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## **NEWSLETTER APRIL 2019**

### **President's Report**

Let me first say how surprised and delighted myself and the committee have been to the positive responses to our Newsletters. We have received many compliments and we hope to continue the standard into the future.

The Newsletter has also encouraged many members to renew lapsed membership and the number of new life members signing up has been outstanding as well as some donations along the way.

The sale of the new caps has caught us on the hop, the original 20 ordered were gone in a flash so more are on order, if not already delivered. We are fortunate that the manufacturer is only a short distance from where the Secretary lives.

We were also in negotiations with the current Battery Commander of 101 Battery (note they don't have Field/ Medium Battery etc now??) to have plaques, stubby holders and keyrings made however all the merchandise has 8/12 Regiment on them (also note no mention of type of Regiment just 1 Regiment, 8/12 Regiment etc) and are not appropriate for us I think plus the fact the cost of postage is too much. At this stage the new plaques are now available, The Secretary will give more information in the Newsletter. They have turned out really good.

At this point I must thank, on behalf all the members the hard work and running around that the Secretary Brian Collins and Vice President Trevor Madeley have done for the caps and plaques. Well done, a good job. The Newcastle Hunter Region Vietnam Veterans' who hosted our reunion in Newcastle last August made special mention about us at their AGM in February. The President said they would be more than happy to host us again in the future. They thought we had a very good turnout at the March and dinner. I did mention in response that not often do they have the pleasure and privilege of mixing and dinning with so many gentlemen of the Artillery at one time.

## PROFILE TREVOR (JACK) J. MADELEY

### VICE PRESIDENT

Once upon a time , long time ago a child was born in West Wyalong on the 6 November 1945 . I remember it well as it was the day Rainbird won the Melbourne Cup. From there I was taken to a mining town called Glen Davis in N.S.W. My dad won a soldier settlement property 11 miles out of Walcha on the New England Tablelands where I did all my schooling . I was destined to be a sheep and cattle farmer . I worked for my Dad for 12 months until I turned 17, when I saw this "Join the New Army " in the papers . "Full adult wages at 17 " I mentioned this to my dad and his reply was " If you want my advice you won't join but if you want to join I will sign your papers". I decided I would give it a go , so the next advice he gave me was " Don't go to Infantry " as he was a mortar man with 27 Battalion in New Guinea. So that's all I knew about the army. The day I went to Sydney to be enlisted I was to start a wool classes course but had to cancel it. My idea was to join for 3 years then go back on the land , however I couldn't add up and 35 years later I hung my boots up 23 in the regular army then another 11 in the army reserve .

After going through Kapooka , then the School of Artillery in 1963 , along with Jim Booth and Jack Lennon , I was posted to 4th Fd Regt at Wacol Queensland. After a couple of years I was promoted to L/Bdr and given a job as a number 1 of a L5 Pack Howitzer then promoted to Bdr about 5 months later, just as those 21 and 22 year old National Servicemen arrived . I'm not sure who were the most worried , them or me .

I was attached as the training element for the 1st intake of National Service doing their gunnery course. Then 108 Bty was formed so I was one of the members of that battery . I thought "Shit", I was 3 months too young to go to Malaya as a reo for 111 LAA Battery and now I'm going to miss out on Vietnam

. However, eventually I was transferred back to 101 Battery and took over Foxtrot Gun . then Delta Gun . Had my free overseas trip with all expenses paid for in 1966-1977 as the number 7 of Delta Gun with Alan Grice as number 1 , Barry Faulkner , Ross Teschendorff, Ted Miekus, Bob Allport and the only reg Dave Vonbertoch.

On return I was attached to the Tropical Trials Unit , based at Crowley Beach .This was for the Rapier Missile Trials. Wake in the morning and go for a surf. I took 5 Gunners with me . Not sure if I can remember them all but here goes , David Ryan , Russel Robertson both 2nd tour of Vietnam , Snoopy Palant, Digger Summersford , ? Robinson who later transferred to Aviation .

