



THE OBSERVATION POST

The official publication of the
National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Australia Inc
South Australia & Northern Territory Branch

SA/NT Branch Patron:
Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia

Volume 15, number 5 – MAY 2025



ANZAC DAY

On Anzac Day 2025 we marked the 110th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings, and also honoured all who lost their lives in wars, operational campaigns, peace-keeping missions and humanitarian relief operations.

Vice-President Don Cameron led the Malaya-Borneo contingent as usual, marching to honour those who served and lost their lives on active service during the undeclared Malayan wars, particularly also honouring the surviving veterans of the Malayan Emergency as we mark the 75th Anniversary of the start of Australia's involvement in the Emergency – on 31 May 1950.

The Australian National Flag bearer at the head of our contingent this year was WO2 Nathan Price, a veteran of two deployments to East Timor.



NOTICES

BRANCH COMMITTEE 2025

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*President, Secretary
Public Affairs Officer*

Don Cameron
*Vice-President
Ceremonial Officer*

Paul Bayliss

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Vicki Crannaford
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Di Davies

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Minutes Secretary

Jeff Hiscock

Mal White
Merchandise Officer

Major Quentin Castle
Branch Chaplain

THANK YOU

*We thank Tony
Zappia MP and the
staff of his Makin
Electorate Office
for their generous
assistance with all
our printing needs*

BRANCH UPDATES 'KEEPING IN THE LOOP'

We released a special edition of 'The Observation Post' in March, giving short commemorative profiles of those affiliated with our association who passed during the month of March, including the late Captain Aileen Ryan RAANC.

We received this note of thanks from Aileen's sister Mary: *"Thank you so much for sending me the Special In Memoriam edition with the lovely tribute to Aileen. Her anniversary is coming up quite soon on 29th of this month. The year has gone by quickly and we think of Aileen often and her rather quirky sayings! The Association and the people she met there over the years meant so much to her and again I thank you Paul for helping to make her funeral and farewell a very special occasion"*.

In the last newsletter we congratulated Captain Imbahadur Ghale of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles on receiving an Intermediate Regular Commission, giving him four more years in the British Army. He has sent us his thanks: *"Have a pint 🍺 in the mess or NAAFI!"*.

We also featured Borneo veteran Roy Hanisch as he approaches his 100th birthday, and in this newsletter you will find Part 2 of Roy's story, as well as an update on our international agent, who is now at last correctly regimentally dressed.

Branch Executives are planning to attend the Eastick Family Reunion Visit to Kuching in order to conduct reconnaissance and liaison for our Branch visit to Sarawak in 2026 to mark the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Malaysia-Indonesia Peace Agreement on 11 August 1966 which brought to an end the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia. Others may wish to join the visit.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May meeting: 1115h Friday 16 May
Maid of Auckland Hotel,
followed by lunch



<https://www.facebook.com/MaidEdwardstown>

Malayan Emergency: 1100h Saturday 31 May:
*West Torrens War Memorial Gardens
To honour our surviving veterans of the
Malayan Emergency, followed by lunch*

June meeting: 1115h Friday 20 June
Maid of Auckland Hotel, followed by lunch

Annual Dinner: Friday 27 June, 6 for 6.30 pm:
*Himalayan Kitchen Tibetan and Nepalese
Restaurant, 73 Melbourne Street, North Adelaide*



Visit our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/NMBVAAadelaide/>



Visit our Website:
https://www.nmbvaa.org.au/sa_nt.php



CONTRIBUTED IMAGES AND INFORMATION

Dato Lim Kian Hock OAM. Lim Kian Hock served in the Sarawak Civil Service during Confrontation. From August 1962 to March 1963, he served under the British District Officer. In April 1963, he was transferred to Belaga in the Kapit District of northern Sarawak as Administration Officer in Charge.

Dato Lim recalls: *"Looking back I am privileged to be given the trust to help leading Commonwealth forces on security patrol in the District during the Confrontation time".*



Lim Kian Hock (second from left) was the Administration Officer in Charge in Belaga, in the Kapit District of northern Sarawak: pictured in 1963.



Lim Kian Hock (seated at front) led Commonwealth forces on security patrols in the Kapit District during Confrontation: pictured in 1964.

Gurkhas in Sarawak. The upper photo to the left shows Dato Lim with a British Army Captain, the commander of the Gurkhas based in Belaga in 1963.

This Gurkha platoon was drawn from 'C' Company of the 1st Battalion, 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles (1/2GR).

After subduing the Brunei Revolt, 1/2GR deployed to Sarawak on its first tour of duty on Borneo. It was assigned to West Brigade (99 Gurkha Infantry Brigade) from February to October 1963 to conduct operations against Indonesian and rebel forces (Third Division of Sarawak). The Battalion HQ was based in Sibü.

Just a few months after this photo was taken, on 28 September 1963, there was a major action at Long Jawai, a Border Scout post.

A large Indonesian force attacked the border post and killed both a Gurkha and a policeman, wounded another soldier and policeman as well either wounding or capturing most of the Border Scouts. The Gurkhas defended their position against an enemy force estimated to be 100 strong. After a firefight lasting three hours and with ammunition about to run out and two men already wounded, the defenders managed to carry out a difficult withdrawal just before the Indonesians mounted a counter attack on the abandoned position. After a four-day march, the exhausted survivors eventually reached Belaga and delivered their report.

The reaction by 1/2GR was immediate: a reinforced 'C' Company was inserted into the jungle around Long Jawai in order to establish river ambushes on the withdrawing force and prevent the Indonesian troops from crossing the border back into Kalimantan.

These proved to be extremely successful with one accounting for at least 26 enemy.

In October 1963, rejoined 17 Gurkha Division in Malaysia.



GREETINGS

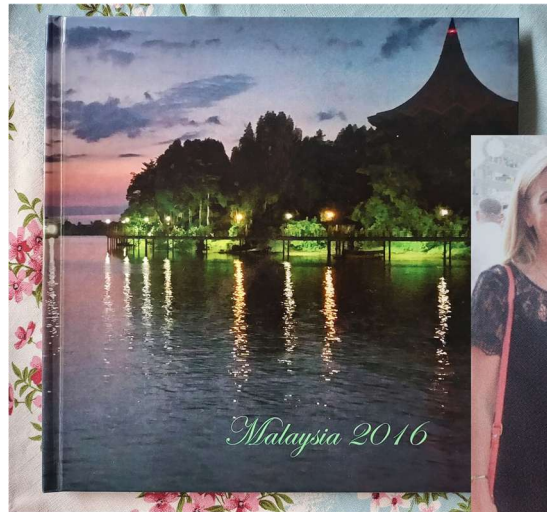
Dato Lim Kian Hock OAM

Our good friend Dato Lim is a keen reader of our Observation Post newsletters.

