



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 16, number 7 – JULY 2026



NMBVAA ANNUAL LUNCH

We held our mid-year annual luncheon at Anthony's Dinehouse Malaysian restaurant to support fund-raising efforts for the four schools in Sarawak that we support, and to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the formation of the "National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association (Australia) Incorporated", which was established as a Company on 29 February 1996.

Vice-President Don Cameron recited the Ode to the fallen, and Paul Bayliss proposed the loyal toast to celebrate the official Birthday of His Majesty King Charles III, King of Australia.

Following the first national AGM, South Australian members gathered in 1997 to form a state branch, with Ross Ortmann elected President and Secretary, and Don Cameron as Treasurer – we look forward to the SA Branch's 30th anniversary lunch next year!



NOTICES

BRANCH COMMITTEE 2026

Paul Rosenzweig OAM
*President, Secretary
Public Affairs Officer*

Don Cameron
*Vice-President
Ceremonial Officer*

Paul Bayliss

Jenny Cameron
Treasurer

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'

Dato Lim Kian Hock OAM sent us this greeting: *"Once again we and STF thank you, yr MBVAs for sharing our gratitude of Anzac assistance during the Indo-TNKU Confrontation moreso for your educational donations to students of our Bau border communities affected by the Confrontation to develop and preserve Sarawak's historical heritage for our young generation and their generations helping to make a better world of tomorrow".*

We received some more feedback from Amy Worswick from Adelaide High School: *"How terrific it was to receive the 'Observation Post' and read the lovely information and especially proud to see the portraits. Your articles capture the enthusiasm of the school and the strength of our working together with (the SA/NT Branch). We are very grateful and hope to do justice to all the support that you have given us. The students are very keen to extend the work with honouring servicemen through their portraits to the Malay and Borneo servicemen. It was wonderful to see photos of Jon Niejalke and see his medals. We will certainly be doing a portrait of him".*

Everyone who attended our annual lunch seems to have enjoyed themselves. Congratulations to the raffle winners, and Chris Howard who got the first pick of the prize selection as the lucky door prize winner.

Just a reminder that the SA/NT Branch 2026 Annual General Meeting will be held at the Maid of Auckland Hotel on Friday 17 July, starting at 1115h and followed by lunch. There will be a guest speaker, and a raffle.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2026 AGM:	1115h Friday 17 July Maid of Auckland Hotel followed by lunch at 12.30 pm
MBV Day Service:	Friday 7 August West Torrens War Memorial Gardens
September meeting:	1115h Friday 18 September Maid of Auckland Hotel; lunch at 12.30 pm
October meeting:	1115h Friday 16 October Maid of Auckland Hotel; lunch at 12.30 pm
November meeting:	1115h Friday 20 November Maid of Auckland Hotel; lunch at 12.30 pm
Christmas Lunch:	Saturday 12 December 2026, 12 for 12.30 pm Maid of Auckland Hotel



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



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



CONTRIBUTED IMAGES AND INFORMATION



The 'Salute to our Anzacs' memorial designed by David Rilstone, followed by the first of the memorial panels – commemorating Australia's participation in the South African War 1899–1902 ('Boer War').



The memorial to the Malayan Emergency 1950-1960, featuring a depiction of the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 which was established in the Australian Honours System in 1997.

ANZAC HILL WAR MEMORIALS

Alice Springs

Mal White has sent us these images of memorials along the Alice Springs Memorial Walk following his recent trip to the Red Centre.

Anzac Hill was created after World War 1 as a memorial for soldiers who fought in the Great War. In 1939 the land surrounding Anzac Hill became home to the camp of the Darwin Overland Maintenance Force (DOMF), responsible for upgrading the Stuart Highway and providing armed forces convoys which would transport personnel and supplies along the Overland Telegraph track up to Darwin.

The Anzac Hill War Memorial is a white concrete obelisk, which was designed by the Reverend Harry Griffiths and was unveiled on Anzac Day, 25 April 1934.

A plaque commemorates the fallen and the Unknown Australian Soldier, unveiled on the 75th anniversary of Remembrance Day, 11 November 1993. More recently, an Alice Springs Memorial Walk was established with memorial panels commemorating the major conflicts Australia has been involved in.

Walking up Anzac Hill is a popular activity for tourists and locals in the town as it offers panoramic views of the town.



The memorial to Confrontation 1963-1966 also features a depiction of the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75.



The memorial to Peacekeeping 1947 – present acknowledges the service of Australian peacekeepers.



CONTRIBUTED IMAGES AND INFORMATION

KAMPUNG GUMBANG

Temenggong Atok anak Derop, Cultural Leader of the Bidayuh community in the Kuching Division of Sarawak, has sent us some updates and images on the preparations for our visit.

Ketua Kampung (Village Chief) Agun anak Ringot has also sent some photos of the clean up around the landmark boulders marking the start of the trail to the 'Bukit Knuckle' position.

During this work some sheets of 'Pierced Steel Planking' or 'Marston Mats' were discovered. These had been developed by the US during WW2 for making temporary landing strips. The sheets have hooks along one edge to be placed into slots on the other edge, to link the sheets together to make matting on the ground.

In the 1950s, the UK developed a shorter version for use in the Libyan desert and around Aden – known as a 'Sand Channel' or 'Sand Tracking'. During Confrontation, these sheets were used by the Commonwealth forces in Sarawak – mainly in the artillery fire bases to create a firm base for positioning the field guns.



Some of the iconic giant granite boulders found in Kampung Gumbang, with a patrol from 11 Platoon, 'D' Company, 3RAR in 1965.



On 16 May 2026, the Kampung Gumbang community cleared the area around the big rock near the Balai Raya Kampung.



ANNIVERSARIES

ANNIVERSARY OF THE SARAWAK HEROES PARK

This year we mark 45 years since the 'Sarawak Heroes Grave' was first established, in July 1981, and 15 years since the fully redeveloped 'Sarawak Heroes Park' was declared open. In this and future newsletters, Paul Rosenzweig and Dato Lim Kian Hock will explore the history of this significant site, and its relationship with us.

