



THE OBSERVATION POST

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

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

Volume 15, number 12 – DECEMBER 2025



REMEMBRANCE DAY

In various local commemorative services, our members took the opportunity to privately reflect and remember. The 604 Squadron Air Force Cadets again provided Catafalque Parties for school assemblies at Modbury High School and Endeavour College – the Modbury Catafalque Party carried innocuous .303-inch SMLE rifles representative of the era of the Malayan wars. State President Paul Rosenzweig attended the Endeavour College service as a volunteer with the Air Force Cadets. This service notably acknowledged the 80th anniversary of the end of World War 2 being commemorated this year.

This 'Rising Sun' hat badge (pictured above) was given to a local Sarawakian by a member of Kuching Force in late 1945 following the liberation of Sarawak by men of the 9th Australian Division, Second Australian Imperial Force.



NOTICES

BRANCH COMMITTEE 2025-2026

Paul Rosenzweig OAM
*President, Secretary
Public Affairs Officer*

Don Cameron
*Vice-President
Ceremonial Officer*

Paul Bayliss

Jenny Cameron
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Vicki Crannaford
Assistant Treasurer

Di Davies

Beverley Dubois
Minutes Secretary

Jeff Hiscock

Mal White
Merchandise Officer

* * *

Major Quentin Castle
Branch Chaplain

THANK YOU

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

BRANCH UPDATES 'KEEPING IN THE LOOP'

In October, the Royal Marines marked their 361st Birthday. His Majesty King Charles III, Captain-General of the Royal Marines, has remarked: *"The Royal Marines have an unparalleled history, both on land and at sea, I draw immense inspiration from their courage, determination, self-discipline and a remarkable capacity to ensure in the most extreme environments"*.

Our National Secretary Maria Seddon has provided reports and images on the Malayan Emergency National Commemorative Service in Canberra, and we have included memorial pieces on her father in the November and December newsletters. Maria wrote to us: *"The work you are doing to highlight the history and the men who served is invaluable"*.

Member Bob McNeill in Toowoomba has sent us his appreciation for the monthly newsletter and special issues, which he says help him keep up to date with our events and history in general.

We look forward to seeing you at the Christmas Lunch. Otherwise, on behalf of the Branch Committee we wish you all a relaxing holiday break and a joyful Christmas, and we send you our best wishes for the new year.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Christmas Lunch: 12 for 12.30 pm,
Saturday 13 December 2025
Maid of Auckland Hotel



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

January Social Lunch: 1200h Friday 16 January 2026
Lunch get-together only, Maid of Auckland Hotel

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

Saturday 28 February: the 30th anniversary of the formation of the
"National Malaya and Borneo Veterans
Association (Australia) Incorporated", as a
Company with Directors, registered with the
Australian Securities and Investments
Commission (29 February 1996)

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

April meeting: 1115h Friday 17 April 2026
Maid of Auckland Hotel, followed by lunch



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



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



COMMEMORATION



National Secretary Maria Seddon in Canberra, proudly wearing her NMBVAA scarf, honouring her late father Private Arthur Seddon who served in Malaya with the 1st Battalion, The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire).



Mrs Jan Algar at the Malaya & Borneo Veterans Day service, honouring her late husband Bombardier Barry Algar of 101 Field Battery and later 111 Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery.



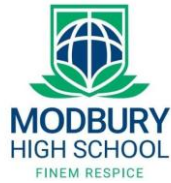
CENTENARY OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN CORPS OF SIGNALS

On 9 November this year, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal inspected a parade to mark the Signals Corps' centenary, wearing the uniform of Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals (an appointment held since 1977). Princess Anne wears the following medals:

- Extra Companion of the Queen's Service Order (NZ)
- Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal
- Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal
- Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal
- Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal
- Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal
- King Charles III Coronation Medal
- Naval Long Service and Good Conduct Medal with two clasps
- Canadian Forces' Decoration with three clasps
- Ultra-Long Service Medal of the Order of Saint John
- New Zealand 1990 Commemoration Medal



COMMEMORATION



MODBURY HIGH SCHOOL Tuesday 11 November 2025

604 Squadron again provided a ceremonial detachment in support of the Modbury High School Remembrance Day Assembly. Cadets provided an armed Catafalque Party, Honour Guard and Flag Orderly.



ENDEAVOUR COLLEGE Tuesday 11 November 2025

604 Squadron also provided a ceremonial detachment to the Endeavour College Remembrance Day Service, with an unarmed Catafalque Party which included Air Force Cadets from 601, 604 and 613 Squadrons.





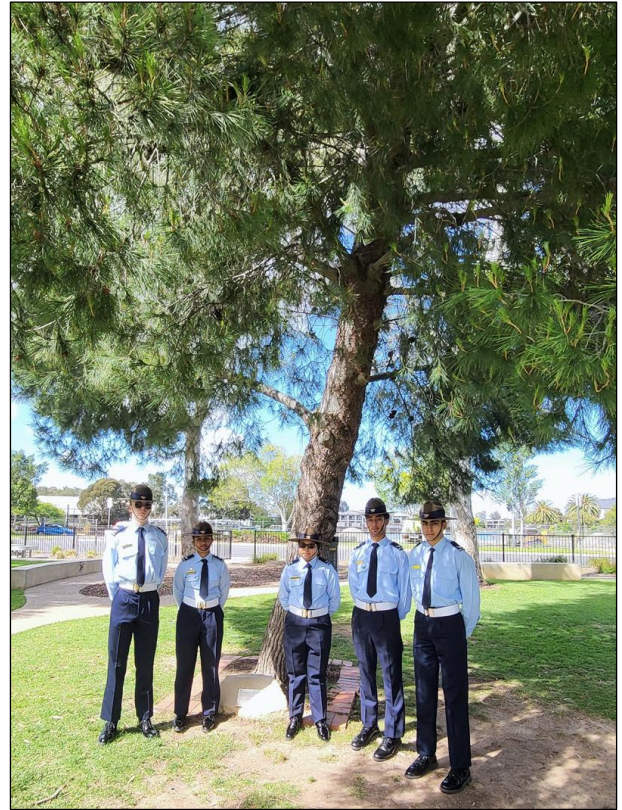
COMMEMORATION



For the Modbury High School Remembrance Day commemorative assembly, the Catafalque Party carried innocuous .303-inch SMLE rifles representative of the era of the Malayan wars.



