

## Odds and Ends and Comings and Goings from the Prez's Pen

Hello to everyone and a Merry Christmas. Well, what's happened since August? For me, a normal busy winter and a lovely overseas trip. Our Ski School in Perisher Valley was very busy with the NSW and then National Interschool championships. I took on a new school as their Coach and had some great successes. As well, a couple of my past schoolkids, now at Uni, have made it to World Cup level, one in Cross Country Skiing and the other in Womens' Biathlon (skiing and shooting). I might just live to see some of the kids that I started as teenies or even younger, skiing for Australia at the next Winter Olympics in South Korea.

As part of my International Masters level skiing duties, I went to Finland for some meetings in early October but then came home via Yekaterinburg in Russia, train to Kokshetau in Kazakhstan and flew down to Kyrgyzstan to the Uzbekistan border and home via Russia and Finland again. I am starting to really enjoy Central Asia, probably because during all my years in the Army, I was unable to visit any Soviet countries and now, I am trying to bag the lot before the weariness of age takes over.



Yekaterinburg is the fourth largest city in Russia and is quite beautiful. It was the city where Czar Nicholas and his wife, four daughters and the Heir, his son, were murdered in the basement of 'The Ipatiev House' in the centre of the city. It was sobering to stand on the spot where the line of the Czars and Emperors, that had lasted over 1000 years, ended. I shall visit their tombs in St Petersburg this coming March.

There was also a nice exhibition close-by for the 100th anniversary of Russia's involvement in

WW1. Russia entered the first world war with the largest army in the world, standing at 1,400,000 soldiers; when fully mobilized the Russian army expanded to over 5,000,000 soldiers (though at the outset of war Russia could not arm all its soldiers, having a supply of only 4.6 million rifles). The losses Russia suffered in the First War were catastrophic. Around 2,500,000 Russians were killed. About 5 million Russians were wounded. Nearly 4,000,000 Russian soldiers were held as POWs whereas Britain, France and Germany combined had only 1.3 million POWs. It is not



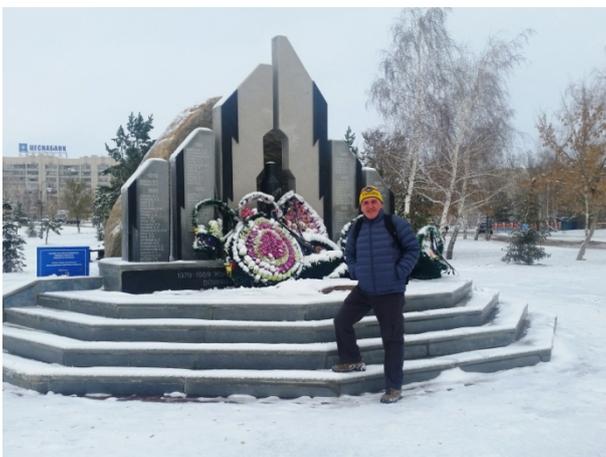
widely known that there were two Brigades of Russian troops allocated to the Western Front in WW1. The First Russian Special Brigade landed at Marseille in April 1916 and took part in the Nivelle Offensive in the Champagne area in 1917. A Second Special Brigade was also sent to serve alongside other Allied formations on the Salonika Front in northern Greece. The locals in 'Yekat' were astonished when I told them of Australia's involvement in WW1 - even more so when I told them about our casualty percentages compared to our population at that time.



I took an overnight train across the endless Steppe to northern Kazakhstan from Yekaterinburg. This was an amazing experience. Such friendly people and despite language difficulties I seemed to get the drift of most conversations. The Samovar was boiling for the whole 18 hour journey so tea flowed freely, but maybe it was the

Vodka that had me speaking Russian. There are two border crossings where the train stops and you are "confined to your compartment" for about two hours. One out of Russia and one, two hours later, into Kazakhstan. I was asked exiting Russia "Why you have bitch and nekid people in passport"...what? then I realised one page has a watermark of an Australian family on the beach. Xa Xa Xa!!!  
(H sound in Kazakh = X, therefore Xa Xa = Ha Ha)

I taught English in my friends lovely little school in Kokshetau for a couple of weeks and it snowed and got to minus 15c - Autumn surprise!! I was wandering one lunchtime and found this amazing memorial with a couple of Soviet WW2 vintage ZiS3, 76mm anti tank guns around it. It looked fairly new so I went over and it was a memorial to the locals from the city of Kokshetau who had died on operations in the Soviet

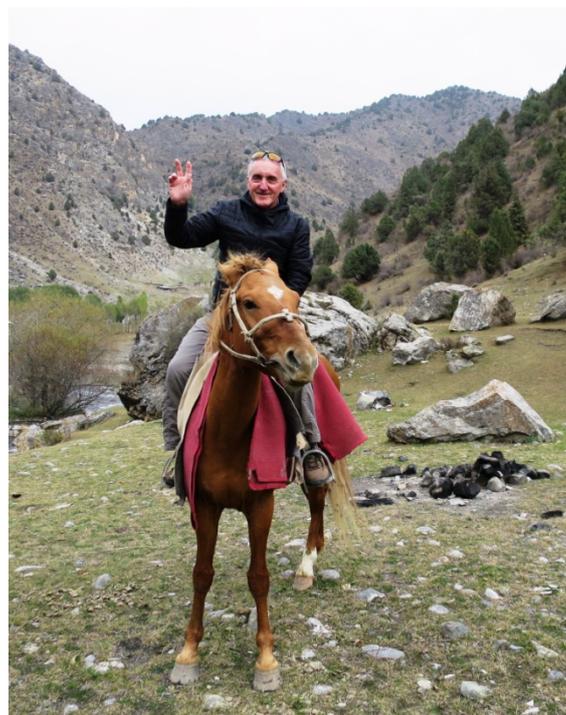


Union's 10 years of war in Afghanistan. There are quite a few names there for such a small city. It was not surprising at all to be told the Kazakh were considered very good soldiers by the Russians.

I was also told a little known story about Napoleon's march on Moscow and the Kazakh. It appears that the Kazakhs were asked to gather some horse warriors and come and help to turn him back.. "Some" turned into 40,000, who rode to Moscow, a mere 2,500 km, and were in time to assist in the extrication of the besieged Russian Army at Borodino and spill a lot of French blood and hurry along Napoleon's retreat using spears, swords and arrows from horseback a month or two later as they

retreated. Kazakh horses and their riders are used to far colder winters than Moscow could produce.