SARAWAK HEROES PARK, 2011



The 21 Iban Trackers from Sarawak killed-in-action during the Malayan Emergency were originally buried at various sites on the Malay Peninsula and Singapore. In Operation 'Mai Pulai' ("Coming Home") in early 2011, their ashes were ceremonially re-interred in the Sarawak Heroes Park in Kuching. Lim Kian Hock secured a grant from the Ministry for Tourism and Heritage to further develop the Sarawak Heroes Park. The Park was declared open, complete with a concrete walkway and large granite Sarawak Rangers Memorial, to be a Memorial Park for all commemorations (top image).

MALAYA & BORNEO VETERANS DAY, 2011

Meanwhile in Australia in 2011, the Department of Veterans' Affairs designated 31 August (the date of Malayan Independence in 1957) as the official date of commemoration for the Malayan Emergency and the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia.

The SA/NT Branch, NMBVAA held the inaugural Malaya & Borneo Veterans Day service in Adelaide at the National War Memorial on North Terrace on Wednesday 31 August 2011, to commemorate the 45th anniversary of the end of the Indonesian Confrontation.

The principal guest was His Excellency Rear-Admiral Kevin Scarce AC AO(Mil) CSC RANR, Governor of South Australia. The Branch Chaplain Captain Quentin Castle officiated (second image), and Branch President Brian Selby gave the address. No 604 Squadron, Australian Air Force Cadets from Hampstead Barracks provided a Catafalque Party.



SA/NT BRANCH NMBVAA, 2014

During their 2014 visit to Sarawak, executive members of the SA/NT Branch, NMBVAA called in to the Tourist Bureau near the Museum in Kuching on Wednesday 3 September. There they met Mrs Barbara Benjamin Atan of the Sarawak Tourism Board, who referred them to Mr Lim Kian Hock (Heritage Adviser, Sarawak Tourism Federation), and he arranged to meet the Australian party at the Sarawak Heroes Park.

Mr Lim arranged a meeting at the Kuching Hilton on Friday 5 September for the SA/NT Branch members to meet with members of the Sarawak Tourism Federation and Sarawak Tourism Board.



This was the beginning of our close association with Dato Lim and our other Sarawak friends. This visit laid the groundwork for the expansion of the Sarawak Heroes Park in Kuching, and for a return visit by the SA/NT Branch NMBVAA in 2016.

MEMORIAL WALL, 2015

In 2015, Lim wrote to the Minister for Tourism and Heritage to seek funding for a Memorial Wall to be built along the boundary of the Sarawak Heroes Park, and the Commission of the Kuching City North (DBKU) was directed to arrange for its implementation.

Members of the Australian Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) Association conducted a Borneo Reunion visit to Kuching in March 2015, and witnessed the redevelopment and construction efforts by DBKU to create a Memorial Wall (bottom image).

At this time they gained STF Heritage Development Committee approval to install a memorial plaque.



AUSTRALIAN SASR ASSOCIATION, 2015

With STF Heritage Development Committee approval, a memorial plaque commemorating the three SASR members who lost their lives in Sarawak and Sabah during Confrontation was installed in the Sarawak Heroes Park on a new purpose-built wall (top image). The plaque was unveiled by Major-General the Honourable Mike Jeffrey AC CVO MC (ret'd), former Commanding Officer of the 2nd Battalion, Pacific Islands Regiment (1974-75) and the Special Air Service Regiment (1976-77), former Governor of Western Australia (1993-00), former Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia (2003-08). The ceremony was followed by a celebration and dinner at the Sarawak Club.

4RAR ASSOCIATION, 2016

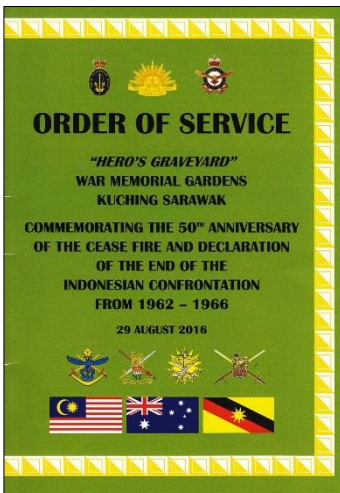
Members of the 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (4RAR) Association conducted a reunion visit to Kuching in 2016 to mark the 50th anniversary of the battalion's operations in Sarawak during Confrontation. The group comprised 35 veterans and their families, led by John Burns OAM. Accompanying them was Lieutenant-Colonel Brian Avery (ret'd) who had commanded 4RAR in Sarawak in 1966. The visit was coordinated by Lim Kian Hock, Chairman of the Sarawak Tourism Federation Heritage Development Committee.



With STF Heritage Development Committee approval, a memorial plaque commemorating the six members of 4RAR who lost their lives in Sarawak was installed in the entrance pathway of the Sarawak Heroes Park with a red leaf ornamental shrub, unveiled on 25 April 2016. Former 4RAR member Brigadier Rod Curtis MC (ret'd) said, *"May it grow straight and strong here in the soil of Sarawak in this venerable place of reflection, and proudly stand as a living memorial to our 4RAR comrades and to other Australian servicemen who died in the name of freedom and peace here in Borneo"*.

SA/NT BRANCH NMBVAA, 2016

Members of the SA & NT Branch NMBVAA conducted their first reunion visit to Kuching in August 2016, led by President Brian Selby and Vice-President Don Cameron. The arrangements were co-ordinated by Mr Lim Kian Hock, Chairman of the STF Heritage Development Committee, and generously supported by the Minister for Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts.



A Malaya & Borneo Veterans Day service of commemoration was held in the Sarawak Heroes Park on Friday 29 August 2016, marking the 50th anniversary of the end of the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia (1962-1966). The Catafalque Party for the ceremony comprised Australian Air Force Cadets from South Australia, primarily drawn from No 604 Squadron AAFS at Hampstead Barracks in Adelaide.

