

The Towner News

2/4 RAR Association Newsletter



The 2nd/4th Battalion
The Royal Australian
Regiment Association

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From the Editor

Well its been a while coming, but here is the eighth edition of the Towner News. Covid and all of its sideline issues, has certainly slowed things down with its effect on day-to-day operations, however we have put together another interesting and informative newsletter.

Members of the Battalion have not been idle, participating in many events, meet-ups, get-togethers and even a trip abroad. The 2/4 Association committee continue with their meetings at the Townsville RSL, keeping all in order. Maintaining our successful special reunion events program, the 2023 Reunion committee consisting of Boof Ellis, his wife Cathy, Dave Lowe and his wife Joy, are all doing great work in already organising preparations for next year's special event. You can read where they are up to in this issue. It is going to be a big one, marking 50 years of our Battalion. It would be spectacular to have as big a number of participants as possible.

Pass the word around, it could be our last big one.

So kick back, have yourself a beverage and enjoy this read of the Towner News.
Cheers
Bob.



Photo courtesy 2RAR Historical Collection

Committee

Patron: BRIG Paul S. O'Sullivan AM
MBE (Retd)

President: Merv Diction

Vice President: Ken Ellis

Secretary: Gary Jear

Asst Secretary: Joy Lowe

Treasurer: Bob Bakkers

Asst Treasurer: Kim Pyke

Merchandise: Martin Dunn

Web/IT/Media Member: Gary Jear

Asst Web/IT/Media Mbr: John Märk

Personnel Member: Pat "Spud" Cairns

Property Member: Joy Lowe

We have 303
members and our
numbers are
steadily growing.

Patron's Message

Message from the Patron – Brigadier (Retired) Paul O'Sullivan AM MBE

Greetings to all members of the Association. I trust this edition of The Towner News finds you as well as years and circumstances permit, and that you are back into your normal routines after all the disruptions we've had over the past two years.

I'm pleased to see that the Association was again extremely well represented on ANZAC Day around the country, and that the 2/4 RAR banner was prominent in so many of the Marches.

It is indicative of how strong the Association is, and how important service in the Battalion is to so many who had the privilege of serving in its ranks. It certainly is to me, so I thought I would share a photo of a prized possession which is displayed in my home in Sydney.



It's been travelling with me since I had the good fortune to have it presented to me when I marched out of the Battalion at the end of 1986.

I regret that I am unable to join you for the AGM in Brisbane this year, but I am sure it will go well and I hope it is well attended. I find it hard to believe we will be having our 50th anniversary next year.

But I will certainly be attending in Townsville next year and look forward to catching up with all who are able to attend then.

In the meantime, best wishes to you all.

Regards, Paul

President's Message

Mid-year already and not long until our AGM in mid-July.

This is my last message as the President of the Association as I will not be re-nominating at the AGM.

It is time for new blood on the Committee and hopefully some younger aspirants. Can I exhort you to consider nominating for positions? We have the Executive Committee covered but there are some spots like Social Member NQ and Regional Representatives SA and NT that need to be filled.

For those who have not yet joined the Association, come on lads and ladettes, it is worthwhile and we need to maintain the Association into the future for as long as we can. Appreciate your attention to this soonest please.

For all those who observed ANZAC Day 2022, a huge well done and hopefully there will be some articles in this newsletter from some of those who led the activities in each Capital or Regional Centre.

Most of you would be aware that a group of us went to Norfolk Island and observed ANZAC Day activities there. See photos in this newsletter.

Appreciation to Bob Bakkers and Kim Pyke for all the work they do to produce our Towner News, great work and a great newsletter and a huge apology from me for holding up production.

On behalf of the Association we would like to see many of you at the 2022 AGM in Brisbane, until then stay healthy and safe and check your mates are OK.

Regards
Merv Dicton

Annual General Meeting—Brisbane 2022

Welcome to Brisbane for the 2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) 15 – 17 July 2022



Welcome to Brisbane and Southbank.

Whilst still in the final planning stages hopefully enough information will be on this page to enable you to commence your planning especially if you are travelling.

The AGM is to be held in the Brisbane CBD at Southbank, site of the 1988 Expo.

