



31st/42nd Battalion

The Royal Queensland Regiment

Vol 2. 17 DEC 21



CO's Introduction



Well what a year for the mighty Minotaur's.

This unit has exploded, erupted and caught the attention of many this year and it has been inspiring to watch. Gone are the days that reserve service

is just strictly a vocational experience. Your efforts this year have made senior leadership stand up and take notice and they are now paying attention, which is evidenced by the awarding of multiple commendations and promotions that the RSM and I were honoured to be a part of. You should all be so very proud of your collective achievements and the RSM and I sincerely thank you for being part of the unit's evolution.

This magazine article will highlight a series of achievements that clearly demonstrates how we have achieved our commander's intent – which is to make reserve service, meaningful, relevant, enjoyable and most importantly credible. Apart from being viewed as the 'metaphorical bench', the unit has moved into the communities to demonstrate how we are here to support them in their time of need whilst also reminding them how the unit can be a means for them to better themselves and serve their nation.

Our performance on Talisman Sabre was noticeable, which was mirrored by our efforts in responding to the needs of the QPS in Belyando and our capacity to lead the ESF collective on Mackay Ready. We have been highly visible and willing to support the community, whether it be in the conduct of Backyard Assists; raising money for Legacy and local RSLs; ceremonial activities associated with the Battle of Fromelles and Remembrance Day, or through the regular attendance of coffee with a soldier, local endurance runs or with our constant and regular support to DFR and DWEP.

The unit has streamlined, however the incentives and opportunities that have been presented now and into the future will enable the unit to grow and develop further. The panelling of soldiers on the RSS and SCCC Support Company Courses along with the arrival of the better equipment, Mobile WTSS, Airsoft, Bluebolt, 5/11 BTY NQ Det, PMVs and the AEV trial from next year, are all clear symbols that the unit is being invested in – and I for one are very excited to see how much further the unit can grow.

Inside This Edition

CO's Introduction	1
S1 Cell	2
OPS Cell	3
OC Kennedy	4
OC Capricornia	5
Cap Coy	6
ISR TS 21	11
Ex Whispering Boomerang	13
Rugby 10s Competition	14
Backyard Assist	15
Ken Coy Adventure TRG	16
Kennedy COY PME	17
IPE	18
Associations articles	20
Hometown articles	27
DACC 1 SAR	32
EX Mackay Ready	33
Honours and Awards	34
Ceremonial Update	35
RSMs Last Post	37

The units social, community engagement and historical links and connections have been bolstered by the arrival of the XO MAJ Mark Smith, who has devoted significant amount of his time coordinating excellent adventure training, dining in nights and opportunities to link with the 31st and 42nd associations. Of note is his efforts to involve the Bn in the 3 BDE 10s Rugby Tournament, that will see the Bn play its first game of rugby in 82 years. Most notably is the donning of 'The Bullas' rugby strip that will sit side by side with the original Kennedy Regiment strip in the Jezzine Barracks Museum after the tournament.



Whilst we are moving forward, the unit has farewelled some outstanding operators who provided excellent support to the unit. Whilst the list is long a distinguished, some key players of note: CAPT Mick Hibbet as the quintessential man for all seasons - has left a gapping capability hole in the unit whilst he pursues a very lucrative transport business. SGT Darren Blair departs Cairns Depot after a long a colourful career. The OPSO MAJ Chris Rosenthal (who will hopefully remain with us part time) has done a mountain of work synchronising multiple LoE whilst winning enough resources and cash to fund a BDE (-) training year. The effervescent OPSWO WO2 Matt Greenhatch, who won't leave a dry eye in the house of Capricornia Coy, has set the Bn on a clear pathway of success with his tireless efforts in enhancing the combat shooting, ACP and ISR capabilities in the Bn. His performance has landed him the coveted CSM position in *old faithful* next year and the unit is proud to see him achieve a significant career highlight.

Sadly we have witnessed the passing of WO2 Rod Law in November this year. After almost four decades of flawless service to his country, he will be remembered as a fiercely loyal and dedicated senior soldier and leader who will be sorely missed. Our deepest condolences to Lyn and his loving family.

Lastly.... I would like to single out the efforts of the RSM WO1 John Stafford, who has provided me with countless hours of support and highly valued counsel that has enabled me to command the unit to the best of my ability. He is the ultimate behind the scenes achiever, who has devoted himself to do his upmost for the Battalions soldiers and NCOs through dedicated and carefully considered advice. His legacy will be maintained as he posts to LRS to ensure that the Army maintains the capacity to conduct realistic, challenging and meaningful range practices – safely. It will be hard to see you leave, but his efforts will always be remembered. Farewell to the 'Game Changer'

The Battalion is alive and well and has a strong beating pulse. Enjoy your well-deserved Christmas leave.... hopefully nothing happens to preclude that opportunity.

DP. Gandy
LTCOL
Commanding Officer 31/42 RQR

S1 CELL – Captain Nick Crosbie



Since the previous newsletter the unit has gone from strength to strength and the S1 cell has been at the forefront. Exercise Talisman Sabre saw us reinforce the CSSB mounting component for 11 Brigade's contribution to the exercise. Receiving, staging and on forwarding not only members from our outlying depots but from Brisbane based units is already a challenge without ongoing pandemic restrictions. CPL

Keiron McKenzie was seconded to BG Cannan HQ based on 9RQR and the Chief, SGT O'Connor and CPL Moore formed the spine of the mounting headquarters.

I was fortunate enough to have a nomination accepted to augment the United Nations Command (UNC) headquarters in South Korea (ROK). The Combined Command Post Exercise (CCPT) is a biannual event where US Forces Korea (USFK) and ROK forces run a CPX and the UNC are there monitoring and enforcing the Armistice that has been in play since 1953. The UNC has a skeleton crew of member states to which the ADF contributes full time staff including the Deputy Commander who is a RAN 3 star. It is heavily reliant on staff augmentation if conflict was to break out on the peninsula hence the twice yearly exercise. It was a very rewarding experience to work in a multinational headquarters with partner nations despite the sightseeing being restricted by the ongoing pandemic restrictions. A personal highlight was being able to be taken on a guided tour of Kapyong and standing in both A COY and B COY MDPs.

The remainder of the year included two high risk weather season activities, one being meticulously planned and the other being rather ad hoc. The former was Exercise Mackay Ready whereby our unit, 11 Brigade NQ units with assistance from 3 Brigade partnered Queensland emergency services for a search and rescue exercise around Mackay. The (now) seasoned clerks conducted mounting administration for a large contingent of NQ ADF (147 personnel) and closely monitored their needs whilst out on task at Ben Mohr station. The ad hoc activity was a DACC 1 task that was raised on a Tuesday night and is discussed in greater detail in another section of this newsletter.

All things said and done the S1 cell has performed well in a very busy year and has remained agile in the administrative functions of the unit. We said good bye to PTE Gray who has moved on to another stage of her life and we wish her all the best. There is a very low turnover of personnel in the cell for next year which augers well for the high risk weather season and the commencement of training in 2022. On behalf of the Chief Clerk and the rest of the crew we would like to wish the Battalion Family a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



B COY 3RAR Left Flank, Kapyong Valley



Australian and Zew Zealand Memorial, Kapyong

OPERATIONS CELL – WO2 Matt Greenhatch

Needless to say (and to echo what pretty much anyone in the unit would say) training year 2021 has been a busy year to say the least. However what came with that busy year has been a metric tonne of capability enhancement, demonstration of relevance, great reputational successes; and despite the stresses and hard work – a whole lot of fun.



The Battalion has been enabled to undertake a huge amount of activities – the state of the budget is testimony to that! But this is the cost of doing business – when you consider that this year the Warfighting season covering the span of bulk live firing, combative's courses, first aid/tactical care of the combat casualty, and getting out and about doing rifle company and ISR activities; then transitioning into the High Risk Weather Season kicking goals with certification exercises that was precursored by a real time DACC tasking that was a baptism by fire but a huge process success. Add to this the other peripheral/enabling activities such as community engagement, adventure training, and social functions – it cannot help to feel that we have done two year's work in one year – but this has put the unit on the map in no uncertain terms.

This work has raised not only the capability of the unit and presented soldiers that are better for it, but has raised the reputation of the unit in and outside of the ADF. So from OPs, well done soldiers and officers of 31/42 RQR. Great soldiering, and best wishes moving into 2022.

GET TO KNOW THE TEAM FOR 2021:



Operations Officer 31/42 RQR, Major Chris Rosenthal has spent the greater part of the year sweating over balancing the budget with the Unit Resource Manager.

- First enlisted as a 37 year old with the 1st Infantry Battalion Australian Imperial Forces seeing action across WW 1 and 2
- Can keep a straight face while having several heart episodes while discussing unit funding
- Loves a Latte despite ragging on Lattes
- Happy to get fully changed in the shared office regardless of occupancy at the time
- His maniac dog literally ate his mess kit the day of a function
- In a display of excellent self-control did not strangle a Lieutenant for the duration of 2021



Operations Warrant Officer 31/42 RQR, WO2 Matt Greenhatch is our subject matter expert on all things to do with death, whether it is unarmed combat, close quarter shooting or Japanese Martial arts.

