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THE RAM 1988



The Magazine of the 8th/9th Battalion
The Royal Australian Regiment



9 RAR Bunker Assault Vietnam

Artist: Harold Lane 1987



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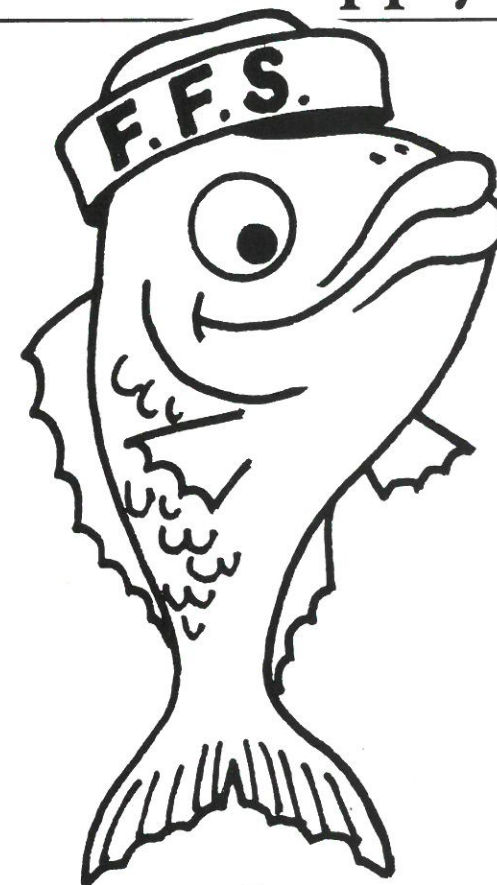
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BN HQ CLERICAL SECTION

1988 saw the Clerical element of Bn HQ take on a new shape right from the start, with changes to staff at the top. The changes included

ADJT – CAPT A. Mortensen – for a short few months initially before deciding that the sweet delights of Singapore were more to his liking and then handed over the reins to CAPT Matthews for 3 months while he swanned around Singapore. Returning to tell all who would listen how hard he had worked.

AADJT – LT J.J. Lewis – a tireless worker all year with no perks of the job.

CCLK – WO2 A.R. Whelan – Who will probably go down in the history of Bn HQ as the Furniture Removalist. From day one until even this day he is not happy with the layout of his Orderly Room and is for ever changing and swapping desks, filing cabinets and even individuals in and out of offices – will he ever be happy!!!!

The rest of the Clerical staff soldiered on throughout the year coping with the many and numerous changes both to staff and their work areas (and at times weren't sure exactly which desk they would be at from one day to the next). Overall though a good effort was put in by the clerks throughout the year and they managed to cope with a new broom who promised not to sweep clean but proceeded to do exactly the opposite.



The major 'coup' of the year for us would have to be receiving the new Photocopier, which has enhanced the Bn reproduction facilities greatly. Also the new Heat transparency machine and the electric collator (when it finally returns) helped to speed up the repro area in the HQ. Even with the Chief running interference (and failing on most occasions) with all repro request and trying to cut the use of the photocopier to a minimum, the new machines have maintained a steady out put all year and have been of great benefit. Thank God for white man magic.

Particular attention should be paid to the Movement Clerk of the year, because at times it appeared that every member of the Battalion seemed to need to move somewhere in Australia by tomorrow and had left every thing to the last minute, however after much abuse by one and all it seemed the impossible nearly always happened and off they went. Thanks for a job well done.

Also thanks to CPL Max Bartlett and his ever changing offsideers in R&F, who have coped with the increased amount of paperwarfare. With Max also the OPs clerk and forever being called away for CPXs, exercises and to help find all the CP equipment, R&F have handled the year well and persevered with the ever changing whims of the Bn hierarchy.

Much to the Chief's disappointment, he wasn't able to deploy the Orderly Room to SWBTA for the Bn exercise, and had to live with only sending SGT Marjoribanks and a couple of representatives from BHQ plus the Coy clerks to A Ech. But never fear he is still trying and "hopes" to deploy the Orderly Room on K89.

Farewells have been many this year and the staff has come and gone at a brisk pace. People who have left for better places (???)

DPRI 8/9 RAR - COMBAT WOMBATS

1988 has been a full and varied year. Much of the emphasis was on stocking the store and increasing the Regt Funds. During this period we saw the loss of Sergeant John Phillips to Aviation Corps, Lance Corporal Scott Hedger to civilian street and the gain of Sergeant Ray Dunning and Lance Corporal Wayne Cullen. We'll see the loss of Wayne to B Coy on promotion by the time this goes to print.

The store is increasing in capability & stock will improve as creditors pay their dues. We saw the deployment of the 'combat wombats' to WBTA and SWBTA but were somewhat restricted due to lack of ready cash and transport. Some mistakes have occurred on QUALITY CONTROL - eh C Coy? And the ever ready resident auditor Captain Hurcum.

DPRI - that's spelt DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE REGIMENTAL INSTITUTE relies on the generous support of the members of the BN to make it financially viable. I would ask you to support it with your custom (including payment of Debts).

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas, a good leave and a safe return next year.

SUBBIES vs CAPTAINS OBSTACLE COURSE RACE

The CO again issued the challenge to the Lieutenants and Captains for the obstacle course race. In readiness for the 8th of September, the two teams of fine young officers prepared for battle.

A cursory recon and trot through the course was all that was needed by the fit and energetic subbies. But the Captains, being only shadows of their former battle hardened PI Comd-selves, were decidedly worried by the talent of their opposition and took training much more seriously.

On the day, a quick resume of the rules and scoring system by the RSM and the competition commenced before a large number of the Bn.

First over were the Captains who initially set a cracking pace, but were soon slowed by the traverse ropes. However a fine display of team work and determination saw them complete the course in 12.57 minutes.

Still fuming from defeat in the inaugural event last year and determined to avoid any embarrassment, the Lt's were keen to seek revenge in '88. With youth and agility on their side, the subbies glided through, over and under the obstacles in an outstanding time of 9.27minutes, easily taking the title from the captains and displaying a fine example to the remainder of the Bn.

Naturally the competition was conducted with true sportsmanship and in great spirit, despite vain attempts by others to upset momentum by throwing eggs, smoke and various other foul waste. Although hardly necessary, it did simulate the haze of a battlefield somewhat.

An excellent contest has been born here, and hopefully will be continued in true officer spirit for years to come.



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AUSTRALIAN RULES

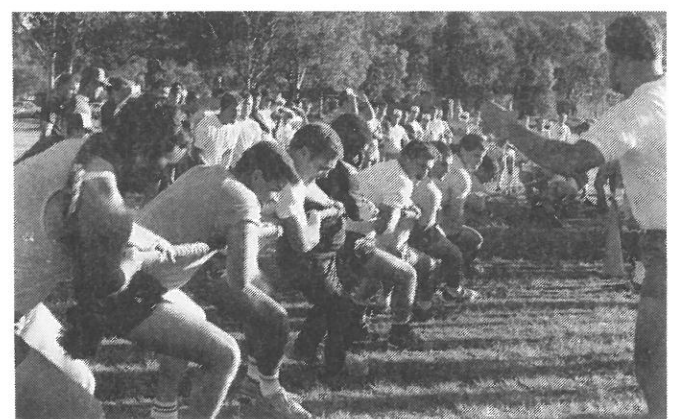
After devastating season in 1987, capturing the Premiership, 1988 was going to be even greater for 8/9 Australian football. However this was not to be. The team lost Paul Crichton, Stu Barrow (for most of the season) and flamboyant coach Des Blazely, which hit the team and the Club right where it hurts.

The A Grade side at the completion of the Home and Away matches were perched on 4th position. The first Semi Final was against the Gunners, who we conquered in that epic and memorable battle of the 87 Grand Final. This time however the opposition had too many big guns for us to handle and the A's bowed out of the 88 Premiership nice.

The B Grade achieved much of what the A Grade didn't - players played to their full potential, and did not know the meaning of the word "quit". The highlights of the "B"s was their victory over the eventual premiers.

A complimentary word to some of the Stars of 88. Best and fairest in the A Grade was Smiley Bradford - he ruckroved tirelessly throughout the season and was a fine example to team mates. Best and fairest B Grade was Darren Powell, who again showed that guts and determination often counts for more than skill and non-committment.

1989 will hopefully be a change for the better for 8/9 Australian football.



BN SPORTS DAY 25th MARCH 1988

The statistics were ominous. On the day each coy had to provide 3 volleyball teams, 3 softball teams, 3 tug of war teams and 10 triathletes. So soon after the grim reaping by Admin and SPT Coy during the manning conference, the bill was hard to fill. In fact, the situation was so desperate that the OCs were seen to compete in some events.

The lead up to the day saw Admin Coy carrying on with its normal routine of playing volleyball for PT. C Coy was seen to be training its teams a week before the event. SPT Coy was able to draw a lot of its talent from the recently stripped Rifle Coys. B Coy just came off duties and had to 'cuff' its teams 10 minutes before the competition began. A Coy just came off RF and had mounted duties. They could hardly fill half the team commitments for the sports day.

The day started typically enough with it raining during the volley ball and softball, thus turning the fields into a quagmire. This had its advantage for those rugby players forced to play volleyball, for they were able to frolic in the muddy quagmire. The highlight of the day was the triathlon. If B Coy was any measure, most Coys had trouble getting 10 bicycles let alone 10 dedicated triathletes. The event started well enough with 50 swimmers mauling each other for first place in the 500m swim. The 8.4KM bike ride and 4.2KM run went by uneventfully. The event ended well with all competitors finishing and the Bn's newest subaltern LT Bywater from A Coy comfortably winning the event.

The last event was the tug of war when the immovable mass from Spt and the irresistible force from Admin had a close run competition between them. They didn't let the other coys have a showing as they both tied for first place.

It wouldn't have been an 8/9 RAR sports day without one, so of course the day finished with a BBQ/Piss up at the Rams for the whole Bn.

1st Admin Coy, 2nd Spt Coy, 3rd B Coy, 4th C Coy, 5th A Coy. VOLLEYBALL: 1st C Coy, 2nd Admin Coy, 3rd A B Spt Coy.

SOFTBALL: 1st Spt Coy, 2nd Admin Coy, 3rd C Coy, 4th B Coy, 5th A Coy.

TRIATHLON: 1st B Coy, 2nd Admin Coy, 3rd SPT Coy, 4th C Coy, 5th A Coy.

TUG OF WAR: 1st SPT/ADMIN Coy, 2nd A Coy, 3rd B Coy, 4th C Coy.

PAY OFFICE

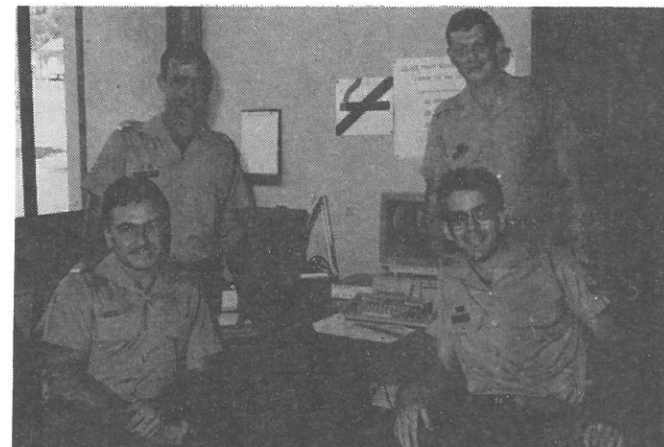
The pay office has had a busy year with the introduction of Net Pay Deposit (thank God), changes in financial regulations and the administration of overseas trips.

We would like to welcome our new pay clerk, PTE Fred Sperry (computer link to DEFPAY) who came from Canberra and joined the unit in June. Fred works to his own timings, tends to go down on us alot, and sleeps in the office, but he is always easy to blame when things go wrong.

We would like to congratulate Blue Emberton on his very wise move on joining the RAAOC, after finishing his pay course. Blue and his family are being posted to Sydney, so all the best to Blue from all of us.

Our Pay SGT with the long name, didn't go anywhere or do anything really great, just stayed in the office, pretty boring year Henry. He did move the office's furniture again, his childhood ambition was to be an interior decorator.

At the end of this year, Johnno is off to Butterworth with A Coy to end a busy year. Johnno seemed to get involved in everything this year from the Vic Bks guard to bludging with PT Coy every chance he got.



After being promoted to CPL, returning from Butterworth with C Coy and completing his SUBJ1 for CPL, Scotty is contemplating a holiday to the USA again early next year. Seems to us that Scotty had a good year this year.

All things taken into account, this year has been a very busy year for us and we only hope it quiets down next year. We would also like to thank all the clerks in the BN for their support etc.



RP SECT 1988

After a well earned rest the R.P. section returned to start work in '88.

88 was a relatively quiet year for the RPs with only one member leaving. PTE 'I can't go bush I've got a bad back plus I've got to play indoor cricket Tuesday and Thursday nights' Lister.

The Sherrif, SGT 'Dutchy' Holland had a good year again on and off in the footy field. Who can ever forget the patrol of one SGT and three CPL's into the bright lights of Rockhampton in the early hours of the morning.

PTE Gardas joined the section mid-year and really believes he can walk Stan without Stan walking him.

PTE Mitchell had a bit of bad luck on his Harley Davidson when the inevitable collision happened and unfortunately will spend the rest of the year in 1 Mil Hospital.

Stan had another year of taking it easy which was highlighted on ANZAC Day when he propped in front of the Governor for a few minutes and still believes he is going to be promoted by the end of this year.

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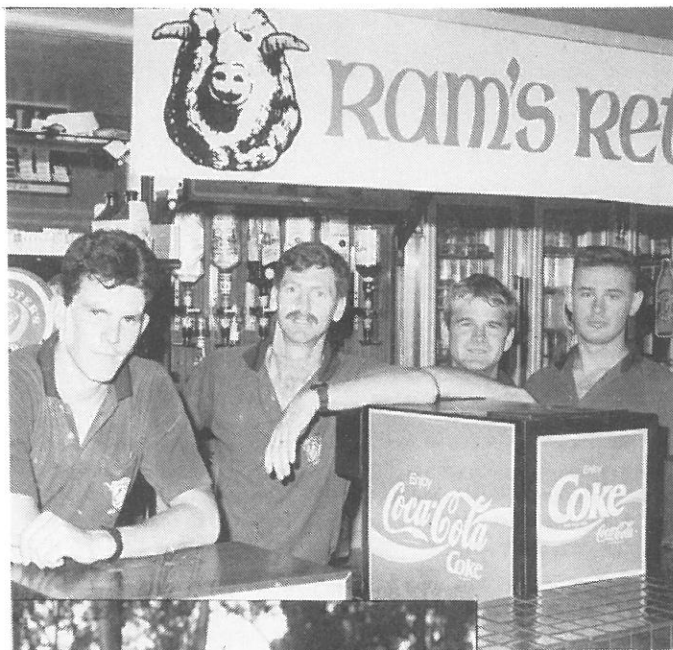
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Steele
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RAMS THANK

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CATERING PL
and INT SECT.

RAMS WOULD LIKE TO SEE

More bar girls
B Coy do more night work
Cpl Campbell learn to count
More bar girls
Less mars bars sold and
the stock take work out just once.

RAMS HATE

Not seeing bar girls
selling mars bars
cleaning up after functions.

THE RAMS RETREAT 1988

It was another good year for the Rams, although it started out a bit shaky. Due to courses at the beginning of the year, not many people came up for a drink, however we did achieve what must have been a world record for the sale of Mars Bars. I think the Mars Bars people should change their slogan from "a Mars a day helps you work rest and play", to, "I need a Mars to get through the day".

