



The Scheyvillian

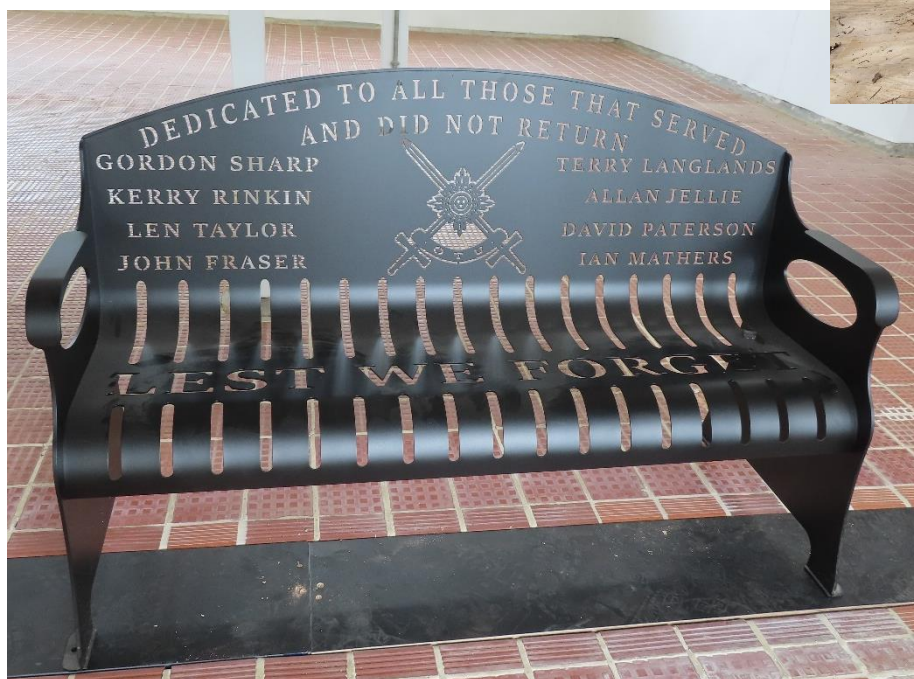
Prepared on behalf of the OTU Association National Committee

OTU Association National Newsletter, No. 3, 2024.

Officer Training Unit, Scheyville, NSW 1965-1973

A Newsletter for all Scheyvillians

Progress at the Scheyville Site



TaskForce Veteran (HAML) pushes ahead with restoration of some of the Scheyville Site! Page A Military Members Shed will take over part of the former Cadet's Mess.

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THE SCHEYVILLE TAPES – Still Available! A good watch!

The Association received from the late Tony Sonneveld a set of Video Tapes and DVDs on Scheyville that were recorded for the NSW National Parks Service. There were 17 tapes and all, and the interviews carried across a number of tapes. These 17 tapes have been re-recorded onto 10 DVDs with the one interviewee/s on a DVD.

The Recordings are of:

The First Commandant, Ian Geddes	Max Almond (RSM)
The Sonneveld Brothers John (2/68) & Tony (1/70)	Tim Fischer (3/66)
Vic Lampe (4/69)	Gary McKay (2/68)
Turk Ellis (1/70)	Various Interviews at Scheyville

A Windsor Church Parade & Return to Scheyville (2 DVDs)

The DVDs are available from The Editor at \$10 each incl P&H – or \$60 the set incl P&H!

OTHER DVDs AVAILABLE

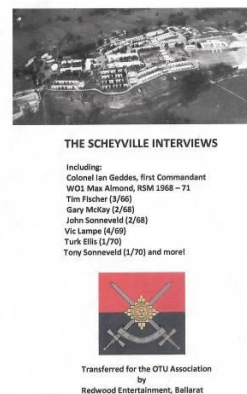
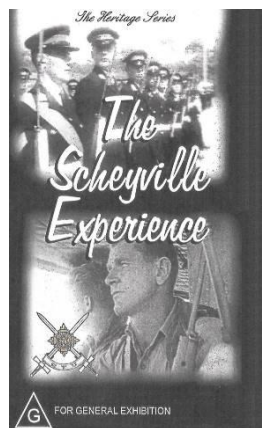
A must for all Reunion

Coordinators or even for Scheyvillians.

National Service Officer and the Don Keyes (4/69) produced 'The Scheyville Experience' \$10 incl P&H

Available from The Editor!

These can be provided on USB!



THE SCHEYVILLIAN NEXT EDITION

Due Out March 2025: It is planned to publish Edition 1 of 2025 of *The Scheyvillian* in April 2025.

Submissions need to be received by 15 March 2025. If you have any contributions: current stories (eg. Reunions, dinners or other get-togethers) or memorabilia stories, please email them to The Editor, The Scheyvillian, at nkaleckie@optusnet.com.au or post to 3/519 Peel Street North, Black Hill, Vic, 3350. **Preferably photographs should be sent separately to the articles.** If you have many large file size photos, please send individual photos by email, or with many photos, please send a disc/USB Stick. Photos are preferred in jpeg format and people should be named! As seen in this and other recent issues, the Scheyvillian is about those who attended Scheyville in one capacity or another.

We all have stories to tell! Please keep the stories coming and keep the standard of this publication high!

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS (Graeme Chester 2/67)

As at the **12 November 2024**, a summary of our membership was:

Number of Graduates	1881			
Number on Database (Incl DNG/Staff)	2034			
Number Financial		477		
Widows		9		
Number Life Members		26		
Number Deceased			310	
Number Unfinancial (Contact Details - Not Renewed)			689	
Number Unfinancial (No Contact Details)			325	
Number Unfinancial (Do Not Contact)			198	

Totals	1881	2034	512	1522
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Of the names on database 25.2% are financial/honorary/widows.

Of the names on the database 15.2% are deceased.

Of the names on the database 33.9% are unfinancial (not renewed)

Of the names on the database 16% are unfinancial (no contact details)

Of the names on the database 9.7% are unfinancial (do not contact)

We currently have **512** financial members whereas at the end of last FY we had **585**. Interestingly, there are **197** members who have been financial over the last two years who have not renewed for this FY. If they renewed, we would be looking good for 2024/25.

For those of you who are yet to join the Association and are participating in Association's activities, ie the Coffee Table book, Q Store merchandise, National/class reunions, dinners, luncheons, ANZAC Day, please support our efforts to 'keep the blokes together' by becoming financial. A Membership Renewal form is attached to this newsletter, or you can purchase an Annual Subscription through the website QM Store using PayPal or EFT.

Regarding the website, as any of your contact details change, particularly email addresses, please update your profile. Simply go into **Profile** on the Home Page and update your information. Don't forget to click on the '**Update**' button (bottom left of page) to ensure the database is changed. Keeping our database updated and accurate will greatly assist classes/Chapters when organising events.

WEBMASTER REPORT



The OTU Website contains a wealth of information, from contact details of the National body and the state chapters and contact details for members, to lists of Honorary Life

Members, Pilots and those with Vietnam Service. There is also the constitution, a short history of OTU. minutes of meetings, the Q Store and the structure of each course. And of course, the photo galleries. Log on is simple.

STILL LOOKING FOR OTU GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS (Neil Leckie, 3/68)

Nothing received yet following the request in the previous editions! General Instructions for classes:

1/67, 2/67 1/68, 2/68, 3/68 3/69, 4/69 1/70, 3/70, 4/70 1/71, 2/71, 3/71, 4/71, 1/72, 2/72

UPCOMING EVENTS

1/71 Reunion (Warwick Walker, 1/71)

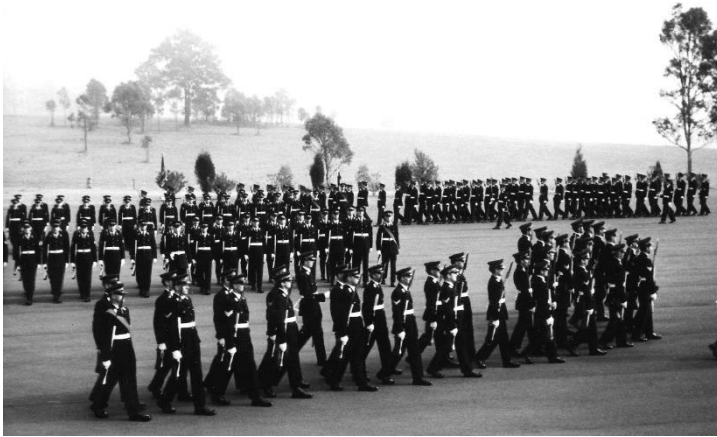
The OTU class of 1/71 will be holding a reunion on the Gold Coast next year. We have been able to contact most of our classmates however we have lost contact with some of them. We therefore would like to publicize the event in the OTU Association Newsletter The Scheyvillian in the hope that some of the association members who might know of a 1/71 graduate will pass the message on to them.

Details are as follows: **OTU 1/71 Gold Coast Reunion 2025**

Dates: Monday 28th April to Friday 2nd May 2025

Venue: Sofitel Hotel Gold Coast Broadbeach

For further details contact: Warwick Walker - warwickdwalker@aol.com



Above left: The Slow March has begun on the 1/71 Graduation Parade on a foggy Scheyville day.

Above right: The graduates are lined up ready to be seated and then called forward to receive their OTU Graduation Certificates. Note that the actual Commission came later, sometimes years later!!!!

1/65 60th Anniversary (Laurie Muller)

A 60th anniversary reunion will be held by the very first class of OTU Scheyville, Class 1/65, 14–18 July 2025 at Maroochydore on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. The focus of the reunion will be on Wednesday 16 July 2025, the anniversary of our arrival at OTU Scheyville in 1965. This day will include a commemorative service, graduate lunch, and a gala dinner. Other activities are planned during the week. We welcome all graduates from Class 1/65 as well as wives/partners of those no longer with us. We also want to hear from any Directing Staff who were mentors and instructors of that class in the second half of 1965. Contact either: Laurie Muller 0418 788 493 or lcmuller@bigpond.net.au or

David Beasley 0409 441 123 or dugara@bigpond.net.au



Above left: Parade Rehearsal.

Above right: the graduating Senior Class (1/65) Marches Off through their Junior Class (2/65).

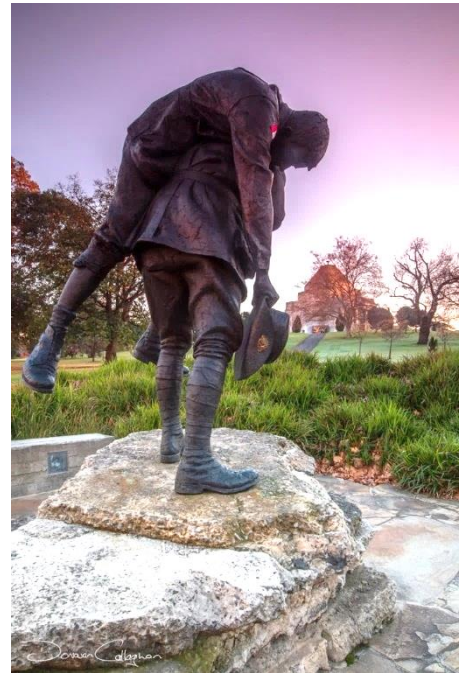
RECENT EVENTS

Battle of Fromelles Commemoration Service Melbourne, 19 July 2024 (Andrew Guest (3/67), Great nephew of Lieutenant Eric Harding Chinner, KIA 19th or 20th July 1916.

On 19 July 2024, I took part in the Battle of Fromelles Commemoration Service held in Melbourne at the 'Cobbers' statue in the Shrine of Remembrance precinct. The Battle of Fromelles took place 108 years ago, on 19 July 1916, but it should never have happened. It was the first major engagement by the Australians after arriving at the Western Front, and because so many lives were lost at Gallipoli, the government kept the truth from the Australian public.

Poor intelligence, poor planning and poor execution were the operational factors that contributed to the defeat, but the root cause was extreme hubris on the part of two senior commanders, the British Corp Commander, Lieutenant General Sir Richard C. B. Haking and the Australian Commander of the AIF 5th Division, Major General the Hon James Whiteside McCay. Haking had failed on earlier occasions to take The Sugarloaf, the only piece of high ground overlooking 'No Man's Land' in the Fromelles sector, and which also projected out into 'No Man's Land, giving the Germans the ability to enfilade any attacking force. Haking had a score to settle, and he allowed it to colour his judgement. McCay on the other hand was too eager to rush his troops into battle, ignoring the advice from the Commander of the 15th Brigade, Brigadier Pompey Elliott, who had personally walked the battlefield at considerable danger to himself, that if the attack went ahead it would be a slaughter.

The combination of all these factors resulted in the greatest number of casualties ever suffered by an Australian military force, in a single 24-hour period. The official figures were 5,533 casualties, including 1,917 killed or died of wounds, 3,146 wounded, and 470 taken prisoner. As Major General (Retd) Mike O'Brien said at the service in July, the true numbers of casualties were even greater, when one considers those who died weeks or months after the battle but were not counted, and those who suffered from the



ongoing effects of what then was called shellshock. The AIF 5th Division was so badly mauled that it took months to recover and to again become an effective fighting force. Afterwards, both Haking and McCay were sidelined.



My great uncle, Lieutenant Eric Harding Chinner (at left) of the 32nd Battalion, was one of those killed in the Battle of Fromelles. He commanded a bombing party tasked with entering the German lines after they had been taken by the Australians, and then holding off the inevitable German counter attacks by throwing bombs until reinforcements could arrive. Unknown to Eric and his men, there were no reinforcements. Under cover of darkness the Germans counter attacked and managed to get behind Eric's party, cutting them off from the Australian lines, and Eric and most of his men were surrounded and killed, with only a small number making it back to the Australian lines. Eric was 22 years of age.

For many years after the battle Eric's family tried unsuccessfully to obtain information as to where his remains might be found. This task was carried out by my grandfather, Leslie Mervyn Chinner, the oldest of Eric's five siblings. Merv (as he was known) was a well-connected journalist, and a personal friend of Charles Bean, the war historian. Bean suggested that Eric and others might have been buried by the Germans in the vicinity of Pheasant Wood, but this important clue was not followed up at the time.

