

7 Field Regiment Association

Yandoo

Royal Australian Artillery

1988

Vol 1 No 2

7 Fd Regt RAA Association, Warrane Road, Willoughby NSW 2068

Our President Max Falconer comments:-

As we look back at the Association's activities during the last year and approach our next A.G.M. I am happy to report a very pleasing year, some of the highlights of which are:- In August 1987 representatives of our Association attended an assembly of representatives of most of the known Artillery Associations in N.S.W. at the School of Artillery. This assembly passed a resolution that all these Associations should affiliate with the R.A.A. Association with the aim of encouraging intercommunication and mutual cooperation between all the Artillery interest groups within the state of N.S.W. This motion is now being implemented.

The Association members badge was designed and made available at \$5 each, our thanks go to Lt Col Staziker for his efforts in this regard.

Another successful reunion was held in October at the Willoughby Legion Club, where a very happy evening was spent by the majority of our members.

A mixed social function held in March at the same venue was not as well attended but those present had very pleasant evening which included music and dancing.

Your committee meets regularly and most committee persons are regular attenders. Matters resolved and in hand are:- Action policy in regard to deceased members.

Restoration and preservation of an original banner which belonged to 3rd Division Artillery in W.W.I.

Preparation of an Honour Board listing the Regimental Commanders since the establishment in 1916 in W.W.I. This to be displayed at the Regiments H.Q. depot.

Membership now stands at 127 with 11 life members, we would like everyone to seek out past members and associates and endeavor to have them join our association.

Thank you all for your support in the year past and looking forward to a successful year to come.

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### NOTICES.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. THURSDAY 28 JULY 1988.

7.30 pm at WILLOUGHBY DEPOT

PLEASE ATTEND PLEASE ATTEND PLEASE ATTEND.

1988/89 subscriptions are now due -- \$5.00

Association BADGES available now at \$5.00

ANNUAL REUNION- - Friday 7th October 1988 at  
Willoughby Legion BOWLING Club.

Details later.

PERSONAL PROFILES. OUR SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT.

Lieutenant Colonel G.S. STAZIKER. RFD. ED.RL.

Stuart Staziker was born at Forbes N.S.W. on the 15/1/38, and educated at FORBES Intermediate High School, Newington College and Sydney Technical College.

His career has been diverse, encompassing Caltex Oil in Australia and the United Kingdom, Shell Oil Refining, Dermide Australia, Bliss Welding Products and Vane Australia, where he is currently the Office Manager. It is interesting to note that on joining Caltex Oil in 1956 he worked in the Accounting Department with 7th Fd Regt identity Maj Laurie Hindmarsh.

Stuart's military career began with the School Cadets in Forbes, progressed in the Air Training Corps at Newington and finally got serious when he was conscripted into 13th National Service Training Battalion at Ingleburn in January 1958. He was posted to 23 Field Regiment where he quickly qualified

for 1st Appointment, was promoted 2nd Lieutenant and posted to Gun Position Officer in June 1959. In the years that followed he filled most officer postings in 23 Fd Regt, commanded all its sub-units and became the Second in Command under the late Colonel Michael Burge. He took command of 133 Locating Battery in July 1981, and C.O. 7th Fd Regt in July 1983 and was posted as the Artillery Instructor on Senior Course at the Reserve Command and Staff College in July 1986.

During 1963 and 1964 Stuart was seconded to 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery (Honourable Artillery Company) in London for eighteen months and then undertook a further secondment of a month with 25 Medium Regt in Germany. A course at the Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill was a highlight of his stay in the UK. In April 1971, he undertook a CMF Observer trip to South Vietnam where he was seconded to 12 Field Regt for three weeks.

On January the 14th 1988, Lieutenant Colonel Staziker retired after thirty years in the Army Reserve. A highlight of his last days in the army was being invited by a friend of many years, Brigadier J.E. Colvin. AM. RFD. ED. to be the Reviewing Officer of the 1088 Recruit Course passing out parade. This parade was held within a month of the 30th anniversary of his own passing out from the 13th National Service Tng Btn. Stuart is the founder and President of the 23 Fd Regt Association, founder and Senior Vice President of 7th Fd Regt R.A.A. Association, President (elect) of the R.A.A. Association and a committee member of Belmore Branch of the R.S.S.L. of Aust. Together with Elaine, his wife of twenty years, they reside in their home at Milperra.