The year saw a new committee, headed up by the PMC CPL Dave Wilson, who had lots of new ideas for the boozier; namely more and better organised functions. The highlight of the year was the Rock 'n' Roll night which had the largest attendance for a long time. Other functions held during the year were ANZAC Day, The hangi, piss up for the Yanks and Singaporeans and the farewell to KJ Thompson.

Pay Fridays at the Rams saw patronage increase significantly. We feel this could have been due to the nice young ladies who sold the raffle tickets.

Improvements to the Rams were thanks to a working bee where a retaining wall was built, painting carried out and even fans installed.

It was a good year for the Rams and the PMC, the committee, myself and the barmen would like to thank everyone for supporting the Rams and hope you will all get back safely from Christmas leave so you can spend more money here next year.

Thank you

I PLATOON A COY 8/9 RAR

I Platoon had had a very successful year in 1988. With a relatively slow start to the year, we were asked to support the Sub 2 for CPL Course, sneaking in a little platoon training on the way. During the middle of the year the premier platoon led the way at FFBS Tully conquering the mud and leeches, vowing to return again.

We then returned to Mt Mee to a Platoon Ex.

It was about this time that things really hotted up, as we were flown to SWBTA as part of the A Coy en force against 6 RAR. Upon contact 6RAR were always asking who it was they had contacted, and shuddered when our identity was revealed.

The Bn exercise was next and I Platoon tackled it head-on, defeating the enemy wherever they dared show their face and ducking a few Singaporean bullets and the same time.

I Platoon will be leading the way again to Malaysia and into '89.

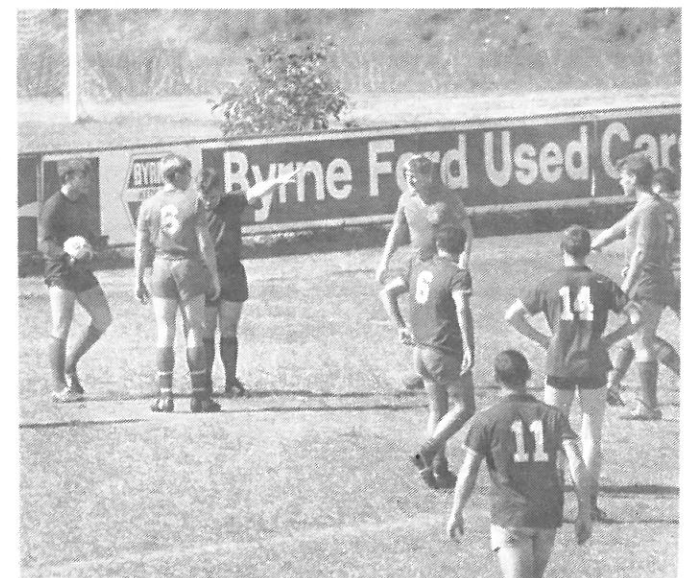
SOCCER

After the sweet taste of victory in 1987, 1988 always looked to be a troubled year for 8/9 RAR; half of the winning team gone, C and B Coy overseas and many of those players left off in the field.

Pre-season went well under new Coach WO1 Bob Nugent and with some talent discovered a solid side was formed – but not for long. C Coy went to Malaysia etc etc. Enough points were gained to reach the semi-finals and a lucky win over an under-strength IFd Regt side allowed us to go on to the major semi-final where we were beaten convincingly by 6RAR. Drawn against a revamped IFd Regt team in the final the team was defeated once again and so ended 1988.

It was a disappointing year for 8/9 RAR soccer however 1989, with a shortened season (K89) and all players available, should be much better.

Thanks to all the players who 'put-in', Bob Nugent for his professional coaching and congratulations to PTE's Greg Wall and Al Ryan for representative selection. Good luck to WO2 Steve Olive as coach in 89.



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TOUCH FOOTBALL

The season started out with the team being short of players due to Bush commitments throughout the year. Finally we were able to field a side and were very competitive against teams that had been training together before the season had started. We had two touch gala days throughout the year and made the semi-finals on both occasions, but due to lack of training weren't able to carry on with the competition. Thanks go to all members of the team for the help and amount of interest shown by the newer and younger members of the side. Looking forward to seeing you all next year for a very competitive touch season and a grand final win in both A - B grades.

Thanks also go to the amount of people who showed up for our presentation day, it was very successful.



RUGBY

The Rugby year started as it was fated to finish, in true style with the delivery of two brand new sets of canterberry jerseys. National Mutual and their two reps, Dave McDonald and Ed Given generously provided funds for the purchase of a harlequin set for A grade and a hooped set for B Grade.

This seemed to be the only bright spot in an other wise wet start to the year. The Gala day was washed out and many of the early games in April and May affected by the fact that Duncan Ovals were closed due to rain. Nevertheless the usual keen hard core of players were rounded onto the fields by coaches Bob Brookes, RSM Briaes and Dutchy Holland and began the long haul toward the grand final.

A considerable amount of depth was added to the A & B sides by the formation of a C grade. It was originally envisaged that the thirds would be a team to play squad designed to absorb the younger players who missed out on a run due to inexperience. But some ancient loners were seen creaking around the field from time to time in support of the younger and considerably quicker junior set. Suffice to say most members of the battalion had at least one game with the C grade and it produced some notable players who will go onto bigger and better things in the future. Some of them were semi regulars in A & B grades including Fish, Hodgins, Curtis and Lindsay and some were old regulars such as Brian Gilland, Keven Moller, Kraut Nicolau and club president Brian Vesper. Some conscripts also turned in fair performances. Notable amongst these were Henry Legay Brereton, Peter Johnson and on at least one occasion the formidable trio of McKay, Brookes and Briaes! The fourth place in the competition was a good reward for the first year of this year of competition.

Dutchy Holland for the third year in a row pulled the B Grade together and by hard work and considerable personal example led the side to Minor Premiership and Grand Final Victories. If there had been a fault in any of the 8/9 RAR teams it was a lack of backs hurt during the season that was fixed by the entry of Queen Rodrigues and Lonergan to support the old stalwarts such as Joe McIvor, Kupu Vanessi and Kev Banaghan. The forwards put in their usual strong performance and received a good boost with the arrival of the second of the Niddvik brothers and the development of Robbo Roberts as a line out specialist. Gerry Whitton played when he could get away from 11 FD Amb and Ray Plunkett and Steely managed to keep up with the play for yet another year.

After the grand final was stolen from them by 1 Base in 1987, it was most gratifying for the team to have such a successful season, winning both the Minor Premiership and the Grand Final. It was a fine performance for future players to reflect upon.

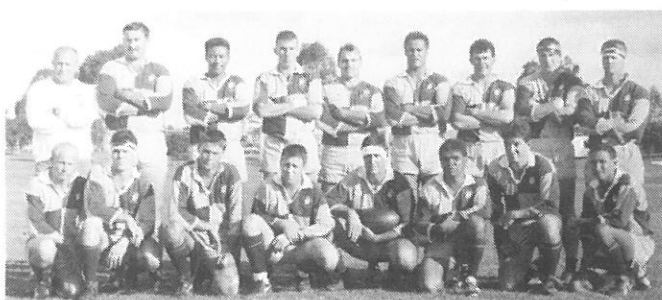
The A grade suffered because they were so good! No fewer than 7 players were selected in the Army Squad and three of those went on to play ASRU.

Aaron Booth, Nick Baddick, Pat Evans, Craig Sloane, Gerard Smith, Angus Baker and Phil Reed all travelled to Darwin to play for the Army side and from those, Baker, Baddick and Booth selected for ASRU. Nick Baddick set some sort of record for long distance recall by travelling to one of the games from the middle of Molokai Training area in Hawaii. As for the rest of the team, Alan Gillman again played an excellent Captains season leading one of the best Service packs in the country to devastate all comers. The strength and size of Booth, Baker and Baddick was more than adequate, complemented by Tiny Pellow and Gerard Smith while Shane Niddvik, Moose McClean and occasionally George Tully provided the speed and aggression needed in the loose forwards. Craig Sloane and Jethro Campbell combined well at half back and five eighth, Dave Hutton, Fossie Foster and Brendan Thompson held the outside leads together. A string of players too many to mention filled the wing and full back positions but notable amongst them were Thomas Duncan, Owen Rodrigues and Wayne Cullen, all of whom were regular B grade players.

A large part of the success was due to the unsung off the field organisers who put a large amount of effort into the organisation and fund raising that made the season work. Brian Vesper as Club President, Alan Whelan as Treasurer and Col Bishop, Bert Birtles and others as managers ensured that the coordination of clean jerseys and funds was on the right track. Bruce Howlett filled a number of roles and was always happy to offer advice to those who would listen. His wife Vicki did a sterling job sewing the badges on two sets of jerseys. Many others sold raffle tickets and raised money. Among them were Brian Lambert, and Wayne Cullen. All should be congratulated.



8/9 RAR "RAMS" RUGBY UNION CLUB Premiers 'A Grade' Premiers 'B Grade' 1988



The 1987 season pointed one way to the success of 1988. Despite the fact that there was about a third of the Battalion missing at any one time, and the fact that most of the officers were away during the grand final period the 8/9 RAR supremacy was undeniable. Traditional rivals 6 RAR provided some concern during the season beating the A Grade three times, in both rounds and in the finals, but in the finest tradition of any game, the best side won grand final day and we retained the trophy.

Next year will be the year to consolidate the good performances of the 87 & 88 seasons. All three teams have the potential to be Grand Final Winners so lets look forward to a Hat Trick in 89.

2 PLATOON A COY 8/9 RAR

2 Platoon underwent some major changes in 88 with a change of platoon commander and platoon sergeant. With 'a change being as good as a holiday', these changes left 2 Pl on an unprecedented wave of morale which they rode throughout the year.

This high morale gave the Brigade Commander a small surprise when he visited 2 Pl on Exercise Silk Purse. A quick briefing from the Pl Sgt to the Sect 2lc's ensured every pit visited would respond in a somewhat pre-meditated manner to a question such as 'how do you find exercise?' or 'how are you?'. After the third pit had stated 'every day is a good day in 2PL Sir' Brigadier Curtis became somewhat suspicious and Captain Matthews said he was going to be somewhat sick.

2PL also became very familiar with mechanized operations during 1988 with the assistance of callsign 12 of the 2/14 Light Horse. This fine assembly of men and machines were commanded by the infamous CPL Ricoh who could best be described as a cross between Audie Murphy and Barbara Steisand. CPL Ricoh could always be relied upon for timely advice, especially when it was time to 'HANG ON'.

1988 definitely proved to be an exciting year for 2PL and it is with great enthusiasm that they look forward to excelling once again in 1989.



WHAT A YEAR

From the conclusion of our successful hosting of the 1/88 Subject Two for Corporal course till now we have once again proved that we are at the top of the hill for a reason. The visit of A COY 22 INF DIV of the United States Army (were they here) showed that all you have to do is travel two hundred miles, set up a wet canteen facility, fire up a hot plate and show a few warries and the Battalion will show up.

Our tour through the Land Command Battle School at Tully proved to be invaluable to both the honing up on old soldierly skills as well as some new ones. The trip also forged a bond between the members of the Company that gives the term 'Esprit de Corp' greater boundaries.

As enemy for 6RAR on Fx 'SWIFT EAGLE' at SWBTA we grabbed the chance to work closely with APCs and, unfortunately not so closely with 6 RAR. Our thanks to CAPT Boyer and the members of 1 TP A SQN 2/14LH, as well as the members of our TPT PL for their tireless support in an exercise that was, despite some drawbacks a truly enjoyable trip (yes you can have a good time at Shoalwater).

Ex Silk Purse tipped to be bigger than WW2, enabled us to operate as a Battalion in the major phases of war as well as train in areas that few of us have touched before such as tactical river crossings by day or night (by gee). Believe it or not we had a good time.

The company now is gearing up for our assault on South East Asia on 1 Dec 88 and display to the rest of the battalion the 'Balls of O'Leary' in 1989.



3 PLATOON A COY 8/9 RAR

The first part of 3 Platoon's year was quite eventful with the changing of platoon staff and most of the platoon finding themselves on a course. June saw LCPL Sutherland, and PTEs Dreezens, Maxfield and Stuckey away with B Coy on EX PAC BOND in Hawaii while the rest of the platoon played host to the US Coy from the 22nd Inf Div.

Soon after, 3 Platoon was infiltrated by ARES soldiers from 9 RQR who were just in time to experience Tully where the platoon really came together and learnt a great deal. CPL Lambert had taken over as PL SGT, while CPL Booth played ASRU football and LCPL Wilson went to Kapooka on an instructor's course. 3 Platoon then left for SWBTA as enemy for 6RAR where the bounty was sweet, capturing an MRAAW, 40AI code, nominal roll notes and a scared sentry before 6RAR knew what hit them. The CSM led a hand picked waterborne fighting patrol that cleaned up most of B Coy as well as several engineers. A thoroughly good time was had by all.

The last exercise for the year was the Bn exercise, where the platoon went through aspects of defence and performed several live fire attacks and ranges. CPL Lambert was promoted.



REPORT ON SUB 2 CPL CSE 8/9 RAR FEB - MARCH 1988.

The Subject 2 course began as most would, with great expectations from the instructors and probably greater reservations by the students.

Weeks before the course kicked off the hand picked instructors were hard at work preparing themselves for the task ahead with such activities as turning up to work on time, learning big words and composing FATAGRAMS for their CSM.

The first few weeks at 1 TRG GP WACOL were to provide the following memorable points:

CPL Lambert's PT sessions, the mornos and meals, the bar, the flu, CPL Vesper's dedication to darts, 84mm and trucks, (in that order), the bar and the day boys (staff only).

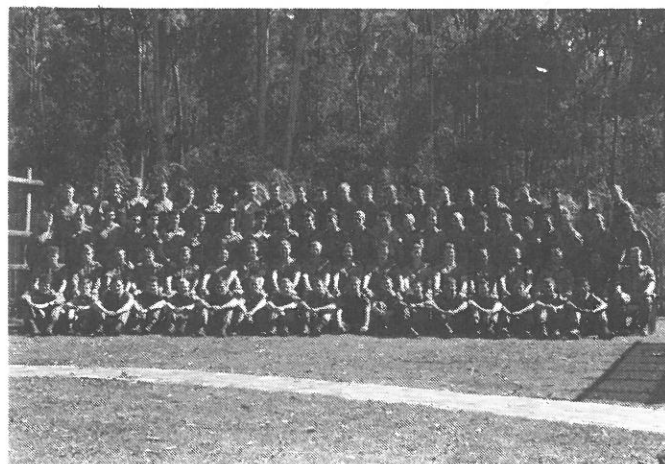
Many thanks go out to the catering staff who turned on meals at short notice to make any mess envious as well as the ARA Staff of 1 TRG GP who went out of their way to assist in the running of the course.

The final phase of the course was conducted within the State Forest near the township of Esk. It was during this field phase that the assesment of a potential Section Commander was done in earnest.

The following events are worth remembering:

The rain, PTE Quilter's birthday, PTE Humphrey (the gun has a sore foot), the night illumination during the attacks, fire control orders while wearing gas masks at night, 'feel like a jaffle sir ? (a certain SGT to the RSM), the injuries, the many flights on helicopters, the calmness of the final fighting withdrawal, and the fanatical 901st Rifle Regiment.

The final phase was hard and worthwhile and many lessons were learnt by both staff and of course, students. Special thanks go out to B Coy for the enemy support at both Wacol and in particular Esk. The



professionalism displayed by the NCOs and diggers was appreciated by all. Thanks especially go to PTE Riley and Dodd for the excellent Q support they provided.

