



Journal of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association NSW Inc  
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# ARMOUR

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Patron: Major General Dave Chalmers, AO CSC  
President: COL Rob Lording . Editor George Baczocha

## Operation Hammersley - Vietnam: History in Focus

On 18 February 2020, DVA held a National Commemorative Service to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Operation Hammersley, conducted in Phuoc Tuy Province, Vietnam. The service took place at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial in Canberra.



More than 350 attendees paused to acknowledge and remember the service and sacrifice of all those who took part during the Operation. The next of the kin of those killed were among those who laid wreaths.

Operation Hammersley began in February 1970 when C Company, 8th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (8RAR), along with a troop of armoured personnel carriers from 3 Cavalry Regiment, tanks from 1 Armoured Regiment, sappers from the Royal Australian Engineers, a mortar section from 8RAR's Support Company, along with air support, were deployed to secure a quarry site at the foot of the Long Hai Hills.

The Long Hai Hills were a stronghold for the Viet Cong and had been the target of previous operations and air-strikes. The Australians had early success during Operation Hammersley and the scope was increased until most of 8RAR became involved.

While the Australians had the support of armoured vehicles, the enemy knew the lay of the land and were able to use the caves running beneath the Long Hai Hills to their advantage.

When it seemed like the Australian troops were in a position to drive the enemy out of the area, they were ordered to

withdraw to make way for a B-52 air strike. The strike was accurate, but few of the enemy were killed as they expected the raid. The Operation saw 12 Australians killed and 59 wounded, with a further two killed in the days following. Most of these casualties were caused by landmines.

The 1970 battle left 12 Australians dead and 59 wounded, with an estimated 42 Viet Cong dead and more than 100 wounded.

Liberal senator and veteran Jim Molan told those gathered at the event the land mine was the weapon that defined Hammersley. "At the highest levels of the army and in politics, the certainty of Australian deaths weighed more heavily than the chance of winning a hard-fought battlefield victory," Senator Molan said.

### Inside this Issue

Operation Hammersley	1
ANZAC DAY March 2021	2
Land 400—phase 3	5
Technical Notes & News	6



## ANZAC Day 2021 Sydney

From: Events RSLNSW [mailto:events@rslnsw.org.au]  
Sent: Thursday, 25 March 2021 10:28 AM

To: Events RSLNSW  
Subject: Important update on the Sydney ANZAC Day March

Dear ANZAC Day March Stakeholders,  
RSL NSW is pleased to advise that the Minister for Health and Medical Research has granted an exemption to the Public Health Order for 10,000 marchers to participate in Sydney ANZAC Day March on 25 April 2021. Veterans of the Australian Defence Force, British and Commonwealth Forces, Allies and Descendants can now march with their unit, ship, squadron or association, and behind their banners.

To comply with the guidelines to the Exemption that was granted each unit, ship, squadron and association is required to register its participation in the March for the purposes of COVID-19 contact tracing. To register please follow this link. RSL NSW will send the nominated contact person for each unit, ship, squadron and association a spreadsheet to capture the names and phone numbers of all known people who intend to March in the Sydney CBD. The spreadsheet must be returned to RSL NSW by 23 April. This information will be collected and stored for contact tracing purposes only.

As a result of late changes to the March logistics and the approval processes vehicles or golf buggies are not permitted in the March or in the form up areas.

To meet the guidelines of the Exemption a limited number of bands will be directly invited by RSL NSW to participate and will be allocated a position in the Order of March. Please read and circulate the attached information to your members ahead of the Sydney CBD March on 25 April.



