

ISSUE 71

CONTACT

AIR LAND & SEA

SEPTEMBER 2021

the Australian military magazine

RAAF
150 YEARS

BUMPER 94-PAGE ISSUE

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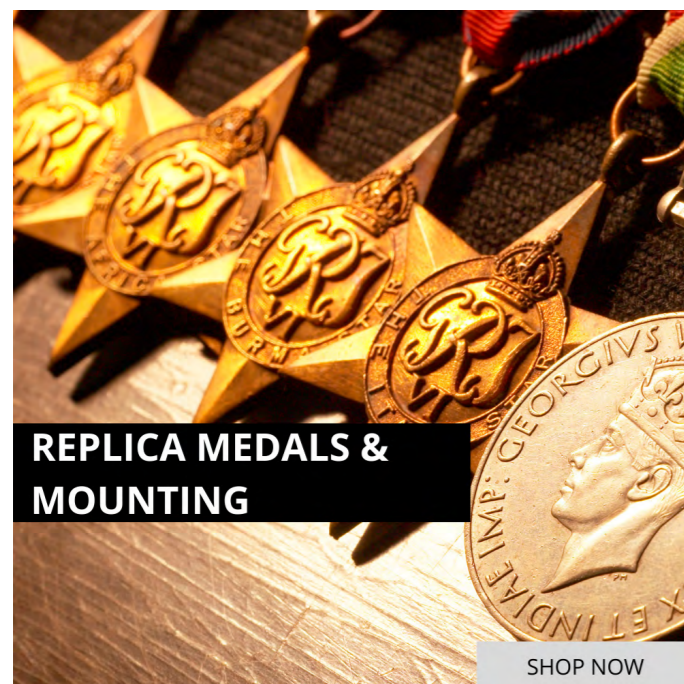
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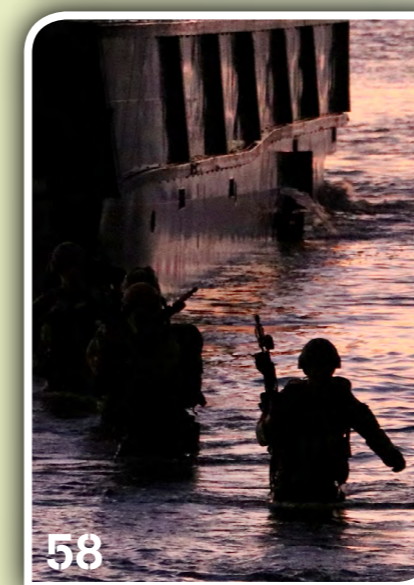
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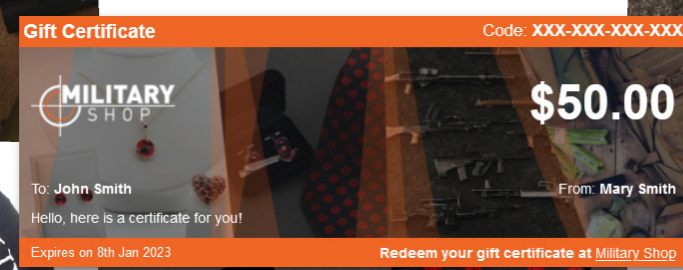


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appropriate.

I certainly didn't struggle for content in this, the 71st issue of
Australia's best boots-on-the-ground military magazine – **CONTACT
Air Land & Sea** :-)

In fact, an extra 10 pages more than usual was required to fit in
what I did – which wasn't even all of what I wanted to.

Even with 10 extra pages, stories such as Operation COVID-19
Assist, ADF storm-recovery support in Victoria and several exercises
had to be left out of this issue.

What I did struggle with for content was actually this page. I
couldn't think of a single, worthy editorial thing to say on my own
soapbox page – mainly because I had used my editorial juice on
pages 48 to 52 – filling The Evacuation of Kabul coverage with
opinion, in the absence of worthy official information.

But, as is always the case, all I had to do was wait long enough and
'something would turn up'. In this case, I waited until 3pm the day
before publication before inspiration was delivered – in the form of
a press release from the New Zealand Defence Force.

Thus, I want to take this opportunity to highlight the excellent
frontline human-interest report by New Zealand Defence Force
PR (using after-action interviews and mobile-phone photos) on
pages 56-57 – and contrast them against the great photo and
video coverage (see our [YouTube channel](#)) produced by Australian
Defence Force PR professionals at Kabul airport, who, unfortunately
yet typically, supplied next to zero usable commentary to
accompany their excellent footage.

As a result of this lack of usable information, I produced seven
pages of ADF photos consequentially accompanied by editorial
opinion and political speechifying just to fill the spaces (starting
page 48).

The only viable alternative would have been to use dry, own-ar-se-
covering press releases and press-conference transcripts written,
produced and authorised by the Liberal Party Canberra (most of
which were used, heavily edited, as news-story grist on our web site
– where they more appropriately belong – not in a quality features
magazine).

You might well ask, why couldn't the photographer write a story
to go with his photos? Well, truth is, photographers don't write –
'union rules'.

I'll say no more, lest I get myself in trouble for divulging insider
knowledge – though I'm officially an insider no longer, transferring
to 'inactive reserve' in August, just shy of my 30-year enlistment
anniversary :-)

Sincerely,

Brian Hartigan,
Managing Editor



COMMEMORATE YOUR WAY

Soar back in time and remember the past 100 years of Air Force

LIMITED EDITION OFFICER'S SWORD

This special edition of the Air Force Officer's sword, limited to only 250 examples, has the Air Force Centenary logo and limited edition number etched into the blade.



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ARNHEM THUNDER



E-7A Wedgetail A30-005 from No. 2 Squadron departs from RAAF Base Darwin into a pink Northern Territory sunset for a night mission during Exercise Arnhem Thunder 21.

As one of the Royal Australian Air Force's largest domestic training exercises for 2021, Arnhem Thunder focused on high-end collective training and involved multiple force-element groups (FEGs).

Operating out of RAAF Bases Darwin and Tindal, Arnhem Thunder 21 provided excellent opportunities for cross-FEG interoperability, high-end air-power missions as well as practising rapid airbase activation. Exposure to large scale offensive counter air scenarios in an away-base environment is of vital importance to the training outcomes of RAAF elements.

Approximately 40 aircraft and more than 500 RAAF personnel deployed on Exercise Arnhem Thunder 21.

TACTICAL LANDING

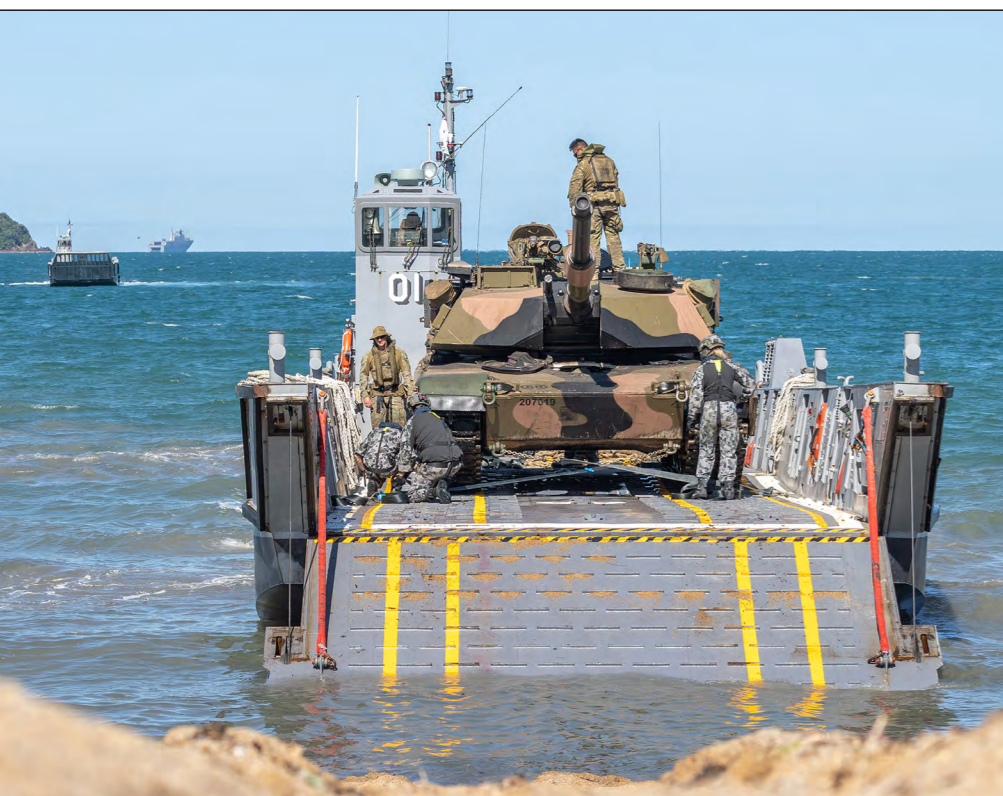


Photo by Leading Aircraftwoman Jacqueline Forrester.

A tactical deployment of Australia's M1A1 Abrams tanks was successfully demonstrated in an amphibious landing exercise in June.

The Australian Amphibious Force achieved the milestone at Cowley Beach, Queensland, during Exercise Sea Explorer, the second major activity in a suite of exercises.

Commander 1st Division Major General Jake Ellwood said the achievement showed Defence was advancing its warfighting capability in the coastal environment.

"During Exercise Sea Explorer we were able to demonstrate our capacity to project a mechanised combat team onto land from the sea," Major General Ellwood said.

"Troops rehearsed beach landings with a range of military vehicles, including the M1A1 tanks, using a variety of landing craft and with Australian Army ARH-Tiger and CH-47 Chinook helicopters in support."

Embarked in HMA Ships Canberra and Choules, the Australian Amphibious Force conducted wet- and dry-environment rehearsals, combat-enhancement training and force integration.

Troops trained day and night to familiarise forces with the conduct of amphibious operations.

Commander Amphibious Task Force Captain Leif Maxfield said the exercise provided a fantastic opportunity to learn and test new skillsets in the amphibious environment.

"The Australian Amphibious Force is a scalable, joint force enhancing the ADF's ability to achieve the nation's Defence and maritime strategic objectives and interests throughout the region," Captain Maxfield said.

"Exercise Sea Explorer enables our soldiers, sailors and aviators to practice a range of procedures and capabilities in complex and challenging scenarios."

The training intensified for all concerned as they moved on to Exercise Sea Raider, in which the Australian Amphibious Force took the lessons learnt on Sea Explorer and eventually put them into practice during a range of realistic amphibious assault and raid rehearsals as part Exercise Talisman Sabre.

25 YEARS SINCE BLACK HAWK CRASH

The Australian Army marked the 25th anniversary of the 1996 Black Hawk accident at Townsville Field Training Area with a service and helicopter formation flypast at The Palmetum in Townsville in June.

During training for counter-terrorism operations on the night of 12 June 1996, two Australian Army Black Hawk helicopters collided, killing 18 – 15 from the Special Air Service Regiment and three from 5th Aviation Regiment.

At the memorial service, Chief of Army Lieutenant General Rick Burr said the Army remembered the fallen who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country and those who still live with the injuries from that day.

"We recall the sadness and shock we felt when we heard about the accident," he said.

"We must not forget heroic acts undertaken by personnel at the scene who, despite the confusion, acted bravely and quickly to evacuate the injured."

Photo by Lance Corporal Lisa Sherman



DISASSEMBLED

The Australian War Memorial's iconic 'G for George' Lancaster bomber was recently disassembled and moved in preparation for AWM redevelopment works.

'G for George' – operated by No. 460 Squadron during World War II – was dismantled by a team from the RAAF History and Heritage Branch and the AWM Collections Services, during a four-week period.

It will be reassembled and placed on display at the Australian War Memorial Mitchell Annex, which will be open to the public soon.

The Lancaster has been one of the most popular exhibits at the AWM and has been on display in Anzac Hall for nearly 20 years.

Anzac Hall will be demolished to make way for a new, larger hall that will house displays being developed over the next few years.

G for George will return to the new Anzac Hall when construction and installation of the updated displays has been completed.

Disassembly teams removed panels, bomb bay doors,

engines and tailplane assembly, undercarriage components, the wings as a whole, and separated the fuselage into four sections.

Expertise and knowledge was passed between both teams.

RAAF Warrant Officer Stan Lawler said he enjoyed the opportunity.

"It was an honour and a privilege

to work with the Australian War Memorial team on this magnificent aircraft, and to remember all those who worked to keep G for George flying for our aircrew during the bomber offensive," he said.

Built in 1942, G for George flew 89 operational missions over Europe and Germany until retired in 1944.

Photo by Able Seaman Paul McCallum



APACHE SALE

The US government has formally approved the sale of 29 AH-64E Apache helicopters to Australia.

The US\$3.5 billion package also includes specific systems, radars, spare parts, training and weapons, including rockets and missiles.

Apaches should start arriving in Australia in 2025, with the Tiger ARH they will replace to be fully withdrawn three years later.

HOME PILOTS

Four F-35A Lightning II pilots graduated from the first F-35A operational conversion course to be completed in Australia.

The final phase of the course was conducted from RAAF Base Darwin as part of Exercise Rogue Ambush.

RAAF's No. 2 Operational Conversion Unit completed the course in July.

CANBERRA FLIES

Canberra bomber WJ680 has returned to flying after an extensive restoration at Temora Aviation Museum.

The aircraft is currently owned by RAAF's No. 100

Squadron – the Air Force Heritage Collection – reformed ahead of their Centenary.

Built in 1955, WJ680 was previously operated by the Royal Air Force in England, including their No. 100 Squadron until 1991.

The bomber last flew more than 10 years ago as part of the Temora collection.

AWDS FOC

HMAS Sydney has returned to her home port and namesake city following a successful four-and-a-half month deployment to the United States and Canada for qualification trials.

Her success now means Australia's fleet of three air warfare destroyers has reached full operational capability.

PERTH FLOATED

Anzac-class frigate HMAS Perth went back in the water on 1 July at Henderson, WA, after completing upgrades to her radar capabilities, communications systems and crew-habitable areas – a major part of her mid-life capability assurance program.

She will conduct sea trials and certification early next year following final steps in her upgrade.

NEW CHINOOKS

Two of four new CH-47F Chinooks have been delivered to 5th Aviation Regiment.

The first two of the new helicopters were delivered to Townsville aboard a US Air Force C-5 Galaxy, with the third and fourth expected to arrive in Australia next year.

The \$595 million purchase will take Army's fleet from 10 to 14 Chinooks.

SUICIDE RC START

A Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was formally established in July.

A former NSW Police deputy commissioner, high-court judge and mental-health expert were appointed commissioners.

Terms of Reference for the Royal Commission, which were widely accepted by veteran community groups, were also published and are available [here](#).



Photo by Trooper Lisa Sherman

ADF REFORM PLAN

CDF General Angus Campbell released the Afghanistan Inquiry Reform Plan in August, setting out Defence's strategy for responding to the IGADF Afghanistan Inquiry.

