



# RECONNAISSANCE

Autumn 2013

The Newsletter of the Military History Society of New South Wales Incorporated

**PATRON:** Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales

**PRESIDENT:** Benjamin Howell – **SECRETARY:** John Twyford – **TREASURER:** Alan Kitchen

**EDITOR:** Harry Taplin – **PUBLISHER:** John Twyford

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to this edition of *Reconnaissance*.

The main focus of your Council this term is to consolidate and grow our membership; especially to bring in a younger membership who is willing to actively get involved with the Society. We intend to achieve this via the following:

- Ensuring we have topics of interests that appeal to a broader audience
- New Society website
- Constitutional Reform
- Increasing the Society's presence and profile
- Essay Competition

### Ensuring we have topics of interest that appeal to a broader audience

As per the last year or so, the Society will continue to deliver topics from a variety of conflicts of military significance, from both Australia and abroad, across both ancient and modern military history. This way, there will be something for everyone to enjoy as we all have our preferred periods of military history.

The Society's 2013 program is set out below.

Please note that the Society meets on the second Saturday of the month at 2pm, Victoria Barracks, Paddington (unless informed otherwise). Let me know if you have any suggestions for topics of interests that we can start slotting in to next year's programme, or have available as alternates.

## New Society website

We will be launching the new website at our June meeting. The website (not available until launch) will be located at: [www.militaryhistorynsw.com.au](http://www.militaryhistorynsw.com.au) Please contact me should you have any queries or suggestions for the site, particularly in relation to photos, articles, useful links, etc. (a big thank you to those that have already done so).

## Constitutional Reform

The Council established a subcommittee at our March meeting to look at reforming our existing Constitution. This subcommittee comprises of Dr John Twyford, Brigadier Phil Carey, and I.

Proposed changes will be distributed to you in writing at least 28 days before a vote at our next Annual General Meeting in February 2014 (as per the New South Wales Associations Incorporation Act 2007 No 7).

If anyone would like a copy of the current Constitution of the Society, please let me know.

## Increasing the Society's presence and profile

In order to increase our membership we need to increase our presence and profile. This will be achieved via:

- A comprehensive Social Media Strategy for the Society via the new MHSNSW website, FaceBook page, Twitter account, and LinkedIn group. We will also promote Society activities on sites such as [www.sydneytalks.com.au](http://www.sydneytalks.com.au) and [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com).

- Identifying media opportunities where applicable and appropriate.
- Networking, developing, and fostering our relationships with other organisations and associations with like objectives to ours e.g. The National Boer War Society.
- Generally talking up our Society and brand whenever the opportunity presents itself so we can discuss the Society and topics of military history.

### Essay Competition

The Council established a subcommittee also at our March meeting to look at running an essay competition for senior high school students or university students (TBD).

This subcommittee comprises of Mr Harry Taplin, Dr Kevin Smith, Dr John Twyford, Brigadier Phil Carey, and I. The Essay Competition subcommittee will advise when more details are available.

On a final and important note, I would like at the time to publicly recognise Brigadier Phil Carey who was unanimously elected as a Life Member of the Society at our February Annual General Meeting. The Council is in the process of having a framed certificate commemorating this achievement organised, and will present this to Brigadier Carey at an upcoming meeting where he is available. Congratulations Phil!

As always, feel free to contact me if you have any queries / suggestions / concerns.

**BENJAMIN HOWELL**

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## PROGRAM OF EVENTS

<b>January:</b>	<i>Bringing it Home: Australia under Attack</i>	Mr Peter Grose
<b>February:</b>	Annual General Meeting	
<b>March:</b>	<i>King Richard III: The Leicester Dig,</i>	Ms Dorothea Preis
<b>April:</b>	<i>Farewell Dear People: Biographies of Australia's Lost Generation</i>	Dr Ross McMullin
<b>May:</b>	<i>Causes of the Peloponnesian War</i>	Mr Peter Xie
<b>June:</b>	<i>Gettysburg and the American Civil war,</i> see the attached flyer	Mr Scott Simpson
<b>July:</b>	<i>Six Theatres of War: An Australian Fighter Pilot's Chronicle</i>	Prof Brian Boettcher
<b>August:</b>	<i>Operation Chastise: The Dambusters</i>	TBA
<b>September:</b>	History Week	
<b>October:</b>	<i>The Vietnam War: 'Sappers War'</i>	Mr Sandy McGregor (TBC)
<b>November:</b>	Brigadier EJH Howard Commemorative Lecture <i>The Centenary of the Royal Australian Navy</i>	TBA
<b>December:</b>	Members Christmas Quiz	

