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# ARMOUR

Patron: Major General Dave Chalmers, AO CSC  
President: Rob Shoebridge . Editor George Baczochna

## *The Donbas: determining the future of Armoured warfare?*

*After more than eight years of conflict in Ukraine's Donbas region US advocates of heavy armour have realised that "tanks still matter".*

*However, armour has to be integrated effectively with infantry and artillery into a combined order of battle. Both sides have been learning this lesson the hard way, but the Ukrainians lack personnel and sufficient equipment to be able to retake and hold terrain.*

*The western backers of the present Kiev government are making a huge mistake by failing to understand or ignoring the culture and history of the area. The very term "Ukraina" refers to the borderland which the Poles, the Russians and the Cossack Hosts have fought over for centuries. Hence there is a large ethnic divide between the Ukrainians of the east and those of the west. The Russians understand this, hence their operations tend to minimize the damage on the local population and to keep as much of the infrastructure intact as possible.*



*One also needs to understand the structure of the Russian Battalion Tactical group, its strengths, and weaknesses. The concept of holding ground is secondary to the idea of inflicting maximum number of casualties and equipment losses, i.e. drawing your enemy out until they are bled dry while minimizing the damage to your own group. The battle of Kursk during WW2 is a good example where the German armour actually won the battle but lost the war as they left themselves overextended in manpower and equipment with no chance of resupply. (Refer to "Armour" October 2012 No. 466 – The Prochorovka Myth).*

*The fighting in the Donbas has not proceeded along what is normally thought of as a conventional military operation. Russia has been sending its personnel into the Donbas as an initial training ground before they are then deployed elsewhere. This has created the false impression that a common model of operations exists for the Russian military.*

*On the contrary, the Russian operations in Ukraine – as well as other operations in previous conflicts like Georgia, Syria – show that Russia prosecutes conflicts under distinctly different sets of objectives and divergent approaches. It is also equally inaccurate that current-day Russian warfare would be based on the doctrinal approaches that dominated military thinking during the Soviet period.*

*(Continued on page 3)*

## President's Report:

As we slowly come out of COVID restrictions, we can start to focus on numbers for two important activities. Firstly, our membership. It is a constant challenge to seek out and then persuade serving and former RAACA members to join RAACA NSW. Many do not see the need to join such an Association while serving and, on leaving, it sometimes takes a while for the penny to drop on the camaraderie that being in RAACA NSW brings. I am a case to point! With networking now being a part of all our lives, please reach out to your RAAC networks and encourage them to join.

Secondly, the 12 November Beersheba – Cambrai Dinner at the RAC, Macquarie St, Sydney. This annual event is one of our two major functions, the other being ANZAC Day, and is an excellent function where we can get together and commemorate the battles that shaped the Corps. It is also an opportunity to catch up with RAAC mates and relive past experiences, whether fact or fiction! This year we have Major General Tony Rawlins AM DSC as our Guest of Honour/Guest Speaker. Tony's career is outlined in the Annual Dinner invitation. I hope to see many of you there.

Yours aye,  
Rob  
Rob Shoebridge



### Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association (NSW) Inc.



Patron: Major General Dave Chalmers AO, CSC  
RAACA (NSW), Victoria Barracks Building 41, Locked Bag 7005, Liverpool NSW 1871  
Membership Enquiries: Mob 0401 966 989 or Email mikebutler181@optusnet.com.au

## ANNUAL DINNER INVITATION IN CELEBRATION & REMEMBRANCE OF THE BATTLES OF CAMBRAI AND BEERSHEBA

**Saturday 12th November, 6.30pm for 7.00pm at The Royal Automobile Club, Sydney**

Colonel (Retd) Rob Shoebridge, President of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association (NSW), cordially invites all fellow Black Hats to the Annual Dinner of the Association in celebration and remembrance of the Battles of Cambrai and Beersheba in World War One.

Pre-dinner drinks from 1830 hrs for Dinner at 1900 hrs  
The dinner will be held at  
The Royal Automobile Club,  
89 Macquarie Street, Sydney  
on Saturday 12th November, 2022.