The venue – THE VENUE HAS CHANGED

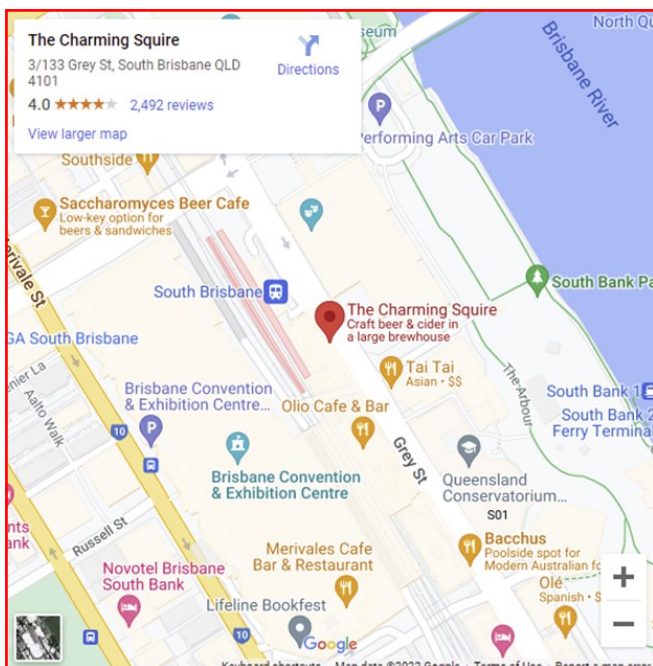
The original venue was The Fox Hotel which sustained flood damage earlier this year. It was hoped that the repairs would be complete but this won't be the case. Sadly I have had to cancel this booking and reverted to the South Queensland go to meeting point.

The new venue is The Charming Squire at Southbank.

The venue is also located in very close proximity to South Brisbane Station at Southbank and is only about 300m from the original Fox Hotel.



Annual General Meeting—Brisbane 2022 *continued*



Sequence of events

Fri 15 July: Meet and Greet 1700 – The Charming Squire

The meet and greet is simply that; a chance to meet up and have a quick catch up with friends and share some drinks and stories. Whilst there is a dining room at the Squire (bookings essential if you wanted, get in early) there has been no food option explored for the meet and greet. What a great chance for people to explore what is on offer in and around South Brisbane / Southbank. There are many dining options to look at in this area. The link below will take you to a few places in close proximity to The Charming Squire along Grey Street and Little Stanley Street.

Dining Options South Brisbane / Southbank

The fundamental appeal of Little Stanley Street lies in its eclectic and exotic food offering across more than 30 distinct dining destinations. Lined with an abundance of funky cafes, cool concepts, and gourmet restaurants to enliven even the most exotic palates, Little Stanley Street has become an integral part of Brisbane’s modern dining landscape. Each café and restaurant skillfully masters a different culinary art, arousing a reputation of finery and diversity that you won’t find anywhere else in Brisbane.

A stroll from end to end will bring you face to face with plentiful Spanish fare set against a vibrant backdrop (that gets more vivacious as the hours tick by), sumptuous banquets that transport you to a Turkish caravanserai, quaint coffee haunts with life-giving caffeinated elixir, Parisian hideaways with express lunches and ambrosial crème brulee, American diners with all-you-can-drink coffee and shakes to go, quirky bars with on-tap craft beers, plus many, many more appetising restaurants and cafes that are waiting to provide you with mouth-watering sustenance from breakfast to dinner and beyond.

Set against this inviting culinary journey are also services and facilities on hand to make your visit to South Bank that much easier and more enjoyable. You can also enter the South Bank car park’s two entrances via Little Stanley Street, adding maximum convenience to your visit. Find your new favourite foodie haven along Little Stanley Street.

Annual General Meeting—Brisbane 2022 *continued*

Sat 16 July: AGM / Dinner at The Charming Squire

The AGM will be held at 1600. People are requested to arrive 1530 – 1545 to allow for checking you in.

The AGM will be followed by about an hour's break (depending on length of the AGM) and then followed by a 3 course sit down dinner at around 1800. Cost for the meal is planned to be \$60pp **to be paid on the night** (CASH\$\$\$\$). A member's subsidy may yet be applied to the dinner. Drinks are at own cost as we have a dedicated bar in the AGM area.

Sun 17 July: Return to home base

Due to the distances across Brisbane that people may / will be staying there is no planned activities for Sunday 17 July. This day will be left to one's own devices to organise other catch ups, look around Brisbane or pack up and return to home base.

The Charming Squire AGM Area

The AGM will be held on the mezzanine floor above the brewery in the River Room and depending on bookings may extend out to the Zinc Room.

The River Room boasts natural light with floor to ceiling windows showcasing views of the Brisbane skyline and the Wheel of Brisbane.

The Zinc Bar offers a prime view of the in-house brewery with its own bar and access to a private balcony that overlooks South Bank.

