



# TRACK

June 2007



**Royal Australian Armoured  
Corps Association Inc.**  
Victorian Branch

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<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~raacavic>

## VETERAN HONOURED AT SCHOOL OF ARMOUR



*Mr Ian Bates of Gunnedah, NSW at the School of Armour on Friday, 30 March 2007, for the official opening of the building named in his honour.*

*Continued page 2.....*

### Welcome to the Crew

Jason Thomas    Simon Mason    Peter Still (transferred from NT Branch)

**Over 30 3rd Cavalry Regiment veterans** returned to their old stomping ground at the School of Armour on Friday, 30th March 2007. The occasion involving the naming of the Schools Initial Employment Training (IET) soldiers' instructional building, was staged to honour one of their comrades severely wounded on the first day of the Tet offensive, 1 February 1968 at Baria, South Vietnam. **Tpr Ian Bates** was the driver of **Troop Leader 2 Lt Roger Tingley's** M113A1 Armoured Personnel Carrier that was struck on the front right hand side by a Rocket Propelled Grenade fired at very close range. Although badly injured, Bates was able to manoeuvre the almost crippled carrier enabling **2Lt Tingley to engage and kill the RPG team.**

By his actions, Tpr Bates undoubtedly saved the lives of the Troop Leader and the three crewmen in the back of the carrier. **Despite being in considerable pain and barely conscious,** Bates continued to move the vehicle into a more secure position prior to the engine seizing and his passing out.



*Commanding Officer/Chief Instructor of School of Armour, Lt Col Jason Thomas and Mr Ian Bates pose for the photographers prior to the official opening of the Tpr Ian Bates Building.*



*Job's done!*



*The original crew together again 39 years on  
(Left to right) Roger Bicheno, Ian Bates, Roger Tingley and Barry Pitt*



*Part of the large crowd of 3 Cav Regt veterans included (L to R) Gavan Vigar, Barry Pitt, Eric Frisken, IC Smith, Alan Spenceley, Rex Harris, Ivan Maher and John Brooker  
(All photos Roger Bicheno)*

# **CAMBRAI DAY COMMEMORATION DINNER**

**Saturday 17 November 2007**

**1900 for 1930 hrs**

Hopkins Barracks Officers/Sergeants Mess  
Puckapunyal

**Guest of Honour  
WO1 Donald G. Spinks, OAM  
RSM of the RAAC**

**Cost:** \$50:00 per head for members  
\$55:00 per head for non members/guests

This function is our premier event for the year and as usual we are providing a quality guest speaker for your enjoyment

**All enquiries to:**  
Daryl Pinner (H) 9359 4520  
Peter Branagan (H) 5793 8171

Make the most of your trip to Puckapunyal with a visit to the world class Army Tank Museum

**Dress:** Lounge Suit or Reefer Jacket  
Miniatures

Tickets posted out early September  
RSVP by 08 November 2007

**Accommodation is limited**

## AROUND THE ASSOCIATION.....



*Victorian Branch member Lt Col Bernie Richards during a recent visit to Yarralumla*



*Veteran Colonel Frank Pearson enjoyed a first class ride on ANZAC Day 2007 courtesy of Roy Arnott and 4/19 PWLH Museum Ferret Mk1 Scout Car*

## AROUND THE CORPS.....

### Head of Corps Structure 2007

The 2007 manning of the Head of Corps (HOC) is detailed below:

**Representative Honorary Colonel:** Lieutenant General Laurie O'Donnell, AC (Retd)

**Head of Corps:** Major General David Chalmers, AO, CSC, ADC

**Deputy Head of Corps:** Lieutenant Colonel Jason Thomas (CO/CI School of Armour)

**Staff Officer Grade Two Head of Corps (ARA):** Vacant

**Staff Officer Grade Two Head of Corps (GRes):** Major Peter Branagan, OAM

**Staff Officer Grade Two Head of Corps (Projects):** Major John Baines, RFD

**Regimental Sergeant Major RAAC:** Warrant Officer Class One Don Spinks, OAM (Corps RSM)

### The Army Combat Badge (ACB)

Authorised by Defence Instruction (Army) Pers 119-1 of October 2006, the ACB is now appearing on the uniforms of young soldiers and the mufti of the veteran community. Through the auspices of the RAACA Federal Executive, 1st Armoured Regiment and 3rd Cavalry Regiment unit associations, our Head of Corps has submitted a number of lists of eligible members to DG Pers for issue to recipients via their association.