On return I was reluctantly posted to 1 RTB Kapooka Wagga as a recruiter training instructor, during my time there I was made a platoon Sergeant as a Bombardier . After 12 months I returned to get married to my girlfriend Gae . Married 1 day, packed the next day. On the road to my father's place in Walcha 1/2 way to Kapooka. Next day stayed at my platoon Sgt's married quarter, next day back to work. In 1970 I was posted and promoted to SGT back to 1 Fed Regt Aust Component Enoggera, then part of the rebuild of 101 Bty as they were just arriving home from Vietnam. Jim Booth will remember it well as I met up with Jim and he kindly took me to his deserted married quarter for a couple of drinks over lunch as I had to get back for work . I think we finished off the bottle of scotch. I staggered back to 1 Fd Regt, missed my first Sergeant's mess meeting . Next morning I'm in front of the RSM who said rude words to me and gave me 7 days Orderly Sergeant. That wasn't the worst thing though, it was going home and telling Gay what happened and picked up all my starched green . Thanks Jim, had a great afternoon I think we enjoyed it. In 1971 I was medically downgraded so had to leave the guns . I choose to do a Transport Supervisors course at Puckapunyal. I was posted to 5 Fd Regt at Annerley , then on to Army Recruiting in Brisbane. My boss WO2 Ron Haskard lived over the road from me in Taigum. It was a top job as only 2 of us Ron and myself were qualified to tow the 35 Ft display caravan behind an International Truck . Posted back to 1Fd Regt as the transport supervisor of 101 Bty . My Bombardier was Alan Baldwin from the 2nd tour 101 Bty, what a team. I recall one exercise up in Shoalwater Bay one of the Gun Tractors lost its exhaust right from the manifold. What a noise and to top it off it had no brakes. Sgt Madeley and Bdr Baldwin were given the task of driving this object back to Wacol . We hadn't arrived at the first gate near Bifield when we stopped. Baldy crawled into the back and located 2 ear muff's from the gun stores, to stop we went back through the gears then both pulled on the hand break. At one stage I wanted to stop for a leak, Baldy was driving. He gave me the 2 fingers up and pointed to the hold in the floor on the passenger's side.

Have you ever tried to pee through a hole in a moving truck mmmmm. We managed to get it back to Wacol in one piece, thanks Baldy. Later on in that posting a job as the internal auditor came up at the main Q . It was offered to Baldy he came to me and told me to take it as he was getting out. At this stage Baldy was promoted to Sgt on the guns. I did take up the office and I have always thanked Baldy for getting me on the track to WO1. ILL NEVER FORGET MATE. Then I became the BQMS of 105 Bty for 2 years as a S/SGT then posted to 5/11 Fed Regt Annerley Brisbane as a WO2 RQMS, I took over from WO2 Tassie Woodard 101 Bty 2nd tour Viet Nam . One of my QM'S was WO1 Paddy Pritchard another 101 Bty 2nd tour, he was promoted to Captain while I was his RQMS, a top boss. From there I was posted to 48 Fd Bty in Keswick Barracks Adelaide as the BQMS QM TPT officer all in one. I was then promoted to WO1 and posted to the Quarter Masters Advisers team based in Victoria Barracks Melbourne. I tried to get a posting back to 1 Fd Regt as the RQMS but was told I had to stay in Melbourne for another 12 months. That's when I decided to get out of the regular Army as I had my own house in Brisbane. Returned to Brisbane for discharge. Not long after that I was at the Brisbane Exhibition where I ran into Jock Gunn as a recruiting officer for the Army Reserve, I took up his offer. After discharge from the regular army, I bought a concrete truck at West End in Brisbane with a company called Classified Concrete. Not for long most of our jobs were high rise apartments in the city, an easy to make a quid. After 2 years I sold out and did 6 months selling real estate, not my bag. Bought a property at Mount Hallen between Esk and Gatton where I bred Murry Brahma cattle, grew my own Lucerne and bailed it for the stock in bad time . Sold them all some years ago, now just watch the world go by. Travel in outback Australia towing an off road caravan. Have done some overseas travel to Bribie Island and over to Manly from Circular Quay .