- He allegedly logged onto ACMS once this year to get a soldier's 5 from the URM about something he still doesn't understand... and still isn't sure what 'ACMS' stands for.
- Has spent more time in the field than the local kangaroos in a bid to avoid all things DRN.
- Sleeps in his SCE with a large punisher skull sprayed onto the front and a sword under his pillow.



Unit Resource Manager, WO2 Greg Tam is located in sunny Mackay, dislocated from BHQ. However, in conjunction with the OPSO managed to pluck funding left and right to at least keep the unit's nose above water...

- Threw himself in front of a moving scooter for reasons undisclosed
- Is Caucasian, not SE Asian (OPSWO made assumptions based on 'Tam'...)
- Does not own webbing, but If he did it'd have a bum bag for sure



Operations Sergeant, SGT Philip Manning; a former Infantry Colour Sergeant with the British Army, has had the pleasure of carrying the OPs cell in the OPSWO's frequent absence. Often referred to as 'the real MVP' of the OPs cell. Double hatted as the 'S6', does a great job in this capacity as far as being able to say 'Nothing to report', 'As read', and 'Any questions, Sir?' during CO's CUB in this role.

- Killed more bad dudes than the Black Plague as a Squaddie, now sips tea behind a desk
- Dislikes being called 'Frenchie'
- In a convenient move, lives half way to Cairns
- Unflappable, almost impossible to get a rise out of no matter what pineapples are thrown at him

From the Operations Cell have a great leave, a Merry Christmas, and a great year in 2022.

OC KENNEDY COMPANY - MAJ Barbie Keller

Well! That's Kennedy Company's year complete. The last 10 months have been an absolute whirl wind experience with significant progress made on the development path. There have been so many highlights in the last half of the year to rival the first half! I have reflected upon the challenges and success we have had. Taking over the Company in February this year was a daunting challenge. The demonstrably low attendance and lack of training program were the first things to focus on and address. The Company has certainly addressed these and more!



The Company's structure has been revamped this year! We started without a Company Sergeant Major but were very pleased to have SGT Jamie Edwards embrace the opportunity and fulfil the role beyond his rank ably. PLSGT Townsville departed during the year leaving us with a significant vacancy. On his return from operational deployment, CPL John Howe has stepped into the breach and performing admirably. He is developing his skills and knowledge rapidly! CPL Howe is paired with LT Lawrence Long and between them, they are proving a stable and dynamic influence in Townsville. Like CPL Howe, CPL Darcy Anderson returned from operational deployment and commenced an extended hand over with the Training Sergeant in Cairns. CPL Anderson is fulfilling this critical role expertly. Alongside LT Stewart Clyde-Smith, Team Cairns continues to build upon their strong foundation.

The Company has been active not only the last six months, but throughout the year. The second half of the year we have been out in the Cairns and Townsville communities with Park Runs being a time to have some fun, improve health and wellbeing and engage in our local communities. We've had many a comment from people who didn't realise there were active Army reserve members in their community. We took out several top spots crashing the Goldsborough Goldrush Fun Run but more importantly had a great morning run with the Cairns Road Runners. Range practices have been the heaviest lifters of all our activities. The Company have fired live fire ranges every month this year, ranged from 9mm through eF88 and 84mm HE! We've flown high in helicopters, roamed the Free Roam Immersive Combat Simulation virtual reality trainer and white water rafted. The Company has been spoilt for choice and this is before the operational deployments domestically and abroad including supporting our civilian emergency services partners on exercise and a real-life search task. And this is just the big stuff!

Every Tuesday night, Kennedy Company is on parade in Cairns and Townsville preparing to support whatever task may arise. Every week we're conducting range practices or weapon handling skills or practicing infantry skills. Army Reserve offers the full spectrum of opportunities to those with the drive, dedication and character that the soldiers of Kennedy Company possess. And, there's more on the horizon.

Without doubt a most fitting way to wrap up the training calendar for the Company was the Dining In Night. This was so expertly planned, prepared and executed by the Bn Executive Officer, MAJ Mark Smith. The function he, his support team (including, once again, our friends from 11 CSSB Catering) and the Community Centre and Lions Club of Balgal Beach put on for us was spectacular. Best Dining In Night entree I've had. Thanks go to the 31st Battalion Association members that joined us for the evening, travelling from far and wide.

The Company has moved ahead in leaps and bound and not without significant dedication, time and effort. We've had several internal moves and we've seen many high calibre NCOs move on to other roles. Their contribution however is not to be diminished. Training Warrant Officer, WO2 Steve Marks leaves the Company to move to Battalion Operations Cell, where I am confident he will remain a close Company ally. SGT Darran Blair has left this last half of the year, off on his great East coast travel adventure and transfer to SERCAT 3. We remain hopeful of seeing him again in future. Company 2IC, CAPT Grant Elwell is also moving into the Battalion Operations Cell, where I think we will see his flair (and quantity of qualifications!) for ranges come to the fore.

2022 will be no less busy. The calendar is already full. We'll be focusing our attention on warfighting skills and improving combat behaviours at every opportunity. Look out for our updates on the new personnel and equipment we're going to be embracing and look out for a procession of bright yellow minotaurs on black park, Strand or Esplanade running throughout the year.

Kennedy Strong

CAPRICORNIA COMPANY – MAJ Grant



Team, the second half of the year has been as busy as the first with the forecast for 2022 being much the same tempo. Thanks again to the soldiers, NCOs, SGTs & Warrant Officers and Officers of Capricornia Company for their efforts in maintaining the tempo and their professional commitment to activities, exercises

and operations in the second half of the year & once again an sterling effort by all.

I would like to welcome into the Coy – LT Craig Hamilton who recently graduated and is fresh out of RMC. In addition, congratulations to SGT Matt Solis, SGT Adam West, SGT Todd Martin & LCPL Stanke on your recent promotions, they are all well deserved.

We also say goodbye to SGT Mike McCulloch who is off to Ken Coy in Cairns to be closer to his family (still 31/42 RQR) and welcome in WO2 Alan Stephenson. WO2 Alan Stephenson will still belong to 11 CSSB but will be looking after the Gladstone Depot on CFTS. Farewell Mike thanks for all your help and welcome Alan.

In 2022 we have a few exciting things coming online being the MWTSS, APV Trail & Airsoft. The main focus first in the half of 2022 will be the developing & honing of the Coy's foundation war fighting skills and combat behaviours. In the latter half of the year our attention will again turn to and focus on the high risk weather season culminating with a certification HRWS Exercise - Exercise Rocky Ready.

On a final note, I would like to sign off again as saying of how proud & fortunate to lead such an outstanding and professional team. Please take the time to enjoy the Xmas break with your families, god willing it will be flood and tempest free. Looking forward to seeing you back and refreshed in early 2022.

Regards to all – MAJ G. *'Vir Magnus Valde Petram'*

2IC CAPRICORNIA COY – CAPT Wooler

Although the calendar year is drawing to a close with the Christmas break and stand down period upon us the year is finishing up with a lot of activity with Battalion still contributing to HRWS preparation as well as other ESF activities and training as well. From a live call for to search for a missing person in the Belyando region leading into Exercise "Mackay Ready" the opportunity to successfully prepare and carry out the full process with mounting, logistics and also the actual operational outcomes involving external supporting units as well as other government emergency services has prepared us well.

Mention must be made with operational contributions by company members supporting Op "Overarch" in the with some committing to additional time away from family and civilian life to extend as part of Op "Resolute".

This time of year has also allowed the opportunity to conduct some extracurricular and social activities as well, even though the Capricornia activity did not go ahead due to adverse weather in SWBTA the opportunity arose for several members to attend the Kennedy Company adventure training in Tully and formal dining in night which was greatly appreciated and a good experience.

A point of note, to be able to carry out all these activities cum training the Admin and Logistical support requires meticulously planning as well as organising with the capable Capricornia staff stepping up but also more support and guidance from the 1 and 4 cells in BHQ which have been beneficial to maintain Company Governance.

Finally, all are looking forward to a break over the festive season, however the Company will be maintaining vigilance and preparedness for the possibility of any events, HRWS or otherwise, that may occur over the stand down period.

TRG WO CAPRICORNIA – WO2 Lergessner

Another busy and fruitful year which has seen us expand from our current role as war-fighters to now include additional roles of Emergency Support Force (ESF) & High Risk Weather Season (HRWS) to support the civil community in an emergency such as cyclone, flood or other significant event when required.

This year the soldiers and staff have been flat out supporting a myriad of tasks/activities which included a number of training weekends in the field, Exercise Talisman Sabre, BDE courses period, numerous Ceremonial activities, support to Training support Requests throughout QLD, ESF & HRWS, recruiting and even putting in a rugby union side for the unit to compete against our northern counter-parts.

Throughout the year we sadly have had a number of soldiers who transferred to the In-active Reserve due to getting new civilian employment, moving to a new location or family commitments. These soldiers have served the unit well over the years and I wish them and their families all the best in their new endeavours and hope one day they return to the Active Reserves either with us or another unit.

