8th/7th BATTALION – 2RVR ASSOCIATION Inc.

VICTORIA'S OWN COUNTRY BATTALION

(Including the Ballarat Ranger Military Museum Newsletter)

Patron: The Commanding Officer 8th/7th Battalion The Royal Victoria Regiment
Lieutenant Colonel Shaun Richards CSM

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THE "BRAVO COY DIGGERS (2RVR & 8/7RVR)" FACEBOOK PAGE RE-UNION HELD SUN 20th DECEMBER WAS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS.

Congratulations to Mark Broemmer and Denis Storer, (Sebastopol RSL committee members), who were kept very busy all day on the BBQ. Kevin Moschetti waiting patiently for his burger.

Mark Broemmer and Tony Bartram were the main instigators for the very successful day at the Sebastopol RSL. The attendance was very good and they had people traveling from all over the state and interstate to attend.

This shows the power of the internet these days. The "Bravo Coy Diggers" facebook has 100 followers, that just shows the interest in keeping in touch.

Speaking with Mark he said "he would like to see a combined dinner later in the year with the Association and the B Coy Diggers", so be prepared and I should have more on this in the next newsletter to keep you informed.

Of note, I had eleven members ask about joining the Association, so there must be others out there, we just need to reach out to them. Well done to all those who attended.

We should now be able to look forward to a better year. Ed.

A picture is worth a thousand words, but don't believe a single word you hear! What a great day.

COMMITTEE

President	Dick Wilkie	0413 530 537
Vice Pres	Vacant	
Secretary	Tom Chambers	0435 569 597
Treasurer	Barbara Birthisel	0438 504 260
Brian Driscoll	**Warrnambool** Welfare	03 5595 4273
Lindsay Govan		0417 053 160
Bruce McKinnon		0412 370 923
Ian Nunn		03 5331 6758
Les Taylor		0417 190 351
John Nadge		0407 007 873

For Warrnambool Hospital Visitations

Bluey Frank 0417 546 709

Newsletter / vale

Tom Chambers as above or
email; tjchambers@iinet.net.au

PRESIDENTS REPORT.

Greetings All Members.
Welcome to the initial Ranger Magazine for 2021.
Association activity 2020 was minimal, however changes to Reserve Forces activity and roles requiring added responsibility and skills means to our Association, added scope and support for former present and future proud Reservists.
We need to continue our welfare, tradition and comradeship function. I commend to members the importance and expansion of our function whilst enjoying our Association, thank you all for your continued membership, there is work to be done and comradeship to be savoured. Looking forward to our good health, good fortune and a productive 2021.
Come on, let's get this show underway !!!!!
Dick Wilkie.

Re-union.

The day was structured in a casual mode so members came and went as they pleased. Just some who attended.
Name tags next time please!

Trevor Anderson	Nick Arundel
Tania Maree	Tony Bartram
Trevor Beales	Wayne Beales
Peter Braybrook	Mark Broemmer
George Brown	Tom Chambers
Davin Clark	Sean Coleman
Barry Donovan	Suzan Godfrey
Lindsay Govan	Jan Govan
Peter Griffin	David Gay
Jarrad Heighway	Sandy McCann
Philip McMillan	Tony Milligan
Graeme Paizis	Helen Paizis
Andrew Stewart	Jennie Stewart
Rhonda Walker	Darren Werry
Dick Wilkie	Graeme Parsons

A number of apologies were received.

Brian Driscoll, Darron Mathews, Bruce Roberts
Chris Spielvogel, MAJ Greg Smith, Maj Neil Leckie
CAPT Rupert Dalley, Danny Parsons, Mick Horne
David Thornell, Norm Thornell, Basil Mansfield
Brian McInnis, Russell Bell, KG Lee.

ANZAC DAY.

Depending on the outcome of COVIT

Ballarat. Hopefully ANAZAC Day celebrations should be back to normal for 2021, looking forward to a good roll up this year.

With the new outbreaks the service may be held in Sturt Street at the Cenotaph or at the Ballarat RSL, Midlands Golf Club, we will do our best to let you know. The council will control where we meet.

Warrnambool; Lyndon King has booked a table for 20 at the RSL. Check the local paper for timings and any changes to the format.

A Warm Welcome to New Members

Gregory Code	Lara
John Czynski	Gowrie Junction Qld
Tim Vanstan	Horsham
Sean Coleman	Buninyong
Glen Newman	Paynesville

NOTICE BOARD

HOORAY WERE BACK!

