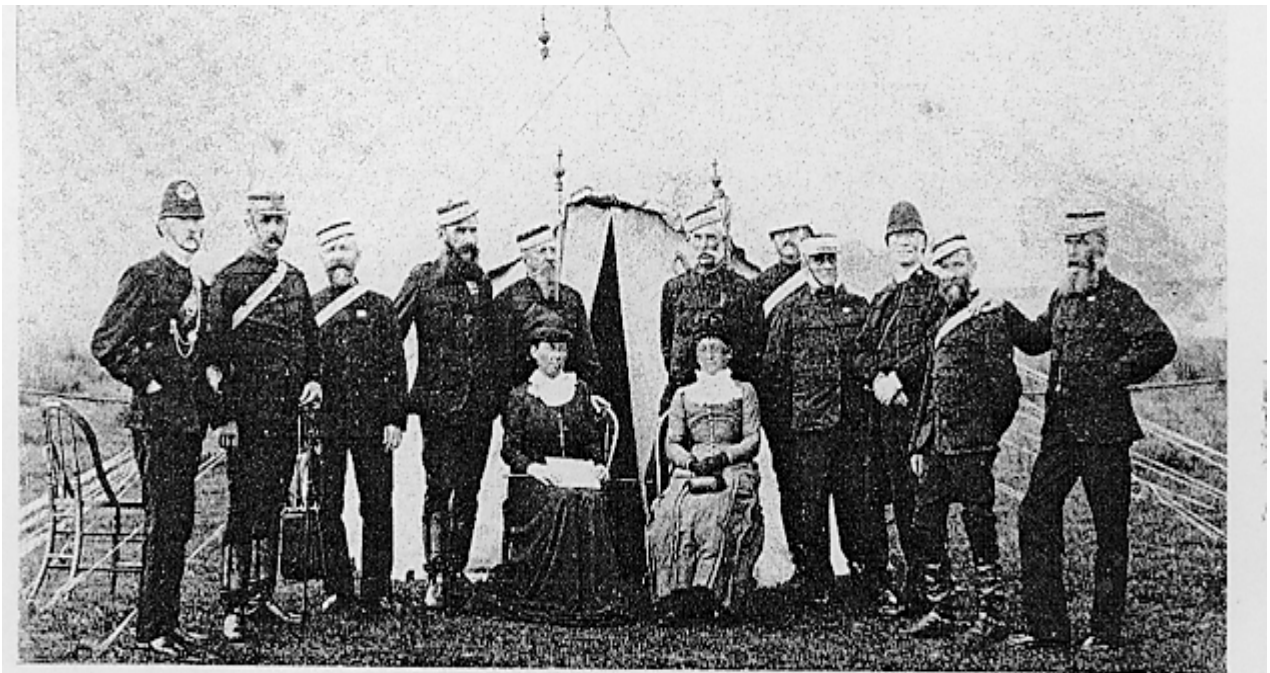

◆ RIFLEFIRE ◆

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PO Box 752 Ringwood 3134 Vic. Australia

Newsletter of the **Victorian Colonial Infantry Association Inc**



Royal Historical Society of Victoria. The military encampments were almost a social occasion as this group outside of Colonel Hutton's Quarters show.

Incorporating **Mt Alexander Rifles**

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All Membership enquires, and, All contributions to the Newsletter to be sent to:

The Secretary
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Next Meeting

TBA

Website Addresses:

[http://
home.vicnet.net.au/
~vciainc](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~vciainc)

[http://
us-](http://us-)

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1. To research the history of the Victorian Colonial Infantry Regiments with particular reference to the Volunteer Rifles in the period 1865 - 1895, and particularly the Mt Alexander Rifles Regiment.
2. To establish & maintain a living history group to recreate the Mt Alexander Rifles in the 1865 - 1895 period.
3. To research and preserve the skills and attributes of the 19th Century Rifleman.
4. To provide a resource to other historical organizations and the Community at large.