## FAMILY MILITARY HISTORY

Mr Harry Taplin continues the family history series commenced last year in Reconnaissance. The material is based on oral history recorded by Harry during interviews with survivors of the 60th Battalion, 15th Brigade, 5th Division, 1st AIF. Harry's father served in that 60th Battalion in WWI.

### THE GERMAN BREAKTHROUGH MARCH 1918

In March 1918 the German Army broke through the British 5th Army and moved practically unhindered towards Amiens. Rumour had it that the whole of the A.I.F. would be moved to France to fill the gap and stem the German advance. The 5th Division, 8th, 14th and 15th Brigades were entrained for an unknown destination, then a long drive in motor transports, no seats. I forgot the name of the town or village where we were debussed.

The various battalions were sorted out and waited for dark before moving off. When our 60th Battalion received orders to march, a band accompanied us for about half a mile. Off we went to the music of Colonel Bogey and then to really cheer us up, the band switched to 'The Yanks are Coming Over there Over There' I have never heard such profanity before or since.

The Company soon settled into its stride and the horizon on our left was lit by gunfire and exploding shells. After marching all night with the skyline on our left having flickering lights like summer lightening with a background of rumble the Battalion reached the outskirts of the evacuated town of Corbie, just at dawn.

It was a pleasure to witness a copybook rear guard by a regiment of the Black Dragoons. Five out of six would dismount and the sixth would lead the horses back about half a mile. The dismounted five, armed with carbines, endeavoured to hold the enemy and retreat on foot to remount and repeat the process. One dragoon told me they had no relief for about a week. He seemed a genial type. The infantry had been routed and were in disorder and morale was at rock bottom.

According to the current furphy, our Brigadier, the popular Brigadier H.E. Elliot, 'Pompey' as he was affectionately known, had insisted on seeing the

British General and demanded his permission to use stray British troops as reinforcements for his Brigade, and also requested authority to shoot any who refused. This caused quite a stir among British Army top brass.

After the long march we were given breakfast – barely cooked quite cold porridge and cold tea. The general idea was to form a thin front line, each man placed about fifteen feet apart. Our Corporal was quite finicky and stepped out the pacings. The line began as a well constructed road and it took the Corporal ages to get the men into position. I did not see anybody I knew. Sometime later the pioneers distributed shovels and we were ordered to dig. Each man was allocated a section – eight feet long, two feet wide and six feet deep. It was white clay – fairly easy digging. It must have been about 4 pm when we finished.

After all the hard work about an hour later we were moved from our trenches about a hundred yards nearer to where the enemy was expected to show up. Puzzled but relieved that we did not have to dig more trenches. The subsoil was white clay and the earth thrown out stood out as a white line. Just before dawn the Germans shelled these trenches. I remember it was a cold, clear, still night – the starlight was good.

During the night I was sent to deliver a note to Battalion Headquarters which I had some difficulty locating. While waiting for a reply an officer gave me his horse to hold while he went to discuss food supplies for his troops. He was our Transport Officer Captain Earn Varley of Horsham. His horse had been wounded and was very nervous of shellfire. His brother was Quartermaster Sergeant Reg Varley who gave me a hefty tot of rum. After a wait, which I judged to be over an hour, I was handed a reply. I tied the horse to a limber and returned to my platoon.

The Company 'stood to' before dawn and after the German shelling a man next to me asked if I could hear a band and to our astonishment we could see a company of enemy soldiers, marching in columns of fours, with a kind of drum and whistle band, all complete with mobile cookers, without a care in the world. We had been ordered not to fire until the company had passed through us. Somewhere in front of us a hare started up and some clown had a shot at it but missed. So everyone opened up on the Germans.

