

7 Field Regiment Association

Yandoo

Royal Australian Artillery

1994

Vol 1 No 8



7 FD REGT RAA ASSOCIATION
YARRANE ROAD VILLOUGHBY 2068

GNR. PECK NX 000

The "official" version of how Harry Peck was born started at Ingleburn Army Camp, NSW, in 1940, when an officious orderly sergeant was inspecting the huts of the gunners of the 2/5th Australian Field Regiment (Royal Australian Artillery). The sergeant, seeing an untidy bed littered with gear and accoutrements, said to a gunner standing nearby, "Who sleeps in that bed?". The answer came back in a flash, "That's Harry Peck's bed." The sergeant noted the name of Gunner Peck in his book with a view to extra fatigues in the near future and left the hut.

The regiment sailed overseas and settled in at Deir Suneid Camp, Palestine. One night, an almighty fracas broke out among the gunners and the sergeant of the guard inquired who had started the trouble. Again came the answer that Gunner Harry Peck was the culprit and the poor unfortunate sergeant dashed off and prepared a charge report, the object of which was to confine Gunner Peck to the camp for 14 days.

The regiment moved down to Mersa Matruh and here the "Peck racket" started in earnest. A nearby Ordnance store of the British Army began to supply vast and incredible quantities of war materials and supplies to an Australian unit, the goods in question ranging from motor vehicles to pistols and binoculars.

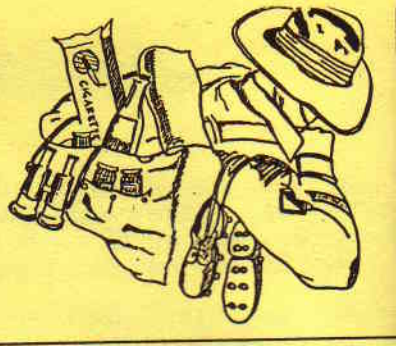
Not until the British began to check the issue vouchers was it discovered that all the goods were signed for by ostensibly the same person - Harry Peck - although the signatures were in a dozen different hands and many different ranks ranging from bombardier to major.

By some twist of fate there chanced to be an inoffensive officer named Peck in another unit at Mersa Matruh and rather naturally he was viewed with a great deal of suspicion by the high authorities, who had come to hear of the matter and were furious.

And so it went on. A Jewish sports dealer in Tel Aviv sold many pairs of football boots to an Australian officer with a very Jewish appearance; the docket was signed for by Heinrich Pfeck but the boots are still unpaid for.

In Syria, Harry Peck became notorious. Ten tons of building stone was carted away by Australian military vehicles and the bill was received by Headquarters AIF. It referred to the "goods taken away by the soldat Henri Peque of the 31st Anchovy Division Army Australienne". Needless to say, the building stone is still another bad debt.

Vast quantities of goods were taken over in Syria by Harry Peck but his unit, the Anchovy Division, was not on the Order of Battle and therefore untraceable.



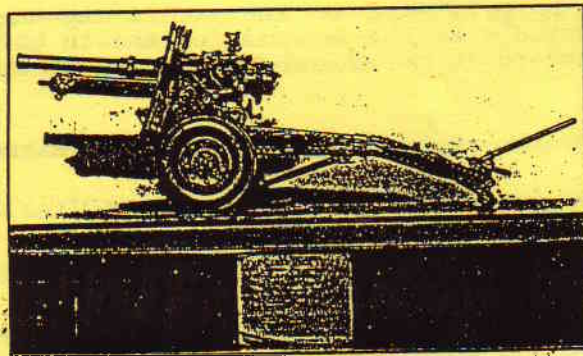
The only concrete evidence of Peck's "existence" was the Harry Peck trophy which was commissioned by Harry Peck and Company in 1950.

It was a large field gun carved out of pieces of wood, exactly to scale, by Warrant Officer Adlam of the AIC, and sprayed with bronze.

The inscription reads: "*The Harry Peck Trophy for inter battery shooting and gun drill competition. Presented to the 5th Field Regiment, AMF, by Harry Peck & Co (Aust) Limited, in recognition of the fictitious Gunner Harry Peck who served with such distinction in the 2/5th Field Regiment, AIF.*"

This trophy was used as a prize for the inter-battery direct firing competition held annually.

In 1960, following an army restructuring, the trophy came to rest in the officers' mess of the 7th Field Regiment in Willoughby, Sydney.



