At last the first signs of Spring after the coldest winter in more than forty years. For our Association, whilst there have been one or two events, for many of us it has been more a time of sensible hibernation. Of those activities that have occupied some members, albeit few in number, have been Reserve Forces Day on Sunday 5th July and the Nek Dinner at Wangaratta, neither of which I was able to attend, being out of the country. There are reports of each elsewhere in this issue.

There have been a number of enquiries as to when and where the forthcoming Annual General Meeting is to be held. Later than usual this year, a consequence of our Secretary’s Army posting for duty interstate, it is now scheduled for Sunday 25th October at 11.00 am. Given the increased security requirements and consequent problems they cause civilians at Watsonia, the meeting will probably be held at the Rising Sun Hotel, Raglan Street, South Melbourne; but all that is subject to confirmation.

At the AGM there will be much discussion of the proposed Association Band and whilst, in its embryonic state it has already had some public exposure, there are still a number of issues to be resolved. There will also be the usual election of office bearers for the coming twelve months and I would invite anyone interested in joining the Committee in any capacity to make their interest known to the Secretary. All appropriate paper work for the AGM will be circulated in accordance with our rules well before the appointed date.

In conclusion might I thank the Committee members for their support and involvement over the past three months or so and in particular wish our Editor, Jeff Heuston, well as he retires from a job that he has performed particularly well for many years … well done and thank you, Jeff, Finally, I was proud and pleased to again represent the Association, in speaking at the Annual Family History Feast, held in the State Library Theatrette on 10th August. Both our present Regiment and the grand old 4th Light Horse entertained the 300 strong audience.

Ich Dien
David Holloway
The Announcement.
No less than fifty years after the event, there was recognition at last (or so it seemed). On 11 May 2015, the Governor-General approved the awarding of the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation (CGWP) to Australian units under command of the United States 173rd Airborne Brigade. The Army newspaper listed the units whose members were eligible.

A person interested in such things, we shall call him 'John', was astonished. The only RAAC unit listed was '1st Armoured Personnel Carrier Troop'. There was no reference to 1 Troop, A Squadron, 4\textsuperscript{th}/19\textsuperscript{th} PWLH, the first Australian Armoured unit to be deployed on active service since the Second World War. How could such a thing happen? He contacted the Department of Defence to make them aware of the error which would seemingly mean that those posted to Vietnam as members 1 Troop, A Squadron, 4/19 PWLH would be ineligible for the award. "No, this is not the case", was the response. Irrespective of the title their units, all those whose names were listed on the nominal roll would be eligible.

The 'Compromise' Proposal.
'John' then learnt that the 4\textsuperscript{th}/19\textsuperscript{th} PWLH Regiment Association had requested the assistance of the RAAC Corporation to make representations to Defence to have the list of units amended to include 1 Troop, A Squadron, 4\textsuperscript{th}/19\textsuperscript{th} PWLH. What happened next was just as hard to comprehend as the original omission.

The RAAC Corporation publically advised that Defence had proposed a compromise title '1 APC Troop (A Sqn, 4\textsuperscript{th}/19\textsuperscript{th} PWLH)', and not only was this supported, but "it could be reasonably interpreted as now becoming Army policy". Understanding how this happened requires a moment to look back into history and how it comes to be documented.

The 'Official History' (OH) is generally regarded as the authority when matters of fact have to be established. The first volume for the Vietnam War lists '1\textsuperscript{st} Armoured Personnel Carrier Troop' in the Order of Battle (ORBAT) of the 1RAR Battalion Group during the period September 1965 to March 1966. No other Armoured unit is listed. The text of the OH refers to 1 APC Troop being part of 4\textsuperscript{th}/19\textsuperscript{th} PWLH. So it is that other publications, such as that which specifically deals with M113A1s in Australian Service, refers to "the arrival of 1 APC Trp [sic] in South Vietnam". What's the explanation for this? It turns out that the letter from Defence that the Official Historian relied on for his listing of the ORBAT ('Allotment of Units for Special Duty', 15 October 1979) was wrong. So, a mistake in a primary document leads to a mistake in the Official History, which results in the mistake being perpetuated 50 years after the event. Should be easy to fix.