#### DRESS

Black Tie, Mess Kit (Army Dress Order 6B) Mess Dress white jacket, or Coat & Tie, Miniatures may be worn

#### REPLY AND PAYMENT

**RSVP NLT 01 NOV 22 by paying \$110 per head:**  
Electronic Funds Transfer to Def Credit BSB 833205, A/c No 20539747 indicating your Surname and the text 'Dinner payment'.

As a last resort, you can pay by cheque payable to: RAACA NSW and sent it to:

The Treasurer RAACA NSW  
c/o LTCOL A Hine  
Training Branch  
Headquarters Forces Command Building 111  
Locked Bag 7005  
LIVERPOOL NSW 1871

**Guest of Honour is Head of Force Design ADFHQ  
MAJGEN Anthony (Tony) Rawlins AM DSC**



MAJGEN Rawlins staff, training and representational appointments include Divisional Officer at ADFA (1996-1998), ADC to the Governor General (1997-1998), Instructor at Australian (2008) and Canadian Command and Staff Colleges (2009-2010), and Colonel – Plans at Headquarters 1st Division/DJFHQ (2010-2012) and Director General – Military Strategic Commitments (2014 – 2016). His most recent command was as Commander of the 7th Combat Brigade (2016-2018). He served as Deputy Chief of Army from 2019-2021.

Operationally he has served as a military observer on UNTSO (1999) and deployed as the Commanding Officer of Overwatch Battle Group West – 2 [OBG(W)-2] in Iraq from Nov 2006 – Jun 2007. He most recently deployed as the Chief of Joint Operations (CJ3) on Headquarters International Security Assistance Force (HQ ISAF) from Jan – Oct 2014.

MAJGEN Rawlins was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross for command of OBG(W)-2 on operations. In 2013 he was awarded a Chief of Army Commendation for his joint amphibious capability development work as Colonel – Plans at HQ 1 Div/DJFHQ (2010-2012), and SEC/CDP Commendation for his work in transferring the Bushmaster into service with the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (2018). He was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in the 2019 Australia Day Honours List.

The outbreak of hostilities in the Donbas were solely the product of a pro-Russian separatist movement in which there was no initial Russian involvement. This called for a minimal and at times even obscured Russian presence on the battlefield. Instead, the plan called for handing over copious quantities of weapons delivered from Russia into the separatists' hands. To date the separatist formations in Ukraine, feature a high-profile presence of Russian military hardware but there has still been a considerable effort to minimize the presence of actual Russian military personnel. This will change as the newly acquired regions are incorporated into the Russian Federation.

The Separatists have also been equipped with progressively more advanced air defence systems and some of the most advanced electronic warfare equipment in Moscow's arsenal. This was done to keep the Ukrainian air force from being able to strike Russian military units, most of which are composed of "contract soldiers" – those serving under agreements for pay scales comparable to the private sector, rather than Russian regular army. Russian regular formations were only used in combat against major Ukrainian-held objectives and supported by main battle tanks and IFVs equipped with modern, encrypted communications systems and reconnaissance drones.

These range from trucks and tanks to more advanced systems that are the latest iterations of post-Soviet-era designs. For example: the PANTSIR-S1 air defence system – an anti-aircraft platform armed with two paired 30 mm cannons. In the same category is the T-72B3 tank, which is the main battle tank of the Russian army for those units not yet upgraded to the T-90. It differs from other tanks of similar configuration in that it has a new fire control system fitted with a Belarusian SOSNA-U gunsight.

The BPM-97, also a Russian-only armoured 4 x 4 MRAP vehicle was also being used. It exists in several configurations, mainly used by special forces of the Russian Federation.

The private military company the Wagner Group, has used the vehicle, due to its smaller size and maneuverability. Wagner

Group took certain measures to obscure their employment of the BPM-97 in Ukraine during the battle for Debaltseve. (The mercenary company also made use of the BPM-97 during their operations in Syria.)