The plan sets out work under way, the manner in which future work will be delivered and timeframes for delivery.

General Campbell said Defence's response to the Inquiry, would embed enduring change across the organisation.

Find the report [here](#).

Photo by Leading Seaman Peter Thompson



NATIONAL LANDMARK

The Captain Cook Graving Dock at Sydney's Garden Island, built during World War II, has been recognised as a National Engineering Landmark by Engineers Australia.

The first ship to use the 347m long dry dock was the 225m aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious and one of the latest was the 230m landing helicopter dock HMAS Adelaide.

President of the Sydney Division of Engineers Australia Jessica Qiu and Director General Maritime Support Branch Commodore Shane Glascock

unveiled a plaque at the historic site to mark its new status.

The dock took four years to complete, peaking in 1943 with more than 4000 men employed on it.

Commodore Glascock said the graving dock was a product of "incredible foresight" that remained a national strategic asset, but, while its design and construction had very much stood the test of time, planning was underway to ensure this critical asset remains operational and available.

AIRSHOW OFF

The 2021 Australian International Airshow at Avalon in Victoria is officially cancelled.

The cancellation is a significant blow to the Royal Australian Air Force's Centenary-year celebrations.

COVID-19 already forced organisers to postpone the airshow from March to November, but continuing uncertainty, especially with the new Delta strain, forced them to cancel.

The next Avalon Airshow will be 28 February to 5 March 2023.

PMV PMTT

A Protected Mobility Tactical Trainer (PMTT) is one of the latest innovations embraced by Army to help vehicle crews.

Developed by Applied Virtual Simulation, the PMTT system allows Army to train its soldiers to operate its fleet of protected mobility vehicles in a variety of tactical conditions and operational environments.

It does this by providing realistic physical simulations of motion and an immersive experience for drivers, vehicle commanders and gunners.

First established at the Army School of Transport in Puckapunyal, PMTT has since expanded to 1st Brigade, Darwin.

The system, which consists of five vehicle platforms, an after-action review station and an admin station, is designed to train junior mounted leaders and to develop teams, and can train up to 15 soldiers at a time.

PNG PB ARMED

At the request of Papua New Guinea, the ADF has agreed to arm the PNGDF's four new Guardian-class patrol boats delivered through Australia's Pacific Maritime Security Program.

With PNG's Pacific-class patrol boats previously armed, this new agreement will ensure a continuity of Papua New Guinea's sovereign capabilities.

Australia will also provide a comprehensive support and training package.

The first Guardian-class patrol boat provided to PNG was handed over in 2018, followed by a second earlier this year.

A further two patrol boats are under construction by Austal in Western Australia.

NEW GAS GEAR ROLLOUT



Army recruits at Kapooka enter a gas-filled tent in an equipment-confidence test.

Army, Navy and RAAF recruits are being taught chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence (CBRND) basic courses with new equipment.

Major Arlo Meany, Land Combat Support Program, said teaching CBRND as a base skill ensured Australia was aligned with allies.

"All ADF members must understand how to survive in a CBRN-threat environment," he said.

The new CBRND equipment provides greater personnel protection, enhanced individual decontamination, and individual chemical and radiation detection capability.

Respirators are more user-friendly than older versions, which required users to hold their breath while changing canisters, but new low-burden masks are sealed as the canister is removed, so if the wearer takes a breath, it just sucks the mask tighter to the face.

The new equipment is in Australian Multicam pattern and comes with a decontamination mitt, large fibre wipe that absorbs chemicals, skin decontamination lotion and a liquid chemical-agent neutraliser.

The new-equipment rollout, under Project LAND 2110-1B, should be complete mid next year.

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An F/A-18F Super Hornet departs RAAF Base Darwin as a super Moon rises over the Northern Territory during Exercise Arnhem Thunder 21.

SUPER HORNET MOON



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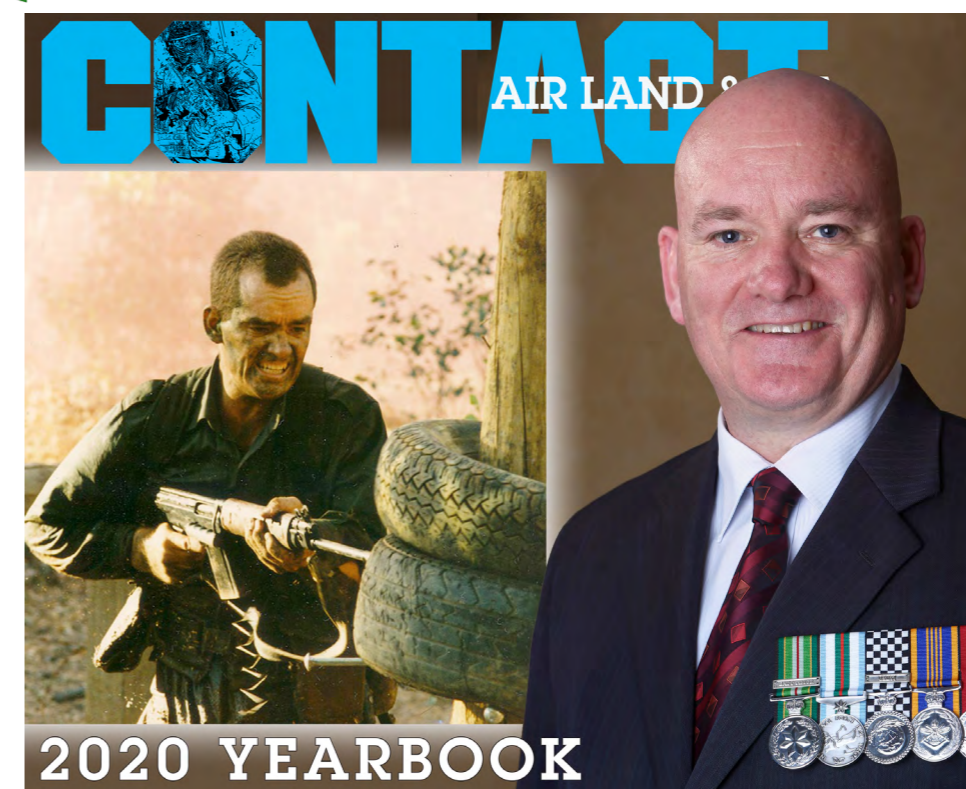


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Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery

Australian artillery marked its 150th anniversary on 1 August 2021 – a century-and-a-half of continuous service.

The formation of an Australian artillery capability 150 years ago marked an initial step in Australia becoming a sovereign nation, according to the Head of Regiment Brigadier Richard Vagg.

The first permanent Australian artillery unit was established on 1 August 1871, when the NSW colonial government raised and funded a permanent battery.

The history of Army's longest continuous-serving permanent unit, A Battery, can be traced to that original NSW battery.

Commemorative services were held around the country on 1 August to mark the 150th anniversary.

Brigadier Vagg told those gathered at Mount Pleasant in Canberra that the enduring story of Australian artillery began after 1870 when the last British forces left the colonies of Australia.

"This anniversary is therefore a special day for every Australian, not just for gunners, as 1871 marks the year from when Australia's colonial governments made a permanent commitment to their own self-defence – one of the hallmarks of sovereignty and nationhood," Brigadier Vagg said.

"Today, Australia's gunners continue to serve proudly across the nation."

A sequential national salute, which fired from locations around Australia, used a mix of M2A2 105mm and M777 155mm howitzers, with firing locations chosen as COVID-19 restrictions permitted.

While most of the planned firings, including a live fire at Mount Bunday Training Area in the NT, went ahead, firings at Brisbane's historic Fort Lytton and Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance were postponed until later in the year, when the full national salute of 150 rounds will be completed.

The first guns fired for the national salute were fired from Mount Pleasant, where more than 180 people gathered for the commemorative service, including current and former serving artillery members.

Speaking about the continued relevance of artillery on the battlefield, Brigadier Vagg said artillery remained a vital blend of the science and art of war.

"Today, the realm of the 21st century gunner extends

across multiple disciplines and domains.

"Ready now as always, the artillery's critical capabilities are essential to winning battles – including not just guns and mortars, but rockets, missiles, drones, radars and, most vitally, the provision of essential joint-fires coordination.

"Looking ahead, the future-ready RAA is unquestionably at the forefront of the Australian Army's modernisation program, with projects delivering new air-defence systems, self-propelled artillery, long-range rockets, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting systems, digital terminal control and new artillery ammunition."

Commemorations ended with a Last Post ceremony at the Australian War Memorial honouring the life of Corporal Frank Matt, a gunner who was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his actions at the Battle of Pozieres during WWI.

More events marking the anniversary have been planned, with a new Queen's Banner and Captain General's Sword to be presented, dependent on COVID-19 restrictions.



150 YEARS



*quo fas et
gloria ducunt*

*where right
and glory
lead*

LEFT: Soldiers from 8th/12th Regiment, RAA, conduct a fire mission at Bradshaw Field Training Area, NT, during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015. Photo by WO2 David Cleland.

RIGHT: Gunner Tyler Kirkpatrick, 101st Battery, 8th/12th Regiment, RAA, confirms the charge for a M777A2 howitzer during the Australia-wide 150th Anniversary Of Continuous Australian Artillery Forces gun salute at Mount Bunder Training Area, NT. Photo by Corporal Rodrigo Villablanca.

PREVIOUS PAGE: Soldiers from 8th/12th Regiment, RAA, conduct a fire mission at Bradshaw Field during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015 (US Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel Eric Dougherty firing the shot). Photo by WO2 David Cleland.



“The most heroic gallantry”

BY GRAHAM BROADHEAD

The family of a WWI gunner honoured at the Last Post ceremony held during the Australian artillery's 150th anniversary commemorations on 1 August was moved by the tribute.

Corporal Frank Matt was a Gallipoli veteran who was posthumously awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal for his actions at the Battle of Pozières in 1916.

Kate Jennings, from Canberra, is the great-grandniece of Corporal Matt and attended the ceremony at the Australian War Memorial with her husband and three children.

She described the service as a “significant event in our family”.

While she said it was disappointing her grandmother, Corporal Matt's niece Allison Mooney, couldn't attend the service in person because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, family members from around the country were able to watch a livestream of the event.

“To have my own children attend the ceremony was very meaningful – a new generation becoming aware of the sacrifice of those who went before to protect our freedom,” she said.

The family of Corporal Matt was accompanied by Defence Personnel and Veterans' Affairs Minister Andrew Gee, along with Chief of Army Lieutenant General Rick Burr, Deputy Chief of Army Major

General Anthony Rawlins and dozens of serving and former-serving RAA officers and soldiers.

While every Last Post ceremony is unique and special, this ceremony held particular significance to the RAA community, coinciding with the 150th anniversary of Australian artillery.

Brigadier Richard Vagg told the gathering Corporal Matt made the supreme sacrifice on the Western Front, serving with 1 Australian Division Trench Mortars.

“His dedication to duty remains an enduring example to all gunners, even now, more than 100 years later,” he said.

Frank Matt was born on 26 October 1893 at South Yarra in Melbourne and enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force shortly after the outbreak of war in August 1914.

He was posted as a batman to a senior officer in 2 Field Artillery Brigade's headquarters and left Australia on 20 October 1914 for Egypt, where the brigade trained before landing at Gallipoli on the afternoon of 25 April 1915.

After the evacuation from Gallipoli, Matt served with different artillery batteries before transferring to the newly formed trench mortar batteries in April 1916 where he was later promoted to corporal.

On the Western Front, Corporal Matt was unsuccessfully recommended for a Victoria Cross

after risking his life to defuse a bomb fired by his gun crew that landed within metres of their own position.

A few weeks after that incident, the trench mortar battery was moved to a position near the French village of Pozières.

On 23 July 1916, the Australian 1st Division captured the village despite strong German resistance.

Corporal Matt and his trench mortar crew, during an enemy counter attack on the night after the village was captured, went into no-mans-land to get a better shot at their allotted targets and maintained that position despite heavy fighting until all the crew members were killed and Corporal Matt was severely wounded. He was taken to 3 Casualty Clearing Station where he died.

Mrs Jennings said the story of Corporal Matt's service was legendary within the family.

“We all feel so proud of his sacrifice and service at such a young age and are proud to have him in our family lineage,” Mrs Jennings said.

She praised the efforts of those who organised the Last Post ceremony to honour Corporal Matt.



This 150th Anniversary Of Continuous Australian Artillery Forces commemorative spread was compiled by the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery and ARMY Newspaper and published in ARMY Newspaper dated 18 August 2021. Republished by CONTACT with thanks.

THE PERMANENT MILITARY FORCES OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

THE Parliament last session voted a sum of money for the establishment of a permanent Military Force in this colony; and arrangements have been made for the enlistment of the required number of men. Yesterday's *Government Gazette* contains the following proclamation, and notification of the appointment of officers to the force:—

"Proclamation by his Excellency the Right Honorable Somerset Richard, Earl of Belmore, a member of her Majesty's most honorable Privy Council in Ireland, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the colony of New South Wales and Vice-Admiral of the same.—Whereas by the 'Military and Naval Forces Regulation Act' it is enacted that it shall be lawful for the Governor, in the name and on behalf of her Majesty, to engage the services of, and maintain embodied upon the terms and conditions therein prescribed, such a number of men to serve in the Military and Naval Forces of New South Wales as the Parliament thereof shall from time to time authorize, and provide for: And whereas the Parliament has authorized and provided for the raising and maintenance of a Permanent Military Force, consisting of one Battery of Artillery and two Companies of Infantry under the said Act: And whereas it has been determined to raise and embody such Force: Now I, the said Somerset Richard, Earl of Belmore, the Governor aforesaid, do hereby by this my Proclamation, issued in the name of and on behalf of her Majesty, direct that the said Battery and Companies shall be raised and embodied, and that the services of the necessary officers and men so provided for as aforesaid shall be engaged, upon the terms and conditions of the said Act, mentioned: And I further direct that the said Battery of Artillery shall be called the 'New South Wales Artillery,' and the said Companies the 'New South Wales Infantry.' Given under my hand and seal, at Government House, Sydney, this first day of August, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-one, and in the thirty-fifth year of her Majesty's reign.

"By command,

"JOHN ROBERTSON.

"God save the Queen!"

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sydney, 1st August, 1871.

First shot in War

The Australian Artillery has made a significant impact throughout its 150 years. The first shot fired in the British Empire in WWI was from the Australian Coast Artillery at Fort Nepean, Portsea, writes Major (ret'd) Bernie Gaynor.

On 5 August 1914, the German freighter SS Pfalz tried to escape from Port Phillip Bay to the open sea, before WWI was declared.

Pfalz was built in 1913 and launched from the yard of Bremer Vulkan, Vessack, Germany and berthed at No 2, Victoria Dock, on 31 July 1914, during its maiden voyage under Captain Wilhelm Kuhlken on his first command.

War in Europe was declared on 4 August 1914, at 11pm London time, which was 9am on 5 August in Melbourne.