The Catafalque Party Commander at Modbury was Cadet Warrant Officer Katarina Czechowicz: she has supported three of our Malaya & Borneo Veterans Day services.



Prior to the Endeavour College Remembrance Day assembly, the participating Air Force Cadets paid their respects at the college's Lone Pine, a descendant of the original 'Lone Pine' at Gallipoli.



This Lone Pine tree was dedicated in April 2009, to the memory of all Australians who have served and died in war. Lest we Forget



CONTRIBUTED IMAGES AND INFORMATION



NMBVAA National Secretary Maria Seddon sent us this image of her father Arthur during the Malayan Emergency. Arthur is featured in the 'In Memoriam' sections in the November and December newsletters.

Maria said: "I did find the attached photo of Dad on active service which I love as he looks so happy. It must have been at the start of his service! He would be so chuffed to know that he was in the newsletter".

Private Arthur Seddon (1935-2016) deployed with the 1st Battalion, The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) to the northern Malay Peninsula in 1957-58.

Visible on the right (left of the vehicle) is the badge of the 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade Group

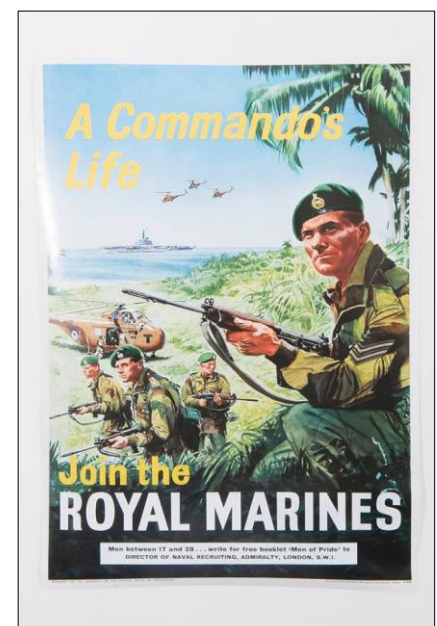
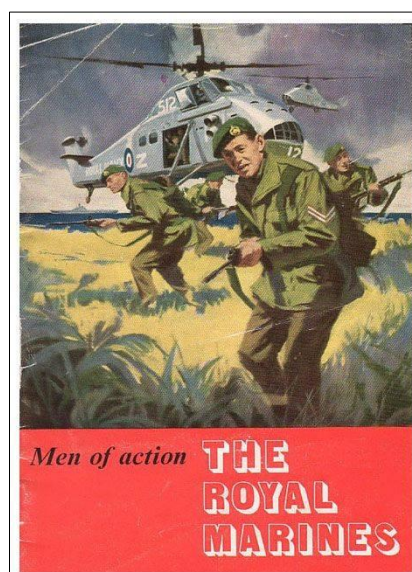
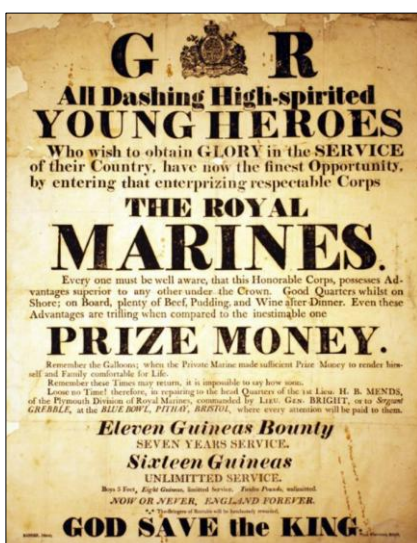
Could any of our Transport or REME members identify the various other markings on the vehicle?

ROYAL MARINES BIRTHDAY

The special day of Tuesday 28 October 2025 marked the 361st Birthday of the Royal Marines.

The RM was founded on 28 October 1664 under King Charles II, and was originally known as the Duke of York and Albany's Maritime Regiment of Foot.

361 years on, the Royal Marines remain the spearhead of vital operations as an elite amphibious fighting force. Today, its elite commandos are deployed in some 20 countries around the world to protect British interests, reinforce regional stability, and deter adversaries.





CONTRIBUTED IMAGES AND INFORMATION



Adelaide High School

Amy Worswick, who is coordinating the Adelaide High School Old Scholar honour project, wrote to us after receiving our latest newsletter:

I have very much appreciated getting the 'Observation Post' and the Air Cadets Bulletin with the details of Pilot Officer Alex Pritchard. It is always a tearful story, it touches the heart the way it's told and the sense of duty in a man still young.

The Vietnam Honour Board is progressing with the carving and assembly nearly finished. Soon it will be taken to the gold letterer for the names to go on.

Three Old Scholars saw Army service during the Malayan Emergency: WO2 Ernest Gerald Crooks (3RAR, 1957-59), Private Brian Howard Ferrell (1RAR, died 23 August 1960) and our inaugural Branch President Ross Ortmann (2RAR, 1956-58).

Brigadier Sidney John Bleechmore and Colonel (Colin) Angus Ewen Fraser served in Singapore in 1960, but the eligibility period for the General Service Medal with clasp 'MALAYA' had ceased on 31 January 1959 for service in Singapore.

Lieutenant-Colonel William Orril Rodgers OBE was an officer of the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps who served as the Regimental Medical Officer of 2RAR at Camp Terendak in 1962-63.

The Emergency service of Commander James Maxwell Kelly DSC RAN is unconfirmed at present.

In the October newsletter, we listed three Old Scholars who saw operational service in British North Borneo (Sabah) with Royal Australian Engineers units on Operation 'Granite', receiving the Campaign Service Medal, 1962– with clasp 'BORNEO'.

During Confrontation, an additional two Old Scholars saw operational service on Borneo.

2nd Lieutenant David Maxwell Chambers was a Platoon Commander (7 Platoon, 'C' Company) with 4RAR in Sarawak from 14 April 1966 to 2 September 1966. Battalion HQ was located at Cambrai Camp near Bau, and 'C' Company was initially held as a battalion reserve at Old Bau Camp. 'C' Company deployed to the defensive position near Kampung Bokah from May to September 1966.

Corporal Tom Bader Douglas also served with 4RAR in Sarawak from 26 April to 17 August 1966.

Able Seaman Quartermaster Gunner John Creswell Thompson served with the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve (BCFESR) aboard HMAS *Duchess*: Malay Peninsula and Borneo, 1965.