This year I have had the honour of seeing many of our senior and junior soldiers receive promotion or honours and awards for outstanding service, these include the following personnel:

-MAJ Robert Grant (OC Capricornia Coy) – Awarded the Bronze medallion for exemplary service to the unit

-OCDT Peter Hamilton – Now LT Hamilton due to graduating this year

-WO1 Huck Berry (Unit WH&S Rep) – Presented with 40 year Certificate for more than 40 years dedicated service

-SGT Valda Ferguson (Coy Clerk) – Presented with her 40 Year certificate for more than 40 years dedicated service & also presented a Certificate for her support to COVID

-CPL Matthew Solis (Recon PL SGT) – Promoted to SGT and also awarded a Bronze medallion for exemplary service to the unit

-CPL Adam West (TRG Staff Mackay Depot) – Promoted to SGT

-CPL Levi Davenport (Patrol Commander) – Presented Soldiers Medallion for Exemplary Service to the unit

-PTE Matthew Stanke (Patrol 2IC) – Promoted to LCPL & awarded Australia Day Medallion for exemplary service to the unit

-PTE Matthew Eyles –Commencing Officer selection courses & now OCDT Eyles.

I am lucky to be part of the finest company in the unit, their dedication, commitment and support to the unit and myself is nothing short of outstanding when you take into account that they all have civilian jobs, the majority have families and many have sporting interests as well, which places Army in last place but you would never know it as we once again met all our tasks and requests throughout the year and I again thank all my soldiers for their on-going support to the me and the unit.

In closing I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New year and hope Santa is good to you all except PTE James Patton who should only get a lump of coal.

4 PLATOON GLADSTONE – SGT McCulloch & PTE Spencer

Yet another year draws to a close, and as the death throes of 2021 slowly recede it is once again time to reflect.

The last half of 2021 saw training step up a notch with soldiers conducting weapon handling blindfolded whilst under pressure, PT has ramped up and people are slowly starting to recognise the importance of doing PT in their own time. Gladstone, once again, provided support to the local community with catafalque parties for Vietnam Veterans Day and Remembrance Day. Well done to all involved!

Throughout the last six months Gladstone soldiers have provided support to various courses, PTE Spencer partook in engaging with local communities during Exercise Talisman Sabre (receiving very high praise for her efforts!), those that attended Ex TS were given the opportunity to take part in invaluable training and enjoyed themselves immensely.

As if that wasn't enough we still found time to go look for a loss soul, who may or may not, have wanted to be found up in North Queensland, attend Exercise Mackay Ready with the highlight being a ride in a helicopter!

Denis and Ben are now DEMO qualified (a great asset for the Bn!), Denis has also completed the CSSS cse. Daniel has just returned from doing his CAM and MOD2 cses back to back (well done Daniel!). James played his first ever game of rugby!

We have a new march in – PTE Sarah Bowden, who has settled right in and has been extremely proactive in organising and encouraging others to participate in all weird and wonderful PT sessions!

It is with quite some degree of sadness that we have to acknowledge that PTE Matthew Maticic is leaving us. Matthew, one of our newer soldiers, has been one of our most enthusiastic soldiers. His willingness to throw his hand up for anything and everything will be missed. Matthew is transferring, with his civilian job, down to Toowoomba and will commence parading with 25/49 RQR.

We also say good bye to SGT Mike McCulloch, we all wish him well and thanks for all his help as the TRG SGT.

Merry Xmas to all.

5 PLATOON ROCKHAMPTON – LT Evans

In July Capricornia Company provided soldiers to 1RAR as part of Battle Group Coral on Exercise Talisman Sabre 21. As well as being a part of a major exercise attached to a full-time unit soldiers gained qualifications in EF88 suppressors, paint projectile rifles, as well as low velocity training round rifles. Soldiers are enthusiastic to bring these qualifications back to the unit to enable reality-based scenario training to occur.

From TS21 soldiers returned to depot for a short period of time before deploying on IPE with 3RAR for six months. Unfortunately, this deployment did not end up going ahead however soldiers were able to slide into Operation Resolute ROTO as party of 6 Alpha deploying to Thursday Island and surrounding Torres Strait Island. Soldiers provided a detect/deter capability in the Torres strait through overt OP's to minimise any possible transmission of Covid-19 into Australia, while maintaining community engagement with the Torres Strait Locals. With some soldiers staying on to do a second rotation of OP Resolute this took Capricornia Company up until the end of the calendar.

Recently, soldiers from Cap Company participated in the 31/42RQR Rugby Union Team all well done to all that played & a great way to round out the year.

The Pl is looking forward to well-earned break.

6 PLATOON MACKAY – SGT Oberg

The last 6 months the Mackay depot has been getting a face lift with refurbishments being undertaken, around these works the depot has hosted several info sessions with DFR and was the mounting base for Ex Mackay Ready.

Midyear saw LCPL Cox finally being promoted to CPL, unfortunately on his promotion the depot lost an experienced NCO on his transfer to Cairns and Kennedy Coy.

A night in the reserves was hosted at the depot in September with displays of military equipment and hands on experiences being given. PTE Wood was ear marked by DFR as being a natural recruiter or in other words he has the gift of the gab.



PTE Wood explains the 84mm to a potential recruit

Along with the DFR support the members have also been joining in with the local community events including park run and other running events to raise the units profile and recruiting. The Mackay mountain marathon was one, what was supposed to be a 25km event ended up being closer to 30km. The extra distance paid dividends to PTE Miller later in the year when he past the recon course without concern.



PTE Joel Miller, Martine Miller and SGT Oberg

Sadly CPL Steve Zahra who retired last year after 30 years of service was diagnosed with cancer. Unit members spent a few hours one Saturday doing a back yard clean up and general mow for him. We wish Steve all the best as he moves to Brisbane in early December to spend his remaining time with his family.



PTE Dahal, PTE Wood, Steve Zahra and SGT Ferguson

October saw 5 AVN conducting air mobile operations and familiarisations around Mackay this was a unique opportunity for several members to assist the 5 AVN team by undergoing flight briefings and then enjoying a flight around the Mackay coast line.



Mackay members ready to be briefed

Whilst this activity was being undertaken SGT Oberg and LCPL Marley were part of the Battalion DACC team assisting the QPS in the search of a missing person West of Charters Towers, a prelude to Ex Mky Ready.

Ex Mackay Ready saw the depot bursting at the seams in early November, it was a timely and worthwhile exercise to be conducted, not having to travel for once was not lost on the Mackay members.

Backing up from the Exercise the Mackay members assisted the RSL in the selling of Remembrance Day merchandise, the assistance was greatly appreciated along with building stronger connections with the veteran community.



SGT Oberg, LCPL Marley, CPL Stevenson, RSL President Ken Higgins OAM, Steven Haidle, CPL Jeppesen, PTE Anderson, SGT West

ISR DEPLOYMENT ON EX Talisman Sabre 21– LT Evans

In July ISR Platoon was attached to 1RAR RSS for Talisman Sabre. This saw ISR working alongside ARA snipers and recon soldiers to provide situational awareness and battlefield commentary to higher. Over three weeks ISR employed the skills they developed over the previous three years in this culminating activity. The exercise was a major success, demonstrating ISR's capability, not only to the 'Big Blue,' but recognised and congratulated by Chief of Army for demonstrating an excellent example of the total workforce model and in this instance, providing essential and valuable information to battlegroup coral to shape the battlefield and achieve mission success.



The exercise concluded with ISR providing battlefield commentary from a feature within the AO walking US Marines on to enemy positions. US Marines thoroughly enjoyed the assistance from ISR and commented 'We thought we had Aussie Rangers in heaven telling us where the enemy was'. A picture of ISR and the Marines is pictured below.



Following TS21 ISR also committed soldiers to OP Resolute with Cap Company and participated in the 31/42RQR rugby union team.

Late in the year PTE MILLER completed the 3RAR basic recon course providing a further recon capability to the platoon, this is now three members that have fulfilled the Basic Recon requirements within the ARA setting. ISR is required to provide a Patrol therefore watch this space for those next members to complete this Course.

We have now seen these Soldiers complete specialist radio courses, support to intelligence courses and combat first aid re-certs to bolster the capability of ISR. ISR now looks forward to becoming 31/42RQR Recon Platoon within the newly establish support company and members of ISR are enthusiastic to complete basic recon courses.

EX WHISPERING BOOMERANG II - Kennedy Company Training Weekend

Our last infantry weekend as a company for the year! Already, Kennedy Company headed north for the opportunity to reduce travel time for Team Cairns. The long journey up the Atherton Tablelands and an overnight set up complete, the company joined with a few members from



sister Company Capricornia and took to the Atherton Rifle Range. The weekend's objective was live fire on the Atherton Rifle range, one which is usually occupied by civilian target and clay shooters. The weekend's practices were all focused on developing the skills, confidence and experience of the Company's junior non-commissioned officers with CPLs running all of the practices. They definitely seized the opportunity and gained experience in running live fire range practices that will be beneficial for our regular Tuesday night training. With soldiers at the ready to provide the firers our first practices with eF88 and the second 9mm pistol. The soldiers benefited from the creative practices being able to fire from different positions and at different ranges.

Following a successful day on the range, we headed to pay respects at the Avenue of Honour, Yungaburra. The Company engaged with locals and visitors to the region at this unique and moving living memorial.

Thanks go to the team from 11 CSSB Caterers who cooked up a stellar meal for us once again! The Company relaxed over stories at the Atherton Depot (with thanks to the team of 51 FNQR) before bunkering down for the night.

