



From the President's Chair.

G'day Fellow members, It is once again with a heavy heart that I must inform you of the death of William John (Bill, Boulby) Gallagher and Carol Cunningham, the wife of our hard working Treasurer, Bob. They both will be sorely missed. I have known Bill Gallagher since 1955, Bill was the CO's driver driving a Holden staff car when I was posted from 3 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery at Middle Head, up to B troop 'A' Field Battery, Georges Heights, as a Gun Tractor driver. These two units belonged to 1st Field Regiment, Royal Regiment of Artillery, including 4 Locating Battery which was at Middle Head. Regimental Headquarters, Light Aid Detachment, Regimental Aid Post, Regimental Quartermaster's store, Officer's and Sergeant's messes were all at Georges Heights. Our Battery Commander was Maj. F. McAskill, nick name (Custard Guts). We had Chev and Ford WW11 Gun Tractors, which were worse for wear. Every Friday morning (If we were not at the Holsworthy Range) was the BC's inspection of the guns and vehicles, the guns were lined up on the apron, in front of the gun bays, with the gun tractors in front of the guns. One Friday the BC made the mistake of giving the command, Drivers Mount and Start Up. We were an eight gun Battery in those days and the only gun tractor to start up was number eight, all the other vehicles were pushed into position, of course this started uproar.

I am getting away from knowing Bill; Bill came to B Troop in 1956 from Headquarter Battery, as a LBdr driver and was assigned to one of the Troop gun tractors, later in 1956 we got brand new, straight out of their packing cases, GMC gun tractors, we thought we were made with 6x6 Yank vehicles and not the old British 4x4's. Maj. McAskill moved on and we got Maj. A.M. Forbes MC, as our new BC. He was liked and respected by all of the Bty. The BC being a Korean Veteran, knew all the staff at the Jungle Warfare School, Canungra, arranged for the Bty to go to JWS with our guns and vehicles, where we completed the obstacle course and Infantry Tactics course then did some live firing from Heart Break Hill, Upper Register, (High Angle these days). As we had 25 pounder field guns, we had to dig the trail in to get high angle, I could tell you some stories about people using PE cord explosive but won't. Bill not being used to geared down steering, as all the GMC's and Studebaker trucks were, was being winched up the hill by another gun tractor fitted with winch. Bill's front wheels hit a rock, causing the steering wheel to spin, it was a no-no to have your thumb inside the steering wheel but coming from driving a staff car to a truck, Bill's webbing between his finger and thumb was ripped back about an inch, in all we spent three months at Canungra. One of Bill's and my jobs was to drive the leave trucks into Brisbane on Friday evenings and return on Sunday afternoon, we always stayed at the Belvedere hotel, the publican was a lovely old lady who always looked after us. In 1957 we went back to Canungra with the Third Battalion and completed the Jungle Warfare course once again, in preparation for our posting to the Malayan Emergency.

We left Australia in September 1957 and on the way ran into an oil tanker in the Torres Strait, this held us up for a few days as we had to do some running repairs, (Or should I say our Engineer Contingent did all the hard work). We were drinking tallies for a shilling (ten Cents). On arrival at Singapore (In those days the place stank) the married families were on -forwarded by train and us single personnel were housed at the British Army's Nee Soon Barracks while the New Australia was repaired. We stayed there for a week so we all had a great time.

On arrival at Penang, we were all transported to our barracks at Butterworth and watched 105 Field Battery depart. By the way Bill's nick name was Bulby, because of his shinynose, Bill was assigned B Troops scout car which he drove for several months and then drove one of the gun tractors, I can recall an incident when we were doing major war training, which we had to do as we were under British command. We were in one defensive position and Bill and I were sharing a weapon pit, on packing up next morning we found we had a companion, a crate snake, very poisonous.

On returning home in 1959, Bill was promoted to Bombardier and I got my first hook as the Q Store driver in HQ Troop. In 1961 the Army was expanding and 1st Field Regiment was split in half to form the new 4th Field Regiment at Wacol, Bill was one of those who went to Brisbane. I did not see Bill for a lot of years and I think I have got this right that he was promoted to a gun Sergeant and then to WO11. He was posted to Portsea as an instructor and this is where he met his lovely wife, Rose. Bill came back to 4th Field Regiment as the Bty Guide in 106 Bty and they were on the way to Vietnam. The BSM of 106 Bty came home after six months and Bill took his place. On return to Australia, 106 Bty was posted to Singapore and Bill and family went for two years.