The medical assistance was supplied by 11 FD AMB. The instructors worked long hours during the field phase to enable accurate assessment of the students and I believe the final reports were a true account of performances.

Finally congratulations to the students of the Subject 2 for Corporal Course. Those who passed thoroughly earned it. Well done to PTE Sutherland for being selected as the most outstanding student and to PTE Ryan for the most improved. A few of the students received very little notice of being panelled for the course and initially this affected their performance but by the field phase most were on equal footing. We hope for early promotions to those who deserve it.

BN SWIMMING TEAM

1988 saw the Battalion reach new heights in swimming supremacy. By the end of the Brigade Swimming Carnival there could be little doubt that 8/9 had both the individual talent and the teamwork necessary to annihilate all challengers.

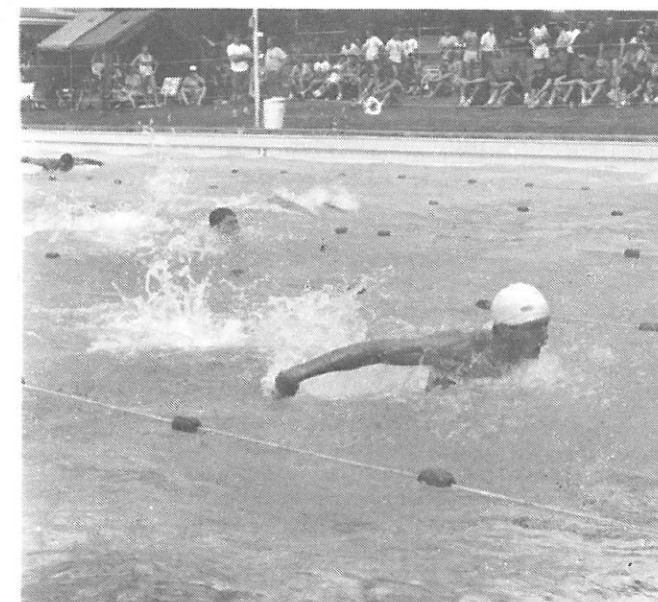
The swimming season started slowly with the absence of star performers due to training commitments. The Battalion Carnival did however give some indication to the potential that lay within the Battalion. Other noted swimming identities from outside the Battalion had the occasional look of anguish at some of the blistering times. Best on the day were PTE Dorries (1988 Battalion swimming champion), PTE Parnaby and PTE Arthur. The champion company was C Company who narrowly won from B Company.

From the Battalion carnival a team was selected to train for the Brigade carnival. SGT Howlett was appointed coach for the team and he adjusted quickly and competently to the intricacies of being a swimming coach. With several strenuous training sessions the team was ready to face the challenge.

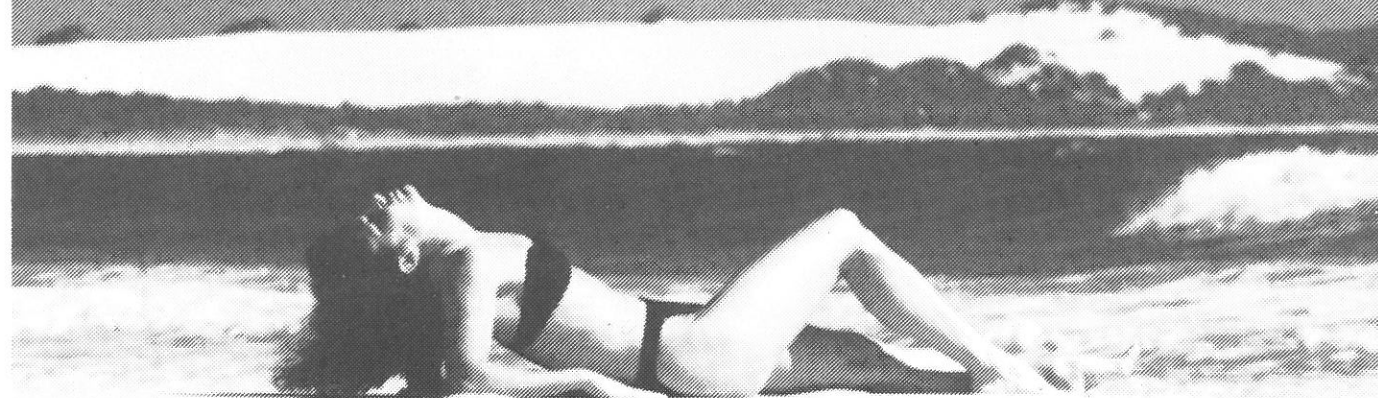
From the outset it was obvious that it would not be a case of who would win the Brigade Swimming Carnival but by how much 8/9 would annihilate the opposition. In several events the Battalion was able to pick up not only first place, but also several of the minor places.

Outstanding individual performances were once again produced by PTE Dorries winning 4 events and PTE Parnaby who picked up 3. To show the depth of talent within the Battalion; we topped the final point score with 95 points, well ahead of our nearest rival with a meagre 33.

Once again an example of the strength and dedication of members of the Battalion to sweep all before it on the sporting field.



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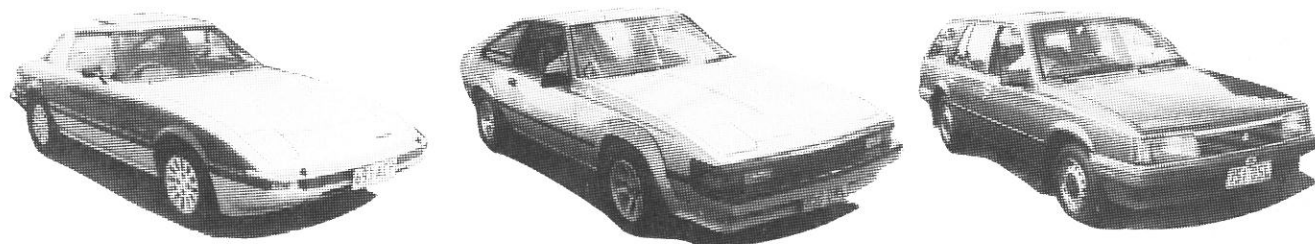
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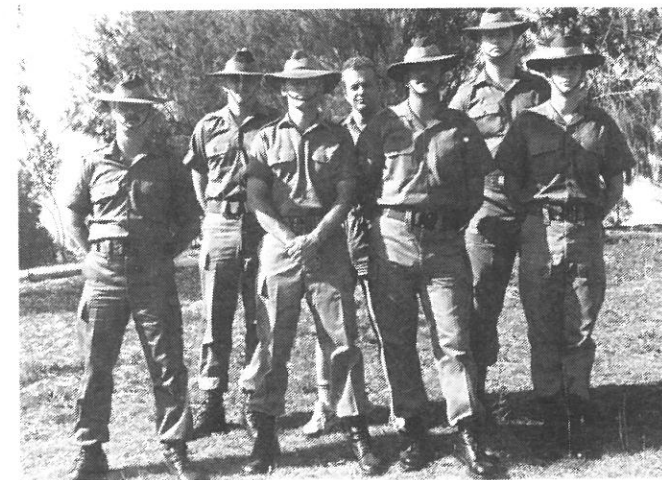
B COY 1988

B Coy had a slow start to the year with most of our soldiers being away with course commitments and then a large chunk of our 'old hands' disappearing forever into the bowels of Spt Coy. Despite these restrictions, the Coy began its preparations for both Ex Pacific-Bond 88 and its Coy programme for the first half of the year. Reminiscences of the first half of the year:

a. LWC Apr 88. LWC was a good 'shake out' trip for the Coy. We were able to identify a major flaw in the sections when the CHQ 'wally section' won the Hydra Despised.

b. Hawaii June 88. After annexing half the soldiers from A and Spt Coys, B Coy was ready for Ex Pacific-Bond. The contingent performed admirably during the Ex with the following score achieved:

- (1) 2 x civil arrests
- (2) 1 x 'psycho' case in Tipler Alcohol de-tox ward
- (3) 2 x charges
- (4) 1 x officially recognised fights
- (5) 1 x hopelessly lost in gulch
- (6) 1 x Coy escape from State of Hawaii Prison Farm
- (7) 1 x sighting of RMO
- (8) 1 x SNCO/Offr outing in black ghetto
- (9) 1 x trip to Miss Hawaii competition
- (10) 3 x 'Hog Nights' at Pearl Harbour
- (11) 1 x Coy assault on USMC Coy
- (12) 12 x assaults during Coy assault on USMC Coy
- (13) 1 x loss to USMC Rugby Union team
- (14) 1 x OCB seen playing against USMC Rugby Union team
- (15) Nil AID'S cases reported yet



After completion of Ex Pacific-Bond 88, a dazed B Coy waved goodbye to its A/Spt Coy attachments and welcomed a new crop of IET's to the fold. To get the Coy back in gear before Ex Silk Purse, the Coy conducted two exercises:

a. Reverse Cycle Trg July 88. A week was spent in which the Coy worked by night and slept by day. The trg was successful but did not prevent hard core elements from attending the Dollar Night at the Wintergarden in the wee small hours of the morning.

b. Barakula Aug 88. Barakula trg was a week in which the Coy was bastardized, to test its toughness and ability to cope with stress over a prolonged period. The Ex ran well with the men feasting on live chooks and raw potatoes. In the end, after covering 80km cross country and digging in to stage 3, not one member of B Coy had dropped out. Unfortunately CHQ was in constant danger of suffering a Coy attack.

After performing well in Ex Silk Purse, the Coy had an opportunity to gauge both its strengths and weaknesses. With these in mind, B Coy will use the time available to it during its RF commitment period over Christmas to gain some undisturbed trg so that B Coy will become an even greater asset to the effectiveness of 8/9 RAR in 1989.

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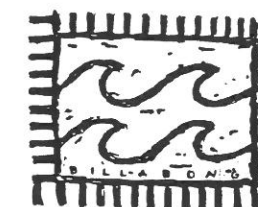
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4 PLATOON REPORT

The Fab 4 began the year with a good shake down trip to LWC. The platoon did a lot of walking around the hills and stands of Canungra. The platoon sig Pte Reid continuously wondered "Do they have any bloody trucks here?" They did, and the trucks took us to the jungles of the border ranges. We didn't encounter the enemy for 2 days and no one could work out who was lost, us or them. Cpl "Jethro" Cambell's section came second in the Hydra Despised, after the renowned Wally section of CHQ.

Soon after LWC we were joined by Cpl Spencer and his adhoc Spt Coy section for the Hawaii trip. On arrival Pte "Freezer" Freeman was disappointed by the lack of hula girls and flower lei. Pte "Bushie" Weymouth and Pte Wyatt left training for a while to take part in the Miss Hawaii contest. The platoons NCO's led by example by being kicked out of more bars than the diggers.

The trip involved two short exercises where we were introduced to gullies, steep hills and giant windmills. The yanks soon worked out that we conducted a very effective ambush when their scout platoon got lost and stumbled into our killing ground.

After a month in Hawaii everyone was eager to get home. We disembarked at Amberly and waved goodbye to Spencer and his crew. The platoon was also sad to lose Cpl Powell and Sgt Croft. Our numbers were soon bolstered by a lot of new marchins just in time for the Company weight watchers exercise at Barracula. Live chickens were on the top of the menu with a side salad of whatever could be found. Two members of the MAF fell into our hands and were well employed in carrying the chickens, until CHQ worked out where the enemy had gotten to. Our Sig ignored all calls for their return, pretending that comims were bad, ("you are weak and unreadable") until LCPL Bubner demanded their return.

Sgt Podobnik joined the platoon just in time to take his position for the battalion exercise. The platoon performed well and enjoyed themselves until being left at the MGB for three days. All else was forgotten as we valiantly strove to repel the sandflies. Time was taken out to go boating up and down the river in an attempt to catch the enemy or preferably some fish.

The exercise came to an end and the platoon is preparing to take its role as part of the Response Force over Christmas. The platoon has had a good year spending a long time overseas and living up to the B Coy motto "Be Professional".



5 PLATOON

The year started for 5 PI with an enemy trip to Esk State Forest to assist in the training of future hopefulls on the Battalions Subject 2 for Corporals Course. Although the platoon was 'bush', the soldier's fitness didn't suffer as regular games of battle cricket and murder football were strongly supported. Survival skills were pushed to the limits with episodes like patrols trying to find their way home after going 'astray' and others having to urinate in their sleeping bags in an effort to protect themselves from the cold. Along the lines of military training a dual purpose was found for the para-illum in the anti-personnel role.

Following this the Coy went to Canungra, where under interrogation as to where his rifle was, a member of the platoon replied "I didn't think I needed it Sarg!" Then it was off to the sun soaked beaches of Hawaii for Ex Pac Bond, where we were duly informed that the legal age for consumption of alcohol was 21. Although a majority of the platoon flaunted this law, not too many of them found themselves confined in steel and concrete. Fears of the local inhabitants were greatly increased when one of the larger members of the platoon returned from town with several bruises, cuts and a black eye. If you're ever in Hawaii we recommend The Jazz Cellar as a nite-spot to be avoided. The ladies on the other hand were quite accommodating as I'm sure PTE Thompson will tell you. Navigation in the very difficult terrain didn't present a problem once compasses had been replaced with bottles; "Who's turn to spin, Sir?" If anyone would like to donate pictures taken outside of C Quad I'm sure our resident C.B.'er would much appreciate finding out what Hawaii really looked like.

Soon after returning from "Pac Bond" we loaded the Company's defensive stores into our packs; star pickets, picks and all and headed for Baracula. That is, those of us who didn't have more important 'sporting' commitments did anyway.

CHQ's survival program was taken in good humor and made quite a change to the boring old luncheon meat. Valuable points were learnt however from living off natural food for a week or so. After carrying chickens around for a couple of days, clucking along, terms such as Larry Lunch and Cyril Snack Attack started popping up. It was unusual to see someone get so attached to his little feathered friend that he didn't want to do the devilish act when the time came. Plucking, gutting and cooking also presented problems not easily solved.

September saw us all on 'Silk Purse' up in the Shoalwater Bay Training Area. For one member of the platoon however the exercise was doomed to disaster before it began. A late start the morning of departure due to commitments to the fairer of the sexes followed by an embarrassing illness half way through the exercise led to more time spent out of the front line than in it.

The joke of the exercise went to the platoon commander after two soldiers were seen still in hysterics hours after seeing him in his underwear; very pretty Boss!

For the future we can look forward to getting in some valuable training on R.F. over Christmas, especially if the pool doesn't close.

INTER COMPANY ATHLETICS COMPETITION

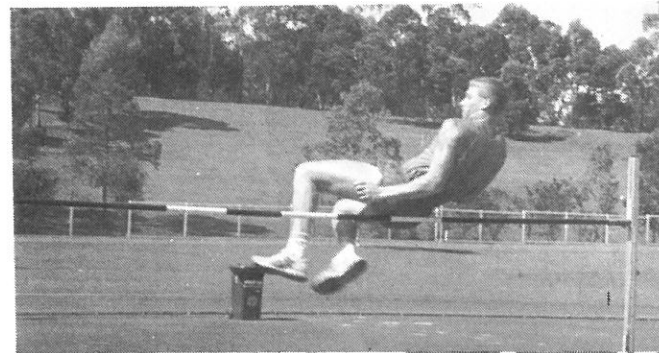
The Battalion inter Company Athletics carnival was held at the QEII Stadium on the 2nd November 1988. From the outset the competition was a rather one sided affair. A Company dominated the competition with the speedy combination of Pte's Kaye, Williams and Wilkenson accounting for almost all A grade track events. B Company struck back by snatching the 4 x 100m relay closely followed by SPT Coy with A Coy third.

