

# More Majorum

**2021 PART 2**



**8th/7th Battalion**

**Welrod**

**Blast from the passed**

**Footnote in History**

**Australian Armoured units of World War II**

**Alecto SPG**

**Canadian Otter**

**Swiss Mannlicher Model 1893 Carbine**

**Something from your Collection**

**GP90 7.5x53.5mm**

### **Blast from the passed;**

Here we have two members no longer with us, Stan Kemp and Neville Leaf. Current member Geoff at end of year wards meeting sometime in the 90's.



**I'VE BEEN "SOCIAL DISTANCING" ALL MY LIFE...**



**IT'S CALLED GOLF**

**Top left Welrod Mk IIA**

**Top Right Canadian Otter Mk 1  
Above Swiss 1893 Carbine**

**Left and Above Left is Alecto MK 3  
Below Packet of military 7.5x53.5mm  
GP 90/23 Ammo With a cardboard  
Stripper Clip**



## N.V.A.C.G. Committee 2020/21

### EXECUTIVE

**President/Treasurer:** John McLean

**Vice Pres/M/ship Sec:** John Miller

**Secretary:** Graham Rogers

**Newsletter:** Brett Maag

**Safety Officer:** Alan Nichols

**Sgt. at Arms:** Simon Baxter

### GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Harrington

Scott Jackson

Carl Webster

Peter Roberts

Rob Keen

Sol Sutherland



## Achtung !!

From the Secretaries desk



Still not a lot to report due to the uncertainty of COVID, but meetings have been continuing with numbers slightly reduced from our normal 20-25 to 16-17. However we still have constant enquiries from people wishing to join and membership is now over 150, the highest for several years.

As you may have noticed I have updated the web page ([www.nvacg.org.au](http://www.nvacg.org.au)) with links to gun shows, events calendars, joining page and a page where existing members can update their contact details.

We are currently advertising our 2022 Militaria and Collectables Expo, and the venue has been booked. Our intention at this stage is to hold this event. BUT as long as the supply of the COVID vaccine is still unknown, there is a possibility that this event may have to be cancelled. We will make the final decision in the later half of the year.

\*\*\*\*\* DON'T MISS THE JULY MEETING \*\*\*\*\*

July 9th Meeting, will be a Black Smithing demonstration and try night so there will be no formal meeting on that night. Collection displays, swap and sell, socializing, supper, blacksmithing and a good time for members and invited guest.

### WANTED

Looking for a W.W. Greener Cocking Tool - WW Greener Facile Princeps Shotgun Cocking Tool - a vital piece of equipment to re-cock the action of Facile Princeps SXS shotgun before it can be reassembled. Looks like a Turnscrew or Screwdriver but will be stamped with "Cocking Tool" on the shaft. Also wanted 12 Gauge Snap Caps

stamped W.W. Greener

Please contact Vito on 0421 928 566 or [vitoliz@westnet.com.au](mailto:vitoliz@westnet.com.au)

W. W. GREENER



Members of the 2/4th Armoured Regiment with a M3 Grant tank in 1942

## Australian Armoured units of World War II

Armoured units made a relatively small, but important, contribution to Australia's war effort during World War II. While Australia formed three armoured divisions and two independent armoured brigades during the war, Australian armoured units only saw action as independent regiments and companies supporting larger infantry formations. Early actions were fought in the Middle East by the divisional carrier regiments that supported the 6th, 7th and 9th Divisions, fighting in Libya, Egypt and Syria in 1941-42, before the Australian divisions returned to Australia in 1942-43. During the early fighting in the Pacific, there was a limited role for armoured formations, although one armoured regiment - the 2/6th - took part in the fighting around Buna-Gona in late 1942. Later in the war, though, during the Huon Peninsula, Bougainville and Borneo campaigns of 1943-45, several armoured units were used by Australian forces in the infantry support role.



**Pre-war** - The Australian Army formed its first armoured units in the late 1920s when two independent Tank Sections equipped with Vickers Medium tanks were formed in New South Wales and Victoria. An armoured car regiment was formed in 1933 based on part of the 19th Light Horse Regiment (the remaining part of the 19th later became a machine-gun regiment), adopting the designation of the 1st Armoured Car Regiment. A second armoured car regiment, designated the 2nd Armoured Car Regiment, was formed in Sydney in 1939. Both of these units were later converted into different roles: the 1st becoming the 101st Motor Regiment, and the 2nd becoming the 2nd Armoured Regiment, and then later the 2nd Army Tank Battalion. As with the rest of the Australian Army, the outbreak of war in 1939 led to a dramatic expansion of Australia's armoured force. Each of the four divisions in the Second Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was authorised a cavalry reconnaissance regiment equipped with light tanks and scout carriers.

**Divisional cavalry regiments-** Until the formation of the 1st Armoured division, the three AIF divisional cavalry regiments were Australia's only armoured units. While all four AIF divisions were authorised a divisional cavalry regiment, only three regiments were eventually formed as it was wrongly believed that the 8th Division did not need armoured support in Malaya. The three AIF divisional cavalry regiments were:

- 6th Divisional Cavalry Regiment
- 7th Divisional Cavalry Regiment
- 9th Divisional Cavalry Regiment (initially formed as 8th Divisional Cavalry Regiment)

These units saw action in the Middle East – fighting against the Italians in Libya, the Vichy French in Syria, and the Germans in Egypt – with their parent formations between 1941 and 1942, before returning to Australia in 1942–43.

