

AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRACKERS AND WAR DOGS ASSOCIATION



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TRACKER'S NEWS

December 2001

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Firstly I would like to say a warm hello to all of you out there. We have formed this association as a means to extend our friendship to all those who have been directly and indirectly associated with war dogs in the many theatres of conflict in which the Australian Army has served. I am still in the process of having the Association incorporated and am awaiting Army Office approval to use the term "Australian Army" in our Association's title.

Our inaugural reunion is on 22 – 23 March 2002 and I am looking forward to meeting many of you at this weekend. It should be a beauty. Please try and make it as it should be a most enjoyable few days.

I would like to keep this Association as informal as possible although as an incorporated one, there are a number of statutory rules which we have to abide by. However, these will not be onerous and it is the committee's intention for us as a group to have an enjoyable get-together on an annual basis. We do not intend to charge an annual subscription at this stage but we will need to rely on the generosity of our members for donations to cover the cost of all our incidentals.

At this time I would like to pay a special tribute to our Secretary, Bob Bettany, who has been instrumental in getting this Association off the ground. He has worked tirelessly to expand the membership and has already put in a lot of effort towards the March weekend. Thanks Bob. We wouldn't be this far without your valuable contribution.

Just to finish off – we are still looking for more of our members so if you know any old trackers or people who were associated with Army war dogs, please pass on this information and we can add them to our list.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a safe and enjoyable Christmas

INAUGURAL REUNION

22,23,24 MARCH 2001

We wish to invite you to join us at our inaugural reunion to be held at Alexandra Headlands on the Sunshine Coast.

The outline plan at this stage is Friday night AGM, meet and greet at Mooloolaba Surf Club, Saturday lunch cruise on the Mooloolah River, or similar tourist activity, followed by a Buffet Dinner Dance at the Mooloolaba Yacht Club. On Sunday there will be a memorial service to our fallen comrades and dedication of a plaque honouring our war dogs for service in Malaya, Borneo and Somalia. We will also formally welcome back our Handlers and Dogs from a Tour of Duty in East Timor followed by barbeque lunch, once again at the Mooloolaba Surf Club. We encourage members and guests to include partners to participate in all activities.

We have asked the National President of the RSL Maj Gen Peter Phillips AO MC to be our Guest of Honour, and other dog handler associations are being invited to attend.

We would appreciate your support and hope that you will be able to attend the reunion.

I would appreciate your early expression of interest as venues, catering and costing will need to be organised.

REUNION ACCOMMODATION

To assist with accommodation requirements, we have obtained advice from Maroochy Tourism and Travel, who have been most helpful. They advise that Easter holidays are very busy on the Sunshine Coast, and if you are planning to stay a while, remember that Good Friday is March 29th. Plan on leaving Monday or Tuesday, because caravan parks do take bookings for Easter and would probably be booked out already. The tariff will increase for the holiday period.

Listed below are a few options located in the vicinity of the Mooloolaba area.

UNITS AND APARTMENTS

Newport Luxury Apartments, Parkyn Pde Mooloolaba - 07 5444 4833

Alex Seaside Resort, First Ave Mooloolaba - 1800 505 994

Excelsior Luxury Apartments, River Esp Mooloolaba - 07 5477 5555

MOTELS

Twin Pines Motel, Brisbane Rd Mooloolaba - 07 5444 2522
River Esplanade Motel, Mooloolaba - 1800 807 399

BACKPACKERS ACCOMMODATION

Beach House Backpackers, Cotton Tree - 07 5443 1755
Suncoast Backpackers Lodge, 50 Parker St Alexandra Headlands - 07 5443 7544

CARAVAN PARKS

Sea Breeze, Melrose Pde Maroochydore - 07 5443 1167
Alexandra Gardens, Okinja Rd Alexandra Headlands - 1800 629 292
Mooloolaba Ocean Beach Park, Mooloolaba Esp - 1800 441 201
Mooloolaba Parkyn Parade, Parkyn Pde Mooloolaba - 1800 441 201

FEES

Units and apartments will range in price from around \$300.00 for 3 nights in a two bedroom apartment up to around \$900.00 for a week, depending where you choose to stay.