SA/NT BRANCH MEMORIAL PLAQUE, 2016

During this ceremony, the SA/NT Branch unveiled and dedicated a black granite memorial plaque honouring the Australians who lost their lives on operational service on the Malay Peninsula and in northern Borneo during Confrontation. The ceremony was followed by a lunch at the Sarawak Club hosted by Datuk Dr Philip Ting AM PGBK, the Australian Honorary Consul to Sarawak.



PANGLIMA SETIA BINTANG SARAWAK, 2016

Lim Kian Hock had an outstanding career in the Sarawak Civil Service spanning 33 years, covering Sarawak extensively and serving all communities, in particular Malay, Bidayuh, Iban and Orang Ulu. He led the first Commonwealth forces security patrol on the onset of the Indonesian Confrontation deep within the Ulu Pakan Julau District in 1962, and continued to support security operations to the interior longhouse communities. He was Secretary of the Council Negeri (DUN) Parliamentary Service for 15 years, and was Assistant State Secretary Sarawak before his retirement from the public service.

On 6 September it was announced that the Governor would bestow upon Lim Kian Hock the Panglima Setia Bintang Sarawak (PSBS, Commander of the Order of the Star of Sarawak). This grants the recipient the title 'Dato'. The investiture ceremony was conducted in Miri on 16 September 2016.

To be continued . . .



COMMEMORATION

ADELAIDE HIGH SCHOOL OLD SCHOLARS Honouring service in the Royal Australian Navy

Our April and May newsletters contained some profiles of AHS Old Scholars who saw operational service with the Royal Australian Navy. Amy has very kindly provided some more images of the portraits made by students for the Vietnam Honour Board project.



01109 Captain Errol Victor Stevens (1927-)

Zainab Hammad (Year 11) produced this portrait of Captain Errol Stevens RAN.

Stevens saw long service in the Royal Australian Navy. He enlisted as a Cadet Midshipman on 1 January 1941, and was successively promoted to Lieutenant on 1 April 1948, Lieutenant-Commander on 1 April 1956, and Commander on 1 April 1964.

He served at sea during World War 2 in the Burma and Pacific theatres. He then served during the Malayan Emergency, and received the Naval General Service Medal, 1909–1962 with clasp 'MALAYA'.

He served with the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve (BCFESR) during Confrontation, in the contiguous waters off the Malay Peninsula, including the Strait of Malacca, and received the Campaign Service Medal, 1962– with clasp 'MALAY PENINSULA'. Stevens also served in the waters off South Vietnam, and later received the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal.

He held the rank of Captain when he received the National Medal for 15 years' long service on 22 February 1978; he received his first bar on 9 March 1991, and second bar on 5 May 2000 to recognise a total of 35 years' service.

Stevens took his discharge from the Permanent Naval Forces on 31 January 1987.



01398 Commodore John Raymond Da Costa RAN (1934-)

Madhura Sanganbatte (Year 11) produced this portrait of Commodore John Da Costa RAN.

John Da Costa from Alberton completed RAAF National Service training (1952-53), and then enlisted in the RAN on 2 April 1955. On 2 January 1963 he was appointed to a permanent commission as a Lieutenant (General Duties Pilot).

By 1966 he was commanding 'B' Flight of 816 Squadron, Fleet Air Arm, which comprised four Sea Venom all-weather fighter interceptors embarked aboard HMAS *Melbourne*.

He served with the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve (BCFESR) in the contiguous waters off the Malay Peninsula, including the Strait of Malacca in 1966, providing anti-submarine and air protection during FESR operations.

Da Costa was the pilot of de Havilland DH.112 Sea Venom FAW.53, N4-900 number '866' of 'B' Flight, 816 Squadron which crashed off the deck of HMAS *Melbourne* in the Sulu Sea south of the Philippines on 28 April 1966 during a landing. Lieutenant Da Costa made a successful low-level ejection and was rescued by helicopter, but the body of Observer Lieutenant Edward George Kennell RAN was never recovered.

Da Costa also served aboard HMAS *Melbourne* in the waters of South Vietnam (1965-66). On 6 July 1989, after 34 years' full-time service, John retired from the RAN as a Commodore and transferred to the RAN Emergency List (Reserves).



COMMEMORATION



01398 Commodore John Raymond Da Costa (ret'd), *continued*

As part of our ongoing provision of support and research assistance to the Adelaide High School Old Scholar honour project, Paul Rosenzweig had the opportunity to meet Confrontation and Vietnam War veteran Commodore John Da Costa (ret'd) at Adelaide High School in April. Honour Board Project Coordinator Amy Worswick invited Commodore Da Costa to visit the school to be briefed on the project, to witness the delivery of the Vietnam War Honour Board, and to view artwork being prepared by the project participants at the school.

The pencil sketch above by Ella Jordan (Year 11) shows Lieutenant John Da Costa RAN in the period 1960-62 when he served with the RAN's 723 Squadron, Fleet Air Arm at Naval Air Station Nowra and embarked on HMAS *Melbourne*. He was flying the new Bristol Sycamore helicopter, Navy's first helicopter, in a Search & Rescue role. Ella has been a very active contributor, and has drawn the most portraits for the Honour Board project.



Paul Rosenzweig and John Da Costa at the Adelaide High School Memorial Garden on Monday 13 April 2026.

NAVY

ABRAHAM, Brian George DFC
 ADAMS, David John
 BAKER, Anthony Roydon
 BARCLAY, Jeffrey Gordon
 BEST, Robert Gilchrist
 BOWMAN, Peter Ray
 BROOKS, Warwick Beverly Rowland
 CASEY, Francis John
 COOK, Eric James
 COOPER, Rodger John MID
 DA COSTA, John Raymond
 ELPHICK, Barry Bruce
 FENWICK, Kenneth Peter
 GALEA, Peter Anthony
 GALLASCH, Keith Alwin
 GOODCHILD, Peter Leighton
 HERSEL, Richard Adrian
 HINDLE, Norman Robert
 HUGHES, Owen John
 JENETSKY, Darryl Owen
 JOLLY, Stephen Robert
 JONES, Phillip Britten
 KELLY, James Maxwell DSC
 KOCH, Brian Melrose
 LEHMANN, Barry Edwin
 LEHMANN, David Paul

Commodore John Da Costa's name on the AHS Vietnam War Honour Roll.

