



# Lancers' Despatch



Bi Annual Journal of the  
Royal New South Wales Lancers Association  
and  
The New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum  
Incorporated  
No 33– August 2017

Note that the online version of Lancers' Despatch includes video and more photos.

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## Coming Events

- ) Association Reunion
  - o Sunday 5 November 2017 - Lancer Barracks Parramatta - 1100 – 1400

## The Regiment

The First part of our report on the Regiment comes from the Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Scott Francis' report on the RAAC Corps Conference.

"The Corps conference was held in Puckapunyal during 23-25 February 2017, and was attended by COs and RSMs from all the units in the Corps. The conference was headed by the new Head of Corps (HOC) Brigadier Mills, with the Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Campbell, attending for the first day. The HOC spoke about the need for the Corps to develop and publish core ideas and principles. Of note, the following areas were discussed at some length:

**Change to ACR organisation.** The original concept for the Armoured Cavalry Regiments (ACR) was for it to have a sqn of MBT; a sqn of CRV; and a sqn of APC/IFV. The organisation will now consist of a sqn of MBT; and two sqn of CRV, with the APC/IFV being transitioned to the Infantry Battalion.

**Use of simulation.** As we progress with the decision on the LAND 400 vehicles, the HOC acknowledged that simulation would play a greater role in training than it has to date. This is as much about the ability to better analyse training outcomes as it is to ensure the training fleet remains serviceable for the expected life of the fleet. A greater use of simulation is being adopted by the Regiment and will be seen over the next few months.

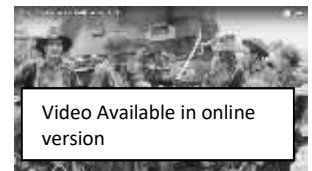
**Closer alignment of full-time and part-time personnel.** The CA, HOC, and full-time COs all acknowledged that the Corps (and Army in general) requires the part-time element in order to meet training and operational demands. The use of simulation will allow this to happen to a greater extent, and there is a commitment by HOC to push for greater involvement of part-time RAAC soldiers within full-time units. This will involve not only Cavalry Scouts, but officers and SNCOs. More on this will be made available over the coming months.

**High percentage of Student of Merit and Non-Corps positions.** The percentage of RAAC soldiers who received Student of Merit on courses is exceptionally high, far outstripping our actual numbers. There was also an acknowledgement of the high number of "any Corps" position being filled by RAAC officers and SNCO at formation level and training establishments.

The Reserve COs were invited by HOC to present their concept for the employment of the Army Reserve as part of the 'Total Force Concept' within the Corps. The proposals gained a lot of support from CA, HOC, and the conference attendees."

The next part comes from the speech given by the Honorary Colonel, Colonel Lee Long RFD at the Regimental Dinner. The Dinner was held at a hangar at Holsworthy Barracks on 1 July 2017. Middle of winter, it took a great speech to make frozen brain cells (the space heaters in the hangar did a good job if you were within 1 metre, by 2 metres the heat had dissipated) Lee's speech was that good and is well worth digesting from the transcript.

Lee was preceded by a short talk by your editor on the Battle of Balikpapan the sanitised version of which can be accessed by playing the video available in the online version. The event marked the return to unit of the fully restored Matilda Tank ACE, OC 1 Tp A Sqn's vehicle at Balik (see article on ACE restoration below). The speech was prepared from an excellent paper prepared on the battle by Major David Brown, the full paper has been published on the Battle for Australia website.



"Dining President, General Glenny, Brigadier Chris Mills Head of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps, welcome sir in my memory you are the first but hopefully not the last Head of Corps to grace us with your presence, Brigadier Michael Bond Comd 5 Bde - congratulations on your appointment to Command the Brigade which includes the premier reserve armoured regiment and only unit in the Corps honoured by the Royal title, Brigadier Phillip Bridie good to see you again and I hope the ankle is better, Major Len Koles President of the Lancer Association, great to see you again and Miss Julie Owens, Federal Member for Parramatta. M'am we appreciate your sharing this important occasion with us, Members and supporters of the Regiment.

Since I have been the Honorary Colonel I have kept my speeches short and focussed, tonight will be no different.

Well we are gathered again and whilst it was regrettable that the Annual March dinner was postponed I trust this dinner will more than make-up for that postponement.

This dinner also affords us the opportunity to acknowledge the self-sacrifice of those who have gone before us, I speak essentially of those that served in the Regt especially in peace and war and acknowledge those who have freely given their time to return this Matilda to its former glory.

I enjoyed the presentation by John Howells on the action at Balikpapan commencing on this day in 1945, I note that during that day 33 Matildas and two D8 tractors were landed successfully and the two squadrons commenced supporting their individual brigades. This was the largest deployment of armour into combat that the Australian Army has ever undertaken.

Before I address substance of the issues facing us, you may not be aware that the Director of the Bovington Tank Museum in the UK visited the Lancer museum in Dec 2016 and was shown the work being done on Ace, subsequent to his visit he provided his views to me and I quote:-

"From my perspective even while Bovington is running their own restoration of a Matilda there is no equivalent anywhere in the world of the Lancer Assn project. The combination of long term volunteer commitment, the access to original parts and the provenance of the vehicle make for a genuinely world leading piece of work. Bovington has the world's most important collection of armoured vehicles, but this is a project we have been learning from the Association."

Brigadier Mills, sir I might also add that Bovington is keen to obtain an AS Leopard which had been offered by Craig Orme, a view I understand they have put to the CO School of Armour during his visit to Bovington.

I will now focus on the core of the issue I would like to address tonight and it is a return to a common theme. We have heard tonight of the actions of this regiment during world war II which added to the honours already emblazoned on the Guidon. When I joined this Regiment we were operating the Main Battle Tank of the day the Centurion and had gained significant competency to sub unit level. Subsequently we trained as APC troops and Cavalry using the same vehicles as the ARA and were approaching their level of competence. However, today we have lost many of the mounted skills we developed.

While we provide an important capability to the Armoured Cav Regiments by providing light cavalry scouts we also provide crews for protected mobility lift but there is no mounted tactical training, the hard earned skills we acquired have all but disappeared.

While I understand the strategic reasons for allocating Bushmasters to the reserve RAAC units I fail to accept that we cannot use them to develop mounted tactical training. Admittedly Bushmasters are not suitable for a Cav role however there is no reason why we cannot use them to train for that purpose. Having said that it is ironic that the Reserve RAAC now have, other than the M1 MBT, the only other armoured (albeit lightly) vehicle that is now deployable for medium and higher levels of conflict as the Chief of Army has determined that the AS Light Armoured Vehicle and the AS4 M113, both in the ACRs, are no longer capable of deployment in those levels of conflict; however we still use them to maintain crew skills.

It would be ideal for the reserve units to have their own AFVs and I do appreciate the sustainability issues. In my view, the Reserve would be better off with a specialised vehicle such as Hawkei however as the delivery time frame of Hawkei would be too long additional Bushmaster or GWagon Surveillance and Recon Vehicles would suit. What we need is a Training Management package for mounted tactical training. The other problem, in my view, is that this lack of capability creates a major Army shortfall for two reasons:-

- ) It precludes the deployment for the Reserve Battlegroup of a Cav or mounted Surveillance and Recon capability;
- ) It also ensures that round out, reinforcement and replacement is not available to the ACRs from the reserve units without a long training period which means that the operational ACR will have to draw from the other ACRs in the other phases of the raise, train, sustain cycle. I believe that recently the CA asked the Comd 2 Div to identify the training gap between ARes and ARA infantry soldiers, if we applied the same measure to the RAAC that gap would be so significant, it might be faster to enlist or draw directly from the general populace rather than from the reserve. If we had the tactical training then conversion to the appropriate platform would be faster.

I have heard an argument from a two star that the reserve equipped with Hawkei could form a forth Sqn in the ACRs for close recon or for use in peacekeeping deployments. There is also a capability option to use them where it is necessary to maintain a close relationship to a civilian populace, which is what the British Cav units use their Yeomanry sub units for and they only have armoured Land Rovers. There is merit in adopting either or both these options.

The other point I would make is that the Army recently announced the purchase of Wasp UAV or drones. These are entirely suitable for Reservists to use and are very suitable for use by Cav units to supplement their eyes on the ground or enable them to examine in detail areas of interest.

At this years Corps conference it was identified that we are wearing out our AFV fleet at an alarming rate and given my commercial background as well as what I witnessed during my visit to the Royal Wessex Yeomanry I believe that, while not the complete answer, simulators are a great and cost effective teaching tool which we should make a greater use of. Having said that, nothing effectively delivers lessons in using the appropriate equipment on the ground, especially in a live fire environment.



Our Corps, ARA and Reserve face many complex and vexing issues; it behoves us all, not only to be proud of our past but to engage in the conversation so ensuring our stake either in the defence of this continent, much of which is ideal for the deployment of Armour in its many forms for a variety of scenarios or indeed wherever the Government of the day commits the Army. We need to be ready to practice our art.



Remember the correct use of Armour saves lives!

In keeping with my opening comments, I trust I have given you something to think about and it is now time to get on with the dinner."



The last two photos show the New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum's fully restored Matilda Tank ACE, the of 1 Troop A Squadron troop leader's tank at Balikpapan 1945, and the restoration team 1 July 2017. The team was L to R George Glass, Joe Tabone (project leader), Paul Martyn-Jones, Ray Jones, Michael McGraw.

