percy Tidd  
Max Wheeler

Right Side Front to Head  
Ian Brooks  
Kevin ( Sam ) Phyland  
Lewis Anderson  
John Phillips  
Dick Cole  
Jim Fasso  
Dick Gambel

## Yeramba at Brighton

Reading the ongoing saga of Col. Farley's Service Career, brought back many memories of my own service, which started with being recruited to the famous, or infamous, Blamey Battery, under Maj. Dick Eason, and being appointed to 22<sup>nd</sup> Fd. Regt., based at Brighton. As Graham has mentioned, the unit basic equipment was the "Yeramba" – a self-propelled 25 pd. Gun on a modified General Grant tank chassis.

I still think the unit must have had some of the most tolerant, long-suffering and broad-minded neighbours that could be wished for. In the "backyard" of the depot, which was situated in a closely built suburban area, the unit maintained an active "Yeramba" vehicle, which was frequently started up, sometimes on parade nights, but more often on mess nights, at all sorts of hours to about 2 a.m. If you can imagine the roar of two 275 h.p., virtually unsilenced, diesels driving a tracked vehicle around at those times and in those circumstances, I think you will understand my comments about our neighbours!!

Ian Beith



## Site 17 Memorial Park Seymour

A Memorial Park has been created at Seymour on the old Site 17 Military Camp adjacent to the industrial area, which occupies most of the old camp area.

The memorial comprises of a stone en faced with many plaques indicating the units that have trained there over the years.

It is proposed to arrange for a plaque as shown below listing the RAA units that trained at Site 17 during the thirties and the early years of the CMF.

I have adjusted the list from information given to me since the last issue. If there are any further amendments please let me know ASP. Phone 9598 8452 or write to 5 Faulkner Street, HAMPTON VIC 3188.



This plaque is placed in memory of the units of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery that trained at this camp between 1930 and 1960.

HQ RAA 3 Division

2 Field Brigade 2 Field Regiment 4 Field Brigade 10 Field Brigade 10 Field Regiment.  
15 Light Regiment HQ RAA 3 Div Band

HQ 2 AGRA (Field)

22 Field Regiment (SP) 2 Medium Regiment 4 Medium Regiment  
31 Medium Regiment 8 Medium Regiment 10 Medium Regiment

106 Tank Attack Regiment

These units include an attached Light Aid Detachment or Workshops



## Major General Harold Grimwade

18 May 1869 - 2 January 1949

Harold William Grimwade was born in St Kilda, Melbourne on 18 May 1869, the son of Frederick Sheppard Grimwade, a pharmacist and businessman and the second son of Edward Grimwade, Grimwade Ridley & Co.'s London Manager. Frederick Grimwade had migrated to Australia, arriving in Melbourne on 10 February 1863, in order to join Youngman McCann & Co. When Edward Youngman drowned when the *SS London* sank in the Bay of Biscay in 1866 and Frederick Grimwade got together with Alfred Felton and they purchased the wholesale druggist portion of the business of Youngman McCann & Co. This was the beginning of Felton Grimwade & Co, a business empire that Harold would eventually inherit, and which endures to this day, best known to generations of Australians for the Bosisto's parrot brand eucalyptus oil, Hypol cod liver oil and the Euky bear brands.

Harold was educated at Melbourne Grammar and the Queen Elizabeth School, Ipswich, Essex, England. He qualified as a pharmacist in London before returning to Australia. He became Felton Grimwade's warehouse manager and a partner in the company in 1893. In this role he displayed a considerable talent for leadership and management of employees.

Grimwade joined the Victorian Field Artillery in 1891 and was promoted to lieutenant colonel on 16 May 1910. In August 1914, he became Chief Embarkation Officer for Victoria. He was appointed to the AIF as a lieutenant colonel on 26 August 1915 to command the 4th Field Artillery Brigade, a new unit formed for the 2nd Division. The formation of the 2nd Division Artillery drained Australia of guns and instructors and left the artillery in Australia badly depleted.

The 4th Field Artillery Brigade embarked for Egypt on 8 November 1915, arriving on 12 December. The 2nd Division Artillery thus missed the Gallipoli Campaign, and instead began intensive training for France. This was a difficult time. Initially the 4th Field Artillery Brigade was to be reassigned to the 4th Division but General Sir Archibald Murray ruled that the artillery must be provided on the BEF standard of 15 batteries per division rather than on the MEF one of just 9. Whereas the infantry in Egypt had to expand from 32 battalions to 48, the artillery was faced with an expansion from 18 batteries to 60. Priority was given to getting the 1st and 2nd Divisions' Artillery ready, and the 4th Field Artillery Brigade departed Alexandria for France on 12 March 1916.

On 10 July 1916, Grimwade was promoted to colonel and temporary brigadier general and appointed General Officer Commanding Royal Artillery (GOCRA) of the 3rd Division Artillery, then in training at Lark Hill, England. It might seem odd that Grimwade should be promoted when he had not served at Gallipoli and had been in France for only a brief time. But so great had been the expansion of the artillery that all three of the brigade commanders who had served at Gallipoli -- Johnston, Rosenthal and Christian -- had already been promoted to command division artilleries. Moving down the seniority list, that left Coxen, the commander of the Siege Brigade, and Grimwade and his fellow brigade commanders in the 2nd Division Artillery. Birdwood recommended Coxen, a highly trained regular army officer, but Army Headquarters in Melbourne felt that taking Coxen away from the Siege Brigade could impair its efficiency at a critical time and instead recommended Grimwade.

Grimwade remained there training his new command for some months, until the 3rd Division Artillery was finally deployed to France on 31 December 1916. Although the division carried out a number of raids, its first major operation was at Messines in June 1917. For this battle, Grimwade had not only his own two brigades (the 7th and 8th) but also the AIF's three "Army" brigades (3rd, 6th and 12th) and two British brigades, a total of 120 18-pounder guns and 30 4.5-inch howitzers. The commander of the 3rd Division, Major General J. Monash charged Grimwade with responsibility for shelling some 446 targets before the day of the assault. Perhaps because of their similar business and military backgrounds, Monash and Grimwade got along well. Although a

gunner himself, Monash relied on Grimwade for advice. In the event, the artillery barrage was flawless, and the battle a complete success.