The Company on our left was astride the road and had quite a picnic. The German officer in charge had not been accustomed to resistance and withdrew without attempting anything.

Their cooked breakfast fell into our hands, large reddish coloured rissoles which smelt appetising until some clown reminded us that the Germans sent back bodies in bundles of ten to be boiled down to obtain fat for making nitro glycerine and cooking oil for the civilian population.

We were relieved by some other Australian units and were allowed to move into the town of Corbie, which had been evacuated. The following day was my nineteenth birthday. I shot a wandering chook, cooked it and tried to make a jam tart but as the makings were labelled in French I had no idea of what I was doing and it turned out as tough as a roofing tile. With my mates we had a banquet washed down with champagne, there was plenty of wine in the cellars of the house in which we were billeted. Some comedian rummaging around a shop found a box of fireworks which he lit and through into our party.

There was a lot of drunkenness and bad discipline and according to records the Germans had the same problem. We stayed for a couple of days unmolested by either our own officers or the Germans.

#### HARRY TAPLIN

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The following is an edited extract from Dr Kevin Smith's *Escapes and Incursions* (2006). His *Borneo: Australia's Proud but Tragic Heritage* was published in 1999 and *Stories from Sandakan* in 2011.

#### RESCUERS AT RANAU

Seven hundred and eighty-nine Australian POWs were sent in 1945 from Sandakan towards Ranau (350 in February, 439 in May). Only 345 of these men ever reached Ranau. By the end of June no more than 166 still survived at Ranau.

Following the abandonment of plans for an Operation Kingfisher rescue of POWs at Sandakan, Lieutenant General Morshead's First Corps Headquarters on Morotai sought information for a

possible rescue of 300 POWs believed to be still alive at Ranau. Accordingly Operation AGAS 3, a reconnaissance mission by 'Z' Special Unit, was planned.

In early July 1945 Flight Lieutenant Geoff Ripley (RAAF) accompanied by Sergeant A.W.C. 'Skeet' Hywood (AIF) as radio operator and four native constables left Pitas on foot for Ranau. Ripley had been a British colonial police officer and spoke Malay well. Already he had served on Operation Crane north of Sulawesi. Hywood, formerly with First Armoured Division, had already served on Operations AGAS 1 and Stallion 4.

It must be wondered why, with the urgency that a Ranau rescue deserved at a time when AIF men were dying there in their dozens, a long trek rather than a parachute drop was planned for AGAS 3. Apparently a British Special Operations Executive Officer asserted some influence to restrict the resources AGAS 3 needed for a rapid deployment.

It took Ripley's group almost a month through remote and almost inaccessible regions to reach the high country around Ranau, slashing their way beneath a green mantle of lush vegetation, persevering their way southwards despite difficulty and discomfort. At misty altitudes close to the slopes of mighty Mount Kinabalu, they were joined by Andong Ajak, wily and wiry headman of a kampong along the way. Hywood remembers:

*From Kiayip to Lansat it was particularly hard as we had to bypass Merungin over the mountains because of Jap occupation. We asked the RAAF to strike the village but all they killed was the chief's buffalo.<sup>1</sup>*

They arrived at Lansat on 2nd August. Local natives reported there were about two thousand Japs camped at various places around Ranau. As news of the commando presence spread discreetly through the nearby kampongs, Bill Sticpewich an escaped POW was brought in by pony on 10th August to Narawang where AGAS 3 had re-located seven kilometres south of Lansat.

'Algy' Reither who had escaped with him had died a day or two earlier. Very ill and almost incoherent, Sticpewich told of four others who had escaped before he did.

On 17th August a pencilled note was brought in from Bill Moxham, one of the other four. With him under the protection of a native named Barigah were Keith Botterill and Nelson Short.

The fourth man, 'Andy' Anderson, had already died. Andong Ajak was sent to them with food and medicines.

The next day, with the war already officially over, two Liberators of RAAF Flight 200 dropped reinforcements at Lansat. The AGAS 3 reconnaissance was now to become a rescue mission.

The seven new members of the mission were:

Major J Forster (Indian Army Medical Service). 'Competent, pretty rough and ready and a great yarn teller' according to Hywood.