To cap off our weekend development activity, Kennedy Company were up and at 'em early heading down the Gillies Range. From Atherton to Goldsborough Valley, we wound our convoy through the fog and early morning dim to the start line of the Goldsborough Goldrush Fun Run, organised by the fabulous team at Cairns Road Runners. The Company's participants dashed along the river through the Wooroonooran National Park. Our aim wasn't top place but we proved a formidable team! PTE Allen took out top 5km female, CPL Anderson on his 30th birthday at second male across the 5km line. Not to be out done, PTE Ford (Cap Coy) took out the 10km event. A number of other places were taken out across both 5 and 10km events. Big thanks must go to the Cairns Road Runners for having us along and for organising such a well organised event.



Following the run, Kennedy Teams turned north and south at Gordonvale to return to respective home locations. Overall, the weekend was a great success with much development, sharpening of soldier skills, fitness and community engagement. The Goldsborough Goldrush Fun Run was a great event and Kennedy Company hopes to return in 2022.

31/42RQR RUGBY 10s TEAM - LT Evans

On the 27th Of November soldiers from 31/42RQR participated in the 3 Brigade Rugby Union 10's carnival. This was the first time in 45 years that the 31/42RQR submitted a team and was a huge achievement for the unit. Soldiers concentrated in Townsville a week prior to conduct team training and develop team tactics. Without the XO Maj Mark Smith, this amazing moment in time would not have eventuated.



'The Bullas' hit the field and were driven with passion. Team managers LT EVANS, team Coach Beau Cox and team Captain CPL DOULIS.



The team played against 1RAR and 4REG/ 2 CAV coming up short in both games. Given the limited time for training, and the number of players in the team that had never played before, it was an outstanding effort against full time soldiers with extensive experience playing Rugby Union. The tournament was a great morale builder for the soldiers and showed that no matter what the task is 31/42RQR can achieve it. The team is

already looking forward to 2022.

Team members were:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| CO LTCOL Dave Gandy | CPL Scot Doulis (Captain) |
| ADJ CAPT Nick Crosbie | PTE Luke Peters (Co Captain) |
| LCPL Matt Stanke | PTE Andrew Bryan |
| PTE Dale Johnson | PTE Cameron Mason |
| CPL Levi Davenport | PTE Oliver Peoples |
| PTE Rick Curran | PTE James Valentine |
| PTE Ellis Williams | CPL Jackson Pearson |
| CPL Simon Edwards | PTE Naph Yvan Yague |
| PTE Lewis Nolan | SGT Grant Lowien |



A big thank you to the supporter inclusive of PTE Alex Ford, PTE Lilli Bathman, PTE Rob Ford and CPL Denis Connolly



BACKYARD ASSIST 03 Sep 21 – MAJ Grant

The latest Rockhampton Exercise Backyard Assist (Ex BYA) was conducted by Cap Coy on the 03 Sep 21. Ex BYA was organized as part of Legacy's Backyard Assist Program by Mr Brian Hollins from Legacy Brisbane. Backyard Assist is an initiative that helps families of deceased servicemen/women maintain their yards in Central Queensland and is funded by Defence Reserve Support QLD (DRS) in conjunction with 11 BDE. The key concept of the day is to have men and women of the Bn have their civilian employer working alongside them on a work task in order to assist Legacy in its charter of helping veterans.

The team assembled at Rockhampton residence in Park Avenue in the early hours of morning on the 03 Sep in order to assist the son of a deceased veteran - (PTE Edward Treacy) with the clean-up of his property. The formidable group armed with tools from shovels to bobcats tackled the vegetation while another team attacked from the rear in the task of pulling down old green houses and sheds thus restoring order to a once-loved space. Hours later the transformation to the landscape was incredible. There were clear paths throughout both front and back yards, and clearly identifiable garden beds. The day was a success providing a sense of satisfaction to all those who participated. The event encapsulated the realising of the spirit of community and acknowledged the sacrifices of service men, women and their families, noting Legacy provides much needed support to families that have lost a loved one in war or peace serving their country.

Mentioned in dispatches are: Mr Glen Stack & Mrs Pam Stack from ALLWAYZ Concreting, Ms Ruth Dunshea from Child Services, MAJ Ben Lansley & Mr Callum Bigarelli from DRS, CPL Jacob Cooke, PTE Dylan Watts, CFN Stephen Beasley & CPL Scot Doulis from 11 CSSB, CPL James Lowe, LT Misty Evans, SGT Adam West, SGT Edward Ward, LCPL Allison Wooler, PTE Harley Davenport, PTE Andrew Bryan, PTE Robert Ford & PTE Dale Johnson from 31/42 RQR & Mr Brian Hollins from Legacy Brisbane.



The BYA Team

ADVENTURE TRAINING AND DINING IN NIGHT – MAJ Keller

Why have one great activity on a training weekend when you can have two! Adventure training white water rafting followed by a Dining in was the final 2021 training weekend for Kennedy company.

White water rafting provided by civilian tour company XXX brought Kennedy Company together with elements of BHQ and Cap Coy to challenge them-selves individually and collectively in small boat crews on the Tully River. The white waters of one of the worlds wettest places was a side shift from the tempo sustained by the Bn through 2021. Members participated in familiarisation of crew roles and responsibilities then on to the water under the control and leadership of the experienced guides. All enjoyed the calm of the wide deep pools to accustom themselves then into the business of navigating the boat down rapids and over churning pools. Acting on the words of command from the guides to be one crew and keep the boat and each other safe.

After transport RV at Jungle Training Centre Tully it was off to Balgal Beach Community Centre and the wholesome hospitality of Rollingsstone Lions Club who accommodated the formal Dining in. Role change for Cap Coy brethren who bore the mantle of support staff putting the finishing touches to preparations prior to arrival of Kennedy Coy and members of the 31st BN Association. Lively social interaction of members past and present broken briefly with the greeting invited guests was the order of the evening as all old friends and new alike exchange stories of adventures past and recent.

As the mess was assembled by Dining-Vice Lt Clyde-Smith an exceptional meal was enjoyed and a number of members of the Coy and Bn were farewelled. CAPT Mick Hibbet and SGT Darren Blair retiring to further adventures and WO2 Matt Greenhatch posting to 3RAR as a CSM. Toast raised and dinner concluded the mess retired to the cool evening to continue.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - 19

October 2021

CSM Kennedy Company, SGT Jamie Edwards

On 19 October 2021, Kennedy Company Cairns Platoon undertook a night of community engagement activities in Cairns. Kennedy Company Cairns PI numbers were bolstered with the addition of CO LTCOL David Gandy, OC MAJ Keller, ADJT CAPT Nicholas Crosbie, RSM WO1 John Stafford TRGWO WO2 Steve Marks making the trip from Townsville to join us.

Cairns Platoon concept of operations (CONOPS) for the night was simple, 1. Conduct PT along the Cairns Esplanade during peak PT times and 2. Build lasting relations with the Cairns RSL Sub Branch and view their extensive exhibits displayed in the Kokoda Hall Memorial Museum.

The Platoon started off with a visit to the museum viewing the extensive and well-presented museum. It was quite a surprise to see the collection on hand! Kennedy Company CSM SGT Jamie Edwards and CO 31/42 RQR LTCOL David Gandy presented an old D COY flag along with a raft of 31/42 RQR memorabilia to Cairns RSL Sub Branch as a sign to commit to the history of the military history in the region. The memorabilia will be proudly displayed in the RSL museum.

With the presentations done, we headed across the road to conduct a run along the Cairns Esplanade. A procession of bright yellow minotaurs on a black background makes for quite a sight and the Hari Krishnas stopped by for a chat and well wishes.

The night concluded with the CO and RSM connecting with soldiers over a meal at the RSL. This first engagement with the Cairns RSL Sub Branch has sparked what should be a lasting relationship and we're proud to have 31/42 RQR memorabilia on display in such a great facility.



INDO-PACIFIC ENDEAVOUR

WHAT A JOURNEY!! It started on the 9th of AUG 2021, 6 soldiers from across 31/42 RQR set off from Townsville to embark on an Indo Pacific Endeavour (region, engagement no one knew) through 9 South East Asia countries on Board a Navy vessel. First stop Darwin, where we combined with 3RAR and started our training, linking in with 5RAR and a few cool courses later on the 16th of AUG 21, COVID 19 struck again. Darwin in Lockdown. Unknown what the future was to hold we were awoken by that sweet army sound, it's been cancelled you're returning back to Townsville tomorrow. Agh thank you.



Curious as to what came next we just did what any soldier does, adapt and overcome. Committed to the cause we linked in back with 31/42 RQR for our annual courses period, assisting where we could. Few mountain bike rides later and some arduous runs combined with the RSM's gruelling challenges, we wondered what's next. I remember the CO LTCOL David Gandy telling us, 'I've got your backs' and again as he had on numerous times already, came back and handed us ALL a golden ticket of a lifetime to Operation Resolute 6A as he promised.