About 12.40pm, the Pfalz was under way and just short of Port Phillip Heads, having been released by RAN from inspection near Portsea. At that moment, news reached Fort Queenscliff that war had been declared in Europe.

Fort Queenscliff, the local coast artillery HQ controlling all the separate forts in the Point Nepean, Queenscliff and Swan Island vicinity, telephoned Fort Nepean and gave the order: "The SS Pfalz must be stopped".

An initial flag signal from Fort Nepean for the Pfalz to heave to was not seen or heeded – the Pfalz continued to steam towards the heads, which was now tantalisingly close from the perspective of the German captain.

Once the Coast Artillery gunners confirmed that the Pfalz was not heaving to in accordance with the Fort Nepean signal, the order was given to fire a shot across her bows to compel her surrender.

And so it was that, about 12.45pm on 5 August 1914, a 100lb 6-inch round, was fired from the right-hand 6-inch gun at Fort Nepean to stop the Pfalz.

The shot worked. After a brief struggle on the bridge between the German captain and Australian pilot – one Captain Robinson – Captain Kuhlken surrendered.

Future ready

With RAA at the forefront of Army's modernisation, the future looks set with game-changing capability, writes WO2 Max Bree.

While the RAA's M777 howitzers deliver deadly bombardments of indirect fire, their RBS 70 air-defence launchers search skyward, ready to launch missiles at enemy aircraft.

From the air, RAA's Shadow UAVs keep watch above the battlefield providing surveillance and targeting for a range of weapons, including RAA's own howitzers.

Back on the ground, reservists of the RAA keep alive their tradition of indirect fire, lobbing rounds with their 81mm mortar, as well as developing an organic small UAS capability.

It's a picture of the RAA set to be radically enhanced during coming decades.

While M777s will remain, they won't be RAA's only gun firing a 155mm shell.

Army will acquire a fleet of 30 AS9 Huntsman self-propelled howitzers, able to fire eight rounds per minute and capable of multi-round simultaneous-impact missions.

The heavily armoured AS9 can travel up to 60km/h and its ability to rapidly relocate between fire missions is set to rewrite RAA doctrine.

Short-range missiles of the RBS 70 should fall out of use within a decade, replaced by the National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System, which will fire medium-range AIM-120 missiles from purpose-built canisters or from atop Hawkei protected mobility vehicles, far outstripping the old system's capabilities.

The range of future indirect-fire systems should extend well beyond the howitzer, with acquisition of rocket or missile artillery capable of hitting targets beyond 500km.

It will be mobile and rapidly deployable while possibly opening new RAA employment categories in data communications and targeting.

RAA's UAVs should also be upgraded and enhanced with the ability to rapidly update sensor pods and other technologies.

Australian manufacture of 155mm rounds will be established and, in future, modernised rounds produced that are less vulnerable during storage and transport.

There will also be a focus on acquiring autonomous, precision-guided 155mm munitions.

Future 81mm mortar rounds should be also able to achieve similar effects of today's 120mm mortar rounds.

For the first time, Australian land power will possess the ability to reach into and influence the deep battlespace with persistence and potency.

Today, the unique gunner culture remains as important to the success of artillery in the support of land manoeuvre as it was 150 years ago.

The balance between technical and tactical excellence remains ever-present in the artillery of 2021.

The role of the gunner today and tomorrow remains one of cooperative human spirit – professionals devoted technically and tactically to their role, and operating as a highly interdependent team.

109 Battery, Alpha detachment, 4th Regiment, RAA, fire their M777 howitzer at Shoalwater Bay Training Area, Queensland, during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2021. Photo by Private Jacob Joseph.

Where right and glory lead

Many soldiers and officers have served the Australian artillery with distinction over the past 150 years. These profiles were compiled by the RAAHC with help from Major Darryl Kelly and WO2 Steven Wilson.

Gnr Charles Paynter

49 Bty, 13 Fd Arty Bde, Montbrehain, France

By 8 October 1918, with the seemingly impregnable Hindenburg Line now breached, the allied forces had the Germans on the run.

A farmer from Rupanyup, Victoria, Gunner Charlie Paynter, was posted to 49 Battery, 13 Field Artillery Brigade, as part of a forward observation party temporarily attached to the US 30th Infantry Division.

The Americans were advancing hard in the vicinity of the French village of Montbrehain.

To ensure vital field-telephone communications were maintained between the forward observer and the guns, Gunner Paynter was detailed to man a relay and transmitting station, which was little more than a hole in the ground, and subjected to the heaviest portion of the hostile artillery barrage from zero hour until the advance commenced.

In spite of the danger, Gunner Paynter crawled out time and again to repair broken communications lines.

As the forward troops advanced, Gunner Paynter had to run out longer lengths of line, even though he was subjected to enemy machine-gun fire from close range.

As the enemy started to withdraw, Gunner Paynter was able to rejoin his observation officer for the continued advance.

Encountering some dogged resistance, Gunner Paynter and the officer turned an abandoned German 4.2-inch howitzer around and used it to engage the enemy at a range of 1000 yards, inflicting casualties.

Gunner Paynter was largely responsible for the successful manner in which his forward observation officer carried out his duties.

He was awarded the Military Medal for "his excellent conduct and devotion to duty".

Bdr Lindsay Barrett

101 Howitzer Bty, 1 Fd Arty Bde, Ypres, Belgium

After his enlistment on 11 January 1916, South Australian Lindsay Barrett, 21, was allocated to the 13th Reinforcements of 3rd Light Horse Regiment.

Arriving in the staging camps of Egypt, Barrett found himself in stirring times – the AIF was growing enormously after its withdrawal from Gallipoli and new units were being formed for action on the battlefields of France and Belgium.

Artillery appealed to the young soldier and, after further training in England, was posted to the newly raised 101st Howitzer Battery, which was part of 1st

Field Artillery Brigade.

In October 1917, 101 Howitzer Battery was in action along the infamous Anzac Ridge, near Ypres, Belgium, and Bombardier Barrett took over as 2IC of No 5 Gun.

On the morning of 26 October, the battery was firing in support of attacking allied infantry and enemy counter-battery fire was heavy – but the Australian gunners stuck determinedly to the task.

Suddenly, an enemy round exploded between No 5 and 6 guns, killing or wounding both detachments, except for Bombardier Barrett, who was generally unscathed.

Realising the loss of firepower from the two guns would cause a serious gap in the barrage line, Bombardier Barrett took on the task to lay, load and fire his gun singlehanded.

For the next 10 to 15 minutes and under heavy fire, he did the work of an entire detachment and his efforts kept the effects of the rolling barrage generally intact at the target end.

As new information was relayed to the remaining guns to cover the gap of fire, Bombardier Barrett was ordered to tend to his wounded mates.

For his actions that day, Bombardier Barrett was recommended for a VC, though the citation was downgraded to the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

He later served in the Militia in WWII.

Bdr Edward Courtney

2/3 Light Anti-Aircraft Regt, Tobruk, Libya

As the Italian garrisons fell to the Commonwealth forces in the early stages of the desert campaign of WWII, so did large quantities of arms, ammunition and equipment.

While some equipment was of dubious quality, it was still functional and lethal in the right hands.

Bombardier Edward Courtney was one of the famous 'Rats of Tobruk' and, as a gunner, was assigned to a captured 20mm Breda anti-aircraft gun, located to defend the vital port facilities.

It was Anzac Day 1941 when 40 enemy aircraft attacked.

As the Australian gunners were returning fire, the Breda gun manned by Bombardier Courtney and his detachment had a severe stoppage.

The detachment was ordered to take cover, but Bombardier Courtney remained at his post.

Despite heavy machine-gun fire and nearby bomb blasts impacting the gun pit, he was able to clear the stoppage and effectively re-engage the enemy aircraft.



A 5th Aviation Regiment CH-47F Chinook prepares to uplift an 8th/12th Regiment, RAA, M777A2 howitzer during Exercise Hamel 2016 at Cultana Training Area, South Australia. Photo by Corporal Nunu Campos.

On 7 May, the gunners were tasked with providing anti-aircraft protection to a troop of 60-pounder guns.

While being attacked by enemy dive bombers and escorting fighters, the Breda gun manned by Bombardier Courtney jammed once again.

Even though enemy aircraft strafed the position and rounds peppered Bombardier Courtney's gun pit, he continued to work on clearing the stoppage and bringing the gun back into action, and recommenced firing.

For his actions he was awarded the Military Medal for "bravery and devotion to duty in an anti-aircraft detachment while under heavy dive bombing and machine-gun fire".

Bombardier Courtney went on to fight at El Alamein, and in New Guinea and, at war's end, returned home to his family.

Sir Arthur Roden Cutler VC

2/5 Fd Regt, Merdjayoun, Syria

Sir Arthur Roden Cutler VC remains one of the most distinguished Australian gunners.

In May 1940, he transferred from the citizen's militia to 2 AIF, commissioning into 2nd/5th Field Regiment, RAA, Australian 7th Division.

In 1941, he served in the Syria-Lebanon campaign, fighting against Vichy French forces, including the tough, experienced French Foreign Legion units.

During the period 19 June to 6 July, in the Merdjayoun-Damour area of Syria, Lieutenant Cutler's regiment was involved in the Battle of Merdjayoun.

Lieutenant Cutler's exploits over two weeks included repairing a vital field-telephone line under heavy fire, repulsing enemy tank attacks with an anti-tank rifle, setting up an outpost to bring artillery

fire onto a road used by the enemy, and employing a 25-pounder field gun to demolish an anti-tank gun and post that was threatening the Australian advance.

Later, during the Battle of Damour, Lieutenant Cutler was seriously wounded. When rescued 26 hours later, his leg had to be amputated.

Lieutenant Cutler received the VC for his actions in the Merdjayoun-Damour area, and was medically discharged in 1942.

An extract from Lieutenant Cutler's VC citation reads: "For most conspicuous and sustained gallantry during the Syrian Campaign and for outstanding bravery during the bitter fighting at Merdjayoun when this artillery officer became a byword amongst the forward troops with whom he worked ... throughout the campaign, this officer's courage was unparalleled, and his work was a big factor in the recapture of Merdjayoun".

After the war, he served in diplomatic roles and was the longest-serving Governor of NSW, and knighted by the Queen in 1965.

Gnr Wilbert Hudson

2 Australian Heavy Anti-Aircraft Bty, Darwin

Wilbert Hudson was born on 17 December 1920, resided with his family in the Merrylands/Greystanes area of western Sydney and, after leaving school, was employed as a textile worker.

With the onset of WWII, he enlisted in the Militia Forces on 5 April 1940.

Posted to 2 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery, Gunner Hudson was deployed with his unit to Darwin in November 1941, as part of the town's defences.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Darwin took on an urgent war footing and prepared for possible attack.

Based at Berrimah, Gunner Hudson was showering when the first air raid sirens sounded just before 10am on 19 February 1942. With the drone of enemy aircraft increasing, Gunner Hudson ran to man his 'battle station' in nothing more than his helmet, boots and a towel around his waist.

With the angle of approach by the attacking aircraft, Gunner Hudson and his number 2 could not get an accurate bead to effectively engage the planes with their Lewis light-machine gun.

The team immediately redeployed into an open paddock and, with the gun supported on the shoulder of his mate, Gunner Hudson began firing.

As an enemy Zero bore in on the pair, they stood their ground and poured a steady stream of fire into the fighter, sending it spiralling off in flames.

During the action, Gunner Hudson realised he had lost his towel – and his modesty.

For his courage and determination that day, Gunner Hudson was awarded the Military Medal.

His citation stated – "he handled his Lewis gun with great skill and tenacity".

LBdr Frederick Wombey

14 Australian Heavy Anti-Aircraft Bty, Darwin

Fred Wombey was a keen young Digger eager to do his bit. Enlisting in the Militia in April 1941 when he was 19, he was allocated to the RAA as an anti-aircraft gun number.



Craving action, he volunteered for service in Darwin where he arrived in August, to join the 14 Australian Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery.

In lieu of action, Wombey initially had to settle for drill, flies, humidity, hard work and boredom. But this was about to change. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor and Japan's entry into the war, Darwin became part of Australia's front line.

During enemy air raids on Darwin, a prime target for the attacking force was the Navy's vital oil-storage tanks, and among the elements charged with the oil tanks' inner defences was Lance Bombardier Wombey and his anti-aircraft detachment.

As the air-raid sirens wailed, Lance Bombardier Wombey took post on his light machine gun and could see the formation of enemy dive bombers and escorting fighters peel off and head straight for his position and the adjacent tanks. Fighters screamed in and peppered the area around Lance Bombardier Wombey.

As the next wave came in, fire from the air was so intense that Lance Bombardier Wombey ordered his men to take cover, but stood his ground to return a continuous stream of fire, forcing the planes to break off from the attack.

Reloading, he readied himself for the next attack. The Zeros tore in, intent on silencing the inner air defences before unleashing the dive bombers.

This time, Lance Bombardier Wombey waited until the attacking plane was close enough to be an ideal target, then opened up with everything he had, again forcing the Japanese planes to abort.

For his actions that day, Lance Bombardier Wombey was awarded one of only two Military Medals to be awarded for action on Australian soil.

Lance Bombardier Wombey later transferred to the AIF and went on to survive the war.

Lt John Pearson

2/4 Fd Regt, Nadzab, New Guinea

It was an undoubted 'first' for the RAA – executing a combat parachute insertion of guns, 192 rounds of ammunition and detachments into battle.

The action was to centre on Nadzab airfield in New Guinea, in an effort to take enemy pressure off the amphibious landing at Lae.

2nd/4th Field Regiment volunteered two of its eight new, just-delivered 25-pounder short guns, to be broken down and parachuted in, accompanied by a contingent of four officers and 30 other ranks, under the command of Lieutenant John Pearson.

A number of the contingent had undertaken some rudimentary training, but for some, their first jump would be this operational sortie.

Inspections on the guns found serious flaws and six were cannibalised to build two complete guns fit for the task. These were proofed by firing 20 rounds, with one of the guns failing the test and requiring significant work to make it serviceable for the coming task.

A thousand things would have been going through Lieutenant Pearson's mind in the preparation phase, leading the readying of a task never performed before.

Once in the air though, his mind would need to be clearly focused on the mission, his men, the precious guns and the follow-up ammunition drop.

All too quickly came the orders that had him standing in the doorway of the aircraft – and then the trepidation of the tap on the shoulder, and that first step into history.

Once on the ground, Lieutenant Pearson assembled his men running in from all points. Miraculously, only one man was injured, with a broken collarbone.

Together, the gunners searched for the gun parts in the high kunai grass and laboured until they had found one complete set of components.

