

# THE DUNTROON SOCIETY

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## Seconds Out, Round Two!

Ross (R.W.) Eastgate (1971)

*In which Eastgate recalls the mother of all battles...*

Apart from the malevolent attentions of the senior classes, there were others who seemed intent on doing us harm.

We had our introduction to Warrant Officer Class One Basil Thomas Webster Waters and his henchmen at Point Hut, where their attempts to beat our puny bodies into shape had not always been mutually appreciated.

Mr Waters, known as BTW, was a College institution and he held an unusual distinction in the Army organisation.

For some years, administrative control of the Army's physical training instructors had devolved to the Royal Australian Artillery, and all PTI's wore the badge of that Corps. BTW was the lone exception. An infantryman who had served in Korea, Mr Waters insisted upon retaining that Corps' affiliation, steadfastly refusing to change.

He had established for himself a nice little sinecure at the College and with the patronage of some of those graduates who had passed through his hands, he was allowed to remain the Army's sole infantryman PTI. Like many of his contemporaries it was his secret, but thus-far, unfulfilled ambition to go to Vietnam to serve with 'The Team'. {51427 WO2 B.T.W Waters did achieve his ambition, serving in AATTV from November 1969 to June 1970. Ed.}

By a defect of speech, Mr Waters was unable to pronounce correctly the letter 'R', which he usually rendered as 'W'. In the limited opportunity to find revenge for the perceived injustices being perpetrated against us, we Fourth Class took every opportunity to mimic Mr Waters' affliction, though never, it must be emphasised, in his immediate presence.

Mr Waters had two malicious and muscle-bound sidekicks, initially Sergeant Clive Matheson and Bombadier Graeme Trethewey and then Sergeants Hislop and Peter Cochran, later a NSW MP. They cajoled us into endless repetitions of physical jerks employing a variety of implements of torture, particularly vertical wopes suspended from a bar exactly 16 feet above the ground.

Mr Water's inventory was not limited to wopes. He had logs, poles and artillery shells as well as the usual medicine balls, Indian clubs and pawallel bars familiar to habitués of gymnasiums and the like. He also had an overwhelming fondness for a device known as the beam, upon which one heaved. For variety, one not only heaved but also simultaneously wotated one's legs until one's insteps touched the said beam.

Mr Waters and his team took an inordinate interest in our physical development. They took notes of our height and weight, and of the size of our chests deflated and inflated. They measured the height of our standing reach against the gymnasium wall and then the extension we could manage from a standing leap.

They recorded at regular intervals the number of push ups we could do without a break and the number of times we could step up and off a low bench in a set time. They also required us to run a mile each term, exactly four times round the old cinders track at the College athletics complex, and they would faithfully record the time that it took each of us to do so. Woe betide the cadet whose timing did not improve, or worse, actually deteriorated.

For normal PT periods we wore a white T-shirt and blue cotton shorts with a thin red stripe along the seam, the College colours, plus white woollen socks and Dunlop Volley sandshoes and of course the obligatory jock strap. The Army's choice of footwear has left a legacy of shin splints, fallen arches and assorted crippling injuries which allows many of us to draw modest pensions from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, or to have various failed joints replaced with artificial equivalents. Then, the same items were seen as being excellent for our physical development.

For battle PT we wore jungle green trousers, leather soled Boots AB and gaiters, eschewing shirts so that we could display our developing physiques for all to see, even in mid-winter.

Importantly, it allowed splinters from Mr Waters' ancient and deteriorating paraphernalia to embed themselves in our much-abused flesh, and to tear snippets of skin on jagged edges. More importantly in winter, we could rest our naked chests on the frozen bitumen of the basketball courts or upon the ice on the beams as we performed a few warm-up exercises before we got down to the main purpose of the period.

Mr Waters was a hard taskmaster who set and demanded high standards. Some classmates enjoyed demonstrating their athletic prowess, and were usually therefore not the ones upon whom BTW would vent his spleen. Muscle bound oafs of a kindred spirit with the thwee PTIs, they would sneer in sympathy at we lesser mortals for whom physical exertions were physical and mental trials.

For any infraction during one of his woutines, Mr Waters would demand "Thwee times up the wopes!" and up the wopes we would weluctantly go. It was a pity he didn't ask us to do push-ups, because for other reasons we were becoming very good at those!

The College held an annual tournament called the Novice Boxing Championship. In previous years cadets of all classes had been allowed to compete.

The trophy for the heavyweight division had been originally presented by one Captain A.G. Thompson. By 1968 the popularity of boxing as a sport had somewhat diminished, and the Thompson Cup was now presented to the best novice boxer as determined by the Senior PTI after a series of public, elimination, gladiatorial, conquests by weight divisions.

Members of all classes still participated in the Novice Boxing; First Class judged the contests, Second Class acted as the ring and ringside officials and Third Class stwapped and acted as seconds to their Fourth Class charges, whose role it was to bleed to satisfy the blood lust of everyone else.

Mr Waters and his staff had the responsibility of pweparing us for the contest. When a PT pewiod had been allocated to boxing training, there would be pairs of boxing gloves in numbers equal to the size of the class in wows upon the gymnasium floor. These gloves were undoubtedly of considerable age, and were redolent of old leather, sweat, blood and other substances that they had ingested during many years of wegular use. We each would don a pair of gloves and, shaping up in the approved manner, we would pwepare ourselves for the ordeal which followed.

For some cadets it was their first encounter with the mysteries of pugilistic arts. We were shown the wudiments of defence and taught the mysteries of how and where to punch one's opponent, and where not to. Footwork was an essential component of the whole, and we were taught how to stand and how to lead, withdraw and balance as we blocked, parried and deflected blows and returned in kind.

The PTIs explained to us how the torso was divided into quarters which, when added to the face were the areas which attracted points when hit. They also indicated those parts of the body which, when hit, disqualified a punch as a foul. They showed us how we should aim our blows to make scoring punches. It had an eerie similarity to firing at the Figure 11 silhouette targets upon which we had learned to shoot. It did not augur well.

We trained in pairs with one offering a jab and the other blocking. This caused a crisis of conscience for some of us, because already we had enough problems in life without being enforced to engage in fisticuffs with our own classmates. But fight we must and thus it was we found ourselves squaring up against someone roughly our own weight and height.

To test the direction and effect of our punches, one's partner was required to hold a stuffed leather covered cylinder about two feet across and six inches deep attached to two rope handles. One held this punching bag at head height while one's partner pummelled it in accordance with strict guidelines laid down by the Marquess of Queensberry and as interpreted by BTW and his fellow thugs.

Timidity on the part of either partner invariably attracted one of the PTIs, who would step up to the offending cadet, throwing one or two fierce punches in his direction. We would then be required to demonstrate that we had recognised our deficiencies and had now corrected them. Sometimes one would first have to rise from the gymnasium floor before doing so.

Occasionally a punch would breach the defences placed in its way and strike an unintended blow. Such connections were inevitable but given the other vicissitudes in our life, they were not always received with the grace nor forgiveness

one should have expected, and a response was offered. Such flare ups were thankfully rare, for the bonds of class were beginning to firm.

Inevitably though, the moment of truth would arrive and we would have to demonstrate our new found prowess in public contest.

The percentage of the population who have actually stepped into a boxing ring with serious intent is probably minuscule. I am sure that there are those who do so willingly and who derive immense satisfaction from going fifteen rounds with someone of their own size. Some may even get some sensual satisfaction from the sweet, musty odour of much used boxing paraphernalia.

I am sure that there are even those who derive pleasure from inflicting a beating on one of their fellows. From the performance of some boxers whose careers I have followed there may even be those who derive some strange satisfaction from being regularly beaten and ending each bout in a bloodied pulp on the mat.

None of those descriptions fits my own reaction to having to fight nor, I am sure, the majority of the other members of the class.

For all my lack of sporting prowess I was not exactly a tyro in the sport of boxing. I grew up in the surrounds of a sugar mill in coastal Queensland in a society which maintained a robust interest in the sport of boxing. Success at boxing brought a brief moment of fame and notoriety to some youths whose lives were otherwise marked only by the drudgery of unskilled or semi-skilled labour. The local boxers trained and fought hard.

Each year at the Bundaberg Show, young hopefuls would pit themselves against the pugs in Jimmy Sharman's boxing troupe. Mr Sharman offered a pound or two for a round or two and the possibility of a job for those with promise. The larger than life displays on the front of his tent proudly proclaimed former members of the troupe who had gone on to become world champions. It was very seductive.

Even more seductive was Vanessa the Undresser, who promised to bathe before our very eyes just a few tents further down Sideshow Alley. For the modest entrance fee of 2/6d, prepubescent boys could discover that Miss Vanessa actually retreated behind an opaque crinkled glass screen before divesting herself of the modest bikini which she had worn on the hustings and sprinkling herself with some water from a conveniently placed container.

Mr Sharman's boxers would not think of stooping to such deceptions, but having been conned out of 2/6d under false promises at Miss Vanessa's tent, we would then attempt to sneak under the flap of the Sharman tent, avoiding the rigorous scrutiny of a Chinese gentleman named Rudd Kee who maintained a formidable watch on the entrance.

Once inside we watched enthralled as local blokes, more than a couple fortified with a few rums consumed at the nearby Canecutter's Bar, engaged with Mr Sharman's more canny boxers. Mr Sharman kept a close eye on his boys, but the bouts inside his immensely popular tent always promised action and entertainment. This had been my introduction to boxing.

My father also received regular tickets to the local boxing tournaments, which were held in an ancient timber-framed theatre clad with corrugated iron with the grandiose title of the Austral Hall. Success at the bouts held within provided minor celebrity status to those young men who participated, in a town which took its contact sport fairly seriously.

In the days before television, Bundaberg's Austral Hall was the venue for a variety of entertainments from vaudeville through pre-taping of syndicated radio shows (who remembers the Pied Piper?) to school balls. Few events attracted bigger crowds than the boxing. Local youths and always a strong contingent from the Cherbourg Aboriginal settlement provided the contestants.

A local boxing trainer who worked as a painter at the sugar mill offered to train me and my brother in return for a favour he believed that he owed our Dad. With what I learned from him in the makeshift gym on the dirt floor underneath his rambling old Queensland house and what I gleaned at the fights, I had decided against pursuing an amateur career in the ring. But I had learned at least some of the rudiments of the sport and when I finally faced my moment of truth at Duntroon, I was in some ways more experienced, if not better prepared, than others. That in no way meant that I was a better fighter.

I seem to remember that the preliminary bouts for the Thompson Cup were held in the gymnasium and the finals in ANZAC Hall. The college had a portable boxing ring which the PTIs would erect and disassemble during those times when they weren't actually harassing cadets. And I also seem to remember that in quiet moments they would engage each other in bouts of fisticuffs, for pain and suffering in the physical sense were not just things the PTIs just took in their stride, they were things that they actively sought.

Mr Waters and the PTI's would pore over the details of our individual weights, determining whether we were feather, bantam, light, welter, medium or heavy before deciding upon the draw for the preliminaries. The list of bouts was published and I was immediately seized by a deep depression.

The cadet I had drawn to fight not only was a member of my own platoon, but he was one of those cadets with whom I had become close friends in the short time we had been at Duntroon. It was true that we both qualified for the same weight division, though at different ends of the criteria. There was however a significant difference in height between us, some six inches, and in the matter of reach, his arms were considerably longer than mine.

He was also a very competitive young chap, and we had a pre-fight meeting to discuss how we might approach the bout. I was, he assured me, his mate, but the Thompson Cup was a very prestigious event and he would not let our friendship interfere with his obligation to take the fight seriously. Thus there would be occasions, he cautioned, when he might actually have to hit me, though I should understand that he would be motivated not by malice but by necessity. His assurances did nothing to lessen my anxiety.

I had one faint hope. Before coming to Duntroon, the young lad had never seen, let alone heard of a jock strap. He wore his with some reluctance and a considerable degree of trepidation. He did not trust the device which he described as a 'marble bag tied through your bum with dental floss'. He lived in fear that the elasticised contraption would one day turn rogue, a slingshot from hell which would separate him from those very appendages which it had been designed to protect and which were of some importance to him.

Perhaps at some convenient moment before or during the fight I could play on his phobias and convince him that the moment he dreaded had arrived. Hopefully he would be sufficiently distracted for me to seize the moment and land a couple of telling punches. It was worth a try.

Staff and cadets turned out enthusiastically to watch the fights. Even the College was not sufficiently heartless to

make individuals fight more than one bout in one session, thus the preliminaries were held over a number of days during which the lesser fighters were gradually eliminated. A slight diversion was provided by those Third Class cadets who had somehow avoided their obligation the year before and who were now required to undergo the indignity of being publicly walloped like some low, vulgar Fourth Class.

In those divisions where there were numerous cadets, a number of heats were required to select the two cadets who would contest the finals. Only two cadets met the heavy weight criteria and they were forced to go straight to the finals without the benefit of a preliminary bout. It would prove to be a battle of the Titans.

As I remember, attendance at all bouts by the cadets was compulsory, but most College staff attended voluntarily, taking a keen interest in the performance in the ring of individual cadets. No doubt how we behaved in the ring would be the subject of discussion at a future Board of Study. Lack of moral fibre could be the final consideration for a cadet whose performance was already falling short of the College's high standards.

Even the Padres took an unholy interest in the sport, enthusiastically and loudly offering advice in a decidedly unecclesiastical manner. For peaceful men of the cloth, they demonstrated a disturbing understanding of the finer points of boxing. Perhaps they were there to deliver Extreme Unction in the event that one or more cadets became boxing statistics, but they seemed not to let such considerations get in the way of their obvious enjoyment.

I do not have any clear recollection of any other fights before my own, so I do not recall whether any previous combatants had been carried bloodied from the ring. I recall that claret was occasionally spilled and that those cadets who actually bled, both bleeder and bleedee, enjoyed momentary celebrity status.

The Third Class who prepared us exhorted us to fight for the honour of ourselves, our platoons and our companies.

As I was fighting a cadet from down the hall on middle floor A61, 5 Platoon Alamein Company would reap the honour no matter who won.

Finally, it was my turn. Our seconds prepared us in a small room adjoining the gymnasium entrance where they shared with us their vast knowledge of the techniques of boxing gained from their own encounters but twelve months before, attempting to fill any gaps left in our training by Mr Waters and the other PTIs. The presence of the College doctor, who carried out a last-minute examination, did nothing to bolster our confidence for any number of reasons.

I have never walked from a death row cell to the gallows, nor do I intend to, but the short walk from the dressing room to the ring must have had a similar feel. Someone who has not stepped in the ring to face the immediate prospect of a severe thrashing cannot truly understand the gut-wrenching feeling that we all felt as we did so.

Bowels quickly turned to water as we surveyed the enthusiastic audience from across the vast expanse of the canvas mat with which some of us would soon enjoy cosy intimacy. The audience's prime reason for being there was to observe our imminent suffering and their enjoyment at our predicament was clearly obvious.

I have since been to many boxing tournaments, often in a Regimental setting. The modern custom is to have a scantily clad young lady assist with the proceedings, flouncing her wobbly bits around the ring announcing the bout and



indicating how far the fight has progressed. No such luxuries applied to the RMC Thompson Cup in 1968.

Those of us actually boxing were dressed for the ordeal in our PT rig; white, spotless T shirts with red-striped blue shorts plus sandshoes a brilliant white from the application of Kiwi liquid sandshoe cleaner, evenly applied with a red and white plastic and foam applicator. For some it would prove a wasted effort for such cleanliness only accentuated spilt blood. Officials wore the College's recreation dress of blazer, grey slacks, white shirt, College tie and black shoes.

As we sat on stools in our opposing red and blue corners and our seconds whispered last minute instructions, the Second Class MC announced that Staff Cadet Eastgate in the blue corner and Staff Cadet Grubb in the red corner would now contest three one-and-a-half minute rounds. Our respective weights were given. Grubby gave me a reassuring wink to show that all would be well.

Our seconds cast us adrift and we met in the centre of the ring, where we shook gloved hands in the approved manner. Mr Waters refereed the bouts, and he admonished us to fight clean, fight hard and not to hit below the belt. With all the pre-fight tension and distractions playing on my own heightened state of anxiety, I forgot to warn Grubby about his jock strap.

At last, the Second Class cadet entrusted with the great responsibility of being time keeper struck the bell, and we joined combat.

We circled each other warily. For my part I was concentrating on ensuring that the leather which filled my immediate vision came from my own gloves rather than those of my opponent. I was concerned, with some justification, that Grubby's significant reach advantage would soon swing the fight his way. He made a couple of cautious jabs, which I blocked, but there was more circling than punching as we each sought to find the advantage.

Every time I thought I had uncovered a gap in his defence I would attempt to hit him, but he simply retaliated by punching me in the centre of the forehead so that my shorter arms were unable to reach the intended target. These effective blocks on his part had the added advantage that they were scoring hits while my ineffectual swings garnered no points at all.

As the bell signalled the end of each round, we returned to our respective corners where our seconds fanned us with a towel, rinsed our mouths with water and indicated how we might improve on our strategy in the coming rounds. Mr Waters checked our vital signs, no doubt to ensure that even if the lights were still on, there was also someone home.

As promised, Grubby did attempt to hit me fairly severely on a couple of occasions but if I had learned nothing else in my boxing career to date, I had learned the value of a solid defence. I was determined not to be hit, or at least not to be hit hard.

When the bell signalled the end of round three we returned to our corners to await the judges' decision, for this bout would be decided on points. I was drained of all emotion and physically exhausted.

I was thankful at least that I had not been battered senseless, and I had successfully resisted the overwhelming temptation to resort to Plan B and take a dive early in round one, as at least one of our fellow cadets had done.

Although I didn't fully realise it at the time, the Thompson Cup was an important ritual in our rites of passage as cadets.

In our miserable Fourth Class lives, there would be many obstacles placed in our path, but if we successfully negotiated

each of them, we were on our way to being accepted fully into the cadet fraternity.

At that moment in my life, it seemed like a very long road to hoe and I wasn't overly imbued with confidence. The Third Class seconds made all the right reassuring noises as we ourselves would do twelve months later with the next intake of cadets, but they did little to reassure me.

We returned to the centre of the ring for the result, and it was Grubby's hand which was rightfully raised in victory.

Perhaps I was a little disappointed. Perhaps I was a little relieved, for at least I wouldn't have to go through the ordeal again as he would now have to do.

Nevertheless I had lost, and in the twisted logic which passed as Fourth Class training, I knew I would have to account for the loss to the senior class cadets in my platoon later that night.

If I was disappointed at losing, then what happened next totally dispelled any such foolish notions. No less a personage than Mr Waters himself came to me as I stood in my corner, and I prepared myself for some inevitable criticism of my performance.

Putting his hand on my shoulder and looking me straight in the eye, he astounded me by saying for all to hear, and with more enthusiasm than I thought my performance deserved, "Good defence, Staff Cadet Eastgate, good defence! Well done!"

Since my performance at PT so far had only attracted the sharper side of his tongue, and although we would continue to have considerable rocky patches in our relationship, it was praise beyond value.

As I returned to the dressing room, it seemed that everyone was offering some form of encouragement or congratulations for my few brief moments in the ring.

For the first time since I had arrived at the College, I felt about ten feet tall.

Gradually and not without some reluctance, I was beginning to concede that perhaps Warrant Officer Basil Thomas Webster Waters, MBE and the other PTIs weren't such bad blokes after all.

And a few days later when my mate Grubby again entered the ring, I was shouting advice and encouragement from ringside, secure in the knowledge that the valuable lessons which I had given him in defence would protect him from serious harm. They didn't.

After two more victories he finally faced Joff Johnson (1971), also from 5 Platoon Alamein Company and the ultimate champion, who doubled the number of Grubby's lips from two to four, thereby turning such simple tasks as eating and cleaning his teeth into considerable trials.

For a few days, wearing a jock strap was the least of his worries.

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*Ross Eastgate graduated from Duntroon to RA Sigs in 1971. In addition to postings in PNG, the Golan Heights, the Sinai, Lebanon and Bougainville as an advisor to the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, he also spent time in Sydney, Canungra and punitive postings in Victoria. He is a 1984 Command and Staff College graduate. He returned to uniform in 2001 as a speech writer for General Peter Cosgrove, deploying to East Timor in 2002. His post-military career has been as a journalist and self-opiniated columnist. He was beer editor of the Gold Coast Bulletin. He and his wife Anne now live on the Gold Coast. Their eldest son Mark is a June 2002 RMC graduate. Ross has previously contributed to the Duntroon Society Newsletter. The 1971 graduating class will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in December. Boxing is not on the approved program of events at this stage.*

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# Next-of-Kin Experiences – Both Sides

## R.W. (Rod) Stewart (1958)



On 3 January 1941 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Imperial Force faced its ‘Gallipoli moment’ as 6 Division, with 16 Brigade in the vanguard, went into the attack on Bardia. Thirty minutes later my father, Captain Wilson Stewart (left), was dead, having created history by being the first Australian Army officer killed in action in WW2.