Captain Henry Nicholls (AIF). 'A scallywag, but you'd follow him through fire and water. A born leader, he fought hard and he played hard, and he looked after his men', recalled Mick Hodges.<sup>2</sup> Nicholls had been awarded a Military Cross at Tobruk, to which would be added a Bar later in Korea.

Staff Sergeant J McNeale (AIF) had experience in the Middle East. Hodges remembers, 'He was a good soldier, a father figure to us and a steadying influence'.

Sergeant E 'Baldy' Gore (AIF) is remembered by Norm Wallace as a calm person who did not get excited easily.<sup>3</sup>

Sergeant L 'Blue' Grinham (AIF) was a medical orderly and this was his first-ever parachute jump, straight into an operational descent.

Sergeant Mick 'Lofty' Hodges (AIF) was recruited to 'Z' after brief Middle East service. Wallace knew him as a great soldier who loved the Bren gun that he carried on patrol.

Sergeant Norm Wallace (AIF) was selected to 'Z' from 1st Australian Parachute Battalion.

This group moved on to Narawang, while Forster and Grinham then went ahead to set up a medical post at Silat. It was not long before they were joined there by others of the party, Grinham staying awhile with Sticpewich at Narawang.

On 24th August Andong Ajak brought Moxham, Botterill and Short to Silat, all three perilously ill. Wallace has declared:

*They were a shocking sight, the memory has remained with me all these years. It did not seem possible that human beings could be in such a condition and remain conscious and mentally alert.<sup>4</sup>*

At Silat a landing strip was prepared for Auster aircraft to come in and take out the four rescued POWs. However, it proved unacceptable because of the encroaching jungle and the hilly nature of surrounding terrain. The bombed-out Japanese airstrip at Ranau was proposed as an alternative.

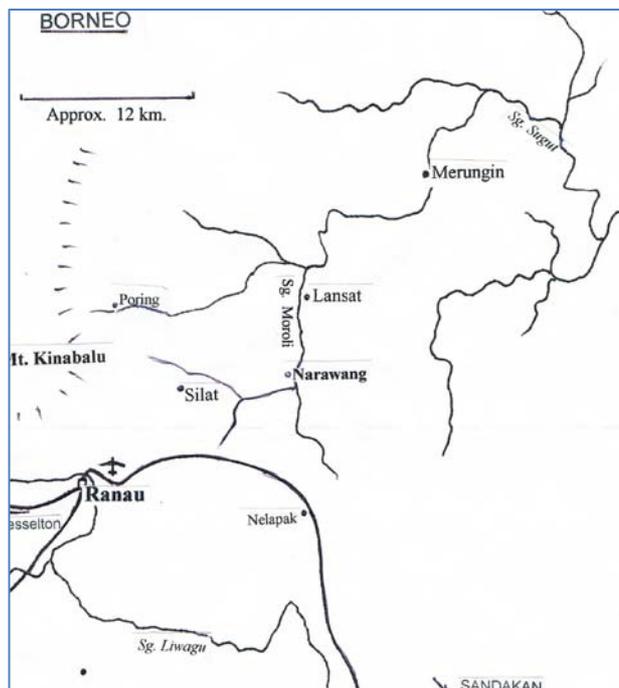
Meanwhile Grinham and Sticpewich were able to move in from Narawang, and RAAF Flight 200 dropped additional food plus medical supplies.

At the same time Sergeants Stan Neil and Allan Russell of Operation AGAS 1 were patrolling nearby with small teams of indigenous guerrillas. Neil had come to 'Z' from the First Armoured Division and then the Parachute Battalion. Russell had prior service in New Guinea with the 6th Cavalry Commando Squadron and on Operation Mosstroops in the Sepik River area.

Neil had distinguished himself in 1944 on Operation Python and had been on the brief Operation Stallion 2(c). He must have been the first Allied soldier to walk that precipitous horror track in the footsteps of those ill-fated POWs who had staggered along it towards Ranau just over two months earlier. While Ripley's team were active to the north, Neil's patrol reconnoitred to the south of Ranau and Russell was more to the east. However, seemingly by chance Russell of AGAS 1 and Wallace of AGAS 3 met briefly on a jungle track near Silat

The Japanese commander in Ranau, learning of Neil's presence, sent a native courier urging him to come in and give himself up. This, the dauntless sergeant declined to do.