### **Attention 69/70 Tour Members**

I am looking some people from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour who will provide their profile for the next newsletter please. You have 3 months to do it before the next newsletter but please email me at [b.collins13@outlook.com](mailto:b.collins13@outlook.com) if you are willing to contribute.

### **Secretary's Report**

#### **2019 National Australian Artillery Association Dinner**

Another reminder of the Gunner's Dinner to be held at Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and a Meet and

Greet on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August. It will also be our Annual Reunion. You have until the 30<sup>th</sup> June to Register and Pay although they would like you to register your interest as soon as possible. You can cancel your interest at any time prior to the 30<sup>th</sup>. Just use this link [www.australianartilleryassociation.com](http://www.australianartilleryassociation.com) and then click on the Gunner's Dinner icon and follow the instructions. You can then indicate that you wish to sit at the 101 Field Battery SVN – 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary tables. The 101 Field Battery 'Last Man Standing Reunion' (Malaya) currently has 15 members and their partners attending and the 101 Field Battery SVN has 27 members and partners attending. Out of the 27 people sitting at the 101 Bty SVN table there are only 9 members (including their wives) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour and it is your 50<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary, C'mon fellas you can do better than that. If anyone has a problem registering on line they could contact Graham Hampton the Secretary of the Association on 0401400403 for help.

### Membership

It has been encouraging to see that since the last newsletter we have had 12 new Life Subscribers bringing the total to 144, 7 of which we know have passed away. 7 members have paid their Annual Subscription for 2019. One notable new Life Subscriber was Max Beck who if he isn't the eldest financial member at 88 years young would be close to it, well done Max.

### Donations

The following members have contributed generous donations to the Association since the January Newsletter, thank you on behalf of the Association:

Max Beck      Reg Shepherd      John Forbes      Brian Collins      Dave  
Richards-Preston

### Rest In Peace

Bill Blackmore 69/70 Tour, Kevin Skippen 69/70 Tour, Noel Lesina 69/70 Tour

It is with sadness that the Association has been informed of the passing of three of our members.

Bill's son Eric's fiancé Vanessa informed the Association that Bill Blackmore 69/70 tour passed away in June 2017.

Judith, Kevin Skippen's wife advised us that Kevin 69/70 tour had passed away two years ago. Judith has paid for 2 years membership of the Association and also purchased two 101 Bty Caps for her daughter Michele and herself.

Patricia Lesina advised the Association that her husband Noel 69/70 tour passed away in November 2013.

Lest We Forget

### 101 Battery Darwin

The following is an outline of the Battery's activities for 2019 as received from the BC 101 Bty, 8/12 Regt who has generously provided this information and will do so into the future.

- "The 101st Battery (we stopped being 'Medium' in 2012) is continuing its READYING Year in 2019. The Battery is designated as the Ready Battery for the Ready Battle Group and the Amphibious Ready Group for 2020. As such we have a busy year ahead of us with Exercises THUNDER RUN (Cultana in March), SEA HORIZON (embarked on HMAS Adelaide) in Apr/May, SEA EXPLORER and SEA RAIDER (Embarked on HMAS Adelaide conducting Air Mobile operations in support of a Mechanised Amphibious Battlegroup) in June and July; TALISMAN SABRE in July and then lastly Exercise PREDATORS STRIKE in September as our final certification exercise before assuming READY in October.
- The Battery is currently manned at 83 personnel and is equipped with four M777A2 155mm lightweight howitzers. We use a system called the Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System (AFATDS) as our Fire Control system which with our current communications systems allows us to conduct Fire Missions digitally from the observer all the way to the Gun without the need for voice orders to be passed on a radio.
- Our Observers are equipped with a Digital system that allows them to produce and send Fire Missions on a lightweight portable computer (like a mini iPad) as well as use their enhanced optical devices to accurately determine 10 figure grids.
- We have recently started employing a new Artillery Meteorological System that has effectively eliminated the need to conduct Adjustments. This is employed by our OPCPs (now called ACSOs, Artillery Command System Operators) either in the Battery or at the Regimental Command Post.