A sample of motel pricing is \$197.00 for 3 nights for a double room, and \$300.00 for the week. This will vary from one motel to another.

A backpackers price is \$19.00 for a dormitory bed, twin or double room is \$44.00, single room \$35.00 per night.

Caravan parks start at \$20.00 per night for two people and \$102.00 for week site fees. Alexandra Gardens Park offers cabins for two couples for \$49.50 per couple.

“OLD FARTS IN CARAVANS”

If you are like me and are one of the above and intend Caravanning to the Reunion, then here are some things you need to know.

There are five Council caravan Parks to choose from in the area. **Cotton Tree** and **Pin Cushion** are on the southern side of the Maroochy River near the mouth and are the closest to the Maroochydore RSL. They are about four klm from the Memorial and five from Mooloolaba Surf Club.

Sea Breeze at Melrose Drive Maroochydore is another council park and is about two klm from the memorial.

Alexandra Gardens, Okinja Rd Alexandra Headlands is privately owned and is part of the Top Tourist Park Group. It has on site cabins for those without a van. They will take

bookings. No discount is offered at this stage but this may change, so be sure to ask. This park is about two klm from the memorial.

Mooloolaba **Ocean Beach Park** is only 500 mtrs from the memorial, and the same from the Mooloolaba Surf Club. It has only 34 sites. This park is not recommended for vans over 24ft, it can be a bit tight. However it is right where the action is.

Mooloolaba **Parkyn Parade** is where I usually stay. It is next door to the surf club and directly opposite Underwater World on one side, with the beach on the other side. It is the closest park to the Yacht Club. Maximum van size would be 24ft.

Council parks normally will not take bookings outside peak season, but if you ring on the day of your arrival they may hold a site for you. Easter holiday makers start to arrive from Tuesday or Wednesday 26,27 March so don't take your site for granted. Parks do take bookings for Easter & would probably be booked out by now.

Happy caravanning,

Bob Bettany

DOING it TOUGH

I recently sent an email to Roy (Shorty) Mawer from Cairns (ex 2RAR) asking for help with names & addresses.

His reply: *"Sorry mate I'm sailing through the Greek Islands at the moment and all that information is at home
Regards Roy"*

DONATIONS

Many thanks to those of you who have sent donations. We still don't have a bank A/C but I do have \$225 hidden under my mattress, what could be safer than that? Until now Leo and I have covered the expenses, by the time you receive this newsletter we should have a bank account so now is the time to hit the till.

PLEASE SEND CHEQUE or MONEY ORDER _ _ _ _ NO CASH

TO: AUSSIE ARMY TRACKERS

22 Pickering Place

Caboolture 4510

I'll try to be organised enough to send receipts with each "Mail Out"

Donations so far: Ross Burns Bob Bettany Blue Bower Gary Grant Peter Tarr

Leo Van De Kamp Alan Dwyer **Thank You**

Expenses so far: \$302.58 plus the cost of this "Mail Out"

Reunion Activities

Activities:

Friday, 22 Mar 1730 hrs Venue Mooloolaba Surf Club (Upstairs via front entrance) Meet & Greet. 1800 hrs AGM & Election of Office Bearers. 1830 Bookings for those who wish to eat in the Restaurant. 1930 hrs Light Finger Food will be served intermittently until 2100 hrs. **Pay at the Door** . Cost : \$ 5 per head. Bar service available. Last drinks 2330hrs

Saturday, 23 Mar 1100 hrs River Cruise 1 hr Trip on M.V. Mudjimba followed by Lunch at Fridays on The Wharf . Cost Incl lunch = \$ 20 per head. Or Individual Sightseeing Sunshine Coast Area .

2100hrs **Buffet Dinner Dance** Venue : Mooloolaba Yacht Club Quarter Deck Parkyn Parade Buffet served at 2130 hrs

Live music Lucky door prizes

Bar service Last drinks 1145hrs Bar closed 2400hrs

Cost per person : \$ 32

Sunday, 24 Mar 1000hrs Assemble in the area of the Memorial. 1015hrs Opening address and Welcome Guest of Honour by Pres Leo Van De Kamp. 1030 hrs Memorial Service to Our Deceased Comrades conducted by Padre Ken Schmidt. Sec Bob Bettany to read the names and a short poem. Last Post and Reveille. 1045 Address by Guest of Honour 1055hrs Welcome Home Handlers and Dogs from Timor. Unveiling of Plaques to Dogs for service in Malaya /Borneo and Somalia. Thanks to other Dog Units and Supporters. March Past of Dogs and Handlers.