➢ The **AGM** is to be held at the Sebastopol RSL 21 February 2021 at 10.30 followed by a BBQ. This will allow a get together and catch up after the lock down.
At this stage we intend to hold the following Annual Dinner and AGM in November 2021

➢ A big thank you to those who sent in amendments to the Honour Roll, we need your input to maintain an accurate record.

From the Battalion HQ.

➢ In the past we have awarded prizes to the Top soldier and Best Junior NCO , this is now under review as the Battalion wants to focus on the unit history with awards, times have changed and soldiers are now allocated to sections and platoons when and where required, gone are the days when you were posted to a platoon or coy till your hair turned white or silver as the case may be.
During the last couple of months, the President and myself have been in discussion about the annual awards for the Battalion with the Battalion XO (2IC) MAJ Stan Cairns in relation as to how we can best serve our objective to support the Bn and gain memberships and present the annual awards.

The unit is endeavouring to better inform the diggers on the very rich military history that it holds.
So, with that in mind it has proposed a number of ideas that the committee will need to discuss and bring a recommendation to its members.

Option 1 Champion Soldier Perpetual Trophy and Individualised Trophy.
This is an example only of a proposed Individualised trophy.

This will be named the "Partridge VC Trophy"

Option 2 Naming of the "Regimental Room"

It is proposed to rename lecture room number two, to the **Bolton Room** after the first **CO of the 8th Bn.**
As part of this, a plaque will be placed at the entrance which will have his biography.
There is a possibility to cover all or some of the cost for the plaque for the room.

Option 3
They are proposing an oil painting in the Bolton Room of Pompey Elliott and will be seeking donations.

These options will be explored by the committee and recommendations put forward.

VALE

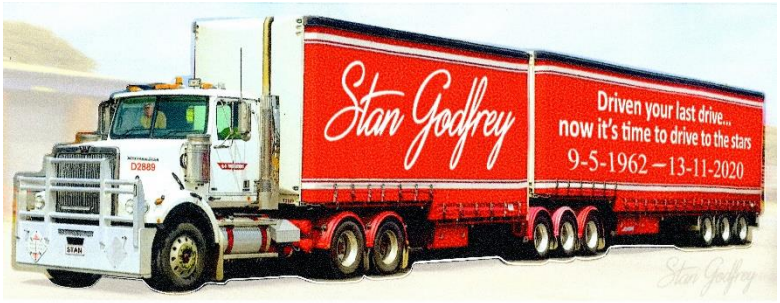
BAILEY Danny 2 October1946 - 21 September 2020 74 years

The President and members of the 8/7th Bn – 2RVR Assoc. deeply regret the passing of our esteemed member.

Our sincere sympathy to Freda, Neil (Beetle), Lyne and family members. Danny enlisted in 1965 with 2RVR and served most of his time as a medic with Tom Sainty in Admin Coy at the Ranger Barracks, Curtis Street, serving for 22 years.

In his civilian occupation he started as an insurance clerk with Eclipse Motors, staying for 20 years. He then moved on to Norville Foundry as office manager, when they folded, he moved to the Castrol Fuel depot in Rodier Street, then on to Driving coaches for Ballarat Coach Lines until his illness caught up with him. Rest in peace mate.

GODFRAY Stan 9 May 1962 - 13 November 2020 58 years



On behalf of the President, Committee and members, I wish to extend our deepest condolences to Wendy and all the family members on the sudden passing of Stan.

Stan served in the pioneer platoon in Portland in the mid-80's and has been a long serving member of the association.

BARNES John Thomas 24. May. 1943 – 02 November2020, 77 years

The President and members of the 8/7th Bn – 2RVR Assoc. deeply regret the passing of our esteemed member. Our Sincere condolences to Cheryl and Johns family members

He passed away peacefully in Mildura. Cherished husband of 52 years to Cheryl.

John served with AATTV in South Vietnam from 14 May 1970 – Sep 70, 1/1 ARVN, 1st Division, Quang Tri. Oct - Dec 70, DIOCC, Cho Gao. Jan – Mar 71, Night Advisory Team 2, Can Tho. RTA 7 Apr 71.

In addition to unit citations awarded to AATTV, John was also awarded the US Bronze Star for Valour (with 'V' Device) and the US Army Commendation Medal for Service. His last posting was 2RVR as a training WO for B Coy and was missed when he retired.