- We have started to integrate and use effectively the new Land 121 Vehicle Fleet. The HX77 Gun Tractor Variant (replaces the Mack), 40M (replaces the Mog) and the G-Wagon (replaces the Land Rover. Additionally we continue to utilise the PMV (Bushmaster) which is undergoing a upgrade to be Digitally enabled. We are also due to receive our first PMV-L (light) or Hawkai's this year."

### 101 Battery Website

The Australian Artillery Association has generously hosted the 101 Battery Website. On the website members can access The History of the Battery, Honour Roll, Membership Roll, Online Membership Application, Newsletters, Latest News, Contact List of the Committee. From the Membership Roll if a member is financial and has an email address, you are able to contact that member by clicking on his name if it is underlined (which indicates he has an email address) and send him a message. We would like all members who are financial members who have an email address to click on their name and send a test email to themselves. If it doesn't work please contact me at [b.collins13@outlook.com](mailto:b.collins13@outlook.com)

This is the direct link to our website -

[http://www.australianartilleryassociation.com/other\\_association/101\\_bty\\_association/101\\_bty\\_assn\\_index.htm](http://www.australianartilleryassociation.com/other_association/101_bty_association/101_bty_assn_index.htm)

### Veteran's Home Care

Continuing the theme from the last newsletter many of our Veterans may not be aware of services available from DVA.

#### **What is Veterans' Home Care?**

Veterans' Home Care (VHC) is a DVA program designed to assist eligible veterans who need a small amount of practical help to continue living independently in their own home.

#### **Who is eligible to receive Home care?**

Eligible DVA clients who have a Gold Card or White card are eligible for an assessment for this service.

To see if you are eligible please contact the VHC Assessment Agency on 1300 550 450 to discuss your eligibility.

#### **How do I apply?**

Simply ring the Assessment Agency. Other people can refer you with your consent, e.g. family members, carers, friend, GPs or Hospitals.

#### **What services may I receive through the VHC program?**

**Personal care**

This includes assistance with daily self-care tasks that a person is unable to do for themselves; e.g. showering, eating etc. (**see Fact sheet for all of these types of services**)

### **Respite Care**

Respite Care relieves a carer who provides ongoing care who is severely incapacitated or frail. It allows the carer to have a break from the caring role' It can include in-home, Residential respite care or Emergency short term relief.

### **Domestic Assistance**

Domestic Assistance provides support with basic household tasks in line with an assessed need, Services may include;

Internal house cleaning

Clothes washing and ironing

Bill paying and unaccompanied shopping (**See Fact Sheet for all these types of services**)

### **Safety-related Home and Garden Maintenance**

Safety-related Home and Garden Maintenance services are designed to keep the home safe by minimizing hazards. Services include minor tasks that could be done by a handyman. E.g. replacing light bulbs, tap washers. changing batteries in smoke/security alarms, grass cutting and gardening but only where a safety hazard exists. (**See Fact Sheet for all these types of services**)

**NOTE:** regular gardening, lawn mowing etc. **ARE NOT** available under this service.

### **Are there limits to each service I can receive through the VHC program?**

These are the basic limits, (**See Fact Sheet for more detailed description of all the limits in the services**)

### **Personal Care**

Dependant on your assessed needs you may have up to-one-and-a-half hours per week.

### **Respite care**

In any one financial year up to 196 hours of in-home Respite care or 28 days Residential Respite care or a combination of both.

### **Domestic Assistance**

There are no strict limits for Domestic Assistance as it depends on individual assessed needs, the service is provided on a fortnightly or weekly basis dependent on your assessed needs. Most common of this service is one-and-a-half-hours fortnightly at a cost of \$5.00.

### **Safety Related Home and Garden Maintenance**

You may have up to 15 hours in a 12 month period. Based on your needs you are not automatically entitled to 15 hours.