The circumstances of his death were told to me much later by the then Brigade Major, Ian (I.R.) Campbell (1922). Eleven days later my mother opened the front door of her house in Mosman to find a telegram boy with an envelope that she opened to see the words “We regret to inform you...etc.” which was to become the case for so many over the next four years. It was fortunate that a few friends were there for morning tea and my grandmother had come over from New Zealand and was staying with her.



*Sollum War Cemetery where my father is buried.*

In 1955 I entered the Royal Military College, Duntroon where, coincidentally, the former Major Ian Campbell at Bardia was now Major General Campbell and the RMC Commandant. In 1956 I was a member of the RMC Sailing Club that sailed VJ dinghies on Lake George. On the second weekend in July 1956, I intended to go to ‘The Lake’ with a few others to do maintenance on the boats. On the Friday I was awarded three days Confinement to Barracks by the Company Commander for being a naughty boy. Tragically, on Sunday 8 July five of my classmates were drowned in the ice-cold lake water. The following morning my mother, who had heard the news on the radio, opened the door to a telegram boy, and she later described the ‘déjà vu moment’ that stopped her opening the envelope until hours later. Her understandably deep dread of that telegram delayed her receipt of the welcome news that I was quite safe.

On 24 May 1966 I was Duty Officer at Army Headquarters and taking up duty at the end of the day I received a message to report to the Military Secretary, Brigadier Geoffrey (G.D.) Solomon (1940). He informed me that the Fifth Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, was going into action that day and the chances were that a National Serviceman would be killed or wounded, and in that event, I was to advise the people on the list he gave me. It started with the Governor-General, then the Prime Minister, Minister for the Army, the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff

Committee, the Chief of the General Staff, the Head of Corps (whichever was relevant), then the Duty Officers at each of the then State Commands. Beside each appointment was a telephone number (landline – this was before mobiles) and I was assured that my career would be drastically shortened if these numbers leaked. I took up my residence in the Duty Officer’s room and chatted with the Duty Sergeant and Signaller. All quiet when I went to bed at 2300 hrs. At around 0230 the Signaller woke me to say he had a message from the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Task Force in Vietnam to say that Private Errol Noack had just been notified as dead. I got up, shook myself into life, and picked up the list and started dialling. The responses varied from polite and gracious, in the case of the G-G (Casey), to gruff and abrupt from the PM (Holt). I rang the Duty Officer in Adelaide (Errol was a South Australian) and asked him to notify the next-of-kin immediately as the press would have the message come daylight. So, Errol Noack’s family would have known about 12 hours after he died.

This procedure applied only for National Servicemen. Notification of Regular Army casualties continued to go through normal channels.

A couple of years after the incident in Canberra involving Private Noack, I was Duty Officer at the School of Military Engineering in Casula. I received a call from the Duty Officer at Army Headquarters to say that a Private Someone had just been killed in action in Vietnam and would I personally advise the next-of-kin? So, I rounded up the Orderly Sergeant and we set off in search for the next-of-kin home in Wentworthville, west of Parramatta. It took a while to find the house (no GPS in those days) and it was dark when we arrived in front. It was also very wet and cold, and I had on my officer-pattern greatcoat, all double-breasted front going down to ankle height and collar turned up, surmounted by my Herbert Johnson ‘Royal Engineers model’ cap with a short visor. I knocked on the door which was soon answered by an elderly lady who took one look at me and ran screaming through the house. I stood there nonplussed and wondered what to do—follow her into the place or just do the manly thing and run for it? A young man in his early twenties eventually appeared, looked at me and said, “It’s Novak isn’t it?”

“Yes. I am sorry to say that it is. Was he related to you?”

“My brother.”

“Please accept my deepest sympathy and that of the Army. You will receive written notification in due course”.

“Thank you, and thanks for coming out on a night like this”.

“I’m worried about the lady who answered the door. Is she OK? Could I speak to her and offer my condolences?”

“That was Gran. She’s OK now. She lived through the Nazi occupation of Hungary, and she thought you were the Gestapo come to take her”.

Must remember to be less formally dressed next time.

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*Roderick Wilson Stewart was aged three when his father, a Signals Corps officer, was killed in Libya. His mother never remarried. Rod graduated from the RMC into the Royal Australian Engineers in 1958, serving in Australia, PNG, Borneo and Vietnam, including a posting as a major as the Instructor in Military Engineering at RMC Duntroon. After transferring to the Reserve he embarked on a new career as a civil engineer, specialising in railway construction in Australia and overseas, including major projects in SE Asia, Hong Kong and UK. He finally retired in 2012, aged 75. He now lives with his wife of 60 years, Dellane, in Huntleys Cove, Sydney.*

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# Commemoration of the Service of Clive William Bridge (OCS Jun 1954)

## John (J.L.) Macpherson (OCS Jun 1954)

On Wednesday 28 July 2021, a bronze plaque commemorating the service of 28409 Lieutenant Clive William Bridge (OCS Jun 1954) RA Inf, formerly of 1 RAR, was unveiled on the OCS Memorial by the Commandant RMC (Brigadier Ana Duncan (Dec 1996)) and John (J.L.) Macpherson (OCS Jun 1954).

After a kookaburra called from a nearby gum tree on a grey Canberra day, the rain paused as the Commandant, CO RMC-D (Lieutenant Colonel Tracy (T.M.) Allison (Dec 2003)), three OCS Course 5/54 colleagues, John Macpherson, John (J.G.) Cosson and Bruce (B.J.) Stark, and two former officers of 1 RAR, Ian (I.J.) Gollings (OCS Dec 1956) and Paul (P.N.) Greenhalgh (1957) gathered to remember a fellow officer who was killed whilst on duty in Malaya on 28 July 1961. Accompanying the group was Secretary of DVA, Liz Cosson (WRAAC OCS 1979 and daughter of John Cosson), and the RMC Chaplains I. Bishop, T. Sutherland, and A. Doyle. Also attending were members of RMC-D staff, members of the Duntroon Guides and a piper and drummer from the RMC Band.

RSM-D WO1 Bradley Bargenquast, commenced proceedings by inviting a Catafalque Party of five subalterns with swords to mount after which the CO RMC-D delivered an address covering Clive Bridge's schooling, National Service, selection to attend OCS and his graduation into the RA Inf.

In her address Lieutenant Colonel Allison said:

*"Clive William Bridge was born on 21 September 1933 in Newcastle, where his family owned a steel manufacturing plant which built household appliances. When he was 10 years old, he was sent to The King's School in Parramatta, joining the school's cadet unit and rising to the rank of warrant officer. After finishing his studies in 1952, Clive took up work in the family business as a cadet engineer. However, this career was not to be.*

*On 20 August 1953 Clive was called up for National Service. Ordered to provide himself a cut lunch, he reported to the Army Training Depot in Hamilton with his "Welcome to your Army" booklet, commencing service with the 19<sup>th</sup> National Service Battalion (Holsworthy) in the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.*

*Here, Clive thrived. Rising to the rank of corporal in just six short months, Clive was identified by his commanding officer as having excellent leadership qualities, with good man-management and the making of a potential officer. Soon afterwards, Clive nominated to join the Australian Regular Army and was enlisted on 22 January 1954 as a private and was appointed as an officer cadet allotted to the Officer Cadet School, Portsea on 23 January 1954.*

*Graduating with the OCS class of number 5 of 54, he was commissioned as a 2LT on 26 June 1954 and allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry. Between 1954 and 1957 he served in the 13<sup>th</sup> National Service Training Battalion at Ingleburn.*

*Clive married June in March of 1957, and in June 1957 Clive was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, then located in Brisbane. He was promoted to lieutenant in March 1958 and in January 1959 he and June welcomed their first daughter, Catherine, into the world. In September Clive was deployed with 1 RAR to Malaya for a two-year tour, so the family packed up their home and moved to Penang.*

*1 RAR were busy when they arrived in the midst of the Malayan Emergency, and the battalion spent many months patrolling the Malaysian/Thai border, sometimes crossing the border in order to follow communist guerrillas and drive them back into Malaya. The battalion's tour and Clive's posting continued after the Emergency was declared over on 31 July 1960. 1 RAR continued conducting peacetime exercises and it was during this period, that Clive tragically lost his life.<sup>1</sup>*

*On 17 July 1961, while conducting a routine convoy move south to Malacca, Clive's vehicle lost control while descending a steep hill. Leaving the road and falling down a 5-metre ravine, the vehicle's fuel tank was ruptured after falling onto its side, covering several men in burning petrol, most severely, Clive.*

*Clive was rushed to the local military hospital suffering severe burns and was later moved to Singapore for more intensive care. Sadly, 12 days later on Friday 28 July 1961, with his wife and mother by his side, Clive succumbed to his injuries and died.*

*Clive is survived by his beloved wife June, their daughter Catherine, and younger daughter Jo, born just six months prior to his death.*

*Lieutenant Clive Bridge was buried with full military honours in Kranji Military Cemetery, Singapore.*

*Today, we remember him and commemorate his service 60 years after his death.*

*Lest we forget."*

Following the unveiling of the bronze plaque by the Commandant and John Macpherson, Bruce Stark read an excerpt from John's Gospel Chapter 15, and a note received from Lady Patricia Harrison, widow of the first Commandant of OCS, who continues, even at the age of 102, to regard the graduates of the first five OCS courses as 'her boys'.

Wreaths were then laid on behalf of the Australian Army by the Commandant and by the RSM RMC-A; on behalf of OCS Course 5/54 by Bruce Stark, and on behalf of 1 RAR by Ian Gollings and Paul Greenhalgh.

A Requiem and The Ode were recited, followed by the Last Post and Rouse, and the National Anthem sung. The service concluded with the Benediction and Dismounting of the Catafalque Party.

COVID restrictions in NSW and the ACT prevented Clive's widow and daughters from attending the dedication. However, Mrs Bridge and her daughter Jo expressed their great appreciation for the commemoration which now mirrors the recognition by the Australian War Memorial and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Mrs Bridge said that the recognition by the Army and the AWM justified the representations made by Clive's two brothers some years ago.

Readers may wonder why Clive Bridge's death 'on service' has taken so long to be recognised. In 1967 when the OCS Memorial was being planned, Army Headquarters rejected the nomination of Clive Bridge as his death was regarded as NOT on 'Active Service'. This decision relied on



the earlier date of formal cessation of the Malayan Emergency.

Some years later as John Cosson recalled, the term 'Active Service' was reassessed to provide a slightly broader interpretation which allowed incidents such as the death of Clive Bridge to come within the definition of "having been killed or died as a direct result of injury or illness sustained on active service in warlike operations", and/or "having been killed or died as a direct result of injury or illness sustained on duty in non-warlike operations ...". This accords with the change made by the AWM to allow 'for post-1945 conflicts, warlike service, non-warlike service and certain peacetime operations'<sup>2</sup>.

Bridge's name has also been added to the OCS Memorial Tablet at the head of the RMC parade ground.

For the record, Clive Bridge's medal entitlements are: AASM 1945-75 (Clasp Malaya); GSM (Clasp Malaya); ADM; ANSM, and Pingat Jasa Medal.

1. Several IRAR officers have asserted that, notwithstanding the formal cessation of the Malayan Emergency, operations (patrolling) continued on the Thai-Malay border until the end of the Battalion's tour in late 1961.

2. Decision by Brigadier M.R. McNarn (1978) as Commandant RMC-A and Chairman, Duntroon Heritage Committee dated 18 September 2000. This decision continues to apply given a formal delegation to the Commandant RMC-A by AHQ.



*Clive Bridge and Paul Greenhalgh at A Coy Officers' Mess, Lhasa, Perak State, Malaya, early 1961. Photo provided by Paul Greenhalgh.*



*Commandant and John Macpherson. Photo with permission of Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).*



*John Macpherson, John Cosson, Bruce Stark, Ian Gollings and Paul Greenhalgh. Photo with permission of DVA.*



*The Memorial Wall. Photo with permission of DVA.*



*Last Post—Bruce Stark, Ian Gollings, John Cosson, John Macpherson, Paul Greenhalgh, Lieutenant Colonel Tracy Allison, Brigadier Ana Duncan. Photo with permission of DVA.*

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John Macpherson entered RMC-D in 1953 for twelve months, then attended OCS Portsea from where he graduated on 26 June 1954 being awarded the Governor-General's Medal. Commissioned into the Royal Australian Artillery, early regimental postings included 12<sup>th</sup> NS Trg Bn, 1 Fd Regt, 1RTB, 4 Fd Regt and Adj 7 Fd Regt. He returned to Portsea on the staff in 1965 as the Artillery Instructor, then Major Training. Staff College in 1969 preceded postings as LO HQ 1ATF to Phuoc Tuy Province, SO2 Ops/Int/SD and ABCA rep in London (1972-74). Three Grade 1 appointments in Sydney—HQ 2MD, HQ FF Comd and HQ 2 Div—prefaced his retirement in November 1981 when he entered the not-for-profit sector with The Institute of Chartered Accountants and the Building Owners and Managers Association. He is a member of the RAA Historical Company; is the Australian Representative of Clan Macpherson and is still an active Rotarian. He was a member of the Meriden School Council for 11 years.  
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# Duntroon and Adventurous Training

Patrick (P.A) Cullinan (1972)

*“RMC taught me to look at rank and position, while adventurous training taught me to look at the person, their strengths and weaknesses...I have seen the benefits of adventurous training first-hand. I have seen a quiet withdrawn individual change into a confident leader.”*

Harvey (H.T.) French (Dec 1998)

## Introduction

Adventure has been linked to the RMC, formally or informally, from the start. The RMC at its core is about leadership training and development, and it is reasonable to assert that the challenge of adventure and future leadership opportunities in the military are probably why most cadets joined the RMC in the first place. In producing a confident leader, the ethos of the RMC—‘learning promotes strength’—complements the ethos of adventurous training; ‘adversity comes with instructions in its hand’. Both inherently acknowledge that the future is unknown, and that actively engaging in preparing for this unknown, better prepares RMC cadets as future leaders.

On 12 March 1913, the day the National Capital was named Canberra in front of a Corps of Staff Cadets (CSC) Guard of Honour, Commander Edward Evans of Antarctic fame later that same day was invited to deliver a lecture to the CSC on adventure. He gave a memorable lecture on Scott’s 1912 British Antarctic Expedition (on which all members tragically died). Evans told of a story of heroism, of privations endured, obstacles overcome and “purposes achieved”. He ended by saying that “... they leave a standard behind them that is nobler than success”. Heartfelt cheers followed for Commander Evans from the officers and cadets present. In his address, Evans in reality lauded a heroic failure in leadership, and it does not appear from the *RMC Journal* account that any mention was made of Norway’s Amundsen reaching the South Pole first, and ahead of Scott, and then bringing all his team safely home. Rather than acknowledging Amundsen’s great leadership and success, the British press even criticised Amundsen for not losing any of his men, exclaiming; how can you call that an adventure! Such were the times.

Just over a year later, with the outbreak of WW1, every RMC graduate in the Class of 1914 voluntarily stepped forward to go to war and did so. The names of those who courageously made the supreme sacrifice appear on a tablet situated on the terrace above the RMC parade ground.

Chris (C.G.) Appleton (1978) invited me to write an article on Duntroon and adventurous training (AT) and in so doing, I decided that I would cover a broad overview of all significant AT activities involving Duntroon graduates and cadets (see Annex A). This article covers some selected activities using recollections and lessons from those who took part and is broadly covered as follows: AT Definition; Early days of AT at the RMC; Mountaineering and AT Activities pre-1988; Crossing Outback Australia—The Vision of RMC Cadets; Mountaineering and AT Activities 1989–2019; and Conclusion.

Adventure has always been a part of the human condition. In the military context, adventure should physically and psychologically involve risk, challenge and uncertainty of

outcome and in addition, have a goal that is worthwhile to either the individual participating or to the team, and preferably both. (Sport and recreational activities, valuable as they are, are not AT). The definition of AT applied in this article is as follows:

*Adventurous Training is an activity of a challenging physical and mental nature, designed to develop those higher individual and team qualities, such as overcoming fear and stress that are required for operations and combat.*

## Early days of AT at the RMC

RMC cadets—young, intelligent and energetic—have always been supportive and keen to undertake various extracurricular activities on offer. One of these was snow skiing. In the 1950’s snow skiing undertaken by the cadets was focused around nearby Mt Ginini, 1,760 metres, (now part of the Namadgi National Park) and later the facilities at Mount Franklin (adjacent to Mt Ginini), with periodic snow skiing occurring in the Snowy Mountains some 180 km from Canberra. John (J.G.) Trevivian (1971) recalls: “I can remember in winter in 1968 driving a 5-ton truck up to Thredbo loaded with firewood for the newly opened Army Ski Lodge in exchange for free accommodation. In those days it was mainly downhill skiing on wooden Fischer skis owned by the RMC Ski Club since the days when they had a ski hut at Mt Ginini. We also had regular trips up to Smiggins and on some of these trips we went cross country skiing.”

In 1970, Major P.N.D. White (1957) [1] wrote an article titled “Adventurous Training in the AMF” in the *Army Journal* enunciating the many benefits of AT. In the early 1970’s, RMC cadets continued their forays into the Kosciuszko National Park (KNP) and also began their participation in the more challenging AT activities conducted in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

In 1962, Bruce (B.G.) Bond (1960) led the first Australian Army patrol since the Second World War through the Ramu Markham Valley and scaled Shaggy Ridge in Papua New Guinea. Numerous AT ventures involving RMC staff and cadets occurred in PNG over future decades with many expeditions following the various wartime trails. In January 1971, RMC staff and cadets embarked on a Kokoda Trail Expedition. Following this success, a year later, another RMC group embarked on a trek from Wau to Salamaua. In addition to the many AT benefits, these ventures provided RMC cadets the opportunity to research, understand and respect Australian military units that fought in this unforgiving terrain.

## January 1972—Wau to Salamaua

In January 1972, Captain John (J.R.P) Paget (1966) organised and led a group of approximately 30 RMC cadets and a couple of staff in a trek from Wau to Salamaua in PNG. At the time, John was an infantry instructor at the RMC and had previously served in 1 Pacific Islands Regiment and so was ideally suited to lead this expedition. Our expedition followed the wartime trail on which Australians fought in WW2. Often while walking, we came across battlefield debris from that conflict. Trekking past an open box containing rusted unused grenades just a metre off the track was memorable. More memorable was a crashed US fighter plane that Staff Cadet Russell (R.J.) Linwood (1973) came across.

It was day two of the trek. An earlier landslide revealed the presence of the fighter plane. Russell crossed the landslide debris and got inside the aircraft where there were the remains



of the pilot. He also noted two holes in the instrument panel, probably fired from a Japanese anti-aircraft gun. He found an inscribed gold ring on the floor of the plane which after the trek, he took to the US Embassy for return to the deceased pilot's family. I admired Russell in making the effort to return the ring to the family rather than just keeping it as a souvenir.



*Trekking team members skirt the Francisco River.*



*Japanese anti-aircraft gun at Salamaua. Left to right: PNG Patrol Medic, S/C Chris (C.M.) Halliday, S/C Russell (R.J.) Linwood (1973) sitting on gun, and S/C Alan (A.G.N.) Bell (1974).*

Some eight days later, we completed the trek arriving at the beautiful bay of Salamaua. Even being young and physically fit at the time, it is fair to say that most cadets found the trek arduous. S/C Rod (R.E.) Jewell (1973) recalls the remnants of a large underground hospital built into the hillside at Salamaua with all the guns facing out to sea. The remains of another two aircraft were noticed nearby. Rod also recalls the huge spiders at Salamaua that “scared the daylights out of me!”. A key lesson from another cadet was “don’t sleep under a coconut tree!”. Trek over, the activity had been very well organised and we all found it to be of great value.