A road to Artemivsk littered with Ukrainian tanks and vehicles just outside of Debaltseve, Ukraine (Photo: AP/ Vadim Ghirda.)

But it is not just having these more advanced platforms that gives the Russians and their surrogates the edge over Ukrainian armed forces in the Donbas. At the beginning of the conflict, the Ukrainian military found itself at a disadvantage due to the advanced reactive armour technology and active anti-ATGM protection fitted to Russian vehicles. In the early phases of the Donbas war Ukraine's military had no anti-tank missiles with a tandem warhead that could penetrate the armour plating of the T-90 and advanced T-72 models.

This vulnerability was eliminated when units in the Donbas began receiving the first new-design SKIF ATGM from the Luch Design Bureau in Kiev. Ukraine had also requested that it acquire the US-made Raytheon FGM-148 JAVELIN ATGM, but the purchase was blocked on multiple occasions by the Obama Administration. In January 2017 this policy was reversed by the Trump Administration.

Modern electronic warfare (EW) systems have also enhanced the effectiveness of Russian Armour in the Donbas. The separatist units from Donbas have now been equipped with the KRASUKHA-2 1L269 jammer, the Bylina RB-109A REPELLENT-1 and the LEYER-3 RB-3418. The RB-3418 has also been used in the field in Donbas operations in conjunction with the Russian-made ORLAN-10 UAV, which has a considerable loiter capability of up to 16 hours and operates at distances in excess of 100 km.

Aside from being able to use the considerable Russian EW assets to blind the Ukrainian military's sensors and constantly disrupt their situational awareness, the ORLAN-10 allows separatist units to pinpoint the location of Ukraine units, which accounts for the increasing lethality of Russian artillery and rocket attacks.

Over the past months Ukraine has been taking huge losses in manpower and equipment especially in the fighting around Kherson and Kharkiv. Since February much of the soviet era equipment, especially their MBTs have been destroyed. Ukrainian forces have been relying on the old Warsaw Pact nations for resupply as it is the most logical and requires the least amount of troop retraining. All the available T72s and their modified variant have now been sent to Ukraine and a large percentage of these have been lost or destroyed.

Ukraine is now asking for modern western armour. However, there is a huge difference in the philosophy and design between T72s, T90s and the western MBTs, ie Leopard 2 and Abrams M1A1 and their variants. For example Russian MBTs are smaller, lighter thus lower profile and faster. Fuel consumption is lower and range much greater, plus the crew size is three as opposed to the western MBT requiring four. Western MBTs are heavier more heavily armoured but this comes with increased fuel consumption and less range. The survivability of the Leopards and Abrams from Syrian experience is that they are just as vulnerable as the Russian MBT to the latest antitank missiles.

*The supply of western Leopard or Abrams will not solve Ukraine's shortage in the short term:*

*\* It takes approx. 6 months to train soldiers for basic crew level, then a further period where the crew learn to work together as an effective team.*

*\* Logistic support not in place and would not be available in time to hold any Russian advance. Fuel, maintenance and repair facilities often would need to be shipped most likely to Poland some 1000km.*

*\* Supply of existing equipment comes from a number of nations having different variants that require its own spares. Spares inventory will be difficult to manage.*

*\* The only solution to this would need direct NATO and US involvement which would escalate the conflict into a major war between Russia and the US.*



*More than a year ago, a senior political leader in the Donbas gave an assessment of the conflict in the more recent past, stating "when the first casualties started, nobody believed it would last so long. The worst thing is, that people have gotten used to the conflict. People who live along the contact line don't care who is the president [of Ukraine], they just want the war to stop," he said.*

While the commitment of armour makes a difference –both in numbers and the modernity – it is not enough by itself. The fighting shows once again that armour still must be integrated effectively with infantry, and artillery into a combined arms order of battle.

With the integration of the new territories into the Russian Federation the Russian military has changed its strategy any attack by Ukrainian forces will be seen as a direct attack on Russia thus expect to see full Russian military involvement rather than the "contract soldiers" used over the past years. The belief is also the the Russian forces are regrouping and waiting for the first snows of winter to harden the ground before they commit themselves to a major offensive.