COMMEMORATION

HONOURING MOUNTED CONSTABLE RICHARD WILLIAM SPICER (1850-1884)

Friday 29 May 2026

A ceremony was held recently at Farina in the far north to honour Mounted Constable Richard Spicer. Spicer was accidentally killed on 28 June 1884 during mounted target practice at Farina (originally known as 'Government Gums'). He was aged 34. Spicer is buried in Port Augusta Cemetery.

The SA Police Historical Society, supported by the Farina Restoration Group, installed a steel silhouette and a memorial plaque telling the story of MC Spicer outside the old Farina Police Station. This memorial is not just in memory of MC Spicer, but honours all SA Police current and former who have dedicated their lives to serve the people of the outback, some of whom have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Assistant Commissioner Ian Parrott APM joined Farina Restoration Group Chairman Bill Brock and SA Police Historical Society President Bill Prior in acknowledging the importance of preserving SAPOL's history and honouring all those who served.

SA Police Historical Society members demonstrated 1850s-era uniforms, while Brevet Sergeant Susan Rosenzweig was on duty demonstrating the remote policing uniform of the present era.



Susan, Steve and Bob demonstrating remote policing uniforms from the 1850s to the present time



Members of the South Australian Police Historical Society dressed in period uniforms

COMMEMORATION

HONOURING 7106 STAFF-SERGEANT CLIVE DUBOIS (1942-2017) Friday 29 May 2026

Beverley and Lynette sent in these images from the Aboriginal Veterans Service at Torrens Parade Ground. They recalled the service of the late Clive Dubois, who passed away on 28 May 2017, aged 74.

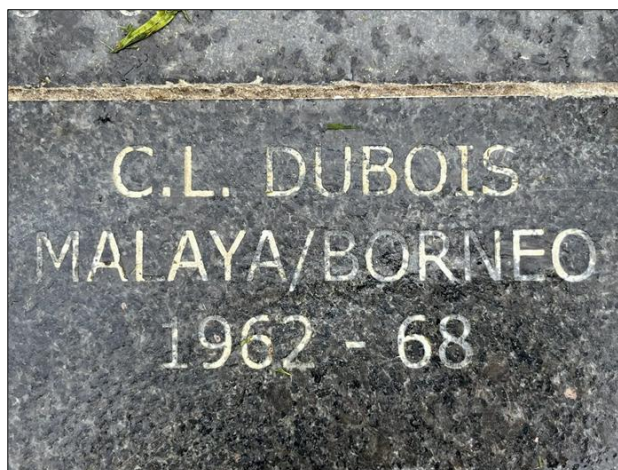
Clive's military service between 1962 and 1986 included postings with 2RAR and 3RAR, and service on Borneo during Confrontation. He took his discharge from the Regular Army in Adelaide on 26 April 1986.

Clive and Beverley joined the SA/NT Branch, NMBVAA on 27 April 1998, and Beverley has been a member of the Branch Committee since 2010.

Clive joined the first Sarawak visit in 2014, and he and Beverley also visited Penang, Ipoh and Sabah. They joined the 2016 Sarawak visit, and also Penang.

For the Sarawak Reunion visit in 2023, Beverley was accompanied by Lynette who wanted to see where her father had served – particularly the Serikin patrol base site occupied by 'C' Company of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment from March to July 1965.

Duty First || Lest we Forget



This memorial particularly recalls the operational service of Clive Dubois with 'C' Company, 3RAR in Sarawak in 1965

BRANCH GENERAL MEETING Friday 15 May 2026

The Ode of Remembrance was recited by Vice-President Don Cameron, and we recalled Leo Howard, Theo John DeKuyper, Group Captain Robert Black AM MStJ RFD, and Barbara Taylor.

Mal mentioned we are getting a resupply of coasters, and these will be sold in sets of 10 in a box with a clear acetate window.

Paul reminded the group about the 'Operation Hornbill 2026' and '60th Anniversary' patches that have been made up.



The shirts for the Sarawak Reunion may now be ordered, at a slightly subsidised price to help keep the cost down. Jenny will receive payments and orders to forward them to Peter for supply and embroidery. All members are able to purchase a shirt, even if not travelling.

In his Vice-President's report, Don mentioned that Anzac Day was a great day even though numbers were down slightly. He thanked all who participated and especially those carrying the flags, Paul Rosenzweig for giving the necessary commands, and to 'the boys' for carrying the banner, again (for at least 25 years running). Thanks to Quentin Castle our Chaplain. Ben Ortmann, Matt Kuta and Quentin received certificates acknowledging their continued support. Several members went to the Mess at Torrens Parade Ground for lunch after the march.

The President spoke regarding the issue of a medal for service in Timor-Leste and the irregular way it has been created.



ANNUAL LUNCH Sunday 7 June 2026

We held a mid-year Annual Lunch on Sunday 7 June 2026 to support our fund-raising efforts for the four schools in Bau that we support. The venue was Anthony's Dinehouse Malaysian restaurant on Tapleys Hill Road, West Beach.

The lunch served to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the formation of the "National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association (Australia) Incorporated" (on 29 February 1996).

It also marked 10 years since the first Sarawak Reunion visit in 2016. That visit was significant because we held our first Malaya & Borneo Veterans Day commemorative service in Kuching on Friday 29 August for the 50th anniversary of the end of the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia.

It was during this service that we unveiled our black granite memorial plaque in the Sarawak Heroes Memorial Park.

This service was unique as the Catafalque Party comprised Australian Air Force Cadets from South Australia, primarily drawn from No 604 Squadron AAFC at Hampstead Barracks.