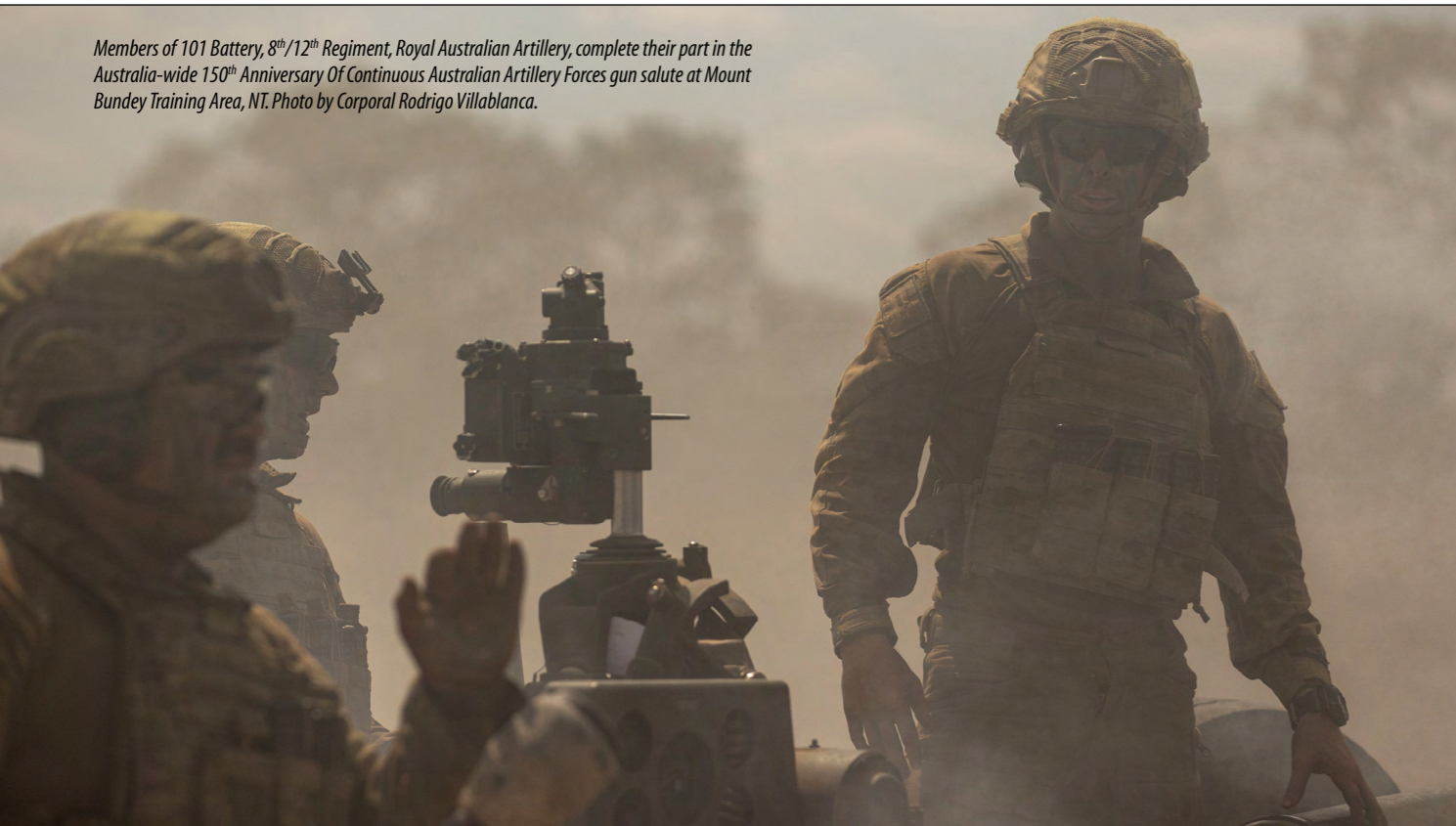
The gun was quickly assembled and made ready to fire – but never called on to defend the new airhead.

Lieutenant Pearson later served with distinction at Shaggy Ridge, earning a Military Cross when he and his party managed the most complex fire plan yet experienced in New Guinea. The party moved with the lead infantry element, through enemy rifle and mountain-gun fire and maintained continuous and 'dangerously close' fire on the enemy.

A month before the end of WWII, Lieutenant Pearson was killed in action at Balikpapan, Borneo, again operating with the leading infantry teams.



Members of 101 Battery, 8th/12th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, complete their part in the Australia-wide 150th Anniversary Of Continuous Australian Artillery Forces gun salute at Mount Bunday Training Area, NT. Photo by Corporal Rodrigo Villablanca.



Sgt Kelvin Ivor Palmer

2/5 Fd Regt, Balikpapan, Borneo

Kelvin Palmer enlisted in the AIF on 23 May 1940, as part of 2nd/5th Field Regiment.

He acquitted himself well in and out of action for the next five years, seeing action in Syria and New Guinea.

In July 1945, Australia's 7th Division, which included the 2nd/5th Field Regiment, was tasked with an amphibious assault on the oil-rich area of Balikpapan in Borneo – the last Allied littoral assaults conducted in WWII – and a contentious manoeuvre which historians to this day argue if they were at all necessary.

Regardless, on 5 July 1945, Sergeant Palmer and his detachment were chosen for a key mission.

The gunners deployed forward to just short of a selected position near the vital Manggar Airfield.

Their task was to neutralise two enemy 155mm gun emplacements dominating the higher ground, which, over the previous two days of concentrated fire, were preventing Australian troops from assaulting and capturing the airfield.

An Australian 6-pounder anti-tank gun had tried before dusk, but lacked the weight of fire to silence the 155s.

Laying up just short of the 6-pounder gun platform, the detachment settled in for the night. Just before dawn, Sergeant Palmer ensured every available man was on hand to manhandle the gun quickly into position.

In the emerging light, Sergeant Palmer targeted the first enemy gun over open sights and the first of a number of rounds was on its way.

Sergeant Palmer calmly switched his fire between the two targets and, even when enemy fire was returned, wounding several members of the detachment, the Australians stuck grimly to the task, continuing to fire until both enemy guns were neutralised.

Only then could the infantry press forward an attack and successfully occupy the airfield.

For his actions, leadership and disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Palmer was awarded the Military Medal.

Sgt Douglas Russell

2/3 Fd Regt, Klidi Pass, Greece

After fighting in the western desert in 1939, Sergeant Douglas Russell deployed to Greece and was part of the first Australian regiment to engage the onslaught of the German invasion.

Ordered to stage a staggered withdrawal, members of 2nd/3rd Field Regiment made their way south.

On 12 April 1941, the regiment was deployed near Klidi Pass and, although initially holding the enemy at bay, the Australians were forced to withdraw to a more defensible position when the enemy broke through at 1pm.

Sergeant Russell and his detachment was chosen to remain behind with a 25-pounder gun and buy time for the remaining nine guns to be withdrawn.

With his delaying mission complete, Sergeant Russell took out an enemy observation post with a couple of well-aimed rounds, before withdrawing.

With Greece lost and, forced to destroy their equipment, members of 2nd/3rd Field Regiment evacuated to nearby Crete having fired more than 65,000 rounds in just over three weeks.

Now armed with captured Italian guns, the Allies prepared to repel German attempts to capture Crete, but were again forced to evacuate, with a number of the regiment falling into enemy hands as POWs.

Others, including Sergeant Russell, made it back to Egypt and began to reorganise, rearm, reinforce and continue the fight in north Africa and later the Pacific.

Sergeant Russell was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal, "for great coolness and control at Klidi Pass". He survived the war and was discharged in October 1945.

Lt Rex Blow

2/10 Fd Regt/Z Force, Sandakan, Borneo

Rex Blow was never born to be a prisoner. Highly intelligent, a powerful swimmer and athlete, coupled with a tough physique and a zest for danger, he was the perfect figure of a young and competent gunnery officer.

A member of 2nd/10th Field Regiment, Lieutenant Blow had served admirably in the fight down the Malay Peninsula in the face of the Japanese advance and was one of many thousands of Allied soldiers made POWs, when forced to surrender at the fall of Singapore.

Originally imprisoned in Changi, Lieutenant Blow was like a caged animal. Eager to escape and rejoin the fight, he volunteered to be part of the POW draft relocated to Sandakan, Borneo.

To aid in his eventual escape, Lieutenant Blow had concealed parts of a radio, a .38 calibre revolver, ammunition and a map in his personal effects.

Biding his time in the infamous Sandakan prison camp, Lieutenant Blow made a run for freedom with a group of other escapees. Instead of heading south towards Australia as expected, they instead headed north to the southern islands of the Philippines.

Marrying up with local guerrilla forces, Lieutenant Blow and his mates were handed over to the local senior officer, Colonel Suarez, commander of the US 125th Infantry Regiment.

The escapees were seconded to remain with the guerrillas and help train the growing force of irregular recruits. Lieutenant Blow and a fellow trusted Digger, Jock McLaren, led separate small bands of guerrillas attacking superior numbers of Japanese with great success. Both were integrated into Australia's famous 'Z Force'.

Later in the war, Lieutenant Blow was tasked with conducting a close reconnaissance on the camp from which he had escaped – Sandakan. It was hoped a rescue mission could be planned to save the remaining prisoners.

Lieutenant Blow's incredible deeds were almost beyond belief. His Distinguished Service Order citation summed him up perfectly – "the most outstanding guerilla commander of the Pacific War".

He was also awarded a US Silver Star.

LBdr Peter Maher

12 Fd Regt, Vietnam

Lance Bombardier Peter Maher and his signaller, Gunner Bayne Kelly, were attached to 5 Platoon, B

Company, 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR), during Operation Overlord, north of Phuoc Tuy Province, Vietnam, in 1971.

At 5pm on 6 June, 5 Platoon contacted a large bunker complex and withdrew to allow artillery to engage.

Despite Lance Bombardier Maher coordinating two fire plans that night, the NVA/VC gamely probed the platoon on three occasions.

There was a preliminary bombardment at first light on 7 June before the understrength 5 Platoon's assault on the bunker complex.

The infantry soon came under heavy fire and took serious casualties.

Lance Bombardier Maher engaged the bunkers again with fire 'very close' to 5 Platoon from A Field Battery and 104 Field Battery, as well as US 155mm medium guns.

Later that morning, the remainder of B Company closed up to reinforce 5 Platoon.

The company forward observer relieved Lance Bombardier Maher but was mortally wounded soon after, so Lance Bombardier Maher again found himself coordinating artillery as close as 100m, pausing to allow RAAF Bushmaster and US Cobra gunship strikes.

A RAAF Iroquois resupply helicopter laden with 20,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, was shot down and burst into flames 30m to their rear.

Gunner Kelly had been moving wounded under fire to the landing zone and rushed to the crash site, rescuing wounded from the chopper. For this, he would receive the US Army Commendation Medal for Valour, more than 20 years later.

D Company and Centurion tanks from 1st Armoured Regiment joined the fray that afternoon and swept through the bunker complex. Forty-seven bunkers were uncovered.

Three Australians were killed in action and 12 wounded, while enemy casualties were difficult to determine because of the destruction to the bunkers, but the toll was thought to be heavy.

Lance Bombardier Maher was awarded the Military Medal for his steadfast coordination of sustained and accurate indirect fire and gunship support over 24 hours.

Bdr David Robertson

MRTF2, Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan

Bombardier David Robertson deployed to Afghanistan in October 2010 as part of Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force 2.

Deploying from Patrol Base Qareb, he accompanied a patrol consisting of 15 5RAR members and 20 Afghan National Army soldiers to the village of Moruch. While there, the patrol planned to interact with locals and search for caches. In support was an Australian infantry section, a mortar section and an ASLAV.

"The closer we got to the village, the more sigint (signals intelligence) reports we had of insurgents watching us and preparing for an attack," Bombardier Robertson said.



Not long after engaging with the locals and searching the village, Australian snipers engaged a number of insurgents who could be seen carrying PKM machine guns in the next village. This engagement triggered effective small-arms fire from high ground overlooking the Australians.

Bombardier Robertson, his signaller Gunner Aaron Costa, two snipers and a MAG-58 machine-gun crew pushed onto nearby high ground that was exposed to insurgent fire, with little cover available, and moving to a small cliff face only exposed them to fire from another direction.

Undaunted, Bombardier Robertson called in a mortar-fire mission; and after one correction and "three rounds fire for effect", the elevated insurgent position was silenced.

He then turned his attention to the other insurgent machine gun, opening at three rounds fire for effect, using airburst proximity high-explosive rounds. Both insurgent locations were neutralised within 20 minutes of the first engagement.

The infantry commander ordered the patrol forward to engage the origin of the original engagement at the next village.

Remaining in location, Bombardier Robertson called in another fire mission to suppress the RPK machine-guns on the nearby high ground, while the patrol searched the village for insurgents and weapons.

This suppression continued until sundown when the patrol moved back to the patrol base.

Although Bombardier Robertson said he feared for his safety during the patrol, he was more concerned about his mates.

"When the time came, everyone else was relying on me to do my job and I really didn't want to let anyone down," he said.

He was awarded a Medal for Gallantry.

Sgt Simon Hastings

Operation Herrick, Helmand Province, Afghanistan

From 2008 to 2011, RAA contributed successive contingents of 15 gunners to British Royal Artillery regiments over six rotations, into Afghanistan.

Sergeant Simon Hastings deployed as part of 4th Field Regiment's first contribution – known as Wallaby Troop.

Embedding with the British 8 (Alma) Battery, 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery, the Australians initially trained in Britain before deploying to Helmand Province. Some members, including Sergeant Hastings were located at Forward Operating Base Edinburgh.

In January 2009, after a difficult reconnaissance, on which two British gunners were seriously wounded by an improvised explosive device, the battery established a direct-fire single-gun position at the nearby Roshan Tower, a small clearing atop a feature commanding the Musa Qaleh district.

Under cover of darkness, the gunners and an accompanying platoon from the Royal Gurkha Rifles manhandled a 1.8-ton 105mm British light gun (identical to the Australian Hamel) to the top of the steep-sided feature, where it was concealed when not in action.

Many of the Australian gunners rotated through this isolated location for up to a month at a time, with Sergeant Hastings the first detachment commander of a mixed Australian/British detachment.

Used in its direct-fire role, the gun provided devastating, accurate fire out to 3000m, dominating the valley below.

Freed from the constraints of seeking clear air, Sergeant Hastings accrued a significant record of targets that were suppressed or destroyed.

Even so, it wasn't all one-way traffic – the Taliban managed to sporadically attack the tiny outpost with machine-gun fire.

Despite the enemy's best attempts, targets that had withstood attack by mortars, 105mm HE, Apache Hellfire missiles and aerial bombs were now dealt with effectively by the gun's direct fire into windows and doorways.

The moniker 'dragon gun' was created by the Taliban on its receiving end, and its fearsome reputation passed into local folklore – for a time.

Sergeant Simon Hastings mentoring Afghan artillerymen in 2012.
Photo by Corporal Raymond Vance.



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LAND 400 Phase 3

The two contender vehicles for Australia's soon-to-be-selected infantry fighting vehicle (IFV) under Project LAND 400 Phase 3 conducted a firepower demonstration at Puckapunyal Military Area in June, showcasing their next-level protection, firepower and mobility.





BELOW: Soldiers from 7RAR dismount from a Rheinmetall Lynx KF4 (left) and Hanwha Redback (right), during user evaluation trials at Puckapunyal, Victoria. Photo by Corporal Sagi Biderman.