In December 1941, four militia light horse regiments were converted to form divisional reconnaissance battalions. These battalions were re-designated as cavalry regiments in late 1942.

The four units were:

- 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion (ex 2nd Light Horse Regiment)
- 8th Reconnaissance Battalion (ex 8th Light Horse Regiment)
- 21st Reconnaissance Battalion (ex 21st Light Horse Regiment)
- 25th Reconnaissance Battalion (ex 25th Light Horse Regiment)

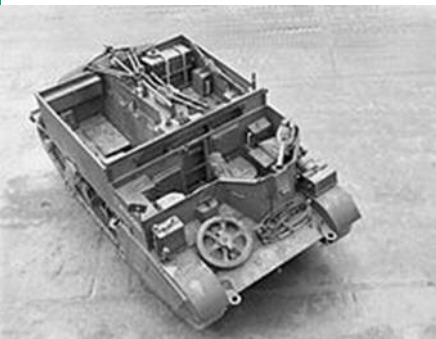
The organisation of a divisional cavalry regiment was:

- Regimental Headquarters (4 light tanks, 2 carriers)
- Administration Squadron
- Three Fighting Squadrons *each with*:
- One Squadron Headquarters (2 light tanks, 2 universal carriers)
- Two light tank troops (each with 3 light tanks)
- Three carrier troops (each with 3 carriers)



**Tanks and carriers of the 9th Divisional Cavalry Regiment in Syria in 1941 (AWM 041776)**

In early 1943, the three remaining AIF divisions – the 6th, 7th and 9th – and three of the militia divisions – the 3rd, 5th and 11th – were converted from motorised infantry to light infantry "Jungle Divisions". As part of this conversion, the AIF divisional cavalry regiments were re-formed as unarmoured commando regiments with the regimental headquarters commanding previously independent commando companies. The 3rd and 5th Divisions' cavalry regiments were both disbanded: the 21st Cavalry Regiment, which was assigned to the 3rd Division, was disbanded in May 1943, while the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, which was assigned to the 5th Division, was disbanded in July 1943. Many of the divisional cavalry regiments' officers and non-commissioned officers were transferred to other armoured units when their original unit converted to the commando role.



**Universal Carrier Mk II**

**Carrier platoons and companies-** During the early years of the war all Australian infantry battalions were authorised a platoon of Universal Carriers. The carrier platoons' main roles were to transport the battalion's crew served weapons and conduct reconnaissance. The carriers were also occasionally used to transport infantry. Experience in New Guinea in 1942, particularly around Buna – Gona demonstrated that, like almost all vehicles, the Universal Carrier was ill-suited to the dense jungle terrain common throughout the south-west Pacific. As a result, when the Australian Army restructured its six front-line infantry divisions as Jungle Divisions in 1943 the infantry battalion carrier platoons were disbanded and replaced by a single divisional carrier company. The divisions which were retained on the British-pattern organisation retained their battalion carrier platoons. Due to the Universal Carrier's vulnerability in jungle terrain the divisional carrier companies were mainly used to transport supplies to forward positions and to provide defense for the division's rear areas, although there were some

examples of them being used for patrol work in New Guinea. For example, in April 1944, after being ferried into position by several aircraft, a platoon from the 11th Division's carrier company clashed with an isolated group of Japanese around Wantoat during the advance towards Madang.

Universal Carriers were also issued to anti-tank and armoured regiments during the war. Several anti-tank regiments were issued with 2 pounder guns mounted on modified Australian-built Universal Carriers, while standard Universal Carriers were issued to the Army's armoured regiments in 1941 and early 1942 for training purposes and to provide the Army with a minimal armoured capability until the arrival of large numbers of M3 Grant and M3 Stuart tanks in April 1942.

**Armoured divisions and brigades-** The 1st Armoured Division was formed in July 1941. Following the outbreak of hostilities with Japan a further two armoured divisions and two independent armoured brigades were formed, with the two new divisions converted from existing motor divisions:

- 2nd Armoured Division
- 3rd Armoured Division
- 3rd Army Tank Brigade
- 4th Armoured Brigade Group

One of the division's regiments, the 2/6th, was deployed to New Guinea in September 1942, where it fought during the Battle of Buna–Gona in late 1942 and early 1943. Other than this deployment, the rest of the division remained in Australia and in July 1943 it moved to Western Australia, while the 2nd Armoured Division was disbanded, the 3rd Armoured Division was concentrated in Queensland and the 3rd Army Tank Brigade remained in New South Wales. Meanwhile, as the threat of invasion passed the need for large armoured formations had lessened, and the divisions had been broken up between mid-1943 and 1944 with only one operational brigade remaining by the end of the war. Following the disbandment of the 1st Armoured Division in September 1943 the division's 1st Armoured Brigade survived as an independent brigade group until it was also disbanded in September 1944. Armoured support for the jungle divisions was provided, when required, by elements of the 4th Armoured Brigade Group.