Kind regards,  
Lisa  
Events Manager  
RSL NSW, Level 5, 341 George St Sydney NSW 2000  
events@rslnsw.org.au Office (02) 9264 8188  
www.rslnsw.org.au

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### Anzac Day at Lancer Barracks



After all of the problems that have arisen with the organisation of the Anzac Day Parade in Sydney, the Lancers' Association has given-up on participating. In lieu, we will hold a reunion parade at Lancer Barracks, this will also include a farewell to Sergeant Peter (Harry) Halloran and a Tank Day live manoeuvre by ACE our restored Matilda Tank. The program for the day will be:

Harry's estate included a generous amount to fund his wake. This will be across the bar at the Sergeants' Mess. The RSM and training staff have kindly volunteered to open the Mess.

1000 - Gates Open;  
1100 - Manoeuvre display by ACE;  
1200 - Anzac day parade and service at the Regimental Memorial;  
1230 - Sergeants' mess to be open until 1350 for a farewell function for Harry;  
1400 - Manoeuvre display by ACE;  
1500 - Gates close, no further entry;  
1600 - Barracks clear of visitors.

(Continued on page 3)

Anzac Day will be the second of the Museum's TANK DAYS at Lancer Barracks. The public will be present on the day.

**DRESS**

Association members (other than vehicle demonstration crews) are asked to dress as they would if attending the parade in Sydney, gentlemen - beret, jacket, tie and medals, ladies - in accord with tase, beret and medals. Not only will this add a little class to the occasion, it will ensure you are not charged the gate entry fee applicable to public visitors.

**PARKING**

Parking will be available on-site, however, do note that the compound can fill and it is difficult to extract your vehicle. Also, if you intend to imbibe, it is strongly recommended that you take a bus or train.

**NUMBERS**

Lancer Barracks is currently limited to 100 under Defence imposed COVID restrictions. A watch will be maintained on numbers passing through the gate, however, in the past such an event has not exceeded that limit.

Note: Do note that should any members choose to march in the City parade, you are invited to an RAACA function at the Civic Hotel at the conclusion of the event. Any RAACA members that are not also members of the Lancer Association are also invited to Lancer Barracks should they choose to attend.

Sincerely,  
John Howells  
Secretary  
Royal New South Wales Lancers Association  
Lancer Barracks, 2 Smith Street PARRAMATTA



Photo: Brad Titlow's FB post

(Continued from page 1)



Regimental Sergeant Major Peter "Pedro" Rosemond CSC OAM is the retired RSM of the Army and was one of dozens honoured at the commemorative service Canberra and he describes his experience during Hammersley. The men on the ground were constantly tense, with an army chaplain at the time saying the ground could erupt at any moment. The operation was aimed at destroying a major enemy base in the Long Hai hills, a rugged part of South Vietnam which was riddled with Viet Cong tunnels. "It was a sinister feeling place," Mr Rosemond said. "Sounds funny, but it was dry and dusty but it was covered in vegetation and large rocks ... it wasn't good terrain for us."

At the time, Mr Rosemond was a 19-year-old corporal in charge of a tank and three other crew members. He had only been in Vietnam for two-and-a-half months. "Would you give your 19-year-old your car?" Mr Rosemond said.

About 11 days into the operation his tank went over a land mine. "In a split second everything went red, black and deafening," he said. He bailed out, his crew unharmed and was still on top of the tank when the ammunition inside ignited, sending flames five metres high.

Mr Rosemond now uses a hearing aid as a result of his near miss. He was lucky: on one day alone during Hammersley, land mines killed nine Australians and wounded 16 others.

Australians had cornered the Viet Cong, but were told to retreat for an aerial bombing run which took two days to arrive. It gave the enemy plenty of time to escape, only for soldiers to go back in after the bombing to suffer more casualties. "Well it was frustrating for us, because we knew we had them," Mr Rosemond said.

Hammersley seemed to provide little reward for Australians when it ended in March, it only raised public anger over repeatedly sending men into the deadly hills. It took Mr Rosemond years to get over the land mine explosion, feeling guilty that he'd led his crew over the mine. "There were times when I thought about it a lot," he said.