He has sent us his thanks for the 'memorable report' on himself and Jeli Mike Abdullah, celebrating Mike's 85th Birthday, and promised to share this with the Sarawak Tourism Federation and all our supporting friends.

Meanwhile, we have found this image of Jeli with ladies from our 2016 reunion party.

Jeli is Sarawak's last surviving child Prisoner-of-War from World War 2. When the Japanese Imperial Army invaded Borneo in 1941, together with other captured Europeans the one year old Jeli and his family were sent to the Batu Lintang POW camp in Kuching.



Just a few days after Jeli's birthday event, Dato Lim also celebrated his 85th birthday, on 27 March. The Sarawak Deputy Minister for Tourism, Yang Berhormat Datuk Sebastian Ting MLA hosted an early birthday celebration the day before. We have sent our congratulations and very best wishes to Dato Lim.

Of interest, in 2009 Sebastian Ting was appointed a Knight Companion of the Order of the Crown of Pahang (federal state of Pahang), granting him the title Dato. In 2017, he was appointed Commander of the Order of Meritorious Service of Malaysia, granting him the title Datuk.



Dato Lim celebrates his birthday with friends, including Audry Wan Ullok, President of the Sarawak Tourism Federation (second from left) and YB Datuk Sebastian Ting MLA (third from left).

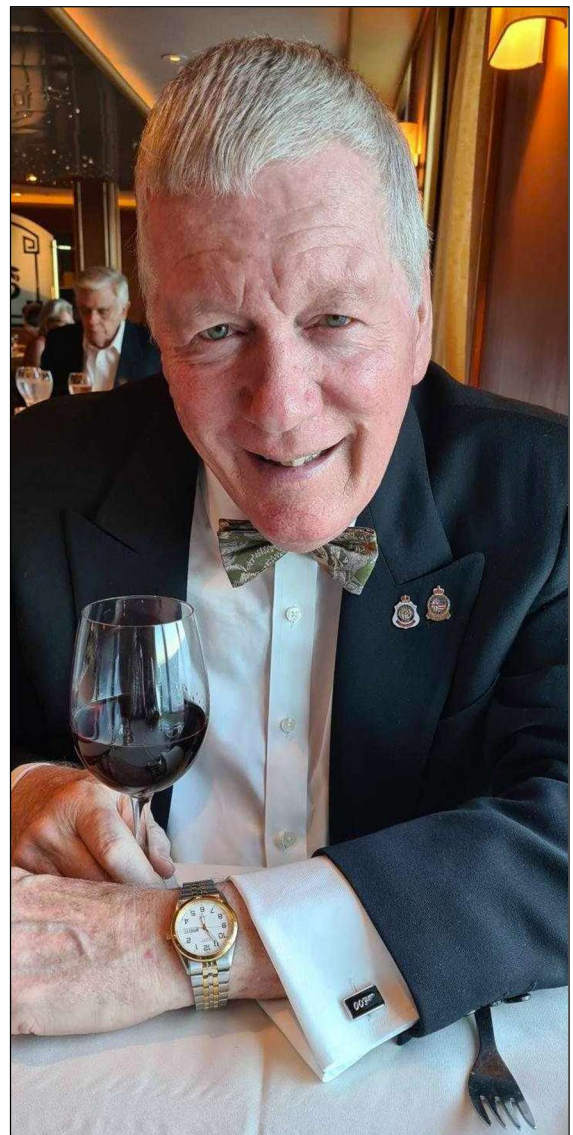


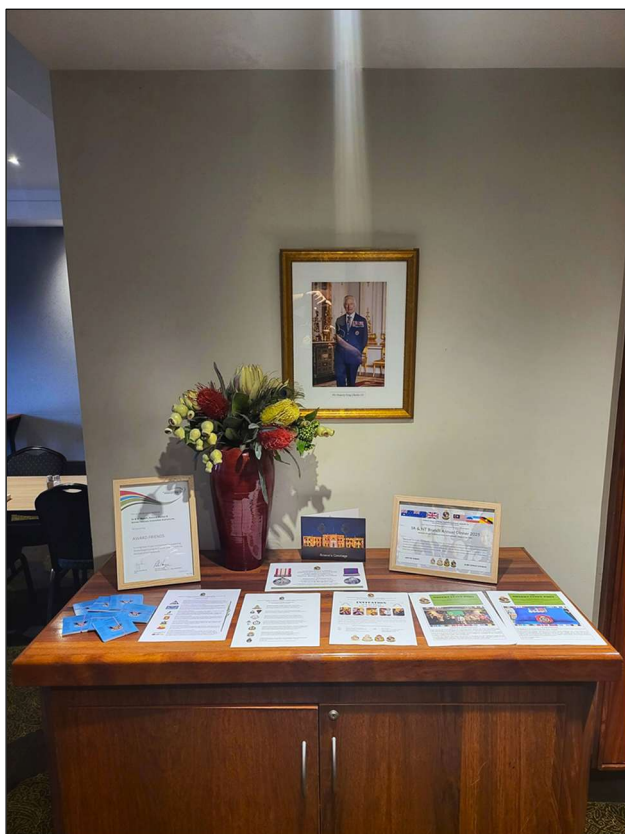
On Her Majesty's Special Service. In our April newsletter we made mention of Paul Baylis and his special 'OHMS' deployment aboard the Cunard Line's MS *Queen Elizabeth* (pictured below left), Paul being very much at home with the art deco interior, the Britannia Club and the cocktails. But we did notice that our international agent was 'regimentally undressed'.

So in preparation for his next mission, our 'Q' made sure Paul had a set of **007[™]** cufflinks in his sea-bag.



Our international agent at dinner on board the Crown Princess, "somewhere near the Indian Ocean".





BRANCH MEETING Friday 21 March 2025

At our March meeting, we displayed our portrait of King Charles III, King of Australia, kindly given to us by Senator Andrew McLachlan CSC, Deputy President of the Australian Senate.

As is our regular practice, the Ode was recited by Vice President Don Cameron.

We particularly recalled Major Roger 'Buzz' Burzacott RFD (1943-2020) who died on 19 March 2020, aged 77, and Captain Aileen Ryan (1926-2024) who died on 29 March 2024, aged 97.

We noted that Mr Bayliss had been spotted 'regimentally undressed', and the President said that he had obtained a UN badge to replace the one that went MIA on Ansel's beret to save him being caught 'regimentally undressed' the next time we see him.

We have received a number of military history books which members may borrow to read, but please return them so we can take them to the schools in Sarawak on our next reunion trip.

There will be an opportunity to join an Eastick family reunion visit to Sarawak to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Japanese Surrender in Kuching. More to follow on this.