Dr Forster with Grinham and his four patients remained at Silat, when on 14th September the rest of Ripley's team moved to the vicinity of the Ranau airstrip. There with native helpers, working at night because of the ever-present hostile Japanese, they filled craters on the landing strip.



Other Japanese, coming in hundreds from their various outposts, were plodding south and west through Ranau. 'Lofty' Hodges with bren gun pointed ominously from his hip, bailed up many of these retreating Japs while his mates disarmed them and sent them on their way.

In mid-September Nicholls and Neil would appear to have independently travelled down the ranges for extraction by Catalina from Labuk Bay. Then on 20th September five Auster aircraft guided by signal smoke landed to evacuate to Labuan the four former POWs. One who helped to build the signal fires was Laniam binte Baranting who has stated:

*It was to show the planes where to land. I met Sticpewich there. He had torn skin and bruises around his chest, arms and shoulders. He was a quiet man.<sup>5</sup>*

Moxham's plane crashed on take-off causing him a head injury, but all four former POWs were eventually safely evacuated. No other prisoners of war, neither Australian nor British, survived at Ranau.

Next day all remaining Japanese garrison troops at Ranau were disarmed. On 23rd September their commander handed his sword to Flight Lieutenant Ripley. On 24th Major Forster flew out to Labuan by Auster, and on 25th there was another Flight 200 supply drop.

McNeale, Hywood, Gore, Grinham, Wallace and Hodges on 3rd October proceeded south on foot to Keningau. This remainder of AGAS III flew out from the landing field there on 10th October 1945. Ripley made a trek north-west of Ranau to Rampayan for extraction by RAN workboat on 15th October. They had been on active service for just on two months following the war's end.

#### Endnotes

1. Correspondence 10/2/04
2. Interview 19/3/04
3. Correspondence 14/3/04
4. Correspondence 18/11/98
5. Interview November 1997

**KEVIN SMITH**

#### **GIFT FROM FAMILY OF PHILLIP DE BAUN**

The family of our recently deceased member Mr Phillip De Baun has graciously donated some of his military book collection to the Society for resale to members. These books will shortly be available for sale at one of our monthly meetings, generally in the five to ten dollar price range.

However, one publication is of greater value and we have set a minimum bid price on it at eighty-five dollars. Any member wishing to place a bid should contact our councillor Mr Harry Taplin, on 02 9489 1290. The inside fly page reads:

#### *THE 7TH FIELD ARTILLERY BRIGADE YANDOO*

*Containing publications of the organ of the 7th Field Artillery Brigade, Australian Imperial Forces, whilst on active service in France, and the return journey to Australia, Brigade Roll of Honour, Battery Casualty Lists, Nominal Roll, Brigade History, Maps, Xmas Cards, Novelty Programme, Menu Cards, etc.*

It is black soft cover with the cover slightly worn but is otherwise in good condition. It is lavishly illustrated with some excellent maps.

**HARRY TAPLIN**

## RECENT MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

### THE PELOPONNESIAN WARS

At the Society's May meeting we were given a very interesting and carefully researched talk by our member Mr Peter Xie. For our members who were unable to attend we set out the main points made by Mr Xie.

Essentially the Peloponnesian Wars were between alliances of Greek states led by Athens and Sparta. In 465 BC, a Helots revolt broke out in Sparta (the Helots were hereditary and publicly owned serfs from Laconia and Messenia whose forced servitude provided food supplies to the Spartans).

