



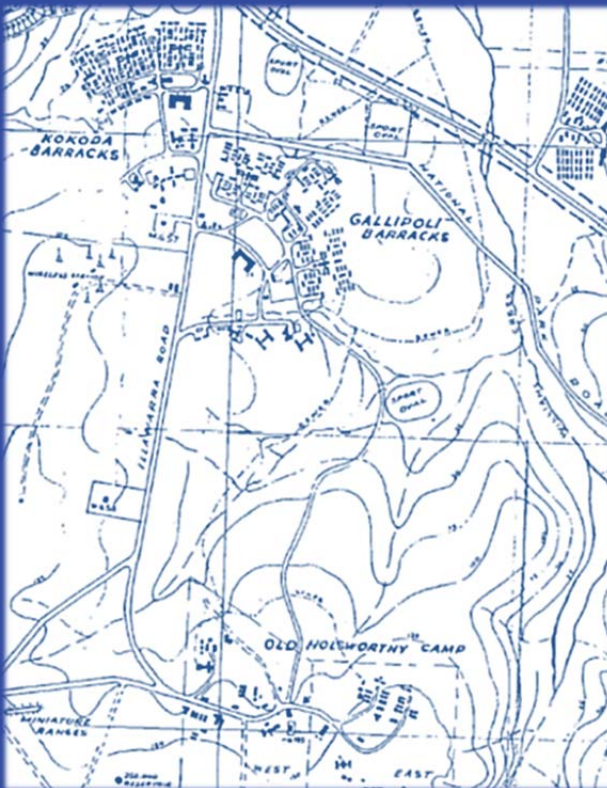
Welcome To Your Army

Holsworthy Barracks

A National Service History of Gallipoli and Kokoda Lines

1951-1972





Above:

Australian War Memorial 1957 Map of Holsworthly Training Area

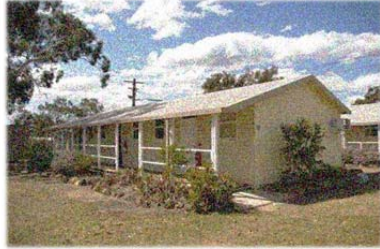
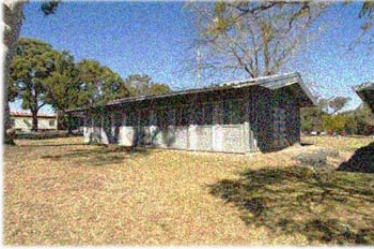
Cover images, clockwise:

National Archives of Australia. (1953). *Defence – Australian Army – National Service Training Recruits at Holsworthly*. Item Barcode: 11438150. John Tanner photographer.

Australian War Memorial ID Number P08634.002 *Five Members of 19 NSTB on leave after a march through Sydney, 1951.*

Aerial image, Kokoda Barracks, c1956. Supplied by Lawrie Maher.

5RAR Association Website, 5RAR Group, Holsworthly NSW, Image Gallery Vietnam, Training Australia 5RAR Group, Holsworthly NSW.



Holsworthy Barracks, NSW

Holsworthy Barracks (sometimes known as Holdsworthy) has a rich military history that dates back to 1913, when the land which would comprise the Barracks was acquired by the Commonwealth Government for an artillery range.

Not only has Holsworthy Barracks been home to many Regular Army units since its establishment, it also has a unique heritage reflecting Australia's historic tradition of compulsory military training, or National Service. In particular, Gallipoli Lines, which is one area of Holsworthy Barracks, has an interesting history, being one of only a few army camps in Australia constructed specifically to house men conscripted under Australia's National Service Scheme in the 1950s.

This booklet presents the history of Gallipoli Lines and the former Kokoda Lines from an Army National Service perspective – a way of life Australia has not experienced since the 1970s.



1951-1959



Australia and National Service: Pre-1951

Australia has a long history of compulsory military training, which has generally been widely accepted by the population. However, the issue of conscripting men to serve in wars overseas has always been a difficult issue for Australian society.

In 1911 a law was passed requiring all male Australian citizens aged 12-60 to undertake military training. This was completed either in Cadets or the Militia, depending on age. Two referenda (1916 and 1917), ensured that only volunteers would actually see active service overseas. Compulsory training was abolished in 1929.

At the outbreak of World War II (WWII) in 1939 all unmarried men aged 21 were called up for three months military training. In 1942, 'conscription' was introduced, requiring all men aged 18-35, and



all single men aged 35-45 to enrol in the Citizen Military Forces (CMF). Only volunteers could serve outside Australia's borders, until 1942 when the concept of "Australia" was expanded to include Australian territories in the South-West Pacific Zone, including Papua and New Guinea and adjacent islands. Between 1942 and 1945, both voluntary Regular Army personnel and CMF conscripts served in the South-West Pacific Zone. This compulsory service scheme ended in 1945.

The 1950s: “Reds Under the Beds”

In the 1950s the world entered the Cold War era. The USA had developed nuclear weapons in the early 1940s, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) detonated its first nuclear bomb in 1949, and the threat of a nuclear World War III hung over the world. A state of military, political, economic and ideological tension existed between the powers of the capitalist “Western World” and the communist “Eastern Bloc”. In 1950 this ideological conflict turned into armed hostilities in south-east Asia. Communist North Korea, backed by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and Chinese leader Mao Zedong (or Mao Tse-tung), invaded South Korea.



Just days after the commencement of hostilities, the United States (US) declared its support for South Korea, prompted by the famous “Domino Theory” held by US President Eisenhower. The theory was that in a row of dominoes (i.e non-communist countries), if one fell, it threatened the collapse of all. The US was supported in its actions by the United Nations (UN) Security Council. Australia was one of the first of the 16 UN members to respond, with Prime Minister Menzies committing land, sea and air forces to support the US and UN counter offensive.

The communist presence in South-East Asia was perceived as a real threat to the Australian way of life. At home, the staunchly anti-communist Menzies Government initiated a referendum to ban the Communist Party of Australia in an attempt to reduce the risks of communism spreading in Australia. Menzies was

unsuccessful - the law was not passed, and an ensuing referendum opposed the bill, although only by a narrow margin of 1.12%.

“Unpreparedness is an Inducement to the Aggressor”: The National Service Act 1951

Given the perceived potentially dangerous state of the world, compulsory military training was reintroduced in Australia in 1951 through the *National Service Act 1951*. This was the first time compulsory military training had been enacted at a time when Australia was not directly threatened by an enemy. The Government had learned its lesson: during World War I (WWI) it took eight months to muster sufficient forces to service the war effort, and 15 months for WWII. The surprise attacks by the Japanese on Darwin, which had only occurred nine years previously, were still fresh in the minds of Australians. It was considered vital that Australia build up its militia, to have a force ready if war broke out.

Under the Act, every male British subject, “ordinarily resident” in Australia turning 18 on or after 1 November 1950 was required to register for National Service. Men enlisted in the defence forces under this scheme are colloquially known as “Nashos”. This was a term first used in a somewhat derogatory manner by Regular Army members to refer to conscripts, but was soon adopted by most “Nasho’s” as a marker of pride, in recognition of their unique contribution to the military

If we are to defend our country, and the freedom enjoyed by the United Nations, our aim must be to prepare an efficient fighting force before the threat of war becomes a reality; it is this aim which has brought about the need for National Service. MAJ W.F. Robeson, 1952

We all learned with bitter cost in the last war that a position of unreadiness is one that can no longer be overlooked or repeated
The Regimental Sergeant Major, 19th Battalion (Btn), 1952

history of Australia.

At first, non-British subjects (or non-Australian citizens) were considered exempt from National Service. This caused significant discord amongst the population, who generally felt that any male choosing to live in Australia as a citizen should fulfil the obligations of being a citizen. Thus in 1951, “ordinarily resident” was extended to *“any male who has arrived in Australia before the registration date and you and your family intend to make your home in Australia, you are considered to be ordinarily resident in Australia”*.

Exemptions from registration included permanent members of the Naval, Military or Air Forces, diplomats, proven conscientious objectors, theological students, full time clergy members, persons with physical or mental disabilities, or an Aboriginal native of Australia. The latter also created discord through the Australian community, however Aboriginal men were able to voluntarily register, and many served their country as Nashos.

The four basic steps completed under the National Service scheme included 1) Registration; 2) Deferment (if needed and approved); 3) Interview and medical exam; and 4) Call-up.