The Harry Peck trophy, commissioned by Harry Peck and Company (now Peck's) in 1950, in recognition of the fictitious gunner.

YANDOO

The title "Yandoo" is derived from the title of the Newsletter of the 7th Field Artillery Brigade AIF. "Yandoo" is an Aboriginal word signifying "Messenger". The first edition was issued at sea on board HMAT "Argyllshire" on 18 June 1916, two days out of Capetown, whilst the 7th was en route to the United Kingdom for training at Lark Hill. Original numbers were duplicated from wax stencils. Needless to say, the combination of wax and heat whilst "Argyllshire" was passing through the tropics caused the enthusiastic Editorial Committee many headaches.

The original numbers proved to be so popular that they were issued in three bound volumes illustrated with photographs and were sent back to Australia by the members of the 7th. I am happy to say that there are two original duplicated numbers in the archives of the Association, together with several sets of the bound volumes which have been identified as belonging to original members of the 7th. The bound volumes are now collectors' items, with one sighted recently in a dealer's premises priced at \$200.00.

Original members of the "Yandoo" Editorial Committee were Captain (later Brigadier) T.A.J. Playfair, BC 26th Battery, and as one would expect, two members of the Battery, Bombardier Sil Rohu and Gunner Eric Harding. Sil Rohu was later a well known gunsmith in Sydney. Eric Harding was seriously wounded when a stray shell burst in the Battery wagon lines on 11 September 1917.

The duplicating equipment was purchased in Capetown and had a short but busy and exciting life. It was manufactured by Ellams and accompanied the 7th to France. When the Australian Divisions moved south to cover Amiens at the time of the German Offensive in March 1918, the equipment was jettisoned in the interests of mobility but fortunately was recovered intact some months later. In addition to printing "Yandoo", it printed menu cards, sports programmes and concert programmes. When the last issue of "Yandoo" was run off in 1919, the counter attached to the equipment had registered 225,000 revolutions.

Laurie Hindmarsh

THE ASSOCIATION'S COLLECTION

As you know the 7th Field Regiment RAA Association's collection of memorabilia has been transferred to the National Artillery Museum. By the time you read this, selected items from the collection will be on display in the Regimental Room at the Museum. The display will be representative of all periods in the Regiment's history. It will be the first in a series of Regimental displays and will be on view long enough for all members to see it.

An ideal time to view the display would be the occasion of the next "Gunner Drinks" at the Museum on 30 September 1994 (5.30 to 7.30pm). Meet other Gunners, view our display and other interesting exhibits with a drink in hand.

Needless to say the search for memorabilia does not finish here. I am still searching and I look to all members to support me in this important project. I welcome enquiries any evening or weekend on (02) 449.1169.

Laurie Hindmarsh

HONORARY MEMBERS

It is with very great pleasure that the President, Major Bob Corbett, is able to announce that three new Honorary Members were elected at the Annual General Meeting on 27 July 1994. The new members are;

- Mr T.H.Elder, who as a Gunner in 27th Battery arrived in France on 31 December 1916 and served with the Battery until the Armistice and later. Mr Elder participates in the ANZAC Day March in Adelaide each year and resides at Hove, South Australia.
- Mrs G.E.Serviss is a War Widow who accompanied the War Widows and Veterans on the return to the Western Front last year. Her late husband, Corporal C.W.Serviss served with the 26th and 27th Batteries. Mrs Serviss resides at Kensington Park, S.A.
- Mrs C.Wynn is another War Widow who has supported the Association by donating memorabilia of her late husband's service in 7th Field Artillery Brigade AIF. Driver E.W.Wynn served with 28th and 107th Batteries and later 3rd Army Field Brigade AIF. Needless to say, the memorabilia has been deposited with the National Artillery Museum. Mrs Wynn resides at Wellington, New South Wales.

All members of the Association join with the President in congratulating the three Honorary Members upon this award of distinction.