BRANCH MEETING Friday 11 April 2025

Vice President Don Cameron recited the Ode: we recalled Signelman John Tassell who died on the Malay Peninsula on 4 April 1966, aged 21; Bill Hanson who died on 8 April 2020, aged 75; Dick Villiers who died on 13 April 2013, aged 88; and our late President Brian Selby who died on 15 April 2022, aged 77.

The President advised that the NMBVAA Inc national committee is now registered under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). The national Treasurer Ian Davenport submitted a detailed submission to the ACNC which was accepted, so we no longer have to submit lengthy and detailed returns to the ATO every year.

As a member of the national committee, the President is a 'Responsible Person'. Treasurer Ian Davenport is the 'Public Officer', and will keep the ACNC information up to date and comply with the returns required.

We were joined by Colonel Corey Shillabeer, the Australian Defence Advisor to Malaysia, and his daughter Erin.



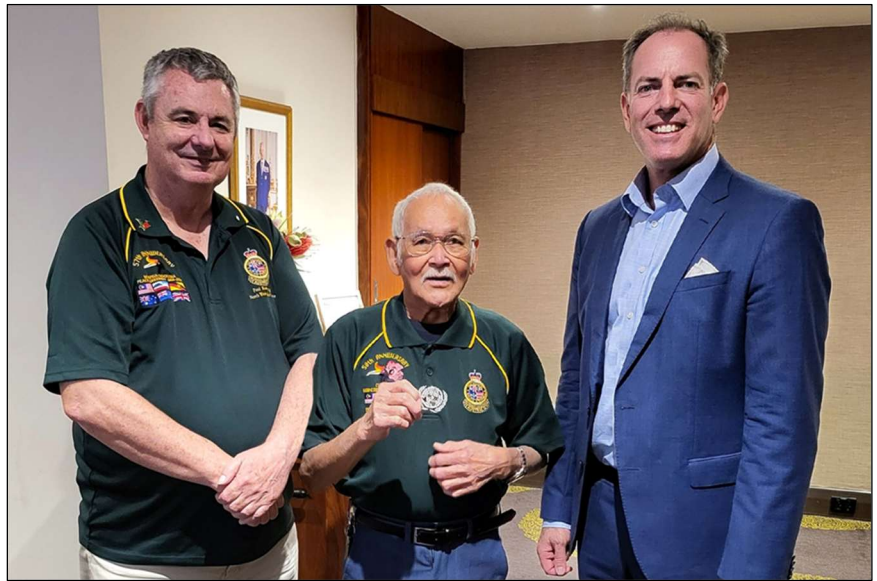
We thanked Colonel Corey Shillabeer, Australian Defence Advisor Kuala Lumpur, for joining us for the meeting and lunch, and presented him with an NMBVAA scarf. We hope the cooler will be of use to Erin during her Army Reserve service with the Adelaide Universities Regiment.



BRANCH MEETING Friday 11 April 2025

Paul briefed the group on our commitments – ranging from Anzac Day, our Malayan Emergency Commemoration on 31 May, our Annual Dinner on 27 June, and our AGM on 15 August, to our 2025 Malaya-Borneo Veterans Day Service on 29 August and potential visit to Sarawak in September, and the proposed Malaya-Borneo Veterans Day Service in Kuching in 2026 to mark the 60th Anniversary of the end of Confrontation.

Colonel Shillabeer then briefed us on the commemorative activities of the Australian High Commission for 2025.



Colonel Shillabeer presented a replacement UN beret badge to Ansel Mathews: this offered the unique opportunity of getting a photograph of three armed forces attachés together – Colonel Shillabeer (Australian Defence Advisor Kuala Lumpur), Ansel Mathews (former Malaysian Assistant Defence Advisor London) and Paul Rosenzweig (former Australian Assistant Defence Attaché Manila).



Colonel Peter Scott DSO on Thursday 27 July 2023 marking Korean Veterans' Day and the 70th anniversary of the signing of the 'Korean Armistice Agreement'.

The RAR Association stated:

**Rest in Peace Noble Warrior and Leader
Your Duty is Done**

VALE

Colonel Peter Scott DSO OAM (1929-2025)

The Royal Australian Regiment Association has reported the passing of their 'Tribal Elder' Colonel Peter Scott in Adelaide on 15 April 2025.

Peter was born in Elsternwick, Victoria on 19 January 1929. A keen cadet in his school days, Peter joined the Royal Military College–Duntroon in February 1946. He graduated in December 1948 as a Lieutenant, and was posted to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps.

Peter served with the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR) as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) in Japan. He then deployed to the Korean War, from 19 July 1951 to 19 July 1952, serving as a Platoon Commander and later as the battalion's Intelligence Officer.

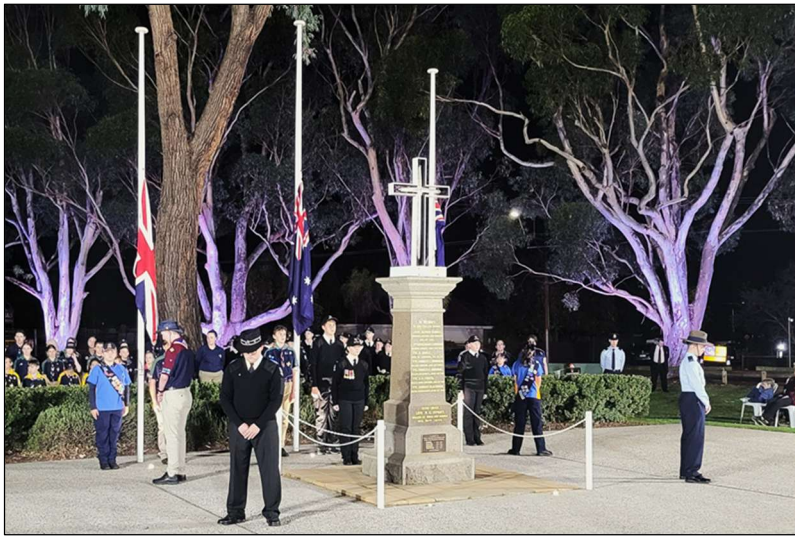
He is noted for his leadership at Hill 317 in the Battle of Maryang San during Operation 'Commando' in October 1951, for which he was Mentioned-in-Dispatches for 'coolness, efficiency, ability & courage of high order'.

For his command of 3RAR in South Vietnam during 1971 he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

He was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia this year, "For service to veterans and their families".