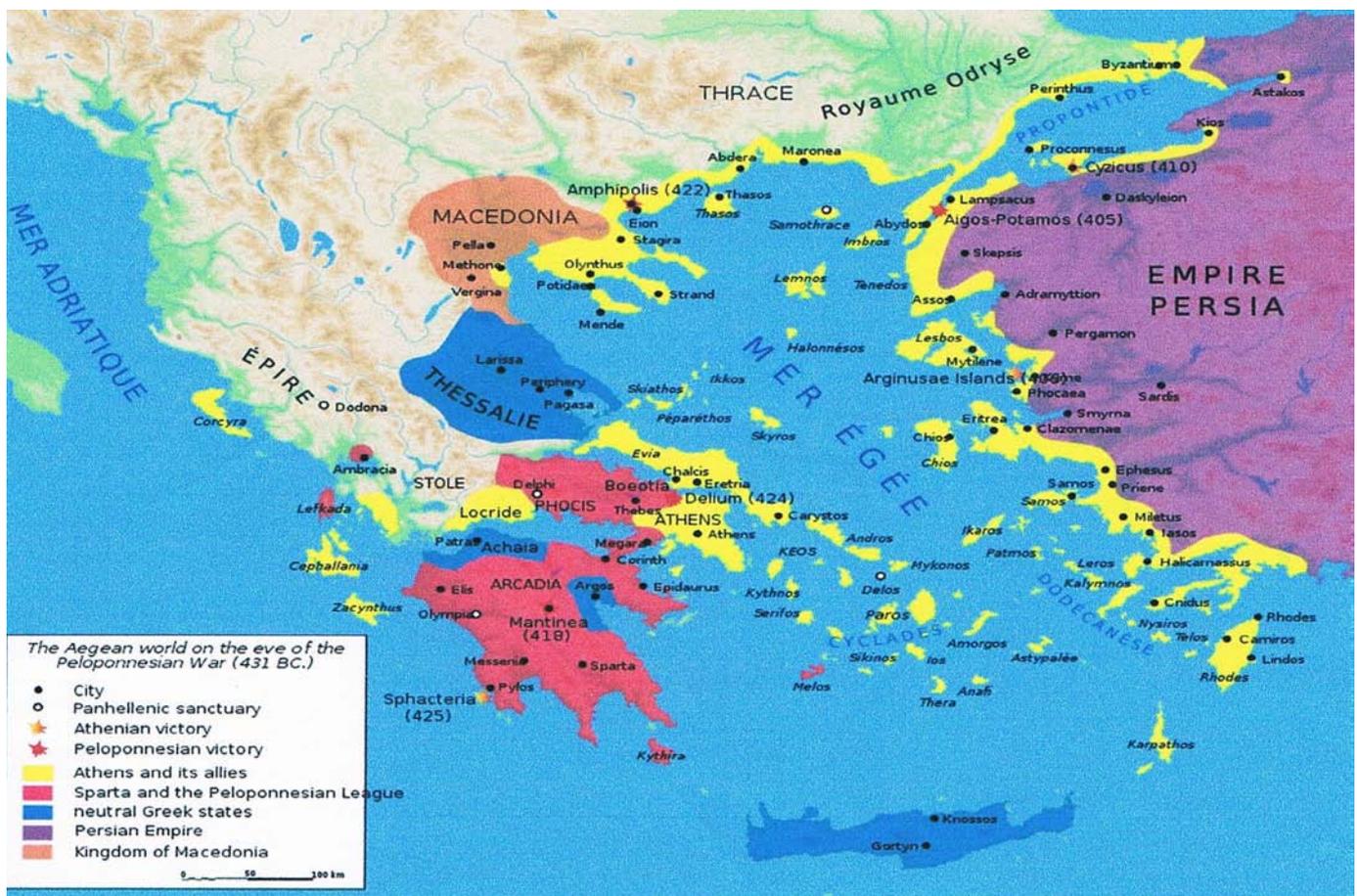
Athens sent a sizeable contingent to help Sparta suppress the revolt, but it was rejected by Sparta on its arrival. Subsequently Athens took advantage of the conflicts between Corinth and Megara, concluding an alliance with Megara, securing a foothold on the Isthmus of Corinth.

A glance at the map shows how this move was prejudicial to Spartan interests.

There followed fifteen years of conflict between Athens and Sparta known as the First Peloponnesian War that ended when both sides signed a thirty years peace treaty. Hostilities resumed in 431 BC with each side successful in a number of land and sea battles. It was during these conflicts that the illustrious names of Pericles, Thucydides and Alcibiades became part of history.