Oh Dark hundred, 17 Sep 21 with the stolen sock in hand we departed Townsville and headed for Cairns, linking back in with our fellow 31/42 RQR soldiers we started our RSO&I process with 51 FNQR. It was good to see all of Army was still the same. Few confusions later and timing changes that made us feel right at home again, we departed Cairns heading off into this unknown place called Thursday Island. Special mention to Scoty Doulis for taking the DG hit, thanks mate. Divided into our Sections and areas the boys started to come into their own, didn't need to be told what to do taking the bull by the horns like a true 31/42 RQR soldier ripping in getting the job done. This was noticed by all ranks almost confused that so many Chocs from one unit on OPS and in one place, unheard of. I would like to mention that I was the first soldier to conduct an ISR task as a Qwee.

With completing their acclimatisation period the operation began with C/S 33 pushed out to Yorke Island (MASIG). After extensive equipment checks helping me increase capability under the guidance of SGT Solis, majority of the Section members being 31/42 RQR were excited to get out and start on task. With an additional task to move FWD to another Island called Erub, the information passed back was mentioned daily in the OC's sync that these soldiers from 31/42 RQR were excelling.



Then it was C/S 32 turns to move to Boigu Island, with members from 31/42 RQR embedded in the Section it didn't take long for all these Maintdems to start appearing. LCPL Stanke and PTE Nolan started checking all the equipment realising it was sub optimal and needed replacing, cheers fellas I didn't have much on anyway, accept babysitting CPL Doulis.

CPL Doulis and I also felt it was our turn to really see what Thursday Island had to offer, especially after he made me run round it so many times. So we made friends with CCOY crew and were taken out on the boat fishing, I never caught a thing, if you don't believe me ask Scoty he'll tell you. Few dives for crayfish later and a great day out, we were convinced we were on an island paradise and not operations.

Sadly, on the 30th Oct 21 the time came for the boys to go and the operation was over.



Then there were two, PTE Drage and I left standing as our time here wasn't completed, we wanted another go round, bring on 7A. This trip was different as our mates were gone, however we were excited to meet new soldiers with different experiences. It was easy for me as I continued with business as usual. PTE Drage was assigned again to C/S 33 however was moved into a liaison position as he had done some fantastic work with community engagement. His contacts allowed future Operations to occur back on Erub second time round. With a few kilo's lighter and one amazing experience which I recommend to EVERYONE, making some friendships that will last forever. I can honestly say we are looking forward to coming home.



FROM THE ASSOCIATIONS

31st Battalion Representation in Fromelles – below is an extract of emails whereby the Battalion was represented at Fromelles

Dear Pierre, thank you again for organising the laying of our Wreath at Fromelles. And a special thanks to your Wife Corinne for laying the wreath. on your behalf. It must have been painful for you to be present at the Service with your broken Leg & other injuries. I shall write & thank LTCOL Francois Nozaic for looking after you. Pierre, we may have our Services here in Australia but having a wreath laid at the Battle Scene at the Precise time of the men attacking 105 years ago means something special to all of us. Thank you & Corinne for making it possible.

We believe Our small service was very successful in that the students & teachers of the four High Schools who attended, were made aware of the battle of Fromelles & went away moved and enlightened by the sacrifice of so many involved, and the pain & suffering of the Families of those who were killed, wounded & missing. We had 3 members of the Brisbane Branch of the Veterans de l'Armee Francaise d'Australie who attended, & a wreath laid by them. Mick will probably have some photos of them. We also had two serving members of the 31st/42nd Bn who drove 8 Hours down from Rockhampton to attend the Service. The Commanding Officer & the RSM were unable to Attend as they and the Battalion are involve in a Large International Battle Excercise in progress in Central & Northern Australia, the CO however made certain the Regiment was represented at the Service. We are extremely grateful to him.

Our Service is Growing & gaining support by the City of Ipswich Community thanks to a lot of work by Mick James & your Tributes. The Kent & Spreadborough Families & Schools were deeply moved when we presented copies of your tributes to them.

Both Melbourne & Sydney Commemoration Services were cancelled as they are experiencing a flair up of Covid-19 in their cities & are in Lockdown. I believe Ours was the only one held in Australia.

Thanks Pierre, & Corinne. Regards from all members of the 31st Infantry Bn Association & The 31st/42nd Bn Royal Queensland Regiment.

TONY

On 20/07/2021 7:56 pm, Pierre Seillier wrote:

Hello Tony and Mick,

Yesterday was the ceremony for the 105th anniversary of the Battle of Fromelles; The president of Fromelles et Weppes Terre de Memoire 14-18 (my french association) Mr Martial Delebarre first laid a wreath at the Kennedy Memorial in honor of the British soldiers killed in this terrible battle. Then everyone got together at Pheasant Wood Military Cemetery for the main ceremony. A large number of flag bearers were present. After the welcoming speach of Lieutenant Colonel François Nozaïc, Australian Army, it was the turn of Mr Jean Gabriel Masson, Mayor of Fromelles to do a speech, followed by the Prefet of North Region and Her Excellency Mrs Gillian Bird, Australian Ambassador in France. After the speeches, Fromelles children and Australian Children (from the families of staff member of the embassy) have laid roses on the graves of unknown soldiers (no identification confirmed this year). It was the time for official to lay the wreaths, my Wife Corinne laid the wreath for the 31st Infantry Battalion Association, on my behalf due to my broken fibula...Imagine what was my surprise during the speech of Her Excellency Mrs Gillian Bird, Australian Ambassador in France, to hear my name and the name of the 31st Bn Ass, to thank me and us for the work to keep alive the memory of our boys ... Despite the pain in my leg, it was a very beautiful and moving ceremony. Lieutenant Colonel François Nozaïc who is a friend took care of me he was very kind with me and my wife... You can see all pictures on my Facebook page 😊

Cheers.

LEST WE FORGET.



BATTLE OF FROMELLES 19TH/20TH JULY 1916 – Dot Point Brief

- The 19th July 2021 will be the 105th Anniversary of the Battle of Fromelles on the Western Front. Fromelles is situated in France near the Belgian Border just south of Ypres & west of Lille.
- It was the First battle undertaken by Australian Troops on the Western Front – WW1.
- It was carried out by the, 8th - 14th & 15th Brigade's of the Aust 5th Division & on their Right, the British 61st Div. – (raw Territorial troops)
(The 31st Bn led by LTCOL Fred Toll was part of the 8th Bde.)
- Fromelles was planned by the British as a Diversionary Attack to convince the Germans not to move troops south to the Somme where the British & French had started a major push on the 1st July. 11 Divisions of the British 4th Army had sustained massive Casualties exceeding 80K, on the Somme around the Pozieres area with little to show for it.
- A British General, LTGEN Richard Haking planned the attack at Fromelles. This was unfortunate for the Australians, as he had previously been involved with planning an attack 14 Months earlier with British troops, over exactly the same ground with absolutely no gain & very heavy Casualties.

- After the previous attack, the Germans spent the period improving & fortifying their Defences around Fromelles with underground Concrete Bunkers, & O/Head protective cover from Artillery. They had a clear view of the Australian Front line and an excellent observation of the battlefield from the Church Spire in the Village of Fromelles. The Germans also had the Australian Front line & supporting areas well ranged by their Artillery & Mortars. They had a year to practice their ranging.
- The attack started with Artillery Bombardments at 11.00 AM & at 6.00 PM (in broad daylight) the troops advanced, with the 8th Bde - 31st & 32nd Bn's leading the attack on the left, with the 14th Brigade's 54th & 53rd Bn's on their right. These two Brigades had to cross about 100 yds of clear open ground of No Mans Land in front, of the 31st & 32nd Bns, & up to 200 yds in front of the 54th & 53rd Bns. But, the 15th Bde on the extreme Right, had to cross about 350 yds of clear open ground to reach the German Front Lines. The 15th Brigade's two leading Battalions were almost wiped out in "No Mans Land" by heavy machine gun fire, from the "Sugarloaf position" & very few Diggers managed to reach the German Front Line, let alone penetrate it.
- The 31st & 32nd - & 54th & 53rd Bns although, taking heavy casualties, over ran the German front line. The 31st Bn CO, LTCOL Fred Toll proceeded forward Approx. 400 M looking for the proposed 3rd & 4th Line German Trenches, but found only muddy ditches. They returned back to a dry Ditch about 200 m behind the main German Front Line & started to dig in as their defensive line. They managed to hold it against Heavy German Artillery Barrages, & overwhelming German Counter Attacks, but at about 2.00AM, LTCOL Toll decided to move back to the Main German line. They held out until about 6.30 AM on the following morning, when they were forced to retreat back over No Man's Land to their own lines, due to lack of ammunition & reinforcements, sustaining further heavy casualties in the process.
- The Attack was over in 18 Hours but wounded were still trying to crawl back & diggers going out to try to rescue them for many hours after.
- The Battle achieved nothing, and was a disaster. There were no more attacks at Fromelles for the rest of the war. The bodies of the dead Australians lay in No Man's Land, until after the War, and many who were killed behind the German Lines, remained as missing. After the war the 410 unidentified remains in NO Mans Land were buried in Groups of 10 at "VC Corner" Cemetery at Fromelles. Those who were killed behind the German Lines remained as missing & would remain unheard of for about 80 Years. That's another story. (Refer Below)
- Roll call after the Battle recorded a total of 5533 Casualties by the 5th Division. This was the highest casualties sustained by any Div. within a 24hr period in Australian Military History.
- However, due to the high casualties, the Battle was basically kept a secret, by the high authority, and as the Aust. 1st – 2nd & 4th Divisions entered the Battle of the Somme on the 23rd July capturing Poziers & the high ground of the "Windmill" behind it, with a Casualty high of 23,000 over the following weeks, the Battle of Fromelles was forgotten, & became part of the British Somme offensive. The British never ever recorded Fromelles as a Battle & it is not recognised as such to this Day. We Australians regard it as a Battle, & the 31st Bn being the only Unit of the 5th Div. WW1, still operational & on strength in the ADF, will continue to recognise it & commemorate the Diggers who fought & died there.