" THE WHOLE STAFF VOLUNTEERED "

In the first week of June, 1917, the 3rd Australian Division, then part of 11 Anzac Corps, was making final preparations for the Offensive at Messines, scheduled to commence on the 7th of June. The Operation was timed to start at 3.10 a.m. on that day, with the explosion of nineteen Mines on Messines Ridge. An intense Preliminary Bombardment had commenced on the 31st of May and five Australian Field Artillery Brigades including The 7th A.F.A. were taking part.

The Messines Offensive was the first Major Operation for the 3rd Division A.I.F. and all ranks were determined to prove that, although less experienced, they were in no way inferior to the older Australian Divisions.

26th Battery, 7th Field Artillery Brigade, commanded by Capt. T.A.J. Playfair was in action in Ploegsteert Wood. Danny Herbert, The Battery Trumpeter, made the following entry in his Diary on the 2nd of June:-

" Still very heavy bombarding but mostly by us. Volunteers to go over behind the Infantry in the Push were called for from the Staff. The whole Staff volunteered, so five men were drawn for ".

FURTHER COMMENT IS NOT NECESSARY.

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THIS IS OUR QUIZ FOR THIS ISSUE.

- Question 1. When were the designations of the various State Regiments of the R.A.A. discarded and, henceforth there was but one Regiment of the R.A.A.?
- Question 2. In the R.A.A. the ranks below sergeant were corporal (2 stripes) and bombardier (1 stripe). In what year did the change to the present structure occur?
- Question 3. When was the Royal Australian Artillery created?
- Question 4. When did the component parts of the gunners, the Royal Australian Field Artillery (RAFA) and the Royal Australian Garrison Artillery (RAGA) cease their separate identity and were reunited as the R.A.A. reverting to the pre 1911 situation?
- Question 5. What year was Militia artillery, The Australian Field Artillery (AFA), included in the R.A.A.

Answers are to be found further on.

RETIREMENT.

WO2 R.C.M. (Danny) Toplis, a well known identity at Willoughby, retired from the Army Reserve in January 1988 after 36 years service in 7 Field Regiment.

Presentations were made to Danny at a Testimonial Dinner at Willoughby Legion Club, attended by many serving and former members of the Regiment. (See photos below).

All members of ths Association wish Danny well in his retirement from the Army Reserve and trust that his interest in the Unit's history and membership of the Committee will ensure that we see a lot of Danny in the future.



Above:- L to R. Danny Toplis, John Balfour, Col Chris Hogan and Max Falconer.

Below:- WO2 Peter Muir recalls some of the highlights of Danny's career.



## NOTES FROM THE DESK OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER.

7TH.FIELD REGIMENT R.A.A., LT. COL. A.R. MAIN.

Since the 1987 edition of "Yandoo" changes have occurred in all but two of the senior appointments within the Unit. The most recent change has been that of the Commanding Officer, when on 11 May this year the writer, Lt Col Rick Main, succeeded Lt Col Bob Hill who has moved to Headquarters 2nd Division. Major Dennis Barrow, previously BC 113 Fd Bty, is also now at Hq 2 Div where he is undertaking a period of full time duty. For the time being 113 Bty is without a battery commander, a situation which is obviously undesirable but not easily rectified. Other changes have been Major Max Coaster-Garten taking over 28 Fd Bty and Major John Fairless posted to the Reserve Command and Staff College as a student on the Senior Course. BC HQ Bty is now Major Peter Widelowski who, like the current CO, is a Regular Army Officer. The end of 1987 saw the posting out and promotion of the previous Adjutant and Captain Karl Delaney now fills that position.

With all these moves explained it is now time to recall the major events of the past 12 months or so. As part of the Commander Land Command Artillery (referred to phonetically as Clacka, and previously known as Commander Fd Force Arty) plan to alternate Annual Field Training (AFT) year about with a Combined Courses Camp (CCC) the Regiment concentrated its resources together with 5/11 and 23 Fd Regts to conduct individual training courses during October. Nine types of courses were scheduled ranging from Gun No to subject 4 for Warrant Officer. Concurrent with the CCC eight officers attended courses at the School of Artillery. Overall 63 students from 7 Fd Regt attended courses with a success rate of 90.5%. Instructional and support responsibilities were shared between the participating Units with some assistance from other sources. The non-Artillery course was a Fitter Armament course conducted by the Technical Support Troops.

Also in 1987 two members of the Regiment, Lt Chris Walder and Sgt Pat Sengos, joined 103 Fd Bty of 8/12 Mdm Regt, for four weeks to participate in Exercise Northern Star which was held in the UK. Promotion to the Senior NCO ranks came for Sgt Amelia Wilson in Oct 87 and for Sgt David Leek in Mar 88. Two retirements this year have seen WO2 Danny Toplis depart in January after 36 years service and WO2 Lance Wilkinson in March after service with both Regular and Reserve Forces, his last six years having been with 113 Fd Bty.