Cover Picture
 From "A History Of Victoria"

THE EDITORIAL

Since the last newsletter, we have attended a few weekend activities, Cape Otway , Tamminick 2004, and single events at The Balaarat club for the 150th Anniversary of Eureka, and Australia day at Ringwood Lake, to name a few.

Its hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere

All events were good, however it would be nice to see some fresh faces amongst those usual ones that attend these events.

We did get our photo in the "Echo" the local paper of the area in the 2 Sept. edition. for the Cape Otway weekend.

I think that the Australia Day at Ringwood Lake was/is the most controversial, as political correctness (PC) has again reared its ugly head. We went to the trouble of arranging a Populous Place Permit with Victoria Police to allow us to fire the salute at the lake with the full support of the council (we needed their approval in writing to get the permit), then a few days beforehand they allow PC To get involved. I have published both their letter and our response further on.

On lighter note, I would like to welcome Andrew Guild to our ranks, and to "congratulate: Phyll McMillan on her appointment as our Public Relations/Recruitment Officer.

Upcoming events include the Maroondah Festival on 20th Feb, and the following weekend , 26 & 27 Feb, we have 2 events, the Lanyard parade with Melbourne University Regiment and the SSAA conference.

I would like to hear from everyone as to which of these 3 events they can attend.

Finally, for those of you lucky enough to have access to "The Maroondah Leader" of January 25th 2004, if you have a look at Page 19, you will see your long suffering Secretary finally getting some recognition for his commitment to our cause. His VDF helmet might appear crooked, but it was the camera angle.

Tom Corfmat
Secretary
Victorian Colonial Infantry Association Inc.

Balaarat Club Rede Dinner

Last night (4th of December 2004), I attended the annual dinner of the Balaarat club on the invitation of Dr Tony Cree, the president of that club.

Also present were representatives of the 40th Regiment and 8/7 RVR and Nick Duff representing the gold fields police on behalf of VPHS.

Dinner was excellent and the address was given by Senator Elect, Michael Ronaldson, who spoke at length on the "hijacking" of the Eureka even by the extreme left and extreme right and how political correctness seems to be seriously getting in the way of the truth.

We are assured of being involved in further events there and I have also made contact with Maj Lecke of 8RVR who would appreciate any help we can provide in regard to the history of the Ballarat Rangers (that other Rifles regiment).

The Balaarat Club is also in possession of a late portrait of her majesty Queen Victoria which, while it is not exactly the right period for us is better than no portrait at all and they are happy to give us a good photocopy of it that we can frame.

Overall a good time was had by all present

Geoff Gleadall
President

OUT AND ABOUT

The Regiment participated officially in two local ceremonies during November.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Melbourne University Regiment parades from its depot in Grattan Street to the University's Trinity College Chapel on Remembrance Day in the evening for its annual Service of Remembrance. Regimental Bugler Ian Douglas attended the parade rehearsal on Saturday 6th November. He spent a busy Remembrance Day, 11th November, first playing Last Post and Reveille from the steps of the Old Treasury Building in Spring Street at 11 am. (This is also the Registry Office, and being in 1960's army uniform, one bride asked him to be in a wedding photograph!) He was then on duty at the Shrine to guide several groups of school students around.

Later that evening, Regimental Sgt-Major Geoff Gleadall represented the Regiment at the Trinity Chapel service, while Ian played Last Post and Reveille during the service from the organ loft of the

*Make Love, Not
War
Hell do both
GET MARRIED*

Chapel. Following the service both accepted hospitality of MUR for supper, followed by a further sojourn in the Sergeant's mess for refreshments and conversation.

These activities should greatly assist in fostering our relationship with MUR. Also, a transcript of the homily delivered at the service by Padre Keil Maslen can be found at <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~shrine.rhistory.htm> - follow the link to MUR 2004.

We are invited to the MUR/MonUR Graduation Parade to be held on the Shrine forecourt on Sunday 27th February 2005.