So to Kyrgyzstan. Foreign Affairs web sites said reconsider and don't go to "Osh" on the Uzbekistan border. There was a bit of a war there a couple of years ago? I went to Bishkek and then Osh and then into the mountains. It was magnificent. Where there are not mountains there are Gardens of Eden. Fruit, vegetables, nuts...some of the best I have eaten. The people are very hospitable and I saw a lot of the country around both of the large cities. Like Kazakhstan, it is a Muslim country, but a little more pious because of less Russian influence. Still, not a veil in sight and the women seem to favour stretch jeans and t-shirts as much as any western country.



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The mountains of Kyrgyzstan are just beautiful and I was up there trying out all the local food and renewing my acquaintance with a saddle as I was offered a nomad boy's pony to take for a trot. I rode happily and wasn't thrown and the locals were amazed I could

ride at all because we have no horses in Australia, just kangaroos - right?

The real joy of these trips is teaching the children in Kazakhstan. I have never met kids with such a hunger for education. This time, I also helped produce a Parents Briefing Night "Death by Powerpoint" which proved very popular.

I have been invited back on a more formal basis so I am working on a special humanitarian Visa at the moment.

As to the coming year, we have no real plans for Anzac Day and therefore it looks like a standard Capital City and towns big and small for the Association. See "Up and Coming Association Events" in "Around the Water Cart".

I look like spending Anzac Day 2016 in Kathmandu with some Slim School Reunion people - could be fun. The official Association celebrations will be "**ANZAC week Reunion 2016**" at The Entrance on the central coast north of Sydney. Then in September, is "**Paddo's Return to Malaysia**". Keep your eyes and ears open for more bulletins on this.

Meanwhile, to all our members and families and friends, may I wish you a Very Happy Christmas and a great New Year on behalf of the Association's hard working Committee members.

Best Wishes to All,

Warren 'Noddy' Feakes

Enterprise 12

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### **Report of the Treasurer**

**107 Treasurer's Report:** With 146 life subscribers, all life subscriptions are held in the Trustee accounts. Your membership renewal information is included in this edition. Subscriptions for 2014 are now due, at only \$15 PA and life subscription at \$150. As at 30 June 2013 the Association made a trading profit of \$3,299.74 for the previous twelve months. Most profits come from the sale of the Association sale items. Current assets are \$6,758.62 in working funds and \$23,169.26 held by Trustees, representing all life subscriptions and resulting interest received to date. Copies of the accounts are available on request.



Report of the Secretary:

**Committee:** Your current committee, re elected in 2014, is:

**ELECTED POSITIONS** (*Executive*)

President: Warren (Noddy) Feakes – Wanniasa ACT – 0417 209 360

Vice Presidents: Brian Tapp – Narrabeen NSW - 0410 543 743

Secretary/Treasurer: Hilton Lenard – Kambah ACT - 0418 695 345

**State/Territory Representatives:**

Queensland: Neil Lunney – Sunshine Coast – 0419 712 136

NSW Bob Edmonds – Sydney - 0410 678 100

Victoria: Ken (Doc) Barclay – Mildura – 0428 251 364

Tasmania: Les Mullan – Launceston – 0408 449 006

SA: Adrian (Wally) Walford – Murray Bridge – 0418 818 776

WA: Bob White – Dudley Park - 08 9535 9411

ACT: Peter Moat – Weetangera - 0419 594 610

NT: Jim Wright – Palmerston – 0419 090 852

**NON-ELECTED POSITIONS:** (*Appointed by the Committee*)

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

Serving 107 Bty Member: Lt Tim Gommers - Townsville - 0410 720 015

Welfare Officer: Ian (Bozo) Simpson – Sydney - 0432 610 794

Hon Chaplin: Rick Burley – Wallsend NSW - 0412 455 301

**Regional Representative for:** (*Appointed by the Committee*)

North Qld: Mike Dinnison – Townsville - 0429 777 786

Central Qld: Jon Eaton – Sarina - 0402 248 716

South Qld: Jim Bray – Miami - 0403 748 858

North NSW: Col Lowe – Tamworth – 02 6761 8936

Sydney: Ian (Bozo) Simpson – Sydney - 0432 610 794

South NSW: Ian Hughes – Sanctuary Point – 0417 140 250

Melbourne Vic: Noel Paterson – Rosebud – 0411 568 103

**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 189 financial members. Association membership covers all regions of Australia plus Paul Gaff, USA and Gordon Pound, UK. Twelve members are currently serving in the Defence Force. Membership covers all periods of 107 Battery's post 1965 history, with approx one third having served at Holsworthy and/or Malaysia (1965-1969) and/or Townsville then Vietnam (1969-1971) and/or Townsville (since 1971). Many served in more than one location. Like an updated membership list? Then contact the Secretary.





**Artillery adds dignity to what would otherwise be a vulgar brawl.**

*Frederick the Great*

### **Presentations to serving 107 Battery members.**

On 4 December Townsville member John Wilson, a former BSM of the Battery, presented the 107 Battery Association awards to four serving Battery members. The recipients were best Gunner GNR Matthew Pal, best Junior NCO: BDR Michael Foster, best Senior NCO: SGT Daniel Hughes and best young officer: LT Benjamin Green. Each received a copy of the Association book 107 Field Battery Australia, Malaysia and Vietnam 1965-1972. Congratulations to the recipients.

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### **Upcoming Association events:**

**ANZAC Day 2015 Sydney.** The Sydney team plans to gather again on the evening before for some fellowship and refreshments, then to march in the RAA division, which normally forms up in Bent Street Sydney around 10:00. For more details contact Mick Souter.

**ANZAC Day 2015 Canberra.** At the Darwin 2014 Reunion, there were several requests to visit and march in Canberra on Anzac Day. To enamel this to occur Hilton Lenard and John Connellan will hold a 'Mini-Reunion' over the Anzac Week in 2015. Features will include the 100<sup>th</sup> Anzac Day Dawn Service at the Australian War Memorial, the RAA Memorial Service at Mount Pleasant, overlooking the AWM and Canberra, and the march and 100<sup>th</sup> Anzac landing memorial service at the AWM. The RAA Historical Company plan to parade their fully restored horse drawn 18 Pounder gun complete limber and period dressed gun detachment. On the day(s) before and after there will be several 107 Association functions and activities so you can have an enjoyable look around the National Capital. Contact Hilton Lenard ([hiltonlenard@hotmail.com](mailto:hiltonlenard@hotmail.com) - 0418 695 345) for further details.

**ANZAC week Reunion 2016** at The Entrance on the central coast north of Sydney will be our next full-blown Reunion. Graeme Lucas has planning close to finalisation with details to be emailed to all in July 2015 and included with the August RAM Ramblings.