The field events proved to be a more even competition. The Highjump was closely contested by Pte Winen and Lanergan. Pte Lanergan won with an impressive jump of 1.93m. Pte Winen went on to win the Long jump with a leap of 6.05m.

Some of the older members of the Battalion turned on some respectable results. SGT Baldrey (Admin Coy) won the 100m veterans race in a time of 12.91 seconds. The "old and bold", the CSM's, although not displaying outstanding athletic progress did show a united front in limping their leg of the chain of command relay in perfect unison. Trust the CSM's to set the track.

As usual the highlight of the competition was the Tug-o-war competition. The youthful A Coy was far too strong for the more experienced Admin Coy. A Coy took the Trophy after a drawn out contest.

The overall result of the carnival was a convincing win to A Coy with B Coy second followed by C Coy. Best overall athlete was shared by Pte's Wilkenson and Williams, both of A Coy. We look forward to another good competition in '89. With more of the Chief Clerk's dynamic race calling.



BATTALION BOXING 88

Apparently 8/9 RAR Boxing in early 1988 was a bit of a disappointment with a lack of boxers and support. However this all changed toward the end of the year and a date was set for a Battalion Boxing Night, the battle lines had been drawn.

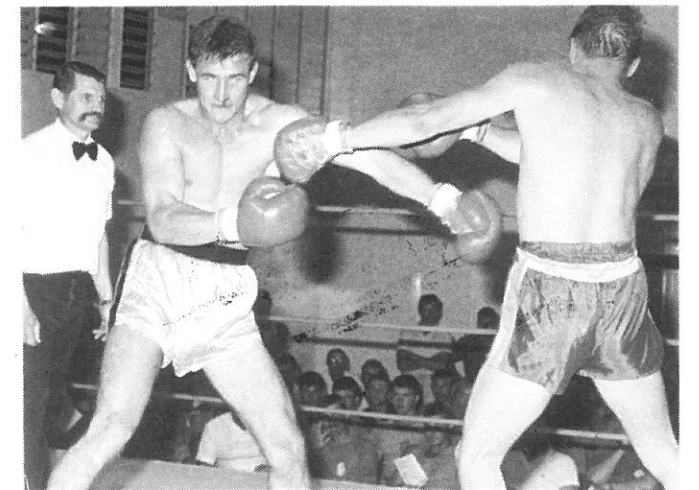
The lads were informed of the event and a good response to participation was received. Training for the night was slow to take off and difficult to coordinate. However it was soon evident there was plenty of talent and keen diggers.

Finally the big night swung into action with a total of ten fights and one exhibition fight were the venue. One of Australia top class referee's 'Alan Moore' guided the fights throughout the night with the assistance of our three professional judges.

The fights themselves were fought with great courage and aggression and in some cases a bit of boxing skill even showed through. Some of the lads found out the hard way how long 3 rounds of solid toe to toe boxing can really be.

8/9 RAR Boxing is back on its feet and a club has been formed. We believe it will be better than ever before and look forward to trouncing the 2/3 FER in a Boxing Challenge March 89.

Special thanks must go to Cpl West. CSM Johnson and all the boxers for making the event the great night it was.



2/8 AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION QUEENSLAND BRANCH

As 1988 draws to a close we of the Queensland Branch of the 2/8th look over our shoulders and take stock of events.

Through the pages of "8th/9th in 1988" we are able to see what the battalion has achieved and where it has been - it makes very interesting and satisfying reading. Although the Battalion sees only the Queensland members of our Association you can be assured that your activities are reported to the other members of the Association in all states, but particularly in Victoria. Evidence of this widespread interest comes in many forms; one of the most tangible being the presentation to the 8th/9th of articles such as the history books and the Italian memorabilia captured by the 2/8th during the battles for Bardia and Tobruk in North Africa in 1941.

In the pipeline is the projected presentation of a drum from the band of the original 8th Battalion, raised in 1914, with subsequent service in Gallipoli and the Western Front. This drum bears the names of the bandsmen of the 8th Battalion. Transport of the drum and presentation to the 8th/9th is being considered as a project for early next year. With other articles already stored within the battalion, the need for a battalion museum is illustrated and of course, this raises the problem of space - a problem that can't readily be solved.

The Queensland Branch held its Annual General Meeting in the Ram's Retreat on Sunday 24th April and the following office bearers were elected:-

President, Bruce Flude; Secretary/treasurer Bill Cavanagh. Committee: 8/9th; Major Chad Sherrin, MM., 2 I C 8/9th; WO I Ron Briais, RSM 8/9th. 2/8th; Gerald Behan, Bert Douglas, Cliff Eustace.

On the following day, Anzac Day, we responded to the early reveille and returned to the 8/9th for celebration of the service outside Battalion H Q. This was preceded by meeting young/old friends in the 8/9th on the way up-hill to Bn H Q. The Dawn Service is one that never loses meaning - to all of us. It is one of the most significant events of the year. It is summed up by the simple expression, "Lest we forget". You can be sure that we never forget the men that we served with during World War Two and who are no longer with us.

Onto the march in the city later in the day and the performance of the 8/9th was, in the eyes of this observer, exceptional. Similarly, with the march through the city on the day ending Army Week, when artillery, tanks and A P Cs were seen for the first time in a city parade, the performance of the 8/9th outshone the other units, some of whom were actually OUT OF STEP. The Tattoo that followed was thoroughly enjoyed by all - it was a masterly presentation and gave the public a thrilling three or more hours of enjoyable entertainment.

Our membership of the Branch continues to prosper giving a new slant to the other expression, "OLD SOLDIERS NEVER DIE etc". Sadly they DO die but we are being continually reinforced with arrivals from the south obviously preferring to "FADE AWAY" up here in Queensland - and who can blame them? We still keep tag on former members of the 8/9th who have been transferred to other units. Very little mail is returned marked "NOT KNOWN AT UNIT". Our three or four Newsletters each year go as far afield as Quetta, Germany and Great Britain. Finally, we of the 2/8th wish all that is best for the men of the 8/9th. May you grab KANGAROO 89 by the tail and enjoy serving in this very special battalion.

6 PLATOON OPENING OF THE BRISBANE ARTS CENTRE

Once again 6PL were under the spot lights, this time at the grand opening of the Brisbane Arts Centre. The men of 6PL although being a little nervous, shone under the spot lights.

Well done the men of 6PL.

6PL in 1988, once again showed all, that through its soldierly dedication and professional skills, it was still an example of what the traditional Australian fighting man has been through history. This has been due, not only to the fine human material that enters the PL, but also the fine leadership and dedication of an unbroken line, of NCOs and officers such as 'Moose' Baker and 'Mingo' Reed.

The year started with 6PL providing a ceremonial guard for the opening of the Brisbane Arts Centre where well known dignitaries from all over Australia and the world could only say "what a good looking bunch of fellahs".

The mainstay of the B Coy swimming team was PTE Parnaby who as a result of his swimming prowess was known as the fish. However most people think he was called this due to his nocturnal activities.

While at LWC, with its normal display of dedication, 6PL cleverly cured all of its hangovers from the night before by marching up Heartbreak Hill.

Though constantly professional 6PL barely remembers its activities in Hawaii during Ex Pacific-Bond. However our most professional member had to be PTE Simon Ion who through strenuous application to his aim, became a guest of the USMC MP who took him for a tour of the Tipler Hospital Alcohol detoxification ward.



CHQ thought it would be cute by organizing a bastardization ex at Barakula for a week. It was bad enough carrying a heavy pack but when they gave us the live chooks, they didn't provide any lemon sauce, the bastards.

Ex Silk Purse provided a startling watershed in the existence of 6PL in 1988. The PL crowd was actually seen to attend a bush exercise. Most of us reckoned this was because Rugby season had finished.

At the end of Ex Silk Purse, 6PL was chosen to be enemy for 2/3 FER's Ex Bay Run. The people of Rockhampton and Flamingoes Night Club, adored 6PL so much that the Police showed PTE Haintz and Robbo their hospitality by letting them stay at their place for a night.

6PL has had a successful year in 1988 and hopes to continue defending truth, justice and the Australian way in 1989.

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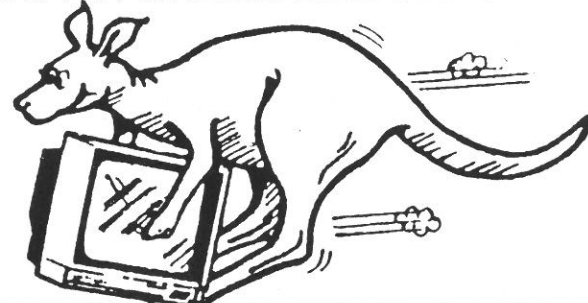
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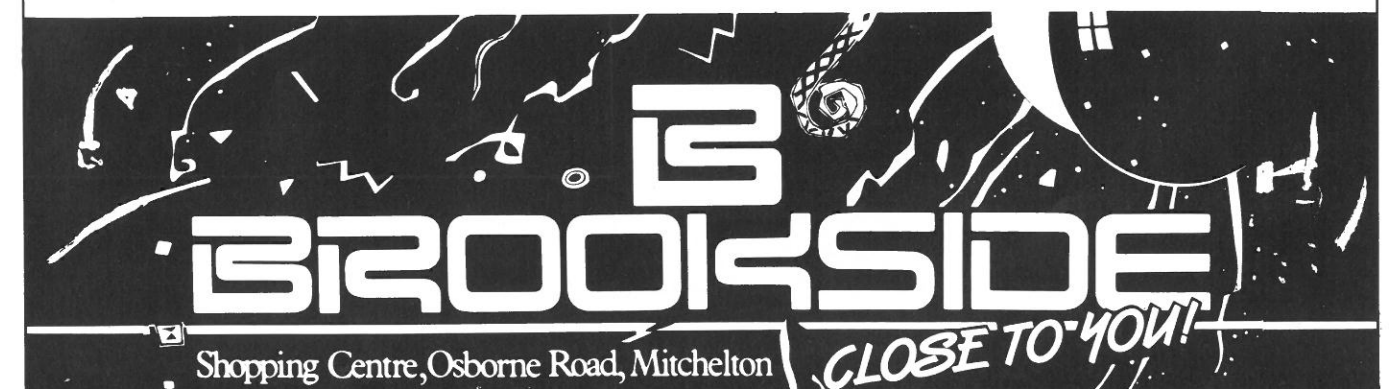
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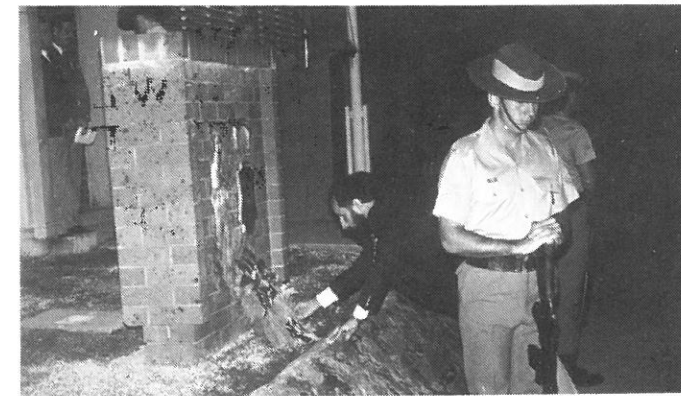


ANZAC DAY 1988

The Officers and men of the 8th/9th Battalion the Royal Australian Regiment participated once again in Anzac Day Ceremonies in Brisbane. A Catafalque Party was mounted.

The dawn service was led by Padre Peter Woodward and wreaths were laid by several association members including Mr Bruce Flude of the 2/8 Battalion. The 8th and 9th Battalions Honour Roll were read, consisting of four cpls from A Coy and commanded by Sgt Steve Whittaker.

Although the march was short in comparison with previous years, the crowd of enthusiastic Brisbane people showed their appreciation by thunderous applause and cheers which nearly drowned out the Pipes and Drums.



'LONG HAI DAY'

Each year, members from A company parade in front of the unit memorial to honour those members of 8 RAR who fell during Operation Hammersly in the Long Hai Hills in February 1970.

The guard was inspected by Brigadier Curtis. During the parade veterans of 8 RAR lay wreaths as the Adjutant read the names of those who had fallen. The day later finished with a reunion at the Rams Retreat.

K.J. THOMPSON FAREWELL

At the end of every year we reflect on past events. One such occasion was the farewell to KJ Thompson, a soldier who has been one of the Battalion characters as well as a permanent fixture in the Rams Retreat. Often sought out by younger members of the Battalion for his vast knowledge, and experience, he is now currently residing at the Gold Coast in a life of leisure.



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CHARLIE COMPANY IN 1988

1988 saw Charlie Company absent for a good part of it, with deployment to Malaysia as the Australian Rifle Company Butterworth from late May to early September and other exercise commitments.

Preparation for Butterworth was the company training at Tully for two weeks, a good opportunity to brush up on jungle techniques and for newly formed sections and platoons to work together.

Time at Butterworth was busy and varied. After an initial acclimatisation period, platoon training began with platoons rotating through the Pulada Ranges and Singapore, a cultural tour to Thailand and training in the local area. Following this a military skills competition was conducted to determine the Champion section, who would represent the company at the IRNZIR Skill at Arms Competition in Singapore. This was won by 7 section, a combined arms section led by BDR Rodgers of 105 FD BTY. Although not winning the IRNZIR competition, they gave the Kiwis a lot to worry about and acquitted themselves well.

Late July saw the commencement of the Subject One for Corporal Course, with eighteen students on the course. The students found the course content very demanding. However their hard work produced good results with PTE J K Hall winning the Student of Merit.

The last few weeks were spent on visits to Malaysian units and various sporting activities. The visit to 19RMR, a mechanised Battalion, gave us an opportunity to look at their wheeled Condor and Commando APCs, handle a number of their small arms and view martial arts and PT demonstrations. The visit to 4RMR, a conventional battalion, provided an opportunity to fire a number of weapons, including a Baretta 9mm pistol, a silenced 9mm sub machine gun and the HK LMG.

A series of challenge sporting matches were held between the officers/SNCOs/CPLs and the LCPLs/PTEs. The former combination won the outdoor and indoor cricket with the latter victorious in the Rugby (league).

Charlie Company was victorious in the first annual indoor cricket match against the RAAF, which was a very exciting and vocal contest. We were also winners in a game of Rugby League against a combined British/Australian Air Force team. Unfortunately we were defeated in the soccer by the Nandau by 4 goals to 2 after leading 2-1 at half time. In Australian Rules we were narrowly beaten by the RAAF in a spirited game, although we probably won the body count.



The last week was busy in the move to the new Rifle Company accommodation, which for future tours, will prove to be a real bonus.

Once back in Australia, and after some short leave, Charlie Company deployed to SWBTA for Exercise Silk Purse. The switch to conventional warfare was quickly achieved, but it took a bit longer to become accustomed to the presence of the APCs. The company really put their backs into the development (and subsequent cleaning up) of the defensive position, and many important lessons were learnt during this phase. The live firing phase also brought out a number of teaching points, but bad luck to CPL Wagner and SGT Hill, you are not battle casualties.

November will see Charlie Company on Exercise Roving Cobra Two, our Adventure Training deployment. One group will be acting as enemy for 51 FNQR and then conducting a diving course in Port Douglas. The other group will be helping a civilian authority conduct a marine and fauna survey on Lady Elliot Island. A most rewarding exercise for a hard and varied years work.

The end of 1988 will see a major turnover in Company Staff. Farewells, thanks and wishes of success go to:

OC MAJ Jim Dittmar - off to Staff College.

