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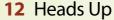
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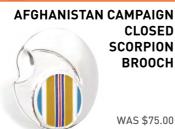
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EXERCISE MATILDA Starts page 34

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Issue 64 – 16 years. Now with 12,000 email subscribers, 30,000 unique website visitors a month and on track for 4million page views this year – CONTACT is notching up the milestones. And with years of experience, you'd think this would get easier. Wouldn't you?

Well it isn't. It's actually getting harder and harder 'to do their job for them'. CONTACT is essentially a recruiting tool – friendly media that makes it easier for Defence to push good, favourable stories out to an eager audience, where potential new recruits might be persuaded to sign on the dotted line in the name of service to their country.

So many times I've heard from blokes who say things like, "Your magazine pushed me that last little bit" – "If it wasn't for your magazine I might never have joined up" - "When the going gets tough, I remember what you said in that article and remember why I joined in the first place".

And they're just some of the few who actually write to me. I'm sure there are many more, influenced by CONTACT, who haven't yet told me their stories. And, of course, I'd love to hear you all.

But, my point here is that CONTACT talks to a growing number of potential recruits - and a growing number of Joe Publics - all of whom are (or should be) important for Defence to keep on side.

But, Defence isn't talking to CONTACT. Defence isn't trying to talk to the CONTACT audience. Hell, Defence isn't even talking among themselves any more, in the PR sphere.

While ministers and senior leaders spruik about 'One ADF', the branches of the ADF are running further and further apart in telling their own stories.

Classic examples recently were the appointments of the first female Warrant Officers of the Air Force and Navy. The first, which CONTACT missed, was only published on the Defence web site, while the second was emailed directly to CONTACT (and every other media outlet in the country) as a press release from the Minister's office. The first of these two appointments was actually the more newsworthy – being the first female WO of Service ever – but the second got the greater coverage, simply because there was no co-ordinated PR messaging across the services, and one team got a better result than the other.

Another example of the services' failure to communicate is actually very frustrating to me. Some of you will remember that I was invited to meet the Deputy Chief of Army in January this year, to hear how he and his new PR team were very keen to be proactive in communicating with the media, and especially with media like CONTACT. "How can we help you to help us?" I was asked. And when I told them, DCA directed his PR staff to make it happen.

Almost a year later, I still have had zero input from Army HQ!

CONTACT is esentially one man's 'hobby'. I sit here day after day, scouring the Internet for stories; and translating press releases dripping with PR spin and political bovine excrement into plain English. I sit here 7 days a week (or take it with me on laptop and/or smatphone when I do go out/away), trying to do their job for them. And it's hard. And getting harder and harder.

One might even be inclined to give up. Not on CONTACT, of course – but on the increasingly useless Defence PR machine – and say, "Hey, audience. Let me hear your stories instead. Good or bad, positive or negative, pro or anti Defence. I want to hear your stories – because Defence isn't talking to me any more".

Brian Hartigan, Managing Editor











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FIRST NEW **BOXER DELIVERY**

The first of the fleet of new combat reconnaissance vehicles (CRV) for the Australian Army was unveiled at Enoggera Barracks in Brisbane in September.

211 new Boxer 8×8 CRVs will be delivered by Rheinmetall Defence Australia under the \$5 billion LAND 400 Phase 2 Mounted Combat Reconnaissance Capability program.

Minister for Defence Linda Reynolds said the new vehicles, with their high levels of protection, firepower and mobility, would provide a world-class capability to the Australian Army.

"The Boxer vehicles have more firepower, they have more mobility, and even higher levels of protection for our soldiers than the ASLAV that they replaced," Minister Reynolds said.

"Let me give you a few examples - the main gun - the cannon - is larger and more lethal than its predecessor [30mm].

"The radios, and the communications, are far more secure, and for the first time, they are integrated into the wider Army and Defence

"They can handle larger quantities of data, and far more

"The significantly improved electro-optical systems will mean enemies can be detected at longer ranges, whatever time of day and whatever the weather.

"Most importantly, they will keep our soldiers - our men and women - even safer."

The first 25 vehicles will be assembled in Germany and delivered to Australia as part of technology transfer activities to familiarise Australian workers and suppliers on the specific manufacturing techniques of these vehicles.

The remaining vehicles will be assembled at Rheinmetall's Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence facility in Redbank, near Ipswich, Qld.



LONGBOW EVEN MORE POTENT

LONGBOW LLC, a joint venture of Northrop Grumman and Lockheed Martin, has announced the successful completion of the US Army's AH-64E Apache follow-on test and evaluation for the AN/APG-78 LONGBOW firecontrol radar (FCR)

During tests, the modernised LONGBOW FCR successfully demonstrated many new operational modes and capabilities, including maritime, single-target track and 360-degree surveillance mode, as well as extended detection range against land, air and sea targets with detection range actually doubled and improved detection of unmanned aerial vehicles.

LONGBOW LLC vice president and vice president at Northrop Grumman Mission Systems Susan Bruce said the open systems architecture approach allowed the company to unlock phenomenal performance without hardware changes.

"Version six is a major update to LONGBOW's capabilities providing significant situational awareness and targeting capabilities," she said.

"Validating these performance enhancements, the LONGBOW radar successfully detected numerous ground and maritime targets at extended ranges.

"Those targets were then engaged and destroyed by AGM-179 Joint Air-to-Ground Missiles fired from the Apache."

Australia is looking for a suitable off-the-shelf replacement for Tiger armed reconnaissance helicopters, with Apache firmly in 'crowd favourite' contention.

VITH JAPAN

Japan's Minister of Defense Kono Taro and Australia's Linda Reynolds made a range of commitments to drive bilateral defence cooperation forward, during Minister Reynolds' first official visit to Tokyo in November 2019.

They emphasised that as Indo-Pacific security dynamics became more challenging, the strategic logic underpinning Japan-Australia cooperation was getting stronger.

The ministers welcomed significant progress in the defence relationship in 2019, including the first bilateral fighter-jet exercise Bushido Guardian and Japan's largest ever participation in Exercise Talisman Sabre, where Japanese artillery was fired on Australian soil.



The pair committed to building on momentum in 2020, deepening relations between the two countries and affirmed that they would accelerate defence cooperation in coming years, through military exercises, personnel exchanges, space and cyber policy, and science and technology.

Japan will become a regular participant in Exercise Pitch Black, and Australia in Bushido Guardian; an Australian Army liaison officer will be posted to Japan: defence scientists and engineers will collaborate; and, both will work towards Japans inclusion in operations, exercises and Pacific-region engagements.

ARMY RADARS

Defence has signed a multi-million dollar contract with Canberra-based CEA Technologies Pty Ltd to supply Army's new short-range around-based air-defence radars.

The \$137 million contract will provide advanced radars as part of the air defence system to protect deployed forces from sophisticated air

The vehicle-mounted radars will be delivered in long- and short-range variants, with the short-range variant to be mounted on the Australiandeveloped Thales Hawkei.

LHDs READY

Royal Australian Navy's landing helicopter dock ships, HMAS Canberra and Adelaide, have officially achieved final operational capability, meaning they are are now certified ready to be deployed on the full range of amphibious operations.

SI GETS PB

Australia gifted a Guardianclass patrol boat to the Solomon Islands at a ceremony in Henderson. Western Australia, on 8 November 2019.

RSIPV Gizo was the fifth of 21 Guardian-class patrol boats to be gifted to 12 Pacific- Army is spending millions to under the \$2 billion Pacific Maritime Security Program.

NEW SF MEDAL

A new medallic award will be issued to members of the Australian special forces for qualifying service on special operations in the future.

The medal is authorised as a new award within the Australian Operational Service Medal (AOSM) suite, and will be known as the AOSM - Special Operations.

AWD TRIALLED

Royal Australian Navy's third Air Warfare Destroyer -NUSHIP Sydney – is on track to be delivered to the Navy

in February next year after completing sea trials.

Sydney will join her sisters, HMA Ships Hobart and Brisbane, to complete the fleet of three Hobart-class guided missile destroyers in the RAN.

ROBOT DEMO

island nations and Timor-Leste develop and test a range of unmanned ground vehicles - some walking on four leas instead of wheels or tracks. During a demo in Canberra

in October, senior leaders witnessed a range of robots and vehicles in action, including two autonomous M113 AS4 APCs conducting fire-and-manoeuvre alongside a range of drones and robots, as well as manned vehicles.

HERC BIRTHDAY

September 2019 marked the 20th anniversary of the introduction of the C-130J Hercules to Royal Australian Air Force service.

To celebrate the milestone, No. 37 Squadron conducted a flight on 5 April 1996.



series of flypasts of RAAF Base Richmond and Glenbrook on 6 September 2019.

Martin announced that the global community of C-130J Super Hercules operators recently surpassed a combined 2-million flight hours since the J-model's first

Meanwhile, Lockheed

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HEADS UP



Australia's newest maritime surveillance aircraft, the RAAF's 11th P-8A Poseidon, was welcomed into the Royal Australian Air Force at a ceremony in Seattle, USA, in October.

Minister for Defence Linda Reynolds said the delivery of the new aircraft marked another milestone in this important project to enhance Australia's maritime security.

"P-8A Poseidon is a cutting-edge aircraft that will conduct tasks

A RAAF P-8 Poseidon flies over Russell Offices. Photo by Chief Petty Officer Cameron Martin.

including anti-submarine warfare, maritime and overland intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and support to search and rescue missions," Minister Reynolds said.

"The arrival of the latest aircraft provides the government with enhanced flexibility to support multiple operations and will play an important role in maintaining border security."

This 11^{th} aircraft is now undergoing verification and validation flying in the United States before joining the rest of the fleet in Australia.

Based at RAAF Base Edinburgh in South Australia, 10 of the total 12 aircraft ordered for the RAAF are already operating from Edinburgh, with the remaining two aircraft expected to arrive in Australia by January next year.

Australian Poseidons operated for short periods in the Middle East and on North Korean sanctions enforcement missions this year.

Exercise Austral Shield, a combined ADF and Victoria Police exercise, in the La Trobe Valley tested new and enhanced arrangements for responses to demostic security incidents.

Chief of Joint Operations Lieutenant General Greg Bilton said the exercise strengthened interoperability between Victoria Police and the ADF and highlighted the professionalism and preparedness of both forces

"The scenario required the rapid

government," Lieutenant General
Bilton said.

"Support included establishing joint Victorian Police and Defence checkpoints, joint patrols and searches and controlling access to a major facility such as the AGL Loy Yang power facility.

"The exercise enabled the ADF to work more effectively with state police and to practice complex command-and-control arrangements in the event of a national sequenty arisis."



NAVY GROWS 1K

A Royal Australian Navy growth-and-retention program has proven a success, with the Navy expanding by more than 1000 members in two years – an eight per cent increase since January 2018.

In financial year 2017-18, Navy's full-time workforce was 13,818 – down from 14,077 the previous year.