## Our Museum

**Ace Comes Home** *Ian Hawthorn*



Well, it's been like the reverse of Dame Nelle Melba's farewell, the off again on again return home of a fully restored ACE Matilda Tank.

We are now VERY pleased, and most relieved to say that the old Tilley IS back home at Lancer Barracks. It has taken almost \$100,000 and 60,000 volunteer hours to have the first tank off the landing craft at Australia's largest ever armoured assault at Balikpapan in July 1945, the only one of three surviving Balikpapan Matildas capable of restoration, restored back to full mobility.

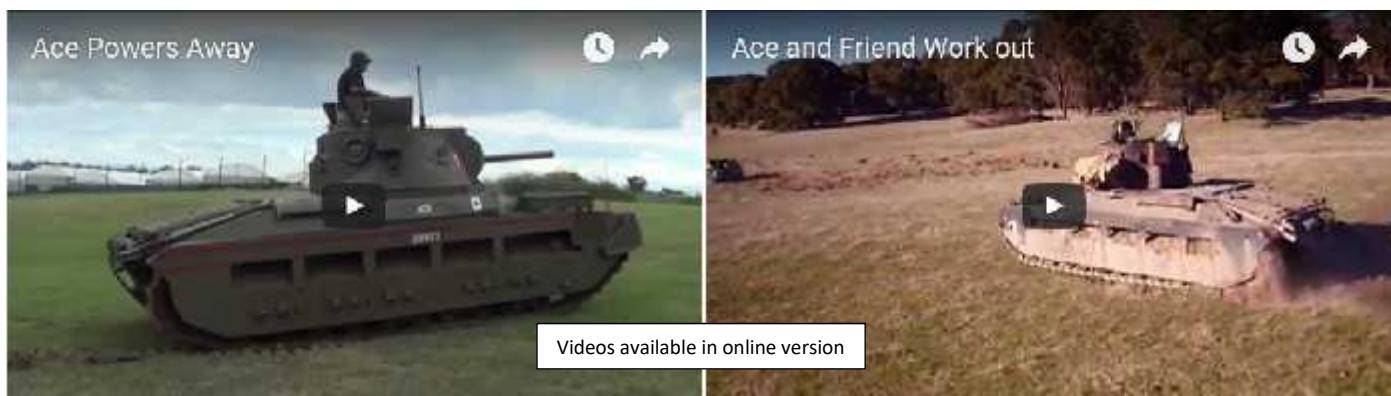
Since our last report about ACE in Lancers Despatch, the tank has thrown up significant "teething" troubles. These prompted the restoration team to move ACE to Matthew McMahon's property at Oberon, in the Blue Mountains. Matthew must be one of the world's leading experts, if not THE leading expert on the restoration of Matilda Tanks. He has a workshop that makes the bush workshop our restoration team had to build/assemble/cobble together at Cecil Park look exactly what it was – primitive. He also has a veritable Aladdin's Cave of spare parts, an unparalleled generosity with his time and facilities and huge paddocks in which we could run ACE in and train Museum drivers. Check the online version where you can view two remarkable videos showing ACE's first moves at Cecil Park and together with Matthew's Matilda racing around the countryside together. You won't find too many videos of three fully restored WW2 AFV's driving around together.

It's almost a given when restoring complex 1940's era machinery such as ACE, that the tank will continue to throw up "teething" problems for a few years more until it fully settles in. However it is now "home", it is running successfully and it is available for people to closely inspect when visiting Lancer Barracks and the Museum. We are now planning to re-activate the Welcome Home ACE event which, regrettably, must be limited to invited guests and the media only. After that, for a number of Sundays when the public can enter the Barracks freely, we will start and run ACE within the Barracks, probably twice each Sunday at 1100 and again at 1400. At these times, instead of just inspecting a static vehicle, you will be able to see, hear and smell a battle experienced WW2 heavy tank the way its wartime Lancer crew would have known it – a very rare if not unique experience.

When visiting the Museum you will also see a display with photos tracing the entire history of ACE, from original 1945 wartime photos, through its condition when found in a paddock near Moss Vale in 1997 and various key stages during its restoration. You will also see 1945 crew belongings remarkably found during the restoration work, together with the National Trust Heritage Conservation Award made to recognise the significance of the restoration project. Such an award is the highest accolade in Australia for restoration work and a professional recognition of the amazing work of our restoration team.

We'll leave the last word to the Director of the UK's Bovington Tank Museum, one of the finest AFV Museum's in the world. During a visit to the Museum in December 2016, the Director was moved to say, "From my perspective, even while Bovington is running their own restoration of a Matilda, there is no equivalent in the world of the Lancer Association project.....a genuinely world leading piece of work".

All members of the Lancer Association should feel proud – we all do at the Museum.



### Overhead Cover

As you can see from the photos above, ACE rests under the overhead protection offered by the now little used vehicle wash. Most of the Regiment's fighting vehicles are located at the Holsworthy base. That leaves the rest of the Museum's vehicle collection out in the open or under tarpaulins, deteriorating and to an extent hidden from Museum visitors. The tarpaulins are expensive and deteriorate in the weather; in almost no time they have to be gingerly removed from the exhibits they are attempting to protect to avoid damage. To put on a good show we need a team of our volunteers to work for at least an hour.

To ensure the valuable collection continues to be preserved and is available for inspection by Museum visitors, overhead protection is essential. ACE cannot be displayed to the public where it is, it must be driven out of the compound should any of the Regiment's fighting vehicles be present therein.

We have raised the matter with the Army chain of command and local politicians, so far to no avail. We do not need money (though any generosity is always appreciated), we will raise what is necessary. The Museum simply needs permission to build



tasteful overhead structures within the Lancer Barracks Heritage precinct to preserve these valuable relics of the Regiment's and nation's past.

Any action a reader of this short piece can take would be greatly appreciated.

### **Retention of the 106 RCL**

One of the Museum's historic fighting vehicle collection is a short wheelbase Land Rover used by the Regiment in the 1970s to mount a 106 mm Recoilless Rifle. The vehicle was obtained from a private source some five years ago, and was painstakingly restored by Museum volunteers.



The 106 mm RCL mounted on the Museum's SWB Land Rover, part of the Centenary of the raising of the 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse parade 30 August 2014

The Museum also holds a 106 mm Recoilless Rifle to mount on the vehicle when it is on display, or taking part in a community activity. This is on loan from the Australian Army History Unit Army Heritage Repository. The Army Heritage Repository (the Repository) first loaned the inoperative weapon to the Museum in August 2014. The Parramatta City Council, the Regiment and Museum were mounting a parade through the streets

of Parramatta with His Excellency the Governor General as reviewing officer. The Repository had previously refused the Museum's requests to purchase or loan a 106 mm Recoilless Rifle from their substantial stock. The good offices of The Hon Dr Geoff Lee MP (MLA for Parramatta) and other local politicians were required to secure the inoperative weapon for the parade.

The 106 mm RCL mounted on the Museum's SWB Land Rover, part of the Centenary of the raising of the 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse parade 30 August 2014

The problem that now faces the Museum is that the loan was initially for 24 months, this was extended for another year. The loan expires on 11 August 2017, and the Museum has been advised that the agreement will not be extended on the current terms. The Repository suggesting that the loan be transferred to the Regiment under the same terms as the M113A1 Armoured Personnel Carrier on display with the other historic vehicles in the Museum's collection.

The Regiment advises that this transfer has proven impossible to organise, all avenues having been explored; meaning the exhibit will soon have to be given-up.

We have written to our local politicians Federal and State. The Hon Julie Owens MP (Federal Parramatta) and The Hon Alex Hawke MP (Federal Mitchell) have both responded, supporting the proposition and have passed the request on to the relevant ministers. The Australian Army History Unit (AHU) has now formally advised us of the end of the loan agreement and asked we return the RCL. The AHU has been formally been advised that the matter is in dispute, and that they will be advised of the outcome. In the interim, the item will continue to be secured in the Museum under New South Wales Police licencing arrangements.

We (the Museum) express extreme concern at this artefact being removed from Parramatta where it is well preserved, appropriately stored and can be displayed in context as part of the Museum's collection to a site far away (a storehouse or paddock in Bandiana, Victoria) where it will be excluded from public view.

