

6 RAR  
Alpha Coy



# 'A' NEWS

Vietnam  
East Timor—Leste  
Solomon Islands  
Singapore  
RCB—Malaysia  
Iraq  
Afghanistan



4/2010 EDITION

Inside this issue:

Editorial	1
Whitsunday Reunion	2
Talking about Reunions	
Views in Afghanistan	4
Fallen Comrades	5
Rob Laurent	6
Pandanus Park in W.A.	7
2010 Reunion	8
Letters to the Editor	9
Welcome Home Parade	10
Welcome Home Parade	11
Finances and Donations	12

"A Veteran is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank cheque made payable to Australia / NZ for an amount of 'UP TO AND INCLUDING MY LIFE'.

That is Honour and there are way too many people in this world who no longer understand it."



## Editorial

Welcome to the 4<sup>th</sup> and last edition of "The News" for 2010. Firstly I'd like to thank all those who sent emails and phoned to say how much they enjoyed my maiden effort as editor of A News. My biggest thanks go to Wendy (number 1 wife) who constantly edited the editor to make it all readable and Terry Mellington who has helped throughout, particularly with military protocol...and good plain sense!

The application for the grant from the DVA has had a few interesting twists and turns. We were informed when we applied that a decision would be made in October. Nobody at the time counted on an early election. (And we all know the result of that!) Everything was pushed back due to changes of ministers and bedding down of the new govt. We will now learn of our fate in November but I am still very confident of success.

Because Gillard called an early election, the free printing I had organised with our local mayor went out the window. He was a candidate for this electorate and what we had planned could have been compromising. Our mayor has lots of enemies looking for irregularities. He was watching his back and I was not going to bring the newsletter into disrepute.

The upshot of all this is we decided to buy a printer. I did a lot of research and came up with a HP Officejet Pro 8500. Price \$500 inclusive with 5 years warranty. There was one thing I didn't research - the option to refill the ink cartridges. At this stage, I have to buy replacement cartridges rather than use suppliers such as Cartridge World to refill. This is proving expensive. One option I am considering is to sell this printer and buy something else or we can hang onto the existing printer and wait for the cheaper refills to become available. Any comments?

I spent some time recently in the chair going through the database and updating the nominal role. Printed them all off and mailed them to everyone who is on our mailing list. I then sent the updated database out to our email list which prompted some changes. Next year... I will send out a notification of intent before I update the database! Also, for some reason known only to geeks, the last five entries did not print out. My apologies to those who were missed out - I have published their details on the back page.

Alpha lost three men in combat in Afghanistan before being rotated back home. Grant Kirby, Jarad Mackinney and Tomas Dale. Our hearts go out to their families and loved ones, and none was a more tragic passing than the other. There was one difference though. On the day Beckie Mackinney buried her husband she gave birth to a baby boy. I haven't the words to describe my emotions. I sent her flowers on behalf of A News and all of Alpha, past and present. We wish them happiness in the future and the family of Alpha when comfort is needed.

As always please send in your contributions/suggestions for the next issue.

Ed

'A'News is the newsletter of the A Company 6 RAR Association. The Association is dedicated to fostering comradeship forged in service to our country.

## FROM PHIL ZEUSCHNER ON WHITSUNDAY REUNION

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE FOR THEIR THOUGHTS AND KIND WORDS

It was a pleasure and privilege to be able to contribute and help to create the great success it turned out to be....it has to go down as the best yet....but then I've only been to two. I have personally thanked & congratulated Ladey & Weigo for their ideas/efforts & dedication for organising the whole schebang, but will now thank them publicly. Pity about the rain, the mud & the midges....but then again....that's how it was forty years ago... so you guys thought of everything!

For my bit, I called on a few favours, bribed a few people and received a couple of "donations" that are best not mentioned in case this is read by those who so kindly "donated".

THE NAME TAGS; They came about by me volunteering to help Ladey & Weigo (which is one thing my Nasho 2 years taught me never to do again....but I must have had a senior's moment) Anyway, they were something different and designed to show those who may not have known where or what our "home" for twelve months was like all those years ago. As I think Merl or Nola said they were designed big enough, so that all us "blind people" could read them and the magnets were to ensure no "pin hole" damage to shirts/blouse/jackets etc.