1130hrs Refreshments at Mooloolaba Surf Club. 1200hrs Bookings for those who wish to eat in the Restaurant. 1230hrs Light Finger Food will be served intermittently until 1330hrs.

Pay at the Door . Cost : \$ 5

----- Tear Off Here -----

Attendance Return

Name:

I will be / will not be attending the Trackers Reunion at Alexandra Headlands. I will be accompanied by Guest / guests.

Enclosed is a cheque / money order for \$..... being for Pers for River

Cruise Incl lunch andPers Buffet Dinner Dance at the Yacht Club and a

Donation of \$.....

EG: 2 x people attending the River Cruise and Dinner Dance = **\$104**

Confirmation Including Money by 1 March 2002

Reunion Attendance List

(As at 2/12/01)

Unit	Int	First Name Nickname	Wife's Name	Last Name	Unit	Int	First Name Nickname	Wife's Name	Last Name
2RAR	I	Ian	Heather	Atkinson	9RAR	G	Greg	Jan	Hawes
7RAR	D	Dave		Attwood	3RAR	R	Ray	Thelma	Hempenstall
6RAR	D	Don/Jock	Helen	Bain	2RAR	A	Allan	Marlene	Johnstone
2RAR	P	Peter	Judy	Bannister	6RAR	W	Bill		Kromwyk
4RAR	A	Aaron		Barnett	2RAR	L	Les		Lambert
6RAR	RJ	Bob	Julie	Bettany	2RAR	W	Wally		Matusch
2RAR	B	Brian/Blue	Janice	Bower	4RAR	A	Allyn		McCulloch
5RAR	J	Jack		Bradd	6RAR	JB	John/Doggie		Neervoort
JWS	R	Ross		Burns	44MW	M	Mick		Pimm
7RAR	N	Norm	Corinne	Cameron	2RAR	P	Shane	Lorraine	Prendergast
4RAR	R	Rod		Cannan	4RAR	FAR	Fred	Evelyne	Roberts
EDD	G	Gary	Scerina	Chadwick	1RAR	R J	Dick	June	Roe
1RAR	M	Mal/Snoopy	Merle	Collison	2RAR	K R	Ken/Speed	Maureen	Strickland
3RAR	A	Alan	Jan	Dwyer	7RAR	P	Peter	Kay	Tarr
1RAR	A	Arthur	Janice	Eather	7RAR	A	Arthur		Taylor
6RAR	N	Lefty	Glynis	Fischer	2RAR	L	Leo	Gail	Van De Kamp
2RAR	A	Arthur	Pam	Francis	4RAR	G	Gerry/EICid	Lorraine	Villalba

RECRUITING

We currently have **362** names on our nominal roll and of those we only have addresses for **172**. Included is a nominal roll of our lost members. If each of us tries really hard to find one bloke, we would be very close to the 300 mark. Those of us who have already tried to find members of our old platoons have had tremendous satisfaction in attaining over 75% out of 45-50 names.

MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership

I was checking the Visitors Book on our web site recently and discovered that some of you were uncertain if you were members. At some time in the future I will give Bazz Magor the list of names for the web site.

In the meantime if you are getting this newsletter, that is the first positive sign that you are a member. Some platoons were called Anti Tank Tracker others were Tracker /Recon and others were just Recon, some blokes weren't even in a platoon but taught us everything we needed to know. If you still aren't sure then get in touch with the Secretary.(ME)

Next of Kin

We offer full membership to **N O K**. However of the **21 deceased** we only have addresses for two NOK, so if you know of any others please give me the information as soon as possible.

Associate Membership

Because of several queries from serving and retired members of the Army and Air Force who do not qualify for full membership we have decided to encourage Associate Membership. If you have any mates who would like to be Associates then let me know.

INTERNET MEMBERS

If you are on the net and receive this by e-mail please send me a reply. I sometimes feel extremely lonely when there is no response to my calls for help. If you have e-mail and got this by post please send me your e-mail address so we can save on postage.