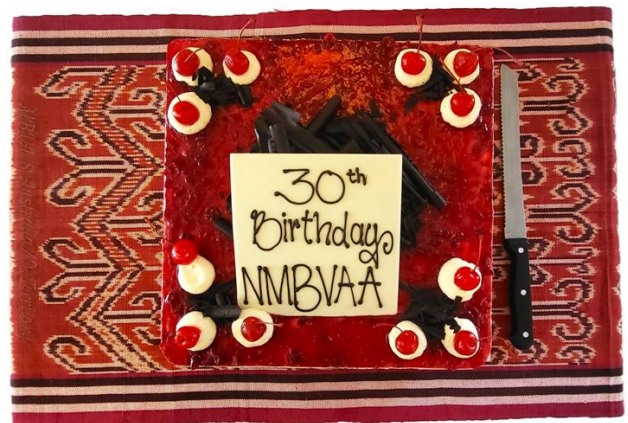


Mick Smith from the NMBVA UK sent us this message:

Congratulations. To think it all started in Nottingham in June 1993. We no longer have a branch as the members slowly passed away so that only 4 were left. The majority were old veterans.



An SA/NT Branch 15 Year Membership Certificate was presented to Dianne Davies (and also one for Allan Davies)



We had a cake donated to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the formation of the "National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association (Australia) Incorporated" in 1996



An SA/NT Branch 15 Year Membership Certificate was presented to Christine Selby



Our raffles raised almost \$300 for the four Bau schools we sponsor in Sarawak

RECRUIT UNIFORM ISSUES

On the weekend of 2 and 3 May, the 1/26 cohort of Recruits in 'Romeo' Flight transitioned from being 'civilians' in a uniform of black squadron T-shirts and baseball caps to being uniformed Air Force Cadets. On Day 1, they were issued with their full set of General Purpose Uniform (GPU) and received briefings on the maintenance and wearing of the uniform. The day finished with 38 Recruits going home correctly dressed in AAFC uniform (see 'Before' and 'After' images below).



Then on Day 2, they were issued with their full set of Service Dress (SD) uniform and received briefings on the maintenance and wearing of the uniform (see 'Before' and 'After' images below).





UPCOMING EVENTS



2026 Annual General Meeting Friday 17 July 2026

This year's SA/NT Branch AGM will be held at the Maid of Auckland Hotel on Friday 17 July, starting at 1115h as usual, and followed by lunch at 1240h.

We will have a guest speaker, raffle and merchandise to purchase. Certificates of Membership will be presented in recognition of 10 and 15 years' membership of the SA/NT Branch since its reformation in 2010.

We will avail of the "Christmas in July" promotion (either 2- or 3- course traditional lunch), or you can choose from the standard menu if you prefer).



Malaya & Borneo Veterans Day Service Friday 7 August 2026

We will hold our annual Malaya & Borneo Veterans Day service in the City of West Torrens War Memorial Gardens on Friday 7 August.

Our Branch Padre Major Quentin Castle will officiate, and the Air Force Cadets of No 604 Squadron will again provide the armed Catafalque Party, Honour Guard and Banner Party.

The ceremony will be followed by a reunion and lunch at Hilton RSL @ \$20 per person.

We hope to see you there!



Sarawak Reunion – Operation 'Hornbill 2026'

In 2026 we mark the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Malaysia-Indonesia Peace Agreement or 'Jakarta Accord' at Istana Merdeka in Jakarta, Indonesia on 11 August 1966 which brought to an end the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia. The prime focus of our Reunion Visit to Sarawak will be a combined service of commemoration honouring the fallen and reflecting on 60 years of peace.

Commemorative shirts, badges and coins are available to purchase. Participants should consider bringing primary and junior-secondary level books as gifts for the schools that we support.



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MEDAL OF THE MONTH

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE MEDAL 1948

The Indian Independence Medal was instituted by King George VI by Royal Warrant dated 21 July 1948.

It was awarded by the Dominion of India to British personnel (including Gurkhas) who were serving with the armed forces of the Dominion on Independence Day, 15 August 1947, and who had volunteered to continue serving until 1 January 1948.

This medal is struck in cupro-nickel. It has a straight non-swivelling suspender attached to the medal by the standard Commonwealth-pattern claw mount with a pin through the upper edge of the medal.

The obverse of this medal features the imperial crown of King George VI and Asoka's Chakra. The reverse features the three lions of Asoka (Emperor of India from 268 to 226 BC) as depicted on Asoka's Pillar at Sarnath, with the title "INDIAN INDEPENDENCE" and the date "15TH AUGUST 1947".

The suspension ribbon is in three equal stripes of saffron, white and green, representing the colours of the new Indian flag.

When worn by British troops, the Indian Independence Medal is considered a commemorative award and is worn after war and campaign medals.



Indian Independence Medal awarded to Corporal Manbahadur Tamang, The Gurkha Engineers

21131051 Corporal Manbahadur Tamang The Gurkha Engineers, Brigade of Gurkhas

Manbahadur Tamang enlisted as a Recruit Boy in the Gurkha Rifles and saw post-war service in India in 1947-48, as a Sapper with The Gurkha Engineers during the Malayan Emergency, and then in Borneo during Confrontation.

The Tamang are an ethnic Nepali group native to central and eastern Nepal; the majority follow Tibetan Buddhism, while a few are Hindu and Christian. The name 'Bahadur' in Nepali means 'brave and courageous'; many Gurkhas have 'Bahadur' as a middle name representing their martial ethos and heritage.

Manbahadur Tamang was born in a village northeast of Kathmandu in about 1933. He enlisted in the Gurkha Rifles sometime between the cessation of hostilities on 2 September 1945 and Indian Independence Day, 15 August 1947. He underwent training in India as a 'Recruit Boy'. He was serving in India on Independence Day, and volunteered to continue serving until 1 January 1948.

After the granting of Independence, certain Gurkha units were selected to be transferred from the Indian Army to the British Army, and these transfers were effective from 1 January 1948. On that date, Recruit Boy Tamang re-enlisted in the British Army and was assigned to the Gurkha Rifles, The Gurkha Regiment.