COMMEMORATION

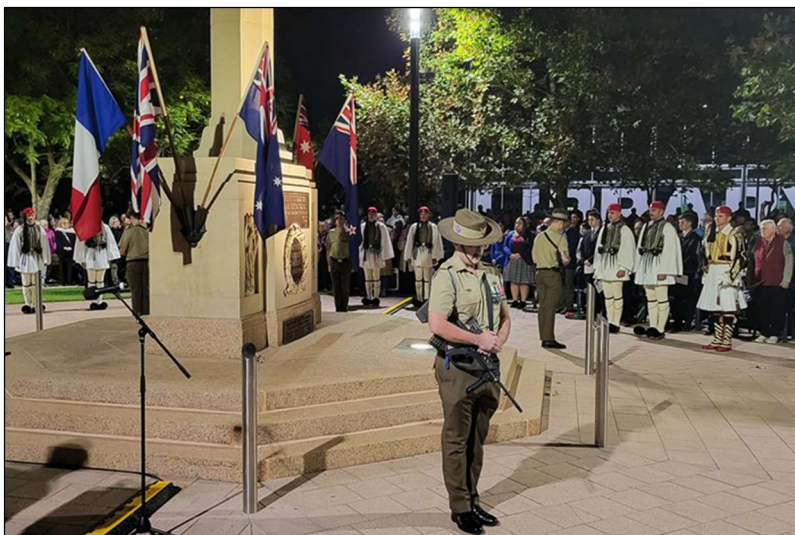


ANZAC COMMEMORATIONS

24-25 April 2025

Vigil. For this year's Anzac commemoration period, State President Paul Rosenzweig represented the SA/NT Branch, NMBVAA as an official guest at the commencement of the City of Playford Overnight Youth Vigil at the Cross of Remembrance in Smithfield Memorial Gardens.

The Vigil, hosted by Mayor Glenn Docherty, is a youth inspired activity with Playford's local youth service groups participating, including St John Ambulance and Air Force Cadets, to remember and appreciate the sacrifices made by Australians in war.



Dawn Service. Paul then attended the Hilton RSL Dawn Service on behalf of the NMBVAA.

He placed a tribute in memory of the fallen – notably recalling sacrifice in the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) as we observe the 75th anniversary of the start of Australia's involvement in the Emergency on 31 May 1950.

The Dawn Service was supported by the Evzones – the Greek Presidential Guard – a ceremonial unit that guards the Greek Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Presidential Mansion in Athens.

They are noted for their distinctive uniform, which includes the fustanella, a kilt-like garment, and turned-up *Tsarouchia* shoes.



Anzac March. For the March in Adelaide, Vice-President Don Cameron led the NMBVAA contingent, with WO2 Nathan Price in uniform as the Australian National Flag bearer.

Ben Ortmann and Matt Kuna were our NMBVAA Banner bearers.

Vicki Crannaford carried the Malaysian National Flag in memory of her brother Signalman John Tassell of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals, a South Australian who died on operational service on the Malayan Peninsula on 4 April 1966 while attached for duty to the 208th (Commonwealth) Signals Squadron.

The other Flag Bearers were Anthony Cameron (Sabah) and Paul Rosenzweig (Sarawak).



No 604 SQUADRON, AAFC

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE BIRTHDAY 31 March 2025

Seven Air Force Cadets from No 604 Squadron supported the RAAF Birthday Sunset Wreath Laying service at the Air Force Memorial at Torrens Parade Ground which marked the RAAF's 104th birthday.



A special distinction was made at the ceremony to recognise that this year we will observe the 75th anniversary of the start of Australia's involvement in the Malayan Emergency on 31 May 1950.

The Air Force Ensign which flew at half-mast for the service, and was then raised by a 604 Squadron Cadet, is the version that was in use during the period of the Emergency, bearing the roundel in concentric circles of red, white and blue.

The modern RAAF roundel, containing in its centre a red kangaroo 'in motion' (as depicted on Australia's penny coin at that time) was approved by the Minister for Air on 2 July 1956.

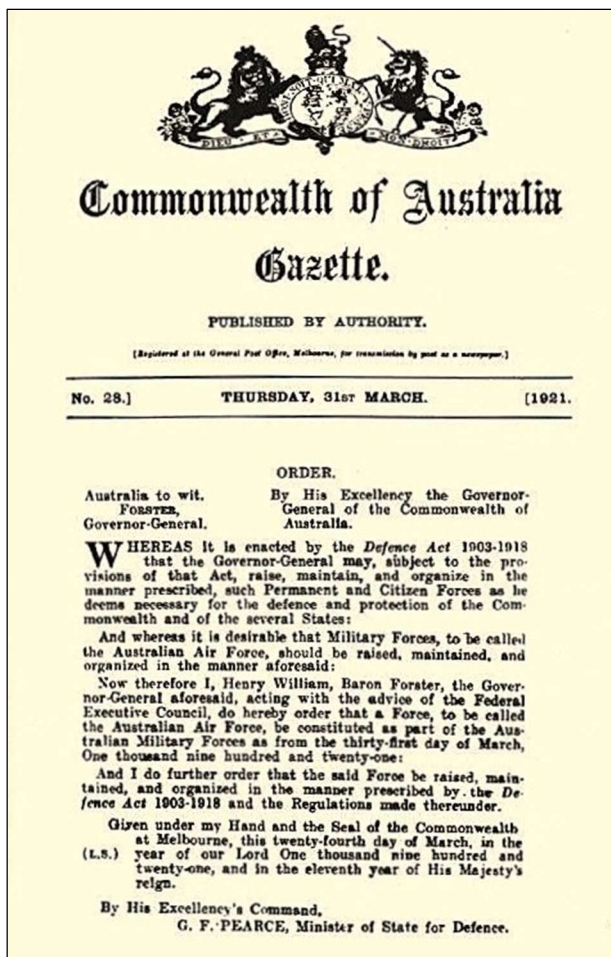
But the Ensign remained unchanged however until 6 May 1982, when a new design bearing the RAAF-pattern roundel received Royal approval and a proclamation was made by the Governor-General recognising the new design under section 5 of the *Flags Act 1953* as the Ensign of the Royal Australian Air Force.



LCDT Jaibir Singh (right) was selected to be a member of the Catafalque Party.



LCDT Veer Abani (right) was selected to be one of the wreath layers.



On 24 March 1921, the Governor-General signed an Order bringing into existence the 'Australian Air Force' as part of the Australian Military Forces, as from 31 March 1921 (promulgated in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No 28 dated 31 March 1921).



On 13 August 1921, following receipt of approval from King George V, the Governor-General signed an Order authorising the use of the 'Royal' prefix This came into effect immediately (promulgated in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No 65 dated 18 August 1921).



604 Squadron Cadets with the Acting Senior Air Force Representative SA, Air Commodore Tim Alsop.



COMMEMORATION

OPERATION 'OBOE' 80th ANNIVERSARY, 1945-2025

Part 2

Paul and Don recently called on Borneo veteran Roy Hanisch as he approaches his 100th Birthday, in the year in which we mark the 80th anniversary of the allied occupation of Tarakan Island (Operation 'Oboe One') in 1945. Roy is the uncle of Graeme Hanisch in Nanango, Queensland. Graeme and his wife Jen are both SA/NT Branch members, and accompanied us on our 2019 and 2023 Sarawak Reunion Tours.