FRED BASTOCK SHARON FULCHER ALEC BURKE
ANNUAL REUNION - OCTOBER 1993



DENE NELSON DON COLLINS JACK GWILYM
KEITH LEEK OWEN SAVILLE MAX FALCONER





LANCE GILKINSON



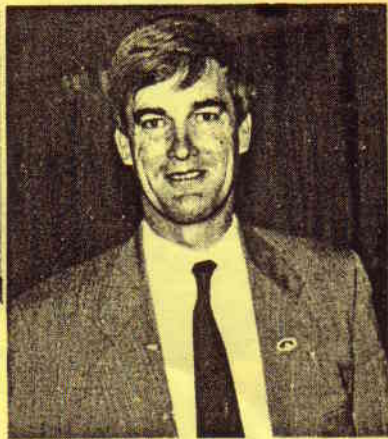
PETER MUIR



IAN JAMES



SNOW MATTHEWS
DICK LORD

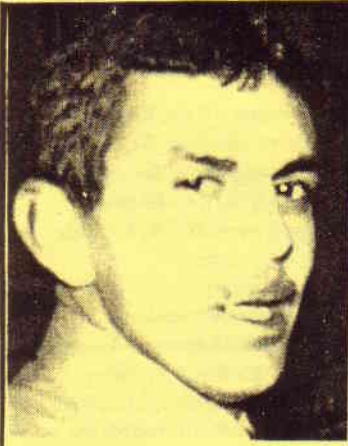


BRIG. JOHN COCHRANE
DANNY TOPLIS



NEIL HAWKINS
DON McVAY





PAT SENGOS



VIRGINIA LONGFELLOW



BRIAN HECKENBERG



GRAHAME SMITH
DAVID BUZACOTT



GLENN MILHAM
JOHN PURCELL



STUART STAZIKER
VIC BIBBY



If one has an interest or connection with a thing or place, it becomes all the harder to escape seeing those subjects manifest themselves no matter where one goes. My honeymoon on Norfolk Island during December 1991 sets the background for such a happening. While there I happened to attend the Norfolk Island RSL Sub-Branch Club. The clubhouse is rather like the style of places one finds in rural NSW, but this one has a special significance in my memory.

On looking about the Club I saw a display of photographs of deceased members showing from a beam above the centre of the building. To my astonishment and wonder I saw that one carried the name Augustus Martin, 26th Battery, 7th Field Artillery Brigade, AIF. Enquiries made to the bar staff led me to 'Gus' Martin's daughter, who still lives on the island. She was kind enough to invite my wife and I to afternoon tea and gave us some details on the full and varied life led by her father.

Born in Portsmouth, England in 1885, Gus Martin came to Australia with his parents the following year. His father opened a drapers shop in King Street Newtown, opposite the old Marcus Clarke's store, for those old enough to remember it being there.

It appears that the family moved to Norfolk Island in 1893, taking up a landholding of some size. By 1914, Gus Martin and his brother Fred were in New Caledonia and I seem to recall our hostess saying that the brothers tried to enlist in the French Army on the outbreak of War. In the event Gus at least returned to Australia and enlisted in the 7th in 1916 at "the Warren" at Marrickville, ironically within a few kilometres (miles) of where he spent his early childhood.

Gus Martin saw the War out with the 7th, reaching the rank of Sergeant. Having seen active service with the Brigade from start to finish, he took a well earned discharge in 1919 and returned to Norfolk Island.

After moving around the South Pacific for a few years he bought the Norfolk Island Trading Co in 1926, changed its name to A.G.Martin Trading Co and ran the business successfully until 1942. Selling out in that year, Gus Martin returned to Sydney and worked for a time as a Customs Officer. Back to Norfolk in 1944, the next seventeen years saw him involved in various pursuits of one kind or another until he returned yet again to Sydney in 1961, living first at Chatswood and later Northbridge. After working on this occasion as a trading and insurance agent, he once again returned to Norfolk Island following the death of his wife of some 41 years.

By now aged about 78, Gus Martin spent a few years with his daughter and then returned for what was regrettably the last time to mainland Australia. His death took place at the Little Sisters of the Poor at Drummoyne on 26 April 1968.

It is a fitting tribute to the man that my wife and I were told that he made a supreme effort to see out Anzac Day of that year. That he did, displaying indeed the fortitude and courage that was the hallmark of the men of the first AIF and not least of all those both very ordinary, extraordinary, men such as Gus Martin who made up the original 7th.