If anyone has an ancestor who was an Adelaide High School Old Scholar and military veteran, please let us know so we can pass the details to Amy.



Gurkha Welfare Trust. This postcard released by the Gurkha Welfare Trust shows a Gurkha veteran wearing the Campaign Service Medal 1962– with clasp 'BORNEO'. Further detail can be found in this month's special feature.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust is a British charity established in 1969. It is the principal UK charity for the provision of aid to Gurkha ex-servicemen and their dependants in their homeland of Nepal, and increasingly in the UK and elsewhere. The Patron of the Trust is King Charles III.

Each year, by tradition, all serving officers and other ranks in the Brigade of Gurkhas contribute a day's pay to the Trust.



PATRONAGE GARDEN RECEPTION

Wednesday 12 November 2025

The SA/NT Branch, NMBVAA is proud to have Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, as our Branch Patron.

Recently, Her Excellency and Mr Bunten hosted representatives of their patronage organisations at the annual Government House Patronage Garden Reception, an event that acknowledges the endeavours of these various organisations and the benefits they bring to the South Australian community. The SA/NT Branch was ably represented by Ian and Vicki Crannaford, and Jeff Hiscock. Some other Branch members were also in attendance, representing other associations with which they are affiliated.



GARDEN TOURS

10:45AM - 11:45AM

FREE ENTRY

BOOKINGS
REQUIRED



SEPTEMBER 5
OCTOBER 3

NOVEMBER 7
DECEMBER 5

JANUARY 9
FEBRUARY 6

MARCH 6
APRIL 10

MAY 1

LUNCH ON THE LAWN

12PM - 2PM • FREE ENTRY
BYO PICNIC



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
ADELAIDE





HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III

The crowned effigy of King Charles III, the 'CIIR' Royal Cipher, and the Tudor Crown are starting to appear on new service medals, insignia and currency throughout the Commonwealth.

From 1 August 2025, new crests bearing the Tudor Crown of King Charles III came into effect for the RAN, Australian Army and RAAF.

Similar changes are gradually taking place throughout other organisations such as the Australian Federal Police (see image right).

There is no objection to using two different designs simultaneously during the transition period – both versions of the crown are valid representations of Royal authority. The transition from the Tudor Crown used by King George VI to the St Edward's Crown of Queen Elizabeth II for example, was made over a ten year period.



The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) has similarly approved a change to its badge, incorporating the Tudor Crown of King Charles III (see image, far right).

This change ensures the RSL remains consistent with Royal protocols and acknowledges His Majesty King Charles III as the Patron of the League.

This is the latest in several changes to the RSL Badge over its 109-year history.

The floral emblems of the UK (the leek, rose, thistle and shamrock) have also been replaced: the Australian wattle is now joined by a sprig of rosemary and a poppy, the two main Australian symbols of remembrance of service and sacrifice.



We previously reported that the RAAF had introduced a new crest bearing the Tudor Crown of King Charles III.

Charles is not only King of Australia but also Marshal of the Royal Australian Air Force – was appointed on 19 October 2024 during his first Royal Visit to Australia as sovereign.

The design of the new Air Force crest was approved by the Chief of Air Force, and came into effect on 1 August.

The Air Force Badge was originally drawn by John Heaton-Armstrong from the United Kingdom College of Arms in 1939.

It was subsequently redrawn by the College of Arms in 1955 when the Tudor Crown of King George VI was replaced with the St Edward's Crown of Queen Elizabeth II.

The design of this new crest has involved more than just adopting the Tudor Crown.

It includes a new rendering of the Australian floral emblem of Golden Wattle, modelled on the Governor-General's cipher, and a return to the 'monumental' style typeface used in the original 1939 pattern.



No 604 SQUADRON, AAFC



Parent Information Days

11 and 18 October 2025

Term 4 is underway, and 604 Squadron has conducted four information sessions for parents and prospective recruits – with 22 potential Cadets attending on the first day, and 20 on the second. There are a further 14 Expressions of Interest being processed.

A number of Cadets supported these activities – sizing up the recruits, and doing drill and fieldcraft demonstrations (see below), with special prizes in the 'parent vs child' competitions! Can you spot the Cadet(s)? How many can you see?



Meanwhile, 'Romeo' Flight has officially been stood up for the 2026 recruit intake, with a newly promoted Cadet Sergeant as Flight Commander, and four newly promoted Cadet Corporals as the Section Commanders, taking up their roles.

The squadron is very fortunate to be able to say that they are currently oversubscribed with prospective recruits, and are also experiencing superb retention within the 2025 Cadet cohort.

They have started redirecting applicants to some of the neighbouring squadrons, or 44 Army Cadet Unit for those that live close to Hampstead Barracks but find that a parade night on Wednesday is not convenient.

AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS

604 SQUADRON || HEAR THE LION ROAR



INTEGRITY || TEAMWORK || RESPONSIBILITY




No 604 SQUADRON, AAFC

CADETS IN THE MEDIA

'Alumni Magazine'. The 'Alumni Magazine' is released quarterly by the Australian Air Cadets Alumni. The November issue includes a report on the squadron's visit to the South Australian Aviation Museum in Port Adelaide. This followed the Communications Skills Development weekends which allowed Cadets to develop their research, writing, photography, public speaking and communication skills, to allow the participants to conduct research on a topic of interest.

Among the historic aircraft found there, and photographed by our Cadets, were the Supermarine Spitfire MK Vc 'UP-O', Pilatus PC-9A 'A23-045', Dassault Government Aircraft Factory Mirage IIID 'A3-115', McDonnell Douglas / Boeing F/A-18A Hornet 'A21-32', and the Royal Australian Navy De Havilland DH-112 Sea Venom 'WZ931'.


Beneath the sweep of the General Dynamics F-111C strike bomber 'A8-132', the Communication Skills Development training participants received their Certificates of Achievement from the Commanding Officer.



ALUMNI Magazine
November 2025

What are Our Cadets up to?

VINTAGE AIRCRAFT




Supermarine Spitfire MK Vc 'A58-146', with Squadron code 'UP-O'; image by CCPL Rashmi Adiga

A group of Air Force Cadets from No 604 Squadron (Hampstead Barracks) recently participated in two residential training weekends at Keswick Barracks to develop their research, writing, photography, public speaking and general communication skills. On the fourth day they made a visit to the South Australian Aviation Museum in Port Adelaide to conduct research on a topic of interest.