THE BANNER: Well that was a natural addition, as I had recently been viewing my slides, I thought maybe not everyone had photos, so it would be a great opportunity to save a few for posterity and it would be a good backdrop for the get togethers around the BBQ. I didn't think about carrying it in the march, but it was a great idea. I think that was your idea Ladey.....GOOD ONE!! But it can & should be at every reunion from now on, even if it's used to mark our spot in the parks. I don't even know where it ended up or who has got it. I suspect Mal and Nola have it stored away somewhere.

THE MEMORIAL BOOK: I was trying to think of something to make this reunion, especially memorable. (I do a lot of work for a wedding album manufacturer, so I thought what better way is there than producing an album that HONOUR OUR HEROS and will be there for those who come after us). When I explained to him (the Printer) what it was for, he would not accept any payment. Now that album is worth around \$300.00 and it was a fantastic gesture....He did however reluctantly accept a few litres of Chivas on behalf of A Coy. So he deserves a mention. MIKE PERCIVAL....ALBUMS AUSTRALIA North Rd. Murrumbeena Vic. 03 9575 0800

The quality of work is second to none & they export all over the world. If anyone may need an album of some kind in the future, Mike will certainly look after you. (Don't forget to mention the A Coy Memorial Album) The end result speaks for itself and I'm sure it will be respected and treasured as it is designed to be. It should also be able to be available to view at every reunion from now on. MY THANKS TO MAL FOR PRESENTING IT TO A Coy. HQ. I was very emotional when presenting it at the RSL that night, so many thanks to Ladey in helping me get through it.

I received 17 requests for "personal copies" which in itself is testament to the impact it had on those who requested one....of which you all should have received by now. If anyone else would like a copy (\$45.00 incl. the CD and postage) please contact me on 03 5974 2560 or mobile 0417 227 877. Incidentally, the original estimated price for the personal Memorial Books was \$60.00. After renegotiations..... Due to quantity the final price has come down to \$45.00. I was able to contact most of you who paid the \$60.00 about a refund, but 99% of you agreed that the balance be sent to Hosko for the Adelaide reunion. As the majority generally rules I will do just that.

Finally on this issue... I must sincerely thank Ladey for his gesture to send me a few dollars of which I instantly converted to a most enjoyable drinkable liquid. Found a comfortable chair and dedicated the contents to you all by indulging myself....(how selfish of me).....but I was only making up for lost time!!!! As for the shirts..... They are so comfortable and cool to wear, can't wait for some warm weather.....so thanks again.

Getting back to the reunion itself....after being "lost in the woods" for all those years I now feel like I am part of the BIG FAMILY. Joy and I had a fantastic time and we made some great "new friends" whom we will be keeping in touch with and visiting when we join the "grey nomads" on our retirement.....whenever that may be.

THERE WERE SOME MEMORABLE HIGHLIGHTS...

THE BOSS'S SPEECH....and just the fact he and Ann attended, they live not far away & have invited Joy and I to call for a cuppa one day...fantastic.

WALLY'S IMPROMPTU SPEECH AT THE SERVICE, fantastic....(one of Joy's highlights was "cooking dinner & getting breakfast for him each day)

POM'S UNACOMPANIED RENDITION OF OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM AT THE SERVICE.

Fantastic !!!!

CATCHING UP WITH Sgt. LANGERBEER AGAIN

Fantastic !!! Happy birthday Lew

THE MARCH ITSELF & THE SESSION AFTER

Fantastic !!!!!

It took me a while to get back to normal...if it can be called that....I was on a "downer" for weeks after...one minute surrounded by so many mates having such a good time....the next...nothing....but Dusty's album is terrific and keeps the memories close WELL DONE BUDDY .

So we are looking forward to the Adelaide reunion to do it all again....see you all there.

*THANK YOU PHIL, I am sure I speak for all, who attended the reunion and saw the thought and effort you put into making the reunion such a success. I think we should keep your throat well lubricated in Adelaide with that "enjoyable drinkable liquid" Ed.*

### TALKING ABOUT REUNIONS

How about this one. Terry Bell has come up with an idea for the 2014 reunion. A cruise to New Zealand to celebrate Anzac day with our comrades in arms, Whiskey and Victor Company's. It would be a ten day cruise leaving Sydney with ports of call at Fiordland (down near the bottom NZ), Dunedin, Christchurch, (if it's still there) Picton then Wellington where a couple of days stopover for the Anzac celebrations. Then back to Sydney.



