

## A Veteran Jungle Soldier Returns To Malaya To Remember His Fallen Comrades.

It's 54 years since I was last in Malaysia, and that was during my military service, in Ipoh Perak, with the Loyal Regiment. On March 6<sup>th</sup>. 2011 I flew into Singapore for a 4 day visit.

My first place to visit was the Changi Prison Museum, which was very interesting, but very sad and moving to read about the atrocities and suffering inflicted on the prisoners of war during the Japanese Occupation, probably most Veteran Australians have visited Changi at sometime in their lives.



*Entrance To Changi Chapel & Museum*

Next on my itinerary was a visit to Kranji Military Cemetery. On my arrival at the cemetery, two bus loads of Singaporean School Children arrived at the same time. My main reason for the visit to the cemetery was to visit the grave of Derrick Allen, a 19 year old National Service Man from the Loyal Regiment. Who in his first 4 weeks at the FARELF jungle training school Kota Tinggi Johore Baru, was killed in an ambush by the Communist Terrorists, also in the same ambush 2 Loyals were wounded. We were lead to believe that Kota Tinggi Johore being a training area, there were no CT in the area. But in fact Johore and Perak where infested with CT. who were extremely active in these areas.



*Derrick Allan's Grave  
Kranji Military Cemetery*

On arrival at Kranji Cemetery, I found the cemetery staff extremely helpful, and the work they were doing was excellent. The grass lawns were manicured to perfection, and it was evident that every soldiers grave was really well cared for. With the help of one of the cemetery staff, I was able to locate Derricks grave, and lay a wreath of red roses. The red rose is the Cap Badge of the Loyal Regiment.

That morning it had rained, and when the clouds cleared, and the sun came out, it became very humid, it was not a good time to be out in the open ground of the cemetery without any shade. I took several photographs of Derricks grave and the surroundings, and then decided to make for the shade of the Singapore Memorial.

As I stated early on, that as I arrived at Kranji, 2 bus loads of Singaporean school children arrived at the same time as myself. The school children were at the Singapore Memorial, on a Battlefield Study Tour, organised by the Singapore History Consultants. The study tour guides and teachers asked me my reason for being there, so I explained the reason for my presence. So they invited me to give the children a talk on the Malayan Emergency, and the kids were very interested. I was then invited to take part in their remembrance service, with the lowering and raising of the flags.



*Singaporean School Children At Kranji Cemetery*

From Singapore I flew on to Kuala Lumpur, to meet up with a Freddy Hudson, from the UK. Freddy was a Corporal in B Company the Loyal Regiment. Freddy was accompanied by his wife Betty and three other ladies. One was Avrial Butcher, the sister of a Loyal Keith Gardener who was killed in Malaya, and Alice her friend, also Marie Walker who was making the trip on behalf of her husband Bob an ex Manchester Regiment Soldier, who due to ill health was unable to make the trip.



*Avrial Butcher At Her Brother  
Kieth Gardner's Grave.*

Freddy Hudson is an ex corporal of the Loyal Regiment and is the author of 2 books based on his National Service experience during the Malayan Emergency. Titled Loyal to the End. and National Secret Service.

From Kuala Lumpur we journeyed by hire care to Ipoh Perak.



*The Gurkha Cemetery At Tambun Army Camp*

Saturday March 12<sup>th</sup>. We visited Tambun Army Camp (The Old Gurkha camp) and met with the Battalions Operations Officer Major Segeran Shanmugam of the Second Battalion Royal Rangers Regiment. During a visit to the Regimental Museum, among the exhibits on display was a Malaya and Borneo Veterans pocket badge, I was informed was it was presented by an RSI member during a visit. The badge was an old one with the union jack.

From the Regimental Museum, we proceeded to the Gurkha Cemetery, which is in a delightful setting under the shadow of Gunong Panjang, a 100 Gurkhas including their dependants are interred there. Most noticeable are the graves of the 6 Gurkhas who in August 1948, were killed in an ambush at Tanjong Rambitan, they were sadly the first to be interred there.



*Soldiers Of The 2nd. Battalion Royal Rangers  
Demonstrate Starting A Fire With Flint Stone  
And Jungle Plant Materials.*

We were then invited to the jungle survival village, with its many animal traps on display, also on show were some of jungle animals that inhabit the jungle. We were given a demonstration on how to start a fire using a flint stone with some of the flammable material collected from jungle plants.