**50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Return to Malaysia.** Jon Eaton is heading up the Reunion Committee and plans are well in hand for the return to Malaysia for the 50<sup>th</sup> celebrations of the Battery first deploying there in September 1967. Watch this space for further details.

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### **Back to Malaysia - 107 BTY – Rifle Company Butterworth - by Lieutenant Benjamin Green.**

Over the period July to November 2014, 107 Battery rerolled as an Infantry Company deploying as Rifle Company Butterworth, Rotation number 107, ie the 107 Butterworth Company rotation. The Battery welcomed some extra numbers and key staff from within 3rd Brigade and external to generate a full Company strength for the deployment. Having completed a two-week training rotation at the Jungle Training Wing in Tully, North Queensland, the Company was prepared for departure to Malaysia. The main body of the Company departed Townsville on 8 August bound for Butterworth, Malaysia, ready and eager for the training opportunities and experiences that awaited them.

The Company hit the ground running and upon arrival in Butterworth training quickly was underway. The Company completed range qualifications and courses during a range week prior to flying out to Thailand for the main effort of the rotation, Exercise Chapel Gold 14. While in Thailand the Company participated in a cross training package, a range day and participated in the field training exercise as a composite Company of Thai and Australian Platoons. Overall, the time that was spent in Thailand exposed members of the Company to some unfamiliar training experiences and an opportunity to immerse themselves in a foreign culture. Having completed the busy exercise the Company drove to Kanchanaburi North West of Bangkok. Here the Company visited the Hellfire Pass Military Museum and The Bridge Over the River Kwai and took some much needed R and R. During the Company's time in

Kanchanaburi members were exposed to the stories of a very important part of Australia's military history. It served as a very sombre experience for many as we learnt of the tragedy, loss and mateship that was forged during the building of the infamous rail line.

The Company would return to Malaysia with the memories of our time in Thailand still fresh in our minds proceeding on a week's leave, allowing members the opportunity to explore further parts of South-East Asia. Returning from the leave break saw the Company step up once again, commencing more periods of training, this time in the southern part of Malaysia at Pulada and in Singapore. The Battery detached a platoon to participate in Exercise Bersama Lima 14 while the remainder of the Company conducted small engineering tasks and survival training at Pulada Training Area, Malaysia. The Company eventually reconsolidated in Singapore, having completed all major training periods, postured for the return to Butterworth.



The Company, having returned to Butterworth waited for the arrival of the next oncoming rotation ready to share stories and experiences with their counterparts, prior to flying back to Australia. On the evening of the Company's return we were greeted by the Commanding Officers of 4 Regt, 3 CER and 3 CSSB and the awaiting families at RAAF Base Townsville.

With the experiences of Rifle Company Butterworth, Rotation 107 now a memory, the members of the Battery look back in retrospect with a great sense of achievement and fondness. The experiences had and the lessons learnt by the individuals of the Battery will no doubt serve them well as Gunners in the Battery, Regiment and wider Corps.

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### **New U.S. Army Rifle 7,800 ft. Range! With thanks to Paddy Durnford in Townsville**



The rifle's gun sight uses a laser range finder to determine the exact distance to the obstruction, after which the soldier can add or subtract up to 10 meters from that distance to enable the bullets to clear the barrier and explode above or beside the target.

The MXT135 Counter Defilade Target Engagement System is to be deployed in Afghanistan soon. I would call it the "Equalizer." Some call it the "Punisher." Soldiers will be able to use them to target snipers hidden in trenches rather than calling in expensive air strikes.



Lt. Col. Christopher Lehner, project manager for the system, described the weapon as a 'game-changer' that other nations will try and copy.

The 35-millimeter round contains a chip that receives a radio signal from the gun sight as to the precise distance to the target. The Army plans to buy 42,500 of the MXT135 rifles this year, enough for every member of the infantry and special forces, at a cost of \$11,900.00 each. Lehner told Fox News: "With this weapon system, we take away cover from [enemy targets] forever. Tactics are going to have to be rewritten. The only thing we can see [enemies] being able to do is run away."

The weapon's laser finder would work out how far away the enemy was and then the U.S. Soldier would add one meter using a button near the trigger. When fired, the explosive round would carry exactly one meter past the wall and explode with the force of a hand grenade above the Taliban fighter.



Experts say the rifle means that enemy troops will no longer be safe if they take cover. The MXT135 appears to be the perfect weapon for street-to-street fighting that troops in Afghanistan have to engage in, with enemy fighters hiding behind walls and only breaking cover to fire occasionally.

The army's project manager for new weapons, Douglas Tamilio, said: "This is the first leap-ahead technology for troops that we've been able to develop and deploy." A patent granted to the bullet's maker, Alliant Tech systems, reveals that the chip can determine how far it has travelled. Mr. Tamilio said: "You could shoot a Javelin missile, and it would cost about \$69,000. These rounds will end up costing about \$45.00 apiece." They're relatively cheap. Lehner added: "This is a game-changer. The enemy has learned to get cover, for hundreds if not thousands of years. Well, they can't do that anymore. We're taking that cover from them and there's only two outcomes: We're going to get you behind that cover or force you to flee." The rifle will initially use high-explosive rounds, but its makers say that it might later use versions with smaller explosive charges that aim to stun rather than kill.

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**107 Battery to get their guns back** After some 38 years, 107 Battery will again become a Gun Battery. Raised in the Vietnam build-up period of 1964-5, the Battery served as part of 4 Field Regiment at Wacol, Vietnam 1967-68, Townsville, Vietnam 1970-71, Townsville then Singapore as part of 28 ANZUK Brigade. On completion of two years in Singapore the Battery was disbanded. In 1975-77 it was re-raised as the Medium Gun Trials Battery and was administered by 4 Field Regiment then disbanded again. Two years ago it was re-raised as an Observation Battery in 4 Regiment.

Robert Gowling, of the unofficial 107 Battery Association reports:

*From the number of responses I received from those whom I had sent a message via the mobile telephone facility SMS, it is clear very few of you all were aware of the pending changes to 106 Battery and its role within RAA. My thank you and appreciation to Paddy Durnford in his role as Curator of the 4th Regiment Museum at Chau Pha Lines Lavarack Barracks in Townsville, where the OR's mess is named "The Michael B Williams MM Club"*

*No doubt a number of you have known of the changes and planned events commencing this forthcoming Thursday, however as I not received nor been advised by 106 er's in contact with me, I considered this broadcast message will facilitate such advice.*



1: On Thursday 4 December 2014, St Barbara's Day (St Barbara, the Patron Saint of Artillery), 106 Battery will move from the allocated task within 4th Regiment (Observation Post Battery) to again be placed on the Order of Battle as a Gun Battery, in fact the Senior Battery of the Regiment to be fully equipped with the M777A2 lightweight towed 155mm howitzer by 2015. The Regiment is expected to receive 12 of these weapons which include the Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System, a fully automated digital battle-management system plus the Digital Terminal Control System in use by the Observation Post Battery's. Every gun battery comprises three troops of 155mm towed howitzers which no doubt brings back memories to those who served in the period before Vietnam when Gun Battery's had 'Troops', not 'Sections'. There will be a Regimental Parade followed by a Formal dinner on the Thursday.