The next battle was a tougher fight. At Broodeseinde on 4 October 1917, Grimwade had his two brigades plus five British brigades. German counter-battery fire was fierce and the artillery and ammunition columns came under heavy fire. Despite casualties of the same order as the infantry, the gunners managed once again to produce a tremendous barrage, enabling the infantry to advance. By this stage, barrages were carefully choreographed affairs, alternately moving and pausing, and searching out beyond the infantry positions.

But when it came to move forward for the new step, Grimwade had overwhelming problems. The weather broke and the ground turned to mud. Some guns became bogged in the mud and had to be abandoned. Guns began to wear out faster than they could be repaired or replaced. Owing to the number of guns out of action, Grimwade had to borrow 13 from a British division. Unlike the infantry, the gunners remained in the line; in the case of the 3rd Division Artillery, continuously from May to October 1917. and living in waterlogged bivouacs under intermittent shell fire took its toll on the men's health. Grimwade was forced to set up his guns along plank roads, distant from the intended positions. The barrage that followed was thin and irregular. The attack on 9 October was a failure. Another failure on 12 October brought the Australian involvement in the campaign to an end.

In January 1918, Grimwade was promoted to colonel in the AMF. In a quiet sector of the line near Messines the 3rd Division, now part of the Australian Corps spent the winter preparing for a German Offensive in the spring. Grimwade and Monash clashed with their new Corps Chief of Staff, Major General C. B. B. White over the placement of the artillery, which they felt was too far forward and would be overrun in the event of an enemy offensive. In the event, the initial German blow fell on the Somme sector to the south and the 3rd Division Artillery was rushed south to defend the river.

For the Battle of Amiens on 8 August 1918, Grimwade had control of 9 brigades of field and horse artillery. They fired the initial barrage and then became part of the defensive artillery set-up. The whole operation was not only quite complex, but had to be conducted under conditions of secrecy, with positions prepared and ammunition dumped without alerting the Germans. Nonetheless the artillery scheme was carried out without a hitch. The gunners fired in support of the advance to the Hindenburg Line and beyond, and remained in the line after the infantry had been withdrawn, firing in support of the British and American armies.

On 14 November 1918, Grimwade became GOCRA of the Australian Corps. In response to a strike by men of the 3rd Division Artillery in December, Grimwade resumed command. "Grim Death" -- as he was called by his men -- met with the men, listened sympathetically to their troubles, attempted to rectify what he could, and promised to pass the rest on to an equally sympathetic corps commander, Lieutenant General J. J. Talbot Hobbs.

Grimwade had been made a Companion of St Michael and St George (CMG) in 1917 and a Companion of the Bath (CB) in 1918 and had been mentioned in dispatches four times. He returned to Australia on 27 February 1919. From 1926 to 1930 he commanded the 4th Division.

With his brothers Norton and Russell Grimwade, Harold continued to build up the family business. In 1929, their company was forced to merge into Drug Houses of Australia (DHA), with Norton as chairman and Harold as a board member. When Norton died on 29 April 1945, Harold replaced him as chairman of Australian Consolidated Industries (ACI) and Felton Grimwade. He died on 2 January 1949.

Sources: Australian Dictionary of Biography, 1899-1939, Vol 9, pp. 126-128; AWM183/22

Reprinted from University of NSW ADFA website <http://www.unsw.adfa.edu.au/~rmallett>

## Vale

### VX773 Harell Day Obit 15<sup>th</sup> February 2005

Harell Day was an original enlistee in October 1939 and served with Don Troop in Libya, Greece and Crete. On return from Crete Harell suffered the after effects of bomb blast and was transferred back to Australia on a hospital ship.

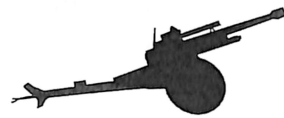
He was retained in the Army with a "B" class medical classification and allocated to the staff of Lt Col. A Arthur, later Brigadier. Lt. Col. Arthur had been BC 4<sup>th</sup> Battery. He was badly injured at Bardia and repatriated to Australia to Army Headquarters where he helped originate the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Field Regiment Association with Brigadier Cremor. Harell then became one of the original members of the Association.

Brigadiers Cremor and Arthur were posted to Bougainville but Harell remained on duty in Melbourne. At wars end Harell became assistant Secretary to the Association and started a voluntary career of service to returned servicemen. He was president of the Kew RSL, Secretary with the 17<sup>th</sup> Brigade Association and the Sixth Division Association. He developed strong links with the Cretan Brotherhood and other Greek organisations.

Unable to carry out full duties through illness over the last several years, Harell remained in contact with the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> and will be sadly missed by his comrades.

"Lest We Forget"

Reprinted from the April 2005 Edition of "Action Front" Journal of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Field Regiment Association



### Gunners of Victoria 1948-2000 update

I am currently preparing a number of addenda to Gunners of Victoria 1948-2000 giving some upgrading of information and expansion on some of the information already included.

There is no charge for these and will be sent you those who forward to me a stamped addressed envelope big enough to hold about 8 pages of A4 paper.

Jim Killender  
31 Longacres Road  
Yallambie 3085



VICTORIAN RESERVE FORCES DAY MARCH  
COMMEMORATING THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE 1<sup>ST</sup> COMMANDO REGIMENT AND THE  
90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE AIF LANDING AT GALLIPOLI



# 2005 RESERVE FORCES DAY MARCH



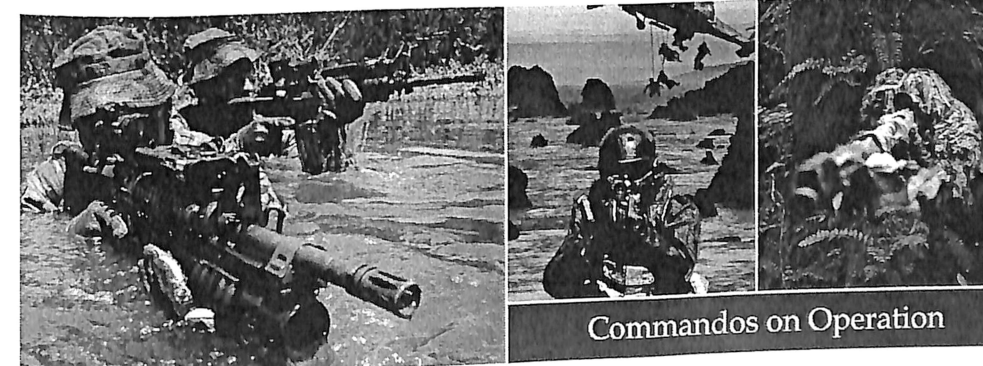
## SUNDAY 3RD JULY

*90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AIF Landing at Gallipoli*

Under the Chief Patronage of His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC,  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, who has kindly accepted the invitation to take the Salute,  
and Her Excellency Mrs Marlena Jeffery.