The story of how Lambis Englezos OAM discovered the location of the mass graves in which the missing Australian soldiers were buried after the battle is well known, so I won't repeat it here. Suffice to say that in 2009 the remains of 250 soldiers were exhumed from behind Pheasant Wood and reinterred in the New Military Cemetery adjacent to the village of Fromelles. Each set of remains was forensically examined and DNA was extracted before being reinterred with full military honours. In 2009 my late brother John and I were informed by the Australian Army that Eric's remains had been identified. In 2010 I travelled to



France to attend the 19 July Reinterment Ceremony of an unknown Australian soldier (who it was certain could never be identified), and during the ceremony I was privileged to give a short speech about Eric, his life and his family, in front of a multitude of dignitaries from many countries.

Left: Rick Hodel (4/71), Terry Benjamin (1/69) and Neil Leckie (3/68) at Eric Chinner's grave in 2018.

The identification process continues to this day, and at present 180 soldiers killed in the Battle of Fromelles and recovered from the mass graves dug by the Germans, have been identified and now lie beneath headstones bearing their names. For the last 10 or so years, at the Battle of Fromelles Commemoration Service, I have had the honour of reading out the names of those soldiers identified over the past year.

This year, I read out seven names. They were: Private Alfred William Ansell (served under the alias Fitch), Private George Robert Barnatt, Corporal Percy George Barr, Private William Christopher Brumby, Private Herbert James Graham, Lance Corporal Harold Thompson Smith, and Private Ernest Frank Studdon (served under the alias Welling). LEST WE FORGET

NSAA Service, AWM Canberra, 6 September 2024 (Frank Miller, 4/67, speech)

Post the Second World war, some 291,000 young Australian men experienced time in the Nation's Defence Forces as National Servicemen – 227,000 in the first scheme between 1951 and 1959 and 64,000 in the second from 1965 and 1972. The two schemes differed markedly. The first included everyone in the age group and, apart from a three-month stint of recruit training, it did not impact their working careers. For those who opted for the Army, rather than the Navy or the Air Force, a period in the Citizen Military Forces followed their initial time.

More controversially, the second was far from all-inclusive and involved two years (later reduced to eighteen months) full time. Selection was by ballot. Of the 804,000 who registered 63,000 ended up in the Army. Of these, 15,400 served in Vietnam.

However, common to both schemes was the ten weeks or so of Recruit Training. This involved relentless instructions on marching, weapon craft, navigation, fieldwork, hygiene, dress and presentation, PT and many other military necessities. Inspections were carried out on anything and everything – petty or not. For many, it was their first introduction to communal showering. Most importantly, they were shrieked at and belittled by Corporals and Sergeants – almost nonstop! Tales of recruits being admonished over the state of the river washed white pebbles outside their hut "How do you expect them to grow if they're not properly raked!!" They broke away the shell and rebuilt you all as one! The most unfortunate surname for a young recruit would be Bloggs. Poor old Private Bloggs was always used, by way of example, as the archetypical "Dozy Digger" – forever getting things wrong and drastically needing to "switch on!"

The best part of Recruit Training was that it finally ended! However, it did teach you self-confidence, dress and presentation, and how to get on with others from very different backgrounds and cultures. It brought about substantial personal change – and for the better. I often think when people talk of straightening wayward youth of the day through military service they have Recruit Training in mind. The military's job is defence, not instilling good behaviour in young people who are off the rails! Let me be clear I was always in favour of National Service, provided it didn't include me! But it did, and here I am!

For the '65 – '72 people, so much depended on the Corps to which you were allotted and your subsequent posting. Spending time in the permanent Army was a fascinating experience. I came across a large number of exceptionally capable individuals who had made a career of the Regular Army. In the Service there was so much to learn on how a huge body of people, from the smallest Section to a full Division, and more, was controlled and managed. It was done very well.

One truly admirable feature of Army training, across all levels, was the doctrine that activities - battles, manoeuvres and so on - be planned step by step from the beginning through to the very end. Preparation and planning was the catch cry. I still see this today as an outstanding management discipline. In this sense National Service taught much from which industry could benefit.

For most National Servicemen there was travel, new and interesting experiences – and so much to learn. You weren't stuck in a boring office all day! As well, there was weekly sport, PT and parades etc. It wasn't dull. Every effort was made for those with special qualifications or trades to use these in their service. I did hear of one Nasho being posted to a role requiring him to do a Master's Degree in the field for which he had just qualified before his call up.

On the negative side of the ledger, 212 NS men made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam and many more were seriously wounded. PTSD took its toll in the years following along with a number of other war related problems. As always with war and longer-term absence, relationships were tested with many failing. Some second scheme Nashos also found on discharge, despite the National Service Act, their careers were two years behind where they would otherwise have been. I found myself in that situation and solved it by leaving to a more enlightened employer.

So, what benefits did National Service bring to the Country? It made a material contribution to its Defence situation. It gave a sense of national pride to those who participated. It grew callow youths into mature adults through knowing how to get on with people from all walks of life – as well as how to act with discipline - either on the receiving end or giving it to others. The Army itself enjoyed a longer-term influx of people with much in demand skills and qualifications.

Of the 1,726 National Servicemen who graduated from the Officer Training Unit Scheyville, well over 200 took the opportunity to make a full-time career in the Army. Many others elected to serve on in the Reserve. National Service proved a fruitful long term recruitment tool in this instance.

Yes, there is a strong cohort who look back at their conscription as having caused a huge and adverse impact on their lives – many with justification. The ballot was a ballot in the truest sense of the word.

Much is made of military mateship. Why is it that so many, from both schemes, joined the National Servicemen's and OTU Associations? It wasn't just to catch up individual mates with whom they had served. There were too many intakes for that to happen. It was to join in with people to seek and enjoy the military camaraderie they had found while in the service. So strong was this attraction that the NSAA had over 20,000 members in its first years. They share, in many ways, a different language involving service acronyms and stories that would be incomprehensible to civilians. It's a pleasure to go back to those days of long ago with them. So strong was this calling that their combined efforts have led to the establishment of this magnificent National Service Memorial we see here today. It stands as a monument to the contribution to Australia's Defence efforts by all who answered their call-up.

A few years ago I attended a morning tea put on by my old university for people who'd studied there all those decades past. Talking to one chap I asked if he had been called up. He replied that his birthday had been drawn and then added "I managed to get deferred every year until National Service was cancelled!". It left me thinking. In no way, shape or form did I ever want to spend two years of my life in the Army. I was a most reluctant recruit! However, looking back over my life I am certain I would have been a lesser

person without my time in the service. It opened a whole new dimension of experience – most of which has been of long term benefit to me.



It would be hard to reconcile my attitude today with my mind set on that dreary July morning - when I presented at Melbourne's Swan Street barracks to start my military penury. Ask a thousand different Australians who had been NASHOS in either scheme, you could get a thousand different answers. I am sure of one thing though, most would have the experience on the plus side of the ledger of life.

Above: Winston Bucknall (2/68), Frank Miller (4/67), Les Boag (4/68) and Neil Leckie (3/68) after the service at the NSAA Memorial outside the AWM.

Class 2/69 Reunion, 25 – 27 October 2024 (Gordon Dickens)

Over the weekend, Friday 25 to Sunday 27 October 2024, members and partners of Class 2/69, celebrated their 23rd reunion. This year the festivities took place in the Canberra/Queanbeyan region. Tim & Nichole Overall and Gordon & Anne Dickens both organised and hosted this three-day event. And what a great event it was almost entirely due to their combined exemplary organisational skills and experience. The “almost” is there simply because the participants, all forty two of us; graduates, partners and widows, did the rest by simply having a great time.

The accommodation venue chosen was the excellent Hotel Kurrajong in Canberra. In common with many other locations around Canberra, our national capital, the Hotel Kurrajong has significant historic connections. Former Prime Minister, Ben Chifley, is known to have comfortably resided there for his entire parliamentary career which included his term as PM from 1945 until 1949. Chifley is said to have often been accompanied by his intimate friends, two sisters, whilst Mrs. Chifley, an invalid, remained at home in Bathurst. Chifley died from a heart attack suffered in the hotel in 1951 which perhaps begs the question?

As many will know Tim Overall was the Mayor of Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council from 2008 until he retired from that position in 2021. Tim's wife, Nichole, is also a woman of no mean means herself. Nichole is a journalist, author, and social historian. Until recently she was also the MLA for the seat of Monaro, representing the NSW National Party.

The traditional Friday night “drinks at the bar” commenced at 1600. In an extraordinary example of both endurance and stamina there were those still determined to keep the bar open after 2300.

Saturday's events commenced at 1500, a fact tacitly acknowledged by most of the Friday-night stayers as a good thing. First up our group was bussed to the adjacent City of Queanbeyan located on the Queanbeyan River in the Southern Tablelands region just east from Canberra. Here, after a slight navigational error, we were met by Nichole, the appropriately named and attired Mistress of Mystery. Nichole had previously run a successful side business conducting historic tours around Queanbeyan and

we were the beneficiaries of her experience. The emphasis of her tour was largely upon 19th century buildings many of which had attendant tales of ghosts and paranormal events attached to them. We concluded this part of the afternoon with a visit to the old Queanbeyan Riverside Cemetery. As the name suggests this cemetery is on the river and often floods so many of the graves have been lost. Some, legend has it, into Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra. Nevertheless, many that remain have a story to tell and these were brought out for us by Nichole.

Tim, in association with the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council and the Queanbeyan RSL, had previously organised for a bronze plaque commemorating those who served and those who paid the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War to be placed in Moore Park in Queanbeyan. Our group was now privileged to be present for the dedication of this plaque. The dedication homily was performed by Pastor Wayne Lyons, a Vietnam Vet himself, and was followed by the laying of three wreaths, a recitation



of The Ode and the bugle calls of the Last Post and Reveille. All elements were conducted with precision and due reverence the whole being the result of excellent planning. Well done Tim Overall and well done all.

As late afternoon was now upon us we retired to the nearby Royal Hotel Queanbeyan and once again partook of pre-dinner refreshments. An excellent three course meal was then served amid speeches and toasts. Garry Ryan, who defected to the RAAF after graduating and became a Mirage fighter pilot, had suggested that Lt. Col. Charlie Barnett (Ret.) a former DS at OTU be invited as our guest speaker. Col. Barnett was on staff for the first three months of our course. In his presentation he disclosed a number of interesting facts regarding the IBM computer system then in use as an assessment tool plus further interesting aspects of



the late Col. Stan Maisey and his competitive spirit on the sports field. An Army badge pilot and Qualified Flying Instructor Charlie concluded his military career as the Commanding Officer, 1st Australian Army Aviation Regiment.



Above left, the participants. Right, Nicole and Tim Overall

As he does at every dinner, Paul Flanagan (right), our class Poet Laureate, composing on the run, produced a number of limericks that captured the tenor of the weekend. And poked a bit of fun.

Tim and Nichole Overall – Arranged an excellent program, including a tour of Queanbeyan's mysterious past, the unveiling of a plaque commemorating Scheyville veterans, a visit to Braidwood and lunch at a winery.

*Though the Canberra mornings were freezing,,
the booze gave the tongues a good greasing.
There was many a story, some a bit warr,,
and for all, the event was most pleasing!*

*One can say that we all had a ball,
though many a story was tall.
The tour was mysterious, and the wreath laying serious.
An excellent show **Overall**.*

Rob Donkin - 2/69 BSM, who enforced strict standards of dress and cleanliness e.g. shaving and short clipped hair, among cadets, arrived sporting longish hair and a beard!

*You might think it sounds rather weird, but BSM Donkin was feared.
He'd rant and he'd rave, if you needed a shave.
But now he sports long hair and beard.*

Lyn Williams - Poet's OTU "Father" and consummate ladies' man.

*My "Father" at Scheyville was Lyn, but I can't say I claim him as kin.
Tho' he's lost all his curls, he's a hit with the girls
'cause he plies them with vodka and gin.*

Charlie Barnett - Aviation Corps DS at Scheyville. (Believed to have conducted unusual recce flights to keep flying hours up in the latter part of his career.)

*As a DS our Charlie was proper, but less so when flying his chopper.
He'd slip out after brekky, for an unapproved recce
And was lucky to not come a cropper.*

After an excellent evening we bussed back to the Kurrajong Hotel for further refreshments and, ultimately, bed. The usual suspects indulged for as long as the bar remained open and then some!

Sunday was, once again and thankfully, a mid-morning start. We travelled by bus to Braidwood, an historic gold mining region and now a thriving heritage tourist town, where we visited their absolutely amazing museum.. This was followed by a luncheon above the shores of Lake George at an eponymously named winery which was greatly enjoyed by all.

And was a fitting end to a fantastic weekend.

Other classes no doubt feel the same but for we veterans of 2/69 the fraternity germinated at OTU Scheyville and maintained over the intervening fifty-five years seems remarkable. The end of each reunion leaves one a little saddened to leave good friends. But we know the next time we meet we will take-up where we left-off. The tales may be taller but the gulf of separation will immediately disappear as if it were never there.

A CORRECTION: In The Scheyvillian 2 of 2012, it was stated that Michael Gillespie died in an MVA near Townsville, Queensland, whereas he actually died in an MVA near Gundagai, NSW.



CHAPTER REPORTS

ACT Chapter (Les Boag, 4/68)

The ACT Chapter continued throughout 2024 to hold monthly lunches at the Royal Canberra Golf Course (RCGC) with attendances ranging from 10 -16. Our monthly lunches are organised by Bruce Selleck 2/70 and Visitors are always welcome but for numbers need to contact Bruce at least 2 days in advance.

Mixed XMAS Lunch: Bruce Selleck 2/70 also organised a wonderful mixed Xmas Lunch on Thursday 28 November 2024 at RCGC. For some years now we have invited the widows in the Canberra Region to join us and this year we had Marion Mitchell (Neil Mitchell 2/72), Jennie Watson (Bill Watson 2/69) and Lorraine Kimpton (Andy Kimpton 1/68). Again, this year we had our own function room and the event started with gathering for pre-lunch drinks, then set table seating for a two course meal with the main course being a buffet service with very generous serves of ham and turkey. There was a toast to our departed comrades by Wal Hall 2/68 and a toast to the ladies by Jim Gilchrist 1/72 OCS. Along with our widows, our Xmas lunch was attended by Margaret and Paul Beerworth(1/71), Karen and John Churchill (2/67), Anne and Wal Hall(2/68), Anne and Mike Buick (1/67), Pam and Jeff Wilkinson (2/70), Kay and Jim Gilchrist (1/72 OCS), Dawn and Les Boag (4/68), Liz and Wayne Mayo (3/68), Joan and Greg Monteith (2/67), Patti and Bruce Mason (1/67), Winston Bucknell (2/68) and Bruce Selleck (2/70).