### **How much do these services cost?**



Co-payments apply and a contribution towards the cost of providing the services. The Domestic Assistance one-and-a-half hour's service costs **\$5.00**. All others services are **\$5.00 an hour**, with the exception of Respite Care which has no co-payment.

**This is a summary of this Program which is over 5 pages long to read all the details and services please Log onto DVA Fact sheet HCS01, Veterans' Home Care, or obtain a copy from your nearest DVA office.**

**John Pollock**

**Advocate/Pension office**

Emergency ID Medical Alerts



## **DVA White & Gold Card Holders can have EMERGENCY ID MEDICAL ALERTS PAID FOR BY DVA**

To whom it may concern,

My name is Nicole Graham, I am the Founder & Director of Emergency ID Australia. I believe our range of world class Emergency ID and medical alerts could be of **huge benefit to your members**.

As you are aware, the rate of veterans with medical needs is high. Emergency ID can hold information that is vitally important in an emergency situation. Emergency Services and medical professionals are trained to seek out emergency identification to obtain VITAL information about the patient which could assist in both their treatment and contacting their next of kin.

**Emergency ID have developed a "DVA Pack" specifically for Department of Veteran's Affairs clients. The pack includes:**

- **Emergency ID Bracelet medallion and chain of their choice. PLUS,**
- **Emergency ID Necklace medallion and necklace chain of their choice. PLUS,**  
Both these quality jewellery items are CUSTOM engraved (as they choose) with their most urgent medical and emergency information.
- **2 x Emergency ID Write-On Wallet Cards. PLUS,**
- **12 month warranty on bracelet & necklace medallion - suitable for 24hr wear - even in the water - showers, chlorine, spas and ocean!**

Ordering any of our products is easy; simply visit our website [emergencyid.com.au](http://emergencyid.com.au) and navigate to the "All Products (SHOPPING)" tab, then to the "VALUE PACKS + DVA" drop down box, or call [03 6381 1223](tel:0363811223) to speak to our helpful and highly professional trained staff.

I have included a few brochures showing a SMALL part of our range, however we have MANY more products which can be seen online. If you feel these products would benefit your members as much as I do, please let them know of this benefit to them. More brochures can be provided if you need them.

**It is a very simple process for DVA White & Gold Card Holders to select their Emergency ID. We will organise FULL PAYMENT BY DVA on their behalf. The pack above is valued at \$139, so we would like to see as many DVA Card Holders benefit from wearing & carrying vital Emergency ID, to assist in ensuring they receive the correct medical and emergency treatment when needed, relaying vital information, when perhaps they cannot.**

Kind Regards,

*Nicole Graham*

Founder & Director

[www.emergencyid.com.au](http://www.emergencyid.com.au)

03 63811223



Memorabilia

The Association caps that appeared in the last newsletter have been very popular. Unfortunately we have to raise the price to \$30 each including postage due to underestimating the expensive postage as it is regarded as a small parcel.

We have decided not to purchase any of the merchandise from 101 Bty Darwin for two reasons. Firstly it has 8/12 Regt on it plus the fact of the high cost of postage would not make it economically viable.

We have designed and purchased a 101 Bty Plaque a photo of the drawing is shown below. The 4 items on the plaque are metal and fixed to the plaque. The plaque cost is \$70 including postage. If you wish to purchase one please deposit the money into the Association account and email the Treasurer or the Secretary to confirm payment has been made.

### Member's Contributions

It is good to see members are taking the time to write in and contribute to the newsletter.

The following was received from Gavin White:

A great Newsletter! Very sad to hear of Len Dyer's passing. When we got back from Vietnam, Len was our footy coach at Enoggera prior to him being posted. I then took over from him and commenced a long career in coaching.

Coach of an Army team, full of your mates, was a good introduction to coaching, as they took absolutely no notice of me and were even caught at times having a durrie at the break; and worse still, passing around a bottle of Stones Green Ginger wine.

I had no idea of the story involving Len's gun, but all I can say he was a first class bloke.

We have an Annual Gunners Dinner in Tassie at Anglesea Barracks and it's a great night.