SEPARATION DAY

On Saturday 13th November, the same two members participated in the ceremony at the Separation Tree in the Royal Botanic Gardens, to mark the 154th anniversary of the reading of the proclamation that on 1st July following, the Port Phillip District would separate from New South Wales to become the Colony of Victoria.

Following announcements and the reading of the Proclamation by the Town Crier, Geoff and the Several members of the 40th Regiment of Foot fired the customary volley, which was followed by a bugle salute from Regimental Bugler Ian Douglas. After answering questions about the ceremony from various curious tourists and passers-by the gathering adjourned to the nearby tea-rooms for refreshment before departing.

SIR JOHN MONASH COMMEMORATION

Ian tells us that he also attended the annual commemoration of the death of General Sir John Monash in the Legislative Assembly Chamber of the Victorian Parliament House on Friday 15th October. This was followed by lunch at the Naval and Military Club, where Sir John was President for 10 years. At the commemoration and the luncheon those present were addressed by Maj-Gen K. J. Gillespie AO DSC CSM, Land Commander Australia, who spoke of his travels visiting Australian Contingents in many parts of the world. He spoke of their dedication in the face of many difficulties.

At the lunch, Ian was seated next to Lt-Col (AAC) Tony Glover, OC Scotch College Cadet Unit. This resulted in Ian being invited to attend the Unit's Tattoo and Retreat Ceremony at the College Oval on the evening of Friday 12th November. Seated in a VIP viewing position near the saluting dais, Ian was in his Mt Alexander Rifles uniform.

SCOTCH COLLEGE PARADE

The evening started well, with the entry of the College Band, dressed in red tunics, white helmets and tartan trews, but soon afterwards the deluge began. Full marks to all concerned who carried on to the end, by which time they were all thoroughly saturated. Ian admits to having some shelter under a folding umbrella, as he was planning to wear the uniform to the Royal Botanic Gardens the following morning. He then discovered that having his front seat had placed his feet in a gutter which was running 50mm of water, and that his boots were not fully waterproof!

A lot of uniforms would have needed cleaning and pressing over ensuing days. The heavy woollen Mt Alexander uniform survived very well.

The Guest of Honour and Reviewing Officer for the parade was Brig Chris G. Appleton, who is Commandant, Royal Military College, Duntroon. He is evidently quite observant, for during the supper following the parade, he met Ian, and noted that they had already met at the MUR Graduation Parade last February.

The historical notes in the programme indicate that around the latter part of the 1920s Scotch College Cadet Unit was supported by the then Melbourne University Rifles. On that basis Ian has written to Lt-Col Glover suggesting possible closer ties between VCIA and the Scotch College Cadet Unit.

TAMMINICK 2004

This years Tamminick was unusual as it didn't rain on either the Saturday or Sunday, and only a light shower on Friday afternoon.

Our campsite this year was smaller than what we usually get and this was raised with the organisers who assure us that it will be fixed in the future.

After setting up camp on Friday most of us headed to the Glenrowan hotel for a counter meal, as Bugler Douglas doesn't imbibe we nominated him driver, after getting back to camp we then did the rounds of the other groups and caught up with the news.

Saturday dawned fine and sunny, and after the morning parade, the shooting events started. For some reason, the thought of making a lot of noise with the firearms didn't really enthuse any of us too much, although later in the day I did send a bit of lead downrange with the carbine.

While on sentry duty L/Cpl Seipp offered to frisk one of the young ladies and was soundly rebuked for his suggestion.

The Cannon shoot was interesting, there were 3 Cannon involved, and the prize was taken out by a small .75 cal.

Andrea Willet, who had the site next to us was happy after she was able to lob a baked bean can full of gravel, 75 metres into the air and 60 metres down range with her mortar.