RMC Duntroon Graduation Prizes and Awards

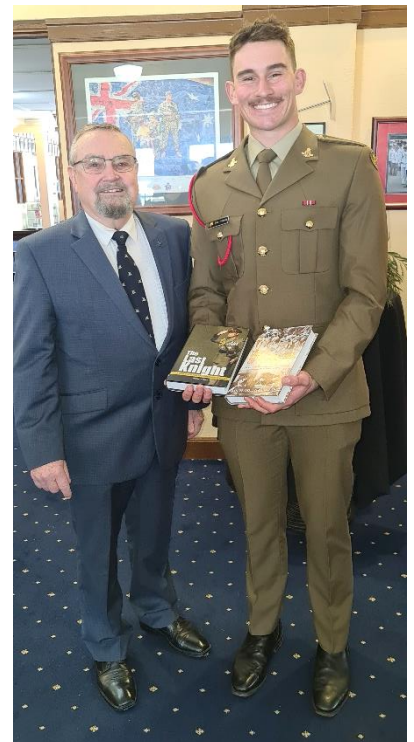


The Officer Training Unit Scheyville Prize is awarded to the RMC Duntroon graduate who has shown the greatest improvement in Leadership Qualities in the Course. During 2023-24 RMC Duntroon transitioned from their Direct Entry course (ie Non-ADFA) from 18 months to 12 months, thus there will be three Prizes and Awards Ceremonies for Graduation in 2024 with the last being on Monday 9 December 2024.

On 24 June 2024 the Ceremony for the Graduation Prizes and Awards was held of the last 18-month class. The Officer Training Unit Scheyville Prize was awarded to Under Officer Alec Fuller (left). Les Boag (4/68) presented the award on behalf of the OTU Association.

On 12 August 2024 the Ceremony for Graduation Prizes and Awards was held for the interim class. The Officer

Training Unit Scheyville Prize was awarded to Corporal Tom Iverach (right). Les Boag 4/68 again presented the award on behalf of the OTU Association.



NSW Chapter

NSW Chairman Gary McKay (2/68) missed a couple of monthly lunches this year but advises that the regular NSW Chapter lunches continue at Club York, in York Street, Sydney. Due to the increased numbers the Christmas lunch, however, will be held at The Little Snail restaurant in Pymont. The Editor was in Sydney in October and was invited to attend the lunch. He was welcomed by the NSW membership. He had his laptop with him and was able to answer a number of member's questions about numbers, people and places, along with looking at some of the OTU Association photo collection (all of which are on the website). Sadly, the day of the lunch was the day of the fatal harbour bridge crash. The Editor was travelling by taxi with his cousin to the cousin's home in Cremorne. With the bridge closed, the usual 10-15 minute journey took two and a half hours.

Newcastle Paragraph (Phil Paddison, 2/70)

September 2024: A Newcastle 'Quickfire Lunch' was held on the day of the National AGM 11 September 2024 at Souths Merewether. Members travelled from a wide area to meet and observe the AGM Zoom Meeting based in Melbourne set down for 1400hrs. That Zoom Meeting did not commence until 1450hrs, Military training and punctuality flew out the window. Blaming technical issues was disingenuous (but true – Ed.). Most had to leave due to the embarrassing delays and lack of prior planning. Those who made the effort to attend were John Retallick 1/66, Peter Benson 1/67, Lou Buzai 1/71, Peter Griffiths 4/66, Craig Lee 1/70, Dave Buckley 2/68, Paul Rees 3/68, Stu Jones 2/70 and Phil Paddison 2/70.

November 2024: The 6th Annual OTU Stakes was run again in Newcastle on 1 November. Two sweeps were held at our lunch, however, the reward for those that laid out cash saw both winners paying around 100/1 with the bookies. The first, Race 2 in Moree (a Maiden Handicap) and the second, again a Race 2 in Kilmore (also a Maiden Handicap). Pity none of us placed bets on either. There are serious lessons available for prospective punters. Surprise, surprise, all is not as it seems in the world of horse racing?? Our sweeps were paid out for first and last, with bottles of wine. Trainers and connections present were Lou Buzai - 1/71 and Val, Peter Griffiths - 4/66 and Kay, Allan Hirschel – 2/72, Geoff Bennett - 2/66, Ian Bartholomew - 2/70 & Annie and Phil Paddison 2/70. Apologies were dominated with medical explanations, a likely common currency in our future.

Queensland Chapter (Doug Oliver, 4/71)

Monthly Luncheon Brisbane 8 August 2024

The Southeast Queensland Scheyvillians' monthly luncheon on 8 August 2024 was held as usual at the Pig 'N' Whistle in Brisbane. Nine were in attendance (clockwise from left): Don McNaught 4/69, Paul Burza 3/69, Jim Box 1/66, Doug Oliver 4/71, Terry Benjamin 1/69, Don Keyes 4/69, Owen Williamson 4/70, Nick Israel 2/70, Mike Donaghue 2/70. There was a father-son reunion (Paul Burza was Don



McNaught's father) and a minor 2/70 reunion (Nick Israel and Mike Donaghue had not seen each other for years). It was good to see Don at his first monthly luncheon in a long while. He has been through a very difficult few years health-wise but is back to his old self. Our Queensland State chairperson, Geoff Daly 4/69, was taking it easy at home after his knee replacement on the 30 July, the first of two. As usual, the lovely Diane, with a new flashy hairdo, looked after us and took our photo.

Monthly Luncheon Brisbane 12 September

The Southeast Queensland Scheyvillians' monthly luncheon on 12 September 2024 was held as usual at the Pig 'N' Whistle in Brisbane. 11 were in attendance (clockwise around the table from left): Geoff Daly 4/69, Peter Moody 2/67, Judge John Brown 2/68, Dave Griffiths 2/69, John Knack 4/72, Doug Oliver 4/71, Owen Williamson 4/70, Keith Michael 2/71, Robin Apted 3/69, Terry Benjamin 1/69, Jim Box 1/66.



Monthly Luncheon Brisbane 10 October 2024

The Southeast Queensland Scheyvillians' monthly luncheon on 10 October 2024 was held as usual at the Pig 'N' Whistle in Brisbane. 7 were in attendance (no photo): Don Keyes 4/69, Doug Oliver 4/71, Dave Griffiths 2/69, Hugh Begbie 1/71, Robin Apted 3/69, Rob O'Donovan 1/69, Geoff Daly 4/69.

Monthly Luncheon Brisbane 14 November 2024

The Southeast Queensland Scheyvillians' monthly luncheon on 14 November 2024 was held as usual at the Pig 'N' Whistle in Brisbane. 13 were in attendance (clockwise around the table from left): Geoff Daly 4/69, Geoff Richardson 1/70, Jim Box 1/66, Terry Benjamin 1/69, Doug Oliver 4/71, Hugh Begbie 1/71, Peter Spoor 1/65 (under the light), Paul Burza 3/69, Keith Michael 2/71, Dave Griffiths 2/69, Robin Apted 3/69, Don Keyes 4/69, Terry O'Shea 4/69



Our annual Christmas luncheon is on Thursday 12th December 2024 at the Pig 'N' Whistle Riverside, Eagle Street, Brisbane, *mien host* Diane. Arrive 12:00 noon sit down 12:30 pm. Come for our annual catch-up, chin wag and some good old war stories. The Pig 'N' Whistle needs our attendance numbers a week in advance to prepare the lunch setting for the expected large numbers. So no late RSVPs please! RSVP to Doug Oliver NLT 12:00 noon Friday 6th December 2024.

\$55.00 per head for a three-course Christmas menu, buffet style. Luncheon pay on arrival. Drinks pay as you go. If you have special dietary requirements, please let Doug know so that the Pig 'n' Whistle can look after you. Bring cash for a whip around for a gratuity for the wonderful service that our host Diane has given us throughout the year.

The Pig 'N' Whistle will again shout the first round of drinks, so don't be late or you might miss out. Put the 2025 monthly luncheons in your diary for the second Thursday of each month: 9 January, 13 February, 13 March, 10 April, 8 May, 12 June, 10 July, 14 August, 11 September, 9 October, 13 November and our Christmas luncheon on 11 December. Our Annual Black Tie Dinner will be on Saturday 29 March. We will again march and meet for lunch on ANZAC Day in Brisbane.

SA Chapter (Gary Vial, 3/69)

With 25 in attendance, and a good spread of Corps and classes, the November MoonUpper was the best turn-up so far, helped along by 4 guests of John Sierakowski. Attendees were: Robert Bridge (2/67 RASvy), Neil Curnow (2/68 RAASC), Carmel and Don Fairweather (3/68 RAInf), Karen and Peter Michelson (DS 71-2), David Morgan (3/72 RAAOC), Rose and Paul Mulraney CSC (2/72 RAAOC), Lee and Malcolm Nicolle (1/70 RAEME), Annie (RAANC) and John Sierakowski (1/69 AACC), Ash and Craig Steel (1/70 RAAMC), Phil Verco (4/71 RAASC), Libby and Gary Vial (3/69 RAInf), Michele and Ken Wagnitz (2/71 RAASC), Marie-Anne and David Webster (1/65 RAInf), Rob Wicks (2/70 RASigs) and Briony and John Whitburn (1/68 RASvy). (See also Page 40.)





Pulteney Grammar School, Adelaide, Remembrance Day (Gary Vial, 3/69)

Left: A great photo from Remembrance Day Commemoration at Pulteney Grammar School. Their motto for the day is 'The School will never forget' ... and this is why. The whole school assembles for the service. My youngest grandchild, Harry and me at the edge of the school's Field of Remembrance where there is a cross for all of the fallen old scholars from the Boer War to today; some 234 in total.

Tasmanian Chapter (Ray Williams, 2/71)

Our third lunch for the year was held on 9 August 2024 and as in most cases we endeavour to select a different venue and encompass a variety of fare'. This not always possible, and in several instances, we have returned to a previously visited venue. On this occasion we selected St Albi, Bar and Eatery as the venue. Rather different from other establishments as this venue was previously a warehouse situated in the suburbs of Hobart. There was a good variety of 'fare' to select from and the beverage range was extensive. Prompt service and the quality and quantity of the items selected by our members could not be faulted. A little noisy at times due to the high ceilings of the building, but only a minor distraction and did not limit the 'war stories' that seem to accompany these gatherings.

Surprisingly our lunch was well attended, for during the cooler months members seem to venture North to the warmer climates. We had fourteen members and partners attend our lunch which was pleasing to see.

Those attending were: Peter Dalkin, Ross & Ainslee Walker, Ray & Pam Williams, Dan Huon, Peter Bysouth, Dennis Townsend, John Hunter, Noel & Viv McRoberts, and Ross & Mary Mace. Apologies were received from: Ross & Jane Robbins, Ian & Jean Howard, Gary & Margaret Barker, Bruce & Allie Argent-Smith, Leon & Jan Miller, and Joye Redfearn. Our next planned luncheon is in the Launceston area to be held on Friday the 8th of December.



Left: Anne Townsend, Dan Huon, Ross Walker (1/69), Dennis Townsend (2/70, standing) and Ainslee Walker. Centre: Noel McRoberts (O1/72), Ross Mace (1/67), Mary Mace, John Hunter (2/69), Peter Bysouth (1/67) and Dan Huon (1/67, side). Right: Peter Dalkin (SUR), Noel McRoberts, Ross Mace, Mary Mace, Pam Williams.

Victorian Chapter

Vietnam Veterans Day (Robin Hunt, 3/69)

A big day at the Melbourne Shrine with a plaque and memorial gum tree unveiled at 1030 hours. As a consequence, the usual march up to The Shrine did not occur and a Service of Commemoration was held on The Shrine forecourt at 1100 hours. The State Premier & State Minister of Veterans Affairs attended, as did senior representatives from Vietnam Veterans Association & RSL along with hundreds of Australian Vietnam Veterans and quite a few uniformed members from the former Republic of South Vietnam military units. The Shrine Guard provided the Catafalque Party. The usual niceties: welcome to country, last post, wreath laying, and the National Anthem were carried out. A glorious sunny day, with a sprinkling of members of the public attending. I didn't see any major tv channels recording but the events were live streamed by the Shrine.



David Sabben was mentioned as being in Long Tan on the day.

David sent the following photograph from Long Tan Day that he spent in Vietnam as a Tour Guide, replacing Gary McKay who was unable to take the tour.



David Sabben reported from Vietnam: ‘Great day at Long Tan yesterday (Sunday) but prevented from holding any form of ‘service’ at the Cross by the authorities. eg - no laying of prepared wreath, no Ode, etc.

Photo: Dave Sabben and Mat McLachlan.

2024 Geddes Dinner

The Geddes dinner was held once again at the Toorak Services Club with xx Scheyvillians and guests in attendance. The Guest Speaker was George Petrou OAM. George talked about stories and paintings which are captured in his book “The Art of Sacrifice”.

The book chronicles his unwavering dedication to honouring Australia’s military personnel. Amidst his own battle with chemotherapy, this commitment became a source of personal strength. Through haunting and poignant stories and historical images, the book delves into themes of valour, courage, bravery, and sacrifice. Robin Hunt (3/69) provided the photo at right:

In the foreword to the book, General Sir Peter Cosgrove AK CVO MC wrote: “... this is a magnificent book, a wonderful contribution to our Australian urge to learn and commemorate and understand that notion of ‘sacrifice’. I commend George and his contributors for what you are about to experience.”

The club provided a first-class meal accompanied by good wines, a ideal military atmosphere and excellent company.

We are honoured to have such a dedicated champion of veterans for our guest speaker.

From his Website: <https://georgepetrou.com.au>

Renowned Melbourne artist George Petrou is a successful graphic designer and acclaimed portrait artist. Passionate about Australians from all walks of life who have served our great nation with gallantry and sacrifice, George captures the eye and gives voice and further life to their incredible stories.

A Patron for TPI Victoria Inc., George assists in supporting the interests and welfare of ex-service men and women, their families and dependents. In June 2020 George was awarded an OAM for ‘Services to the Visual Arts and to Veterans’, and in the same year he released *The Art of Sacrifice* – a haunting and poignant exploration of a spirit like no other – the ANZAC Spirit.

His painting has evolved from a strong contemporary abstract style to restrained portrait painting with a splash of abstraction to free up the subject from total reality. George’s portraits proudly hang in museums in France, Government House Canberra, and a range of military institutions across Australia.