CSM, WO2 Chance Kelly, LWC.

CQMS, SSGT Noel Hawes, SPT Coy.

Clerk, CPL Andrew McCarthy 5/6RVR.

And a special mention to LT Roger Dixon, LT Jeff Corkhill, who will be ambushing Int Corps, and Cpl Steve Ferguson, who will be taking his outstanding looks and turnout to Kapooka.

Finally, a vote of thanks to those who have assisted us throughout the year. Spt Company, in particular SGT Dave Pabst, CPL Mal Cockburn and his merry men and the Sig Net consisting of Comedy Company members, Richo, Stewy, Snoz, Billi and Bishop. From Admin Coy thanks to SGT Kelly and his men of white, LCPL Clayton and his men of terror and a special mention to our favourite son CPL Don Bowie, who, rumour has it, is defecting to another company for 1989. Thank you for your excellent assistance Don! Also a quick nod of appreciation to 105 Fd Bty and 2/14 LH (QMI) and the other Enoggera units who provided us with valuable manpower which made our Malaysia Tour the highpoint of a successful 1988.



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7 PLATOON

After a short but well deserved BRL the Champion PL was back on deck and ready to tackle the year ahead. After sending the old boss, LT McRitchie back down to Singleton for a bit of retraining, the PL prepared to start training the NEW boss, LT Dixon. To everyone's surprise very little training was needed as the Boss and the Soldiers seemed to be on the same wave length.

Now with the boss squared away I Section had the task of breaking CPL Podobnik into the system. After the first few attempts it was considered to be a lost cause, but quiet persistence eventually paid off. It was never the same without CPL (AMOS) Dalley, but at least it was quiet.

The PL soon found themselves cruising up the coast on Ex 'Initial Landing', regarded as the "swan of swans". PTE Lord had a near incident with the buttered ET, but all in all everyone enjoyed the exercise (except PTE Lord for some reason). On return from the trip it was found the PTEs O'Mara and Streeter had decided to further their careers in the real PL. The men of the PL accepted them so well that they were given a hook each, along with Bung. Now we had four Lance Jacks in the PL; to fix that they gave Wags another stripe and all was well.

After the Easter Break, the Champion PL prepared to head off to Tully and at the same time 'Dixie and H' were off to London as part of the Royal Guard. First impressions of Tully were nothing like what we had seen in any of the Far NTH QLD travel brochures. After we accepted the fact that the Army Booking Office had not made a mistake with our reservations, we tramped off into the weeds to lead the way again. All was not bad and one of the highlights was listening to 9 PI launch a full scale attack in the jungle at night, definitely a gutsy move.

After endless DPI checks the big day arrived and we were off to Malaysia to see what it had to offer. Our feet had barely hit the ground when we found ourselves bundled into a bus and heading down to check out the ranges at Pulada. The ranges were a little run down but we still got some worthwhile shooting in. PT was taken care of by SGT Slattery. Most of us found PT extremely enjoyable and were very sad when the SGT was layed out in hospital for the last month. PTEs Craigie and Todd had to be counselled that all good things must come to an end. After Pulada the men were let loose on Singapore for a few days to relax. After the compulsory trip to see the Kiwis and score a few cartons it was back to the pool to see what Singapore had to offer. Three members of the PI found out that the PI SGT had more to offer than Singapore did, when they phoned him up in the middle of the night - on the dry and confined to camp seemed pretty reasonable and a lesson was learnt about alcohol and phones. On return to Butterworth, the PI was tasked with destroying the Engineer Detachment in the inter PI sports. Naturally the invincible 7 didn't let they Coy down as the other two PLs had. With another big win under their belt the PI was off to conquer Thailand. A great time was had by all although a few members were worse for wear and tear - nothing that a bit of antiseptic wouldn't fix. 'H' really knows how to lay a bike down. After returning to Butterworth some members of the PL were off to start their SUB I (CPL), leaving the rest to continue the winning streak they had started before they left for Thailand. Of the 9 team games played only one loss was incurred. All in all the soldiers of the PI displayed the team work that makes 7 PL the Champion PL.

On the return to OZ the PI prepared for Ex Silk Purse, one thing we did learn on the exercise was not to follow "Gunnies Lesters" PL when navigation is involved. The PL is looking forward to a well earned BRL after an outstanding effort throughout the year.

Go hard 7 "HEAD FIRST"

EIGHT IN EIGHTY EIGHT

Post course 88 saw Eight platoon badly mauled by Support Company. CPL Hughes along with PTEs Bill, Bourne and Corcoran were netted by Support Company. SGT Dunning decided to go into business and moved up to DPRI and CPL Holmquest couldn't make up his mind where he wanted to go.

CPL/SGT Hill marched in along with CPL Ferguson and LCPL Wilson. The platoon then took an April vacation at FFBS Tulley, a relaxing 10 days enjoying the jungle environment.

May was preparation month for MALAYSIA and we welcomed CPL Jackson and his section of troopers from 2/14 QMI. As our departure got closer the more hectic our training became, until the day we left became a welcome relief to all.

Three months in BUTTERWORTH was an enlightening experience for most of the platoon. Cultural tours were conducted in SINGAPORE and THAILAND and a stint was spent at PULADA honing up on our ambushing techniques.

September saw us back on deck in AUSTRALIA with a strength of 1&12. The gods smiled on us though and we received 7 reinforcements for Silk Purse. November sees Eight Platoon off the LADY ELLIOT ISLAND for 10 days of adventure training. This will be spent with marine biologist Neville Coleman conducting a marine fauna survey of the island. As the end of the year draws near, the exodus once more begins. Those leaving are LT Corkhill, CPL Ferguson and PTE Taverner. LT Scamp comes to the platoon in 89, and he is lucky enough to have the best looking NCO in the regiment on his roll books. So farewell 1988, year of Eight Platoon's bicentennial bash.

EXERCISE KIWI CONNECTION

From 15-28 August, the officers and supporting elements of 8/9RAR participated in Ex Kiwi Connection, a Five Power Defence Agreement CPX conducted at Papakura Military Camp in Auckland New Zealand. The exercise was hosted by HQ 1 Task Force, and participants were:

8/9 RAR Australia, HQ 1 TF New Zealand, 12 RMR Malaysia, 12 Gurkha Rifles United Kingdom and 2 SIR Singapore.

The aim of this annual exercise was to develop interoperability between the FPBA armies by extending the knowledge of each others tactics, operating staff procedures, organisations, weapons and equipment. This was achieved by practising CP procedures in a combined (FPDA) operational setting at Brigade and Battalion level.

The exercise was conducted in 2 stages. Four days were spent conducting TEWTS in the TAOR (Tactical Area of Responsibility), followed by the CPX over a 3 day period.

The concept was of low level operations, with the enemy comprising 2 companies of the Musorian Parachute Battalion and local dissidents of the Peoples Democratic Militia. The FPDA Brigade was deployed and played by lower control, by means of a large war game with directions from higher.

A number of problems were highlighted during the CPX. Perhaps the most evident being the efforts by the media to capitalise on adverse propaganda and military action involving civilians, to discredit the FPDA force.

The presence of the dissidents presented the delicate situation of committing the military forces into civilian population centres. This forced the requirement for combined military and police forces, to avoid breaching civil law, and required specific and detailed Rules of



Engagement and powers of arrest. Sound relations with local leaders was also essential to allow cooperation and sound intelligence to be gathered.

8/9 RAR found itself in the most active AO, and performed creditably, by achieving its objectives well before time through employment of sound tactics.

Overall, the exercise was of great benefit to all participants through the gaining of experience in the different procedures and tactics of other armies. Additionally international relations were developed and fostered in the finest Australian tradition and we left much more aware of the FPDA and the country of New Zealand.

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EXERCISE SILK PURSE 88 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Exercise Silk Purse 88 was the Battalion's only unit level activity for the year, as a result there were a few hiccups along the way. However, overall the results were pleasing and an indication that despite the restrictions of the current economic climate, the Battalion has the ability to maintain an acceptable level of skill that could be readily expanded to allow a successful deployment on operations. The addition of D Coy I SIR added an interesting sidelight to the exercise with the Singaporeans being employed as the Battalions' fourth rifle company. This is a task, I think everyone who was on the exercise will agree, they completed with enthusiasm, professionalism and competence.

After the normal arguments with the RAAF on the number of personnel they would take on their aircraft, 77 or 90, we had a victory and the Battalion was deployed complete on the one day as opposed to the two days proposed by our brothers in blue. On arrival in SWBTA our taxis were waiting and the Battalion commenced work up training with the APC's. I could hear an audible yawn from all you "experienced" members of the Battalion, but remember there is always a requirement to train the new march ins on these horribly noisy, smelly pieces of equipment and therefore to maintain section and platoon identities it is necessary to re learn old lessons. You would have noticed that we kept the work up period as short as possible and lets face it they beat walking.

Following the shake out phase we started to advance, you guessed it down the North South Road. The original plan was in fact, to travel via 17 Mile Gap and down the coast track, however the heavy rain in the month prior to our deployment made this an unsure proposition and it was abandoned in favour of the more certain alternative. No startling developments here. We learnt again the basics of mounted advance and the realities of arriving in night loc after dark, however in this job, thats life.

The Assault River Crossing provided an entertaining interlude with the intricate operation going relatively smoothly considering the amount of practise, nil, and the level of expertise, very limited, the unit has in this sort of activity. More time was needed to gain the most out of this phase of the exercise as the difficult part is not the actual crossing of the river but the planning, co ordination and logistics involved.

Good old defence was next and once again time was our big enemy. The finer points of defensive operations have been lost owing to the emphasis now being placed on low level operations. At section and platoon commander level we need to get back to the basics of the conduct of defence to provide the polish to what is a very basic infantry soldier skill. The firing of the Mortar and Artillery DF's and FPF's provided an extra slice of realism to the live firing phase. The difficulties of co ordinating the firepower available to commanders in a defensive position was well demonstrated. When you start to look at the restricted arcs of fire imposed by the location of pits and the requirement to take into account the back blast danger areas of the various support weapons the problems become obvious. When you sit down and think about it, defence is not as easy as it looks.

The "withdrawal" for want of a better term, while appearing to be a case of organised chaos, worked, and once again the need for planning, coordination and simplicity was reinforced. The whole thing was made easier by the presence of the tracks however it is not an easy phase of war and rehearsals are imperative if it is to go smoothly.

Live Firing always has provided the most realistic form of training available to the Army in a piece environment, the training this time certainly lived up to that reputation. As infantry soldiers we need to develop confidence and competence in the use of a wide range of weapons, this can only be done by practice and more practice. Unfortunately the ammunition allocation of most special natures is not sufficient to anything like the required amount of training at individual soldier level. This shows in the lack of confidence in the design and construction of ranges and in the over application of required safety standards. That is not to say that safety standards should be ignored, quite the opposite, however the current rules and regulations provide adequate scope for the conduct of realistic live firing training, the only real limitation is the imagination of the personnel involved. The live firing conducted at Silk Purse was a more than worthwhile activity which was of benefit to all those who participated.



In conclusion I would like to pass on to all the units who supported us during the exercise our appreciation for their efforts, without their assistance the exercise would not have been possible. K89 will provide the next proving ground for the battalion and I am sure that it will be approached with the same professionalism and desire to succeed that Silk Purse was.



9 PLATOON C COY

9 PL may not be the biggest PL in the BN but few can say that they have achieved as much as 'The Devil Dogs'.

During our time at Tully, both sections set a blistering pace over the obstacle course which the rest of the coy found a bit much to keep up with. The PL Maintained a high standard in the field the whole time.

When the Coy deployed to Butterworth, 9PL grew to 3 sections. There were no supprises when 7 section won the Coy inter-section mil skills comp and went to Singapore to compete in a Skill at Arms Competition sponsored by IRNZIR. 8 and 9 section had to merge due to the Sub I course and came a creditable fourth.

9 PL came second in the inter PL sports competition which was fiercely contested by everyone. The basketball, touch and volleyball were all tight games but we just couldn't get there at full time with the important games.

The training conducted at Pulada gave everyone a good idea about operating in Malay jungle. Combatting the Musician Block Monsters and giant leeches were just two of the challenges we faced. We completed a detailed package of range practices both at Pulada and in Penang which helped bring the standard of markmanship up to a very acceptable level.

Naturally our tour to Thailand saw the recommended amounts of Mekong and Sam Song being consumed and the train ride to Bangkok was very quiet - Go Romes!



Swimming in hotel pools became very hazardous in Singapore, especially after 10pm. The manager of the Grand Central Hotel wants to know when we are returning as everyone enjoyed the 3 day stay in Singapore.

Overall the PL has had a good year and everyone is looking forward to visiting North Queensland in November, where we will be acting as enemy for 51 FNQR and later completing a diving course in Port Douglas.



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CHQ SUPPORT COMPANY 1988

The Senior Company, of course, has had a very busy year in 1988 supporting the remainder of the Battalion. The company has been committed throughout the quiet Bi-Centennial year to developing our specialist skills, keeping the soldiers entertained with a variety of overseas excursions and filling in our spare time with a few duties. Despite the restricted training time available due to overseas jaunts and duties, duties, duties ... the QUIETLY SUPERIOR company proved its ability by performing well on the Battalion exercise SILK PURSE '88.

The start of 1988 saw a new "six-niner" at the helm. MAJ Bozsa led the company with enthusiasm and frequently increased the Diggers military knowledge through the use of historical examples as well as impromptu bush hat and bitumen model displays. The exalted position of 2IC Spt Coy had a high attrition rate this year with CAPT Johnstone deciding that several months was long enough and EX "Longlook" would be more fun. CAPT Tulley OC Mor PL tried his hand at the job until the arrival of CAPT Ashurst. The impending loss of the current 2IC Spt to A Coy in November will leave the position vacant yet again. Any Captain in the Battalion interested may organise a job interview with OC Spt Coy. Applicants should be well versed in fighting the administrative battle doctrine.

WO2 Seeth this year proved that he can survive extended periods in barracks, despite his recurring duties nightmares. A dedicated lover of the field, the CSM managed to endure his separation from the bush by his relentless support of an unnamed brewery in Milton Road.



For the next several months log training, the Tattoo and promotion courses stopped any coordinated platoon training being implemented. Ex Silk Purse saw the platoon gear up for a new role - vehicle mounted patrols. (Don't worry SGT Emmett and Toco - we didn't hurt them). With more practice we will be able to get a good set of SOPs operating (K89)?.

Another welcome. A new boss, LT Evans, arrived after swarming as the LO and with C Coy in the cesspits of Malaysia. Welcome Boss. Another farewell to CPL Frank Ketu. After doing well with the DOG Squad and getting a good result on his Sub 2 SGT course we see him go to training Coy awaiting for this third. Best of luck Frank and thanks. See you back here soon.

That's about it for this year. Watch the recruiting posters and harass your platoon staff to get to the best platoon in the battalion. We need good, enthusiastic and odd soldiers to do our new 1/89 Recon Course 6 February to 17 March 1989.

EX PAC BOND

B Company was joined by the cavalry, engineers, artillery and members of other companies in the battalion a week prior to departure for Hawaii. In this week the contingent trained in areas of infantry minor tactics, weapon handling and teamwork. The training culminated in an exercise trained soldier and a BBQ. When the contingent boarded the RAAF 707 for Hawaii they were eager and ready to go.

On arrival we were shuttled to Schofield Barracks and dropped off at C Quad, the home of 4 Bn 22 Infantry. Our accommodation proved to be a little crowded but comfortable and the section commanders heartily approved of having a fridge in their rooms.

