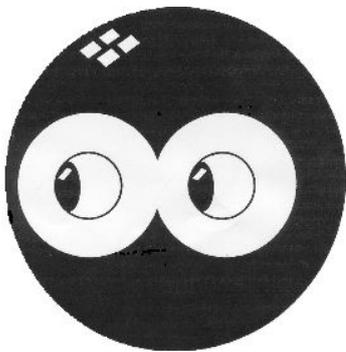




# BEHIND THE EIGHT BALL



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The Quarterly Newsletter for  
**THE 8<sup>th</sup> BATTALION ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT  
ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED**  
PO Box 213 Scarborough Qld. 4020

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**ISSUE No 144**  
**February 2026**



*Commanding Officer 8 RAR Lt Col Keith O'Neill accepts the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry Citation from ARVN Lt Gen Do Cao Tri for the Battalions efforts in the Long Hai's during 1970.*

All articles and letters published in this newsletter are from the members. The views and opinions expressed are not necessary those of the Association. The 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Australian Regiment Association Incorporated, its committee and members accept no responsibility for information and articles appearing in this newsletter. Members are encouraged to submit articles, photographs and items of interest. The editors reserve the right to decide on the publication of any article or item for any issue of "Behind the Eight Ball"

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### LAST POST

Rest ye, oh Warrior, you'll battle no more no longer to live the horrors of war your duty was done, with honour and pride' farewell! Oh brother, until we march by your side.

"Well done thou good and faithful friend."

**Rajko Ribic Adm Coy Vietnam**

**Lionel Allan Coward Malaysia**

**Terry M. Franke Malaysia**

**Kevin Craze Australia**

**William "Bill" Bricknall D Coy Vietnam**

**'WE CAN NEVER FORGET'**



### **President Report**

Welcome to our first 8 Ball for the year and Happy New Year to you all, though it is fast becoming an old year.

As I write this, many of you are sweltering through some record temperatures in the southern states; Victoria has been devastated by fires affecting much of the state; while in Western Queensland and across the top end farmers and communities have again been smashed by floods. The vastness of Australia hands us these stark contrasts.

Thankfully, it appears that none of our Grey Eighters have been affected by all of this, but if you, or a Grey Eighter you know is in strife, please reach out to the Association if you need help.

In a similar vein, we are all getting on in years, and with advancing years come more health issues. This underscores the importance of keeping in touch with your mates. There is a lot of support out there to assist us as we age, but many are unsure how to access it, and struggle on alone. So, pick up the phone and check in on your mates: if they are having difficulty, and don't know where to turn, refer them on to me or the Association. This is how we can all help one another.

Jim Stopford has put a useful summary of the support available and how to access it on our website <https://8rarassociation.org/>

### **End-of-Year Functions**

There has not been a lot of activity since our last newsletter but the end-of-year Christmas functions, which are reported on later in this newsletter, seem to have been well attended. At the Queensland function we had the opportunity to thank and farewell WO1 Adrian Ross, the 8/9 RAR RSM. Adrian's next posting is to Material Branch, where he will be advising on the acquisition and introduction of new equipment for our soldiers.

Adrian's replacement is WO1 Dave Nicholas. Kym and I met with Dave before Christmas, and he will be attending our Qld Long Hai Commemoration, where others can meet him.

### **8 RAR Old Colours**

The old 8 RAR Colours have now been placed on permanent public display in Brisbane City Hall, in recognition of the title 'Brisbane's Own', earned by the Battalion through its strong association with the City

during its lifetime. If you're in Brisbane, simply ask at the Information Desk in the foyer of City Hall to be directed to the display.

**8/9 RAR Historical Collection.** Ron and Marjorie Goward continue to work on the 8 RAR section of the Historical Collection. Their two latest projects have been a storyboard describing the award of the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, with Palm, Unit Citation to 8 RAR, and framed portraits, with replica medals, of each of 8 RAR's commanding officers. The CO's portraits will be formally presented to the museum on Long Hai Day this year.

Ron and Marjorie are currently working with the 9 RAR Association to produce a combined display of the weapons and equipment carried by our soldiers in Vietnam; donations towards this display are encouraged – donations can be permanent or on loan.

If anyone has one of the old cassette recorders, of the type used to send messages to our loved ones, that would be greatly received and would give today's soldiers an insight into life before mobile phones and the internet.

### **2027 Reunion**

The 2027 Reunion at Twin Towns on the Gold Coast is barely 12 months away. It's time for you to start making your plans to attend. There is further information in this newsletter on the planned activities and suggestions for your accommodation bookings. You should get in now with your booking to ensure you don't miss out. I hope to see you all there.

### **Annual Raffle**

Kev Sullivan and your committee have been working hard on some very attractive holiday prizes for this year's raffle. You will receive a book of tickets along with your 8 Ball – don't delay in returning your ticket butts because the raffle is **drawn on 18<sup>th</sup> March**.

### **The 'In Direct Support Award'**

Lastly, it is my great pleasure to announce that the winner of the 2025 'In Direct Support Award' is Simon Kleinig.

Simon joined the Grey 8 as a national serviceman in Malaysia and went with the Battalion to Vietnam as the D Coy pay clerk.