### RECOGNISING VALUED SERVICE TO THE NATION

Past and present members, including all who have served in the Australian Reserve Forces. Reunions to follow the March  
● MILITIA ● CITIZEN MILITARY FORCES ● NATIONAL SERVICE ● RESERVES ● RESERVE UNIT CADRE STAFF



**Assembly/Forming up point:**  
Queen Victoria Gardens, South of Princes Bridge  
Melways Ref. Map 2F, H7  
At 1100 hours for step off at 1130 hours, march to the Shrine Forecourt  
where a short service will be conducted

For More Information, [www.rfd.org.au](http://www.rfd.org.au)  
Telephone Reserve Forces Day Information  
Phone: (03) 9284 6651 or (03) 9650 1444 Email: [peter.wertheimer@wertheimer.com.au](mailto:peter.wertheimer@wertheimer.com.au)  
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NAVY RESERVE



ARMY RESERVE



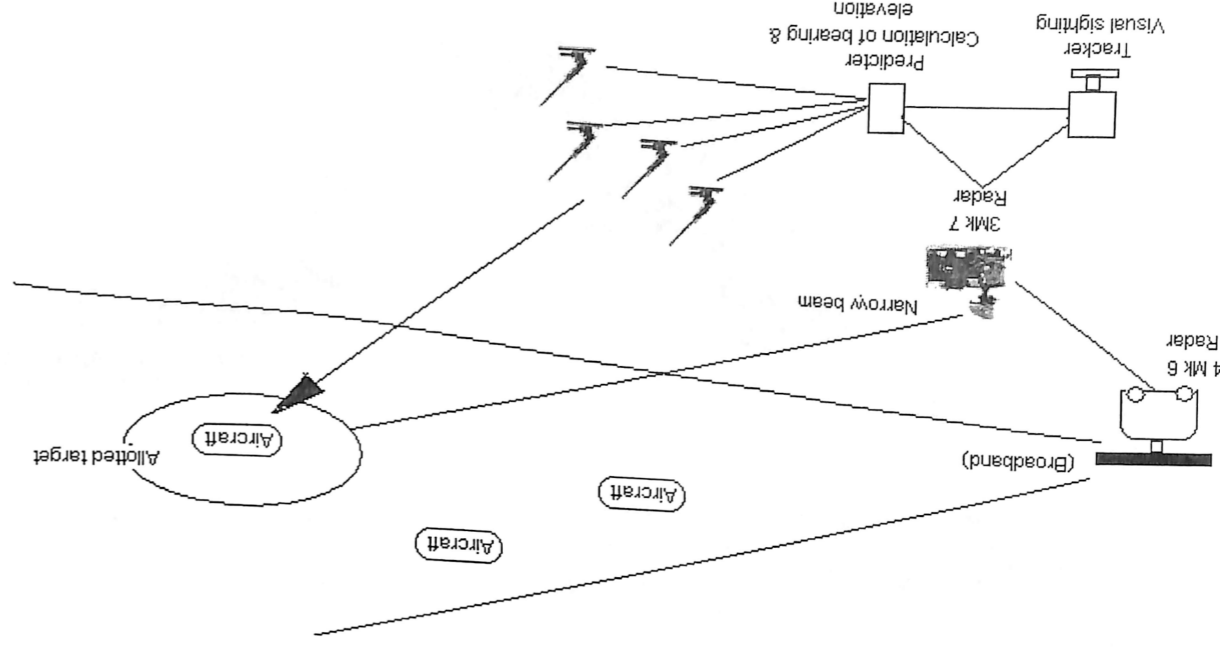
AIR FORCE RESERVE

**Seeking Information about the 4 Mk 6 Radar**

Replies to: Jim Killender 31 Longacres Road Yallamamie Victoria 3085  
Tel/Fax (03) 9459 1563  
Email: jimkillender@tryouth.org.au

In 1953 following my 3 months full time national service I was posted to 40 HAA Regiment to complete the part time obligation. Our annual camps were held at a 4 AGRA (AA) (Army Group Royal Artillery - Anti-Aircraft) at Port Fairy in Victoria. Initially I was a gun Sgt and later a radar St prior to being commissioned.

At one of the camps I can clearly remember that in addition to the 3 Mk 7 there was a larger radar which I understand was a 4 Mk 6. In hindsight it may have been part of 143 AA Fire Control Bty or 143 AA Control and Reporting Troop which were part 4 AGRA and that they may have deployed an AAOR (Anti Aircraft Operations Room). The 4 Mk 6 Radar was a broad beam radar which scanned a large area of sky and then electing individual targets for the gun batteries. They passed this data to the 3 Mk 7 narrow beam radar located at the gun position and which in turn sent the data to the predictor (an early computer) which in turn sent the bearing and elevation to each of the guns of the troop. I have not been able to find any information or photos of the 4 Mk 6 radar or the tracker which provided visual contact with the aircraft and the later model of the Predictor. I would appreciate any information and/or photographs of any of these so that I can elaborate the contents of The gunners of Victoria 1948-2000.