**2 pounder guns mounted on modified Australian-built Carrier**

**Armoured regiments and battalions-** Upon its formation the 1st Armoured Division was organised along British lines and was authorised six armoured regiments and an armoured car regiment. While these regiments began forming in mid-1941 they were not issued with any tanks as it was planned to equip the division and finalise its training when it deployed to the Middle East between December 1941 and March 1942. Following the outbreak of war in the Pacific the decision was made to retain the division in Australia. At this stage, there were still not enough tanks available to complete the division's equipment requirements, and so as an interim solution the division's armoured regiments were equipped with Bren Carriers until sufficient tanks arrived. These were replaced by newly arrived M3 Grant medium tanks in April and May 1942, and the division completed its training in northern New South Wales, before moving to Western Australia in 1943 where it was tasked with defending against a possible Japanese invasion.

The Australian Armoured Corps was expanded in early 1942, with the conversion of the 2nd Motor Division to the 2nd Armoured Division. This conversion involved three motorised regiments being armoured with M3 Grants and a further motorised regiments being converted into armoured reconnaissance regiments. In addition, the 3rd Army Tank Brigade was formed by converting the 4th Cavalry Brigade, to provide armoured support to infantry units. In keeping with this role, the brigade's three tank battalions were equipped with Matilda II infantry tanks, which were considered to have superior performance in jungle terrain; as a result, all of the armoured units to be deployed to the South West Pacific after the initial deployment of M3's as part of the detachment sent to Buna–Gona, were equipped with Matildas before deployment, and they were subsequently used in the Huon Peninsula, Bougainville and Borneo campaigns. While a third armoured division was formed in late 1942 by converting the 1st Motor Division, this only resulted in the formation of one additional armoured reconnaissance unit as the 1st Armoured Division's 2nd Armoured Brigade was assigned to the new division and provided its armoured units.



**Australian howitzer-equipped Matilda II tank in combat at the [Battle of Tarakan](#)**

**Independent squadrons-** In October 1941, two independent light tank squadrons had been formed for service in Malaya; however, neither was deployed. They had been due to deploy in January 1942, yet this was cancelled due to a lack of vehicles in Australia or Malaya to equip them. In April 1942, the squadrons were redesigned as the 2/1st and 2/2nd Armoured Brigade Reconnaissance Squadrons, before being amalgamated in November 1942 with a squadron from the 2/11th Armoured Car Regiment to provide men for the new 2/4th Armoured Regiment. In September 1943, the 2/1st Armoured Brigade Reconnaissance Squadron was reformed using personnel from Headquarters Squadron, 1st Armoured Division following its disbandment. Meanwhile, the 3rd Armoured Brigade Reconnaissance Squadron was formed in South Australia in 1942 as part of the 6th Armoured Brigade from men drawn from the 3rd Motor Regiment. Later, a number of specialist units were formed. These included the Armoured Squadron (Special Equipment) raised in late 1944 which operated a number of Matilda tank dozers, Matilda Frog flamethrower tanks and a Coventanter bridge-layer, and the 2/1st Amphibious Armoured Squadron formed in 1945.

**Casualties-** Due to the nature of their employment, casualties among Australian armoured units during World War II were limited in comparison with the infantry. In total, the three divisional cavalry regiments sustained 82 men killed or died of wounds, while the armoured regiments lost another 36 men Summary list of Australian armoured units.



**Something from your Collection** With each newsletter we would like to feature something special from a members collection, it doesn't have to be valuable or rare, just something you don't see every day. Members who would like to have an item featured can contact Brett Maag or Graham Rogers. If you can supply a digital photo and a short spiel it would be good if not, bring it along to a meeting and we will photograph it there and take notes.

## Items from Scott's Collection



**Item 1. 'Princess Mary Gift Fund box'** Is an embossed brass box that originally contained a variety of items such as tobacco and chocolate. It was intended as a Christmas present to those serving at Christmas in 1914 and was paid for by a public fund backed by Princess Mary. It was Princess Mary's express wish that 'every sailor afloat and every soldier at the front' should have the present. The gifts were devised in October 1914 and intended for distribution to all who were serving overseas or at sea, in time for Christmas 1914; afterwards, with the fund in surplus and many feeling they had been 'left out', distribution was extended more widely – to all who were serving, whether at home or

abroad, and to prisoners of war and the next of kin of 1914 casualties. This widened eligibility to an estimated figure of 2,620,019. It was anticipated that the majority of eligible recipients would receive an embossed brass box, one ounce of pipe tobacco, twenty cigarettes, a pipe, a tinder lighter, Christmas card and photograph but quite early on the committee in charge received strong representations that an alternative gift should be made available for non-smokers. After some discussion the Committee agreed that non-smokers should receive the brass box, a packet of acid tablets, a khaki writing case containing pencil, paper and envelopes together with the Christmas card and photograph of the Princess. The Committee was also obliged to consider the tastes of other minority groups and it was recognised that if the dietary rules of various religious groups were to be respected, changes would have to be made in the gifts intended for Indian troops. It was decided that The Gurkhas were to receive the same gift as the British troops; Sikhs the box filled with sugar candy, a tin box of spices and the Christmas card; all other Indian troops, the box with a packet of cigarettes and sugar candy, a tin box of spices and the card. Authorized camp followers, grouped under the title of 'Bhistis' were to receive a tin box of spices and the card. The smokers' and non-smokers' gifts were both deemed unacceptable by the committee for nurses at the front in France who were instead offered the box, a packet of chocolate and the card.