"I was feeling responsible that it was my decision. It wasn't my decision at all, I was doing what I was told to do. "But at the same time I'm responsible to say, 'just move over to the right a bit, move to the left a bit' ... and I sort of questioned all of that. But now I just accept it."

Dr Robert Hall, an 8RAR veteran of Operation Hammersley, delivered the Call to Remembrance. He said: Today is a day to reflect on the qualities of endurance and courage that characterised the Australians' service in Vietnam, often in the most trying, difficult and dangerous of circumstances. It is a day to reflect on what the war in Vietnam, and what operations like Hammersley, cost Australia – it cost those who served, and it cost their families.

If you would like to watch the Operation Hammersley National Commemorative Service, visit the 'Live videos' on the DVA Facebook page. More information about Operation Hammersley is available on DVA's Anzac Portal or on the Australian War Memorial website.



Photo: Veterans of Operation Hammersley are thanked for their service during the National Commemorative Service for the 50th anniversary of Operation Hammersley. Department of Defence.



## Vehicles delivered for Land 400 Phase 3

Hanwha Defense Australia and Rheinmetall Defence Australia have each delivered three prototype infantry fighting vehicles – two for test and evaluation activities and one for blast testing – as part of the two-year Risk Mitigation Activity under Land 400 Phase 3. The Project is valued at up to \$27.1 billion and will provide the Army with an advanced infantry fighting vehicle capability.

Hanwha Defense Australia and Rheinmetall Defence Australia have each delivered three prototype vehicles – two for test and evaluation activities and one for blast testing – as part of a two-year risk mitigation activity.

“The Risk Mitigation Activity will undertake important analysis on each vehicle’s ability to integrate with other key ADF land, sea and air capabilities, including amphibious lift.

“The Infantry Fighting Vehicle will be a state-of-the-art tracked armoured vehicle, capable of carrying six soldiers in addition to a crew of three. These advanced vehicles will provide increased protection, mobility, and firepower for the ADF.”

The project will acquire up to 450 Infantry Fighting Vehicles and a Manoeuvre Support Vehicle capability comprising up to 17 vehicles.

“When delivered, the Infantry Fighting Vehicle will allow Army to successfully sustain mounted close combat operations against emerging and future threats as part of the joint force,” Minister Reynolds said.

The Risk Mitigation Activity will include detailed testing and evaluation of the tendered vehicles and provide Defence with the objective quality evidence to inform a government decision in 2022.

The Australian model is being designated AS21 "Redback", named after a local Australian spider species.

**Hanwha Redback infantry fighting vehicle**



The AS21 has a traditional track-and-wheel drive arrangement involving six double-tired road wheels to a hull side. The hull itself has slab sides with armored skirts protecting the upper reaches of the track run. The glacis plate is shallow and well sloped towards the turret roof. Atop the turret sits a complete traversable turret with an unobstructed 360-degree reach. Crew and systems survivability have been enhanced over the original K21's scheme. Beyond the typical operating crew of three - there is space for up to eight combat-ready infantrymen.

Armament is a 40mm autocannon and a single 7.62mm coaxial machine gun - both fitted to the turret. Up to ten (five to a side) smoke grenade dischargers will be available for self-screening the vehicle as needed.

**Rheinmetall Lynx infantry fighting vehicle**



With an assumed turbocharged diesel-fueled engine serving as its powerpack, the vehicle has an estimated road speed of 70 kmh (this falls to 40 kmh when going cross-country) and an operational range nearing 500 kilometers.

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Lynx is an armoured fighting vehicle developed by Rheinmetall Landsysteme (part of Rheinmetall's Vehicle Systems division). The Lynx, configured as a KF31 infantry fighting vehicle (IFV), was unveiled publicly at the Eurosatory defence exhibition on June 14, 2016. The KF41 variant was unveiled publicly at the Eurosatory defence exhibition on June 12, 2018. According to Rheinmetall, the Lynx family of tracked armoured vehicles is at the forefront of a new trend in IFV design toward armoured vehicles with lower unit and through-life costs and reduced complexity. One of the key principles of the Lynx concept is the integration of proven sub-systems with a high technology readiness level to reduce development time, cost and technical risk.