#### **RMC AT Activities in the 1980’s**

In the late 1970’s RMC continued undertaking adventurous training. Lieutenant Colonel Bill (W.) McDonald (1959), CO CSC, commented in the *Newsletter 1/1980*:

*“Adventurous Training is designed to be just that—adventurous, exciting and challenging. Fourth Class cadets are introduced to a number of adventurous activities during Easter. These include sport*

*parachuting, survival training, river navigation, roping and rappelling, underwater diving and canoeing. Cadets have been to New Zealand mountain climbing; another group successfully negotiated the Canning Stock Route in North-West Australia: another traversed Australia from the furthest point in the west to the furthest point in the east—the most direct route, across the Simpson Desert. Another navigated the Murrumbidgee River in assault boats from Gundagai to the Murray River. Cross country skiing and ice-climbing expeditions have also been conducted. Most recently, during Christmas leave 1979-80, a party led by a company commander completed a trek in the Himalayas in Nepal.”*

Darren Moore in his book *Duntroon, The RMC of Australia 1911–2001*, commented:

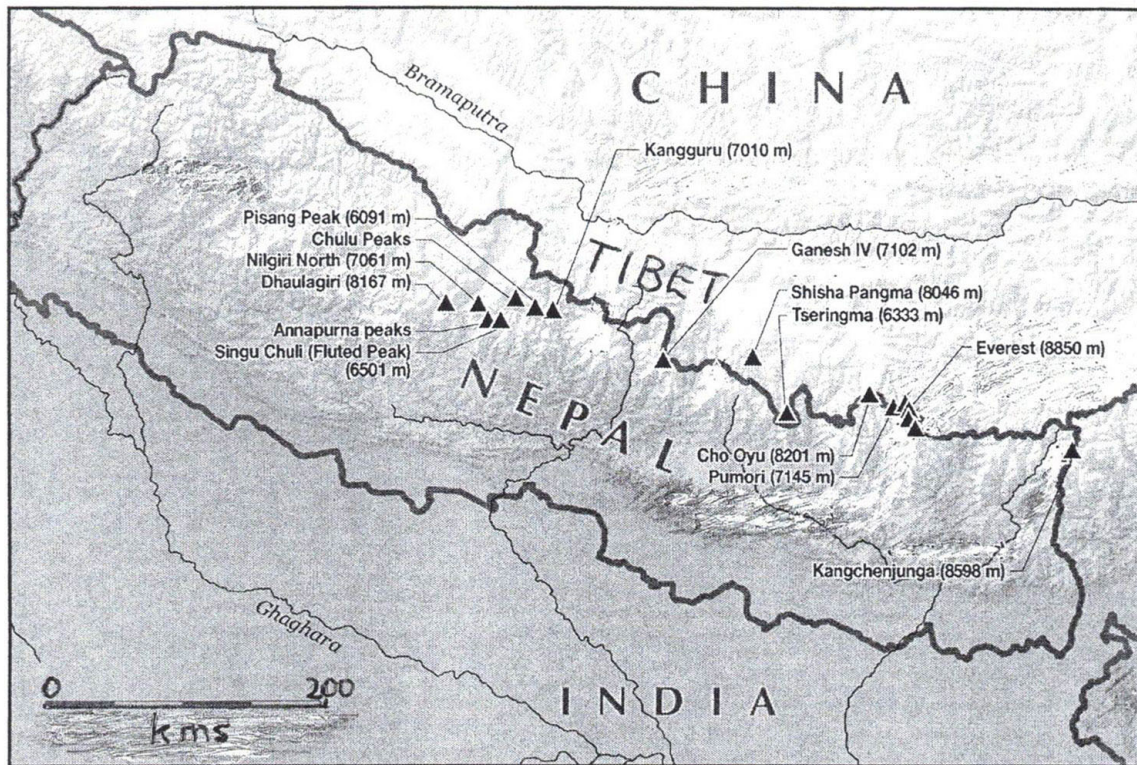
*“After 1985, AT continues but, owing to the change in the course, was limited to the mid-year break. Activities conducted included survival training in the NT (1987); camel trekking near Alice Springs (1988); numerous expeditions to PNG, including walking the Kokoda Trail and climbing Shaggy Ridge; scuba diving; free-fall parachuting; hang-gliding; sailing and Nordic skiing. Most cadets completed an abseiling course during Second Class, with all cadets undertaking a familiarization parachute jump into Jervis Bay during First Class.”*

#### **Bridges Company—Training by Adventure**

Historically, the RMC had found that about 80% of the ‘not-yet-suitable’ applicants who had been asked to re-apply, did not do so. In response, Bridges Company was raised in October 1989. The ‘not-yet-suitable’ applicants were inducted into the Army then given a 46-day adventure program conducted by Outward Bound (which included rafting, abseiling and trekking). While undertaking this AT, applicants were able to appreciate that everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses and so this helped applicants get to know themselves and each other and to build respect for fellow participants. Additionally, the need to work as a team, so important in Army, was continually emphasised. The culmination of this training involved a warm welcome by serving RMC staff and cadets into the RMC and a viewing of the RMC Graduation Parade.

From 1990, with the raising of the Army Adventurous Training Centre, the applicants spent a further three weeks there. Following this training by adventure, they joined their peer group at the RMC. Bridges Company (involving the application of AT) proved highly successful in retaining these youngsters for Army many of whom continue to have highly successful military careers. Bridges Company ceased in June 1991 when due to the Force Structure Review and limits on recruiting it was deemed to be no longer required. In 2005 Bridges Company was reinstituted to increase the number of candidates for the 18-month course at the RMC. A four-month program included a significant element of AT. In July 2005, 85 cadets entered Third Class, 16 of them having completed Bridges Company. These once ‘not-yet-suitable’ candidates graduated 18 months later with a higher success rate than their non-Bridges Company classmates. Despite its success, the program was short-lived. By 2008 recruiting was producing suitable candidates in numbers that negated the need for a preparatory program.





Map1. Nepalese and Tibetan Himalaya showing locations of some RMC team-related AT climbs.

### Mountaineering and AT Activities pre-1988

The Army Alpine Association (AAA) had its genesis in 1970 to foster alpine skiing and to a lesser extent, climbing in the Army. With the recently opened ski lodge in Thredbo, skiing continued to thrive. In 1975, following a meeting at the RMC including Dr John Cashman, Major Paul (P.A.) Mench (1964) and Major Jake (E.J.) O'Donnell (1958), a mountaineering club was formed at the RMC [2] by two of Dr Cashman's students Jim (J.F.) Truscott (1978) and Lester (K.L.) Cornall (1978). About the same time, in February 1975, Colonel Peter (P.C.) Gration (1952) a later CDF, led a party of 16 Army engineers and one doctor to the Kala Pattar peak overlooking Everest Base Camp in Nepal. As part of his planning, Colonel Gration helped to establish the conditions of service that became the basis for all subsequent overseas AT. Following his Kala Pattar trek, he commented: *"I thought we should aspire to climb some of those magnificent Himalayan peaks, and dare we even think of it, one day to tackle Everest itself."* His thoughts, 13 years ahead of the 1988 Everest climb, were quite visionary. Young officers and cadets rallied to the call, and overseas mountaineering ventures were to get underway.

In the first *AAA Newsletter* of May 1976, Colonel Gration, the then President of the AAA, commented: *"The response to the re-activating of the Association (by Colonel Gration) has been most encouraging from the Army Australia wide"*. In the Newsletter, he outlined the long-term program for the AAA as follows: *"1976 Nov/Dec/Jan Basic mountaineering course in NZ followed by two or three weeks climbing experience. 1977 Climbing in NZ. 1978 Intermediate climbing course in NZ. 1979 Attempt a modest Himalayan peak. 1980 NZ for advance climbing experience on peaks such as Cook, Tasman, Dampier. 1981 A major Himalayan peak."* In reality, AAA activities pretty much followed Colonel Gration's 1976 program.

In August 1976, the annual AAA winter AT occurred in the Blue Lake area of the Kosciuszko National Park. These activities became known as the 'August epics' due to the notoriously bad weather that often occurred in August. These epics included ski mountaineering, ice climbing and constructing and living in snow caves. These epics provided a good psychological and physical introduction to mountaineering.

In December 1976, the annual AAA summer AT took place in the South Island of NZ run by a commercial company, Mt Cook Alpine Guides and following these courses, cadets would consolidate their skills climbing in small groups throughout Mt Cook (now Aoraki/Mt Cook) National Park. These trips were very significant in providing the AAA members much necessary experience as a lead-up to taking their part in more challenging expeditions in the Himalayas and other parts of the world.

The first major AAA Himalayan Expedition undertaken was the Mt Gauri Shankar expedition February to April 1980 in Nepal, where a subsidiary peak Tseringma 6,333 metres was climbed. Team members joined the AAA a month or so prior to the expedition. As leader, I was the only RMC graduate on the team which mainly comprised members from my old SAS climbing troop—the intent being to provide them a Himalayan challenge. During this epic, Sergeant Barry Young at Camp 4, while detaching himself from the fixed line, caught one of his crampon front points in the strap of his other crampon and fell nearly 365 metres down a gully. His life was saved by Sherpa Anu who standing at Camp 3 and still attached to the fixed line was alerted by a pack flying through the clouds between Camp 3 and Camp 4, and was able to grab Barry as he tumbled down at speed. Immediately below Camp 3 was a vertical 600-metre ice cliff. In this episode, the elements of danger and luck in the Himalayas were displayed.





*Tseringma Peak 6,333 metres showing the route taken to the top.*



*Trooper Wayne Carroll above Camp 4 on Tseringma on his way to the top.*

Seven climbers reached the 6,333 metre high Tseringma Peak. The Swiss Alpine Journal ended its account of the expedition with the words: Excellent performance by an expedition of this dimension where no (Australian) member had previously climbed in the Himalayas.

Tragedy occurred on 22 June 1980 when AAA member Lieutenant Colonel Paul Mench (1964) fell to his death while scrambling on Castle Crag in the Lamington National Park, QLD. In the same month, the planned AAA expedition to Tirich Mir in Pakistan (of which Mench was to be the expedition leader) was cancelled due to the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

Later in December 1980, was a successful three-man ascent of Ball's Pyramid 562 metres, by Jim Truscott, Mike (M.S.J.) Hindmarsh (1978) and Mark (M.G.) Dickson (1977). This is the highest sea stack in the world and is located in the Tasman Sea near Lord Howe Island.

In December 1980, some 19 members climbed in NZ. Of particular note, following some years of training, a small AAA team undertook the Grand Traverse (GT) of Mt Cook (3764 m). The GT of Mt Cook was a great mountaineering challenge which involved ascending one side of Mt Cook, traversing across the mile-long summit ridge, and then descending via a different unfamiliar route. Team members were Zac (Z.) Zaharias (1977), Brian (B.J.) Agnew (1976), David (D.G.) Sloane (1979) and Sapper Phil Pitham. Climbing involved some very steep climbing on up to 60-degree snow slopes. The long summit ridge had sheer drops on both sides.



*AAA Grand traverse of Mt. Cook, NZ in 1981.*

On the top on 17 January 1981, the team had a glorious 360-degree view of the Southern Alps and both coastlines of New Zealand. The expedition fulfilled the aims of AT as Zac was to comment: *"We had trained hard for it over many years, we were fit, focused, determined and confident. The climbing was exhilarating and absorbing, and like all great challenges we were committed, there was no turning around and we didn't know what the outcome would be until the very end."*

The next major AAA expedition to the Himalayas was the Ganesh 4 climb March to May 1981 in Nepal. With a good team and careful planning, some 131 porters carried the expedition's three months of supplies to Base Camp. Tragedy struck on 23 April 1981 when a 1,500-metre-wide avalanche swept through Camp 2 and pushed Dave Sloane over a cliff to his death. Following rescue of other members affected, the expedition was abandoned. RMC team members were Brian Agnew, leader, Zac Zaharias, Jim Truscott, David Sloane, David (D.) Simpson (1979), and Dr John Cashman, a lecturer at RMC and a very keen mountaineer.

In 1981, tragedy again struck when AAA member Lieutenant Rick (R.L.) Butler (1979) was killed by a rock fall on Mt Barff, NZ while training for a later climb of Mt McKinley (now Mt Denali) in Alaska. The Mt McKinley expedition went ahead in May/June 1982 in extremely cold and windy conditions and was successful. The RMC team members were Zac Zaharias, leader, David (D.A.) Smith (1973), Peter (P.L.) Lambert (1979) and Bernie (B.G.) McGee (1980).

From September to November 1983, the climb of Nilgiri North, 7,061 metres in Nepal took place. This was both a very challenging and successful expedition. The RMC team members were Zac Zaharias, leader, Peter Lambert, Terry (T.J.) McCullagh (1979) and David (D.A.) Evans (1980). Of added significance, the Nilgiri North expedition was also the first AAA climb to incorporate the now well-established practice of running concurrent climbs and treks. A number of



these Army trekkers, after mountaineering courses in NZ, later became Himalayan climbers.

Lead up training for Everest continued in 1985 with the successful climb of Tent Peak 5,663 metres in Nepal. Leader of the six-man group was Peter Lambert. Next came the climbs of Pisang Peak 6,187 metres and Chulu West 6,419 metres in Nepal. Although trekking peaks, very cold weather and very heavy snow fall made the climbs challenging. This successful undertaking was a mixed AAA, Navy and civilian team. The only RMC member was the leader Rick (R.C.) Moor (1976).



*Climbers on summit ridge of Broad Peak (Summit is on far left in the background).*

The major lead up climb for Everest was the climb of Broad Peak in Northern Pakistan. At 8,047 metres, it is the twelfth highest mountain in the world and just 803 metres in altitude lower than Everest. To seriously attempt Everest in 1988, the AAA had to demonstrate both to itself and potential sponsors that it was capable of climbing an 8,000-metre high mountain and in mid-August, it did when eight climbers stood on the summit of Broad Peak. A great achievement. By the end of the Broad Peak expedition, only 10 Australians had reached the summit of 8,000 high mountains—eight of them were members of the AAA Broad Peak expedition. The RMC members were me, as leader, Brian Agnew, Peter Lambert, Rick Moor, Terry McCullagh, Zac Zaharias and Jim Truscott. While we were climbing Broad Peak, some 13 climbers died on neighbouring K2 in a series of accidents, most preventable over a period of two months. Our expedition attended to a number of them. What this expedition showed me was that our military training provided a very firm foundation for all these challenging AT activities and vice-versa.

Accompanying the Broad Peak climbing team in northern Pakistan was a trekking team whose leader Major Derek Cannon was to make the following observation: *"I have generally regarded the AT exercises I was associated with as being a surrogate for active service. In all cases the team was subjected to war-time similarities for example: logistics, movements, third world culture, communications problems, support problems, disease, hostile environment, health problems, altitude, leadership, team-spirit, morale and man-management, foreign customs, language etc."* These leadership challenges Derek Cannon has highlighted parallel those similar ones that confront the leader in war or on operations. AT provides the opportunities to confront these challenges and learn from them without being fired upon.

A final lead-up expedition to Mt McKinley led by Andrew Smith (Navy) took place in May 1987. The only RMC member on this expedition was Rick Moor who reached McKinley's summit as a member of this successful expedition. By now, the AAA covered a wide assortment of

people beyond RMC cadets and graduates. These included the wider Army, Navy, Air Force and some civilian members.

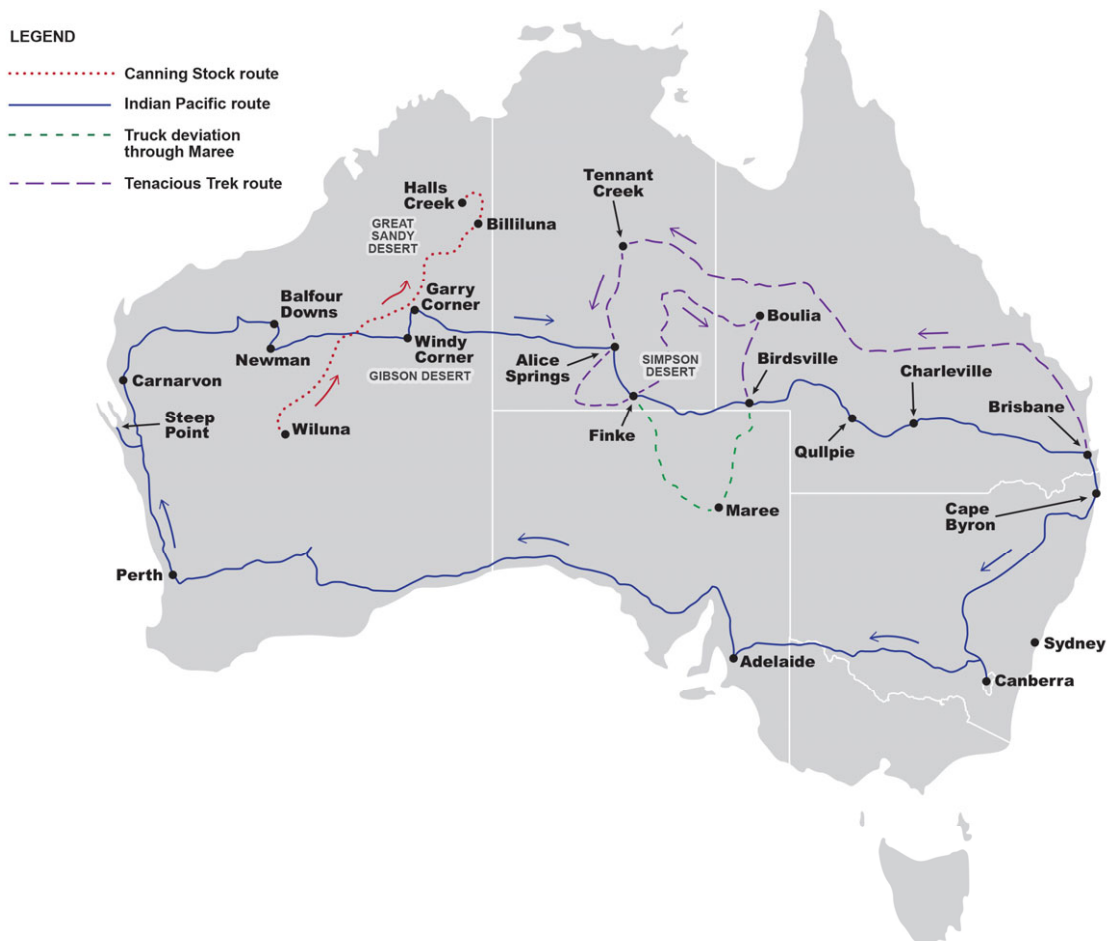
The 1988 Australian Bicentennial Everest Expedition (ABEE) 8,850 metres in Nepal took place from February to May 1988. ABEE was a project five years in the planning, that achieved a goal on time and within Budget. It achieved a world's first (first climb of Everest from the Nepalese side without the aid of high-altitude Sherpas) and a world record (longest stay by any climber on the South Col of Everest including the summit—some eight and a half days). These two records still stand. Having the strong support of HQ 1 Commando Regiment was most helpful. In Nepal, team members were respectfully called 'White Sherpas' by the Nepalese Sherpas. Three stood on the summit; Paul Bayne and me on 25 May and Jon Muir on 28 May 1988. Without the team effort, none of us would have reached the summit. The adage, no matter how exhausted you are, you can always go one more step certainly applied in my case.

I spent three minutes on the summit and with fellow team members some five years in the planning but the three minutes on the summit was worth the five years in planning. My key lesson: perhaps 80% of overall success was determined in detailed preparations before leaving Australia, but at the crunch, the White Sherpas took on real challenges well outside their own comfort zones and succeeded against all odds. The ABEE team was half Army and half civilian with one Navy member. It is to be noted that the non-Army members were every bit as important in both the preparation and climbing aspects of the expedition as were the Army participants. The RMC expedition members were Rick Moor, Brian Agnew, Terry McCullagh, Zac Zaharias, Peter Lambert, Jim Truscott, and me. Looking back on ABEE, Zac was to comment: *"It still amazes me how we managed to pull all this together in such a successful way with very little experience. By the end of it we were pretty competent though."*



*Mount Everest showing route taken to the summit in 1988.*





Map 2. Crossing outback Australia—AT 1976-1982.

### Crossing Outback Australia—The Vision of RMC Cadets

*Australia is the perfect environment for Adventure Training. Mountaineering sometimes takes all the glory. The reality is—Australia has ‘mountains’ of its own. However, these ‘mountains’ are different, they are wide and come with the extremes of heat, terrain and distance, all factors that challenge anyone brave enough to attempt them.*

John (J.D.) Karmouche (1978)

Without the inspiration of a small number of RMC cadets, the three expeditions into Outback Central Australia (shown on Map 2) would not have occurred. Back then, these expeditions were real challenges as little was known of Australia’s outback desert areas. External on-call safety support or 4WD or navigation technology in these desert areas was either basic or non-existent. Maps obtained, (the most recent found being 25 years old and 1:250,000) invariably contained significant blank areas. Essentially each of these expedition teams were on their own. The leaders and their teams would have to come to the fore, and they did.

### Canning Stock Route Expedition—16 December 1976 to 5 January 1977

The Canning Stock Route stretches 1,850 km from Halls Creek in the north, to Wiluna in the south, bisecting the Great Sandy, Little Sandy and Gibson Deserts. The inspiration to retrace this Route came from Staff Cadet Blair (W.B.) Healy (1977). Commenting on the AT proposal, the then Chief of the General Staff (CGS), Lieutenant General A.L. MacDonald (1939) wrote: “The location chosen is a remote,

harsh, outback area which will test the initiative, endurance and experience of the participants and provide a demanding activity for men and equipment....”.