About Southbank

Over the years Southbank / South Brisbane has been upgraded and rebuilt many times since the 1988 Expo, now offering one of Brisbane's main entertainment precincts in the city.

From the cultural venues, to the restaurants, to the live theatre and shows or simply a stroll (e-scooter / e-bike) along the winding river; this area has it all.

Some things to put on your list:

The Wheel, Streets Beach, QLD Maritime Museum, Gallery Of Modern Art (GOMA), The Cultural Centre, QLD Performing Arts Centre, The Arbor, Nepalese Peace Pagoda, Community Herb garden/s and many more.

For a link that highlights what you can open :-

<https://www.visitbrisbane.com.au/south-bank/news>

Ferries run you along the Brisbane River and crisscross from along Southbank to the city side where more entertainment options await you.

There are even free (city hopper) ferries that can take you from one end of the river run to the other and back again with multiple stops along the way where you get on and off as many times as you want to.

Annual General Meeting—Brisbane 2022 *continued*

Accommodation Options

There are many accommodation options in and around Brisbane and Southbank. Some suggested venues are listed below that offer different tariffs but there are too many to list.

A quick google of the dates (two nights) and prices (appx) showed better value at:-

Fleet Lane (\$278)

River Plaza Apts (\$282)

Parkview Apts (\$229)

Other prices ranged from \$300 – \$378 across the seven Arise options.

Menso, Mantra and Rydges were \$600 – \$800 for the two nights.

***** Feedback from one of our members recommends staying at Riverside Hotel South Bank, it appears to be the probably the best option, as the parking is free and the room for two nights was only \$356 compared to \$400+ for the others. Most of the other hotels charge around \$40/day for parking as well.**

**Mantra , Menso, Parkview Apartments (value) Arise (Multiple accom options)
Rydges, River Plaza Fleet Lane**

Getting to Southbank

Southbank map

Southbank is located on the south side of the Brisbane River opposite the CBD. There are many public transport options available to you to get to Southbank Precinct.

There are two railway stations along the precinct Southbank and South Brisbane with South Brisbane being the closest to the planned venue.

Rail line map

There are also buses and taxis that offer alternatives transport.

Green Cabs are based at The Big Wheel, and **run tours of Southbank and surrounds from around \$15**



2/4 RAR 50th Birthday Reunion 2023

50th BIRTHDAY REUNION

14th – 20th AUGUST 2023

Planning is well underway for our reunion next year. 50 years is quite a milestone and we are hoping to make the event a special one for all who attend.

Activities that are being planned will only run for half day at the most which will allow those attending to arrange sightseeing, catch ups or relaxation/recovery time during their stay.

As soon as we have events confirmed, or set in place, we will let you know so that you have a taste of what is being planned.

Obtaining a suitable venue has been our main focus and proven problematic at the same time. We want to make sure that we do not have to cap numbers (which a small venue will do) but at the same time keep the costs down (which a larger venue will *not* do). The aim of this reunion is to allow for as many as we can to participate in and use it as a time of reflection, reminiscing and recollection. We are definitely aiming to keep the costs as low as we can by applying for Grants to assist.

It is 12 months away and the time will go quickly so this is an early prompt to consider your accommodation options.

FYI there are numerous other events happening in Townsville during August 2023 which will put pressure on accommodation venues.

Hoping to see you in Townsville in August 2023.

Regards
2023 Reunion Committee



2/4 RAR 50th Birthday Reunion 2023—Questionnaire

Townsville 15-20 Aug 23

QUESTIONNAIRE

Ladies and Gents, to assist with the planning for our 50th Birthday Reunion, the Reunion Committee have some questions (below) we would like you to answer. The answers you give will allow us to more accurately price events and provide information that will gratefully assist us with our grant application. Your response below is not to be seen as a booking or commitment, just an indication of your intention to attend the planned events. Further details will be advised in due course.

(Cross out what is not applicable below)

Is it likely that you may attend or stay in Townsville for?

1-3 days activities

3-6 days activities

7 days or more

Would you be interested in attending an Open Day / Back to the Battalion Day at Lavarack Barracks?

YES NO

Would you be interested in attending a Memorial Service / Breakfast function at ANZAC Park?

YES NO

Would you be interested in attending a Call to Arms at a local watering hole?

YES NO

Will you be attending the formal dinner Sat 19 Aug 23?

YES NO

Will you be interested in attending the Annual General Meeting Fri 18 Aug 23?

YES NO

Will you be bringing a partner or a plus one?

YES NO

Do you require accommodation in Townsville?