2: On the Regiment's 55th birthday, 2 May (2015) an Open day is planned at the Barracks area with displays and demonstrations followed in the evening by a dinner to be held on the Parade Ground. It has been suggested by the Regiment this Birthday Day could be a good time for all ex members of the Regiment to visit Townsville.

My best wishes to you and to your families for a happy Christmas period and a healthy and happy 2015.  
Robert Gowling M: 0419 183 306 - PO Box 774MANSFIELD VIC 3724

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The following appeared in the Queensland RSL News recently:

**"Kiwi Vets Wanted**

*Seeking past serving NZ soldiers who served with Victor Five Company, 1RNZIR (2RAR) in South Vietnam 1970-71. With several Kiwi vets now living in Australia, a company reunion and march in the Anzac Day Parade is planned for April 2015 in Brisbane. Contact Barry Moore on [bmoore423@gmail.com](mailto:bmoore423@gmail.com)"*

Your Secretary sent the details and the following to all Rammers with email:

*Most will be aware; we were the Direct Support Battery to 2RAR/NZ during that time and had Forward Observer parties with both V and W Companies. When W Company returned to Singapore in October 1970 some of the W Coy FO Party moved across to V Coy FO. Other members of the 107 Battery gun line also did stints with V Coy FO Party.*

*On deployment to Vietnam on 7 May 70, the FO Parties comprised:*

*V Coy Capt Pheagan (replaced by Lt O'Brian), Bdr Tobin, Gnrs Turner, Opray (wounded twice and now deceased) and Tapp.*

*W Coy: Lt O'Brian, LBdr Sullivan & Dobbs, Gnrs Simms, Pavlovich and Brumm.*

*Bdr Holmes did a stint with V or W Coy Sep - Dec 70 before going to as FO Ack to B Coy.*

*The W Coy FO party was already in country on our arrival and came from HQ Bty 4 Fd Regt. They came under 107 Battery operational command from 7 May 1970.*

*If you are interested in attending the V Coy gathering next year, and I assume they would be delighted to have you, please contact Barry Moore on [bmoore423@gmail.com](mailto:bmoore423@gmail.com).*

*To Barry More, The 107 Battery Association wishes you all the best with your Oz Brisbane gathering on Anzac Day 2015. We have very fond memories of our Kilo-One-Whiskey-One mates of 1RNZIR and 2RAR/NZ. If we can assist you in any way then please contact me. Also please pass on our total respect and regards to all who attend. Every member of the 107 Bty Assn with email is a BCC to this signal.*

*Hilton Lenard Secretary - 107 Battery Association [www.107fdbty.com](http://www.107fdbty.com)*

**The following note subsequently arrived from OC 3 Platoon, V Company 2 RAR/NZ**

Dear Hilton, Thank you very much for your recent e-mail to Barry Moore regarding the links between 107 Fd Bty and us Kiwis.



As the platoon commander of 3 Platoon V5 for our whole tour I really appreciated having you around. Seeing the names of your FO parties prompted me to dig out some photos I have of them.



Bdr Tobin looking relaxed; and Bdr Holmes (whom we called 'muck-dai-loi' - a play on words for 'oop-dai-loi' because of his Brit accent; and cheeky Gnr Tobin (whom I am sad to see is now deceased). I have a 107 Fd Bty plaque proudly on my wall which was presented to me by Bdr Holmes.

With very best wishes Alastair MacKenzie  
Dr. ALASTAIR MACKENZIE PhD Lt Col (Ret)



#### Australian Army Badges of Rank

Australian Army officers receive a commission that is personally signed by the Governor-General of Australia,

#### **Officer Cadet (OCDT)**

The rank of Officer Cadet is given to those who are studying at the Australian Defence Force Academy. Their rank is then changed to Staff Cadet upon entry to the Royal Military College, Duntroon (RMC-D) where they become a part of the Corps of Staff Cadets.

#### **Lieutenant (LT)**

Lieutenant is a rank typically held for three years. They normally command a platoon or troop of around 30 soldiers and with experience may command more specialised platoons/troops such as mortar platoon or a reconnaissance troop. Along with Captain, they comprise the subaltern ranks.

#### **Captain (CAPT)**

Captains are normally second-in-command of a sub-unit of up to 120 soldiers. They are key players in the planning and decision-making process within tactical level units, with responsibility for operations on the ground as well as equipment maintenance, logistical support and manpower.

**Major (MAJ)**

Promotion to Major generally occurs after 8-10 years of service. Majors are field rank officers who command a sub-unit – a company, squadron or battery – of up to 120 officers and soldiers with responsibility for their training, welfare and administration as well as the management of their equipment. Majors are also employed across all levels of headquarters in staff roles.

**Lieutenant Colonel (LTCOL)**

Lieutenant Colonels typically command units of up to 650 soldiers, containing three to five sub-units. They are responsible for the overall operational effectiveness of their unit in terms of military capability, welfare and general discipline. Lieutenant Colonels also hold staff officer appointments on headquarters at the Brigade level and higher.

**Colonel (COL)**

Colonels are the first of the senior officer ranks and are not usually field commanders. Typically they serve as staff officers at Divisional and Command level headquarters. Colonels are the principal operational advisors to senior officers and will have a staff consisting largely of Lieutenant Colonels and Majors.

**Brigadier (BRIG)**

Brigadiers command at the Brigade level and are also Directors General within Army Headquarters and non-Army groups. They are responsible for branches within the headquarters such as Personnel, Operations and Career Management. The rank of Brigadier is referred to as 'one star' rank.

**Major General (MAJGEN)**

Major Generals command formations of division size, or equivalent, and hold senior executive appointments within the Department of Defence such as [Special Operations Commander - Australia](#). The rank of Major General is referred to as 'two star' rank.

**Lieutenant General (LTGEN)**

Lieutenant General is the second-highest active rank in the Australian Army. The Rank of Lieutenant General is held by the [Chief of Army](#). The rank is also held when an Army Officer is the Vice Chief of the Defence Force, the Chief of Joint Operations, or the Chief of Capability Development. The rank of Lieutenant General is referred to as 'three star' rank.