He has been the SA representative on your National Committee for many years, providing wise counsel in the running of your association, and actively supports the SA Branch in their activities. In recent years, he has been a reliable backstop for Ted Forward as he dealt with ongoing health issues.

Additionally, Simon works hard in support of veterans' families, through his involvement with Legacy in South Australia.

We congratulate Simon, and he will be presented with his trophy at the Adelaide Long Hai Day Commemoration.

Duty First, [Chad](#)



### *Secretary's Report*

I hope you all had a pleasant Christmas period! However, the scenario at Bondi was something I am sure none of us would have expected in the Country that we fought for Peace and Freedom! Sadly, history will show that there is always someone who wants to ensure that is not the case!

Back to Business - Please note that the AGM is **NOT** on Long Hai Day this year but will be held on **Tuesday the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2026** commencing at 1100 hours and will be held at the 8/9 RAR Uruzgan Lines, Enoggera and will also be broadcast using the Zoom platform for members outside Brisbane.

The relevant notice and other details will be forwarded to each financial member closer to that date!

**So please ensure you pay your subs this month to ensure you are eligible to vote!**

Paul (Wombat) Gallagher

### *Queensland*



#### **Christmas Function – 2025**

Once again there was a great turnout at the Queensland Branch Christmas party on 3 December, with over 40 attendees from Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Northern NSW making up a wonderful group of Grey Eighters to see a busy year out with lots of stories and lots of laughs.



*CO & RSM with the crowd*

Some members we haven't seen for a while came along for the occasion including Gerry and Carol Woodrow,



*CO 8/9 LTCOL Andy Raven, our patriarch Gerry Woodrow & RSM 8/9 WO1 Adrian Ross*

Bill & Stella Watson, Bob Crossthwaite, Rob Cathcart, and Peter Sweet. The CO and RSM 8/9 RAR were also made welcome.

We also bade farewell to the RSM Adrian Ross who has been an immense help to the Association during the past couple of years. It's great to see attendances at our 8RAR functions on the increase.



Bruce Mison, Andy Raven, Adrian Ross, Kym McDougall, Chad Sherrin, Ron Goward  
*Farewelling RSM Adrian Ross*

Thank you to all who attended.

### Remembering Our Fallen

We are holding a special graveside memorial service to remember three of our men killed in that tragic event in the Long Hais in February 1970, and who are interred here in Qld.

The services will be held on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> February. Details are as follows:

- **Bill Hoban and Jim Barrett** - Mt Gravatt Lawn Cemetery, and
- **Timo Pesonen** - Wall of Remembrance, Pinnaroo Lawn Cemetery, Bridgemen Downs.
- **Date/Time for both services:** Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> February, commencing at 10.00am.

If you would like to join us for one of these special services, please RSVP as follows:

- Mt Gravatt Lawn Cemetery - Chad Sherrin [chadawn@bigpond.com](mailto:chadawn@bigpond.com)
- Pinnaroo Lawn Cemetery - Ron Goward [mnr@bigpond.net.au](mailto:mnr@bigpond.net.au)

### Long Hai Day 2026

### Long Hai Day 2026

This year we will be joining with 8/9 RAR at their Uruzgan Lines for a combined Long Hai Commemoration Service and 8/9 RAR family day, providing the opportunity to meet and mix with the soldiers and their families.

We have a few special activities planned for the day and here is the outline program:

- **9.00 to 10.20 am: Gates Open:** enter via the Lloyd Street Gate to Enoggera Barracks and follow directions to 8/9 RAR and parking. Each person must have photo ID for access to the Barracks, and you will need to provide the following information, for each person, to the

secretary, Kym McDougall  
[kymmcdougall@icloud.com](mailto:kymmcdougall@icloud.com) :

- Name,
- Licence or passport number, and
- Vehicle Registration number.

This information is required NLT Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> February.

Coffee and refreshments will be available prior to the parade.

- **10.30am:** Parade commences.
- **11.30am to 2.00pm: BBQ Luncheon and formalities.** Includes:
  - Toast to the Fallen;
  - Presentation of LT Peter Lauder MC Trophy;
  - Presentation of framed CO's portraits.
  - Presentation of awards;
  - Opportunity to view the 8/9 RAR Historical Collection.
- **RAR National Memorial Walk.** If anyone would like to visit the Memorial Walk, a minibus will be available to take groups. For security reasons, individual movement around the Barracks is not allowed.

Refreshments will be pay-as-you-go. Cash and credit card facilities will be available.

### 8 RAR Assoc Annual General Meeting:

The Association AGM will be held at 8/9 RAR on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> April at 11.00am. Further detail will be provided closer to the event. **Reminder:** you must be a financial member to vote at the AGM.

### YOUR INVITATION TO THE 8RAR NATIONAL REUNION 26<sup>th</sup> TO 28<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2027.

It is our pleasure to invite you and your families to the next national reunion in February 2027 at Twin Towns on the Gold Coast. While this may be early notice it is important that we get the ball rolling now so that we all can plan ahead.

We have held two reunions at Twin Towns over the years, in 2005 and 2020, and I know you'll agree with us that there is no better place for us to gather with our lifelong 8RAR comrades. It ticks every box in terms of ease of access, accommodation, great beaches and an outstanding venue.