Throughout 1976 the group undertook driver training during their leave periods, assembled maps, aerial photos and original source material from Canning’s 1910 expedition, studied celestial navigation, consulted people familiar with the area and the Stock Route, and prepared and modified four long wheel-base Army Landrovers for the expedition. Each vehicle carried around 750 kg of stores including 113 litres of water and 313 litres of fuel.



Canning Stock Route AT in 1976-77. Left to right: Gary Vale, Blair Healy, Hugh Graham, Russell Doran (arms leaning), Tim Larkin, Alf Kunning and Alan Tebb.

He interested fellow cadets Alan (A.R.) Tebb (1977), Hugh (H.L.) Graham (1978), Russell (R.J.) Doran (1977) and Tim (T.B.H.) Larkin (OCS Dec 1978) in the undertaking and so detailed planning as an AT activity proceeded. Later, three more joined the team; Captain Ian (I.L.) Cleaver (1973), the OC of the RMC RAEME Workshop, who was designated as the officer in charge, Sergeant Gary (Gerry) Vale, SASR and Craftsman Alf Kunning making a team of eight.

For the duration, daily temperatures rarely dropped below 38°C and on some days the going was reduced to no more than 50–60 kms of driving in second gear, low range across sand dunes 60 metres in height. The country was harsh. Spinifex grass clogged vehicles and caused skin rashes on legs and feet. Heat exhaustion delayed the journey by two days, infection from minor cuts, headaches, gastro problems and allergies all plagued various members of the team. Drinkable water became so scarce that at the half-way point, the expedition had to dig for water to make sure there was sufficient supply to complete the trip.

Mother nature played its part and provided conditions that ranged from unrelenting heat, a howling dust storm to torrential rain as the wet season gathered force across the northern parts of the stock route. The group of eight proved to be remarkably compatible given they had no time to bond as a team before beginning the journey. Heat, exhaustion and long hours of driving inevitably took their toll. By the third week the constant grind led to frayed tempers and the occasional argument but nothing that at any time threatened the integrity or purpose of the exercise.

In the end, the team achieved a number of firsts. The exercise was the first vehicle journey along the Stock Route done at the peak of summer and it was the first to be done by a team completely drawn from the Army. Team members have commented that the assessment made by the CGS above was very accurate.



*Blair Healy, Canning Stock Route AT in 1976-77.*

More than 45 years later the cadets remain in touch and occasionally reflect on the experience of a lifetime made possible by the vision of one person, Blair Healy, the support of Army and the resolute commitment of everyone involved.

#### ***Exercise Indian Pacific 4 December 1977 to 5 January 1978***

The inspiration for Exercise Indian Pacific came from Tim Larkin who the previous year had participated on the Canning Stock Route Expedition. Tim and fellow cadets now dreamt up a greater challenge; a vehicle crossing of outback Australia from the westernmost point (Steep Point south of Carnarvon, WA.) to the easternmost point (Cape Byron south of Brisbane, QLD) through the Simpson Desert in mid-summer, a distance of over 4,000 km.

At the start of 1977, Captain John (J.G.) Trevivian (1971) was posted to the RMC and was duly appointed as Supervising Officer of this RMC AT activity. This turned out to be fortuitous as John was a RAEME officer with experiences in this type of training. Not surprisingly, John became the expedition leader of this 10-man group. Appreciating that the cadets did not have much spare time, nor the authority or rank to demand the myriad of requirements needed, John undertook much of the planning himself but kept all members informed on how planning was progressing, on how the administrative system worked as well as allocating responsibilities to cadets; such as writing letters to civil authorities, medical and communications responsibilities, meteorological data, vehicle repair logs and ration and fuel accounting methods. Next the cadets undertook vehicle training and were given responsibilities in the preparation and servicing of vehicles. A pre-exercise training programme was conducted covering subjects of navigation, radio procedure, vehicle driving, vehicle maintenance, medical, survival, physical fitness, water planning and briefings on the exercise area and exercise concept. For the eight third-year cadets involved, it was all a great learning experience even before expedition's start.

The expedition left Canberra on 4 December 1977, called into the SASR for vehicle checks, then drove on to Steep Point through 120 km of trackless, rough, sandy terrain on the way. The expedition then headed to Carnarvon, then onto Balfour Downs. From this point the expedition was to cross 2,000 km of uninhabited and virtually waterless, country to Alice Springs which included a crossing of the Gibson Desert. The terrain varied considerably from flat, hard clay to undulating and well vegetated hills, to sand ridges and sandy desert.

During this period of the exercise maximum temperatures were in the region of 44–48°C resulting in fuel vaporisation problems with the vehicles and discomfort for the members. The extreme heat resulted in each man drinking about 20 litres of water daily. The heat meant that every physical activity became very arduous. The numerous punctures caused by the staking of tyres were repaired when possible in the cooler temperatures of the evening. Constant vigilance was required to prevent sunburn and other heat related problems. The extreme heat warped map protractors and liquified the leads of chinagraph pencils. Vehicle floors were hot enough to boil water and a brew of coffee could be made directly from a jerry can left in the sun for a few hours.



*Indian Pacific team at Wittenoom Gorge, WA. Left to right rear row standing: Rod (R.N.) Bridges (1979), John (J.F.B) Mansell (1978), John Trevivian, Rowan (J.R.L) McDonald (1978), Jack (J.P.) Affleck (1978), John Karmouche. Left to right front row kneeling: Mick Thompson (mechanic), Steve (S.D.) Meekin (1978), Tiger (K.P.F.) Bell (1978), and Tim Larkin.*



The crossing from Newman to Alice Springs took eight days, averaging 200 km a day with the last two days spent driving through mud, the result of sudden rain downpours.

Three days were spent in Alice Springs, servicing and repairing vehicles before setting out on 23 December for Finke on the western edge of the Simpson Desert.

From Finke the group headed due east, into the Simpson Desert. They had 1,400 parallel sand ridges to navigate, some up to 50 metres in height. Driving techniques were rapidly learnt by trial-and-error. Deflating tyres, use of shovels, sand mats and much energy became the order of the day. Christmas Day saw temperatures of 51°C with the team bogged in a large claypan on the western side of the desert. The heat and terrain took its toll on vehicles. Throughout the exercise, the group adopted a policy of thorough daily servicing of vehicles and repairs as required. In this way, all vehicles were ready to go early in the morning to cover maximum distance before heat and fuel vaporisation enforced a stop.

The 400 km crossing of the Simpson Desert took seven days to complete to Birdsville. In this time a variety of wildlife was seen including king brown snakes, camels and dingos. The vehicles had two broken axles and many minor problems. Vibration caused bolts to continuously come loose, and vehicles needed constant checking.



*Vehicle recovery in Western Simpson Desert.*

About 150 km from Birdsville, the group crossed its most formidable obstacle, that of Eyre Creek. The banks of this dry creek are almost vertical. Before committing themselves to the creek bed, the group reconnoitred a way out along the far bank. This crossing however was too much for one vehicle resulting in a complete gearbox failure. As the group did not have a spare Landrover gearbox, they radioed through the Royal Flying Doctor Service for a new gearbox to be sent out. The Army supply system reacted remarkably fast and within three days, the group were fitting a new gearbox in the Simpson Desert in temperatures around 50°C. Their arrival in Birdsville resulted in a welcome rest and the inevitable vehicle repair and maintenance.

From Birdsville they travelled by road to Cape Byron, arriving four days later. The group ceremoniously tipped the bottle of Indian Ocean water they had collected at Steep Point into the Pacific Ocean. Two days later they arrived back to cold wet weather in Canberra, the exercise completed.

All exercise aims were achieved. John Trevivian's post-exercise report contained many lessons including the importance of providing lead time for detailed planning, the recording and passing on of information gained and the need for the military system to be followed even where a level of informality exists where all members are involved in normal

routine decisions. Careful selection of team members is also important to minimize later conflict.

John Trevivian notes that, to be worthwhile, AT should be interesting, arduous and with elements of danger and the unknown. Exercises which go wrong in the field are probably of more value than ones that sail smoothly. He is not suggesting that exercises should be inadequately planned, but rather says this because when things go wrong, members can test their initiative, improvisation, reactions under stress and personal relationships.

In conclusion, properly organised and interesting AT has considerable military application and training value. It is an activity which can re-motivate soldiers positively and provide incentive for other forms of training. Its value ranges beyond the actual exercise in terms of planning, preparation, the passing on of knowledge gained and improvement in personal skills.

The 1978 *RMC Journal* account of the activity ends with the words: "... the epic expedition had been successful. Thanks go to Captain John Trevivian for leading the expedition and for having the patience to cope with typical (RMC) cadet arguments. Thanks also to Craftsman Mick Thompson for his mechanical skill and tireless work."

#### ***Exercise Tenacious Trek—16 December 1981 to 12 January 1982***

The experience of Staff Cadet John Karmouche on Exercise Indian Pacific was the inspiration for attempting Exercise Tenacious Trek over the height of the summer of 1981/82. Tenacious Trek involved the crossing of the Simpson Desert, retracing the route taken by the explorer C.T. Madigan who led the first successful crossing of the Simpson Desert in the winter of 1939. Madigan took a team of camels—which is what John had originally planned to use but, for a number of reasons, Landrovers were used. Those given to the expedition were pretty worn out. Understandably, this fact significantly impacted on achieving the goal.

As it turned out on Tenacious Trek, the vehicles taken were Series 2 and one Series 3. The Landrovers, were just not up to the task. By the time the group got one-third of the way into the Madigan's Expedition Route, the expedition's fuel consumption had exceeded the two kilometres per litre planned for, and all spare axles had been consumed, and at the rate of progress they would have run out of water. As a young lieutenant in the middle of the Simpson Desert John Karmouche found himself in a position faced with real consequences: "*Do I push on and continue the expedition or do I consider the lives of my soldiers and find another route?*" He recalls that day well—it was 52°C and one of the team had been suffering from heat exhaustion: "*Looking back now on this expedition, it demonstrates that this type of training places young officers into an environment where they are placed in situations where they are 100% responsible for the lives of those under their command. When you are in the middle of a desert far from the nearest human civilisation the stress level reaches its peak. There is also the pressure of operating under extremely harsh conditions (daily temperatures in the Simpson Desert reached as high as 52°C) and keeping team spirits up, one had to maintain a clear head.*"

John Karmouche's diary entry of 1 January 1982 records the following: "*Today I made the decision I have always dreaded. We are travelling so slowly and breakdowns take up 70% of our travelling time. I have decided to give up our attempt to reach the Hay River where we were scheduled to*

*meet up with our support vehicle carrying our fuel and water supplies. We have at least three vehicles (including my own) that I am sure won't make it. The Military Appreciation process taught to me at RMC kicked in and all that training saved the day. We stopped heading due east and headed north out of the Simpson Desert to the nearest homestead called Indiana Station."*

John further comments: *"One of the forgotten aspects of AT Expeditions, like the two I was involved in, is the lessons that can be learned. Little was understood about Outback Central Australia in those days. 4WD technology was rudimentary for the conditions anywhere greater than a couple of hundred kms from civilisation. Many of the experiences from my trip resulted in decisions to bring diesel fuelled vehicles into service. Had I taken later JRA Rovers fuelled by diesel engines that have lower rev torque and better consumption, things may have been different. Today, I believe the route we attempted is a common track for modern 4WD enthusiasts."*

It was an admirable effort by John Karmouche's team, and as the leader, John's difficult decision to abort the mission quite likely saved lives. Their legacy was to be lessons that improved Defence's future vehicle fleet, rather than what could have been, a monument constructed somewhere in the Simpson Desert in memory of lives lost.

In conclusion, it's a very 'well done' to all those outback warriors (mentioned above) who were brave enough to take on the challenges of the extremes of heat, terrain and distance of the largely unknown Australian outback with intelligence, commitment, energy and enthusiasm. On these three AT activities, all members acquitted themselves admirably, learnt a lot and identified lessons that they passed on via post-exercise reports and were all better for it. These AT activities no doubt made each participant a better person and leader,

and so benefitted their future junior officers and soldiers who might not have heard of these great exploits.

One can only imagine how much more would be known of outback Australia and the further improvements in vehicles and equipment that would have occurred if AT activities such as these had continued to the present day.

### ***Mountaineering and AT Activities 1989 – 2019***

Following Everest success in 1988, there was loose talk on whether there would be 'life after Everest'. With a membership of some 400 members in 1989 in the AAA, subsequent AT activities were to clearly demonstrate that there was plenty of life after Everest. Some overseas treks took place in Nepal.

In December 1989, the first climbing expedition after Everest took place. It was the climb of Aconcagua 6,960 metres in the Argentine Andes led by Terry McCullagh. The expedition comprised two climbing teams and a trekking team. The RMC members of this successful expedition were: Terry McCullagh, Jim Truscott, Angus (A.J.) Campbell (1984), Dave Freeman, and Carl (C.A.) Johnson (1984).

In 1991, AAA members travelled to East Africa to climb Mt Kenya in Kenya and Mt Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and another group led by Jim Truscott climbed Puncak Jaya (formerly Carstensz Pyramid) 4,884 metres in Irian Jaya (now West Papua). Later that year, a team of climbers led by Zac Zaharias and a team of trekkers led by John Trevillian participated in a joint expedition with the Indian Army. The expedition led by Zac Zaharias travelled to the Western Garwhal region of the Indian Himalaya and successfully climbed Kedarnath 6,940 metres. This expedition was a mix of Army and civilian members.

1992 and 1993 saw the continuation of the annual AAA winter training in the KNP, the annual summer training in NZ and a trek in Nepal. In both years, Exercise High Sierra led



*Mt. Buffalo in Victoria showing Army members (circled) in preparation (left photo), and (in right photo) abseiling down the 300 metre rockface (a one-day ATW conducted activity).*



by John Trevivian in the Yosemite National Park in the US took place where the group practised the skills of living and operating in harsh conditions. 1993 also saw a team make an attempt on Dhaulagiri.

An AAA attempt on Dhaulagiri 8,167 metres was made in 1993 but had to be abandoned due to illness and high winds. A high point of 7,400 metres was reached. In 1997, a second assault was made on Dhaulagiri (both led by Zac Zaharias, this one successful. This was the first Australian ascent of Dhaulagiri with Zac Zaharias, Matt (M.D.) Rogerson (Dec 1991) and Andrew Lock reaching the summit. Matt (M.J.) Walton (Jun 1991) was also a team member. Concurrently, an attempt was made on Tukulche 6,940 metres in Nepal. This AAA expedition reached the 6,690-metre south peak of Tukulche. This was the first Australian ascent of the south peak. Led by Alex van Roy, team members included Lindsay (L.R.) Adams (1983), Martin (M.P.) Banfield (Jun 1992), Robb (R.R.) Clifton (Dec 1992), Mike (M.J.A.) Cook (Jun 1989), David Donaldson, Jamie (J.A.) Hackett (Dec 1994) and Dr David Smith.

Army's Adventurous Training Wing (ATW) established in July 1989 continued to conduct Unit AT Leader (UATL) courses and senior officer modules which sought to provide senior officers with a better awareness of the value of AT. I recall in 1996, ATW invited me to give an Everest presentation, overnight with them, and next day abseil down the 300-metre vertical rock face of Mt Buffalo. Ian (I.C.) Gordon (1973) (see Mt Buffalo photo on previous page), the then Commandant at Army Command and Staff College, turned up, met all students, listened to the Everest talk, overnights at ATW, and next day undertook the 300-metre abseil with the students. Ian was to later comment: *"I was never a great fan of heights, but I also remember being distinctly aware that the point was to learn to deal with the things that were most uncomfortable and the lessons from that experience have stayed with me. Since then, I've been climbing and abseiling a few times and been much more comfortable in doing these activities. I became a strong advocate for that sort of conditioning."* Ian's example on that day provided a great encouragement to the students who were also going outside their comfort zones in undertaking this 300-metre vertical abseil. Even a well-planned and well-conducted one-day AT activity as this one was of great value to all.

A further example of an effective one day AT activity came from Chris Appleton who commented: *"By way of example, as a Bn CO, I took my six majors and their key warrant officers on a 'no-notice' one day canyoning and climbing activity. To see this normally extroverted and supremely competent and confident group deeply challenged by a high degree of perceived risk and an arduous physical team-based activity, afforded all involved the opportunity to reflect at length on the 'lessons learned.' The benefits to the group were remarkable: better cohesion, a real sense of personal and collective achievement, and a rare opportunity to trade places with the lot of a junior soldier, needing to deal with fear of the unknown and fatigue. In a two-year program of officer and NCO training, I assess that one day to have been the single day best spent, with the greatest dividend for the individuals involved."*

Meanwhile in the mid-1990's the AAA continued undertaking their winter August epics in KNP and summer training in NZ. Individual and small groups of AAA members undertook activities in Nepal, USA, Kenya, India and Argentina. Exercise Denali 98 successfully climbed the West

Buttress of Mt McKinley (now Mt Denali) 6,194 metres in Alaska. The RMC members were Carl Johnson, Roger (R.T.) Grose (Dec 1993), Mike Cook, Adam (A.R.) Scott (Dec 1995) and Calem (C.L.) Glover (Dec 1993).

In 1999 an AAA expedition to Shishapangma in Tibet took place. A reconnaissance was conducted the year before, which in a country such as Tibet, was most helpful. The team led by Brian Agnew was deliberately large in order to maximize high-altitude experience ahead of the 2001 Everest climb. Camps were established in the usual manner and advantage was taken of the fine weather that remained long enough for 17 climbers to reach the 8,026-metres central summit of Shisha Pangma—a world record. The RMC members were Zac Zaharias, Peter Lambert, Carl Johnson, Mike Cook, and Jamie Hackett. Non-RMC members were Dave Donaldson, Steve Graham, Steve Simpson, Brad Reeve, Tanya Bylart, Allen Caldwell, Tim Robathan, Bob Killip, Stuart Sudgen, Brian Laursen, Dean McMaster, Shane Lacey, Adrian McCallum and Andrew Peacock.

In November 1999, a small four-man AAA expedition embarked on a fishing vessel and made their way to Heard Island in the Indian Ocean with the goal to climb Mawson Peak. Heard Island is some 4,500 km southwest of Perth. At 2,745 metres, Mawson Peak is Australia's highest peak. The expedition was unsurpassed in providing some extreme life challenges in such a remote location on earth. The expedition became the third party to successfully summit Mawson Peak. Expedition members were Matt Rogerson, Stu (S.C.) Davies (Dec 1992), Robb Clifton, and Tim Curtis.

The final preparation for Everest 2001 was the expedition to Cho Oyu, 8,201 metres in Nepal. The expedition was conducted 15 April to 28 May 2000. The expedition was designed as a lead-up activity to gain experience at high altitude for Everest in 2001. With the exception of Everest 1988, this was the highest mountain that the AAA had attempted to date. Led by Roger Grose, the team succeeded in very difficult conditions placing three members on the summit. The RMC members were Adam Scott, Matt (M.C.) Shepley (1993) and Matt (M.J.) Walton (Jun 1991).



*Mt. Everest 2001 Expedition (Tibet) showing camps and route taken to the summit.*

In 2001, the AAA Tenix Everest 2001 expedition in Tibet took place. Led by Zac Zaharias (1978), it was a very skilled and very experienced team. The expedition was a major activity celebrating Australia's centenary. The team was accompanied by a trekking team. Ahead of the climb, all members took part in an acclimatisation trek in the Annapurna Sanctuary in Nepal, a popular tourist trek located

about 600 km east of Everest. On the walk-out from this trek, tragedy struck. A cliff collapse without any warning, later determined to be a one in 60-year event took the lives of three members of the trekking team. Despite having to deal with this extremely traumatic event, the leader and team courageously decided to continue the expedition and very commendably placed three members on the summit: Sergeant Brian Laursen, RAAF and fellow climbers Chhewang and Ngima. RMC members were Peter Lambert, Mike Cook, Carl Johnson, Jamie Hackett, and Roger Grose. It was a team success that went beyond just RMC graduates.

Looking back at the numerous AAA overseas Himalayan ventures undertaken, they are at the extreme end of peacetime outdoor activities, and so provided participants with a unique opportunity to extend themselves both physically and mentally, well beyond the norm, in a most unforgiving environment. Additionally, the expedition leader had to exhibit skills ranging from thorough planning in Australia to turn an idea into reality, to patience, tact and tolerance in a foreign land, to plain leadership up high. Army has long recognised and accepted AT as a means to bring out those qualities we look for in our officers and soldiers in time of war; leadership above all, detailed planning, determination, and physical and mental toughness. The key point is that Army members are soldiers first, and AT complements soldiering.