Please note photos showing item in the gift tin are from the Imperial War Museum London as the tin is empty.

## Item 2 'Soldier's Friend' Camp Pocket Candlestick'



This printed tinplate candleholder appears to have been made in Australia from the middle of 1915 and was available for private purchase to Australian troops prior to their departure overseas. The purpose of the tin was to ensure the contents were kept dry and readily available. It is possible the lid also aided in shielding the direct flame of the candle.

**Footnote in History;** Northern Victoria has quite an interesting association with military aviation. Over at Shepparton, the Air Force had their No. 1 Recruit Training Depot, while activities at Benalla led to the raising of an associated Voluntary Air Observers Corps around the Northern Victorian region -civilian Spotters who would record any aircraft passing overhead. Out the road from Shepparton was a Secret Airfield, we had the Royal Air Force at Violet Town – and we could also remember Tocumwal Air Base, and what the Americans really intended that to be. To return to Benalla, though. In December 1939 the British authorities realised they had a wartime need for 50,000 airmen annually, of which they could only supply 22,000, with the serious problem of limited training aircraft and safe aerodromes. The solution was to introduce the Empire Air Training Scheme, involving Australia, New Zealand, Canada and later Rhodesia. Australia's responsibility was to produce around 900 trained aircrew every 4 weeks – 36% of the total requirements, at a final cost of 100,000,000 pounds

An Air Force base was accordingly raised at Benalla, designated as No. 11 Elementary Flight Training School – one of 12 such, and in company with others that trained navigators, radio operators, air gunners and observers. Benalla was selected because an airfield already existed there, this being taken over by the Commonwealth. Benalla grew, to the point where it had a maximum of 80 Tiger Moth aircraft on strength. This led to auxiliary fields being set up at Winton, Devenish and Goorambat, with a further field at Wandook having 40 aircraft, plus 80 trainees and 80 instructors. The airstrip at Goorambat is recorded as being just a grass field with no runway – just point your nose into the wind – and the others would have been similar. All Elementary Flight Training Schools gave a 12 week course, and provided up to 75 hours of basic flight training: By the end of the Second World War Benalla would have trained 2,953 pilots, including amongst these small groups of Americans, and personal from the Dutch East Indies Air Force.

Article Supplied by Ford



# The Welrod

Was a British bolt action, magazine fed, suppressed pistol devised during World War II by Major Hugh Reeves at the Inter-Services Research Bureau (later Station IX). Station IX, being based near Welwyn Garden City, gave the Welrod its unusual name, being derived from "Wel" from "Welwyn Garden City" (a prefix used on covert equipment designed by Station IX) and "rod" as a way to obscure its purpose. Designed for use by irregular forces and resistance groups, the Welrod is an extremely quiet gun, developing only 73 dB when fired. Approximately 2,800 were made during WW2, with as many as 14,000 including post war numbers.

**Development-** The name *Welrod* comes from the custom of naming all clandestine equipment devised at Station IX in Welwyn Garden City starting with *Wel*, e.g., *Welbike*, *Welman*. A document produced towards the end of World War II ensured that the right people were properly credited for their inventions at Station IX. This document reveals that the inventor of the Welrod was Major Hugh Reeves. He was also responsible for other important designs, including the sleeve gun, which was similar to the Welrod, though single shot and made to conceal up a sleeve.

The Welrod was used primarily by the British SOE but was also used by the American OSS and Resistance forces. The Welrod was a "sanitised" weapon, meaning that it had no markings indicating its manufacturer or country of origin; it was marked only with a serial number and some inscrutable symbols and letters. The Birmingham Small Arms Company Limited (BSA) confirmed that they manufactured some Welrod pistols, but that they put no markings at all on them, so it is likely that any markings were added by the British military after delivery. The original model was the Welrod Mk II, chambered for .32 ACP. This was the primary model. Due to poor field results, the Welrod Mk I was subsequently developed using 9×19mm Parabellum rounds.