141038 Leading Aircraftman Roy Hanisch entered the South West Pacific Area (SWPA) theatre on arrival at Morotai in the Netherlands East Indies on 24 March 1945.

It was from Morotai that the Borneo campaign was launched – known as the 'Oboe' series of operations – including Operation 'Oboe One' (Battle of Tarakan) and Operation 'Oboe Two' (Battle of Balikpapan).

In his wartime observations, recorded by his grandson Chris in 1992, Roy recalled coming ashore on Tarakan Island on 24 May 1945: *"The Japanese still held this island before we landed. We were transferred from the ship to landing barges. When our boat arrived the American Liberator aircraft had just bombed the place. The coastline had oil storage tanks on it and all of them had been blown up, there was smoke everywhere"*.

"The Japanese had left a lot of vehicles around when they fled into the hills. When we did land it was not advisable to touch things like motor bikes, cars, as the Japanese put a lot of booby-traps on them. I know of one instance where one fellow sat on a seat of a motor bike and a booby trap had been placed under his seat, you would know how he finished up".



141038 Leading Aircraftman Roy Hanisch, aged 18 (1943) and 99 (2025).

Roy was a Cook's Assistant with 29 Air Stores Park: *"Our camp was probably 50 km from the fighting area. It was a spectacular sight when the American Liberators flew over the target area and dropped bombs in the hills. Our Camp, which were tents (3 men per tent), was right next to the Japanese prisoner of war camp. A four-metre wire fence separated us. We would try to make conversation with the Japanese prisoners while we did our washing"*.

"Being so close to the prison camp, we had a lot of tense times, as somehow or other the word would get around, around the prison camp, that it was expected a break out would occur. But this never occurred. I think the prisoners were being too well looked after, three meals a day. Things had always been very poor for them as all supplies had been cut off from them for some time".

On 2 July 1945, Roy was transferred to Labuan Island in North Borneo, where he served with the Australian First Tactical Air Force (No 1 TAF) Telecommunications Unit until 21 December 1945.

1TAF had been formed on 25 October 1944 to provide a mobile force of fighter and ground attack aircraft to support Allied army and naval units in operations against Japan. It comprised No 77 (Attack) Wing, No 78, 80 and 81 (Fighter) Wings, No 61 and 62 (Airfield Construction) Wings and a Telecommunications Unit (1TAFTU).

Roy recalled: *"It was not long before I was on another ship and heading for Brisbane"*. He departed Labuan by ship for Brisbane in December 1945 and returned to Adelaide: *"I arrived home xmas morning"*. On 3 January, Roy began his demobilisation through No 4 Personnel Depot (4PD), and he was discharged on 22 March.



Daphne Nunn at the time of her enlistment in the WAAAF, aged 18.

Meanwhile, during his processing at 4PD he met one of the clerical staff, 114833 Aircraftwoman Daphne Nunn.

Daphne Constance Nunn was born in King's Park, SA on 24 April 1927, the daughter of William Thomas and Eleanor Mary Ann Nunn of New Street in Plympton, who had married in 1922.

Daphne was a shopkeeper, just turned 18, when she enlisted at No 5 Recruiting Centre in the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force on 9 May 1945. After training she re-mustered as a clerk on 31 August, and was posted to 4PD as staff on 1 September, serving until 1 May 1946.

After they had both been demobilised, Roy and Daphne married in August 1946.

Daphne passed away on 10 August 2015, aged 88, and is commemorated at Enfield Memorial Park.



Roy and Daphne at Glenelg on their first date, 1946.



A prized family frame of Roy and Daphne.



MEDAL OF THE MONTH

INDIA GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL 1936-1939

The India General Service Medal 1936-1939 was instituted by Army Order 167 of 1938 on 3 August 1938, superseding the India General Service Medal 1908-1935.

It was created following the ascension to the throne of King George VI, to reward operational service in India between 24 November 1936 and 31 December 1939 inclusive by members of the British and Indian armies, and the Royal Air Force.

The medals were struck in sterling silver, with an ornate swivelling suspender bar. Medals struck at the Royal Mint have an elaborate claw mount attaching the medal disc to the suspension bar.

Medals struck at the Calcutta Mint have a plain claw mount.

The obverse design features the crowned effigy of King George VI and the title REX ET INDIAE IMP (*Rex et Indiae Imperator*) – 'King and Emperor of India', signifying his rule over British India as its imperial head of state.

This India General Service Medal was not issued without a clasp, however only two clasps were authorised:

'NORTH WEST FRONTIER 1936-37'

'NORTH WEST FRONTIER 1937-39'

The second clasp was only struck and distributed after World War 2.

9403 Rifleman Randhoj Gurung **2nd Battalion, 8th Gurkha Rifles**

Randhoj Gurung was a Gurkha rifleman, from the ethnic Nepali Gurung group (*jaat*) which was native to the western and central regions of Nepal.

He saw operational service as a Rifleman with the 8th Gurkha Rifles in Waziristan between 16 December 1937 and 31 December 1939 inclusive.

Randhoj Gurung enlisted in the mid-1930s, at the Gurkha Rifles Recruiting Centre at Quetta in the far northwest of India, north of the Indus River and near the garrison of Razmak on the Afghanistan border. In the Indian Army prior to 1920, soldiers in the infantry had carried the rank of 'Sepoy'; this term was no longer used for Gurkhas after 1920, and from that time a Gurkha soldier held the rank of 'Rifleman'.

The 2nd Battalion of the 8th Gurkha Rifles was formed as a regular infantry battalion in 1907 through the redesignation of the former 7th Gurkha Rifles.

In 1935 the 1st Battalion (1/8GR) and the 2nd Battalion (2/8GR) were located in Quetta – 1/8GR being assigned to 5 Infantry Brigade, and 2/8GR being assigned to 4 Infantry Brigade.

The 'History of the 8th Gurkha Rifles, 1824-1949' records that on the night of 30/31 May 1935, the North West of India was rocked by a series of powerful earthquakes, resulting in thousands being killed. The Gurkhas of the 2nd Battalion, 8GR based at Quetta worked tirelessly in their efforts to help free the many civilians that were caught beneath the rubble, leading to a number of gallantry awards being authorised, including the Empire Gallantry Medal and an Albert Medal for bravery.

To ease the accommodation burden in Quetta following the earthquake, it was decided to reduce the garrison before the cold weather arrived. The 1st Battalion moved to Shillong, and the 2nd Battalion moved by Army motorised transport to Loralai, in the Zhob.

The 2nd Battalion was assigned under command of 5 Infantry Brigade (Quetta) for training, but was under command of Zhob Independent Brigade Area for administration. The Zhob Brigade had been formed in November 1920 for service on the North West Frontier.