Here is an early outline of the activities that are in place. All times will be confirmed and circulated in future comms.

- **Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> February:** Registration and Meet-and-Greet.
- **Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> February:**

- Bus trip to the Land Warfare Centre, Canungra (the old JTC, where you trained before Malaya and Vietnam). It is a one-hour trip to Canungra where we will visit the impressive and emotional Vietnam Memorial; the moving AATTV Grove and Memorial; the infamous ‘Bear Pit’ and ‘Tower Leap’, that we’re sure you all remember; and more! We will then be hosted to lunch at the Sergeants’ Mess
- On our return to Twin Towns will be the opportunity to attend Company Functions.
- **Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> February:**
  - **Annual General Meeting.**
  - **Long Hai Day Service.** You will remember the emotional and touching service held in the main auditorium of Twin Towns at the 2020 reunion. We will again be using that venue for our service.
  - **Long Hai Luncheon.** This will include the emotional ‘Toast to our Fallen’.

The committee is still working on the fine detail of each of these activities and is investigating ways to reduce the out-of-pocket costs for you. Further detail will be conveyed to you in the April edition of the 8 Ball.

To ensure you don’t miss out on this information, make sure your membership fees are up to date. This addition of 8 Ball indicates the status of your membership, or you can contact Len Thompson on [lenthompson3@bigpond.com](mailto:lenthompson3@bigpond.com) to check the currency of your membership.

### Accommodation

February 2027 is barely 12 months away, so it is strongly recommended that you book your accommodation now, to ensure you don’t miss out. Here are some options for you:

- **Sebel & Mantra Twin Towns.** The Sebel & Mantra are conveniently co-located with the reunion venue and joined by a covered walkway. They have extended an offer of 10% off the Daily Accommodation Rate for us (*see attached flyer*), covering the period 24<sup>th</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> March. This will enable you to stay a bit longer if you would like. To book: phone 1800 19 20 20 or email [twintowns.res@mantra.com.au](mailto:twintowns.res@mantra.com.au)
- **Tweed Heads Las Vegas Motel.** 124 Wharf St, Tweed Heads (13-minute walk to Twin

Towns). Room rate - \$189 to \$220. Web: [www.tweedheadsvegasmotel.com.au](http://www.tweedheadsvegasmotel.com.au) Book: 07 5599 0399

- **Blue Pelican Motel.** 115 Wharf St, Tweed Heads (12 minute walk to Twin Towns). Room rate - \$184 to \$232. Web: [www.bluepelicanmotel.com.au](http://www.bluepelicanmotel.com.au) Book: 07 5536 1777
- **Cooks Endeavour Motor Inn.** 26 Frances St, Tweed Heads (9-minute walk to Twin Towns). Room rate - \$190 to \$200. Web: [www.cooksendeavourmotorinn.com.au](http://www.cooksendeavourmotorinn.com.au) Book: 07 5536 5399.
- **The Pink Hotel Coolangatta.** 171 Griffith St, Coolangatta (7-minute walk to Twin Towns). Room rate - \$190 to \$230. Web: [www.thepinkhotelcoolangatta.com](http://www.thepinkhotelcoolangatta.com) Book: 07 5415 0598
- **Tweed Central Motel.** (9-minute walk to Twin Towns). Room rate - \$190 to \$200. Web: [www.tweedcentralmotel.com.au](http://www.tweedcentralmotel.com.au) Book: 07 5536 6620
- **Tweed Holiday Parks Tweed Heads.** 3 Dry Dock Rd, Tweed Heads (4-minute drive to Twin Towns) Fees: Cabin - \$180/night; Site - \$61 to \$73/night. Web: [www.tweedholidayparks.com.au](http://www.tweedholidayparks.com.au) Book: 075524 3306
- **Big 4 Tweed Billabong Holiday Park.** 30 Holden St, Tweed Heads South (7-minute drive to Twin Towns). Fees: Cabin - \$191 to #255; Sites: \$76 to \$79.

**Note:** *Except for the Sebel/Mantra, all the rates shown are indicative only. To get the best rate, first check the booking sites (e.g. Booking.com, Trivago, etc), then phone the individual motel and negotiate the best rate to suit you.*

### IMPORTANT:

**We want to know if you’re planning to come.** This is not a request to register, simply an indicator that you are likely to attend. No pressure, if you change your mind or if life gets in the way, and for some reason you find you can’t attend, no problem. It will just help us in our general planning.

### PLEASE EMAIL YOUR REPLY

[kymmcdougall@icloud.com](mailto:kymmcdougall@icloud.com) if you intend to come along. That’s all we need, a **Yes or Maybe, and how many**. The formal registration stuff will happen in the next edition of the 8Ball.

**We look forward to seeing you all there in 2027!**

**Stay With Us**

The Sebel Twin Towns and Mantra Twin Towns is pleased to extend to all guests of  
**BRAR Reunion**  
**24<sup>th</sup> of February – 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2027**  
**10% off\* the Daily Accommodation Rate.**

The hotel rooms and apartments are beautifully appointed with stylish and comfortable furniture and all the amenities you need to make yourself at home. Relax in the on-site pool or take a short walk down to Greenmount Beach.