Navy offers 45 retention initiatives, including financial bonuses for key sailor and officer categories, flexible workplace arrangements for uniformed members, as well as outplacements to improve professional development for technical sailors.

The measures come after a Navy-wide consultation that resulted in 600 suggestions from members.

NAVY SUED FOR DUD PROMISES

NSW Court of Appeal overturned a Supreme Court decision denying damages to 300 trainee marine technicians who claimed they were recruited on false pretences.

They alleged that Navy had contracted with them, as a Registered Training Organisation, to provide a Certificate IV in Engineering, but failed to deliver.

NSW Supreme Court held that the Commonwealth could not have bound itself by contract to the sailors because it was a "fetter" on the Navy's right of command.

NSW Court of Appeal said neither the 'contract' nor damages awarded fettered the Commonwealth – and found that damages to the lead plaintiff and around 300 other members of the class action should be paid.

The lead plaintiff was awarded \$60,000 plus interest plus costs.

This precedence opens the door for similar cases against all three branches of the ADF.

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ALL ABOARD SURABAYA EXPRESS

Soldiers from Darwin's 1st Brigade flew to Indonesia in November to participate in Exercise Wirra Jaya 2019, a bilateral training exercise held annually with the Indonesian Army.

The 2019 iteration of Exercise Wirra Jaya took place at Dodiklatpur in Asum Bagus, East Java – Indonesia's premier live-fire field training facility, which regularly hosts international exercises.

Australia's Chief of Army Lieutenant General Rick Burr said 2019 would be the first time Australian Army Bushmasters were deployed with soldiers as part of the exercise.
"Our soldiers, from 5RAR, introduced the Bushmaster to

their Indonesian counterparts in the Northern Territory last year and will now continue that training on unfamiliar ground," Lieutenant General Burr said.

"The Tentara Nasional Indonesia Army (TNI-AD) strategic reserve force, the 2nd Division Kostrad, will this year have the opportunity to show the Australian infantrymen their own armoured fighting vehicle capability.

"Familiarising ourselves with each other's doctrine, equipment, tactics and techniques broadens our knowledge and understanding of each other, which in turn naturally builds trust and relationships that endure," Lieutenant General Burr said.

Each year, Australia and
Indonesia share hosting duty for
Exercise Wirra Jaya.
In 2018 the Australian Army's
1st Brigade welcomed around
90 TNI-AD soldiers to Robertson Barracks.

Exercise Wirra Jaya debuted in



















ARMY AVIATION TIRATNIS CENTURE

50* YEARS AT OAKEY

AAvnTC celebrated 50 years since the formation of the Australian Army Aviation Corps on 19 October 2018 with a spectacular display of aviation capability – six MRH-90s inserting soldiers from the Enoggera-based 6th Battalian, Royal Australian Regiment, to conduct an aerial assault on fixed positions established across the airfield – all under the watchful eyes of two ARH Tiger escorts.

A year later, to mark 50 years of operations at Swartz Barracks, Oakey, photos from last year's spectacular were released on AAvnTC's Facebook page – and we thought they were still good enough to share [plus, I do have a certain bias for helicopters – Ed].

Local community members, families of base personnel and invited guests observed the display as the assault was conducted just metres in front of them.

Visitors were then invited to enjoy light refreshments and to walk among various aircraft and equipment displays.





*The former WWII RAAF training base at Oakey, 150km west of Brisbane, was transferred from the Department of Civil Aviation to Army control on 1 July 1969, following the formation of the Australian Army Aviation Corps a year earlier. Now called Swartz Barracks, after local politician and aviation advocate Sir Reginald

Swartz, AAvnTC's base is shared with aviation-support industry, the Singaporean Air Force pilot-training 126 Squadron and the Australian Army Flying Museum. Photos by Bradley Richardson.











Air War	fare Destroyer			
Class	Hobart class			
Туре	Destroyer, Guided Missile (DDG)			
Role	Air Defence Surface Warfare Surveillance Undersea Warfare			
Names	Hobart, Brisbane and Sydney			
Pennants	D39, D41 and D42			
Dimens	sions & Displacement			
Displacement	7000 tonnes (full load)			
Length	146.7 metres			
Beam	18.6 metres			
Draught	7.2 metres			
	Performance			
Speed	28+ knots (top speed)			
Range	4500 nautical miles (18 knots)			
	Complement			
Crew	Standard 186			
	Max 31 officers, 203 sailors			
	Propulsion			
Machinery	2 x General Electric Marine model 7LM2500-SA-MLG38 gas turbines, 17,500 kilowatts (23,500 hp) each 2 x Caterpillar Bravo 16 V Bravo diesel engines, 5,650 kilowatts (7,580 hp) each			
	Armament			
Missiles	Mk 41 Vertical Launch System (48 VLS Cells) RIM-66 Standard 2 missile RIM-162 Evolved Sea Sparrow missile Advanced Harpoon via 2 x quad launchers			
Guns	Mk 45 5-inch 62 Calibre Gun			
Torpedoes	MU90 torpedo			
Other Armament	2 x 25mm M242 Bushmaster on Typhoon mounts 1 x Phalanx CIWS			
Physical Countermeasures	NULKA Active Missile Decoy system			
Radars	AN/SPY-1D (V) Phased Array Horizon Search Radar			
Sonars	Integrated hull-mounted and and towed-array sonars			
Combat Data Systems	Aegis (Baseline 7.1)			
Helicopters	1 x MH-60R Seahawk			

LEFT: NUSHIP Sydney on pre-delivery

The Royal Australian Navy's third air warfare destroyer - NUSHIP Sydney - is on track to be delivered for commissioning into the fleet early next year after recently completing her builder's sea trials.

Third and final in the class of three ships, Sydney will join HMA Ships Hobart and Brisbane as the most potent warships ever built for the RAN.

The Hobart-class DDGs, which cost more than \$3billion each, are based on the Navantia-designed Spanish Álvaro de Bazán-class F100 frigatem, coupled with the Aegis Combat System.

They were constructed in Australia by the Air Warfare Destroyer Alliance, comprising Defence Capability and Sustainment Group, Raytheon Australia and ASC Shipbuilding, supported by Navantia.

Hobart class will provide air defence for accompanying ships in addition to land forces and infrastructure in coastal areas, and for self-protection against missiles and

The Aegis Combat System, incorporating the stateof-the-art phased array radar AN/SPY 1D(V), in combination with the SM-2 missile, will provide an advanced air-defence system capable of engaging enemy aircraft and missiles at ranges in excess of 150km.

Aegis can track hundreds of airborne targets simultaneously as part of its air-defence network.

The surface-warfare function will include long-range anti-ship missiles and a naval gun capable of firing extended-range munitions in support of land forces.

The Hobart class will also conduct undersea warfare and be equipped with modern sonar systems (both towed and integrated into the hull), decoys, surfacelaunched torpedoes and an array of effective close-in defensive weapons.

Hobart class will also carry one MH-60R 'Romeo' Seahawk anti-submarine/anti-surface/search-and-rescue helicopter.

In a powerful demonstration of the AWD's advanced capabilities, HMA Ships Hobart and Brisbane have demonstrated a new-to-Australia war-fighting capability whereby the missiles from one ship can be fired and targeted using the radar and intelligence picture from another ship.

Both Aussie ships have proved the concept on separate trips to the USA with US Navy warships in American waters, but have also demonstrated the capability together off the coast of South Australia.

In the coming years, the Australian Joint Integrated Fires capability will link AWD and 'future frigates', as well as aircraft and land-based assets to create an increasingly sophisticated air-defence network.

Cooperative Engagement Capability will also be integrated into a range of ADF assets, including the E-7A Wedgetail airborne command and control aircraft and the Integrated Air and Missile Defence program.

Not only will this capability enable the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force to share targeting data in real time between ADF assets, it will also enable the ADF to share its data with United States assets, and vice versa, providing new levels of interoperability within a coalition force.

Australia is the first international partner outside the United States to gain access to this cutting-edge technology.







Size Comparison LHD - DDG - FFG - FFH **CANBERRA CLASS - LHD** Length Overall 230.82m - Maximum Beam 32m Displacement 27,500 tonnes **HOBART CLASS ---- DDG** Length Overall 147.2m - Maximum Beam 18.6m - Displacement 7000 tonnes ADELAIDE CLASS -- FFG Length Overall 139m - Maximum Beam 14m - Displacement 4200 tonnes Length Overall 109m - Maximum Beam 14.8m - Displacement 3600 tonnes Armidale Class PB 101 Length 56.8m - Beam 9.5m





'Catastrophic' bushfire condition on Australia's east coast in November were so overwhelming for civilian authorities that a major support effort from the ADF was officially called for – and all three services responded with much-needed resources.

Army and Navy helicopters were put to good use. A range of RAAF planes got a workout. Engineers, cooks, logisticians and a plethora of bodies pitched in.

However, the military assistance was strictly in a supporting role - though some got closer to the fire front than others.

The ADF is not trained, equipped or certified to undertake ground-based or aerial bush firefighting and does not get involved in the direct act of fighting bushfires outside Defence property.

Direct firefighting responsibility falls to the experts.

But where the military does excel is in areas such as transport – moving firefighters and their equipment from all over Australia to the fire front.

C-17A Globemasters, C-130J Hercules, KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transports and even 737 Boeing Business Jets picked up and deliverd firefighters by the hundreds.

Army and Navy helicopters also picked people up – firefighting experts and planners in smaller numbers for shorter transits, but also searching for and evacuating civilians in danger of approaching

One Royal Australian Navy MRH-90 helicopter spent the first day of catastrophic fire conditions on search-and-rescue missions to support firefighting efforts around Kempsey, New South Wales.

CONTACT Air Land & Sea - Issue 64 - December 2019

After leaving Royal Australian Air Force Base Williamtown, near Newcastle, the helicopter kept ahead of the firefront to ensure property owners were well prepared and equipped for the approaching firestorm.

Flying low over properties in the direct path of the fire, the aircrew made hand signals to property owners and were prepared to evacuate any who did not give the 'thumbs up'.

Lieutenant Commander Michael Cairncross piloted one of the first missions, making several landings for the specialist firefighter on board to engage with community members.

"MRH-90 has the capability to quickly move more people and equipment than firefighting helicopters can," Lieutenant Commander Cairncross said.

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ABOVE: Leading Seaman Benjamin Nixon on a search-and-rescue flight. BELOW LEFT: Corporal Ryan Massingham, loads Victorian firefighters onto a KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transport. BELOW RIGHT: A New South Wales Rural Fire Service officer on a Black Hawk reconnaissance mission.





"I have never witnessed the intensity of a firestorm engulfing an entire mountain in less than five minutes.

"It was an extremely dynamic environment to fly in and challenging for the entire crew."