Day 1	Depart Sydney	18 deg C
Day 3	Fiordlands Pk.	9 deg C
Day 4	Pt. Chalmers	10 deg C
Day 5	Christchurch	11 deg C
Day 6	Picton	12 deg C
Day 7	Wellington	12 deg C
Day 8	Wellington	12 deg C
Day 11	Sydney	18 deg C

Fares for the cruise are;

Outside with balcony Twin \$2,619 PP

Outside 4 berth from \$1,229 PP Twin from \$1,729 PP

Inside 4 Berth from \$1,179 PP Twin from \$1,679 PP

What is included in the fare?

All meals in the silver service main restaurants, food courts and daytime grills.

Daytime activities, including the sports court, whirlpool spas, pools and fully equipped gym.

Evening entertainment featuring live comedy, theatre, nightclubs and cinema.

These prices are standard and can change with group bookings. Please note PP means per person. Do your sums and decide if that's what you would like to do. On another angle it may be wise to invite the rest of the battalion along seeing as it was an Anzac Battalion. May need the numbers to lower the costs.

At this stage it is an idea and questions or expressions of interest should be directed to;

TERRY BELL 2/14 HALL AVE. BONGAREE Q 4507

PH. WK. 07 3332 7711 Mob. 0447 332 007

Email [terencebell@hotmail.com](mailto:terencebell@hotmail.com)

And cc to the Editor

**YOU NEVER FAIL UNTIL YOU STOP TRYING**

**Old jungle saying**

## Sergeant Shane Slattery's views in Afghanistan

My name is Shane Slattery, and I am a Sergeant serving in Mentor Team - Alpha (MT- A) as part of Mentoring Task Force - 1 (MTF - 1). I am not an original member of Alpha Company, but was forced assigned to it from the School of Infantry, when it was re-rolled from a combat team to a mentor team. I concentrated with 6 RAR, in early Oct 09 to commence the necessary preparations to deploy. Following a hectic period of rehearsals, validation, and kitting out we deployed in early Feb 2010. We arrived as winter was nearing an end, and quickly assumed responsibility for our assigned areas of operations from the outgoing unit. The Company was deployed to the Mirimbad Valley to the east of Tarin Kowt (TK), the main base for the joint Dutch/ Australian operations. The Mirimbad valley had up until recently had limited ISAF presence. We were spread over two patrol bases, one at Atiq, and the other at a recently established patrol base, named Patrol base Wali. Another element occupied a patrol house nearby, whilst another element remained at TK to assist with training of the Afghan National Army (ANA). There wasn't a great deal of time to gradually adjust to our surroundings or our jobs, as the company hit the deck running and commenced a intense period of patrolling, both as Australian only call signs or partnered patrols with our ANA colleagues. My role was as a Sergeant Mentor within an Operational Mentor and Liaison Team or OMLT. The team's mission was to assist to develop the capabilities of the ANA, through partnered operations and mentoring in such things as training and planning with the aim that they will be able to conduct their own independent operations and be self sufficient.

The intensely cold weather on arrival wasn't the only surprise; the culture shock in particular was significant and fascinating. It was like stepping back in time with many of the locals existing as they have pretty much for centuries past; with little to no access to the modern conveniences we take for granted like electricity, sewerage, clean running water etc. The reaction from the locals was a mixed bag, with some friendly and at ease with our presence, whilst others were passively hostile. Most chose to sit on the fence not knowing which was the better option and fearful of the repercussions of being seen to be collaborating with us. These situations altered little for the duration of the deployment; however it was pleasing to see people who would find ways of passing information to us, whilst at risk to themselves to advise us of threats such as IED's in the area. This suggests we were making some progress in gaining the support of the people.

The mentoring experience for me personally has been both challenging and generally satisfying, however at times frustrating. This last point has often been as a result of the cultural perceptions. The combined operations we regularly

conduct primarily consist of dismounted patrols, cordon and search and a vehicle checkpoints. These operations have yielded some good results with significant cache finds including weaponry, munitions and IED components. Aside from developing the ANA capabilities and giving them confidence, these results have assisted to disrupt the enemy's ability to conduct offensive operations against us, and provided a more secure environment for the locals to go about their daily lives. The ANA continue to develop gradually albeit slowly.