India General Service Medal 1936-1939 with clasp 'NORTH WEST FRONTIER 1937-39' awarded to Rifleman Randhoj Gurung, struck in silver at the Calcutta Mint and named on the rim in small impressed capitals.

Jai Gurkha!

The tribes and clans (*jaat*) of Nepal are extremely complex, and their hierarchy, religious and social order is deeply rooted in ancient religion and mythology going back thousands of years. Traditionally recruits of Indian Gorkha or Nepalese nationality came from one of four major *jaat* groupings:

- > Gurung and Magar from western and central Nepal
- > Limbu and Rai from eastern Nepal

The Gurung (also called 'Tamu') are an indigenous people of the foothills and mountains of the Himalayas, primarily around the Annapurna Region, most commonly using the surnames 'Gurung' and 'Ghale'.

Their religion combines ancient animistic rituals and Buddhist beliefs.

Until 1914, the British and Indian Armies had primarily recruited Gurungs and Magars into their Gurkha regiments; after 1948 they formed the majority of soldiers in the 'western' battalions (2GR and 6GR).

8th Gurkha Rifles

The 8th Gurkha Rifles has its origins in the 16th (or Sylhet) Local Battalion, which was raised in 1824 after the Anglo-Nepalese War. It subsequently had the following titles:

- > 44th Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry: became a regular infantry unit in 1861 when it was taken into the Bengal line and under the authority of the British Crown.
- > 44th (Sylhet) Regiment, Goorkha (Light) Infantry': redesignated from 1886 to 1891, and deployed with the Lushai Expeditionary Force in 1891.

The spelling 'Goorkha' continued to be used for Gurkha regiments until 1891 when it was changed to 'Gurkha'.

- > 44th Gurkha (Rifle) Regiment of Bengal Infantry: designated a rifle regiment in 1891, with the standardised spelling 'Gurkha' being adopted.
- > 44th Gurkha Rifles: adopted as part of a broad reorganisation of the Indian Army in 1901.
- > 8th Gurkha Rifles: retitled in 1903.

In 1907, the 2nd Battalion was formed as a regular infantry battalion through the redesignation of the former 7th Gurkha Rifles.

- > 8th Gorkha Rifles: one of the six Gurkha regiments which transferred to the Indian Army on 1 January 1948 after independence under the tripartite agreement of 1947, with the spelling 'Gorkha' being adopted in 1949.



8th Gurkha Rifles

The 8GR regimental badge comprised a pair of crossed kukris with the blades facing outwards and downwards, with the numeral '8' above the blades.



A Rifleman of the 8th Gurkha Rifles (circa 1935) in the field service uniform worn on the North-West Frontier.

The crest of the 8th Gurkha Rifles on the cover of the regimental history, 'History of the 8th Gurkha Rifles, 1824-1949', compiled by Lieutenant-Colonel HJ Huxford, OBE, 8th Gurkha Rifles (Gale and Polden Limited, 1952).



SPECIAL VALUE IN	
TEAS.	
	Per lb.
Excellent Tea For Household Use	1/4
A Grand Blend of Tea Marvellous Value	1/6
Our Popular Tea	1/8
Our Famous Tea Full of Fragrance	1/10
High-class Tea Perfect to a Leaf	2/-
Cafe Blend Superb choice blend	2/6
E. WOODHEAD & SONS,	
LIMITED.	
TEA SPECIALISTS,	
CHESTERFIELD.	

8th GURKHA RIFLES

These are collectible Cigarettes & Tea Cards produced circa 1901-03, depicting Gurkha soldiers of the 44th Gurkha Rifles. Raised in 1824, in 1861 the regiment became known as the '44th Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry'. It was subsequently known as '44th (Sylhet) Regiment, Gurkha (Light) Infantry' (1886-1891), and then '44th Gurkha (Rifle) Regiment of Bengal Infantry' (1891-1901). In 1901, as part of a broad reorganisation of the Indian Army, it was retitled '44th Gurkha Rifles'. The regiment was retitled '8th Gurkha Rifles' in 1903.

The spelling 'Goorkha' was used for Gurkha regiments until 1891 when it was changed to 'Gurkha'.

Left: A Sepoy of the 44th Gurkha Rifles, from the series 'Our Colonial Troops' by W&F Faulkner Ltd of London (Grenadier Cigarettes).

Right: A Sepoy (later known as Rifleman) from the 44th Gurkha Rifles, from a series of tea trading cards by E Woodhead & Sons, Tea Specialists of Chesterfield.

Waziristan

For the remainder of 1935 and throughout 1936, strenuous training was undertaken by both battalions to make up for the six months' work spent on reconstruction in Quetta following the earthquake.

The North-West Frontier between British India and Afghanistan was an ongoing source of political tension for most of the 19th century and beyond. In 1936-37, a new generation of tribesmen had been taking action against the Government forces, and large-scale operations became necessary, lasting twelve months from November 1936, before a semblance of peace could be restored. By the end of 1937 most of the hostile tribes had submitted and given guarantees of good behaviour.

As the insurrection spread throughout Waziristan, by April 1937 four extra brigades had been brought in to reinforce the garrisons at Razmak, Bannu and Wana. At the height of the campaign in 1937, some 60,000 regular and irregular troops were employed by the British in an effort to bring to battle an estimated 4,000 hostile tribesmen.

The regimental history recorded: "During 1937 Waziristan and the Zhob area were in a disturbed state, and the 2nd Battalion at Loralai were frequently called upon to find escorts for lorry convoys, and for some weeks were ready, at a few hours' notice, to deal with raiders".

By December 1937, the insurrection began to wane and the decision was made to withdraw most of the additional brigades that had been brought up to bolster the garrisons at Razmak, Bannu and Wana. Trouble flared up again in 1938 however.

At the beginning of 1938, 2/8GR deployed as yet another military campaign commenced in Waziristan. They arrived in the depth of winter when the Razmak plateau, 6,000 feet above sea level, was covered with a thick blanket of snow. During these snowy months, the local tribesmen usually kept to their homes or joined the winter migration to the Plains.

In February the battalion moved by MT convoy to Wana, in South Waziristan – slow progress was made owing to rain and snow. On the first day the convoy reached its halting-place, Fort Sandeman, at midnight, after man-handling its lorries for two miles through snow. Wana was reached on 8 February.

Training in Wana was, in the early months, a difficult business. From April to December the 2nd Battalion was largely out on operations, chiefly in the Splitoi, Inzar, the Derajat and Kotkai areas. The two last named, undertaken in conjunction with the Razmak Column ('Razcol'), were the largest in extent. During the sixteen days on this operation, the 2nd Battalion marched 150 miles.

Garrison life at Razmak was dominated by two recurring tasks – operations (column duties) or road construction.