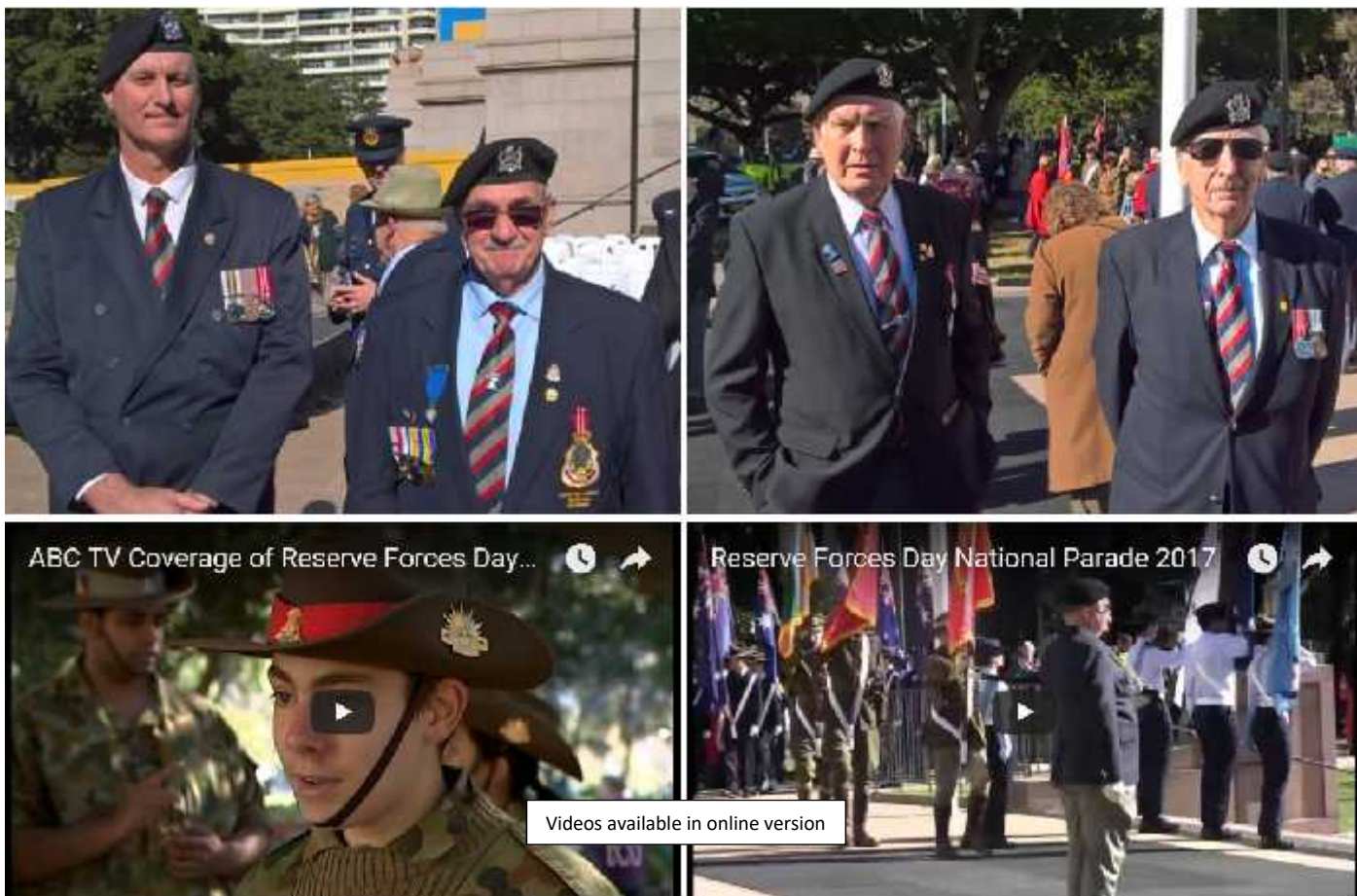
## **Our Association**

This year the Association had a great showing on ANZAC Day, and Reserve forces day where many old faces can be recognised. Sorry no photos from ANZAC Day in Sydney, only Kuala Lumpur, your editor was at Villers Brettoneux freezing at the Dawn Service then trying avec «je parle un peu français» to get a tyre fixed.

Make certain you check-out the ABC TV coverage in the online version for an interview with a couple of old Lancers, Bandmaster David Pragnell's son and an Artilleryman who joined the reserve to keep himself out of the pub.







## The Regiment July to December 1917

We pick up the story of the First Light Horse Regiment, Australian Imperial Force on 1 July 1917.

When the regiment was not on patrol it was carrying out entrenching work at Garbi under the command of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Horse; and a detached troop under Lieutenant Gray was on duty at divisional headquarters.

On 8 July the regiment formed up at 04:45 and moved to Khasif to try to cut off enemy patrols there. But although patrols swept wide to the flanks, the enemy kept their distance. Leave to Cairo was now granted at the rate of one officer and 10 other ranks per week. It would have taken a long time to cover the unit at this rate, so from time to time men were sent to the rest camp at Khan Yunis.

As spies were known to be moving in and out of the British lines, a cordon was drawn on July 15 all along Wady Ghuzze, the 1 LH holding a line from Tel el Jemmi for 1600 metres until touch was gained with the 7 LH. The orders were that no one, officer or man, was to be allowed to cross Ghuzze that day. A survey party was held up by the regiment and the officer was very indignant, not having received the order cancelling all movements.

Lieutenant Colonel Granville returned on 17 July and took command of the regiment again. Two nights later the regiment was ordered to report to the NZMR Brigade on the Tel el Fara - Beersheba road. While waiting on the plain across the a two enemy aeroplanes were seen. Incidentally, the regiment always moved in very extended order, while the camp was formed as a hollow square, making it difficult to do much damage with bombs. The unit got back to camp at 22:30, but had to saddle up again at 02:30 and move out in support of the NZMR Brigade which was operating near Im Siri. Reaching this place at 07:00, the operation was found to be over and orders were issued to return to camp, watering on the way at Tel el Fara. Next day at dawn four patrols of a troop each were sent out at dawn, while at 05:30 A Squadron was sent as escort to the survey party, the branch railway from Rafa having been now carried across Wady Ghuzze.





Before the end of July, General Allenby, the newly arrived commander-in-chief, had decided on a reconstitution of his force. Inter alia, the Desert Column was abolished and the Desert Mounted Corps ('Descorps' for short) was formed under the now Lieutenant General Chauvel. Descorps consisted of three mounted divisions, as below, and ancillary troops:

Anzac Mounted Division (Anzac Div):

1<sup>st</sup> ALH Brigade (1, 2, and 3 LH Regiments)

2<sup>nd</sup> ALH Brigade (5, 6, 7 LH Regiments)

NZMR Brigade

Australian Mounted Division (Ausdiv) :

3<sup>rd</sup> ALH Brigade (8, 9, and 10 LH Regiments)

4<sup>th</sup> ALH Brigade (4, 11, and 12 LH Regiments)

5<sup>th</sup> Yeomanry Brigade

Yeomanry Division (Yeodiv):

6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> Yeomanry Brigades



LTGEN Chauvel

On 22 July the 1 LH left Gamli at 23:30 for Khasif with the intention of cutting off Turkish patrols. About 40 Turks were sighted, but warned by vedettes on hills they retired hurriedly. Squadrons continued patrolling by turn and never a day passed without contact with the enemy.

Once more, on 26 July, the regiment left camp to try to scupper the Turkish patrols, and marched all night, getting into position at 02:50 in the hills to the right of Khasif. At 06:30 C Squadron reported that an enemy patrol had moved up to a hut where Lieutenant Gregory with a Hotchkiss gun and the dismounted men of his troop were lying in wait. Fire was withheld until the enemy discovered the ambush, when they retired hastily. One Turkish officer and two horses were killed and some of the others were wounded; one NCO was captured. The hut was a favourite place for patrols to leave propaganda at, most of the papers contained illustrations, a favourite one being that of a cow labelled Turkey being milked by a German.

On 28 July the regiment took over the strongposts at Ghabi from the 6 LH. These strongposts were self-contained as to rations and water, and orders were given to hold out if attacked. Improvements were made to the trenches and the barbed wire entanglements were extended around one of the posts. These works were on the extreme right of the British line, and despite rumours the Turks never made a real attack on them.

Lieutenants C S Frost and W T Morrice with 33 other ranks arrived from Moascar on 1 August as reinforcements. On 4 August the Canterbury Mounted Rifles took over the Ghabi works and the 1 LH marched back to Gamli. Two days later, after further reconnaissance work, the regiment moved to Shellal, where it was deloused. Further inoculation against cholera followed. Those men most affected with septic sores were now being sent to the rest camp at Port Said.

On 12 August at 15:30 the regiment moved out with the brigade in an easterly direction to find out the strength of the enemy south and east of Beersheba. Moving through Bir el Esani and Abu Ghalyun, it left the brigade early in the morning and proceeded to Bir Ibn Turkia. The squadrons then scattered out to different objectives: B (Captain FCW Wright) to Gitwail el Semin; C with one section of the 1<sup>st</sup> MG Squadron, to Ge Naam; Lieutenant Moore remained with a troop at Ibn Said: the rest of the unit remained at Bir Ibn Turkia. C Squadron's patrols pushed back some cavalry and camelry, capturing 11 prisoners and three camels and later also 11 Bedouin prisoners. On the morning of the 14 August a four-gun battery on Hill 1070 opened fire on C Squadron, firing 53 shells. The regiment reformed and withdrew, A Squadron acting as rearguard. Casualties were one killed and three wounded.

Another reconnaissance to the same area was made on 15 August. On this occasion, the 1 LH was the brigade reserve. Scattered enemy patrols were captured by the brigade and C Squadron was detailed to bring them back to camp.

Men and horses being much fatigued, the regiment was given a spell on the beach at Marakeb. While at Marakeb beer was procured and issued on payment twice a week. All ranks were re-inoculated, and underwent a dental examination. Officers attended lectures, other ranks received gas and Hotchkiss gun instruction, and live-bomb throwing was practised from the beach, a few fish being obtained as a result. Sea bathing did a lot of good to the septic sores, the men becoming very fit.

