

Captain Robert (Bob) Greig ED RFD
Passed away 18 May 2017
1RVR - 5/6RVR

John Hanlon wrote:- Having known Bob for many years and worked with him at ANZAC house for several, I am saddened to report Bob's passing late on Thursday 18 May 2017. Bob had a long fight with cancer and only a few weeks ago advised me he had been diagnosed with oesophageal cancer, just to add to his problems. Bob's funeral was held in Canberra where he had lived with family for several years. Bob was Intelligence Officer with 1RVR in the 70's and 80's; a task he excelled at through briefings and lectures on the "enemy".



Bob Mc Dougal wrote:- I first came across the IO, Captain Bob Greig, when I was sent on a Regimental Signals Course, run by 1RVR at Puckapunyal circa 1975. LTCOL Lunn was CO, of a very reduced Battalion. Having suffered the mass departure of National Servicemen doing their 6 year commitment. Bob Greig was IO and he had set up the Bn CP Ops/Int tent. It was out in the sticks. The new Sigs began to get used to the rostered duties. He was a fair boss, tireless in his application to work. It was only later I realised the extent of his commitment. The pressure lanterns were the ones with the silk mantle, tied on delicately around the burner. Some metho from a little green bottle was squirted onto a small plate, and lit, to begin the combustion. Do not lose the little pricker to keep the nozzle clear! A pale light, the hissing of the lamps and hash from the radio sets tended to make you somnambulant. Bob brought along his own radio rack, which was a great boon. It kept all the sets off the FS table and the handsets could be clipped onto the rig. The rack was suspended by wires from the central spar of the 11 x 11. Bob also brought along his own LP gas lamps! Bringing us into the late 20th century. Although we sometimes rigged up a little fluoro using a radio battery.

We were short handed at the time. LTCOL Lunn got his Landrover fitted up with an ANGRA & speaker. The Bn had a march past, with the CO on the tailgate. There was barely a Coy of us! Later I was sent to 3 Div as a clerk. At 3Div I observed the comings and goings of the Officers, they all knew and were contemporaries of Bob. CAPT (at the time) Paul Riley, LT (later Capt) Barry Coad, COL Bullard, BRIG Mac Grant. The annual camp that year was at the Big Desert. Bob produced his Big Desert Special 1:25,000 map. With such flat topography there was only a little squiggly contour line on one corner!

Later I went to 1RVR as a Corporal under LT Ian Campey. We were building up D Coy. Our recruiting was successful and at one stage we had nearly 3 platoons on the back parade ground at Menin. A senior platoon doing courses, an IET platoon, desperate to wear the coveted blue lanyard, and the recruit platoon, some about to go to RTB or just come back. CAPT Greig in the meantime was running his INT Section on the top floor, end room at Menin. At the RVR I met some of stalwarts who were to be the mainstay of the RVR in the lean years to follow. Bob of course was there with

his CPL Ken Lewis, a marvellous model maker & master of minutiae. But also there was (rank excused) Jim Brown, Allan Wilkinson, T.C. Johnson, Mick Symons, Johnno Johnson, John Hanlon, John LeTet, Don Blanksby, Allan Hale, John Leyden, Maurie Ryan, Lt. Aird, Max Shepherd, Allan May, Peter Bayley, MAJ Reinmuth, Norm Healey, Ken "Horse" Hargreaves, Peter McLellan, Carlo D'Appio, Maurie Sarteschi etc.

At the Dargo High Plains exercise, one of the CP staff, CPL. Puttick observed an alarming incident involving Bob Greig. As we exercised "Jungle Warfare" in our privately purchased Howard Greens, with Smocks Psychological, Katabatic winds & freezing rain. The one Huey helicopter had arrived from RAAF Sale, to provide us with some idea of air mobility. Wild Bill Hocking was CO and the little black haired nuggety pilot, offered to take some officers for a joy flight. Into the Huey went Wild Bill, Bob of course, the ADJT, the 2IC, the QM and the officer who can usually be found hanging around any CP. The chopper got up to about 20 ft & there was a tremendous bang, and it came straight down again. First out and sprinting for the trees was the Flying Officer, and in the other direction the co-pilot. The rest of the entire command group sat, just amazed. On reflection, had the chopper been a bit further over there was a sharp steep escarpment. Goodbye command group. Incidentally, at the same camp the BUC had a massive stockpile of beer cans. The then SSGT Hanlon seemed to take an interest in it, and it was piquetted at night time.

The messes did get noisy and boisterous, the CO had his collar broken by the ADJT falling on him from the top of the mess tent. CPL McClurg wanted to fight anyone, and the inaugural VICTORIA POLICE SWAT team had to be disbanded as they fought among themselves. Horse Hargreaves said the inside of the Med Tent looked as if tomato sauce had been squirted about when they were wheeled in! Circumstances put me out of the Platoon SGT business and Bob Greig took me under his wing and began to educate me.