At the start of World War 2, an agreement was reached between the British government and the Indian independence movement whereby India would be granted independence after victory over the Axis Powers, in exchange for India's full cooperation in the war. On 18 July 1947, the *Indian Independence Bill* was enacted by the British Government, and voting in the Bengal and Punjab Provinces resulted in the decision that both provinces should be partitioned. Pakistan was granted independence at midnight on 14 August 1947; India was granted independence the following day, 15 August 1947.

After the partition of India and Pakistan, as a result of negotiations between the Nepalese, British and Indian Governments (the 'Tripartite Agreement'), the 2nd, 6th, 7th and 10th Gurkha Rifles of the former British Indian Army transferred their service to the British Army with effect from 1 January 1948 to form 'The Gurkha Regiment'.

The Indian Independence Medal awarded to Recruit Boy Manbahadur Tamang of the Gurkha Rifles was struck at the Mint in Calcutta, and is named on the rim in small impressed capitals:

21131051 R.BOY MANBAHADUR TAMANG. G.R.

Officially named medals to Recruit Boys in the Brigade of Gurkhas are quite scarce.

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.

Traditionally soldiers 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

Those named Rai, Limbu, Tamang and Sunwar, as well as some Sherpas (of Tibetan origin, from the Himalayan mountains of Nepal), have traditionally come from the east of Nepal.

From eastern Nepal, the British primarily recruited Rais and Limbus into their Gurkha regiments, more so in the 'eastern battalions' (7GR and 10GR).

Gurkha Training Squadron, Royal Engineers

On 1 January 1948, Sapper Tamang re-enlisted in the British Army, joining 'The Gurkha Regiment'.

Rifleman Tamang transferred to Malaya, and in late 1948 and throughout 1949 underwent field engineer and demolitions training with the Gurkha Training Squadron, Royal Engineers. This had been raised in December 1948 at the Engineer Training Centre, Far East Land Forces at Kluang, Johore.

On the completion of his training, Manbahadur Tamang was appointed a Sapper and was posted to either 67 Gurkha Field Squadron (raised in October 1949), or 68 Gurkha Field Squadron (raised in April 1950).

These squadrons were created in Malaya to provide field engineer support to infantry formations during the Malayan Emergency. They were assigned in support of the 48th Gurkha Infantry Brigade of the 17th Gurkha Division, which had been formed in Malaya on 27 February 1950, taking control of the Gurkha Brigades deployed there.

Hong Kong

In 1950-54, Sapper Tamang continued to serve with 67 or 68 Gurkha Field Squadron, assigned to the 26th Gurkha Brigade serving with the British Army garrison of British Forces Overseas Hong Kong.

These squadrons supported the Gurkha battalions engaged in internal security duties, which included responding to civil disturbances resulting from China's Cultural Revolution.

In 1951, these field squadrons came together to form the '50th Gurkha Engineer Regiment, Royal Engineers'.

Malaya

Sapper Tamang returned to the Malay Peninsula during 1954-61, for duty with the 50th Gurkha Engineer Regiment, based at Sungei Besi near Kuala Lumpur.

The 50th Gurkha Engineer Regiment, RE became the divisional engineers of 17 Gurkha Division in Malaya, based at Sungei Besi near Kuala Lumpur, supporting ongoing operations against Communist Terrorists (CTs).

By Royal Warrant dated 28 September 1955, the regiment was redesignated 'The Gurkha Engineers' within The Brigade of Gurkhas. They were known by this title from 1955 until 1977.

From 1955 to 1961, Headquarters Gurkha Engineers and the two Field Squadrons were based at Sungei Besi, as the 17th Gurkha Divisional Engineers.

Corporal Tamang received the General Service Medal 1918-1964 with clasp 'MALAYA' for his service during the Malayan Emergency with the 50th Gurkha Engineer Regiment (Royal Engineers, later The Gurkha Engineers).



From 1948 to 1955, members of the Gurkha Training Squadron and the two Gurkha Field Squadrons in Malaya wore the brass hat badge of the Royal Engineers bearing the Tudor Crown and Royal cipher of King George VI.



48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade

The brigade formation badge was printed in scarlet on diagonal weave cotton drill material, a format unique to Gurkha formation insignia, leaving the crossed kukris in white as a reverse silhouette.



26 Gurkha Infantry Brigade

No formation sign was approved for 26 Gurkha Brigade, so members wore the formation badge of its superior formation, the 17th Gurkha Division – a badge printed in green on diagonal weave cotton drill material, leaving the crossed kukris in white as a reverse silhouette.



The Indian Independence Medal (right) awarded to Corporal Manbahadur Tamang, The Gurkha Engineers, together with the General Service Medal 1918-1964 (fourth pattern, 1949-52) with clasp 'MALAYA', and Campaign Service Medal 1962- with clasp 'BORNEO'.

Malaya / Malaysia

The British granted independence to Malaya on 31 August 1957, and the State of Emergency in Malaya formally ended on 31 July 1960.

Sapper Manbahadur Tamang continued to serve with the 50th Gurkha Engineer Regiment, which was based at Sungei Besi near Kuala Lumpur until 1961. Gurkha 70 Park Training Squadron was raised in 1960.

Sapper Tamang was promoted to Corporal, and in 1961 was appointed as a member of the raising cadre for the newly-created 69 Field Squadron, The Gurkha Engineers at Sungei Besi.

In 1961 the regiment moved to Kluang in Johore, to take over the Engineer Training Centre, Far East Land Forces.

The Centre was disbanded on 13 November 1961, and its role was assumed by The Gurkha Engineers, reorganised as a training establishment. The regiment remained based at Kluang, Johore until 1971.

In 1962, the disposition of the regiment was as follows:

- > 67 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron was assigned to 48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade / Gurkha Field Force with the British Army garrison of British Forces Overseas Hong Kong (1962-93).

- > 68 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron became part of the Strategic Reserve with the 3rd Division at Tidworth, UK (1962-71) and then joined 48 Gurkha Brigade in Hong Kong (1971-93).

- > 69 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron was based at Kota Belud in North Borneo (Sabah), where it completed construction of the Kota Belud training area; it deployed to Brunei in December 1962 following the suppression of the Brunei Revolt.