**Design-** The Welrod takes the form of a 1.25-inch-diameter (32 mm) cylinder, about 12 inches (300 mm) long. The rear section of the cylinder contains the bolt, the middle section, the vented (16-20 ports) barrel and expansion chamber for the barrel, and the front section, the baffles (rubber) and wipes of the suppressor. There is a knurled knob at the rear that serves as the bolt handle, which unlocks when rotated 90 degrees. The magazine is also the grip and can be removed for easier conceal-ability. The exclusion of a pistol grip was apparently done to help conceal the weapon's purpose and in some groups it was called a "bicycle pump" due to its innocuous look with the magazine/grip removed. The Welrod is provided with sights marked with fluorescent paint for use in low light conditions. Regarding operating range, the Mk I manual states: "It is accurate up to 30 yd (27 m) in daylight or 20 yd (18 m) on a fairly light night, but is most effective when fired in contact with the target." The muzzle end of the gun is ground slightly concave to minimise noise during a contact shot; this may have also improved grip against the target, decreasing the chance of missing. The ported barrel of the Welrod serves two purposes: it releases the powder gases gradually into the rear of the suppressor, reducing the sound of firing, and it reduces the velocity of the bullet to subsonic speeds (especially important in the 9 mm version since the standard 9 mm loading is supersonic). The metal baffles and rubber wipes that follow the barrel serve to further slow the gases of firing, releasing them over a longer period of time and avoiding the sharp explosion that occurs when high pressure powder gases are suddenly released to the atmosphere. The Welrod uses a bolt-action design because it is simple, reliable and quiet. The bolt-action has only the noise of the firing pin hitting the primer, and the bolt can be cycled quietly. The Welrod is extremely quiet for a gun, producing a sound of around 73 dB when fired. Magazines of six and eight rounds were produced.

**Operation-** The pistol is manually operated using a rotary bolt, locking with two lugs. Loading is performed with a pull/push action using the round knurled knob to the rear of the weapon. The trigger is single stage with a simple safety at the back of the magazine housing. The detachable single stack magazine contains six or eight rounds (depending on calibre) and serves as a pistol grip with the bottom part enclosed into the plastic cover. In 2002, Small Arms Review tested the Welrod (in .32 ACP) and found a 34-decibel noise reduction compared to a control pistol with a same length (3.25 inch) barrel for a final 122.8 decibel value. Earlier sound measurements did not meet the standards in place in 2002. According to Small Arms Review, the lower earlier measurements were 'Undoubtedly a function of the available measuring equipment (including excessive meter rise time)'. A fully refurbished Welrod sounds quieter than a CO2 pellet pistol, with Philip H. Dater calling it 'Hollywood quiet'. The Welrod's sound is almost imperceptible at 15 feet in a quiet environment, and it would be inaudible to the operator in a noisy environment were the muzzle in contact with the target.

**Use-** There was a plan in 1943 to drop them into German-occupied territories for the mass assassination of SS and Gestapo officers and soldiers within a month period by resistance units. This plan was possibly delayed or called off in the aftermath of Operation Anthropoid, the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich by Czech resistance forces. In the wake of his assassination, an estimated 13,000 civilians were arrested and interrogated, 5,000 civilians murdered in German reprisal killings and the villages of Lidice and Ležáky destroyed. The Welrod was used in Denmark during World War II as well as being dropped in several other countries and is reported to have been used during the 1982 Falklands War, throughout the Troubles in Northern Ireland and during operation Desert Storm by British Special Forces. Welrod guns were also found in weapons caches from Operation Gladio, the clandestine "stay-behind" resistance organization designed by NATO and the CIA, in the event of a Warsaw Pact invasion of Europe.



Welrod Mk I

<b>Wars</b>	<b>World War II; reportedly also Falklands War, Northern Irish Troubles, Desert Storm</b>
<b>Designer</b>	<b>Inter-Services Research Bureau</b>
<b>Designed</b>	<b>1942</b>
<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>The Birmingham Small Arms Company Limited; unnamed other manufacturers</b>
<b>Produced</b>	<b>World War II and onwards</b>
<b>No. built</b>	<b>around 14,000</b>
<b>Variants</b>	<b>Welrod Mk I; Welrod Mk IIA</b>
<b>Barrel length</b>	<b>3.25 in (83 mm)</b>
<b>Calibre</b>	<b>.32 ACP (Mk II) / 9×19mm Parabellum (Mk I)</b>
<b>Efetive firing range</b>	<b>25 yd (23 m) (Day); 7–8 yd (6.4–7.3 m) (Night)</b>
<b>Feed system</b>	<b>6-round (9x19 Parabellum); 8-round (.32 ACP)</b>





An Otter crossing a Bailey bridge over the Voltorno river at Grazzanise in Oct 1943

**Otter Light Reconnaissance Car** (known officially by the British as Car, Light Reconnaissance, Canadian GM (R.A.C.) was a light armoured car produced by Canada during the Second World War for British and Commonwealth forces.

**History**- The Otter Light Reconnaissance Car (LRC) was developed by General Motors Canada to meet the demand for this type of armoured car. The design followed the layout of the British Humber Mark III LRC.

**Design**- The Otter was based on the Chevrolet C15 Canadian Military Pattern truck chassis and used many standard GM components. It took a crew of three - driver and commander seated in the vehicle front, while the gunner occupied the turret position at the rear. A Wireless Set No. 19 was mounted in the rear with A and B set aerials extending from the rear of the fighting compartment on mounting arms. The primary armament consisted of a hull-mounted Boys anti-tank rifle and a Bren light machine gun in a small open-topped turret. A smoke discharger is mounted alongside the mounting for the Boys anti-tank rifle. Although it used a more powerful engine than the Humber, it was larger and heavier (by a ton); overall performance was less than that of the Humber, but still acceptable.