The much-debated issue of conscripts serving overseas was faced at registration. Men were able to nominate a preference for which service they would like to enter – Navy, Air Force or Army. Positions in the Navy and Air Force were limited, and the National Service Act stated that if the registrant wished to undertake their National Service in the Navy or Air Force, they would be liable, involuntarily, for service overseas if required.

The only service in which overseas military service was voluntary was the Army.

The Minister for Labour and National Service determined which age groups would be called up and when, and would advertise in the Commonwealth Gazette,

Lawrie Maher recalls:

"you generally only got into the Air Force or Navy if you had relevant experience, or you knew someone who could get you in there."

through newspapers and on the radio.

Men who fitted into the nominated age group were required to register within four weeks of the announcement, or

face a penalty of £50 (almost \$2000

today). Men were allowed to apply to register earlier than

their nominated time if required for study or employment

reasons, and were also able to

nominate a preference for time of year for call-up; however, call-up

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

AAF A205
Reprinted Sept., 1951

VOLUNTARY UNDERTAKING TO SERVE
BEYOND THE LIMITS OF THE COMMONWEALTH

No. (Army Number) 21732812 (Rank) Sgt

(Name in full) SACHSE GEORGE CHRISTOPHER
(BLOCK LETTERS)

(Unit) 9 FND PK SQN

do solemnly declare that I am willing to serve beyond the limits of the Commonwealth if and when required in time of war.†

[Signature]
(Signature of Officer Witness)

[Signature]
(Signature)

17 April 1955
(Date)

CONSENT OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN
(To be completed if the member volunteering is under 21 years of age)

No. MARJORIE SACHSE

† Father—
‡ Mother—
§ Legal Guardian—

of the above-named hereby consent to his volunteering for service beyond the limits of the Commonwealth if and when required in time of war.

Marjorie Sachse
(Signature)

20 - 11 - 55
(Date)

during the preferred time was not guaranteed.



Once registered, a Certificate of Registration and a registration number was received, that identified each Nasho until allocated to a particular intake. Next came an interview and medical exam. The registered

Nasho would then be allocated to his service, which was based on the medical and interview results, their educational background, details of hobbies, type of employment and willingness for deployment overseas.

The last stage in the process was the call-up. Each Nasho received their call-up notice in the mail, stating where and when they needed to be to commence their training. The notice also specified the service they would be entering, instructions on how to get to their allocated training facility, a train ticket and instructions on what personal items to take.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE

Reg'n No. _____

CALL-UP NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 26 of the National Service Act 1951-1953, you are hereby called-up for service with the Citizen Military Forces.
You are required to present yourself for service at _____
on theday of.....1955

to the National Service Reception Officer, for onward transport to Puckapunyal..
On arrival- Flinders Street Railway Station, you will be met by an Army representative and provided with transport to Royal Park.

Travel Arrangements: Enclosed is rail warrant for travel on train leaving your home town to the place referred to above. Upon presentation to the Station Master you will be supplied with the necessary rail ticket free of charge. Warrant is for travel on train leaving in the morning of 26th April, 1955
Dated this _____ day of _____ 1955

District Employment Officer - _____

NOTE-This Notice should be presented, together with your Certificate of Registration, when you report for service-
If you incur expenses for fares, meals or accommodation en route (additional to any provision the District Employment Officer has already made for you) essential to enable you to comply with this Notice, you may obtain on arrival at the training centre, for completion and submission to the Service Authorities concerned, a form of claim for recoupment up to the limits prescribed. If a claim is made this notice should be attached thereto.
If you are a member of the Citizen Forces or a Cadet, you should inform your Unit H Q. of your Call-up as soon as you receive this notice.

The Army received the greatest allocation of National Service recruits, forming 10 National Service Training Battalions: 11th Btn at Wacol (Qld), 12th Btn at Singleton/Holsworthy (NSW), 13th Btn at Ingleburn (NSW), 14th, 15th and 20th Btn at Watsonia (NSW), 16th Btn at Woodside (SA), 17th Btn at Swanbourne (WA), 18th Btn at Brighton (Tas), and 19th Btn at Old Holsworthy/Holsworthy (NSW).

After a visit to watch the training of the 19th Btn in 1954, the Hon. Jos. Francis, one of the authors of the National Service Act 1951 and Minister for the Army 1955-1956, commented:

"... [being] told that his country needs him to train, so that he can defend it against aggressors, the young man of today answered readily – making the scheme the outstanding success it is today. For the first time in its peacetime history, Australia can claim to have a defence force which can be mobilised properly instead of just a phantom force on paper. This means that we have fully observed our agreements with our friends of the democratic world in the build-up of forces which, we all hope, will deter the Communist aggressors from starting World War III."



“Three Months’ Holiday”

It was with mixed feelings that I started out on my three months training to be a soldier. I was old enough to realise the hardships that might come my way, but sufficiently young to take delight in the novelty of the adventure. A youth enters as a civilian, and emerges as a man and a soldier. A lot of publicity has been given recently in the newspapers about National Service being a waste of money and time, but if these critics could see how much is learnt and accomplished in 98 days, they would acclaim National Service as being necessary for the welfare of this country at any cost. L/Cpl Collins 11Pl, BCoy, 1953.

The period required for National Service training was 176 days. In the Army, Nasho’s spent the first 98 days (sometimes referred to in battalion journals as “three months’ holiday”) in a training camp undertaking basic military and corps training. The remainder of the time was spent undertaking more intensive corps-specific training in whichever corps the Nasho was allocated. This was followed by two years in the CMF and three years on active reserve.

The trainers at Nasho camps were generally either Veterans of World War II and/or the Korean War, members of the CMF, or ex-Regulars of the British Army.

“Is National Service all that it is cracked up to be? The only person who really could answer this question are the chaps themselves. The main points of dissention amongst the boys are not enough sleep, hot meals on hot days and cold meals on cold days. The service has its good and its bad points, in some ways the bad have outweighed the good. There are more weeks to go, and all are hoping that a few things will improve by then.” Anonymous Nasho, 1952.

Nasho's received around one and a half days of leave for each completed month of service. Leave was also granted on public holidays and Sundays, which were normally considered rest days. They could also have off one night per week between 5PM and midnight, short weekend leave from 5PM Saturday till midnight Sunday, and three long weekend leave periods, from 5PM on a Friday until midnight on a Sunday.



If, at any stage during their full-time service, Nasho's felt compelled to enlist *"because they like the comradeship and friendliness undoubtedly found and wish to do something practical for their country"* (19th Btn Journal, 1954), they were able to apply to serve in the Regular Army on a voluntary three or six year engagement. Some were keen and headed to the Recruiting Depot the day they finished their three months training.

Others however, were not to feel the call of army life:

"From my point of view, I am not a person who would take up soldiering as a permanent occupation. I consider my position as a farmer just as important." Anonymous Nasho, 1954.

“Holsworthy in the Scrub”

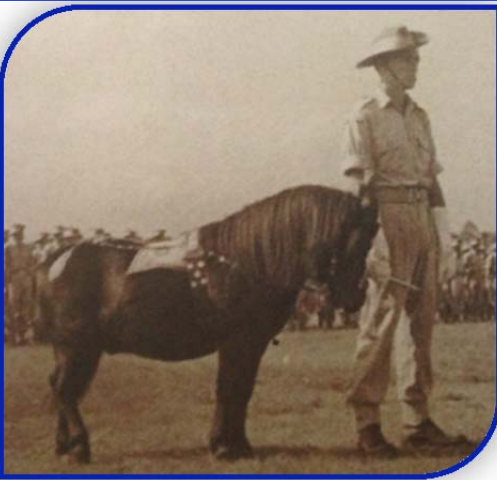
Following European settlement, the land on which Holsworthy Barracks is sited was used for agriculture and viticulture. In 1913, it was resumed by the Commonwealth Government and officially proclaimed as a military reserve. The first buildings were constructed on site during World War I, in an area of the Barracks that became known as Old Holdsworth.

Under the National Service Scheme of the 1950s, Holsworthy Barracks became one of the most important sites for training of Nasho's. The camps at New Holsworthy - Kokoda Barracks and Gallipoli Lines - were constructed specifically for the purposes of accommodating and training Nasho's. The camps each held over 1000 men.



Kokoda Barracks was constructed in 1951, in an area which became known as New Holsworthy, sited to the north of Old Holsworthy. It was constructed to accommodate 12th National Service Training Battalion (NSTB) which was raised at Moorebank in 1950.

The first intake of Nashos in 12th Btn, 979 men, marched in on 6th August 1951 at 1630 h. However, they marched in at Singleton, NSW, because 12th Btn's numbers were greater than expected and more facilities were needed at New Holsworthy. 12th Btn moved into Kokoda Barracks in November 1951.