The Quest to Correct 'History'
The RAAC Corporation had recommended to the RAAC Head of Corps (HOC) that the compromise proposal be accepted. The 4\textsuperscript{th}/19\textsuperscript{th} PWLH Regiment Association, however, believed that it was important that the first Australian Armoured unit to be deployed on active service since the Second World War, should be correctly acknowledged, in their words "We do not ask to be 'satisfied' with another name. We just ask that the correct name be used when referring to the Troop and to the men that served in that unit". They made their own submission to the HOC.
'John' did his bit as well. He contacted the Official Historian who quickly acknowledged the mistake, advising that he would amend the ORBAT in the Official History to list 1 Troop, A Squadron, 4th/19th PWLH, as having been deployed to Vietnam from June 1965 to March 1966. This information was passed to the Army History Unit. One would think that would be the end to it.

But the powerful RAAC Corporation had strongly supported Defence's compromise proposal. Thank heavens for historians. The Army History Unit's recommendation to the HOC was that the designation to be adopted should be: 1 Troop, A Squadron, 4th/19th PWLH June 1965 to 31 March 1966 (redesignated as 1 APC Troop, 1 APC Squadron from late Sep 1965). It was agreed that 1 Troop, A Squadron, 4th/19th PWLH was the first Australian armoured unit to be deployed on active service since the Second World War. "While 1 Troop was redesignated and became part of 1 APC Squadron in September 1965, that information didn't necessarily make it to the troop. As a result, the troop should remain listed as 1 Troop, A Squadron, 4th/19th PWLH for the duration of their tour. The bracketed statement regarding redesignation is, however, factual and should be included". The HOC accepted this recommendation, together with that of the 4 PWLH Regiment Association, and advised Defence to amend their records accordingly. Implementation was immediate.

The Controversy About the Timing of the Name Change.
One might have thought that it was all over. But, when did 1 Troop A Squadron 4th/19th PWLH, commanded by Lt R K Hill, become 1 APC Troop? The officer appointed to command 1 APC Squadron when it was raised in Australia in July 1965, was Major Bob Hagerty. He wanted there to be no doubt that he had informed Lt Hill of the formal change of title in September 1965. The Army History Unit, however, was bound to take note of Major General Hopkins' statement in the history of Australian Armour, that Bob Hill told him ten years or so after returning from Vietnam, that he had received no "official advice" of the new name and retained the 4th/19th title in the field until March 1966, when the PM announced the deployment of 1 APC Sqn to Vietnam. One would not be too surprised if the young commander of an independent APC troop on active service might have 'turned a blind eye', when told from Australia of the need to rename his troop.

Nevertheless, the Army History Unit saw it to be important, to include reference to the 'formal' date of name change, as referred to above by the OC 1 APC Squadron, i.e. '1 Troop, A Squadron, 4th/19th PWLH June 1965 to 31 March 1966 (redesignated as 1 APC Troop, 1 APC Squadron from late Sep 1965)'

Postscript.
It might have been thought that the outcome was a positive one. The place in history of the first Australian Armoured unit to be deployed on active service since the Second World War, had been secured. Not so for all, however. One person, who obviously believes that once history is 'official', it should never be changed, had this to say publically:

“So much for Truth, so much for History let it be on the consciences of those who have perpetrated this falsehood. How can we be Honourable and live a lie? 'John' in the fullness of time and beyond this life you will be judged”.

Quite sad really, but on a brighter note: A historical anecdote re the late Lt Col R K Hill, MC, RAAC. A friend of his mentioned that just before he died, Bob told him that he was the first member of the 1 RAR Battalion Group [other than the advance party which arrived by air] to set foot in Vietnam.
“R. K. Hill’s carrier was the first over the side of HMAS Sydney and first ashore. That’s the type of leader that he was, always to the fore”.
This was a comment by Stuart Hart, a member of 1 Troop, A Squadron 4\textsuperscript{th}/19th PWLH, regarding their arrival for Vietnam in June 1965.