Read more about the South Australian Aviation Museum here: <https://www.saaam.org.au/>

One of the historic aircraft they saw was the Supermarine Spitfire MK Vc, serial 'A58-146'. This was constructed in 1942 during World War 2 by Westland Aircraft Ltd in the UK. It was allocated to No 79 Squadron, RAAF which was operating from Goodenough Island, and later operated from Kiriwina Island, off Papua New Guinea with Squadron code 'UP-O'. Read more about the Supermarine Spitfire displayed at the South Australian Aviation Museum here: https://www.saaam.org.au/aircraft_profiles/SupermarineSpitfire/




Pilatus PC-9A 'A23-045' at the South Australian Aviation Museum; image by CCPL Rashmi Adiga

Another aircraft of interest to the Cadets was the Pilatus PC-9A. This was originally part of the Roulettes aerobatic team in the early 1990s (with serial number 'A23-032'), but it is now marked with the serial number 'A23-045' and is adorned with the livery of the Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU). Read more about the SAAM Pilatus PC-9A here: https://www.saaam.org.au/aircraft_profiles/PilatusPC9A/

Other aircraft of interest were the Dassault Government Aircraft Factory Mirage IIID 'A3-115' https://www.saaam.org.au/aircraft_profiles/DassaultGAF-Mirage.pdf


McDonnell Douglas / Boeing F/A-18A Hornet 'A21-32' <https://www.saaam.org.au/McDonnellDouglasBoeingF-A18A.html>

ALUMNI magazine November 2025



CDT Liam Jackson with the McDonnell Douglas / Boeing F/A-18A Hornet 'A21-32', which was built in 1981 (one of two fitted with flight test instrumentation) and served with No 3 Squadron, and then with ARDU (including numerous Weapons Tests).

Although the 604 Squadron Cadets wear an Air Force uniform, they are interested in all things aviation – including Navy aircraft such as the De Havilland DH-112 Sea Venom: https://www.saaam.org.au/aircraft_profiles/DeHavillandSeaVenom.pdf




Beneath the sweep of the General Dynamics F-111C strike bomber 'A8-132' at the South Australian Aviation Museum, participants in the 604 Squadron Communication Skills Development training received their Certificates of Achievement from the CO.

One of the highlights of the visit to the South Australian Aviation Museum in Port Adelaide was to see the General Dynamics F-111C. Leading Cadet Aryan Patel reports: "The F-111C was known in the United States as the 'Starhawk' due to its ability to fly low and fast with its 'nose in the air' like an overhauled, which means 'earth pig'. In the RAAF it was similarly nicknamed 'The Pig' for its long, drooping nose".


The F-111 was retired in 2010 and can be seen in museums across Australia, such as this model at the South Australian Aviation Museum – serial 'A8-132'. LCDT Patel reports: "The F-111C was one of the RAAF's most iconic aircraft. Its special ability to dump fuel gave it the ability to create a fire spectacle called the 'dump and burn'. This was an airshow favourite, used for many airshows, including the closing ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympics".

This aircraft on display made its first flight on 21 October 1968, and served alternately with No 1 Squadron and the Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) at RAAF Edinburgh in strike fighter and trials roles.


In 2011 it was returned to its ARDU colour scheme and brought to RAAF Edinburgh for display. LCDT Patel notes: "For its primary role at ARDU of testing new weapons including a range of guided and unguided weapons, this aircraft was given a special paint scheme of camouflaged upper surfaces and white lower surfaces to provide contrast in images of weapons release during trials".



Dassault Government Aircraft Factory Mirage IIID 'A3-115'; image by Cadet Sergeant Aishwarya Srikanth



RAF De Havilland DH-112 Sea Venom 'WZ931'; image by Cadet Sergeant Aishwarya Srikanth



AIR FORCE CADETS

ALUMNI magazine November 2025

All copies of the 'Alumni Magazine' may be accessed online:

<https://us6.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=07b68cb1fe&id=b846523045>



THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S INTERNATIONAL AWARD

In accordance with our philosophy of "Look to the future", the SA/NT Branch will continue in 2026 as a *Friend of the Award*.

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a global framework for non-formal education. It challenges young people aged 14 to 24 years to find their purpose, passion and place in the world. To become 'World Ready'.

Since it was founded by the late Prince Philip in 1956, over eight million people have participated in the Award in over 130 countries and territories.

The Award was introduced in Australia in 1959, and inspires over 50,000 young Australians each year to undertake Voluntary Service, Skills, Physical Recreation and an Adventurous Journey as part of their Bronze, Silver or Gold Level. Young people participate in activities over a minimum length of time to qualify for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Levels. Each level is progressively more challenging.

Chelsea, the Engagement Officer – South Australia for The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award–Australia, has kindly provided us this brief profile of a young South Australian awardee that our 2025 contribution has assisted and impacted. The benefits of our commitment can be seen to be very far-reaching and really out of all proportion to our small contribution.

CAMERON

Life-changing funding helps Cameron achieve both a Gold Award and his SACE

Cameron has a background of complex trauma, he has high functioning level 2 autism, ADHD and anxiety.

Because of his highly challenging early life conditions and complex neurodivergence Cameron struggles in academic settings and didn't believe he would ever be able to complete high school.

With some strong caregiver and support worker assistance Cameron has engaged in the Duke of Ed award with Operation Flinders.

Through providing recognition for his endeavours in developing wellbeing skills, engaging in outdoor recreation pursuits and in assisting Operation Flinders as a charity along with completion of one of our 8 day adventurers journey programs in the Flinders Ranges, he has now completed his Gold Duke of Ed Award and will gain 40 SACE credits – enough to finalise his SACE and enable him to graduate from school.

The funding support that has enabled us to run these activities and camps has been truly life-changing for Cameron, enabling him to achieve something that both he and his family did not think would ever be possible.

* Name has been changed to maintain privacy



We have some special connections to the Framework.

Branch Committee member Paul Bayliss undertook the prestigious Gold Award in the UK while serving in the British Army, completing his Award in February 1965. Paul received his Gold Award certificate and badge personally from HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh in Singapore in March 1967.



Paul Rosenzweig is a Level 2 Certified Leader, and in 2021 he received the Medal of Recognition for Long Service.