*This article has been compiled mainly using the European Security and Defence article, with updated information from Patrick Lancaster and Colonel McGregor.*

### **Sources**

*Reuben F. Johnson is a 30-year veteran of reporting on the defence sector and analysing political-military affairs in the former USSR and East- ern Europe, the PRC and SE Asia*

*US "Armor" Spring 2017 edition – Defeating the Russian Battalion Tactical Group, CAPT N.J. Fiore*

*Patrick Lancaster, @PLnewstoday*

*Colonel Douglas McGregor US Army (retired)*

*European security and defence 23/8/22, info(at)mittler-report.de*



# Technical Notes & News

## Poland to Purchase South Korean Black Panther tanks

By Oleg Danylov, 22nd January 2022

Poland will receive the first South Korean K2 Black Panther tanks this year, and KAI FA-50 aircraft – next year Polish Defense Minister Mariusz Błaszczak confirmed the the supply of South Korean military equipment for the Polish Army.

“This year, the first units will be delivered and in total there will be 180 (K2 Black Panther) tanks in the first order; ultimately, these tanks will be produced in Poland,” said Mariusz Błaszczak in an interview with the Sיעי weekly.

In addition, Błaszczak noted that Poland will also purchase KAI FA-50 howitzers and light fighters from South Korea.

Mariusz Błaszczak did not specify the number but it is most likely the 155-mm self-propelled guns, K9 Thunder.

The purchase is to replace the soviet era equipment that in May was handed over to the Ukrainians.

The first howitzers and tanks are scheduled to arrive at the end of 2022 while the planes are expected to be delivered next year, the defense minister said.



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## Cambrai and Beersheba Dinner 2021



Mick Woolan MC and Bob Ferrari OAM



Brig. Phillip Bridie AM and Jim Dummett

# Vale

## Ian Hawthorn

It is with great sadness that I let you know about the passing of our friend and colleague Ian Hawthorn. Ian passed away at Norwest Private Hospital in the evening of 21 July 2022 after an illness that had not till the very last stopped him from volunteering at the Museum. He had been guiding and manning the gate but a month before.

Ian had served eight years in the British Army reaching the rank of captain in 3RTR before migrating to Australia. We only had the benefit of two years of his service in the Regiment. He was OC A Squadron 1975/76. A new country for his family and a rising career took him from us.

When he retired in 2010, we at the Lancers' Museum got the benefit of his full drive and energy. He had already been helping-out with the organisation of Reserve Forces Day, but after election to the committee of management of the New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum Inc in 2011, the Museum became his focus, to our benefit.

He proved to be a great researcher, organiser and had the capability and tenacity to obtain funds. The meticulous way in which he sought out, obtained and managed grants and funds from public and private sources demanded admiration. His passion for the Second Anglo-Boer war and the Lancers' participation therein shows well in the Museum's collection; his unearthing and contextualising items like Patterson's poems, the Elands River Flag etc enhanced the Museum's collection. His greatest triumph was the fundraising and management of the project to restore the WW2 Matilda Tank ACE; this will stand as a symbol of his endeavour for many years to come.



Sincerely,  
John Howells  
Hon Secretary  
New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum Inc

# Vale

## Brian Catt RAAC - OCS Class Dec 72

Very sad news. Apart from anything else, he was a significant influence on my joining RAAC, and a top fellow. I recall him and his wife Jenny with great fondness.

Andy  
AW Hine  
LTCOL



Australian Rheinmetall Boxer CRV, Patria AMV 35, M1A1 Abrams and ASLAV

# Vale

## Major Alex Baczocha

1971 -2022

Alex was a second-generation member of the Regiment. His father George had served in the 1980s, George was noted for his participation in the mounted contingent on Reserve Forces day, and latterly as the editor of ARMOUR, the RAACA-NSW journal. Major Alex Baczocha, Officer Commanding C Squadron passed away on 30 March 2022. Alex's shining career cut far too short. He died suddenly of a cerebrovascular related condition only just after returning from full time service related to the flood emergency in the north of our state.