The mascot of 12th Btn was a black Timor pony named Duke, aka Rowley Park Don Juan. He was officially marched in on 9th December 1953, and could be seen in action at all battalion and brigade parades. He was eventually promoted to Brigadier.

SILVER AND GOLD

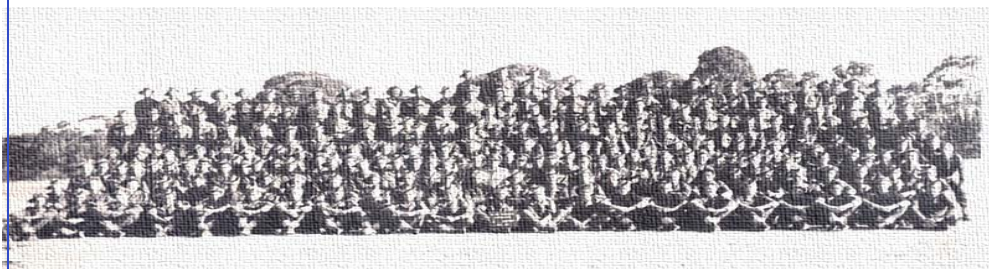
By Twelfth National Service Battalion
 A story is frequently told
 How to a little black stallion
 They gave stripes of silver and gold.
 Silver and gold, silver and gold,
 Everyone's talking of silver and gold
 Since they promoted our brave mascot bold,
 Giving him chevrons of silver and gold.
 His rank is the cause of confusion
 To "Corporal" some turn a deaf ear –
 The silver they call an intrusion
 And claim gold requires "Bombardier".
 But high over any Corps colours
 Stand those we're still prouder to see –
 Whether "armoured" or "Mounted" or "gunners"
 To Twelfth we give first loyalty.
 The symbol of this is our mascot
 With lineage proud as his name
 A handsomer mascot we ask not
 Twelfth's Duke we all proudly proclaim.
By J.F.W. & G.M.McA

As the National Service Scheme started to take shape throughout 1951, the Government decided to expand and raise additional battalions. In June 1951, the decision was made that 12th NSTB would comprise artillery and armoured companies, and two new battalions would be raised from the 12th. These were the 19th Btn, comprising non-artillery and non-armoured companies such as engineering, survey, ordnance and signals; and the 13th Btn, an infantry battalion to be

accommodated at Ingleburn.

Together, the three battalions comprised the 2nd National Service Training Brigade.

The 19th NSTB adopted a gold coloured flag, representing masses of wattle or the Australian sunshine, and with a black border reflecting the guns which guarded the entrance to the old camp and also as a mark of respect for the brave dead who have fought to keep and safeguard Australia. In the centre a black crest surrounded with gold wattle. The Regimental motto was “Carry On”, to ‘carry on’ the work of keeping Australia free, and adopted “Sons of the Brave” as its marching song.



At the end of 1951, 19th NSTB was accommodated at Old Holsworthy awaiting completion of its new encampment, Gallipoli Lines. The encampment was ready in 1953, and cost around £450,000 (around \$14 million in today's currency).

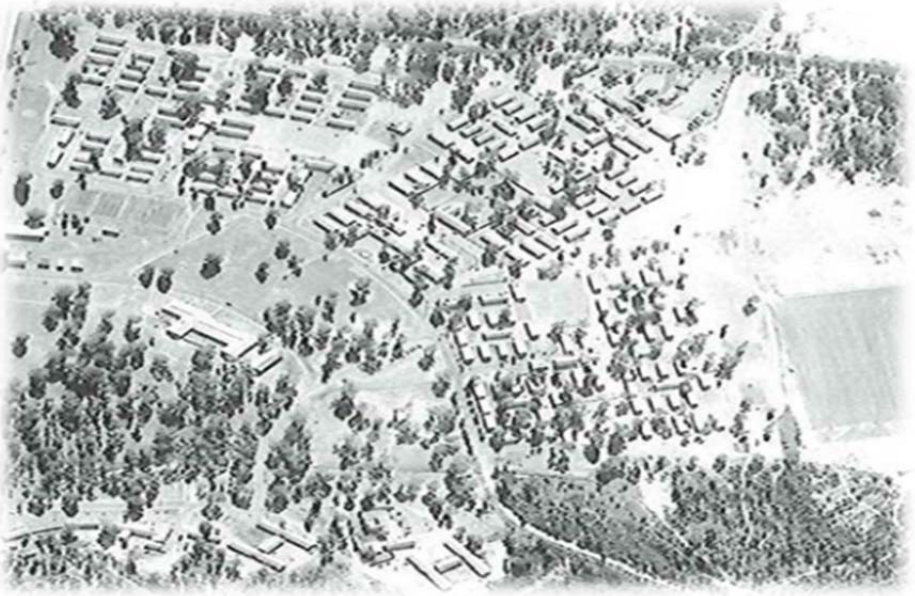
The camps were primarily made up of the timber “P”-series hut, which had been a dominant feature of World War II training camps. These buildings were designed to be utilitarian, able to be easily and rapidly constructed, and inexpensive to suit a restricted wartime budget.

"Learning to live together in community huts is very important. We are forced to see how other people of our own age think and act, and thus we can learn things to our own advantage. We have to learn to get along with the other 15 fellows or lead a poor existence. Most fellows learn to get along with each other after a while in camp, so they should be better able to understand and fit in with people beyond their own family circle when camp life is over."

(Anonymous Nasho, in *Nasho Tales*)



The huts were axially positioned in groupings of Company (Coy) and Rank, and the overall arrangement of communal living and training emphasised the importance of functioning as a group.

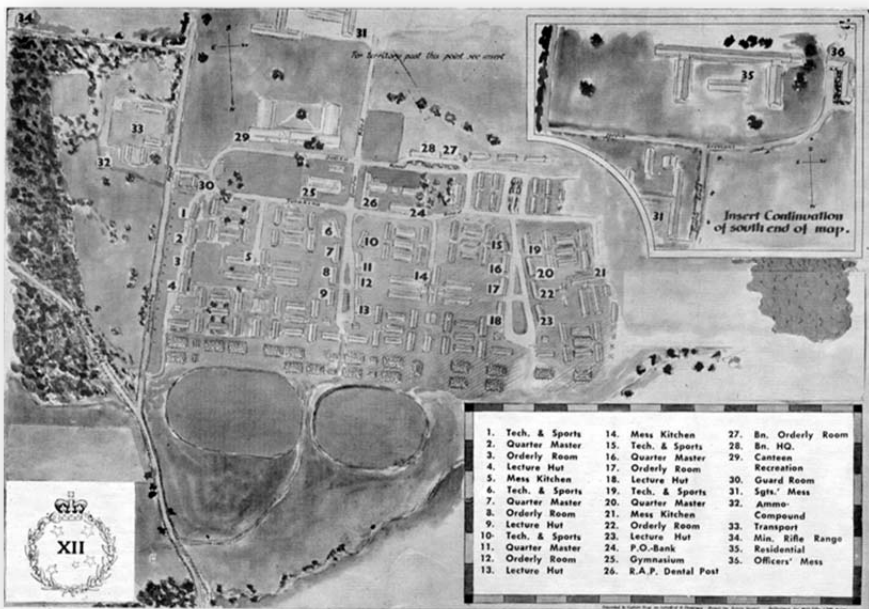


The construction of the new camps at Holsworthy caused a buzz of excitement amongst not only the trainees, but also the wider community. The

"Community living in National Service clears a fog of narrow ideas. A man learns how others of all classes and creeds live and think. In this way his own type of life falls into proper perspective."

(Anonymous Nasho, 1953).

Gallipoli Lines encampment in particular was considered one of the most modern camps in Australia, and was anticipated to *"revolutionise the conditions of military training"*. By constructing modern, comfortable facilities and entertainment features, the Government wanted to encourage trainees to enjoy being at camp by providing all the comforts of home and more, and thereby also dispelling any feelings of resentment towards the National Service Scheme.





"Gone are the days of sleeping in tents or on straw-filled palliasses like World War II recruits. The National Serviceman will be sleeping on a wire-framed bed with a mattress, fresh sheets and even a pillow, in well-lit (by electricity!), fully lined huts".

The accommodation huts each housed 16 men. Beside each bed was a chest of drawers, a cupboard, padded chair and a mat.



An additional innovation *"never dreamed of by the troops in the last war"* was that the linen and clothes would be laundered in new electric washing machines, 1 for every 100 men, which would even spin dry clothes!