I'm sure the above addressees can not only give some great gunner stories, but also track down a lot of our missing mates. I know Tony White is still in close contact with a few of the MIAs.

**(Secretary's Note:** I won't name the addressees mentioned however I am sure there are a lot of stories that could be told that are suitable for the newsletter, so put pen to paper or fingers to the keyboard and send in some stories).

The following was received from David "Buck" "Daffy" Ryan 66/67 tour.

Daffy honoured At Hall of Fame

FORMER local, David "Daffy" Ryan, will be honoured as one of the five inductees to the Australian Shearers Hall of Fame in April. Mr Ryan is a well-known man in the local community, winning many prestigious awards including the inaugural Hamilton Wool and Rural Monarch award in 1981. Photo: SPEC FILE.MITCH LANG (See Photo below) Former local resident, David "Daffy" Ryan, is set to be inducted into the Australian Shearer's Hall of Fame on Sunday, April 21 Where he will be recognised for his tireless Work in the industry. Mr Ryan will be one of five Australian Shearers inducted in the Hall of Fame, with a ceremony set to be in western New South Wales in a small town of Hay, on Easter Sunday.

Each year the country's best shearers are recognised at the Festival of the Blades, and this year five shearers will put their names among some of the greatest ever in their Industry.

An independent selection panel had 30 names put forward to them with only five positions up for grabs and to no surprise Mr Ryan was included in the final five. Such a big honour can come as a big surprise and overwhelm some people, but Mr Ryan was extremely humbled and proud of his achievement. "It is a pretty special thing to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, shearing was just part of my life so to be recognised like this is really special," he said.

Where it all began

WITH 37 years of shearing under his belt and starting from such a young age, Mr Ryan knew nothing different than turning up to sheds every day and working tirelessly. "I did it to the best of my ability every day and just worked really hard," he said. "I was in the sheds at around 13 years of age but I didn't start shearing till I was around 16-years-old." Growing up, Mr Ryan's brothers moved into the shearing sheds and with no university or further education to move onto after school, Mr Ryan opted to leave his education behind in pursuit of a paying job. He described his decision to move into the shearing sheds as one that was made in search of the highest paying labouring job, rather than just something that he would enjoy. "I knew that I wouldn't be able to move on to Uni like you can today so I decided to leave in search of the highest paying possible labouring job," Mr Ryan said. "Both my brothers were shearers so I was in the sheds a bit when I was

little, but to earn such big money at such a young age was something that was pretty crazy, I would be earning up to three times more than other people I knew.” After shearing for several years, Mr Ryan developed his skill and began to really fly through sheep in a day, before he found himself as the quickest shearer in every shed he visited. “I found that as I got better, I was never getting beaten, no matter what shed we would go to I was always getting through the most sheep either in a run or in a day,” he said. When Mr Ryan first began shearing, the record for the most six-month-old merinos shorn in a day was 420, but that wouldn’t be enough in August 1978.

Mr Ryan showed how quick he really was when he broke the record one day, going through 466 in one day, not just beating the record, but smashing it by 46. “It’s a funny story actually, I knew the man that had the record at the time, but I always said that I was good enough to beat it and I did,” he said. Following his record breaking day, Mr Ryan furthered his status as the quickest shearer in the country upping his tally to 501. he would eventually lose the record for some time before September 1994 where he reclaimed the record, shearing 625 merino lambs in one day.

Along with shearing records, Mr Ryan also entered in some big tournaments, including national and state competitions which he proved he was good enough to win both. Winning one Australian Championship as well as three State Championships, Mr Ryan stamped his name among some of the best to ever work with the blades. “I won one Australian Championship and three National Championships and although they mean a lot to me it was funny because you’d always be competing against the same people,” Mr Ryan said. “It was always a competition within a competition, we always wanted to win it all, but it was just as much about beating the other shearers as it was to win.”