CREALMAN Robert James 04 June 1950 – 03 December 2020 70 years

He was called up for National Service and commenced at 2 RTB, Puckapunyal on 30 September1970. Following Recruit Training Bob was posted to the RAInf Corps and undertook infantry Corps training at 3TB Singleton.
On 22 March 1971 he was posted to the Infantry Centre Reinforcement Wing. Two months later he was posted to 4 RAR arriving in Vietnam on 19 May. He returned to Australia on 17 December 1971. Bob joined the Army Reserve with 107 Plant Squadron on 20 August 1977, transferring to 2 RVR on 15 May 1979 where he was soon promoted to Corporal. By 1982 Bob had been promoted to Sergeant. For the rest of his Army service Bob was mainly in the Army Active Reserve, or on Full-time Service, along with a four-year period in the ARA from 2008 to 2012. After postings that included 3 Training Group, 5/6 RVR, 2/17 RNSWR, The Royal Military College Duntroon, Melbourne and Monash University Regiments and 4 Combat Service Support Battalion, Bob's final posting from 11 March 2014 until the Army retired him on 13 Jan 2019 was with his 'home' unit 8/7 RVR.
Bob was a family man, being married four times, and having eight children along with one step-daughter. At his death on 3 December 2020, he was a Grandfather and a Great-grandfather.

RIGONI Peter Henry 30 March 1945 - 1 September 2020 75 years
From John Kerwin.
Those who live and served up Shepparton/Echuca way may know Peter. He was a NASHO who served with 2 R T B in 1967 and spent time at the ARMD Centre Puckapunyal. (ADM / ANSM)

Douglass George 7 October 1937 - 03 January 2021 84 years
On behalf of the Committee and members, we wish to convey our sincere condolences to the Douglass family.
George Joined the RAN where he served till his retirement. He joined the Bn serving as a steward for the Officers Mess at the Ranger Barracks in Curtis street.

CAMERON Philip (Phil) 20 May 1947 - 05 January 2021 74 years

Passed away suddenly at B.H.S. Sincere condolences to his wife June, Dean, Lisa and family members.
Cpl Phil Cameron enlisted 07 November 1966, was posted to 5 Pl. B Coy 2RVR and BHQ Intelligence section. He took discharge on 22 March 1976. Phil was a plumber and worked for S J Weirs construction company.

COX Ellis George 17 April 1934 – 5 January 2021 87 Years

Passed away peacefully in QLD. Son of the late Lillian and Arthur Cox. Loved brother of Jack, Joan, Bob (all dec), Bev and Val (dec), Margaret, Heather, Annette and families.
George enlisted in the CMF on the 03 March 1953, and took discharge on 15 March 1966.
His postings. 112 Infantry Workshops, 3 Mar 53,
24 Company, Royal Australian Service Corps, 14 Dec 55,
8/7 Infantry Battalion 09 Aug 57 and 2 RVR 01 Jul 60
He was employed as a Driver, Rifleman and Quartermaster Sergeant.

LEST WE FORGET

Wanted 5.5 in field Gun for display in Warrnambool

Back in the 50's & 60's, Warrnambool was part of an Artillery Regiment that trained on the 5.5in field gun that fired the 100lb shell. Laurie was a member of 8th and 10th Med Reg. in Warrnambool and enjoyed my time in the units. On his travels have come across a number of 5.5's guns bringing back fond memories.

As hundreds of National Service men trained on them, it would be great to have one sighted in Warrnambool as a large number of National Servicemen served in the Artillery at the Warrnambool depot.

Thanks to Laurie for requesting this article.

If anyone knows who to approach in an endeavour to obtain one, could please ring Laurie on **0488 044 041**

Brief History of the10th Medium Regiment.

BL 5.5-inch Mk3 at Puckapunyal.

10th Medium Regiment – raised as X. Brigade, Australian Field Artillery, in 1921 at Albert Rd, South Melbourne, perpetuating the 10th Field Artillery Brigade that had served on the Western Front during the Great War. It was redesignated 10th Field Regiment in 1941, serving in Western Australia with the 4th Aust Division before being disbanded in late 1943. In 1948 it was reformed at Batman Ave, Melbourne, relocating to Railway Parade, Frankston, about 1954. In 1957 the Regiment was redesignated 10th Medium Regiment with RHQ and one battery at Frankston, the 19th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment (City of Caulfield) at Ripponlea was absorbed as a second battery, and the personnel of 4th Medium Regiment and 22nd Field Regiment (Self-Propelled) at Brighton formed the third battery. RHQ relocated to Brighton in 1958. In **1960** the Regiment absorbed **8th Medium Regiment** to comprise RHQ at Brighton and batteries at Geelong, Frankston, and **Warrnambool/Colac**. In 1961 however, the Brighton and Frankston elements amalgamated as Q Battery, 2nd Field Regiment; RHQ and Q Battery, 10th Medium Regiment, were reformed in Geelong, **with R Battery at Warrnambool**. The **Warrnambool element** transferred to the **Royal Australian Infantry** in **1965** and the third battery was reformed in Geelong. In 1991 the Regiment amalgamated with 2nd/15th Field Regiment to form 2nd/10th Medium Regiment with 37th and 39th Medium batteries amalgamating to form 38th Medium Battery.

