

Ram Ramblings

The Newsletter of the 107 Field Battery Association



**Special Edition on the 100th Anniversary
of the Gallipoli landing**

From The President's Pen.....

What a feast of commemoration we are having this year. Anzac Day will be on us in no time and I am looking forward to the mini reunion Hilton has planned for Canberra and seeing old friends again over that weekend.

Personally, I have just returned from a month in Russia and Turkey and apart from being robbed in the St Petersburg Metro, it was a great trip.

First, I was in Syktyvkar, 1000km NE of Moscow, for the World Masters Cross Country Skiing Championships, but along with the commemoration theme, I will say a few words about this small city and its part in WW2.

On the original site of the City's 1941 recruitment station, there is a large war memorial to the participation of residents of the city in WW2 as well as the citizen/comrades of the Komi Republic (State). Close by, is a memorial to those of the city who died in the Soviet Afghanistan Occupation and war. Some interesting stats from WW2 from what was then quite a small city are: 13,552 of the city's soldiers were killed (all named on the memorial) and from the small as sparsely populated Komi Republic, 164,189 never returned. For a remote Soviet state in that time, these are pretty huge losses.



Then it was a cold, snowy Moscow for a few days and some of the sites I had not yet visited including the wonderful Tretyakov Gallery of Russian Art. I found a particular French cannon in the Kremlin amongst the many hundreds recovered after Napoleons retreat. (see above) Look at the picture, particularly its muzzle area. Looks like a cannon ball strike from counter-battery fire to me. You make a judgement on its history. And the hourly changing of the sentries of the Kremlin guard is always a great photo opportunity - if you can capture the moment.



I then caught the High Speed 250 kph train to St Petersburg and endured a rather professional robbery in the Metro.

St Petersburg (Leningrad) is worthy of a week. I had 4 days. It is such a European city and quite different to Moscow in architecture particularly. Peter the Great's Island Fortress, the Hermitage Museum and the General Staff Museum are overwhelming. I have included a couple of "gunner" type pictures from Peter the Great's fortress built in ~1783. It was very cold with the famous bone-chilling Leningrad wind.



Then to Istanbul for my first time. Warmer, thank goodness, but still padded jacket weather. I wandered around the old and new towns for a couple of days and then took a tour to Gallipoli and beyond. Gallipoli is ramping up for the ANZAC day ceremonies with tiered seating being erected and quite tight security but it was relatively deserted. I spent a full day walking the battlefield from North Beach, Ari Burnu , ANZAC Cove, Shrapnel Valley, Hell Spit, Brighton Beach, Artillery Road, Lone Pine, Johnston's Jolly, Quinn's Post, The Turkish

Anzac Cove - The beach



Memorial and the Nek and then to Walkers Ridge. It was my first time and I was carried by the mood and feeling of the place to such an extent that I hardly spoke all day. The vista from ANZAC Cove looking up at the Sphinx and Plugge's Plateau was so daunting. The beach itself is so narrow and an attempt by me to scramble up the lower slopes of Plugge's only resulted in a slip and grazed elbows and numerous scratches from the scrubby bush. I think the relatively small Beach Cemetery, also the site of Simpson's grave, was the one that put me in the most sombre mood. The amazing distance gained by the Aussies on the first day, when about a dozen got to Baby 700, is awe inspiring when one looks back toward the landing beach.

The Sphinx from the landing beach at Anzac Cove



These are the Gunners believed to be buried at the Lone Pine Cemetery



John Simpson Kirkpatrick - Private J Simpson's grave at "Beach" War Cemetery

Then it was time to leave for a four day archaeological extravaganza of South Western Turkey. First, Troy, then all points south through Izmir, Ephesus and Pamukkale to bathe in Cleopatra's Pool. All this and I only scratched the surface of this fascinating and friendly country.

Have a great Anzac weekend.

Warren "Noddy" Feakes

The Heritage of the 107 Battery Commander's Sword and Sam Browne

There has recently been some scepticism as to the origin of the Battery Commander's Sword and Sam Browne that "belonged" in the BC's 107 Battery office. I suppose because "I was there" in 1967, there is no doubt in my mind that the sword was presented by a remaining member of the 107th Howitzer Battery Association, 1st AIF, to the BC and men of 107 Field Battery at the Open Day at Holsworthy on 17th June. I gather it was unceremoniously "turfed" out of the office by an unthinking previous BC but was saved by Paddy Durnford and is now held in the museum at Lavarack until some facts can be presented as to its heritage.

The Lineage of 107 Battery.

I refuse to argue about the official lineage of the now 107th and 107th Howitzer Battery of the 1st AIF but I will say that opinions are like "fundamental orifices" in that "everybody has one" and some are full of it. Here however, is a brief factual history of 107 as an artillery sub-unit of the Australian Army with all the bumps and gaps. I believe it's pretty accurate but draw your own conclusions.

107 was originally raised as 28 Battery at "Warren" Marrickville, Sydney, in 1915 and equipped with 18 pounders. Remembering that a Field Artillery Brigade was the then equivalent of a gun regiment today, 28 Battery formed part of 7th Field Artillery Brigade (7th FAB). The Brigade embarked on the SS Argyllshire on 11th May 1916 and arrived in England on 12th July 1916. Following the Gallipoli campaign, the Australian Divisional Artillery was reorganised to match its British counterpart. Initially howitzer brigades of three four-gun batteries were established, with the batteries numbered consecutively from 101. However by the time 7th Brigade arrived in England the howitzer brigades had been abolished and one howitzer battery was allocated to each of the field brigades. 28 Battery was re-equipped with 4.5-inch howitzers and redesignated 107th Howitzer Battery.

107 Howitzer Battery first saw action near Armentieres in early 1917, as part of 3rd AIF Division commanded by General Monash. Subsequently it saw action at Menin Road, Broodseinde, Passchendaele, Morlancourt, Mont St. Quentin*, Messines and the Hindenburg Line. Surprisingly, towards the end of the war, in 1918, the Brigade served with the 27th United States Division (late again). On 3 April 1919 the 7th and 8th Field Artillery Brigades were amalgamated. By the end of April only about 250 men remained in both brigades and on 1 May 1919 2nd Division Artillery and 7th Field Artillery Brigade ceased to function. The remaining personnel were formed into one battery (26 Field Battery) and attached to 4th Field Artillery Brigade for demobilisation. On 18 August 1919, the Brigade was removed from the line of battle.

At Armistice, the battery strength was 181 all ranks; having lost 19 killed in action, 12 died of wounds, one died of illness, 119 wounded and 41 gassed.

