

THE FURPHY

ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

August 2026 Edition



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General Meetings:

Second Sunday of each month at 1100hrs

Annual General Meeting:

Second Sunday of September

Committee Positions

Armada Sub-Branch Committee	
President	Mr Mike Fairweather
Vice President	Mr Bob Giles
Secretary	Ms Carol King
Treasurer	Mrs Cheryl Cowie
Warden	Mr Graeme Cowie
Warden	Mr Keith Northcott
Membership Officer	Ms Carol King
Committee	Mr Geoff Scott
Advocate / Welfare Officer	Mr Brent Errington
Bar Manager	Mr Mike Fairweather

ADVOCATE / WELFARE

Brent Errington “Erro” is available as follows:

At the Armadale RSL Sub-Branch:

Monday: by appointment only
Thursday: between 0900 - 1400hrs

Weekday Contact Details:

Mobile: 0407 449 150
e-mail: welfare2@armadalersl.com.au

Diary Dates for August

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>
Sunday	2nd	Social Committee Meeting	1130
Tuesday	4th	Management Committee Meeting	1100
Sunday	9th	General Meeting	1100



We Remember the life and service of 496 Sergeant (Sgt) Seymour William Pead, 28th Battalion.

A butcher from Perth, WA prior to enlistment, Sgt Pead originally enlisted with the Light Horse but was granted an early discharge.

Re-enlisting with 28th Battalion, he embarked with C Company from Fremantle on HMAAT Ascanius on 29 June 1915.

After being severely wounded at Gallipoli he was transferred to HS Guildford Castle where he died, aged 40, on 22 September 1915 and was buried at sea.

He is commemorated on the Lone Pine memorial, Turkey.

Secretary's Notes

Hi Everyone,

VFF Grant implementation is ongoing. Some quotes have increased significantly however savings will be recouped over time (eg Solar Panels).

Executive and Committee Nominations opened on 12th July and will close on 9th August. Available positions are on the Notice Board along with Nomination Forms.

Committee Meetings are held monthly at 1100 hours on the Tuesday before each GM.

Please consider nominating for vacant positions, the Sub-Branch welcomes both Service and Affiliates on the Committee.



Voting will occur at the AGM on Sunday 13th September.

Best regards as always,

Carol King

Sub-Branch Secretary

e-mail: secretary@armadalersl.com.au

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Members,

The Veterans Facility Grant funding has now been received and implementation will commence soon. This may disrupt our trading hours however we have never received \$146k before to upgrade our facilities so hope that members and guests will understand. We will certainly try to keep closures to a minimum. I will keep you informed at General Meetings if there are significant changes – eg early closures or late openings if applicable.

That's about all from me for now,

Mike Fairweather

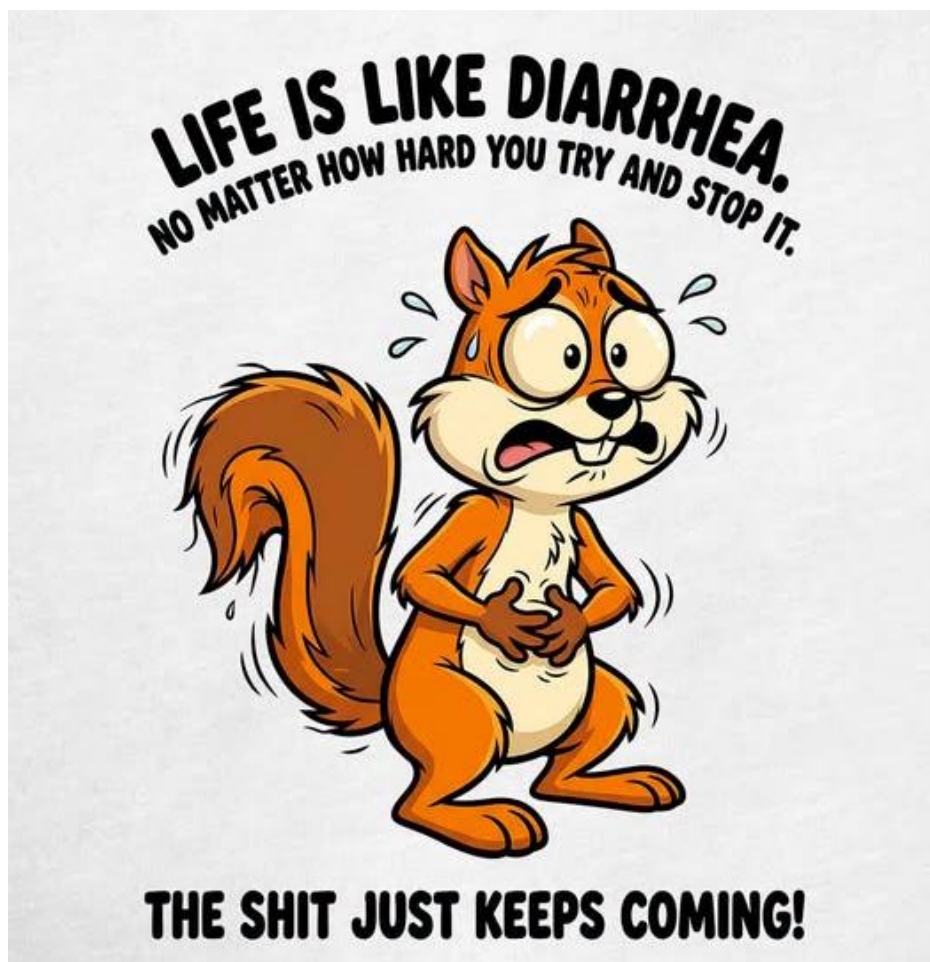
President

Returned Services League Armadale Sub-Branch

Ph: (08) 9497 1972. M: 0403 980 290

1 Commerce Avenue Armadale WA 6112 | PO Box 697 Armadale WA 6992

e-mail: president@armadalersl.com.au



Membership Update

As at 31st July 2026:

Service Members:	117
Affiliate Members:	40
Social Members:	<u>79</u>
Total:	<u>236</u>

2 new Social Members accepted during the month.