Jeff Hodder, an aviation rescue crewman, is one of only 30 specialist volunteers with the New South Wales Rural Fire Service and joined the MRH-90 crew for these first missions.

"I am a volunteer with the Cowan Brigade, on the fringe of Sydney just south of the Hawksbury River," Mr Hodder said.

"I had been out fighting fires on the ground on Friday night and Saturday morning around Taree before my first-ever flight in a Navy helicopter."

Both men agreed that proving the interoperability



and Rescue officers in the Yeppoon area.



between the Royal Australian Navy and Rural Fire Service under such extreme conditions had been a great learning experience.

Further north, in Queensland, Tiger helicopters, aircrew and mission support personnel assisted firefighting efforts by flying fire-mapping missions at night to supplement Queensland Fire and Emergency Service activities.

At night, the cooler air provides an opportunity for Tiger crews to map the fire perimeters so QFES firepredicting specialists can analyse them.

What they glean from their infra-red data helps better deploy firefighters where they are most needed and with a better plan of action.

QFES Acting Chief Superintendent Kevin Reading

said Tiger helicopter crews were flying a number

of profiles during the night, using the aircrafts' manoeuvrability to tightly map the fire lines.

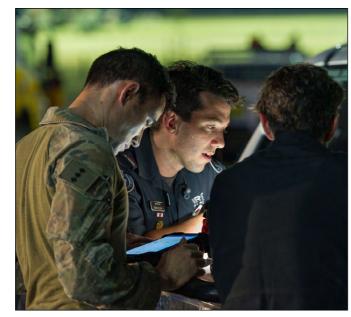
"The accuracy being provided by the Tiger aircrews is first class," cting Chief Superintendent Reading said.

"They have been able to value-add to our operations in Queensland by gathering information through late-night missions that we then assess in the early morning and, ultimately, pass on to the firefighters on the ground at the start of their day."

As well as linking in with the QFES mapping software, Army Tiger crews also provided thermal imagery of potential flare-up areas detected during their missions.

Elsewhere, Army supplied personnel to prepare and cook three meals a day for 250 firefighters





ABOVE LEFT: Firefighters from across Australia receive a brief on the thermal imagery capability of the ARH-Tiger.

ABOVE RIGHT: Captain Abdul Hamidon provides a post flight brief to emergency services in the Yeppoon area.

BELOW LEFT: 6th Engineer Support Regiment soldiers clear a fire break near Canungra.

BELOW RIGHT: 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment soldiers clear ground for the Rural Fire Service access near Canungra.





at the Rural Fire Service staging ground in the Northern Rivers Region of NSW, to give respite to volunteers who had been providing meals.

Lismore Depot of the 41st Battalion, Royal New South Wales Regiment, and Singleton Army Barracks in the Hunter Region provided accommodation and catering support to hundreds of tired and hungry firefighters from the Victorian Country Fire Authority.

Army also provided logistics support to the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services incident control centre, hosted at Borneo Barracks, Carbarlah, and embedded liaison officers in several co-ordination centres across both States.

Personnel from Kokoda Barracks, Canungra, and the 7th Brigade, Brisbane, provided engineering support to assist Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to clean up fire breaks near Beechmont. Army's Borneo Barracks near Toowoomba established a helicopter-landing site, overnight parking and refuelling capability for civilian rotarywing aircraft.

Helicopters and ground troops were used in at least two separate and successful search efforts for missing civilians in fire danger areas.

RAAF Bases Williamtown, Richmond, Edinburgh and even Pearce in WA catered to the needs of very busy firefighting aircraft.

RAAF Base Richmond also accommodated and catered for hundreds of firefighters, and opened maintenance hangars for up to 50 fire appliances and support vehicles.

It was a massive effort over several weeks – and the summer fire season hasn't even properly started yet.

Good luck to you all - and stay safe.

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Around 40 soldiers from the Singapore Army participated in the two-week biennial Exercise Matilda with their Australian Army counterparts from $8^{th}/9^{th}$ Battalian, Royal Australian Regiment, at Brisbane's Gallipoli Barracks. Brisbane-based 7th Brigade

Commander Brigadier Andrew Hocking said the exercise focused on a number of key military practices, including urban operations and reconnaissance.

"This exercise was a great example of Australian and Singaporean soldiers working together to plan and execute training missions in bush and urban environments," Brigadier Hocking said.

"The training provided soldiers with opportunities to exchange tactics, enhancing our ability to work together in the future.

"Exercise Matilda is an important activity as we continue to build mutual respect, friendship and cooperation with our Singaporean counterparts."

Exercise Matilda began with integration training across basic soldier skills including weapons, vehicles and tactics, before progressing to urban-operations scenarios incorporating Singaporean Army intelligence,

surveillance and reconnaissance assets.
Brigadier Hocking said the troops gained valuable knowledge from one another, which helped build both side's foundation warfighting skills and strengthed the bond between the two nations.

Australia and Singapore are close partners, and participate in a range of bilateral and multilateral exercises to increase interoperability each year.

PICS DARRIN TOMLIN

AIRSOFT M4A1

A Defence spokesman told **CONTACT** that 8/9RAR, in these images, are using an Airsoft M4A1, for training purposes.

"Airsoft weapons offer additional flexibility for units to conduct reality-based opposed training in a close-quarter environment," Defence said.

"This is often done before conducting more complicated training activities.

"The Airsoft M4A1 is an interim

training weapon for Army's Forces Command until the Airsoft EF88 is introduced, from late 2020.

"Army continues to seek innovative ways to enhance training through graduated methods and techniques, to maximise positive outcomes, while retaining safety for soldiers."

Read more on Army's new shooting philosophy starting on page 16, and thoughts on 'pain incentive training' starting on











RAAF and Navy's senior enlisted FIRST FEMALE WOS



Warrant Officer Fiona Grasby and Warrant Officer Deb Butterworth were recently appointed as the senior enlisted members of the Royal Australian Air Force and Royal Australian Navy respectively.

WOFF-AF Fiona Grasby became the first female Warrant Officer of the Air Force on 6 November, followed by WON Deb Butterworth as the first female Warrant Officer of the Navy on 21 November.

Both are the ninth senior enlisted members of their respective branches.

Among other roles and responsibilities, the senior enlisted member of all three branches of the ADF is to represent the views, concerns and opinions of the enlisted men and women to the chief of service and other senior leaders, and is responsible for overall maintenance of discipline and morale in the ranks.

At her appointment ceremony at Russel Offices, Canberra, WOFF-AF Grasby spoke of her pride to be standing in front of the large number of Defence personnel gathered for the occasion.

"Thank you for the confidence and trust that the Senior Leadership Team has bestowed upon me with the appointment of me as the ninth Warrant Officer of the Air Force," WOFF-AF Grasby said.

"It is with humility that I say it is a privilege to do what we do every day."

WON Deb Butterworth and WOFF-AF Fiona Grasby at WON Butterworth's appointment ceremony at Russell Offices, Canberra. Photo by Able Seaman James McDougall

She thanked her predecessor, WOFF-AF Rob Swanwick for his words of support and practical wisdom shared over the years.

Minister for Defence Linda Reynolds said Warrant Officer Butterworth's appointment as WON was reflective of her outstanding career achievements to date, and exemplified the depth and diversity of leadership across the Australian Defence Force.

"I congratulate Warrant Officer Butterworth on her appointment," Minister Reynolds said.

"I also sincerely thank the outgoing Warrant Officer of the Navy, Gary Wight, for his dedication, care and strong advocacy in representing the views and concerns of sailors throughout his career, and particularly so over the past three years."

CONTACT notes with frustration the differences between how these appointments were announced publically – WOFF-AF by 'internal' news reports (which we didn't see for weeks) and WON via ministerial press release emailed directly. CONTACT congratulates both WOs equally.

CONTACT congratulates both WOs equally.

CONTACT Air Land & Sea – Issue 64 – December 2019









CONTACT Air Land & Sea – Issue 64 – December 2019



"You need simple, robust systems that will work every time and when you really need them."

Enter the Carl-Gustaf man-portable recoilless rifle

Since being developed in the 1940s, the system has proved reliable in countless conflicts around the planet. Its simple, robust design and adaptability has made it a first-choice dismounted combat weapon for more than 40 nations, including Australia.

"The Carl-Gustaf is a true multipurpose weapon," Mr Arvidsson savs.

"It has anti-armour and anti-structure capabilities, it can defeat soft targets in the open, and it also has support capabilities such as smoke and illumination.

"Armed forces use the system everywhere from arctic environments, down to the tropics and in

From an initial offering of just two rounds, today's Carl-Gustaf systems are compatible with 11 different rounds, allowing it to be tailored for use on any mission. Most commonly employed by a two-man team (a gunner and a loader carrying the ammunition), it is capable of anything from tank kills and bunker-busting to battlefield illumination.

Carl-Gustaf is also extremely light. Weighing less than 7kg, the weapon can be easily slung over a soldier's shoulder. With the 84mm rounds weighing between 2.6 and 4.8kg, a two-person team of gunner and loader can easily transport an impressive support capability.

The first Carl-Gustaf weapons produced for the Swedish military in 1948 represented an impressive leap forward. Based on the barrel of an 84-calibre 19th-century canon, the rifled barrel and innovative recoilless firing system allowed the Carl-Gustaf to fire relatively large-calibre rounds at much higher muzzle velocities than rival systems, resulting in greater lethality, accuracy and range.

While the overall design of the system has remained constant since then - a gunner from 1948 could fire today's system with almost no training - there has been constant innovation around components.

Saab has worked tirelessly to evolve the features of the weapon and its sights to ensure they meet the demands of modern troops.

With the release of the M4, the overall weight of the system was reduced by more than 3kilograms through the use of light-weight materials, such as titanium alloy.

Saab engineers also reduced the length of the weapon by 6cm and improved the overall ergonomics.

"We recognised that the weapon should be as light and manoeuvrable as possible because infantry are often operating in tight spaces and jumping in and out of vehicles and buildings" Mr Arvidsson savs.

Another factor in the Carl-Gustaf's ongoing popularity is the nature of warfare. While technology has removed the human factor from some theatres of conflict, it remains crucial in others.

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"In many parts of the world, the threat environment is not symmetrical," Arvidsson says.

"Over the past 20 years, there's been a rise in conflicts where the enemy is inside buildings in an urban environment.

"Engaging the enemy threat requires boots on the ground, and the troops involved need a weapon to solve their challenges."

The sights for the Carl-Gustaf system have also undergone significant innovation.

"M4 can be fitted with an intelligent sight that can communicate with the rounds to increase the probability of hit," Mr Arvidsson says.

"The sight looks at factors such as the temperature of the propellant to carry out more accurate ballistic calculations, and the gunner can choose whether a round should airburst, explode on impact or penetrate a wall."

Meanwhile, guided-missile munitions have recently been tested that will potentially allow system users to strike at greater ranges, more accurately, with reduced risks of collateral damage.