On the 18 August the regiment moved with the brigade to a new camp at Kilo 9, and the brigade's transport rejoined. Twenty-two donkeys known as 'Allenby's white mice' were allotted to each regiment, but later experience showed that they could not keep pace with the cavalry. A syllabus of training was carried out, the unit taking part in a brigade tactical scheme in which the second-in-command of regiments and squadrons took command.

The unit remained at Kilo 9 until 3 October when it returned to the beach area, all wheeled traffic proceeding via Rafa. By this time the horses had improved and they were inspected on the 5 October by General Butler, Inspector-General of Remounts, who gave permission to commence clipping. On 24 October, all ranks were issued with box respirators instead of old-fashioned gas helmets.

The regiment left the beach on 24 October and marched with the brigade to Fukhari, where Captain M. Wright rejoined from duty at Anzac Mounted Division headquarters. Next day the movement was resumed and after passing Esani and Khalasa, Asluj was reached on the night of 29/30 October. At Asluj Regimental Sergeant-Major JR Wright and Squadron Sergeant Major Al McDonald were promoted to commissioned rank.



The 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Brigade was covering Asluj until 06:00 on 30 October, when Second Lieutenant JR Wright and 12 other ranks relieved them on their day observation post. One troop under Lieutenant Frost was detailed as escort to B Echelon transport, and Second Lieutenant Parbury and 40 other ranks were detailed as a working party with engineers developing the water supply. The regiment less the two troops left Asluj at 05:30 and, after watering, joined the brigade near Asluj railway station, which was the rendezvous of the Anzac Mounted Division prior to its advance against Beersheba. After a long night march, the high ground east of and overlooking Beersheba was reached at dawn and orders were issued to the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade to attack Tel el Saba, the 2 and 3 LH Regiments being detailed to initiate the attack, while the 1 LH was held in reserve. At 10:30 on 30 October 1917, the regiment was detailed to take up a position on the left flank of the Inverness Battery, which had come into position a 1600 metres south east of Saba, near Khurbet el Watan. The advanced troops were heavily shelled, and all led horses had to be taken back some distance to the broken ground. Lieutenant Wright, with two sections, carried out a very daring reconnaissance of the enemy's position in Wady Saba, bringing back much valuable information. The New Zealand Mounted Rifles materially assisted the attack by a flanking movement from the north, and Tel el Saba was occupied at 15:00.

At 16:10 the regiment received orders to attack the town of Beersheba on the line Hill 970 to the mosque in the town, both inclusive. This line, which was on the northern side of the town, was made good just after dark. Before the order to attack had been received, however, the position generally had become grave. The enemy, though driven off Saba, was still strong south



of the town and stronger north of it. Only a few hours of daylight were left, and the possession of the wells in the town was imperative, for both the infantry and the cavalry. It was neck or nothing, and General Chauvel ordered that Brigadier-General Grant's 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Light Horse Brigade should make a mounted attack on the trenches on the south-east. At 16:30 the 4<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Regiments commenced their famous charge. Within an hour Beersheba had been entered, the lightning attack so disorganising and demoralising the Turks that the opposition to the 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Brigade, on the north, failed.



The regiment, strengthened the position, and sat tight all night. A Squadron under Major White and B under Captain Kater held the outpost line, with two troops of C Squadron, under Captain Mack, in reserve. A few enemy cavalry approached during the night, but retired on being fired on, at least one of their number being killed. The regiment had taken 90 prisoners, including 11 officers, at the small cost in casualties of two killed (including the RS., P. Lenehan) and one wounded. The A Echelon transport had had a bad time, two enemy planes dropping bombs which killed one other rank and wounded Second Lieutenant WG Drummond and eight other ranks, 17 draught horses and five riding horses were killed. Within a few days the infantry had broken the Turkish line at Sheria and, again, between Gaza and the sea. This blow was the opening gambit in the great cavalry drive up the Philistine Plain to Jaffa.

On the morning of 1 November, officers' patrols under Lieutenants James, Edwards, Guthrie and Gray were sent forward at 04:00 to the front and reported all clear by 06:00. Guides went back to escort the camel convoy which arrived at the south side of Beersheba during the afternoon, and at midday the unit was relieved by infantry and moved to a new bivouac site, 1,000 metres east of Beersheba. The weather was wet. The transport with A Echelon reached camp at 18:00 with horses obtained from other units, as so many had been killed. During the afternoon 20 men under Lieutenant Otton were employed digging graves and 20 more under Lieutenant Parbury were detailed to guard the prisoners. Next day Lieutenant Parbury and

a troop acted as escort to a camel convoy from the Anzac Divisional Dump to a point a few kilometres along the road to Hebron. On the afternoon of 2 November, Lieutenant CS Frost marched in from Khalasa with B Echelon transport, the horses of which had now to be used for A Echelon.

Now followed the six days' fighting for Tel el Khuweilfe. The regiment formed up in column of route on the Beersheba-Hebron road at midnight, 2/3 November, and moved with the brigade until at 03:00 a halt was called near Kh el Lekimeh. At 07:00 orders were received to attack Tel el Khuweilfe where the Turks were strongly entrenched. A Squadron under Major White was sent forward on the right and B Squadron under Captain Kater on the left, with orders to keep touch. The line was held up as the enemy's position was a strong one, and Major Irwin went forward to report on the situation. The enemy held all the high ground and had complete fire supremacy at this time; casualties were heavy and supports a long way behind. Major Irwin returned to regimental headquarters and reported how things stood; he was then instructed to go and take charge of the firing line. At 10:15 Captain Mack (C Squadron) was sent forward to cover the right flank of the regiment's position, but was unable to get into position owing to severe machine gun and rifle fire, so his men reinforced the front line. At 10:45 two squadrons of 2 LH reported as reserves, and Captain Handley (killed in the Jordan valley) went forward as support on the right flank to give covering fire to the 1 LH while two troops of 2 LH under Lieutenant Weller did the same for the left flank. The firing line was unable to advance owing to superiority of enemy fire and lack of cover, and every man who moved at once became a target for the vigilant enemy snipers. After darkness came on, the regiment withdrew with the dead and wounded, sand carts being sent up for these. The withdrawal was covered by 2 LH and supported by the Inverness Battery. At 21:00 the regiment moved to the bivouac area at Beersheba and arrived after midnight, the horses having been 30 hours without water. The 1 LH casualties had been: killed, Lieutenants WJM Edwards, F. A. Guthrie, J. R. Wright and 13 other ranks; wounded, Major AA White, Captain ME Wright, Lieutenants Gray and Ross and 39 other ranks.

The enemy shelled continuously all day and part of the night, five horses being killed, 29 wounded and 16 missing. 4 November was spent in burying the regiment's dead in a pretty little cemetery close to Beersheba, where there were a number of young gum trees, planted by the enemy, growing near each grave. This area was securely fenced in with barbed wire.

On November 5 Lieutenant ON Hayes was evacuated, wounded; 23 remounts were received and five captured Turkish animals handed over to the 6<sup>th</sup> Mobile Veterinary Section. Next day, owing to the heavy casualties among the officers, the following were promoted to commissioned rank: SQMS JA Markwell, Sergeants A Kingsford, GE Campbell and ES Dowling, Corporal RG Fawcett, Lance-Corporals W D Jarrett and CE Upton, Trooper LH Smith. Fourteen mules were received for B Echelon, which rejoined the regiment for the day and returned to brigade when the regiment moved out at 16:30 on 6 November for Tel el Sheria, all spare horses and saddlery were attached to B Echelon for the move. This was the beginning of the long ride to Jaffa, with the Turks being pushed in front all the way for over a month.

On the night of 6 November the line was taken over from the 5<sup>th</sup> Yeomanry Brigade and at 06:30 next morning orders were received to move towards Khurbet um Ameidat. At 09:45 the advance commenced with the 2 LH on the left flank and the 3 LH on the right. Ameidat was taken at the gallop under shell and heavy rifle fire at 10.30, the enemy retiring and leaving 27 wagons, 250 shells, 35 EP tents and 200,000 rounds of small arms ammunition while the brigade also collected a number of prisoners. One squadron under Captain EC Battye took up day observation posts and another squadron under Captain F Mack with two machine guns went forward towards Tel el Nejila, but was held up at a wady by shell fire.

Three good waterholes, capable of watering a squadron each, were discovered under Tel el Nejila by patrols, who also reported 400 Turks retiring in a northerly direction. The enemy abandoned their wounded and a large hospital which was taken over by the 1 LH and left in charge of a party. Casualties were light and the regiment withdrew to Ameidat, taking up an outpost line with the 3 LH on the right and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Brigade on the left. Next morning the dawn patrols reported all clear for three kilometres ahead. Nejila was again occupied by 10:00, 11 prisoners being taken and about 50 tonnes of cord wood (firewood) found unburnt at the railway station. The railway line was a tactical one, of narrow gauge, built between Beersheba and Gaza. The enemy withdrew and the 1 LH was ordered to report to brigade headquarters on the left flank of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade to which C Squadron was attached. On reaching brigade headquarters at Jemmama the regiment bivouacked for the night. The horses had been 50 hours without water, and the only feed carried was a quantity of grain. The A Echelon transport reached RHQ by midnight.