ABOVE: Hanwha Redback (left) and Rheinmetall Lynx KF4 (right). Photos by Corporal Sagi Biderman.





Rheinmetall Defence Australia's KF-41 Lynx and Hanwha Defense Australia's Redback have been facing off in extensive user-evaluation field trials.

Both companies have delivered three prototype vehicles, which are being tested over the course of this year as part of a two-year risk mitigation activity.

Land 400 trials-platoon commander Major Joel Sloane said the vehicles were being tested and evaluated in all weather and in varying terrain to ensure they were fit-for-purpose.

"Our trials have involved literally blowing the vehicles up in order to test how they can withstand a range of firepower and threats," Major Sloane said.

"We have been testing the Redback and Lynx through a range of tactical scenarios in the field that will be realistic to how they will be employed in the future."

At the firepower demonstration, both vehicles fired their 30mm main cannon, and co-axial and remote-weapon-station 7.62mm MAG 58 machine guns, engaging targets at ranges from 300m to more than 2000m.

Head of Armoured Vehicle Division in Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group Major General David Coghlan said with their next generation protection suite, 30mm cannon, anti-tank guided missiles, and the ability to engage helicopters and drones, both vehicles offered capabilities never before seen in the Australian Army.

"These vehicles will provide increased firepower, mobility and, most importantly, protection for our infantry soldiers," he said.

"We are rapidly approaching the end of the risk-mitigation activity and submission of the short-listed tenderers' final offers. We will then undertake a final evaluation to identify the preferred tenderer.

"The live-fire shoot showcased the extensive testing and evaluation process we are undertaking to provide confidence that these new vehicles are fit for service."

Each vehicle has a crew of three and can carry six fully armed infantry soldiers into battle.

The vehicles are designed to fight alongside the nation's current and future tank fleet, with commensurate mobility.

Major Sloane said the Australian Army had been using the current M113 armoured personnel carriers since the mid 1960s and they had served Army extremely well for many decades.

"But, to be here at the start for what is going to be a vehicle that supports us for multiple generations is something that I am proud to be part of," he said.

"The best thing about the infantry fighting vehicle is it will allow the infantry corps to contribute more to joint land combat.

"The capabilities and systems on these new vehicles allows the infantry to fight *with* the vehicle, not just *from* the vehicle.

"It allows us to move further in the battle space, under armour, with full situational awareness."

Individual vehicle craft, tactical manoeuvres, advances and attacks on objectives are just some of the activities the project is testing these vehicles in.

Both companies, should they be successful, have committed to building the majority of vehicles in Australia, with substantial investment in Australian industry capability, supporting Australian jobs, talent and technology.

Valued at between \$18.1 billion and \$27.1 billion, Land 400 Phase 3 is the largest acquisition project in the Australian Army's history.

A decision on the preferred tenderer will be presented to government for consideration sometime next year.

Soldiers from 7RAR stand with a Hanwha Redback (left) and Rheinmetall Lynx KF4 (right), during user evaluation trials at Puckapunyal, Victoria. Photo by Sergeant Jake Sims.



BIG BANG

AFTER WEEKS IN THE CLASSROOM FINGERS ON TRIGGERS

Story by Captain Jesse Robilliard.

Photos by Leading Aircraftman John Solomon and Private Jacob Hilton



THEORY

The 'gun-car' variant of the Australian Army's Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicles (CRV) has been fired for the first time in Australia by soldiers who will man it in the field.

The accuracy and lethality of the Boxer impressed the soldiers from 2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment (Queensland Mounted Infantry) on their turret conversion course.

After several weeks of theory, the soldiers travelled to the Wide Bay Training Area in late June for the live-fire component of the conversion course, where they fired the main 30mm armament of the Boxer.

Lieutenant Stefano Rankin was on the course to convert from the Australian Light Armoured Vehicle (ASLAV) to the Boxer CRV and said he was immediately impressed with the turret.

"To fire the turret, it's quite different to what we are used to. It's very digitised, as opposed to the ASLAV," Lieutenant Rankin said.

"The fire-control system on the Boxer is much more advanced than the ASLAV – it's a more modern vehicle and a very capable piece of equipment.

"I managed to hit targets in excess of 2500m."

Boxer CRV will replace the ASLAV, the current Army reconnaissance platform, which has been in service since the 1990s.

Lieutenant Rankin said the advanced sights on the Boxer CRV sped up target identification and engagement.

"The most impressive part of the Boxer is the accuracy of the weapon system.

"From the start – from zeroing straight through to engaging targets – you are almost guaranteed a first-round hit," he said.

"It's a significant advantage over the ASLAVs.

"The accuracy of the weapon system is phenomenal compared to the ASLAV, and you are just able to see targets more clearly through the advanced sighting system."

Trooper Brett Ward said firing the main 30mm armament after several weeks of theory with the new turret was exhilarating.

"It was extremely satisfying firing it after being in the classroom for weeks, so to get out here and live-fire it, to get rounds on targets, mostly first time, it's extremely impressive," he said.

"Just the incredible accuracy, even from the zeroing of the weapon, getting first-round hits with pinpoint accuracy, compared to the ASLAV, was really impressive."

The bulk of the live-fire event was conducted from a static position at the Wide Bay Training Area.

However, Lieutenant Rankin said he believed firing on the move won't be an issue with the Boxer.

"The stabilisation system on the Boxer is very advanced," he said.

"It has technology that calculates the movement of the vehicle in relation to the target as well as the movement of the target in relation to the vehicle.

"This enables us to get first-round hits almost all the time, even when on a battle run."

The Boxer CRV is due to achieve initial operational capability in the second quarter of next year.

30mm 2500m

First round hits with pinpoint accuracy



Soldiers from the 2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment (Queensland Mounted Infantry) fire the main 30mm armament of the Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicle at Wide Bay Training Area, Queensland, during their turret conversion course.



A soldiers from the 2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment (Queensland Mounted Infantry) inspects the main 30mm armament on his Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicle.

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EVACUATION OF KABUL

Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

Famous words – but no one in power ever seems to learn.

Aside from any justifications or right/wrong arguments/predjudices, the fact remains that the NATO Coalition is just the latest (and likely not the last) occupying force to tackle Afghanistan and leave in ignominy.

At the 'end' of Australia's other recent war, there was a protracted soldier, veteran, public and media outcry to issue visas to interpreters who worked with Australian troops in theatre.

After much debate and pushback, the government of the day gave in and resettled thousands of Iraqis in Australia.

Defence Minister of the day Joel Fitzgibbon conceded Australia had a moral obligation to help the Iraqis.

"Interpreters and translators played a very significant role in assisting us, and we do feel we have a moral obligation to them," Minister Fitzgibbon said.

"We don't want to see the mistakes that were made in the past and we're determined that they'll be taken care of."

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said he did not want a repeat of the Vietnam War, when the Whitlam Government was accused of ignoring the needs of those who helped Australian soldiers.

You might be forgiven for expecting the Liberal government of today would do the opposite to Labor – but, the then Liberal Opposition immigration spokesman Chris Ellison backed the Labor government saying "if someone stands by our Australian troops in need we look after them – we don't leave them high and dry".

With that in mind, move forward to 2021 and the current government don't seem to have learnt from

the past – ignoring, blocking or just plain red-taping the inevitable and totally predictable repetitive chorus of support for Afghan interpreter visas.

Even as the Taliban occupied our main base, in Tarin Kot, and rushed headlong towards the capital, the Australian government spruiked about the capabilities and steadfastness of the Afghan army and government.

It wasn't until after the Afghanistan president deserted his country, the Taliban gave a press conference from the presidential palace and the capital descended into lethal anarchy did our government reluctantly launch a 'rescue mission'.





CONTACT ALWAYS HAS AND ALWAYS WILL SUPPORT, ADMIRE AND PRAISE THE WORK OF FRONT-LINE ADF PEOPLE DOING A PROFESSIONAL JOB, IN FAR-FLUNG PLACES, CONSTRAINED BY RULES OF ENGAGEMENT WRITTEN BEHIND A DESK IN CANBERRA

Even then, our soldiers and aviators seemed initially hamstrung by red tape and paperwork.

A day after a US Air Force C-17 took a record-for-the-type 823 people out of harms way, a RAAF C-130 extracted just 26.

It seems the Australian aircraft was only authorised to take onboard Australians and Australian visa holders who were at the airport – and those with the right paperwork weren't at the airport because they didn't know the flight was coming – and the flight didn't tell anyone they were coming 'for operational security reasons' [and while this diabolical catch 22 is editorial speculation, it is plausible nonetheless].

A subsequent Australian C-17 flight departed with just 40 evacuees, on the same aircraft type that squished 823 on board days earlier.

These Australian rescue flights are undoubtedly being conducted to the highest professional standards – within their rules of engagement – and the US flight was a completely illegal but heroic on-the-spot decision by that flight crew.

But the contrasting optics did not look good and are surely hard to justify, especially in light of the fact that while other countries removed Australian paper holders from Kabul, Australia did not report

returning the favour – though the Kiwis did report a handful of theirs got out on RAAF flights.

In the end, Australia extracted some 4100 people on 30 flights – with just five Afghans on the last Herc out.

To be crystal clear in this – CONTACT's finger pointing is squarely at the Australian government and bureaucrats dictating the rules of engagement – and not at the brave men and women of the Australian Defence Force flying into a foreign city beyond the brink of collapse.

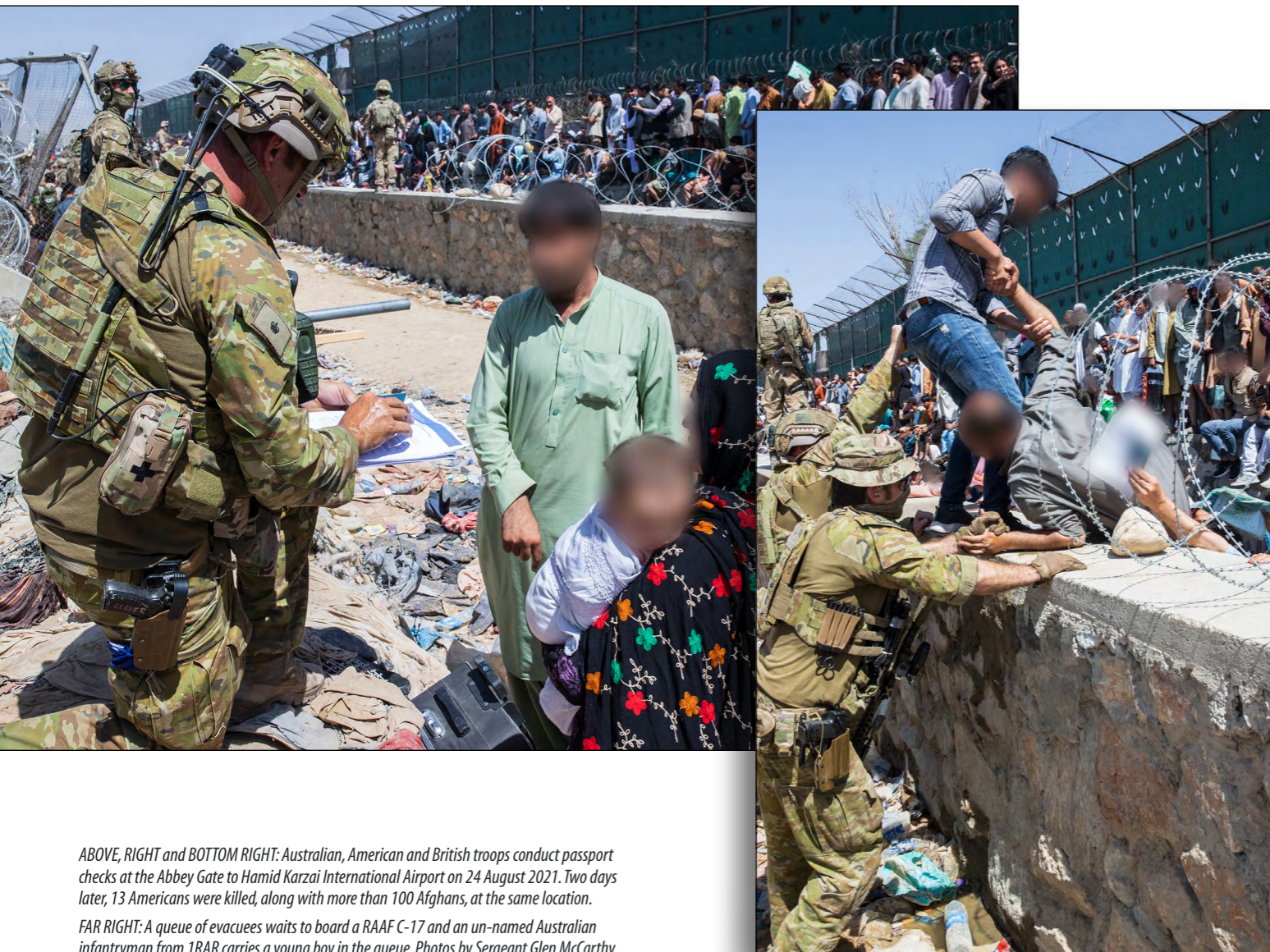
CONTACT always has and always will support, admire and praise the work of the ADF throughout the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns – we visited them in theatre four times to see for ourselves.

We know in our hearts that, at the tactical level, Australian military personnel did a magnificent job over there for 20 years – sometimes well above and beyond what was asked or expected – some giving their very lives to the mission.

But we also know in our heart, at the strategic level, Australia was over there for one reason and one reason only – to wave our flag alongside our biggest ally, because they asked us to.

On that count, Australia absolutely achieved its strategic aim also.





ABOVE, RIGHT and BOTTOM RIGHT: Australian, American and British troops conduct passport checks at the Abbey Gate to Hamid Karzai International Airport on 24 August 2021. Two days later, 13 Americans were killed, along with more than 100 Afghans, at the same location.

FAR RIGHT: A queue of evacuees waits to board a RAAF C-17 and an un-named Australian infantryman from 1RAR carries a young boy in the queue. Photos by Sergeant Glen McCarthy.



But our biggest ally left the job half done at best – worse than when they started, most will say – with the distinct possibility they or someone else will have to have another crack at it, for everyone’s sake.

America’s longest war looks like failure – and that’s not just CONTACT’s opinion.

The following is a speech to the British House of Commons on 18 August, delivered most passionately by MP and Afghanistan war veteran Tom Tugendhat.

“Like many veterans, this last week has seen me struggle through anger, grief and rage

— through the feeling of abandonment of not just a country, but the sacrifice that my friends made. I have been to funerals from Poole to Dunblane. I have watched good men go into the earth, taking with them a part of me and a part of all of us. This

week has torn open some of those wounds, has left them raw and left us all hurting.

And I know it is not just soldiers; I know aid workers and diplomats who feel the same. I know journalists who have been witnesses to our country in its heroic effort to save people from the most horrific fates. I know that we have all been struggling. If this [parliamentary] recall has done one thing, it has achieved one thing already. I have spoken to the Health Secretary, who has already made a commitment to do more for veterans’ mental health.