BELOW: A laser-guided missile ammunition shot from a Carl Gustaf M4 in early-stage flight. LEFT: The target cops a very accurate hit.



In October this year, Raytheon and SAAB test-fired 11 guided munitions in Sweeden and America with 100% success.

Raytheon Land Warfare Systems vice president Sam Deneke says Raytheon and Saab have spent the past 12 months working together to develop a precision-guided munition that will penetrate multiple targets at extended ranges.

"This lightweight round can overmatch potential adversaries while decreasing collateral damage, making it an ideal weapon when fighting under restricted rules of engagement," Mr Deneke says.

"Increased range combined with the ability to fire at targets from inside structures, will offer troops greater protection."













48

At just below 7kg, the Carl-Gustaf has lost half its weight since the first version 70 years ago.

After World War II, Swedish arms designers really got to grips with developing portable recoilless anti-tank launchers that could be fired from the shoulders of infantrymen.

But, with the gradual disappearance of light tanks and introduction of infantry support vehicles with much thicker armour, a more effective antitank defence system with better penetration was required.

That's when they came up with the concept of using shaped-charge high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT) warheads.

Being both lighter and shorter than its predecessors, today's M4 has the same loading and firing system, with a two-man team comprising a gunner and a loader required for its efficient operation.

The gunner takes up their position and the loader checks that the risk area behind the weapon is

The locking lever is also an inbuilt safety system, which allows the M4 to be carried around the battlefield while loaded. Clearly beneficial, this means that the gunner no longer needs to venture out unarmed into vulnerable terrain before loading the weapon.

High-tech electronics on the M4 also set it apart from the purely mechanical nature of earlier Carl-Gustaf systems.

It has a shot counter, which means that soldiers no longer need to make a note of the number of full calibre rounds they have fired. Secure in the knowledge that they have up to 1000 live rounds to fire, they can be confident that the computerconnected system will monitor the weapon's maintenance needs for them.

Operators are also able to keep hold of the handle while using a joystick or fingering a touchpad on the side of the weapon to scan the menu of its capabilities, thus remaining in control of the system at all times.



While both the Carl-Gustaf and its ammunition are evolving with the times, the calibre of 84mm has been retained thought the years, which makes every version of Carl-Gustaf compatible with any ammunition and vise versa.

Compatible with 11 different rounds, the Carl-Gustaf system can be tailored for use on any mission or in any environment. It has anti-armour and antistructure capabilities, it can defeat soft targets in the open, or enemy soldiers behind concealment, expose the enemy with illumination or provide masking through smoke.

Saab produces four types of anti-armour rounds for the Carl-Gustaf, including one against reactive armour, two single-warhead, rocket-propelled rounds, and a confined-space round with a different propulsion system for firing from inside buildings.

Anti-structure rounds for the system include the ASM 509, which is designed for use against buildings, and the multi-target round MT 756,

featuring a tandem warhead that first punches a hole through a wall and then detonates behind it.

Anti-personnel rounds include the area-denial munition ADM 401, which is designed for defeating close-range soft targets such as cars, and the highexplosive round HE 441, which features a time fuze, allowing for airbursts to defeat targets behind cover.

Finally, support rounds include a parachutesuspended illumination round ILLUM 545C and $\boldsymbol{\alpha}$ smoke round SMOKE 469C.



Inside the shaped high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT) charge, the kinetic energy released by an explosion is focused on a particular point, allowing it to pierce steel that is very thick.

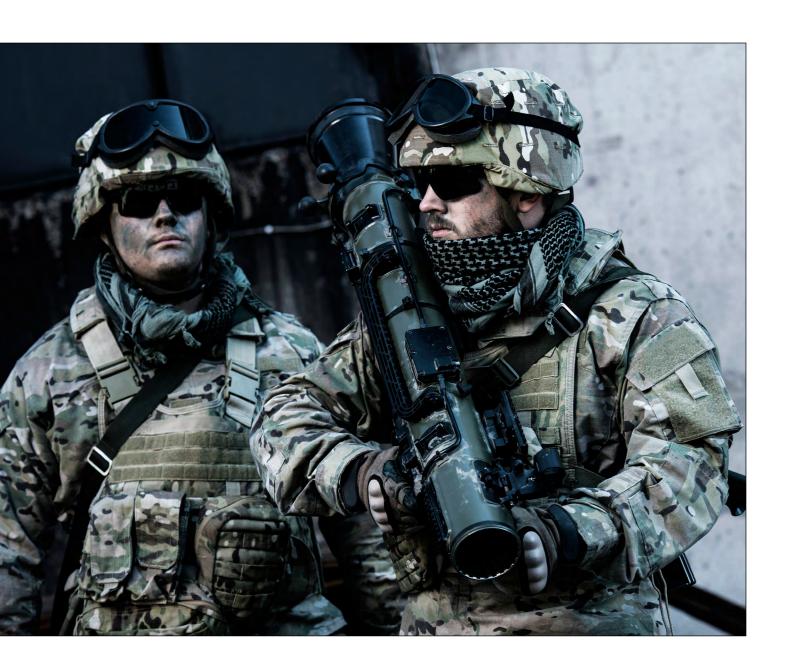
The shaped charge device comprises a hollow cylinder containing explosives that are placed behind a metal casing. A detonator located behind the explosives ignites them, releasing a











high-velocity detonation wave that creates a highpressure front, which expands the metal casing, making it shoot forward in the form of a narrow jet. With its needle-like profile, this jet is able to penetrate reinforced structures.

So, despite its acronym, a HEAT round does not rely on heat or melting the metal to get through but actually uses concentrated pressure.

Saab and Raytheon are sharing the workload on developing the latest cutting-edge ammunition laser-guided missile munitions – on a 50/50 basis.

While Saab is providing the necessary warhead and propulsion capabilities, Raytheon has brought its seeker, guidance and control systems to the

Director Product Management Programmes at Saab's Business Unit Ground Combat Johan Ekeroot says using a guided ammunition provides pinpoint accuracy, even at ranges up to 2000m, with similar target capability as the regular rounds but with the reduced risk of collateral damage.

"You just pull the trigger and the round will do the rest – I promise you that," Mr Ekeroot says.

"The soldier simply aims at the target, locks the seeker to it, and fires the round in the general direction, then the round takes over.

"Launched at a relatively low velocity, it picks up speed as the flight rocket motor is started, and proceeds to home in on its target.

"The seeker in such a round allows it to track stationary and moving targets, providing high success rates even at long range, without increasing the workload required by the gunner."

With cutting-edge capability, intelligent sights, programmable ammunition and, arriving soon, rocket-propelled guided missiles, Carl-Gustaf is ready for the future.

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NO HGHER HONOUR

PICS CHRISTABEL MIGLIORINI

On 13 October 1775, the American Continental Congress passed a resolution to establish a navy to disrupt British

merchant ships resupplying British soldiers.
Since 1972, at the behest of then Chief of
Naval Operations Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, that date is remembered annually with fleet-wide celebrations befitting the United

States Navy's Birthday.

Ceremonial and celebratory activities are held on bases and in cities world wide – and CONTACT stringer Christabel Migliorini was extended the honour of an invitation to this year's Navy Ball in Guam, where she joined hundreds of Guam-based sailors and guests to celebrate their 244th birthday.

Guest speaker, retired Fleet Master Chief JoAnn Ortloff told guests that every generation of sailors built upon the work and traditions of those who had gone

"That's how we have become the strongest Navy in the greatest nation in the

world – and you are a part of that legacy."
she told her very appreciative audience.
"I encourage you to find what
inspires you to uphold the sacrifice and
commitment it takes to be in the Navy, and I leave you with 10 lessons I learned over 33 years of naval service:

- > Don't wait for things to happen to you.
- Make them happen for you.

 > Words matter. Choose them wisely
- because they cannot be taken back.

 > Do the right thing because people are watching, and learning about your character through your behavior.
- > Challenge the process, but not the authority, and recognise the difference. Encourage others to do the same.
- > Change is good for the sake of improvement, not for the sake of change.
- > Find a part of 'yes' in every 'no'. If everyone accepted the 'no', there wouldn't be innovation or second chances.
- > It's easier to get on a negative bandwagon than a positive one because someone else is doing the driving, but take the wheel, change the direction, and drive.
- > If you are not having fun, you are doing
- > We get what we raise, so raise wisely.
- > Sometimes, we have to fail to know great success, as long as the failures were not









CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:

Presenting the Colours; Marching on the Colours; Guest speaker retired Fleet Master Chief JoAnn Ortloff, the youngest sailor on Guam and commander Joint Marianas Admiral John Menoni cut the birthday cake; Raising a toast to the United States Navy; Setting a place for missing comrades.

NEXT PAGE: March on the Colours.

Thank you to Christabel Migliorini for volunteering to be our photography stringer at this event. Follow Christabel on Instagram.





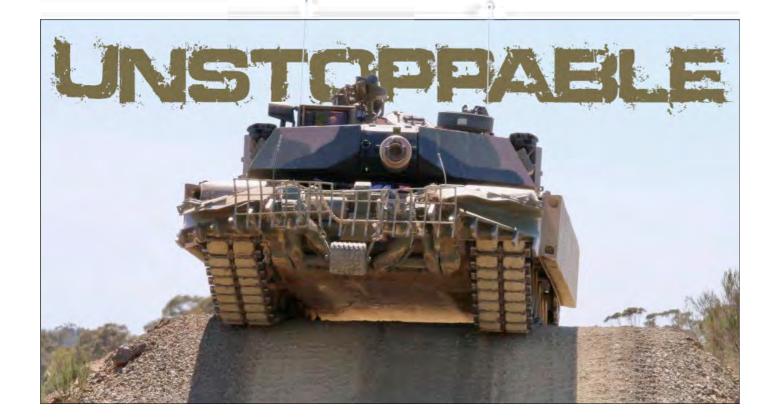












Session 0013 of the Tank Driving and Servicing Employment Category Testing Officer Course at the Australian Army's School of Armour, Puckapunyal, has been learning the finer points for employing the M1A1 Abrams mine-clearing blade. In the initial stages the course, students learned how to connect the specialist equipment to the M1A1, before moving out into the field and conducting driving assessments within the controlled environment of the school's driver-training circuit. Photos courtesy School of Armour.