Alex's funeral was held Friday 8 April 2022 at St Patricks Cathedral, Parramatta with full military honours. He is survived by his wife Tracee and two teenage daughters Phobe and Isabella.

Born on 24 November 1971, Alex Baczocha enlisted into the Australian Army on 25 November 1997, one day after his 26<sup>th</sup> birthday. Being allocated to the Royal Australian Armoured Corps, he undertook his recruit course in April 1998. After successfully completing Kapooka he was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Royal New South Wales Lancers, the unit where he would spend a majority of his military career. Upon receiving his beloved black hat, it was not long until Trooper Baczocha commenced his M113 crewman suite of courses, becoming fully qualified less than a year after enlisting.



He was promoted to LCPL in March of 2002 and CPL 19 months later. In 2004 he completed his Subj 4 SGT courses in comms and gunnery. While many at 1/15 were impressed with Alex's rise through the ranks and may have had grand plans for him as an OR, Alex had a different view. In June 2004 he crossed to 'the dark side' and transferred to the Sydney University Regiment as an OCDT. Eighteen months later, the newly minted 2LT Baczocha emerged from the Royal Military College. However, the old Alex was not lost to the military. As recurring theme throughout Alex's next 16 years was his 'ORTs', or 'Other Rank Tendencies', but more on that later.

His brief stint away from the Regiment during his time as an OCDT was quickly forgotten when he returned like the prodigal son and took up a position in Regimental Headquarters. He completed his Regimental Officer's Basic Course over the next 15 months and was promoted to full lieutenant and with it, the prized subaltern role of troop leader %45; a position he cherished and made his own for the next two years.

The beginning of 2010 saw the now 'Captain' Baczocha spread his wings and head to B Squadron as their second-in-command, a position he held for three years, both in Canberra and Sydney. However, his fun times in the Regiment were soon to come to an end, albeit briefly. It is imperative that to be a good, well-rounded officer, one cannot remain in the same unit for the entirety of their career. In 2013 Alex was posted to Headquarters 5 Brigade in the operations cell. He spent the next 4 years in various non-corp postings, further enhancing his knowledge outside his armoured speciality, and losing his pips and gaining a crown in 2016.

Major Baczocha returned to 1/15 in December 2017 as the adjutant on full-time service. In 2020 he finally achieved a life-long dream when he was given sub-unit command of B Sqn, and subsequently C Sqn. His final period of full-time service was at Headquarters 2 Div as the SO2 Future Training Needs. Such was his dedication and love for the Regiment, that at the same time he was on full-time service at 2 DIV, he was also maintaining his role as OC C Sqn.

Alex had a profound influence on everyone he came into contact with. There is not one person in the army who ever said a bad word about him. He was able to relate to all ranks, whether they be troopers, NCOs, or officers. He had the benefit of sitting on both sides of the fence – as an OR and an officer. This gave him so much credibility within the unit and gave him a unique insight into the requirements of his soldiers, a trait many officers wish they possessed.

So many positive words have been said about Alex since his untimely passing. The impact he had on junior officers will stay with them for the duration of their military careers. A lieutenant stated that 'Major Baz' (as he was affectionately known) showed her what it meant to be an officer who put soldier welfare first. He gave young officers confidence when they had none and felt well and truly out of their depth. He made them feel welcome when they marched into the Regiment. He always made himself available for the officers under his command, showing them how to complete paperwork that looked completely foreign to them. Another lieutenant said that Major Baz provided him with a perception of how to be a good officer and a good leader. He shaped and mentored officers and was instrumental in their development.

But his influence was not confined to the officer stream. Indeed, his 'ORTs' earned him a certain level of respect from the other ranks. Maj Baz was not your normal looking squadron commander. Despite the best efforts of his SSM, it was his dress of the day to be walking around with his t-shirt hanging out under his uniform. When chipped by the SSM for being dressed incorrectly, his response would always be "yeah yeah".