Following the tragic accident in 2001, overseas AT was cancelled. This coincided with the outbreak of operations and war. Much AT continued in Australia and many climbers undertook major climbs in the Himalaya as private leave ventures. Annual mountaineering trips to NZ have continued. Two overseas Himalayan expeditions that did occur as part of Defence's International Engagement program were the Joint Indian-Australian Expedition to climb Shivling 6,505 metres in India led by Matt Rogerson in 2007, and secondly, the Joint Australian-Pakistan Expedition to climb Spantik 7,028 metres in Pakistan in 2011 led by Zac Zaharias. Both of these expeditions were very successful. Today, the AAA continues to be active and has approximately 320 members.

Over the past decades, AT has sometimes suffered from perceptions such as 'it's just a jolly'. In a paper for the 2004 IG Group evaluation on the value of adventurous training in the ADF, Jim Truscott recommended that the title of AT be changed to 'Combat Inoculation Training' to reflect the impact of battle hardening and spirit toughening as a catalyst for change like no other warlike training can provide. There is a lot in a name and there is a risk in not taking a judgmental risk.

## Conclusion

It was the vision of Colonel (later General) Gratton who, in 1975, envisaged Army members climbing Mt. Everest some 13 years later in Australia's bicentennial year. It was the vision of three RMC cadets who separately imagined three team crossings of Australia's outback deserts between 1976 and 1982. Arguably, there is a link between leadership and vision, as well as the determination to turn vision into practice as described throughout this article. Linked to vision, leadership is genderless, and over the decades, Army has provided incredible opportunities for spirited young male and female officers and soldiers to plan and undertake challenging AT activities all around the world (see map at Annex A).

There are many parallels between the planning and conduct of major overseas AT and the planning and conduct

of overseas military operations: logistics, third world culture, disease, health support, communications to name but a few. There is one key difference, however, AT provides the opportunity to build and hone leadership, planning and other skills without a shot being fired. Julian McMahon (2007) provided the following comment of how he benefitted from AT: *"The key personal benefits from AT have been learning how I react in situations of fear and consequence. More broadly for Army, I have seen AT used to teach soldiers about risk, team bonding and leader behaviours. In my opinion, AT is the best general-purpose training to teach the importance of logistics and risk management—two things that can't be faked in austere environments and are highly relevant to operations. I would argue that the skills I learnt over the years of planning, preparing and executing AT exercises better prepared me for my two operational deployments (Kuwait/Afghanistan and Iraq), than the traditional courses of the Officer Training Continuum."* There are some things that only AT can teach.

Well planned AT is all about mind control and keeping fears at bay as participants keep focused on the task in hand until task completion. In this way they confront and overcome their fears thereby expanding their comfort zone and becoming more confident as officers or soldiers. Confronting the unexpected and dealing with it professionally builds resilience. AT complements military training.

Many an Army AT practitioner has commented that a particular AT activity undertaken sometimes decades earlier was the highlight of their time at the RMC or even their time in Army. Most would assert that challenging AT makes better leaders and, as a consequence, benefits those junior leaders and soldiers under their command. AT can also be used by a commander as a training tool to address underlying problems such as team disharmony and mental health and, if well-planned, can significantly solve identified problems and in addition, aid morale and retention.

For AT to be effective, it does not need to be a 'world-beating' event. Some very well planned one-day activities such as the Mt Buffalo abseil or the no-notice one day AT activity mentioned earlier in this article can have positive life-changing impacts. The key point is that AT should stretch participants physically and mentally in an environment comprising positives (challenge, motivation and learning growth) and negatives (risk, fear, hardship and uncertainty). The focus of AT is on developing ADF members. It must be tailored to the group, have clear objectives, be well-planned and be reviewed on completion turning lessons identified into lessons learnt.

The Bridges Company experiment where not-yet-suitable applicants—all teenagers—were inducted into Army, and then undertook an adventure program conducted by Outward Bound and later in some cases training by ATW proved to be highly successful. In my view, the Bridges Company concept has the potential to revolutionize early training of officer cadets at Duntroon. In addition to the very valuable socialization aspects taught by Outward Bound and AT by ATW, the young, educated cadets being IT aware and comfortable with using IT systems are in an ideal position to be taught exercise planning, conduct and post activity reporting, as well as the appreciation, plans and orders formats all in a very relaxed learning environment. Simple IT tools such as templates can be used to mirror ADF training; risk management, data bases covering lessons learnt, injury stats, latest trends and so forth. An established ten step traffic light model can be used to educate cadets on social aspects



such as alcohol, drugs, drink driving, unsafe sex, or speeding while driving. Such a Training by Adventure concept can have huge benefits for new cadets starting their military life at Duntroon.

Key to successful AT is detailed planning in the first place. For Everest success in 1988, perhaps 80% of overall success was determined in the detailed planning and preparation before leaving Australia. In addition, subject matter experts contribute hugely to the success including the safety of AT. Roald Amundsen, mentioned near the start of this article, made the interesting comment after beating Scott to the South Pole: “*Victory awaits him who has everything in order—good luck people call it. Defeat is certain for him who has neglected to take the necessary precautions in time. This is called bad luck!*”

The ADF is very proficient as a training organisation. Operational processes and doctrine, fundamental for success, capitalise on previous learning and provide a sense of control in a known (training) environment very much characterised by routine, standardisation and efficiency where one becomes skilful at applying process. AT complements this training by operating around the world in environments characterised by uncertainty, unfamiliar contexts and situations where normal processes do not work well, or at all. AT better prepares individuals not so much with process (importantly covered under standard ADF training), but with the ability to live with uncertainty and then respond to the unique and unusual challenges it presents. Dealing with the unexpected builds resilience and expands one's comfort zone.

Finally, as Australia has just ended its longest war in Afghanistan, the Army's attention has now turned to home amid growing instability in the Indo-Pacific. Early in July 2021, the Chief of Army (CA) told military units and reporters in Australia's north that there is a lot of change going on. He said: “... we're now focused on our own region and the threats and changes in our environment”. Thoughtful and well-planned AT in our region, involving small Army groups, sub-units, units, joint or combined teams as part of International Engagement, could well contribute to CA's intent, and as mentioned in the first paragraph of this article: “In producing a confident leader, the ethos of the RMC—‘learning promotes strength’—complements the ethos of adventurous training—‘adversity comes with instructions in its hand’. Both inherently acknowledge that the future is unknown, and that actively engaging in preparing for this unknown, better prepares RMC cadets as future leaders.”

**Annex A.** Map 3. Key areas of RMC team-related adventurous training undertaken.

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### Footnotes

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Patrick Cullinan graduated from the RMC Duntroon with a BA (Mil) into the Infantry Corps. After service in the 5<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion and following selection, Patrick became Troop Commander of the Climbing Troop of the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) and after that served with the United Nations in Kashmir. Later, he became OC of the 6 RAR Parachute Company Group (Delta Coy), after which he served with the Commonwealth Training Team in Uganda. After Everest, he was appointed 2IC SASR and on leaving SASR was promoted to lieutenant colonel. A number of SOCOMD appointments followed. Patrick lives in Canberra with his wife Sharon. His email is [patrick.cullinan@yahoo.com.au](mailto:patrick.cullinan@yahoo.com.au).

Mountaineering-wise, Patrick was the first Australian to climb two 8,000 metre peaks (Broad Peak in 1986 and Mt Everest in 1988). With fellow climber Paul Bayne, he broke the world record for the longest survival at the last camp on Everest including Everest's summit, some eight and a half days. This record still stands. Patrick has been awarded the Star of Courage (SC) for a rescue on Broad Peak in 1986 and the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to mountaineering including summiting Mt Everest in 1988, a team effort for the first time undertaken on the Nepalese side without Sherpa support. In November 2013 his book ‘White Sherpas’ was published by Barrallier Books.



Map 3. Key areas of RMC team-related Adventurous Training undertaken

- 1 Canberra region and Snowy Mountains**
- 2 PNG.**
  - 1962 Shaggy Ridge
  - 1972 Wau to Salamaua
  - 1976/77 Kokoda Trail
  - 1989&90 Treks in PNG.
  - Mid 1990's Shaggy Ridge
- 3 New Britain**
  - 1989 Retracing Lark Force
- 4 NZ.**
  - Annual summer mountaineering training and climbs
  - 1981 first AAA grand traverse of Mt. Cook
- 5 Tasman Sea, Australia - Balls Pyramid 1980**
- 6 Himalayas in Nepal (1975 to 1988)**
  - 1975 Kala Pattar, near Mt. Everest
  - 1980 Gauri Shankar (Tseringma) Expedition
  - 1981 Ganesh IV.
  - 1984 Tent Peak, Pisang Peak and Chulu West
  - 1988 Bicentennial Everest Expedition
  - 1989 Kanchenjunga Trek
  - 1991 Kedernath Expedition (India)
  - 1992 Rongbuk
  - 1993 Dhaulagiri
  - 1994 Kwandge Ri
  - 1995 Kusum Kanguru
  - 1997 Island Peak
  - 1997 Dhaulagiri and Tukucho
  - 2000 Cho Oyu Expedition
  - 2007 Shivling Expedition (India)
- 7 Crossing Australian deserts**
  - 1976-77 Canning Stock Route
  - 1977-78 Ex Indian Pacific
  - 1981-82 Ex Tenacious Trek
- 8 Pakistan**
  - 1986 Broad Peak Expedition
  - 1996 Ghondogoro Expedition
  - 2007 Spantik Expedition
- 9 Alaska**
  - 1982 Mt. McKinley Expedition
  - 1987 Mt. McKinley Expedition
  - 1992 Mt. McKinley Expedition
  - 1997 Mt. McKinley Expedition
- 10 Tibet**
  - 1999 Shishapangma
  - 2001 Centennial Everest Expedition
- 11 Argentina**
  - 1989-90 Aconcagua Expedition
  - 1997 Aconcagua Expedition
- 12 USA**
  - 1990, and 1993 to 1997 Yosemite snowtraining
- 13 Heard Island, sub-Antarctica, Australia**
  - 1999 Mawson Peak
- 14 East Africa**
  - 1991 Kilimanjaro, Tanzania & Mt. Kenya
  - 1995 Mt. Kenya, in Kenya
- 15 Indonesia**
  - 1990 Puncak Jayawijaya
- 16 Russia and regions**
  - 1994 Mt Elbrus, Russia
  - 1996 Ex High Suworov, Tajikistan
  - 1998 Ex Prezhevsky, Kyrgyzstan



## Vale a Prodigal Son: Jim (J.F.) Truscott (1977)

**Rick (Min) (R.C.) Moor (1976) and  
Matt (M.D.) Rogerson (Dec 1991)**

*{For many years, the Newsletter featured a column titled "The Prodigal Son", recounting the exploits of a graduate who marched the road less travelled. In this edition, Min Moor and Matt Rogerson pay tribute to their friend Jim Truscott, who was arguably the College's greatest adventurer. Ed}*



Jim Truscott, OAM passed away suddenly on 28 April 2021. At the time of his death Jim was on an unsupported push bike tour of the Mungo Loop with two close friends. They were following the footsteps of the Burke and Wills expedition and were approximately 80 km north of Balranald nearing the end of their first day's ride when Jim collapsed. They'd had a great day, perfect autumn conditions, much friendly banter, enjoying life to the full far from the madding crowd. Jim passed as he lived—with his boots on, riding into the setting sun, on an adventure.

Jim was well known for his drive, enthusiasm, and dogged determination. He was in many ways a renaissance man—a very professional but unconventional soldier; intrepid and daring adventurer; somewhat reluctant engineer; amateur but respected historian and author; red wine connoisseur; highly successful businessman; and committed community member; but above all son, brother, husband, father, grandfather and friend.

Jim first served in the Marist Brothers Ashgrove school cadet unit and then the Queensland University Regiment before entering the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1975 and joining III Class. He graduated in 1977 and was awarded a BE (Hons) in 1978 (he later completed a BA out of interest). Jim subsequently served as a Troop Commander in 1 Field Squadron of the 1<sup>st</sup> Field Engineer Regiment and as an observer with the Commonwealth Monitoring Force in Rhodesia attached to a mixed-race field propaganda unit before completing SAS selection and serving as the Operations Officer in 3 SAS Squadron. He, along with his Officer Commanding, will be long remembered for organising and overseeing "Exercise Biltong Watcher", an epic in the Northern Territory that even included airstrikes by B52s operating from Guam. Jim subsequently served as the Garrison Engineer in Newcastle and on the Operations Staff in Field Force Command, Army Headquarters and Headquarters Special Forces. Following these postings, he vowed to never again serve in the 'Big Army' or as a 'Staff Wally'.

He achieved legendary status as the Officer Commanding 2 Commando Company with his many innovative and realistic exercises often involving short notice call out. He also served in the Pilbara Regiment as a Surveillance Squadron Commander then in the Northern Territory as a Civil Affairs Officer before returning to SASR as the Operations Officer. It was during this last posting that his ingenuity, knowledge, and experience came to the fore as he led the regimental planning team for the deployment to the Middle East to enforce the no-fly zone, the initial entry by the ADF into East Timor, and the counter terrorist support to the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

But above all Jim's core professional interest lay in special warfare. He starred on the Special Warfare Course, taught himself 'jungle' Indonesian and studied in detail the activities of the Services Reconnaissance Department (SRD) during the Second World War. He was a known "Friend of Z" and had befriended, supported and interviewed many of the original operatives. He had also conducted a long distance sea kayak trip from Singapore through the Indonesian archipelago tracing the route of the escaping OP RIMAU party, spent two months walking through the jungles of Borneo retracing the steps of the OP SEMUT operatives and interviewing the few surviving guerrillas and their families and had recently travelled to East Timor to research a battle field guide covering the activities of the Independent Companies and SRD in World War 2, TNI and Falantil during the Independence War and finally INTERFET and UNTAET post-1999.

As a special forces officer, Jim was one of the few truly unconventional thinkers, and he pushed and prodded SASR and commandos toward more advanced capabilities, often with complete disregard for his own career. A subordinate at the time recounts that it was always a joy and terror to be a junior officer within his command or earshot.

Jim was also a passionate, committed, and enthusiastic mountaineer, rock climber and Nordic skier. As a cadet at Duntroon, he was a founding member of the RMC Mountaineering Club, instrumental in the re-establishment of the Army Alpine Association (AAA) and the instigator of the famous RMC August Epic. He was a fierce and dedicated climber and mountaineer his entire life. Anyone who knew Jim will have a favourite tale of his eccentricities, his at-times manic drive and his fiery intellect, his endless energy, great projects and causes, and his legendary wordsmithing. He was always driving hard, whether rustling up a team to tackle Carstensz Pyramid; signing off on C130 flights for Everest logistics or hitting up Big Ben Pies to sponsor an expedition to the remote volcano of the same name.

Jim's list of achievements is lengthy. As a mountaineer and climber, he first headed to the Southern Alps of New Zealand in December 1974. He then spent many summers in the 70's and early 80's in the Southern Alps. While recovering from a major injury incurred solo climbing near Majors Creek, Jim made an early ascent of Ball's Pyramid, this in turn after a disastrous and near-death experience attempting to sail to the remote sea stack. In 1981 he survived an avalanche at Camp 2 on Ganesh IV (7,102m) in Nepal. Tragically, Dave (D.G.) Sloane (1979) was not so lucky and was swept to his death. Jim was a member of the successful expedition to Broad Peak (8,047m) in Pakistan in 1986, at that stage only the second 8,000m peak climbed by an Australian team. Jim was also a member of the successful 1988 Australian Bicentennial Everest Expedition, the second ascent of the mountain by an Australian team and the only ascent of the mountain accomplished without local high-altitude porters. He was awarded an Order of Australia Medal and Chief of the Defence Force Commendation for his organising efforts and participation in this activity. Subsequently, he climbed Aconcagua in Argentina (the highest mountain in the Americas) in 1990, Carstensz Pyramid in Irian Jaya (the highest mountain in South East Asia) in 1991, and then Nanda Devi East on a multi-national expedition with the Indian Army in 1996.

He was also a voracious rock climber, putting up hundreds of new rock-climbing routes wherever he was based: Kangaroo Point and Frog Buttress in south east Queensland;

the Sydney Sea Cliffs and the Blue Mountains in New South Wales; Arapiles, Mt Buffalo and the Grampians in Victoria; the remote Western Australia northwest coast; the Perth Hills; and his beloved Southwest. Generations of future climbers will puzzle at his climb names and wonder at his route selection and bolting practices. Jim knew a quality route when he saw it, but didn't mind putting up the odd scrappy climb—one climbing partner recalls getting told to bring a shovel when joining him on one of his Perth Hills new routing adventures. Many a climbing partner will recall that it was always prudent to double-check Jim's belay stances and to be wary of his pick of climbs, as the call "your lead" would oft come at an inopportune moment. They will also recall many a session in the Dugandan, Natimuk and Mt Vic pubs contemplating their failures, celebrating their successes and building Dutch courage for future ventures.

In the 70's, 80's and early 90's Jim was also a committed and competitive Nordic skier. He organised and competed in many Inter-Service events, representing Army on numerous occasions and finishing in the top 30 in NSW state championships several times in the 1980's. On one occasion he, along with a friend, skied from Kiandra to Mt Kosciuszko in 18 hours. In 1989 he also led a ski mountaineering trip to Mt Shasta in California. Jim had, in addition to tracing the route of the OP RIMAU operatives, conducted several remote sea kayak trips including to the Monte Bello Islands and two attempts to cross the Torres Strait. He also rafted the Franklin in Tasmania before it became popular.

Immediately following the Sydney Olympics, Jim left the Army and entered business as a crisis management consultant, first with a British multi-national company, before setting up his own firm 'Truscott Crisis Leaders'. After a lean start Jim through sheer determination and exceptionally hard work established a very successful consultancy with a clientele that included many of the world's leading multi-national companies. His straightforward and sometimes abrupt style was not everyone's cup of tea but his advice and training were highly valued by many mining and off shore oil and gas companies operating in the remote corners of the world. Jim was known to cover 10 countries in seven days, conduct day trips to Singapore and travel to Europe for one day jobs. His ideas, advice, guidance and training significantly enhanced the emergency response capabilities and safety of many workplaces around the globe.

Jim was a prolific writer. A cursory inspection of professional journals and newsletters will feature Jim Truscott. Jim's thoughts on Special Operations published under his nom-de-guerre 'Taipan' and his accounts of his personal adventures informed and inspired many. He was also a prolific reviewer and authored several books including his autobiography *Snakes in the Jungle—Special Operations in War and Business*, an account of OP SEMUT titled *Voices from Borneo—The Japanese War*, and a business sales guide titled *Who Dares Sell, Wins—Mastering True Sales in Management*. At the time of his death, he was finalising a detailed *Battlefield Guide of East Timor*. His writing was always erudite, often lengthy and sometimes unprintable. As you considered his ideas and read of his adventures, as you listened to his proposals and stories, you were sometimes stunned by his audacity, but more often left enriched by his grasp of history, military capabilities, mountain geography and business practices, giddy in the wake of his often-preposterous ideas and actions, and unsettled by how boring your own mind and life appeared next to his.

Following the recent sale of his business Jim qualified as a Surf Life Saver and served as a hose man in the Darlington Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade. He was also actively working with the 2/2nd Commando Company Association in an attempt to have the unit awarded a Unit Citation for Gallantry for their actions as an Independent Company in Timor in 1942 and the HMAS Armidale Association on a project to locate the wreck.

Above all, Jim was a family man, devoted to his wife, children, and grandchildren. He was a man to follow and learn from, both in his words and deeds. You had to be quick to keep up and follow his thinking, but he suffered fools better than he made out, and we are all the better for his friendship and life. His passing not only brings a great sadness to his family and close friends but leaves an enormous gap for many across military, veteran, business, and adventure communities.

Vale Jim Truscott, gone but not forgotten.



## Sport – 1979-82

**Allan A. Murray (1982)**

During my time at Duntroon, one of the criteria for success was to be physically fit, in order to keep up with the soldiers, and to a degree, be proficient at sports. In its various forms, sport was a regular and popular component of the College timetable each week.

Having played competition cricket throughout high school, I was attracted to playing cricket as a Summer sport in early 1979. After four games I realised I had better things to do all-afternoon on Saturdays in the Summer. I switched to sailing leaving behind forever the thwack of leather on willow. I was however, issued a very stylish RMC Cricket Club cap, which I have to this day. Those in my Class who continued, and excelled, with cricket included Roger Gray, Tony McLeod and Steve Thompson. I remained a member of the Sailing Club for the next three years and rarely set foot in a sailing boat, but I really enjoyed my Saturday afternoons in the Summer. I was a minnow compared to two contemporaries—Mick Jones and Mark Nicholas—who went on to significant achievements in sailing.