We soon settled into accommodation and the American style of training. This didn't cause too many problems although some differences made many people appreciate the Australian method of doing things. Confusion reigned on the rifle range, when the firers received "lock and load" instead of action, instant. Things returned to normal when SGT Gillman mounted the control tower to give words of command.

Fortunately after a hard day's work there was always a meal at C Quad. The meals impressed so many people that Burger King (U.S. equivalent of Hungry Jacks) had to put on extra staff to keep up with the Australian demand. PTEs Weymouth, Robinson and McKenzie were there so often that they had seats reserved.

The American staff at the bayonet assault was impressed by our enthusiasm and aggression. The instructor was a bit worried by our intention to use bayonets on our rifle during the one-on-one training. However he finally agreed as long as any injuries weren't his responsibility. Everyone was amused by PTE Reids unique style and PTE Freeman was given plenty of room after his bayonet flew off twice. SSGT Neate was far from impressed when he had to worry about bent bayonets and a bent barrel or two.

An interesting day was spent on the range with an introduction and range practice involving Soviet weapons and other commonly used small arms. 'Doc' Berry did a convincing imitation of Dirty Harry and spent a lot of time wondering how to smuggle a 44 Magnum into Australia.

During the weekends everyone left Schofield for Honolulu and the beaches. Most seemed to enjoy the local culture, especially that found in the nightclubs. However the 21 year old drinking age limit tended to annoy some of the younger contingent members, such as LT Stevenson. PTE Leaver chose to ignore this small law and found himself being escorted to the local police station wearing handcuffs. This lesson was taken seriously and the rest of the contingent was careful not to get caught.

PTE Ion was a little careless and in an attempt to set an alcohol consumption record, he found himself in the psychiatric ward of a hospital, where most people thought he should remain.

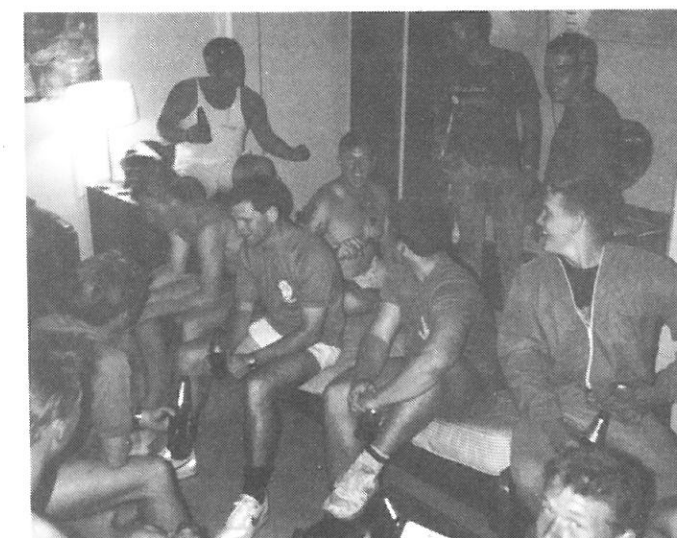
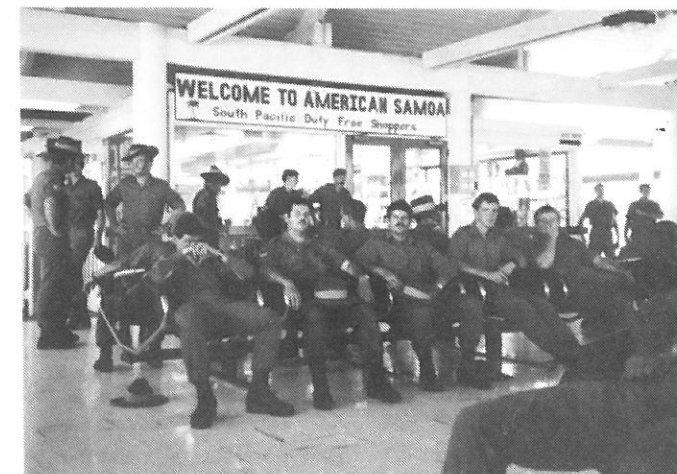
One of the highlights of the trip was the Miss Hawaii contest. The contingent had to provide 8 members to appear as part of the show. The contest was televised throughout the United States and there was no shortage of volunteers. However finding 8 tall handsome members proved to be a bit hard.

Finally we had to go back to work so it was off to the Kahuku Training Area for the company exercise. Here we were introduced to gulches and MRE's (meals ready to eat) neither of which were very popular. 6 Platoon quickly made PTE Haintz forward scout due to the dinosaur infested gulches because he was seen as being expendable. Over 3 days at the Kahukus we honed our skills for the battalion exercise.

The battalion exercise began with a hot insertion by Blackhawks and by the end of the day B Company had destroyed most of the enemy camps in the area. Ambushes were a popular night time activity along with an infiltration attack. The ambushers had a mixed bag with 4 platoon destroying a lost U.S. scout platoon who appeared in the killing ground. At last we flew out by Chinook to be deposited in a prison farm, some 4km from our designated LZ.

Eventually it was time to depart for Australia. Everything went smoothly until an American specialist tried to tell SGT Croft that 96 items were missing from the 4 platoon lines. This impressive list included 4 fridges, 6 lockers, and a number of chairs. It was all straightened out without a kit inspection of 4 platoon echelon bags; the specialist was lucky not to be thrown out of C Quad.

The trip home was by U.S. Star Lifter with combat seating. This was uncomfortable for a 14 hour trip. This didn't worry many people because we were heading back to Australia. The trip was an overall success and gave the members of B Company a look at how the Yanks work.



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PIONEER PLATOON

The year started with a Pioneer course in February which was very successful.

1 Section, under CPL Cockburn had mixed success with C Company in Malaysia.

2 Section, with LCPL Coughlan commanding, built a bridge at St. Peter's Chapel School (The Gap) which should last for one hundred years or more.

CPL Spencer and 2 Section had a rewarding trip to Hawaii with the "gulches" being a topic of conversation for some time.

During this time, the boss kept busy playing rugby while the 'Sarge' held the fort and was lucky enough to get a 2 week trip to Victoria Barracks, Sydney.

CPL Spencer and his men returned from Hawaii in time to go to Tully for the usual workout. 'Spanner' was kind enough to sprain his ankle and give 'Cogs' a chance of leading the section.

For most of the year, duties have plagued the platoon training.

1 Section returned from their Malaysian trip in time to prepare for Ex Silk Purse.



Ex Silk Purse gave everyone a chance to use most of their pioneer skills which included watermanship, field engineering and demolitions.

Adventure Training took us to Emerald to help build an obstacle course, plus abseil, sailing and pig shooting.

1988 has been a BEAUTIFUL year due to the hard work of the men and the support of their wives and girlfriends.

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1/88 ASLT PNR CSE

The 1/88 Aslt Pnr Cse was held by 8/9 RAR from 1 Feb - 11 Mar 88. Included in the panel were soldiers from both 8/9 and 6 RAR as well as three instructors from 6 RAR.

Overall the course went well, with very few administrative hiccups. Highlight for the students was the construction of a 21m bridge at LWC - this was a highlight not only because they had the satisfaction of building a bridge but more importantly knowing that it would be used.

The demolition phase went off with a bang - we were fortunate enough to have 3 Bofors guns available which made a pleasant change from blowing up the usual used bits and pieces left from 100 other courses.

The final highlight and in fact surprise was the Watermanship - surprise because we had brand new motors which didn't break down. This enabled the students maximum time on the water which they enjoyed and benefitted from.

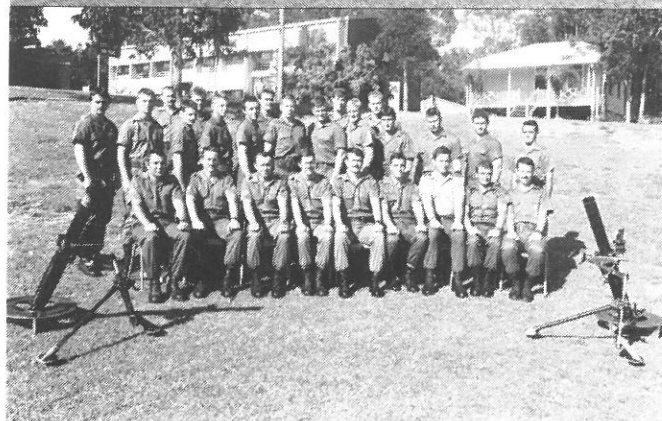
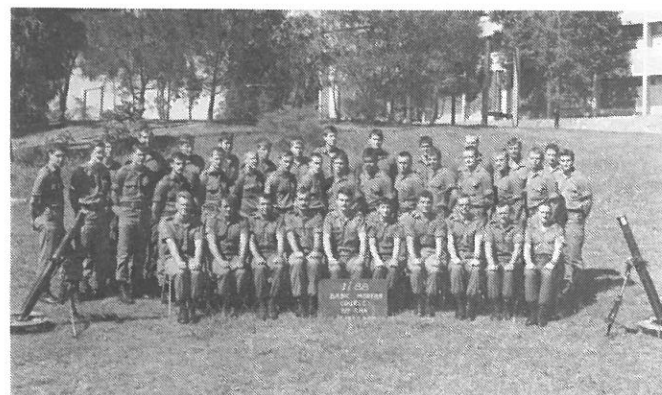
In conclusion, the course was a success with only one student being withdrawn. The result of this is that both Battalions have now some eager qualified pioneers just waiting to get dirty in PNR PL.

8/9 RAR ASLT PNRS recently built a foot bridge at St Peters Chapel Primary School. The task eventuated as a result of the existing bridge being rather unsafe, mainly due to the recent high rainfall which washed away a substantial amount of the bridge footings.



It turned out to be a full weeks work for PI bridging the 14 metre gap. The area needed a substantial amount of re-shaping, including the preparation for a large pier. During the construction the bridge required 4 metres of concrete-suffice to say the bridge will stay put for many years to come.

The bridge was opened by LCPL Coughlan who cut his way through a wooden barrier with a chainsaw. It was then handed over to the school principal, Mr Allan Clarke.



MORTAR '88

"WHAT A TOP DAY"! It was enough to make all those present in the Platoon Office look up from their steaming coffee mugs and overflowing ashtrays. Through the haze of the room they saw him in the doorway. The full brown brief case and determined grin along with the rank insignia of a captain said it all.. The new Boss was here and Mortars would never be the same again.

From there we relearnt the long forgotten art of PT and began to prepare for the basic mortar course. In mid-February we packed up our tubes and headed off to Stalag G Block at Greenbank. The transformation started and mere mortals evolved into Mortar Men. Once the students proved that they could be trusted, they were shipped off to Wide Bay to turn the tranquil bush land into a crater-covered moonscape. When it was all over the elite were chosen and elevated to the dizzy heights of Support Company.

The aptly-named Exercise 'First Try' was our first effort as a Platoon. We had stacks of ammo to sharpen our skills. We bunged it on for the Rifle Company guys who came to see us and closed with a fire power demo said to rival EXPO. Next on the agenda was Exercise 'Tasman Link'. Our mortars represented the Royal Australian Regiment and we held our own against everything from Naval Gunfire to the full might of the RAAF. We even managed to break the world Land Rover loading record. All went well, apart from the caving in of the CP by the sonic booms of FI 11s and FA18s.

Exercise 'Dig In' showed 131 Div Loc Bty that when we say "regardless of season, weather or terrain" we mean it. We did our stuff despite the rain and cold. The Yank Mortar Men on visit for a day were reluctant to leave us and go back to their "Brain dead".

Our MLO LT Keynes parted company at this stage to go onto bigger things down at 1 RTB. We still miss him and have already forgotten how to tie knots. Nice one Basil!

A trip to Tully in July showed the world that we are still more than able to mix it in the 'J'. The DS were amazed by our basic drill - Run, Down, Crawl, Observe and Call in Mortars (then re-org). During this trip PTE's Allen and Lentfer joined the Platoon. Their skills in the Transport Yard, since have been greatly appreciated. The now look Mortar Line now featured a fresh face at the helm - LT Sutton joined us as the new MLO.

August came and so did our visitor from the Royal Marines. Somehow all our shirts got mixed up that day and the Pom was met at Amberley by 'LT' Birtles and 'CPL' Sutton. On arrival at PHQ he was introduced to 'CPT' A J Conlon and promised a night of fine aboriginal cuisine.

8/9 RAR 1/88 BASIC MORTAR COURSE

A Basic Mortar Course was conducted by 8/9 RAR during the period 17th February 1988 - 5th March 1988 with a combined 8/9 RAR/6 RAR Staff.

The course was conducted in two parts, an instructional phase at Greenbank, and the live fire shoot at Wide Bay Training Area. The climax of the course was a first light company attack live fire, fire plan in two phases. The shoot confirmed that a good standard of handling and CP procedures was reached.

PTE Simon Lockwood was awarded the trophy for achieving Student of Merit, whilst PTE Goose Roberts was the Most Improved Student.



After coming to grips with our sense of humour LT Cawthorne became very much part of the Platoon. No sooner had the Pom caught his breath than he was whisked off to New Zealand with 9er and the gang for Exercise 'Kiwi Connection'. Not an overly arduous experience. Let's hope bed sores don't scar.

'Silk Purse' The big one! We approached the exercise with clear minds and buckets of enthusiasm. Amidst cries of "where's the chainsaw" and "man your means!" we managed to come out of SWBTA with a few lessons learnt. Now we know why they call us diggers.

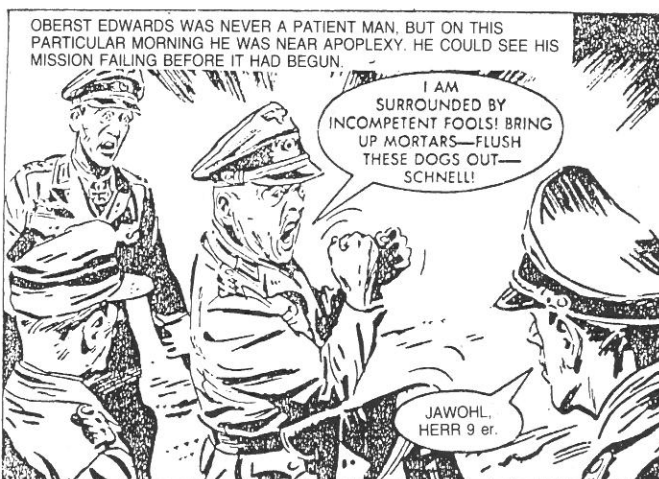
As we approach the end of Mission for 88 and the year becomes just another sheet in the fire plan of life we say goodbye to a few of the team. We lost SGT Kelner during the year to B Company and Kev Banighan to Alpha. Some faces won't be back in '89. SGT Colbertaldo is off to B Company and CPL Birtles is bound for Kapooka. A J Conlon is going out to civvy street and Nev Warwick should be roaming around Perth in a sandy beret. A heap of boys are off to Malaysia to give A Company a hand. And one of the sections will be supporting the Officer/NCO course at Singleton and proving our Platoon to be the best in the Regiment.

PTE Henderson and LT Keynes whilst mounted in APC(M)s - supporting 131 Div Loc Bty.

PTE Lockwood, PTE McGuire (6RAR) and LT Sutton.

PTEs Wellington, Symes (6RAR) and Cousins (6RAR).

PTEs Rupe, Brown and Benson.