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2005**

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Sat 20th August 2005**

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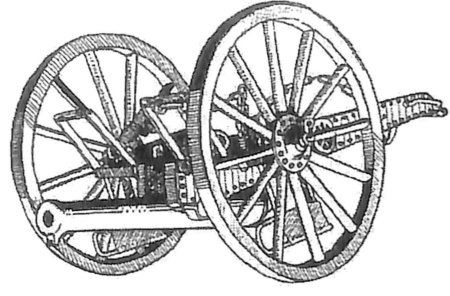
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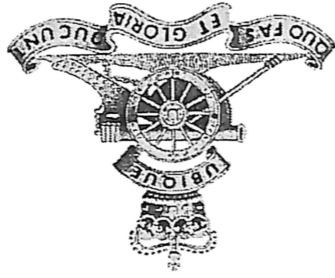
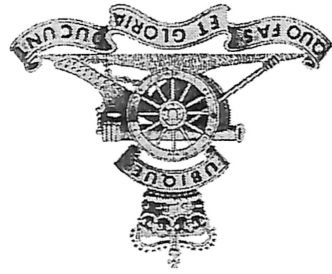
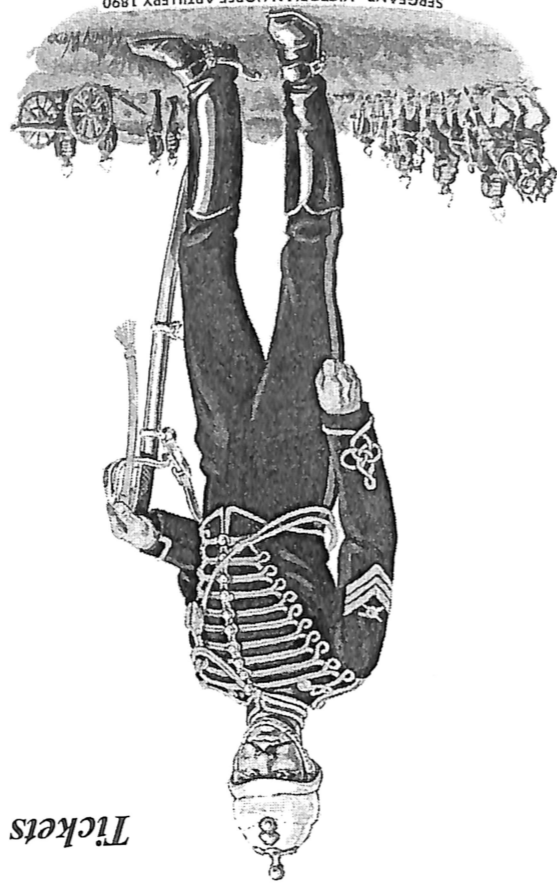
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## France Belgium and Dunkirk 1940

with  
19<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Artillery  
Lt Col W.G. Mackay OBE MC RA in command.

by SP Bellmaine Lt Col (Rtd)  
MB, BS (Sydney) DCH (London) FRACP

Based on an address given, by request, to the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps  
5 November 1995

For the aggressive Germans and the unfortunate Poles, World War II commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939. For the British and the French, the war commenced when our ultimatum expired on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September.

Be that as it may, I found myself in France, on the Belgium border, before the end of September. Belgium at this stage was neutral, though very apprehensive. I was there as Regimental Medical Officer to a Regular Field Regiment of Royal Artillery, 19<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> British Division, 1 corps, British Expeditionary Force (the BEF).

Two very large armies faced each other, - the Germans, behind their Siegfried Line, the French behind their Maginot Line, and the relatively small BEF. (the BEF ultimately reached 350,000). Months of military inactivity occurred – stalemate, the “phoney war” as the press and we ourselves labelled it.

The French immediately mobilised many doctors for their huge (but ultimately ineffective) army, so that in Northern France, where we were, the countryside and the villages were denuded of doctors. In their distress, the people turned to the British doctors, the Royal Army Medical Corps, stationed in their midst. They did not turn in vain. This created difficulties for the British Doctors, who were not equipped or organised for civilian practice, but it created real goodwill between our army and the people.

Much has been spoken, and written, about this aspect, so that I shall limit myself to just one anecdote.

In the winter of 39/40, I was asked to see a middle aged Polish woman (there were many Polish miners, and their families, in Northern France). I was told that she had “la grippe” (the ‘flu’) and that she was “tres Malade” (very ill). It was immediately apparent that she was very ill indeed, with a high temperature. Whilst I was examining her, I noticed an emerging red rash on her forehead with spots all in the same stage of development. Similar lesions were apparent on the back of her hands and wrists, but her body was still clear of lesions. I ascertained that this was the third day of illness, and the first day of the rash. Now in those far off days, when exanthematous diseases were common, we carried around in our heads our pet mnemonics for the day of disease, day of onset of rash. Both on my mnemonics told me that the rash of scarlet fever, for example, appeared on the second day, and that of measles on the fourth day, and that a rash appearing on the third day was the rash of smallpox! Though I had never previously seen smallpox, I certainly knew the text book description, though I knew nothing about the epidemiology of smallpox in Northern France. I was compelled to make a diagnosis of smallpox. This had high level implications, and I decided to drop the matter into the ADMS's<sup>1</sup> lap! I expected that in a couple of days I would hear some message of commendation or alternatively, criticism for

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Director of Medical Services for a division. The holder is medically qualified and a full Colonel; his role is administration. He does not have clinical responsibilities or command of troops.

spreading alarm and despondency by making an incorrect diagnosis of a disease that I had never previously seen.

But I heard nothing. Then, towards the end of the week, in BEF HQ orders, there appeared an order that all ranks of the BEF would immediately be revaccinated against smallpox and that the supplies of the vaccine were on their way from England! “*Res ipsa loquitur*” as the lawyers say – the matter speaks for itself!

Now looking back at this episode of more than 50 years ago I suspect that there may have been some deviousness at the ADMS's office, whereby the initial diagnosis was not attributed to me!

I used the expression “drop the matter into the ADMS's lap”. Our ADMS was a most unhelpful man. He had deployed around him a large number of medical officers, inexperienced in military matters, and mostly, recently qualified in medicine, and he never lifted a hand to help us! I think that the only thing that he ever said to me was “Why are you wearing a Gunner Flash?” I replied “My CO's orders Sir!” (My Artillery Colonel had said to me “Doc, you're one of us – you wear our Flash”.)