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# Technical Notes & News



## Commanding Officer School of Armour Order of the Day

### School of Armour's 80th Birthday

Today marks the 80th anniversary of the opening of the Army Armoured Fighting Vehicles School in Puckapunyal, Victoria. The unit was originally created to provide trained tank crews and instructors for the Australian Army during the Second World War. Officers and soldiers trained at the unit fought in combined arms teams against the Imperial Japanese Army in the Southwest Pacific Theatre of the Second World War.

Since that time, the unit has undergone many name changes including the Armoured Fighting Vehicles School, the Armour School, the Armoured Centre, the Mounted Combat Division and, since 2001, the School of Armour. Despite the name changes, the unit's role has stayed relatively stable and has maintained an unbroken record of providing the Australian Army what it required to prepare for conflict. In the latter half of the 20th century, instructors at this unit trained officers and soldiers that served in all conflicts in which Australia involved itself. In the 21st century, it has trained and educated crewmen, instructors, junior leaders and combat officers that have performed admirably in many conflicts across the world.

While the School of Armour has long been home to members of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps, in recent decades it has become home to all of the Army's mounted experts regardless of corps, hat badge or background. The School of Armour continues to be recognised as one of, if not *the*, centre of excellence in the Australian Army for the shaping of excellent officers and soldiers operating in combined arms teams.

Looking to the future, the School of Armour will only increase its importance as the centre of excellence for mounted and combined arms warfare. While our machines and technology continue to change over time, the fundamentals of being able to move, shoot and communicate at a tactically excellent level will remain. Members of the unit will continue to trial new equipment, support the development of doctrine, and provide the Army with instructors who can teach future generations of combat officers and soldiers.

I offer my congratulations to all who have served and currently serve at the School of Armour. Your dedication continues to ensure the Australian Defence Force is prepared to deploy world-class mounted crews in support of Australia's national interests. I look forward to watching this unit go from strength to strength in the future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mitch Watson'.

**Mitch Watson, CSC**  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Commanding Officer & Chief Instructor  
School of Armour

24 February 2021

## 2 Cavalry Regiment -Remembering 50 years of service

Although 2 Cav Regt celebrates its birthday in combination with commemorations for the battle of Beersheba on October 31, its actual birthday is November 20. That was the day, in 1970, when the Battle of Coral/Balmoral veteran Lt-Col John David Keldie assumed command and this appointment date determined 2 Cav Regt's birth date.



CO 2 Cav Regt Lt-Col Patrick Davison salutes the reviewing officer Maj-Gen Roger Noble during the unit's 50th anniversary parade on November 14 at Lavarack Barracks, Townsville.  
Photo: Cpl Brodie Cross

The Unit then consisted of a reconnaissance squadron and an APC squadron, reminiscent to the British cavalry organisations. In 1992, 2 Cav Regt moved from Holsworthy to Darwin as part of 1 Bde's move north.

With the emergence of new technology and equipment, the regiment was restructured and raised C Sqn. With the introduction of a new platform, the role of the regiment transitioned to a greater focus on formation reconnaissance.

From 1995-97, the regiment was re-equipped with the ASLAV. Reconnaissance troops now became the more familiar six car troops equipped with four ASLAV 25 and two ASLAV PC variants.

In 1999, C Sqn deployed to East Timor as part of the initial Australian contribution to Interfet, with the ASLAVs providing the Australian force with the majority of its mobility and armoured support during the early days of the intervention.