**General (GEN)**

General is the highest active rank of the Australian Army. The rank of General is only held when an Army Officer is appointed as the Chief of the Defence Force. The rank of General is referred to as 'four star' rank.

For further details on these ranks, visit the [Australian Army website](http://www.army.gov.au/Who-we-are/Ranks/Officer-Ranks). <http://www.army.gov.au/Who-we-are/Ranks/Officer-Ranks>

Source: Australian Army

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**A quick note from Peter (Pommy) & Glenda Ransom:** We, re just sitting back in St Helens (Ed: on the perfect north east coast of Tasmania). Busy season starts now as locals come to stay in their holiday homes and tourists flock in. Glenda is busy at the pharmacy and Pommy is busy playing golf, renovating our little caravan, selling his Merc to changeover to a Chevy - and any other retirement mischief available. Hope all is well with you. Regards Pommy & Glenny.

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Warrant Officer Wally Thompson - the first Regimental Sergeant Major - ARMY passed away late October, a true gentleman and a soldiers soldier. Stand-down Sir, your duty is done. Duty First - Lest We Forget



Warrant Officer Class 1 (WO1) Wallace (Wally) Talbot Claxton Thompson joined the Citizen's Military Forces (CMF) in 1950 and was called up in 1951 for National Service. He did two tours of Malaysia, on the second occasion serving with the British Army, and then went to Vietnam in 1964 with the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam. He served a second tour with the First Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR), fighting in 1968 and again in 1971 as RSM of 4RAR.

In 1983 he became the first appointee to the position of Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army (RSM-A), which put him in a position where he reported directly to the Chief of the General Staff.

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**Flawless MALE LOGIC** with thanks to Robin Eade. Critical Thinking At Its Best!

Woman: Do you drink beer?

Man (an undisclosed member of 107 Battery Association) : Yes.

Woman: How many beers a day?

Man: Usually about 3.

Woman: How much do you pay per beer?

Man: \$5.00, and this is where it gets scary !

Woman: And how long have you been drinking?

Man: About 20 years, I suppose.

Woman: So a beer costs \$5 and you have 3 beers a day which puts your spending each month at \$450. In one year, it would be approximately \$5400 correct?

Man: Correct.

Woman: If in 1 year you spend \$5400, not accounting for inflation, the past 20 years puts your spending at \$108,000, correct?

Man: Correct.

Woman: Do you know that if you didn't drink so much beer, that money could have been put in an investment account and after accounting for compound interest for the past 20 years, you could have now bought a Ferrari?

Man: Do you drink beer?

Woman: No.

Man: Where's your Ferrari then?

*Editor: There is an additional Female ending to this pearl of wisdom that Robin did not include, but as this is a family friendly newsletter it has not been included.*

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**Vietnam Veterans Family Study - An Intergenerational Study**

The Vietnam Veterans Family Study (VVFS) is the most significant research program ever undertaken by the Australian Government into the health of the families of Australia's Vietnam veterans. The study examined the physical, mental and social health of Vietnam veterans and their families, covering a broad range of health outcomes for these people.

Over 27,000 people participated in the studies, including Vietnam veterans, partners and their children. Defence Force personnel of the same era who did not deploy to Vietnam, and their families, participated in the study as a control group.

A Scientific Advisory Committee of independent research experts provided oversight of the study and a Consultative Forum represented the veteran community perspective.

The study found that the majority of sons and daughters born to Vietnam veterans are leading healthy and productive lives. However, analysis found that the families of Australia's Vietnam veterans are more likely to have

considerable emotional, physical, and social issues when compared to families of those who served in that era but did not deploy to Vietnam.

When examining mortality amongst the children of Vietnam veterans, the research found that the children of Vietnam veterans and Vietnam-era personnel had lower mortality rates when compared to the general Australian population and that there were no significant differences in deaths from cancer. Sons of Vietnam veterans deployed had a higher mortality rate compared with Vietnam-era personnel from late teenage years to adulthood, largely due to external causes which include car accidents, misadventure and suicide.

To see the full reports please follow these links:

[Volume 1: Introduction and Summary of the Studies of Vietnam Veteran Families \(PDF 614 KB\)](#)

[Volume 1: Introduction and Summary of the Studies of Vietnam Veteran Families – \(DOC 3 MB\)](#)

[Volume 2: A Study of Health and Social Issues in Vietnam Veteran Sons and Daughters – \(PDF 748 KB\)](#)

[Volume 2: A Study of Health and Social Issues in Vietnam Veteran Sons and Daughters – \(DOC 2.4 MB\)](#)

[Volume 3: A Study of Mortality Patterns of Vietnam Veteran Families – \(PDF 901 KB\)](#)

[Volume 3: A Study of Mortality Patterns of Vietnam Veteran Families – \(DOC 2.9 MB\)](#)

[Volume 4: Supplementary Studies of Vietnam Veteran Families' Experiences – \(PDF 2.3 MB\)](#)

[Volume 4: Supplementary Studies of Vietnam Veteran Families' Experiences – \(DOC 7.6 MB\)](#)

The research shows that operational service affects more than just the person who serves. It can also impact on family members which is why DVA has services to help families adjust and cope. Studies, such as these, help inform support programs and services.

For veterans and their families, including sons and daughters of Vietnam veterans, help is available through the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS). VVCS provides free and confidential nation-wide counselling and support for war and service-related mental health and wellbeing conditions. For help, to learn more or to check eligibility call 1800 011 046 (24/7) or visit [www.vvcs.gov.au](http://www.vvcs.gov.au).

Interested parties are encouraged to provide comment and feedback on the findings of the Vietnam Veterans Family Study through their local Ex-Service Organisation (ESO). The ESORT will consider feedback at their meeting in March 2015. If you do not have a local ESO and wish to provide feedback, you can do so via email to [VVFSFeedback@dva.gov.au](mailto:VVFSFeedback@dva.gov.au).

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Welcome to the 21st century - the "LESS" Century, with thanks to Robin Eade

Phones – wireless, Cooking – fireless, Cars – keyless, Food – fatless, Tyres - tubeless

Youth – jobless, Leaders – shameless, Relationships – meaningless, Attitudes - careless

Children – mannerless, Politicians – gutless. Everything is becoming LESS but still our hopes are ENDLESS. All this, quite frankly, leaves me SPEECHLESS!!

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**Remembrance Day 2014 - The Women Who loved and Lost** by *George Mansfield*.