A number of Service people will not be renewing for 2027.

Some have moved overseas or away from the area, others have chosen not to renew however we have gained one Service Member as a transfer from Serpentine Jarrahdale.

A couple of members have advised that they were unable to renew through the Head Office Portal so are not planning on renewing at all. I am following these up separately but, in the meantime, I have expressed my disappointment to both our RSLWA Board Patron and the CEO who are also investigating.

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Carol King

Tel: 9497 1972

e-mail: secretary@armadalersl.com.au

**"Do not touch" must
be one of the scariest
things to read in
braille.**



August Service Members:

Beven	Mr	Ken	28/08	Buti	Dr	Antonio	20/08
Gardiner	Mr	Owen	27/08	Husking	Mr	Peter	22/08
Knight	Mr	Michael	09/08	Livesey	Mr	Adam	05/08
Rynn	Mr	Thomas	31/08	Smith	Mr	Robert	20/08
Tooth	Mr	Geoffrey	11/08				

August Affiliate Members:

Brown	Mr	Ray	11/08	Galvin	Mrs	Joan	18/08
Kostin	Ms	Vicki	12/08	Lewis	Mr	Steve	29/08
Symonds	Mrs	Karan	28/08				

August Social Members:

Borger	Mr	Hank	06/08	Craven	Mr	Vince	02/08
Dowling	Mr	Philip	23/08	Gunjila	Mr	Stjepan	15/08
Nonnok	Ms	Phanphanat	07/08	Strandly	Mr	Kingsley	16/08

If there are any errors or anyone has been missed off the list, please advise

The Secretary (Membership Officer)

These members may collect a free drink of their choice during the month

We hope you have a very special Birthday



Bar Manager's Report

G'day All,

The price of drinks has now increased. We apologise for this however the last increase we implemented was in 2024 and we can't keep absorbing price rises for that period of time.

For information, 50% of the takings over the bar goes back into replenishing stock. From the other half we still need to pay bar staff so the more patrons we can attract will assist in holding prices down.

Cheers for now,

Stormy



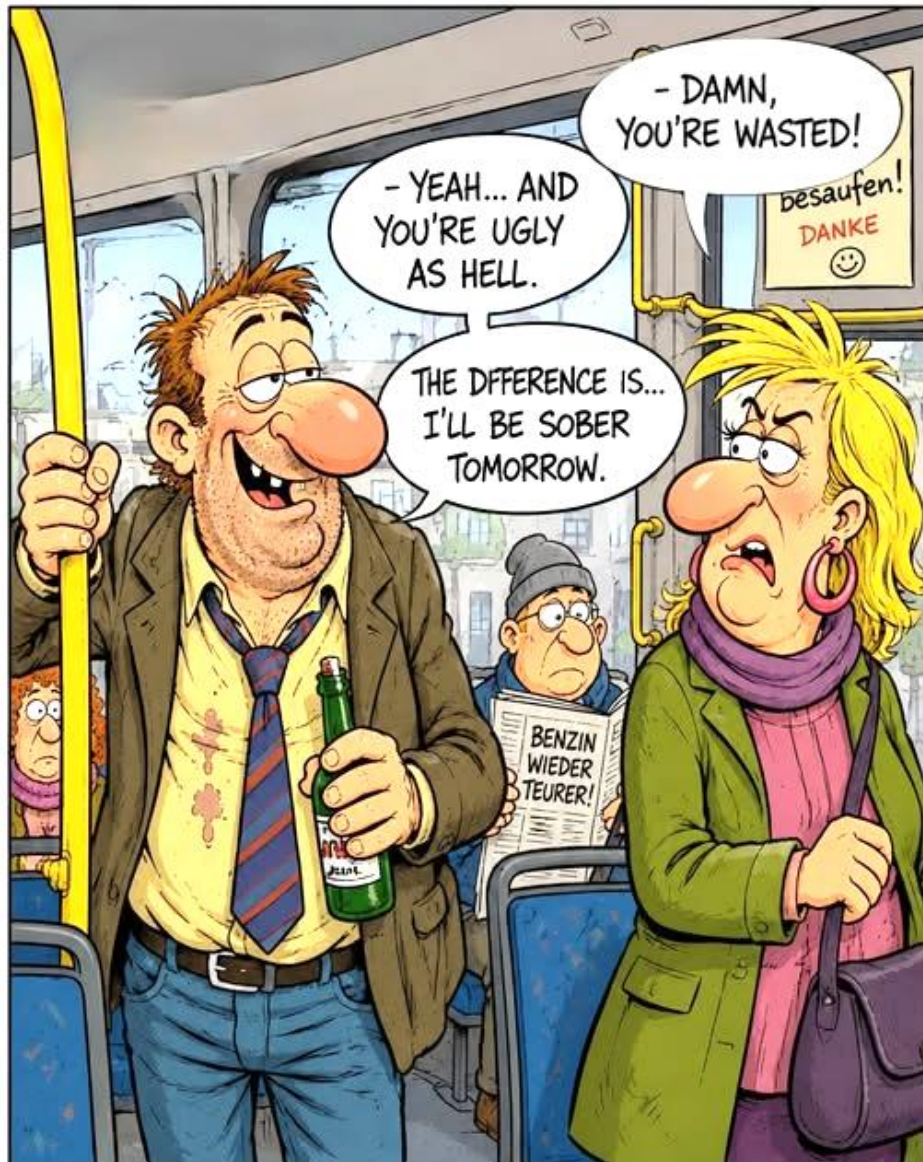
I asked myself if I'm

CRAZY



and we all said

NO!