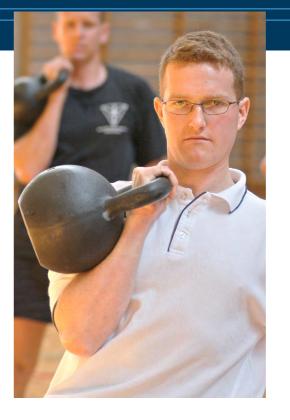






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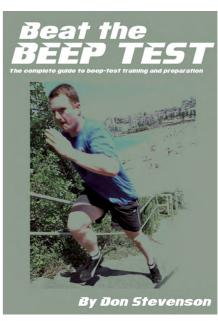
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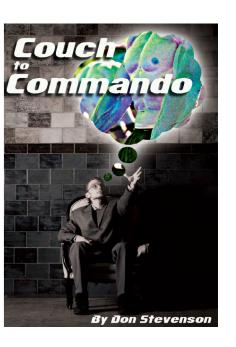


"Modern military athletes cannot expect to get combat fit on a diet of pushups and running"

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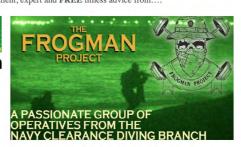




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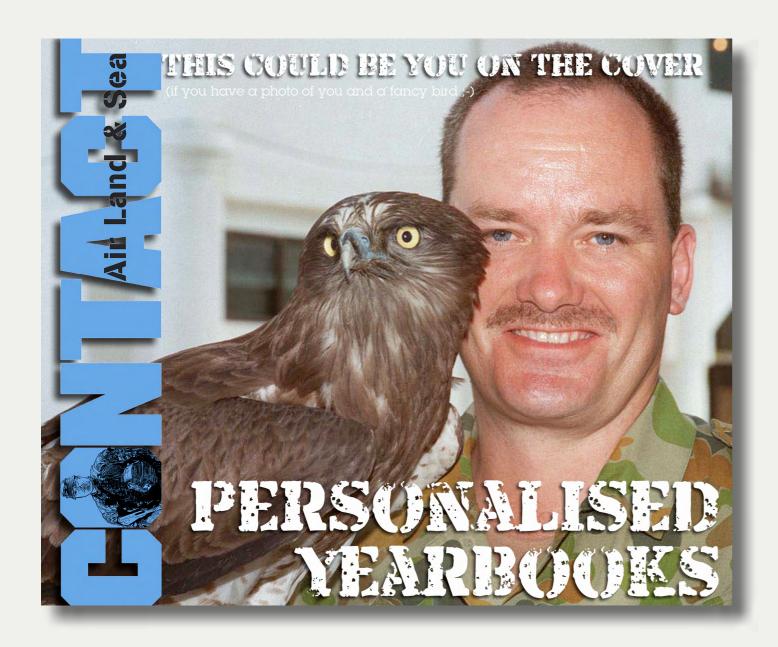
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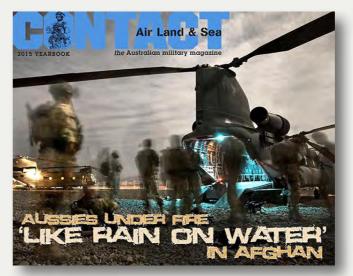
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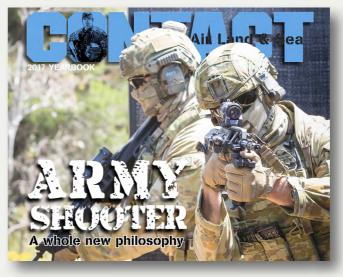








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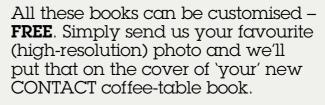


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AUSARMOURFEST 2019 - CAIRNS

They say that if you are passionate about what you do, you would never have to work a day in your life. After meeting Rod Lowden, the owner and curator of the privately operated Australian Armour and Artillery Museum, I beg to differ.

Words and pics by Peter Jackson





AUSARMOURFEST





To be honest, I'm somewhat of a groupie too.

This year was only my second Ausarmourfest since moving to the tropics of Queensland. However, I have lost count of the number of times I have visited the museum over the past two years.

It seems to grow larger with every visit, with more and more incredible displays filling the place.

Some think that Disneyland is the happiest place on Earth. Again, I beg to differ.

We arrived early and already they had the big armour out wowing fans.

The queue to ride on the various choices of rolling heavy-metal displays snaked through the museum. And what choices there were.

Everything from the APC (Armoured Personnel Carriers) used by the Australian Army in Vietnam, to a rare, original German Panzer 1V D.

Moving out of the sun to the very civilised shade of the exclusive 'Commanders Deck' for a better view, the entire paddock laid out before me was alive with metallic motion.

A replica Tiger 1 tank trailed a Sherman Firefly around the dusty course, both appearing to be stalked by a Cold-War era Soviet T72 that, even after all these years, still seemed to wreak of evil intentions.

I deemed that the Commander's Deck luncheon area was exactly where I needed to stay, to observe the day's activities, for three reasons mainly; the excellent overall view of the vehicles on display; the wonderful food being served and the cold beer on tap.

CAIRNS



As an Australian, I chanced having my citizenship questioned for not imbibing in available beverages – so I felt it best not to risk it. It's a cultural thina.

A series of loud bangs and shouted commands heralded the outbreak of hostilities between local military re-enactment groups, with the field soon hazed by smoke belching from the German 8.8cm flak cannon and various small arms as the Wehrmacht once again held their ground against a mix of American and Australian ground forces.

The heated combat rolled on to the delight of the ever-growing crowd filling the outdoor display area. And I do mean heated, as the tropical Australian sun was fairly baking the poor lads wearing authentic traditional woollen uniforms and heavy leather webbing.

Once a ceasefire was called, the military reenactors regrouped and blended back into the museum crowd to once again be photographed and to answer questions on their chosen military uniform.

f 🔰 🔞 🕍 🧕 🐧 🖂 and

Ausarmourfest's reputation as a must-see event is growing stronger every year, drawing military-vehicle fans from all over.

One enthusiastic gentleman and his wife from the UK spent his annual leave flying to north Queensland to witness the event alongside other armour fans from across Australia and from around the World.

I totally get it.

The event, like the museum itself, is always evolving, with new and exciting displays being added to the already impressive collection.

For more information on the **Australian Armour** and **Artillery Museum** head to their excellent web site www.ausarmour.com

Conveniently, the webpage has a 'countdown clock' displaying in days, hours, minutes and seconds how long before the 2020 Ausarmourfest kicks off.

I say conveniently as I am counting the days – as many others are too.







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There are 12 other Patreon members, whose support is also very, very welcome. The amazing **CONTACT** fans listed on this page are Direct Funding Supporters of our Work, financially supporting what we do – not because they have to, but simply because they want to.

With their support, **CONTACT** can continue to deliver what we already deliver - plus a few extra rewards exclusive to DFSW Club members.

Unfortunately, the one big reward we wanted to deliver - printing CONTACT again - did not happen, because the level of support required just didn't materialise.

Find out how you can join the DFSW Club, and all its benefits, at

patreon.com/contactmagazine

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CONTACT

Have you ever wondered where CONTACT came from and why? I've written a longer history on our web site – but here's a synopsis.

After seven years as a helicopter mechanic in Townsville, and after tying for a long time, I eventually got a Corps transfer to ARMY Newspaper as a reporter in 1998.

But, I lasted less than five years at the paper - 'the powers that be' took away our unit status, civilianised the editor's job, gutted morale and squeezed me out for rebelling against the changes.

After deciding on about day three at Kapooka that I was going to be a 'career soldier' - and having eyes on the ARMY Editor's job from early on too, this was a very painful exit - in only my 11th year in the Army, forced to quit by a weasel civilian editor who didn't know shit from clay about anything military.

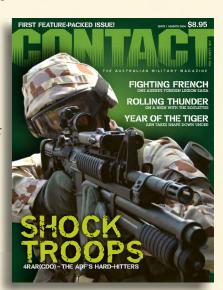
About a year after leaving, a corporal who still worked at the paper told me the weasel civvie editor was shutting down ARMY Magazine - for "staffing issues".

So, that corporal and I started CONTACT Magazine as a "fcuk you - just two staff could do it, and do a better job, on our own time, with our own money, as a hobby, in secret"

And when, with great pleasure, I handed that weasel editor the first ever issue of CONTACT, in March 2004, he ran straight to his boss to plot shuting us down!!!

Fifteen years later, CONTACT is still here, still a 'hobby'. My corporal partner-in-crime has moved on. Mr Weasel civvie editor is long gone and so too is ARMY Magazine.

So now I'm doing their job for them - and they don't appreciate it.



CONTACT Air Land & Sea digital archives are a work in progress, with more than 60 magazines available to read FREE - here

Our most appreciated PayPal members

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PayPal membership is no longer an option (except for advertisers)

Thank you all very much for your support

What is DFSW Club?

While DFSW is an Army acronym, we hope our Navy and RAAF fans will forgive us for moulding it to our needs too - Direct Funding Supporters of our Work.

Membership of the DFSW Club is completely voluntary and, while it does have some perks, CONTACT would definitely seem to be getting way more out of this relationship than members are – and we hope to redress that imbalance as time goes by.

Joining the DFSW Club can only be done via Patreon, an American platform designed to help fans support 'creatives'.

We tried running a 'subscription' model via PayPal too – but that didn't work for purely technical/software reasons. Anyone who 'subscribed' via PayPal will still receive the membership benefits we initially promised - except, of course, newly printed magazines.

We are so grateful to our amazing supporters who joined our DFSW Club in the hope that we would print CONTACT again - and gobsmacked that so few of them left after we announced the decision not to proceed with that plan.

We thank all our past and present members most sincerely for your ongoing support – and if you would like to join them, please check our our Patreon page, here.







Chinchilla

3338 CORPORAL CHARLES JULIUS JONES 15[™] BATTALION

He lay there, squinting as the strong light burnt into his eyes. The masked figure bent over him. "Just relax Mister Jones, you'll be fine," the doctor said. He vainly shook his head as the black rubber mask was forced over his mouth and nose.





The striking difference between Corporal Charles 'Chinchilla' Jones before he went into the German prison camp (above centre) and the shadow of the man after his release (left). The horrors of the Japanese POW camps of WWII are widely known and spoken about, but the Turkish and German camps of WWI were just as bad.

Charlie Jones read the paper as he sat at the breakfast table. "Jeez, this Gallipoli thing looks bad", he said to his wife Mary Ann. Laying his paper on the table, Charlie took a large swig from the teacup as he stared in silence across the room. "I reckon it's about time I joined up love!" he said.

Charlie, who was commonly known as 'Chinchilla', was allocated to the 15th Battalion's, 11th Reinforcement draft¹. The 15th Battalion – made up of the best of Queensland and Tasmanian manhood – was locked in combat on the Gallipoli peninsula and giving a good account of itself against the stubborn Turkish defenders.

It was October 1915 and, while his mates climbed the gangway of the troopship Seang Bee², Charlie held Mary Ann and said his final good-byes.

"Please be careful Charlie" she said.

"I will love and don't worry, not a bullet made that can get me," he replied.

With a final kiss he was off to board ship. Chinchilla was a natural leader and quickly gained the respect of both superiors and peers alike. The training continued as the ship made its way across the Great Australian Bight. They made a brief stopover in Albany to take on coal and provisions, and the men were allowed ashore for a route-march to stretch their legs. It was great not to have a pitching deck below them for a change.