We are also proud to have a long-standing affiliation with No 604 Squadron, AAFC which has had an active involvement with the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Framework.

A substantial number of Cadets have participated since 2016, with a total of 115 completions approved to date.



MEDAL OF THE MONTH

CAMPAIGN SERVICE MEDAL 1962–

This medal was instituted by British Ministry of Defence Order No 61 dated 6 October 1964 to reward service in minor warlike operations after 1962 (when the Ministry of Defence assumed unified control over the three Services) for which no separate medal was issued.

This medal replaced both the General Service Medal 1918-1962 (awarded to the Army and Commonwealth Air Forces) and Naval General Service Medal 1915-62 (Commonwealth Navies and Royal Marines).

This medal was struck in sterling silver at the Royal Mint in London. The obverse features the crowned effigy of Queen Elizabeth II.

The reverse includes the legend "FOR CAMPAIGN SERVICE", giving the medal its name. It is today referred to as the 'General Service Medal (1962)'.

The CSM was not issued without a clasp, with a total of 13 clasps ultimately authorised.

The CSM (or 'GSM 1962') was awarded until 2007, being replaced by the Operational Service Medal. In 2015, the new General Service Medal (2008) was introduced.

21154491 Signalman Dilbahadur Thapa 17 Gurkha Signal Regiment, Gurkha Signals

Dilbahadur Thapa was a Gurkha Signalman from the western and central Himalayan region, who saw operational service in Sarawak with the Gurkha Signals during Indonesia's Confrontation with Malaysia.



The Campaign Service Medal 1962– with the clasp 'BORNEO' awarded to Signalman Dilbahadur Thapa, struck in sterling silver at the London Mint.

The Thapa are a sub-clan of the Magar, an ethnic Nepali group native to the western and central regions of Nepal. The name 'Bahadur' in Nepali means 'brave and courageous'; many Gurkhas have 'Bahadur' as a middle name representing their martial ethos and heritage.

In the early 1960s, immediately following the Malayan Emergency, Dilbahadur Thapa enlisted in the Gurkha Signals.

He underwent training with '2 (Training) Squadron' of the Gurkha Signal Regiment, which had originally been raised as the 'Gurkha Signals Training Wing', and was known as '250 (Gurkha) Signal Squadron (Training)' in 1959-61.

Signalman Thapa qualified as a Radio Operator, and was assigned to 17 Gurkha Signal Regiment at Sikamat Camp in Seremban, in Negeri Sembilan in Peninsular Malaysia, which in 1961 became the Gurkha Signal Regiment.

Gurkha Signallers had first been employed in 1911, within the Royal Engineers, in the three Indian Corps of Sappers and Miners (Bombay, Bengal, and Madras). During World War 1, whole companies of Gurkha signallers existed within these three Corps.

In 1920 these companies were formed into the Indian Signal Service, each one being allocated a letter designator; they were attached to various units across the British Indian Army. Gurkha soldiers formed No 2 Company of 'G' Divisional Signals within the Indian Signal Service.

During the early 1920s, Gurkha signallers were committed to operations on the North West Frontier. At the end of 1928 these corps were disbanded.

After India gained independence from the British Empire in 1947, four (of ten) Gurkha rifle regiments transferred to the British Army to form 'The Gurkha Regiment'. The Gurkha Regiment belonged to the Brigade of Gurkhas, which soon gained additional Gurkha units including a 'Gurkha Signals Training Wing' in November 1948.

The Gurkha Signals Training Wing was raised in Kuala Lumpur in November 1948 during the Malayan Emergency to support the infantry brigades of the 17th Gurkha Division – the 26th, 48th and 63rd Gurkha Brigades, and also the 99th Gurkha Brigade after its formation in 1952.

All Gurkha signallers were subsequently brought into Headquarters Gurkha Signals and the Gurkha Signal Regiment.

Jai Gurkha!

The tribes and clans (*jaat*) of Nepal are extremely complex, and their hierarchy, religious and social order is deeply rooted in ancient religion and mythology going back thousands of years.

Traditionally recruits of Indian Gorkha or Nepalese nationality came from one of four major *jaat* groupings:

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

Magars are divided into the following six tribes, or clans: Ale, Bura/Burathoki, Gharti, Pun, Rana and Thapa. These tribes all intermarry with each other, have the same customs, and are in every way equal as regards to social standing.

Gurkha Signals

The Gurkha Signals was created in Kuala Lumpur in November 1948 when a Gurkha Signals Training Wing was raised. This saw Gurkha Signallers qualified as 'Operator Wireless and Line', 'Lineman' or 'Despatch Rider'.

The first intake of 102 soldiers completed their training on 1 August 1950, and joined the 'Gurkha Independent Brigade Signal Squadron'. This Squadron had its detachments named after towns and districts in Nepal.

Subsequent designations were as follows:

> Gurkha Royal Signals': redesignated on 1 May 1949, with its members wearing the hat badge of the Royal Corps of Signals.

> 48th Gurkha Brigade Signal Squadron: the first Gurkha signals squadron was declared fully trained on 18 December 1950, based at Seremban in Negeri Sembilan and operating in support of 48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade. By the end of 1951, three signals troops had been formed:

- 'J' (Jig) Troop at Seremban, supporting 48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade
- 'K' (King) Troop at Seremban, supporting 63 Gurkha Infantry Brigade
- 'L' (Love) Troop at Johore Baru, supporting 99 Gurkha Infantry Brigade

> 17 Gurkha Division Signal Regiment: officially created at Maxwell Road Camp in Kuala Lumpur on 16 October 1952, in support of the 17th Gurkha Division, providing close communication support to the infantry. The regiment comprised:

- 1 Squadron (divisional headquarters squadron)
- an independent squadron in Kluang supporting 26 Gurkha Infantry Brigade
- 3 Squadron ('J' Troop, 'K' Troop and 'L' Troop, plus 'I' Troop from November 1953).

> Gurkha Signals: the regiment was redesignated in 1954.

A unique regimental badge was introduced and first presented at Lamjung Camp on 23 September 1954, and since that day the regiment celebrates its birthday on 23 September.



The regimental badge comprises two crossed kukris pointing upwards with the blades facing inwards; between them is the figure of Mercury on a globe surmounted by the Saint Edward's Crown of Queen Elizabeth II, with the motto "CERTA CITO" ('Swift and Sure') on a scroll, drawn from the badge of the Royal Signals.