The next form of sport I was introduced to was via the Inter-Company Sports Competition for the Lord Forster Cup. There were six Inter-Company sports—athletics, hockey, rugby, soccer, aussie rules and swimming.





*Early 1980. Steve Thompson (batting) and Tony McLeod (1st slip) take their passion for cricket to Majura Range with Jeremy Logan and me the other fielders. Source: ©The Family Murray Trust*

First up was the Swimming Carnival. For someone in Kokoda, there was an intimate link between the Swimming Carnival, the Kokoda Company Banner and Fourthies displaying company spirit. On the morning of my first carnival—Saturday 10 February 1979—the Kokoda Company Fourthies paraded outside accommodation block A60 carrying, and protecting, the Company Banner. My classmates closest to the Banner wore white gloves as we marched to the buses.

Attending the Swimming Carnival at the Dickson Pool was the first time I went anywhere near Civic as a Fourthie. I was not a competitive swimmer, so I attended as a spectator. On the sidelines of the carnival, I stood in the Kokoda Company group to cheer on the small number of competitors striving to win the J. L. Davies Cup. For four years, the stars for Kokoda Company from my Class were Paul Harris, Jeremy Logan, Pete Morris (backstroke) and Peter Singh.

With most cadets not swimming, the real interest was the push and shove outside of the pool, with the Fourthies of other companies attempting to snatch the Kokoda Company Banner or to throw it into the pool, which the Kokoda Company Fourthies had to prevent. This ritual occurred for the next three years.

The Swimming Carnival included a Staff Event. In February 1980, in a single act, one of our Exchange Officers announced himself as outrageously British. He entered the Staff Event wearing a bowler hat and carrying a large black umbrella.

The end of the carnival was inevitably raucous. There was something about large bodies of water and Staff Cadets. Fourthies were encouraged to target the Company Sergeant Major for a dunking in the pool, clothes and all, as an end of event celebration. In 1979, we obliged and Company Sergeant Major, Peter Lambert, went home wet. It was traditional for the recipient of these 'bishes' to take it with good grace and humour. They knew it was coming. The intent, normally, was to do no harm.

Next up was the Inter-Company Athletics Carnival, competing for the RAAOC Cup. In 1979, fellow Fourthie, Ash Gunder, made a big thing about his hurdling capability; so, he represented the company in the 110-metre hurdles. He found the hurdles higher than expected. As the race progressed at Bruce Stadium, Ash tired and he ducked under the last two hurdles. He earned himself the nickname 'Under Gunder' as a result. Kokoda Company came third to Long Tan Company in 1979 and Andrew 'Arab' MacInnes won the Silver Boomerang. Classmate, Paul Symon, was the champion 1,500-metre runner. He won the race for the next three years for Kokoda Company.



*1980. Major T. Moody, the British Army Exchange Officer in the Staff Event at the Swimming Carnival. Source: ©The Family Murray Trust*

By March 1981, many in my Class were shining at the Athletics Carnival. Gav Bourke was legendary in the pole vault, Mark Nicholas in the High Jump, Ian 'Jock' Campbell in the 800-metre and Grant Dibden in the 400-metre.

Soon we were into Winter Sports. I loved playing soccer (now known as football), having played from the age of five with local clubs and school teams. Soccer became my main sporting outlet at the College. I played with the 1st and 2nd XI squad for my entire time; played for four years in the RMC team selected to play against Hawkesbury Agricultural College in the annual sporting weekend held alternatively at Duntroon and Hawkesbury; and played for the Kokoda Company soccer team in the Inter-Company sports.

It was on the soccer field that I was regularly reminded that I was a 'Cordy' by the local Canberrans.

My first RMC Soccer Club trials and Club Day was on Sunday 18 March 1979; I met Arab, the Silver Boomerang winner. He was in his third year (II Class) of a five-year plan at the College. He stood out, being confident, articulate and big physically. He quickly advised to me that he was the striker in the 1st XI. In the trial game, where IV Class played against a composite 1st and 2nd XI team, I soon learned that Arab was fast, aggressive and good at heading the ball. He sped past me several times in the midfield.

Neil 'Rocky' Littlewood and I were the only Fourthies selected as members of the 1st and 2nd XI squad who went on to play regularly in the 1st XI in 1979. We played on Sundays in the 2nd Division of the ACT Football League, the top League in Canberra. Each Division had a 1st and Reserves competition. I was playing regularly with the 2nd XI and being a 'sub' for the 1st XI. After six weeks, I played my first full game for the 1st XI. The Canberra Times wrote: "*At Duntroon the powerful, fast running RMC ran Belconnen into the ground*".

It was the responsibility of the more junior cadets in the team to write a 'match report' for the weekly RMC Soccer Club Newsletter. Throughout 1979, Rocky and I shared these duties for the 1st XI. I really enjoyed putting pen to paper to record the story of the team.

Arab was also the tactician of the team. He had memories of most of the key players from all the clubs we were to play against and was not shy at offering the coach, and his team members, tips and insights for dealing with these players on the field. For all of his tactical advice, his own style was straight forward. He loved to dominate in the air at corners and free kick situations in front of goals. With his speed, he scored run away goals after chasing down the long ball and muscling past opposition defenders. He had a solid boot on him and could put the ball away. This is how he scored most of his goals and he did score a lot of them.

Sport was one of the opportunities to break down the Class barriers. In 1979 I played soccer with my Platoon Sergeant, Peter Hanlon, and we developed a good, friendly relationship.

By the end of July, the opportunity for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI to reach the finals had passed and the strategy became, to quote the coach, Captain Trevor Lloyd, ... 'to get the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI into the finals'. The 2<sup>nd</sup> XI finished third on the ladder and was then beaten in the semi-finals match, which unfortunately clashed with the August leave period. I flew back from the Gold Coast to play in the match.

The soccer squad to represent the College travelled to Hawkesbury over the weekend 14-16 September. Rocky Littlewood and I were the only Fourthies in the squad. Of the 14 players, Arab played with a broken hand and by half-time we had lost Private I. Hammond through a leg injury, my Platoon Sergeant, Peter Hanlon, through an ankle injury and II Class cadet, Ian Rankin, with a knee injury. It was a tough match, but we won 5-0 and collected the silver plate for another year. The social activities on Friday night and Saturday night were also great. I received a Sporting Half-Colour for soccer in 1979.

After the 1980 soccer trials and Club Day on 22 March, I began playing with Andy Monro and Kon Iliadis, starting lifelong friendships. We again played in the ACT Football League's 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. The 1<sup>st</sup> XI had a new coach, Major Bob Bradford, of the Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps. We were together for the next three years and he was to be a big influence on my Corps selection in 1982. Arab was the team captain. Our first game with the new coach was a 3-1 victory but the rest of the season was a struggle. It became a building year as we tried new combinations and approaches.

This year also kicked off via the *RMC Soccer Club Newsletter* an ongoing, and friendly, rivalry between me and Rocky which lasted for three years. Rocky wrote of the match against Canberra North on 30 March: *"Teamwork was dominating play with passes being used instead of running. Staff Cadet A. Murray was quite pleased with this as he did not have to run. Yet the question remains ... Has anyone ever seen a sweat on Staff Cadet A. Murray during a game?"*

I would respond by highlighting the number of missed tackles and shots wide of goal by 'our small blonde haired half-back' that cost us dearly. Rocky nicknamed me 'Slug' and taking every opportunity to use the nickname, wrote in the Soccer Report in the 1980 *RMC Journal*: *"Even 'Slug' Murray was seen to break out in a sweat and quick jog."*

On 15 June, the day after the Queen's Birthday Ball, we played ANU, understandably losing 4-1. On 6 July, we played ANU again for a 0-0 draw. It highlighted the impact of other College activities upon our sporting teams.

For our penultimate game against Goulburn Workers on 3 August, the Commandant, Major-General Morrison watched the game. After a long drought, we won 3-1. I wrote the match report: *"... perhaps the best comment of the day came from our small blonde haired half-back ... 'I'm amazed'. And so was everybody else when he scored our second goal."*

At last, the 1<sup>st</sup> XI appeared to have found a winning combination. Were we set for bigger and better things in 1981?

The soccer season each year was an ongoing sequence of playing and injury. As a result, I learned of the Physio Section of the Duntroon Hospital. Physio was run by a lady known to all as 'Madame'. She spoke with a strong French accent and always had classical music playing in the background of the handful of liniment oil smelling rooms that comprised the

Physio. I visited Physio quite a few times in my early years at the College, primarily for soccer injuries to my feet and ankles.

I was appointed the Treasurer of the RMC Soccer Club in December 1980 and held the appointment for the 1981 season. The RMC Soccer Newsletter introduced me to the Club as follows: *"Al was known at school as a scrag, villain and cad, and that was only by those that liked him. Since taking over as Treasurer last December, Al has been making some shrewd investments with the club's money, and I only hope he does as well at the Queanbeyan Leagues Club pokies this week as he did last week."*

All completely made up by the Editor, classmate David Hurrell, who was one of the legends from the teams participating in the Churches League competition. Others from Romani Company who were stalwarts in the often-brutal Churches League were Tim Cook, Martyn Hagan, Murray 'Nozzle' Nelson and Mark Scanlon.

In 1981, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI continued to play in the ACT Football League's 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. The 1<sup>st</sup> XI had a great start to the season but after some long-term player injuries, we began to slide down the ladder. The season ended with the 1<sup>st</sup> XI near the bottom of the table. It was not the send-off we had hoped for Arab after his five years in the 1<sup>st</sup> XI. We needed to change something.

With three other II Class – Rocky Littlewood, Panot (from Thailand) and Steve 'Bogger' McFarlane, I travelled again to Hawkesbury from 18-20 September 1981. When the soccer kicked off it was 30°C. RMC was 3-0 up in 15 minutes; the eventual score was 4-1 to RMC. Once again, we enjoyed the night, the free-flowing spirits, and the friendliness of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College hosts.

As an adjunct to my friendly rivalry with Rocky Littlewood, in March 1982, I challenged him to run against me in the B Grade 200-metres at the Inter-Company Athletics Carnival. We drew adjoining lanes. At the 120-metre mark, we were shoulder-to-shoulder, literally. As the finish line neared, I gave him a solid bump, soccer style, which threw him off-balance. I finished half-a-metre in front of him to claim 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> place. Gallipoli Company won the RAAOC Cup in 1982 and the trophy was collected by the team captain, and future RAAOC Officer, Grant Dibden.

Two significant changes were made in 1982—the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI moved to the First Division of the Canberra League and now played on Saturday (which was great for my Sunday down-hill skiing) and the 1<sup>st</sup> XI started to wear red shorts; at my suggestion (and with the approval of the Commandant's wife). This was unique among the College sporting teams at the time.



1982. 1<sup>st</sup> XI on Grand Final day. Coach, Major Bob Bradford, at top left. Source: ©The Family Murray Trust



The team finished second in the minor premiership and was the only Winter sports team at the College to win a grand final in 1982; winning the Canberra League Cup against the Harcourt Hotspurs on 25 September. Off a set-play, I set up an easy goal for Andy Monro in the second half to push RMC to a comfortable 3-1 victory.

In mid-September, once again on a very hot day, the RMC soccer team defeated Hawkesbury at the Duntroon ovals. At years' end, I was awarded another Sporting Half-Colour and Rocky Littlewood was awarded a Full-Colour.

In the remainder of the Inter-Company Sports Competitions, my focus was on the soccer, but I also played aussie rules. Each company played every other company in the Inter-company Soccer Competition for the R.F. Oakes Trophy. Playing five matches was gruelling over a short period. I was always one of the main players in the Kokoda Company team. As a result, I was targeted by the rugby player converts in the other teams. The competition winner was normally the company with the most players from the 1st and 2nd XI. Doing well relied heavily upon stopping the rugby player converts in the team from unknowingly committing fouls (and being sent off) and having a good goalkeeper. I captained the Kokoda Company team in the 1982 competition, the last soccer I played at the College. These were the halcyon days of sport for me.



*October 1982. Scoring for Kokoda Company from the penalty spot against Alamein Company. Source: ©The Family Murray Trust*

I briefly played aussie rules for my High School in 1978 so was happy to run off the bench for the Inter-Company Aussie Rules Competition, competing for the Reynolds Gymkhana Cup. I did this for four years. Because of the poor overall standard of the teams, the games were very physical, with the ball eternally on the ground. Classmate Paul Harris proved himself to be a dynamo in these situations, frequently winning the ball and breaking away with it.

I was not involved in the Inter-company Hockey (competing for the 1919 Cup). Jeremy Logan, Damien Negus, Craig Orme and Richard Pye were team regulars. In high school, I was never exposed to rugby union; had not even seen a game played. At the College, rugby was the blue-ribbon sport and considered 'the closest thing to war' and 'the game they played in heaven'. Rugby (competing for the Pitt Cup) was the most anticipated of the inter-company sports. I never played and rarely watched. What I did see was a lot of 'psyching up' for the game followed by some very average rugby. They were brutal affairs however, with many cadets sustaining injuries. I enjoyed watching the soccer converts 'putting in' for the company.

There were other less formalised sports at the College, for example down-hill skiing. One sporting club I would like to single out is the Mountaineering Club and in particular a

prominent member from 1976 to 1980, Rick Butler. Rick had a big impact upon me as my Section Commander in 1979. He was not a noted sportsman in the formal sense but was passionate about mountaineering and was incredibly fit. He was a very skilled climber with experience of difficult climbs in Australia, Nepal and New Zealand. Tragically, Rick was killed pursuing his passion. While participating in an advanced ice-climbing course in the Mount Aspiring region of New Zealand, he was struck by a falling rock on 28 December 1981. As the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this incident approaches, I dedicate this article to his memory.



*1979. Kokoda Company v Kapyong Company in the aussie rules. Me (centre) with Paul Harris behind. Source: 1979 RMC Journal*

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Brigadier Allan Murray entered Duntroon in January 1979 and graduated into the Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps in 1982. He returned to Duntroon to play sport and instruct between 1989-92. Leaving the Australian Regular Army in 2001 as a Lieutenant Colonel, he continued to serve in the Army Reserve, commanding 8<sup>th</sup> CSS Battalion and 8th Brigade. In 2009, he was awarded the Conspicuous Service Medal for his work as Assistant Commander 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. He retired from the Army on 26 January 2019. This is his eighth contribution to the Newsletter. The article is an extract from his book Staff Cadet – Bishing, Bogging and Bastardisation at Duntroon available in paperback and e-book from Amazon.

## From the Commanding Officer

**Lieutenant Colonel Tracy (T.M.) Allison  
(Dec 2003)**

2021 has been a year of significant change at Duntroon. The implementation of the new Full Time Officer Commissioning Program curriculum, designed and developed over the past 12–18 months, is occurring this year. COVID-19 is once again having a significant impact on the delivery of training, and the restructure and reorganisation of the Royal Military College of Australia has changed the command and control arrangements of the Royal Military College, Duntroon.

### *New Curriculum*

An extensive review of the training across Army's Full Time ab-initio officer training was undertaken in 2019 and the curriculum benchmarked against the officer training programs of our allies and partners at Sandhurst, West Point, Kingston, and Saint-Cyr. Unfortunately, COVID-19 arrived before my predecessor Lieutenant Colonel Rob (R.J.) Ryan (Jun 2002) and the Deputy Chief Instructor Major John (J.R.)

Crockett (Dec 2006) had the opportunity to visit Waiouru, but we remain engaged with our closest ally New Zealand through our mutual exchange instructors. The purpose of the curriculum review and subsequent re-design was to reduce course density, in order to enhance the staff cadet's ability to retain information and learn from failure in a reduced consequence environment. The changes to the Full Time Officer Commissioning Program curriculum that followed are the most extensive made at Duntroon in 35 years. The redesigned curriculum is based on a training model that focuses on learning culture. Training is delivered through evidence based contemporary educational approaches such as scaffolding and interleaved learning. In a learner-centred culture, staff cadets are empowered to take ownership of their own learning with a focus on learning rather than assessment, and Instructors are coaches and mentors. Employing this approach in the past six months has seen an increase in the first-time pass rate of 15–20%, whilst maintaining Duntroon's commitment to excellence. The redesigned curriculum has an enhanced focus on character, leadership, and ethics. The thinking behind this is that, while we don't know how our Army will fight in the future, we know that we will always need the will to win and ethical leaders of character that have the ability to adapt rapidly to whatever is required of them. This is how we contribute to a Future Ready Army.

#### *COVID-19*

COVID-19 has continued to have a significant impact on training at the College. In the first session of 2021, II Class were required to quarantine for 14 days on their return from Puckapunyal. Due to some supply issues with hot boxes this saw the class eating a variety of curry and rice and rice and curry for seven days before the Drill Wing Sergeant Major was alerted to the problem. The Mid-Year Graduation saw the graduation of 'COVID-19 Class' who spent 126 days at Majura in III Class and did not exercise outside of Majura until their I Class Complex Operations exercise that was held in the township of Goulburn. The extra time at Camp Blake resulted in the storming, norming and forming of a very cohesive group, who will no doubt carry the close bond and deep friendships they formed for a lifetime.

In Canberra, we were extremely fortunate to have more than a year without local transmission of COVID-19; however, this ended in mid-August and Canberra is in lockdown at the time of writing. Due to the foresight and excellent work of the Instructional Staff, led by the Deputy Chief Instructor, we were able to make changes to the program and commenced online learning within 24 hours of the lockdown with the staff cadets confined to their company buildings and all instruction delivered remotely. This created an unforeseen opportunity for the staff cadets to demonstrate their creativity and problem-solving abilities and the Instructors have been very impressed with their work. With the concurrence of ACT Health, all classes are now in the field at Majura. Range space is tight, but with the support of the ADFA officer cadets as role players, we are confident that we will be able to continue to deliver high quality training outcomes for our Army, despite the impact of COVID-19.

#### *Restructure and Reorganisation of the Royal Military College of Australia.*

The Headquarters of the Royal Military College of Australia has been restructured and reorganised. The role of the Director of Military Art has increased in scope to oversee

training analysis and design across the formation. As such, the Commanding Officers of the Royal Military College, Duntroon and the Land Warfare Centre now report directly to the Commandant of the Royal Military College of Australia and the Commanding Officer of the 1<sup>st</sup> Recruit Training Battalion will also do so from January 2022.

So far, 2021 has been a year of unexpected opportunities and we look forward to the challenges that the remainder of the year will undoubtedly bring before we celebrate the completion of training for the 139<sup>th</sup> Graduating Class of the Royal Military College – Duntroon.

## **From the President, Duntroon Society**

**Chris (C.G.) Appleton (1978)**

For the first time in 18 months, I had the opportunity in June 2021 to present the Duntroon Society award in person. The improvement in COVID situation at that time allowed for the conduct of a Prizes and Awards ceremony, and more importantly, for families to attend the Graduation parade.

Every class claims its own character, but bushfires and COVID have given the 138<sup>th</sup> Class a particular bond, starting with 127 days straight at Camp Blake at Majura Field Firing Range. They know a bit about resilience and mateship. Congratulations to Hamish Gleeson (who received the Society's award) and his classmates, some of whom were in the field on Exercise TALISMAN SABRE in the month following graduation.

The demand for a good quality silk RMC tie continues to be strong. They can be purchased online at [www.dunsoc.com/shop/rmc-silk-tie](http://www.dunsoc.com/shop/rmc-silk-tie) for \$75. Plans are underway to acquire a silk scarf in the RMC colours for the College's many women graduates. If you are interested in ordering one (for about the same price as the tie) when available, please let me know by email.

As always, if you wish to discuss any matter concerning the Society, please contact me at [central@dunsoc.com](mailto:central@dunsoc.com).



*Hamish Gleeson – the June 2021 recipient of the Duntroon Society Prize. Photo with permission of RMC.*



## New Members

Since the last Newsletter, 19 new members have joined the Society; their names are listed below. Please continue to reach out to mates past and present to invite them to join us in the Society at [www.dunsoc.com/join](http://www.dunsoc.com/join). New members are:

Alasdair Barnes (Jun 2021)  
Ron Bates (OTU 4/67)  
Jon Belmonte Salvation Army (Associate membership)  
Tait Bensemann (Jun 2021)  
Patrick Brennan (Jun 2021)  
Philip Cooper (1967)  
Luke Dekkers (Jun 2021)  
Hugh Emmett (Dec 2020)  
Ryan Fuery (Dec 2020)  
Mona Goldsmith (nee Moussa) (Dec 1992)  
Jonathon Hibbert (Jun 2014)  
Jacob Klap NZ (Jun 2021)  
Anton Lubbers (Jun 2021)  
Darin Macey (Dec 2002)  
Kevin Maloney (OTU 4/70)  
Jonathan McGuigan (OCS Dec 1975)  
Kyle Osborne (Jun 2021)  
James Stuart (Dec 1987)  
Dan Wilson (1/94 RRES Jul 94)  
Steven Woods (Dec 1991)

## From the OTU Association

### Frank Miller (OTU 4/67)



In the last edition, mention was made of the National reunion, scheduled for October of 2020, being deferred for twelve months due to the Corona virus. Such has been the situation this year that it has again been put off for another twelve months.