The following were awarded the Military Medal in connection with the action at Khuweilfe: 2467 Trooper E Dowling, 3065 Trooper CE Kelleher, 2649 Trooper W West (later commissioned), 1088 Trooper S Cross, 50 Sergeant R Hamilton. Captain ES Kater was awarded the Military Cross for the same action, the news of this award being received later, at Esdud.

In addition to three days' rations for man and horse, each squadron carried flags and ground sheets for communicating with aeroplanes, extra small arms ammunition, bombs and pioneer tools such as picks and shovels. The following was the official scale of food per man: 500 gm of bread or 400 gm of biscuits per diem, 340 gm fresh meat or 250 gm. bully beef, 85 gm. jam or treacle, 14 gm tea, 3.5 ml milk, 85 gm sugar, 115 gm potatoes, 115 gm other vegetables, 85 gm bacon, 765 mg. pepper; also 115 gm oatmeal or rice weekly and 115 gm flour twice weekly. The foregoing were the quantities on paper, but they were reduced by 5 per cent. for all men behind the front line and north of Wady Ghuzze, and by 10 per cent for all those south of Wady Ghuzze. Smokes: 57 gm tobacco or 2 packets of cigarettes per week, 2 boxes of matches for three men. The horse ration on paper was as follows: 4.5 kg of barley bran and scrap hail (a mixture of molasses and millers' waste), 5.5 kg. of tiffin (hay or chopped straw). One kilo more grain was issued for draught horses; mules received the same as riding horses.



Of course it was impossible to maintain these scales in such an operation as the pursuit up the Philistine Plain in November 1917, but the Army Service Corps did wonders in keeping food up to the column, while a certain amount of stores was captured from the Turks. At Beersheba, tinned meat, peas, raisins, rice, grain and tinned were taken and each halt yielded something. Tobacco was very scarce and for a time the men were reduced to smoking tea.

On the morning of 9 November C Squadron rejoined from detached duty with the 2<sup>nd</sup> ALH. Brigade and the 1 LH received orders to move from the bivouac area at 05:45. A Squadron escorted the Inverness Battery and an NCO and 12 men were detailed as escort to the GOC. The remainder of the Regiment, with the 3 LH on its left and the 2<sup>nd</sup> ALH Brigade on its right, advanced on Simein which was reached at midday without opposition. The regiment then moved to el Mejdal where water was found, and left at 16:00 for el Tina where the advanced troops got in touch with the enemy at sundown. Next morning the regiment pushed on to Esdud at 11:00 C Squadron sending forward two troops to hold the wady towards Burka. The wady was made good and the outpost line was held during the night by A and C Squadrons, with the assistance of two machine guns. Lieutenant Dowling and a troop escorted engineers to the beach to develop water which could be found all along the coast a short distance inland at a shallow depth.

Next day the 1 LH marched north, with the 2 LH covering the right flank, to reconnoitre the wady in the vicinity of Tel el Murre. A magnificent stream of water was discovered, two metres deep and 10 metres wide, running from the tel to the sea and quite fresh. After watering the horses and filling all water bottles, the regiment left one squadron and two machine guns behind to assist the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment with the outpost line and returned to camp.

On 12 November the regiment attacked Burka in conjunction with the infantry, who were on the right; RHQ was located 800 metres south of Sukereir at 13:00 and a strong firing line was established in Wady el Khubb. The Yeomanry Division arrived at 16:30 and took over the line at 18:30. While in Wady el Khubb the regiment was heavily shelled, the casualties being Captain ES Kater, MC, Lieutenant FH Otton and 11 men wounded. Withdrawing to Esdud, the horses were fed and watered and the regiment marched along the telephone line and bivouacked south of Tel Abu Haraze.

Next morning a move was made to the beach, and there had just been time to swim the horses when orders came to move at 13:00 Yebna was reached at sundown, A Echelon transport arriving an hour later. Fifteen of the worst of the horses were sent to the MVS Yebna was vacated in the early morning and the horses watered at a village named Ras Deiran, a Jewish colony with comfortable houses and flourishing orchards and orange groves.

The regiment stood by until the artillery shelled the enemy's position. At 15:20 orders were received to advance on Ramleh, but the attack was cancelled and at 17:15 orders were to move east 1600 metres and take up an outpost line, with the 8<sup>th</sup> Yeomanry Brigade on the right and the 3 LH on the left. B Echelon transport joined the regiment on this date (14 November 1917).

The infantry were now definitely turning their faces eastward towards the passes leading up to Jerusalem, while the bulk of the mounted troops crossed over to the west and carried on the advance up the maritime plain.

Next day, 15 November, after early morning patrols reported all clear for a distance of three kilometres, the regiment moved out in conjunction with the 2 LH and the Yeomanry Division, with instructions to occupy tactical points west of Ramleh. At 11:45 Ramleh was occupied without opposition, a squadron of the 2 LH being the first to enter. The 1 LH then pushed on and occupied Ludd at 13:30. The enemy were seen to be retreating in a north-easterly direction on the outskirts of Ludd, and B Squadron under Lieutenant WH James was ordered forward to attack the rear of the enemy's column. A Squadron under Captain EC Battye was sent to cover the left flank of B Squadron and in spite of heavy hostile artillery and machine gun fire the following were captured: 14 Turkish officers, two German and 283 Turkish other ranks, four machine guns and a damaged motor-car.

Lieutenant WH James showed great gallantry and dash in collecting prisoners close to the enemy's rearguard, and later was awarded the Military Cross for his work on this and other occasions. The enemy continued to shell, and many of their own men were killed whilst being brought in.

Lieutenant Markwell reconnoitred Safiriyeh and found it occupied. The 1 LH casualties were Lieutenants Dowling and McDonald and five men wounded. Lieutenant CRT Parbury was ordered along the railway line towards el Yehudiyeh with a troop to cover the engineers while they blew up the enemy's railway line. The remainder of the regiment bivouacked in Ludd. Two troops under Lieutenants CS Frost and SE Gregory took charge of the prisoners who were next day handed over to the APM (Military Police) at Ramleh.



About midday on 16 November the regiment marched out with the brigade for Safiriyeh, the 2 LH acting as advanced guard and getting well shelled. One patrol under Lieutenant GE Campbell was sent to reconnoitre Kerfana, which was reported clear. Another patrol under Lieutenant WD Jarrett found Sakia strongly held. The regiment bivouacked near Safiriyeh, holding an outpost line with the Camel Corps on the right and the New Zealand Mounted Rifles on the left.

Next morning orders were received to move to Yazur, where Major GHL Harris rejoined from the school of instruction and 30 reinforcements arrived. Unfortunately, Lieutenant ES Dowling died of wounds in the Anzac Hospital Clearing Station on 18 November.

Patrols were sent out from Yazur and day observation posts placed, rain falling all day. On 20 November the " Echelon of limbers under Captain WH McKeown moved to Mulebbis and drew forage captured from the enemy. The orchards around Yazur were in full bearing and the oranges were fully appreciated by all ranks. An outpost line was taken over that night from the 3 LH at el Yehudiyeh; contact was maintained with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade on the right and New Zealand Mounted Rifles on the left.

The regiment was relieved next morning by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Brigade and rejoined its own brigade in Yebna. On 22 November the regiment moved with the brigade to Sheikh Abu Jahm, where 24 reinforcements marched in, bringing 24 remounts complete with saddlery and others without saddlery. There was good picking around Yebna, and the opportunity was taken during a halt of a few days to graze the horses.

On 25 November the Military Medal was awarded to the following for their conduct at Ludd: 505 Sergeant D. Mychael, 288 Corporal R. Ashworth, and an attached corporal of the AAMC, J. W. Poole. On the same day 103 SSM GHS Cundy was appointed to commissioned rank.

The regiment marched to Ayun Kara on 27 November, watering the horses in the village, where 2,000 oranges were bought for the men out of regimental funds. Fatigue parties were told off daily to collect tibbin, and at midnight on 4 December the regiment moved to Jaffa, and bivouacked, moving again on the following night to another camp site and coming directly under the Anzac Mounted Division, whose orders were to be in readiness to reinforce the line at certain points if the enemy attacked. With this object in view Lieutenants Drummond, Parbury, Jarrett, James and Cundy were sent along the different roads to reconnoitre and to act as guides if necessary. However, the enemy contented themselves with shelling only and on 7 December the regiment received orders to rejoin the 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Brigade at Ayun Kara.

Heavy rain fell for several days at Ayun Kara, but the health of the men was good. The inhabitants around Richon le Zion treated the men as friends and seemed glad that the Turks had gone, although no doubt many of them were Turkish sympathisers and acted as spies. It was while the regiment was at Richon that word came through that Jerusalem had fallen. The unit was under strength and only enough reinforcements arrived to equalise the evacuations of sick, the new men apparently not being able to stand the wet and the night marches as well as the older soldiers. Wine was purchased from the local winery for issue to the men, and a wet canteen was opened. The enemy had not had time to destroy the winery or any buildings around Richon, but contented themselves by blowing up a few small bridges and culverts on the main road.

The regiment was still able to act as infantry when necessary and orders were received to be in readiness to take over the trenches east of Jaffa at short notice. With this object in view, Lieutenant Colonel Granville, Major Harris, Captains Mack and Battye visited the portion of the front line held by the King's Own Scottish Borderers of the 155<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade.