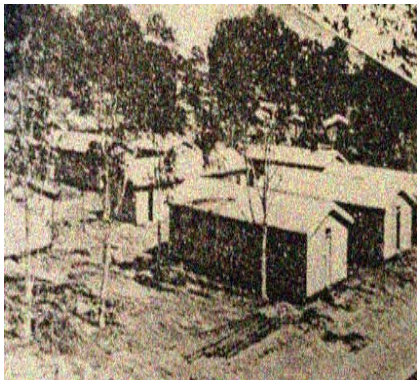
There was also much excitement about the modern mess facilities. Kitchens were fully electric, and described in *The Age* newspaper (9 November 1951) as *"everything a housewife dreams about"*.

Not only were the messes equipped with electric dish washers, but an amazing innovation – the electric potato peeler, which could do in minutes what it took the proverbial “spud barbers” hours to accomplish. For those higher ranking, the mess for permanent Army Corporals and Privates was to be painted in pale pastel tones and have “surrealist printed curtains”.



“[Their] eyes brightened as they viewed the clean, just-painted huts, which were to be home for the remainder of their stay with the Btn – different to their previous marquee life. The sight of the ablutions block also brought cries of joy – not only was there water in the showers, but it was hot too! The excitement didn’t stop – grown men starting whooping for joy at the sight of the new kitchen and appliances, all that stainless steel, tiles, oil stoves, electric cutters – far removed from the smoky broken wood stoves and antiquated appliances of old life!” (Anonymous recruit, 19th Btn, B Coy, Ordnance Corps, Intake 3, September

1953)



A dry canteen block with a milk bar, a billiards room, table tennis and a library with the latest books, periodicals and magazines and a “magnificent radiogram” was available. During full time training in camp, Nashos were not permitted to purchase, receive, possess, or consume intoxicating liquor of any kind. The canteen itself “*sold everything from a pin to a pineapple*”, but the booklet provided to all Nashos upon arrival at camp (entitled “*Welcome to Your Army*”) issued this warning:

“If you haven’t had a drink up to date – keep up the good work. You’re not missing much. We in the Army think your parents will know best when it is time for you to take a glass of ale. Stick to your guns, and you’ll be a healthier, wealthier and wiser National Serviceman for it.” 19th
Btn journal

However, you should not fill yourself with sweets etc. to the stage when you are unable to eat the meals provided. You will find that you will be able to save considerably more if you do not waste your money in this fashion.

A theatre was constructed in the 12th Btn lines which showed the latest films and featured live entertainment by a range of social-theatrical clubs.

Pianos were provided in camp, but men who played their own musical instruments were encouraged to bring them along, to form part of the affectionately known “bash and blow” platoon.



Care and establishment of the grounds at Holsworthy was undertaken by the Nashos. The official Holdsworth Grounds Improvement Committee was established in January 1952, with the express purpose of improving and beautifying the grounds through the construction of ornamental drives and footpaths, establishment of lawns, and planting of flower beds, shrubs, hedges and shady trees.



Two 'ancient weapons' – 12 pounder muzzle loading cannons (likely to be of 19th Century vintage) – were set up on concrete platforms on either side of the main entrance to the camp. One exciting feature constructed by the committee was a carpark, *"where the wealth of some National Servicemen is displayed"* (WO1 Mackell, JS 3/53).

"In moving to our new camp, we are moving to the most modern in the Commonwealth. No longer will a thin shield of canvas be our only protection from wind and rain. [Gallipoli Lines] is the camp that gave the battalion birth."
(Anonymous Nasho, Intake 3, 1953)



“Welcome To Your Army”

“Soon you will be a member of the Australian Army, whose primary job it is to provide protection for a democratic people who want peace with freedom for the world. I take this opportunity to convey to you my personal welcome to the Army. You are, of course, well aware of the dangers of the situation in South-East Asia and the adjacent countries and of the need to increase Australia’s defence preparedness and her capability to act in co-operation with her allies to preserve the security of this region. Now that you have been called to serve your country, I am sure you will do so willingly, cheerfully and to the best of your ability.”

(Taken from the “Welcome to Your Army” booklet, issued to all Nasho trainees upon arrival at camp).

The first Nashos marched in to their training camps in August 1951. Prior to the intake, to make sure everything would run smoothly and to highlight any possible problems or flaws in the system, the Eastern Command of the Australian Military Forces (AMF) carried out “Operation Intake” on 16th July 1951. More than 3000 soldiers donned their ‘civvies’ and acted out the role of the ‘fresh Nasho’. They attempted to contribute to the atmosphere as realistically as possible - some showed up on time, others showed up late, others forgot their call-up notices and registration forms, and some went AWOL so that the AMF could practice the process of investigating the whereabouts of any missing men.



Upon arrival at camp, the Nashos were allocated to their respective Companies (Coys). This reflected the CMF unit they were ultimately to train with. 12th NSTB was comprised of five companies: A and B Coys were armoured (and at one stage were also infantry and transport), and C - E Coy artillery. Each was organised into four platoons, and each platoon into two sections. Intake 1, 1955 (1/55) was also trained for Ordnance.



19th NSTB was comprised of A Coy, the Royal Australian Engineers; B Coy, the Royal Australian Corps of Signals; C Coy, the Royal Australia Army Service Corps (RAASC) and D Coy, Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RAEME).



For a bit of competitive fun, a weekly 'cock of the walk' pennant was awarded to the best Company for:

- Administration and training
- Ground improvements and hygiene
- Barracks rooms and Company security
- Hair cuts, dress, alertness on parade
- Best Company on Btn Parade
- Guard mounting and sentries

At the conclusion of the intake, the Company with the best all-round efficiency would be awarded a trophy. Additionally, the Silverton Trophy was awarded to the Company most proficient at small arms.

Once allotted to a Company, it was off to the Quartermaster's Store (or Q Store) to receive the clothing and equipment needed for the next 98 days. Nasho's could only bring to camp the civilian clothing worn for the journey to camp, clothes for leave days, and specialised sporting clothes. All other items of clothing and toilet gear required were supplied by the Army, compliments of the Australian taxpayer. It was emphasised to the trainees that it was their duty as a soldier, and as a citizen, to take proper care of it.



"Your attitude should be that your clothing and equipment is to be treated as you would treat your own civilian clothes, and your barracks etc should be treated as you would your

Issued clothing and toilet gear included one greatcoat, one Battle Dress suit, one Service Dress suit, beret, hat, three pairs of drill trousers, three khaki shirts, one necktie, two pairs of boots, one pair of leather shoes, one pair of

canvas shoes, one pair of shorts, one pair of braces, trousers belt, one jersey, three singlets, three underpants, three pairs of socks, two pairs of pyjamas, three towels, one boot brush, one hair brush, one comb, one kitbag, one wire stretcher and one mattress.

The Sydney Morning Herald of the 5th of January 1952 reported that many men entering the Holsworthy Camp could not be supplied with the full Army clothing issue, because it all proved to be too small.

"Before I knew it I had one foot in a colossal army boot, the other in a black and white tennis shoe, and had a woolly jacket underneath a heavy greatcoat. On my head sat a hat that was too big for me and under my arm was a kit bag full of new-smelling assorted clothing." Anonymous Nasho, 12Btn Journal, Intake 3, 1953.

"They have two sizes: too big and too small. The pants are so tight, I couldn't sit down, the boots were so big that I turned around three times and they didn't even move." Anonymous Nasho, 12Btn Journal, Intake 3, 1953.

"The first day we were introduced to protective dress – this was apparently meant for midgets to wear. After begging, borrowing and stealing, we all managed to get at least one set of good fitting clothes." Anonymous Nasho, January intake, 12th NSTB 1952.

The reason for this, according to an Army Sergeant, was that on average, the men of the January intake were taller than those who entered in August, and the National Service Camps did not expect so many “big healthy fellows” in the intake.

Once the trainee had received all his bits and pieces, found his way to the hut that would be his home for 98 days, met his new housemates, and had his first taste of the delicacies of the mess, basic training would commence.

The **purpose** of basic training was

- To effect a smooth transition from civilian to service life; and
- To produce soldiers basically trained and imbued with the spirit and ideals of military service.

The **aim** of basic training was:

- To develop willing obedience, based on knowledge and understanding, of Army development and customs;
- To develop pride in self and pride in the Army;
- To attain a degree of physical fitness that will meet the requirements of the later stages of training;
- To provide high standards of responsibility, conduct and morale;
- To provide knowledge and skill in the fundamental military subjects essential to all arms and services.