The next time I saw Bill was when 12th Field Regiment and 8th Medium Regiment were amalgamated and he took over from Arthur Bretherton as the RSM of 8/12th Medium Regiment. I was posted in as the RQMS, but this was not what the CO wanted, he was going to send me to the Locating Bty, I thought this was a step back in my career as I has been the BQMS of 'A' Fd Bty when they were an independent Bty in 19th Composite Regiment. One day Bill rang me and said that a posting was going for a WO11 with 3 Cadet Battalion in Mackay and that is how I now live in Mackay, Qld, and have been here since May 1974.

When Bill retired the family returned to Bill's home town of Warragul and he became an interior decorator. When Bonnie and I went tripping around after retirement, we stayed with Bill and Rose and they made us very welcome. A great soldier and a good friend passed away on the 12th May and may I pass on mine and the members condolences to Rose and family. May he rest in peace?

Carol Cunningham was a lovely lady who always supported Bob in his endeavours, Bob, the rest of the committee and members pass on their condolences to you and your family, and may Carol rest in peace?

The Annual General Meeting and Reunion, which is to be held at Morwell RSL on the 7th to the 9th September, is approaching fast, so come on all you southern members who always say that we only hold our meetings in Qld And NSW, come along and enjoy good comaradery.

The details are:

Friday 7th Sept. Meet and Greet. 1830hrs for 1900hrs. Casual Attire. Morwell RSL. Cost \$15.00 per head.

Saturday 8th Sept. 1000 Hrs. Annual General Meeting. RSL. After meeting, lunch at own expense.

Saturday Evening, Dinner, two course meal (Chicken or Steak), large choice of sweets, tea and coffee. 1830hrs. for 1900hrs; semi-formal attire, miniature medals to be worn. Morwell RSL. Cost \$25.00 per head. Wines and bar drinks at bar prices.

Sunday 9th Sept. 0800hrs. Breakfast at the Comfort Inn Cedar Lodge \$15.00

Bus Trip to the Phillip Island Vietnam Museum. Depart 0900hrs. outside motel. Cost of bus \$30 per head.

Entry to Museum. \$10.00 per head.

Lunch at Phillip Island RSL. Own expense, large choice of Seniors meals, \$12.00 to \$14.00.

Dinner at Morwell RSL. Own expense.

Total Cost. \$95.00 per head.

For the people who are going, please have your money into the Secretary by the 31st August. Secretary's address, 6 Harveys Road, Beaconsfield, Qld, 4740.

Accommodation: Comfort Inn Cedar Lodge, Mr John Callaway, Phone 03 5124 5877, email cedarlodgemorwell@bigpond.com

I attended the re-opening of the Henry Green Room on St Barbara's Day last December, Don Sinclair is now officially the curator, he has a get in and out of Enoggera card, wish I had one, if you can get into the barracks it is worth going and having a look as Don has done a marvellous job. The association gave a grant of \$6,500.00 towards the restoration. Also we donated \$1,000.00 to the 'A' Bty funds.

I have forty one members who are unfinancial on our books, the new financial year starts on the 1st July, so please pay your dues so we can keep on doing worthwhile projects. I have not sent out reminders this year, as usually I get no response. If you do not wish to be a member of the 'A' Field Battery Association Inc; any longer, please let me know and I will delete you from our members roll.

This December I will turn eighty two years old and if you younger members want the association to continue, please come along to our AGM and stand for either, President, Secretary or Treasurer. Our Treasurer is nearly 81 also.

If we don't get a new committee, then we will have to close the Assn; and pass our assets on to another like organization. I think this would be a crying shame, as we have less than three years and 'A' Battery will be 150 years old.

That's all from me for this newsletter: Tex Bassan

A BIT OF HISTORY



AGM AT BLI BLI SEPTEMBER 2008



DINING WITH THE STARS

The Saturday night Dinner at our AGM reunion featured live entertainment which included the boss of the Motel, Lloyd, singing country and western and doing an impersonation of Elvis.

The throaty warbling of the late Rock and Roll King was there, but the raunchy, gyrating, pelvic pumping was missing.

C'mon Lloyd, we may be down at the end of Lonely Street called Bli Bli Motel, but we expect you to practise some pelvis thrusting exercises, for when you Shake, Rattle and Roll at next year's tribute to the glory days of the Blue Suede Shoes Man.



Ian and Wendy Leven

This Annual General Meeting will be remembered for the voting in of our youngest Vice President.

