

Paludrine Parade  
Issue 32

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Patron:  
MAJOR GENERAL  
David McLachlan AO,  
(R)

## RAASC VIETNAM SUPPLY PLATOONS ASSOCIATION (VSPA) NEWSLETTER APR 2013 EDITION

This newsletter is in PDF  
format – download FREE at - [www.adobe.com/products/reader/](http://www.adobe.com/products/reader/)

In this edition:

- The next 2014 reunion
- Who is attending the reunion to date
- Proposal for a three year gold membership of the association
- Follow-on historical article - expanded needs of the Task Force-HQ26 Coy/Det 52 Sup PI RAASC
- DVA services over the festive season
- Vale - Bruce Gordon ARBON (MAJOR)-HQ 26 Tpt Coy Vietnam 14Jan69-14Jan70

Hi Everyone,

We hope you are all well. We have recently finished our reunion at Phillip Island. Overall we had 53 members and wives attend which is testament to the enthusiasm of our members to meet periodically. Many thanks to Tony and Liz Galea, and Warren and Anne Coughlin for their time and hardwork in setting it all up. We have two new teams working already on Wollongong and Perth.

We'll tell you more about the 2013 reunion shortly but we agreed at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) to meet again as follows:

October 2014 at Wollongong, and  
October? 2016? In Western Australia, likely in conjunction with Back to the Bush weekend at Bruce Rock for those who wish to stay on.  
Additionally, because we agreed at our Coolangatta reunion to lay a VSPA plaque at each reunion venue, we will return to Dorrigo for some unfinished business there on the 18th August 2013 at Dorrigo to lay our VSPA plaque-all are invited to this event.

**Three Year Membership** We also agreed to a proposal to offer three year membership as an alternative to the annual \$20 membership. The three year membership will save us administrative time, effort and costs.

Both memberships are **DUE TO COMMENCE 1 JULY 2013.**

We have enclosed an updated membership renewal form attached for you to return to Christina. You can pay by cheque, or direct debit.

RAASC Vietnam Supply Platoons Association PO Box 207 Mitchell ACT 2911  
Contact us on: 02 6241 2358 or mobile 0430 125 195 Home Page: <http://raascsupply.asn.au/>

If you are using the computer then you must tell us when crediting our account when you have done so and your details as our statements do not show the name of the depositor. Any unnamed deposit becomes a donation to our funds unless proven otherwise.

Also, as you now we have to allow for the cost of printing as we are no longer able to achieve free printing. We will aim for three newsletters a year in lieu of four as previously produced.

Accommodation varieties to suit include motel and caravan park close to the RSL. We are keen to see all members attend including our Widows of deceased members.

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## **VALE**

**GREG RICHEY**  
**16SEP1946-FEB2013**  
**25 SUP PL 8JAN1968-11FEB1969 (per Tony Galea)**

## **DVA NEWS**

### **NEW CENTRE FOR YOUNG VETERANS-FRANKSTON VIC**

A new centre offering young veterans and their families a place to relax and access support services, such as counselling, has opened in Frankston, Victoria today.

Opening the Frankston Young Veterans and Families Wellbeing Centre, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Warren Snowdon, said the Centre was the result of years of hard work and dedication by the local RSL and community members.

"This Centre is a first in Australia and ensures that the young veterans in Frankston have a welcoming place to socialise with mates and access support services for themselves and their families," he said.

Mr Snowdon praised the Frankston RSL for its efforts to continue to evolve its traditional service model to better meet the needs of younger veterans and their families.

The Australian Government provided \$73,000 in funding towards the Centre, through the Veteran and Community Grants program.

For more information on the Centre, join its Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FrankstonYVC/>.

## **PARTNERS OF VIETNAM VETS (PVA) (sounds like a payslip doesn't it?)**

**6) The term "secure the building" means different things to different military personnel.**

**Nato troops: "Occupy the premises and prevent anyone else entering."**

**US Marines: "Make an all-sides armed assault on the place, and then defend it with suppressive fire."**

**Singapore soldiers: "Take out a three-year lease with an option to buy."**

**vii) Army rations now include freeze-dried Starbucks latte.**

**8) The three golden rules for Singapore Cadets:**

**i) If it doesn't move, hide behind it;**

**ii) If it does move, surrender to it;**

**iii) If it has four legs and isn't a table, eat it.**

**9) A Singapore radio station receives a call. "This is the military. Can you tell us the exact time?" The deejay asks: "Who wants to know?" The caller says: "What difference does that make?"**