In one of the Batteries of our Field Regiment there was a young subaltern named Tommy Brooke. His father was the General Officer commanding II Corps BEF. From time to time, during the phoney war, General Brooke would come across to our Corps area, to visit his son. One sunny Sunday afternoon our CO, and our 2i/c, and I were strolling along a country road, when a staff car pulled up behind us, and out stepped General Brooke. He had in his time been a Gunner Officer, so he knew well my Colonel and my Major 2i/c, and they talked together whilst I stepped back half a pace, and remained silent. It could be said that I had met General Brooke, but that he would be unaware that he had met me! Tommy Brooke was a nice young fellow with a sense of duty, but none of us would have thought that he had a Field Marshal's baton in his knapsack.

A couple of weeks later, one evening at about 7.30 pm, I received a message that Tommy Brooke was very ill. In a few minutes I was at his Battery lines, and found that he had a “rip roaring” acute appendicitis. Actually, he should have reported sick about twelve hours before, but his Battery had a “drill order” on that day, and he had decided that he must not miss it. I immediately arranged an ambulance, and wrote a very careful letter to accompany him. I wrote such a letter not because his father was Corps Commander, but because it was my habit to write carefully when referring a very ill patient. I arranged that the ambulance should by pass a couple of medical dressing stations on the way, and should proceed direct to the Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) where there was a surgical specialist with full operating facilities. On Tommy's arrival at the CCS, the admitting MO's put him to bed to wait the morrow!

I can work out exactly what happened. Tommy's appendix had ruptured after I last saw him and before his arrival at the CS. It is a classic story – when a very acutely inflamed appendix ruptures, there is relief of tension, and there ensues a temporary and misleading lull – an abatement of symptoms and signs – the pain decreases, the tenderness lessens, and the abdominal rigidity softens. Then, when, the peritonitis sets in, after two to a few hours, the whole clinical picture recurs with increased ferocity, and a life is in danger. These admitting medical officers met Tommy during the “lull” phase and did not heed the explicit details of my letter. No doubt they thought that some young and inexperienced MO from the periphery had sent in “an urgent appendix”, but it didn't appear to be much of a case. Well, I was not an inexperienced young MO. I was thirty one years of age, six years

out of Medical School, and it so happened that I had vast experience of acute abdominal emergencies in adult patients.

Next morning, at 8 am, the Surgical Specialist did a round of his beds, and was astonished to find a dangerously ill patient therein. He decided on immediate operation. Whilst the theatre was being opened up, the CO of the CCS received a phone call – from the Corps Commander II Corps, enquiring about his son, admitted the preceding evening. Consternation! In a military environment it is double jeopardy to make an egregious error involving a senior General Officer.

The surgeon at the CCS saved Tom's life but when Tom was evacuated back to England he had a faecal fistula. I do not know if he ever soldiered again.

A couple of weeks later I received a personal letter, in his own hand writing, from General Brooke, thanking me for my "exemplary part in what proved later to be a rather sorry affair". Unfortunately I did not retain this letter – it was lost in the subsequent campaign. Well, I did not know then that the General would become Chief of the Imperial Staff, Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, accompanying Churchill on his overseas missions – a player on the world stage. The letter would have been an interesting memento!

The phoney war rolled on. We learned something about the wines of France, and that even in humble restaurants in the countryside, the cuisine is excellent.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1940 at 8 am on the BBC, we learned that at 5.20 am that morning, the Germans had invaded Belgium. The excitement was intense. It was a beautiful sunny day, and in fact throughout the ensuing month the weather was perfect and the North Sea was like a mill pond.

The BEF immediately put in place its well thought out plans and entered Belgium, to meet the advancing Germans at the River Dyle, east of Brussels. 1 Div was of course in the vanguard. Our convoys passed through Brussels where the streets were lined by cheering crowds, girls blowing kisses and offering gifts of fruit and flowers. As we proceeded, I saw and only two, Stuka dive bomb attacks some hundreds of yards on our right. When we reached the Dyle, our encounter with the Germans was surprisingly low key, with desultory shell fire by both sides, in which it seemed to me that we gave as good as we got, or better.

It was there that I saw my first battle casualty, Gunner Collins. A piece of skull bone, about the size of the palm of my hand, from the left temporoparietal area had been blown away by a shell burst. There was little haemorrhage and the brain and its membranes were surprisingly undisturbed. He was comatose, but breathing well, his colour was good, and he was convulsing gently. I carefully avoided touching or putting anything in to his wound, and covered everything with a large sterile shell dressing, which fitted excellently. I evacuated him "down the line". I later heard that he had gone back to England and survived, but I know nothing of his ultimate life. Because he had not suffered cerebral compression, possibly he may have fared quite well.

As far as I know, there was, on our Brigade front, no cross river activity.

The Regimental soldier only knows what happens on his own bailiwick. We were absolutely astonished when after four days of desultory artillery exchanges, we were ordered to retreat, to move under the cover of darkness, to new positions west of Brussels.

We bypassed that city, no cheering crowds this time. We vaguely supposed that our retreat was because of the pressures being put on the French on our right, and the Belgians on our left. (We were correct in these suppositions).

This became the pattern of our lives, 3 – 4 days in a position with low level artillery exchanges, then retreating under orders at night.

But on the third and fourth such withdrawals, there was a new factor. The roads were now congested with refugees, with their handcarts, or horse drawn vehicles, so that we did not reach our new destinations until well after daylight. I expected then that we would be bombed from the air, but no such attacks occurred.

Then on 26<sup>th</sup> May, "Operation Dynamo" was announced – the BEF were to be evacuated, *in toto*, by sea from the port of Dunkirk in France and the nearby Belgian beaches. We sent back our clerks and our cooks. Our role was clear, 1 Div and two other divisions, were to hold the line whilst all the other divisions, and the support troops, passed through us on their way to the beaches, to the much celebrated small craft. It was then I saw the only German that I sighted in the whole campaign. A bunch of British soldiers, passing through our lines had a prisoner walking with them, a tall fair haired handsome young man who looked surprisingly unperturbed. The British soldiers, not good haters, treated him like a mascot. The morale of the retreating Army was extremely high, no excitement, no panic – they were soldiers moving as ordered.