Statistics for BL 5.5-inch medium gun Mk3

Place of origin: United Kingdom

Service history in service UK 1941-1980 Australia 1941 – 1984 Production Run 1941 – 1945

Build Number 5,000 Used by various nations

Wars: World War 2 Korean Conflict South African Border War Iran – Iraq Wars

Specifications

Mass; 13,647 lbs. (6,190kg) **Length;** 24ft 7 in (7.5m) **Barrel length;** 3ft 9in (4.19 m)

Width; 8ft 4 in (2.54m) **Height;** 8ft 6in (2.4) **Crew;** 10

Shell; Separate loading bagged charge and projectile two sizes the early 100lb and the later 82lb

100lb muzzle velocity of 1,675 feet with max range 16200 yards.

82lb muzzle velocity of 1,950 feet with max range 1950 yards.

It was able to fire other types of rounds, i.e., smoke, illumination, chemical etc.

IN THE FIFTIES and SIXTIES:
Eating in the 1950s & 1960s in Australia and NZ, how strange we've become....

Pasta was not eaten in Australia or N.Z.
Curry was a surname.
A takeaway was a mathematical problem.
A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower.
All potato crisps were plain; the only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not.
Rice was only eaten as a milk pudding.
Calamari was called squid and we used it as fish bait.
A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining.
Brown bread was something only poor people ate.
Oil was for lubricating; fat was for cooking.
Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green.
Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, and was regarded as being white gold. Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.
Fish didn't have fingers in those days.
Eating raw fish was called poverty, not sushi.
None of us had ever heard of yoghurt.
Healthy food consisted of anything edible.
People who didn't peel potatoes were regarded as lazy.
Indian restaurants were only found in India.
Cooking outside was called camping.
Seaweed was not a recognised food.
"Kebab" was not even a word, never mind a food.
Prunes were medicinal.

Water came out of a tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have become a laughing stock!!

But the one thing that we never ever had on our table in the sixties;
"**Elbows or phones"**

Sick Parade.

James Mack John Eagan Don Dow

Norm Thornell Neville Jolly Jack Garden.

I am sure there are many more.

If you know of someone in our assoc. who is not well, please contact the secretary, so we can send them a card to say we are thinking of them.

30 K9 Thunder 155mm self-propelled howitzers and 15 K10 armoured ammunition resupply vehicles

On 3 September the Department of Defence announced it is releasing a request for tender to Hanwha Defence Australia under its Protected Mobile Fires Project for 30 K9 Thunder self-propelled howitzers and 15 K10 armoured ammunition resupply vehicles.

Australia's system is named Huntsmen and will be built in Hanwha's Geelong Australia facility.

The K9 is a 155 mm/52 calibre with a maximum range of 30 km with conventional and 40 km with RAP rocket assisted projectiles. It uses an automatic loading system with in the vehicle as well as for replenishing from the resupply vehicle. Its state-of-the-art navigation/positioning and Kongsberg digital fire control system allow for firing within 60 seconds from receiving a call for fire when deploying from movement or 30 seconds when already in place.

The system is already in service with Finland, Norway, Estonia, India, and Turkey.

K10 Ammunition Resupply Vehicle

The K10 Armoured Ammunition Re-supply vehicle covers the requirements of substantially increased number of ammunitions in the warfare to the K9 to meet its tactical requirements of higher firing rate, shoot and scoot. It has a fully automated re-supplying capability to maximize the efficiency of artillery forces, and shares the same chassis, power pack and suspension with the K9 Thunder for efficiency in logistic supports and tactical movements.

It has a fully automated re-supplying capability to maximize the efficiency of artillery forces, and shares the same chassis, power pack and suspension with the K9 Thunder for efficiency in logistic supports and tactical movements.

The concept of fully automated ammunition resupply vehicle for Korean Army have been conceived during the early stage of development for the K9 Thunder self-propelled howitzer as a firing-position partner for intensifying the tactical effectiveness of K9. But the practical issue of developing fully automated ammunition resupply vehicle surfaced after the completion of K9 Thunder at the end of 1990s. In 2001, Korea's Samsung Techwin was awarded a full-scale development contract for XK10, which is the project name for Korean Army's armoured ammunition resupply vehicle (AARV).

Developmental requirements.