[Hon. Members: “Hear, hear.”]

This is not just about us. The mission in Afghanistan was not a British mission — it was a NATO mission. It was a recognition that globalisation has changed us all. The phone calls that I am still receiving, the text messages that I have been answering as I have been waiting, putting people in touch with

our people in Afghanistan, remind us that we are connected still today, and Afghanistan is not a far country about which we know little. It is part of the main. That connection links us also to our European partners, to our European neighbours and to our international friends.

So it is with great sadness that I now criticise one of them, because I was never prouder than when I was decorated by the 82nd Airborne after the capture of Musa Qala. It was a huge privilege to be recognised by such an extraordinary unit in combat. To see their commander-in-chief call into question the courage of men I fought with, to claim that they ran, is shameful. Those who have never fought for the colours they fly should be careful about criticising those who have.

[Hon. Members: “Hear, hear.”]

What we have done in these last few days is demonstrate that it is not armies that win wars.

Armies can get tactical victories and operational victories that can hold the line; they can just about make room for peace — make room for people like us to talk, to compromise, to listen.

It is nations that make war; nations endure; nations mobilise and muster; nations determine and have patience. Here we have demonstrated, sadly, that we — the west — the United Kingdom — do not.

This is a harsh lesson for all of us, and if we are not careful, it could be a very, very difficult lesson for our allies. But it does not need to be. We can set out a vision, clearly articulated, for reinvigorating our European NATO partners, to make sure that we are not dependent on a single ally — on the decision of a single leader — but that we can work together, with Japan and Australia, with France and Germany, with partners large and small — and make sure that we hold the line together.



Because we know that patience wins. We know it because we have achieved it; we know it because we have delivered it. The cold war was won with patience; Cyprus is at peace, with patience; South Korea – with more than 10 times the number of troops that America had in Afghanistan – is prosperous through patience.

So let us stop talking about forever wars. Let us recognise that forever peace is bought, not cheaply, but hard, through determination and the will to endure.

The tragedy of Afghanistan is that we are swapping that patient achievement for a second fire and a second war.

Now we need to turn our attention to those who are in desperate need, supporting the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and so many other organisations that can do so much for people in the region. Yes, of course I support refugees, although I am not going to get into the political auction of numbers. We just need to get people out.

I leave the House with one image. In the year that I was privileged to be the adviser to the governor of Helmand, we opened girls' schools. The joy it gave parents to see their little girls going to school was

extraordinary. I did not understand it until I took my own daughter to school about a year ago. There was a lot of crying when she first went in — but I got over it

[Laughter]

— and it went okay.

I would love to see that continue, but there is a second image that I must leave the House with. It is a harder one, but I am afraid it is one that we must all remember.

[Time elapsed: Interjection:] "I wonder whether my honourable friend could say a bit more about that second image."

I am very grateful to my honourable friend, who was watching the clock more than me.


The second image is one that the forever war that has just reignited could lead to. It is the image of a man whose name I never knew, carrying a child who had died hours earlier into our fire base and begging for help. There was nothing we could do. It was over.

That is what defeat looks like; it is when you no longer have the choice of how to help.

This does not need to be defeat, but at the moment it damn well feels like it."

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CONTACT thanks the New Zealand Defence Force for providing this very human insight into a very difficult mission. We are certain Australian soldiers at the wire experienced very similar emotions, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with their Kiwi, British, American and other comrades. Unfortunately, the ADF wasn't able to produce human-interest stories of this calibre to go with the high-quality imagery they produced at the airport.



LEFT x 2: New Zealand soldiers try to identify Kiwis and visa holders in the crowd. ABOVE: A New Zealand soldier helps a woman across a sewage drain. NZDF photos

Bravery on both sides

Among those sent to Afghanistan to provide safe passage for thousands of evacuees from Kabul was an elite group of New Zealand soldiers who used code words and tactical landmarks to assist identifications in an attempt to avoid chaotic and dangerous scenes.

Members of the New Zealand Army, deployed as part of the New Zealand Defence Force's Operation Kōkako, were on the ground at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) in Kabul to help evacuate New Zealand nationals, their families and visa holders.

The turbulent and dangerous environment saw special-forces troops, including a female-engagement team, move deep into the security area designated around HKIA, at times using a sewage canal, to reach those they had been sent to help, guiding them through the crowds to points on the perimeter where they could be brought into the airport, secured and safely evacuated.

A special forces commander on the ground said the evacuees would be given code words for them to show in order to be positively identified.

"Once identified we would begin the work of extracting them, often during a lull where it was tactically acceptable.

"We were very deliberate in this approach lest we started a riot or caused a breach."

The bank of the canal was controlled by coalition forces so the soldiers were able to use the banks as a tactical thoroughfare, often jumping into the fetid water to aid evacuees.

In one rescue, a wheelchair-bound woman and her son were helped across the banks to safety.

"This specific rescue was just one of hundreds of acts we undertook to recover New Zealand nationals," the SF soldiers said.

"All those involved in the operation take great pride in being able to be a part of the numerous acts that took place to get people out safely."

KIWIS' KABUL PERSPECTIVE

Senior national officer for the New Zealand operation Group Captain Nick Olney said the scene was confronting for personnel to deal with.

"We were looking for needles in haystacks, and there were a lot of haystacks out there to start with and we had no idea what the needles looked like," Group Captain Olney said.

"We were assisting people through sewage ditches, over barbed wire fences – I can't describe enough the bravery on both sides.

"With the evacuees, in their desperation, would do anything to get into the airport.

"On our side, our team pushed themselves to every physical and psychological limit to get these people out and make them safe."

Group Captain Olney said the New Zealand troops "put their lives on the line" by going into crowded areas knowing there were credible threats of attack – that later came to tragic fruition for US forces.

"There was absolute bravery and desperation on both sides to make it work," he said.

"We had some very highly trained, highly capable individuals on the ground who did their absolute best."

He said the operation was a team effort and many in the team were tormented reflecting on situations where they could physically reach out and touch people they wanted to help, but they couldn't get them through.

"I can't stress enough how difficult it was to bring those people through the wire.

"It was best endeavours to make miracles happen in the timeframe we had available."

Those who were saved, Group Captain Olney said, were relieved, frightened – "and every human emotion you could possibly think of".

"When they saw a Kiwi serviceperson, it was their first sign of hope."

TALISMAN SABRE 2021

Despite COVID-19 – but with extensive and proper protocols in place – Exercise Talisman Sabre 2021 went ahead in Australia in July with around 17,000 military personnel from seven countries participating.



Soldiers from 9th Battalion, Royal Queensland Regiment and 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment work together in an urban-clearance operation. Photo by Christabel Migliorini.

The key focus of TS21 was moving from land to sea, as forces from Australia, United States, Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand and the United Kingdom prepared for an action-packed amphibious phase around the Bowen and Ingham areas of north Queensland and featured air operations, beach-landings, armoured vehicles and urban operations.

Commander Deployable Joint Force Headquarters Major General Jake Ellwood said the amphibious phase included complex joint-force manoeuvres.

"This is the culminating activity we've been working towards throughout the year," Major General Ellwood said.

"It's the final test of our ability to operate as a joint force in a contested environment across land, sea, air, space and cyber.

"Around 20 ships and 60 aircraft conducted war-at-sea training off the Queensland coast as part of the scenario."

A beach landing in Ingham included Australian, United States, Japanese and British Exercise Director Air Commodore Stuart Bellingham said this year's Talisman Sabre looked a little different, with reduced scale but increased complexity.

This year's exercise included some of the most realistic and challenging training activities yet,

spreading even further across Queensland than in previous years.

In the first few days of the exercise, each nation focused on foundational training to get the multinational forces reading from the same playbook.

In a first for Australia, the US Army launched the MIM-104 Patriot surface-to-air missiles at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area.

The next two days involved a barrage of munitions from land, air, and sea, culminating in an awesome display by the US High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS).

Not only spectacular to watch, the live-fire activities ultimately showed that the forces of the seven nations could operate as one to produce a coordinated and staggering result.

Things ramped up again in the second week with collective training – engineers paired with infantry; explosive detection dogs alongside amphibious elements; and special forces worked in the air and in the shadows.

As the complexity of each event built, so did the threat scenario.

Townsville Field Training Area hummed within the urban operations training facility, a series of structures built for soldiers to fight through streets and buildings of a simulated town.



British Royal Marine Commandos patrol along a sugar-cane train track near Ingham, Queensland. Photo by Corporal Jarrod McAneney.

At sea, air and maritime assets engaged in high-end warfare training above and below the waves off the Queensland coast.

Meanwhile a US Air Force B-52 Stratofortress bomber joined the latest Australian aircraft in a simulated long-range strike.

In the third week, the combined forces orchestrated all these moving pieces in a complex opposed scenario involving real Queensland communities in Bowen, Ingham and Cairns, with forces in the community fighting through a scenario designed to test their skills at the highest level.

For the first time in history, Australian, US, Japanese and UK amphibious forces operated from the same ship.

Inland, Alaska-based paratroopers embarked in a C-17A Globemaster in Darwin to drop onto farmland thousands of kilometres from home, in Charters Towers.

Not to be outdone by their counterparts operating across the physical domains, cyber and information warfare operators sharpened their skills too.

Just like the real-world, experts were tested through simulated social media and traditional media scenarios too.

Tactical leaders saw their decisions tested – with their failures tipping social-media sentiment towards

the opposing force, only to see it swing back again through influence operations on public support for the mission.

TS21 exercise director Air Commodore Bellingham and his US counterpart Colonel Jerry Hall both praised the efforts of all the nations involved.

"TS21 was a tremendous success and I applaud what our international forces have been able to accomplish together in the past three weeks," Air Commodore Bellingham.

"I am particularly proud of the many milestones we have achieved this year, including the US Patriot missile launch, the HIMARS tactical airlift, and the first-ever employment of the US Space Force in an international exercise."

Colonel Hall was more focused on the strategic significance of TS21.

"I'm extremely proud that this year's Talisman Sabre directly contributed to advancing the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region," Colonel Hall said.

"We want people to be free, we want free trade, we want to sail, to fly anywhere in the Indo-Pacific region without having to worry about the security situation.

"That is our shared vision and why we work together."

An Australian Army special operations military working dog and handler from 2nd Commando Regiment watch as a US Army Black Hawk from 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment prepares for a fast-roping activity at RAAF Base Tindal, NT. US Army photo by Private First Class Matthew Mackintosh.



Alaska-based US Army paratroopers with 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, drop from a C-17 near Charters Towers, Queensland. US Marine Corps photo by Lance Corporal Alyssa Chuluda.



Australian soldiers from Battlegroup Eagle advance on an enemy camp, at Townsville Field Training Area. Photo by Corporal Brandon Grey.



Soldiers from the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force disembark a Royal Australian Air Force C-27J Spartan at Bowen, Queensland. Photo by Leading Aircraftwoman Jacqueline Forrester.

An Australian Army M113 Armoured Personnel Carrier conducts a route clearance in Ingham, Queensland. Photo by Corporal Madhur Chitnis.



An Australian Army Bushmaster from Battlegroup Coral, conducts a 'forward passage of lines' at Townsville Field Training Area. Photo by Corporal Brodie Cross.



An Australian Army M1A1 Abrams tank at Townsville Field Training Area in Queensland. Photo by Corporal Brandon Grey.



A US Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey departs Lavarack Barracks, Townsville, for night operations during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2021. Photo by Lauren Larking.

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**Words Captain Thomas H. de Vries,
Marine Rotational Force – Darwin**

Photos Barrie Collins

In the heart of the Australian Outback, US Marines, Australian soldiers, and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force soldiers assembled and successfully conducted Exercise Southern Jackaroo 2021 in June.

The trilateral exercise, held over a two-week period, was a tangible demonstration of multinational interoperability, where the forces worked through logistical and cultural challenges that tested the ability of each of the militaries to mutually support one another.

The exercise began with an opening ceremony at Robertson Barracks, home of the Australian Army's 1st Brigade, where commanders addressed a formation of Australian, Japanese and US troops.

They spoke on themes of enhanced cooperation between each force and the importance of building deep, personal and professional relationships with one another.

To overcome communication barriers, the force integrated teams of military interpreters throughout the formations in order to best facilitate understanding amongst each other.

SOUTHERN JACKAROO



Japanese liaison officer at 1st Brigade HQ Australian Army Captain David Ferwerda said they built a multi-rank team of interpreters, drawn from the ADF and JSDF, to bridge the gap from the lowest ranks up to the command group.

Training commenced with urban breaching operations at the Urban Operations Training Facility at Mount Bundey, where all three forces demonstrated their tactics, techniques and procedures for manoeuvring through urban terrain.

Leaders frequently reviewed the patrols and breaches to learn from one another and, if required, integrate squads in future operations.

Simultaneously, US cannoners from Mike Battery, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment (Reinforced) and the Australian 103rd Battery, 8th/12th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, established a combined gun line of six M777 howitzers, where they participated in fire missions directed by US and Australian fire-support coordination centres.

MRF-D Command Element fires officer Captain Eric vanHorn said the time and effort that the Marines and their Australian friends invested during the

exercise – and would continue to invest to advance interoperability – demonstrated the strength of the ANZUS alliance.

"Coordinating fires came easy to us because of a shared purpose, built upon a long history of partnership for more than a century," Captain vanHorn said.

To conclude the first week of training, troops from all three militaries met at a combined marksmanship range, where snipers demonstrated advanced shooting techniques to engage targets at maximum effective range.

Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Colonel Kosyo Mizoguchi, commanding officer 50th Infantry Regiment, said the opportunities presented by training with Australian and US forces was very important.

"It is also very meaningful because Australia has very broad training areas, so we can conduct long-range shooting," Colonel Mizoguchi said.

In the second week of training, all three militaries came together in a culminating live-fire event, where direct- and indirect-fire assets supported ground troops while assaulting multiple objectives.



During the event, weapons teams fired 400 mortars, 250 rounds of artillery, and thousands of rounds of machine-gun ammunition.

Most notably, troops also fired four FGM-148 Javelin anti-armour missiles at simulated enemy targets, as a powerful display of interoperability in support of manoeuvring ground forces.

During the assault, all three militaries seized objectives throughout Mount Bunday Training Area, enabling one another to move forward on their mission and demonstrate the ability to command and control fires and manoeuvre.

Although a challenging feat, the training the week before allowed the forces from the three nations to confidently perform this complex event in concerted synchronisation.

MRF-D commanding officer Colonel David Banning said successful integration of indirect fire, fire-support coordination, various types of heavy weapons and aviation fire support, was a big task.

"Any one of those things, just with your own unit, would be complicated," Colonel Banning said.

1st Brigade commander Brigadier Ash Collingburn said Exercise Southern Jackaroo 21 had well prepared all involved for future challenges.

"I look at all of you, shoulder-to-shoulder, and know that you stand ready for what challenges lie ahead," he said.