These successes weren't limited to the ANA, the Australian operations have yielded even better results with very significant number of IED and cache finds. This has had particularly significant impact on the enemy's operations and greatly assisted to secure the local area.

Throughout the deployment the battle group including MT-A has found itself involved in numerous engagements including some of the most intense fighting in recent times. The fighting has been conducted under some quite arduous conditions with temperatures during the summer exceeding 50 degrees, often over difficult terrain. On those occasions where we have engaged the enemy we have acquitted ourselves well, and at high price to the insurgents.



Unfortunately, despite MT-A's successes, the trip hasn't been without cost. As is the nature of such conflicts we have sustained casualties including two of our comrades from MT-A who paid the supreme sacrifice, whilst MTF-1 lost six. They maybe gone but won't be forgotten. Lest we forget.

At the time of writing the deployment for us is nearing an end, and we are all looking forward earnestly with excitement to returning home and being reunited with our loved ones. We are looking forward to a break, and some time to renew relationships, recuperate and reflect on what has been a long and at times hard and difficult trip, but on the whole a satisfying experience of a lifetime for which I am personally gratefully to have had the opportunity to have had.

---

**Fallen Comrades**

Vale

Grant Kirby

Although he hated to admit it, Kirbs was one of the most dedicated and professional soldiers I've had the privilege of working with. When Grant first tried to enlist, 10 years ago, he was knocked back for having shin splints and was told he could re-apply as soon as they were fixed. So he waited and on the very day he was healthy, Kirbs was there, just proving his passion and dedication for his job. Being true with the ANZAC legend, Kirbs played just as hard as he worked and he was without fail, always the first to the boozier on a Thursday afternoon, trying to get his mates out of work, so they could come and join him.

*Excerpt from eulogy by his mates*

Vale

Jarad Mackinney

He was a cheeky bugger who was always ready to have fun or help a mate and was always the first bloke to lend a hand or volunteer for work that needed to be done. Crash symbolised everything that is Australian, he loved fishing, 4 wheel driving and having a beer with his mates but at heart he was one of the battalion boys, a true Australian digger

*Excerpt from eulogy by his mates*

Vale

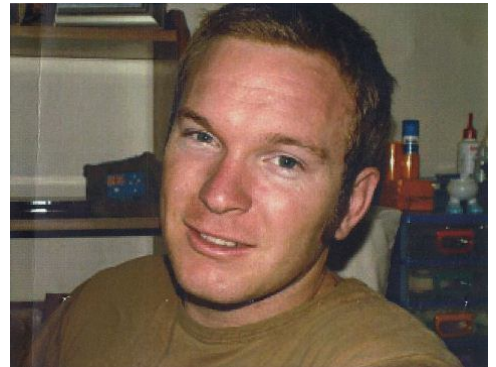
Tomas Dale

He was a talented sportsman, excelling at hockey and soccer. He was also a talented soldier, anything he seemed to put his mind to, he was able to do well, notably his position as a CFA, always looking for that experience. He was the real Australian soldier, he didn't care for the bullshit and will be remembered for his larrikinism in hard times. He was the king of stacks, but each time he rose, he'd have a smile on his face, bopping his head to his own internal soundtrack.

*Excerpt from eulogy by his mates*



Grant Kirby

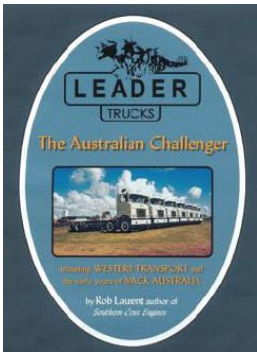


Jarad Mackinney



Tomas Dale

## Blue Flyer Publishing Rob Laurent



### Leader Trucks, The Australian Challenger

Including Western Transport and the early years of Mack Australia

This book tells how one dynamic man spent thirty years turning a dream into reality.