- A fully automated resupply system to maximize the efficiency of artillery forces.
- K9 Family of vehicles sharing the same chassis, power pack and suspension for efficiency in logistic supports and tactical moves, which must always be coordinated.

The benefit of using common systems has reduced development periods and the K106пs performance was completely qualified through development test and evaluation, which lasted one entire year. The tests included traveling 6,000 miles with combination of paved, dirt and off-road conditions for pushing the ammunition handling mechanical systems to endurance limits and operational performance tests for docking with K9 and existing systems. A total of more than 70,000 units of ammunitions have been transferred and reloaded into the system testing reliability of the ammunition transfer systems.

The electrically driven fully automatic transfer system consists of magazines for ammunition storages, loading and reloading, manipulator, mover, telescopic conveyor and automated inventory management system. It allows any kinds of ammunitions to be transferred at 12 rounds per minute.

Automatic Control System

The flow of charges and projectiles use the same conveyor path while they come from different storage magazines through manipulators and storage magazines through manipulators and using jog switch. It is located at the front of the vehicle to facilitate fast aligning with K9 even in narrow and harsh field condition.

The emergency access to ammunitions, the charge and projectile storage compartment have separate rear access doors for loading or reloading with manual assistance. The ammunition compartment is fitted with fire extinguishing systems to suppress flames.

Performance Comparison

K10 ARV, comparable to a cargo truck, has a high level of protection which is the same as that of K9 Thunder. The fully automated system guarantees its high performance in any severe battlefield conditions. In resupply mission, the operator is able to select the specific kind of projectiles and charges through manipulator and mover. Even in the darkness, the resupplying mission is not disturbed.

The long and the short of it all

Background on the photo from David (Tiny) Bent, in Albury.

In 1963 I joined A Coy 2RVR in Geelong. Not long after joining they decided to cease Infantry in Geelong and suggested that we transfer to 10 Medium regiment (Artillery).

No thank you, so I transferred to 2RVR in Ballarat, and then started 5 years of travel on the Geelong/Ballarat Road sometimes fortnightly sometimes weekly. Boy did I know that road well.

In 1968 I volunteered for 2 years Full Time Duty with the expectation of becoming a Platoon Commander with a Battalion in Vietnam. Never can be sure what the Army will do, and I spent 6 months training to join the Australian Army Training Team, Vietnam. Cont.,

Cont.

My first 5 months were as Adjutant of AATTV, and the next 7 months were as Senior Advisor to the 1st Battalion 51st Independent Regiment ARVN (Army of the Republic Viet Nam). Hence the photograph.

Dai Uy (Captain) Ba, was my (counterpart) Battalion Commander. A 20-year veteran, always at war with someone.

You will notice my hat badge was RVR, the only parent unit I ever had. Secondly you might guess that communication between myself and Captain Ba often required that I bend over closer to gain his ear.

My 11 years with RVR and my time at the Drill Hall in Ballarat, will always be close to my most enjoyable and worthwhile times. David.

Thanks David (who I believe was a Pl commander of 5 PL) and so another of our members have gained distinction serving in the famed AATTV adding to the amazing history of this Battalion of ours. Ed.

The Pentropic Division 1960 – 65 (Part 1)

The Pentropic organisation used by the Australian Army between 1960 and 1965 was based on the US Army's 'Pentomic' organisation,. It involved reorganising most of the Army's combat units into units based on five elements, rather than the previous three or four elements. The decision to adopt the Pentropic organisation was driven by a desire to modernise the Army and ensure that Australian units were able to integrate with those of the United States Army. While the US Pentomic organisation had been implemented in 1957 to improve the Army's ability to operate during a nuclear war, the Australian organisation was optimised for limited wars in South East Asia in which there was a chance that nuclear weapons might be used. Both structures were designed to facilitate independent operations by the sub-units of divisions. The Australian Pentropic division was intended to be air portable, capable of fighting in a limited war and capable of conducting anti-guerrilla operations.

The key element of the Pentropic organisation was the reorganisation of divisions into five combined arms battle groups. These battle groups consisted of an infantry battalion, field artillery regiment, engineer field squadron and other combat and logistic elements, including armoured, aviation and armoured personnel carrier units as required. These battle groups would be commanded by the commanding officer of their infantry battalion and report directly to the headquarters of the division as brigade headquarters were abolished as part of the reorganisation.

When the Pentropic organisation was implemented in 1960 the Australian Army was reorganised from three divisions organised on what was called the Tropical establishment (the 1st, 2nd and 3rd divisions) into two Pentropic divisions (the 1st and 3rd). While two of the Army's three regular infantry battalions were expanded into the new large Pentropic battalions, the 30 Citizens Military Force (CMF) battalions were merged into just nine battalions. Hence the Royal Victoria Regiment was born!