The formal dinner was on that night and was good, although as we were at the opposite end to the door, next to the head table, by the end of the night it was hot and stuffy, so we retired to various campfires. The major highlight of the dinner was when our President's daughter, Anne, was awarded Mongrel of the camp for her trying to imitate Cher on the barrel of the 43nds Cannon barrel.. That our president's daughter, and a member in her own right, could so embarrass us is a shame that we will have to suffer until she passes it on next year.

Sunday was a repeat of Saturday, and after the final parade at 12.30 we proceeded to break camp and were on the road by about 3pm.

Observations: The host unit was poorly organised, timings were rarely adhered to, and order of precedence was ignored. Some of the events, such as the cannon shoot were not judged properly, no feedback was forthcoming as to what points were lost on for the historical campsite.

Other than my few grumbles, it was a good encampment, and enjoyed by the 200+ who were there.

Report of Cape Otway Engagement: 28/29th August 2004

The VCIA and the Police Historical unit attended Cape Otway for the dedication of the re-furbished Telegraph Station on the weekend of 28/29 August 2004.

First off, we extend our thanks to Bugler Douglas for arranging this event.

We set off for Cape Otway at 8.20am on the morning of Saturday 28th, it was a 3 ½ hour drive there, with our President providing the vehicle and doing all the driving.

For those of you who aren't aware, Cape Otway is where the Southern Ocean and Bass Strait meet on the southern coast of Victoria,

We arrived after the Police unit, Sgt Duff and Constable Lowe, so we set up our display opposite them, just below the old Telegraph station.

Just time for a quick bite for lunch before our first engagement, a re-creation of the sacking of Captain Lawrence, the drunken lighthouse keeper, played very convincingly by Sgt Duff,

This scenario was replayed several times over the course of the weekend.

4.30pm we gave them a retreat and flag lowering ceremony that they will not forget in a hurry. We marched to the flag pole in unison, with the police in the lead, the police took post at the Australian and Cape Otway flags respectively. While we took post to their front on an incline facing out. At the command of the Sgt Major, both flags were slowly lowered, last post was played, and a 3 volley salute was fired. After which we formed up and marched off.

Saturday night we were accommodated in the old Lighthouse keeper's cottage, along with the telegraph operators. The Management put on a very nice dinner with wine for all of the volunteers that night. We observed the decorum of the evening, and did not attempt to introduce any mess games, although the thought was there, we limited ourselves to a toast to Queen Victoria and enlightening some of the other there on our role in the preservation of Victorian History.

After the wine had run out we were able to tempt the Manager in joining us with a some of my duty free Irish single malt whisky, after which we retired to our accommodation, and, in deference to the Morse code operators who shared our accommodation, we sat outside to finish off the rest of the bottle, along with Sgt Duff's port and Stout.

About midnight one of the other guests came out to complain about the noise, and it was about then we discovered we were out of "consumables" in the way of liquid refreshments, so we retired for the evening.

Sunday morning saw us all bright eyed and bushy tailed at the respectable hour of 8 am. So by the time the complex opened at 9.30 we had showered, had breakfast were ready to take on the hoards.

The raising of the flags we took down the previous evening was first on the agenda, a sacking of Capt. Lawrence, then at 1.00pm the official re-dedication of the old telegraph station, with us firing a 3 gun salute, the local MP saying his bit and other locals putting in their recollections, it took about 25 minutes, we were standing there doing our best to look menacing.

After the speeches were over and we marched off, it was off to a nice free lunch, then another sacking of the Captain.

Our last function was the lowering of the flag at 4.30pm then pack up camp and head home.

My thoughts on the weekend? The management at Cape Otway had not had any involvement with re-enactors before, they seemed very happy with the "colour" that we were able to impart to the weekend proceedings. They expressed a desire for us to return.

There are plenty of good camping areas available there so that we do not impose on them for accommodation. It was mentioned to me on a couple of occasions that they would have liked us to help them with their bunny population, reducing it, a thing to look at the legality of such for a possible next time.

The Management were happy with us and are going to debrief the staff as to their opinions of our involvement.