When not engaged on these, the 2nd Battalion was kept busy helping to build New Wana. A move into barracks from Wana huts was a welcome change in October of this year.

Column duties with Razcol represented the mobile striking force in the region, which consisted of four out of the six battalions in Razmak (one British, three Indian and two Gurkha), together with Mountain Gunners, Sappers and others.

The regimental history recorded: *"During this period the 2nd Battalion received the congratulations of the Brigade Commander for their good work"*.

In 1939, political control in Waziristan reverted to the Governor, North-West Frontier Province, and a new era of peace was said to have started, although some gangsters continued their activities around Razmak, planting buried bombs and persistently sniping at troops. 2/8GR was engaged in minor operations, *"entailing plenty of hard work, but not of sufficient importance for a detailed narrative"* the regimental history noted.

The 2nd Battalion saw a great change in the accommodation at Wana. Work had continued on the building project, and by the end of 1939 Wana had been completely rebuilt as a modern cantonment, including electric lights in all barracks.

Both battalions of 8GR were reorganised in May 1939 into four rifle companies, each of three platoons.

The outbreak of World War 2 had little impact at Razmak, as the battalion continued with its security duties.

After 1939, the North West Frontier quietened down, and remained reasonably peaceful. Apart from the occasional raid on a village or attack on a garrison, things would remain this way until the end of British rule in 1947 when another rebellion was launched against the state of Pakistan.

There were still occasional incidents of substance. In late October 1939, the Battalion was engaged with the tribesmen while employed on a 'Training Column'. This training activity turned out to be a most realistic operation: this short war over most difficult country cost the Razmak Brigade (Razcol) 11 killed and 24 wounded in six days.

In June 1940, the Battalion was ordered to move to Dehra Dun, ending its prolonged stay in Razmak. They occupied the lines of the 2nd Goorkhas.

In October the Battalion returned to the North-West Frontier at Thal in Kurram to work on the Kurram defences and join Brigade columns. In June 1942, 8GR was instructed to proceed to join a war division then training for jungle warfare in the Abbottabad hills. In September 1942, the battalion deployed to Rawalpindi to be reorganised within a Light Division in the Eastern Army, to meet the threatened Japanese invasion of India.

India General Service Medal 1936-1939

For these operations on the North-West Frontier, a new Indian General Service Medal was awarded, which both battalions of 8GR were entitled to receive.

Rifleman Rana was awarded the new IGSM for service with the Razmak Column in South Waziristan. The medal is named on the rim in small impressed capitals.

Clasp 'NORTH WEST FRONTIER 1937-39'. This was the second and final clasp created for the India General Service Medal 1936-1939. The clasp was authorised by Army Order 217 of 1940 for operational service with Northern Command (India) in Waziristan between 16 December 1937 and 31 December 1939 inclusive.

Twelve Gurkha battalions qualified for this clasp.

Rifleman Randhoj Gurung qualified for this clasp through his service with 2/8GR in Waziristan during 1938 and 1939, based at Wana on the Razmak plateau and conducting duties with Razmak Column ('Razcol'), transferring to Dehra Dun in June 1940.



The reverse of the India General Service Medal 1936-1939 depicts a tiger standing astride a mountain range.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Malayan Emergency Commemoration Saturday 31 May 2025

The SA/NT Branch, NMBVAA will hold a small personalised service to give acknowledgement to our Branch's surviving veterans of the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960), whose contribution served to uphold the sovereignty of the Federation of Malaya, and independent Malaya after 31 August 1957.

Full-size medals should be worn; a private tribute or poppy may be placed.

If you wish to attend, please RSVP to our Ceremonial Officer Don Cameron by Friday 23 May.



REMINDER

Friday 27 June 2025 2025 Annual Dinner

You are cordially invited to attend this year's SA&NT Branch annual dinner, to be held at the Himalayan Kitchen in Melbourne Street, North Adelaide on Friday 27 June at 1800h, starting at 1830h. There will be a raffle with some interesting prizes to choose from, and merchandise to purchase. RSVP and payment in advance are required. You can find more details here:

<https://thehimalayankitchen.com/>



SAVE THE DATE

Friday 15 August 2025 2025 Annual General Meeting

You are invited to attend this year's Branch AGM, to be held at the Maid of Auckland Hotel on Friday 15 August, starting at 1115h as usual.

Our Guest Speaker will be RAAF Butterworth veteran Reverend Brenton Daulby OAM JP, speaking on the topic "The Australian Naval & Military Expeditionary Force, 1914" – Australia's first expeditionary force of the Great War.



MALAYAN EMERGENCY Roll of Honour – May

Honouring the sacrifice of the 46 Australians who died on operational service during the Malayan Emergency, 16 June 1948 to 31 July 1960, and in the period immediately after.

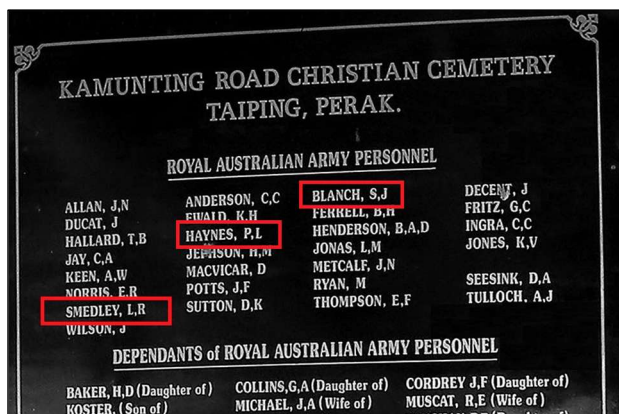
2/8924 Corporal Peter Leslie Haynes,
3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
23 May 1958

2/9510 Gunner Sidney John Blanch,
'A' Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery:
3 May 1959

2/9849 Private Leslie Ray Smedley,
1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
16 May 1960

1/2817 Corporal John Robert Harrison,
1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
31 May 1960

Lest we Forget



Corporal Haynes, Gunner Blanch and Private Smedley are buried in the Taiping (Kamunting Road) Christian Cemetery in Perak State, among the 50 Australian fallen from the Malayan wars who remain buried overseas.

FAR EAST STRATEGIC RESERVE 2 July 1955 to 14 March 1975 Roll of Honour – May

Honouring the sacrifice of the three Australians who died during service with the Royal Australian Navy during the Malayan Emergency and in Southeast Asia.

R56594 Engineer Mechanic Second Class
Dennis Keith Hoare
HMAS *Quickmatch*
14 May 1961

Lest we Forget

CONFRONTATION Roll of Honour – May

Honouring the sacrifice of the 26 Australians who died during the general period of the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia, 24 December 1962 to 11 August 1966.