It’s quite conceivable that the landing craft carrying Bob Hill’s carrier beached, the APC drove ashore and, with the others when landed, formed a defensive perimeter, the landing craft then brought 1RAR members ashore prior to the heavy equipment being unloaded, in the course of which, R K Hill jumped down from c/s 10A and became the first one of those beaching at the time to step on Vietnamese soil. No chocolate bars, but a piece of the RAAC’s, and Australian Army’s, history none the less

(Editorial note; John who is a respected member of the Armoured Corps Family, has chosen to publish under this pseudonym, he was instrumental in the final result together with the AWM, HOC, RSM Corps, Army History Unit, and Regimental Association, we are grateful to them all).

WARD. John. Daryl 3775967 4\textsuperscript{th}/19\textsuperscript{th} P.W.L.H.
The President, Committee and Members of regret the passing of our respected member Daryl on Dec. 16, 2014. Condolences to John’s family. RIP

Here’s a link to the Seymour Telegraph article about the Commemoration. 


MARKING THE 50\textsuperscript{TH} ANNIVERSARY OF THE PONY SOLDIERS

Master of Ceremonies, Association Secretary Mr Lindsay Burke, who also conceived of and executed the entire event with very limited assistance from the outset.
Invited guests dignitaries, Our CO and State Shadow Veterans Minister and Association members.

The Plaque to be placed, (when a minor alteration), and a view of the Spectacular Vietnam Veteran's Walk

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Walk. The original Hotel Plaque, refurbished, and framed.
Presented to the Prince of Wales Hotel Seymour, as well as a new Commemorative one from the Regimental Association Honouring the Original Pony Soldiers of 1 Troop A Squadron 4th/19th PWLH Regiment.

Serving Members of our Regiment making up the Catafalque party, L – R

LCPL Ben Jensen - B Sqn
LCPL (Now CPL), Chris McAleer - B Sqn
TPR Jayden Grech - B Sqn
TPR Tim Wright - B Sqn
TPR Tim Thompson A Sqn
TPR Matt Smith - A Sqn

A splendid representation of the commitment and standard of our Regiment. All proudly honouring their predecessors.

Catafalque Party, rest on Arms Reversed, while MC Lindsay Burke, CO LTCOL John Molnar and one of the original Pony Soldiers Mr Rex Warren, unveiled the plaque, Rex had travelled from South Australia for the event
Old friends and new mingling over a great meal, and enjoying the company of the brotherhood of service.

A well deserved meal, and one special moment shared with our newly awarded Roy Arnott OAM. A well deserved award to a good friend, and dedicated servant of the Regimental Family for a long time.

The Band of the 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment Association.

This spectacular Band was resurrected after The Regimental Band was wound up and moved to Army Band Melbourne. Their Level of commitment and attachment to the Regiment is outstanding. You do us proud!
The floral tribute from the Regiment, laid by LTCOL John Molnar CO.

Very grateful thanks to Joe Linford, Steve Munn and Chris Ryan for the photos.

The Cenotaph and Catafalque Party just prior to the unveiling of The commemorative plaque.

This photo shows a great mix of intergenerational mischief, all enjoying good food, good wine, and the best of company, Brad Hall and Chris Ryan are in particular no strangers to mischief.
Our good friend, Unit History Room Curator, Trustee, Association Treasurer, Former SSM and many things to many people, Roy Arnott has finally been recognised for his tireless efforts to the benefit of the Regimental family. Heartiest Congratulations, and well done to those who conspired in obtaining this award for him.