Photo of the Ballarat marching team 70's. (not the Clunes march)

Back Row left: Pte Norm Thornell, Pte Bill Allen, Cpl John Sonneveld, Pte Unmack, Pte K Aggett, Cpl Gill Richards
Middle Left: Pte D Hodges. Pte Peter Kelly, Pte A Goosens, Pte F Steel, L/Cpl J Whitten
Front left: L/Cpl R Lingham, Sgt N Denman, W02 Alan Douglass, Sgt Kevin Fiscalini, Cpl Tom Chambers, Pte Hermit Schmid

The Ballarat Ranger Military Museum

Historical Collection of the

8th/7th Battalion Royal Victoria Regiment

MUSEUM OPEN HOURS

Open Thursday afternoons 1 – 4pm,
Fourth Sunday of the Month, 9am – 12noon

Or by appointment.

Phone
Neil Leckie,
0400 573 802
Or **John Coull.**
0481 286 167

Museum Matters

- A few **dates** for your **diaries:**
- Thursday 21 January Museum re-opens
- Sunday 24 January Museum Working Bee – the wooden base for the toilet/storage shed needs a rebuild, so please bring your carpentry tools.
- The hut needs a good clean down outside!
- Sat 20/Sun 21 Feb . The Museum will be supporting Meg McNena's play 'Blood & Bone', a story based on some 2/7th Bn AIF men, to be held in Kew. I plan to go to the Sunday afternoon performance if others wish to travel with me!

Meg wrote the 'Pompey' Elliott play 'Mud & Blood' that we supported in 2018/19.

- Sunday 28 Feb Museum Working Bee
- We are also looking at opening the museum, for the battalion members to visit, on some Tuesday nights this year!
- I plan to contact the secondary colleges early this year and set up more Year 9 visits!
- I look forward to your support again this year!

We are now back to COVID normal and are open as per normal. Neil.

Brothers Meet on the way to London in 1917

During 'The Great War' two brothers, one who was serving in Ballarat's 39th Battalion AIF, having not seen each other for 14 years, met on an English Channel ferry and were in London on 4th July 1917. The meeting was arranged by a third brother who lived in Field's Corner, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

John Henry Coombes was born Montreal, Canada, in May 1876, although other information suggests he was born in London, Ontario, Canada. In 1915 he was a 39-year-old single Labourer of the Methodist religious persuasion. His Next of Kin was his sister Fanny Trenouth of Neponset, Boston. John's previous experience was three years with the Canadian Militia. By 1904 he had settled at Ingham, Queensland.

On 6 December 1915 John signed his Enlistment Application at Victoria Barracks, Sydney, signing his Enlistment Papers the following day. On 27 January 1916 he was allocated to the 10th Reinforcements for the NSW 19th Battalion as number 4097. On 16 February he had been Absent Without Leave for 2 days and listed as a Deserter, and transferred to E Company, 19th Battalion. Then on 29 March a Warrant was issued for his apprehension and conveyance to the Infantry Depot at Liverpool.

On 22 March John enlisted in D Company of Ballarat's 39th Battalion as Henry Coombes, listing his employment as a Seaman with his NOK now living at Quincy, Massachusetts. He was allocated number 1254. He now claimed his previous experience as 6 years with the Canadian Permanent Forces.

On 27 May Henry embarked on the HMAT A11 Ascanius and during the voyage found himself charged with Insolence to an NCO. He was awarded 7 days detention. The battalion disembarked in Devonport, England, on 18 July. Henry was promoted to Acting Corporal 5 days later. On 14 August Henry was admitted to a Military Hospital with a 'Disordered Action of the Heart'. The battalion embarked for France from Southampton on 23 November. Henry was then promoted to Temporary Corporal.

30 March 1917 saw Henry promoted to Corporal and on 24 June was awarded the Military Medal. **Recommendation for MM:** (3rd Division recommendations for Honours and Awards, 7 to 12 Jun 1917): On 7th, 8th and 9th June 1917 during operations south of Messines for his untiring energy, and his coolness. When the stretcher bearers of his Battalion became casualties, this NCO organised and conducted parties to the advanced front line and supervised the evacuation of wounded to the Regimental Aid Post. From the commencement of the action in the early morning of the 7th until the morning of the 9th he worked almost ceaselessly under fire and exhibited great coolness and courage.

THE DORCHESTER BEACON

Brothers Are United After A Separation Of 14 Years

Through the faithful correspondence of a brother living in Dorchester, two brothers, one fighting "somewhere in France," the other "somewhere in Belgium", met for the first time in 14 years and held a Fourth of July celebration in London during a lull in the fighting.