- > HQ Squadron and 70 Gurkha Training Squadron were located at Kluang, Johore; the squadron was disbanded in Singapore on 31 April 1971.



The reverse of the Indian Independence Medal features the three lions of Asoka (Emperor of India from 268 to 226 BC) as depicted on Asoka's Pillar at Sarnath, with the title "INDIAN INDEPENDENCE" and the date "15TH AUGUST 1947".

Having enlisted in the British Army after the end of World War 2, Recruit Boy Manbahadur Tamang was still undergoing training in India on 15 August 1947, and volunteered to continue serving. On 1 January 1948, Recruit Boy Tamang re-enlisted in the British Army and was assigned to the Gurkha Rifles, The Gurkha Regiment. He then transferred to Malaya in 1948 where he underwent field engineer and demolitions training at the Engineer Training Centre, Far East Land Forces at Kluang, Johore.

Brunei

Corporal Manbahadur Tamang deployed to Brunei with 69 Field Squadron, but this was after the close of the qualifying period (23 December 1962) so the engineers did not receive the clasp 'BRUNEI' to the General Service Medal 1918-1964.

Instead, they received the Campaign Service Medal 1962- with clasp 'BORNEO' for service in Brunei after 24 December 1962.

Sarawak

During Confrontation, 69 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron was the only element of The Gurkha Engineers to see operational service on Borneo.

From August 1965, 69 Field Squadron was assigned to 51 Gurkha Infantry Brigade in Sarawak.

51 Brigade had transferred to Borneo in 1964, and established its headquarters in Brunei. The brigade operated as 'Central Brigade', responsible for the defence of the Third and Fourth Divisions of Sarawak.

Corporal Tamang received the Campaign Service Medal 1962- with clasp 'BORNEO' for his service with 69 Independent Field Squadron in Brunei (1962-65) and 51 Gurkha Infantry Brigade (1965-66).

This 'undeclared war' was brought to an end with the signing of the Malaysia-Indonesia Peace Agreement or 'Jakarta Accord' at Istana Merdeka in Jakarta, Indonesia on 11 August 1966.

During and immediately after the Malayan Emergency, eight Gurkha sappers were killed or died on active service. During Confrontation and immediately after, four Gurkha sappers died.

Hong Kong

Having enlisted after WW2 as a 'Recruit Boy', Corporal Tamang was aged in his mid-30s when Confrontation ended, so he may well have served again in Hong Kong.

69 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron was assigned to 48 Gurkha Brigade, British Army garrison of British Forces Overseas Hong Kong.

During the unrest in 1967 and 1968, 69 Squadron was heavily involved with strengthening defences on the border and in bomb disposal tasks throughout the Colony.

Owing to the reduction in strength of The Brigade of Gurkhas, 69 Squadron was disbanded in 1968.



Headquarters Land Forces, Hong Kong

Headquarters Land Forces, Hong Kong was established on the liberation of the colony in 1945. It was the command headquarters of the British Army garrison of British Forces Overseas Hong Kong. All eight battalions of the Gurkha Rifles and elements of the Brigade of Gurkhas served here at various times until the handover to China on 30 June 1997.



The Queen's Gurkha Engineers

This postcard published by Geoff White Ltd in 1989, no 58 in 'The British Army Series', shows the regimental badge (introduced in 1955) and samples of uniforms of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers:

Left: Captain (Queen's Gurkha Officer) in No 1 Dress

Right: Sapper, equipped for diving

On 2 February 1977 – in the year of Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee – Her Majesty authorised the change of title to 'The Queen's Gurkha Engineers' (QGE).



KING'S GURKHA ARTILLERY



The Royal Regiment of Artillery celebrated the official formation of the King's Gurkha Artillery – the British Army's newest regiment – in the presence of King Charles III with a parade at Royal Artillery Barracks, Larkhill on 4 June 2026.

The King, who is Captain General of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, was received with a 21 gun salute before being presented with a traditional mala flower garland.

The KGA, established in April 2025, is a part of the British Brigade of Gurkhas. Its new cap badge, the first created for a British Army unit in 14 years, marks this significant moment in the Army's evolution.

Commanding the third contingent on parade was the Battery Training Officer of 34 (Seringapatam) Battery, KGA Captain Imbahadur Ghale. Those who joined our 2023 Sarawak Reunion will remember Im as the commander of the British Forces Brunei and 1RGR detachment that joined us in Kuching.

VALE

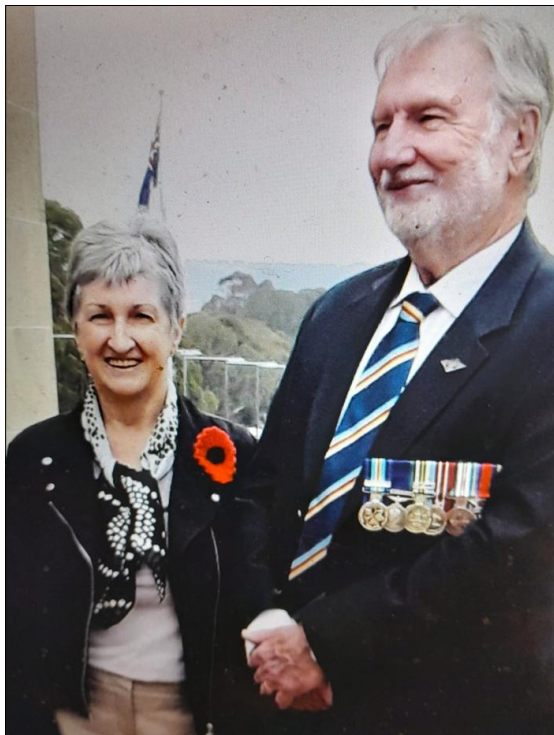
Barbara Jane Taylor (née Stephens), 18 February 1946 – 7 May 2026

It is with sadness that the SA/NT Branch, NMBVAA advises of the passing of Branch member Barb Taylor on Thursday 7 May, aged 80. We send our condolences to Peter, their sons Mark and Stephen, daughter-in-law Samantha, and granddaughters Maddison and Darcy.