YES NO

If so, for how many days accommodation will you require?

Thank you for your participation.

The Reunion Committee are working hard to put together a reunion program which will allow opportunities to meet old mates, share stories and make some new connections.

For planning purposes, the committee would appreciate your indications above be returned by 10 Aug 22 to the Association's e-mail account,

[mailto: reunion@24rarassociaton.com](mailto:reunion@24rarassociaton.com)

(subject heading should be 2023 Reunion Questionnaire).

A program will be distributed in due course.

Anzac Day Norfolk Island 2022



Preparations for the Dawn Service.

A BIG Thank you

To Julie and Rowdy Unsworth for suggesting and organising the Norfolk Island Trip for the Anzac Day Weekend 2022, which was a Huge success.



Anzac Day Norfolk Island 2022 - *continued*



2/4 RAR Association President, Merv Diction, being presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by Norfolk Island RSL Sub Branch President, Warren Finch (Wal) on the occasion of the ANZAC Day visit to Norfolk Island 2022.



Coffs Harbour ANZAC Day Gathering 2022

L to R Geoff Hannah , (3rd in line) Garry Heskett 2/4 , Warren Dowell 2/4 ,
Bob Bryce 2/4, Everett Ryan 2/4 and Jerry Dykyj

Other 2 members were George Fields Singleton Army Rugby Union and
on the end Chris Leermakers 4RAR



At the gathering in Coffs Harbour for ANZAC Day Bob Bryce, Geoff Hannah, Everett Ryan, Jerry Dykyj and Warren Dowell raised \$500 to the cost of construction of a cover over Peter Egan's grave (as discussed at the Committee Meeting 7Feb 2022).

Peter served most of his time in Bravo 2/4 15Aug1973 to 31Mar1980. May I please request this pledge of \$500 be included in our next Bn Newsletter with a request for ex Bravo Company Old Guard and other Bn members who new Peter donate to the placement of a cover over his gravesite which is located next to Stumpy Randall's site in Townsville.

Peter has no living family other then his old mates in 2/4....

Warren Dowell

DHAAT

DHAAT reviewing RCB service

Many of us served on rotation with Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) in Malaysia between 1971 and 1989. That was the period of the Malaysian Communist Insurgency War 1968-1989. Up until 1974 New Zealanders also served at Butterworth as part of RCB. Like our own government the New Zealand government has maintained that RCB service was peacetime service.

That is, up until last year when the New Zealand Defence Department were instructed to conduct a review of that service. Relying on evidence from Australia, largely provided by the Rifle Company Butterworth Review Group (RCBRG), New Zealand has overturned their previous finding of peacetime service and have awarded their people the Operational Service Medal for service with RCB.

On 7 April this year, following representations from the RCBRG and just days before the election was called, the Minister for Defence Personnel, Andrew Gee, directed the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (DHAAT) to conduct an inquiry into RCB service 1970-1989, in particular whether that service should be awarded with the Australian Active Service Medal.

The Tribunal is taking written submissions up until 1 July this year and will then take oral submissions from selected people. A final report is expected by the end of the year.

Information about the inquiry, and how to make a submission, can be found on the Tribunal's website: <https://defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au>.

For assistance in completing a submission go to the RCBRG website at <https://recognitionofrcbservice.com/submissions-to-rcb-dhaat-inquiry/>

A submission does not have to be complex, it is sufficient just to say how you were prepared for RCB, what you were told, what you did there and what was your understanding of that service.

Ray Fulcher
RCB 1979, C Coy
Chair RCBRG

Jim Smith—Simpson Desert Adventure

Jim has had a sensational trip recently and
You can read all about Jim's adventure through the Simpson Desert on the
2/4 RAR Group Facebook page.

Just crossed the Simpson Desert solo in 3 days, bloody loved every second, [Ken Ellis](#), that's why I
didn't want it to rain out west 🍷 beers being had in Birdsville



1982 Year Book - 2RAR Historical Collection

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SSGT FRANK N. STEIN

"Frankie" was constructed by the then SGT Noel Huish from kit form in 1964 at Woodside S.A. for presentation to the 4 RAR Sergeants Mess after their Inauguration. On presenting "Frankie" to the Mess and to the then PMC WO1 Paddy Brennan, both Frank Galvin and Noel Huish carried "Frankie" into the Mess in a box shaped like a coffin, filled with dry ice. The lights in the Mess were dimmed and he was placed on the bar with the dry ice vapours rising from the coffin.

When "Frankie" was built, he originally had a ball and chain around his right ankle, but over the years it disappeared through moving him on various 4 RAR postings.