BEING A SNIPER

Being a sniper is a lonely job. For a start you are hated by the enemy while your own troops also have a distaste for snipers.

'Frenchy' Ray volunteered to be a sniper in the Korean war to avoid having to undergo another period of basic training, having been recruited in England. He told the interviewing panel in Australia he had been a sniper in the Parachute Regiment, so they were delighted to have him. Frenchy Ray was so called by his friends because he was born in Paris.

He joined three other snipers, Eddie McMahon from Adelaide and two brothers, Hugh and Kevin Tupper from Brisbane. They were issued with a special heavy barrel .303 rifle with telescopic sights and were sent to Korea. Frenchy Ray only fired five bullets from his sniper rifle before embarking.



After disembarking from the New Australia at Pusan in South Korea, they travelled to Camp Casey where they took part in a huge parade to commemorate the fact that the whole of the Australian Infantry was there, 1, 2 and 3 RAR. It has never happened again outside Australia.

After some little training and other duties, Frenchy Ray found himself in the real war.

He and his partner Kevin Tupper were presented with a \$3000 'Sniper Scope' infra-red rifle which had the ability to see in the dark. The weapon was still on the secret list and they were warned not to let fall into enemy hands.

Having been shown the impressive weapon, which needed a heavy car battery carried in a back pack to operate the sight, they realised there was no ammunition for it.

There was an embarrassed silence when they pointed this out to the officer in charge. "I was given a Jeep and a new slouch hat to go to the American line to swap the hat for carbine ammunition,"

Frenchy Ray wrote in his story of the war SITREP: Nan Tare Roger.

"We had no problem in obtaining a huge quantity of bullets which lasted us till the end of the war," he added.

On their first night patrol with the 'Sniper Scope' Kevin Tupper accompanied Frenchy to cover him with an Owen gun. Leading the patrol, Frenchy would stop every minute or so to examine the ground ahead through his infra-red scope.

"As the guys behind me could not see me, the only way they could stop was by colliding with the man in front," Frenchy wrote. "In no time, a good mortar bomb landing nearby would have collected the lot of us but that, at the time, was the least of my problems.

"Firstly I was scared, secondly I did not want to fall into a Chinese ambush, and thirdly I wasn't too happy at all the noise behind me: 'Shit...Move up...you bastard...etc'. "Some 300 or 400 yards from our line I came across some bushes which required some investigation. I froze. I could see some dark green men (infra-red shows up green in the scope) holding black objects in their hand (obviously weapons). "I kept on looking round to see how many enemy were in front of us, when the patrol commander pushed me in the ribs and said 'Move on, we can't stay here all night', to which I whispered in his ear 'There are some gooks in front of us'."

The officer was eventually persuaded and the patrol stayed put until shortly before daylight, before returning to their own lines.

They took the 'Sniper Scope' out every second night because the battery had to be recharged as there was no spare, so during the day Frenchy and Kevin reverted to being snipers.

"On 12 May at the crack of dawn I left for no-man's land with my faithful 303 rifle. I advised the forward platoon of my time of return and marched down the hill. It's the time of day when ambushes are unlikely. One can see fairly clearly ahead in the early morning light," he wrote.

"The area had been shelled so often that no trees could be seen, just a few sparse bushes covered the countryside. I organised myself for a day of sniping, laying under some bushes. After some hours of looking around I heard a rifle being fired some 200 yards in the west-front of me. My heart started to beat. At last, I was close to a Chinese sniper.

"I kept on looking for a long time but spotted nothing. This time when the Chinese fired his rifle once more, I saw a tiny puff of smoke filtering through a bush. I knew now where he was hiding but still could not see him through my telescope. I waited a fairly long time just watching the bush when I heard another crack of the rifle.

"I lined up my rifle, nice and steady as if on the rifle range, and fired a single shot. Nothing happened, nothing moved. I waited another half hour and fired another shot. Still no move from the enemy.

I passed the rest of the day waiting for his next move. Nothing. I had only two options, I had either killed him or scared the daylight out of him. I was bursting for a smoke by this stage of the day, so I chewed a Camel cigarette from my C ration pack.

When it was time to move back, I started to worry that if I had missed 'Charlie' he might not miss me. Instead of boldly marching out, I crawled very slowly to the east, avoiding travelling the same way I had come.

"After a long crawl, I stood up behind a low ridge and marched briskly in the direction of our lines. Getting close to our forward trenches, I saw the dust of

two bullets landing at my feet. I dived into a shell hole. I was fired on not by the Chinese but by our own troops.

I studied my map carefully and came to the conclusion that I was a long way from my own line and was facing the Canadian position. I had drifted too far to the east. I poked my head above the rim of the shell hole and within a second a bullet crashed beside me. Thank God, whoever fired at me was a lousy shot, especially at such short range.

Knowing that the Canadians were mostly French speaking, I yelled in French 'Ne tirez pas' while waving my hand above my head. I heard the reply 'Avancez'. I took the plunge and jumped out of the shell hole and yelled that I was an Australian going in the wrong direction. A Canadian pointed out the right direction and called out 'bonne chance'."

After a spot of leave in Tokyo, Frenchy Ray's unit was sent to The Hook where they relieved a British unit. There the rival front lines were very close to each other and with talk of an armistice to be signed at any time, orders were given to company commanders to avoid Australian casualties. The men were not told this to avoid demoralisation.

Meanwhile, the fighting continued. Frenchy and Kevin found themselves a bunker inside a tunnel from which to carry out their sniping.