If you haven't visited the web site it is: www.aussietrackers.nethop.com Please sign the **Visitors Book**. We like to know you were there.

Some other sites worth a look are: www.vungtauvietnam.com www.udfisd.com.au
www.combattrackerteams.org www.hinet.net.au/~ozgrunt www.diggerz.org
www.aussieviet7.homestead.com www.geocities.com/sixthbattalionassociation

TARDY SCRIBE

Some of you may be wondering why it has taken me so long to write this newsletter. Well here's my excuse I've got "AAADD"

AGE ACTIVATED ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER

I have recently been diagnosed with AAADD

This is how it goes.

I decide to wash the car, start toward the garage and notice the mail on the table.

Okay, I'm going to wash the car.....

BUT FIRST I'm going to go through the mail. Lay car keys down on desk. After discarding the junk mail, I notice the garbage bin is full. OK, I'll just put the bills on my desk...

BUT FIRST I'll take the garbage out, but since I'm going to be near the mailbox, I'll address a few bills.... Yes now where is the cheque book? Oops... there's only one cheque left. Where did I put the extra cheques? Oh, there's my empty plastic cup from last night on my desk. I'm going to look for those cheques....

BUT FIRST I need to put the cup back in the kitchen. I head for the kitchen, look out the window, notice the flowers need a drink of water, I put the cup on the bench and there's my extra pair of glasses on the kitchen table. What are they doing here? I'll just put them away....

BUT FIRST I need to water those plants. I head for the door and.... Aaaagh! Someone left the TV remote in the wrong place. Okay, I'll put the remote away and water the plants....

BUT FIRST I need to find those cheques.

END OF THE DAY : Car not washed, bills still unpaid, cup still in the sink, chequebook still has only one cheque left, lost my car keys; and when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm baffled because.... **I KNOW I WAS BUSY ALL DAY!**..... I realize this condition is serious.... I'll get help....

BUT FIRST..... I think I'll check my e-mail.

Now you know why it has taken me so long to get this newsletter out to you.

WAYNE'S POEM

There is an inscription on the War Dog Memorial and the words are from the pen of a bloke called Sam Brown. Sam was a Medic attached to B Coy 2RAR 1st Tour of SVN.

TRIBUTE to Our WAR DOGS

*Ceasar Cassius Janus Julian Juno Justin Marcian Marcus
Milo Tiber Trajan*

*Down jungle tracks through shot and shell
Ears pricked high, keen sense of smell
Our tracker dogs with care and poise
Alert to ambush, foreign noise
Never whimper, whine nor bark
Their service honoured by this plaque
No medals pinned to hairy chests
They stayed behind, they were the best.
All gave something, some gave all
Those who knew you will never forget you*

Wayne Brown MM

Confucius say.....

**Before you criticse someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes.
Thay way, when you criticse them, you are a mile away and you have
their shoes.**

HELP HELP HELP

As you can see by the table below, I need a lot of help to complete the list of Dogs and Handlers who served in Malaya and Borneo. If you see any mistakes or have some additions please let me know

DOGS & HANDLERS MALAYA & BORNEO

YEAR	UNIT	DOG	HANDLER	REMARKS
57-59	3RAR	Spear	Roy Bohan	
		Rocket	John Caruana	
		Tu Tu	Ray Caulfield	
		Search	Bruce Lenegan	
		Rush	Roy Maurer	
		Tarzan	Sid Songar	DECEASED
			Blue Carter	
60-61	1RAR	Rolf	Arthur Eather	
		Wince	Rick Ezbahah	
		Handy	John (King) Barker	<u>Deceased ????</u>
		Darky	Dave Haines	
		Sandy	D (Spunky)Fieldhouse	
		Rufus	“ “ “	
		Bramble	John Caruana	
62-63	2RAR			
64-65	3RAR			
66-67	4RAR	Simba	Fred Roberts	
		Toddy	Alex Lennox	
		Rank		
		Milo		
67-68	8RAR			
70-71	1RAR	Tago		
71-73	6RAR		Blue Reason	
			Fred Germanus	

*HO HO BLOODY HO
MERRY CHRISTMAS and
HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO YOU ALL*