To book, call **1800 19 20 20**  
 or email [twintowns.res@mantra.com.au](mailto:twintowns.res@mantra.com.au)

**THE SEBEL** mantra

\*Minimum length of stay applies over the weekend  
 Terms and conditions apply. Subject to availability at the time of booking and subject to change. Discount does not apply to peak rates.

**Victoria**



Well summer has hit Melbourne with a vengeance this time. High thirties appear to be the new temperatures for the moment. Best I stop complaining about how miserable the city’s weather is I suppose. Let’s see how long it lasts though. Perhaps another grouch to align with my usual approach to opening these missives to you all. The traffic! I am fed up with it. There was a time when I loved driving, but not now and certainly not in the mire of traffic jams and poor roadway maintenance that one finds everywhere around Melbourne. Congestion is out of control and all the while the Government is trying to influence us to catch public transport, the joys of which I will cover another time. The latest is that new homes, apartments anyway, will be lavishly planned to cater for one or even two push bike spaces. No car spaces or garages anymore. Ponder that!

Anyway, welcome to the 8 RAR Victoria Branch update for 2026 and may all your ducks align for you and yours this year.

Turning to recent activities. Our Christmas Luncheon was a roaring success once again at the Doncaster East RSL on 16<sup>th</sup> November. Thanks especially to Denis CLARKE (Vietnam) and his wife Martha for their support. In attendance were David and Pam rooks, Paul Fraser, Wayne and Vera Maschette, Geoff Ravenscroft, Sian Stevens, Jim and Dawn Brown, John and Hillary Cooper, Neil and Sylvie Smith, Dennis and Cait Moss, Alan Holland, Ralph Miller, John Onrust, Allan and Joyce Small, Bill Westhead, Arthur Koo, Joy and Warren Gilliland/Madex, Graeme and Julie Agnew, Bill, Kerri and Debbi Westhead. Great to see a few young folks there too – people like Kerri, Debbi and Sian. Bring your friends! Apologies were received from Bruce and Marilyn Lankford, Peter and Janet Fraser, Peter Manassa, Ken Emmett and Ros Vowles, Grant and Tina Coultman-Smith, Jim and Paula and Jim Cororan and John Betts. It is notable that both 9 and 6 RAR Association Branches had a similar social engagement on the same day as ours.

News about the traps. Your reporter’s in-tray is surprisingly clear thus far this year, although people like Adrian Lombardo and Snow Morgan have been in touch. The former continues to soldier on as a Life Governor at The Shrine while Snow is living the life up Townville way.

The RAR Association in recent times has been forced to relocate from its old home ‘The Tramways RSL’ in Fitzroy. All quite a kerfuffle apparently with a proposed alternate home at the Kew RSL not being suitable and a continuing problem being the future of the Vietnam and other memorabilia housed in that august facility. Camberwell RSL has been in the mix and there is scuttlebutt about suggesting that the old Rats of Tobruk Association building in the CBD might be the end destination. Really. It is all very confusing and frankly, disappointing. Corner our man with the RARA, Bruce Lankford and ask him for a debrief. It may appear to be all a bit *Ho..hum*, but this erosion of interest in the history and heritage of our veterans, not to mention Australia bodes badly for the future.

Dennis is still busy with the SES and has made inroads into having new name tags sourced – somewhere in Queensland.

I wonder if anyone remembers Barry Hubert Smith. The young National Service clerk from Beverley in Western Australia who was posted to 8 RAR as a reinforcement MG Number on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1966. Eight days later he was attached to the Jungle Training Centre but was still on our books. Barry became ill in January 1967 and died from a cerebellum tumour on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1967.

No more news is to hands about the future of Victoria Barracks which means the future of the Royal United Servies Institute is still unclear. As urged before,

do yourself a favour and arrange a visit to the RUSI library, soon to be renamed the Monash Melbourne Defence Library. There is none better, certainly in Victoria, indeed it is officially assessed as a Collection of National Significance. Feel free to contact the writer, Neil Smith, if you want to know more – [milhis@hotmail.com](mailto:milhis@hotmail.com) or 0411143041.

Sadly, Wayne and Vera Maschette have relocated to Queensland. We hope you find greener pastures there and please be assured of the gratitude we have for your friendship and supportive work all these years in Melbourne. Please don't be strangers and of course we expect you to read the Victorian Update in 8-Ball before all others. That means we need another volunteer to help out in the Vietnam Veterans' National Museum, doesn't it? Hmm.

I don't know about you but I have received more medals since I left the Army than when I was serving. I would happily debate that with you but will leave it for now and merely report that two more bravery decorations have recently been approved for two Vietnam chaps – Lance Corporal ROONEY 6 RAR and Colonel G C SKARDON from the Training Team. Well done those men, but where and when will it stop? With my research I see instances of courage and sacrifice almost daily in say World War One, but never recognized. And don't get me started on the '8 RAR' unit citation.