"The bunker has been the site of a lot of fighting judging by the number of dead Chinese around it," Frenchy wrote. "The head of a freshly decapitated Chinese was staring at us through the opening [a 'window' consisting of a wooden frame supported by sandbags].

"We were told that all the forward troops would be on 'stand to' alert all night and every night. This was perfectly logical as all attacks started at night.

"We could see the Chinese trenches about 200 yards [183m] in front of us. On our left, we could see behind the Chinese trenches facing the US Marines on Hill 111. On the night of 13 July the Chinese started to attack.

"We did not know it at the time but the Chinese did not intend to take The Hook. Such a prospect had been too costly for them in human terms with our deadly accurate artillery fire. They assumed we were numerically bigger than in reality.

"At the time we had two companies in the front line, Charlie Company on the left and Baker Company on the right, probably around 300 men. The Chinese could be counted in thousands."

As the days dragged by there was still no sign of an armistice.

"About 11 o'clock [on 23 July] two Chinese officers (we guessed because Chinese do not wear badges of rank in the field), one carrying a large pair of binoculars, the other with a map case, were both standing on top of the trench, right in front of us. What a beautiful target. Selecting one each, we fired simultaneously. They fell backwards in perfect unison. No other Chinese officers appeared for the rest of the day.

On 27 July, just after breakfast the company was told to parade. "We were to leave only a skeleton crew to defend the place. To our ultimate surprise we were instructed by the CSM to leave our weapons guarded near the Company's command post to avoid shooting each other by accident.

"[We were] addressed by the CSM who explained the terms of the truce and the ultimate details of the cease fire. Nobody leaped for joy or showed any great sign of satisfaction. It was not a surprise. The armistice had been negotiated for months.

The troops were told to avoid any incidents which might irritate the enemy and to start packing up. They had 72 hours to move 3 miles [9.6km] from the front lines after destroying the bunkers, tunnel and weapon pits. The Chinese had to do the same, leaving a strip of six miles empty of all troops to be called the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ). The truce would come into effect at 10pm.

"That day passed slowly," Frenchy wrote. "No one wanted to be the last casualty of the war. We were at the receiving end of some Chinese bombs, but the whole front was rather calm. Presumably to get rid of an overload of ammunition, the Chinese started shelling our lines seriously as soon as it got dark, as well as firing all sorts of coloured flares in the sky.

"At 10pm all firing stopped. It was unreal. The whole front was quiet. We became aware of the complete silence. We could speak softly once more. It was rather eerie and strange and it was hard to get to sleep in such silence.

"Few men, from generation to generation are privileged to be witness to a historical event. We knew when we got up at 4am that this day would be unique. The experience would remain engraved in our minds forever."

"The valley in front was covered with a thick fog. We decided we would go and meet our enemies on the opposite trench. To show that we were friendly, we took off our tin hat and flak jacket. We were bare to the waist. In my case I decided to carry my large pair of binoculars.

"Our faith in the Chinese was based only on the fact that they had stopped firing at the time stipulated. We hoped that they were good at keeping their word.

"When the fog lifted, Kevin and I took our first site through 'Green Fingers' the site of previously deadly ambushes. We could hear Chinese music being played on loud speakers and as we got nearer we saw large flags of all colours lining the side of the Chinese trenches.

"We walked slowly, not knowing what was going to happen. Suddenly we froze. Like a rabbit out of a hole, a Chinese appeared from an opening in the ground. We were about four feet from a smiling enemy.

"He wore glasses and a green cap. To our complete amazement he said in perfect English: 'Good morning gentlemen. Have you had breakfast yet?' We were stunned and we mumbled 'Not yet'. 'Well, if you don't mind, gentlemen, can you please come back a little later whilst I have my breakfast'."

Frenchy recalls that he was told not to come in because of his binoculars.

"They were taking me for a spy. Kevin and I sat on a rock and smoked a cigarette. After a while Kevin went to see if our Chinese was ready. I stayed relaxing on the rock."

Just then a war correspondent arrived with a movie camera saying he was filming for the BBC. Frenchy advised him not to go into the Chinese trenches until the fog had completely cleared. As he sat on a rock, the cameraman knocked his camera which fell into a bomb crater. As he moved to get it, Frenchy advised him that most bomb craters were either mined or booby-trapped in some way.

"I left him nearly in tears. I was thinking that I had missed an opportunity to be famous. In fact no film was ever shown of the Australians meeting the Chinese on Armistice Day."

He moved a few yards and met three Chinese soldiers with whom a shook hands and exchanged cigarettes.

"At this stage, the number of Chinese soldiers had increased considerably, and many Australian Diggers joined in. We saw little groups exchanging souvenirs, some showing photographs of their wives or girlfriends.

"The vision of peace was marred by the extraordinary sight and smell of the thousands of rotten Chinese bodies laying all over the place. In the course of the afternoon the Chinese brought in a bulldozer to dig a large trench to be used as a mass grave. The bodies were brought in on stretchers and dropped over the side.

When completely filled, the bulldozer pushed some earth on the top of the grave. No ceremony of any sort was carried out."