Finally there were only three divisions remaining, 1 DIV in the centre, 46 DIV and 50 DIV – these Divisions in good shape, defended the last canal. The Divisions which had suffered most were already sent home.

By 31<sup>st</sup> May, 19<sup>th</sup> Field were above the beach at Bray Dunes, in Belgium, six miles northeast of Dunkirk. There were now no soldiers awaiting evacuation. There was a long concrete esplanade, fifteen feet or so above the sands. The beach below was covered with destroyed equipment, tricks and weapons. But the departing troops had left behind their Bren guns with ammunition and tripods, so that on the esplanade there was a loaded Bren gun about every ten yards. We had often been told that small arms fire was very effective against low flying aircraft. Out from the beach was a small British naval vessel. Someone said it was a River Gunboat. At intervals next day, one by one, four German fighter planes flew low over us, (as low as a Qantas jet over Leichhardt) completely uninterested in the khaki clad men below, intent on attacking the gunboat. They flew through our hail of small arms fire, completely ignoring it, then meeting more anti aircraft fire from the gunboat. I remember thinking how brave these German airmen were, but they were signally unsuccessful in their attacks. With the fourth of these planes, I reached a Bren gun in time to have a shot myself. My Colonel was greatly amused to note that I had removed my Red Cross brassard. There were no more flights, and the vessel, now floated by the tide, went into the English Channel.

We three divisions of the rear guard waited for the last powerful German attack, but no such powerful attack ensued – just the continuation of intermittent shelling, perhaps a little more intense than previously. The fire was returned by our gunners before they spiked their guns.

A couple of hundred yards down the esplanade was a Main Dressing Station of 1 DIV. Later on 1<sup>st</sup> June, I walked down to see them. They told me that they were not receiving a flow of casualties, but they had the body of a young Gunner Officer killed by sniper fire. He

was not wearing his "dog tags". Could I help identify? When they pulled back the blanket, it was Peter Lewis, from one of our batteries. Peter was very young, one of the youngest of all regular officers, having been commissioned not long before the war began. Some months before, Peter having had no sexual experience, went with a girl in Lille. Now he was sure that he would contract VD, thereby bringing disgrace upon his Battery, his Regiment and the whole Regiment of Royal Artillery. He consulted me. In due course I was able completely to reassure him. As I gazed sadly at his body, I reflected that he had not died wondering!

Late in the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> June, we were informed by our Colonel that all British resistance was to cease at 2359 hours of that night – that boats would be coming for us, but there would be no organisation, each man must find his own small boat. It was a dignified, high morale, *suave qui peut*. It was very bright moonlight. After farewells and good wishes, at the exact moment we moved off. There were no rocky headlands, just miles of open beach. I decided to walk towards Dunkirk, but keeping a lookout for a small boat. After a while I suddenly realised that I was absolutely alone. Then came a salvo of gunfire, and I watched as the shells hit a group of draft horses about 100 yard ahead of me. Presumably French Artillery or Service Corps horses, the suffered severely. They could not lie flat in the soft sand.

The British soldier expects to have an officer to make the decisions. It was not long before one by one or in small groups about 25 or so British soldiers gathered around me. They had found their officer. I did not disillusion them. They did not learn from me that I was an officer of less than twelve months service and a non executive Medical Officer at that. We proceeded to Dunkirk – to find that there were huge flames coming from that port. So we turned about, hoping to find a small boat. Then just before daylight, I saw a little shape on the waters. As well as good sight in those days I also had a very strong voice. I called out "are you English?" Back came an equally loud voice in a North Country accent, "come on lads!" The beach shelved very gradually and we waded out to nipple level to get into a lifeboat which took us to a tugboat. Three other lifeboats arrived and deposited their human contents into the tugboat which set off across the Channel with the four empty lifeboats in tow. By now, it was broad daylight, and I quietly wondered about air attacks or E boats, but there were no such happenings and we reached Ramsgate in northeast Kent. We did not feel like a beaten Army, but we did not feel like heroes either, though the people of Ramsgate treated us as such, with cheers and refreshments. The railways were marvellous. We entrained at Ramsgate and without a single change of trains we arrived in North Staffordshire to a beautiful parkland where newly built barracks were awaiting us. It was a Sunday afternoon but the Post Offices were kept open for us. For me it was a telegram to the Isle of Man where my wife and daughter were living, to my parents in Sydney and to my wife's parents in Orange, NSW.

Then we slept the clock around. After a few days, units were re – formed. ! DIV reconstituted itself around Leeds. We found that we did not lose in the crossing a single member of 19<sup>th</sup> Field. When our wives joined us at Leeds, they were amazed at the high spirits and conviviality of the spouses to whom they had come to offer sympathy.

When one is a Regimental Officer, one has a blinkered view of war. One knows something of what is happening in one's own Regimental area, in one's own Brigade area, to some extent in one's Divisional area, but nothing of the big picture.

To be continued next issue.....

## MY SERVICE CAREER By COL Graham Farley, OAM, RFD, ED (Rtd) Part 20 – Colonel Artillery, 1977

Despite having been promoted and no longer administering command of MUR, I was invited on 1<sup>st</sup> July (the day of my promotion to Colonel) to lunch in the MUR Sergeants' Mess. They wished to farewell me. I was presented with an MUR plaque and a lace handkerchief – symbolic of my gunner corps. The new CO, LTCOL David Bullard<sup>2</sup>, was present, together with BRIG Kevin Cooke<sup>3</sup> and LTCOL Graeme Standish<sup>4</sup>.

I was to attend my first parade as Colonel Artillery, 3 Div FF Gp at Field Force headquarters at "Grosvenor," Queen Road, on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> July. "Grosvenor" was a stately building, probably dating back to late nineteenth century. It had a grand front room, but it was a challenge to the army engineering people, as it had poor foundations and needed a lot of maintenance. I felt very conspicuous in service dress with red tabs. I felt that I had two electric red lights under my chin! The red hatband was visible for miles. But then that was the purpose of enabling "other ranks" to identify staff officers, particularly in the First World War hopefully with no snipers lurking nearby. I met the senior regular army officer, the Assistant Commander, COL Peter Scott.