I believe that all of us that were involved in this venture enjoyed it and would like to participate in future operations there.

Tom Corfmat
Corporal: Mt Alexander Rifles.

Subject: Australia Day

To: idouglas@melbpc.org.au
Cc: "Stephen Onans" <Stephen.Onans@maroondah.vic.gov.au>,
"Helen Croxford" <Helen.Croxford@maroondah.vic.gov.au>
From: "Diane Childs" <Diane.Childs@maroondah.vic.gov.au>
Date: Mon, 17 Jan 2005 15:06:24 +1000

Dear Ian,

I have been speaking to Stephen Onans regarding the upcoming Australia Day ceremony and would like to confirm that Council's Leisure & Culture Panel (consisting Councillors and Council Officers) has determined that we will not be allowing the firing of guns as a part of this year's ceremony. After the event last year Council Officers received several complaints about the noise and appropriateness of firing of guns at a family event and in addition there is the issue of the loud noise startling animals, including pets that families bring to the event and animals that are part of programmed activities.

I apologise for the short notice and hope this does not cause inconvenience to your organisation. Of course the Colonial Infantry is most welcome to participate in all other activities as previously organised, including the bugle salute.

I will also send you this information in the mail for your records. If you have any queries please contact me on the number below or ring Emma Smith on 9298 4380. I look forward to seeing you at the Australia Day celebrations.

Regards Di

Di Childs
Manager Leisure Culture & Youth
ph: 9298 4281

.Wednesday, 26 January 2005

Ms Dianne Childs
Manager Leisure, Culture & Youth
Maroondah City Council

Re: Australia Day

Dear Ms Childs

I refer to your letter of 17/1/05 to Mr Ian Douglas of The VCIA Inc.,.

This letter was discussed at our recent meeting, and I admit that we are all somewhat bewildered as to its contents.

The “appropriateness of firing guns at a family event”. The flag raising ceremony is a ceremonial event, at which guns have been discharged as a mark of respect to the flag and all it represents. This tradition goes back many centuries and I believe that this practice was followed at Sydney cove in 1788 on the very first Australia day. To say that this culture is not appropriate is to deny our heritage.

Regarding the noise that accompanies this event, it is nothing compared to fireworks events, that are promoted as family event, and I must say affect a great many animals over a very large area.. I have not witnessed any cancellations of fireworks displays due to the noise that they generate.

Regarding complaints to Council Officers. You failed to indicate in your letter specifically what those complaints were, and the actual number received. This is the first that we have heard of any complaint, and we have been firing salutes at Australia Day celebrations for the last 10 years.

We, on the other hand, had at least 12 people come up to us last year and congratulate us on a job well done and say how it was the best Australia Day that they had witnessed at Maroondah.

This year we did receive several inquiries from people asking why we did not fire a salute like we did last year. We referred them to contact you.

On another matter, at last years Ringwood Highland games, the then Mayor, Cr Rose gave us a verbal undertaking to see what assistance the Council could give us in the way of a storage facility and meeting room.

I sent him a letter reminding him our conversation last October, but as yet we are still awaiting a reply. Could you follow up and see what is happening in this regard.

We are a non profit organisation and attend many public events and, like we have done for Maroondah, do not charge for our appearance, even though there is usually considerable expense involved, the cost of blank ammunition, permits, travel etc.

What Cr Rose said was that he would investigate if the council had any facilities where we could store our large items such as tents, and if there was a meeting room available for us to hold regular meetings.

Yours truly,
Tom Corformat
Secretary
Victorian Colonial Infantry Association Inc.

If you can read this, thank a teacher
If you are reading it in English, Thank a Soldier.