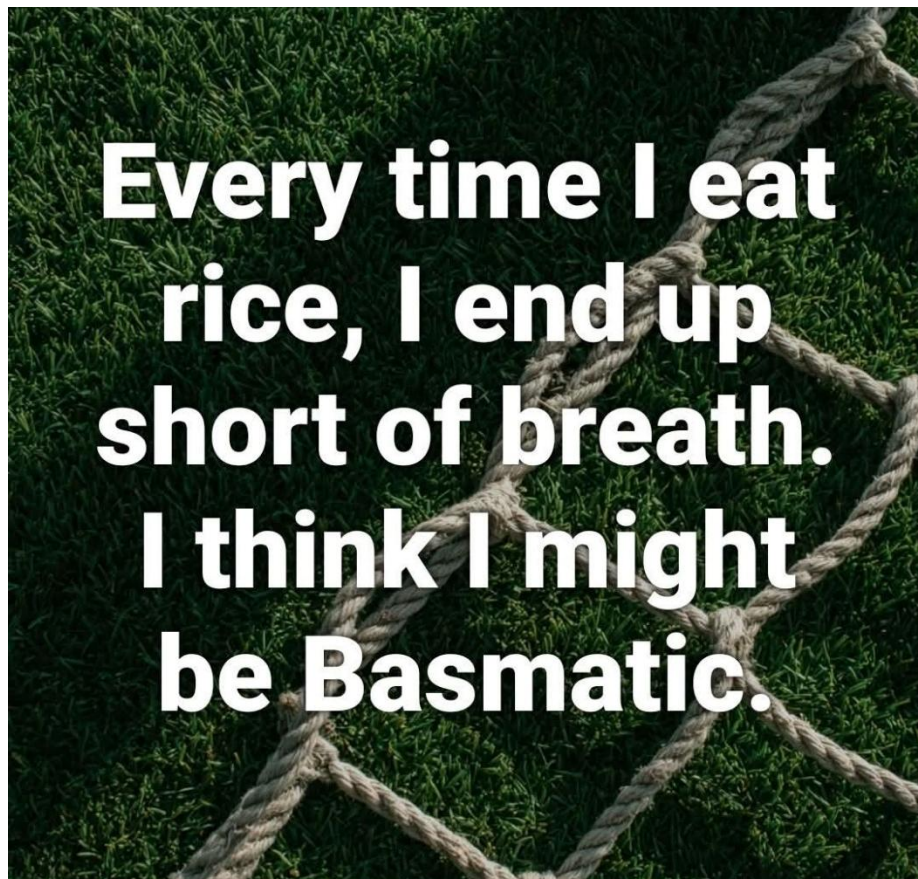
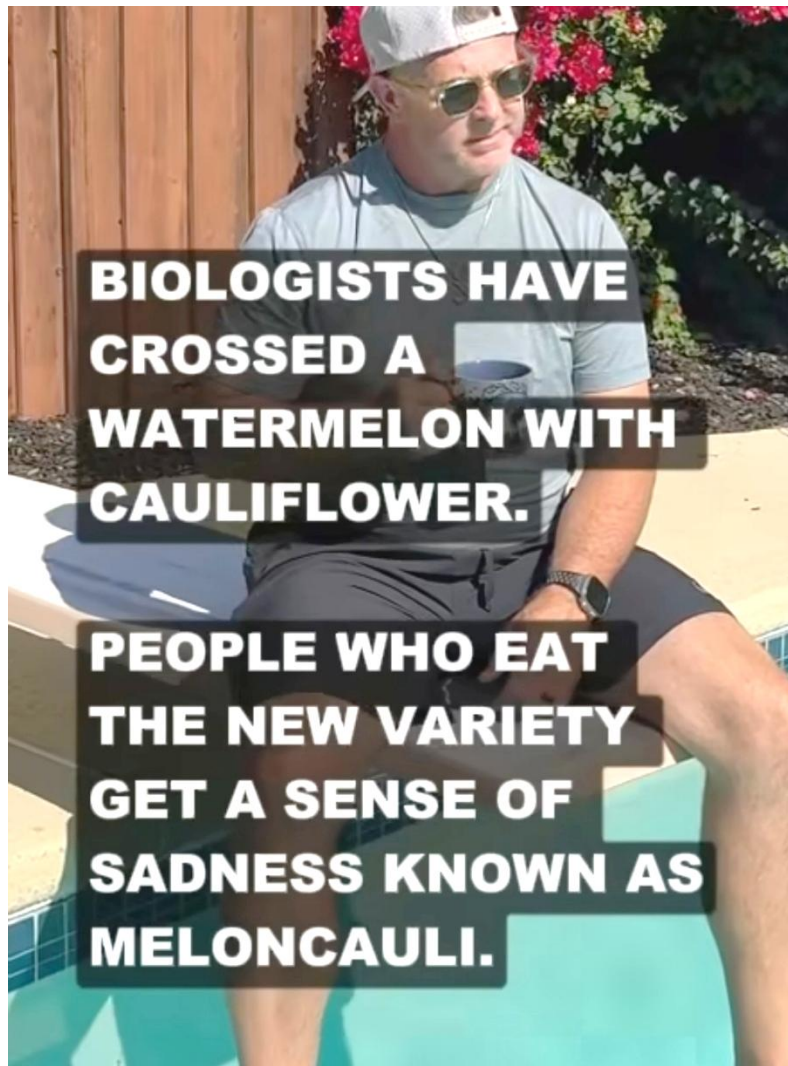
Sandbagged dugout occupied by members of a howitzer battery, ca. 1917



23 July 1916. Back at rest after the taking of Pozieres, by the 1st Australian Division. An Australian soldier having a shave while wearing a captured German pickelhaube (helmet)



A group of Light Horsemen with their horses. The photograph was taken in 1915, during WW1



SAS History

EARLY DAYS

Raised in 1957 during Communist subversion in South East Asia, the small and little understood SAS was seen as the Ugly Duckling of the Australian Army. The SAS proved itself in 1965 in the undeniable jungle war in Borneo during Indonesian Konfrontasi. Follow the Australian SAS missions from inception through to the 2015 rise of the brutal ISIS caliphate.



Australia's "Special Forces" can be traced as far back as the 1940s when Australian soldiers were part in AIB or Allied Intelligence Bureau. However it wasn't until July 25th, 1957, when the Army turned to Major W. Gook, that a proper "Special Forces" unit was formed. Major Gook was put in charge of a new unit: the 1st Special Air Service Company (Royal Australian Regiment). The total strength of the Company was only 180 men at first. On August 20th, 1964,

the SAS finally became a full Regiment consisting of three "Sabre" Squadrons, a Training Squadron, and a Headquarters. The SASR was modelled after the British SAS.