“As a civilian who has had no previous military training, it was a difficult adjustment. However, it was not long til I got into the ‘swing of things’. I believe that it is a credit to the Army authorities for having everything so highly organised, and it is a credit to officers and NCOs for the manner in which they control and train raw recruits in National Service.”

The first official task undertaken by Nasho's was the official oath-swearing to Queen and Empire. Then came the basics such as how to stand to attention and how to march, which was

essential for Battalion Parade, held every Wednesday morning.



Drill training in how to use the Nasho's essential weapon, the rifle and bayonet, was of primary importance, followed by training in section weapons such as the Bren light machine gun and the Owen machine carbine. However Nasho's generally had to wait one month before actually firing the weapons. Grenade throwing was an interesting part of the curriculum, as most members of the Regular Army had never even seen a grenade.



Nasho's also studied subjects such as field hygiene and medical training, map reading, military law, field engineering, chemical warfare, and a range of Corps specific subjects.

2/51 US CORPS TRAINING					A Cor
2/..734.0.12... Name... SACHSE... 6.C					
SERIAL	SUBJECT	LESSONS	LEC	P	
1	Corps History and Organisation	Corps History and "Capper Tasks" Engineer Organisation			
2	Use of Tools	Recognition of Tools Care and Maintenance Digging Tools Cutting Tools Compressor Tools Lifting and Move Weights			
3	Field Geometry	Measurement of Dirt Use of PG Level Setting out RL and measuring a 90°			
4	Field Defences	Intro to Fd Defences Sandbagging Rev. ment Weapon Pits Wire Fences			
5	Mines	Intro to Mine Warfare and Safety Precautions Minefield Laying "Tram" Footy Traps Mines and Ladders Mine Warfare Parties Laying and Lifting Mine Detector			
5	Demolitions	Intro to Demolitions and Safety Precautions Service Explosives Service Accessories Initia by Safety Fuses Making up and Firing of small charges			
6	Basic Bridging	Intro to Basic Br with care of Cordons and SW Knots and Hitches Lashing and Rd Machines Blocks and Buckles Anchorage & Holdfasts Tubular Scaffolding			
7	Patrol Bridging	Intro to Patrol & Lim Patrol Constr Model Room Patrol Circus Stores and Site Layout Proc Constr of S/S Convert D/S and Dismantle			
8	Watermanship	Intro with parts of Anchors FEE Tripartite Making up-Casting Anchors Study of Mount of FEE and Tripartite Rowing Drill & Orders			
9	Water Supply	Potters No 4 Pump & 4" Tank			

A high degree of fitness was required to satisfactorily complete training. One period each day and an additional four periods per week were set aside for physical training and recreational games. Organised sports were played every Wednesday and Saturday. Tuesday and Thursday nights were

work nights, and there were either lectures or a picture.

A 'Confidence Course' formed part of the Nasho's military training. This was basically a track through the bush along which had been erected a range of obstacles to test the skill and physical fitness of the trainee. These obstacles included climbing walls, tunnels, ropes to descend down rock faces, and river crossings via wire 'bridges'.



"Our platoon was in charge of a field gun – a 15Pdr I think. Every day we would push and pull it from the camp to the training ground and practise firing drill. At the end of the day we would drag it back to camp. After several weeks training we were promised that we would be able to do something special with the gun. Our anticipation ran high- we were going to be able to fire the gun! But these thoughts were short lived. The damn thing had to be buried so that we could practise camouflage. It took us about a week to dig a hole in rocky ground big enough for the gun to fit into. After finishing the hole, we pulled the gun into it – thank God it fit! We pulled the gun out. Then we proceeded to fill in the hole. B.M, 1/57, 5Platoon C Coy. (They did eventually get to fire the gun, and only a few old trucks were destroyed in the process).

“The public opinion on the value of National Service is divided. Those in favour say that in the event of a war an efficient and well trained Army can be quickly raised for the defence of Australia. They also say that Army life is healthy, the trainee learns the useful art of self-Defence and they really learn to look after themselves – the trainee enters camp as a bewildered youth and emerges a young man.

They meet lads from all walks of life, make friends, and learn to work together as a team. Those who oppose National Service say it is a waste of time trying to teach 18-year-old youths to become good soldiers in only three months, as 18-year-old lads are not ready to take on such responsibility. They also say that the training interferes with the lives of those who are studying or learning a trade.

Then there’s the perspective from the National Service trainee. For the first few weeks we hate the words “National Service”. After we settle down however, we realise it isn’t so bad, and begin to feel it is well worth while.” (Pte H., 1950s)

Not only did the National Service Scheme aim to turn the everyday man into a soldier, it also intended to make him a better citizen.

One of the activities undertaken by Nashos every Tuesday morning was “CO’s Hour”. Led by the Unit Chaplain, this discussion session covered topics such as honesty, drinking, gambling, swearing, morality, discipline and respect, with the overarching theme being citizenship and living in a civilised community.

Every unit had a Chaplain and a representative of the Salvation Army permanently attached to it, and Chaplains from every denomination visited each unit at regular times. Religious services and Sunday Church were offered to those who were interested in discussing moral standards and Christian principles.

The “Everyman’s Hut” was the home of moral and spiritual welfare. The Nashos were encouraged to put forward their views and opinions and engage in discussions about current events. Supper was provided every night from 2100 h to 2115 h, and a range of games, and reading and writing material were provided.

“One Sunday morning after one of the continual line-up parades, the platoon was asked if anyone did not want to go to Church that morning. I, along with a few others, decided that we would not go and would spend the time resting in the hut and reading the paper or some like activity. However, the Corporal had other ideas. We ended up in the kitchen for most of the day, and half of the night, scrubbing dishes. I learnt very early the value of going to church and not volunteering for anything.”

B.M, Intake 1 1957, 5Platoon, C Coy.

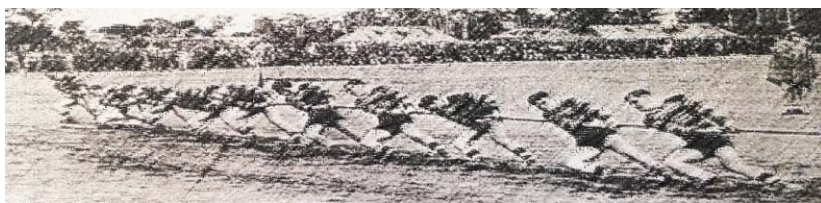
“Once the serviceman has completed his training, he is considered to be a greater asset to the army, his community, and his nation.” MAJ W.F. Robeson 1/52.

“All Work and No Play...?”

The Nashos had the opportunity to demonstrate their improved physical and military skills at Gymkhana. Two Unit gymkhanas, and two Brigade gymkhanas were held each intake. For the latter, the 12th and 19th Battalions were joined by 13th Battalion from



Ingleburn, to compete in a spectacular competition of athletic and military prowess.



Each man fought hard to ensure his battalion was the Premier of the Intake, and would take home the shields for athletic, and military events. Events on the day included tug-o-war, grenade throwing, bayonet skill, weapons relay, cycle race, medley marathon, sprints and cross country. The Gymkhana also provided the opportunity to see which battalion had the best



rugby union, basketball, hockey, softball, boxing, tennis, soccer or volleyball team.

Not all social activity was undertaken on the sporting field. Weekly concert parties were arranged for the camp, and battalion dances were also a feature of the social life of the Nasho experience.





Visitor Days were also held twice during each intake, on a Sunday from Church parade till sunset. The general public, *"particularly mothers"* were encouraged to

visit the camp on these days, to marvel at the facilities, the Nasho's training regime and gain an understanding of the importance of the National Service Scheme.

The Nasho's at Holsworthy also became very well known for their benevolence. Many of the social activities at the camps were used to raise money for charity and public institutions, including the War Widows' Fund, United Nations appeals, community flood relief and hospitals.



The Nasho's also provided support to the Red Cross through regular blood donation. On a good day, over 100 (sometimes) willing volunteers would show up to *"the wagon from Dracula's castle"* to donate.



A significant event occurred during the training of national servicemen in 1952.

Elizabeth II was sworn in as Monarch after the death of His Majesty King George VI. Two years later, on 3 February 1954, HM Queen Elizabeth, with the Duke of Edinburgh,

became the first reigning Monarch to visit Australia. Their first stop was Sydney, and the 19th and 12th Btns provided street lining for the Royal Car company. Some senior staff were honoured through being included in the Royal Car company, and a number of staff attended the Ceremonial Opening of Parliament by the Queen on 15th February 1954.