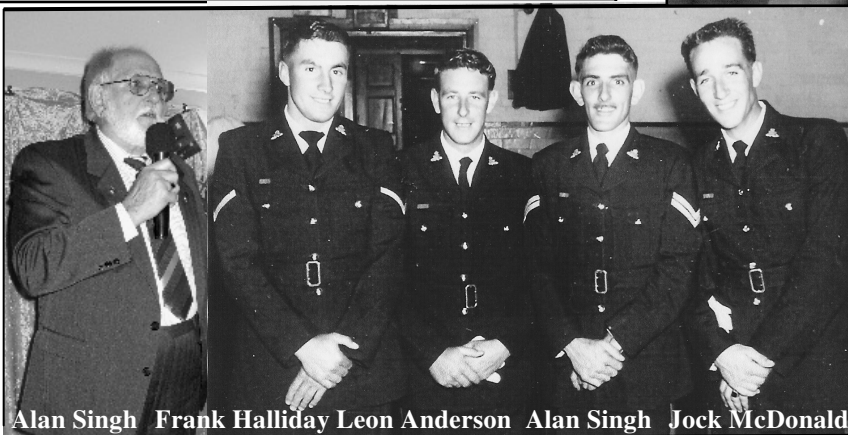
Congratulations to Ian Leven, shown here with his lovely wife Wendy.

Ian was on the Committee last year and epitomises the need for our committee to gain more younger members to keep our association functioning with fresh ideas.



Raffle Prizes Galore

A table full of prizes tempted all those attending the AGM Dinner to buy tickets in the raffles, there must have been around thirty draws. Thanks to Bonnie, Coco and Dee Bostock, Pud Gilkinson, Noelene and Bernie McMahon and Sue Hart for their donations.



Alan Singh Frank Halliday Leon Anderson Alan Singh Jock McDonald

The old bloke on the left is not singing, however he did raise quite a few laughs at the AGM Dinner telling a few yarns, mostly about these young gunners from 1957,

Of course, the old, "Sir, I'm Gunner Singh."- "I don't give a stuff if you're gunna do a soft shoe shuffle." joke raised it's head again and sounded just as funny as when it was first aired in 1957.

I am looking forward to hearing it again in 2009



The Captain Cook

Perfect Post March Party on the Brisbane River. The Anzac Day post march get together was a wonderful new experience, with the sound of the cheering crowds still echoing in our ears we headed for the Riverside Pier to board the Captain Cook for a cruise organised by 105 Field Battery. We were a little early for boarding, which did not create any problem at all as we enjoyed a couple of drinks in the outdoor garden area of the Pig and Whistle Bar and Restaurant.

When we finally boarded the Captain Cook we were treated to a complimentary first drink as we settled into the comfortable conditions on board and cast off for our cruise in perfect weather conditions.

The meal was advertised as a sausage sizzle and proved to be much more upmarket than that with perfectly cooked sausages, hamburgers, heaps of fried onions fresh buttered bread rolls and a wide choice of salads.

All this as we cruised the beautiful and interesting Brisbane River, eating, sipping and swapping yarns with old friends as we took in the picturesque and ever changing views along the river bank, the friendly family atmosphere was further enhanced by the attendance of a lot more than usual, wives and partners.

The charge for the complete package for this enjoyable afternoon was a modest \$20 per head, hopefully this cruise will be repeated next year and I would suggest you book in early as I am sure that all who were lucky enough to do this trip will be first on board next Anzac Day.



Prior to the march Ray Alcorn and Tex Bassan pose with these lovely and colourfully attired girls who were part of the contingent of Vietnamese veterans from the Republic of Vietnam



The sun is over the yardarm, it's time to splice the mainbrace and doing just that is, portside, Arthur Burke, amidships is Ray Alcorn and Bob Cunningham, hard to starboard



The Preso, pouting petulantly pleads for privacy from the paparazzi while settling down to a great luncheon, the look says it all, and the paparazzi pest p—ed off ! Didn't seem to worry the Baron though.



Ron Hart doesn't look out of place on board the boat, put a navy blue jacket on and he is easily mistaken for an Old Salt. Bonnie demonstrates the size of the sausages



Here is the Sydney Anzac day 2018 march featuring A Field Battery.
Sent in by Dodger Noonan



Bomb Squad dogs: The quiet heroes of Australia's military

TO detect hidden explosives meant to kill them, modern soldiers now have access to robots and electronic sensors among a vast range of technological wizardry.

But the tool they trust more than most is the faithful canine companion that has lived at humanity's side for more than 15,000 years.

Despite years of research, the military is yet to find a replacement for the sniffer dog and its sense of smell — more than 100,000 times better than ours.