The regiment was now inspected by Lieutenant General Chauvel.



Such an event was recognised by the men to mean generally that 'something was doing'. On 17 December, a move was made for the front line near Shelme; squadrons moved independently to take over a series of posts from the 155<sup>th</sup> Brigade. A Squadron of the 2 LH was temporarily attached. The CO, adjutant and squadron leaders were the only ones to keep their horses near the front line, the rest of the horses being sent back to the camp near Richon under Captain Otton, two subalterns from each squadron and one man to four horses. Major Irwin, 1 LH, was in charge of the horses of the brigade. Two of the posts, numbers 3 and 4, were being constantly sniped and a few shells were being fired into number 3 Post. The line at this time was close enough to permit the enemy to shelling Jaffa and orders were to push him back; dismounted patrols were sent out and machine guns located.

During the night of 19/20 December heavy rain fell and some of the trenches were badly flooded. Rations were brought up by Captain McKeown and distributed to the various posts. The meat issue was frozen rabbit from Australia, which was very good, but it was impossible to light a fire in the front line. Sniping was kept up by the enemy on Posts 3 and 4, Posts 5 and 6 being shelled.

On 23 December the regiment returned to Richon and 29 reinforcements were taken on strength. On Christmas Eve B Echelon transport arrived from Esdud with Christmas comforts and AIF Canteen stores. Plum puddings and extra stores were issued to all ranks. It rained heavily on Christmas Day and the camp was a sea of mud. Church parade was held at Richon Town Hall. That night orders came to shift camp to Esdud. The roads were so muddy the transport had difficulty in moving. B Echelon transport could not get through and camped at Yebna for the night; the men's blankets were on the wagons, so they spent a cold night.

The regiment remained at Esdud until 11 January; it was raining most of the time but fortunately the camp was on a sand hill. The horses were carrying a long coat and those which had not previously been clipped were clipped at Esdud. The usual inspection was held by the brigade commander.

New Year's Day was cold and wet.

*The Regiment's story in World War 1 will continue next issue. The account is taken from one assembled by members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse on the journey back to Australia in 1919.*

## **Lancers in South Africa 2017** Terry Boardman OAM

Jim Gellert and I attended the Stars of Sandstone 2017 event near the town of Ficksburg in Free State South Africa from 27 March to 9 April.



The event was held on Sandstone Estates and involved the display and operation of a large collection of historical tractors and farm vehicles, airplanes, classic cars, military vehicles and trains and was heavily supported by the South African National Defence Force via the Armour Museum at Bloemfontein

Jim and I took part in daily display convoys of military vehicles and in a ceremonial parade and salute on Saturday 8 April when all vehicles of every type passed a dais where the salute was taken by Brigadier General Andre Retief, Officer Commanding the South African Army Armoured Formation, flanked by Lyndie Mole and Michael Myers representing Sandstone Estates.

Jim drove a Ferrett and I drove a modified Saracen

I was also thrilled earlier in the event to be allowed to drive an Olifant 1A tank – a South African AFV based on the hull and turret of a Centurion but fitted in South Africa with a 105mm cannon, a diesel engine, semi automatic gearbox, and a different steering system. My biggest problem was getting into the driver's seat!

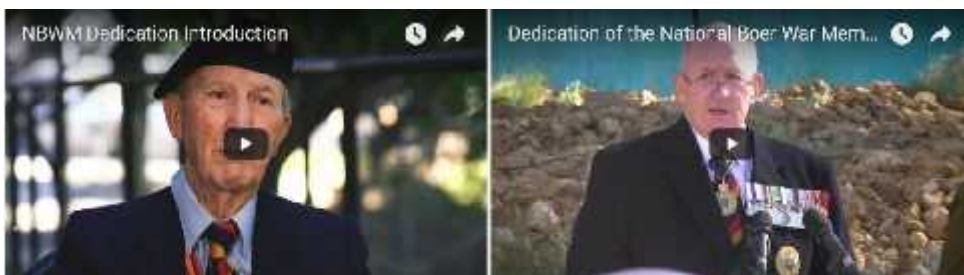


## National Boer War Memorial

Australia's First National Boer War Memorial in Canberra has been Dedicated. The Memorial on Anzac Parade Canberra was dedicated on Wednesday 31 May 2017.

All credit to those, including a number of Lancer Association members (the national chairman was Colonel John Haynes OAM Retd, Ross Brown, Bill Cross, Chris Dawson, Owen Graham and Brian Walters also served on the national national and state committees) who worked tirelessly for 17 years to deliver the magnificent outcome.

The Lancers Association delegation laid a wreath in memory of New South Wales Lancers - Frederick Kilpatrick, Rowland Harkus, Walter Ellis, Frederick Avard, Franz Fetting, and Leslie Tunks who paid the ultimate price for Australia in the Second Anglo-Boer War.



Videos available in online version



## Veterans' Notes *Bert Castellari*

### Jack Bramston

In a story in The Australian on Anzac Day Troy Bramston, had a special article about WW2 and his grandfathers who were in the army. Here's what he said about one of them:

"John 'Jack' Bramston (1922-2003), whom I called "Pop", was a factory hand at a brewery in Sydney when he enlisted in October, 1941. As part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regiment, he served in New Guinea between August, 1943 and September, 1944. When he fell in love with my Nana, and went absent without official leave so he could marry her, he forfeited 13 days' pay. He was discharged with the rank of trooper in December, 1945."

### Michele Martire

Michele Martire (NX140880) was in HQ Squadron of the 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Regiment when it became the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Tank Battalion in 1942 and served in the New Guinea and Borneo campaigns. He was a pastry cook and probably in the cook house in the beginning but I think he also became jeep driver. We became friends but I lost track of him as the unit moved around. Mick was born in Molfetta, a coastal town north west of Bari, capital of the Puglia region of Italy, overlooking the Adriatic Sea. He came to Australia with the family in 1933 and was soon living on the coast again in Clovelly. He became a life saver and was a life member of Clovelly Surf Lifesaving Club. On discharge from the army in 1946 Mick became a pastry cook with Qantas.

## Cavalry Sunday London 2017 *John Walker*

Sunday 14 May 2017, in London was 'Cavalry Sunday', a memorial parade that is as poignant as any in its remembering of those who paid the ultimate price in conflicts past – but which has a unique aspect to its ceremonial. The Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Association Parade and Memorial Service is held on a Sunday in May every year when former members of British cavalry regiments march past the Cavalry Memorial in Hyde Park and then hold a short service. Many of those parading carry and drill with furred umbrellas, and wear bowler hats, the stereotypical British headgear that is rarely seen nowadays. Officially, the dress is simply lounge suits with medals and decorations.

In the illustrations below, we see contingents from our affiliate UK Regiments, the Queens Dragoon Guards, and the Hussars or Light Dragoons.



## Departed Comrades

### RAYMOND FRANCIS BATES (2140866).

Ray joined the Regiment on 3 May 1966, serving until 19 June 1967 when he joined the Regular Army and saw service in Vietnam with 6 RAR. He left the ARA in 1979, re joined the Army Reserve, then served until 1983 with 4/3 RNSWR. He rose to the rank of Sergeant. Ray passed away in the closing stages of 2016. His funeral was on Wednesday 18 January 2017, at Minchinbury. *(Tony Fryer)*



**STANLEY NORMAN WILLIAM BUTLER (NX101256) 12 July 1923 - 31 October 2016.**

Stan died on 31 October 2016. He was one of the militia members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Regiment who transferred with others to become members of the Second AIF in the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Tank Battalion. He became a Lance Corporal in 4 Troop of A Squadron by the time it was in New Guinea. Some of 4 Troop's involvement in the Huon Peninsula campaign is recorded in the unit's history and in 'Memories of A Squadron' published in May 2000.

An extract from the history: "...4 Troop was taken by barge to the Buri River near Scharnhorst Point where on 9 January 1944 they went into action with a patrol of the 2/17 Battalion. Strong resistance was being encountered ... the position was attacked with covering fire from the Matildas' Besas and captured ... one of 4 Troop's tanks had a track blown off by a Jap mine which had been laid after the patrol had moved forward."

Stan reported the follow up to this in the half page he contributed to 'Memories'. In an account previously quoted in Lancers' Despatch of August 2013 he told how he began depressing the howitzer for action forgetting that the troop leader, Lieutenant Bartlett, who was ill, had been hanging on to it for a more comfortable ride outside. As the gun barrel came down he was sliding off and could have fallen in front of the moving tank. Stan made a quick change and Bartlett survived. Preceding this story was a lighter tale:

"While 4 Troop was in reserve and waiting to cross the Masaweng River, where the infantry had supposedly cleared the northern side ... the Boss (Bartlett) and Lt Ben Hall, as it was a stinking hot day, decided to have a dip in the shallow river to cool off. When nearly waist deep in the middle of the stream and completely stripped off, not realising they could possibly be observed from Jap held Fortification Point, suddenly a small mortar bomb arrived in the river followed by a second, landing between them and our mob having a short rest on the southern shore. We've never seen a funnier sight than two naked 'brass' bums in full frightened flight rushing to safety ..."