On exercise in Shoalwater Bay, he was in command of a PMV which was assigned to be the battlefield clearance vehicle - effectively tasked with removing casualties from the battlefield. Approaching an intersection in the middle of nowhere, travelling a best speed to reach the 'casualty', his warrant officer driver told him they needed to turn left. "No. Keep going straight to the next track" Maj Baz said. As they drove down that track the driver noticed a mobile air traffic control tower. A closer look at their surroundings revealed an MRH90 flying alongside them. The pilots holding their hands up, questioning why a Bushmaster was driving along the edge of the airstrip.

Alex was always willing to assist the unit whenever it was required. He was one of the few officers who was PMV driver and crew commander qualified. This skills, coupled with his M113 experience made him an excellent manoeuvre commander. He was an engaging person, and his audience would always enjoy his muses, whether they be related to the army, his family, Tracee, Phoebe and Isabella, or his horse breaking and endurance riding skills.

Alex Baczocha loved the Regiment, but he particularly loved C Sqn. The loyalty he earned from his squadron was second-to-none. He was most certainly the epitome of a 'soldier's officer'.

*Brigadier Robert Lording CSC.*



Great Grandfather  
Lwow circa 1890



Grandfather  
Bressuire, France 1941



Father  
Puckapunyal 1966

*Alex came from a military family that dates back to the 13th century and in those days we were tasked with guarding the old silk road into the European north. Remains of some of the fortification can still be found in the Tatry mountains. Ironically when I began working for the ABC I met the descendant of the warrior guardians of the eastern end on the Chinese—Mongol border. Our surname actually has the implied meaning guardian/attentive/watcher.*



# Vale

## **Lieutenant Colonel Philip Charles Lawrence, RAAC (Retd).** OCS Class December 1968.

Philip died on 29 August 2022, aged 76 years in South Australia.  
South Vietnam service:

A Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment, January 1971 – March 1972.

Sadly missed by his Portsea classmates, colleagues and many friends.

R.I.P.

Paul Portsea <paul.portsea@gmail.com>

# Vale

## **Wally Hausman**

It is with sadness that I advise that our friend and colleague Wally Hausman passed away Monday 17 October 2022. Wally has been suffering from leukaemia and not been well for some time.

He was a backbone member of the Regiment's LAD/TSS for many years and a valued Museum volunteer.

His funeral was held at Pinegrove Cemetery, Great Western Highway, Minchinbury, on Thursday, 20th October, 2022.

Sincerely,  
John Howells  
Secretary, Royal New South Wales Lancers' Association

# Vale

## **Brian Brackenreg**

It is with considerable sadness that I let you know about the passing of our friend and colleague Brian Brackenreg (Captain Brian Brackenreg RFD ED).

Brian served with the Regiment on Centurions and M113s, he served in Vietnam on a combat experience tour, and was a mentor to many including yours truly.

When he left the Army he became a Museum volunteer sharing his vintage vehicle knowledge. After he retired from his civil job as franchisee of the Epping TAB, he and Janelle moved to a small holding at Tewinga in the north coast hinterland. It was there Brian served with the RFS using his Armoured Corps training to organise the local brigade's vehicles and communications.

Brian has not been the best for the past year, moving from his retirement home at Wauchope to the adjacent nursing home in February, he was receiving palliative care for a few days before he passed. Brian is survived by his wife Janelle, six children and many grandchildren.

Brian's wife Janelle advised that his funeral was held at St Agnes' Catholic Church, 74 Hay Street, Port Macquarie NSW.