I have sometimes called it a rough & tumble university, because there was a great deal of learning to be done. Bob on exercise took his grand panjandrum and box of tricks. He always set up the CP with the Ops and Int maps, the clip boards with Mor Reps, Sitreps, Intsums etc. It was very much his domain, the Duty Officers came & went. Bob was always there, cogitating. As I recall a new CO arrived in the wee hours. The hiss of the lamps, the drone of the KVA, the hash from the speakers had the duty men in a daze. The CO arrived as "Christ Cleaning the temple" and demanded an Int briefing! The Duty Officer the Sig & INT bloke stared aghast at this starched apparition. A resounding fart broke the silence and a hand reach out around the table and levered up the IO who had been asleep under the table. He then began a professional Int briefing: situation etc. The flabbergasted CO treated us with a little more respect after this, and he hustled out into the black night to find his hoochie!

Under Bob's tutelage I went on to do the Int course at SMI, Canungra. Bob was pleased although he sometimes muttered "green lanyard" when he found some publication he did not agree with. At 1RVR apart from disagreeing about stores with the then QM Adrian Jackson, he put out a brilliant publication: Unit intelligence Digest, September 1984.

It was an A4 sized guide to the then training enemy the Musorians. All Soviet equipment of course, but included all the small arms, armoured vehicles, tanks, arty,

SP arty even AA. In 3 parts it had Tactical Principles, Organisation (of MR/Rifle Bns), & combat weapons. It was an excellent guide and much of it is still relevant today. Bob had an extensive library and was an authority on some arcane subjects such as uniforms of the German Army in WW1, just to name one.

The smoking ban in Commonwealth buildings began to bite, as Bob and many others liked a “durrie” at times. Also the end was nigh as 1RVR was subsumed into 5/6 RVR. Bob left the service, over age for an Officer. Karen and myself, among others kept contact with Bob, and he even cooked us a delicious meal at his flat in Grey St., St. Kilda. In later years I also corresponded with him when he was working for ANZAC House at the warehouse. I sent my requests and returns in to him, sometimes with Green Lanyard, written on the bottom just to stir him up. That was where Peter Smith OAM met Bob when he joined the RSL as Appeals Director. We still got phone calls from Bob, & Christmas Cards, the last in 2016.

The only physical reminder I have of Bob is the book he gave me to start my education: Militia Battalion at War by Mathews & his palette from school. The palette, which I still use has R.D. Greig on the back with Form V, ART, 157 Cornwall Rd Sunshine Melbourne. Rest in Peace Bob, you are one of the greats! Regards, Bob Mc Dougal.

Paul Riley wrote:- Bob’s passing is sad news indeed. Another of the characters that enriched our lives in a variety of ways. Bob was a stalwart supporter of the profession at arms and the ARES in particular. He was a military enthusiast of the first order and he approached the business of officer-ship in his special way. He was the most effective Unit INT Officer I had the opportunity to work with. The dedication he offered to the task was beyond reproach and his enthusiasm rubbed off readily on those in his INT Section, I'm thinking here of the likes of Bob McDougal, Ken Lewis and many others. My first encounter with Bob was as a digger in D COY 1RVR (Pentropic) in 1962. The Coy was deployed to Blackwood for a tactical weekend and Bob’s Pl was the EN for the exercise. I remember this weekend for three reasons;

1. My Pl (13), Pl Comd SGT Wally (Chesty) Schestopoulos (later Sheppard) debussed short of the defensive position we were to occupy and the confusion that followed did little for my confidence as a new member.

2. We spent the morning adjusting our Pl position overlooking the Blackwood Recreation Reserve and dug in to stage 1. As we had been ordered to take breakfast and lunch with us from home, the evening meal was rationed. After stand-to that evening it was quite dark and SGT Brian Mullarvy appeared and dropped two tins into the weapon pit I was sharing with Danny O’Shea. Ten Man ration packs were all that were available in those days so between us we had a tin of peas and a tin of ox tongue. Need I say more?

3. On Sunday during an advance to contact and a subsequent Pl attack the En was routed and a debrief was conducted. It was at this time that Bob the En Comd appeared resplendent in a German Officer uniform standing very erect, Rommel fashion, in the passenger side of an Austin Champ. He gave us all the Greig stare and moved on.

During the Jerusalem Inlet AFX in 1967 Bob was the Duty Officer in the BN CP and I was his understudy. At one point during the night Bob asked one of the Sigs to get a set of Chinagraph pencils from a pocket of Bob’s greatcoat that was hanging near the

entrance. Shortly thereafter the Sig let out a almighty scream that startled everyone. He had driven his hand into the great coat pocket and latched onto Bob's dentures. It took some time to calm him down with Bob explaining that he preferred not to wear the dentures because of the dust in the air.

Bob always worked hard and played hard and I can recall many nights in front of the bar in the Offrs Mess at Menin Depot, Bob regaling us with many facts and much gesticulation as he was want to do, usually with a glass in the same hand. Needless to say much drink was spilled and eventually the Parquetry floor had to be restored in the area that Bob habitually occupied.

Bob was an effective procurer and when we were refurbishing the indoor range at the Footscray Depot I rang him at work and asked him if he could obtain a sheet of steel plate to mount at the back of the stop butt. He said "let me see what I can do" and a short time later called me to ask if someone could be at the depot the next day to receive the said plate.

Bob was a willing supporter of the RVRA and for a number of years a regular volunteer storeman at the ANZAC House Warehouse.

Without a doubt Bob did his bit for the country and his contribution was a valuable one. He left his unique mark on the activities in which he engaged and we will remember him fondly for many years to come.