Regular State Chapter luncheons and some other functions have, by and large, returned to normal—sporadic lockdowns permitting.

COVID also restricted the ANZAC Day marches in most capital cities with Scheyvillians marching as a unit in only Brisbane, Adelaide and the ACT.

To date there has been no decision made by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service on the leasing of the Scheyville site. The Association is keen to ensure the current generous access permitted, along with the cairn commemorating the eight graduates who made the ultimate sacrifice in the Vietnam War and the signage throughout the area, are all maintained.

Unlike the RMC or the OCS, the range in age for Association members is much narrower as the unit was only operational for just over seven years. Accordingly, attention is being paid to the ultimate winding up—be it however long down the track from now.

Membership numbers stayed at their highest level since the 1990s, exactly equalling last year's figure. Similarly, the Association remains in good financial shape.

Another fine edition of *The Scheyvillian* was issued earlier in the year. It featured coverage of Brigadier Richard (Dick) Flint AM, former OTU Chief Instructor, who died in March. Many other articles of interest to Scheyvillians and the broader defence fraternity were also included.

Frank Miller Chairman, OTU Association.

## From the Branches

### Australian Capital Territory

#### Branch Office Holders

Convenor: Chris (C.G.) Appleton (1978)  
Secretary: Jason (J.J.) Hedges (1992)  
Treasurer: Mike (M.J.) Ryan (1980)  
Members: Merrie Hepworth (WRAAC OCS 1967); Mike (M.J.) Ford (1957); Stuart (S.B.) Althaus (OCS Jun 1982)

The ACT Branch will hold a Luncheon in Duntroon House on 27 October 2021, commencing at midday. His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley, AC, DSC will be presented the medallion of a Fellow of the Society at the luncheon. Email invitations will be sent to ACT Branch members in September.

### New South Wales

#### Branch Office Holders

Convenor: Bob (R.L.) Guest (OCS Dec 1959).  
Secretary: Matt (M.D.) Jones (1989);  
[mattjones@socialalchemy.com.au](mailto:mattjones@socialalchemy.com.au); 0438 007 770.  
Treasurer: Ian (I.R.) Taylor (1965);  
[ita01@ozemail.com.au](mailto:ita01@ozemail.com.au); 0407 539 441.

#### 2021 Functions

The NSW Branch managed to hold four of their monthly lunches from February through June, before having to cancel the July and August lunches due to the COVID lockdown. The June lunch held to coincide with the Graduation week was a mixed function with four ladies attending. A regular feature of each of the lunches is a short presentation of a significant military event, on the theme 'this month in history', given by Peter Sweeny. For the April lunch, Peter gave a superb presentation on the ANZAC landings which encapsulated events of the first day. All attending agreed it was by far one of the best presentations they have had on this subject. At the moment, lunch meetings are suspended but will resume with gusto at the earliest opportunity.

A photo from the June lunch is below.



Left to right: Stewart Grant (OCTU), Ahmad Mostafa (OCS 1978), David (D.A.) Dufall (OCS Dec 1963), Don (D.R.) Gillies (1959), Matt Jones (1989), Wayne Brown (OTU 4/72). Foreground: Sandy Guest and Bob Guest (OCS 1959).

#### Monthly Lunch—The Army Officers' Lunch

Duntroon Society members meet other officers at the Imperial Service Club, now incorporated in the Royal Automobile Club at Circular Quay. They normally meet on the second Friday of each month at 1200h for 1300h and have an excellent two course lunch including wines for \$70 per

head. Future lunches are planned for 10 September, 8 October, 2 November (Melbourne Cup Luncheon), 12 November, and 10 December (Mixed Function). These lunches are known as the Army Officers' Lunch and it is hoped that more Duntroon Society members could join their fellow officers on these monthly occasions. Out-of-state visitors are most welcome but should advise office holders or the Club (02 8273 2320) of their intention to attend.

## New Zealand

### *Branch Office Holders*

Patron: Major General Robin (R.G.) Williams (1952).

Auckland Sub-branch Convenor: Lieutenant Colonel Barry (B.D.) Dreyer (1965).

Wellington Sub-branch Convenor: Brigadier Ian (I.J.) Duthie (1962).

### *Auckland Sub-branch*

As a result of short local lockdowns at the turn of the first and second quarters, the Auckland Sub-branch has deferred activities until mid-August.

Around 35 members and partners had lunch at the Ranfurly Veterans' Home at our mid-year function. The date available was 18 August, Vietnam Veterans' Day.

Prior to lunch a short Memorial Service for the Fallen was held in the Memorial Foyer of the historic Ranfurly building. The Foyer contains a large memorial wall for those lost in the Sudan and South African wars, so it is an appropriate spot.

The Society wreath will be laid by Alva Stanley and Collen Brooker. Alva is the widow of Morrie Stanley (MBE (1953), the Forward Observer with D Company 6 RAR and Colleen is the widow of Peter Williams (OCS Dec 1961) killed in action 14 Feb 1967 and who was the 161 Bty RNZA GPO during the Battle of Long Tan.

The reading will be done by Major General Ken (K.M.) Gordon CBE (1956) and the ode by Brian (B.P.) Cudby (OCS Jun 1958).

### *Research Assistance*

We are still looking for some research assistance in Adelaide. Dorothea Proud of Adelaide, an early female rights and worker advocate, was a close friend of Reg (R.) Miles (Aug 1914), graduate number one from the RMC.

They probably met in 1910 or 1911 on one of Miles' sea trips on leave from the RMC to NZ. They spent a very happy period together in London in 1916 when Miles was recovering from severe wounds. They kept in regular contact. The last time they met was in 1937 when Miles stayed in Adelaide for a day or so with Dorothea, while he was on a sea trip to his Imperial Defence College course in London.

Readers may recall that we are completing a professionally written biography of Miles. We have his diary and letter comments to others on Dorothea, but we would really like to get hold of any material that may be from the Pound family (they were a prominent Adelaide family at the time) in Archives or in any family holdings in South Australia. The biographer wants to explore the relationship between these two important friends.

We probably have National Archives in Canberra covered with some of my classmates, and some aspects of Adelaide as well. However, as our biographer is now up to the late 1920s, any new or further material is likely to be very useful. We would be grateful for any assistance.

Please email Barry Dreyer [barryddreyer@gmail.com](mailto:barryddreyer@gmail.com) if you are interested and able to help us.

## *Wellington Sub-branch*

With COVID-19 lockdowns, and so on, there is not much happening in this part of the Society except that we will be having our winter gathering on 19 September, COVID allowing.

## Queensland

### *Branch Office Holders*

Convenor: Graeme (G.J.) Loughton (1956).

Here in South East Queensland our social schedule is to meet monthly for lunch at the United Service Club on the second Wednesday, with the numbers usually being around 6 to 10, including stalwarts and casuals. All members with email addresses receive a monthly reminder. About twice a year we increase both the pleasure and the culture by upgrading the monthly lunch to a 'lunch with partners' format. The most recent was in June with 23 attending. The next 'with partners' lunch is expected to be in November, a sort of early Christmas.

As always, an email notice will go out 2-3 weeks ahead. If you think you have missed out, contact Convenor, Graeme Loughton, on (07) 3378 7376 or [loughton@bigpond.net.au](mailto:loughton@bigpond.net.au).

## South Australia & Northern Territory

### *Branch Office Holders*

Chairman / Convenor: Doug (D.D.) Strain (1978)

Deputy Chairman / Convenor: Peter (P.J.) Neuhaus (1975)

Members: Jack (I.R.) Gregg (1976), David (D.C.) Litchfield (1978), Chris (C.M.) Burns (OCS Dec 1979), Chris (C.) Mulraney (1979), Steve (S.M.) Quinn (1978), Chris (C.E.T.) Roe (1987), Tim (T.J.) Hanna (1980), Steve (S.F.) Larkins (OCS Dec 1976), Leanne Glenny (WRAAC OCS 1983), Mark (M.G.) Dickson (1977).

To keep up to date with the latest information about events please connect with the SA Branch on Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/DuntroonSocietySA/>.

### *Annual Graduation Luncheon—7 December 2021*

We will be holding our 2021 Annual Graduation Luncheon at the Naval, Military and Air Force Club on Tuesday, 7 December 2021 commencing at noon for 12.30 pm.

The cost of the luncheon is \$75.00 which includes a main course and desert. All pre-luncheon and luncheon drinks are to be paid for at the bar. Payment is via EFT to Westpac BSB No: 735-041 Account No: 502573 Account: The Duntroon Society. Please note your name as the description. For alternate payment contact Doug Strain on 0407 200 664 [doug@thedssolution.com.au](mailto:doug@thedssolution.com.au).

### *Second Tuesday Group*

Adelaide ex-serving and serving officers have been meeting informally on a monthly basis for nearly 20 years through a group informally titled the 'Second Tuesday' group. This group continues as a conduit for local graduates to network and has a core group of local business identities, supplemented by serving officers on postings to Adelaide. Many useful business contacts have resulted, and some serving officers have been able to identify a pathway to life on leaving the Army. The group meets from 0730 to 0900 hrs on the second Tuesday of every month, at Cafe Bocelli on Hutt Street, Adelaide. Any visitors to Adelaide are most welcome. If you wish to know more, please contact Ilona



Horan (1999) at [Ilona.Horan@defencesa.com](mailto:Ilona.Horan@defencesa.com) or Jake Kearsley (1997) at [jake@allowaccess.com.au](mailto:jake@allowaccess.com.au).

## Victoria & Tasmania

### Branch Office Holders

Victoria continues to operate by committee with occasional meetings and primary contact by email.

Convenor: Roger (R.) Schie (OCS Dec 1981).

Secretary: Konrad (C.) Ermert (1962).

Treasurer: John (J.G.) Carmichael (OCS Jun 1977).

Event Manager: Ross (R.S.) Bishop (Associate).

Member: Roger (R.W.) Greene (1965).

With COVID-19 still with us the Victorian Committee managed to have a number of committee meetings to plan and conduct two luncheons for Victorian members.

Our first luncheon was held with the Melbourne Cricket Club Military Veterans Group on 10 Mar 2021, with guest speaker John Howell who delivered a presentation on 'The only Woman at Gallipoli'. An enjoyable day was had by all. Below is a picture of members and guests at the luncheon.



*Left to Right: Konrad Ermert, Mimi Ermert, Ross Bishop, Martin (M.J.) Hobbs (1984), Luke Bishop, Roger Schie, Michael (J.M.) Phoenix (OCS Dec 1976), Jonathan (J.M.) McGuigan (OCS Dec 1975), and John (J.G.) Carmichael (OCS Jun 1977).*

Our second luncheon of the year was held in the Harrison Room at the Melbourne Cricket Club. We had 32 members and guests. It was great to see everyone mixing and engaging during the pre-luncheon drinks against the magnificent backdrop of the MCG.

At this luncheon we welcomed Bob and Ruth Slater after his medical challenges over the last year. We formally thanked Bob for his efforts over the years to keep the Victorian Branch functioning. We also thanked Ruth for her support to Bob and the Branch and we presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

The guest speaker Keith Wolahan delivered a sensational speech on the topical issue of Politics and War Crimes. During the speech you could hear a pin drop—even on the carpeted floor!! At the conclusion Keith opened for questions and a lively and lengthy discussion on the subject was held.

Keith was endorsed as the Liberal Party candidate for the federal seat of Menzies following a contested preselection on 31 January 2021.

Keith was born in Dublin and educated at the University of Melbourne (BA/BCom) and Monash University (LLB(Hons)), where he was awarded the Sir Charles Lowe Prize for Best Advocate. He later completed a Masters of International Relations (MSt) at the University of Cambridge. After completing articles at Mallesons Stephen Jacques, he

was admitted to the legal profession in 2006, and called to the Victorian Bar in 2010. Keith specialised in commercial and administrative disputes.

He has acted in a number of high-profile matters, including appearing as counsel for the accused in an Afghanistan civilian casualty combat court martial in 2011, and one of Victoria's longest running commercial trials in 2018, where he acted for Glencore.

Keith has also served in the Army Reserve since 1996, completing part-time officer training through Duntroon in 1998 and reaching the rank of captain. He later qualified as a commando, serving several periods of full-time service, including one tour of Timor Leste (2007) and three combat tours in Afghanistan (2008, 2009/10, 2014).

In the 2011 Australia Day Honours he was decorated with a Commendation for Distinguished Service for performance of duty in action as a platoon commander. He lives in Warranwood with his wife Sarah and two children, Leo and Eva. The food, beverages and company were excellent; a great time had by all.



*Keith makes a salient point.*



*Don Sargeant, Victor (V.R.) Steiner (RMC/OCS Jun 1961), Jonathan (J.M.) McGuigan (OCS Dec 1975), Don (D.J.) Reid (OCS Dec 1964), Adrian (A.J.) Lombardo (OTU 1/64), Peter (P.A.) Stokes (1959), Kevin (K.A.) Maloney (OTU 4/70), Ron (R.R.) Bates (OTU 4/67).*

Unfortunately, our third luncheon was cancelled due to one of our many lockdowns we have had here in Victoria. The next luncheon is planned to be held with the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) Military Veterans Group in the MCC Members dining room on Wednesday 13 October 2021. We are also planning a Christmas function in mid-November, details to be advised.

The Victorian Branch has also set up a dedicated email: [dunsocvic@gmail.com](mailto:dunsocvic@gmail.com). So, if you are coming to Melbourne

and want to know what is happening or just want to get in contact with us use this email.

## Western Australia

### Branch Office Holders

Convenor: Bob (W.R.M.) Hunter (1985)

Social Convenor: Kevin (K.F.) Poynton (1974)

These positions are both endorsed by members but held informally as no specific constitution is in place.

The WA Chapter has been fortunate to still be able to host its series of quarterly informal networking catch up events with the former army officer cohort in Perth.

These events have been hosted at the new [RSL WA Veterans Central](#). This model facility provides a significant enhancement on providing support to Army and all veterans in WA.

The ANZAC Club facility, in particular, provided a fine establishment for the last quarterly drinks hosted on Friday 24 May 2021, where approximately 40 were able to gather and catch up. The next in the 2021 series will be on Friday 27 August and the final one for the year on Friday 26 November. All welcome.

Any visitors to WA or others wishing to be informed please contact the WA Convenor, Bob Hunter on [bobhunter@opleadership.com.au](mailto:bobhunter@opleadership.com.au) or 0413 045 355.

## Coming Events

### ACT Branch

27 October 2021. Luncheon in Duntroon House, commencing at midday. His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley, AC, DSC (1975) will be presented the medallion of a Fellow of the Society at the luncheon.

### NSW Branch

8 October, 2 November (Melbourne Cup Luncheon), 12 November, and 10 December (Mixed Function). Monthly Lunch. Imperial Service Club at the Royal Automobile Club building at Circular Quay.

### Queensland Branch

Monthly (second Wednesday). Meet at noon for lunch at the United Service Club.

### South Australia Branch (incorporating NT)

7 December. Annual Graduation Lunch. Location TBA.

### Victoria Branch (incorporating Tasmania)

13 October 2021 1200 for 1230. MCC Members' Dining Room, Jolimont Rd, Richmond.

Mid-November (TBA). Christmas function.

### Western Australia Branch

Quarterly drinks. For details, contact the WA convenor, Bob Hunter on [bobhunter@opleadership.com.au](mailto:bobhunter@opleadership.com.au) or 0413 045 355.

### Ceremonial Events at RMC Duntroon

6 December 2021. Queen's Birthday Parade.

6 December 2021. Prizes & Awards Ceremony.

7 December 2021. The Graduation Parade.

11 June 2022. Queen's Birthday Parade.

20 June 2022. Prizes & Awards Ceremony.

21 June 2022. The Graduation Parade.

Further information is available from Major R. Knight, SO2 Protocol, Office of the DMA, on 0421 033 549; or [robert.knight1@defence.gov.au](mailto:robert.knight1@defence.gov.au); or [rmc.protocol@defence.gov.au](mailto:rmc.protocol@defence.gov.au).

## Retired Officers Luncheon Club—Canberra

This Club meets on the first Thursday of every month for lunch at the Royal Canberra Golf Club at 12 noon. Retired officers meet in a very pleasant venue for a convivial monthly gathering which originated in 1985. There is a selected menu which ensures that the cost will be approximately \$30 including pre-lunch drinks and wine. Bookings are essential. If you are interested, please contact Don McDonough (1961) on (02) 6259 6583.

## Shorts

- Preparation of the article on RMC adventure training (AT) on pages 8–19 has prompted Pat Cullinan to offer to collect any AT-related stories, maps or photos that you would like to donate to the RMC archives. Please contact him at [patrick.cullinan@yahoo.com.au](mailto:patrick.cullinan@yahoo.com.au) and phone number 0457 888 707.
- *{From Chris Appleton. Ed} In Newsletter 1/2021, the article 'Shaggy Ridge 1990' concluded with the 1999 renaming of EXERCISE TIMOR as EXERCISE SHAGGY RIDGE and attributed this decision to the then DMA. There is more to the story. The then SI II Class, Captain Ana Duncan (Dec 1996)—now Commandant RMC—proposed the name 'Ex SHAGGY RIDGE' to the then CO, Lieutenant Colonel Mark (M.J.) Holmes (1986). Her proposal was based on her experience crossing Shaggy Ridge in New Guinea in 1996 as a cadet, and the fact her step-grandfather fought there as an infantryman with the 2/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion.*
- *{With thanks to Captain Damian (D.M.) Freeman (Jun 2010). Ed} Long before the Army Officer Selection Board, there was a five-day exam in history, geography, mathematics, general knowledge, physics and chemistry for entry to the RMC. Corps numbers were allocated according to ranking in the exam. W.J. Urquhart was allocated CSC 1 for gaining first place in the exam taken by the 1911 intake. Here are 10 of the many questions from the exam (the 32 successful Australian candidates averaged a score of 64.4%. How would you have fared?):*
  - Write a careful note on George III's relationship with his Ministers from 1760 to 1763.
  - Sketch the development of Napoleon's Continental System, and of England's response to it.
  - On a map, locate six important islands off the Australian coast and indicate clearly why they may be regarded as of special importance.
  - What are the chief manufactures and natural productions of Spain? What market has that country got for its surplus productions?
  - Write a short account about each of the following: a. Alexander the Great, b. Julius Caesar, c. John Hampden, d. Lord Clive.
  - Find with as few figures as possible, correct to two decimal places -  $2140.765 \times .030706$
  - In what time will a given sum of money quadruple itself at 6%, per annum compound interest?
  - State the law of conservation of matter. Describe an experiment exemplifying it.
  - How may the composition of the atmosphere be determined?
  - Explain the terms Direct Impact, Oblique Impact, Coefficient of Restitution, as applied to two impinging spheres.



- Prompted by the article in this issue on adventure training at the RMC (see pages 8-19.), John Bullen reminds us that *Newsletter 2/2000* and *Newsletter 1/2001* contained the two-part article 'Inland with Sturt', which was written to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event which was in-turn commemorating the centenary of Sturt's original expedition down the Murray. The 1951 event was not organised by the Army, but it did depend heavily on the Army's contribution, especially the six young officers, five of whom were recent RMC graduates, viz: Brien (B.C.) Forward (1948), Ian (I.G.C.) Gilmore (1946), Roy (R.W.O.) Pugh (1948), Pat (P.) Trost (1948) and Ron (R.E.) Wells (1948). The crew also included a descendant of Sturt himself. In addition, there was one established film star (Grant Taylor) and one future film star (Rod Taylor). They were not related.
- *Military service by Wesley College students.* In recent years substantial work has been undertaken improving the knowledge of the service of former students of Wesley College, Melbourne in the conflicts of WWI and WWII. Wesley now seeks to expand that work by seeking information on former students who had military service in the post-1945 era. This would include those who participated in full-time or part-time service or National Service. Any Collegians who have served or are still serving, or family members of those who are deceased, are invited to contact Leigh Treyvaud (National Service Intake 4/1967, 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regt 1968/69) at [treyvaud-lc@bigpond.com](mailto:treyvaud-lc@bigpond.com).