The SAS had previously worn a red beret (indicating them as a Parachute Company) with the Infantry Corps Cap Badge. In 1966, the SAS was given permission to change over to the beige (sand) beret. However since most of the SASR was deployed to Borneo at the time, all they could get were the British SAS berets with the cloth Winged Dagger emblem on them. Later on that year the cloth patch was replaced by a black flash and a solid gold metal Winged Dagger emblem on top of it.

MALAYA AND BORNEO

Deployed to Brunei in 1965, it was 1 Squadron that would also be the first to see active duty. The British had already been in Borneo for some time and the initial request by the British Government for Australian SASR help was declined.



As the "conflict" grew the SASR was brought in, tasked with stopping the communist Indonesian troops from taking over Borneo.

Living in the jungle, sometimes on patrols for months, they learned how to track the enemy, lay ambushes, and defeat him at his own games. This would prove effective again later in Vietnam. While defeating the enemy, SASR also won the "hearts and minds" of locals.

Local tribesmen would often assist where they could and SASR would often step to to provide needed repairs, medical treatments, and food for the villagers. The main threat came from a group known as RPKAD, known for being extremely brutal. Wearing a cap badge depicting a set of Airborne Wings with a dagger through them on top of an octagon, making the RPKAD easily recognised.

The war lasted until 1966. Three SASR men died while on active service in Borneo, however none died from direct enemy contacts.

SOUTH VIETNAM

The SAS soon found themselves in action again. This time in Vietnam. 3 Squadron was the first squadron to be deployed to Vietnam. The SASR was sent in again to help the Americans fight off the communist government of North Vietnam from overtaking South Vietnam.



The SASR once again began the long patrols deep into the thick jungles. They lived like the enemy and again started a "Hearts and Minds" campaign. The SASR suffered the same types of problems as the Americans, with the enemy hiding amongst the civilians who were scared to turn them over.

SASR did however use captured VC (Viet Cong) and NVA (North Vietnam Army Regulars) to help them locate the enemy. The SASR soon started operating with American SEAL (Sea-Air-Land) Teams and Special Forces, helping with the American Recondo School and with MAC-V-SOG missions. The Recondo School was started in Australia, and the principles were passed on to the Americans.

The Patrol Course the SASR runs today is similar to that of the Recondo School. The bond between the SASR and the different American Special Operations units is still strong today.

The SASR fought this war in Vietnam until 1971. 4 SASR soldiers died during accidents, one died months later from gun shot wounds received, and one is still MIA (although now presumed dead).

COUNTER TERRORISM

After the withdrawal from South Vietnam, SASR first concentrated on developing surveillance skills in support of the defence of Australia then in 1979 as part of government direction outlined in Plan IRONBARK raised a Tactical Assault Group (TAG) based on elements of 1 SAS Sqn with higher command, intelligence and logistic support components. The first TAG in 1980 consisted of Gauntlet 1, a land operations capability based on A Troop, followed in 1981 by Nullah 1, the water operations capability based on B Troop. The Nullah teams also included RAN Clearance Divers from Clearance Diving Team 4.

The CT capability has over the years provided security support to all major events held within Australia including the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games. In addition it was used in the Southern Indian Ocean in support of the Australian Government's counter fish poaching efforts in the early 2000's, to secure the MV Tampa of Christmas Island in 2001 and to secure the Pong Su, a North Korean drug smuggling vessel of Sydney Heads in 2003.

This capability in concert with TAG (East) maintained by 2 Commando Regiment remains the Australian Government's last resort option to deal with acts of politically motivated terrorism that may threaten Australia's people and interests at home and abroad.

Whilst training in this role in 1996, two Blackhawk helicopters collided resulting in the deaths of 15 SAS soldiers along with three aircrew from the Army's 5th Aviation Regiment. It was Australia's worst peacetime military air accident.



PEACE KEEPING

Support to UN and Other Peacekeeping Missions

Between 1994 and 2006 SASR provided a number of Squadrons, specialist teams and individuals in support of Australia's contribution to United Nations (UN) and Regional Peace missions in Somalia, Cambodia, Rwanda, Bougainville, the Solomon Islands and offshore Fiji. These deployments contributed

significantly to the capabilities, situational awareness and security of the supported main force elements.

In response to Iraq's reactions towards UN inspection team activity in 1998 SASR participated in Operation Desert Thunder. This contribution saw the deployment to Kuwait of a force element based on an SAS Squadron and the SAS Regimental headquarters, which commanded the ANZAC Special Operations Component as part of the US Coalition Special Operations Task Force. Although escalation was averted the contingent established itself as a world class Special Forces organisation with US and coalition leaders.



EAST TIMOR

Ops SPITFIRE, STABILISE / WARDEN, TANAGER and ASTUTE

The crisis in East Timor in 1999 resulted in the deployment of SAS force elements based on 3 SAS Sqn first on Operation Spitfire, the assisted evacuation of Australian and other international and locally employed staff, then in concert with elements from the NZ SAS and UK SBS as the Response Force on Op Warden / Stabilise in support of the broader International Force East Timor (INTERFET) operations. The Regiment's capabilities were employed across a wide range of tasks and significantly contributed to the shaping of the environment for the conventional INTERFET forces.

The unit's importance to the successful outcome of INTERFET operations cannot be overstated. The Regiment subsequently maintained a Squadron minus element on Op Tanager within each United Nations Transitional Authority East Timor (UNTAET) AUSBATT until late 2001. An SASR element then redeployed as part of a Special Operations Task Group on Op Astute for a short period in 2007 in response to an attempted coup / assassination.