<b>Mass</b>	4.44 t (4.37 long tons; 4.89 short tons)
<b>Length</b>	4.50 m (14 ft 9 in)
<b>Width</b>	2.16 m (7 ft 1 in)
<b>Height</b>	2.44 m (8 ft 0 in)
<b>Crew</b>	3
<b>Armour</b>	up to 12 mm
<b>Main armament</b>	.55 in Boys anti-tank rifle
<b>Secondary armament</b>	0.303 in (7.7 mm) Bren light machine gun
<b>Engine</b>	GMC 6 cyl. gasoline 106 hp (79 kW)
<b>Power/weight</b>	24.1 hp/tonne
<b>Suspension</b>	4 x 4 wheel, leaf spring
<b>Maximum speed</b>	75 km/h (47 mph)

**Production**- Between 1942 and 1945, 1761 units were produced in Oshawa, Ontario, though fewer than 1,000 were delivered overseas.

**Usage**- The Otter served with Canadian units in the Italian Campaign and Northwest European operations. It was also employed by the South African Army and the British RAF Regiment. Some RAF regiment vehicles used aircraft armament such as 20mm cannon and 0.303 Browning machine guns. After the war the Otter was used by the Jordanian Army and Dutch Army during the Indonesian Revolution.

**Variants**

- Car, Light Reconnaissance, Canadian, G.M. Mark 1(R.A.C.) with turret.
- Car, Light Reconnaissance, Canadian, G.M. Mark 2 (R.A.C.) without turret.

**Surviving vehicles**

- The Karl Smith Collection in Tooele, Utah.
- The RAF Regiment Museum, Honington.
- Hellenic Historical Vehicles Preservation Club, Greece,
- Fort Nieuw Amsterdam Open Air Museum, Surinam.



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Brett M at [bnmaag@gmail.com](mailto:bnmaag@gmail.com)

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(B). 577/450 Martini Henry rifle Cutlass Bayonet and Scabbard in very good order.

(C). 577/450 Martini Henry rifle Elcho Bayonet and Scabbard in very good order.

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**8th/7th Battalion, Royal Victoria Regiment** (8/7 RVR) is an infantry battalion of the Australian Army. It is one of two battalions that make up the Royal Victoria Regiment (RVR), with its sister unit being 5th/6th Battalion, Royal Victoria Regiment. It can trace its history back to 1854 and the battalion has existed since maintaining an unbroken record of service, albeit in varying forms and under various names. The present day unit traces its lineage from a number of previous units, including 8th Battalion (City of Ballarat Regiment), 59th Battalion (The Hume Regiment), 7th Battalion (The North and West Murray Regiment), and the 38th Battalion (The Northern Victoria Regiment). Today the battalion is part of the 4th Brigade and is responsible for most of the rural areas of Victoria and protecting vital assets in the north of Australia. The battalion maintains an affiliation with the 5th/7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, with whom many members of 8/7 RVR have undertaken periods of full-time service in recent times.

**History-** The Ballarat phase of the battalion's history was formed as the Ballarat Volunteer Rifle Regiment on 9 August 1858 as a result of the Crimean War, coupled with the withdrawal of the British Army in 1857. In the years between its formation and the outbreak of War in 1914, the battalion went through a series of name changes as follows:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1854 – Earliest units of the RVR formed ( Melbourne Volunteer Rifle Regt. ) | 1898 – 3rd battalion, Victoria Infantry Brigade       |
| 1858 – Ballarat Volunteer Rifle Regiment (later Rangers)                    | 1901 – 3rd Battalion Infantry Brigade                 |
| 1884 – 3rd Balarat Ballarat Infantry  | 1908 – 1st Battalion 7th Australian Infantry Regiment |
| 1892 – 1st Battalion, 3rd Victorian Regiment                                | 1912 – 70th Battalion (Ballarat Regiment)             |
| 1912 – 71st Battalion (City of Ballarat Regiment)                           | including Geelong                                     |

Further to the north the following evolution was taking place (encompassing the Bendigo/Castlemaine and Murray river areas):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1858 – Bendigo Rifle Regiment                 | 1887 – 4th Mount Alexander battalion of Victorian Rifles |
| 1860 – Bendigo Volunteer Rifle Corps          | 1893 – 2nd Battalion, 3rd Victorian Regiment             |
| 1870 – Castlemaine Corps of Rifles            | 1898 – 4th Battalion, Victorian Infantry Brigade         |
| 1872 – Mount Alexander Bn of Victorian Rifles | 1903 – 8th Australian Infantry Regiment                  |
| 1883 – 4th Battalion of Infantry              | 1908 – 1st Battalion, 8th Australian Infantry Regiment   |
| 1912 – 66th (Mount Alexander) Infantry        |  |