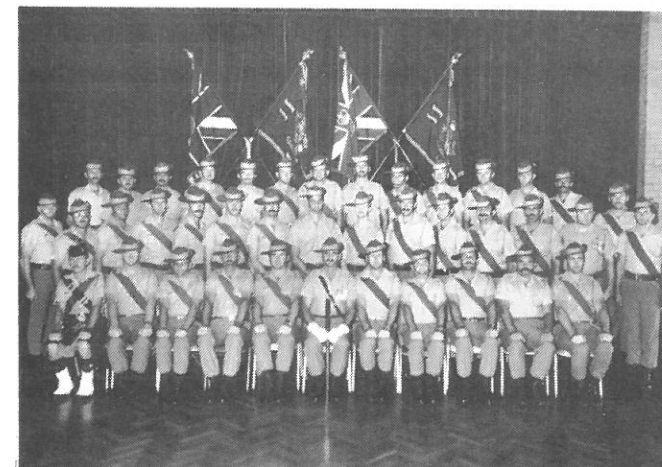


THE OFFICERS' MESS

The Officers' Mess has undergone a number of physical improvements this year which have gone towards the overall Mess development plan. General refurbishment inside, including the establishment of the Galipoli Room has been matched by gradual improvements to the landscape outside. These ongoing selfhelp programmes will gradually lead to a more appealing mess. As well, the Annex has also received a number of cosmetic improvements, the fruits of the labour of the 8/9 RAR officers and mess staff.

On the entertainment side there have been a number of notable functions with the Roman Night standing out for entertainment and the mixed dining in night after the Trooping of the Colours parade probably being the finest meal that we've ever had at a function.

The Officers would like to pay tribute to the mess staff for their hard work and acknowledge the always friendly atmosphere engendered by them. As well, all those soldiers who have been involved in duties in the mess, in particular those rostered on function nights are thanked for their efforts. The Mess looks for an even better year in '89.



8/9 RAR SERGEANTS' MESS ACTIVITIES

During 1988 the Mess had several functions with the Highlights being the Bi Centenary Dinner on the 27 May and the Regimental Dinner on the 12 Aug 88, both activities going off with great success.

Toward the end of the year the Xmas draw will be held on the 26 Nov, with a paid comedian (NOT ONE OF THE MEMBERS) plus a disco for the entertainment.

From the PMC and members all the best wishes to Past and Present members of the Battalion for Xmas 1988 and their future military careers.

le tahiti

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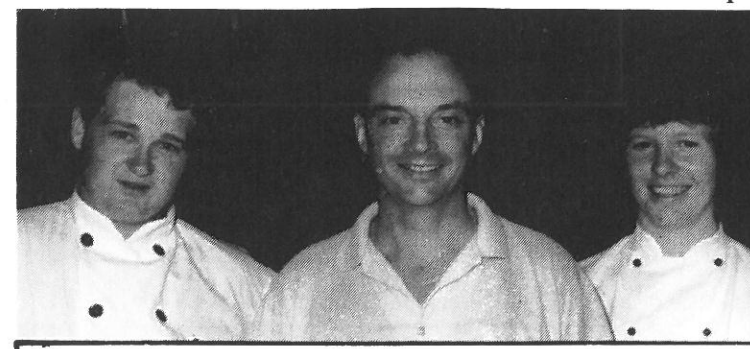


Tony Sullivan would like to welcome all serving members to

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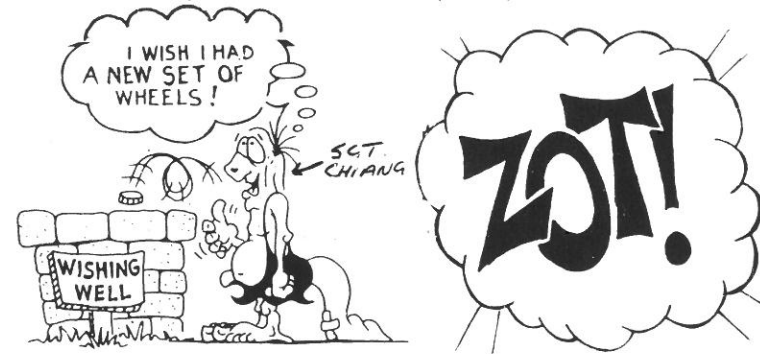
5% Discount

Tony served in Malaya, Singapore and Vietnam (8 RAR) and cordially invites all members and their families to dine in a pleasant, relaxed setting.

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE - CATERING PLATOON

1988 has been very full and varied for Catering Platoon, with all the Chefs and Stewards going to the field or overseas.

Those lucky enough to score an overseas trip were: Sgt Kelly, Cpl Campion and Pte Hall and Holloway with a trip to Butterworth, Malaysia. Cpl Maroske and Pte Ward to New Zealand and Pte Young and Silveri to Hawaii. The rest of us had to be content with such exotic locations such as Shoalwater Bay, Greenbank, Mt Mee etc. Sgt Chiang, Cpl Godwill and Pte Holland and Garnett are off to Butterworth, Malaysia for Christmas with Alpha Coy.



ADVENTURE TRAINING - SURAT 1988

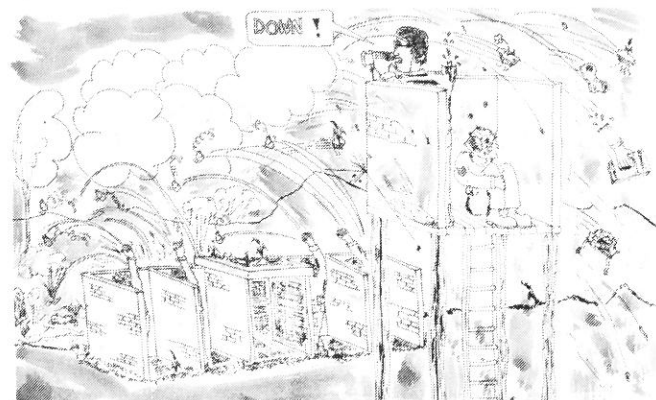
Exercise ENFORCED DIET or in laymans terms How to eat nothing in four days. Some privileged members of our Admin Coy were treated to a five day holiday on a station out of SURAT in western Queensland and they LOVED IT! (or so they said). After a couple of lectures on survival in the wild and one on how cold they could get, the members were whisked off into the bush.

Shelter and warmth were first on the agenda, followed by scouting the local animal paths and the laying of not mines (pity), but snares. All groups were camped by what is usually a nearly dry fish and eel infested river, which was flowing at about 12 knots and 30 feet deep. The fish, well, there weren't any, (caught that is).

The rabbits, fellas, the rabbits were for food, not to keep you warm at night (a bit sus if you ask me), or to make pets of. Other than a lot of bunnies on the trip, there was plenty of game about, just very little caught in the snares. A few kangaroos were snared, but just kept on going, better luck next time lads. One of the groups had some luck when a local hare committed suicide in a snare and tore itself apart, (no match for hoochy cord).

While, we in base camp froze at night, our adventurers told us they were snug and warm in their shelters with their blazing camp fires, (and their bunnies?).

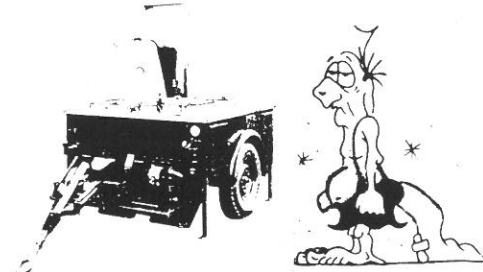
All had a few cold refreshments on the final night in base camp and proceeded to swap stories, you know, like who caught the biggest and how they made snares out of blades of grass. I especially liked the one about the WHITE TURKEY! For those who don't know about this one ask Cpl Godwill, Maroske and Gilshenan. To all those members who participated, WELL DONE, and see you out there again next year.



The platoon has also worked tirelessly in providing superb barbecues and buffets at the Rams Retreat. While the Battalion has enjoyed the terrific tucker and the cold refreshments, the chefs as usual were enjoying the sweat.

With the Silly Season nearly upon us, we are all gearing up for the busiest time of our year, with functions galore. It is this time of year that we kiss our wives and girlfriends goodbye and head off to work with our sleeping bags and several sets of uniforms. We trust you will enjoy the forthcoming functions, as a lot of time, effort and sweat goes into them.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 1989 WITH 8/9 RAR



EXERCISE 'SILK PURSE 1988' - CATERING PLATOON 8/9 RAR

ROLL CALL

W02 Young
Sgt's - Thomas, Mitchell, Chiang, Baldrey
Cpl's - Godwill, Gishenan, Maroske, Rayner
Pte's - Sullivan, Holland, Garnett, Ward, Young, Holloway, Gillan, Silveri, Walker, Pyle, Kitchen

We deployed to SWBTA as a platoon for the first time in nearly twelve months. After some teething problems, we accustomed ourselves to the job at hand and worked as a team to feed the Battalion and all the attachments.

Everyone worked as a team and the overall standard was high. Sgt Mitchell, as always the Morale officer, was up to his usual standard, and kept the morale on an even keel. The KFM had a father, Sgt Chiang, who looked after it like a baby.

Overall, the exercise was an experience not to be missed.

DEFINITIONS: by A. Cook

PUNCTUALITY: pack up the KFM and your vegies will be on time.

CHARCOAL: see Pte Young. Noted Pte cook who knows how to really make your bacon crisp.

BED REST: see Cpl Rayner. Play volleyball on exercise and twist your ankle.

HOMER: see Pte Ward. Use your head as a bat to hit the kitchen building for a home run.

ECSTATIC: boarding a south bound C 130.



SIGNAL PLATOON 1988

1988 has been a very busy and diverse year for the comms lords. We have had people travel to the four corners of the world and even into the back blocks of the Australian outback.

The year commenced with a lot of new faces including an almost new command structure with the RSO, Rad Sergeant, PL Sergeant and several new CPL det comds arriving in mid January. Immediately it was off to Greenbank to train a few more siglets for the PL & Bn on the 1/88 Regimental Signallers Course.

The course was hardly over and the PL began its cultural wanderings around the world with the RSO, Steve Barrow and Squizzy Taylor setting off to the exact centre of Australia. Sergeant Fairbank, Private Cairnteurs, Fonie and Richo headed off to England for the Royal House Guard and the remainder to duties. The guys on duties were further depleted with several members heading off to Hawaii where Blue Ingram managed to purchase a few more grass skirts to add to his collection. Duties were again further depleted with more of the guys joining the jetsetters for a trip to Malaysia with C Coy.

Those of us left were beginning to wonder who CPL's Barrow and Richardson really are or was the RSO just adding names to his board to make it look good.

The duty roster was again depleted when the sigs departed for New Zealand for a cultural exchange and a little work with the FPDA exercise.

Talking about New Zealand, who was the siglet getting all those free drinks off that good looking barmaid who could have been a tag team wrestler and why was CPL Sheldon so surprised at 0500 on the day of departure.

The final overseas trip for the year will be another trip to Malaysia with CPL Sheldon leading the siglet contingent. God help A Coy.

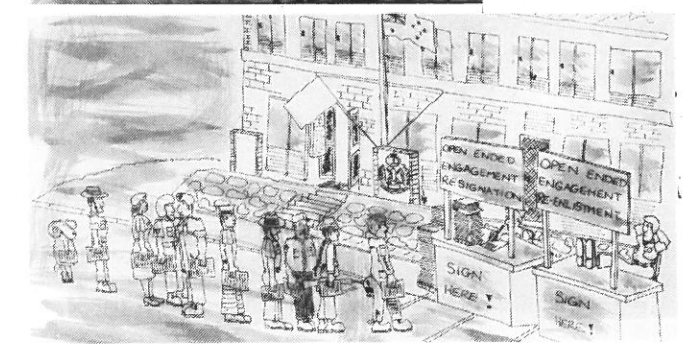
Although Sig PL spent the majority of the year scattered around the world, we managed to get together for Ex Silicon Bandit, a CPX at Canungra and Exercise Silk Purse at SWBTA.

Exercise Silk Purse saw the PL operating under adverse conditions with the usual comms problems which the PL worked hard to overcome. Particular mention must go to our newest untrained members PTE Reid and Taverner who worked hard to achieve excellent results.

A point on the exercise was that if operations operated and users treated a radio like a black snake, communication security would be much enhanced.

We also managed to squeeze some time into the year to qualify PL members on various courses. CPL Sheldon and SGT Jarvis went to sunny Singleton in July for their RSO course achieving 1st & 2nd place respectively. The RSO and B J Hughes went to Melbourne to learn all about the new VINSON equipment which will be issued shortly. Numerous members went off on subject courses and Steve Barrow will finish the year at Singleton (that's not overseas) on his RSO course.

Finally, Sig PL will finish the year with another Sig course at Greenbank then finally off for some well deserved BRL.



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HEAVY WEAPONS PLATOON

The beginning of the year saw Heavy Weapons heavily into training, this was due to the shortage of man-power in the platoon. This problem has been the major set back in the platoon all year.

Our first bush trip was to Tully, the platoon got back into the swing of being a rifle section again, the change over from 16 machine guns to 3 was easy to handle, although the dismantled role and patrolling took a while to get used to.

After Tully most of the platoon went to Hawaii. Those few that were left, were lucky enough to go to LWC and then Wide Bay.

In Wide Bay we supported the Americans in our SFMG role. A little further in the year saw the platoon deploy to Shoalwater Bay for the battalions major exercise "Silk Purse". The exercise brought a lot of points out, especially in the way the platoon is to be resupplied. On the exercise we employed both our roles, being mainly Anti-Armour.

The vehicles lasted, which was surprising, also the "Rams" released Cpl Wilson for the exercise as well!!

A few of the points that came out on the exercise, a vehicle can drive by itself if there is a snake on the gear stick, there was 6 survivors from the Ashor Valley not 3.

Cpl McIvor can build over head protection that could take a 155 round. Cpl McIvor does get issued a Turfer Jack with his weapon CES.

DELTA COMPANY IN 1988

Well, we can say, so far in 1988, we have survived the only way we knew how, "knowing each day was a new adventure".

Members of Delta company have had a year of non stop highlights as part of a complete new team. With the exception of Sgt Lackmann, an original member from last years Delta Force, Delta Company received an "Influx" of new members, namely: WO2 J. N. Baszyk marched in from 2 RVR Ballarat to take charge of the company. His presence has since been felt as far away as the United Kingdom, on the Royal House Guard, and as close as Support Company's own "Kids Camp".

Sgt K. R. Lester. Although with the company for over three months he spent the majority of that time at FFBS Tully, prior to returning to the Battalion and deciding to join Charlie Company in its tour of Oriental delights on the Malaysian Peninsula, he is sure to have brought back many memories, hopefully none of the painful kind.

Sgt S. C. Ward. Another member who was with the company for only a limited amount of time. He assisted in a number of Pre Course Training weeks, prior to moving to SPT.



It is possible to dig 8 alternate gun fits in one defensive location. Arty sheraf does come into the gun line if your to close. You can send an "of dem" whilst writing a mait dem and contact report and commanding the vehicle and fighting the battle all at once. After the exercise saw the platoon doing work on the vehicles (AN ALL YEAR JOB) and work on the weapons.

At the end of the year the platoon will see a complete turn over, all the NCO's are leaving except "Willy" and the Boss will also be going.

All up the year was quite enjoyable (I HAD TO WRITE THAT). And we look in anticipation on how the platoon will shape up next year.



Cpl B. W. Lambert. We had him, but did not have him!

Cpl H. Tietz. Our storeman initially, but decided to keep to himself at the RAMS.

Cpl G M Steele. Left the Rams and marched into Delta Company on his return from annual leave.

Lance Cpl M. Vesovic marched into Delta from BHQ late last year.

Pte G. L. Smith. Marched into Delta coy as our storeman and is still here when not playing rugby.