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ONE WILD

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY BARRIE COLLINS

RIDE





I had the pleasure of spending a day with the United States Marine Corps, Aviation Combat Element – or ACE as they are known – in Darwin on deployment with the Marine Rotational Force - Darwin.

MRF-D spend six months in Darwin during their annual rotational deployment and this is the 10th year a rotational deployment has taken place – and getting bigger and better each year.

Last year the deployment was cut short and impacted by COVID-19. This year, contingency plans paid off and approximately 2200 Marines are taking part in the current rotation.

Support personnel arrived ahead of the main body to prepare and set up for their arrival and, having an Air Combat Element with the MRF-D takes a lot of pre-planning, logistic support and many hours of on-going maintenance.

The Marines flew into RAAF Base Darwin and underwent COVID testing immediately on arrival, followed by 14 days of quarantine.

Their equipment, supplies and munitions arrived by air and sea. The aircraft came in by sea freight.

On arrival at Darwin's East Arm wharf, the aircraft were inspected, re-assembled, then serviced before being flown to their deployment home within RAAF Base Darwin.

On this rotation the air wing comprises attack/gunship helicopters, the Bell AH-1Z Viper – utility-support helicopter, the Bell UH-1Y Venom, and the unusually designed Bell/Boeing MV-22B Osprey, a vertical/short take off and landing (V/STOL) multi-mission tiltrotor aircraft.

These MV-22B Osprey are from the Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron VMM-363 Red Lions – or

"Lucky Red Lions" according to their motto – form part of the Marine Aircraft Group-24 (MAG-24) 1st Marine Aviation Wing (1st MAW) based in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

The Vipers and Venoms hail from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367 (HMLA-367) Scarface – "When you are out of Scarface, you're out of guns" – also based in Hawaii with MAG-24, 1st MAW.

Together, the Vipers clear the way ahead for an advancing Marine force, the Ospreys convey Marines to their deployment area and assist with supplies and medical evacuations and the Venoms support ground troops with their on-board firepower, relaying vital information as they assist with medical evacuations.

On my arrival at RAAF Base Darwin, I had the pleasure of meeting the commanding officer of the 'Red Dragons', Lieutenant Colonel Joe A Whitefield Jr, who is a Marine Corps man through and through.

Lieutenant Colonel Whitefield typifies the words gung ho, oozing the enthusiastic energy that makes you want to go to hell and back with him. He's been a Marine since 1994, starting out as an enlisted man and making his way up through the ranks. As a Staff Sergeant, Joe Whitefield completed his Bachelor of Science in Physical Education and was then promoted to second lieutenant. He became a Naval Aviator in 2007 and has flown with a number of helicopter squadrons and transitioned to Osprey in 2008, accumulated more than 2100 military flying hours in Osprey and 1000 more on other types.

It was arranged I attend the morning briefing of the aircrews and, afterwards, have an informal catch up with three pilots and a crew chief.



The briefing went over the mission rules of the day, flight path and safety concerns. Everything was done in complete detail, with the emphasis on safety.

'One Wild Ride', the lead captain was very thorough in his briefing. I paid a lot of heed as it involved the flights I'd be taking later that day.

On meeting the aircrew, I immediately got the impression of how proud these men were – a true team, even though they had individual jobs, bonded by love of Corps, love of flying and respect for one another. I felt humbled to be with them.

During chat, we laughed, told stories and talked of the importance of their roles. Captain 'B1', call sign 'Tiny Dancer', was the shortest of the group but packing a mighty punch as pilot of the lead Viper.

We spoke of the challenges he faced – the hardest

being away from his family and home.

Captain B1 believes in practice, practice, practice, knowing that if he makes a mistake in practice he won't make the same mistake in combat.

Captain 'V-L' reminded me of the pilot 'Too Tall' from the movie 'We Were Soldiers'. Another Venom pilot, his call sign is 'Two Moms' – I didn't ask, even though the Texan has a great sense of humour. Being a Venom pilot was his first choice – "Low and fast is the way to go".

The newest pilot in the group was Captain 'B2', who hasn't been given a call sign yet as this is his first deployment. I'm betting it will be 'Bill Bailey'. Hailing from Ohio, Captain 'B2' has been flying since he was 16 and loves flying the MV-22B Osprey.

Last of the group was UH-1Y Venom crew chief, Corporal 'S'.



Crewing in the Venom was his first choice and he's been a crew chief for two years. He loves his job and plans on staying with the Marines for 20 years or longer.

Combined, they all agreed that they would come back to Australia again in a heart beat – they all agreed the people were really happy and friendly – not so the wildlife!

"Everything here wants to kill us. There's no way we'll land in the water – your crocodiles are way too big."

They also agreed that bird and bat strikes were a serious flying hazard. They are very watchful for both.

Another Australian hazard they have to watch out for are termite mounds, as the tall, hard mounds are hard to detect from the air.

Talking over, the first mission for the day was an introduction flight in the MV-22B Osprey, out to the Mount Bunday military training area, where we would land just so I could snap a few photos, before returning to base – a round trip of around 90 minutes.

The second flight was later in the day. This time, I was on board the UH-1Y Venom, doing an interdiction and recovery mission to the Tiwi Islands. We were accompanied by one AH-1Z Viper. This was a great opportunity to catch some air-to-air shots of the impressive-looking gunship.

On the approach to Melville Island, aircrew put the Venom through its paces, taking evasive action during a mock attack. It was one wild ride, that's for sure!

After evading incoming munitions, the enemy was spotted from a few kilometres out and the threat was eliminated – making it safe for us to land and rescue a downed pilot.

After a successful mission, we returned to base just on sunset, refuelled and landed back at the 'Snake Farm'.

My day was not over yet, as I managed to get a few sunset shots and some nice images of the Osprey preparing for a night flight.

After a long day with ACE, I felt a greater appreciation of the important role they play in the big picture that is the United States Marine Corps and their rotational force in the Australian 'Top End'.

Semper Fi, Marines, and thank you!

EXERCISE LOOBYE



WORDS AND PHOTOS BARRIE COLLINS

Bradshaw Field Training Area in the NT played host to Exercise Looby in August – a joint exercise with the United States Marine Corps and the ADF.

The exercise involved more than 2500 troops in the field and a number of support staff from various units from within the Marine Rotational Force - Darwin (MRF-D) and the Australian Defence Force – primarily infantry and artillery with air support from the USMC MV-22 Ospreys and AH-1Z Venoms with a RAAF C-17A Globemaster for cargo transportation.

The objective of the exercise was to attack, clear and use an enemy airfield so that the C-17 could land and deploy its cargo a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS).

HIMARS would then be used to destroy an enemy location that was used to fire anti-ship missiles on friendly shipping.

Acting on relayed information from a drone, an air attack on the airfield quickly and accurately dispersed enemy ground troops and destroyed their posts and emplacements.

Shortly thereafter, Ospreys came into view, landed, and deployed USMC assault troops.

This was followed by other landings with ADF members being deployed.

The airfield was secured in an hour, prisoners processed and dispersed from the area, and preparations made to land the C-17 and deploy HIMARS.

Upon landing, the C-17 taxied to a location suited for the ramp to be lowered.

Once the dust had settled, HIMARS was quickly on the ground and ready to go.

Communication between the HIMARS crew and the C-17 were maintained and boxy-looking vehicles drove to their pre-designated launch area.

Shortly after that, a HIMARS missile was on its way to a target more than 50 kilometres away, where another drone reported a successful destruction of the enemy target.

Mission successful, the HIMARS vehicle and crew returned to the C-17, loaded up, and were off to another location, ready to bring more rain on a hapless enemy position.

I had a unique opportunity to witness this interaction between the Australian and United States military forces and saw them work seamlessly, ever keen to help one another out.

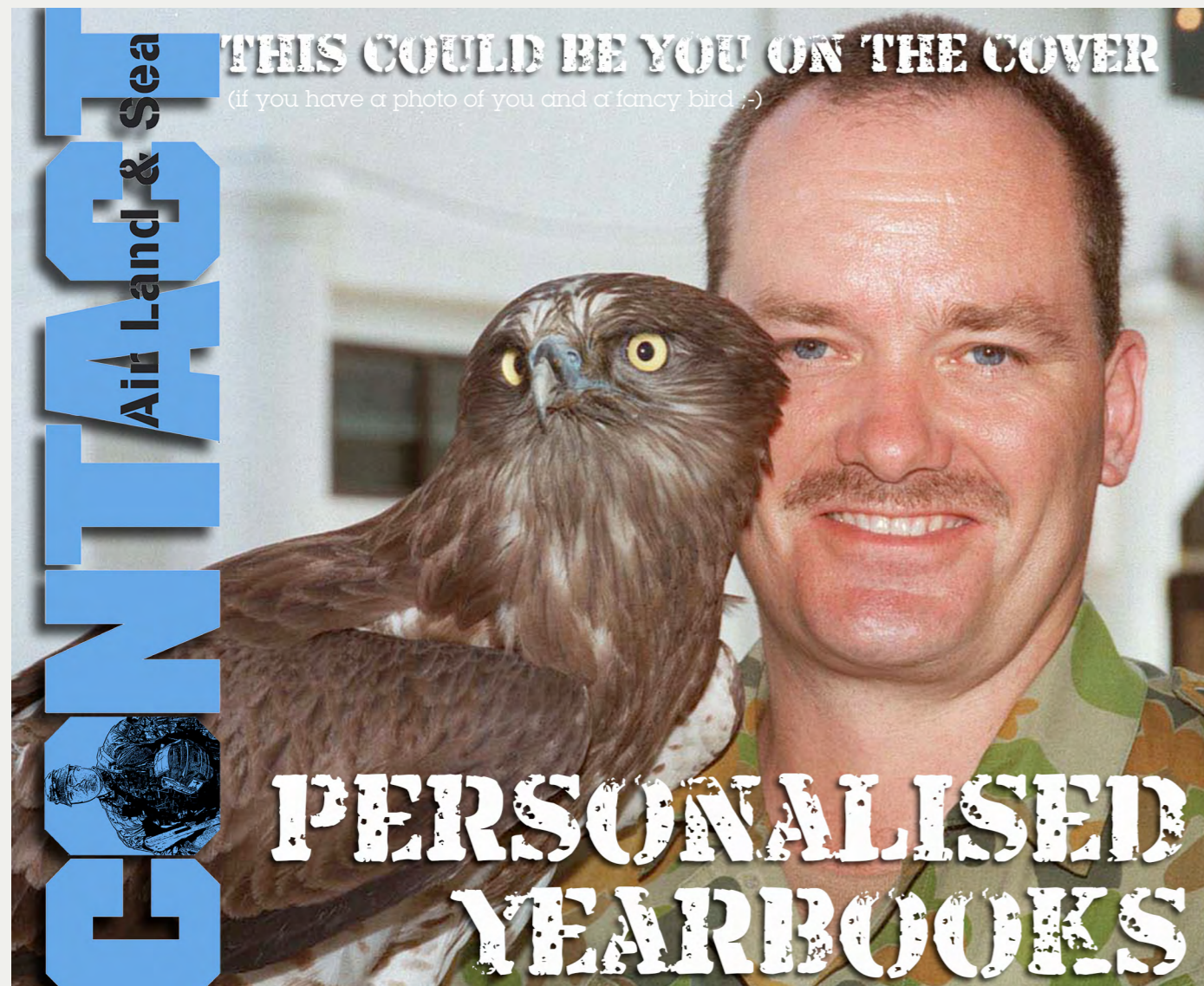
There were definitely smiles all round and a lot of weary soldiers at the end of this day.



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The Hogans

4TH BATTALION, AIF

Thomas and Mary Hogan, were typical middle-class people who worked hard to maintain their family in the southern Sydney suburb of Marrickville. Thomas, 39, was a tailor by trade while Mary tended the house. 18-year-old sons John and William were both gainfully employed, with John also a tailor, and his brother a pastry cook assistant. The youngest, Eileen, was still at school¹.

Given his age, William Hogan was previously unable to enlist for Gallipoli but now that he was 18, and had five years' service as a senior cadet under his belt, he was good to go and was keen to get over to France and have a crack at the Hun. He presented himself at the recruiting depot in mid-February 1916 but, unfortunately, didn't pass the required chest expansion test².

He returned later in the month and this time took in as much air as he could and puffed out his chest. As William strained to hold in the oxygen, the medical officer wrapped the tape measure around the lad's chest. "Right son, you can breathe normally now!" the doctor said. Completing his portion of the documentation, he handed it back to the young recruit and, with a smile said, "Through you go Private and good luck".

With his enlistment confirmed on 29 February 1916¹ and with the spike in willing enlistees following the withdrawal from Gallipoli, he was held in abeyance in Bathurst Depot Battalion until the training camps could be cleared with some of the backlog of reinforcements.

With William now in uniform, John felt he should also go and do his bit, rather than risk staying behind and becoming a recipient of the dreaded 'white feather'³.

Thomas and Mary spoke of the prospect of both lads heading off to war. Thomas felt it was only right that he too should enlist, lest his sons do all the fighting while he was safely tucked up at home. Reluctantly, Mary hid her sadness and agreed with her husband.

John enlisted on 17 April⁴, while Thomas enlisted a week later, at the local sportsground, on 26 April 1916⁵.

Both were hopeful that they would marry up with William, but sadly, it wasn't meant to be, as both were sent to the Dubbo Depot Battalion^{4,5}.

Reinforcement drafts for the NSW 4th Battalion were being formed in Liverpool Army Camp and the trio saw an opportunity to finally serve together. All applied and all were successful. Now officially destined for the 4th, Thomas was allocated with Regimental Number 6493, William 6494 and John 6621.

The draft had to knuckle down and prepare for war. The training was hard but interesting and the food, although a little bland compared to Mary's home cooking, was plentiful.

If the training program allowed and if not required for guards or other duties, local leave was granted on the weekends. All three headed home at every opportunity to spend their dwindling time with Mary and Eileen.

It was 30 September 1916 when the 21st Reinforcement Draft of the 4th Battalion, marched to the dock and the awaiting troopship Aeneas⁶. Mary and Eileen edged their way to the front of the crowd, in the hope of seeing their boys. For Mary, it was a chance to utter a silent prayer, that it wouldn't be the last glimpse of Thomas and her sons^{2,4,5}.

The Aeneas made a quick stop in Melbourne to pick up some additional drafts and, on 2 October, continued her journey to England, arriving on 19 November 1916.

The men were sent to the bleak training area near Larkhill on Salisbury Plain, where the impending winter weather would allow for a realistic representation of the battlefields of northern France and Belgium as the troops completed their training. But for the boys from 'down under', nothing could prepare them for that winter of 1916-17, said to be the worst in 40 years. Their only solace, was the realisation that if they were already in the trenches, it would be a hundred times worse.

Thomas and William buckled down with training, deployed to France in February and joined the battalion

JUST SOLDIERS

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY

It was 0345 hours on Sunday 15 April 1917 and a small group of Australian soldiers manned their outpost in 'no man's land'. Their task was to provide early warning and protection for their mates in the 4th Battalion, who were hastily trying to improve their defences before an expected enemy attack. Suddenly, the scream of incoming shells shattered the night air.

in March. John was different – he decided to 'buck the system'. In mid-March he was charged with 'Failing to comply with the order of an NCO', found guilty and sentenced to 21 days Detention⁴. Only time would tell if this would pull him back into shape.