Despite having so many years of shearing experience, Mr Ryan’s career was interrupted by two years national service including one Stint in Vietnam. When returning from his two years’ service Mr Ryan thought of perusing a different career before eventually moving back into the shearing sheds where he finished his working life. “I spent three years away from shearing due to national service and being in Vietnam, and when I came back I wasn’t too sure I knew what I was going to do, but I eventually moved back into shearing,” he said. “I had a serious think about changing careers and at one stage I was going to become a policeman.” One big factor of Mr Ryan’s work was his travel, but he said that the travel wasn’t the hardest on him. “I travelled all over, I would be between Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria and that would happen every year,” Mr Ryan said.

“People always say how shearers had it hard, but what about the wives and the families of the shearers when they went away? They constantly had to stay home and function while the man was away at work.”

Easter Sunday will be the day when Mr Ryan’s name is placed among some of the greatest shearers of all time. Although Mr Ryan now lives in far-north Queensland with wife, Regina, majority of his family still lives locally. While in the south-west, he was honoured with a number of awards, including the inaugural Hamilton Wool and Rural Monarch award, which has since been presented to 28 others since its inception in 1981. All family and friend have been invited to the event that starts at 10am on Sunday, while an open invitation is extended to anyone interested in the industry who wants to attend. It will be a day that will mark the end of a tremendous career for Mr Ryan, a career that was full of hard work, record breaking and award winning.

See attached photo of Daffy (Buck) (David) in action.

### Operation Bribie Reunion

A reunion to commemorate Operation Bribie in 1967 was held fittingly at Bribie RSL in Queensland. Members of Bravo Company, 6 RAR and members of 101 Bty Association attended the Meet and Greet on 16<sup>th</sup> February and then attended the Memorial Service on the 17<sup>th</sup> February. 101 Bty laid a wreath and Trevor (Jack) Madeley delivered a speech from the gunners point of view of the Operation which was warmly received by the Infantry component attending. The photo shown below is of members at the Memorial Service (L-R) Trevor Madeley, Jim King, Trevor Plant, Ray Smith. Below is Trevor’s speech.

### Operation Bribie From 101 Fd Bty Perspective

“On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 1967 all quiet on the gun position, half the gun detachments were attending a concert at Luscombe Bowl.

Out of the blue came over the tonoi (a speaker which all guns had for communications between the guns and the command post.), “Prepare to Move!!!”

I thought someone had gone into the command post and playing a prank as previous operations we were given a prior warning order. Came over the tonoi again “Prepare to Move”, I then took more notice of it and ran over to the gun. I believe the concert was stopped to announce “Members of 101 Battery are to “return to their guns immediately, trucks are waiting to take you back to the Battery position.”

We bought the guns out of action and towed them to our helipad "Koala Pad". The guns were strapped in pairs with A22 containers either side of each gun. We were then briefed on where we were going, nothing about what our task was. We were also informed that the area had not been cleared and to watch for land mines, I thought 'Holy shit that's all we need'.

We loaded the Chinook with first line ammunition which was 100 rounds HE, 6 rounds of Smoke and 5 rounds of splintex. The ammunition was firstly removed from the boxes but remained in the cylinders, I was with the first sortie of two guns and the command post.

On arriving beside the airfield at Dat Do after lunch sometime, the guns were lowered and unhooked, the chopper moved to the side. We fixed bayonets to prepare to probe for mines however that was discarded because the priority was to bring the guns into action. The pilots lifted the nose of the Chinook and out rolled all of our ammunition, immediately returning to the 101 Bty position in Nui Dat to hook up the next two guns.

No sooner had the command been set up and the guns brought in to action we commenced firing with two guns. The Chinook lifted the remaining 4 guns 2 X 2 to our position.

During the course of the Battery firing to my amazement a kid on a pushbike came riding through the gun position calling out "You want Coke" "You want Coke" to which he had loads in a box on the back of his bike.

We fired missions until just before dusk, the GPO (Gun Position Officer), 2Lt Mal Pearce gave the order to fill our pits in as we were about to return to our base at Nui Dat. However we continued firing and then got the order to dig out our personal pits as we were not returning to Nui Dat.