Each year we pause to reflect on the sacrifice made in war. Understandably, much of our thoughts are related to those who did not come home. They were mostly very young and so full of energy and zest for life. They had many similarities. Love of country, mateship and acceptance of responsibility. They were dedicated to each other, sharing and caring, defiant when the odds were against them, daring, a wry sense of humour and longing to be back in their beloved Oz. There are also others who became casualties of war; the women who waved loved ones goodbye and kept the home fires burning. For them, no matter the generation and regardless of the conflict, of when and where or its degree of intensity, there were many commonalties which they all endured. The long wait for mail, the loneliness of sleeping between cold sheets in an half empty bed, the smothering uncertainty from day to day and always waiting for that reassuring message that all was OK. For many it was also being Mum and Dad and so many extra chores that used to be his.

Those women who have experienced such separation would agree it was a very long and anxious time waiting and too often a skipping heart beat when the media with breaking news announced there had been casualties. Each announcement followed by the long, long dreaded wait for a possible knock on the door by a grim face in uniform. It's the game played by next of kin in any war and there are the winners and losers. I wish to talk briefly about such women who lost and the pain and anguish many of them experience for the rest of their life. The profile of a war widow is a stark reminder of the tragedy of war. Most were very young and often there were infants. Many never remarry. Their dreams gone and life changed forever with photographs of a smiling soldier on the mantelpiece to remind them of sweet memories from yesterday. Some years back I wrote some verse about a comrade with whom I shared a Spartan Christmas lunch with on a lonely hill during the annual 24 hour cease fire in Vietnam. Not long

after, he was killed in action. I included the verse "How Could I Forget" in a book "The Australian Spirit" I wrote and was recently published.

#### **HOW COULD I FORGET?**

*The killing stopped, well, just for a while  
It was a day of peace or so they said  
So my mate and I met on a lonely hill  
Shared a tin of meat, a brew and some bread  
Talked of home and sweet love to fulfil  
Had other mates been wounded or killed?  
We joked and laughed of better days  
Then as shadows grew, we said hooray  
For I was going home and he had to stay  
I felt the power of that farewell embrace  
Saw his final wave as I left him there  
Heard his distant shout "you take care"*

*Since then, so many years I have bid adieu  
Now I have grandchildren, more than a few  
Most of my dreams but not his came true  
I still think of him in so many special ways  
More so of our meeting on that Xmas day  
I recall that familiar welcome cheeky grin  
A soft voice, ruffled hair, oh yes, it's him  
I feel the strength of that brotherly embrace  
The pain of farewell etched on a sunburnt face  
See again his fond salute as I left him there  
Hear faint echoes of a call "you take care"  
How could I forget? Who would even dare?*

Imagine my surprise when I received a phone call from his widow (whom I had never met) only days ago to advise that someone had given her the book and she read the verse for the first time. It was over 47 years since she had lost her husband. A very articulate woman, she was most thankful her late husband had been recognised and honoured in such a way. She is a proud and resolute woman who has raised her children alone and I imagine there is still never a day when she does not grieve for the loss of him.

So when you recall war, never forget the hidden sacrifices of those who were caught in the terrible game of waiting, hoping and then had lost. Sadly there has been no change to the rules and the game goes on this very day thus let me conclude with some verse dedicated to those from yesterday and today who keep the home fires burning.

#### **Once a Military Wife**

These ladies always seen with brave face  
Young and old, they've never faltered in life's great race  
Duty, honour and love of country was a lover's cry  
A final hug, the last kiss as he whispered goodbye

These women knew well the loneliness of the waiting game  
The smothering silence while pretending he was home again  
Each day and night dreading to hear that knock on the door  
Hoping tomorrow would go faster than the one before

To see once more that familiar wave from the front gate  
Have him safe and no longer the agony of wait  
Longing to hear his laughter reaching out above  
The comforting warmth and sweetness of his love

They have such proud and loved memories of yesterday  
Married to the best who for Nation led the way

God bless and salute them for the brave women they are  
Each loved and adored by her hero now among the stars  
George Mansford © October 2014

These women, no matter their time of life, deserve much recognition and our immense respect. Helping or donating to Legacy which supports war widows and families is one very effective way of doing just that. Pursuing peace in the world is another but never, never at the compromise or surrender of our treasured way of life.

**YOU ALL LISTEN UP & PAY ATTENTION** - children should be taught this! *With thanks to Robin Eade*

In September of 2005, on the first day of school, Martha Cothren, a History teacher at Valley Heights High School in Port Rowan, Ontario, did something not to be forgotten.



On the first day of school, with the permission of the school superintendent, the principal and the building supervisor, she removed all of the desks in her classroom. When the first period kids entered the room they discovered that there were no desks. 'Ms. Cothren, where are our desks

She replied, 'You can't have a desk until you tell

They thought, 'Well, maybe it's our grades.' 'No,' she said.

'Maybe it's our behaviour.' She told them, 'No, it's not even your behaviour.'

And so, they came and went, the first period, second period, third period and still no desks in the classroom. Kids called their parents to tell them what was happening and by early afternoon television news crews had started gathering at the school to report about this crazy teacher who had taken all the desks out of her room.

The final period of the day came and as the puzzled students found seats on the floor of the desk-less classroom.

Martha Cothren said, 'Throughout the day no one has been able to tell me just what he or she has done to earn the right to sit at the desks that are ordinarily found in this classroom. Now I am going to tell you.'

At this point, Martha Cothren went over to the door of her classroom and opened it. Twenty-seven Veterans, all in uniform, walked into that classroom, each one carrying a school desk. The Vets began placing the school desks in rows, and then they would walk over and stand alongside the wall. By the time the last soldier had set the final desk in place those kids started to understand, perhaps for the first time in their lives, just how the right to sit at those desks had been earned.

Martha said, 'You didn't earn the right to sit at these desks. These heroes did it for you. They placed the desks here for you. They went halfway around the world, giving up their education and interrupting their careers and families so you could have the freedom you have. Now, it's up to you to sit in them. It is your responsibility to learn, to be good students, to be good citizens. They paid the price so that you could have the freedom to get an education. Don't ever forget it.'