Training activities for 1988 will culminate in late October with our AFT at Singleton. The change of location from Wide Bay in Qld may be a disappointment for some however circumstances make it necessary. The build-up includes four weekend field firing exercises, each of which is preceded by observation of fire training weekends using the simulator at the School of Artillery. In addition the perhaps not so exciting but necessary Infantry minor tactics, training, CPX and Unit and CDA TEWTS have to be worked into the programme.

Notes from the CO's desk cont.

In the latter part of the year the gun detachments will prove their skills at direct firing and quick actions as these are requirements for the unit assessment by CDA staff during the AFT. I anticipate that the HQ Bty RCP will also be ready for assessment by then. Once the gun batteries have completed their ARTEP we enter the final phase of the AFT which will include battle efficiency testing, small arms qualifications and an introduction to NBCD training - there may be a few surprises in learning what it is like being a gunner working dressed like a deep sea diver.

The final major event of the year will be our assistance again, for their 1812 Overture, to the 1st Recruit Training Battalion at Kapooka. I look forward to a happy and successful association with 7 Fd Regt. My first impressions are pleasing and I expect that with the combined dedication of those who currently serve, and with the support of those from the past, we can together expand on the solid base which exists now to meet challenges and changes facing the 2nd Division in the future.

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At our Reunion last October.

Clock-wise:- Don McVay, Sharon Fulcher, Lt Col Broadhead, WO2 John Balfour, WO1 Bruce Johnston, Lt Col Bob Hill, Max Falconer, Brig. McAlister, Capt Tim Kemp, Owen Saville.



SEEN AT THE 1987 REUNION.



Above:- L to R. Mick Cole, Harry Taylor, Danny Toplis  
and Lt Col Dick Lord.

Below:- L to R. Colin Hamer, Graeme Kilkelly, Max Falconer  
and Bill Starke.





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REGIMENTAL HISTORY PROJECT.

We are pleased to report that the project is well in hand and that the work of drafting the narrative has commenced. The collection of items of historical interest continues to grow. Two recent additions to the collection are a 3rd Division Artillery colour patch and miniature presented by Mr D. Allan, a collector of Military cloth insignia. Mr Allan asks that, if any member has insignia that is no longer required, he would be glad of the opportunity to include it in his own extensive collection. Interested members should contact Laurie Hindmarsh for Mr Allan's address.

The Committee takes this opportunity to publicly acknowledge the assistance which has been given to date by the following people and organisations:-

Mr D. Allan. Grenadier Guards and Australian Regular Army.  
Mr J. Black. 2/30 Aust Infantry Battalion A.I.F.  
Lt Col K.L. Begg, 7 Aust Field Regiment, A.I.F.  
Mr J. Coates. 2/1 Aust Pnr Btn A.I.F. & 2/3 Aust Inf Bn A.I.F.  
Mr F.A. Corbett. 39th Battery 10 Fd Arty Brigade A.I.F.  
Mrs B. Gresser.  
Mr A.A. Gordon. 7th Aust Field Regiment, A.I.F.  
Mr G.N. Hammond. 7th Field Brigade R.A.A. (Militia).  
Mr J. Heesh.  
Mrs A.F. Kernahan.  
Mr H. Lewis-Hughes. Ammunition Column. 7th Fd Arty Bde. A.I.F.  
Mrs A. McAlister.  
Brig. F.B. McAlister. C.B.E., E.D., (R.L.)  
Mr R.A. McDonald. 7 Aust Fd Regiment A.I.F. & R.A.A.F.  
Mr S. Mildenhall. 7th Aust Field Regiment, A.I.F.  
Marrickville Heritage Society.  
Mr E. Parker.  
Lt. Col. D.H. Playfair. O.B.E., E.D., (R.L.)  
Miss A. Rice.  
St. Ignatius College, Riverview.  
Mr B. Stevenson. R.A.A.F.  
Maj A.A. Summers. 7th. Field Brigade R.A.A. (Militia).  
Mr R.C.M. Toplis. 7th Field Regiment R.A.A.  
Mrs J.M. Upward.  
Mr J. Woolley.  
Mrs C. Wynn.

There is a continuing requirement for information and memorabilia for presentation. Anyone who wishes to assist in this direction, should contact Laurie Hindmarsh, 5 McRae Place, Turramurra. 2074. Phone (02) 449 1169. (A.H.)