LAMBIS ENGLEZOS AM

- In the late 1990's a Greek born, Arts Teacher & amateur War Historian from Melbourne started taking an interest in the Battle of Fromelles as he had interviewed old WW1 Diggers of the Victorian 15th Brigade living nearby in Melbourne. He became convinced after checking records and reading Corfield's Book on Fromelles "Don't forget me Cobber" that there were approx. 250 missing Diggers unaccounted for. Lambis was on a mission. After research of German Aerial

Photographs & a visit to Germany to inspect German War records, he identified that a probable Burial site, was an area astride "Pheasant Wood" which was behind the German front Line. Lambis requested authorities to investigate the site, but they weren't interested. However, due to his drive & persistence, it wasn't until 2007, that an Archaeological team found evidence of Australian & British Badges on the site. This proved to be enough evidence to make a dig. It wasn't until 2009 that the dig was made & the bodies recovered.

Preface

(To "Recollections of Norman and May Larkin: Early Settlers on the Atherton Tablelands" 2019)

This is a collection of the personal recollections of Norman Gilby and Victoria May Larkin (nee Fuelling), of their lives together, and those of their forebears as known to them. Their recollections have not been checked for accuracy except where indicated. Where it would enhance the story, recollections of close relatives are footnoted.

The material was recorded and transcribed between 1975 and 1989 when a first draft was completed, retyped in 2009 and proofread and updated significantly in 2018-19.

Wherever possible the direct 'voices' of Norman and May have been used and have been italicized. Because the recollections were recorded over a period of time, there is some resultant repetition. Except where this seriously disrupted the flow of the story, no effort has been made to edit such repetition as the language used is very typical of the way they expressed themselves. Where the text is not a direct quote an attempt has been made to nevertheless reflect their own telling of the tale. Over time some of their recollections have proven to be incorrect and, where possible, this has been noted in the footnotes.

The conversations were recorded in Atherton, North Queensland in the mid-1970s by Norman and May's daughter Phyllis, in response to written requests from her daughter Frances who was then living in the United States. The story also has drawn upon correspondence between Frances and her mother and grandparents, and on documents and photos sent to Frances by her grandmother.

This document is primarily intended for the interest and information of Larkin and Fuelling family descendants; hence no apology is made for the family focus of the content. Every care has been taken for accuracy and to verify facts where possible. Any errors of fact are unintentional and regretted. This work is not intended to be sold or in any way used for commercial purposes. I hold exclusive copyright on original text, all recordings, and some family photos but grant licence to anyone wishing to copy them for non-commercial historical, family and research purposes provided the source is properly acknowledged. Any factual background information taken from public domain websites is clearly acknowledged as such.

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"Wongabel"

191A Atherton Street

Downer ACT 2602

2019

New Guinea

When you became members of the Rifle Club you swore an oath that you would be willing to be called up for the defence of Australia and that was a similar thing to the Citizens Forces. But we could not be taken out of Australia. So that, when the war came we were actually automatically called up to defend Australia. We went to Cairns about two days after the war was started in 1914, and we were there for two or three days, issued with uniforms and rifles and then the TSS Kanowna¹ came from Townsville with Riflemen and also Citizens Forces and we went aboard her and we sailed to Thursday island where we did a garrison of the fort on Thursday island. We were there for about a week when they called for volunteers for active service in the Pacific. Stan and I volunteered and we sailed and ended up at Port Moresby. We garrisoned at Port Moresby – big wireless station there – that is, our battalion did, and the rest of the men stayed on board the Kanowna.

But the lot that I was with went ashore and we, with the native constabulary, garrisoned the Port Moresby big wireless station and also the water reserve up on top of that big hill.² It was a pretty hard life because they (we) were sort of forgotten. But still, that was our job, and that's how I became a member of the Australian Military Forces and ended up in Port Moresby.

I couldn't say just what Port Moresby was like at that time as we didn't see much of it. We were camped out at the wireless stations, and we were never in the town at all. The only time we got near the town was when we were marched up to guard the water supply right on top of that hill. We were there for approximately (about) six weeks.

The troop ship SS Berrima came up after six weeks time and we were taken from the wharf on a destroyer and went up to the Kanowna which was anchored right up in the inner harbour where all the HMAS Sydney, three destroyers, and two submarines and we were making for German New Guinea. We, the troops on the Kanowna, were to be the landing force on German New Guinea. A couple of hours out of Port Moresby, the Kanowna stopped and there was a flutter of flags, and the destroyers racing around and wanting to know what the trouble was. Well evidently – they told us that the firemen on the Kanowna had gone on strike, and we were to proceed back to Townsville.

Well, we got under way by doing our own firing, and guarding the firemen as well and we went back to Townsville, tied up at the harbour under strict security. We weren't allowed to talk to anybody, nobody could see us, they put screens down all around the Kanowna and we had to lie on our bellies and look through the bottom of the canvas to see anybody on the wharf, until German New Guinea fell, then we were allowed ashore and we went out to Kissing Point and we were there for a week or a fortnight, when we were discharged and we came back to Cairns by boat³. A lot of the men who were with me in that 500 on the Kanowna joined up in the military forces and were on the landing at

¹ The TSS Kanowna was plying the Fremantle to Sydney route when she was first requisitioned as a troop transport on 8 August 1914 and embarked troops for New Guinea. Commonwealth control ended 21 August 1914 (www.southernoceanexploration.com/kanowna.php)

² Norm was telling this tale to his daughter Phyllis who had lived in Port Moresby in the 1950s. It is likely to have been Paga Hill, the most prominent hill in Moresby closest to the Harbour.

³ Norm could not remember the name of the ship, but said it was subsequently wrecked on the return trip.

Gallipoli. A lot of them lost their lives, men that I knew and was friendly with in that campaign to New Guinea lost their lives on the landing of Gallipoli.

On the arrival of the Kanowna in Townsville, the troops' heads were shaved, and (as Norman has said) the decks were screened off. Norman has bitter memories of the troops being treated like animals and of an inspection by officers from shore. One officer enquired during the inspection: "Oh, I say, and have you seen them fed?". The 'them' referred to superciliously being, of course, the men.

Norman recalls that the group of Citizen Forces with which he went to New Guinea were the first to volunteer for active service for which they were given no recognition at all. In fact, they were dubbed "The Dirty 500'. They were dirty. They had endured incredibly rough conditions the whole time in Port Moresby and on board the ship. They had no change of uniform, their first issue also being their last. A man named Draper, later a large shopkeeper in Cairns was their Commanding Officer. Andy Smith was also with them. He married Dot Fuelling and later introduced Norman to Dot's sister, May, after Norman had seen May working in Jack and Newells in Mareeba.

Between deployments

Early in 1915 Stan volunteered for service overseas, which broke up the team on the farm. Harold joined the Methodist Ministry, and Norman continued to do quite a bit of scrub falling and timber cutting with Ernie McDowall. During all this time, and previously, when Norman did so much timber cutting, he received no wages at all, everything going into the farm to keep it going. By the time he returned from New Guinea, a further thirty-six acres had been felled, and the farm was carrying a small dairy herd. His father was still at Herberton, travelling around his circuit mostly with the help of two missionaries. The circuit comprised Herberton, Irvinebank, Chillagoe, Mareeba, and Atherton, a round trip of about 200 miles. The Reverend Stephen Larkin travelled this circuit mostly on horseback, occasionally going by rail from Herberton to Chillagoe. Herberton was the centre of the circuit. The missionaries were raw recruits straight out from the UK and the country of Australia and its rough conditions often broke these men –some of them couldn't even ride.

Dad had his headquarters in Herberton. He was batching in a vestry under the church, with stables at the back, and all his travelling was done on horseback. He'd probably be away from the farm for two to three weeks at a time, going around to the different areas which he had to visit and contact people in. He'd come home occasionally, as I said he'd be away about two or three weeks – he'd be home only a short time, possibly four days at the outside. As regards doing any work on the farm – he'd just love to do a bit of perhaps gardening, or cleaning – apart from any other farm work, no, he did nothing of that kind.

In 1915, whilst he was felling timber for Arthur Coleman, Norman volunteered for the A.I.F., having obtained his father's consent to join the forces. He was called up and went, with eleven others, for a medical examination. Only one man passed the test and Norman was rejected, as were the other ten, for a 'cardiac defect'. He says that the army was embarrassed at the time by the number of volunteers. Norman volunteered again in 1916 and went to a Doctor Millett in Mareeba rather than Atherton for his medical, and this time was passed.