Robin Hunt later added: I think last night’s Geddes dinner was one of the best I’ve been to: Really good steak (Club red wine wasn’t too bad either), more informality. Guest speaker who had an interesting but less militaristic topic (nice guy too)



Victorian Chapter Annual Dinner 2024

With the William Angliss College unavailable this year, the 34th Victorian Chapter Annual Mixed Dinner was held at the Royal Brighton Yacht Club on 25 October with almost 70 in attendance. Ray Andrews (1/70) again took on the role of MC and as usual was ably supported by his wife Maggie on the computer/projector. Ray welcomed the attendees and especially welcomed Dave Sabben (1/65), who with the recent deaths of Harry Smith and Geoff Kendall, is the last surviving officer from D Company, 6 RAR, after the Battle of Long Tan on 18 August 1966.

On behalf of the other attendees, Ray thanked Frank Miller (4/67) and his sub-committee of Peter Hateley (2/71) and Chris Coates (3/71) for putting together the evening.



As usual, Ray finds some marvellous photos of Scheyvillians and puts a story to them. The first photo was of Ray's 'Senior' Vince Berne (4/69), while the second was of Ray's classmates Robin Webke and Ray Neumann.

A Victorian dinner would not be complete without a story about our 'friend' Duntroon graduate Colonel Rupert Farquhar-Jones. Ray produced two good stories this year (too long to include here).

After entrée and main course, Ray introduced Victorian Chapter Chairman Frank Miller for his annual 'oration'. In welcoming Frank, Ray advised all of Frank having been awarded the OAM in the Australia Day awards this year. The award particularly focused on

Frank's involvement with WATCH Disability Services where he has been a Board Member for over twenty years. Frank joins numerous other Scheyvillians who have received awards, including Allan McCallum (3/70) who became an officer of the Order of Australia in 2020 for, in part, distinguished service to primary industry, particularly the grain industry, seafood and medicinal plant production.

A Victorian dinner would also not be complete without a raffle. Members donated a half-dozen prizes (of minimum value \$60) and the raffle raised almost \$1,000 for Youth Leadership.

Later Frank Parton (2/70) proposed the Toast to the King, fittingly as the dinner was in a 'Royal' yacht club! Neil Leckie was asked to toast our departed colleagues and Scheyville. Prior to the toast Neil gave a short update on the Scheyville Site progress, including recent photos. Before proposing the toast, he read out the details of the eight Scheyvillians who died on Active Service in Vietnam, who are a part of the 310 deceased 'Scheyvillians' of all categories on the website. National Secretary Chris Grigsby (OCS 1/73) proposed the toast to the wives/partners. In doing so he mentioned he had met Amanda, who became his wife, while at Scheyville.



A highlight of the Victorian Annual Dinner is always the singing of the Scheyville Song. This was done with gusto, but not always with good timing. Ray then entertained all with the playing of the 2016 recorded

version of the song taken at William Angliss College. A much better version – amazing what you can do with some practice! Ray then closed the evening with thanks again to the organisers and for all who attended. It was a fine evening and enjoyed by all.

Western Australian Chapter (Bernie Houston, 1/65)

September Lunch:

The WA Chapter held their Quarterly Luncheon in the Victoria Cross Room, ANZAC House, Perth on Friday 20 September 2024. A total of seventeen were in attendance and all had an enjoyable time catching up with other team members, coupled with lunch and a few refreshing liquids. David Ward drew attention to himself by being the only attendee who ordered sweets (ice cream). Among the attendees who haven't been with us for some time were Iain (Joe) Martin, a 1/65 man, and Ross Prout, a 1/71 man. Great to see them with us. Another welcome attendee was Frank Shellabear (2/66), who now resides in California and happened to be in Australia visiting family. Our luncheon coincided with his visit and great that he found the time to squeeze us in.

The presentation on service reminiscences was provided by Paul Conti (3/68) – an amusing and witty talk from Paul and appreciated by all. Paul's experience was a little different than most in that he was married when he marched through the gate. Paul's wife Anne had to be out of the ordinary to follow Paul about at length in his National Service years. What was intriguing and amusing to the attendees was that Paul had obtained papers from his early days at Puckapunyal and at Scheyville. Comments from interviewing officers and DS at Scheyville from nearly fifty years ago are particularly amusing when one reflects on one's achievements in those years. Were those DS really that perceptive?



FEATURES:

The Coconut War and OTU Graduates' Involvement (with John 'Hondo' Gratton, 3/69)

The **New Hebrides** was the colonial name for the island group in the South Pacific Ocean, almost 2,000 km north-east of Brisbane, that is now Vanuatu. Native people had inhabited the islands for three thousand years before the first Europeans, a Spanish expedition led by Portuguese navigator Pedro Fernandes de Queirós, arrived in 1606. The islands were named after the Hebrides in Scotland, by Captain James Cook in 1774 and subsequently colonised by both the British and the French. The two countries eventually signed an agreement making the islands an Anglo-French condominium that provided for joint sovereignty over the archipelago with two parallel administrations, one British and one French. In some respects, that divide continued even after independence, with schools teaching in either one language or the other. The condominium lasted from 1906 until 1980, when France and the United Kingdom agreed that independence would be granted as the **Republic of Vanuatu** on 30 July 1980.



Just prior to independence, Jimmy Stevens, head of the Nagriamel movement, led an uprising against the colonial officials and the plans for independence. The uprising lasted about 12 weeks. The rebels blockaded Santo-Pekoa International Airport, destroyed two bridges, and declared the independence of Espiritu Santo island as the 'State of Vemerana'. Stevens was supported by French-speaking landowners and (secretly) by the Phoenix Foundation, an American business foundation that supported the establishment of a libertarian tax haven in the New Hebrides. On 8 June 1980, the New Hebrides government asked Britain and France to send troops to put down a rebellion on the island of Espiritu Santo. France and Britain sent troops, but the French refused to allow them to take any effective action against the rebels. As independence day neared, the Prime Minister-elect, Walter Lini, asked Papua New Guinea if it would send troops to intervene. The three nations of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and New Hebrides (Vanuatu) form the Melanesian group of nations, so the request was well received. As Papua New Guinean soldiers began arriving in Espiritu Santo, the foreign press began referring to the ongoing events as the 'Coconut War'. The PNG contingent was called 'Kumul Force' after the Bird of Paradise which is PNG's National emblem.

Three Scheyvillians were involved in 'The Coconut War': Lang Kidby (1/67), John 'Hondo' Gratton (3/69) and Leigh Collins (1/70). Lang wrote: 'During 1980, as Ops Officer/2IC of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force Air Transport Squadron, I had the pleasure of commanding the air element of the force sent to Vanuatu to suppress the rebel forces attempting to disrupt an orderly transition to independence from the combined French/British colonial government. Our detachment of two DC 3s and one Nomad with supporting ground crews arrived about a week before independence in order to participate in the

celebrations. We were then to support the PNGDF in military operations. Above: a French Navy DC4 and French Marine Puma Helicopter behind the Nomad at Vila.



At this time, half a battalion of Royal Marines sat on the

airfield at Espiritu Santo, merely keeping it open and unwilling to take any action against the reasonably well organized rebel force which controlled the island. They looked across the runway at half a battalion of French Foreign Legion Paras with their crew cuts and tight camouflage uniforms. The political situation was such that fighting between these two groups was more likely than against the rebels.

While little is generally known about ‘the Coconut War’ even less is known about the logistics efforts that supported the PNG military intervention. Captain John (Hondo) Gratton (3/69), as Ammunition Technical Officer (ATO) PNGDF, was intimately involved in this logistics buildup, initially in his ammunition technical position and subsequently across the whole logistics role. The first notification of the possible deployment of a two Infantry company-based group caused a flood of activity at Headquarters PNG Defence Force in Murray Barracks, Port Moresby. It had not been considered or planned that PNG, just five years after their own Independence, would be called upon to project military power beyond her borders. And this over an air/sea gap of almost 2,500 kms.

Hondo (right) wrote: ‘The start point for logistics related to; ‘What will the First Battalion, Pacific Island Regiment (1 PIR) group need?’ Intelligence on the task was minimal. Was be ‘Counter-insurgency Warfare’ or ‘keeping the peace’ or even just crowd control? The Operations Officer, 1 PIR, Major Les Tranter, and Hondo decided to cover all contingencies and send the lot! They developed from scratch First, Second and Third-Line ammunition requirements for each contingency over a marathon 12-hour session at Taurama Barracks. The next day allowed Hondo to further develop these needs into the packaged ammunition requirements, for projected (best guess) duration and activity levels for the deployment. By the end of this exercise, they knew what was probably needed. The next major issue was preparing it for how it was going to be moved. Others in the HQ were undertaking similar exercises for all other combat supplies, such as foodstuffs, petrol, oil and lubricants, medical etc. Moving ammunition and explosives, with very limited PNGDF aviation and maritime assets, was the biggest challenge.



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‘Some very innovative and technically thoughtful, although highly unorthodox, procedures were instituted to pack non-compatible ammunition loads for both air and sea transport. A little unusual for example to pack M26 High Explosive Fragmentation hand grenades in the same 20-foot shipping container with M406 CS (tear gas) grenades, using many boxes of 7.62 mm and 9mm small arms ammunition as wall liners and internal ‘separators’. The one Australian and PNG ammunition technicians at Goldie River Depot, did a fantastic job putting this together in under 48 hours. Similar, ‘radical’ but safe loads were developed for air movement, although the logic of these needed to be explained to ‘very interested’ aircrews! After departure, a nervous 8-10 hours for air and 4-5 days for maritime later, fingers could be uncrossed.

‘After dispatch of the ammunition and explosives, the head of Logistics PNGDF, Col Gaga Mamae, directed Hondo to take over the role of SO2 Logistics Coordination for the deployment. One of the first tasks of the SO2 Log Coord was to organise a faster transport capability for personnel and small loads between Port Moresby and Port Vila/Espiritu Santo. The flippant remark of ‘we should lease a Lear jet’ was just answered with ‘do it’. Later concerns were raised that the bulk ammunition and explosives supplies sitting on the outskirts of Port Vila were in jeopardy. The 1 PIR Group, understandably, grabbed what they thought they needed and headed to Santo. The remaining, substantial supplies were probably secure but had been badly mixed and left exposed to a harsh tropical environment.

‘So, Capt Gratton was dispatched to Pt Vila to sort this. The value of the Lear Jet for these type of short notice tasks is obvious. The task of sorting out the ammunition into acceptable and safe field storage configurations and ensuring security was pretty straight forward. Attempts by me to get from Vila to

Santo were not successful and the deployment was therefore restricted to Pt Vila over a space of about 10 days, including the first Vanuatu Independence Day. The possibility of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) being deployed in the Capital was raised and a small contingency kit for manual render safe, including a shotgun, was built up, but never used operationally.'

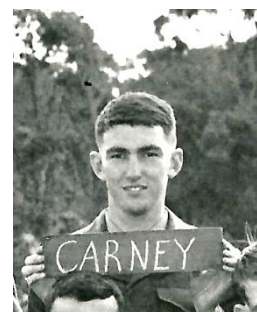
Lang Kidby concluded with: 'The following morning the new nation of Vanuatu was on the map. We commenced ferrying the PNGDF troops to Santo to replace the French and British who were leaving as fast as they could. The PNG force immediately went into action against the rebels resulting in a number of fierce firefights and casualties on both sides. Many prisoners were captured in the initial operation. These prisoners, both native people and French planters, were taken back to Vila in our aircraft for trial and imprisonment (they all asked to go to the French jail because wine was served with meals there).' Boosting the air capability, in early August, 'Captain Leigh Collins arrived from Oakey after an heroic over water flight with two Pilatus Porters.'

However, the 'war' was brief and unconventional. The residents of Espiritu Santo generally welcomed the Papua New Guineans as fellow Melanesians. Stevens's followers were armed with only bows and arrows, rocks, and slings. The war came to a sudden end when a vehicle carrying one of Stevens's many sons burst through a Papua New Guinean roadblock in late August 1980. The soldiers opened fire on the vehicle, killing Stevens's son. On 28 August Jimmy Stevens surrendered, stating that he had never intended that anyone be harmed.

At Stevens's trial, the support of the Phoenix Foundation to the Nagriamel movement was revealed. It was also revealed that the French government had secretly supported Stevens in his efforts. Stevens was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment and remained in prison until 1991.

What Scheyvillians Had to do – The Selection Process (Bernard Carney, 3/68)

Seeing the reference to the Scheyville selection process in the last Scheyvillian magazine brought back some interesting memories for me. I was never meant to be an army officer and had no such aspiration. At 20 years of age, my marble dropped and I was a typical young bloke who had no qualms about serving my country, albeit without really understanding (or wanting to understand) the political reasons why I should do so. I was young and life was an adventure. So, on 23 July 1968 I fronted up at Marrickville in Sydney to be 'joined up' into the army. The first few days at Kapooka were a complete haze to me but I do remember having needles stuck in my arms and sitting down, along with all the other new recruits, to do a written test of some sort.



A day or so after doing that test, I was ordered to report to a Major who I was told was something to do with psychology – which caused me to wonder if I had been deemed unsuitable for service or even something worse. I fronted into the Major's office and apologised for not saluting him as I had not been taught how to salute at this stage. He was very casual and asked me to take a seat after which he asked me if I remembered doing the recent test and did I recall the last question on that test. I said that I certainly remembered doing the test but couldn't recall what the last question was. He then told me that it read – "Do you wish to apply for officer training?" – and that I had answered "No". He asked me why and I said that I simply wanted to be one of the guys or words to that effect. The Major then told me that my test results were in the highest echelon and typical of someone who should have answered yes to the question. This surprised me as I had been a reasonably average student at school even though I received a very sound and disciplined De La Salle education.

After some further chat with the Major, I still stood by my decision until he explained to me that the selection process was very rigid but it did entail having lunch in the Officers Mess. Although meals in the Recruits' Mess had certainly been filling, I could not once identify what the ingredients were in any of those meals, so lunch in the Officers Mess was too tempting to resist.

True to the Major's word, I joined a small number of other recruits for lunch in the Officers Mess as part of a rigorous day of tests and challenges, the likes of which I had not experienced before. Two days later, I was called out on morning parade by my Platoon Commander and told to pack my bags. When I dared to ask him why, I was told in no uncertain terms that "You don't ask questions in the army". Later that day, I was on a flight back to Sydney and in the early evening on a bus that pulled into a place called Scheyville as several men in uniform boarded the bus and began yelling at its unsuspecting passengers.