The regiment continued to serve in East Timor as part of UNTAET from 2000-2002. Once the Australian Government recognised the requirements for the protection of Australian representatives in Baghdad, the regiment was tasked to form part of the SECDET forces in Iraq. Deployed forces conducted a variety of tasks including reconnaissance and convoy escort. On February 22, 2005, 2 Cav Regt was directed to form a battle group in support of the Al Muthanna Task Group (AMTG) in Iraq.



Unidentified members of C Sqn, 2 Cav Regt, resupply an ASLAV-25 at their headquarters at Ainaro, East Timor in 1999.  
In 1992, 2 Cav Regt moved from Holsworthy to Darwin as part of 1 Bde's move north.

AMTG-1 was a task-organised combined-arms battle group based around 2 Cav Regt, consisting of about 450 people.

AMTG-1 conducted a series of security operations in a high-threat environment for a sustained period of 191 days, where Australian soldiers were deliberately targeted.

2 Cav Regt deployed to Afghanistan with RTF-1 from 2006-07, the first and second rotations of the MRTF from 2008-2010, and MTF-2 from 2010-2011. In 2013, the unit formed the 2 Cav Regt Task Force, Australia's final rotation to Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan.

2 Cav Regt moved to 3 Bde at Lavarack in 2014, and in late-2015, one of 1 Armd Regt's squadrons was transferred to the unit with 14 Abrams tanks also relocating.



ASLAV and crew members from 2 Cav Regt arrive at Baghdad International Airport, 2003.  
Photos: Australian War Memorial  
2 Cav Regt deployed to Iraq in 2003 as part of Op Falconer and Op Catalyst.

*Article courtesy: Army News 26th November 2020*

## Lancer Barracks Turns 200

I trust you are all surviving COVID Well. As did say in previous updates, there would be a parade to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Lancer Barracks.

The parade took place yesterday 21 November 2020. It was a magnificent occasion, sadly due to COVID restrictions, one that few could witness; everyone there apart from a few dignitaries had a job to do. Nonetheless, this message gives you the opportunity to see what happened.

The year 2020 saw 200 years since Lancer Barracks were first used as a Military Depot. The unit that had called the barracks home, the now 1st/15th Royal New South Wales Lancers planned a grand celebration. This had to be scaled back due to COVID requirements.



Everyone who got to the parade at 1000 on 21 November 2020 apart from a very few dignitaries, had a job to do.

### CO's Speech on Occasion of the Bicentenary of Lancer Barracks

The Hon Dr Geoff Lee MP, Member for Parramatta, Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, Councillor Bob Dwyer, Lord Mayor of Parramatta, Major General Campbell AO, CSC, Commander of the Second Division, Distinguished Guests, Officers and Soldiers of the 1st/15th Royal New South Wales Lancers

It's an honour to stand before you today to help commemorate the significant milestone of the bicentenary of Lancer Barracks and its place as the oldest continuously occupied military barracks on mainland Australia. Lancer Barracks has a long and proud history in the service of Great Britain, NSW and since federation, the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Lancer's close association with the barracks and Parramatta commenced in 1891 with the arrival of K Troop and we have been here ever since. Few barracks today are named for the Unit that is quartered within it. The unit is committed to the service of its nation and remains one of the oldest and most decorated on the Australian Army's Order of Battle. Lancer Barracks has played a significant role in this as a training ground and staging base prior to Lancers being sent overseas to exercise and to war.

That legacy of service and connection to the barracks continues today with the current occupants. The barracks now houses a wide variety of those who share a common interest in the defence of Australia, our heritage, service and self-improvement. These range from our youth to those who still wish to stay connected after they have completed their formal service with the ADF. The current occupants are:

- the NSW Lancer Association
- the NSW Lancer Memorial Museum
- 203 Australian Army Cadet Unit
- 3 Platoon, Sydney University Regiment; and
- RHQ, Band and other elements of 1/15 RNSWL

In addition to the formal lodgers, the barracks is also regularly used by many of our wider colleagues and partners including the NSW Police Force and several regular Army units from the Sydney area. Most recently the 6th Aviation Regiment used the barracks to rehearse tactical flying and insertion with their Blackhawk aircraft and the 2 School of Military Engineering, Explosive Detection Dog (EDD) Team regularly conduct search training here.