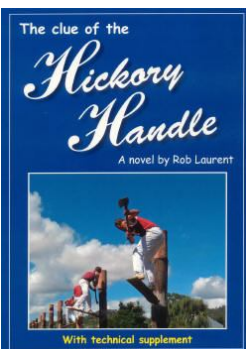
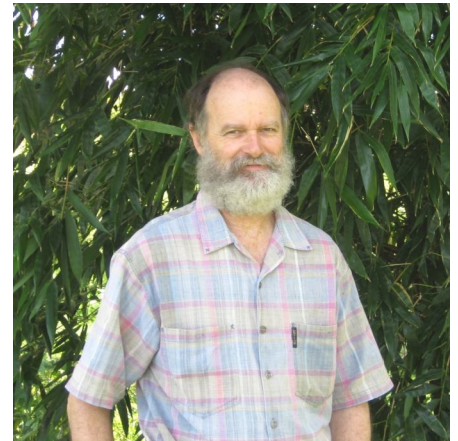
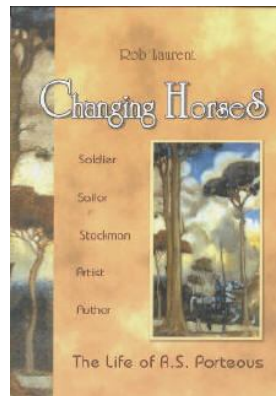
**Rob (Doc) Laurent**, (pictured) company medic Alpha Coy. 2nd tour 69/70, popped up to the Whitsundays with his wife Sally. His chief reason for the visit about a month ago was to see his brother. While he was here Ian Lade and I caught up with him. We all had a good yarn over a good cup of coffee. (I remember we used to catch up over a beer, what happened)?

Like so many of the Vietnam Vets he has had a hard time of it fitting into a life without the mateship of the military. It seems he has found his niche as an author. When he arrived he asked if I had "anything to do with trucks"? My reply was "only about thirty years" Rob the made a gift of the Leader Trucks book, I thanked him then and I thank him now. All you blokes out there who made a life attending the steering wheel I'm sure will enjoy. this book.

### Changing Horses

The life of R. S. Porteous; soldier, sailor, stockman, artist and author of "Cattleman".

Syd Porteous packed a lot into one lifetime: A Light-Horseman in World War 1; Commercial artist in 1920's Melbourne; Jackeroo, then part-owner of a vast Central Queensland cattle run.

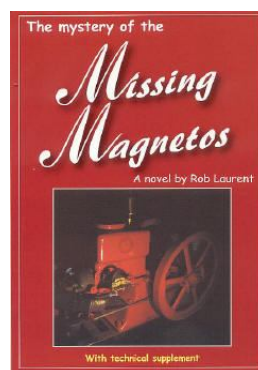


### The Clue of the Hickory Handle

Ronnie and Tip from Toomaroo Museum along with Barbie and Wendy, stir up a hornets nest when they link the mysterious disappearance of a champion axeman to an unsolved 30-year old train robbery.

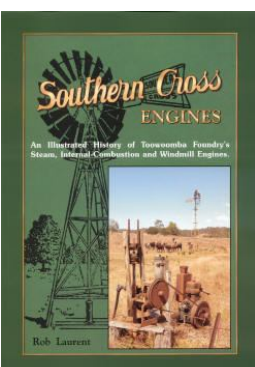
### The Mystery of the Missing Magnetos

Ronnie's the tractor expert, Tip's the computer whiz and Barbies the graziers daughter. There's trouble galore when this trio decides to investigate the theft of some valuable magnetos. Includes the working principal of internal combustion engines.



When He and Sally were about to leave he asked if I liked R. S. Porteous. I replied in the affirmative, in fact I am listening to a radio station in Innisfail who are broadcasting "Cattleman" Porteous' award winning novel. So he gifted me another book, The life of R. S. Porteous. I thoroughly enjoyed it as well, Rob writes very well and I can recommend it to you all as a good read. Ed.

Some A company members may remember me as the bloke who handed out Aspros and Band-aids. I was the company medic during the second tour SVN. I carried a small camera in Vietnam and took



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lots of photos. I'm now putting the photos into a book about our year overseas. I'm being helped by Ian Lade and Doug Tanner, who also took photos. There are some second-tour photos on the "A Company Remembers" DVD that I'd love to include in the book, but Mike MacNaught (who compiled the DVD) can't remember everyone who contributed pics. Could anyone whose photos are on the DVD please contact me . I live near Toowoomba QLD. My phone number is 07 4696 6108 Email address roblaurant@blueflyer.com.au

### Pandanus Park in WA ?

Hi folks, this may not interest everybody.