**The deejay explains: "If you are spies, it's three o'clock. If you are pilots, it's 15 hundred hours. If you are navy guys, it's six bells. If you are local army cadets, it's 120 minutes to happy hour."**

**To know more, visit our columnist at: [www.vittachi.com](http://www.vittachi.com)**

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## **FOLLOW ON HISTORICAL ARTICLE EXPANDED NEEDS OF THE TASK FORCE-HQ 26 COY/Det 52 Sup PI RAASC**

The 1st Australian Support Group (1ALSG) at the port of Vung Tau was 27 kilometres SW of 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) at Nui Dat. As the build-up of 1ATF continued to three infantry battalions and supporting arms and services, the task of supporting it also increased. Fire Support Bases (FSB) were used more frequently and continued to be moved further into Phuoc Tuy Province.

**HQ 26 Coy RAASC** HQ 26 Coy RAASC and Det 52 Sup PI deployed to South Vietnam in two phases. The advance party arrived in country by air on 18 December 1967 and comprised the advance element of the headquarters plus Det 52 Sup PI.

The main body arrived on 8 January 1968 and comprised the remainder of the headquarters group under the 2IC (CAPT Dick Jacombs). Both units were responsible for bringing their TWET stores and these also arrived in January 1968.

The company was formed in Nui Dat and took over the second line role from 5 Coy which remained in Vung Tau. In its last two years in South Vietnam, 26 Coy was given additional Admin and Q functions from other logistic units and doubled up as the Task Force Maintenance Area (TFMA).

The company consisted of the following units or detachments:

- a. HQ 26 Coy RAASC (GT)
- b. 85 Tpt PI RAASC
- c. Det 52 Sup PI RAASC
- d. Det 25 Sup PI RAASC
- e. Det 8 Pet PI RAASC

Other units were later added as part of the Task Force Maintenance area including

AFPO4-the Posties,  
1 Ordnance Field Park RAAOC (1OFP),  
Det AFV Cash Office,  
Det 2 AFCU (ASCO),  
Det 11 Movement Control Group (11 MC Gp), and  
Det 1 Div S & T Workshops.

In early 1968, following the Tet Offensive and subsequent increases in enemy activity in Baria, Long Dien, and Dat Do it became obvious that a second Coy Headquarters was

needed in the Task Force area at Nui Dat for the forward support of 1ATF.

The focal point of HQ 26 Coy was the Ops Cell, which coordinated bids for transport support, air dispatch rigging, ammunition resupply and other materials of war as well as road transport tasks.

HQ 1 ATF frequently was ordered to provide infantry type patrols which ranged from section size up to a full platoon. They operated directly under command of HQ 1ATF, or an infantry battalion, or armoured unit.

Tasks varied from ambushes, standing patrols, fighting patrols, provision of protection parties for civil aid projects, i.e. MEDCAP, FSB defence and much longer activities of up to 14 days.

### **Detachment 52 Sup PI RAASC**

Det 52 Sup PI RAASC arrived in South Vietnam on 18 December 1967. The detachment consists of one officer and eleven other ranks. The detachment was responsible for:

1. Making detailed issues of rations and expense supplies to 1ATF units. This requires a ration break down to fourteen (14) units.
2. Holding operating and reserve stocks of combat rations and expense supplies.
3. Providing personnel for the supply cell in the Fwd TFMA.

Perishables (fruit and vegetables) were issued six (6) days a week after receipt from Class 1 Depot Saigon via RAAF Caribou. The Detachment received Bread and ice daily from 25 Sup PI via road convoy.

Meat was received Monday, Wednesday and Saturday with non perishables and expense also coming by road convoy also.

Det 52 Sup PI RAASC also has deployed its members to an Adv TFMA on Operations DUNTRON and COBURG for duties involving issues of combat rations and water.

In addition, the detachment's two forklifts have been employed by many of the 1ATF units on an "as available" basis. Their number is very limited and the demand has been considerable, especially during periods when stocks arrive from the Jeparit or when a major unit is leaving.

The Detachment was supplemented by a detachment from 25 Sup PI of a SSGT Ammo Tech and two Storemen (RAAOC) whose responsibilities included the operations of 1 ATF ammunition point, inspection of unit ammunition holdings and backloading suspended ammunition and salvage.