When war broke out in 1914, the 8th Battalion was recruited from the Ballarat and Ararat areas and the 7th Battalion from the North Western and Murray areas. Both battalions became well known and respected for their actions in the Gallipoli campaign and later in France, earning numerous Campaign and Battle honours, some of which are emblazoned on the Royal Victorian Regiments Colours, with the remainder being held in trust by the Regimental council. After World War I, further restructuring took place in the Ballarat and North-Western Regions. At the outbreak of World War II in 1939, both the 8th and 7th Battalions were again raised, and the two battalions served alongside by side during the most significant campaigns and battles of that war. Following World War II, the 8th and 7th Battalions were amalgamated to form the 8th/7th Battalion, the North Western Victorian Regiment. The battalion retained its name until 1960, when Pentropic Divisions were formed and the battalion became 2RVR, absorbing the 8th/7th, 38th and 59th Battalions. On 14 November 1987, the battalion was officially retitled the 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment. It has adopted the white (8th Battalion) and brown (7th Battalion) lanyard and wears the 8th Battalion colour patch (rectangle white over red). The Battalion Flag consists of the regimental badge on a diagonally split background of brown above white.

**Activities and equipment-** The battalion usually parades from early February until mid December, taking part on parade nights, with one weekend a month and a two-week continuous training exercise taking place throughout the year. There are several training periods per year, including several sub-unit (company) based exercises, normally run quarterly, and a range week, of which the battalion undertakes several days of weapon training. This complements the 4th Brigade's contribution to Exercise Hamel at the Cultana training area in South Australia in September, allowing training in combined/support arms tactics, with access to the full resources of the entire brigade. The battalion is light infantry based, and as such uses all the weapon platforms commonly found within an Australian infantry battalion, including the standard issue F88 Austeyr rifle (5.56 mm), F89 Minimi machine gun (5.56 mm), M72 Short Range Anti Armour Weapon (66 mm), M18A1 Claymore anti-personnel device, F1 & F3 Hand Grenades, MAG 58 machine gun (7.62 mm), 84 mm Carl Gustav rocket launcher, using the standard infantry battalion composition of four companies comprising three platoons, each containing a section of nine soldiers, with a support section held at company level.

**Locations-** 8/7 RVR is located in the state of Victoria, with the following depots:

- Battalion Headquarters (BHQ), Ranger Barracks, Sturt Street Ballarat
- Combat Service Support Company (CSSC), Ranger Barracks Ballarat
- Alpha Company Headquarters (A Coy), Newland Barracks Geelong
- Bravo Company Headquarters (B Coy), Ranger Barracks Ballarat
- Charlie Company Headquarters (C Coy), Passchendaele Barracks Bendigo (Junortoun)

The battalion also has regional depots located at:

- Somme Barracks Shepparton, RAAF Williams Laverton Kiarivu Barracks Mildura,
- Messine Barracks Swan Hill, Tel el Eisa Barracks Warrnambool

**Battle honours-** The Royal Victoria Regiment has the enviable honour of having inherited the most battle honours of any other Infantry Regiment of the Australian Defence Force. 8/7 RVR currently holds the following battle honours:

**Boer War:** South Africa 1899–1902.

**World War I:** Landing at Anzac Cove, Somme 1916–1918, Bullecourt, Ypres 1917, Polygon Wood, Amiens, Albert 1918, Mont St Quentin, Hindenburg Line.

**World War II:** Bardia 1941, Capture of Tobruk, El Alamein, Greece 1941, South West Pacific 1942–1945, Bobdubi, Finisterres, Hari River, Borneo.

**Unit colour patch below**



Editor side Note; I have a personal connection with 8/7 RVR as I joined it on my 17th birthday in 1989 and remained a member for 4 years. As part of "A" Coy 1st Platoon when "A" Coy HQ. Which was station at the Somme Barracks Shepparton at the time.



**Alecto** was an self propelled gun developed by the British during World War II. In 1942 a project for a 3.75 inch (95 mm) howitzer was started. Two guns were made, and one of these was chosen for test mounting on a Harry Hopkins tank chassis. Like the Harry Hopkins, the Alecto had skid steering, which operated by bowing the tracks through lateral movements of the central road wheels. The gun was mounted in an open-topped structure.



The first trials were not started until late in 1944. The trials uncovered various problems but by the time these were solved the war in Europe was over. With no prospect for use in the Far East, the project was ended. A small number of Alecto Is were completed, some served briefly with the British Army in Germany, but only arriving in the immediate post-war period and they equipped the heavy companies of at least the Kings Dragoon Guards operating in the Middle East just after the end of the war

**Variants**

Mk I 3.75 inch (95 mm), 20 cal howitzer  
 Mk II QF 6 pdr gun  
 Mk III QF 25 pounder gun-howitzer. Prototype partially completed  
 Mk IV 32pdr howitzer.  
 Alecto Dozer

Manufacturer	Vickers
Mass	19,040 lb (8.64 t)
Length	14 ft (4.3 m)
Width	8 ft 10.5 in (2.705 m)
Height	6 ft 11 in (2.11 m)
Crew	3 or 4
Armour	6 - 38 mm
Main armament	howitzer or AT gun
Secondary armament	Vickers machine gun
Engine	Henry Meadows 12-cylinder petrol engine 148 hp (110 kW)
Operational range	125 mi (201 km)
Maximum speed	30 mph (48 km/h)