Jim Nash

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIGHTING OF WORLD WAR ONE

(Continued from last issue)

1917

- Jan 8 German High Command decides on unrestricted submarine warfare.
- Jan 19 Von Zimmerman note to Mexican Ambassador urging a Mexican alliance with Germany against the U.S.
- Jan 31 Germany notifies U.S. that unrestricted U-boat warfare will begin Feb 1.
- Feb 3 U.S. severs relations with Germany.
- Mar 8 Russian Revolution begins.
- Mar 11 Baghdad occupied by British forces.
- Mar 15 Czarist Government overthrown in Russia.
- Apr 3 Germans retreat to Hindenberg line after massive British and French attacks.
- Apr 6 U.S. declares war on Germany.
- Apr 9 Battle of Arras begins; British take Vimy Ridge.
- Apr 16-20 Second Battle of Aisne; British and French suffer heavy losses
- Jun 1 First U.S. troops land in France; General Pershing commanding.
- Jun 7 British launch mass surprise attack on Messines Ridge.
- Jun 31
to
- Nov 10 Third battle of Ypres; British troops gain about five miles at a cost of 400,000 men.
- Jly 1 Lawrence of Arabia emerges as legendary hero of the war in the desert.
- Aug 20
to
- Dec 15 Second Battle of Verdun.
- Oct 24 Italian line shattered by German-Austrian forces at Caporetto; Italians retreat in confusion.
- Nov 8 Bolsheviks overthrow revolutionary Russian Government under Kerensky
- Nov 20
to
- Dec 3 Battle of Cambrai; British attack with 380 tanks; unable to follow their advantage.
- Dec 8 British conquer German East Africa.
- Dec 9 General Allenby takes Jerusalem.

1918

Continued next issue.

(MLF 10/7/94)

MY FIRST SHOOT by DICK LORD

I have called this little story "My First Shoot" because it was the first time I ever saw a shoot at an OP although it wasn't really "my" shoot.

First some biographical background. I joined 7th Field Brigade RAA (Militia) in February 1939 knowing nothing about the Army and was posted to the Battery staff of 25th Battery. In a surprisingly short time I qualified as a specialist (range Finder) and to my surprise promoted Bombardier and posted to what I suppose was BCA (Battery Commander's Assistant). I must have been keen or there wasn't any opposition. This is to explain what happened later.

In October 1939 it was decided that the Militia would do a month's camp in alternate months and the 7th went to Aberglassyn near Maitland in that month. In due course came a field firing day with me not having the faintest idea of what would happen. The OP was on a bare grassy knoll; no camouflage or any nonsense like that! There seemed to be quite a crowd there which I suppose included Artillery Brass, the CO etc etc, the BC and of course me. My gear consisted of Artillery Board and stand Director (one of those incomprehensible 180 degree R & L things) and Stand Field Plotter (a device for solving triangles), binoculars and case, prismatic compass and case, map board, haversack with pencils etc etc and water bottle. I had to carry all this ironmongery to every OP. I used to drape it all over myself, secure it with a belt and set forth. It was dashed heavy which was bad enough but that was nothing compared with how awkward it was and that was plenty. It was ridiculous really. I set up all this with the instruments on their stands in a straight line and waited.

Well, anyway, eventually the target was allotted and I'm a bit hazy about things then for a bit, particularly not knowing what was what nor who was who or why? Eventually, after much discussion about the fire orders all above my head, the first shot; dull "boom"! Much peering through binoculars!.

Nobody seeing anything (including me), much discussion.

Finally "did you see that round Ack?

Ack not having a clue "what would I have seen Sir?...

"smoke coming up between those two hills over there".....

Ack, ever ready to oblige "I think so Sir"....

"where"..."over there" pointing.

Much discussion as to whether the Ack had or had not seen anything.

I don't suppose he had and this was the concensus of opinion

The rest of the shoot was a disaster. The worst thing was how my BC who I had thought pretty close to God could have made such a hash of things. Certainly a fall of the mighty.

The rest of the day wore on. I don't remember anything much until it was all over and I packed up, hung my gear around myself, belted it on and trudged off down the hill.

In later years I saw many such disasters from OP's including my own first go. I eventually got the hang of it, mainly by hours and hours of "mini ranging" and practice shoots and eventually considered myself pretty good and just loved shooting. It is far and away the very best feature of all Artillery activities.

FOOTNOTE BY LAURIE HINDMARSH

Dick Lord is LtCol C.R.Lord ED Ret'd. A valuer by profession he enjoys a well earned retirement at Burradoo on the Southern Highlands of NSW. In January 1940 the 7th was in camp at Greta and Dick, by then a Sergeant, was appointed to the Recruit Training Depot at Menangle Park Racecourse as an Instructor. After some two months at the Depot he was nominated to attend a three month's course at the School of Artillery upon the understanding that he would be commissioned. Dick did qualify and was commissioned and was appointed to 2/6 Australian Field Regiment AIF as a Lieutenant.