And that is the story of my selection process, which I'm sure is not typical of what others experienced. As I was most unprepared for what was to follow at OTU, I struggled through the Junior Term but finally found my feet in the Senior Term. Perhaps if it was my intention to voluntarily apply for officer training, I may have been better prepared for what was to come. However, I have never regretted the decision I made and am proud to have been counted amongst those known as OTU Scheyville graduates.

Remembrance Day Reflections (Ray Andrews, 1/70)

The school class where Ray's grand-daughter, 11-year-old Scarlett Nielson attends, was asked to write a poem for Remembrance Day. Scarlett's poem was one of the four selected for Remembrance Day 2024:

11, 11, 11. Month, Day, Hour.
 Another minute given, another year of sorrow.
 The blood, the sweat, the tears, the haunting terror of never-ending noise.
 The woosh of the bullets nearly hitting you.
 Friends – gone. Family – gone.
 The black cars, the constant roar of gravel driveways under rubber tyres.
 Then, the note, the sorry that doesn't fix anything. The sorry that doesn't bring them back.
 Then comes the sleepless nights, the cries you hear through the pillows. The ones they think that you don't hear.
 11, 11, 11!.

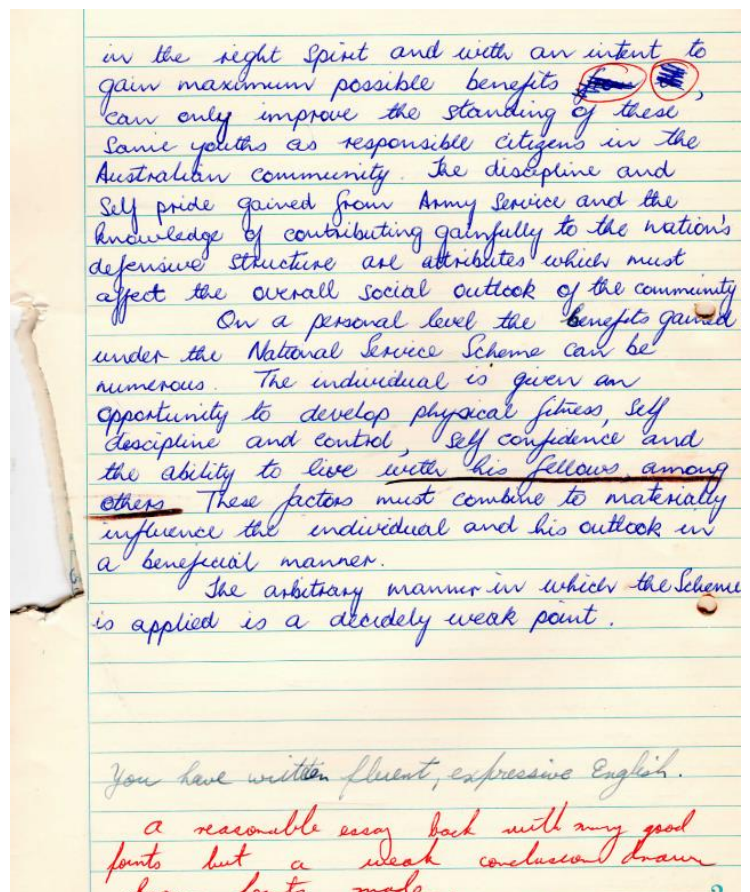


Military Expression at OTU (Bill Moss, 1/70)

In The Scheyvillian 2 of 2024, there was an article on 'Military Expression at OTU'. The article described Military Expression task MX21 and asked: 'does anyone have a copy of their 'paper'?'

Although I do not have the paper described in the article, attached is a copy of a similar paper from Class 1/70!! The original is in my set of Scheyville training notes that I gave to the RMC Duntroon Museum in 2022. The standard of the paper is 'mediocre' at best and not indicative of my overall record at Scheyville – I did win the Military Arts Prize after all!!

The answer paper is five pages long, The last page and the report (in red) are shown.



Scheyville Veterans, Families and Community Centre SITREP (Paul Irving, 2/72)

Gather around all you sceptics and naysayers for the bumper Xmas 2024 SITREP on our former home at Scheyville. Previous articles in the Scheyvillian have referred to the restoration of some of the few remaining buildings at Scheyville by a dedicated veterans' organisation, previously called the Hunter Anzac Memorial Limited (HAML) and now rebadged as Taskforce Veteran.

Brett Wild, Chairman of Taskforce Veterans, his fellow directors and their builder have faced considerable obstacles in dealing with the NSW NPWS that have served to delay the restoration work and impose additional costs on Taskforce Veteran. This has caused Brett Wild to raise these issues directly with the NSW Minister for the Environment as well as with the media.

Much of the military heritage has been eliminated from the site. Street signs have been removed as has the flagpole near the parade ground. Taskforce Veteran has installed a new flagpole. Much effort has been undertaken in the restoration work of the Western SSARs hut (previously the Cadets' Mess and kitchen) and the Eastern SSARs hut (previously the gymnasium) to preserve the heritage of the buildings. The external cypress pine timber has been sourced from a timber mill at Forbes that had the original profile cut so that the new external replacement timber matches exactly the profile of the original external timber walls.

Dulux matched the original external paint – now called

“Scheyville Military Heritage Blue” that soon you will be able to obtain from Bunnings when you want to

paint your mancave or shed. Both huts have been painted internally and externally thanks to Dulux that donated 15,000 litres of paint. Original light fittings and doorknobs have been retained, basins have been re-enamelled and broken windows repaired.



SSARs hut and new internal lining installed. A new roller door has been installed in one end of the Western SSARs hut to allow access for armoured vehicles.

The timber floor in the gymnasium has been repaired, sanded and oiled. Vinyl flooring has been laid over the concrete floor in the remainder of the Eastern SSARs hut.

A disabled toilet has been installed, new paths laid to cater for mobility scooters, new plumbing laid, old electrical installations replaced and new fire extinguishers installed.

Importantly, the external “bar” in the Eastern SSARs hut that had been boarded up internally and externally by NPWS has been restored.



The Western and Eastern SSARs huts have been completely refurbished. Rotten timber floor plates and rotten walls in both huts have been replaced, new uprights installed. a new roof installed over the kitchen in the Western





Restoration work on the beer garden between the two huts is nearly complete— new pond lining and pump have been installed, the retaining wall behind the BBQ has been rebuilt, sandstone tiles have been laid in the BBQ area and around the pond, and cracked paths have been replaced.

Eight specially made steel settee seats with the names of the OTU Officers KIA in Vietnam lasered in the seats together with the OTU badge will be set in concrete in the beer garden, which will become a special place for reflection.

In short, the two SSARs huts are in brand new condition and should last another 50 plus years.

Officers from NSW Heritage, the regulator of heritage buildings in NSW, have inspected the buildings and were highly complimentary about the quality of the work.

Use of the SSARs Huts: The Western SSARs hut will be the home to a collection of armoured vehicles with a “Men’s Shed” to be renamed “Scheyville Base Support Workshop” in the rear of the hut, complete with tools, lathes etc to provide support to the Taskforce Veteran site operations.

In one end of the Eastern SSARs hut, an exhibition of the various inhabitants of the Scheyville site over the last 150 years, including OTU, will be displayed. There was talk about slinging a rope over the frame in the roof to see how many of you can still do the rope climb! The gymnasium end with the timber floor will have multiple uses including a place to hold functions. It can hold up to 400 persons at a sit-down lunch/dinner.

Long Tan Place: Taskforce Veteran has been given the green light to restore the last married quarter in Long Tan Place. This was the Chief Instructor’s house, being the only four-bedroom married quarter. The missing Long Tan Place street sign has been found and re-installed outside the street. The street was named Long Tan Place in late 1966, after the Battle of Long Tan where sadly Gordon Sharp (/65) was killed. Two other connections between OTU and Long Tan Place were the brave actions by Dave Sabben in the battle and that Lieutenant Ian Savage, APC Troop Commander, who recovered the dead and wounded from the battle site, lived in the Chief Instructor’s house when subsequently posted to OTU as an Instructor.

Nissan Huts: The two Nissan huts between the Western SSARs hut and the back of the Officers’ kitchen are being repaired and restored, including the installation of new roofs. This work expected to be completed before Christmas. Ian Savage has advised that one hut contained a billiard table for the officers. A kind volunteer has donated a full-size billiard table to Taskforce Veterans that will be installed in the hut together with a library. To date, we have collected several hundred books for the library. The second Nissan hut will be made into an office for the Veterans’ Centre.

Officers’ Mess Lines: For those of you who attended the last OTU reunion, you will remember the poor state of the officers’ accommodation lines. There are no walls or ceilings in many of the rooms, only wall and ceiling studs. These accommodation lines were the original dormitories for boys from the Dreadnought Scheme that were built in the 1920s. Taskforce Veteran will be seeking approval from Heritage NSW and NWPS to turn these lines into accommodation for homeless veterans, veterans recently released from incarceration and possibly respite accommodation for veterans. This is a big project and likely to generate some opposition, but the welfare of our homeless veterans should be paramount and this was an important finding of the Royal Commission into veteran suicide. The Officers’ Mess kitchen is in good condition and could be used to feed veterans.

Commandant's House: This is the original Farm Manager's house built in the 1890s. Sadly, NWPS has allowed it to deteriorate to such an extent that it is in danger of collapsing on one side. Whilst Taskforce Veteran is prepared to restore the house, it requires NWPS to fund essential stabilisation work, including re-piering the house. Heritage NSW has issued a breach notice on NWPS to undertake that stabilisation.

Tennis and Squash Courts: Heritage NSW values highly the tennis and squash courts complex. The squash court is a mess that will require a lot of restoration work, the tennis courts also require work as they too have been let go with vegetation allowed to compromise much of the court surfaces. Taskforce Veteran intends to start the necessary remediation work in 2025.

60th Anniversary of the Battle for Long Tan – Saturday, 15 August 2026

To participate in the 60th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan on 18 August 2026, Taskforce Veteran is planning to hold a series of events at Scheyville, including a sit-down lunch on Saturday, 15 August 2026 for up to 400 people, as a fitting farewell to OTU National and to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Battle for Long Tan. Ian Savage, after he left the Army, started his own catering business and one of his chefs who runs Café Enzo at Pokolbin has agreed to do the catering for the lunch.

Put this date in your diary – more details to follow.

How Can You Help? Taskforce Veteran has two aims for the Scheyville site. The first is to restore as much of the heritage of the site as possible. The second is to turn the site into a pre-eminent Veterans, Families and Community Centre, where veterans and their families can seek assistance with claims to DVA, find temporary accommodation, have a coffee/meal, play tennis, squash or billiards, read a book or quietly contemplate life in the beer garden. Park runs for families, cricket, football and netball and even horse riding could eventually be made available on site. Taskforce Veteran may need you to write to NSW and Federal politicians to support what Taskforce Veteran is doing on site but will provide more details on this in 2025. You could donate any memorabilia from your time at OTU for the museum. In particular, we are looking for a 1:25,000 Scheyville Special map. Or you could make a financial donation to Taskforce Veteran <https://taskforceveteran.org.au/donations/> – all donations are tax deductible.

The restored Scheyville site will be a place where you and or your children/grandchildren can visit and reflect with pride on that part of your life spent at OTU. Take care and keep well.

Life on the Other Side (Joe Logan, OTU Cook via Peter Norman NSAA, Vic)

In the army you certainly had to break the rules just to have some fun and annoy those in charge. On my first guard duty at Pucka I hardly spent any time at the post. I was off to phone my fiancée!

After basic training we arrived at Bonegilla to start training as a cook. We were rather disappointed that the promised weekend off had been cancelled so we could clean up the camp. I just changed into civies and hit the road hitchhiking to Melbourne. One of the other guys had his car at the camp and picked me up a bit down the road. We got back on Monday morning expecting some punishment and discovered that a large percentage of the guys had also gone AWOL, so the leave was retrospectively permitted.

I was posted to Scheyville in Sydney in 1968 and from there sent to Moorebank Army Fire Station for a short time. There wasn't much to do so I borrowed one of the small fire engines and drove to another camp where I nicked all the good meat from the Officers Mess. Then we had a barbecue back at the fire station. I did get into trouble, however, when I borrowed the very big fire engine and drove it through the Officers' Quarters at about 3:00 am with lights and bells firing. Apparently, I drove past my Major's house and his wife pushed him out of bed thinking there was an emergency. He was none too happy later that day.

I wonder if you'd get away with what we did these days, security being so 'important'. Up in Scheyville I remember the civilian brother of one of my mates visited his brother and stayed for about three weeks. I had a room at the camp but as I was married, I lived off-base and he just occupied my room, ate and drank in the mess and nobody cared.

After Lights Out – Skits Happen (Tim Fischer 3/66, with Peter Norman, NSAA Vic)

Neil, you may be interested in this piece for a future edition of The Scheyvillian. It's about one of your 'old boys', the late Tim Fischer AC. Over the years I had several short chats with him on several subjects. During one such chat I asked him for any anecdotes from his OTU days. At the time I was compiling a selection of stories for an intended publication titled "After Lights Out - Skits Happen". He thought for a moment then said something like "We were too exhausted after a hard day's training, followed by needing to clean all our gear for tomorrow so we just fell into bed exhausted every night. There was no after lights out mischief" (or Tim's words to that effect).



Some several days after our conversation he wrote the following to me: Incoming, Incoming! In South Vietnam occasionally when not on operations I used to fit in a late-night game of chess with junior officers and sometimes Chaplain Father Tinkler, a very cunning player. However, the standard trick was just as I was about to pronounce 'Checkmate', my opponent (never Tinks) would shout 'Incoming' and then jump up and tip the chess board over in the process.

An altercation would then take place but soon the stillness of the night would resume as there were never any 'Incomings' on the nights I carefully chose to play chess. I calculate I ended up about 50/50 with the chess win/loss ratio, but then lost heaps to the navy playing bridge on HMAS Sydney on the way home.
(Source 2784385, 2nd Lt Tim Fischer AC)

Right:
From The Collection:
Junior Leaders From Scheyville. TABLE 1

Comparison of Subjects taught at OTU with those taught at OCS (as at 31 Jan 1966).