Sincerely,  
John Howells  
Secretary  
Royal New South Wales Lancers Association



**Lest we Forget**  
**We regret to advise the passing of the following members**

MAJ	Alex	A	Baczocho	1/15 RNSWL
Mr.	Geradus	G	Wolffer	
Mr.	Ray	R	Deaves	
WO1	Andrew	A	Zsolt	4/19 POWLH (notified by Ron Baikie)
COL	Lloyd	LR	Streeting	1AR
LTCOL	Phillip	PC	Lawrence	3 CAV
Mr	Wally	W	Hausman	1/15 RNSWL
CAPT	Brian	B	Brackenreg	1/15 RNSWL
MAJGEN	Raymond	RJ	Sharp	
LTCOL	John	J	Moore	
Mr	Danny	D	Marriott	1/15 RNSWL
Mr	Bob	B	Dickson	1/15 RNSWL
Mr	Tony	T	Larkin	1/15 RNSWL
CPL	Geoff	G	Francis	1/15 RNSWL

## Vale

### Colonel Lloyd R. Streeting (Retd)

Lloyd graduated to RAAC with the OCS Class in Jun 1960. He died in Canberra on 11 September 2022 at the age of 86. Served as a captain in South Vietnam:

B Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment    26 Nov 1969 – 23 Dec 1969  
 A Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment    23 Dec 1969 – 19 Nov 1970  
 Attended Army Staff College, Queenscliff in 1973.

A life well-lived and will be missed by many.

R.I.P.

Bob Ferrari

*(A good man with whom I served briefly in B Sqn, 1AR. I came home 17 December 1969.)*

## Vale

### Andrew (Andy) Zsolt

21 Aug 1936 - 3 Apr 2022  
 "A thorough gentleman and a fine soldier"

On Monday 11 April, a much loved and respected Black Hat was farewelled at the Boyd Chapel of the Springvale Botanical Cemetery. A standing room only crowd witnessed a very moving ceremony to celebrate the life of former WO1 Andrew Zsolt. Andrew lost his battle with lung cancer on Sunday, 3 April.



## Vale

### Geoff Francis

Corporal Geoffrey Charles Francis, 1923 - 2022. Geoff Francis passed away on Friday 20 May 2022. Geoff was the last Lancer who saw service in World War 2 in the Sydney area. The only other World War 2 Lancer still alive that we know of is Bert Castellari of Curtin ACT.

Geoff was born in Croydon on 25 Mar 1923. He was a farmer working his father's property "Hillcrest" Robertson ara when he joined the Army in 13 February 1942.

Initially an AMF soldier Regimental number N244331, he was posted to 2 Army Tank Battalion. He transferred to the AIF on 15 Jul 1942 at Greta, his number changing to NX101413.

He was posted to the Regiment (1st Army Tank Battalion (Royal New South Wales Lancers)) on 18 February 1943. He served in New Guinea leaving Australia 15 August 1943 (promoted Corporal 17 August 1943), arriving back 26 September 1944. Left Australia 21 May 1945 for Borneo , arriving back 7 August 1946. He left the Army on 17 September 1946.

Geoff was an active member of the Lancers' Association, regularly marching on Anzac Day in Sydney until 2019.

He was the only contemporary Lancer able to be there when ACE, the first Matilda to land at Balikpapan on 1 July 1945 re entered Lancer Barracks fully restored on 4 November 2017.

Rest in peace old Lancer, your Regiment lives on.

john.howells@lancers.org.au



Geoff Francis - 2017

## Vale

### Major General Raymond Jack Sharp AO RFD ED, 1929 - 2022

General Sharp was born in Sydney, 1929. From 1946 to 1987 he held various seafaring positions and senior management positions with Burns Philp Group of Companies here in Australia and overseas. In his later years he was a consultant in Personnel Management and Organisational issues in Australia and the Asian/Pacific area.

Ray Sharp enlisted as a Private soldier in the Royal Australian Engineers 1949 transferring to the infantry 1952. He was commissioned in 1951, serving in command, staff and instructor postings in all ranks, he was appointed Commander 2 Division on promotion to major general in 1982 commanding the Division, and thus the Regiment until 1984. He became inactive in 1986.

He saw overseas service I the UK, USA, PNG and South Vietnam.

On leaving the Army he served on numerous boards and committees in the areas of Community Development and Health Services, Overseas Disasters Response and Defence Force, associated welfare and advocacy organisations including the Battle for Australia Commemoration Committee.