On 31st March 1921, 7th Australian Field Artillery Brigade (Militia) was formed under the command of Lieutenant Colonel C.A. Callaghan, CMG, DSO at Mount Street, North Sydney, NSW. The Brigade comprised Brigade Headquarters, 25 and 27 Battery AFA and 107 (Howitzer) Battery. In 1929 the Army gradation lists show the Brigade's designation as 7th Brigade AFA.

In 1929 the Brigade was moved into a riding school's buildings at Warrane Road, Willoughby. "The Menage" (riding school) and stables were situated between Tyneside Avenue and Eastern Valley Way opposite the old Willoughby depot. The riding school was run by the Remount Section, Army Service Corp with assistance from the Veterinary Corp. Also attached to the unit were members of the Corp of Signals. The Brigade was now known as 7th Field Brigade AFA. This is of particular interest to me because I was the ARA Cadre officer and Adjutant of 7 Field Regiment at Willoughby in the early 1970s before being posted as Adjutant School of Artillery.

From 1921-1939 annual camps were held at Liverpool, Holsworthy, Greta, Aberglassyn and Williamtown. Guns and remounts were obtained at depots in the area. The Brigade designation is shown in the gradation lists of 1937 as 7th Field Brigade Royal Australian Artillery (Militia). It was horse-drawn, consisting of four 4.5-inch howitzers, each hauled by six horses. The numbers One and Ten (Sergeant & Bombardier) rode on single mounts. Each pair of horses had a driver and two gunners rode on each of the gun, limber and ammunition wagons. In May 1939, and the Brigade was mechanised.

At the outbreak of WW2, The battery was deployed to Geraldton, WA, as part of 7th Field regiment supporting the 8th Brigade Group. On 1 October 1941, 7 Field Regiment consisting of 25, 26, 27 Field and 107 Howitzer batteries was allocated to full time duty. Late in 1941 the 18 pounders and the 4.5 inch howitzers were withdrawn and 25 pounders issued in their place. 107 Howitzer Battery was disbanded and the personnel were allotted to 26 Battery. Although actively involved in the Defence of Australia, the battery did not see action in WW2.

The Facts



The Sword, Sam Browne and a trophy were presented by Gunner ... Bdr... (later Lieutenant, appointed 5/1/19) Geoffrey Allan Johnson MM of 107th Howitzer Battery, 7th Field Artillery Brigade, Born 1895. So in 1967 he was a sprightly 72 year old and George Barnard, then the BC 107, remembers him well as do I. It was the sword of Major William Leslie Marfell, DSO MiD, who was the second Battery Commander of 107 Battery. Geoff Johnson and the other 1st AIF boys there, told us that it was Bill's sword that

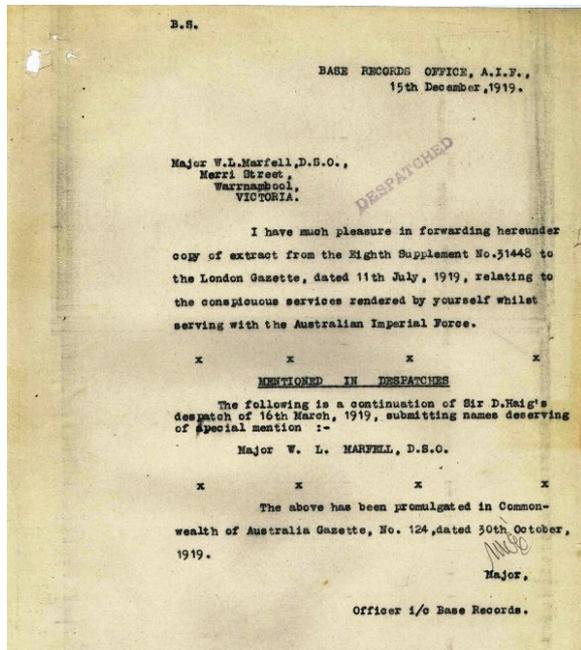
he had left with the Association as he became a bit frail. He died in April 1949, aged 75. The other item presented was a Trophy that was originally won by 107th Howitzer Battery during the 1916-1918 period. It was re-named "The Black Sheep Cup" and dedicated for competition between Left and Right sections of 107 in any competition or games. The items are seen being placed on the plaque and shelf by Gunner Clissold, at that time the youngest member of the Battery.

You can read all about Major Marfell ; All 51 pages of his service history, at <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/NAAMedia/ShowImage.aspx?B=8214811&T=PDF>

Of particular interest is his length of service before WW1. He was born in October 1884 and before his enlistment in April 1916 he spent 15 years in 46th Battery AFA of the Garrison Field Artillery

(from age 16), the last four years as an officer and commander of 46th Battery. He served until 1920.

Captain Marfell was court martialled in January 1917 and awarded a severe reprimand, yet he was promoted to Major 7 months later. I cannot find the offence although the proceedings are registered in the Australian Archives.



Marfell was Mentioned in Dispatches (MiD) after the Armistice in 1919, perhaps for generally being a good bloke in the war. However, he was awarded a Distinguished Service Order for a particular action on 30 August 1918.

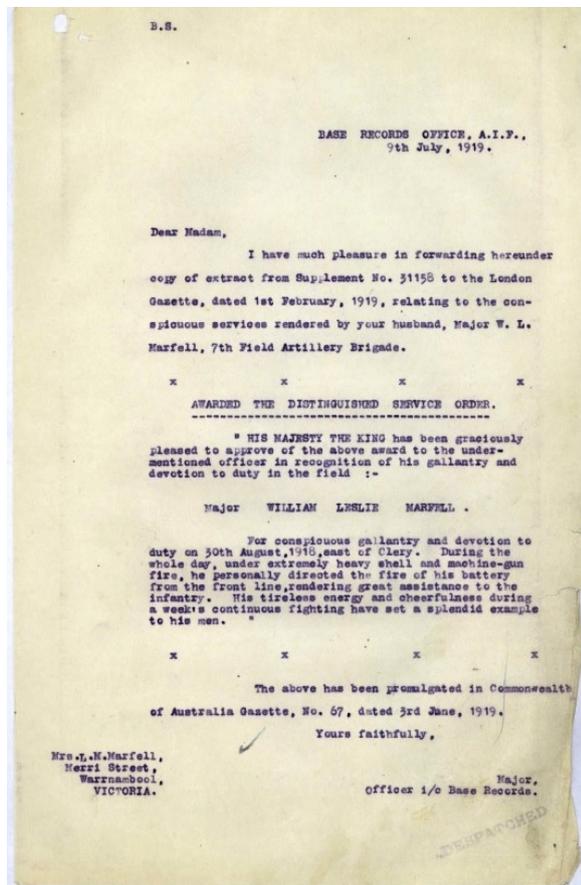
Marfell's DSO

*I have researched this as far as I can go "by connections" because I am unable to find his actual citation, just a letter to his wife from Base Records AIF. I suggest that he was supporting the advance of Australian, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Divisions on Peronne/Mont St Quentin after or around crossing the Somme at Feuilleres (west of Peronne) and taking Clery-sur Somme (north-west of Peronne) 23rd to 31st August 1918. There were 8 Victoria Crosses won by Australians in this battle.