The veteran community in WA, largely through the tireless efforts of Norm Whitburn (ex POFC) have obtained an abandoned cattle station in the north west from the State Government and the Department of Environmental protection.

This is to be set up as a Veterans Retreat with facilities for camping etc..... The only one real drawback for some people will be it's isolation. It is approximately 80 kms off the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Road on the Woody Woody Mine Road which I think is owed by Rio Tinto.

Norm has canvassed the big miners out there as well as the Marble Bar Shire, interested Government departments and he has been impressed by the support offered.

#### A Coy. Rep

In the last edition I informed you all that Rick Karaitiana put his hand up for the rep's job. In the meantime he has come to realize that it would be too much of a burden with living in Iraq, his business commitments and a university degree he is currently studying for. He has since asked to be relieved of the duty but promised to look at it again when he returns to Australia permanently. Peter Adamis has jumped on board to fill the gap and I'm sure we all wish him well. Peter is based in Melbourne and will work with the association from there. Ed

Peter can be contacted on:  
03 9432 5396  
0409 965 538  
pellana@netspace.net.au



*President Norm Whitburn and Vice President Peter Fitzpatrick discussing one of the camp sites at Meentheena.*

The station is the old Meentheena Cattle Run of some 700,000 acres which has been disused for some time. It has the Nullagine River passing through it and fairly good roads to and from the proposed camp area. We have been out that way and it is probably a good 3 hour drive from Port Hedland.

As of next year the setting up of the camp will begin in earnest and anybody who is passing that way is more than welcome to drop in and crack a tinny with the fellow ex-servicemen and women.

To contact Norm; nwhitburn@bigpond.com and he can fill you in on the details if you are interested.

Please pass this on to any other interested parties...There may be a need for volunteer workers in the initial stages. Norm has done a great job and it would be a pity if he was not supported. I believe that Norm's wife is going to be setting up a web page so all will be able to keep up to date as it develops.

Kindest regards to all, Shang and Marlene.

*Police were called to a day care centre, where a three year old was resisting a rest.*

*Two blondes walked into a building, you'd think one of them would have seen it !!*

## 2010 BATTALION REUNION by Peter Fitzgerald

There was much anticipation and anxiety regarding the style and events of this years Battalion Reunion owing to the disaster which was the dinner at the 2005 reunion; and, from the A Company perspective - the staging of the Airlie Beach reunion just six weeks prior to the Battalion 5-yearly reunion.

In hindsight, neither concern had any effect. The format of the reunion was similar to those of previous occasions with a 'meet-and-greet' on Friday night, Dinner dance on Saturday night and general meeting/lunch function on Sunday. Also, complimentary company functions were held around the week-end.

The concept of all company meet-and-greet functions being held in the one place on Friday night, was well placed this year, being at the Broncos Leagues Club; which has the facility of several venues for individual companies, while allowing people to meet with mates from each company. As usual there are lessons to be learned from every reunion which need to be recognized for future events. My observation this time were two, a) that the bar staff should be ready to serve at opening time. (nearly 20 minutes late) and b) that the food served could be of a higher standard than the (deep fried) food served this year. That some attendees hadn't registered until after the cut-off date meant extra work for the organizers on the night-usually happens.

The Saturday night dinner was exceptional. All the lessons learned from 2005 were well avoided, and produced a wonderful event. The food was beautiful, with an alternate drop menu which appeared to apply to every ones taste; and the staff attention was exceptional. As one person said to me on Sunday, "You only had to scratch your head and another round of drinks appeared on the table".

Another pleasing feature was the tables of Timor veterans who attended— the start of the next generation of the 6 RAR Association. A Company again had the greatest number of tables for a single company-only matched by the combined Support/Admin/BHQ group. The venue was great, with none of the sound problems of the previous venue, so all the problems, which had caused criticism of the previous event, were solved.

The general meeting on Sunday was the (normal) poorly attended event. No one who doesn't put in the effort deserves to criticize—so I guess there will be no criticism during the next 5 years.