On ANZAC eve two members of the RAACA NSW executive - Messrs **Bob Ferrari** and **Ron Baikie** were presented with their ACB in Blamey Square, Russell Offices Canberra, by **Major General Chalmers** in acknowledgement of their dogged pursuit of recognition for armoured combat soldiers over many years. Also present were **Lieutenant General Laurie O'Donnell**, **Colonel John Haynes** - Federal President RAACA and the National Secretary of the RSL - **Mr Derek Robson**.



*Included in the crowd at the opening of the Tpr Ian Bates Building were Mr Peter Still, WO1 Don Spinks, Lt Col Mitch Kent and Lt Col Craig Burn  
(Photo WO2 Joe Linford)*

## SOCIAL CALENDAR.....

Mark your diary now for the **Children's Christmas Party** at the **Diamond Valley Miniature Railway**, Lower Eltham Park (Melways reference map 21 H 10). We have resumed our traditional date of a week before Christmas so come and join us on **Sunday the 16th December**.

As usual **Santa is timetabled to arrive by train at Meadmore Junction at 1300 hrs**. We have booked our first dedicated special to arrive at the picnic area at **1100 hrs** and the afternoon train at **1400 hrs**. Both these trains travel the extensive layout for 30 minutes and have proven very popular with all ranks in the past. **Rod and Sharon Westgarth** put a lot of effort into organising this activity, so come out to Eltham and give the kids (**from eight to eighty**) a great day out.

Remember **we provide soft drinks and bagged sweets, you provide a suitably wrapped and labelled present for Santa to give to your children**. We also provide **complimentary rail tickets** so that you can take the family for a ride on their regularly scheduled trains at any time.

The newly introduced **sausage sizzle** was a big hit last year, so if you can't be bothered to pack a picnic lunch, Rod and Sharon will gladly flog you a sausage or two!

It is a condition of travel on the Diamond Valley Miniature Railway **that all those intending to ride the rails, must wear suitable, enclosed footwear**.

**So come along and join the fun on Sunday,  
the 16th December 2007 from 1000 hrs.**

## RAACA SCHOLARSHIPS

**One of the benefits your association provides are the scholarships** available to eligible children commencing or completing their secondary education.

**The Victorian Branch Scholarship** is currently **\$150:00** per year for the first two years of secondary school. Applications should be forwarded to the Secretary with proof of attendance by **28 February in the first year of qualification**. You must have been a financial member of the RAACA for a **minimum five years to apply**.

**The Brigadier F. B. Hinton, MC Scholarship** is administered by the Federal Executive and currently provides **\$250:00 for each of the final two years of secondary education**. Application including proof of intention to complete years 11 and 12 to our Secretary by **30 September in the applicant's year 10**.

There are no scholastic results required, however proof of attendance must be provided on the relevant school's letterhead paper. **Applicants must be financial members**.

### **The Victorian Branch Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donors**

Tom Murphy, Bruce Tarran, Rod Westgarth, Bill Burton OAM, Greg Sheppard  
Peter Swinfield and John Crossman

## DATELINE DARWIN.....

There will be significant activities taking place at **Robertson Barracks, Palmerston, NT** over the weekend **7-8 July**. Not the least of these will be the **58th birthday celebrations at the 1st Armoured Regiment**. Saturday morning at 0930 hrs will see a **mounted parade** on the **1st Brigade Parade Ground** featuring the last hurrah of the **Leopard AS1 MBT** after 30 years Trojan service and the official introduction into service of the **M1 Abrams MBT**. A highlight of the parade will be the firing of a feu-de-joie from the Abrams to salute the birthday of the Regiment.

On Saturday night from 1900 hrs the traditional **Regimental Ball** will be conducted in the open air on the regimental Soldiers Walking and Marching Place. This activity will be in stark contrast to the shivering affairs that were held in Puckapunyal prior to 1995!