Most of 26 Coy were withdrawn to Vung Tau in mid 1971 prior to ceasing our military commitment to South Vietnam. (Many thanks to Geoff Christopherson and other sources)

**NEXT historical article**-The Tet offensive through RAASC eyes-the role of Adv TFMAs

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## **DVA SERVICES OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON**

**Arrangements for the Christmas and New Year period**  
The Department of Veterans'

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VALE - Rest in Peace (for those who Corps Transferred to RAAOC)

DON C Fenwick in 2010  
born 4 Oct 1935.  
RMC 1956. Colonel RAAOC  
Died Jan 2013



**Vietnam Commemorative Walk-Seymour-**  
**<http://www.vietnamvetwalk.org.au/>**

The Commemorative Walk is not to memorialise those who served in Vietnam and/or those who paid the ultimate price, but to commemorate the service of all who played their part in what turned out to be a tumultuous part of Australia's history. It will, in the interpretive centre give an accurate history of the times prior to military commitment, the period of our involvement and the aftermath.

The Walk will be a meandering red earth path set in native trees and grasses that

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resemble rubber trees and rice paddies. These two plants are synonymous with Vietnam.

Along the length of this Walk will be walls made up of panels of DigiGlass with the name of every Serviceman and Servicewoman who served in their various capacities. The names will be separated only by the Service in which they served in alphabetical order. The plinths on which the panels stand will have holes for Poppies; the effect is to have a field of Poppies under the names. Behind the names is the picture story of the Vietnam conflict. There will be areas of contemplation for people to use along the length of this walk. Contact the following for more information:

Ross Stewart	Chairman -	0407 646988
John Phoenix	Deputy -	0410 576201
Ross Gregson	Secretary -	0417 973573

**We have showed figures about Vietnam but I got this some weeks ago about WW2 which might interest you:**

You might enjoy this from Col D. G. Swinford, USMC, Ret and history buff. You would really have to dig deep to get this kind of ringside seat to history:

1. The first German serviceman killed in WW II was killed by the Japanese ( China , 1937), The first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians ( Finland 1940); The highest ranking American killed was Lt Gen Lesley McNair, killed by the US Army Air Corps.
2. The youngest US serviceman was 12 year old: Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded and given a Dishonorable Discharge for lying about his age. His benefits were later restored by act of Congress.
3. At the time of Pearl Harbor, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced 'sink us');The shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry division was the swastika. Hitler's private train was named 'Amerika.' All three were soon changed for PR purposes.
4. More US servicemen died in the Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions, an airman's chance of being killed was 71%.
5. Generally speaking, there was no such thing as an average fighter pilot. You were either an ace or a target. For instance, Japanese Ace Hiroyoshi Nishizawa shot down over 80 planes. He died while a passenger on a cargo plane.
6. It was a common practice on fighter planes to load every 5th round with a tracer round to aid in aiming. This was a big mistake. Tracers had different ballistics so (at long range) if your tracers were hitting the target 80% of your rounds were missing. Worse yet tracers

instantly told your enemy he was under fire and from which direction.

Worst of all was the practice of loading a string of tracers at the end of the belt to tell you that you were out of ammo. This was definitely not something you wanted to tell the enemy. Units that stopped using tracers saw their success rate nearly double and their loss rate go down.

7. When allied armies reached the Rhine, the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).

8. German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City, but they decided it wasn't worth the effort.

9. German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.

10. Among the first 'Germans' captured at Normandy were several Koreans.

They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.

11. Following a massive naval bombardment, 35,000 United States and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska, in the Aleutian Islands . 21 troops were killed in the assault on the Island. It could have been worse if there had actually been any Japanese on the island.

12. The last marine killed in WW2 was killed by a can of spam.

He was on the ground as a POW in Japan when rescue flights dropping food and supplies came over, the package came apart in the air and a stray can of spam hit him and killed him.

**And finally:**

Keep in touch! We do advertise regularly in VETAFFAIRS but if you know someone who might like to join us, let us know and we'll send them a free Association badge when they take up membership.

Have a safe, happy and holy Christmas season. We hope to see you at Phillip Island

**Bruce, Christina, Ray, Russ and Dave  
VSPA Association Executive**

**Cut here=====**

**NEWSLETTER DELIVERY METHOD SURVEY**

**NAME.....**

In view of our proposals above, how would you like your newsletter delivered from now on?

Email or Snail mail (circle whichever suits you)

Your choice will take effect after this edition.

Please return to Christina on 02 6241 2358 or mobile 0430 125 195 or Post Office Box 207 Mitchell ACT 2911 or email bamberg01@bigpond.com