An invitation was given for tea and refreshments, a cooked dish, of what looked like some type of chicken, was placed on a wooded table in a timber constructed shelter, the bird was as tough as old boots. I rummaged around for a tender bit, but came up with one of the birds talons, complete with claws, I'm pretty sure they had cooked an old jungle fowl for us.

We were then invited back to the Officers Mess for a very nice chicken lunch. After which Freddy Hudson was presented with the Regimental Crest of the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Battalion Royal Rangers. He in return presented Major Segeran Shanmugam with a copy of his two books.

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>. March

A visit to Gods Little Acre Batu Gajah. This was a run down and neglected cemetery, until R Thambipillay retired Superintendent of Perak Police (Pillay as he prefers to be called) discovered its existence, and set about cleaning it up and renovating it. Pillay is the author of the book Gods little Acre, and all the proceeds from the book sales were used to renovate and maintain Gods little Acre cemetery. Pillay invited us to his home for lunch, and during a conversation with him, he told me he was writing an other book dealing with the Japanese Occupation of Malaya, and the Malayan Emergency all proceeds from book sales will go to caring and maintaining military cemeteries and graves.

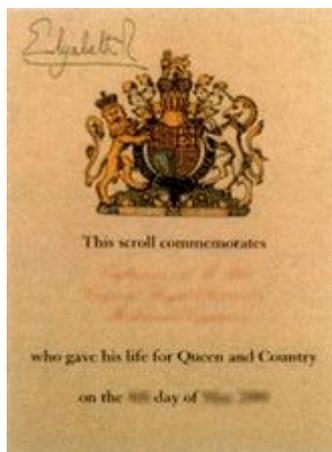
Monday 14<sup>th</sup>. March 2011

The main reason for the return visit to Malaya was for a remembrance service at Kamunting Road Christian Cemetery for Keith Gardner and his comrades of the 1<sup>st</sup>. Battalion Loyal Regiment, also the soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup>. Battalion of the Manchester Regiment, and 2 Iban trackers of the Sarawak Rangers who were attached to the Loyal Regiment. The 9<sup>th</sup>. Royal Rangers Regiment to our surprise kindly provided a shade awning, complete with seating, PA system, lectern and two buglers for the service. Wreaths of red roses and poppies were placed on the graves to remember the comrades who were killed, and one minutes silence was observed to honour them.



*The Remembrance Service  
Kamunting Road Cemetery, Taiping.*

Avrial, Keith Gardner's sister was presented with his awards.



*The Memorial Scroll*



*The Elizabeth Cross*

The Elizabeth Cross and Scroll, was presented by: Colonel Jacques Lemay Defence Adviser. British High Commission. Kuala Lumpur The Elizabeth Cross was introduced in July 2009. The Elizabeth and Memorial Scroll is issued to the families of UK personnel who died in operations or as a result of terrorist action since 1<sup>st</sup> January 1948

The GSM with Malaysian bar was presented by: Malaysian 9<sup>th</sup>. Rangers Group Officer.

The Malaysia PJM. Medal and Citation was presented by; R Thambipillay. MBE. Superintendent of Police, Retired. Guardian of Gods little Acre.

The National Service Medal. Presented by: Arthur Seddon 1<sup>st</sup>. Loyals Malayan Veterans. On behalf of the Australian 1<sup>st</sup>. Loyals Veterans and the Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association.



*Soldiers Graves In Kamunting Road Cemetery, Taiping.*

In January 2009. 12 members of the Loyal Regiment Malayan Veterans visited Kamunting Cemetery Taiping for a Memorial Service for their comrades laid to rest there. Also present was Lt Colonel Campbell Paine from Fort Butterworth. The cemetery and graves were in a neglected and poor state, this as since been rectified. During a check count of the Australian Graves, it was discovered there were 40 graves not recorded.

In June 2010 at the cemetery a Remembrance Service for the Australian Personnel interred there, was held by the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association.

Recorded in the Ipoh Echo Newspaper who were present at the service. It stated in an article that 40 Australian Service Personnel are laid to rest there. The Black Marble Tablet in the Cemetery Entrance Portico, records 28 Royal Australian Army Personnel, plus 10 Army Personnel Dependants, and 2 Dependants of the Royal Air Force, making 40 interred there. Is the Black Marble Tablet in the Cemetery Entrance Portico a correct record of all Australian Personnel interred there?

Arthur Seddon.  
Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association Melbourne Branch.



*Marble Tablet At The Entrance To Kamunting Cemetery*



*Reunited With A Mate  
At Kamunting Road Cemetery  
After 54 Years.*