- Periods allocated to administration are not shown for OTU.

Subject	OCS	OTU
<i>Individual Basic Training Wing:</i>		
Drill and Ceremonial	143	96
PT	68	75
Army health and first aid	32	15
Sport	{ Comparison not possible	80
Demonstrations		variable
<i>Individual Field Training Wing:</i>		
Weapon Training	223	124
Fieldcraft	75	48
Methods of Instruction	33	33
Map Reading	89	74
<i>Advanced Field Training Wing:</i>		
Minor Tactics: Lectures	156	151
Practical	471	302
<i>Military Art Wing:</i>		
Armour	26	17
Artillery	27	13
Engineers	34	10
Signals (Corps and Radio Trg)	65	42
Administration — Peace	21	25
Organization and Administration — War	28	28
Staff Duties and Training	60	42
Military and Social etiquette	47	33
Military History	45	20
Military Law	53	25
English Expression	54	40
Leadership	46	33
	<hr/> 1,903	<hr/> 1,362*

WHAT SCHEYVILLIANS DID

Sing Songs at OTU (with Mick Stone 1/68)

All Scheyvillians would know the OTU Song, either from their time at OTU or singing it gustily at a reunion: 'There's a track winding back, to a military shack, that we all call Scheyville OTU.' However, there were many other songs. Mick Stone (1/68) remembers some of the words to a song written about those Cadets who 'disappeared' from Scheyville and were never seen again. It was based on the Kingston Trio song of the time known as 'The Ballad of the MTA.' That song referred to the MTA (Massachusetts Transit Authority) doubling the fares on the underground trains. One worker didn't have enough money to pay for the second leg of his journey and therefore was stuck on the first train forever! Worth a Google search.

The chorus is:

'Did he ever return,
no he never returned,
and his fate is still unlearned.
He may ride for ever on the streets of Boston,
he's the man who never returned.'

The Scheyville version became: 'The Boys Who Never Returned':

"Let me tell you the story of some boys from Scheyville
On a sad and mournful day -
They put coloured aprons on them - stuck them in the last chopper
And they haven't been seen since that day!

Chorus

"And did they ever return? no they never returned,
And their fate it remains unlearned,
They may fly forever round the hills of Scheyville,
They're the boys who never returned.

If you know more of the words to the song, they are a part of our history, so please let the Editor know!

Another song, not quite as classy, is known as the Artillery Song (or 'Side by side'):

We graduated to Arty,
Major Wells says its just like a party,
While the rest of the Corps
Are scratching their balls,
Side by side,
The Tankies are wankers,
Side by side!

Just as I expected
Artillery gets all the girls, ask Warren.
We'll lay them on the tables
And win by the chairs in the hall
Side by side.

We finally got ready for war when
Along came a dozen other Corps men
But Arty's got class
So we gave them the arse
Side by side.

Please send the words of any OTU songs from your time at OTU to the Editor.

WHAT SCHEYVILLIANS DO:

A Bayonet for the Phillip Island National Vietnam Veterans Museum (with Dave Sabben, 1/65)

When Dave Sabben was in Vietnam with 6 RAR, he was issued with an AR15 (Armalite) rifle, but did not have a bayonet for it. On the day after the Battle of Long Tan, 19 August 1966, when cleaning up the battlefield all the weapons and kit of the Australian dead and seriously wounded were collected into one place for carriage by APC back to the 1ATF base. Dave took possession of a SLR bayonet and scabbard and wore it as part of his issued kit for some eight months thereafter.

On a later operation, Dave's platoon had a contact resulting in one VC KIA. In his kit was an Armalite bayonet and scabbard, obviously obtained from an American or ARVN or another Allied soldier casualty. Dave then took to carrying that Armalite bayonet for the rest of his tour, leaving the SLR bayonet in his kit bag.



On RTA, the SLR bayonet and scabbard were stored with Dave's military kit. The scabbard was somewhat rusted and marked but the bayonet was in good condition. In 2001, a Masonic Lodge in Victoria requested an artifact. The bayonet and scabbard were then passed into the care of Gary Edwards (former 2RAR) for ceremonial use in the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Masonic Lodge.

The Lodge has been closed for some years and the bayonet and scabbard stored away by Gary. On 29 October 2024, the SLR bayonet and scabbard were presented to the Vietnam Veterans Museum at Phillip Island by (Gary Edwards Left in photo) and accepted by John Methven OAM, founder of Newhaven's National Vietnam Veterans Museum (right in photo). Dave Sabben attended the hand-over.

Travel & Meet Up with Other Scheyvillians (Bernie Houston, 1/65)



Met up with Paul Conti (3/68) and wife Anne yesterday (12 Aug) in Livorno, Italy. Paul has been escaping the WA winter by holidaying in Italy. I (and wife Donnelle) on a Mediterranean cruise and one of the 'Ports of Call' was Livorno. We had a top lunch in a medieval town named Bolgheri.

Found out from Paul that he was originally called up in the 1/65 Draft but was deferred because of studies. Before he finished his studies he married Anne and rolled up to Scheyville with 3/68. I didn't know they had married Officer Cadets at Scheyville (wife not on Base of course) but Paul said that as far as he knew there were three.

Currently in Rome - bloody hot and tourists everywhere.

Frank LeFaucheur added: Cheers Bernie and good on you Mate. Our 1/71 Intake was almost all long-term deferred (some from 1/65 call up!!) and we had plenty with wives, some had kids. Pretty tough for most of them during the six months! Getting our share of rain here. Bon Voyage!

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO:

Barry David Nott, born in Broken Hill, NSW, on 14 November 1945. He completed his secondary education at Broken Hill High School. Barry was called up in 1965 but deferred until 1968. Before entering the Army as a National Serviceman on 17 July 1968 he was employed by the Taxation Department. Being in Broken Hill, Barry enlisted as a South Australian 4720179. In his 'Junior' Term Barry at Scheyville Barry was allocated to 17 Section, 6 Platoon (the Platoon Sergeant was Ken Milner), B Company. His 'Father' was Alan Hall and Barry had a 'brother' in fellow Junior classmate Don Mecham (also a 'Son' to Alan).

At right: 6 Pl B Coy.

Rear Fairweather, Warren, Hall, Ferns, McDuie, McAvoy, Nott, Skeoch. Fr Stanton, Boorman, Hind, Patterson, Mailler Skeoch photo



Barry graduated with his class on 20 December 1968. He was allocated to the Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps (RAAOC) and posted to the No. 4 Base Ordnance Depot (4 BOD) as an OO or 'Orderly Officer'. In the 1960s, 4 BOD was an Adelaide located Army depot.

Barry served on in the Army Reserve and was awarded the 'Reserve Force Decoration (RFD) for 15 years of service as an officer in the Army Reserve. Captain Barry David Nott was awarded the MBE in 1982.

In September 2024 Barry's son, Patric, advised the OTU Association that Barry had a major operation for stomach cancer and has been in hospital for six months, which has brought on dementia. The family has advised that Barry should now be removed from the association website. He has been moved to the 'Do Not Contact' List. Patric advised that 'While Dad was not active with your organisation he always spoke fondly of his time at Scheyville and it was a major part of his life.'



1969 02-03
RAAOC Course:
Middle:
3 Alan Hall,
4 Roger Nation,
5 Barry Nott,
6 Paul Conti
(all OTU 3 68)

VALE:

While Geoff Kendall was not a Scheyville graduate, he was in the Battle of Long Tan with Scheyville 1/65 classmates Gordon Sharp and David Sabben. It is worth having his Vale here.

Geoffrey Martin Kendall was born in Brisbane on 16 July 1941 to Sergeant James Kendall (AIF) and Mary 'Molly' Kendall. He was their third son, followed by two daughters. Geoff was schooled at Marsh Brothers in Ashgrove, Queensland, followed by an electrical apprenticeship. A keen rugby player, Geoff was a part-time rugby coach, while working as a station hand. Not convinced that being a station hand would lead far, on seeing a newspaper advertisement for Army officers, Geoff applied. The educational standard met, he commenced at the Officer Cadet School, Portsea in January 1964. Geoff graduated as a 2nd Lieutenant on 12 December 1964, was allocated to the Infantry Corps and posted to 2 RAR, based at Enoggera in Brisbane. Geoff Marched In to 6 RAR on the day it was raised, 6 June 1965. He went to Vietnam with 6 RAR on 6 June 1966 as Officer Commanding 10



Platoon, D Company. At Long Tan on 18 August 1966, Geoff's platoon was on the left following some bullock wagon tracks, with 1/65's Gordon Sharp's 11 Platoon on their right. 1/65's David Sabben's 12 Platoon was behind Major Harry Smith's Company Headquarters. In the battle that followed, Gordon Sharp and seventeen soldiers died.



Returning to Australia, Geoff was attached to Headquarters Southern Queensland Area from where on 16 April 1968 he was transferred to the Jungle Training Centre at Canungra as an Instructor. He returned to 2

RAR on 26 August 1968.

On 20 January 1969, Geoff was posted to the RAAF School of Languages, being promoted to Lieutenant there on 11 March 1969. He became fluent in Mandarin and on 3 September 1970 undertook Long Term Schooling in Hong Kong, initially as a Temporary Captain. While there he played rugby for the Australian team known as 'The Koalas'. On return to Australia, he accepted a transfer into the Intelligence Corps. Geoff was promoted to Captain and Major during his time with the Intelligence Corps before retiring in July 1988.

Geoffrey Francis Carmody was born in Canberra on 18 December 1946, a brother to Jenny and Shelly, and completed his secondary education at St. Edmund's College, in Griffith, Canberra. He went on to the Australian National University in Canberra and completed a Bachelor of Economic Degree (Honours) in 1968. Geoff found employment as a Clerk in the Bureau of Census and Statistics before commencing his National Service on 29 January 1969 at 1 RTB, Kapooka. Selected for officer training Geoff commenced at OTU Scheyville on 14 February in 23 Section, 8 Platoon, C Company under Corporal Bob Sullivan. With



Class 4/68 being a 'small' one, Sullivan had four 'Sons' from the 'large' 1/69 intake: Geoff Carmody, Ken Finlay, Alan Hudson and Phil Mitchell, who did not graduate. Geoff graduated with his class on 16 July 1969, was allocated to the Education Corps and posted to the 3rd Training Battalion at Singleton, NSW, commencing there on 30 July. He was promoted to Temporary Lieutenant on 10 October 1970. Geoff discharged from the Army on 28 January 1971 and returned to the public service. He completed a Master of Economics at the ANU in 1976



Geoff spent fifteen years with Commonwealth Treasury, covering most policy areas, and including postings representing Australia at the IMF in Washington (1972-74) and the OECD in Paris 1978-1981. From 1984 until 2003 he was engaged within the Australian tourism industry covering both policy affecting tourism and the measurement of the economic contribution of tourism via Tourism Satellite Accounts and had extensive consulting experience across a wide range of policy areas, including taxation, foreign investment, and wages policy.

In 1988 he co-founded Access Economics with David Chessell, remaining with Access for fifteen years. His career philosophy was stated as: "Contributing to good economic policy outcomes. Maintaining a reputation for vigorous, credible and independent economic advice. Being prepared to speak out fearlessly and, if necessary, publicly, on policy matters. Preserve these traditions of the Westminster System as regards advice to government at a time when this seems to be under attack, if not decline."

Between 1989 and 2013, Geoff was involved in eight election platform and policy costing exercises for Opposition parties at Federal, State and Territory level.:

Geoff married Val and they had daughters Christine and Lynda and grandchildren Lachlan, Xanthe and Archer. He died in Canberra on 27 October 2024. A Private Wake was held on 11 November 2024. Geoff will be remembered as a passionate public policy economist who fought for a better Australia.



Alan David Robson or 'Robbo' was born in Melbourne on 1 February 1945 to a teacher father (a farmer's son) while his mother was a farmer's daughter. He went to Melbourne for better education about the age of eight. Robbo completed his secondary education at Coburg High School. He went on to Melbourne University and graduated as a Bachelor of Agricultural Science in 1965. He then completed a PhD in West Australia, arriving in WA the day after marrying Gwen. Their son was born there. Returning to Melbourne, Robbo was employed as an Agricultural Scientist by the Victorian Department of Agriculture when he commenced his long deferred National Service on 28 January 1970 as 3798136. Selected for officer training 'The pay was better!', Robbo commenced at OTU on 13 February. He was allocated to Cpl Jenvey's 12 Section, 6 Platoon, Chauvel Company, along with Cadets Dawson Hann, Hugh Morehouse and David Zach. In Robbo's words 'I was a hopeless soldier!' and a month into the course he was told that it was thought that he would not make it through the course. However, Robbo pushed on and was awarded the Commandant's prize for 'Most Determined to Graduate'. Robbo graduated with his class on 15 July, was allocated to the Ordnance Corps and posted as the Adjutant/Quartermaster to the 6th Central Ammunition Depot at Gladstone, near Port Pirie in SA. Robbo discharged at the end of his National Service on 27 January 1972.



Post-Army Alan went to the Victorian Wheat Institute in Horsham. His daughter was born there. Some time later Robbo was offered a lectureship in plant nutrition at the University of WA, which he accepted, and commenced in 1974. Robbo had some time away from the university at the Grassland Research Institute in 1980. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1983 and the Chair of Soil Science in 1983 and went on to become a university professor. His outstanding contribution to higher education is widely recognised both domestically and internationally.

Professor Robson was Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost of the University of Western Australia from 1993 and Vice Chancellor of the university from 2004 until 2012. The 'Group of Eight' universities was formed from the Australian National University, The University of Western Australia, the University of NSW, the University of Queensland, Monash University and the Universities of Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. Robbo served as Chair of the Group of Eight between 2007-2010 and was Deputy Chair of Universities Australia from 2009-2011.

During his tenure as Chair of the Group of Eight, Professor Robson advocated to increase education opportunities for disadvantaged groups and worked tirelessly to raise the research reputation of Australian universities to ensure they remained internationally competitive.

Robbo was the driving force behind the establishment of the Australian Universities' Consortium, an alliance of leading universities that funds scholarships each year under the John Monash Scholarships Program. The Foundation is deeply grateful for the leadership that Robbo showed as a Director of the General Sir John Monash Foundation (5 October 2011 to 30 November 2021), a Western Australian Selection Panel member to 2022) and an online reviewer (2022 to 2023).