One point of discussion during the meeting was the suggestion of holding Battalion reunions every 3 years,

Instead of 5, due to the aging membership. The motion was defeated when it was pointed out, that at the next reunion; the Battalion will be 50 years old - a significant event.

Also it was decided to continue with the half-term reunion, and it is intended to coincide with the wildflower season in spring 2005. The WA locals (led of course by an A Coy member), will be determining the timing and details – so as soon as this is announced, you should book for the Indian Pacific if this is your preferred method of travel west.

The Sunday memorial service and buffet lunch was a great event. The memorial service—which involved members of the current Battalion, was a fitting reminder of the sacrifices of our Battalion over the past 45 years, and quite moving. At the conclusion of the service, the balance of the people were asked to stay in the contemplation building while association members took the poppies provided and placed them at the appropriate tree in the memorial walk dedicated to the fallen members of 6 RAR – which had been marked with an Australian flag and 6 RAR Association ribbon.

The caterers were organised for such a large number of people, and lunch was served in an orderly fashion with the food being quite presentable. Entertainment was provided, and it appeared that a great time was had by all.

For me the only down side was that the current Battalion members were not available to join with the 'oldies' due to operational commitments; however the few remaining current soldiers and their families, were able to join us for the Sunday function and we were warmly welcomed.

In summary, this was the best overall reunion for many years and great credit should go to the organisers who have eliminated many hiccups of (some) previous reunions, and with enthusiasm of the younger members these reunions will continue.

Although there were no nominations at the reunion for A Coy. Rep, and the other nominations as newsletter editor were withdrawn; it is now great to know that we have two enthusiastic people in Rick Karaitiana (Rep) and Chris Weigand (Editor) to lead us through the next period of time.

Regards Peter Fitzgerald

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



### Lew Langabeer

This photo was taken in August, the day after Lew's seventieth birthday. In the past few years Lew has had a heart condition and around March his condition went down rapidly. The doctors wanted to operate in April. Lew had other ideas, he had a reunion to attend. Against all doctors advice he came to the Whitsundays to see his mates and comrades, they came first, his wellbeing second. Wendy and I were pleased to spend some time with him and Bev on the cruise in the Whitsundays. He had his operation in May and came through it all very well. After a couple of months recovery time Bev tells us that he is back to his old self, off to Gym to show the youngsters up, running and generally being a pain. Good luck Lew and Bev, we hope to see you again soon. Ed.

### Ted Jones

Around six weeks ago Ted started to feel uncomfortable and asked Rhonda to take him to hospital. They found his blood pressure to be far too high to be healthy. They did a lot of tests, off to Greenslopes for more tests but couldn't figure out why he was out of whack. All the tests are now in and they still don't know what has caused the problem. Rhonda says he is feeling ok but has to keep taking the pills.

Good luck Ted. Ed.

### Letter to the Editor from Peter Fitzgerald

I would like to put the case forward for having both email or snail mail available for the newsletter in the future. During my time as Editor I had years when we had to pay for printing etc. to provide the newsletter. Indeed, for some years Donna and I paid personally for the production costs (paper, printing and envelopes). Fortunately due to the many generous donations (often just in time and out of the blue) I never found the need to beg for funds. I'm sure when you publish the finances for the year (usually I did this in the final issue for the year); members can see how the funds are going, and many will then support the newsletter with donations.

My concern about sending only email copies of this fine newsletter is that we will not know who is or isn't receiving a copy. In the past the copies returned have been a great indicator of missing mates; and have been the basis of MIA (Missing In Australia), and also notification of some who have passed away. Having a copy to hand to a mate has also been a great tool for introducing a new member to our family. Also, email only (or website only) issue, doesn't allow hard copies to be sent to the serving soldiers—either at base or deployed. It is a constant need to introduce new members to replace those who have "passed on".

Another concern is that the wives and partners may also not be involved if the news is only on the Association site. Over the years many members have laughed about having to fight their wives to get the first look at the newsletter as it comes from the mail box (I cannot see a lot of these same wives visiting the site on a regular basis). I therefore put forward that any member who would like a hard copy should be able to ask for same. I'm sure you, as Editor, would find that most of these men would at some time offer a donation.

Regards,

Peter Fitzgerald.