For anyone wishing to contribute in memory of Barb, you may make a donation to the Australian Cancer Research foundation.

Barb was the wife of Peter for almost 59 years. Peter was a National Serviceman who served as a Sapper with the Royal Australian Engineers, and in 1966 deployed to North Borneo (Sabah) with 22 Construction Squadron on Operation 'Granite' during Confrontation.

Lest we Forget



Barbara and Peter at the Australian War Memorial in 2018



At our Christmas Lunch on 9 December 2023



MALAYAN EMERGENCY Roll of Honour – July

Honouring the sacrifice of the 46 Australians who died on operational service during the general period of the Malayan Emergency, 16 June 1948 to 31 July 1960.

1/3542 Private James Neville Metcalf,
2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
4 July 1957

O52768 Flight Lieutenant
Dennis St George Greaves Oates,
Base Squadron, RAAF Butterworth:
10 July 1959

A218384 Leading Aircraftman
William Patrick Duffy,
Base Squadron, RAAF Butterworth:
26 July 1959

A312178 Aircraftman John George Lawson,
Base Squadron, RAAF Butterworth:
26 July 1959

2/8409 Lieutenant Clive William Bridge,
1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
28 July 1961

Lest we Forget

CONFRONTATION Roll of Honour – July

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.

213347 Signalman Kenneth Charles Johnson,
208th Signals Squadron (Commonwealth):
3 July 1965

342550 Corporal Peter John West,
Assault Pioneer Platoon, Support Company,
4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment:
2 July 1966

3411676 Sapper Reginald Nevill Bridgland,
22 Construction Squadron,
Royal Australian Engineers:
31 July 1966

Lest we Forget



213347 Signalman Kenneth Charles Johnson (1941-1965)

Signalman Kenneth Johnson served with the Royal Australian Corps of Signals. During Confrontation, he deployed to the Malay Peninsula and was attached to 208 (Commonwealth) Signals Squadron, 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade Group.

Johnson was injured in motor vehicle accident on the Malay Peninsula, and died in Kuala Lumpur General Hospital on 3 July 1965, aged 24.

Signalman Johnson was buried in the Terendak Garrison Cemetery in Malacca, Malaysia with full military honours.

On 2 June 2016, his remains were repatriated in a C-17A Globemaster aircraft in Operation 'Reunite'.

Aircraft bearing the coffins of 25 Servicemen and eight dependants from Terendak Military Cemetery in Malaysia and Kranji Cemetery in Singapore landed at RAAF Base Richmond in Sydney, after which a military repatriation ceremony and memorial service for families was conducted, attended by the Governor-General, friends and former colleagues of the deceased.

Signalman Johnson was reinterred in the Sydney War Cemetery in Rookwood, NSW.

His name is listed on the Rolls of Honour (panel 3) in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial.

Lest we Forget





2/8409 Lieutenant Clive William Bridge (1933-1961)

Lieutenant Clive William Bridge of the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment suffered severe burns in a military truck accident on 17 July 1961 while heading towards Malacca, on the Malay Peninsula. He died in the British Military Hospital, Singapore on 28 July, aged 27.

He is not listed on the Rolls of Honour at the Australian War Memorial under the title 'Malayan Emergency' as his death occurred after 31 July 1960, the date the government of the Federation of Malaya officially declared the Emergency over. Instead, he is listed in the Commemorative Area under the title 'Southeast Asia, 1955-1975'.

Clive William Bridge was born in Mayfield, NSW on 21 September 1933. He first enlisted with a National Service Intake on 20 August 1953, and underwent training with the 19th National Service Training Battalion. He later graduated from the Officer Candidate School – Portsea before deploying for overseas active service during the Malayan Emergency.

Lieutenant Bridge emplaned in Sydney with a 1RAR advance party on 31 August 1959, and deplaned in Singapore on 1 September; the main body embarked on the chartered troopship MV *Flaminia* on 20 September 1959. The *Flaminia* was a former passenger liner, in the service of the British Merchant Navy during the early years of World War 2 as the *Empire Swan*.

The incoming battalion group disembarked at Singapore on 2 October and, after a period of acclimatisation and issuing of equipment, underwent jungle training at the Jungle Warfare School at Kota Tinggi. They were soon reported to be 'flat out', getting their first month-long taste of the Malayan jungle.

The following month they moved to Perak State and joined the 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade Group in the continuing hunt for communist-terrorists in North Malaya. The brigade group again came under the control of Australian Army Force, Headquarters Far East Land Forces (FARELF).

The Government of the Federation of Malaya declared the Emergency over on 31 July 1960, but the 1RAR Group continued on operations until the end of its scheduled tour of duty in October 1961. Lieutenant Bridge qualified for the General Service Medal, 1918-62 with clasp 'Malaya', and this was awarded in May 1960.

Lieutenant Bridge is one of 50 Australian fallen from the Malayan wars – 42 from the Emergency and 8 from Confrontation – who remain buried overseas.

In 2021, a commemorative service was held at the Royal Military College-Duntroon, as a direct response to Lieutenant Bridge's former classmates asking to have his name honoured. RMC-D is the custodian of the OCS Portsea Memorial Wall and OCS Portsea Memorial Tablet. The original policy was that only those who had died on 'active service' were given a place on the honour roll. In 2000, that policy changed, but the status of Lieutenant Bridge was not considered until some time later. An investigation determined that Lieutenant Bridge was eligible to be inscribed on the Roll of Honour.

The College held a small ceremony on 17 July 2021 – the 60th anniversary of Lieutenant Bridge's death – in which a newly installed plaque on the OCS Memorial Wall was unveiled.

Lest we Forget



The grave of Lieutenant Clive William Bridge in Kranji Military Cemetery, Singapore in December 2019.



Lieutenant Bridge's former classmates with his plaque on the OCS Memorial Wall, installed on 17 July 2021.