More importantly, the barracks has recently been used as an operational base for support to domestic operations and exercises. In April and May this year Lancer Barracks became the Joint Task Unit HQ location for JTU 629.1.3 on Operation COVID19 ASSIST providing support to the NSW Police with quarantine compliance management. The barracks was able to rapidly be converted from an Army Reserve depot into a functioning,

(Continued from page 8)



operational and joint headquarter location. The barracks was also used in support of Operation Tartan Oceania 19 last year, providing support to the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (Sydney) where the ADF supported visiting militaries from thirteen different nations, all quartered in the Homebush area. The location of the barracks helped provide an excellent combat service support node. Custodians of the barracks over the years have worked hard to retain as much of the original character as possible while still using the barracks as an

operational base and an engagement point with the community. The Chief of Army talks about us as “an Army for the nation and an Army in the community” and I feel Lancer Barracks helps represent this today.

While the barracks has remained largely unchanged the skyline and community around us has changed significantly. Today, Australia is one of the most culturally diverse places on the planet, Parramatta embraces this multiculturalism, with close to 50% of its residents born overseas. The composition of the Lancers today is more diverse than it has ever been reflecting the community we serve. The location of the barracks in Sydney’s central city provides an attractive recruitment

option for those who wish to serve in the Parramatta area.

The barracks today also provides opportunities for members of the public to visit aspects of the base to learn about the service of our forebears and experience the heritage first hand. I am always interested to hear of the various school groups that come to visit the barracks and Museum and their reflections on our servicemen and women. Additionally the barracks holds memorials to all of those from the Regiment who have passed away in war and in training, providing a focal point for commemoration.

I’d like to share a quote from the Regimental History from 1974, “notwithstanding any shortcomings of Lancer Barracks as a depot for a modern regiment, the 1/15 RNSWL strongly cherishes its occupancy of this site, the history of which reaches back to 1820; indeed the very name indicates its association with the Regiment.”

On the international front, I have been grateful for well wishes the Unit has received on this occasion from the modern descendants of several British Regiments who served at the Barracks in the 1800s, including the Royal Anglian Regiment and The Duke of Lancaster’s Regiment. They remember Lancer Barracks as not just a colonial outpost but also where several of their members passed away and are buried.

Finally Lancer Barracks, despite the ravages of time, two global pandemics, the passing of thousands of soldiers through her gate and on her parade ground, and an ever growing vertical expansion around the barracks, has remained relevant and steadfast, true the Regiment’s motto, steadfast in faith.

I remain tenax in fide.  
A.T. White  
LTCOL, CO, 1/15 RNSWL  
21 Nov 2020

**HEARTY WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBER SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE**

Mr. Richard Parker Armoured centre, 1AR

## RAACA Memorabilia for sale,

AFV Crewman's Badge		\$20
Pocket Badges		\$40
Lapel Badges		\$20
Armoured Antics		\$ 20
Vietnam Video		\$20
Boer War Lapel		\$ 20
Army combat badge	Large	\$30
	Small	\$20

The Veteran web Network providing information to Australian veterans, ex-service and service personnel.  
Reaching more than 12,400 readers daily and growing.

All service and ex-service personnel can subscribe to the Veteran web Network cost free. Information is provided via email from various reliable sources. Veteran web is an information service, while is not a forum you are welcome to contribute.

Some interesting statistics of veterans by electorate can be found at:  
[http://www.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/publications/datastatistical/fedprofile/Electorates\\_Mar2016.pdf](http://www.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/publications/datastatistical/fedprofile/Electorates_Mar2016.pdf)



Our latest Life Member of the Association, **Brian Walters** (centre), our hard working Treasurer, awarded on the occasion of the Beersheba-Cambrai dinner in November 2020 at the Royal Automobile Club.