Nek Dinner

The first wave of light horsemen from the 8th Light Horse Regiment were shot down by Turkish rifle and machine-gun fire. The second line, also from the 8th, scrambled over the dead and wounded of the first line to make their attack, and suffered the same fate. Cancellation of the attack was proposed, but was rejected by Major John Antill, who had taken over effective command of the 3rd Brigade. The third line of soldiers, from the 10th Light Horse, went over the top and were also shot down. Cancellation was again suggested, but before a decision was made, the right flank of the fourth line charged as a result of a misunderstanding, and the rest of the line followed. They too were mowed down by the Turkish fire. The 8th Light Horse suffered 234 casualties, 154 fatal; and the 10th, suffered 138 casualties, 80 fatal.

The Nek was a vitally important position on the northern end of the ANZAC front line and the scene of a tragic attack by the 3rd Light Horse Brigade at dawn on 7 August 1915. It was a narrow bridge of land that stretched between Russell's Top and Baby 700 across the top of Monash Valley. The Turkish trenches on the slopes of Baby 700 allowed them to dominate the Australian positions below. As part of the diversionary effort for the August Offensive, the 3rd Light Horse was ordered to attack the Turkish trenches at the Nek at 4.30am on 7 August to support an attack on Baby 700 by New Zealand troops who were to have captured Chunuk Bair the previous evening. The attack commenced with a bombardment of the Turkish positions by a destroyer steaming offshore, but the bulk of the shells fell beyond their target and the bombardment ended seven minutes early. Instead of charging at this point, the officers of the light horse held their men back until the appointed time for the attack arrived. This gave the Turks time to man their positions, having sought shelter during the bombardment.

Source: Australian War Memorial
On 9th August 2015, at 4 CSSB Wangaratta, Commanding Officer LTCOL John Molnar hosted a dinner to commemorate the centenary of the 8th Light Horse Regiment's attack at the Nek. A total of 110 serving and former members of the Regiment, members of the 4/19 PWLH and 8/13 VMR Associations were present. Included in the strong 8/13 VMR Association presence was that Association's patron, Bill Tilly MP.

A fine meal was provided by the caterers of 4 CSSB supported by unit recruits acting as stewards. These new members received a valuable insight into the Regiment's history and traditions.

The 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment Association Band provided musical support for the occasion. Members welcomed the Band's revival in its new form.

Several people addressed the gathering:

- **LT Sam Abdelsayed** told the story of the Nek,

- **CPL Chris Youings** provided a personal touch by telling the story of No 208 LCPL John Baker

- **LTCOL Andrew Abbott, CI School of Armour**, representing Head of Corps, provided a briefing of the role and progress of RAAC in Plan Beersheba.
It was very pleasing to note that LTCOL Ian Upjohn CSC, has been appointed Queen’s Counsel. Yet another significant event for our Regimental family, that a former Commanding Officer should have been so distinguished.

Some food for thought here

The RAAC ARES ‘Crisis’

If the ARES is not equipped to fulfil its role, the multi-role ‘ready’ brigade will not be able to function effectively on the battlefield. The absence of supplementary cavalry and mounted infantry capability, will result in a much weakened force that is able to be committed to battle. Attempting to plug this capability gap with AFVs which are totally outmatched by the enemy, will cause even more casualties. Armouredadvocates recently suggested that, rather than Plan Beersheba with all three multi-role brigades fully resourced, is it possible, as an interim measure, to focus on the resources needed for the ‘ready’ brigade, with the other two brigades in the cycle operating with restricted assets?

What are the RAAC resources needed by the ‘ready’ brigade? Obviously the single tank, cavalry and APC squadrons provided by the ‘ready’ ACR, are insufficient for all operations that the standing force might have to undertake in all likely contingencies. So, what RAAC ‘force structure’ does this thinking generate? One view, in terms of ‘ready’ organisation, is: two tank squadrons; two cavalry squadrons and two APC squadrons. The second cavalry and APC squadron capability can, of course, be provided by the ARES. Armouredadvocates concluded that there were organisational and prioritisation needs which follow from the above, but these were for another post.

A Possible RAAC ARES Force Structure.