In 1948 when the 7th reformed at Warrane Road, Dick Lord, by then a Captain, rejoined and it was not long before he was appointed BC P Battery and promoted Major. He went on to command 14 Field Regiment RAA.

Dick Lord is one of those people who can "see the problem whole" and I, in those far off days a young returned Infantryman endeavouring to become a Gunner, am deeply indebted to him for his constructive criticism and friendly advice (often delivered at a late hour). It is due to Dick and to other Officers of similar calibre and in particular Major Ossie Rosevear ED, Major Reg Wilkins ED, and Captain Jack Flynn that I continue to have a finger in the Gunner Pie in 1994.

DECEASED MEMBERS - 1993/94

KENNETH CROSBY JAMES - 12 August 1993 - Aged 77

Ken joined 7th Field Brigade in 1932 and was commissioned as a Lieutenant into RAA(M)(FD) on 2 April 1936, becoming a Temporary Captain from 1 January to 26 April 1940, then transferring as a Lieutenant RAA(FD) Reinforcements (AIF) on 27 April to be transferred to 2/1st Field Regiment on 17 January 1941, again being promoted to Temporary Captain on 30 October 1942. On 9 November 1942 his appointment was confirmed.

Other appointments were Intelligence Officer HQ RAA 6th Division 21 June 1941 to 6 September 1941 and seconded to HQ RAA 6th Division 9 October 1942 to 19 February 1943. On 17 February 1944 Ken was transferred to RAA(F) and was placed on the Reserve of Officers (RAA)2 Military District on 12 October 1945.

WILFRED ORBEL KENTWELL - 8 December 1993 - Aged 79

Wilf joined 7th Field Brigade in 1931, being made up to a Sergeant before enlisting in the AIF on 22 May 1940 and was allocated to 2nd/3rd Anti-Tank Regiment, where as a WO2 he was Mentioned in Dispatches for his actions at the Battle of El Alamein in October/November 1942, taking his discharge from the AIF on 31 October 1945.

Wilf's son Les served with the Regiment in the late 1950's/early 1960's as a WO2. Wilf was a life member of 2nd/3rd Anti-Tank Regiment Association.

LEST WE FORGET

The President and members extend sincere condolences to their families, relatives and friends

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EMBARRASSMENT

Late November in the early 1970's the Regiment, with the assistance of other Artillery Units, was to assist the then Eastern Command Band in an evening concert at Victoria Barracks, providing the cannon fire for Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture. As the Troop of 25 pounders were being driven over the grass for the rehearsal a man in old clothes with a cape around his shoulders walked up to the Adjutant, Captain I.M.Simpson, and said "Your Guns are tearing up my lawn" . The Adjutant ignored the man as he walked away with "Oh Yeah, Oh Yeah".

Sgt Jack Erwin spoke to the Adjutant and said "Sir, do you know who that was?". "No". "The GOC Eastern Command (Maj Gen K.Mackay CB, MBE)". "Oh!, I thought he was just the gardener".

For the dress rehearsal and the performance, the gun tyres were deflated.