The two warriors were Sergt. Forbes Coombes of the Canadian Foresters and Corp John H. Coombes of the 19th Australian Infantry, recently honored by the "war-cross" for valor on the field of battle. The Dorchester brother is George Coombes of 4 Harbell terrace,Field's Corner.

For two years after the war broke out, George tried by a series of letters to arrange a meeting of his two brothers. The last letter to his brothers was to suggest that they both get a furlough in order to be in London July 4, 1917. The attempt was successful.

For the first time in 14 years, Brother Forbes met Brother John. The meeting took place on a Channel boat and brothers went to London, where they celebrated the American holiday when the above photograph was taken. The photo was passed by the censor and arrived in Dorchester this week, and used in this paper, through courtesy of the Boston Evening Record.

Corp. John H. Coombes, left, and Sergt. Forbes Coombes, right.

Although his records do not show that he had been allocated leave to England The Dorchester Beacon reported that on 4th July 1917 John Henry Coombes met up with his brother Sergeant Forbes Coombes on a Channel Boat from where they went on to London.

On 3 August, John Henry Coombes was killed in action near Messines and buried at Kandahar Farm, Ploegsteert, near Messines. There is no information on any activity on that date in the battalion's War Diary.

On 30 January 1919 the Warrant for John's arrest was withdrawn as the 'member re-enlisted in Ballarat and Killed in Action, Belgium.'

Remembering "Bill the Bastard" Australia's greatest war horse

Sculptor Carl Valerius enlisted the help of a vet to build a skeleton for Bill's statue to ensure accuracy. *(ABC Central West: Dona Sheil)*

The little-known story of Australia's greatest war horse will be enshrined in the Anzac legend with a life-size bronze statue.

Bill the Bastard is widely considered Australia's finest equine export of World War I.

Serving in the Middle Eastern theatre of the conflict, the 17-hand-high stallion was notorious for his unrelenting stubbornness, endurance and courage.

Bill became a legend at the Battle of Romani, where he and Major Michael Shanahan rescued four Tasmanian troops from certain death on the battlefield.
Sculptor Carl Valerius is honouring Bill and Major Shanahan's legacy with a true-to-scale statue depicting their rescue effort during the battle, in which Major Shanahan lost his left leg.

Mr Valerius said the statue would help to educate Australians about a widely overlooked part of Anzac history.
"He's just an uncanny, incredible animal. We've got to know about it; it's got to be in our psyche," he said.

"I'm not trying to glorify war, but I am trying desperately to recognise what this horse did, and especially Shanahan and the four men."

Accurately recreating the uniforms and equipment of all five soldiers revealed to Mr Valerius the potential to revisit the historical nuances of the conflict.

"As these men went to Gallipoli, then there's a good chance that they came back with some of the wrong equipment."

"So, we can explain that within the statue, and that's a layer that I wasn't aware of when I was doing it."

The statues of soldiers are made from of a mixture of polystyrene, fibreglass and polyester resin.

The statue, when finished in June 2019, will stand in the south-western New South Wales town of Murrumburrah-Harden, the birthplace of the 1st Australian Horse infantry in 1897.

The town has rallied to raise more than $830,000 to cast the statue in bronze once it's completed.

"Bronze is a very endurable material, and to be there for generations to come is something I can leave behind that honours what these men did," said Mr Valerius.

"It doesn't just get lost in the ether."

From pack horse to legend

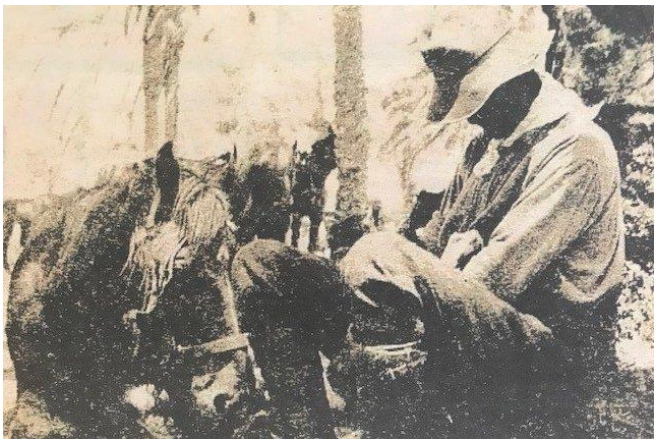
Bill's military life began at Sydney's Liverpool Army Camp, used by recruiting officers to test the skill and strength of would-be light horsemen.