AFGHANISTAN

Ops SLIPPER Phase 1

Following the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York on 9/11 2001 the Australian Government committed troops to the US led coalition to rid the world of the threat posed by Al Qaeda and its affiliates. As part of that response 1 SAS Sqn Group deployed to Afghanistan from October 2001 to April 2002. They were followed by 3 SAS Sqn Group from April 2002 to August 2002 then 2 SAS Sqn Group from August to November 2002.

Throughout the deployment period the SAS elements operated mainly in support of the US 10th Mountain Division in Southern Afghanistan. The deployment was characterised by long duration vehicle mounted operations and contacts in very isolated locations far away from ground support. An element also participated in Operational Anaconda, a large-scale battle (30,000 troops) in southern Afghanistan in 2002. With the looming invasion of Iraq further Sqn rotations were halted.

IRAQ

OP FALCONER

While engaged in Afghanistan a planning team from SOHQ with SASR representatives deployed to US Central Command in Florida and began planning the invasion of Iraq. In early 2003 1 SAS Sqn Group deployed to Jordan as part of the Special Forces Task Group (SFTG). Their task was to secure an area of western Iraq from which it was feared SCUD missiles could be launched. 1 SAS Sqn successfully entered Iraq by vehicle and helicopter and secured the main road from Jordan to the approaches of Baghdad after a week of fighting. Following this they patrolled the highways in the area to block the escape of members of the Iraqi government and to prevent enemy foreign fighters from entering the country.

On 11 April 1 SAS Squadron was concentrated to capture the Al Asad Airbase. While this base proved to be almost undefended, they captured over 50 MiG jets and more than 7.9 million kilograms of explosives.

After securing the air base 1 SAS Sqn were reinforced by 4 RAR (Cdo) and the IRR elements. The Special Forces Task Group remained at Al Asad until the end of the war, when most of 1 SAS Sqn and IRR Troop returned home and the 4 RAR (Cdo) platoon (reinforced by elements of the SAS) deployed to Baghdad to protect Australian diplomats.



AFGHANISTAN

OpS SLIPPER Phases 2 & 3

Following the withdrawal of the 1 SAS Sqn Group from Iraq and a period of rest and refurbishment SASR elements redeployed to Afghanistan as part of a SFTG in August 2005. This Task Group consisted of elements from the SASR, 4 RAR (Cdo), IRR and support personnel. In addition a detachment of two CH-47 Chinook helicopters from the 5 Avn Regt deployed in March 2006. During this period the SFTG operated in support of the Dutch in Uruzgan Province and faced considerable opposition from the Taliban. The troops were involved in numerous contacts and several significant battles including support to the Dutch during the Battle of Chora. The SFTG withdrew from Afghanistan in September 2006.



In early 2007 Australia refocused its efforts and in April deployed the Reconstruction Task Force with a 300 Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) / Task Force 66 in support. The SOTG included a Commando company group, reduced size SAS Sqn, IRR Troop and an integral combat service support team. Force elements rotated every 4 months with a reduced footprint based on an Army Reserve Commando Company from 1 Commando Regiment over winter. Again the fighting from April to November was fierce. Of most significance during this period was the Battle of Eastern Shah Wali Kot in May to June 2010 by SOTG Rotation XII consisting of elements 2 SAS Sqn, A Cdo Coy Gp (2 Cdo Regt), element IRR and helicopters from TF No Mercy US 101 Airborne Div. The SOTG remained in Oruzgan province until December 2013. During this period CPL Ben Roberts-Smith and TPR Mark Donaldson were awarded the Victoria Cross of Australia.

OTHER OPERATIONS

Afghanistan - Op HIGHROAD

Upon the closure of the Australian base in Tarin Kot a small contingent, including an element from SASR, deployed to Kabul to assist train the Afghan National Army. This element remained in the country until December 2021.

Syria - Op OKRA

With the rise of ISIS in 2014 Australia contributed to the US led Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR), in Iraq and Syria. An SASR element was included in the supporting SOTG.

International Engagement and Miscellaneous Operations

Throughout this period SASR has maintained an active international engagement program consisting of individual exchanges, visits, specialist training and exercises with like elements throughout the region and with our principal allies. The program develops awareness of complex operating environments, allows SASR to remain abreast of the latest developments plus enhances regional security by improving interoperability, promoting good will and developing relationships.

In addition considerable security, communications, specialised logistic and intelligence support has been provided to a wide range of official activities in Australia and abroad.



UNIT AWARDS & CITATIONS

Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation

for distinction in battle in South Vietnam:

- 1 SAS Sqn, 02-Mar-67 to 18-Feb-68 and 03-Feb-70 to 18-Feb-71.
- 2 SAS Sqn, 29-Jan-68 to 04-Mar-69 and 18-Feb-71 to 15-Oct-71.
- 3 SAS Sqn, 01-Apr-66 to 05-Jul-67 and 03-Feb-69 to 20-Feb-70.

Meritorious Unit Citations

- 3 SAS Sqn Group, for sustained outstanding service on Operation Warden (East Timor) during the period September 1999 to April 2000.
- The Special Air Service Regiment for sustained outstanding service in Afghanistan in 2002.
- Force elements assigned to TF 66 (principally SASR, 1 Cdo Regt, 2 Cdo Regt/4RAR (Cdo) and SOER/IRR) for sustained and outstanding warlike operational service in Afghanistan from 30 April 2007 to 31 December 2013.

Unit Citations for Gallantry

- 1 SAS Squadron Group for effective execution of high-risk operations on Operation Falconer (Iraq) during the period March to May 2003.
- The Special Air Service Regiment and 4 RAR (Commando) for acts of extraordinary gallantry in Afghanistan from August 2005 to September 2006.