It was decided at a formal dinner by the first CO, LTCOL D. Thompson MC, that he should be promoted to SERGEANT, which was duly done. It was also decided that he should be dressed accordingly, 4 RAR main dress then was battle dress, so a set was made for him, together with a set of Mess Dress (Blues).

"Frankie" became the Mess mascot and he attends all Mess functions. At Regimental Dinners he has his own seat, place card and is served all meals (small portions) wines and port. He sits at the end of the table and is hosted by the junior infantry Sergeant.

He accompanied the Battalion to Malaya in 1965. It was there a set of Summer Dress and Planters Dress was tailored for him. He was promoted to SSGT in 1973/74 (after 2 RAR and 4 RAR were amalgamated) by the CO, LTCOL J.P.A. Deighton MC.

It was decided in Malaya that he should only reach the rank of SSGT. SSGT Stein was officially presented to the 2/4 RAR SGT's Mess by WO1 G.N. Huish in February 1982.



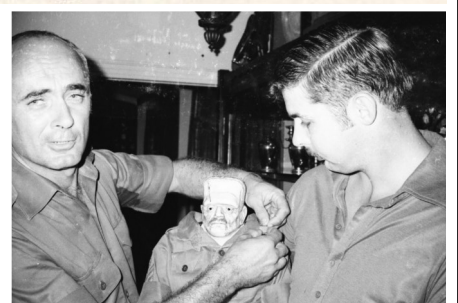
SSGT Stein

RECORD OF SERVICE

4 RAR Woodside S.A.	1964-65
4 RAR Borneo/Malaya	1966-67
4 RAR Enoggera	1967-68
4 RAR/NZ South Vietnam	1968-70
4 RAR Townsville	1970-71
4 RAR/NZ South Vietnam	1971-71
4 RAR Townsville	1972-73
2/4 RAR Townsville	1973-

SSGT Stein is entitled to wear the following medals/awards:

- a. General Service Medal 1962 with Clasp Borneo,
- b. Vietnam and South Vietnamese Campaign Medal,
- c. National Medal,
- d. Defence Force Service Medal with Clasp,
- e. Infantry Combat Badge.



Infantryman's Muster—Nov 2022

Infantryman's Muster



**2022 EVENT
17-20 NOVEMBER**

Please arrive NO EARLIER than Tuesday 15th
and leave NO LATER than Tuesday 22nd.
* Extra Costs (to you) will be incurred

**Amamoor Creek Campground
Amamoor Creek Road
Amamoor Qld**
(site of the Gympie Country Music Muster)

Come and [Re] Connect with the Infantry Family.
An annual event for ARA INFANTRY and certain Friends (those posted to an RAR Bn may come as a guest)
Saturday Night Band (may be) included in Entry Fee Coffee/Cafe Van onsite - Thu-Sun
Saturday Night Dinner and Recovery Breakfast included in Entry Fee
Spouses/Carers Welcome (\$50.00 but no merchandise pack) - Camping or bring your Caravan
**** Over 18 event**
* Pre-paid Entry Fee - \$130.00 RAR only includes Shirt and Stubby Holder
Pre-paid Entry Fee - \$100.00 without Shirt and Stubby Holder
\$100.00 for guests.

<https://www.facebook.com/InfantryMuster> <http://www.infantrymansmuster.com>
rainfmuster@outlook.com.au **0401 225 914**
Payments to: Commonwealth Bank.
BSB: 064474. Acct: 10680388
(The Infantrymans Muster Inc.)

* May be Paid Off over time
with payment finalised by 1st November.



<http://infantrymansmuster.com>
<http://www.facebook.com/InfantryMuster>

Contact:- rainfmuster@outlook.com.au

Editor's End Note

Editor's end note

So this brings us to the end of this issue of the Towner News. A quick note though, Cordell Kent has informed the Association that Frank Nuccio has become the Executive-Vice President of the Ballarat RSL. If you're in the area call in and have a cold one.

A reminder also that memberships will be due in August, and those members due will receive a reminder for this in mid-August from the Association.

Standard membership is \$15 per year or \$180 for a life subscriber, this also comes with a laminated certificate.

If you know of anyone who served in the Battalion, no matter what corps encourage them to join, it is well worth it.

Don't forget to complete the 50 year Reunion questionnaire and either email back to reunion@24rarassociaton.com or post if you're not computer savvy. Use the address on the front of the Newsletter.

Finally, stay safe and healthy, and for those attending the AGM in Brisbane, I will see you there.

Cheers Bob.