1200029 Private Larry Richard Downes,
3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
17 May 1965

61207 Sergeant Vincent Phillip Vella,
3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
17 May 1965

14840 Corporal Ronald Charles Patch,
4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
20 May 1966

215881 Private Liam Malloys O'Carroll,
4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
27 May 1966

14982 Private John Wynne Jones,
4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
28 May 1966

Lest we Forget

61207 Sergeant Vincent Phillip Vella (1934-1965) 1200029 Private Larry Richard Downes (1945-1965)

This month we honour Sergeant Vince Vella and Private Larry Downes of 'A' Company of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment who were killed on 17 May 1965 by a concealed anti-personnel land-mine in the First Division of Sarawak during a reconnaissance patrol to the Sarawak-Kalimantan border investigate a known border-crossing point.



Sergeant Vince Vella and Private Larry Downes are honoured on the SA/NT Branch NMBVAA plaque in the Sarawak Heroes Memorial Park in Kuching which was unveiled on 29 August 2016.



R56594 Engineer Mechanic Second Class Dennis Keith Hoare (1942-1961)

There were three deaths of Royal Australian Navy personnel while serving with the Far East Strategic Reserve between 2 July 1955 and 14 March 1975.

Dennis Keith Hoare was a South Australian serving with HMAS *Quickmatch* when he died of illness in Adelaide on 14 May 1961, aged 19.

He was buried in Cheltenham Cemetery on 15 May, and was commemorated in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial (panel 2).

His name was not included however, on Adelaide's Post-WW2 Memorial on North Terrace. This Memorial was originally established to commemorate Service personnel from South Australia who died in an overseas conflict since the end of World War 2.

In 2022, the RSL (SA) Anzac Day Committee received a grant from the South Australian Anzac Day Commemoration Fund to update this memorial, in order to commemorate all Service personnel with close links to South Australia who lost their lives as a result of their service in an overseas conflict or operation since the end of World War 2. Several errors and omissions were corrected, and casualties from more contemporary operations were included.

This Memorial now commemorates all Service personnel with close links to South Australia (including Broken Hill) who lost their lives as a result of their service in an overseas conflict or operation since the end of World War 2.

On the updated plaque, Dennis Hoare's name is correctly listed under the title 'Southeast Asia, 1955-1975' (see images below).

Royal Australian Navy

Two deaths from the Royal Australian Navy are listed by the Australian War Memorial in the Commemorative Area under the title 'Malayan Emergency, 1948-60'.

One death is listed on the Rolls of Honour under the title 'Malay Peninsula, 1964-1966'.

One death is not listed by the Australian War Memorial, but occurred during the prescribed period of the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia.

Additional to these are three members of the Royal Australian Navy who died while serving with the Far East Strategic Reserve. They are listed by the Australian War Memorial in the Commemorative Area under the title 'Southeast Asia, 1955-1975 (FESR, SEATO)'.

Lest we Forget



An updated plaque on Adelaide's Post-WW2 Memorial on North Terrace was unveiled at the 2023 Anzac Day Dawn Service in Adelaide. Engineer Mechanic Second Class Dennis Keith Hoare (1942-1961) is now correctly listed under the title 'Southeast Asia, 1955-1975'.





Sarawak Defenders

During the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia, 11 Australians lost their lives while on operational service in defence of Sarawak, or died after being evacuated from Sarawak.

This month we honour five of them, who lost their lives May 1965 or 1966.

From the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:

1200029 Private Larry Richard Downes (1945-1965), a Rifleman in 3 Platoon, 'A' Company: killed-in-action on 17 May 1965, aged 20). Killed instantly by an anti-personnel land-mine whilst on a reconnaissance patrol from Stass.

61207 Sergeant Vincent Phillip 'Vince' Vella (1934-1965), 3 Platoon, 'A' Company: killed-in-action on 17 May 1965, aged 32. Killed by an anti-personnel land-mine whilst leading a reconnaissance patrol from the defensive position near Kampong Stass.

From the 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:

14982 Private John Wynne 'Taffy' Jones (1928-1966), a Rifleman in 'A' Company: non-battle casualty, 28 May 1966, aged 38. Accidentally killed during a night sentry change in a border position near Kampong Gumbang.

14840 Corporal Ronald Charles 'Danny' Patch (1941-1966), a Rifleman in 1 Platoon, 'A' Company: died of illness on 20 May 1966, aged 25. Medically evacuated by air to Kuching, then Singapore, and then to Sydney on 18 May, but died in St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney following emergency surgery to replace a faulty heart valve.

215881 Private Liam Mallows 'Len' O'Carroll (1937-1966), a Rifleman in 'C' Company: non-battle casualty on 27 May 1966, aged 29. Died in the company base near Kampong Bokah from gunshot wounds in the platoon position (suicide).

Lest we Forget

The Sarawak Museum Journal, LXXXV (106) (2022): 47-75

IN OUR NEIGHBOURS' SOIL OUR ANZACS SLEEP

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ABSTRACT

The Sarawak Heroes Memorial Park in Kuching contains a black marble plaque, installed on 29 August 2016, honouring the Australian military personnel who died during the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia. Incomplete records however, led to this plaque containing minor errors and omissions. Three years later, as a member of the South Australia and Northern Territory Branch of the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association of Australia Inc, I was invited to deliver a commemorative address for Malaya-Borneo Veterans Day in Kuching on 29 August 2019. This presented the opportunity to extensively research the fallen, and a new plaque was installed prior to this ceremony. My address, included here, drew attention to the 50 Australian fallen from the Malayan wars who remain buried overseas, acknowledging Malaysia and Singapore for looking after our 'Anzacs'. In particular, of the Australians who died during Confrontation, I noted that eight died in Sarawak (while a further three died after being evacuated from Sarawak). This paper includes this commemorative address, followed by an analysis of the circumstances of each of the eleven Australian defenders of Sarawak in 1965-66 who lost their lives. Concluding this research, the graves of the Australian fallen in Kranji Military Cemetery in Singapore were visited and photographed in December 2019, including the four Australian soldiers who died in Sarawak and remain buried overseas. The significance of the 2019 ceremony in Kuching has been heightened by the inability of veterans to schedule any further reunion visits because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Keywords: Confrontation, Veterans, Commemoration, Australia, Sarawak, Sacrifice

Sarawak Museum Journal

Eleven Australian soldiers died during Confrontation as a result of operational service in defence of Sarawak – eight died in Sarawak and a further three died after being medically evacuated from Sarawak. These included Sergeant Vince Vella and Private Larry Downes of 3RAR, and Corporal Danny Patch of 4RAR.

The sacrifice of these eleven Australian defenders of Sarawak has been documented in this research paper:

Rosenzweig, PA (2022)

'In our Neighbours' Soil our Anzacs Sleep'.

The Sarawak Museum Journal, LXXXV (106): 47-75

A copy of this paper may be downloaded here:

