

# THE FREE GLANCE



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New Zealand  
Special Air Service Association

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- September, 1961 -

FREE GLANCE

No 3

NEW ZEALAND SPECIAL AIR SERVICE ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE

President. . . . . WO I N. P. O'Dwyer.  
Secretary . . . . . WO I B. P. Martin.  
Member . . . . . Sgt G Goldsworthy.

EDITORS

Capt A. R. Vail, WO I N. P. O'Dwyer, WO I B. P. Martin, WO II M  
Burke, WO II J McCulloch, Ssgt R Delves.

Okay, okay, okay. So we havn't written. Well neither have you. That is the majority of you. But we would like to acknowledge letters from Peter Crewther, Colin Craigie, Bill Gawn, Snow Collins, Cliff Fenwick, Alec Smith, Andy Allan, Ian Swan, Pat Royal, Pete Smith, Tug Wilson, Peter Quilliam, John Dean. If we've missed anyone's name, write again. We're always glad to hear from you, and it makes the compiling of a newsletter so much easier. Whilst on the subject of newsletters, we will welcome any appropriate articles from any of you. Remember this is YOUR newsletter

MEMBERSHIP

In the last issue we mentioned that membership cards were available, and the fee was ten bob. The response to this, to say the least, has been very disappointing. Up to the time of writing we have 16 financial members and this includes 2 members who are waiting for their cards. The applications for membership dribbled in very slowly and in the initial stages it cost us a 3d. stamp for each member caused by posting the 10/- into the bank. The secretary has now decided to hold up applications until a reasonable number apply so that a lump sum can be deposited into the bank at one time, thereby saving money. But at the rate the applications are coming in, it means a long wait for some people. LETS HAVE SOME MEMBERS - WE'VE GOT TO HAVE SOME MONEY TO MAKE THE ASSOCIATION WORK - C. T. Y.

REGIMENTAL BADGES ETC

You will remember that in the last Free Glance we mentioned the subject of pocket badges etc. We did in fact receive orders for these and similar items and the total amount involved was just on £50. When enquiries were made as to the placing the order a number of snags were met, e.g.

- (a) The Bank Manager (We have just over £50 in the bank)
- (b) Customs Dept (An import license would be required)

In these circumstances the secretary decided that it was impractical to place an order that would virtually denude us of funds for one thing and probably involve the retailing of the items at a price considerably in excess of those quoted in the last Newsletter. You will easily understand that once again money is the predominant factor. We reckon that provided the association has sufficient funds available it would be quite feasible to place the orders for you from here. With enough financial members, this service can be provided.



Mister ROSWELL : House Hunting in AUCKLAND. Best of luck in that unenviable task Sir.

Ray DELVES : Now freezing gradually to death in WAIOURU. He still seems to think the moustache suits him. For goodness sake Pam, get on to him about it.

Anonymous : Thank you for the newsy letter. Who the H... are you ?

Earl YANDALL : Congratulations. We thought the good lady would have caught up on you, but you held out well. Good luck on the rumoured trip to HONG KONG and we hope you spend your money rather differently this time.

Bill GRAY : A Daughter. Well Done

George GOLDSWORTHY : Ditto Ditto. We are all very pleased for Betty and you.

WHAT ABOUT ANOTHER GRATE OF RE-TRAINING ?

MISSING PERSONS

Anyone Knowing the whereabouts of the following missing persons please notify Noel or Brian forthwith.....

Roe BAKER                                  John DEAN                                  Eddie GREY

John HERMAN                                  Jack GILLESPIE (Ex-S Sgt Sig Sqn 21 SAS Regt)  
(Some where in New Zealand)

WE WONDER WHOSE STILL WRITING TO ITALY ?

2 NZ REGT IN MALAYA

What about a letter Ray, Bob, Windy, Leo, Brian George, Hoke, Ted, Huia and Ian ? We've had no news for months..

WHOSE FOR SOME LOPCHONS ?

1 NZ REGT IN BURNHAM

Hope to see some of you in WAIOURU next month. What about some news from that neck of the woods too ?

WHAT PRICE THE 'SWING SISTERS' FOR THE MARRIED PADS ?

UNITED KINGDOM NEWS (Thanks to MARS & MINERVA)

RSM REED    Now a MAJOR RAC

Brig George LEA    DSO MBE    Deputy Military Secretary The War Office after commanding the Regular 2 Inf Bde Gp.

RSM PHILIPSON    )

SSM 'Spud' THOMPSON    )} Long Service we understand - Good Conduct we can't.

Sgt Bill BAYLISS    Ex-Tpt Sgt. Now WOII somewhere in Arabian Desert

S Sgt Pete AMOR    Ex-SQMS.    Ditto

Tpr Paddy MAYNE    Now L Cpl. Apparently spending more time out of the Sqn than in it (Attending Courses).

Capt Mike HAWKINS    Now Adjt 23 SAS Regt.

Cpl Ernie DIX    Now RNZEME in LINTON CAMP. What about a few more of you chaps following in his steps.

Sgt Bernard AYLING    Now RNZA in WAIOURU CAMP. Would like to be remembered to his old unit friends in UK.

FOR 1 NZ SAS SQN

If you are worrying about a tour overseas - Here's a suggestion. Contact Selwyn Toogood to run a MYSTERY PACIFIC FLIGHT for youse all ?

WHAT ABOUT A TAMIL FOR BREAKFAST ?



## CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Up to now we have been giving you a hard time and it has taken a whole page to do it. Well, just one final thing, how about some of you blokes letting us know when you change your address.

## PRESENTATIONS

Recently the silver tray which was presented by the Sgts Mess of 22 SAS Regt in MALAYA to the Sgts Mess Members of the NZ SAS there, and the Shield presented by the Parachute Regt Sqn has been handed over to 1 NZ SAS Sqn in PAPAURA for their Sgts Mess. This will keep Brig busy with the Silvo !

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## O B I T U A R Y

Most of you will remember Maj Hugh MERCER who was the 2 IC of 22 SAS Regt whilst we were in MALAYA. You will be sorry to hear of his death on 24 Jan 61 after a long illness. He will be most remembered for the important part he played in experimental jumps into trees. Insofar as the NZ Sqn is concerned, he played a large part in the organisation of the initial training operations and continuation parachute training. Our sympathy is extended to his family.

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## PERSONALTY PARADE

The following information is hearsay and therefore not acceptable in any court of law as a result of future slander, libel or any other law-suits :-

- Peter WILDERMOTH : Still in NAPIER - Married with 2 childrens
- Roy BINDON : Reference the last newsletter: The question mark should have been after 'Family' and NOT after 'Married'.
- Pete QUILLIAM : Believed to be returning to BLIGHTY SHORES.
- Buzz BURROWS : Basking in the sun at NELSON and sometimes acts as Adjnt 1 NMWC Regt.
- Pete O'NEILL : Found you at last : Hope you enjoy this effort.
- Colin CRAIGIE : Married and by now should be a Daddy.
- Snow COLLINS : Married with 1 and ten/ninths of a family.
- Lindsay WILLIAMS : Well - Well - Well !! Caught at last by a lovely girl in WANGANUI. He held off long enough to win a lot of bets though. Will be getting married in December.
- Rusty VAIL : Now this is TRUE ! He's married. Yes - thats right - Well and truly snagged and he's going to AUSTRALIA in November for a two year hair rejuvenating course at PORTSEA.
- Noel O'DWYER : Its getting more impossible - isn't it. But there you are, he's married too and its a real education watching him hanging out the washing between rounds of the golf course. Theres a chance of him being a proud father next March !
- John DESMOND : Away to MALAYA again - Good Luck John.
- Graeme OTENE : Still in the Army - Still a Medic.
- Lt Col RENNIE : If rumour has it right and Treasury approves he will be trying a change of climate - In ENGLAND this time. Good Luck Sir.



RE-UNION

It is proposed to hold the next re-union in AUCKLAND during next Queens Birthday weekend (That is the first weekend in JUNE 1962). Save up now for the event. You can expect an overall levy for the function of approximately £2 - 10 - 0 per head plus cost of travel and accommodation. Please understand that the more that attend the less will be the personal cost. You can also save expense on accommodation by arranging it with your friends now.

To assist in the planning required it will be appreciated if you will drop a line to Brian or Noel sometime before Christmas letting us know whether or not you will be attending (All things being equal).

This early notice is required so that catering in particular, also things like a band, hall, decorations etc can be booked well in advance. This is most necessary in a big place like AUCKLAND for obvious reasons.

We are sorry for the South Island members, but you will, we are sure understand that the majority of members live in the northern half of the North Island. If you cannot attend, we would suggest that you try and hold a little get-together of your own on the same weekend.

We will be sending out a pro-forma later, BUT ONLY IF WE GET AN ASSURANCE OF SUFFICIENT NUMBERS ATTENDING TO MAKE FOR A SUCCESSFUL RE-UNION. Please co-operate with us on this matter and let us know whether or not you propose to attend.

EPILOGUE

It is now mid-night and we must go to bed - Goodnight everyone.

ON SECOND THOUGHTS - ANOTHER CRATE OF RE-TRAINING.

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20 Sep 61 This morning we received a report on the new Squadron from Capt MACE for which we sincerely thank him and attach for you all to read.



## NEUTRAL, MY FOOT !

from

The British Army Journal.

( Editor's Note

There has been much talk of conditions in MALAYA recently. Some views expressed are correct : others well off beam. In order that we all get a clear picture of conditions, the following article has been included. )

" I am now in a position to inform Mr Spencer CHAPMAN that the title of his deservedly popular book is, to borrow a phrase from another context, bunk. The jungle, Mr C., is about as neutral as MR Krushchev.

The esoteric occupation of chasing bandits in wooded country is one reserved almost exclusively for that branch of the Services referred to irreverently as "beetle-crushers". It is true that the Royal Air Force from time to time delivers a stupefying aerial bombardment which liquidates a terrorist encampment and simultaneously reduces our own unfortunate infantry to a jelly of fear. Naval units in the Straits of Malacca have occasionally hurled high explosives into the trees of Johore with dramatic effect. There is, indeed, a story, without doubt, apocryphal, but well beloved in Army messes, of a frigate which invited a local rubber planter aboard for a cruise and then, as a result of a garbled map reference, shelled his estate for half an hour while he looked on speechless with gin and disbelief.

For the most part, however, it is the infantryman's war and it is from that point of view that I propose to refute Mr Chapman's bald and provocative statement that the jungle is neutral.

When I arrived in MALAYA, with the advance party of my regiment, we were promptly consigned to a Training Centre, the object of which is to organise ageing field officers into patrols, usually under the command of a malevolent and vindictive corporal, and send them on a series of 'jungle exercises'. Let no one fall into the error of thinking that these 'exercises' are in any way akin to the decorous manoeuvres carried out on the plains of Westphalia or Salisbury.

One evening we were paraded by our corporal and 'briefed' for the first exercise, which was to take the form of a compass march in thick jungle. Presiding over this briefing was an Australian sergeant of heroic proportions, who supervised the proceedings with a sardonic smile. The sergeant represented the Directing Staff and he had seen it all before.

It was still dark next morning when we left camp to go into the jungle, and the rain was pouring down. We blundered out into the early morning, carrying on our backs sufficient, as the DS put it, 'to enable us to live and fight in the jungle' for four days. I personally was of the opinion that I had an entire battalion's stores on my back and that while I might possibly live, there was no possibility of fighting anyone more powerful than an undernourished boy of six. This foreboding was airily dismissed by the Australian sergeant of the Directing Staff who staggered beneath the weight of a clasp-knife and a water-bottle.



We were carrying, in fact, about ninety pounds. At least, it was ninety pounds when we left, but soon it was soaking wet and I had to look around at intervals to reassure myself that the Australian sergeant had not climbed on my back. The poncho, or waterproof cape, which was meant to protect my pack, had already unwrapped itself and was flapping wetly at the back of my knees: my cleverly designed jungle hat was directing two streams of water, one into my left ear and one down my neck: the whole effect of timeless misery was heightened, or rather heightened, by the curious property of jungle boots, which is to allow water in, but not out. The cumulative effect of this curious osmosis is to create two bags of liquid around the ankles and feet, a unique and unenviable sensation not unlike walking in a drunken stupor - or so I am told.

Slowly we made our way through the undergrowth, stumbling, skidding and thinking hysterically of the Crillon Bar or the Mayfair Grill. Suddenly my foot caught on a projecting root. You may think, with my terrible burden, I fell at once to the ground. But no. As I was about to fall, a malignant trailing vine caught me under the chin and, threshing wildly with my rifle, I hung like a victim of mob violence, between the dripping trees and the sodden earth. As I was about to lose my senses the Australian sergeant stepped massively forward and with his clasp-knife neatly severed the vine. Somewhat naturally I fell violently to the earth, landing squarely on my hip pocket, which contained the two ripe bananas with which I had thoughtfully augmented my rations. There was a brief and poignant struggle to rise, a manoeuvre finally accomplished by using my rifle as a sort of alpenstock. This filled the barrel of the rifle with mud and leaves, and for a moment I toyed wildly with the idea of pointing the weapon at my head and pulling the trigger, thereby solving two problems at once. Reason, however, prevailed, and for hours we struggled on, crippled by the weight of our packs, blinded by the green dye which seeped from our jungle hats, numb with fatigue and discomfort. Eventually, however, we halted to make camp for the night.

This is a procedure which can reduce strong men to tears. First the necessary precautions are taken to ensure that we are not likely to be surprised by terrorists while making our camp. As if anything could surprise us now. We then split into pairs and each pair is allotted a particular section of the circular camp perimeter. Each pair then proceeds to erect a basha or shelter contrived from two waterproof capes. Unfortunately, on this occasion, my companion was detailed for the first period of sentry duty and I was left to complete this small task myself. It took no time at all to erect four sticks and stretch a groundsheet across them to form a roof. It then took no time at all for the evil thing to fill with rain. Paralysed with frustration I sat huddled in my wet clothes and watched as the supporting sticks curved inwards under the ever-growing weight of water: I cringed lower to the ground as the cape bulged moistly downwards like the belly of some fearsome marine



.. beast : eventually the whole thing collapsed with a sound like the breaching of a dam and a cold flood poured over me and cascaded into the undergrowth, carrying with it my pathetic little pile of belongings.

Eventually I succeeded in erecting a shelter of a sort, and under it I began to prepare our evening meal. The first step was to ignite the small block of compressed fuel to make our fire. It had become sodden in the first debacle and I held a match to the corner of it without much hope. There was a unique sound which can only be described as a wet crackle - a sort of derisive bubbling. An evil-smelling smoke filled the shelter and eventually the match burned down to my fingers. Cursing, I threw it away and it set fire at once to my companion's small stock of toilet paper. In my frantic efforts to extinguish the blaze I tipped my water bottle over his spare shirt. I put the smoking fuel block down on my blankets, where by some devilish chemistry, it immediately burst into flames. By the time my bedding had been extinguished the inside of the shelter resembled a shell hole at Gallipoli. Eventually, order was restored and a mess tin full of some unspeakable mixture of bully beef and rice prepared. My companion returned from sentry duty and in a numb silence we ate ; then laying out our sodden blankets, we slept.

During the night a scorpion stung my friend and with a terrible yell he leapt into the air, knocking down the main support of our shelter. The whole thing collapsed upon us in a clammy, suffocating heap. It was still raining and the luminous hands of my watch, blurred by the rain, pointed to 2.15.

We spent the rest of the night wrapped in our waterproof capes while the tall trees dripped sadly upon us. At six o'clock the Australian sergeant came round to wake the camp for stand-to. I was already sitting on the camp perimeter, limp with fatigue, trying not to think that in about an hour we should be on the move again.

" You're up early, Sir," said the sergeant in a whisper. "Nothing like a good night's sleep for charging up the batteries ! " And with a terrible smile he moved on to the next shelter.

Despite anything which Mr Chapman may say, the jungle is malignant, hostile and vindictive. And do not, as Damon Runyon used to say, let anyone tell you any different.

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