Just after their arrival in Egypt, the men of the 11th reinforcements married up with the 15th Battalion, refitting at the training camp at Tel el Kebir after the evacuation from Gallipoli. The newcomers found the men who had taken everything that the Turk could throw at them were reserved and hard as iron – for the 15th had the dubious reputation of having suffered one of the highest casualty rates of any unit to serve at Gallipoli³.

Things were now on the move and the soldiers learnt of the expansion program to double the AIF. The plan was simple – split the battalions of the 1st Division in two. This was easier said than done, though. The men who had endured the hardships of ANZAC all for the sake of the battalion, were loath to leave. But it had to be done and veterans and reinforcements alike were chosen either to stay with the 15th or go to help form a new battalion, the 47th.

Chinchilla hung on every name as it was announced. Suddenly it was over and his name wasn't called. He was to stay with the 15th.

Being such a large, fit bloke, Chinchilla was selected as part of a specially trained squad of 'bombers' – men attached to battalion HQ4 and used on an as-required basis for special tasks. They were issued with the new grenade launchers, which were designed to fit on the end of the standard .303, as well as their trusty Mills bombs.

On 31 May, the battalion broke camp and was shunted off to the port of Alexandria, where they boarded the troopship Transylvania to run the U-boat gauntlet to southern France. Luckily, the weeklong trip was uneventful for the 15th, arriving in Marseilles on 7 June 19165.

The 15th Battalion boarded trains for the long journey to northern France and, on arrival, undertook indoctrination and the issue of new pieces of kit that were to prove invaluable in this kind of warfare - steel helmets and gas respirators.

Donning the new kit, Chinchilla turned to his mates - "How do I look?" he mumbled through the mask.

"I think it's a bloody improvement, ya ugly mug," one retorted.

The bombers underwent extensive training under their platoon commander Lieutenant Moore and were soon masters of their trade. They knew every intricate component of their deadly projectiles and they could deliver them with pinpoint accuracy.

The Diggers were nervous as they took up their positions for the first time in the front line⁶. This wasn't Gallipoli, they thought – this was the bloody German Army facing them.

That first night, the Germans sent over a quick artillery barrage to help keep the newcomers on edge. Many of the lads confused the smell of cordite for that of a deadly gas and sounded the alarm. In the haste to don their masks, many placed the respirators on back to front. The older hands stepped up and quickly brought the situation under control. A general calm overtook the trench line and the red-faced troops settled down to a 'normal'

Following their tour in this 'nursery sector', the 15th was moved with the other units of the 4th Division to join the attack on the Somme. The point of the Australian attack was the fortified village of

As he moved along the crowded support trenches, Charlie Jones came face-to-face with the horrors of warfare. Mangled bodies littered the floor, stretcher-bearers struggled to carry the shattered bodies that were once soldiers to the rear. Shrapnel shells exploded above the open ditches, showering their deadly lead pellets into the massed bodies of

In the ensuing weeks, the 15th were in and out of the line. The bombers were instrumental in their tasks of fumigating the enemy trenches with their grenades. Their tactics were quick and effective move forward with the rifle sections and, when they hit a bottleneck, bomb the enemy into submission. Basically simple in theory but bloody difficult in













The No. 5 Mk. 1 Mills bomb, manufactured by Mills Munitions Factory, Birmingham, England, entered service in 1915.

Photo courtesy Royal Armouries.

Pozieres was described by many as hell on earth. The Germans had massed a massive amount of artillery, which pounded the beleaguered Diggers around the clock.

And, if Pozieres was hell, then the nearby enemy stronghold of Mouquet Farm was simply sinister. The Germans had turned the modest farmhouse into an impregnable fortification of concrete and steel, much of it below ground.

The capture of Mouquet Farm was vital, and the 4th Division was given the task of taking it. The division hit the farm again and again, and time and time again their attacks were repulsed. It was now the turn of the 15th.

As the artillery barrage lifted, the battalion moved forward. Suddenly the German machineguns opened up on the Diggers. As the battalion's lead companies began to pepper-pot forward, the bombers went to work. The Lewis guns⁷ and riflemen laid down oppressive fire on the Germans, as a number of the bombers crept forward.

When Charlie Jones got close enough to the first post, he paused and took a Mills bomb from his haversack. He glanced to the left and right and nodded readiness to his mates. They each pulled the pin - one, two, three -"Now!"

As one, they turned and launched their bombs at the post. Before the smoke even cleared, the riflemen rushed forward and took care of any survivors before they had time to retaliate. It was a quick, simple and effective tactic and it was instrumental in the capture of Mouquet Farm.

The second half of 1916, saw the 15th redeployed to Belgium and engaged in operations around the Ypres salient. On 10 October, the battalion was tasked to take over a portion of the line near Zillibeke. The officers, runners⁸, machine-gunners and bombers moved up the night before to familiarise themselves before the occupation.

Chinchilla, now a corporal 1, sought out his opposite number from the battalion currently occupying the position.

70

"Alright mate? What have we got to deal with?" he asked.

"Well, Berlin's that way, but there's about a million German's between us and it. Paris is that way and that's where I'm headed tomorrow. Anything else?"

"Good one sunshine, enjoy your leave," Charlie said as he shook the man's hand.

This new part of the line, was a constant hazard as the German mortars would often engage the Aussie batteries in a deadly duel. The bombs were falling in a distinct pattern on the 15th's position. Chinchilla huddled in the corner of the bomber's bay, all the time trying to pull his helmet tighter onto his head as rounds exploded around him.

Suddenly, the barrage lifted and an awkward silence drifted over the lines.

"Stand to! Stand to!" the sergeant ordered as he ran along the trench line.

Jones snapped up the trench periscope and scanned the German trenches. Here they come, a large grey line of German infantry.

The Aussie rifles and Lewis guns opened up and patches of grey soon started to fall. But the others edged closer and closer to the allied line. Charlie Jones laid about a dozen bombs on the sandbag ledge and unfastened the flap of his pistol holster in preparation.

"Keep comin', ya bastards, keep comin'," the big man muttered as the Germans approached.

Then he let rip with bomb after bomb, the explosions mixed with agonising screams let him know he was on the mark.

Suddenly, he noticed a shadowy figure in the corner of his eye. Turning his head, Charlie's eyes widened as he looked into the eyes of a German rifleman. The German hurriedly squeezed the trigger of his rifle but his aim was slightly off, missing Jones. Before the Hun could reload, Charlie Jones whipped out his revolver and put three rounds into the German. Just to make sure, Charlie snapped up a grenade and lobbed it over the parapet onto the body of his fallen opponent.

February 1917 and the 15th Battalion was in the line, occupying the frozen trenches near Gueudecourt, in northern France. The whole battlefield was a solid mass of ice, snow and mud. The Diggers did their best to stay warm as they huddled around little bonfires of damp, smoking wood and snuggled the fleecy sheepskin vests as close to their bodies as possible. But it was all in vain. Even boxes of the vital small-arms ammo were at times a solid frozen mass.

'Stormy Trench' was the next objective for the 15th Battalion. It was a key feature that had to be taken if future operations in the area were to proceed9. The Aussie's knew this, but so did the Germans who were tasked to hold this sector at all costs. 0230hrs and the allied artillery and heavy trench mortars opened up to soften up the enemy and cut the wire, as the 15th moved out to its jumping-off tape¹⁰. As they lay there in the bonepiercing cold, the Diggers thought of one thing -"Just get the bloody job done and get warm".

The whistle shrilled, the Diggers stood up and moved forward with bayonets fixed. As they got within 20m of the trench, all hell broke loose. Machine guns and rifles opened up from a thousand points in front of them. There was only one thing to do - push forward and get into it.

Charlie Jones crawled to the edge of the parapet and threw six grenades in rapid succession into the trench. As he stood up to follow them in, a grenade blast and machine gun burst got him in both legs, forcing him to stumble forward into the enemy position. A German was poised to put a bayonet into him as he lay on the floor, but an Aussie sergeant capped the Hun with a quick shot before he could complete his task.

Diggers poured into the trench and locked into the savage fury of hand-to-hand combat. Stretcher-bearer Corporal Wilson grabbed Jones by the shoulders and dragged him into a German dugout4.

"God mate, you're in a mess," the stretcher bearer thought to himself. Jones had 11 separate bullet and shrapnel wounds riddling his legs.

"Give me your thumb," the medic said to Jones, ramming the thumb into the worst of the holes. As his thumb touched bone, Jones turned over on his side and threw up, losing his dental plate in the

Other wounded were brought into the dugout for urgent treatment.

Outside the issue was in doubt. The Germans had rushed re-enforcements forward to recapture the vital position.

A sergeant burst into the dugout. "Doc, we've got to pull back. Can we move these blokes?" he asked.

"These here can go," nodding at one group. "These ones, not a hope of moving them!"

"Right you men, let's go. Quick now or we'll end up in the bag," the sergeant yelled.

"I'll have to stay here with the wounded." the medic said4.

The Germans swarmed back into the trench. The wounded sheltering in the dugout were waiting with baited breath for the blast of the grenades they were sure would come. But they didn't.

Three enemy soldiers entered the dugout and kept the wounded covered with their rifles. An officer arrived, scanned the situation and delivered a curt command to one of the privates, who scurried from the dugout. He returned a few minutes later with two German medics who immediately went to work treating the wounded Diggers.

Jones was unconscious when they carried him from the dugout. He woke briefly in a German field hospital some time later, near Cambrai, and summoned enough courage to lift the sheets. He smiled as he saw he still had his legs.

Chinchilla was moved firstly to the hospital camp at Munster and, when he was feeling a bit better, moved to a more permanent camp near

Jones' wounds were serious. His legs were stiffening and his muscles were rapidly wasting because of the inactivity. The Australian and British medics who cared for him were sure that he would be exchanged sometime in the near future.

At home, his wife shook as she answered the knock at the door. Standing there was the local minister, his hand containing a buff-coloured government envelope. As the minister read the telegram, she heard the sentence that burnt into her soul, "Missing, presumed died of wounds".

The expected prisoner exchange did not occur and Jones was sent to the prisoner-of-war camp at Soltan. He was incapable of work and was forced to remain in hospital and only allowed out of bed for short periods.

Being in hospital meant he could not forage for additional food, like the other prisoners. This took a toll on the big man's physique, and he shed weight at an alarming rate.

By mid-1917, Jones was able to establish contact with the British Red Cross. He was able to request a new dental plate be sent to him so that some form of normality in his life could be maintained11. Most importantly, his parents and loved ones would now know of his survival.

Later, Jones was able to move about the hospital with the aid of crutches and carry out light clerical duties.

By late 1918, the allies were pushing towards Germany. The Hun was suffering defeat after defeat and many felt that the end could be in sight.

11 November 1918 and a huge cheer went up around the camp as the armistice was announced. A few days later, Red Cross staff entered into Soltan camp finally effecting the prisoners' release.









Notes

- 1. National Archives of Australia, B2455, WWI Service Records, 3338 Charles Julius Jones, 15th Battalion AIF
- 2. AWM 8, Unit Embarkation Nominal Rolls, 15th Battalion AIF, 1914-1918 War
- 3. The 15th Battalion suffered 557 killed or died of wounds, 520 wounded and 18 POW. History of the 15th Battalion by LT T.P. Chataway, William Brooks & CO, 1948
- 4. AWM 1DRL/0428, Australian Red Cross Society, Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau
- 5. A subsequent trip in May 1917 wasn't so lucky for the Transylvania, though, as she was torpedoed en route to Alexandria and sunk, with significant loss of life.
- 6. It became standard practice that new units to the Western Front would undertake occupying the forward trenches in a

- normally quiet sector of the front line around Armentieres. This was dubbed 'The Nursery'
- 7. Light, drum-fed, section-level machine gun, firing a .303-calibre round
- 8. Specialist troops trained to run the gauntlet of fire and deliver messages by voice or in written between units and sub units.
- 9. Page 149 History of the 15th Battalion by LT T.P. Chataway, William Brooks & CO, 1948
- 10. White tapes placed in 'No Man's Land' by reconnaissance parties to indicate the form-up point and line-of-departure for attacking troops.
- 11. Author's note
- 12. Trove Daily Standard (Brisbane) Tuesday 12 October 1920, Page 5.

It was decided to evacuate the more serious cases to England for proper treatment, but this would take

The hospital ship crossed the channel and Charlie Jones was offloaded in Dover and transported to the Base Hospital at Sutton Veny.

One day, an old mate from the 15th Battalion came to visit Jones in hospital. The man looked at the wasted form lying on the bed.

"God, Chinchilla, what did they do to you?" he asked with tears in his eyes.

Charlie Jones arrived home on 30 April 1919. His eyes still bore the black rings of fatigue as he stumped his way down the gangway of the troopship and made his way to his wife and mother. Stopping just short of the pair he said, "Well Mum, I'm home".

Charlie Jones returned to the Kurilpa area of Brisbane and tried to settle into a normal life. His legs still gave him trouble, but he was starting to move a lot more freely. It seemed to him that, with time, things were going to turn out all right.

Charlie decided to take up a soldier's dwelling in 1920, which was located in the nearby suburb of Norman Park. The house was modest but it was like a dream to the Jones'.

On Sunday 10 October 1920, Charlie was in central Brisbane. He glanced at his watch and realised that if he didn't get moving he would be late in meeting up with his wife who was shopping. He ran for the tram, reached out and grabbed the handrail. His foot hit the step and he stumbled and fell under the moving vehicle. As the heavy iron

wheels ran over his legs, Charlie Jones screamed out in pain.

The ambulance men did the best they could to stabilise their patient at the scene, before conveying him to the hospital where doctors were waiting to rush him into surgery.

As the surgeon looked down at the old soldier, he reassured him that he was in good hands. The doctor took up a scalpel and looked at the nurses -"Right, we better get on with it," he said.

The doctors were forced to amputate the left leg above the knee. The right leg, although badly crushed, might be saved, but only time would tell.

For days, Jones drifted in and out of consciousness - condition critical¹².

A few days following the accident, the doctors were forced to also remove the right leg, which by now was badly infected with gangrene.

After the doctors broke the news, Charlie lay there staring at the ceiling. At that point, he had a decision to make - he could either give up and die, or fight through this disaster.

He chose the latter.

The citizens of Kurilpa rallied behind their soldier, raising money to assist in paying for the house, to give him a fighting chance of success.

Charlie Jones did survive and he did fight on. Like many of the Diggers who were maimed either during or after the war, he found the Anzac spirit that had seen him through the trenches, the wounds and the prison camp - and it would also now see him through this adversity.

Charles Jones died on 7 March 1946, aged 60.



SOLDIER ON IS ABOUT AUSTRALIANS COMING TOGETHER TO SHOW THEIR SUPPORT FOR OUR WOUNDED. IT'S ABOUT TELLING DUR DIGGERS THAT WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE THEIR BACKS; THAT WE WILL REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE COME HOME, AS WELL WE WILL REMEMBER INUSE WHO HAVE GUME HOME, AS WELL AS THOSE THAT HAVE DIED. IT'S ABOUT GIVING THE WOUNDED THE DIGNITY THEY DESERVE AND THE CHANCE TO DO AND BE

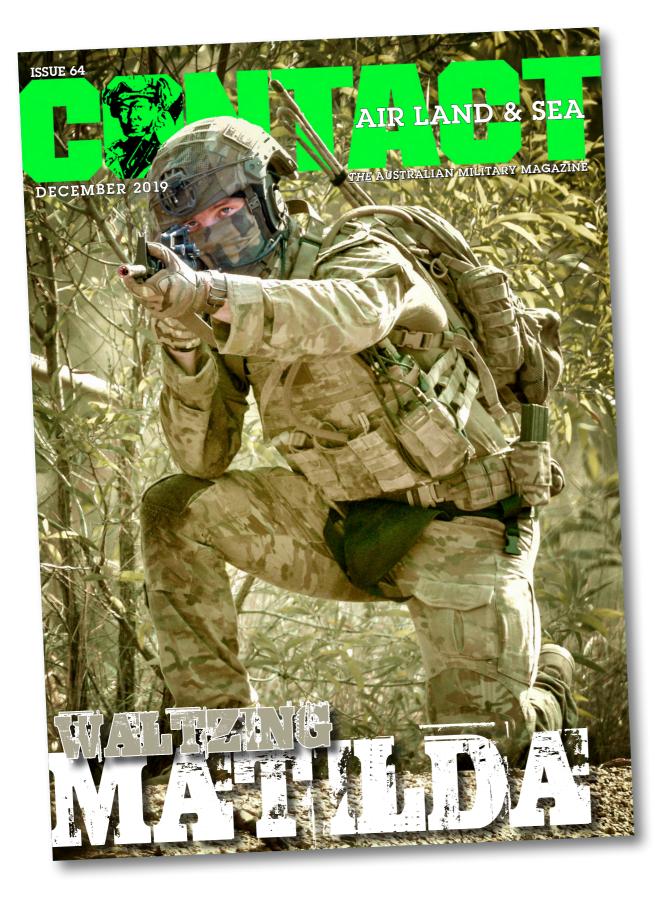
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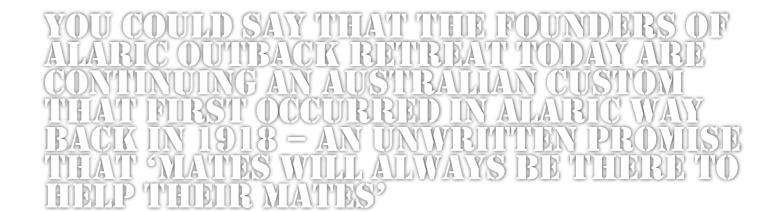
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he original owner of Alaric in 1918 was a man by the name of Corporal JC (James Chum) Tully, who had returned from the horrors of WWI where he was wounded on his left arm from a machinegun burst, and later received a depressed skull fracture, possibly from a shell striking his helmet.

Under a Closer Settlement and Soldier Settlement Scheme designed to aid returned veterans, Chum drew Alaric, a block of about 12,000 hectares near Quilpie, and chose to employ only returned veterans with the aim of helping them rebuild their shattered, shell-shocked lives.

Chum apparently refused to grow beetroot on the property as it reminded him and his colleagues of the horrific injuries they saw in the war.

Today the original Alaric homestead and property is now known as Alaric Outback Retreat, a fully fledged Australian charity registered with the Not for Profit Commission (ACNC) co-founded by two Vietnam veterans, Lenny Thompson and Ted Robinson, and is a working cattle property of some 50.000 hectares.

Located in south-western Queensland, Alaric Outback Retreat (AOR) is 100km north-west of Quilpie and about 1100km west of Brisbane.

Alaric Outback Retreat aims to provide a secure and relaxing retreat to aid the advancement of social welfare of all service people, including current and former members of the Australian and Allied Defence Forces, State and Federal Police, fire services, ambulance, State Emergency Services and their respective families.

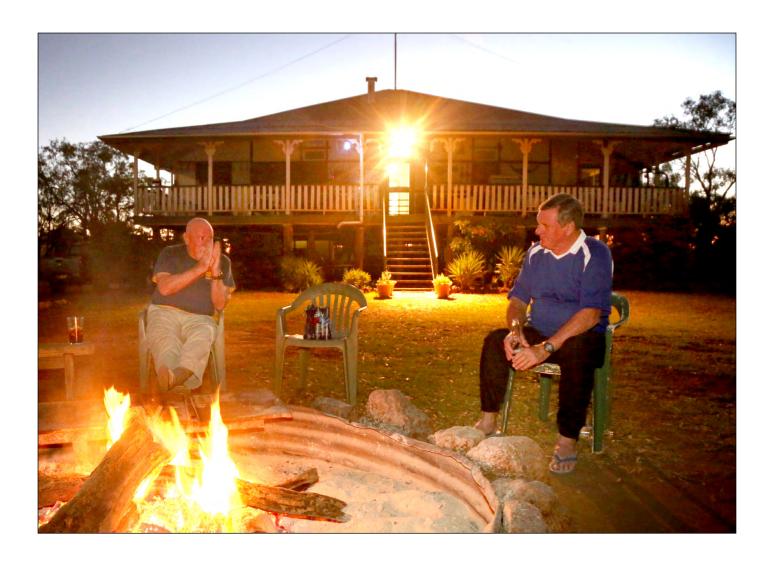
Lenny Thompson, who was wounded in Vietnam before having a long career in banking across Australia, said it was now a place for all first responders and their families, those dealing with PTSD and other issues – not just for Vietnam and other war veterans.

Lenny and fellow co-founder and Vietnam vet Ted Robinson, hatched the idea for a retreat. under the stars at nearby Adavale where Ted had already purchased an old, early 1900's corrugated iron shed-like home, called 'The Hut', and the surrounding block of land for less than \$500.

















THE BEAUTY OF ALARIC IS THE ISOLATION AND OTHER

Veterans used 'The Hut' at Adavale for many years, to relax, recuperate, 'recharge their batteries' and 'get away from it all' - a trend among veterans, seeking solace and refuge in the outback.

"In 2006 Lenny and I met the new owner of Alaric, grazier Jim Scott, who told us he may have to bulldoze the house as the absentee new owners had were primitive – there was no electricity, no phone, no real need for the 100 year-old five-bedroomed homestead." Ted said.

"Immediately my dreams of winning Gold Lotto and buying the homestead as a Vietnam veterans retreat came back, so we put together a proposition to Jim and the Veterans Association and, after much discussion about certain conditions and rules relating to cattle properties, plus some hard work, it was eventually established as a retreat."