On Monday morning **9 July**, buses will leave the regimental Swamp at 0800 hrs for the **Mt Bunday Training Area** to witness a Firepower Demo with the new tank. The vast training area is located off the Arnhem Highway some 110 kms SE of Palmerston.

For further information contact **John Brooker** at 1 Sunrise Crt Epping, Vic 3076 (03)9408 0226 or johnbrooker45@aol.com

The annual **RAAC Conference, Council and Dinner**, traditionally held in mid March at the School of Armour, Puckapunyal is moving this year to **Robertson Barracks, Palmerston**. It will occur over the period **9-11 August** and will be accommodated on base in the **Rowell Centre**. It was decided to move the conference this year to give our northern soldiers an opportunity to attend.



*M1 Abrams power pack change demo at Puckapunyal Dec 06*

# VALE

## 335166 Captain Brian Charles Kollias

### 28 February 1945 - 26 January 2007

St Leonard's Uniting Church at Brighton Beach, Victoria was filled to overflowing on Monday, 5th February with family, friends and veterans to celebrate the life of Brian 'Nick' Kollias. The three major areas of his life - military, legal and sailing were all well represented particularly by former comrades from the 3rd Cavalry Regiment. Brian died suddenly on Australia Day and the shock of his passing was still very evident at the funeral.

Brian was four years at the Royal Military College and graduated into the Australian Regular Army on 14 December 1966. Following Corps training at the Armoured Centre in early 1967 he joined A Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment and served a tour of duty with them in South Vietnam from 3 February 1968 to 28 January 1969. On return to Australia he served at the Armoured Centre as 2I/C Tactics Wing and as the Adjutant. Deciding that a legal career was the way ahead, he left the Army in March 1973 and developed a highly successful legal practice in the Mornington area. Brian's late father Norm also served in the armoured corps for many years through to the early sixties.

## Lest We Forget

The passing was noted earlier this month of long serving RAACA Queensland member Noel Bassett. 'Dozey' Bassett served in a number of RAAC postings in the Fifties and early Sixties. In recent years he was involved in veterans affairs and served as Federal President of the RAACA from 1995 - 1998.

## We Want You.....

At this years **Reserve Forces Day March and Ceremony on Sunday, 1st July 2007 at 1100 hrs.** This march is conducted annually to recognise the **commitment** and **valued service** to the nation of its Reserve forces. On 31 October 2007, the ninetieth anniversary of the Charge at Beersheba will be celebrated, the armoured corps, as **heirs and successors** of the **Australian Light Horse** have been granted the prestigious position of being **lead unit** in this march on 1 July. All details are included in the flyer (overleaf).

If you served in the **Militia, the Citizen Military Forces, National Service, Reserves** or on the Cadre Staff of a Reserve unit, stand up, turn out in your black beret and march to the **Shrine of Remembrance** on **Sunday, 1st July 2007.**





VICTORIAN RESERVE FORCES DAY  
MARCH AND CEREMONY  
1ST JULY 2007



RECOGNISING VALUED SERVICE TO THE NATION  
& 90 YEARS SINCE THE CAVALRY CHARGE AT BEERSHEBA

MILITIA | CITIZEN MILITARY FORCES | NATIONAL SERVICE | RESERVES | CADRE |  
Reunions afterwards. Past and Present members of the Australian Reserve Forces



ARMY RESERVE



NAVY RESERVE



AIR FORCE RESERVE

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL A. HOUSTON AO AFC  
CHIEF OF DEFENCE FORCE  
WILL BE TAKING THE SALUTE & PRESENTING AWARDS



*Assembly/Forming up point:*

*Queen Victoria Gardens, South of Princes Bridge*

*Melways Ref. Map 2F, H7*

*At 1100 hours for step off at 1130 hours, march to the Shrine Forecourt where a service will be conducted*

*Wet weather plan: Warrant Officer Ceremonial to advise by 1100 hrs on the day*

For More Information, [www.rfd.org.au](http://www.rfd.org.au)

Telephone Reserve Forces Day Information

Phone: (03) 9284 6651 or (03) 9650 1444 Email: [peter.wertheimer@wertheimer.com.au](mailto:peter.wertheimer@wertheimer.com.au)

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