After bucking each eager recruit with ease, Bill was labelled unrideable and delegated to work as a pack horse carting supplies and munitions.

Along with 130,000 other Australian war horses, Bill began his voyage to the Middle East in late 1914, cared for by bush poet and war correspondent Banjo Paterson, who later commanded the Australian Remount Squadron.

During the journey, Paterson noted in his diary: "you can't lead Bill the Bastard to anything and you certainly can't make him drink".

After arriving in Egypt, Bill was sent with Anzac troops to the shores of Gallipoli. He began work as a pack horse and eventually carried the body of war hero John Simpson from the battlefield after his death on May 19, 1915.



Major Shanahan and Bill the Bastard get much needed rest under a date palm. *(Supplied: Terry Shanahan)*

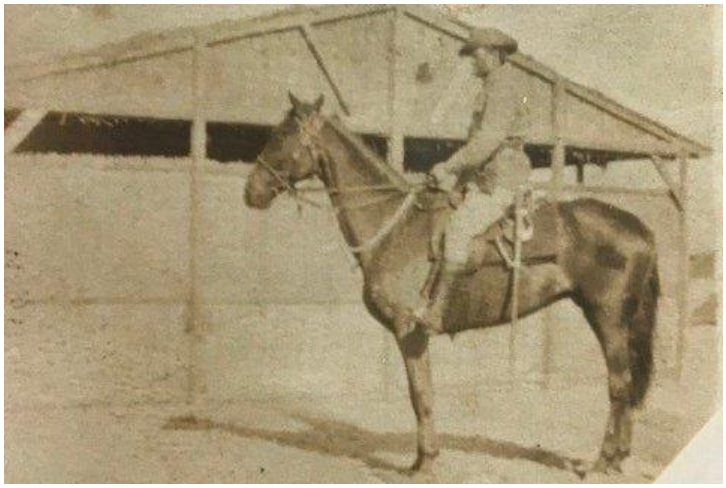
Journeying between Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove, Bill suffered two gunshot wounds.

One bullet was never removed. It was during his recovery that Bill became inseparable from Major Michael Shanahan, who grew determined to break-in Bill and become his rider.

Major Shanahan adopted a strategy of whispers, pats and liquorice all sorts, soon earning Bill's trust and becoming the only man to ever ride him in battle.

It wasn't until the Battle of Romani on August 5, 1916, however, that Bill and Major Shanahan's heroics would become legendary.

Fighting off Turkish troops, the pair rescued four stranded Tasmanian soldiers, who piled onto Bill as he rode almost three miles to return them to safety.



Returning to battle, Major Shanahan passed out on top of Bill after suffering a gunshot wound to his left leg, which was later amputated once Bill returned him safely to base.

Bill survived the war but was unable to return to Australia. He died in 1924 at the age of 21 and is buried at Walker's Ridge in Gallipoli.

After losing his leg in the Battle of Romani, Major Shanahan continued to ride horses. *(Supplied: Terry Shanahan)*

Ref: ABC NEWS

World War I

Homing pigeons were used extensively during World War I. In 1914, during the First Battle of the Marne, the French army advanced with 72 pigeon lofts with the troops.

The US Army Signal Corps used 600 pigeons in France alone.

One of their homing pigeons, a Blue Check hen named Cher Ami, was awarded the French "Croix de Guerre with Palm" for heroic service delivering 12 important messages during the Battle of Verdun. On her final mission in October 1918, she delivered a message despite having been shot through the breast or wing. The crucial message, found in the capsule hanging from a ligament of her shattered leg, saved 194 US soldiers of the 77th Infantry Division's "Lost Battalion".

German unmanned camera pigeon (probably aerial reconnaissance in World War I

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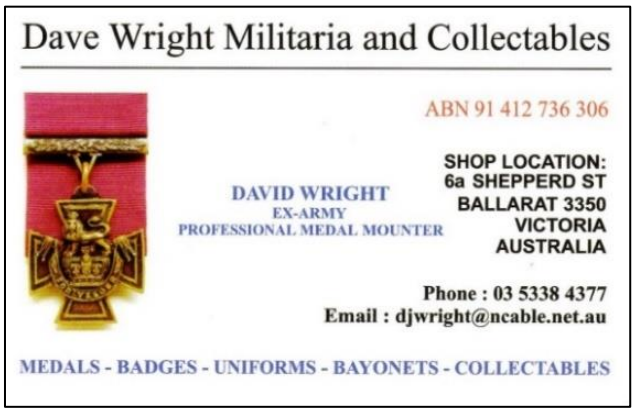

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