The war ended with the Athenian expedition against Syracuse. This resulted in the destruction of the Athenian expeditionary force and the loss of the Athenian fleet at Aegospotami. In 404 BC Athens itself was laid siege to and after the fall the walls were pulled down. The death and destruction occasioned by this conflict suggests that warfare had reached a new level of savagery. Another interesting fact is that the Athenian war effort was severely crippled by and outbreak of the plague whereas the Spartans barely suffered at all leading the Athenians and some later scholars to conclude that this might be an early example of biological war!

JOHN TWYFORD



## BOOK REVIEW

### **A SAPPERS' WAR: HOW THE LEGENDARY AUSSIE TUNNEL RATS FOUGHT THE VIETCONG**

**By Jimmy Thomson and Sandy Macgregor**

**Allen Unwin, 270pp RRP AUD \$27.99 inc. GST**

The Australian 'Sappers' of the Vietnam War, the Royal Australian Engineers, are best described by their motto, 'We make and we break'. That is, they performed a varied role as combat engineers in building roads, bridges, airfields, field defences and other infrastructure, much of it ultimately useful post war.

They also had an opposite role of removing or destroying obstacles such as mines, while under the constant threat of attack. Of course, they were always prepared to take up the role of fighting infantry alongside their fellow Australians.

Authors Jimmy Thompson and Sandy Macgregor tell the story of these brave men with a mixture of history and personal insights into the lives of those who served and achieved their intent to provide '... a sense of the Sappers' overall involvement, rather than a series of dates and events' (p 4).

The history of 'Sappers' purportedly dates to the Assyrians in the 7th century BC. The name Sapper, apparently derives from the French word sappe, or a zigzag trench, an innovation constructed to advance troops and cannon in the siege of a fortification, which would enable covering fire so the opponent's defenses might be breached. In 1855, Captain T.W.J. Connolly (1815-1885), Historian to the Royal Sappers and Miners, asked, 'What is a Sapper? This versatile genius ... is a man of all work of the Army and the public-astronomer, geologist, surveyor, draughtsman, artist, architect, traveler, explorer, antiquary, mechanic, diver, soldier and sailor; ready to do anything or go anywhere; in short, he is a Sapper.'

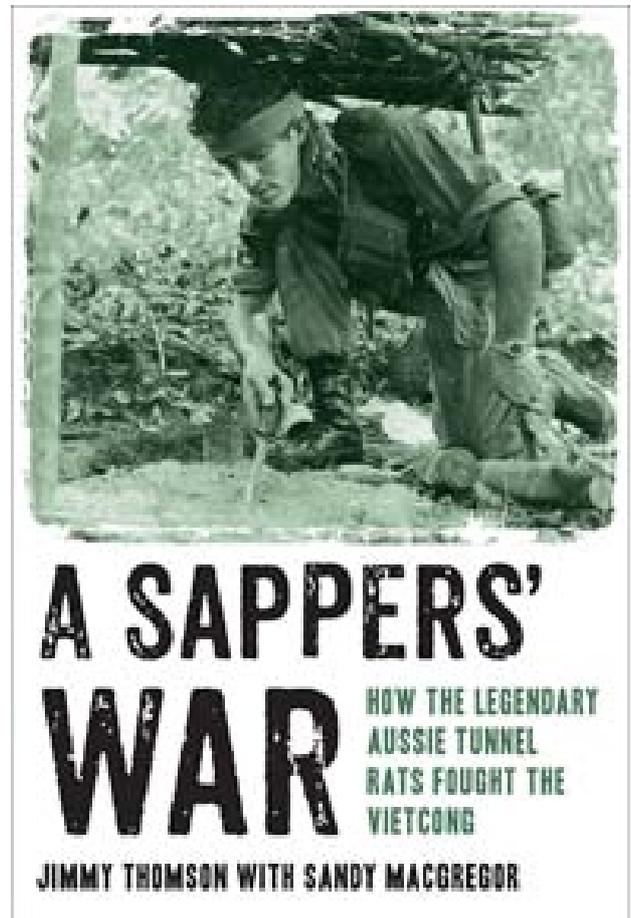
The role of a Sapper has, of course, evolved into the modern broad-skilled fighting engineer role and in Vietnam, the Australian Sappers would once again be called up to innovate and create new ways to achieve their mission. The needs, especially of infantry and armour in that conflict required embedded support using individual Sappers and small teams out-front clearing mines

and other obstacles was core to an organisational change from a more traditional larger group role.

