

PADRE'S REPORT



This year has been an interesting year for the Battalion's first dedicated Padre since its re-raising as a separate battalion. It has been a year of challenge for the Battalion with the much rumoured and finally confirmed change of role. It has also been a year of challenge for me in my first year as a Reserve padre after almost five years in the ARA. It has been interesting balancing the responsibilities of a new civilian parish appointment with a new Army posting. Just when I was getting the hang of it all I had two months off thanks to having a reasonably major operation in May. I was very grateful for the kindness shown me by the Battalion when I was laid up.

I have enjoyed being part of the Battalion and I'm very grateful for the support I have had from the Battalion in doing my job as Padre. My time at 4RAR so far has been one of being made very welcome and I really felt accepted from day 1. The year has been one of variety in my role. It has been the first time I, the Padre, was a host officer on a parade. A testimony I suspect to how short-handed the Battalion is. I've had the chance to counsel a good number of members both formally and informally which is the bread and butter of chaplaincy. I must say that I appreciate the support given me by the Chaplains from 1 Bde, particularly CHAP Ian Schneider, who picked up the slack when I couldn't get here, either because of Parish responsibilities or more especially when I was unwell. Sadly one of the reserve members of the Battalion died early in the year and I took part in the memorial service we had at the Battalion entrance.

I'm looking forward to being part of the Battalion next year as it begins the process of becoming a Commando unit. The most appropriate way to close is to reflect on what God says and I thought this would be an appropriate reminder of the limitations of human ability. A limitation of which I was forcibly reminded this year. The writer of Ecclesiastes observes that:

“The race is not to the swift
or the battle to the strong,
nor does food come to the wise
or wealth to the brilliant
or favour to the learned;
but time and chance happen to them all.”

So therefore he concludes, “Now all has been heard:

here is the conclusion of the matter:
Fear God and keep his commandments
for this is the whole duty of man.”