He was appointed as an Order of Australia 1984.

A military funeral was held for General Sharp's at St James' Church Queen's Square, Sydney on 31 May 2022. Thanks very much to Ray's son Richard for letting the Lancers' Association know.

Sincerely,  
John Howells  
Secretary  
Royal New South Wales Lancers Association

# Vale

## LTCOL John Moore OAM RFD ED Ret'd

It is with sadness that we note Lieutenant Colonel John Moore OAM RFD ED Ret'd passed away peacefully on Friday 16 September 2022. After his sustained effort, may he now rest peacefully.

He is well known for establishing and running Reserve Forces Day for twenty years, organising parades in honour of Australia's Defence Reserves.

After World War 2 Australia found itself with a broadly based Regular Army for the first time. In the time up to 1948 the Australian Army was a militia (the equivalent of today's Reserve). Soldiers were part time supported by full time officers and NCOs and some soldiers in traditionally specialist corps in particularly the artillery. The new Australian Regular Army (ARA) had units covering all active corps but not the traditions of ¾ of a century of combat. The militia had formed the units that went to the Sudan, South Africa, and both World Wars and retained those traditions. The ARA anxious to carve its own traditions, effectively all but excluded Reservists and Reserve Units from deployment in combat until the mid-2000s. From 1948 'till 2005 to be deployed overseas on anything more than a combat familiarisation mission, a reservist had to resign then join the ARA, usually as a recruit or otherwise with reduced rank. This meant reservists regardless of time sacrificed in the service of the nation were denied public recognition.



Such lack of recognition encouraged the then Lieutenant Colonel John Moore RFD ED to work to establish a special day of commemoration in 1998. Colonel Moore established a council chaired by Sir Roden Cutler VC AK KCMG KCVO CBE the then Governor of New South Wales and himself a former reservist. Prior to World War II when he was awarded the Victoria Cross, he was RSM of Sydney University Regiment. This council with Colonel Moore as CEO and subsequently under the chair of Sir Laurence Street AC KCMG QC then The Hon Tim Fischer AC organised special recognition parades and services throughout Australia until 2018. By this time, the Reserve members of the Defence Forces were regularly deployed on peacemaking, peacekeeping and security tasks. And with the exception of Sydney were marching with pride with their regular force colleagues on Anzac Day. Meaning there was no further need of a special recognition day.

The last parade commanded by Major Len Koles RFD was held in Sydney in July 2018.

Many serving and former reservists worked tirelessly to make Reserve Forces Day a success. Four, including Colonel Moore were awarded the Order of Australia Medal in part for their work on Reserve Forces Day.

*Extract from [www.rfd.org.au](http://www.rfd.org.au) website*

# Vale

## Danny Marriott, Bob Dickson and Tom Larkin

Just to let you know of the passing of Danny Marriott, Bob Dickson and Tom Larkin. All well respected former members of the Regiment.

Bob Dickson was 85 years old and died on the 11 April 2022. Bob served in the Regiment in the 1960s and 1970s; he was a vehicle crewman. He did not have a funeral in accord with his wishes. Thanks very much to Lyn Pascoe his daughter for letting us know.

Tom Larkin died in Goulburn Hospital last Wednesday the 29 June 2022 (his 81st birthday ) after a short illness. Tom served in the Regiment from 1960 until 1980 as a vehicle crewman. Later he served as a Museum volunteer 'till moving to Goulburn in the 2000s. Perce had gone down to Goulburn on the morning of Tom's birthday with a small cake and a bottle of red to celebrate his birthday with him only to be told the sad news that Tom had passed away. Thanks to Arthur Standing for letting us know.

Daniel (Danny) Marriott served in the Regiment from July 1985 to February 1996 as an Assault Trooper then vehicle trooper. He passed away at Coffs Harbour with his wife, daughter and son by his side after a very tough battle with cancer on Friday 1 July 2022.

Thanks very much to Danny's son Bryan for letting us know.

Sincerely,  
John Howells  
Secretary  
Royal New South Wales Lancers Association