The new size and structure would mean greater demands from small units as '...there was no handbook to work from, no tried and tested set of instructions. The game had changed profoundly for Sappers and they were ... making up the rules as they went along' (p 36).

The book opens with the kind of experience that was Vietnam, one day training in Sydney Harbour, the next directing air strikes along the DMZ. The book then covers 'Operation Crimp', in January 1966, where the US troops were to drive the Vietcong from the Iron Triangle area, pushing north into a large ambush led by Australian troops.

There, 3 Field Group of Sappers made an important contribution as they found and thoroughly investigated 'a virtual underground city, with tonnes of weapons captured and reams of documents discovered' (p 24) resulting in a large amount of intelligence that changed the general orders for the rest of the war.



Following Operation Crimp, Lieutenant General John Wilton proposed Australian troops have their own area of operation to fight independently of the Americans, which would also aid the integration of the arrival of the first large group of Nasho's into the country. Australia assumed responsibility for Phuc Toy Province in March 1966, which then became the centre for Australian operations for the balance of the war and where much of the book is based.

Winning 'Hearts and Minds' of the Vietnamese people was an important political goal of the Allies and the Australian 17th Construction Squadron 'Little Bear' (adopting the bear symbol for the Squadron's 21st anniversary) unit's experience is noteworthy. Investment in a civil affairs strategy was important, as a way to undermine support for the Vietcong as such support was critical for the Vietcong to operate throughout the country. The construction of roads, bridges, schools and the like was even valued by the Vietcong as they expected to be running the country and apparently 'the NVA had issued a decree anyone displaying the Little Bear was not to be targeted' (p 194) and the Unit benefited from this unintentional free pass for the balance of the conflict. Stories of mines are throughout the book as Sappers not only place them but also had to remove them and the personal stories are poignant.

One example was a Sapper's vivid memory of seeing a demonstration of the 'Jumping Jack' mine forty years earlier, '... observed from 100 metres away. I remember the puff of smoke and the pop out of the ground – you have just got time to think, 'This is not too bad' – then you observe the red ball of fire when a pound of TNT encased in eight pounds of cast iron explodes a metre off the ground with a crack that I have never forgotten. Like everyone there, I wondered what demented bastard had invented such a thing' (p 135).

Humour, perhaps sometimes of the black type, also was present. As one Sapper reported, '... somewhere out in swampland. I went arse over tit after tripping on a tree root. My rifle ended up sticking out of the mud in a perfect vertical stance ... but I wasn't as bad as the forward scout who was carrying an F1 sub-machine gun and tripped like I had. I don't know how he did it, but he actually managed to shoot himself in the arse. Explain that to the folks back home!' (p 224).

In all, the book was lively and, more importantly, stayed true to the author's intent and presented the Sapper as the kind of bloke we would want serving alongside any of us. Is there a truer compliment?

**TOM ALGEO**

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## UPCOMING EVENT

### GETTYSBURG AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

The Military History Society of New South Wales Incorporated proudly presents Mr Scott Simpson, Diplomat, US Consulate Sydney, who will explore the themes and reasons why the Battle of Gettysburg and the American Civil War in general occurred and its historical impact on the United States. This will be an interactive session, so those attending are encouraged to perform some prior reading / research. This is a FREE event but RSVP is essential by Wednesday 5 June 2013 as numbers are restricted.

**Saturday 8 June 2013 at 2pm**

Building 113 Victoria Barracks Paddington

Telephone: (02) 9660 7225  
0418 400 825

Email: john.twyford@uts.edu.au  
bhow0340@bigpond.net.au

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## FROM THE PUBLISHER

I trust that our members will find material of interest in the Autumn issue of *Reconnaissance*. We have been fortunate to have two contributions from members in this issue and I urge members to retire to the warmth of their studies and prepare some material. As this issue exceeds our allocated word length my remarks are confined to reminding members that Dr Kevin Smith has advised that the May edition of his newsletter is now available. The publication may be obtained by contacting Kevin at the following address: helkev@tpg.co.au.

**JOHN TWYFORD**

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