Len said working parties mustered from the 400-strong Sunshine Coast Vietnam Veterans Association arrived in September and November 2006 and worked their butts-off repainting, rewiring, re-plumbing and generally rectifying doors, windows, toilets and showers.

"People were most generous and came out of the woodwork offering us furniture, freezers, paint, as well as patronising our raffles," Len said.

When Chum took on Alaric in 1918, conditions no radio nor motor vehicles.

Today's guests have electricity, running water, baths (indoor and out), air conditioning, TV, WiFi, 4WD's and an airport nearby in case of medical emergencies.

But the overall beauty of Alaric is the isolation and

One guest, Darryl Wilson, who suffered from PTSD said he had never felt such peace, tranquility and relaxation than that which he experienced at Alaric Outback Retreat during his stay there in 2019.

While performing manager's duties at Alaric Homestead, Vietnam veteran Graeme 'Scotty'

Scott said, "three couples visited for up to a week at separate times and before they departed, each wife told me they had never seen their partner so relaxed, happy and enjoying himself, for years."

And that seems to be a common observation from most partners of veterans who stay a night or two or a week or two.

Perhaps it's because there are no organised formal activities at Alaric. Visitors are free to do as little, or as much as they wish and are welcome to stay for a day, a week, or longer.

Many choose to help out on tasks like vegetable gardening, watering, cleaning or collecting timber for the evening chat around the fire pit.

Visitors can choose between the spacious bedrooms of the homestead or just park their caravans, mobile homes or tents in the ample space - with power and water available.

During the day, activities such as opal fossicking, fishing, catching yabbies, bird watching,

photography, bush walking, or visits to one of the two working opal mines on the property are

Day trips to the historic town of Adavale and Hell Hole National Park can also be arranged.

Most visitors however prefer to just relax, read a book, sit around the fire in the evening with newfound friends and tell a few yarns.

This is when the magic of Alaric Outback Retreat recuperation is seen at its best.

Alaric's very remoteness is a major part of the retreat's attraction and contributes to the healing processes of both mind and body and, when likeminded guys gather, drink a few ales and talk, you can literally see the weight lift from visitor's shoulders.

With almost zero light pollution in the Outback, you can lean back on your fireside seat and look upwards and, before you know it, you've seen a meteorite burn its way into our atmosphere, gasped

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at the cloudy brightness of the Milky Way and watched a satellite orbit our planet Earth – and most of your problems seem to shrink away.

Talking around the fire pit with mates who experienced similar traumatic events can generate a humbling, honest conversation.

Men, most of who were teens or barely older at the time, who had never fired a gun during the conflict in Vietnam, sit and talk with men who had to deal with events that still, to this day, wake them crew'. at night, sweating, screaming.

As current volunteer manager at Alaric, Alan 'Sparrow' Christie admits, he had no idea what was coming before he left for Vietnam, but insists he would have volunteered anyway. He was only 17.

80

"My grandfather was in the First World War and my dad was in World War 2. This was my generation's war and there was no way I was going to miss it," Sparrow says, smiling as he lights up a rollie from a twig burning in the pit.

Sparrow was part of 3 Field Troop, the first engineering unit in the war. They were led by Sandy MacGregor, who says he was proud of all of them, and lovingly described them as a 'motley

Sparrow was one of those men nicknamed by media as 'tunnel rats' and spent a lot of his wartime under ground, looking for and chasing Vietcong, in dark, tight tunnels with a torch, a bayonet and bucket-loads of courage.

The further they went along the tunnels, the more complex the tunnel system became. There were twists, drops, turns and hidden sideways passages where you could easily be stabbed as you crawled

Alan recalls chasing a Vietcong sniper in a tunnel. The sniper had been wounded by the infantry, who were not at all keen to chase him down a hole.

The sniper escaped Alan's efforts too, but left behind a Czech snipers rifle that sits in a museum today as part of the record of the tunnel rats.

Alan loves Alaric Outback Retreat and spends more time volunteering there as manager than anyone else.

Alan built and maintains the vegetable garden, which provides lettuce, kale, tomatoes, beans and cucumbers - but still no beetroot.

Over 14 years of operation, many souls have benefitted from their stay at Alaric Outback Retreat.

Alaric Outback Retreat co-founder Ted Robinson was back home on the Sunshine Coast at the Vietnam Vets Drop-in Centre at Maroochydore three months after Alaric had opened when $\boldsymbol{\alpha}$ veteran came in and asked to see him. The man walked up to Ted and said, "Thank you. Alaric saved my life," turned around and walked out

"How many lives has Alaric saved or helped? asks Ted, "I don't know, but at least I met one."

Mates helping mates.





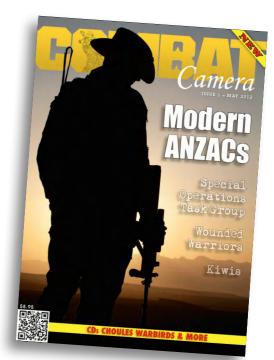
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Going from strength to strength, Carinthia has again updated its military garment line with new technology and features.

Starting with the iconic MIG Jacket, they have released version 4.0 and introduced their new thermal technology, ISO mapping, which tracks the heat generation of the body and allows Carinthia to adjust the levels of insulation around the garment to give the best warmth, lightest weight and freedom of movement.

The other major tech is IR camouflage. Using a new fabric from Gortex, the MIG 4.0 now has signature management in the infra-red light spectrum, making it harder to detect using nightvision devices. This tech includes making sure all the zippers, toggles and other hardware are out of view and under the IR fabric, making for a an even sleeker look.

Comfort wise, the best new feature here is the stand-alone collar. No longer part of the hood, the collar can be zipped up under the chin and covers the whole neck while leaving the hood to lay flat.

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Sometime early next year, a tender will be released that kicks off an acquisition project as important as our infantry fighting vehicles or the replacement attack helicopter.

This project is called LAND 159 - a project to replace small-arms in the ADF.

I hear you – "A new pistol? And let's get a new rifle too while we're at it".

Well, LAND 159 is not just those items of small arms. It's ALL small arms. Everything. Right up to DFSW.

What is very interesting in L159 is that the ADF doesn't just want a new weapon in a category - they want a system. They want the weapon, ancillaries, ammunition, support and training delivered in one

Can this happen? Pretty much. But it's complicated. Here's how they are going to do it. The first stage was to approach industry with several proposed supply and integration models and get feedback about what they think would be the best way to supply defence.

Second stage was to assess the feedback, determine the best way forwards with supply and integration.

This was actually completed earlier this year and the result was that the ADF has chosen to adopt a prime-vendor model and has appointed three organisations to be prime vendors.

The responsibilities of these primes is to respond to Defence's tenders and find suitable solutions to meet the requirements.

Are there problems with this? Maybe.

One of the primes is purely a supply and integration organisation. They don't make, sell or represent anything at all - and have been quite successful in previous projects with defence.

LAND 159 - a project to replace ALL small-arms. Yes - EVERYTHING!!!

The other two are also successful with defence, but have their own products and represent and sell the products of other manufacturers.

If you're like me, you're probably thinking that they will push their own products first - and we're right to think this. There will be bias. That is the nature of a company, to look after its owners and shareholders first.

Defence understands that no single prime will have all it wants, but when they don't have the product Defence is asking for, they will have to work with other suppliers – and that's where it gets really interesting.

The business world can be nasty, so imagine if any of these organisations had behaved poorly towards another business that defence wants a product from, and that business says, "No, we won't work with them". This is where having multiple primes comes into play.

Earlier, I mentioned that Defence wants 'systems'. That is to say they want a turn-key solution and want it all from one supplier.

Let's look at this in the context of the first capability to be acquired, which is sniper systems.

Defence wants to replace its entire inventory with new and improved capability, but not by buying a rifle here or a scope there in separate tenders. They want the primes to offer them a complete system that is already integrated with all components, under a single contract.

For the primes, they need to find and evaluate solutions to present to Defence, who then does their own evaluation before choosing the preferred solution.

This is where it gets really, really interesting. Apart from a rifle and optics, each solution must include ammunition, ballistic computer, weather station, observation optics, threat-detection sensors, sniper suit, sniper shelter, personal cam net, sniper packs, special LBE - right on down to camouflage tape.

Can you think of one organisation that has all of that in a one-stop-shop? Me neither.

Two of the primes will try, in order to have control, but sooner or later they will need to work with others.

Remember that third prime that doesn't make or sell anything itself? They won't have much problem with this. And to their credit, Defence recognises that it's unlikely they will get what they want from one supplier and have advised all parties that they may be required to source different components from various suppliers and integrate them into one package.

That will be fun to watch!

None of this is even published yet and I know you are already wondering what we're going to get.

Defence is pushing performance specifications - with some that are unlikely to be achieved at this time.

The people putting these specifications together are no less immune to marketing and trends than anyone else. They also don't get much in the way of budget to attend all the trade shows and manufacturers they should, let alone visit other country's weapons R&D programs. Which leads to less of an understanding of what is being asked for, and what can realistically be had, supported and employed effectively.

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As an example, the medium-range sniper system wants to be effective at 1000m, in a self-loading platform that is also capable of providing the rapid fire expected from a semi-automatic rifle. The idea being that a sniper on overwatch can switch to accurate suppressive fire in support of troops – as fast as one round every three seconds and to maintain that for 10

So, it needs precision long-range accuracy, reliability under hard use and the ability to fire semi-automatic for a sustained period.

Will they get it? Maybe, but only just. It will surely be a jack of all trades but master of none. To be superbly accurate at 1000m, they will need a specialist rifle, calibre and ammo, which introduces a new logistics requirement and supply issues on its own, just for the ammo. That makes it less effective in the supporting role.

To make it effective in the supporting role, it will have to compromise its 1000m capability, maybe down to 600m or so. In fact, a minimum accuracy has been given for 400m groups under these conditions.

Even in a common calibre such as 7.62x51 NATO, it would still need a specialist loading, not currently available in the supply chain. And Defence has only just realised we don't make our own 7.62 F4 ball anymore!

We currently have to import 7.62 ball, tracer and AP. So add a precision operational round of several types (expensive) to that and a sniper training round (less expensive) and you get the idea that supply in the field is now more complicated, and the length of the supply chain reaches overseas, making it easily cut.

What if we went to a specialist round like a 6.5? That supply chain issue could be even worse. Now your maintdem is asking for 9mm, 5.56, 5.56 link, 7.62 ball, 7.62 link, plus whatever specialist rounds the sniper needs.

And we haven't even discussed polymer or telescoping case technologies that may be chosen!

You now have an overview of the thought processes and issues behind LAND 159. There is no doubt that it will deliver better systems than we have now. But the questions are, how well will it work and how much better can those 'systems' be?



