Meanwhile, as often as possible, he courted May Fuelling, riding the thirty miles to Mareeba on a Saturday, staying with Andy and Dot Smith, and leaving the town on Sunday night about 11p.m. for the two-hour ride home along the bush track. The first time he was ordered to report for duty, and did so, his name was not on the Cairns list and he happily returned to Mareeba to spend two or three more days with May. Before he finally did leave he and May arrived at an understanding that if he returned safely they would become engaged.



May's sweetheart brooch which her granddaughter Wendy Kurz (nee Latham) holds, and has had cleaned.



Norman took this photo of May with him to the war. She is wearing his "sweetheart" brooch.

HOMETOWNER ARTICLES



PTE Richard Gray-Spence 31/42 RQR, Kennedy Company – Cairns Platoon

I enlisted on a balmy day, late September of 2014 in Townsville. It was the culmination of a 4 year journey. I am posted to Kennedy Company, Porton Barracks, in Cairns with the greatest bunch of misfits, mates and like-minded Team mates.

Enlisting in the Army had always been with me, ever since watching *The Thin Redline* and reading books about Kokoda, Gallipoli and Tobruk. The common story of sacrifice and going above and beyond for mates and country was something I took away and wanted to hold myself to this standard.

The training that I have had has been disappointingly mundane compared to my childish imagination of Hollywood movies and at the same time has been everything I could have hope to receive. Being able to shoot 66mm rocket launchers, firing Claymores and throwing grenades has always tickled that childhood memory of too many movies. Learning close quarter unarmed combat was a highlight and one of the most enjoyable training that I have had, and conducted only this year during Battalion Concentration Period. Being able to go full on with one another and seeing what other guys and girls were able to bring to the training from their civilian jobs or personal history added to it being a great course. Even if it did involve being tossed around like a rag doll by the Commanding Officer.

In my civilian life, I am IT Systems Administrator, which means I can use Google better than most and have searched the same things often enough that I can fix peoples problems quicker than most. I work for a not-for-profit organisation that supports supermarkets in some of Australia's remotest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. From Palm Island in the south, to Doomadgee in the West and Boigu Island to the North, which is only 6 kilometres away from Papua New Guinea. I have two girls aged 13 and almost 2 and my wife and I also foster two of my nieces who are 6 and 10.

Due to a busy work and home life my Reserve service outside of the regular parade nights and training weekends has been somewhat limited. I have managed to secure time away to participate in Module 2 Infantry Course in Brisbane in 2020 and a brief period undertaking COVID-19 response. I have participated ceremonial duties, notably catafalque parties for ANZAC Day. With five females in the house now I can see my desire to participate in long deployments increasing especially once the eldest two hit teenage years.



**PTE Alfred Stauder,
31/42 RQR, Kennedy Company – Cairns Platoon**

I joined the Army Reserve in December of 2018. Currently, I live in Cairns, Far North Queensland (FNQ). I joined as a Rifleman in the Royal Australian Infantry Corps. The reason for joining the Army Reserve was because I wanted to give back to the community and be part of something bigger than myself. The sense of pride being a member of the Australian Army and the ADF as a whole is something that has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. First I attended 1RTB Kapooka in the winter of 2019. Kapooka is without a doubt a life changing experience where you learn the true meaning of Australian mateship. After finishing the 35 days at Kapooka I then continued on to do Infantry Initial Employment Training with Queensland University Regiment, learning the advanced weapon systems and tactics of the infantry and then being able to implement them out in the field. A highlight of my training would have to be doing a live fire section attack by night with the use of night vision equipment. For a civilian job I'm an apprentice Aircraft Engineer with Jet Aviation working on large aircraft conducting heavy maintenance. My first operation with the ADF was OP COVID ASSIST for four months, working out of the quarantine hotels in FNQ. This was a remarkably rewarding and educating experience working side by side with Queensland Police and being able to see how they conduct operations. My time the Army Reserve so far has been an incredible experience and I look forward to many years of service to come.



PTE Mason Hepburn
31/42 RQR, Kennedy Company – Cairns

If bright blue jackets and strangely stained desert DPCU's in the jungle don't come to mind, I can't blame you. However for the officers' of TB3 and the Infantry Mod 2 course this was a common sight, in the heart of the Canungra Training Area as the enemy party stalked the two courses over a seven day period. As an OPFOR member the opportunity to indulge in hot brews at any time or the fresh hot meals delivered to us in a field environment was too much to ask for and made me appreciate the struggles myself and many other reserve infantry soldiers have gone through on previous courses. Nothing could beat the 10 minute tasks of bumping a position and simply walking away leaving a stressed and fatigued platoon of soldiers to jump from their sleep, quickly dress, grab their weapons and run to their fighting bays only to wait in silence, look through their NVGs and wonder if we were still there.

Having the opportunity to see how training courses are run from behind the scenes also allowed myself and fellow soldiers to see how much effort and time is put into preparing these courses and how much responsibility rests on the shoulders of course staff. The OPFOR tasking, whilst fun, was not only an opportunity to see how well these type of courses are conducted but also provides enemy party soldiers the opportunity to spend time with crucial fighting equipment that is not usually issued and to brush up on skills not often utilised. Overall OPFOR tasks are valuable for everyone involved, from the trainees that get to visualise an enemy to the enemy party itself who can learn from and outside view.





LT Misty Evans

31/42 RQR, Capricornia Company – Rockhampton

Lieutenant Misty Evans thought joining the Army Reserve as a 17-year-old might give her some extra cash and a chance to explore the country.

Twenty-three years on, she has a university degree, three children and a rewarding job as a child-safety officer, all while carving out a flexible part-time career in the Army that has allowed her to inspire others to challenge themselves.

Growing up in the town of Byfield in Queensland, she said she watched soldiers on their way to Shoalwater Bay Training Area and imagined herself getting involved as soon as she was old enough.

“I had family who had served in the military, so joining the Army Reserve wasn’t an unfamiliar concept – but I didn’t think I would end up commissioning and serving as an officer,” Lieutenant Evans said. “The challenges kept on presenting themselves, and each time I just decided to give it a go, which gave me the confidence to try the next challenge.”

Starting life in the Army as a cook, she spent her early career supporting catering requirements for Army units and ADF exercises.

Transferring to work as a clerk after a few years, she volunteered to serve in border protection operations on HMA Ships *Melville* and *Kanimbla* with an Army security detachment.

Lieutenant Evans took a break from the reserves while she worked in a more remote civilian role and when her first two children were small.

During this time, she completed a Certificate IV in fitness and ran local Strongman competitions and exercises, which inspired her to restart her Army involvement in 2013 as an officer.

“It took me four years to complete my officer training and the final component through Duntroon, but that meant I could fit it in around having another baby, while still working in child safety,” she said.

“I completed a Bachelor of Science in Psychology in 2014, and am doing a Masters now while I am still employed in the Army in the infantry.

“I really think the skills and qualifications I have are complementary to my role running an intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance platoon.

“To get the best out of my team, I need to understand their motivation, drivers for success and personality types.

“Having a civilian role that works with people also, helps me with my leadership in Army.”

Lieutenant Evans said she felt very fortunate to have a leadership role in her unit, which involved supporting soldiers on the ground to do their jobs, and ensuring essential information was communicated up and down the chain of command.

“Being a platoon commander is the most rewarding role that I have held in my entire career; I am surrounded by driven, passionate individuals who are very capable soldiers,” she said.

It’s a role she hopes to continue serving in for many years.

“The Army has been an extremely flexible part-time career – when my family and I have the capacity, I volunteer with the reserves for operations and exercises such as during the recent bushfires and this year’s bilateral training exercise with the United States, Talisman Sabre,” Lieutenant Evans said.

With more than 300 jobs in the ADF spanning part-time and full-time service, many servicemen and women change roles over their careers.

DACC 1 SEARCH AND RESCUE TASK BELYANDO – Captain Crosbie

During the lead in and training for the High Risk Weather Season (HRWS) 2021-22 the Battalion was called upon for a short notice search and rescue task. The task fell under Defence Aid to the Civil Community (DACC) level 1 and was issued to us on 24 October whilst we were gearing up for a Tuesday night parade. The Commanding Officer offered me an opportunity for my first command, a privilege in any unit, let alone this battalion.

The person in question had been missing since the 21 October from a Carmichael Mine site Camp which housed the construction crews for the railway line. The SES had already covered the camp site the day previous.



The Commanding Officer set the criteria early whereby if we had a minimum of 20 soldiers able to support the task by 2030hrs that night then the task would proceed. As the unit is quite accustomed to now, the soldiers dropped everything and moved heaven and earth to support this including letting both family and civilian employers know of their commitment. We were fortunate to be given a day in which to concentrate the force so that the road party from Gladstone and Rockhampton had time to move north and consolidate in Townsville. 5/11 Battery of 9th Regiment, RAA were keen to support and sent their BC and 2 operators with unmanned aerial systems (UAS). Eventually a Task Unit of 41 personnel was assembled including 11 PMV crews from 1 RAR.



After some analysis and updates from Queensland Police we were able to send an advanced party forward to provide us with much needed situational awareness.

The task in all was a two day affair where we provided the Police with a detailed search capability. The Police had received some mobile phone 'pings' from the missing person and had identified an area of Blackwood State Forest that we searched on day 1 both mounted and dismounted with the UAS covering difficult terrain and establishing the targetable area. That night we were fortunate enough to be given lodgings at the Camp as opposed to sleeping next to our vehicles in the bush (something the soldiers were more than prepared to do).