Centre photo: Left is Mike Butler and to his right is our Honorary Auditor Alan Williams.

Right Hand Photo: MAJGEN Michael Krause during his presentation at the COVID safe Beersheba-Cambrai Dinner.

Left Hand Photo: Our President COL Rob Lording presenting Brian Walters with his Life Membership of the RAACA (NSW) Inc at the occasion of the 2020 Beersheba-Cambrai Dinner in the COVID safe environment.

*Cheers,  
Mike*

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

Mr.	Des	DE	McKinnon	2/1 Aust. Armoured Brigade, Recce Sqd.
Dr.	Monty	MB	Lewis	1 AR
Mr.	Keith	K	Bonnefin	1 AR
Mr.	John	JL	Slee	
Mr.	Leslie	LW	Lee	
Mr.	Bruce	B	Holt	1 AR, A Sqn

# Vale

## John Alexander Carter DCM OAM



Vietnam Veteran John Carter DCM OAM participating in his first Anzac Day march in 2019. He is pictured here with his son Glen and daughter Jodie.

Some sad news. Another veteran of the Battle of Long Tan has passed away. John Alexander Carter DCM OAM passed away peacefully at G V Health Shepparton on 23 January 2021 aged 75 years young. His funeral was held 29 January. Here is a link to a recording of his funeral service - <https://www.njtodd.com.au/livestream...>

John was the loved and adored father and father-in-law of Jodie and Andy (Tilley), Glenn and Cathryn, the loved and treasured Grandpa of Maia and Kirby, Charlotte, Paris, Darcy, and Alexander, and Great Grandfather of Freya.

Rest in Peace John Carter. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and comrades. John joined the regular army at age 18 and made a career of it until he retired at age 55 years. He worked his way up to the position of RSM (Regimental Sergeant Major). He received the OAM (Medal of the

Order of Australia) for services to the Military. John played football for Benalla and Tatong in his teen years. He is the son of the late Alec and Dot Carter. — Bev Cleeland, sister of John Carter.

Then Corporal John Carter commanded an M113A1 APC, callsign 39M, which was part of the hastily assembled relief force comprising ten M113A1 Armoured Personnel Carriers from 3 and 2 Troop, 1APC Squadron, commanded by then Lt Adrian Roberts, with infantry from A Company 6RAR on board. Lt Roberts orders were simply, "To convey A Company 6 RAR to joining D Company and break up the attack [on D Company]".

The 2 troop APCs went into battle without gun shields leaving the crew commanders fully exposed. One of those, Corporal Peter Edward Clements was mortally wounded in the battle and died nine days later on 27 August 1966. The 3 troop carriers were equipped with gun shields. Carrier 39M was an APC fitted out as an ambulance.

Corporal John Carter was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) for his actions during the battle. As the Australian APCs entered the rubber plantation they confronted the lead elements of D445 Viet Cong Mobile Provincial Battalion which was attempting to complete the encirclement of Delta Company. Lt Roberts ordered the APCs to open fire, engaging their flank with their heavy machine-guns. A number of Viet Cong were hit while others turned to engage the APCs as they closed with them. A Viet Cong 57 mm RCL (recoilless rifle) crew then fired on one of the APCs at close range, with the round narrowly missing the APC and blowing apart a rubber tree which fell across Corporal Carter's vehicle. Corporal Carter engaged the enemy anti-armour team from the top of his APC as they reloaded, but his .50 calibre machine-gun jammed just as they fired again. Grabbing his 9mm Owen machine carbine, Carter killed two of them from a distance of just 15 to 20 metres. The second RCL round subsequently detonated against the fallen tree, saving both the vehicle and its occupants. Despite being dazed, Carter killed three more Viet Cong soldiers as his driver was throwing him magazines. Carter then scrambled back into the carrier, which was now without

communications following the destruction of its aerial. By drawing further enemy fire upon himself, he allowed the remainder of the troop to advance.