There were strict instructions supplied to everyone involved in the street lining, to ensure a high standard of drill and discipline was maintained. Clean, pressed, battle dress was to be worn, all wood, brass and shoes were to be polished to a high shine, and all men were recommended to have a haircut a few days before the event.

Nasho Stories: George Sachse

George Sachse was living at his family home in Matraville when he was called up for National Service in the 19th NSTB at 19 years of age. He was able to defer for one year in order to complete his apprenticeship as an upholsterer. When he received the call up, he contacted his brother who was serving in Korea and asked what he should do. His brother's advice was to 'go in and keep quiet'.



George's Nasho experience is a little different to many others, in that he already had some military experience. The CMF was reformed in 1948, and George joined the Regimental Cadets in 1949. He was taught bridge building and demolitions/explosives – despite the fact he was only 14. Bridge building claimed the top of one of his fingers when he was 15. George transferred to the CMF at age 18 in the Royal Australian Engineers, so George spent his National Service time in A Coy instructing other Nasho's in engineering.

He remembers one time the boys had to do their own washing, and threw all their clothes into a boiler together, only to ultimately end up with toddler sized clothes because they all shrunk. Another day during marching, the English officer who usually led the Company was absent. He had a funny accent when he led the march, *"le't, right, l'et, right"*.



One of the trainees decided to lead the march and impersonate the officer – only to march around a building to find the Officer sitting on a tree stump waiting for them. He was not impressed about being impersonated.

George remembers the camaraderie and friendship that developed during Nasho - learning to stick together and stick up for each other. When asked if he would do it again, the answer is a resounding *“Yes! That’s why I keep my hair short – military protocol, in case I get called up again”*.

Following his time in national service, George wanted to enlist in the Regular Army, but his father would not allow it. After he moved out of home he enlisted in the CMF, whilst working as an upholsterer. He eventually became the director of a large furniture company.

Nasho Stories: Lawrie Maher

Lawrie was conscripted to 12th NSTB in 1956 after a deferment to finish studies at Balmain Teachers’ College. He vaguely remembers being dropped off by his dad at the barracks in Paddington and boarding a bus for Holsworthy. At the Q Store he was introduced to this stuff called “Blanko” – he remembers it came in a round cake and the Nashos used lots of it, and boot polish too. Having been part of the school cadets, Lawrie *“knew a bit about drill and marching”*, and was promoted to Bombardier after a month or so in camp.





Lawrie was accommodated in the hut furthest from the front gate and Guard House, but close to the fence by the river. This was prime real estate for Nasho's to discretely enter the camp away from watchful eyes when they were late returning from leave.

His most vivid memories of his time training are losing leave due to having rust in the magazine of his rifle, engaging in the 'rifle toss'

("which never seemed to happen when training staff were around") and being told to shave every day with the cake of soap and razor blades received on pay day. He also remembers the CMF training after his time in Nasho camp being a drag – mostly because it took him around three hours round trip to travel to training, which generally didn't go any longer than two hours.

Lawrie also recalls that the variety of occupations and the backgrounds of the other Nasho's were amazing. Despite coming from many walks of life, teamwork and mateship developed between the Nasho's – particularly through the inter-battalion competitions that were held.

Nasho Stories: Jim Powe

Tpr James (Jim) Powe was born in Arncliffe, NSW and worked for Atlantic Oil prior to his enlistment in Nasho. Jim undertook his Nasho training between January and April 1955, when he was almost 21 years old. Jim was allotted to Hut 15, 6 Pl, B Coy, of 12th NSTB. Members of B Coy were intended for service



with the RAAC. Jim obtained his driver's licence as part of his service, which he was grateful for!

Following basic training at Holsworthy, Jim was assigned to the 1st/15th Royal NSW Lancers. He then completed his apprenticeship as an electrician with the NSW Railways, where he remained for 10 years. Jim was a keen amateur photographer, and during his time in Nasho, Jim

took a large number of photos of his experiences in camp, some of which are included in this booklet. He extended his love of photography into the broader media arena, becoming a news cameraman in the 1960s at the newly formed TV station Channel 10, and later moved on to the ABC. When filming in cold locations, Jim continued to wear his black RAAC issue beret to keep warm, until it literally fell apart some 20 years later.

Jim's son, Brad, says that he does not recall his father talking frequently about his experiences in Nasho, but when he did, he had positive memories about it, and believes the experience was one his father enjoyed.

1959: The End of an Accepted Part of Life

By 1959 the Government believed the National Service Scheme had become too costly, and was too much of a burden on the resources of the Regular Army.

"National Service has rapidly become an accepted part of the lives of young men, its impact being felt amongst thousands of families around the country every intake. National Service is now a part of the normal life of the Nation. Its smooth and efficient introduction was due, in the main, to the efficiency and devotion to duty of the Commanding Officers and Staffs of National Service Units and to the enthusiasm and cheerful co-operation of the National Service Trainee."

Brigadier T.N. Gooch C.B.E, to Intake 2, 1952.

Further, there was the belief that the style of military training was ineffective and inappropriate to modern warfare. Military strategists were theorising that modern warfare would involve smaller armies in tighter conflict, rather than mass armies engaged in global conflict.

Interestingly, the National Archives of Australia holds written records dating to this time, from men expressing their disappointment to the Government about the potential abolition of the scheme. These young men state that they were looking forward to experiencing the training, mateship and citizen responsibility that their friends and brothers got to enjoy.

Despite some community desire to continue the scheme, it was abolished in 1959. Records indicate that 1650 men were killed during their National Service training activities.

"Admittedly, thinking of National Service can conjure up a picture of blancoing, brassoing, cleaning your rifle and being roared at by raspy-voiced NCO's. However, it should be obvious to all that they benefited in knowledge, character and friendship, and that the fourteen weeks were well spent and worthwhile" (Anonymous Nasho, Intake 3, 1953).

1964–1973



“Forward Defence”: Australia and the Vietnam War

In the 1960s tensions were rising in Vietnam between the communist northern Vietnam, and southern Vietnam which was not under communist rule, mainly due to its historical occupation by the French, then the British after WWII. Despite South Vietnam not officially being under communist rule, there was a significant portion of the population who supported communism. These people formed an underground contingent of the National Liberation Front (NLF), more commonly known as the Viet Cong.



In 1960, the Viet Cong launched a guerrilla campaign intending to ‘liberate’ South Vietnam and unite the country under communist rule. The non-communist forces were insufficiently resourced to retaliate, and South Vietnam looked likely to come under communist rule.

Similar to the state of affairs in the 1950s, the United States was concerned about the possibility of the spread of communism, and sent troops to Vietnam to resist the communist insurgency.

The anti-communist Australian Government, looking to strengthen

“The takeover of South Vietnam would be a direct military threat to Australia and all the countries of South-East Asia. It must be seen as part of a thrust by communist China between the Indian and Pacific Ocean”. Prime Minister Menzies, 29 April 1965

ties with the US and reduce the threat of communism in South-East Asia, acted on its doctrine of “forward defence” and committed its first team to the Vietnam cause – the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV). The first combat troops, the 1st Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) arrived in June 1965.

“Forward Defence” – meeting the enemy at the source, rather than waiting for conflict on Australian soil.

“All the Way with LBJ!”

From the abolition of the *National Service Act 1951*, Prime Minister Menzies was pressured by the Australian people to reintroduce National Service. There was an overwhelming public opinion that this was an essential means of strengthening Australia’s armed forces to ensure the country was well prepared in the event of communist invasion from the north.

The Menzies Government held firm to the belief that compulsory military training was no longer needed for Australia’s defence.



However, as the Vietnam War progressed, it became clear that the size of Australia’s Regular Army was not great enough to service the commitment to the US – hindering Australia’s commitment to go *“all the way with LBJ”*. The Government desired a standing army of 40,000 men, and consequently the *National Service Act 1964* was introduced.



Initially, the Australian public was generally accepting of RA personnel engaging in conflict overseas, as this was considered part of the job of the RA soldier. Given the Australian Government's anti-communist stance, most Australians had become wary about the communist presence in South-East Asia, and so accepted the attempt to curb possible insurgency through committing of troops. They were also generally accepting of the concept of reintroducing compulsory military service for home duties.

However, when the Menzies Government enacted new powers that enabled the government to send conscripted National Servicemen into frontline roles in battles outside Australia's territories involuntarily, the population became far less accepting. The general feeling was that the government had the right to ask men to perform National Service, but it did not have the right to compel them to serve overseas. There was also the widely held belief that, as was the case in previous wars, asking men to volunteer for service overseas would generate a sufficient response to adequately service Australia's wartime obligations.