At one stage of firing we got the order from the command post "Danger Close Clinometer Laying". This method of laying the gun was only used when the rounds were directed within 100 metres of our troops. We were absolutely amazed and wondering what the hell was happening at the Infantry's end and things must have been pretty bloody serious there.

I don't know how many rounds we fired however during the night we were getting low on ammunition and we felt relieved when helicopters arrived directly from Vung Tau with ammunition underslung. There was no allocation of ammunition per gun it was just grab what you could and we will sought the numbers out later.

Sometime that night a Battery of American 155mm Self Propelled guns came into position on the opposite side of the airfield to us. I believe they were in the area and came to our support.

We did have an incident of 2 rounds falling into Bravo Company's position. This was quite devastating for us. Later it was discovered the gears in the elevation scale on one of our guns was faulty so not the fault of the gun sergeant.

Next morning after we stopped firing once again we were told to fill our pits in and reluctantly we did. The Kiwis from 161 Battery arrived with their trucks to take the guns and all empty boxes back to Nui Dat. The gun crews were flown back by Huey helicopters.

This is a brief summary of 101 Battery's involvement in Operation Bribie."

### THE NEW AND THE OLD

I thought it might be interesting for us older gunners to see the difference between the old and new 155mm Howitzers in the Australian Regiments. There has always been talk within the old field Gunner ranks as to the slowness and bulk of Medium guns/Howitzers and some derogatory remarks about detachment ancestors. Well things have changed and I am one of the converted.

The new M777A2 155mm Light Howitzer has taken the world with a storm, it has had the following sales thus far, **Australia 54, Canada 37, India 145, Saudi Arabia 70** and the **US Marines 580, US Army 421** a total for US of 1001.

It first saw action in Afghanistan with the US Marines late 2007 and is still in Iraq being used against ISIS supporting Iraq and Kurdish forces.

This is the comparison between the old and the new:

	<b>M777A2</b>	<b>M198</b>
Weight	4200Kg	7154kg
Into action	2 min 10 s	6 min 35 s
Out of action	2 min 23 s	10 min 40 s
Number carried on C130	2	1 per load
Detachment	5	9

I bet Defence and Treasury are clapping their hands with only 5 men per gun by saving all that pay from the other 16 off the M198s (Only four guns per Battery now) imagine the savings from the 42 on the old 105mm six gun batteries.

The Extended Range Cannon Artillery project, in concept stages will modify the gun by adding 1.8 m to the barrel and 900kg to extend the range from 30 to 70 Km

John Pollock

### GREATER RECOGNITION FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



NEW legislation introduced into Federal Parliament will provide better recognition of the unique nature of military service and further acknowledge the service and sacrifice of veterans and their families. The Government's Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Bill 2019 will establish an Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant, and as part of a wider recognition package, a card and lapel pin will be provided to veterans. Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said it was a project he has been working on with exservice organisations since becoming the Minister almost 12 months ago. "The Government has introduced this legislation to provide a formal way for all Australians to show their appreciation to the men and women who secured the freedoms we enjoy today and to their families who have supported them," Mr Chester said. "I have consulted extensively with the ex-service community on the development of this Bill, including discussions with our 5-Eyes counterparts in the United Kingdom who have put in place similar measures. "The covenant, card and lapel pin will allow the community — whether they are employers, businesses, community groups, veteran or sporting organisations — the opportunity to recognise the service and sacrifice of the men and women who have served our nation. "Our government is committed to putting veterans and their families first and this legislation is part of a greater suite of measures we are putting in place. "This Bill will create a separate Act to provide symbolic recognition for all veterans, and does not change current entitlements." "Importantly, the Bill before Parliament includes a statement requiring the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to adopt a beneficial approach when interpreting legislation and applying a fair, just and consistent approach to veterans' claims. It's part of our ongoing efforts to transform the culture of DVA." The Government has received a positive response from businesses which are supportive of the recognition program. The covenant includes an oath, which all Australians will be encouraged to take at community commemorative events, and is underpinned by the new Veteran Card and an Australian Veteran Lapel Pin and a Reservist Lapel Pin.



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