Thomas and William joined their unit, which was undergoing battalion- and brigade-level training in Fricourt Camp. The weather was poor but tolerable and the thrill of real training alongside combat-hardened officers and soldiers, gave real credence to the situation⁷. Many in the battalion were not aware that Thomas and William were actually father and son – a secret they kept for fear of being separated. Instead, it may have been thought that they were brothers.

On 1 April the men enjoyed a supplementation of treats and beer provided by the battalion's welfare funds, to commemorate the first anniversary of the 4th Battalion's arrival in France⁷. For the 'old hands' it was a time to reflect on all those who had passed through the ranks over the past year and sadly were not on hand to mark this milestone in the unit's history. Such was the nature of warfare.

In mid-April, the 4th Battalion sat astride the Bapaume/Cambrai Road, opposite the seemingly impregnable German Hindenburg Line. This was a key position within the allied offensive plan to try and breach the line in and around the fortified area of Bullecourt.

As the men of the 4th were hastily endeavouring to improve the defences for an expected German counter attack, a string of outposts was pushed into 'no man's land' in order to provide early warning and even a possible delaying action, to disrupt or contain a limited German attack within the area.

The weather was cold, and a recent heavy dumping of snow hampered the digging in the near-frozen ground. Sheltering in one of the scattered outposts was Thomas, William and six of their mates. At approximately 0345

hours on 15 April, the Germans started an intensive pre-assault artillery barrage, followed by a determined infantry attack. As the allied outposts took the full force of the assault, withdrawal or even effective defence was all but impossible. Thomas was badly wounded in the attack and was writhing in pain when their position was overrun. The enemy quickly relieved the Diggers of their arms and ammunition and kept the Australian's covered as they rallied them out of the shell hole.

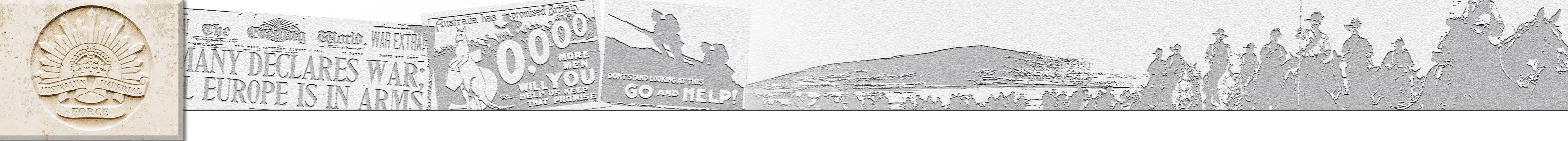
A fine balance now poised over Thomas' future – as he was badly wounded and struggling to stand, the enemy could have easily shot him. Instead, William and the others crowded around him and dragged him up. With his seven mates carrying him rearward⁸, the Germans showed some compassion and spared Thomas' life.

Once in the German-controlled area, the able-bodied prisoners were separated from the wounded. For William, it would have been heartbreaking to leave his badly wounded father to the mercy of the enemy. Thomas' wounds were extremely serious as his right eye was a complete loss, he had wounds to his right arm, and his left ankle was very badly smashed⁸. His initial on-site treatment was rudimentary but lifesaving and would have to do until he could be evacuated further to the rear.

Back with the 4th Battalion, the battle still raged and no one knew the full extent of the attack or the plight of the outposts that were either overrun or cut off. It would be days before the situation stabilised and an accurate assessment undertaken.

Respite came, when on 16 April, the 1st Battalion took over the 4th Battalion trenches. The fresh troops were amazed by the significant number of enemy dead scattered in 'no man's land'⁹.

A relatively quiet day on 17 April afforded the 4th Battalion time to take a breather and recover, identify and bury their own¹⁰. Unfortunately, a significant number



HMAT Aeneas at Port Melbourne, Victoria, 3 October 1916 – with the Hogans on board. Photo by Josiah Barnes. AWM PB0007



The remains of Bullecourt. AWM A00664

were still unaccounted for and it was feared they had either been blown to pieces, lying closer to the enemy front line as bait for allied stretcher bearers, or they were in enemy hands.

With his detention complete, Private John Hogan crossed over to France on 19 April and completed his battle-induction training. Now ready for duty, he arrived at the headquarters of the 4th Battalion². When he enquired as to where he could find his father and brother, he learnt the shocking news that they were both posted as 'missing'. He was reassured that, as it stood, their bodies had not been found during the retrieval and that the authorities were corresponding via the Red Cross to ascertain if they were in fact prisoners of war.

Meanwhile, Thomas was moved back to Germany and into a more permanent prison camp in Limburg. His wounds still plagued him and he could barely move. The postage system was inefficient and he could neither get letters in or out, as he had not yet been officially declared a POW. It was if he had simply disappeared.

Later, he was transferred to Gustow (head camp) where the allied authorities finally learned of his internment and on 18 December 1917, he could finally be declared officially as a Prisoner of War.

Further transfers to camps at Lasarette and finally Parchim followed but, even though he was all-but crippled, the situation in Germany, especially in the latter half of 1918, was dire. Prisoner-of-war rations were in short supply and to merely feed themselves, everyone needed to work. This was echoed in a note sent by Thomas to the Red Cross on 24 August 1918, stating – 'I am no better and I have been sent out to work'. He did however,

highlight his thanks to the Red Cross regards them writing to his son and wife⁸.

Private William Hogan was also heading back into Germany. Unbeknown to Thomas and William, they both staged through Limburg camp at the same time but their paths simply didn't cross. William's health was good and being free from wounds made all the difference. He was employed on work parties, which allowed him to forage for extra food, and he was in receipt of Red Cross parcels and letters. He was concerned though that news of his father was extremely scant¹¹.

John Hogan's service was a veritable roller-coaster. His record was clear until 10 March 1918, when he was part of a fatigue party returning to the unit when a heavy German barrage caught them in the open. When the smoke cleared, the officer in charge, Lieutenant William Clemenger, and seven of the party were dead and a number, including John Hogan, were wounded. His treatment would keep him away from the battalion for the next week⁴. This incident saw a rapid change in the soldier's behaviour.

The following month, he was charged with 'Failure to comply with a lawful order and use of abusive language'. Found guilty, his penalty was seven days loss of pay and 14 days confinement to barracks⁴. Following a brief stint being sick in hospital, he again ran foul with authority when, on 23 May, he was charged with 'using insubordinate language to a superior officer'.

Again, he was found guilty and sentenced to 28 Days No2 Field Punishment¹². In August, he was in trouble again, charged with 'absent without leave after being

warned out for duty'. Punishment this time was seven days loss of pay and seven days confinement to barracks.

But in August 1918, John pushed his insolence too far – this time 'disobeying a lawful command by his superior officer in that after being duly warned for line fatigue said to SGT Horstead – "I will not be there". The Commanding Officer was unforgiving in dealing with the issue and referred Hogan to face court martial proceedings. Again, he was found guilty, but this time he was sentenced to imprisonment with 18 months hard labour⁴.

John Hogan was sombre when he boarded the transport in handcuffs with a military police escort.

Arriving back in England, he was taken to a bleak structure with high, grey, stone walls with a faded sign indicating His Majesty's Prison, Wormwood Scrubs⁴.

As the huge steel gates creaked open, he got a push in the back from one of the MPs and, passing through the opening, the gates clanged shut – his immediate fate was sealed.

Following the allied attacks of mid-1918 and the breaching of the Hindenburg Line on 8 August, the allies now had the Germans reeling. Daily Allied advances that only a few months previously would be measured in yards, were now being measured in miles.

Then, finally, on 11 November 1918, the guns fell silent and the Great War spluttered to end with an Armistice declared.

For William Hogan and his fellow prisoners, jubilation and the thought of impending freedom would have been paramount.

For Thomas Hogan, his thoughts would have been more composed. First and foremost were his wounds, declining

health and poor diet, all of which had taken their toll. Second was the fact he had survived and the expectation that he may soon be reunited with his family started to fill his thoughts and dreams.

William was the first to be repatriated to England, arriving in Dover on 1 December. He reported to AIF Headquarters and was issued with a new uniform and clothing. He was able to draw some back pay and send a telegram home to his mother and sister. He was then granted a month's leave, which he took full advantage of, touring the country hell bent on making up for lost time spent behind barbed wire. He was even granted an extension to his leave, which would take it up to 19 January 1919.

Unfortunately, time got away from him and he didn't make it back until the 23rd. He was charged with AWOL, but, despite being remorseful, was still required to forfeit four days pay².

He was ordered to No2 Command Depot in Weymouth, where he was to keep himself busy until the allotted date, ship and time for his return to Australia eventuated.

Unfortunately, he decided to give himself a couple of weeks personal leave, which, when he finally returned, resulted in him being again charged with AWOL. This time the punishment was stiffer than previously – sentenced to 21 Days Field Punishment No 2¹² and forfeiture of 35 days pay² – a rather expensive exercise, to say the least.

William was then moved to No1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, where he again ran foul of authorities, this time for 'Disobeying a lawful command given by a



Thomas and William had made inquiries only to find they had each sailed from England on the same day – but on different ships.

superior officer'. The finding was guilty with two days No2 Punishment and forfeiture of two days pay issued².

But, finally, the day he waited for arrived – his shipping orders home – and on 31 March 1919, William Hogan boarded the transport Khyber and set sail for home².

Thomas Hogan arrived back in England on Christmas Day and was immediately hospitalised. He also had a run in with authority when in February he was charged with AWOL and fined 10 days pay⁵.

In late March, Thomas was discharged from the Queen's Hospital, Sidcup, and conveyed to the waiting troopship Wandilla. Hobbling his way up the gangway on crutches, he had his name marked off on the ship's manifest. As the ropes were let go, the tugs pushed the Wandilla into the channel and she got underway – on 31 March 1919⁵.

Both Thomas and William had made inquiries to the Red Cross to try and gain information on each other – only to find they had each sailed from England on the same day but on different ships⁸.

As for John Hogan in Wormwood Scrubs? As the war was over, the Australian authorities relented on those serving non-capital crimes. On 21 July 1919, John's sentence was suspended and, again in uniform, he returned to his unit for processing home. Sailing from England, he arrived in Sydney on 30 October 1919. He was discharged on 3 January 1920⁴.

For the Hogan's, their war was over but their real battles may have only just begun.

William married Lola and tried to rebuild his life but, sadly, he passed away in 1931¹.

Thomas' post-war life was still hampered by his wounds. Sadly, he passed away on 27 March 1933⁵.

John also married. He was surprised when separate packages arrived containing his service medals, which he expected he would have forfeited because of his imprisonment.

Of the three members of the family, I researched for this story, John intrigued me the most. Although he had a somewhat minor brush with authority early in his service life, it wasn't until his wounding in March 1918 that his behaviour changed dramatically. Could this have been the result of post-traumatic stress, shell shock/concussion or the combination? We'll simply never know.

John sadly passed away on 31 January 1937.

Of note, in the 4th Battalion, 35 sets of brothers served during WWI. Also, apart from Thomas, William and John, an additional father-and-son combination served in the battalion, with consecutive numbers – 18-year-old 7194 Claude Armbrister and his father 7195 Percy Armbrister.

My thanks to Ron Austin, noted Australian author, whose work in writing the history of the 4th Battalion, along with other works, has left a great resource for future generations¹³.



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Notes:

- 1 NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages
- 2 National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 6494 Hogan, William John
- 3 A heinous act by women on the home front to present a supposedly able-bodied man with a white feather, as a sign of shirking duty or cowardice.
- 4 National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 6621 Hogan, John Laurence
- 5 National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 6493 Hogan, Thomas

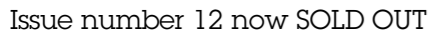
- 6 AWM 8 23/31/4 - 44 Infantry Battalion - 13 to 23 Reinforcements (December 1915 - November 1916). HMAAT 'Aeneas' 9A60
- 7 AWM 4, Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries, 1914-18 War, item 23/21/25, 4th Infantry Battalion, March 1917
- 8 Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War. IDRL/0428 6493 Hogan
- 9 The area that lies between the forward trenches of opposing forces. Neither side dominate or control the area but it is usually patrolled by both sides, to keep the other at bay.

- 10 AWM 4, Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries, 1914-18 War, item 23/21/26, 4th Infantry Battalion, April 1917
- 11 Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War. IDRL/0428 6494 Hogan
- 12 Field punishment No. 1 consisted of heavy labour, possibly being restrained in handcuffs or ropes, and tied to a post or wheel. No. 2 was similar, with the offender not attached to a fixed object.
- 13 The Fighting Fourth, A History of Sydney's 4th Battalion 1914-19. Slouch Hat Publications 2007

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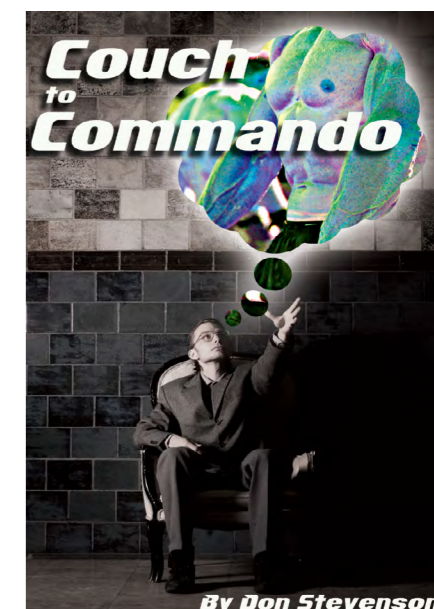
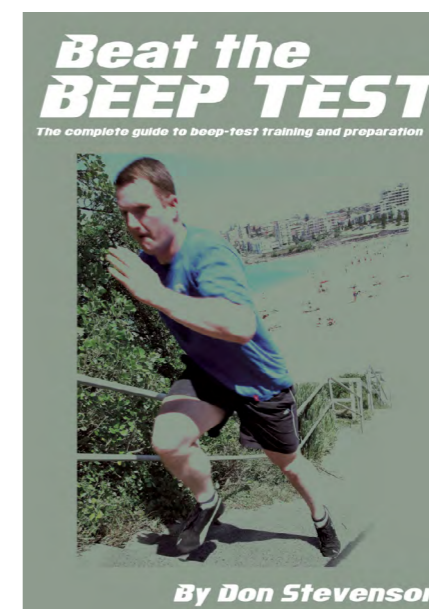
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An ARH Tiger waits for its 30mm cannon to be checked before a live-fire shoot during Exercise Knights Guns at High Range Training Area, Queensland. The School of Army Aviation, based at Oakey, conducted the live-fire training alongside Townsville-based artillery elements from 21 to 24 June 2021, to expose ARH Tiger trainee pilots to a complex training environment, and enable them to use a larger quantity of hellfire missiles.





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