Day 2 the Police were able to gain a triangulated area of the Gregory Development Road where this mobile phone had pinged. The soldiers covered an 11km stretch of said road in rather hot and taxing conditions but were not able to turn up any credible evidence of the missing person.



All said and done the Battalion gained some valuable experience leading in to the HRWS and matured some relationships with the Police search teams which will be critical if we need to partner them in future events. Words cannot express the admiration that I have for not only the dedication of members of this Battalion but the willingness to drop everything mid-week to come to the aid of a civilian.

EXERCISE MACKAY READY – LTCOL Gandy



In line with the renewed focus of 2 DIV, the unit took it upon itself to conceive and design a HRWS interoperability exercise to determine the BDEs capability to *actually* 'deal with' and meet a call for assistance when the region needed it. **Answer = EX Mackay Ready.**

Exercise Mackay Ready was an assurance activity for the upcoming High Risk Weather Season (HRWS), aimed at testing Army's interoperability with civilian emergency authorities as well as the Queensland Remote Area Trackers (QRAT) in response to a real time natural disaster or HRWS event in the region. The exercise required the formation of TU - force assigned to JTFG 629.3 to respond to a 'Request For Assistance' (RFA) to deal with flash flooding as well as assist in the Search and Rescue (SAR) of 30-40 personnel trapped in the Ben Mohr State Forest post extreme weather that overwhelmed the local agencies.



The TU was able to provide assistance in the air courtesy of the newly introduced into service Leonardo AW 139 helicopters from B SQN 5 AVN and military drones from 5/11 BTY whilst SES and QRAT conducted a methodical mounted and dismounted ground search added by soldiers from 31/42 RQR and 12/16 HRL, using routes cleared by Combat Engineers from 11 ER.

The exercise was instrumental in strengthening the relationships with NQ and CQ emergency services in order to ensure that the Army could assemble a highly credible and swift capable response to a wide range of challenges.

The exercise demonstrated that the collective ESF NQ/CQ could concentrate 143 personnel across multiple locations throughout the wide and expansive AO in quick time whilst coordinating and solving complex logistical and communication problems.

This exercise and the recent DACC 1 QPS support task in Belyando are excellent examples of the Total Workforce System as well as very clear demonstration of the ADFs capacity to step up and support the community in a time of need as we've done during COVID, bushfires, Townsville floods, Cyclone Debbie in 2017 and Cyclone Yasi in 2011.



The Minotaurs are ready to lead the collective ESF forward and meet the needs of the region. Moreover we have clearly demonstrated a capacity to lead the ADF response with FT assets allocated TACON as opposed to ARES being perceived as purely *supporting fires*.

Well done to all of those involved. We have met commander's intent at multiple levels – **standby for EX ROCKY READY 22.**



HONOURS AND AWARDS - RSM

It is one of the greatest privileges of being a Commanding Officer or Officer Commanding to be able to acknowledge Officers and Soldiers under your Command for the outstanding achievements or contributions they make to the Battalion, Brigade, Army and / or the ADF via presentation of honours and awards.



In the second half of 2021, The Battalion has seen a number of outstanding individuals receive recognition for their service and the part they have played in the successes of the Unit and the contributions they have made in enhancing the Battalion's and / or Army's capability as well as reputation.

Those individuals are as follows:

MAJOR Robert Grant – Army Bronze Level Commendation

CAPT Micheal Hibbet – ADF Silver Level Commendation

WO2 Gregory Tam – Army Bronze Level Commendation

WO2 Ron Gurnett – Federation Star (40yrs Service to Army)

WO1 Harold Berry – Certificate of Service (40yrs Service to Army)

SGT Valda Ferguson – Certificate of Service (40yrs Service to Army)

WO2 Rodney Law – Certificate of Service (37yrs Service to Army)

WO2 Steven Marks – Certificate of Warrant

LCPL Matthew Stanke – Australia Day Medallion

SGT Phillip Manning – Australian Defence Medal

PTE Bradley Bradshaw – Australian Defence Medal

As the RSM it was outstanding to see so many members acknowledged and receive formal recognition for their contributions, especially for those that have provided a lifetime of service to their country.



Before closing out this article I would like to remind all Commanders that it is important to take the time to not just acknowledge individuals who stand out by their contributions in their annual PAR but to also follow it up with a written nomination so formal recognition via an honour or award may be presented.

2ND HALF CEREMONIAL UPDATE 2021 - RSM

In the second half of the year, the Battalion supported a total of nine ceremonial activities throughout the unit's extensive area of operations. The bulk of these centred around Vietnam Veterans Day (18 August) and Remembrance Day (11 November) where the Battalion was able to provide Catafalque Parties, Flag Orderlies and Wreath Layers for Memorial Services.

Another honourable mention was support to Legacy Week (24 September) which saw unit members selling badges and other merchandise on the local streets and shopping centres to raise funds for war widows and their families.



The feedback and the pictures from these supported activities was extremely positive and appreciative and the organisers / communities always comment about how professional our men and women look, conduct themselves and about how they engage with the communities on these significant occasions.

It is great to see the Battalion even with the high number of competing operational priorities it has still being able to support the local communities with these significant ceremonial occasions

especially after the restrictions and cancellations we saw in 2020 due to COVID. It is important that we continue to support these key dates and occasions on the national calendar as we honour the promise of "Lest We Forget".



RSM's Final Word



As I start my final RSM's article for the Battalion Newsletter to close out 2021, I am bewildered as to how quickly my time has passed since I took up the mantle as the Regimental Sergeant Major. I believe that a key factor is due to the number of significant events the Unit has faced over the past three years. In my time we have dealt with a major flood in Townsville in 2019, major bushfires which impacted on almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the east coast and southern regions of the country over the summer of that same year and to top it off a global pandemic which we have been dealing with since March 2020.

These events had a significant impact on the Unit as well as the 11th Brigade which effectively brought about changes to what it means to Soldier in the 2nd Division today. In saying that, the 2nd Division has always had a part to play in responding to significant weather events and disasters on a national level however from October 2020 it is the first time that as a Division, we are the lead to any Army response to a Domestic incident (Less counter terrorism).

This task has put some additional strain on the Unit, 11 Brigade and the 2nd Division some of which hasn't been seen since the early 2000's when we had Operational Rotations to Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands as well as the Middle East Area of Operations. Although challenging it has provided for those Officers and Soldiers that did deploy a great opportunity to further enhance their skills and understanding of Domestic Operations (DOMOPs) outside of our traditional role as Warfighters. The efforts by those individuals and the members that trained and supported them went a long way to achieving mission success and shaped Army Headquarters and the Government assigning the Army Reserve this responsibility.

On top of DOMOPs, the Unit has managed to maintain our Foundation Warfighting skills via Tuesday Night Parades, Coy Lead Training Weekends and a Battalion Concentration Period. This training has been effective considering the limited opportunities available but was put on show during Exercise Talisman Sabre 21 when elements of the Battalion got to work directly with 1 RAR. The feedback we received on how our members integrated in with the full-time soldiers was that it was seamless and difficult to identify who was the "Regular" and who was the "Reservist". This assessment is exactly what we want to hear and has gone a long way towards FORCES COMMAND and AHQ understanding what a SERCAT 5 can provide in the modern era and how we can plug and play in the future.

These results and the opportunity afforded the Battalion via the Deputy Chief of Army's Force Establishment Trial (DCAFET) has enabled the Unit to grow (On paper at this stage) by creating additional positions in the HQ's as well as the establishment of the All-Corp Platoon. The All-Corp Platoon will enable those soldiers leaving the SERCAT 7 workforce who do not have a Reserve Unit to go to in Central or Northern Queensland to come onto our Unit Establishment and continue to provide service by supporting DOMOP's as well as maintain basic soldier skills. Once this concept is realised 31/42 RQR will be able to maintain multiple lines of effort without burning out both the SERCAT 7 and 5 workforce especially over the High-Risk Weather Seasons. Additionally, we are about to see the return of Support Coy (-) with the creation of the Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Sniper Platoon and Signals Platoon. This will take a bit of work to establish but is well worth it given the capability and equipment it will provide to the Battalion, but also gives the Officers and Soldiers other options with their careers to keep them interested, engaged and relevant. So exciting times with so many opportunities to come for all members of the Unit.

This now leads me to my last point to raise before I sign off. Through out the last three years the Battalion has had many significant events / activities / deployments of which it has given a good account of itself. You have all played a part and done an outstanding effort to maintain the history of the two units and to further enhance the reputation of the Battalion as it is today. There have been

many that have come and gone, some have done a lifetime and some a season but all are now a part of the unit's history in this snapshot of time. Our responsibility as members of the Battalion is to pause and acknowledge that what we have done is significant and to make sure that we take time to capture these achievements in order to tell the full history of the 31st/42nd Battalion, The Royal Queensland Regiment for the generations to come.

It has been my honour to serve with you and to be your RSM and I wish you, the Unit, and the new Regimental Sergeant Major (WO1 Dave Harding) all the best in the future.

Semper Paratus Defendere / Cede Nullis



John Stafford

Warrant Officer Class One

Regimental Sergeant Major

31st/42nd Battalion, The Royal Queensland Regiment (2019-2021)