**CATEGORY A/B & H FIREARMS LICENCE TESTING**  
 Firearm safety course & license testing conducted by Victoria  
 Police authorized safety instructors, available to any N.V.A.C.G. member.  
 Contact Graham Rogers 0417 137 232 or Alan Nichols 0408 142 733

**PARTS WANTED**  
 Westley Richards "Monkeytail"  
 gun parts namely lock and  
 hammer etc.  
 Also a complete firearm with  
 good barrel and in good  
 working order.  
 contact John Harrington  
 on 03 58213192 or email  
[jobah450.577@bigpond.com](mailto:jobah450.577@bigpond.com)

**SOME OF YOU MAY NOT KNOW BUT  
 THE N.V.A.C.G. HAS IT'S OWN WEB-  
 SITE**

Here you will find all the news and details for  
 coming guild events and information for pro-  
 spective members.

<http://www.nvacg.org.au/>

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## Swiss Mannlicher Model 1893 Carbine



was a straight-pull carbine designed by Ferdinand Mannlicher for use by the Swiss cavalry troops. It features a bolt that is almost identical to that of the Mannlicher M1890 Carbine and Mannlicher M1895 rifle aside from the shape of the cocking piece.

The Swiss military was in need of a cavalry carbine for their mounted units, so they tried shortening the existing Schmidt–Rubin 1889, but its action proved to be too long to be effective to maneuver with while mounted, so the Swiss government began trials for a new carbine. Two turning-bolt designs were submitted by SIG, a turning-bolt and a straight-pull design were submitted by Ferdinand Mannlicher, a modified Mauser design and a straight-pull design by Vogelsang and Krauser. The Mannlicher straight-pull design was chosen for its compactness.

It was carried by side sling swivels and didn't feature a bayonet mount. These carbines were supposedly hated by the Swiss soldiers as they were hard to field strip and their bolts were hard to disassemble. Many were intentionally smashed during drills, so today combined with their small manufacture number they are quite rare. It was later replaced by the Schmidt–Rubin Model 1905 Cavalry Carbine. The



In service	1893–1905
Used by	Switzerland
Designer	Ferdinand Mannlicher
Designed	1893
Manufacturer	SIG, Waffenfabrik Bern
Produced	1895–1905
No. built	7750
Mass	3.08 kg (6.8 lb)
Length	100 cm (39 in)
Barrel length	55 cm (22 in)
Cartridge	7.5×53.5mm Swiss (GP90)
Action	Straight-pull bolt action
Muzzle velocity	1,835 feet per second (559 m/s)
Effective firing range	fixed sight: 300 m; adjustable sight: 400–1200 m
Feed system	6-round detachable box magazine, fed by charger

M1893s were never meant to fire more potent GP11 ammunition and should never be fired using it.

**GP90 7.5mm Swiss cartridge** has been in Swiss Army service since 1889 in their Schmidt–Rubin Model 1889 rifles. Originally using PC 88 ("powder composition-88") *rauchschwacher* ("low smoke" - equivalent to "smokeless") cut tubular smokeless single-base powder relying on nitrocellulose as its propellant ingredient, it was known as the Gewehrpatrone 1890 (GP90).

The GP90 was loaded with a paper patched lead hollow based heeled steel-capped round-nose bullet. Starting from the rear of the nose section the bullets were wrapped around by two turns of paper, much like cotton patches were placed around the bullet of a musket. This paper patching reduced metallic fouling of the barrel and was supposed to aid in the gas seal of the bullet.

It was discovered that the primer of GP90 ammunition was far too corrosive so it was updated in 1903 to the GP90/03 cartridge.

GP90/23 cartridge variant for the Model 1889 rifle Long

after the discontinuation of the

Schmidt–Rubin Model 1889 rifle in the Swiss armed forces, the GP90/03 round was updated in 1923 and called the "GP90/23", for use in shooting competitions. The GP90/23 dispensed with the paper patching around the bullet and was loaded with a full metal jacket (FMJ) non-heeled round-nose bullet. The PC 88 propellant shape was changed to square flakes. GP90, GP90/03 and GP90/23 ammunition was available in nine different variants



	GP90	GP90/03	GP90/23
Cartridge	7.5×53.5mm	7.5×53.5mm	7.5×54.5mm
Case length	2.106 in	2.106 in	2.15 in
Rim diameter	0.492 in	0.492 in	0.5 in
Head diameter	0.488 in	0.488 in	0.496 in
Neck diameter (w/ paper patch)	0.362 in (0.362 in)	0.362 in (0.335 in)	0.328 in
Bullet	211 gr	211 gr	190 gr
Bullet diameter (w/ paper patch)	0.3208 in (0.3075 in)	0.3208 in (0.3086 in)	0.3075 in
Bullet length	1.14 in	1.14 in	1.165 in
Muzzle velocity	1968 ft/s	1980 ft/s	2050 ft/s
Powder measure	27-31 gr smokeless	31 gr smokeless	33.7 gr smokeless
Max. service load chamber pressure (Swiss standards)	36,970 psi	36,970 psi	38,390 psi