Looking a little further down the track. Our annual Long Hai Commemoration Service is locked in for 1230 hours at the Shrine on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026 – note the slightly later start time than usual to allow for another service to continue. No change is envisaged to previous years apart from that, with sandwiches and beverages inside the Shrine once again. And no, I am not going to ask for help on the day this year – I know that will be forthcoming without a request?

In conclusion, a little more wisdom from Winston Churchill.

Knowledge is knowing that tomato is a fruit.  
Wisdom is not putting it in the fruit salad.

They begin the evening news with 'Good evening', then proceed to tell you why it isn't.

To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.

One more. There is a fine line between cuddling and holding someone down

so, they can't get away.

Cheers,  
Neil SMITH

## South Australia



### Christmas Lunch

Our annual Christmas Lunch was held at the Birkenhead Taven at mid-day on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025. A pleasant day of mild, spring Adelaide weather attracted a healthy turnout of our membership: Bob & Tania McLeod, John & Anna Kelly, Dennis and Deirdre Broadbent, Kym Growden, Sylvan Elhay, Jula Szuster, Malcolm Tylor, Adrian Coles, Maureen O'Donoghue, Gavin & Judy Power, Lorraine Harris, Ted & Adrienne Forward and Alan Handley. Fred & Lois Manno were joined by their son Vince and grandson Enoch.

Our Christmas lunch was a fitting way to sign off on another successful calendar year. The SA 8RAR Association continues to fulfil its aims of fostering goodwill and camaraderie, and of looking after one another.



### Long Hai Day



A forward notice that the SA branch of the Association will be commemorating Long Hai Day as usual at 11am on Saturday, 28 February 2026. Members are invited to assemble at the 8 RAR Memorial on the Pathway of Honour, above the southern end of the Torrens Parade Ground.

Simon Kleinig

### *Western Australia*



There is not a lot to report, I have emailed details of our Long Hai Day separately to WA members. However, if you haven't received those details here, they are.

We gather in Kings Park on Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup> at 0800 hours to remember our own fallen comrades and to also remember mates who have passed since and recall the good times we had with them, their humour all the funny quirks they had. We all miss you guys a whole lot all of us RIP you great men. After the Service we will have breakfast at the Zamia café in the park.

Cheers  
Dennis

### *ACT/Monaro*



Greetings from the Capital.

Not a lot to report from the ACT. Like winter, much of the population migrates from Canberra, in summer to the coast for Christmas.

I will be shortly putting out a message to local members about subs for this year for those due to renew and referring them to the application form on 8 Ball.

I was at Woden cemetery recently with some Army band colleagues to visit the grave of Pte Chris Clark, a bandsman/stretchers bearer with 1 RAR first tour, who was KIA in Jan 66 and buried at Woden after being returned to Australia with several Vietnam KIA who had originally been buried in Malaysia. We also laid a tribute on the grave of Phil Richter and I told the guys the story of his passing. Of interest, we visited the grave of Corporal Ernest Albert Corey MM and 3 Bars. He was a stretcher bearer in WW1 with 55th Infantry Battalion and

was the only Commonwealth soldier to have been awarded the MM 4 times. He came from near Cooma and lived around Queanbeyan and Canberra until his death in 1972, age 81, when he was buried in Woden.

Our Long Hai Day commemoration will again be held at Phil Richter's grave in Woden cemetery at 1400 hrs, Saturday 28 February. A short service will be held and a wreath laid. All ACT based members and any visitors to the area are invited to participate. Contact me if you need details of the location.

Forewarning for Anzac Day in the ACT. The ACT Branch of the RAR Association will be marching as a group with other RAR veterans. Following the march and National service, a gathering will be held at the Mecure Hotel. Details will be provided nearer the day.

Best wishes to all.

Tony Sillcock  
ACT Representative



### *New South Wales*

I have very little to report as our Christmas drinks at the Epping club were only attended by those who are on the committee and Tom Lyons.

The main topic in this report is Long Hai Day on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February at the Epping Club. Kevin Sullivan has prepared a flyer with the details for all NSW Members included with your 8 Ball. I just hope that we get a good turn out on the day to honor this very special event.

### Welfare Report

At this point in time, I have no information regarding welfare.

In the next issue I will have details of what will be happening on Anzac Day.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year.



Regards Mick Carter

## Last Post

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the families of the following members, you can be assured they will never be forgotten by the men of the Grey Eight.



### Rajko (Rick) Ribic

13 January 1948 – 2 August 2025

Rajko was born in Luneburg Germany and served with the battalion during our tour of Vietnam

We received the following sad news from Ribic's son Troy.

*Good afternoon gentlemen of 8 RAR. It's with great sadness to inform you 1 of your brothers Rajko (Rick) Ribic has sadly passed away on the evening of the 2nd of August 2025 Rick passed quickly from complications he'd had been suffering for couple of years. I'm so very sorry I bring you this news late as I myself have been grieving. He was the sole inspiration that I joined the Army in 92 and proudly served in 8/9 for a short while Rick my dad was the best Husband, Father, Grandfather and Hero to his whole family and friends.....R.I.P Stand Down your duties are done Dad....We miss you Cheers everyone May the boys of 8 Battalion RAR live forever!!!!*



### Lionel Allan (Pud) Coward

13<sup>th</sup> January 1926 – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2025

Much loved husband and friend of Christine.