Major Kendall Crocker, senior veterinary adviser for the Army, said dogs have saved hundreds of Diggers' lives and remained a critical component of the military.

"The US spent more than \$1 billion on projects and they came to the conclusion that the most effective device for detecting explosives in many situations is a dog's nose," he said. "There are still projects on artificial robots and looking at detectors to pick up certain chemicals that are associated with explosives, but a trained dog can learn a new explosive in a matter of an afternoon. They are phenomenal in what they can do."

FOR frontline Australian soldiers, explosives detection dogs and military police dogs are not just lifesavers.

They are also best mates, building unbreakable bonds with handlers who often adopt them as pets when they retire. A large percentage of explosive detection dogs are rescue dogs pulled off death row themselves.

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Lance Corporal Rueben Griggs, who has just taken on Bee, a three-year-old male kelpie cross adopted from a western Sydney animal refuge, said there was no doubt about their importance.

"I've seen the -devastation an IED can cause and I know that when the dogs are -involved and on point, the amount of lives saved by the dogs finding explosives before they are -activated is countless," he said.

The ADF officially recognises June 7 as the National Military Working Dog Day and last year began awarding a Defence Canine Operational Service Medal — the first defence force to do so.

The day -corresponds with the death of Sapper Darren Smith, 26, and his bomb dog Herbie, who died together in Afghanistan in 2010.

Since 1993, it has been an ADF policy to return all working dogs to Australia. In the event a dog is killed, its ashes are brought home.

Major Crocker said dogs were treated to the same medical care and evacuation procedures as soldiers



Bee" is a EDD dog seen here with his handler Lance Corporal Rueben Griggs at Gallipoli Barracks.



Sapper Mason Revell with his EDD "Dexter" and Vet, Major Kendall Crockett at Gallipoli Barracks.



Sarbi tries on the iconic bush hat at Eastern Creek



They shall not grow old,
As we that are left grow
old.
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the
sun,
And in the morning,
We will remember them.
Lest we forget.



KEN. AGNEW
LES ASHBY
TOM. BANFIELD
CLARE. (BONNIE) BASSAN
TREVOR. BEER
FRANK. BERRIER
S.J. BLANCH (OAS.
Malaya)
DOUG N. BRYAN
MALCOLM J. BUGG
GORDON CARMICHAEL
TOM. CARRUTHERS
KEITH. CHRISTENSEN
REG CLATWORTHY
HARRY COOK
DON DONKIN MBE
RICHARD. DUGGAN
R.M. DUCAT (OAS.
Malaya)
PAT. DALY
RAY DAVIS
TOM. DAWSON
JOHN. DOWNES
NOEL EGAN
BEVAN FILCE
MAURICE FONTAINE
GEORGE. FORSYTHE
MAX. FRANKLIN

MAX. FRANKLIN
M.K. FUSSELL (KIA,
Afghanistan)
BILL GALLAGHER
LANCE GILKINSON
ROBERT J. (BOB) GRAY
BARRY HANDLEY
NEIL HARDEN
MICK. HARKEN
DAVID (BANGER)HARRIS
RON HART
B.D. HENDERSON (OAS.
Malaya)
REG KELLY
KEN. KENNEDY
JOHN KNIGHT
BOBBY. LEWIS
BILL LIDDELL OAM
JOHN. MACDONALD
BARRY MARR
I.G. MATHERS (KIA.
Vietnam)
IAN. MEIBUSCH A.M
LLOYD MITCHELL
KEVIN MITCHELL
JACK MILLIGAN
E.J. (LOFTY) MOORE
BRIAN. MURTAGH
JIM PONTING

R.J. PARKE (OAS.
Vietnam)
DAVE. QUIRK
PETER. RAINSBURY
JOHN FRANKLAN
RAINEY
CLIVE. RALFE
JOE ROUSE
JOHN SALMON
BRIAN. SCOTT
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JOHN SHEEHAN
ALBERT (ALBY)
SHERIDAN
ALAN. SINGH
NOEL. SMALL
R. F. SMITH
LESLEY (SQUIZZY)
TAYLOR
IAN UHLMANN
DONALD DAVID WEIR
BRIAN. WHISKER
JACK WHITEHEAD
JOHN. WHITELAW.
AO,CBE
BERNARD. (PLONKY)
WINE
GUS. WOOLFE
JOHN. WORBOYS

In Memory of Our Departed Comrades

This page is to pay tribute, as we honour those members of A Field Battery who have passed away but are by no means forgotten.

We remember them as friends and comrades in happy and sad times. Most of them we knew as young soldiers and others, in later years developed a close friendship as we grew older

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