On the Terai Hat (Hat Fur Felt, Gurkha), the hat badge is worn on the left side on a 3-inch square backing of Red Grant Tartan Number 15 representing an affiliation with the 51st (Highland) Divisional Signals Regiment.



17th Gurkha Division Signal Regiment

The 17 Gurkha Division Signal Regiment, raised at Maxwell Road Camp in Kuala Lumpur on 16 October 1952, wore the formation insignia of 17 Gurkha Division: printed in dark green on diagonal weave cotton drill material, a format unique to Gurkha formation insignia, leaving the crossed kukris in white as a reverse silhouette.

Gurkha Signals, Brigade of Gurkhas

On 28 September 1955, the Gurkha Signals was formally incorporated into the Brigade of Gurkhas.

> 17 Gurkha Signal Regiment: redesignated on 1 September 1959, with the Gurkha Signals troops redesignated as squadrons – 246, 247 and 248 Gurkha Signal Squadrons. Relocated to Sikamat Camp in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan.

Six Gurkha signallers (Gurkha Signals or the Royal Corps of Signals) lost their lives during the Malayan Emergency.

> Headquarters Gurkha Signals and 17 Gurkha Signal Regiment: following a reorganisation in 1961, comprised three squadrons.

17 Gurkha Signal Regiment ceased to be a Divisional Signal Regiment, and took on the responsibility of fixed communications sites across Malaya.

Elements of 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron deployed at short notice in late 1962 to suppress the Brunei revolt.

> Queen's Gurkha Signals: the Royal title was granted on 20 April 1977 as part of the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations (QG SIGNALS).



17th Gurkha Signal Regiment

After the Federation of Malaya gained independence on 31 August 1957, 17 Gurkha Division was retitled '17 Gurkha Division/Overseas Commonwealth Land Forces (Malaya)'. The formation badge is printed in black on yellow diagonal weave cotton drill material, a format unique to Gurkha formation insignia. 17 Gurkha Signal Regiment adopted its new title on 1 September 1959.

Borneo, 1962-63

Confrontation in Borneo was an undeclared war of armed infiltration from Indonesian Kalimantan into British North Borneo (later Sabah) and Sarawak, with the aim of halting the creation of the proposed State of Malaysia.

Early actions were undertaken by local volunteers or 'Independent Border Terrorists' (IBT). Further military operations were designed to counter threats posed by Indonesian military forces and the National Army of North Kalimantan (*Tentera Nasional Kalimantan Utara*, TNKU). Every unit of the Brigade of Gurkhas took part in this campaign, providing the bulk and continuity of the British Army's contribution during four years of continuous operations.

Signalman Dilbahadur Thapa deployed from Sikamat Camp in Negeri Sembilan with the Gurkha Signals on at least one tour of duty on Borneo. 17 Gurkha Signal Regiment initially deployed one brigade signals squadron to Sarawak:

> 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron: served in support of 99 Gurkha Infantry Brigade ('West Brigade') from December 1962 to September 1963.

West Brigade was assigned to the First Division of Sarawak, to defend the line of approach from Kalimantan to the Sarawak capital Kuching. It comprised five battalions, mainly operating at platoon level from defensive positions and patrol bases, with Brigade headquarters collocated with the Headquarters of the Sarawak Constabulary at Police Headquarters in Palm Road, Kuching.

The mission of the assigned Commonwealth military forces was to deny any intrusion into Sarawak by occupying a series of defensive positions and defending their allocated areas of responsibility within Sarawak and on the Sarawak-Kalimantan border.

Signalman Thapa may have been serving in Borneo at the time of the creation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963.

Borneo, 1964-66

From 1964, 'West Brigade' was responsible for the defence of the First and Second Divisions of Sarawak. 17 Gurkha Signal Regiment deployed further assets to Borneo:

> 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron: based at Bolkiah Camp, four miles outside Brunei town, from February 1964, assigned to 51 Gurkha Brigade.

> 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron: served in Sarawak again from January 1964 to January 1965 in support of 99 Gurkha Infantry Brigade.

> 343 Gurkha Signals Squadron: deployed to Sarawak in 1966.

The regiment also provided a detachment to the Gurkha (Independent) Parachute Company, which first deployed to Sarawak to train indigenous Iban tribesmen as Border Scouts, and again in June 1964 to provide a screen in remote forward areas on the border between Sarawak and Indonesian Kalimantan and conduct long-range reconnaissance patrolling. The 17th Gurkha Signal Regiment provided one British Officer, one Queen's Gurkha Officer, 28 radio operators, two technicians, one technical storeman, one clerk and one general duties soldier.

The Gurkha Parachute Company returned to Borneo for six-month tours in October 1964 and September 1965.

From 1965, West Brigade (99 Gurkha Infantry Brigade) comprised five battalions, with their headquarters at Lundu, Kuching Airport, Serian and Balai Ringin, with the Gurkha battalion headquarters at Bau.

'Confrontation' (Konfrontasi) was brought to an end through the signing of the Malaysia-Indonesia Peace Agreement or 'Jakarta Accord' at Istana Merdeka in Jakarta, Indonesia on 11 August 1966. On leaving Borneo, the Gurkha Signals moved to Seremban in Malaysia, with a reduction from three brigade signals squadrons to just a Regimental Headquarters and two squadrons.

During Confrontation and immediately after, the Brigade of Gurkhas suffered a total of 106 casualties – including three members of the Gurkha Signals, plus one who died after the end of Confrontation. They were buried in the Seremban Gurkha Cemetery at Sikamat Camp.

Signalman Dilbahadur Thapa was awarded the Campaign Service Medal 1962– with the clasp 'BORNEO' for operational service in Sarawak with the Gurkha Signals during Confrontation.

The medal is correctly named on the rim in small impressed capitals:

21154491 SIG. DILBAHADUR THAPA. GURKHA SIGNALS.

Clasp 'BORNEO'. This was the first clasp created for the Campaign Service Medal 1962–, established by Ministry of Defence Order No 2/64 dated 6 October 1964.

It rewarded at least thirty days' operational service between 24 December 1962 and 11 August 1966 in operations against Indonesian and rebel forces in North Borneo (later renamed Sabah), Sarawak and Brunei during Indonesia's Confrontation with Malaysia.