Loving father of the late Simon and Vanessa.

Privately cremated as per Lionel's wishes.

Spud served in 7 platoon C Company in Malaysia.



### Terry M. Franke

17<sup>th</sup> December 1945 – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Garry Murdoch received a phone call from Terry's Daughter Anne Martin advising of Terry's passing. He was living at Tallebudgera Valley in Queensland. His funeral was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025.

Terry started National Service on 20 April 1967 and was discharged on 19 April 1969. He served with 8RAR in Malaysia in 6 Platoon B Company.



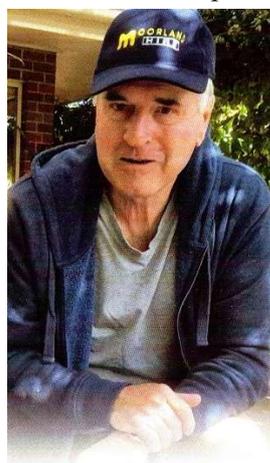
### Kevin Craze

Kevin was a National Serviceman who served with 8 RAR in the time between our returning from Malaysia and deployment to Vietnam. He was transferred to Dental Corps and completed his service there. A Memorial service was held at Palmwoods Hotel.



### William "Bill" Bricknall

18<sup>th</sup> April 1949 – 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026



Hoppy, Sue Bricknall and David Lewien

Bill was posted to 9 Section 12 Platoon on the 18 June 1970 and had Operational Service/Deployment Vietnam from 27 May 1970 to 12 November 1970. On return Bill saw out the remainder of his service with the Battalion.

On the 17 December Bill's lymphoma returned and he requested no more treatment. All he wanted was to return home for Christmas which he did. He passed away on the 4 January 2026

I carried out the RSL Eulogy and presented the 8th Battalion Sash and

Certificate and David Lewien presented the Australian Flag to Sue Bill's wife.  
Geoff "Hoppy" Hopkins



**Chris Laurenson**



**8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion. 6 March 1953 – 22 December 2025**

Pipe Major 8/9 Battalion Rtd. Chris Laurenson passed away on the 22nd of December.

The members of 8 RAR Association were very saddened to learn of Chris Laurenson's passing, many will remember Chris playing the Long Hai Hills Lament at our last Tweed Heads Reunion.

We extend our sympathies to his many friends in 8/9 RAR.



### Items of interest.

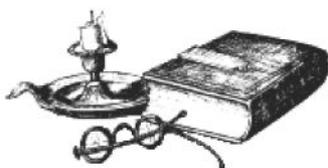


#### 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National Service 1951-72

On National Servicemen's Day, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2026, the Department of Veterans' Affairs will commemorate and honour the more than 280,000 Australians who were called up for national service during the period 1951 to 1972.

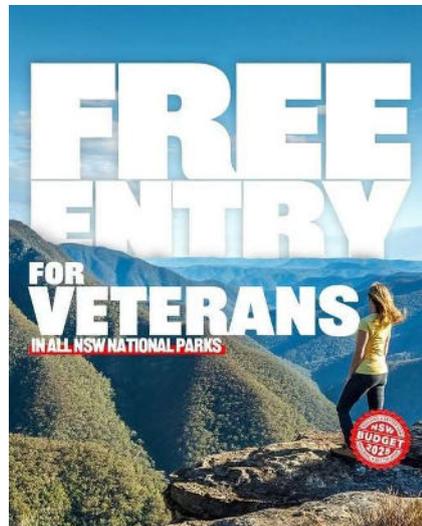
The national commemorative service will be held in the Great Hall at the Australian Parliament House in Canberra and the service will be broadcast live across Australia by the ABC. For more information about the national commemorative service.

please visit [dva.gov.au/Nashos75](https://dva.gov.au/Nashos75)



#### Editors Ramblings

Membership renewal is now due! You will see the date your subscription is due on the envelope with either your 8 Ball or raffle tickets are in.  
**PAYMENT WILL BE BY BANK TRANSFER TO 8 RAR ASSN INC. NAB. BSB 084283 ACCT 045098582 OR BY CHEQUE**



In a nod to those who've served our country, the Minns Labor Government will expand free vehicle access to national parks in NSW to all Commonwealth Veteran Card holders.

The 2025-26 NSW Budget measure will enable more veterans from around Australia to apply for a free pass to enter the 45 national parks in the state where a vehicle entry fee applies.

The pass is currently available for some categories of Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card holders, and this decision by the Minns Labor Government will ensure all DVA Veteran Card holders are able to apply, including those with a White Card or Orange Card.

It will increase veteran access to our network of national parks and have the added benefit of boosting veterans' physical and mental health.

NSW has an incredible network of 895 national parks and reserves that conserve close to 10 per cent of the state, protecting unique ecosystems across deserts, Alpine regions, coastal areas, rainforest and Ramsar-listed wetlands.

Only 5 per cent of parks and reserves in NSW have vehicle entry fees. They range from \$4 to \$12 a day, and up to \$29 a day for Kosciuszko National Park in winter. Removing the charge will make it easier for all Commonwealth DVA Veteran Card holders to enjoy more of these natural wonderlands.