There are six RAAC ARES units (incl 3/4 Cav Regt when it is raised). Plan Beersheba has these linked with the six ARES brigades, with these, in turn, being 'paired' with the multi-role ARA brigades in the Plan Beersheba force generation cycle.

Ideally each RAAC ARES unit would comprise a cav sqn and an APC sqn. This would satisfy the ready brigade composition referred to above. However, the concept of all ARES units being fully resourced is unrealistic.

In the times of old when some CMF units were assigned to a tank role, training was achieved by having a relatively small number of tanks held under unit arrangements and a training pool held at Puckapunyal. Individual and crew training were conducted under unit arrangements, with troop/squadron training completed using the 'pool' vehicles.

Is such a concept viable again? If not, there must be other options which can allow the RAAC ARES to contribute to the Corps role to: "locate, identify, destroy or capture the enemy, by day or night, in combination with other arms, using fire and manoeuvre". To place the RAAC ARES in the role of dismounted light cavalry (as advocated by the RAAC Corporation) begs the question of whether or not the rationale for the continuance of the RAAC ARES is viable. Thoughts re the “other” options will follow. Authored by LTCOL Bruce Cameron MC “Armoured Advocates”.
This is a letter to one of our former soldiers, who set a benchmark, along with his twin brother, Richard. Both Officers, both Vietnam Veterans and both highly regarded by their brother Officers and their troops alike. A long time coming Clarry, but we concur with the content and the sentiment, congratulations on the acknowledgement mate. (Included with Clarry’s consent).

Read the full account in the E-Book sent with this edition. It’s an excellent read and tells a little known story of one of our own, of honour, integrity and mateship.
This will be my final edition of Plumes after taking on the role after Harry Austen’s passing. In that time, there have been many changes in the format, content and distribution, I think it fair to say, that since my first attempt in September 2009, we have come a long way. In those days our distribution list was Association members only, and by snail mail. We now are predominantly distributed electronically and have many recipients of the RAAC family, who have not necessarily served with the Regiment, but have a keen interest in the Regiment and the Corps family as a whole, and many other Associations with whom we share information and share newsletters. To now have such recipients as, HOC, RSM RAAC, many former officers and luminaries of the Corps, is a matter of enormous pride to me, and quite an important achievement for our Association.

Throughout the recent dare I say “Vigorous” debate over the recognition of the original pony Soldiers, it was blindingly apparent that there were some major differences in recollections, and like any family, there were some passionate exchanges, my only observation throughout, (and I was basically the conduit for the passage of information between those actively involved, you may ask why, I know I certainly do), was the position of the RAAC Corporation, which vacillated to and fro on a number of occasions, leaving others to battle on. A very disappointing development, in fact as one participant put it, “It wouldn’t have been so difficult if the RAAC Corporation had just done nothing, by actively supporting the title 1st APC Tp (4/19 PWLH) in the context of it becoming Army policy everybody else’s job became twice as hard.” Frankly I concur. However, for the most part, my view is, it’s time for wounds to heal, and to accept the result and move forward in a united way, those who tried to claim undue credit are known, and those who did honourable battle for the right reasons should now forgive and forget, and re-bond as a united Corps family.

Thank you to those who have encouraged and inspired over the years, in particular Roy Arnott, who was once my SSM. We still have many events of note over the next few years, and hopefully YOU, the members will send in photos and articles on where you’ve been and what you’ve done. OPSEC will always be taken into consideration when the newsletter is published and the larger Regimental Family are always interested in the goings on around the place. REMEMBER, both the Association AND the newsletter are your inheritance, its intention is to help keep the ties strong, probably more after your active service, but, this is where the bonds are formed. I now have many close friendships from my time at the Regiment, with people who were my seniors, peer group and current serving members and many I didn’t even know. I cannot encourage you strongly enough to where ever possible, USE your Association, be a part of it, and you will all serve each other well into the future. To those of you who submitted articles, photos and other input, information, guidance and even criticism, thank you, I appreciated it all and I hope you will do likewise for our new Editor, Ich Dien, Jeff.

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