Signalman Dilbahadur Thapa qualified for this clasp through his service in Borneo with 17 Gurkha Signal Regiment, Gurkha Signals – either with 247, 248 or 343 Gurkha Signals Squadron, or possibly on attachment to the Gurkha (Independent) Parachute Company.



The reverse of the Campaign Service Medal 1962– features a wreath of oak-leaves surrounding the St Edward's crown of Queen Elizabeth and the legend "FOR CAMPAIGN SERVICE".



One of the tasks of 248 Gurkha Signals Squadron in Sarawak was to maintain a hill-top outpost station at Gunung Serapi, the tallest peak in the Kuching area, some 3,000 feet above sea level. Supplies could only be delivered by Royal Air Force Westland Whirlwind HC10 helicopter. This image shows a similar rebroadcast site established in Sarawak in 1966 by 343 Gurkha Signals Squadron, during a resupply by RAF Westland Scout AH1 number 'XP888'.



UPCOMING EVENTS


National Malaysia & Borneo Veterans Association Australia Inc
South Australia & Northern Territory Branch
Faithful Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia

 **INVITATION** 
SA & NT Branch
Christmas Lunch 2025



You are invited to join us at the Maid of Auckland Hotel in Edwardstown for our annual Christmas Lunch on Saturday 13 December.

This is an opportunity to reflect on the events of the year, while also supporting our sponsorship of four schools in the Bau District of Sarawak where Australian military forces were deployed during Confrontation – Sekolah Kebangsaan Stas, Suba Buas, Serabak, and Gumbang.

The contributions to raffles, cash donations, and donations of books are greatly appreciated, and will contribute to next year's pilgrimage visit to Sarawak – Operation 'Hornbill 2026'.

Date: Saturday 13 December 2025, 12 for 12.30 pm
Venue: Maid of Auckland Hotel, 920 South Road
Dress: Smart Casual / Business attire
Bring your jacket, miniature medals and beret

RSVP: Jenny Cameron, by Wednesday 3 December 2025
08 8284 2858 | 0430 401 939
jcameron@nmbva.com.au



REMINDER

Saturday 13 December 2025 SA & NT Branch Christmas Lunch

Join us at the Maid of Auckland Hotel for our annual Christmas Lunch to reflect on the events of the year and to support our sponsorship of the four schools in the Bau District of Sarawak where Australian and Commonwealth military forces were deployed during Confrontation, as part of our philosophy of 'Remembering Malaysia' and 'Looking to the Future'.

Donations of raffle prizes are most welcome – these can be brought on the day.

Bring your jacket, miniature medals and beret for a group photograph.

Remember there is a cashback bonus for 2025 financial members.

VALE

Ben Cameron (1981-2025)

We send our condolences to Don and Jenny, and the whole Cameron family, on the passing of Don's nephew Ben Cameron, aged 44. The South Australia Cricket Association noted that Ben debuted in 2004. He proudly wore cap number 570 as a player, representing South Australia 19 times in First Class and List A cricket until 2007. He then worked within SACA from 2012 to 2022 as a coach and talent specialist. More recently, he was a selector for the state teams.

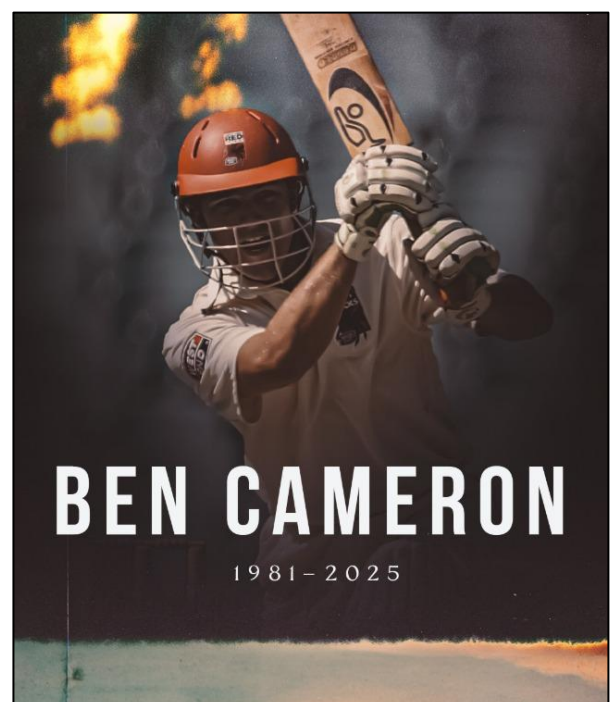
One person noted: *"He also recently served as a selector and significant contributor to the Redbacks' historic domestic double last season"*.

The Chairman of Worthing Cricket Club in the UK said:

Our Overseas player from 2001, Ben Cameron has sadly passed away at the age of 44. Ben, from Adelaide in South Australia will forever be remembered for his prolific season in the Premier League scoring 1,082 – a league record at the time and a club record that stands to this day. He made a lasting impression on many of the players he played with and to honour his magnificent achievement, we named our 1st XI Player of the Year trophy in his honour soon after.

One supporter in the UK noted: *"He was a great batter and his 120 odd not out against Horsham, chasing down 300, will never be forgotten"*.

Lest we Forget





IN MEMORIAM

Private Arthur Seddon (1935-2016)

In the November newsletter we provided some information on Arthur Seddon who was honoured by his daughter Maria, our NMBVAA National Secretary, at the National Commemorative Service in Canberra on Sunday 31 August.

Arthur served as a National Serviceman with the 1st Battalion, The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) in 1956-57, and deployed with the battalion to the Malay Peninsula during the Malayan Emergency, stationed at Ipoh.

Among the mates he lost on active service were 23277743 Private Dennis Allen (killed 3 April 1957; buried in Kranji Military Cemetery Singapore) and 23293162 Private Bob Nelson (killed 9 December 1957; buried in Taiping Christian Cemetery in Perak).

Arthur successfully campaigned for posthumous medals to be awarded to Bob Nelson. The medals were awarded to Bob's sister Eileen in 2011 at the regimental depot at Fulwood Barracks in Preston, Lancashire. Maria recalls that she attended the ceremony, which was very moving: *"We felt honoured to be present for it"*.