In the Quenn's Birthday awards 2013, Alan David Robson was awarded the Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for distinguished service to tertiary education through governance and administrative to the advancement of scientific and medical research, and to the community.

His service and contribution to Australian society extended well beyond the higher education sector and included roles as Deputy of the Council of the National Library, Member of the Western Australian Science Council, Member of the Board of the CSIRO and Chair of the Museum's Board of Trustees.



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Chair

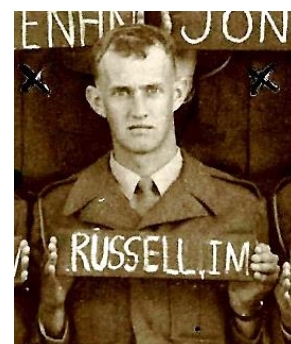
Robbo was a strong believer in equity and access to education, having benefitted from a government scholarship himself as an undergraduate.

In October 2023 Robbo had a relatively simple fall, caused by an infected pelvis. This event was the 'beginning of the end' for Robbo. He was bedridden in a hospice for the last year of his life. His wife, Gwen, is suffering from dementia, and is living in the same hospice. She was able to visit Robbo each day for a short time from her ward downstairs. Emeritus Professor Alan Robson AO, educator, innovator and great friend to many in higher education circles and beyond, died on 30 October 2024. The University held a Memorial Service in Winthrop Hall for Robbo on 15 November 2024. The now wheelchair bound Gwen attended the service for a short time. Robbo leaves behind his widow Gwen, two children and grandchildren.

Classmate Chris Madden said: 'A tragic way to end an outstanding life of service. Robbo made all of us better men, and his classmates will miss him dreadfully. Our condolences go to Gwen and family.'

The University of Western Australia has three interviews with Alan in 2014 at: <https://oralhistories.arts.uwa.edu.au/items/show/70>

Ian Murray Russell was born at Epping, NSW, on 17 November 1947, a brother to Roger (deceased), Denis, Bronwyn and Helen. He completed his secondary education Lismore High School in NSW. Before being called up National Service on 1 May 1968 Ian was employed as a Trainee Teacher with the NSW Department of Education. Selected for officer training, Ian commenced at the Officer Training Unit, Scheyville, on 17 May. He was allocated to Cpl Tony Grundy's 24 Section in Sgt Ian Rafferty's 8 Platoon, C Company. In his Senior Term, remained in 24 Section and was a 'Father' to Colin Smith and Officer Cadet R. J. Trevena who did not graduate.



for

Ian

Ian graduated with his class on 10 October, was allocated to the Signals Corps and posted to the School of Signals in Balcombe, Vic, for Corps Training from where he was posted to 5 Signals Regiment. Ian discharged from the Army 30 April 1970. After National Service Ian joined the NSW Department of Education as a primary teacher. In 1976 he was selected for a special appointment and seconded to Department of Defence to teach at RAAF School in Penang, Malaysia.

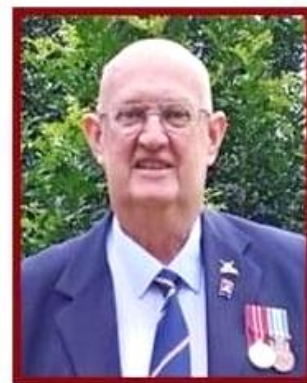


Ian married Robyn Allsopp and the couple had four children: Paul, Linda, Koren and Anita. They would have seven grand-children. Sadly, Robyn died in 2001. Ian later married Phuong.

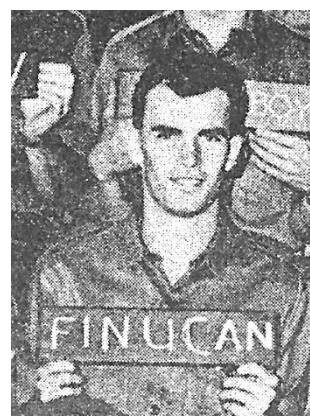
Later in life, for twelve years Ian was the popular Local Post Office 'Postmaster' at the East Lismore LPO business.

Ian was ill for a long time before he died on 17 November 2024 at the Lismore Base Hospital. On 5 December, a Graveside Service followed by a

Memorial Service at the Lismore Heights Sports and Recreation Club were held for Ian. His OTU Classmate, John Brown, spoke on Ian's Army service.



Peter John Finucan was born in Sydney on 17 June 1949. He completed his secondary education at St Benedict's College, in the inner south-west Sydney suburb of Broadway (near Glebe). Peter then attended Sydney University, graduating as a Bachelor of Arts in 1969. He was still studying when he entered the Army as National Serviceman 2794414 at 1 RTB Kapooka on 22 April 1970. Selected for officer training, Peter commenced at OTU on 8 May in 16 Section in Sergeant Humphry's 8 Platoon, Blamey Company. In his Senior Term, Peter remained in 16 Section, now under Corporal Michael Donaghue. His 'Son' was Cadet Trower, who did not graduate. Peter graduated with his class on 2 October 1970, was allocated to the Service Corps and posted to the RAASC Centre for Corps Training the following day. On 1 December 1970, Peter was posted to 31 Supply Platoon. While Peter was serving the period of National Service was reduced to eighteen months, so Peter discharged on 21 October 1971.



Following his Army service Peter and Meridan lived in Sydney for a short period where he practised law with a Sydney firm. They then moved to Maclean on the North Coast of New South Wales where Peter established his own legal practice which serviced the Northern Rivers area until his retirement.

Peter and Meridan lived a full life on the North Coast of NSW with Peter interests including his family, football, surfing and after his retirement Community Radio. They raised three fine children Sam, Alarna and Alexie and were later blessed with seven grandchildren.



Peter Graham, along with Mick Donaghue and Duncan Birt, stayed in touch with Pete and Meridan since their Army days. Peter Graham said: 'Peter was a much-loved member of our class, his great humour, even temper and camaraderie supported his classmates every day. Pete will be greatly missed.'

After a long battle with cancer Peter died on 19 November 2024. His wishes that he be privately cremated have been carried out. Relatives and friends attended the celebration of Peter's life at The Boardwalk Bistro, Yamba Bowling Club, on the NSW North Coast, on Friday 6 December 2024.

CATCH-UP VALES:

David Welsey Eather (Assistant Instructor, OTU) was born in Richmond, NSW, on 15 March 1933 the second son of Frederick Reuben Eather (1893-1964) and Florence Catherine Richards (nee Hulbert, 1911 - 2002). Fred had served in The Great War, enlisting on 7 May 1915. He trained as a Reinforcement for the 15th Battalion, but on arrival in Egypt was transferred into the newly formed 47th Battalion, 12th Brigade, 4th Division. Two weeks later he transferred to the 4th Division's artillery. In March 1917 Fred was wounded, sent to England and returned to the Front. Then, in October 1917, he was gassed. In 1918 Fred was awarded a Military Medal 'For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during the attack on our position opposite Dernancourt and Albert on April 5th 1918.' He also received the 1914/15 Star, The British War Medal and The Victory Medal. Following his father's footsteps, David joined the Army and served in Korea as 27663 with 1 RAR from 7 May to 20 October 1954 and from 30 November 1954 to 12 May 1955.



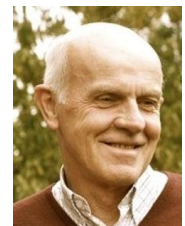
On 15 June 1957, David married Maribel Bridget (nee Williams, born Windsor, NSW, 1 April 1938) at St Matthews Catholic Church, Windsor. One of Maribel's attendants was David's sister Wanda, while David's Best Man was Maribel's brother Herbie. He was also attended by an Army mate John Anderson (probably 25441, John Gordon Anderson, born Richmond 16 October 1934, who served in Korea with David in 1 RAR). The couple would have one child, David James Eather, who died as an infant. By then a Warrant Officer Class 2, 214603 David Eather went



to war again, this time in Vietnam with the Australian Army Training Team from 2 July 1969 to 11 June 1970. In between David found himself posted on staff to the Officer Training Unit, Scheyville with the first intake in 1965 as an 'Assistant Instructor' in the IFT Wing (Individual Field Training). Left: WO2 Eather in Vietnam, AATTV Assoc photo. David died on 23 November 1994 at just 61 years old. He was buried in the Richmond, NSW, Lawn Cemetery. Maribel died on 13 June 2015. She was buried with David.

BOOKS:


Neil Smith's (3/67) Mostly Unsung Military History Research and Publications Summer Catalogue is now available. Email or call Neil at milhis@hotmail.com 03 5971 5565 or 0411 143 041 or Google him at Mostly Unsung Books!



EMAILS TO THE EDITOR:

From: Paul Conti (3/68) to Bernie Houston (1/65) **Date:** 14 August 2024 **Subject:** 2 Scheyvillians in Italy

Hi Bernie. The special mate-ship and bonding of OTU Scheyville lads even though in different intakes is very special and indeed a reward for the training that we shared.

We are now in our latter years and the opportunity to catch up shake hands and look at each other in the eye knowing that we share a unique experience is something to be treasured. Thank you mate  IT
Regards PC.

From: Robin Hunt (3/69) **Date:** 19 August 2024 **Subject:** The Scheyvillian 2 of 2024

The picture of the two WO2s on Page 39 of issue 2 of 2024 reminded me of my exposure to WO2 Quee at OTU during my time at Scheyville in the second half of 1969. I don't believe that Quee was a Drill Instructor (he would have been too senior as a WO2). He taught me Fieldcraft and use of personal weapons - all with his very shrill voice of command. Initially, I got him confused with WO2 Laurie Tillbrook, but Brian Cooper quite rightly corrected me on that point. Does any one else have memories of Brian Quee?

Indeed what do we have on the legendary Laurie Tillbrook ? I certainly remember the latter demonstrating the advantages of the GPMG-60 in front of the rifle butts. He commented on the noticeable kick and then, holding the gun, placed it against his groin and fired a full belt into the butts whilst calling out "It feels lovely, girls!". He also wrote his name in the butts with live ammo whilst holding the machine gun in one hand.

OTU STATISTICS – NS/AIR CADETS

When Scheyvillians talk about intake numbers, sometimes their figures can be a bit inaccurate.

The following are the latest numbers of Graduates and Non-graduates at OTU. There are a few classes that we are unsure of how many entered as there is no paperwork or March In photos available. There also some doubt as to which term, Junior or Senior, the Did Not Graduates (DNGs) left. Again, some classes have this information, some don't. The only certainty is the number of graduates: 1,803 NS and Air Cadets and 68 OCS! Also, another certainty is that 365 graduates served in Vietnam, although some OCS graduates had served in Vietnam before attending OTU and are not counted in this number. DNGs are not included either!

Class	March In	Repeat from previous class & Grad	Class Total	DNG Junior Term	DNG Senior Term	Graduated	Repeat with next class & Grad	Repeat with next class & DNG
65/1	106		106	4	21	76	4	1
65/2	70	5	75	2	27	41	3	2
66/1	117	5	122	3	34	79	6	
66/2	88	6	94		30	54	8	2
66/3	82	10	92	7	20	56	8	1
66/4	58	9	67	8	10	42	6	1
67/1	137	7	144	7	27	97	12	1
67/2	84	13	97	2	18	65	9	3
67/3	58	12	70	1	5	50	8	6
67/4	54	14	68	0	17	43	5	3
68/1	128	8	136	6	25	92	7	6
68/2	95	13	108	14	13	64	12	5
68/3	95	17	112		38	64	9	1
68/4	58	10	68	16	12	36	3	1
69/1	106	4	110	18	10	76	4	
69/2	77	4	81		21	51	9	
69/3	74	9	83	5	15	57	5	1
69/4	52	6	58	5	15	32	5	1
70/1	128	6	134	28	4	92	9	1
70/2	90	10	100	4	14	74	5	3
70/3	65	8	73	3	15	51	4	0
70/4	51	4	56	6	10	35	1	4
71/1	144	5	149	14	24	104	7	
71/2	84	7	91	12	10	62	4	3
71/3	57	7	64	7	23	31	2	1
71/4	110	3	113	20	34	58	1	
72/1	108	1	109	0	25	82	2	
72/2	104	2	106	11	15	77	3	
72/3	60	3	63	10	13	39	1	
72/4	53	1	53	25	5	23		

2593

209

238

550

1803

162

47

The largest March In was Class 1/71 with 144 Cadets, plus 5 Repeats

The largest Graduating Class was Class 1/71 with 104 Graduates (including 1 Repeat).

The smallest March In was Class 4/70 with 51 Cadets, plus 4 Repeats

The smallest Graduating Class was Class 4/72 with 23 Graduates (including 1 Repeat).

However, this low number was due to the end of National Service.

The smallest 'normal' graduating class was Class 3/71 with 31 Graduates (including 4 Repeats).

Dear Neil

My family & I would like to thank you for sending us the hard copy of the Scheyvillian Sep '23. I am attending the 55th OTU reunion this weekend & will organise to be a contributing member to The Scheyvillian. It is well done & worth it.

I would like to convey to all, how very much Ian appreciated the phone calls from OTU & ADF members. It had a powerful uplifting affect on Ian, hearing voices that took him back to past days at OTU & ADF. The camaraderie unquestionably as strong as yesterday.

I'm enclosing what Michele, our eldest daughter wrote for Ian's funeral, that said it all.

*Best Wishes
Annette Paull.*

To my father, Ian Lancefield Paull

Life ... it's like a book, you said, with many chapters and an unfolding story. All the characters of your life beautifully entwined in a prologue, a beginning, a middle and inevitably an end.

Like all stories there are many moments of love, happiness, sadness, tragedy, triumph, failures and achievements.

We are all characters etched in the fabric of your life story. The many chapters that made the landscape of your story, uniquely different.

You were a beloved son, brother, husband, father, uncle, grandfather, great grandfather, and best friend. You leave the legacy of many things to all of us.

Mostly though, you leave us all, missing a wonderful human who loved everyone in his life: family, colleagues, acquaintances, friends ... friends that were like family and of course your adored animals. The low rhythmic drum of a helicopter has always reminded me of you. As a child I found myself always looking skyward, something I seem to have never stopped doing. Whenever I hear that melodic sound, my senses will be awakened to the presence and memory of you. We will all hear you, we will see you, and we will feel you with every beat of those blades.

Like all good books Dad, I didn't want to get to the final chapter, I was afraid of the sad ending, but you so bravely said goodbyes and with such dignity. Then you peacefully slipped away on Friday 26th May and the story changed.

