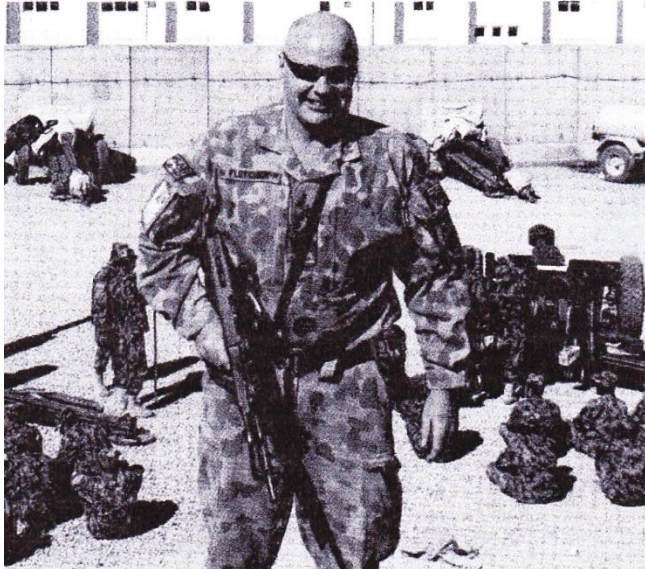


AUSTRALIAN GUNNER OBITUARY RESOURCE

Major Ian Charles Fletcher

1964 – 2015



Major Ian Charles Fletcher sadly passed away on 7 May 2015 aged 51. Ian was born in Manchester in 1964 and raised by his parents Jack and Amey Fletcher. He attended his junior and high school there and joined the Junior Leaders' Regiment Royal Artillery in 1980 at 16 years of age.

Following his twelve months of basic training he was posted in 1981 to Germany as part of the British Army of the Rhine where he remained until 1983. When 7 Para Royal Horse Artillery (RHA) returned to Aldershot in England, Ian passed P Company and earned his coveted maroon beret and wings. The

Regiment was the bedrock and home for Ian right through until 2004. Throughout this period Ian conducted two operational tours of Belize, one to Cyprus as part of United Nations Forces, a tour of Bosnia and a tour to Macedonia where as a Warrant Officer he carried a local field promotion to the rank of Captain.

His crowning glory was being promoted to the position of Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) of 7 Para RHA. As RSM he spent seven months in Iraq during the second Gulf War I which 7 Para RHA supported and crossed the Iraq border with the United States Marine Corps.

Ian participated in Army Championship winning teams in swimming, water polo and triathlon in which 7 Para RHA were Army Champions five times consecutively. Upon his return to the UK Ian was performance punished by being promoted from the ranks to captain and posted to A Battery (The Chestnut Troop) RHA, the senior battery in the Royal Artillery (RA). In his role as Battery Captain, Ian was immediately sent to Basra in Iraq where his battery was operating as the fourth infantry company of the 1st Battalion, The Cheshire Regiment. Midway through his tour in 2004 saw the uprising of the Mahdi Army causing extensive and prolonged contacts and several pitch battles in which Ian was involved.

In 2007 Ian and Eileen moved to Australia where Ian continued his military career joining the Australian Defence Force as a Lateral Transfer. Their first posting was in Townsville, then to Darwin where Ian served as Battery Commander. By this time Ian served in two tours of Afghanistan, one as a leave replacement in Tarin Kwot and one as an Artillery Trainer in the Kabul Military Training Centre. While the Battery Commander of 103 medium Battery, Ian pulled off probably his biggest success; during an exchange trip with the United States Marine Corps, he took his battery for a five day trip to the Marine Corps' birthday celebrations in Las Vegas and brought his battery back without losing a single man or woman.

AUSTRALIAN GUNNER OBITUARY RESOURCE

To go from Junior Gunner to being a Major and Battery Commander helps highlight Ian's exceptional quality as a soldier and as a man. Ian leaves behind his mother Amey, wife Eileen and children Rachael and Matthew. His entire family, and the many people who have and the privilege to meet him, will miss him in a way that cannot be described with words.

Acknowledgements:

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- Lieutenant Colonel M P White for forwarding the article to Australian contacts.