Arthur and his wife Jean, with four children, emigrated to Australia in 1968 per RMHS *Ellinis* under the Assisted Passage Migration Scheme. In Australia, Arthur and Jean had two more children (Maria was number five, and four years later their sixth child Genevieve was born). Maria reflected:

Dad was born in 1935. His generation grew up in the ruins left by World War II, and are remarkably resilient with a strong sense of duty. You don't realise how important this is until you are much older and by the time you realise, the window of opportunity you have to ask the important questions is very small. For many years, Dad did not talk of his experiences in Malaya at all with the family. He was a very quiet and thoughtful person and those memories remained very deeply lodged.



Private Arthur Seddon on the Malay Peninsula circa 1958, 1st Battalion, The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire)

After he finally retired in the late 1990s, he joined the National Malaya Borneo Veterans Association, Melbourne Branch and was a very active member of the Association with fundraising, obtaining recognition for veterans and winning awards for some of his short stories which detailed his experiences.

He also wrote to the British Government and the Queen seeking recognition for the Gurkhas, whom he held in the highest regard. Joanna Lumley wrote him a thank you note and he was very chuffed with that!

It really was heartening to see Dad harvest his history, and spending time with fellow veterans in the Association gave him a lot of comfort and camaraderie as his health failed him in later years.

In 2011, Dad returned to Malaya after 54 years. He was able to visit the graves of the mates he had lost, and participated in a number of memorial services. It was such a memorable trip for him and he was deeply affected by this travel experience.

Dad wrote to me after his trip to Malaysia. It was an experience he held very dear. He was reminded of the song of his regiment which is 'My Love is Like a Red Red Rose', and we subsequently played this at his funeral.

I found his support of the NMBVAA inspiring and I am really pleased to be able to carry this on in a small way in his memory.

Lest we Forget



MALAYAN EMERGENCY Roll of Honour – December

Honouring the sacrifice of the 45 Australians who died on operational service during the general period of the Malayan Emergency, 16 June 1948 to 31 July 1960.

A51076 Leading Aircraftman Michael Murphy,
No 1 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force:
3 December 1956

R51381 Cook Alan Campbell Cooper,
D59 HMAS Anzac (II):
25 December 1957

6/143 Sergeant Maurice Ryan,
Royal Australian Army Service Corps
attached to
3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
14 December 1958

Lest we Forget



FAR EAST STRATEGIC RESERVE Roll of Honour – December

Honouring the sacrifice of the three Australians who died during service with the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve in Southeast Asia during the period 1955-1975.

R54324 Chief Petty Officer
(Electrical Artificer Third Class)
Bryon Edward Plint,
HMAS Vampire:
1 December 1961

Lest we Forget

CONFRONTATION Roll of Honour – December

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

58702 Sapper Anthony John Colohan,
21 Construction Squadron, RAE:
15 December 1965

Lest we Forget



Sapper Colohan is commemorated on our NMBVAA plaque in the Sarawak Heroes Memorial Park.

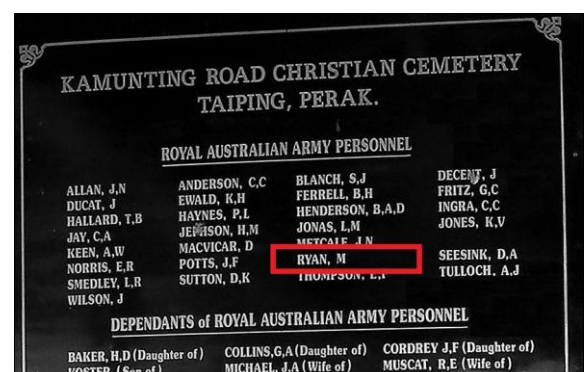
6/143 Sergeant Maurice Ryan (1925-1958)

Maurice Ryan was born in Townsville on 21 October 1925. He served in South Korea after the armistice with the Australian Ancillary Unit Korea (17 to 31 January 1955) and the 104th Australian Field Cash Office (31 January to 8 September 1955).

On 14 December 1958, while serving in Malaya with 3RAR, Sergeant Ryan died of wounds (accidentally wounded), aged 33. He was buried in the Taiping (Kamunting Road) Christian Cemetery in Perak, Malaysia where he remains today – one of 42 Australian fallen from the Malayan Emergency who still remain buried overseas.

His name is honoured on panel 2 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial.

Lest we Forget





R54324 Chief Petty Officer Bryon Edward Plint (1930-1961)

Three members of the Royal Australian Navy died while serving with the Far East Strategic Reserve between 2 July 1955 and 14 March 1975 – their names are listed on the Rolls of Honour under the title 'Southeast Asia, 1955-1975 (FESR, SEATO)' in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial (panel 2).

The British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve (BCFESR), more commonly known by its shortened form 'FESR', was formally announced by Prime Minister Robert Menzies in April 1955.

This was not a warfighting formation, but was created in part to deter communist expansion into the region.

Bryon Edward Plint was born in Brisbane on 10 May 1930, the first son of Harold Jennings Plint (aged 23) and Gwendoline Emelda Margaret (née Chatwood, aged 20); his mother died just two years later.

He was married in Albion Baptist Church in Brisbane on 9 January 1954, and had two children.

He was working as a Metalwork Teacher in Ashgrove when he enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy on 16 May 1958 for a period of 9 years. On 16 July 1958 he was made an Acting Electrical Artificer Fourth Class at HMAS *Cerberus*.

In 1960, Chief Petty Officer Plint saw service on HMAS *Tobruk*, made substantive as an Electrical Artificer Fourth Class, and HMAS *Melbourne*.

He then joined the Australian-built Daring-class destroyer HMAS *Vampire* on 3 January 1961, and on 16 July was made Electrical Artificer Third Class.

HMAS *Vampire* was attached to the Far East Strategic Reserve on five occasions, including during Confrontation, and escorted the troop transport HMAS *Sydney* on six transport voyages to South Vietnam.

Chief Petty Officer Plint suffered a heart attack in Hong Kong and died on 1 December 1961, aged 31.

He was buried at sea off Hong Kong on 6 December, and has no known grave.

The RAN Record of Service Card for Chief Petty Officer Bryon Edward Plint

THE NAVAL ODE

They have no grave but the cruel sea
No flowers lay at their head
A rusting hulk is their tombstone
A'fast on the ocean bed

They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old

Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn

At the going down of the sun
and in the morning

We will remember them

Lest we forget

Memorial notices published by Plint's family in The Courier Mail