As it was a unit with a considerable number of full-time personnel, an evening meal was served before the parade. This was always a social occasion and helped to establish excellent relations between the various corps personnel, both part and full-time. Wines were served in cafes, but more about that later. The office for the artillery group was in an annex behind the main mansion building. This was more than adequate for our needs. One felt that one was "going out the back" or else moving towards the bunker when the meal was over. One could even hide!



COL Graham Farley sporting his new red tabs and hat band at city parade, 3 Dec 77

The task of the "Col Arty" was not well defined. If it had still been the CRA appointment, then the role would have been well understood in that the guns were under command, with all that that means. But that degree of command was now at a level higher up. From what I learned from my predecessor, my task was very much a social and liaison one. But still, a careful eye had to be kept over the affairs of the gunner regiments and

batteries. In particular, the "Col Arty" was responsible for the conduct of artillery functions, such as the Gunner Dinner a Ball, and St. Barbara's Day. At that time, there were still two artillery regiments, (2/15 Fd Regt RAA and 10 Mdm Regt RAA), together with 132 Div Loc

<sup>2</sup> LTCOL Bullard received one of the last OBE medals to be awarded, pending the full implementation of the Australian Honours system. A solicitor in civilian life, he is currently the president and chairman of the board of the RACV

<sup>3</sup> Later promoted to Major-General as Commander, 3 Infantry Division, which was re-raised in 1984, and currently still very active in the Defence Reserves Association. In addition to the RFD and ED, he has been appointed AO

<sup>4</sup> Later promoted to Brigadier as Commander 3 Training Group and with RFD and ED, was appointed AM

Bty. 2/15 paraded at the Batman Avenue, Dandenong and Baxter depots, with 10 at Geelong and Colac. LTCOL Graeme Allinson commanded 2/15 and LTCOL Tony Larnack-Jones<sup>5</sup> at 10.

Life on a headquarters was quite different from that in a regiment. My period with CSTU had helped to prepare me for an appointment without troops. The acronym, TEWT, was going to take on a real meaning. Quite apart from this new type of role, I have found it a little more difficult to write up my years on 3 Div FF Gp as distinct from being with a regiment. In some ways life on the Field Force Group headquarters was more political. It was not a matter of rivalry between regiments, but more a matter of corps rivalry. Further, even though the events took place 25 years ago, more of those personnel involved are still alive and can read! One needs to be tactful as well as truthful.

My civil occupation as the foundation headmaster of an ecumenical community school at Woodend, Braemar College, was even more demanding in my second year there. Reading through my diaries<sup>6</sup>, I wonder how I kept sane. I seemed to have too many irons in the fire, what with family, school, church, scouts and army. The army gave me the excuse to "escape" to Melbourne once a week, mix with people completely unconnected with Braemar College. I was also able to stay overnight at Elwood with my parents, before rising early and returning to Woodend before the day's schooling commenced.

What did one do on a parade night after the social meal other than relax after the wine and port? Quite a bit of time on a typical parade night could be taken up with reading through the "float file," which was reading requiring a signature. I was not high on the distribution list, and often the material was all but out of date by the time I saw it, but it was one way of being relatively up to date with what was going on.

As far as staff in the artillery office was concerned, I recall the names of LTCOL Baxter Green and MAJ Tony Furze at first, but later the team included LTCOL George James, MAJ Bernie Pearson<sup>7</sup> and WO1 Bob Millett<sup>8</sup>.

The first six months in the appointment included a round of unit visits, social engagements and the CGS exercise. On 23<sup>rd</sup> July there was a Ladies Night at "Grosvenor." The Gunner Ball was held at 9 Darling Street on 5 August, LTCOL George James the convening officer. It was termed the Silver Jubilee Gunner Ball to honour our Captain-General's silver jubilee on the throne. I attended a dinner at Geelong on 13 August, at which BRIG Ian Gilmore, OBE, the commandant at the Staff College, Queenscliff, was present. I did not know then as to how our paths would cross in later years at Braemar College.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> LTCOL Larnack-Jones was a former full-time armoured officer who, after retirement from the regular army, was conducting an art studio and gallery in Geelong with his wife

<sup>6</sup> I commenced my diaries at the age of 16. They have always been of the narrative type. At times when I was very busy, months could elapse before they were written up from my day-to-day diary. In 1976 and 1977, I have to confess that the detailed typing had to await the summer vacation. Hence some detail may have been lost. Regrettably I have kept very few army documents or, as tertiary institutions would term them, "primary sources."

<sup>7</sup> Was promoted LTCOL as CO MUR in a later posting

<sup>8</sup> WO1 Robert Millett, MBE, had been the keystone of 10 Mdm Regt, RAA, for many years. He was RSM(CMF) and DASM (in effect) on the newly re-created 3 Inf Div. His other main interest was life saving

<sup>9</sup> Brigadier Gilmore was later to be in charge of the Australian Counter Disaster College (now Emergency Management Institute Australia). He was invited to join the Board of Braemar College and was its chairman for six years. Just before he moved to Melbourne, he encouraged me to join Legacy. BRIG Gilmore was very senior in Legacy and was President of the Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey Trust for a period.

In the middle of August, the Chief of the General Staff conducted his exercise. This was the only one during my six years on the headquarters to which I received an invitation. I never asked or found out why just the one! Incidentally the CGS exercise experience enabled me to understand why I have never been interested in full-time service in the army in peace time. Full-time service seemed to be a combination of periods of intense activity followed by periods not so intense, even to the point of boredom.

The CGS exercise followed this formula perfectly. From the time our aircraft landed in Canberra, we were "rushed" to Duntroon, although the exercise did not start until the following day. We had the afternoon and evening to fill in. Most gravitated to the mess. I went for a walk! We wore blues at night. It was then that I discovered that everyone else, with one exception, had the larger gorget tabs on their blues' collars. I had no seamstress at hand to change mine, but no one seemed to comment about it. The other officer with the small tabs was MAJGEN Grey, later to be knighted and promoted to General and subsequently appointed Governor of Tasmania.