Commonwealth DVA Veteran Card holders will be able to apply for the pass from Monday, 7 July 2025, by visiting <https://pass.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/concession/application>

#### Dental changes leave veterans smiling

The Australian Government is enhancing dental care for veterans by providing easier access to more

dental providers and increasing the money veterans can access for costly dental work up front.

Following feedback from veterans and the dental sector, from 1 January 2026, funding for Schedule C items under the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Dental Program will double by switching from an annual to a biennial monetary limit. Schedule C includes high-cost treatments such as crowns, bridges and veneers.

This means that from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027, the biennial monetary limit for Schedule C dental items is \$5,980.30. This change applies to subsequent two-year periods and is subject to indexation.

This doubling of the cap will help ensure veterans are not left out of pocket when paying for high cost, clinically required restorative items.

Funding is available to eligible veterans with assessed clinical need and a Veteran Gold Card or White Card with related accepted conditions.

Dental therapists, hygienists and oral health therapists who are registered with the Dental Board of Australia have also been added to the approved list of dental service providers.

This means these professions can now provide and directly claim for treatment, within their scope of practice. This enhances choice and access, making it easier for veterans to access a dental practitioner suited to their needs.

These changes are about giving veterans greater flexibility and financial support when accessing dental care, particularly costly procedures.

To learn more about DVA's Dental Program, visit the [DVA website](#).

### Veterans in Home Care

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) provides support services for veterans in home care through the Veterans' Home Care (VHC) Program. This program offers in-home care and support services designed to help eligible DVA clients maintain their independence by providing practical assistance.

Services under the VHC Program include:

Domestic assistance

Personal care

Respite care

Home and garden maintenance for safety

Access to these services is through the VHC Assessment Agency, which confirms eligibility and conducts an assessment to determine the level of care needed. The VHC Assessment Agency can be contacted on 1300 550 450.

For more detailed information, you can refer to the [Veterans' Home Care Program Overview and Access Information](#) and the [Veterans' Home Care](#)

Support Available from DVA for Aged Care and In Home

<https://www.dva.gov.au/ge>

[t-support/health-support/care-home-or-aged-care/aged-care-resources](https://www.dva.gov.au/health-support/care-home-or-aged-care/aged-care-resources)

Planning Ahead a Guide to putting Your Affairs In Order This is an excellent valuable resource for you and your Family.

<https://www.dva.gov.au/documents-and-publications/planning-ahead-kit>

Note: DVA will send the kit by mail if you request this.  
Veterans Legislation Reform Update  
30/10/2025: [Veterans' Legislation Reform | Department of Veterans' Affairs](#)

### National Raffle

1<sup>st</sup> Prize: 7 nights at Air B&B 12 Echidna Gr. Cowes. Phillip Island. Valued at \$2,000.00

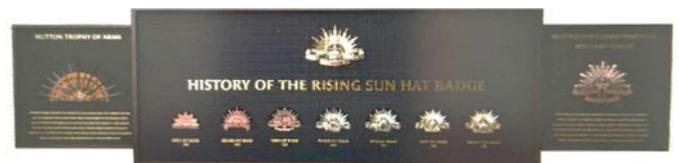
2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - 7 nights at St Georges, Gold Coast, or \$700 cash. *Note: St Georges prize only available to Defence or ex-defence members.*

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize - History of Rising Sun Hat Badge Wall Frame. Value \$295.00

4<sup>th</sup> Prize -Books by Lt. Col. Fairhead

### Prize Details

1. As you can see, our National Raffle this year has some excellent prizes. We thank Dennis Moss for securing the Phillip Island prize and we also appreciate the generous gift from the property owners.
2. The Committee has purchased the second prize, which coincides with our 2027 reunion. *Note: St Georges prize only available to Defence or ex-defence members*; for this reason, a cash alternative of \$700 is offered.
3. The NSW Branch purchased *History of the Rising Sun Hat Badge Wall Frame* and has generously donated it for this raffle.



4. This prize consists of two books written by Lieutenant Colonel Fred Fairhead (Retired): *A Duty Done* (soft cover), and *The History of the Sixth Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, Volume 1: Vietnam Era 1965–1970* (hard cover). This prize was organised by Jim Stopford.

**MEMORABILIA ORDER FORM**

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SURNAME \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Description	Price	Quantity Req.	Amount \$
T-Shirt	Casual design for relaxation, gym	\$35 each See sizing chart		\$
8RAR Cap (Grey)	One size fit all	\$30 each		\$
Dog Tag / Keyring	Dog tag design with regimental logo	\$10 each		\$
Coaster Set	Sets of four with regimental logo	\$18 set		\$
Label Badge	Pin on lapel Badge V111	\$10 Each		\$
Cooler	With 8RAR design	\$10 each		\$
Window Sticker	With 8RAR design	\$5 each		\$
Battalion Tie	With 8RAR design	\$35 each		\$
Infantry Combat Badge	<b>LARGE</b>	\$10 each		\$
Infantry Combat Badge	<b>SMALL</b>	\$10 each		\$
Reg. Logo (Skippy) Badge	<b>LARGE</b>	\$10 each		\$
Reg. Logo (Skippy) Badge	<b>SMALL</b>	\$10 each		\$
Citation	<b>LARGE ONLY</b>	\$10 each		\$
<b>Postage</b>		<b>\$15 FLAT RATE</b>		<b>\$15</b>
			<b>TOTAL</b>	