### Editors response

It has always been my intention to post A News to those who do not have an email address, with every other member receiving their notification by email. The reason is simple—we no longer have the facility to print the newsletter free of charge and it currently costs \$2.18 to send each hard copy. In the long term this is not sustainable.

I hope this clarifies the matter. Should anyone else share Peter Fitzgerald's view, please contact me. I will collate the replies and we will see where we go from there. Ed.

## Welcome Home Parade - 7th Brigade Brisbane



Welcome Home Parade Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November Brisbane

2500 diggers of the 7th Brigade, majority of whom are 6 RAR members, marched through the streets of Brisbane on Saturday, cheered on by an enthusiastic crowd of 15,000 plus onlookers. It was heartening to see the number of young children so proudly waving their Australian flags to the passing soldiers. As we stood under the 6 Battalion banner we were proud to be supporters of our current serving members of 6RAR and other units who had recently returned from Afghanistan, Timor Leste and Iraq. To see a fine body of young fit and strong men and women was most impressive and reminded us of days gone by when it was us who would have been marching. Armoured vehicles, including Bushmasters and old APC's and a Bren carrier along with other motorised vehicles rumbled down the streets as the Military bands kept everyone in step. Part of the parade included 6 riderless horses to honour the 6 fallen members who paid the ultimate sacrifice in serving their country. Two of the horses carried a pair of boots reversed in the stirrups and a helmet facing backwards to signifying the passing of the soldiers.



Following the parade we continued to Enoggera barracks for a get-together but unfortunately the young diggers are not unlike us and many of them hot footed it to the closest watering hole with their mates to celebrate being back home for just a few quiet ales. There was live entertainment and food available at Enoggera. We met Maggie who was instrumental in sending care packages to the boys while they were overseas and as such has become known as "Maggie Queen of the Parcels". We also met Lessa who is currently working hard to get "Red Shirt Friday" up and running Australia



**NOTE FROM MERV**

Merv McInnis was listening to Ian Lade who was recalling the career of our past CO Maj. Gen. David Butler AO DSO retired. Merv's ears pricked up when Ladey mentioned that David's first command was with the occupation forces Japan.

Merv's dad was also doing the same gig at the same time. Merv and his dad it would seem, served under the same commander 20 years apart. How many people can claim that distinction! "It came as a shock, then as a pleasant surprise to me when the penny dropped. My dad passed away many years ago without saying much about his service time apart from some light hearted banter."

Merv McInnis

**CONTACTS**

Since I sent out the database I have had a couple of contacts from ladies who have lost their husbands .

Ann Jeffrey nee Branson lost her husband Ross about 14 years ago and wondered should any of Ross' old mates like to make contact. Try the Branson name in this database.

Dianne Reynolds lost her husband Bill in July this year and would like to find Bill's mate John Knoles to let him know of the loss. Anyone out there have any info contact; Dianne Reynolds.  
Villa 7 250 Thames Boulevard  
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**FINANCES**

As reported last issue a most successful reunion in the Whitsundays netted a good deal of money and donations and book sales have also made a good contribution.

Opening balance:

Fitzgerald A News funds \$ 753.87

Deposits:

Proceeds Reunion \$6,203.21

Donations, book sales \$1,323.00

Interest \$ 4.99

Outgoings:

Printer, stationary, stamps, ink cartridges etc. \$1,377.39

**Balance: \$6,907.68**

Less seed funding Adelaide \$3,000.00

**Balance "A" News \$3,907.68**

**DONATIONS**

Leo Kucks \$50  
Dave Strachan \$50  
Kevin Squire \$35  
Lloyd Shingles \$100  
David Butler \$50  
Bruce McLay \$50  
Roy Pollock \$50  
Kevin Knowles \$50  
Gerald O'Donovan \$50  
Peter (Ben) Hall \$50  
Peter Watson \$200  
Barry Duncan \$200  
Leonard Jones \$100  
Larry Holm \$80  
Ken Lumis \$20  
Fred Steele \$50

I would like to thank to those above for their donations to A News. Over the years cash reserves have not always been as healthy as they are at the moment and I am hoping to keep them at a level that will not cause concern should donations dry up for a while. Once again to the donors, thanks, and I hope you enjoy this edition of the A News. Ed.

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