The exercise concerned a country known as Lantana. The landmass was the size of Tasmania, but turned upside down. There were the usual seminar groups working on solutions to the problems, with the presentation of solutions in the main hall. My seminar leader was BRIG Greville from South Australia. He was also a close friend of BRIG Gilmore. The senior gunner officer was BRIG Jack KELLY, CBE. The CGS was LTGEN D. B. Dunstan. Sir Arthur Tange, CBE, Secretary to Department of Defence and reputed to be feared and respected as such, was also present.

On the final night, a formal mess dinner was held. Before the night was out, each corps group of officers had to stand on the tables and demonstrate solidarity in song. Memory suggests that the tops of the tables were quite rough and accustomed to such treatment. I did not know then that a similar "dance routine" by an officer at a 3MD gunner dinner would have considerable financial and other repercussions for many of us!



LTCOL Graham Allinson, CO, 2/15 Fd Regt, RAA, discussing aspects of the Artillery TEWT with the Colonel Artillery COI Graham Farley

On return, I attended a number of regimental activities, such as a 10 Medium weekend on forward observation, a formation TEWT, and the Artillery TEWT, all at Puckapunyal. The regiments were at a high standard, reflecting both the training given by their current COs and also my predecessor.

The formation TEWT was Exercise "Think Through." Accommodation was at A Block South at Puckapunyal. COL B. Clendinnen was the exercise coordinating officer. The Orbat in those days included 4/19 PWLH, 8/13 VMR, 2/15 Fd Regt RAA, 10 Mdm Regt RAA, 132 Div Loc Bty, HQ 6 Const Gp, 7 Fd Engr Regt, 108 Sig Sqn, 1 RVR, 2 RVR, 3 Div FF Gp Int Unit, 7 Tpt Coy, 15 Tpt Coy, 3 Ord PI, 6 Fd Amb, 3 Psych Unit, the Chaplains, and, of course, the HQ 3 Div FF Gp.

Gunner officers "invited" to attend included LTCOLs Graham Allinson and Tony Larnack-Jones, MAJs B. J. Wright, Peter Hemingway, John Henry, Bob Freeland, Doug Knight, Bob Muirhead, George James, Bob Collins, Doug Perry, and CAPTs Graham Rebeci and Laurie Haby.

The enemy was the nation of Musoria, "an aggressive, dynamic nation to the North of Australia."<sup>10</sup> "Own Troops" were 1 (AS) Corps, with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Division raised to full strength. HQ 3 Div consisted of three task forces, 4, 5 and 7. Problems were set for the 5 TF grouping. Artillery included 13 Fd Regt, 11 Mdm Regt (less one Bty), radar, survey and meteorological sections of 132 Div Loc Bty, and a SAM Tp from 118 Div AD Bty (Lt). Infantry comprised 6 RVR, and 3 and 4 RNSWR. The area of operations was Wangaratta.

At the end of the Arty TEWT on the weekend 29/30 October, Shirley and I had been invited to a Beating the Retreat ceremony outside Victoria Barracks in St. Kilda Road. The mover behind this function was the Logistics Commander, MAJGEN John Stevenson, OA. Dress was blues. My red tabs were now the correct size. But I had not been issued with my blues cap<sup>11</sup> with its abundance of gold thread. Fortunately I was able to borrow one from COL B. Clendinnen, AM, for the occasion. I was continuing to find that "colonels" were quite important and attracted much respect, particularly in the form of a place in a queue, compliments and transport.

On 5 November I was detailed to be a reviewing officer at the passing out of a recruit parade at Puckapunyal. I was to substitute for BRIG Jim Barry, ED. This was at the time of centralised recruit training, a period of sixteen days. My brief stated that there were to be 141 recruits on parade. On a later such parade, when there were 166 recruits, I insisted on being allowed to march on, but on this first occasion the hosts wanted me to use the official car. Scared that something would fall off, either my hat, medals or both, to say nothing of jamming the sword in the door hinge of the car, I asked that I be allowed to practice getting in and alighting from the car. I think I made it, but I felt like a corkscrew. This was one of the disadvantages of being over six foot in height and not very athletic.



Artillery visited 3 Div FF Gp on 22 November. On the same day that the artillery honoured St. Barbara, there was an army parade through Melbourne, including Leopard tanks.

Colonel Graham and Mrs. Shirley Farley at the 10 Mdm Regt, RAA, Ball at the Myers Street

But I have never had difficulty with public speaking, so I guess that I discharged my role fairly adequately. The 3MD colonels were on a roster as reviewing officers.

Before 1977 was out, I had attended the 2/15 Fd firing bivouac, and on another weekend had eventually found the 10 Medium bivouac, not at Puckapunyal but at Whittlesea. The Director of MAJGEN Norman Vickery<sup>12</sup> was at that time the Colonel Commandant. Looking after Colonel Commandants was another task for the Col (Arty).

<sup>10</sup> Ex "Think Through," General Idea, paragraph 1.

<sup>11</sup> Even for offices below colonel's rank this part of a well-dressed officer's apparel was also known as "Hats, red, ridiculous"

<sup>12</sup> His Honour Judge Norman Vickery, CBE, MC, ED. The MC was awarded for his service in the desert campaign. He later served as a NGFSO (Naval Gun Fire Support Officer). He was promoted Brigadier as Commander 4 AGRA and was subsequently both Commander 3 Inf Div and then the CMF member on the Army Board. He was the RAA Colonel Commandant for many years, particularly during my period as Col (Arty)

### Parade Card

**JUL 2005**  
03 Res Forces Day  
21 Committee

**AUG 2005**  
20 Regt Ball  
18 Committee

**SEP 2005**  
15 Committee

**OCT 2005**  
20 Committee

**NOV 2005**  
06 RSL Springvale  
10 A.G.M.  
11 Golf Day  
17 Committee

**DEC 2005**  
07 St Barbara's Day  
08 Committee

**JAN 2006**

**FEB 2006**  
05 Church Parade  
16 Committee

**MAR 2006**  
16 Committee

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