Stan was born on 12 July 1923, in Bankstown, then a far out (distance not attitude) suburb of Sydney. His wife, Charlotte, now 94, tells of Stan's beginnings and later life: "He attended Bankstown primary and high schools. He used to get into trouble for not paying attention, too busy watching the pigeons out the school window."

But he was a persistent, committed bloke as the story of their romance unfolds. It developed slowly rather than as one of those at times necessarily rushed wartime liaisons. Stan went into the army on 29 December 1941. Those of that intake were soon after taken to the army camp at Orange Showground. Charlotte was living with her family at Yeoval 80 kilometres away. Later Stan was transferred to Greta, (or it may have been Singleton). Sometimes in those years in the central west of NSW, as in much of Australia, travelling was difficult and demanding.

Charlotte continues: (At the time) "I never got to know Stan. He was just one of the boys. When they were despatched from there he wrote to the friend I was boarding with ... he asked her to get me to write to him. He knew my first name but not my surname ... that was the start of our friendship. One night when I was writing to my parents I thought I'd write a note to him, what about goodness knows. We just kept on writing.

I knew very little of his army life. After a while I went back to Yeoval to work in my father's office. I used to send Stan the Sunday Telegraph. At times my Mum made him a fruit cake. When Stan was discharged from the army (November 1945) he went back to his old boss to finish his apprenticeship of cement rendering and concreting. We continued writing.

One holiday weekend I invited him to come up to Yeoval. Not easy to get there so I told him to get the train to Wellington and we would meet him there. The train came but no Stan. Thought he must have got cold feet. Later that night Stan turned up at Yeoval. He had got off the train at Orange but there was no transport to Yeoval. So he started to walk.

Someone stopped and asked him where he was going. He said he could take Stan to Molong. Stan knew Harry Britten lived there and somehow found where Harry lived. I guess after a good chinwag Harry took him up to Yeoval. Lucky the café was still open and they asked if they knew where I lived. Lucky for Stan I was only five minutes around from the café."

They became engaged in August, 1947. The post war years were tough. There was a housing shortage. In Sydney there were regular power blackouts, general shortages of every day items and a black market which involved shop keepers and consumers.

Charlotte: "Stan bought a block of ground in Bankstown. At that time you could build a garage and live in it. The only problem was getting the material, fibro mainly. Had to have the order in for two years to get it. Somehow he got the timber and concrete slab down but when he went to get the fibro, sorry, no. Stan knew the owner of the business his boss used to get his material from. Stan told him it was going to be a bit hard, his wife was pregnant, and so on, but it got him enough fibro to finish the garage.

Stan had gas and water and electricity connected but to get a stove and copper he had to buy them on the black market. My uncle went to Wellington and asked in the hardware store if they had a bath tub and they said yes as long as you like green. It's 16 years since we sold the house and to my knowledge the green bath is still there.

We were married on 9 October 1948, and have a daughter and two sons. In 1951-52 Stan decided he was going into business. He had a cottage to cement render. On his first day he had sand and cement delivered but had to get there himself. He went on my bike, his shovel, floats and straight edge strapped on. He got the job done."

There are more stories about Stan.

Given a 1927 lorry he had to drive from Yeoval to Sydney and having had only one lesson on driving it he still had to get a driving licence. The policeman asked how long he'd been driving. 'Only today', said Stan. The policeman granted the licence adding, 'By the time you get to Sydney you'll improve'.

There was the time he needed bricks but could not get the number he needed. Doug Beardmore who was a near neighbour then enabled him to get them from a factory which was being demolished. A few years later a building slump put Stan out of business. He got a job in a Bankstown hardware store owned by a friend he had known at school. He retired after 18 years in that job.

Late in life Stan developed dementia and prostate cancer. He needed full time care for 16 months before he died, a cruel end for a man who had given all he could.

"He was a home body," Charlotte said. " He'd help anyone if he could." (*Bert Castellari*)



## BARRIE HODGSON



Major WBE (Barrie) Hodgson passed away at 14:10 on 11 February 2017 at his NSW Central Coast nursing home. Barrie had been very sick for a long time. His funeral at Beresfield 11:00, Friday 17 February 2017 was attended by many of his Lancer colleagues.

Barrie served with me during the 1970s and 1980s, his noted contributions were to revive the horse mounted troop for the Regimental Centenary in 1985, and later as a Museum volunteer setting up the photo gallery on the CO's stair. Commissioned later than most, Barrie had not quite reached the 15 years as an officer for a Reserve Forces Decoration when required to retire aged 47. (*John Howells*)

**ALLAN STUART HOWITT** (NX114594) 25 April 1923 - 03 April 2017: Word of Allan's passing came almost simultaneously from his youngest son, David, and our B Squadron correspondent, Reg Gunn. Allan was born on 25 April 1923, and perhaps that was an omen. His association with the Lancers began when he joined the militia in 1940. "He enlisted at 17 – may have bent the truth about his age to get in with his friends," David said. His service number then was N7170 and the unit was the 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Regiment. He once recalled having been at the Wallgrove camp when "a light horse regiment stampeded through our lines." He was always part of the action. Allan was a wireless operator in Lieutenant Allan Aynsley's No. 2 Troop in B Squadron. He was on the USS Millen Griffith in 1945 when it ran aground at Bonga where the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Tank Battalion had been based at one time in the New Guinea campaign in 1943. He was in the last tank actions of the war in Balikpapan in the months before the Japanese surrender.

Extracts from the regiment's history virify the action: "At 07:00 on 10 July Lieutenant Aynsley's 2 troop, with a frog (flame throwing) tank attached, was called forward to give support to A Company of the 2/31<sup>st</sup> (Battalion) in its successful attack on the jungle clad Cello feature ... about 13:30 2 troop and the frog tank went into action again this time with D company ... targets on both sides of the highway were engaged with gunfire and flame; five machine guns were taken, the tank on the left flank had not gone far when it developed rackam (steering) trouble. While attending to it the crew came under fire from a light machine gun; another tank gave covering fire and eventually an infantry section silenced the machine gun. Later in the same day there was a third and very memorable action ... This was the difficult and hard fought attack on Coke Spur, a key position, the action in which snipers killed the regiment's 2/IC, Major EJ Ryrie. Read the account in pages 298 and 299 of the history. 2 troop continued to be heavily engaged until tank operations in Borneo ended in mid July. Three days later the enemy broke contact; this marked the end of organised resistance ... by 15 August the war had ended."

Allan is survived by his wife, Margaret, and two daughters and two sons. He loved the regiment and marched nearly every Anzac Day and followed up by celebrating his birthday. David Howitt recalls going to the Lancers Museum at Parramatta – "We were very touched by the attention shown him by Len Koles who gave him a warm welcome and a personal tour of the exhibits."



David provided the rest of this story. Allan was born in Paddington and grew up in the Chatswood/Willoughby area. Like many who served in World War 2 he lived childhood through the tough years of the depression of the nineteen thirties. In the worst of it he had no shoes when he was going to school. He left school at 14 and had various jobs which included working at a bakery starting work in the very early hours. He was among the school children who marched across the Sydney Harbour Bridge when it opened in 1932. He got to bowl Don Bradman when Bradman did some school tours. He rode a bike from Chatswood to Palm Beach for "something to do" one day. (Quite an effort when you consider the roads in the early 1930s.)

After the war Allan worked for a pharmaceutical manufacturer. There he met Margaret. He couldn't stand working indoors and left the company for a job as a tram conductor (not an indoor job but travelling always in all weather on the running board from which he collected fares). He must have been glad when he was able to switch to being a bus driver. Allan worked for NSW



Transport for 35 years until he retired. The Howitts were one of the pioneer families in the then newly opened area of Forestville in the expanding post war Sydney and built a family home in the bush.

David continues: "Dads interests were books. He had hundreds of books and was an avid reader particularly of war history. His memory was amazing and he still had brilliant recall of events until he died aged 90. His other interests were coin collecting and he was a big fan of North Sydney Bears Rugby League team.



He was a wonderful father always supporting his family in whatever he could. He became a much loved grand father and great grand-father. If he had lived a few more months he would have been a great great grand father too." *(Bert Castellari)*

#### JUDI SPADARO

Judi joined the Regiment in the 1980s one of a group along with Helen Clark, Heather Brettle, Rebecca Smock and others, of early female members of the Regiment. While serving with the Regiment Judi met and married Bruce. He was a Police Highway Patrol officer and Regimental Warrant Officer, sadly he passed away very prematurely aged in his late 30s in 1994. Judi and Bruce both had forms of cancer.

Judi continued to serve, her Army Reserve income allowing her to meet the special needs of her family as a single mum.

Judi rose to the rank of Sergeant, and won the Tiger Colliss award for excellence as a senior NCO.

Judi's funeral was on Friday 28 July 2017 at 1030h, Forrest Lawn Cemetery, Leppington then following at Moorebank Sports club.



Many who served with her were there; many others sent sincere messages of condolences. To quote but one:- "Judi was one of God's blessings in my life and I believe for the lives of many. I give thanks for the benediction that is the memory of a wonderful colleague." Not being an accepter of myth based religion myself I cannot quite comprehend the meaning, nonetheless the heartfelt nature of the statement does express a depth of feeling common to all who knew Judi. *(John Howells)*

#### JAMES SQUIRES (2139762) 26 August 1937 - 16 July 2016.

Jim served in the CMF for a total of 16+ years, most of the time with the RNSW Lancers rising to the rank of Sergeant. On a couple of occasions, due to transfers with his work, he transferred to, and spent a couple of years with, the RAASC followed by another couple of years with 1 Base Workshop. I know he would have been champing at the bit to get back to the Lancer Barracks.