Lieutenant - Colonel NICHOLAS WILLIAM KELLY, C.B., late Commanding Officer of the Horse and Field Artillery of Victoria, was born in Dublin on the 1st of October, 1851, and received his earlier education in the West of Ireland. At the age of fourteen he accompanied his parents to Victoria, where he finished his education at the private academy of Mr. Archibald Millie. Entering the Railway Department at an early age, he remained there for a period of twenty-two years. In 1888 he joined Mr. Carney in establishing the well-known firm of Carney and Kelly, land and estate agents, in Swanston Street. Twenty years previously he had joined the Melbourne Artillery Corps as gunner, and graduated to the rank of captain. On the formation of the Victorian Militia in 1884, he obtained the captaincy of the C Battery, South Melbourne, and presently was promoted to be major and commander of that battery, which, during his connection with it, contained the champion rifle team of Victoria. He was likewise captain of several teams which took part in intercolonial competitions, and went home as adjutant and coach to the team which visited England under the captaincy of Colonel Templeton, and won the Kolar Cup in Jubilee year. When the Fourth Contingent, known as the Victorian Imperial Bushmen, left Australia for South Africa on the 1st of May, 1900, it was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly. Reaching Beira on the 23rd of the same month, it proceeded from thence, by way of Umtali, Marandellas, Gwelo, and Buluwayo, to Mafeking, which was reached on the 20th of August. There Lieutenant - Colonel Kelly served under Lieutenant - General Sir Frederick Carrington, being posted to Brigadier-General the Earl of Errol, who was in command of the 1st Brigade. During the next ten days Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly was actively engaged in various operations in the vicinity of Malmani, in the Transvaal; and from the 30th of August he was attached to the 2nd Mounted Brigade, which formed part of the 1st Division of Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen's command, at that time operating in Western Transvaal, the scene of its heroic labours embracing Malmani, Buffalo's Hoek, Jacobsdaai, Zeerust, Kaffir Kraals, Lichtenburg, Klip-Kuil, Wonderfontein, Manana, and Malopo-oog, the period covered by these operations extending to the end of December, 1900. From New Year's Day, 1901, until the 18th of February, Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly was actively engaged in operations at Vryburg, D o o r n b u l t , Schweizer Reneicke, and Taungs, in Griqualand; at Ebenezer, Nitral's Kop, Lilufontein, Wolmaranstad, Sypherfontein, Reitfontein, Paarde Plats, and Hartebeestfontein. At the last-named place he was wounded in the thigh, invalided to England, and returned to Victoria in the month of August, 1901. Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly's bravery and the valuable services he had rendered during the campaign did not escape recognition in high quarters, and, on the recommendation of Field - Marshal Lord Roberts, he had the gratification of receiving the Companionship of the Bath for the work he had performed in South Africa up to the 29th of November, 1900. In addition he had the honor to be specially mentioned in Lord Kitchener's despatch, published in the "London Gazette" of the 7th of May, 1901, for his gallantry in action at Hartebeestfontein, where he was severely wounded while leading his regiment into fight on the 18th of February, 1901. In his despatch to Lord Kitchener, Lord Methuen stated that Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly was the first man to reach the Boer position at Hartebeestfontein. The following copy of a telegram, bearing date the 21st of February, 1901, despatched to Lord Methuen by Lord Kitchener, denotes the impression produced upon the mind of the Commander-in-Chief of the bravery displayed by all concerned in the particular action which, unfortunately, incapacitated Lieutenant - Colonel Kelly for further active service :— "The G.O.C. in C. desires to express his highest appreciation of the excellent work done by Lord Methuen's column in marching and in fighting. In the action at Hartebeestfontein they showed the greatest gallantry and dash, and the Commander-in-Chief, in thanking Lord Methuen and the officers and men of the column for their hard work, desires to place on record the distinguished services of the column." To have been one of the foremost in rendering these services, and to have won the eulogy of a Commander-in-Chief whose praise is only to be earned by high desert, are Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly's best title to the gratitude and respect of his fellow-countrymen. It only remains to add that, having been invalided on the date abovementioned, he received his discharge on the 7th of December, 1901, and is now on the reserve of the Victorian military forces.