## Jock Irvine's Cartoons

John (J.E.) Bullen (1958)

Jock Irvine's cartoon in the previous issue of the Newsletter showed the hapless 1950s staff cadet clearly failing to display adequate 'officer qualities' in the boxing ring.

But somehow he has managed to survive that fearfully bruising experience, having previously survived starvation in the dining room plus lots of extra drills. He is now living a relatively 'normal' life, where he is seen clambering up the external drain pipe to the roof of his accommodation block. Why on earth...? Never mind, there is a reason for EVERYTHING in the Army, especially at the Royal Military College.

In the 1950s every cadet's room had built-in cupboards, a wardrobe, and drawers for all his clothing. Other furniture included a small bookcase above his desk and there was also a wall rack for his rifle, his bayonet and other field equipment. His toilet gear went into a small mirror-fronted wall cabinet above a hand basin and towel rack. Beneath his bed was a padlocked security box for his rifle bolt, his money and limited private possessions.

Corps of Staff Cadets Standing Orders (SOs)—a big binder full of duplicated, typed pages—prescribed in fine detail what was to be kept in a cadet's room and exactly where it was to be kept. Every cadet had his own copy of CSC SOs and was required to be assiduous in keeping it fully amended and up to date.

Hung uniforms and greatcoats were always to be buttoned right up while all other clothing was to be kept in neatly folded piles, naturally with squared edges, in the prescribed place. In CSC SOs all compartments were numbered, and the cadets usually referred to those compartments by their numbers. The highest number was Number 12—the big

bottom drawer which contained spare blankets, folded very neatly of course, and other large items.

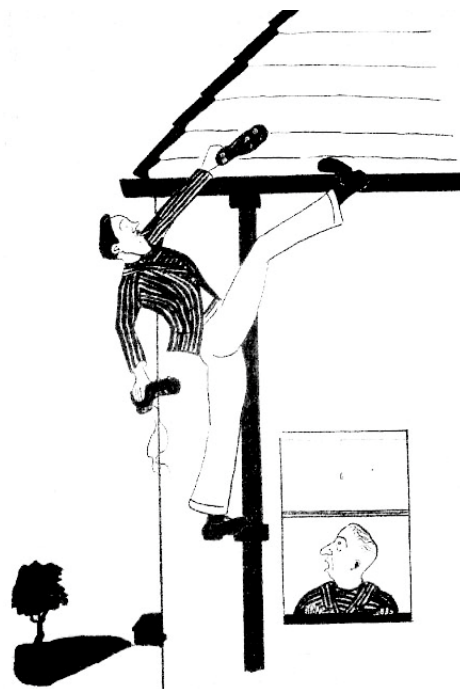
Understandably, cadets felt the need for additional storage for personal items not prescribed in CSC SOs, including prohibited items such as food or other contraband. An additional hidey-hole for survival of frequent room inspections was plainly necessary. Unsurprisingly it was usually referred to as Number 13. Number 13 storage varied in location from cadet to cadet.

The most obvious choice for a Number 13 was immediately beneath Number 12, accessible by pulling the big Number 12 drawer right out. But many inspecting officers were RMC graduates themselves and were prone to check beneath the Number 12 drawer. They would also check for other hidey-holes that they might have once used themselves—such as hiding muddy football boots inside the laundry bag. Fortunately, officers very rarely checked the cupboards under the staircases in Ack Block and Beer Block.

Football boots were always a problem. When not actually in use, they had to be clean and polished. But you couldn't polish them until they were completely dry and the heavy mud had to be washed off first. And drying them was a very slow business in Canberra's winters.

Clearly a higher level of ingenuity was often required, and this is being displayed by our cadet with his football boots in this cartoon. The background detail suggests that this building is Ack Block.

As shown here, a Number 13 outside one's own room had both benefits (dubious) and disadvantages (obvious).



*Yes, I know—but wouldn't it just be easier to clean them?*

The ultimate Number 13 had to be the secret room excavated in 1958 by a team of Third Class cadets beneath the room of Staff Cadet Ross (A.R.) Thomas (1960) in Cork Block. It was better known as 'the Cork Block Cavern' and later as 'the Room Within a Room'. Concrete lined (thanks to night-time pilferage from a works site nearby), it was equipped with lighting and heating (thanks to illegal wiring from the building fuseboard). It was very generously furnished by Her Majesty (who unknowingly supplied Axminster bedside rugs) and by the RAAF Sergeants' Mess at Fairbairn (who wondered where their curtains had gone).

That room exists today, carefully preserved as part of an officially recognised heritage building. Instead of contraband, these days it only stores spare parts for Staff Cadet Casey who has now been at Duntroon for about 90 years and still hasn't graduated.

*John Bullen was a Third Class cadet in Alamein Company when Colour Sergeant Jock Irvine was the Alamein Company CQMS in 1956.*

## Obituary

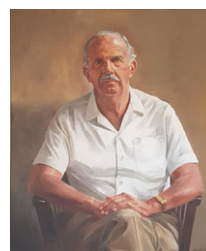
Since the publication of the last Newsletter we have learned of the deaths of the following:

- 11 Mar 20 Colonel W.H. Wansley (June 1941) <sup>1</sup>
- 17 Mar 21 Major J.R. Goodwin (OCS Dec 1968)
- 19 Mar 21 Captain J.D. Strang (OCS Dec 1953)
- 29 Mar 21 Captain J.A. Hunt (OCS Dec 1953)
- 21 Apr 20 Brigadier P. Davies ((1958) <sup>2</sup>
- 16 Aug 21 Brigadier P.J. Bray (1962)
- 21 Dec 20 Major I.S. Callan (1972)
- 15 Mar 21 Brigadier R.S. Flint <sup>3</sup>
- 2 Apr 21 Major R. Carter (1972)
- 16 Apr 21 Brigadier B.H. Cooper (OCS Dec 1953)
- 28 Apr 21 Major J.F. Truscott (1978) <sup>4</sup>
- 1 May 21 Brigadier K.P. Morel (1956) <sup>5</sup>
- 8 May 21 Major General P.J. Day (1956) <sup>5</sup>
- 19 May 21 Mr J.A. Hammond (1956)
- 19 May 21 Captain W.J. Henderson (1957)
- 21 May 21 Major K.J. McGhee (1955)
- 3 Jun 21 Brigadier M.G. Holton (OCS Jun 1959)
- 6 Jun 21 Colonel D.W.T. Hayes (1985)
- 17 Jun 21 Captain R.D. Crispin (OCS Jun 1978)
- 27 Jun 21 Major R.G. Althaus (OCS Jun 1956)
- 8 Jul 21 Lieutenant Colonel P.G. Raue (OCS Dec 1973)
- 14 Aug 21 Major G.R. Lovegrove (OCS Dec 1977)
- 6 Sep 21 Brigadier J.H. Robbins (1963)

1. We missed Bert Wansley's passing in the 2020 issues of the Newsletter but are delighted to be able to provide a brief tribute from Ross Eastgate below.
2. Phil Davies had a unique relationship with three officer training institutions—he was a graduate of the RMC, an instructor at OTU Scheyville, the Chief Instructor at the RMC, and the final Commandant of OCS Portsea 1984-1985. We missed acknowledging Phil's passing in 2020 but a brief obituary follows.
3. Dick Flint was CO/CI OTU Scheyville 69/70 and SO1 Admin at the RMC from 1971.
4. See tribute to Jim on pages 19-20 as well as mention of his adventure training in Pat Cullinan's article on pages 8-19.
5. Keith Morel and Peter Day were members of the highly influential RMC 1956 graduating class. During the late 1970s, members of this class were simultaneously and separately Director of five major Corps in the Australian Army, namely John 'Blue' Keldie (Armour), Don Quinn (Artillery), Peter Day (Engineers), Keith Morel (Signals) and John Healy (Infantry). At the same time, 'Jock' Irvine was Director of Military Police. As RMC cadets in a class full of strong leaders they had all held rank of sergeant or higher. The 1956 class also exerted a strong influence (fortunately beneficial!) on the Duntroon Society Council for more than 20 years, thanks to Garth Hughes (ACT), Neville Bergin (SA), Graeme Loughton (Qld) and June Healy (WRAAC). June was John's wife and a particularly staunch supporter of the 1956 class.

## Colonel Wehl Hubert Wansley AM (Retd) (June 1941)

**Ross (R.W.) Eastgate (1971)**



In a military career spanning 37 years, Bert Wansley served in three wars and was one of the officers who helped shaped the modern PNGDF. Yet his sense of service remained strong, and he later spent two terms as Noosa Shire's mayor on Queensland's Sunshine Coast when what was needed was a firm but unassuming

hand during turbulent times.

Wehl Hubert Wansley, known as Bert, was born in Melbourne on 30 August 1921, attending Wesley College before entering the RMC in February 1938, graduating early in June 1941 on posting to 19<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, then on garrison duties in Darwin.

After a brief appointment on HQ 28 Inf Bde, he was reposted as adjutant, 19<sup>th</sup> Bn, deploying with them to New Britain in December 1944. During fierce fighting on Waitavolo Ridge in March 1945 he was wounded and evacuated to Port Moresby.

After staff and training appointments in Victoria, he was posted to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Bn in Maryborough, Queensland, where in early 1949 he married physiotherapist Audrey Hearn. Their twin sons were born later that year and the family returned to Melbourne.

In 1953 Bert deployed to Japan and Korea as a reinforcement, then to 3 RAR for 12 months including the during armistice.

He served with 11 Bde in Northern Command, before returning to PNG in 1956 as CO PIR, then CO PNGVR.

Further staff and training appointments in Australia followed, including Comdt 1 RTB, before attendance at US Command and General Staff College.

After senior logistic appointments in Victoria, including special service in Thailand and Vietnam, in November 1971 now Colonel Wansley was posted to PNG, then PNG Command, as Chief of Staff, where he helped guide the defence force to self-government, becoming among that select group of ADF officers who were formation members of the PNGDF.

It was a challenging time professionally, politically and personally for personnel posted to a truly joint force environment, with Bert Wansley as the calming hand to commander Brigadier Jim (J.W.) Norrie's (1942) more stentorian style.

The Wansleys were also well aware of the vagaries and challenges of remote postings, providing both guidance and friendship to less experienced officers and more importantly their wives, who were often experiencing such things for the first time.

Bert's final posting was Commander 1 MD, where he was appointed AM prior to his retirement later in 1976.

The Wansleys had bought land in Noosa, where they created a contemporary version of their tropical Murray Barracks married quarter, with a PNG feel right down to the cane furniture, the perfect venue to entertain friends.

Bert played bowls and Audrey bridge, also returning part-time to physiotherapy as they looked forward to a long retirement.



Disturbed by what he saw as unnecessary development, Bert was elected to Noosa Council in 1979, inheriting the mayor's role when the incumbent died.

Variously described as the mayor who "galvanised the green movement", he introduced height restrictions as well as other development controls, vowing to keep rates low, even through a major council amalgamation, which he opposed.

Popular, determined, even after his electoral loss in 1988 he remained a revered figure in the community.

In later years Audrey's health declined, though Bert remained stoic, alert and always up for a chat.

Bert died on 11 March 2020, and is survived by his sons Ian and Grant and their families.

Audrey predeceased him.

*{The portrait of Bert is by the artist Hal Barton. We are indebted to Hal's widow, Christa, for permission to use it here. Ed}*

## Brigadier Phil (P.) Davies, AM (Retd)



*{We are grateful to Michael Williams, Executive Officer of [TPI Victoria Inc.](#) (the Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Servicemen & Women's Association of Victoria Inc.) for permission to use this edited extract from the Association's publication ChinUp. TPI Victoria Inc. was formed in 1926 and has a long and proud history of providing*

*welfare, advocacy, benefits, and concessions along with supporting its members, their families, dependants, and the broader veteran community over the past 90 years. Phil Davies was a patron of TPI Victoria and was pivotal in moving the association forward in its recent years. Ed.}*

Phil Davies graduated from Lithgow High School and entered the RMC in 1958, attaining Under Officer status in his final year and winning the prize for Minor Tactics. He graduated in December 1961 and was commissioned into the Royal Australian Infantry Corps as a platoon commander with 1 RAR and then 3 RAR in 1963, seeing active service in Malaysia in 1964.

On return to Australia, he was promoted captain and appointed an Instructor in April 1965 to the newly forming Officer Training Unit (OTU), at Scheyville. Phil was then posted as the Adjutant/Assistant Operations Officer of 1RAR in 1968/69, which included the significant action at FSPB Coral in Vietnam. He was promoted to major on return from Vietnam and posted to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Training Battalion (3 TB) at Singleton, NSW, to train hundreds of National Service soldiers in readiness for Vietnam.

Technical training at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham UK, followed in late 1970. On return to Australia in January 1972, Phil was posted to the Army Engineering Design Establishment (EDE) Maribyrnong, Victoria. Selection followed in January 1974 to the Australian Army Command and Staff College Queenscliff, Victoria for twelve months.

On posting as 2IC of 5/7 RAR in December 1974, the battalion undertook immediate deployment to a devastated Darwin to provide civil aid following Cyclone Tracy. Promotion to lieutenant colonel followed in late 1975 as the Army's Senior Planner for Exercise Kangaroo 2. In late 1976 Phil was posted as Commander of the Infantry Development Wing at the Infantry Centre, Singleton, NSW.

Selection for the Joint Services Staff College (JSSC) early in 1979 followed before a return to Duntroon, this time as the Chief Instructor.

He was awarded an AM in the 1979 Queens Birthday Honours list for services to the Australian Army and the Singleton Community.

Phil was promoted to colonel in late 1981 and posting to Army Headquarters, Canberra.

He then took up the position as the last Commandant of the Officer Cadet School (OCS) Portsea in 1984, with the challenge of integrating female cadets into the mainstream of Army officer training for the first time, a milestone for women in the Services.

Phil returned to Canberra in January 1986 as a Brigadier to command the Army Quality Assurance Organisation. In June 1986 he was chosen as Head of the Hamilton Report Implementation Team, to implement improvements for Service families, and continued in this role until January 1987 when he was appointed Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Military District (3 MD).

Civilian life beckoned and he retired from active service in January 1992 becoming an officer of the Inactive Reserve and Colonel Commandant of Army Cadets for Australia and Honorary Colonel of Cadets of the new Southern District until 1996. A number of civilian appointments followed, and he retired from the paid workforce in January 2005.

Phil was married to Sandra and has two daughters and a son, and seven grandchildren.

## Colonel David (D.W.T.) Hayes (Retd) (1985)

### Martin (M.J.) Hobbs (1984)



The RMC Class of 1984/85 are saddened by the news that Colonel David Hayes (retd), passed away suddenly and unexpectedly while competing in an Ironman event in early June this year.

Dave graduated from the RMC in 1985 with a Bachelor of Science degree majoring in Physics and Geography. He was also awarded military prizes for his outstanding achievements in military studies during First Class.

Dave then joined the Army Aviation Corps, and was dux of his Army Pilots' course in 1987. He flew a mix of rotary and fixed wing aircraft types in his military career, including the Porter, Nomad, Kiowa, Iroquois and Black Hawk.

Between 1996-97, Dave commanded B Squadron, 5<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment which operated the Black Hawk helicopter in Townsville. Tragically during this tenure, there was a Black Hawk mid-air collision resulting in 18 SAS soldiers and airmen losing their lives. Dave was instrumental in regaining the confidence of those he commanded to eventually regain their flying status, despite the trauma of that event.

In 1998 Dave attended the Royal Military College of Science in Shrivenham (England) where he was awarded a Master of Science (Fighting Systems). The following year, Dave was a student at the UK Joint Services Command and Staff College, where he completed a Master of Arts (Military Strategic Studies).

While in England, Dave participated in a swim across the channel to France with a team of other students. In addition to his passion for swimming and flying, he was very fond of

sailing and shooting. Dave represented the Australian Army in a number of shooting competitions over the course of his military career.

On his return to Australia, Dave was appointed Chief of Staff, Headquarters Aviation Support Group on promotion to lieutenant colonel. His tenure spanned operations in East Timor, Bougainville (PNG), the Solomon Islands and, closer to home, the Sydney Olympics.

Dave's last appointment in the Army was as Director, Training and Rotary Wing Development at the rank of colonel. Notably, the work Dave oversaw in this position was primarily next generation rotary and fixed wing training systems, the result of which is being utilised today. He was awarded a Chief of Capability Development Group Commendation.

Dave joined Jetstar Airlines as a pilot in November 2007, after completing almost 27 years with the Australian Army serving in Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Oakey, Townsville, UK and Germany. Like so many airline pilots, Dave had been stood down from flying duties during the COVID-19 pandemic. A keen competitive athlete, he had spent this time training for the Ironman event in Cairns. Tragically, on Sunday 6 June, he died after receiving medical attention during the swimming portion of the Ironman competition.

Dave is remembered fondly as an energetic and enthusiastic colleague, and as a loving father and grandfather.

Vale David Hayes—a great mate to all.

## The Over 90s

In recent Newsletters we have published a list of (graduates who had reached the age of 90 years. We update it here.

D.G. Sharp (Jun 1941)*	b. 19 Jul 1920
L.W. Wright (1942)	b. 10 May 1922
W.D. Jamieson (1943)	b. 16 Feb 1924
P.W.F. Joplin (1944)	b. 2 Jun 1925
J.E. Neylan (1948)	b. 23 Apr 1926
C.St.J. Griffiths (1947)	b. 15 Jun 1926
J.F. McDonagh (1946)	b. 6 Nov 1926
R.R. Harding (1948)	b. 20 Dec 1926
L.R. Greville (1946)	b. 10 Aug 1927
K.J. Hill (1948)	b. 10 Sep 1927
D.E. Verinder (WRAAC OCS 1952)**	b. 12 Nov 1927
I.D. Stock (1948)	b. 15 Mar 1928
J.I. Martyn (1948)	b. 13 Apr 1928
A.T. Pembroke (1950)	b. 23 Jul 1928
W.M. Purdy (1948)	b. 19 Oct 1928
P.H. Bennett (1948)	b. 27 Dec 1928
F.P. Scott (1948)	b. 19 Jan 1929
P.H. Kitney (1953)	b. 17 Feb 1929
N.C. Schofield (1950)	b. 27 Feb 1929
A.R. Vail (1951)	b. 7 Mar 1929
M.J. Lamborn (1948)	b. 20 Mar 1929
J.E. Duff (1951)	b. 19 Aug 1929
B.G. Florence (OCS Dec 1952)	b. 9 Nov 1929
R.J. Wilson (1948)	b. 13 Nov 1929
M.B. Pears (1950)	b. 14 Nov 1929
L.A. Wright (OCS Jun 1952)	b. 29 Dec 1929
B.H. Hockney (1951)	b. 6 Feb 1930
R.A. Grey (1951)	b. 2 Jul 1930
R.A. Sunderland (1953)	b. 26 Jul 1930
C.N. Kahn (1951)	b. 17 Jan 1931

\* Brigadier Derek Sharp became the oldest living graduate and the Elder of the Duntroon Society on the death of Colonel H.K. Oxley on 8 March 2020.

\*\* Dulcie Verinder graduated in the first class from WRAAC OCS, then at Mildura, in 1952. She was Assistant Adjutant at RMC Duntroon in the mid-1950s. Her later postings included Chief Instructor at WRAAC School in the late 1960s. In the 1970s she held several staff postings in Personnel Branch at Army Headquarters, finishing up as Director of Personnel Services - Army. There, she became the first WRAAC officer to be promoted to Colonel in her own right as an Army officer, other than the few who held the specialist appointment of Director WRAAC. In retirement she married Brigadier 'Lou' Brumfield (1947) who had commanded 1 RAR in Vietnam in 1965.

This list is not complete and is subject to constant change. There could be survivors in the Classes of April 1944 and 1947. The Classes of 1950 and 1951 would, by now, have members who have already reached that very significant age, but we do not have their appropriate details. Without your help we cannot ensure the accuracy of the listing.

## Profile of the Corps of Staff Cadets

Current strength (5 April 2021)	389
First Class	193
Second Class	109
Third Class	87
Neville Howes VC Platoon	12
Afghanistan	2
Cambodia	1
Fiji	6
Iraq	1
Lebanon	1
Malaysia	1
New Zealand	4
Pakistan	3
Papua New Guinea	14
Philippines	1
Singapore	1
Thailand	1
Tonga	2
Vanuatu	2
Females	57
Staff Cadets with previous military service	50

Two Australian Army trainees are undergoing training at the NZ Officer Cadet School on exchange.

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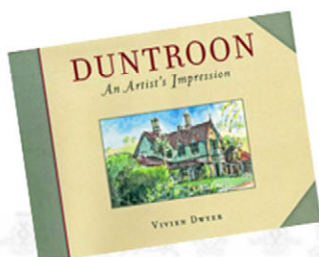
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