Engraved on Adrian Roberts's memory was the picture of Corporal Carter leaning forward, braced, firing the Owen looking just like an illustration in a training manual.

Australian M113A1 carriers had a crew of two with the commander in the commander's cupola with one .50 inch calibre machine gun and one driver. The driver's personal weapon at that time was an Owen submachine gun. The vehicle could carry up to ten troops internally. Some but not all of the APCs were fitted with RT68 radios (part of the AN/GRC7 and 8 radio sets) as well as PRC25 infantry backpack radios. Some of the early Australian carrier commanders had to use cords tied through the driver's shirt epaulets below them, and so they steered their carriers like the reins on a horse.



1968. Sergeant John Carter of Benalla, Vic, an M113 armoured personnel carrier (APC) crew commander with B Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, Royal Australian Armoured Corps (RAAC), supporting the 9th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (9RAR), in Exercise Riflebird at Shoalwater Bay.

*(Continued on page 12)*

# Vale

## Ross Brown

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of our friend and colleague Ross Brown.

As many will know Ross had suffered from leukemia since the late 1990s, thankfully for all of us his periods of remission were long and still allowed his volunteer spirit to blossom. Ross passed away suddenly last night.

Ross joined the Army in the 1960s serving with 12/16 HRL while working as a permanent member of the State Emergency Services staff at Gunnedah. In 1978 Ross was transferred to Sydney by his employer, he joined the Regiment as a captain serving as 2IC B Squadron. Pressure of civil employment saw Ross leave the Army in 1980; he maintained his connection, becoming secretary of the Museum. Ross' qualifications in business and experience as a senior public servant were of great value in setting up the Museum's corporate structure. His commitment to the history of the Regiment meant the collection was accessioned and well managed. An agreement to lease the land on which the Museum stands was negotiated with the Department of Defence, a perpetual agreement that still stands us in good stead.

1999 saw the onset of Ross' illness. He relinquished the Secretary role. Soon in remission he was back taking the role of Vice President and mentoring the new secretary.

By 2005 he was well enough to take on the roles of treasurer of the National Boer War Memorial Association, and secretary of the Peakhurst RSL Sub-Branch. The insidious disease, however, was always taking its toll. Ross had to relinquish roles when cancer raised its ugly head. He never stopped mentoring those who carried on.

Ross was also a lifelong Mason. I recall the annual camp in Bourke, 1977. The town had a religious/cultural divide. With the late Padre Peter Quilty handling one group, Ross dealt with the other.

Ross' son Gregory also served in the Regiment until his career was cut short; Gregory was sadly disabled after being attacked on a late-night train journey returning home after a work shift.

Ross is survived by his wife Yvonne, son Gregory, daughter Justine and family. He lived a life filled with service to the Army and the community, he will be greatly missed.

His funeral will be a quiet family affair due to COVID limitations.

Sincerely,

John Howells

Hon Secretary

New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum Inc

*(Continued from page 11)*

It was not until October 1966 that all of 1 APC Squadron APCs were fitted with the AN/VRC 12, ANGR 125 and Vehicle intercommunications (VIC-1) systems. Part of this system was the AT-912/ VRC antennae which were quite different from the later AS-1729 VRC antennae that were used well into the 1980s.

The APC commanders during the Battle of Long Tan were as follows:

30A - Lt FA Roberts, 30B - 2Lt IC Savage, 32 - Sgt RE Richards, 32B - Cpl RJ Gross, 33A - Cpl P Fottrill,  
33B - Cpl JJ O'Shae, 39M - Cpl JA Carter, 23 - Cpl JT O'Reilly, 23A - Cpl PE Clements, 23B - LCpl WG Smith

Greenbank Military Area, .2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment's new Boxer CRV training course.



3 Troop, A Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment. Vietnam December 1966.