Battle Honours

Army Battle Honour Eastern Shah Wali Kot awarded to the Special Air Service Regiment and 2 Commando Regiment in due recognition of extraordinary heroism in Afghanistan, during the period May to June 2010.



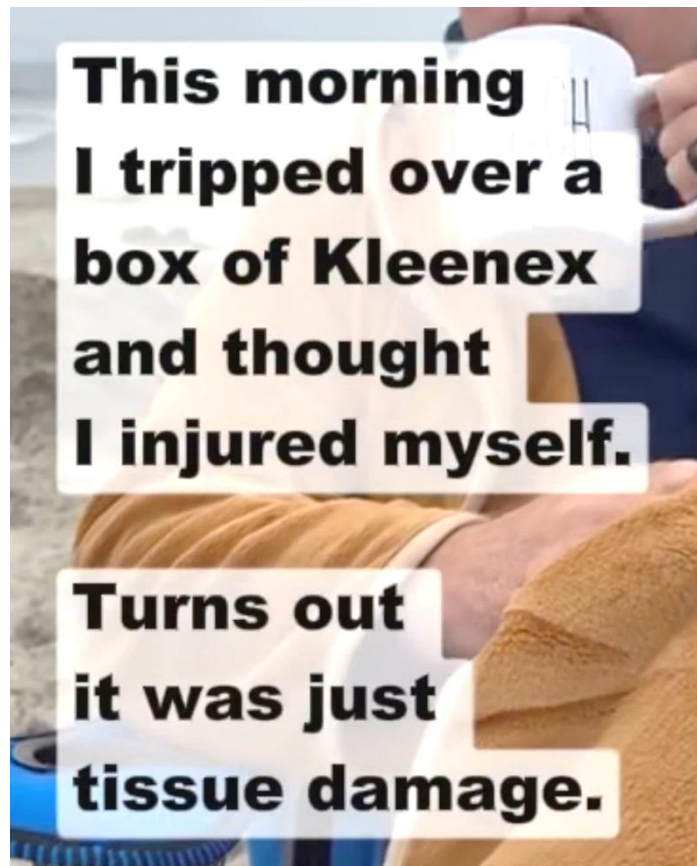
When older people say,
“Enjoy them while they are young.”
They are talking about
your **knees** and **hips**
not your kids.

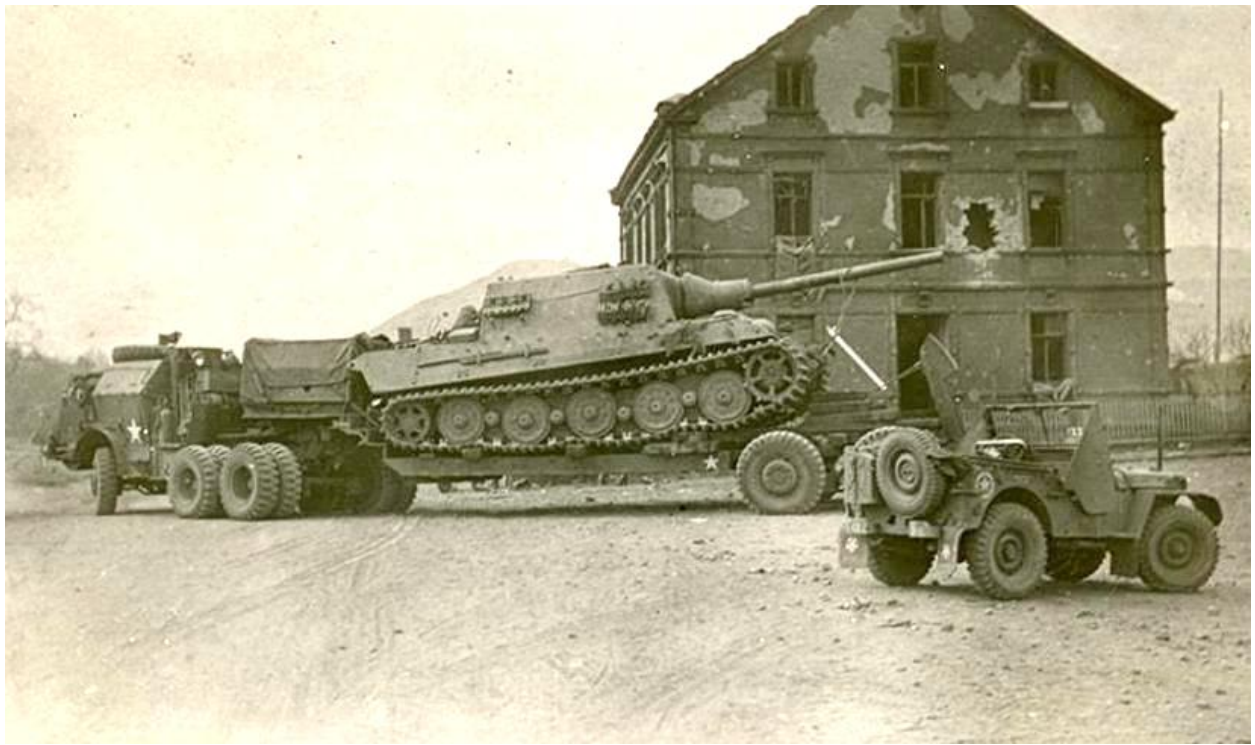


In England it's called a lift, but in America it's
called an elevator.



I guess people are just raised differently.





*Dragon Wagon moving a recovered Jagdtiger Germany at the end of WWII.
How tiny looking is the Jeep?*



Shermans of New Zealand's 19th Armoured Regiment in Trieste, Italy circa May 4 1945.



RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH

Your RSL