This was part of the Battle of Mont St Quentin as described in chronological sequence at <http://www.anzacsinfrance.com/1918/>

See

https://www.awm.gov.au/histories/first_world_war/page_800_to_810. It's really worth a read. I suspect the "observing officer with his telephone was lying out among the Infantry" - on top of page 800 could be Marfell, "East of Clery" - "Directing the fire of his battery from the front line". Entirely separate references



No. 5 A.G.H.
A.I.F. Q.S.
INVALID
AUSTRALIAN HOSPITAL
Pathological Laboratory.

19
Marfell, W.L. No. Rank Major
Unit 107 H Bty Ward Age

Diagnosis
of Specimen Routine
ation Required

6-12-1919
Rank Major
A.A.M.C.

Diagnosis Report
Nil abnormal detected

16-12-1919
M.O. in charge of Pathological Laboratory.
This form to be rendered in Duplicate.

As for the fact that Major William Marfell DSO MID, was the Battery Commander of 107 Howitzer Battery 7FAB, in action in France and later, there is no doubt. An irrefutable source document, as far as I am concerned, is on Page 32 of his service records. Although after Armistice, it is a pathology report showing Major Marfell and his unit as 107 (H) Battery. He had the flu.

There are also a few sources showing that earlier, he was given command, as a Captain, of a composite battery consisting a section of 107 Bty and a section of 108 Bty, called D3 Battery, around 25/26 February 1917 for a large allied "push" that I am yet to identify from the Op Order.

STAFF FOR RIGHT GROUP. C.O. - Major F.P. Derham D.S.O.
Adj. - Lieut. T. Morrell.
C.O. - 2/Lt. G.L. Millor.

D.A.C. will supply: 2 Clerks (1 draughtsman & 1 Typist)
8 Signallers.
1 Armament Artificer.

7th. & 8th. F.A. Bdes: 2 Telephones each.
will supply

The above officers and men will report to Major Derham at Right Group Headquarters at 10 a.m. 28th instant.

STAFF FOR D/3 Bty. C.O. - Capt. W.L. Marfell.

The Sections from the 107th & 108th Batteries will be detached with 1 Section Commander, 4 Telephonists, and 2 telephones each.

2/Lieut. Lipp, 8th. F.A. Brigade will be attached to this Battery.

These Officers and men will report to Capt. Marfell at the 107th Battery at 10 a.m. 28th instant.

ACKNOWLEDGE.

Headquarters, 26.2.1917. Major R.A. B.M., R.A., 3rd Aust. Divn.

32
Appendix No 2
Copy No. 51

SECRET

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY
OPERATION ORDER NO.10.

Reference Map:- HOUELINES 36.N.W.2 11/10.000.
Scale 1 parts of.
Edition 6. (redrawn) C.

The Third Australian Divisional Artillery will take over the Artillery support, of the whole divisional front at an early date.

The arrangements will be as follows:

LEFT GROUP.	30th. Battery	} Will remain.
	28th. Battery	
	108th. Battery (2 Sections)	
CENTRE GROUP.	28th. Battery	} Will remain.
	26th. Battery	
	107th. Battery (2 Sections)	
RIGHT GROUP.	Will be made up as follows:	
	27th. Battery	- From 7th. F.A. Brigade
	31st. Battery	- " 8th. "
	D/3 Battery	- " (1 Section 107th. Bty. 1 Section 108th. Bty.)

C.O. - Major F.P. Derham D.S.O.
Adj. - Lieut. T. Morrell.
C.O. -

Group Commanders will arrange positions for these Batteries to cover the whole of the Group zone, and they should also be able to cover the subsidiary line from these positions without moving.

Left and Centre Group Commanders will inform D.A.H.Q. of any alterations necessary in the positions of their Batteries. Major Derham will inform D.A.H.Q. of the positions to be occupied by the incoming Batteries.

All extra communications necessary will be laid immediately.

On the order to carry out this scheme, the 175 Bde. and "I" Battery R.A. will occupy reinforcing positions as follows:-

A/175.	- 2 Sections C.26.C.41.05	Att. Left Grp.
B/175.	- 1 Section C.27.C.10.02	Left Grp.
		Att. Right Grp.
D/175.	- 1 Section remains	- Att. Right Grp.
		1 Section reinforces 108th. Bty.

Right 26th/let. Mar. - A/175. Bty. withdraws and moves into position at C.26.C.41.05 - 4 guns.
C.27.C.10.02 - 2 "

107th. Bty. 1 Section moves into position at I.S.a.6.6.

All arrangements to be made between Group Commanders.

Major F.P. Derham D.S.O. will take over the command of Right Group, and Capt. W.L. Marfell of the composite Howitzer Battery at 10 a.m. 28th Mar. (Composite How. Battery will be called D/3 Battery)

All Reliefs will be carried out a Section at a time.

D.A.H.Q. TO BE INFORMED ON COMPLETION OF MOVES ORDERED.

AMMUNITION. 27th. Battery will take over the ammunition dumped at A/175.
31st. Battery will arrange to transfer all its ammunition to the new position, less 300 rounds for the incoming Section.

All 18 Pdr. batteries changing positions will fill up their echelons from their present positions, and dump this amount at their new positions.
No re-arrangement of ammunition will take place among the Howitzer batteries.

Maybe this is enough to satisfy the sceptics.

Cheers, Warren "Noddy" Feakes, President 107 Fd Bty Assn.

Around the Water Cart: Furphies and other good useful and often useless information acquired, scrounged and sometimes stolen by your Secretary and others.



Artillery adds dignity to what would otherwise be a vulgar brawl.
Frederick the Great



Sadly, more fine Black Sheep accept their final posting to the Great Gun Park.
End of Mission, members, job well done.

Lee John Smith bravely accepted his final posting to the Great Gun Park this morning as detailed below by Barry. Lee or 'LJ' served in the Battery as a gunner signaller with the BC's Party then as a FO Sig with C Company 2 RAR/NZ, in Townsville and SVN then returned to Townsville with the Battery before taking his discharge on the successful completion of his National Service obligation. Lee attended the Reunion Townsville 2005 and has been a member of the Association since. He lived for many years at Buffalo River near Myrtleford in the Victorian Alps where he was unfortunately diagnosed with a brain tumour two months ago. He moved to Bright for his last days. Our thoughts are with LJ's sister, Lath Piazza, and her family. Thanks to Barry for the photo of young fit 'LJ' at Nui Dat in 1970.



From: barry.artup@bigpond.com

Subject: Vale - LJ Smith

Date: Tue, 3 Mar 2015

Hi Hilton, It is my sad duty to inform you that LJ Smith passed away this morning after being diagnosed with a brain tumour about two months ago. Tim Mooney, Dave McGhee and myself will be attending. Thanks Barry Artup.

Terry Beckman bravely accepted his final posting to the Great Gun Park. His widow, Anne reported, *"I am sad to have to inform you that Terry died on the 3rd January this year. He battled pancreatic cancer for 2 ½ years with dignity and strength but as with this type of cancer there is very little survival rate (3% has been mentioned) I am sure that you will inform the other Rammers and I wish you all health and happiness. Sincerely ANNE Beckman"*

And from Joh Eaton; *It was with great sadness that I received the news of Terry's passing. Terry was a National Serviceman and I served with him at Holsworthy in 1966 and Malaya in 1967-68. Terry was attached to the Headquarters section and was the only person I have ever seen who could spend two weeks in the jungle and not only did he not seem to not work up a sweat, but his uniform always looked like it had just been freshly washed and pressed. He was one of nature's gentle men, and I never heard a bad word about anybody pass his lips. He lived in the next room to mine at camp in Bukit Terendak, and unlike the rest of us never seemed to go out to the Bars, sample the delights of the local ladies or to drink far to much beer.*

He did however have one very annoying habit that drove other diggers in adjoining rooms to absolute distraction, Terry had purchased a reel-to-reel tape recorder that looked a lot like the control tower at a major airport and was about the same size and power.

To this recorder he had a very good set of earplugs and he would plug himself into this contraption and play it until the early hours of the morning. Because of the quality of this unit not a sound of the music could be heard, what could be heard however was Terry singing along with the music at the top of his voice ,until one or more of his disgruntled neighbors would storm into his room and unplug the power.He would however not take the hint and repeat this night after night, and it was only that Terry was such a nice bloke that nobody seemed not to take offence.

I only saw Terry one more time 40 years later at the 2008 Sydney reunion, and it was if the intervening years had not passed, he was still a great bloke. RIP Terry, Jon Eaton

Michael Sullivan accepted his final marching orders to the Great Gun Park. As notified by Peter Bruce below, I relay the passing of Michael Sullivan. Mick was a member of HQ Battery in Townsville and Vietnam and was the L/Bdr FO Assistant of the Forward Observer party HQ Battery provided to Whiskey Company 2RAR/NZ. As such that FO party was under command of 107 Battery from 7 May 1970 until Whiskey Company returned to its parent unit the 1st Battalion RNZR in Singapore, in October 1970. Those who had contact with Mick will never forget his cheeky smile and attitude, regardless of the situation confronting him. Our thoughts are with Glenda and family. There are photos of Mick on pages 242 and 243 of the Battery Book, '107 Field Battery, Australia, Malaysia Vietnam'. From: Peter Bruce.net.au - Date: Sat, 14 Mar 2015 20:21:55 +1100

Hello everyone, Sad news I'm afraid. Mick Sullivan died on Thursday this last week. No details of funeral at this stage. Mick's wife Glenda rang me with the news. Mick had apparently been quite sick but never let on when I was talking to him just over a week ago. Family are rallying around. I will advise of funeral details when I find out. Perhaps a few Old Boys from Victoria may be able to attend? RIP Mick Sullivan. More to follow. Peter Bruce, OAM, JP President 4 Fd Regt (SVN) Association

Anzac Day 2015in Canberra, we will remember our friends who are no longer with us. Those known from the recent times are listed in the Vale on our website.



However this day represents 100 years since the Australian Imperial Force landed at ANZAC Cove at Gallipoli. Although 107 Howitzer Battery did not see service at Gallipoli, it was in the early stages of being formed in Sydney and subsequently served on the Western Front as part of 7th FAB, part of the 3 Division AIF. It is appropriate to remember those from 107 Howitzer Battery who lost their lives in that massive conflict, the Great War.

FAB stands for Field Artillery Brigade. This is the Great War equivalent of our current RAA Regiment. In 1916 to 1919, 7FAB, 3rd Division AIF, comprised of 25 Battery, 26 Battery, 27 Battery and 107 Battery. 25, 26 & 27 were Field Batteries with 18 Pounder guns and 107 the Howitzer Battery with 4.5 inch guns. In addition there was Headquarters staff of around 70 men.

107 Battery Killed in Action WW1: Bdr Pember R.M. 1 Feb 17, Gnr Walsh E.P 1 Feb 17, Mjr Patterson G.H. 14 Apr 17, Sgt Ladd B.6 Jun 17, Bdr Richards W.E. 24 Jun 17, Cpl Cade J.F 8 Jul 17, Gnr Biggar J.K. 8 Jul 17, Dvr Tompkins W.E. 23 Jul 17, Gnr Hill W.H. 21 Jul 17, Gnr Gibbs R.E. 10 Aug 17, Driver Pettitt F.J. 23 Sep 17, Lnt Rutledge H.F. 9 Oct 17, Gnr McColgan 15 Oct 17, Cpl McGregor G. 22 Jun 18, Dvr Holmes J.F. 8 Aug 18, Sgt Gillespie M.M. 21 Aug 18, Gnr Bezer H.J. 22 Aug 18, Gnr Gilson J.N. 21 Oct 18, Gnr Lakin F.H. 23 Oct 18.

107 Battery Died of Wounds WW1: Dvr Smith P.W. 6 Jun 17, Gnr Payne R.S. 23 Jun 17, Dvr McPherson D. 23 Jul 17, Gnr McRobert J.W. 20 Sep 17, Lnt Cooper W.S. 22 Sep 19, Gnr Morley F.W. 19 Oct 17, Pte Strong 20 Oct 17, Dvr Kendall H. 20 Oct 17, Sgt Capel R. 6 Apr 18, Cpl Long A.B. 6 Apr 18, Gnr Tully J.K. 22 Aug 18, Gnr Lawrence J. 6 Oct 18.

107 Battery Died of Illness WW1: Dvr Bishop G.H. 19 Nov 17. (Ranks are listed using the abbreviations of the time. Ed)



WE SHALL REMEMBER THEM - LEST WE FORGET

From the Battery Commander, Major James Casey: *“Just a quick update from the Battery: Since returning in December from their tour as Rifle Company Butterworth in Malaysia (fittingly the 107th rotation of the RCB), the Battery has been focusing their efforts on getting back to the basics of gunnery. The Butterworth task has meant that the majority of the gunners in the Battery have been 'off the tools' for some six months, making the 'back to the basics' approach all the more important at the start of the year. This has also helped the command team to settle into their stride; the Battery Commander, Battery Captain, Battery Sergeant Major, Battery Guide and Battery Commander's Assistant are all new march-ins to the Battery.*

“During March, the Battery undertook Exercise FIRST RUN with the majority of the Regiment. Considering how long the gunners have been 'off the tools', the exercise was a success for the Battery - there were few mistakes, and no major incidents. We did have a soldier trip whilst carrying a shell (45+kgs), severely breaking one of his fingers. While full credit goes to the young gunner for trying to prevent the fuze from striking the ground, we are hopeful his finger will be saved and he is back punching bombs with the Battery sooner rather than later.

“Immediately following our contribution to Ex FIRST RUN, we shifted our efforts to shooting in support of an Air Force course that qualifies Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs - formerly known as 'Forward Air Controllers' or 'FACs'). While slow and frustrating at times, the opportunity to conduct some training around the Air Force's flying schedule allowed us to build on the training conducted during Ex FIRST RUN.

“The Battery is now back in the Barracks, cleaning up and 'refitting to fight'. After a short stint of leave over Easter, April will be full of preparations for the Regiment's 55th Birthday parade, which will take place on 01-02 May. We will be taking the opportunity to celebrate the Battery's 50th Birthday at the same time, rather than having our Old Boys and their families try to come up to Townsville twice in the one year. For those who are able to join us, we will have an open day during the afternoon on the afternoon of Friday 1st of May. Afterwards we will open the Battery's bar (the Sheep Dip), where the gunners are looking forward to sharing a beer and having a yarn with the Old Boys. We look forward to showing you how the Battery has changed (for better or for worse) in the last couple of years.

If you haven't seen the new guns, our Bushmaster Command Post vehicles or our new observer equipment, it will be a unique and interesting opportunity.

“From mid-May until late July, the Regiment will be bouncing from exercise to exercise with a short stint of leave in late June.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as are able to join us in May, and will keep you posted on what is happening with the Rampant Rammers. Ubique.

Major James Casey, BC Rams

A previous report from the Battery Commander can also be found on our website.

And from BSM Jason Bourke:

Good morning Hilton, My name is Jason Bourke the current Battery Sergeant Major 107th Battery 4th Regiment. I understand that the BC MAJ James Casey has already made contact with you to submit an article for the upcoming 'RAM Ramblings'. I am pleased to have learned that I have been posted back to 107th Battery, 4th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, as a Battery Sergeant Major, with effect from 19 January 2015.

My previous service has consisted of several regimental and instructional postings which include the 4th Field Regiment, 108th Battery as a Detachment 2IC; 1st Field Regiment, 105th Battery as an Operator Command Post Bombardier, Forward Observer's Assistant and Detachment Commander; and 4th Regiment, 107th Battery as a Detachment Commander, Operator Command Post Sergeant, Battery Commander's Assistant and Battery Guide.

I have deployed on operational service in East Timor with the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) as a Rifleman, on Operation WARDEN; Timor Leste with 6 RAR as part of the Civil-Military Cooperation Team on Operation CITADEL; 1 RAR as a Platoon Sergeant on Operation ASTUTE; twice to Afghanistan with 1 RAR as a Battery Commanders Assistant from June 2009 and February 2010 on Operation CATALYST; and as a Liaison Officer for the 2nd Field Artillery, US Army in 2011.

I am married to Kylie, my wife of 12 years, and at this stage we have no children; however, we plan to start within the next 12–24 months. I still manage to play sport, particularly Rugby Union and Cricket, although most of my spare time is spent travelling with Kylie.

I was posted to the School of Artillery as an instructor within the New Equipment Training Team managing the Digital Terminal Control System.

I am looking forward to the challenges that the Regiment and Battery environment brings and to be working with soldiers from 107th Battery again. If there is anything that we as a Bty can do for the association please let me know.

Regards Jason Bourke

J.P. BOURKE

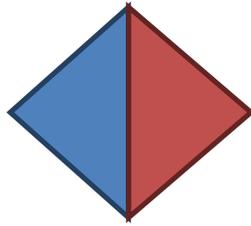
Warrant Officer Class Two, Battery Sergeant Major

Correction: In the last edition the gremlins attacked the paragraph on 106 Battery regaining their guns, the gremlins (or was it that cheeky young second lieutenant from years long gone?) infiltrated the copy and the title appeared as 107 Battery. Be assured that 107 Battery has retained its guns continually since re-raising in 1965. It was in fact 106 Battery that has been re-raised for the third time, and will now receive its guns in the form of four M777 light 155 mm guns in 2016/7.

Colour Patch. Also in the last edition was a contributed article containing the patch of 4th Regiment. Our eagle-eyed expert of patches, Chris Jobson, picked that the

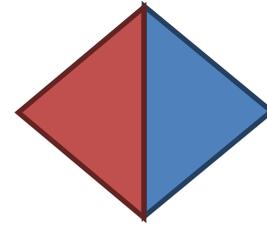
patch shown was in fact back the front. To clear up the correct display of patches, and the National flag on aircraft, Chris provided the following.

4th Regiment



(as seen on signage, in documentation and worn on the left shoulder)

On signage and documentation the 'leading edge' (the blue section) is facing THE 'right' (the 'left' as seen by the observer), and on clothing to the wearer's front.



(as worn on the right shoulder and on the right-hand side of the puggaree)

The 'leading edge' (the blue section) is facing the wearer's front.

* The patch has a grey border around it.



The ANF as seen on the port (left-) side of an aircraft.

(in both cases the 'Jack' faces towards the front

The ANF as seen on the starboard (right-) side of an aircraft.

of the aircraft)

From Kerry Cooke in Sydney, Hello again Hilton, I would dearly like to attend the re-union as I feel that Canberra would be the best place in OZ to celebrate the Anzac Centenary. Of course I'd love to meet the blokes again and do the tour of the AWM [It's been 30 plus years since I've last seen it] but in particular I'd like to see the 18 pounder. I'd even be happy to march behind the gun and dodge the horse apples, but, despite my best unselfish efforts to share myself around, I find even I can't be everywhere. However, I'll try hard to make it, even if it's a last minute effort. I've found this story of a WW1 artillery battle involving 13 pounders which is probably the little brother of the 18 pounder and I found it very interesting as it's the first time I've heard of guns direct firing upon each other over open sights.

FATE AND GLORY. BATTERY L, ROYAL HORSE ARTILLERY, NE'RY, FRANCE. Sept 1, 1914, Battery L RHA [known as The Horse Gunners] were hoping for a rest near the village of Ne'ry after weeks of fighting and withdrawing from the battle of Mons. They knew friendly forces were to the west and French cavalry [Cuirassiers, known to the Brits as Coursers,] were on the ridge overlooking them. However, during the night, the French withdrew without informing the battery and shortly after 2x6 gun German batteries and support units moved in. At dawn an alert gunner saw through a telescope German spiked helmets on the ridge. Yelling a warning, he raced through the bivouac just before the first shells came howling in blasting men, horses and equipment to pieces.



Yet the gunners reacted as calmly as if they were on the firing range in far away peaceful England and went into their drills to bring their guns into action and begin returning fire.

Three guns were quickly put out of action and the fourth and fifth guns managed to get several rounds away before also being put out of action. Only number 2 gun continued firing and now 12 German guns concentrated their fire on them at 600 yards range, almost point blank.

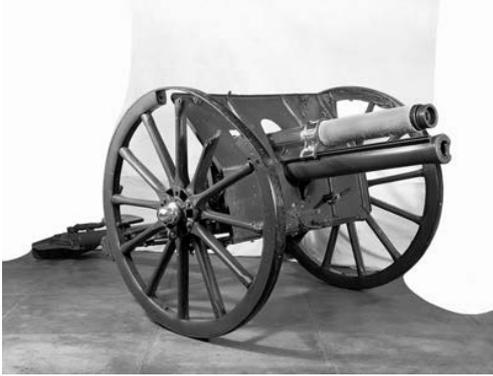
Amid dead, dying and wounded men, dead and crippled horses and smashed equipment, number 2 gun returned fire as quickly as shells could be fed into the smoking hot breech. Everyone available cast around to undamaged caissons to bring shells to the gun and keep the fire returning. Some assistance was afforded when a nearby squadron of dismounted cavalrymen gathered in a sunken road and began to lash the ridge with the famed British 'mad minute of musketry'. A Vickers machine gun was also brought up and added its weight of fire upon the ridge.

Several German guns went out of action yet still the shells rained in, killing and wounding more men, yet still they carried on, many with multiple injuries. One officer with severe wounds crawled between the limber and gun to bring shells forward. Gunner Derbyshire [Hello John, an ancestor of yours?] continued to operate the gun, despite having blood streaming from his nose and ears from the muzzle blast. Still the action raged and the nearby cavalrymen would pause from time to time to give the gallant gunners a rousing cheer. An officer ignored the metal storm and stood erect beside the gun and observe the fall of shot and calling corrections and so put 3 German guns out of action.

But then an airburst directly above the gun killed the officer and severely wounded the remaining 4 gun crew but, no doubt pumped up with adrenalin, duty and determination they continued on until two passed out from loss of blood. Yet the last two carried on, one serving the gun and the other bringing shells forward until, weak from loss of blood and out of ammunition they could go no further.

For two hours the uneven battle raged so how did number 2 gun survive? Perhaps the God of War looked down on the single gun and its gallant crew and smiled. Who knows? Yet the time bought allowed Battery I of the Horse Gunners to bring their guns up nearby and commence to pulverise the ridge with rapid fire and also vengeance. An exhausted gunner was later heard to say "I've never heard grander music!" A British cavalry counter attack swept over the ridge without opposition and found all the debris of a routed enemy, destroyed guns, smashed equipment, scattered shells, abandoned small arms and ammunition [sadly]wounded and crippled horses and, most telling of all, 4 battle worthy field guns, 2 still loaded and unfired.

After reading this story I'm certain you'll agree with me that Napoleon was right when he called artillery "The Queen of the Battlefield" that I now totally understand the term "Stick to your Guns!" and I'm very, very proud to be a Gunner!"



From another book of mine and I quote: *“The affair at Ne’ry became one of the most celebrated episodes in the opening months of the war. The British were outnumbered and overwhelmed, but pluck and tenacity won out. The Germans were beaten and three VC’s were won that day. Out of the battery’s 6 guns, only one was fit to be driven away. It was returned to Britain, and in 1919 the famous Ne’ry gun was amongst the first artillery pieces to arrive at the Imperial War Museum’s first exhibition at the Crystal Palace.*

It became one of main focal points of the display and every year on Sept. 1st a large laurel wreath was reverently placed on the gun to commemorate the battery’s gallant stand and heavy losses, a practice that continued into the 1950’s. Battle-scarred and damaged, the gun’s physical presence provides a tangible, evocative link with the terror of that day. A hundred years on, it remains one of the most powerful objects in the museum’s collection”.

If you’re ever in London and you visit the museum, if you find the Ne’ry gun and listen for few moments you may faintly hear the shouts of the gunners and the thunder of the guns! Also in London it will be worth a visit the memorial to war animals, from carrier pigeons to elephants, and the inscription that reads “ May God bless the gallant war animals, for they had no choice!” (Thanks Kerry, great historical story. Ed)

A Quiz for very bright Rammers, with thanks to Mim Lunney

There are only nine questions. This is a quiz for people who know everything! These are not trick questions. They are straight questions with straight answers.

1. Name the one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends.
2. What famous North American landmark is constantly moving backward?
3. Of all vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
4. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
5. In some liquor stores, you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle. The pear is whole and ripe, and the bottle is genuine; it hasn’t been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
6. Only three words in Standard English begin with the letters ' dw' and they are all common words. Name two of them.
7. There are 14 punctuation marks in English grammar. Can you name at least half of them?
8. Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form except fresh.
9. Name 6 or more things that you can wear on your feet beginning with the letter 'S.'

Answers later in this RAM Ramblings.

Nashos and Regulars, another poem from George Mansfield.

I recently watched a video of 5RAR, (an infantry battalion) returning from Vietnam and memories flowed. It was a time of military expansion including two years national service for a portion of Australian 20 year olds and decided by birthday dates drawn from a barrel. They

were impressive young men who became tough, disciplined and determined soldiers. History shows that regardless of dangers they never faltered in their duty.

They came from all walks of life; quickly adapted to the mad discipline of army routine and yet never lost that wry Aussie sense of humour and could be relied upon to create mischief. They were magnificent.

To the credit of the Army at that time, it is true to say that after initial basic training, it was difficult to identify a Regular from a Nasho. Indeed, many conscripts in a short time became junior officers or NCOs and commanded troops in battle.

In a troubled and complex world, the thought of a **modified national service training scheme to enhance personal and collective values for our youth** should always be considered. After all, we wouldn't want such a precious national asset to become soft, indifferent, wrapped in cotton wool and not able to scale those challenging trees of life to compete in an ever shrinking planet where the rule of competition in life is win or lose and where there is "no quarter." Or would we?

In the meantime while Canberra blunders and bounces from one brick wall to another, please crack a tinny with me and drink to those magnificent Nasho bastards and their regular ugly counterparts who did our Nation proud. GM

Our Nashos Did Us Proud

Perhaps you were working in a bank or shearing sheep
Whacking a ball for six or flirting with a sheila down the street
When marbles rattled and your birthday tumbled in the draw
Gawd, fair dinkum, talk about the bloody short straw

You took the oath, then copped a medical and needles too
Quickly learnt that in the army there was always a long queue
Got to know the ARA mob who became brothers to you
Then you went to war because Canberra Suits told you to

The rugged mountains and paddy fields became your home
Soaking rain and stifling heat as with rifle and pack you did roam
No matter if Regs or Nashos, you all drank from the same cup
Sharing, caring and then grieving when a comrade's number was up

Choppers, ambushes, mines and bunker systems became your life
The grim reaper was busy as was the surgeon's knife
Long Tan, Balmoral, Coral, Binh Ba and other places you did fight
Always with purpose and for what you believed to be right

On return, how proud you marched through cheering crowds
Carrying proud colours with Band and beating drums so loud
The sweet unforgettable embraces with loved ones at last
The curtain of war finally fell, leaving on stage a battle weary cast

As is always the way of life with shell, grenade, knife and gun
The price you paid was a bitter and costly one
The fallen are remembered on sacred walls with pride and pain
Others with invisible wounds suffer sleepless nights again and again

Now in the early winter of life you reflect on where you've been

Comes the pride and sometimes doubt of that military scene
Let me proudly say of you and your regular army comrades too
All of you were “chips off the old ANZAC block” and just as true blue
Gmansfor©January2015

Doc replaces old but ‘not so faithful’ off road boat and caravan-towing vehicle. I went into a local car dealers the other day to drop a GST exemption and a sales tax exemption for a veteran and saw a car sitting there saying buy me, which of course I did. I just can’t trust the one that I have now as it has let me down once and was not suitable for going off road. I bought a brand new second hand car it is a 11/2009 Isuzu D Max LS 3ltr 4X4. It has 144.350kms on the clock, however it is diesel so that really doesn’t count as it is just run in for a diesel. It is in showroom condition with not a scratch or stone chip anywhere on the body or underneath. It has the following on it:



ARB canopy· ARB bulbar· Old man emu shockers· UHF & roof console· Duel battery system with circuit breakers instead of fuses (don’t know if that makes a difference)· Safari snorkel· Tow bar with electric brakes· Diesel chip· Tub Liner· Side steps· TJM springs all round· Fire extinguisher· Reversing camera· Extra protection pan underneath.

It had \$28,000.00 on it, however with my trade in of \$8000.00 (I would have been happy with \$6000.00) GST exemption of \$2545.45 and a bit of haggling I got it for \$16954.55. There was also a very nice looking 2011 Jeep there too, but I spoke to my mechanic and he said do not get the Jeep as servicing & parts are expensive. I also had a chat to a mate who was a mechanic on the Ambulances and said exactly the same thing.



A couple of other people said the same thing. Apparently a Jeep built before 2014 are not very reliable. I took notice of them plus if you do break down anywhere parts for Isuzu’s are very easily obtained as they use a lot of Holden parts in them. All that I have to do now is to get my RSL number plates on. Ken Barclay

PS: The blue Mazda with “NAM65” plates and a patriotic paint job has nothing to with Doc’s story, just thought that this was a good place for a photo with no story! Editor

The very first ever-Blonde GUY joke, from Mim Lunney. And well worth the wait!
An Irishman, a Mexican and a Blonde Guy were doing construction work on scaffolding on the 20th floor of a building. They were eating lunch and the Irishman said, "Corned beef and cabbage! If I get corned beef and cabbage one more time for lunch, I'm going to jump off this

building."

The Mexican opened his lunch box and exclaimed, "Burritos again! If I get Burritos one more time I'm going to jump off, too."

The blonde opened his lunch and said, "Bologna again! If I get a bologna sandwich one more time, I'm jumping too."

The next day, the Irishman opened his lunch box, saw corned beef and cabbage, and jumped to his death.

The Mexican opened his lunch, saw Burritos, and jumped, too

The blonde guy opened his lunch, saw the bologna and jumped to his death as well.

At the funeral, the Irishman's wife was weeping. She said, "If I'd known how really tired he was of corned beef and cabbage, I never would have given it to him again!"

The Mexican's wife also wept and said, "I could have given him tacos or enchiladas! I didn't realize he hated Burritos so much." (*Oh this is GOOD!*)

Everyone turned and stared at the blonde's wife. The blonde's wife said, "Don't look at me. He makes his own lunch"

A travel update from Robin Eade in January, February & March respectively;

Howdeedoodeeya all. Hi how's yadoin? I've had a decent rest and am ready to use up some black stuff for awhile, I've had a month at Standown Park (between Gympie and Tin Can Bay) lovely place to stay and veg out. Both Ginge (*the companion dog otherwise known as the Bitch-Ed*) and myself will miss the walks through the pine plantation, and the drives around the local countryside. Christmas was enjoyed with a couple I met a couple of years ago, and lots of sleep (eat drink and be merry) however only had a sip water with my meal. The Matis is doing me fine, what with trips into Gympie and Tin Can Bay quite a few times picking up stuff for the build etc and the odd visit to friends. Will be heading out tomorrow for Cania Gorge Retreat (no service in this area, so comms will be sparse) for a week or so then onto Boyne Island for another week after that who knows. Keep safe for the coming year and hope your troubles are few

And in February, I had myself a real good time at Cania Gorge Retreat for a week of total relaxation and reading a couple of novels with lots of peace and quiet (no rug rats) and plenty of wild life. I then set off for Biloela had another relaxing time, what a lovely town, people are friendly and obliging with all needs sated. Ready myself to leave decided to warm the beast up nothing doing flat batteries so took a chance Sunday (all vehicle businesses closed) drove up the street RACQ rep gate opened went in had a bit of a chat drove out with two new batteries not bad for a business closed (the boss was hiding from the missus) after a couple hard hours batteries in and all's well, Monday (Australia Day) fuelled the beast and readied the tow for early or more relaxed drive on Tuesday. Headed out for Boyne Island just south of Gladstone (Qld) comfortable drive until I was informed car hatch was opened thank the lord nothing missing, met up with people I had met at Standown Park nice to meet up with nice people had a couple o nights there, thence up to Rockhampton. Have had a few busy days what with doing some maintenance and correcting some miss-givings with the radiator not being correctly serviced in Toowoomba (just a little oversight). Rockhampton has exploded to what I remember (1967) The main township (is not unlike large cities) is very drab and not much happening the northern burbs and big shopping complexes do kill off the business centre somewhat. Leaving Rockhampton today heading unto Middlesmount, Nebo thence Mackay. Keep safe and healthy ah!

Then in March, Hi ya folks have arrived in Townsville, pulled into my favorite caravan park. Visited the big house (Casino) on Saturday night had minor fortune and met up with an

old chum had me a good chinwag. The bitch and myself had a tour of the place and she seemed happy enough, attended an RSL meeting at Mystic Sands golf club on Sunday and ended up being asked to do a care taking job at (no don't bust boilers laughing) the Townsville Buddhist Temple on the northern outskirts for 2 months, this should be a very peaceful stopover. I do believe I'll settle in Townsville whence I've finished my travelling, the weather hasn't been all that sweaty however had to fire up the air conditioner for the bitch to remain cool ah!. Behave yourselves and I'll try and enjoy myself. Regards, RobE "If you can read this, thank a teacher; if you are reading it in English, thank a soldier"

The final word of wisdom from Robin Eade and his travel experiences, for this edition at least; **Down at the Retirement Centre.** The 80-year old Bessie bursts into the recreational room at the retirement home. She holds her clenched fist in the air and announces, "Anyone who can guess what's in my hand can have sex with me tonight!" An elderly gentleman in the rear shouts out, "An elephant?" Bessie thinks a minute and says, "Close enough."

Secretary's Report: We sadly acknowledge the posting to the Great Gun Park of Lee Smith, Terry Beckman and Michael Sullivan, see vale in this edition. We have three new members Alan Hinds of Maryborough Qld who served in the Battery in Townsville & Vietnam, Peter Malone of Townsville and served with the Battery in the early 1990's and James Casey also from Townsville who is the current Battery Commander. Welcome to Alan, Peter and James.

Committee: Your committee is:

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Vice Presidents: Brian Tapp – Narrabeen NSW - 0410 543 743
Secretary/Treasurer: Hilton Lenard – Kambah ACT - 0418 695 345

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Tasmania: Les Mullan – Launceston – 0408 449 006
SA: Adrian (Wally) Walford – Murray Bridge – 0418 818 776
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ACT: Peter Moat – Weetangera - 0419 594 610
NT: Jim Wright – Palmerston – 0419 090 852

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Editor RAM Ramblings: Warren (Noddy) Feakes – Wanniasa – 0417 209 360
Webmaster: Doc Barclay – Mildura – 0428 251 364
Historian: Hilton Lenard – Kambah ACT – 0418 695 345
Welfare Officer: Ian (Bozo) Simpson – Sydney - 0432 610 794
Hon Chaplin: Rick Burley – Wallsend NSW - 0412 455 301

Regional Representative for:

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Central Qld: Jon Eaton – Sarina - 0402 248 716
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South NSW: Ian Hughes – Sanctuary Point – 0417 140 250
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BOARD of TRUSTREES: Warren Feakes - Wanniasa – 0417 209 360
Hilton Lenard – Kambah - 0418 695 345
Jim Wright – Palmerston - 0419 090 852

Members List: There are 190 financial members. Association membership covers all regions of Australia plus Paul Gaff, USA and Gordon Pound, UK. Twelve members are currently

woman their condolences and beat a hasty retreat. After the friends left, the daughter leaned over and whispered, 'Momma, I thought you said you were dying of cancer, and you just told your friends you were dying of AIDS! Why did you do that?' 'Because I don't want any of those bitches sleeping with your father after I'm gone.' And THAT, my friends, is what is called, *'Putting Your Affairs In Order.'*

CROW FACTS.



Researchers for the Wagga Wagga City Council found over 200 dead crows on the Olympic Way, near Wagga recently. There was concern that they may have died from Avian Flu. A bird pathologist examined the remains of all the crows and, to everyone's relief, confirmed the problem was definitely NOT Avian Flu. The cause of death appeared to be vehicular impacts. However, during the detailed analysis it was noted that varying colors of paints appeared on the bird's beaks and claws.

By analyzing these paint residues it was determined that 98% of the crows had been killed by impact with trucks, while only 2% were killed by an impact with a car. Wagga Council then hired an Ornithological Behaviorist to determine if there was a cause for the disproportionate percentages of truck kills versus car kills. He very quickly concluded the cause: When crows eat road kill, they always have a look-out crow in a nearby tree to warn of impending danger. They discovered that while all the lookout crows could shout "Cah", not a single one could shout "Truck." Now that is just to make all those Rammers who undertook their basic training at Kapooka, feel better! The aboriginal meaning of Kapooka has been recorded as "little army camp out side place of many crows"

Answers To Bright Rammer Quiz:

- 1 The one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends -Boxing.
- 2 A North American landmark constantly moving backward: Niagara Falls. The rim is worn down about two and a half feet each year because of the millions of gallons of water that rush over it every minute.
- 3 Only two vegetables that can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons: Asparagus and rhubarb.
- 4 The fruit with its seeds on the outside: Strawberry.
- 5 How did the pear get inside the brandy bottle? It grew inside the bottle. The bottles are placed over pear buds when they are small, and are wired in place on the tree. The bottle is left in place for the entire growing season. When the pears are ripe, they are snipped off at the stems.
- 6 Three English words beginning with dw: Dwarf, dwell and dwindle.
- 7 Fourteen punctuation marks in English grammar: Period, comma, colon, semicolon, dash, hyphen, apostrophe, question mark, exclamation point, quotation mark, brackets, parenthesis, braces, and ellipses.
- 8 The only vegetable or fruit never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form but fresh: Lettuce.
- 9 Six or more things you can wear on your feet beginning with 'S': Shoes, socks, sandals, sneakers, slippers, skis, skates, snowshoes, stockings and stilts.

Thanks Mim for testing us all!

And the final word from our WA based a-political reporter and member, Dick Lawler:
A man is walking along a beach when he comes across a lamp partiallyburied in the sand. He
picks up the lamp and gives it a rub. A genie appears and tells him he has been granted one
wish. The man thinks for a moment and says, "I want to live forever." "Sorry," said the genie,
"I'm not allowed to grant eternal life." "OK, then, I want to die after a Labour government
balances the budget and eliminates the debt. "You crafty little bastard," said the genie.