**PAYMENT DETAILS**

**PAYMENT WILL BE BY BANK TRANSFER TO 8 RAR ASSN INC. NAB. BSB 084283  
ACCT 045098582 OR BY CHEQUE.**

**PLEASE COPY THIS ORDER AND EMAIL TO. [treasurer8rarassn@hotmail.com](mailto:treasurer8rarassn@hotmail.com) or post to  
Len Thompson, Treasurer, PO Box 555 Cotton Tree Qld 4558**

**Enquiries? EMAIL Kym McDougall [memorabilia8rar@icloud.com](mailto:memorabilia8rar@icloud.com)**

**THE 8<sup>th</sup> BATTALION ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED**

ABN: 12 157 362 866

PO Box 555 Cotton Tree Qld 4558

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL**

Surname: .....

Given Names: .....

Home address: Street # ..... Street name: .....

City/Suburb: ..... State: ..... Post Code: .....

Postal Address (If different to home address)

Street # & Name OR Post Office Box #.....

City/Suburb: ..... State.....Post Code .....

Telephone: Home: ( )..... Mobile: .....Work: ( ).....

E- Mail address: .....

Spouse/Partner Name: .....

Service Details: Service No.: ..... Coy: ..... Platoon/Unit: .....

Birthdate: ...../...../19..... . Date enlisted: ...../...../19..... . Date discharged:...../...../19..... .

Rank on Discharge: ..... Served In: Australia Malaysia Viet Nam Other.....

(Circle all that apply)

I HEREBY APPLY TO JOIN / RENEW MEMBERSHIP OF THE 8<sup>th</sup> BATTALION ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED AND AUTHORISE THE ASSOCIATION TO PRINT MY NAME IN ITS CORRESPONDENCE, NEWSLETTERS OR ANY PUBLICATION THAT THE ASSOCIATION MAY WISH TO PUBLISH FROM TIME TO TIME, PROVIDING THAT THE INFORMATION OR USE OF MY NAME IS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH OR CONNECTED TO ANY DEFAMATORY PUBLICATION.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT THE ASSOCIATION HAS A PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY AND THE AMOUNT OF COVER IS \$20MILLION.

Signature: .....Date: ..... /..... /20.....

Annual Subs: \$20.00 for one (1) year OR \$100 for Five (5) Years \$.....

Donation (optional) \$.....

Total \$.....

*Remember you can now pay your subs directly to the Association's bank account.*

Account name: 8 RAR Association Inc Bank: National Australia Bank

Account Details: BSB No. 084-283 Account No. 045098582

**Don't forget to put your name in the detail section on the Bank Deposit Slip**

*If you pay your subscriptions by direct deposit to the Association's Bank Account, please scan and e-mail this page to:-*

*The Treasurer at [treasurer8rarassn@hotmail.com](mailto:treasurer8rarassn@hotmail.com) OR Post to:-*

*The Treasurer at PO Box 555 COTTON TREE QLD 4558*



**NEW NAME BADGES FOR MEMBERS AND FAMILIES**

**RECENTLY WE HAVE RECEIVED REQUESTS TO MAKE AVAILABLE NAME BADGES FOR USE AT 8RAR ASSOCIATION GATHERINGS.**

NOW YOU CAN RENEW YOUR NAME BADGE OR BUY ONE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS. MANY OF US NOW MARCH WITH CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WHO WOULD PROUDLY WEAR AN ASSOCIATION NAME BADGE TO ANZAC DAY, LONG HAI DAY OR OTHER GATHERINGS.

BADGES WILL BE AS IN THE IMAGE BELOW WITH VERY LITTLE CHANGE FROM THE ORIGINAL, AT A COST OF ONLY **\$11.00 INCLUDING POSTAGE.**



**PLEASE COMPLETE THIS ORDER FORM AND SEND TO THE ADDRESS BELOW.**

NAME.....

EMAIL.....PHONE.....

YOUR POSTAL ADDRESS .....  
.....POSTCODE.....

**PLEASE SEND ME.....BADGES AT \$11 PER BADGE. TOTAL COST .....**

**NAME/S ON BADGE/S (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY IN CAPITALS)**

- 1.....
- .
- 2.....
- .
- 3.....
- .

**PAYMENT DETAILS**

**PAYMENT WILL BE BY BANK TRANSFER TO 8RAR ASSN INC. NAB. BSB 084283. ACCT 045098582, OR BY CHEQUE. DO NOT SEND CASH.  
PLEASE COPY THIS ORDER AND EMAIL TO [treasurer8rarassn@hotmail.com](mailto:treasurer8rarassn@hotmail.com) OR POST TO:  
8RAR ASSN, PO BOX 555 COTTON TREE QLD 4558**

**ENQUIRIES? EMAIL KYM MCDUGALL [memorabilia8rar@icloud.com](mailto:memorabilia8rar@icloud.com)**