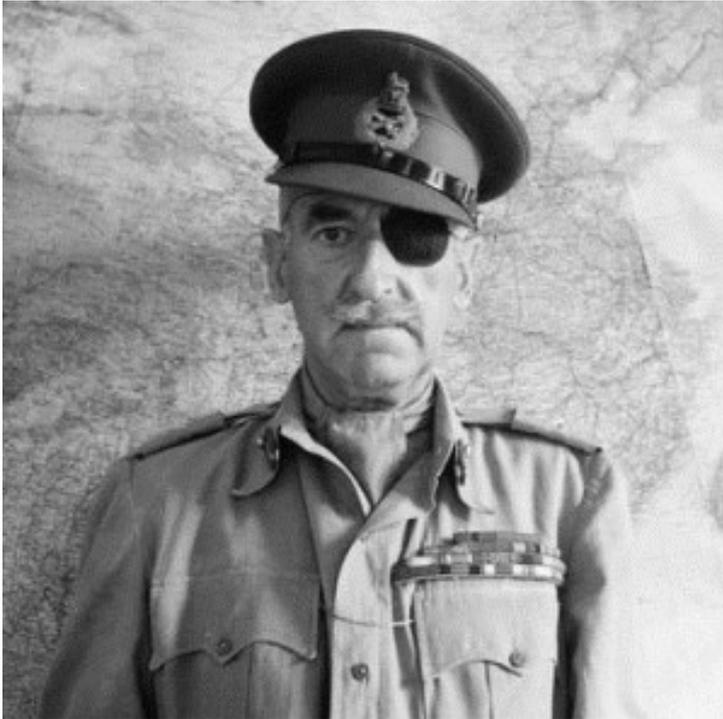
By the way, this is a true story. And this teacher was awarded Veterans of Foreign Wars Teacher of the Year in 2006. She is the daughter of a WWII Prisoner Of War.

Do you think this email is worth passing along so others won't forget either, that our Veterans earned the freedoms we have in this great country? Let us always remember the men and women of our military and the rights they have won for us.

**Veteran of Boer War, WW1 and WW2 was wounded 9 times, and bit off his own fingers when a doctor wouldn't amputate them.** *From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

In a military career spanning 1899-1947, Adrian Carton de Wiart fought in 4 wars, and survived being shot in the stomach, groin, head, hand, ankle, hip and leg; surviving well as two plane crashes and five escape attempts from a

POW camp. He lost an eye and a hand in 1915, but still won the Victoria Cross in 1916. It is a war story that sounds far-fetched even by Hollywood standards, but Adrian Carton de Wiart really existed.



From there he went to Oxford University in 1899, but dropped out after one term to join the British Army. The Boer War had just started at the time and, after enlisting under the false identity of 'Trooper Carton', Carton de Wiart was sent to South Africa. However, he was seriously wounded in the stomach and groin early in the war and invalided home. As soon as he had recovered, he returned to action in South Africa in 1901 as a commissioned officer under his true identity.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Carton de Wiart was en route to British Somaliland in the Horn of Africa, where the British were engaged in a low level war against the "Mad Mullah". In an attack on an enemy fort, Carton de Wiart was shot twice in the face, losing his left eye. He wore a glass eye for a short time after, but whilst travelling in a taxi one day, threw it out of the window and put on a black eye

patch, which he wore for the rest of his life.

In 1915 he embarked on a steamer for France. As an infantry commander on the Western Front, he was wounded seven more times. Soon after his arrival he lost his left hand (biting his mangled fingers off when a doctor declined to remove them). He was later shot through the skull and ankle at the Battle of the Somme, through the hip at the Battle of Passchendaele, through the leg at Cambrai, and through the ear at Arras.

It was during the Battle of the Somme in July 1916 that he won the Victoria Cross, the British Empire's highest award for gallantry in combat. His citation read:

*"For most conspicuous bravery, coolness and determination during severe operations of a prolonged nature. It was owing in a great measure to his dauntless courage and inspiring example that a serious reverse was averted. He displayed the utmost energy and courage in forcing our attack home. After three other battalion Commanders had become casualties, he controlled their commands, and ensured that the ground won was maintained at all costs. He frequently exposed himself in the organisation of positions and of supplies, passing unflinchingly through fire barrage of the most intense nature. His gallantry was inspiring to all."*

In his later autobiography, Happy Odyssey, he made no mention of his VC. Of the First World War itself, and despite the loss of various body parts, he said: "Frankly I enjoyed the war."



He retired from the Army in 1923 with the honorary rank of major-general, and spent the next 15 years shooting waterfowl on a friend's 500,000 acre marshland estate in eastern Poland – his home a converted hunting lodge on an island, only a few miles from the Soviet border.

His peaceful life was rudely interrupted by the Second World War in 1939, when he was recalled as head of the British Military Mission to Poland. When Poland was attacked by both Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in September 1939, the estate was overrun and all Carton de Wiart's possessions were confiscated by the Soviets, then destroyed by the Germans in later fighting. He never saw the area again. Carton de Wiart and his mission team escaped Poland by road convoy, with the Germans and the Russians in hot pursuit. Despite being attacked from the air by the Luftwaffe, the convoy made it across the Romanian border. Carton de Wiart then made it back to England by aircraft, travelling under a false passport.

In 1940 he was dispatched to Norway, where he took charge of an Anglo-French force with orders to take the city of Trondheim. With few supplies and little support, he managed to move his forces over the mountains and down to Trondheim Fjord, despite coming under frequent attack from the Luftwaffe, being shelled by German naval destroyers and machine gunned by German ski troops. Unable to effectively challenge the superior German forces, Carton de Wiart was eventually ordered to evacuate. Royal Navy transports got his men away, but they were bombed severely on the way out. Carton de Wiart arrived back at Scapa Flow on his 60th birthday.

Even back on British soil, Carton de Wiart found himself on the frontline when his London home was bombed by the Germans during the Blitz. All of his medals and decorations were destroyed or lost and he had to apply to the War Office for official replacements.

In 1941 he was appointed head of the British-Yugoslavian Military Mission, just as Hitler was preparing to invade Yugoslavia. After negotiating with the Yugoslavian government in Belgrade, Carton de Wiart's aircraft was heading for Cairo when both engines failed. The plane crash landed in the Mediterranean off the coast of Italian-controlled Libya. Carton de Wiart was knocked unconscious in the crash, but the cold water revived him. When the plane sank, he and the crew were forced to swim a mile to shore, where they were captured by the Italians.

Carton de Wiart was sent to a special prison for senior officers at in Italy. With his distinguished comrades, he five escape attempts, one of which including seven months of tunneling. During one attempt, Carton de Wiart evaded capture for eight days disguised as an Italian peasant – but his age, eye patch, empty sleeve, multiple scars and lack of Italian gave him away.

Carton de Wiart was released from prison in 1943 and taken to Rome, where the Italian government secretly planned to leave the war and wanted Carton de Wiart to act as messenger to the British government. An Italian negotiator accompanied him to Portugal to meet Allied contacts to facilitate the surrender. From Portugal, Carton de Wiart made his way back to England.