Initially, Australians were generally accepting of the Vietnam War, and only opposed to the concept of compulsory overseas service. However, since that was directly related to the Vietnam conflict, that opposition eventually spilled over to ignite anti-Vietnam War sentiments across the country.

Interestingly, the Army proved to be one of the biggest resisters of a compulsory service scheme, despite the fact that in 1964 the Army was in a position of needing at least 10,000 extra men to adequately service the war effort. There was widespread belief

amongst many in the military that it would be difficult to turn a randomly selected civilian who was not in the army by choice, into an integrated and inspired member of a regular army unit, who would serve in battle and protect his fellow soldier.

Conscripting Australia's "Voteless Youth"

At the time, men were considered old enough to be conscripted to fight overseas, and potentially kill other people. They were not, however, considered old enough to vote for or against the Government imposing that conscription.

The National Service Scheme of the 1960s required men "ordinarily resident" in Australia and turning 20 years old to register with the Department of Labour and National Service. Failure to register meant automatic ballot, and the possibility of being fined.



There were three major differences between this scheme and earlier schemes. Firstly, this scheme involved conscripting men for involuntary overseas service.

Secondly, it was not a 'universal scheme' (i.e every Australian male of a given age would train and fight). Thirdly, only the Army received conscripts. Navy and Air Force did not receive conscripts.

Whilst all men of 20 years of age had to register for service, the Government did not require such a great number of men. Those who were ultimately called up for service were selected through a 'birthday ballot', which the Government believed to be the fairest and most random way of selecting conscripts. This ballot became

colloquially known as the “Unlucky Dip” or “the Lottery of Death”.

The ballot used numbered marbles, which were placed in a box and drawn by hand. The numbers drawn corresponded to months, and days, and determined the birthdate from which the conscripts would be chosen.



At first, the ballot was treated as some sort of spectacle, and was televised with celebrities drawing the marbles. The almost



celebratory nature of the ballot drawing was panned by the Australian public, and the drawing of the marbles was eventually conducted in secret.

Just like the 1950s scheme, some men were exempt from the draft. This

included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, the medically unfit, theology students and conscientious objectors who could prove their objection to war was on religious beliefs. Unnaturalised ‘alien’ immigrants, such as overseas-born children of post-war migrants were also exempt. As a result of public outcry, this was revoked in 1966 to encapsulate *“all our young people who see their future in this country now will face equal responsibility.”*

Later exemptions were extended to men who were only children and men whose other brothers had been drafted, and therefore not being at home would cause hardship for their families.

Temporary deferments were offered to university students, married men, apprentices and those who could prove that National Service would cause them financial hardship – in particular this seemed to be the case of men from the rural sector, who were often seen as the backbone for the survival of family farms and Australia's primary industries – *"I know we have to protect our country, but we also have to produce the food required"*.

Those conscripted were required to fulfil two years full time in the Regular Army, followed by three years part time in the reserves.

"We expected that our Battalion, 5 RAR, would be the next Battalion to be sent to Vietnam to replace 1 Btn. We were unsure however, being such a politically contentious decision, whether conscripts would be sent, or even be given an opportunity to choose whether we wanted to go or not.

Anyway in April 1966 the Liberal government officially announced that our Btn, the 5th Btn, would be going to Vietnam at the end of April 1966 – Nasho's included. We were all given pre-embarkation leave in early April to share precious time with family and loved ones before we were to spend at least a year overseas in a seemingly faraway foreign war." D.B., 8Pl Coy 1st Tour, 5RAR, 1966.

Nasho's and Training

Once a man's birthday came up in 'the unlucky dip', if he could not prove that he should receive a deferment it was time for physical and medical examinations. Providing these were passed, he was recruited.

Nasho's were assigned to a variety of Corps, but mostly to the rifle companies in infantry battalions. Others went to engineers, signals, medical, logistics or transport Corps. This allowed the Army to



increase the Royal Australian Regiment from five to nine battalions.

Nasho's learnt how to fire machine guns, use rocket launchers, throw grenades, conduct ambush formations, contact drills, use hand signals and devise assault tactics. After this training the recruits were promoted to "Private" and went to their units.

Hours were spent undertaking training exercises in the hilly terrain around Holsworthy, in preparation for the jungle warfare training course at Canungra, Queensland.

Each soldier was required to pass the course at Canungra before being deployed to Vietnam. At the end of a year's training a large-scale mock battle was staged at Shoalwater Bay Training Area, Queensland, where the recruits had the opportunity to put their learnings into practice.





Gallipoli Lines

The former Nasho huts from the 1950s were re-occupied by a number of Corps in the 1960s, including the infantry battalions 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) and 5th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment (5RAR). Gallipoli Lines was still dominated by the hutted encampment, but from the 1960s to the present, another type of low cost, rapid construction building was introduced – the steel framed Lysaght Shed.

Designed for transport into international theatres of war, these buildings were also useful on a local level, providing storage space, a place for vehicle workshops and even Headquarters.

They were a common feature in Australian encampments in Vietnam.



1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment: “Duty First”

Until 1948, 1RAR was known as the 65 Australian Infantry Brigade. Upon returning to Australia from Japan, in November of 1948 the unit was redesignated 1st Battalion The Australian Regiment, then in January of 1949 the prefix “Royal” was conferred by King George VII. 1RAR first served in Japan as 1RAR, but its earlier constituents have participated in many theatres of war, dating back to Sudan in 1885.



During the early 1950s, 1RAR conducted training at Enoggera in Queensland, and served in Malaya and Korea. In 1962, 1RAR returned to Australia and moved into the former Nasho huts at Gallipoli Lines, Holsworthy. At Gallipoli Lines 1RAR built up its numbers to over 1300.

The Battalion conducted large scale training exercises in the Tianjara Training Area. These included manoeuvre and live fire practices, high explosive weapons, and aircraft air to ground ordnance. Changes to the organisation of the Defence forces in 1965 saw 1RAR split, with half its contingent raising 5RAR, also at Gallipoli Lines.

1RAR continued to train at Gallipoli Lines into the 1960s, and on 26 May 1965 the first troops bound for Vietnam were trucked from Holsworthy Barracks to Garden Island. In the early hours of 27 May 1965 they departed on the HMAS Sydney under extremely

secret conditions. 1RAR arrived in Vietnam throughout May and June 1965, and was one of three infantry battalions attached to the US 173rd Airborne Brigade.

The Battalion ended their tour in April 1966 and returned to Australia. After a period of leave, the Battalion was reformed at Holsworthy. From July 1966, 1RAR continued to build numbers, including integrating the earlier drafts of National Servicemen. 1RAR resided at Gallipoli Lines until July 1967.

Septimus, the Regimental Mascot



To boost the morale of the regiment, LTCOL Ferguson, Commanding Officer of 1RAR in 1951, purchased a Shetland Pony to act as mascot for the battalion. His name was Septimus.

“Septimus” (1951-1967) attempted to bite the Governor of Queensland, Sir John Lavarack in 1953. He redeemed himself through exemplary performance when meeting HM Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip in 1954.



“Septimus Secundus” (1971-1977) was well known for his indifference to authority. However, he loved a crowd and was winner of many local show awards and champion ribbons.



SGT “Septimus Tertius” (1977 – 1993) was a diligent mascot, winning several awards in local shows. He was awarded “Student of Merit” at the battalion’s 47th birthday parade.



SGT “Septimus Quartus” (1993 – 2011), the son of Septimus Tertius, continued the family tradition of winning awards and honours at local shows. Moonlighting as “Drop Dead Gorgeous” he was a successful harness racer, as well as a dedicated mascot for 18 years.



“Septimus Quintus” (2011 – present) was born in 2010 and has recently been given to 1RAR Townsville. He is hoping to continue the honourable career of his father, Septimus Quartus.



5th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, the “Tiger Battalion”

The 5th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment was raised from 1RAR in March 1965, at Gallipoli Lines, Holsworthy. Its inauguration parade was held in November 1965, which included 250 conscripts from the first National Service intake.

Following an intense period of training, including at the Canungra Land Warfare Training Centre, 5RAR was deployed to Vietnam, arriving throughout March and April 1966.

The deployment of 5RAR to Vietnam in March-April 1966 was a significant moment in the history of the Vietnam War-era National Service Scheme, as this was the first battalion that included National Servicemen on overseas deployment.

In May 1966, the first Australian National Serviceman died in Vietnam, Pte Errol Noack. Sadly, he was shot by friendly fire, during an engagement with the Viet Cong. Pte Noack was a member of 5RAR.



included battle-equipped runs, obstacle courses and rope and assault courses.