It was during this period that Jim, who was born in Lismore on 26 August 1937 but grew up in Kyogle, married Judy. They were married at the Church of England in Canterbury, NSW on 7 December, 1962. It was as close to a perfect match as you can get. Truly soul mates from that day onwards.

Jim returned to his beloved Lancer Barracks on January 2, 1967. I wasn't at the barracks by then, but I can imagine that first evening in the Sergeants' Mess (not to mention the subsequent ones) with their first class raconteur back where he belonged, performing with a full sail. Like as if he'd never been away. That was our Jim.

Our regular trips by train to Puckapunyal for training where we would get out into the open spaces and develop our skills were always looked forward to.

As a close friend (Jim was Best Man at my wedding in 1961), I can say that Jim had Chutzpah and you always listened to what he was expounding about. (As opposed to what was obviously a tall tale). Because he thought things through to the point where he was usually right. It was best to shut up and listen. Then have him on over a beer later.

Jim and Judy moved with their family to Melbourne in 1973 with his work. He remained in the CMF and transferred to the 4/19<sup>th</sup> PWLH but decided, with some misgivings, to leave the service on 21 November 1973.

In 1978 Jim joined the committee for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ringwood East Scout Group for two years. Four years later he became an Assistant Scout Leader through into 1986. On the horizon was yet another career of service other than his "daytime job". But, before he knew he was going to adapt to that new interest, Jim and Judy invested in a small yacht and sailed in competition on Western Port. With the occasional hair raising decisions and varying degrees of success. When you hit something when you are driving a Centurion that seldom effects your progress. Sailing is different and Jim quickly learnt his sailing skills.

It was during his sailing career that Jim became a member of Rotary. He served there for 20 years. He served on every committee at least once, and served as Sergeant at Arms for at least three terms during his Rotary career. He was especially interested in ROMAC, Rotary Overseas Medical Aid for Children, and was involved in assisting a number of children to come to Australia for some fairly serious operations. Jim also held the position of President and in 2003 was awarded a Paul Harris Fellow. He was also involved in Young Achievement Australia. In his last year serving with that group, he was called to Government House with his group of kids to be awarded as winners for Victoria.

Jim and Judy were living in retirement at Ringwood, the Melbourne suburb they had moved to, back in 1973, when their son Matthew and his family decided to buy a property at Cobram situated on the Murray. They decided to follow Matthew, Tammie, Kathryn and Robert. They moved to Cobram in 2011. It goes without saying that Jim dearly loved his closest mate, Judy - his family and his Country. That was patently obvious given his commitments to other interests outside working hours.

Over a number of years he and Judy took their caravan and journeyed to most parts of Australia. There is only a small section of the map they did not get to see.

Now he has left us. Jim's best mate Judy, his family and his wide circle of friends - we all cherish our memories of him and we are all the poorer for losing him. (*John Snelling*)

## Thank You

Thank you all very much for your assistance in supporting the Museum and Association financially in the 2016/17 financial year. Our records (and they may not be perfect, human data entry has been involved) show the following supported by donation, the Association:

Bryan Algie, John Arnott, Max Bell, Douglas Black, Tony Blissett, Cynthia Booth, Kenneth Brown, John Carruthers, Bert Castellari, Alan Chanter, Alan Chapman, Paul Degiorgio, Trevor Forward, Tony Fryer, Chris Gammage, Roger Gellett, John Howells, Anthony Huntley, Danny Marriott, Don Morris, Brad Pearce, Kevin Regan, Margaret Sheppard, Richard Small, Gloria Warham, Roy Young.

and the following the Museum:

Bryan Algie, John Arnott, Max Bell, Douglas Black, Tony Blissett, Cynthia Booth, Valerie Boyton, Phillip Bridie, Ron Cable, John Carruthers, Bert Castellari, Alan Chanter, Alan Chapman, Paul Degiorgio, Trevor Forward, Tony Fryer, Chris Gammage, Bob Gay, Roger Gellett, Warren Glenny, Wally Hauseman, Bev Hill, Anthony Huntley, Mary Lamb, Neil Mangels, Danny Marriott, Dorothy Mikel, Don Morris, Brad Pearce, Doug Pollard, Kevin Regan, Margaret Reid, Margaret Sheppard, Richard Small, Bob Stenhouse, Gloria Warham, Roy Young.

## HELP!

Yes we really do need your financial assistance. No amount too large, no amount too small.

Donations to the Museum (the Museum is registered with the charity tick) and Association are possible securely using PayPal from your credit card (Visa, Mastercard, AMEX) or from your PayPal account (from our website). If paying by cheque or money order, simply use the attached form, donations to the Museum are tax deductible.



Don't forget your memorabilia, the online shop now has Regimental Centenary Beret Badges for sale; we have secure payment facilities available using your credit card or your PayPal account. If paying by cheque or money order please use the attached form.

## RAACA

Membership of the RAACA NSW is free to all applicants over 75. The RAACA NSW newsletter complements Lancers' Despatch, providing news of events in the wider corps community. If you wish to join the RAACA and receive the newsletter, drop a line to the Association at Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Paddington NSW 2071, or visit the website: [www.raacansw.org.au](http://www.raacansw.org.au).



### "TENAX IN FIDE"

"A regiment is not solely the men who presently comprise its strength. It is an entity stretching back in time to its beginnings. It is all the men who have served in its ranks, with their traditions and achievements. The serving unit, like the tip of an iceberg, may be the only part you see, but underneath, supporting it, there is a great deal more." (These words, often quoted, were introduced by the Museum's Patron, Major General Warren Glenny, AO RFD ED, during his term as 2IC of 1<sup>st</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Royal NSW Lancers in the 1960s)







Royal New South Wales Lancers Association and  
New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum Incorporated ABN 94 630 140 881

## Response Sheet – August 2017

I will be at the Regimental Association Reunion Sunday 5 November 2017, Lancer Barracks.

Post to: New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum Inc  
and Royal New South Wales Lancers Association  
PO Box 7287  
PENRITH SOUTH NSW 2750  
AUSTRALIA

I would like to make the following donation/s.

An Amount of: \$(AU) \_\_\_\_\_ to the New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum Inc.

An Amount of: \$(AU) \_\_\_\_\_ to the Royal New South Wales Lancers Association.

Total: \$(AU) \_\_\_\_\_

A cheque or money order is enclosed made out for the total amount to the "New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum Inc".

(For credit card donations, please use the online donation form at [www.lancers.org.au](http://www.lancers.org.au))

*Note that funds will be transferred to the "Royal New South Wales Lancers Association" account in accord with your allocations. Receipts will be provided in January or July for donations to the Museum.*

### Your Details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(If applicable)*

Street 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Street 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Town (etc): \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

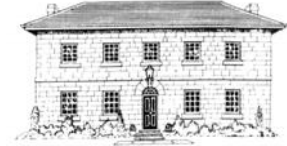
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

eMail: \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL DONATIONS OVER \$2 TO THE NSW LANCERS MEMORIAL MUSEUM INC ARE DEDUCTIBLE  
FOR TAXATION PURPOSES WITHIN AUSTRALIA**







New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum Incorporated ABN 94 630 140 881

# Memorabilia Order Form

Post to: New South Wales Lancers Memorial Museum  
PO Box 7287  
PENRITH SOUTH NSW 2750  
AUSTRALIA

I would like to Order:

- \_\_\_\_\_Regimental Centenary Beret Badges @ \$(AU)20.00 within Australia \$(AU)30.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_1LH Centenary Mugs @ \$(AU)20.00 within Australia \$(AU)30.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Regimental Stickers @ \$(AU)7.00 within Australia \$(AU)10.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Regimental Polo Shirt @ \$(AU)40.00 within Australia \$(AU)50.00 Overseas SIZE: S, M, L, XL, XXL (*please circle*)\*
- \_\_\_\_\_Regimental Plaques @ \$(AU)50.00 within Australia \$(AU)70.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Regimental Bow Ties @ \$(AU)20.00 within Australia \$(AU)30.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Bullion Blazer Badge @ \$(AU)25.00 within Australia \$(AU)30.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Stubby Holders @ \$(AU)15.00 within Australia \$(AU)25.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Regimental Ties @ \$(AU)25.00 within Australia \$(AU)35.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Histories of 1/15 RNSWL @ \$(AU)60.00 within Australia \$(AU)80.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Key Rings @ \$(AU)15.00 within Australia \$(AU)25.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Embroided Badges @ \$(AU)7.00 within Australia \$(AU)10.00 Overseas
- \_\_\_\_\_Caps @ \$(AU)25.00 within Australia \$(AU)30.00 Overseas

Above prices are inclusive of GST (within Australia) and Air Mail Postage

\* Please note that should the wrong size be selected and an exchange requested, the buyer will be required to cover the cost to post return the unwanted item, and post out the replacement.

A cheque or money order is enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(for credit card orders, please use the online shop at [www.lancers.org.au](http://www.lancers.org.au))

### Delivery Address

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Street 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Town (etc): \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

eMail: \_\_\_\_\_