Carton de Wiart was immediately summoned by Churchill to be his personal representative in China, where he worked for the rest of the war and up to his retirement in 1947. On his way back to England, he stopped off in Rangoon as a house guest of the local army commander. Coming down stairs, he slipped on coconut matting, fell, broke his back and knocked himself unconscious. He eventually made it back to England and into hospital where he slowly recovered. The doctors succeeded in extracting an incredible amount of shrapnel from his old wounds.

Lieutenant-General Sir Adrian Paul Ghislain Carton de Wiart VC KBE CB CMG DSO finally settled in County Cork, Ireland, where he died in 1963 at the age of 83. The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography described him thus: *"With his black eyepatch and empty sleeve, Carton de Wiart looked like an elegant pirate, and became a figure of legend."*



Adrian Carton de Wiart's medals and decorations – image by the Museum of The Royal Dragoon Guards

**Some words of wisdom** *with thanks to Doc Barclay*

1. If you're too open minded, your brains will fall out.
2. Age is a very high price to pay for maturity.
3. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you a mechanic.
4. Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.
5. If you must choose between two evils, pick the one you've never tried before.
6. My idea of housework is to sweep the room with a glance.
7. Not one shred of evidence supports the notion that life is serious.
8. It is easier to get forgiveness than permission.
9. For every action, there is an equal and opposite Government program.
10. If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the trip.
11. Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of Cheques.
12. A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts feel so good.
13. Eat well, stay fit, die anyway.
14. Men are from earth. Women are from earth, deal with it.
15. No husband has ever been shot while doing the dishes.
16. A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.
17. Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.
18. Opportunities always look bigger going than coming.
19. Junk is something you've kept for years and throw away three weeks before you need it.
20. There is always one more imbecile than you counted on.
21. Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.
22. By the time you can make ends meet, they move the ends.
23. Thou shalt not weigh more than thy refrigerator.
24. Someone who thinks logically provides a nice contrast to the real world.
25. Blessed are they who can laugh at themselves for they shall never cease to be amused.

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**Very Important Health Information** *with thanks to Dick Lawler in WA.*

Do you have feelings of inadequacy? Do you suffer from shyness? Do you sometimes wish you were more assertive? If you answered yes to any of these questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist about Cabernet Sauvignon. Cabernet Sauvignon is the safe, natural way to feel better and more confident about yourself and your actions. It can help ease you out of your shyness and let you tell the world that you're ready and willing to do just about anything. You will notice the benefits of Cabernet Sauvignon almost immediately and, with a regimen of regular doses, you can overcome any obstacles that prevent you from living the life you want to live. Shyness and awkwardness will be a thing of the past and you will discover many talents you never knew you had. Stop hiding and start living. Cabernet Sauvignon may not be right for everyone. Women who are pregnant or nursing should not use it. However, women who wouldn't mind nursing or becoming pregnant are encouraged to try it. Side effects: Side effects may include: Dizziness, nausea, vomiting, incarceration, loss of motor control, loss of clothing, loss of money, loss of virginity, delusions of grandeur, table dancing, headache, dehydration, dry mouth, and a desire to sing Karaoke and play all-night rounds of Strip Poker, Truth or Dare, and Naked Twister.

Warnings: The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may make you think you are whispering when you are not. The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may cause you to tell your friends over and over again that you love them. The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may cause you to think you can sing. The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may create the illusion that you are tougher, smarter, faster and better looking than most people. Please feel free to share this important information with as many people as you feel may benefit. Now if Cabernet Sauvignon can make you feel like this, just imagine what you could achieve with a good Shiraz..

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## AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE ASSISTANCE TRUST

### CARING FOR THOSE WHO SERVE

I write to introduce the ADF Assistance Trust to you in your role caring for Defence members, veterans and their families in need.

The ADF Assistance Trust is a charity which may be able to assist your clients by providing emergency and non-emergency funding when financial hardship is exacerbating an already

difficult time of life. We provide financial assistance to current and former members of the ADF and their dependants following service-related death or severe wounding (mental or physical) particularly in recent conflicts. We can provide assistance for:

Essential living costs Tuition and school fees, retraining expenses, educational resources Health and medical expenses, mental health injury services, specialist equipment not covered by Defence or DVA Vehicle expenses (not covered by DVA), car payments, car insurance, registration Funds to facilitate a family member travelling to assist a Defence member in an emergency Childcare during illness or surgery Emergency dental expenses Carer's relief and assistance not covered by DVA

We cannot provide assistance for:

Holidays, adventure tours, other forms of recreational travel and

Needs which can be met by Government agencies or other similar military trusts.

We hope you will assist us by putting potential beneficiaries in contact with us. On your request we can work directly with your clients to ascertain eligibility and complete applications. We aim to work with you and/or your clients to ensure that the application process does not place additional stress on applicants. Our eligibility requirements are summarised on the next page. For those eligible the ADF Assistance Trust has the flexibility to provide individualised support. The current turnaround time for applications is one month, though can be shorter in emergency situations.

For further information please visit our website at [www.adfassistancetrust.org.au](http://www.adfassistancetrust.org.au) or contact us on [ask@adfassistancetrust.org.au](mailto:ask@adfassistancetrust.org.au) or by phone on 1300 652 103. Yours faithfully Allison Stephens Executive Officer  
Tel: 1300 652 103 | [ask@adfassistancetrust.org.au](mailto:ask@adfassistancetrust.org.au)

#### ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE

The ADF Assistance Trust provides relief of financial hardship for current or former members of the ADF (and their families) who are struggling to meet financial commitments as a result of service-related incapacity, death or injury. Specifically, the ADF Assistance Trust provides financial assistance to fill gaps in services available to:

- Current or former ADF members with a service-related permanent incapacity or who are otherwise permanently injured, and their dependents
- Current or former ADF members with a service-related mental health condition, and their dependants
- The dependants of those ADF members who have suffered a service-related death. The ADF Assistance Trust can step in to help if financial assistance from the Commonwealth is not meeting an individual's needs. In emergency situations financial assistance can be offered quite quickly. Assistance cannot be provided to those already in receipt of similar support from a government agency or a similar trust which has been established for the purpose of providing similar relief of financial hardship to members from any particular section of the ADF and their dependants. **CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE** Current members of the ADF with a service-related mental health condition, permanent physical incapacity or who are otherwise permanently injured may be eligible for assistance. **FORMER MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE** ADF veterans with a service-related mental health condition, permanent physical incapacity or who are otherwise permanently injured may be eligible for assistance. **FAMILY MEMBERS** A partner (spouse or de facto spouse), child or dependant (under 25yrs old) of a member of the ADF who is killed during service or has a service-related mental health condition, permanent physical incapacity or who is otherwise permanently injured, may be eligible for assistance.

**END of MISSION**

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