5RAR was again deployed to Vietnam in January 1969, and returned in March 1970. Back on Australian soil, the battalion commenced platoon and company training at Holsworthy from 1970, followed by physical fitness and endurance training at Holsworthy from 1972 until well into 1973. In December 1973, 5RAR was linked with 7RAR to form 5/7RAR at Tobruk Lines, Holsworthy.

Quintus, the Regimental Mascot

In 1965, Army Headquarters sent a message to 5RAR that the colours for the battalion were to be black and gold. That year, Esso (now ExxonMobil), was spruiking its “put a tiger in your tank” advertising campaign, and was giving away tiger tail toys that could be affixed to a petrol cap.

5RAR returned from Vietnam after completing over 30 operations, and undertook training throughout 1968 at a number of Defence training areas, including Holsworthy. Battle Physical Training was the primary training undertaken that year, and



The majority of these toys likely went to 5RAR personnel, who affixed them to anything possible, including vehicles, hats and mess kits. This started a new tradition for 5RAR and earned them the unofficial title of *"the tiger battalion"*.

In Vietnam 1967, 5RAR was relieved by 7RAR, whose mascot was a pig. When 7RAR arrived in Vietnam, 5RAR presented them with a pig painted in black and gold stripes. When 5RAR arrived back in Sydney, senior personnel surprised 5RAR with a special gift – their new mascot, a Sumatran tiger called "Quintus" (which means five in Latin).



The original Quintus was presented with the Queen's and Regimental Colours at Holsworthy in 1967. He passed away two years later and was replaced with Quintus Secundus. When 5RAR linked with 7RAR in 1973 to form 5/7RAR (Mechanised), Quintus was retained as mascot. Quintus lives at Taronga Zoo but is enrolled in the Army, and to this day 5RAR contribute financially to his upkeep.

The End of National Service

When Richard Nixon was voted in as US President in 1968, one of first priorities was the withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam. Australia followed suit, and the last of the Australian troops, 3RAR and 4RAR, were withdrawn from Vietnam in 1971 at the request of the McMahon Government. National Servicemen were officially discharged from the Army by the Whitlam Government in 1972, and *The National Service Termination Act* was passed in 1973.

Between 1966 and 1971, Australian infantry battalions were typically comprised of an even mix of regular soldiers and national servicemen.

Around 804,200 20-year olds registered during the national service scheme, and around 64,000 had their birthdays drawn from the unlucky dip.

15,381 national servicemen served in Vietnam. Of these, 1279 were wounded and some 200 gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country.



The National Service Medal

The *Anniversary of National Service 1951-1972* medal was awarded to Nasho's in 2001, to recognise those who completed their obligations under the National Service Schemes between 1951 and 1972.

The colours on the ribbon include:

- Ochre strips which represent the land;
- Light blue, white and green strips which represent the RAAF, Navy and Army respectively;
- Dark blue strips flanking the centrally positioned gold strip, representing Australia's national colours at the time.

The obverse side of the medal features a design influenced by the current Australian Defence Force emblem, but reflects those Defence Forces from the 1950s and 1960s. At the background are wings representing the RAAF, in the middle ground is an anchor representing the Navy and at the forefront are crossed swords representing the Army. The Army representation takes precedence on the medal as a reflection of the fact that the Army constituted the highest number of conscripted personnel during the National Service Schemes.

On the reverse of the medal is a centrally positioned nucleus, with radiating lines and the Southern Cross, all surrounded by a cog. The nucleus represents National Service, a core facet of society in a time of need. The lines and Southern Cross represent National Service reaching



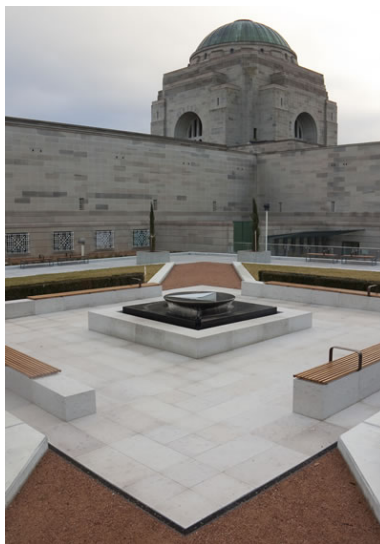
throughout Australia, and the cog is a traditional symbol which represents the spirit of cooperation between the Defence Forces and the community, and therefore represents the Australian community who accepted National Service as part of their lives.

Surrounding the outer edge are the words 'ANNIVERSARY OF NATIONAL SERVICE' and at the central bottom edge the years '1951-1972'.

National Service Memorial

The National Service Memorial is located at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. It was dedicated on September 8th, 2010.

The memorial commemorates the 287,000 men called up for service to Australia, including those who died on active service, during the National Service Schemes between 1951 and 1972.



Acknowledgements

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- Lawrie Maher, for taking the time to participate in the interview, his personal collection of Nasho photos and tales, and for kindly providing copies of the 19th and 12th Battalion Journals - which have provided most of the information included in this booklet. Lawrie is also convenor of The Mighty 12th website, which has photos and stories from the 12th Battalion (www.themighty12th.org).

For more information, stories and anecdotes about Australia's 1950s National Service period, Lawrie has written or edited a number of books, including:

- *Nasho Tales*. (2005). Wagga Wagga: Lawrie Maher;
- *This is My Rifle: A Supplement to Nasho Tales*. (2006). Wagga Wagga: Lawrie Maher; and
- *A Collection of Nasho Verse*. (2011). (To be published).
- George Sachse (State Treasurer, National Servicemen's Association of Australia NSW Branch), for taking the time to participate in the interview and share his memories and photographs, and for escorting Holly and Janene at the National Servicemen's Memorial Day at Bardia Barracks (NSW), on 4 August, 2013. For more information on the National Servicemen's Association of Australia, visit www.nashos.org.au;
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Image, pg 42: *All the Way with LBJ Supporters Pin* www.ebay.com.au

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HOLSWORTHY IN THE SCRUB

At Holsworthy in the scrub,
We came two months ago as budding soldiers,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,
The life was clean and health, so they told us,
They quite forgot to mention bayonet drill and
two-ton packs,
Reliable way to wash oneself this place really lacks,
You leave the grime for three days then remove it
with an axe,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,

At Holsworthy in the scrub,
The local vegetation's getting thinner,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,
We have to clear a lot to get to our dinner,
Quite soon we got a neck-full of the service-rifle's
crack,
Of really brilliant shooting there is certainly a lack,
And having been a butt-party we're quite blasé of
flack,
At Holsworthy in the scrub.

At Holsworthy in the scrub,
Our R.S.M is quite a pleasant dream,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,
His orders dissolve us into a scream,
He charges us for laughing or the unintentional
sneeze,
We have hysterics at his "Bayonets. Fix" and
"Stand at Ease",
But it isn't very funny when he cancels all our
leave,
At Holsworthy in the scrub.

At Holsworthy in the scrub,
A rifle shoot is something quite exciting,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,
We have a lot of troubles with our sighting,
Instructors say that most of us will never learn to
shoot,
We realise they're pretty right, but couldn't give a
hoot,
Top score last time in fifty shots - four sergeants
and a lieutenant,
At Holsworthy in the scrub.

At Holsworthy in the scrub,
Mounting guard all night is quite a relaxation,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,
You're still not free of red-tape and taxation,
Red-tape appears as bordering on all our front
door mats,
The Ord'y Sergeant wears enough to floor a block
of flats,
Brigadiers and Generals love it so they wear it on
their hats,
At Holsworthy in the scrub.

At Holsworthy in the scrub,
We're told that on the food we're really thriving,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,
To get enough we're always striving,
We queue up for an hour or so out in the blazing
sun,
But when we're getting close and think the
battle's won,
The food runs out, but all the same, it's good clean
healthy fun,
At Holsworthy in the scrub.

At Holsworthy in the scrub,
The nightlife of the place is really thrilling,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,
A Soldier's (?) sense of humour's really killing,
You form a group of bandits and into a strange
tent barge,
And wreck the thing completely but then taken by
and large,
You can miss a lot of work you know by being on
a charge,
At Holsworthy in the scrub.

From Holsworthy in the scrub,
We will go as soon as three months are completed,
At Holsworthy in the scrub,
We really weren't that badly treated,
There were some things we didn't like that made
us whinge and moan,
For instance being roared at when from work our
minds would roam,
But even though we loved it we'll be damn glad
to be home,
From HOLSWORTHY in the SCRUB.