In the words of Thomas Wilde:

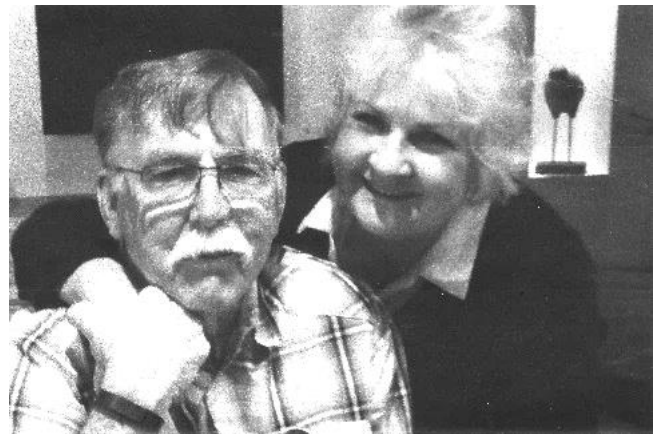
'It's hard to turn the page when someone won't be in the next chapter. But the story must go on.'

Thank you for your story, I will cherish it forever. I'm sure I speak on everyone's behalf by saying, to honour you we shall all continue to write our own story.

Fly high, Ian Lancefield. Miss you already, Dad. xxx

Ian Lancefield Paull died, aged 74, on 26 May 2023 at the Townsville University Hospital.

Right: Ian and Annette Paull.



WHITE CARD The association still hears that some members do not have a White Card. The Veteran White Card provides access to clinically required treatment anywhere in Australia for accepted service-related conditions. All Veterans with at least one day of full-time service, and some Reservists, are able to access free treatment for mental health conditions through Non-Liability Health Care (NLHC) without the need to prove the condition was caused by their ADF Service. In addition, some veterans are eligible for NLHC for cancer and tuberculosis and other ailments. Check with the DVA.

Some states, territories, local government and private providers offer concessions or discounts to Veteran White Card Holders, however, these vary according to your card and the state or territory you live in. Page 12 of the Vet Affairs newsletter of December 2023 gives further details.



OTU ASSOCIATION

2024/25 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Website: www.otu.asn.au

INVOICE ABN 26 390 124 006		Please return by 31 December 2024 Cheques payable to OTU Association	
MAIL TO: Treasurer OTU Association PO Box 672 BALWYN VIC 3103 CONTACT: 0425 729 769 hjmoyle@gmail.com		Annual Subscription 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 Donation to Youth Leadership Development Total Cheque/Cash Enclosed <i>(For Direct Debit payment see below and please remember to update our database or return this form so that your contact details can be confirmed)</i>	
		\$50.00 \$ _____ \$ _____	

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS UPDATE			
Personal Details:		I Have Retired Yes / No	
Title/Rank:		Work Details (If Applicable):	
First Names:		Position:	
Last Name:		Organisation:	
Wife/Partner:		Industry:	
Address:		Address:	
Town/Suburb:		Town/Suburb:	Postcode:
State:	Postcode:	Work Phone:	
Home Phone:		Work Fax:	
Personal Mobile:		Work Mobile:	
Personal Email:		Work Email:	
Personal Web Address:		Work Website:	
Class:		Any Comments:	
Corps:			
Regimental No:			
Awards:			
I am a new member: <input type="checkbox"/> I am a continuing member: <input type="checkbox"/>		I am no longer interested. Please delete me from the database: <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<i>(Please Indicate)</i>	
For Office Use:		You will need to know the following information to pay your Membership using Direct Debit: Bank – National, BSB – 083 298, Account No. 56-687-0611, Reference – Surname and/or Regt No.	

Membership Drive

Please list details below of those who shared the Scheyville experience who you think **may not be current members** of the OTU Association. We will check against current membership lists and follow up non-members.



	NAME	CLASS	ADDRESS	EMAIL	PHONE NO
1					
2					
3					

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES & CONTACTS:

Queensland:	Geoff Daly (4/69)	0403 171 478	seagull@bigpond.com
	Monthly Luncheons: 2nd Thursday of the month		
NSW:	Gary McKay (2/68)	0411 574 019	garymckay@bigpond.com
	Monthly Luncheons 3rd Wednesday of the month		
ACT:	Les Boag (4/68)	0418 210 348	les@boag.biz
	Monthly Lunches Bruce Selleck (2/70)	0407 163 108	bselleck@bigpond.net.au
SA:	Gary Vial (3/69)	0414 762 525	garyvial@ctmc.com.au
	Activities advised through SA Contact List		
Tasmania:	Dennis Townsend (2/70)	0419 313 855	det47@y7mail.com
	Ray Williams (2/71)	0438 438 016	adaptbm@bigpond.net.au
	Quarterly lunches advertised by email		
Victoria:	Frank Miller	0401 140 762	millerfw@netspace.net.au
	Bernie Gleeson	0414 702 905	berjulgleson@bigpond.com
	Monthly Lunches, 2nd Wednesday		
	Brian Cooper	0418 373 874	bctcooper@gmail.com
WA:	David Ward (2/66) WA Chapter Chairman/Hon Treas	0417 927 146	david.ward@taxhut.com.au
	Bernie Houston (1/65) Lunch Co-ordinator.	0437 886 979	bdhouston@bigpond.com
	Jay McDaniell (3/69):	0438 959 050	Jaymcdaniell100649@gmail.com

Quarterly lunches are usually at ANZAC House – (with one of our members as a “guest speaker”). The December lunch is with-partners. Warning-in is required with bookings to be confirmed CoB on the Wednesday before via email to Bernie Houston.

Q STORE (Order through the Website) All prices include Packaging & Handling

2013 40th Reunion Badge (33):	\$5	Right: 40th Reunion	
OTU Lapel Badges (16):	\$9		
OTU Cap Badges (8):	\$9		
1993 OTU Reunion VHS Tape (1):	\$15		
2003 Reunion DVD (6):	\$15		
The Scheyville Experience DVD (1):	\$15		
National Service Officer Recruit Training Film on DVD (2):	\$15	Right: OTU Lapel	
Window Stickers (32):	\$4		
OTU Ties (0):	Sold out, no more will be ordered!		
The Scheyville Experience/ National Service Officer Recruitment Film – USB on demand		\$15	

OTHER ORGANISATIONS & NEWSLETTERS

For those with an interest in the Australian Army's involvement in PNG, the latest issue of *Armi Nius*, the newsletter of the **PIB-NGIB-HQ-PIR Association**, is available online at: www.soldierspng.com
The newsletter theme includes Kokoda Day 2024 plus a summary of recent and future Assn events.

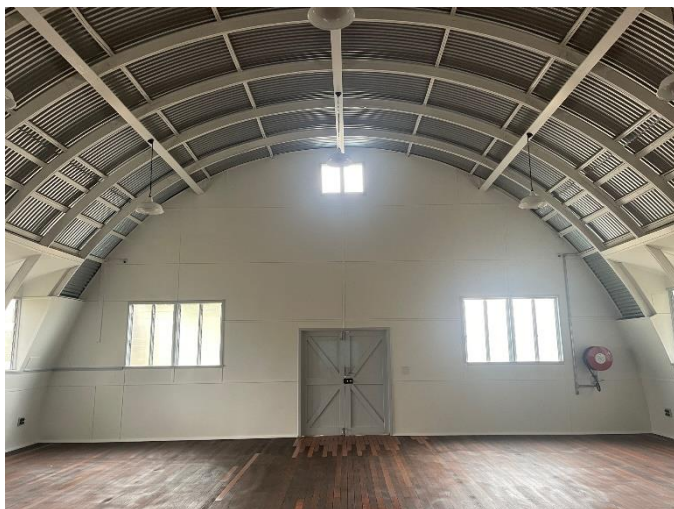


The **Duntroon Society** website is: www.dunsoc.com Their newsletter is available at www.dunsoc.com/newsletters



THE BACK PAGES:

The Scheyville Site:

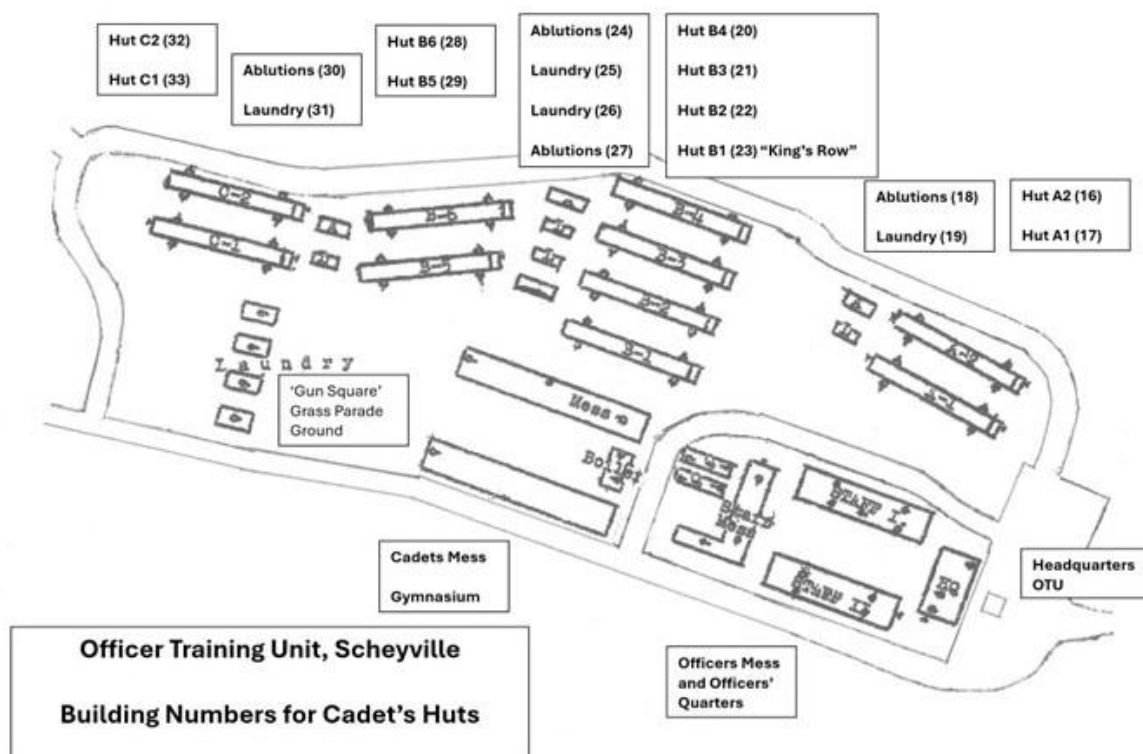


Above left: the new floor in the gymnasium – wait until the ropes are refitted.

Above right: Laying the floor covering in the former gymnasium kitchen where the museum will go!

Below left: the Cadets Mess, now home for military vehicles.

Below right: The Commandants House, formerly the Farm Manager's House – to be restored



OTU crashes in to dual win

National Service Officer Cadets of the OTU at Scheyville had a dual win recently when they met the Combined High Schools in Australian Rules and the NSW Police Cadets in rugby.

At Randwick Military Oval, the OTU cadets defeated the police cadets 17-3 in a fast bruising game in which the fitness and superior football sense of the smaller OTU cadets ensured success.

The OTU cadets were slow in settling down to their usual game, due to the hard tackling of the police forwards, and the backs lacked finish in their moves.

When the attack did straighten, OTU scored and at half-time the score was 8-3, with two tries to OTU and one to the police cadets.

The second half saw no slackening in the hard forward play but in the last 15 minutes the superior fitness of the cadets resulted in three more tries.

Final score: 17-3.

Intelligent hard play by the OTU forwards Reidy, the captain, and Young, paved the way for the elusive and try-starting moves of Brooker, the half-back and Gordon, the five-eighth.

Hard hitting

A large, vocal crowd at Erskineville Oval, saw the cadets defeat Combined High Schools 7.5 (47) to 5.4 (34) in Australian Rules.

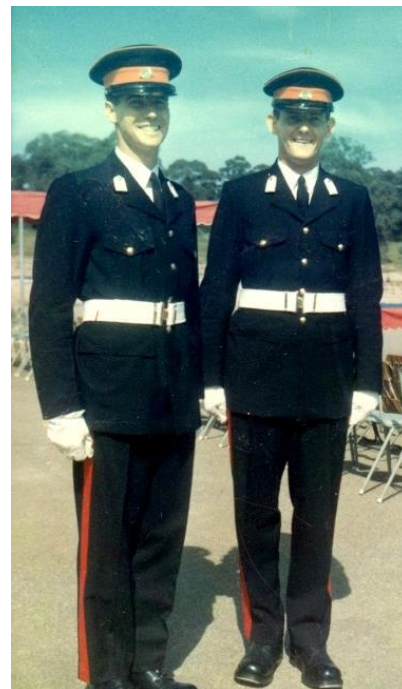
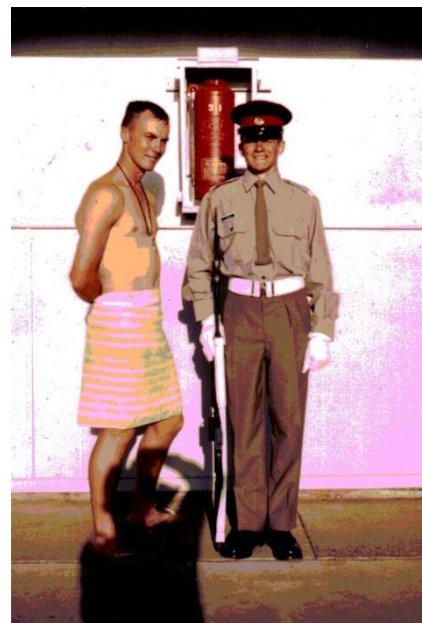
The game kept the crowd anxious and resulted in a display of fast, play-on type of football.

CHS proved to be a pacy, high-flying side as opposed to OTU's heavier, hard-hitting game.

As the game progressed, OTU's fitness, experience and solid play slowly took control and they ran out winners.

Officer Cadet Jones, was best on the field, and Officer Cadets Renowden and Holman provided the pivots for victory.

Sport



Above: Class 1/66 Sport – Australian Rules and Rugby (Rob Young, 1/66)

Right top: Fred Pedler and Les Myers (Pedler Photo).

Right bottom: Dave Callaghan and John Caine (1/67) (Caine Photo). Below: SA MoonUpper photos.