And last but not least, our original member SGT Lackmann 'The Mechanic'. He was away most of the time, either on detachments or on course.

Members who are or were in Delta Coy through the year should be commended for all their efforts, in providing their best in instructional training.

As far as sporting events seem to go, rugby stood out as one of the leading drives behind this company. Each new member we got had a helping hand in the battalions efforts to be the best. Two of these sporting heroes that we could not have done without were Cpl Steele and Pte Smith who took each day as a day towards rugby.

RAP

After quickly bolting the door I've found some time to write about what a hectic time the RAP has had this year. In fact it's been so busy we even saw the demise of our SSGT Chris Hughes. Chris has been posted out to civvy street where he will take up residence in the Melbourne Museum along side Phar Lap. Word has it his display will be computerized.

For all you non believers the second coming of the lord has arrived. Yes Cec is back and no he wasn't on long service, so troops start whistling up those marching tunes because that's what this army needs.

If you were wondering whether the RAP had a SGT well wonder no more. We haven't! Yes that tiny ball of flesh which has periodically been seen around our area is going back to Kapooka. Well done SGT Fisk and don't expect a going away present.

For all you observant troops around the area you will notice that the RAP is finally getting its new Q store. It's to be named the CPL Berry Memorial Store. Yes after six years of blood, sweat and tears the 'BEAR' is finally leaving. This man who has single handedly preserved the health and well being of the Bn and maintained thousands of troops in the field (except for those who paid well) will be sadly missed. Doc Berry we salute you.

Another fine medic being posted is young Chippy Bainbridge. He's been in the Bn for five years, however real time spent in the Bn has amounted to only six months. The other four and a half years Chippy has provided medical science, years of fascinating medical problems. And the cost? Bugger you Chip, you have consumed over half the army's hospital funds allocated yearly. Well done Chippy. We salute you as well.

Don Bowie has just arrived back from Malaysia after the RMO banished him out of the RAP. Some remark that 'Fijian' Don didn't take too kindly to. We never hear much about Don. He never tells us anything. He has this Toorak syndrome, a real snob. His company is too good for the rest of us. Never tells us anything. So from us all Don, Up Yours!

CPL Butler was ROLLED into I mean posted into the Bn in January replacing CPL Saville. Benny has fitted I mean settled into the RAP quite well until he ventured onto the road party returning from 'Ex Silk Purse'. Benny was so annoyed at missing out on BATHURST that he decided to put his driving skills to the test by taking over the wheel and subsequently destroying the RAP in two easy rolls. ROLL on Benny and good luck. You'll need it.

Our new hygiene waller (Blow Fly) Grant Larven marched into the Bn in January this year with expectations from his predecessor SGT Reidy of being promoted along with receiving an OAM. It's now nearly twelve months and Grant is becoming quite worried and now he is fighting to save his office in the RAP. Never mind Grant 6RAR might have you.

And lastly it's time for the RMO, CAPT Fielke to leave the Bn. After telling the army his posting preferences Adelaide or Civvy Street, the Doc will be leaving after a good three years in the Bn. The RMO introduced many new suggestions and new innovations into the RAP. We were assured that they really work, however the Doc was never around to supervise due to his O/S commitments. The Doc will be sadly missed in the Bn especially by the Aussie Rules team. We wish you and your family all the best and good luck.

That concludes our small brief on the RAP for 1988. We look forward to seeing all you sicko's and bludgers in 1989 especially SPT COY, Butts, Turv's, Baker, Gathercole, Butt's again etc etc etc.



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Our beer.

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TRANSPORT PLATOON ECN 109 COURSE

Once again Tpt PL returned from leave to find a yard full of grounded vehicles. After our transportation obligations to the other courses had been fulfilled we were left with very little for our own course. Just a minor problem. Twenty eager road warriors turned up on the front door step of transportation platoon on the First of February and within minutes the course was in full swing. The first week was spent learning the basics of vehicle maintenance and road law. The second week was the start of the actual driving. Our potential truckies went straight for the cabins and the instructors straight for the sedatives. After numerous close calls with the civilian population the drivers were almost prepared for Exercise Blue Horizon, more commonly known as how to cope with outback culture shock.

EXERCISE BLUE HORIZON

The first leg was from Brisbane to Nambucca Heads, a pleasant cruise down the coast. This was our first encounter with the indigenous people of the outback and a preview of what was to come. Thanks Shiny, and by the way A.J. isn't one of your "Lations". The second leg was the day the students were allowed out on their own. Much to the instructors relief there wasn't anything wrong with their navigation as they all made it to Narribri that night. The next two days were spent travelling to Charleville via Walgett. The only thing that could be said about this stretch was, HEAT!, DUST!.

Even the windscreen washer reservoir was looking good as far as Westy was concerned. When we arrived at Charleville it was obvious that Max had either been there before or he was just naturally an instant hit with the local girls. For any future courses, Transport platoon recommends Coronies Hotel, the only place you can get a hot meal, shower, bed and comedy act by twenty dero's. The course was starting to show signs of driver fatigue on the road to Murgon, as it had been a long trek. When everyone finally arrived at Rainbow Beach it was time for a spin on the beach. The drivers were quick to realise the problems associated with travelling in sandy conditions and along coastal shorelines.

This also gave the course a chance to practise their skills at recovering vehicles. The trip home was fairly uneventful and now the only thing that remained to be done was to clean the vehicles, sign for the licences and read course reports.

In conclusion we hope all on the course learnt something about military driving. All concerned should now know it takes more than getting into a vehicle and driving to be a good driver.

TRANSPORT PLATOON

Once again the warring transport platoon was at it, driving hard "but fair". We began the year with two new illustrious leaders Lt A.M. Baker and Sgt C.E. Emmett.

Although Lt Baker thought he was in the Rugby Platoon and Transport Platoon was a hobby, it didn't take long before he realised it was the other way around and took control of the mighty transport platoon. Sgt Emmett sometimes forgetting his position did more work than the diggers.

With the heavies of the platoon Harly Harry Harris, Big Tim Drewry, Dick Clayton, The Big Bubba, Ando, Baihny, Colly, Franky, Hyme, Danny Diff McCoy, Ossie, Big Al Ryan, Billy Bom BOM, Willy and Woody Allen, and Big Al Pearce who joined at the start of the year.

It wasn't long into the year before the battalion was full on into courses and transport was in the thick of it again. As well as supplying vehicles to about four other courses, they had their own course to run. Only six weeks to make it as an elite truckie in a hard and vigorous course resulting in eight drivers joining the platoon - Lizard Hill, Macka McGregor, Macka McKenna, Macka McLaren, Oli Oliver, Styles, Wilba Williams, Hutch.

During the year two companies headed off overseas to Hawaii and Malaysia, taking half the transport drivers with them. That left us quite short when we were invaded by 120 Yanks. This was part of an exchange and we got the short end of the stick.



What do you do with 120 randy yanks? Well you can't leave them in Brisbane for too long so it was up to Wide Bay "holiday camp" for a bit of sight seeing and live firing.

I must admit that the drivers were showing off a bit to the yanks, by going over as many pot holes as they could, trying to show them the great suspension of our Mogs. We could tell that they were impressed.

At the end of a hard day live firing, it was back to Camp Kerr for tea, a couple of beers and a movie. As pointed out to us by some of the yanks it was a very hard tactical exercise.

Well we couldn't keep them up there all the time, so eventually it was back to Brisbane for a few days before heading home to Hawaii.

The week after saying good bye to the yanks and welcome home to B Company there was a long awaited week off.

Just after coming back Transport was thrown into a massive panic because the big bad boys from MAS were coming to pay us a visit. The job of MAS is to go around various transport platoons and check on their vehicles. They consisted of SNCO's and they put fear into any transport platoon they visited.

With only a half week before the visit, vehicles were sent out of the yard and many of the trailers turned upside down to get fixed. This plan worked well as they couldn't ground a grounded vehicle, neither could they ground vehicles that were not here.

After the visit we had TWO WEEKS before we went bush and as always Transport Platoon came through again, managing to get 90% of the vehicles on the road all dressed with cam nets, shrouds and skirts. As I said we got most of them on the road, but they didn't all stay there for that long. On the move up to Rocky for Ex Silk Purse some took longer than others to get there.

The next day we moved into the training area, slightly hung over but nothing that we could not handle. All in all Silk Purse was a hard exercise for transport, with regular trips to Brisbane, swimming and driving our backsides off. As the boss would say it wasn't all beer and skittles you know! Moving 6 RAR defence stores, driving on some of the worst roads in the area, moving troops back and forth and coping with the dust. I can safely say that everyone was well and truly glad to see the end of Shoal Water Bay.

Over all transport platoon has had a hard year with a lot more on their plates than I am able to say in this summary. For example the individual tours down to the Area Medical Centre, the countless duty drivers, driving for the Tattoo, enemy trips, servicing, non techs and the many driving tasks near and far.

But don't worry 8/9 after everything we are still smiling and we will keep trucking on.



And as I was flying over A Echelon the cooks started throwing cans of Corned Beef type E at my plane. You should see the dents it left on my Mig.

ADMIN COY - HQ

As the proposed 'non-event' year draws to a close we sit back and try to figure out where all the spare time has gone. With only the one Battalion exercise, Admin Coy still managed to have all its platoons searching for 'quiet times' between support activities.

Coy HQ received a new lease of life for 1989 with the change over of all personnel with the exception of the OC and COMS. This idea was so successful we've decided to try it again next year when everyone leaves.

Coy HQ morale hit an all time high with the arrival of WO2 Baczyk. CPL Orr was delighted with his new golf playing CSM (both can be found hacking around a lush fairway every Wednesday) - and as the Coy knows, when CPL Orr is happy, the Coy is happy.

WO2 Baczyk has eased his way into Admin Coy life with great success. Rumour has it that he'd like to stay with aspirations of one day being Coy 21C.

The 21C is claiming victory in the "Admin Coy most travelled CAPT event" with a 2½ to 2 victory over the RMO. However, a protest has been lodged by the RMO on the grounds that a trip to Norfolk Island doesn't even count as half a point.

Time was found between commitments for Adventure Training. Most of the Coy managed to participate in either the SURAT Survival Training or the rafting down the Tweed. Both events were a success with many lessons learnt and a good time had by all.

The annual exercise was a breeze, minimal effort was required and everything went as expected - and I've developed a habit of telling lies. The exercise was the norm with last minute changes by the dozen and the odd Pridem for sweet biscuits. Thanks go out to Mortor PI for their efforts to gainfully employ all Admin Coy platoons to the maximum.



The road party to and from the exercise was a success, and rumour has it that the Tpt Oftr was actually seen once, without his new Perentie 110 (and no he didn't always drive it the 80m to the meal point).

Best of luck for all next year, no doubt it'll be another quiet one with nothing to do. I do believe we've finally got it right from the other Coys point of view:

IF WE WANTED IT TODAY WE WOULD HAVE ASKED FOR IT TOMORROW



PIPES & DRUMS IN 88

1988 has been a full year for the Pipes & Drums.

The year started off as usual with physical training taking a major part in the PLs training! (Volleyball) champs of the BN. Midway through the year the P & D saw the arrival of CPL Vesper, who took the volleyball side from strength to strength. At work practise was now undertaken for the Bi-centennial tour, which has been conducted with great success by us. As the year draws to another BRL period the Pipes & Drums can be congratulated on another top performance in representing 8/9 RAR. Merry Christmas from all of us and look forward to pipeins in 89.



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QUARTERMASTER PLATOON

Since the issue of the last magazine many platoon faces have come and gone, a faster turnover than we can remember for a long time. Arrivals and departures as follows:

MARCH IN

SGT Lentini, SGT Smith, CPL Doyle, LCPL Hunt, LCPL Oakley, LCPL Wallace, PTE Cleary, PTE Hall, PTE Hempstead, PTE Matepi.

MARCH OUT

SGT Lentini (DIV BRIS), SGT Smith (Disch), CPL Thompson (Disch), CPL Billsborough (SASR), LCPL Hunt (C Coy), LCPL Oakley (disch), PTE Matepi (Raeme Att)

Four members were promoted this year, Mick Cleary & Ted Hall to LCPL. It should also be noted that Ted was the student of merit on his subject course conducted in Malaysia. Paul Incoll and Steve Dykstra were promoted to CPL.

A quick rundown on some individuals over the year as follows:

CPL Doyle - on march in thought that an ammo count would be a piece of cake until he spent more time on the road to Wallangarra than at Enoggera.

PTE Matepi - Thought that seeing as how he was tasked to CPL Doyle, he would fuel up at Wallangarra instead of Enoggera.

LCPL Wallace - Appears to enjoy the log stream and intends to stay.

LCPL Hunt - Although enjoys being a chippy, longs for rifle action.

PTE Dover - says he is getting out, but changes with the weather, hang in there Ben.

QM - is still telling 30 second stories, although he has a few to tell after 27 years service.

SGT Muir - Look, it up in MEMA, I'll show you! Knows more about the book than the RQ.

PTE Memsforth - unfortunately has a severe back disease which won't be good in his later years.



PTE Nicholson - Spends more time talking about his shooting trips and weapons than doing his job.

RQ - Still winning 6 packs.

SGT Morrison - I don't argue - shut up or I'll punch ya!
SGT Lentini - Now in his element at DSU - 9 to 4.

SSGT Neate - the fork lift is my job.

PTE Kimmel - I hate paperwork but love driving.

PTE Mau - Don't ask me! I'm only a driver mate, also congratulations on 15 years service.

PTE Bell - changes the furniture around every week and done more than look after the tanks

PTE Pidcock - the only storeman who has been in every section.

CPL Canahan - still can't talk like the Singapore soldiers.

K J Thompson - farewell to a mate and best wishes on your discharge.

Overall a good production year to end with the issue of DP uniforms.

TECH SUPPORT

It's been another long and busy year for Tech Support. It started out as a year of changes with almost a full turn around of personnel by the end of 1988.



The lone stayer of Tech Support is Dick Sutton. Dick was deservedly promoted to CPL in September 1988.

The year started out with plenty of work and a shortfall of workers. First there was the 8/9 RAR 109 Drivers course. The road run was a long, hot, dusty trip until we arrived at Rainbow Beach. All people learnt how fast the tide comes-in at high tide and how soft wet sand becomes. We also found how waves go through Landrover windows. All in all, an experience.

Most of the year was quiet as far as exercises go but the work load kept on increasing and when we lost Dick Sutton, Mel Melbourne and Nads Nadudvary to the Malaysia culture trip, we had fewer people to do the extra work. But like true professionals, we got the job done.

While the Butterworth trip was under way, the remainder of Tech Support went on the Admin River Cruise. The Talgum to Fingal boat paddle.

The paddle trip brought out the true colours in some people. Lee Bloom showed how, on a calm and windless day, you can fall out of a boat yet manage to keep a cigarette alight and dry. After the first day of paddling, Harry Hay tries to get out of paddling by using the "Big Toe Hurts" trick. It didn't work.

There was always the usual mishaps like lost paddles, boats taking water, radios not working, getting stuck against bridges and caught on hidden rocks and trees. Apart from waiting for an hour at the wrong football field for showers, the trip was a good time and a good break from the monotony of work.

Then came the overtime onslaught to get 8/9 on the road for exercise "Silk Purse". A lot of long hours were put in by all of Tech Support with many 6 a.m. starts and 9 p.m. finishes. With the commencement of the exercise the early starts and late finishes didn't stop. Many times a few tradesman worked a full 40 hours without rest to keep things rolling. Any respite was greatly deserved.

The results of the exercise with few faults in the weapon department shows the worth and professionalism of our armourers. The road run home showed the true results of the hard work completed by our mechanics.