R.C.M.Toplis

MEMBERS AS AT 1 AUGUST 1994

AGNEW	Charles	GILKINSON	Lance	MOONEY	Ronald
AISTON	Karen	GILL	Greg	MOORE	Dennis
ANDREW	John	GLADEN	Noel	MORGAN	Robert
ANGUS	John	GODFREY	Anthony	MORISON	Jim
BAGSTER	Mark	GRESLEY	Wal	MOYSEY	David
BAILEY	Norman	GRIFFITHS	Davi	MOYSEY	Robert
BALDWIN	Murray	GWILYM	Jack	MUIR	Gayle
BALFOUR	John	HALL	Barry	MUIR	Lawrence
BANHAM	Mike	HAMER	Colin	MUIR	Peter
BASTOCK	Fred	HAMMOND	Arthur	McDONOUGH	Paul
BATEMAN	Ray	HANSFORD	Jes	MCGRATH	Peter
BAYNIE	John	HANSON	Arthur	MCLEAN	Russ
BENNETT	Lloyd	HARGREAVES	Thomas	MCVAY	Donald
BIBBY	David	HARLE	Charles	NASH	James
BIRCH	David	HARRISON	Allan	NEALE	Geoffrey
BLOW	David	HARROWER	David	NEILL	William
BOWEN	Chris	HAWKE	Phillip	NELSON	Dene
BRADLEY	Herb	HAWKINS	Neil	NELSON	John
BRADLEY	LEO	HAYLEN	Ian	NICHOLLS	Eric
BREWER	Charles	HECKENBERG	Brian	NOAKES	Steven
BRINCAT	Alex	HILL	Robert	OVERTON	John
BROADHEAD	Ken	HINDMARSH	Laurie	OWENS	Robert
BROWN	Ed	HOEY	Ian	OWENS	Robyn
BRYANT	Kevin	HOGAN	Christopher	PINNINGTON	Laidley
BURNETT	Jerry	HOGGE	Richard	POSENER	John
BURKE	Alec	HOPKINSON	Fred	POWER	Brian
BUZACOTT	David	HORTON	James	POWER	Phil
CARLSSON	Jim	HOWARTH	Sue	PRIMROSE	Brian
CARMENT	David	HUGHES	Russell	PURCELL	John
CARRODUS	Michael	HUNGERFORD	Bruce	RICHARDSON	Robert
CARSTENS	John	HUNGERFORD	John	ROBERTS	Bruce
CARROLL	Gordon	IRELAND	John	ROGAN	Robert
CASHMORE	John	JACKSON	Kim	ROSEVEAR	Oswald
CHAD	Allan	JACKSON	Neville	RUSSELL	Robert
CHRISTIE	Carl	JAMES	Ian	RUSSELL	Ross
CLIFTON	Alfred	JEFFRESON	Alan	SABER	Stanley
COCHRANE	John	JEFFRESON	Edward	SAFTICH	Rolf
COLE	Mick	JEFFRESON	Norman	SAINSBURY	Mauric
COLLINS	Don	JOHNSTON	Warwick	SAVILLE	Owen
COOTE	Glen	JONES	Michael	SCOTT	Ian
COPPARD	Doug	KARIKS	Andi	SENGOS	Patrick
CORBETT	Robert	KEEFE	John	SMITH	Colin
COTTLE	Victor	KEEN	Kenneth	SMITH	Grahame
CROUCH	Robert	KEFT	Barry	SMITH	Roger
CROWE	John	KELLY	Wal	STANFORD	John
CUNNEEN	Stephen	KIELY	Douglas	STARK	Glyn
DAWSON	Roy	KILKELLY	Graeme	STARKE	Bill
DAVEY	Gregor	KIRKWOOD	John	STAZIKER	Stuart
DAVIDSON	Ross	KISS	Alex	STEDMAN	James
DOHERTY	Carl	KOHLHAGEN	Paul	STONE	Peter
DICK	Anthony	KONA	Jeffrey	SULLIVAN	Kevin
DOUGHERTY	Robert	LANE	Bill	SUNDERLAND	Ray
EAGLETON	Harold	LANGFORD-BROWN	Ian	TAYLOR	Harry
EDWARDS	Hugh	LAURENCE	Michael	TIMBS	Christopher
ELDERTON	Frederick	LEEK	Keith	TOBIN	Philip
ELSLEY	Graham	LEWIS-HUGHES	Ken	TOPHAM	Raoul
EWAN	David	LIFU	Patrick	TOPLIS	Danny
EWAN	Amelia	LONGFELLOW	Virginia	TRANTER	Peter
FAIRLESS	John	LORD	Dick	TRUELOVE	Peter
FAIRLEY	Jack	MASON-JONES	Nicoll	WALKER	John
FALCONER	Max	MATTHEWS	Snow	WATKINS	Kenneth
FITZPATRICK	Roy	MEAKINS	Ron	WATSON	Alex
FLANAGAN	Kevin	MEGGATT	Thomas	WHEATLEY	Murelia
FLIPPENCE	Addie	MENDL	Peter	WHITE	Ces
FRAZER	Ian	MILHAM	Glenn	WHITE	Peter
FULCHER	Sharon	MILIC	Karl	WHITFIELD	Timothy
GABRIEL	Reginald	MILLAR	Anthony	WILLIS	Kenneth
GATES	Graham	MITCHELL	Frederick	WILSON	John
GIFFNEY	Desmond			WRIGHT	Colin