

Mark Broemmer (Neil Leckie).

After Mark died unexpectedly, I was asked to present the family eulogy.

‘It is a privilege to have been asked to give the family eulogy for my good friend Mark. In 1981 I transferred from Melbourne to the School of Mines Ballarat taking up teaching position in the electrical area. Early that year I also transferred my Army Reserve service from Puckapunyal to 2nd Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment (known as 2 RVR) in Ballarat as the Second-in-Command of B Company under Captain Douglas Ball, who is here today. One of the soldiers in B Company was a seventeen-year-old Mark Broemmer.



Mark Kirsten William Broemmer was born at St John of God Hospital in Ballarat on 14 March 1963 to Ralph and Margaret Broemmer. He was baptised that year at Our Ladies Help of Christians in Wendouree. Margaret died in 1980, however Ralph is here with us today. Ralph was the son of Herman and Senta Broemmer. Herman was a Master Butcher who in 1966 moved from Ballarat to Sydney for work. Completing Ralph and Margaret’s family, Mark’s brother Paul was born that year.

Mark went to Primary School at Our Lady Help of Christians and then Secondary School at Saint Patrick’s College where his love of the Army started with Saint Pat’s Army Cadets. Brian Broadribb, who is an apology for today, the teacher in charge of the Cadets said: ‘I knew Mark from his school days at St Pat’s when he was one of my Senior Cadet Under Officers in the Cadet Unit. Unflustered, steady and a good influence on the junior cadets.’

When growing up, the Broemmer brothers were very close to their cousins, the Taylors, some of whom are her today. They spent a lot of time together and were considered a close-knit family.

From 1966 until 1976, when Herman died, the family undertook many trips to Sydney to visit Herman and Senta where Mark no doubt gained an interest in food and butchering.

In 1979 a sixteen-year-old Mark undertook an overseas holiday with Ralph and Ralph’s mother-in-law. The group visited Germany, Greece and Italy, where they visited Ralph’s sister, also named Monika, and her three daughters, who are here with us today.

The Army and the RSL will give details of Mark’s Army service, but Mark joined the Army Reserve at 17 and a half years in 1980. Completing Year 12, Mark left school but did not find a full-time job, however, this left him with plenty of time to undertake Army Reserve work.

In early 1982, Mark went to a dance at the Provincial Hotel in Lydiard Street here in Ballarat. He saw this girl, named Monica, and asked her to dance. Mark and Monica would become engaged in December 1983 and married on 21 July 1984.

The couple would have three sons: Michael, born in December 1985, Luke born September 1987 and Anthony born in September 1989.

Mark did find work, firstly at the Paddle Shoe Factory in Sebastopol, the Mars factory in Wendouree and Selkirk Bricks in Ballarat North before moving into the food area. He was the Fish Manager at Safeway in Eastwood Street. This was followed by some years where he had Noah’s

Fish Shop in Little Bridge Street. More recently Mark found a position as a Prisoner Officer in Melbourne's western suburbs.

Outside family and work, Mark had many interests. He continued in the Army Reserve and served over 42 years. At the time of his death, he was the President of the Sebastopol RSL Sub-branch, having previously been the Secretary. In 1986 Mark instigated the formation of the Ballarat Arms & Militaria Collectors Society for people interested in firearms. He was a member of the Royal Victoria Regiment Association and the local 'old & bold' association, the 8/7th Battalion - 2 RVR Association. Mark was also an active member of the Ballarat Ranger Military Museum and took over as the Curator from Sgt Jeff Whitten in the 1990s.

In 2001 when the Army moved out of the old Ranger Barracks, Mark organised the rental of a room in the council owned Sebastopol RSL Hall at \$1 per week. With Monica's help Mark then moved and set up the museum's collection there.

In 2005 when the current museum hut became available at the new Ranger Barracks, Mark managed the Curator's aspects of the move from Sebastopol.

In recent years his shift work at the prison meant that he hasn't had much to do with the day to day operations of the museum, but he continued to work for the museum in the background.

As the Ballarat Army Reserve battalion's Caterer, Mark ensured that everyone was well fed. You never went hungry! He was a master of the preparation of the formal dinner. Over the years Mark has catered for Past Battalion Officers Dinners, usually with an attendance of about 20. The Army has not always been able to provide additional catering staff at these events and Mark, often with Monica's help, would do the catering without Army support. He was an amazing Caterer.

In my experience working with Mark over many years in a number of fields, he was a quiet achiever. There was a job to be done and he got on and did it. Mark will be missed, not only by his family, but by the Army, the Museum and the other organisations he belonged to. RIP, Mark.

Mark Broemmer joined the Army Reserve on 22 September 1980 and was posted to 2 RVR, Ballarat. He was still serving when the unit became 8/7 RVR in 1987. On 15 January 2018, Mark, along with all the 8/7 RVR Administration Company members, was transferred to the 4th Combat Services Battalion at Watsonia. However, he and his Ballarat based Cooks continued to support 8/7 RVR. On 18 January 2021 Mark was next transferred to Headquarters 4th Brigade, where again he continued to support 8/7 RVR.

Over his 42 years of Army Reserve Service Mark served as an Infantry Private, a Cook, a Caterer and as an Assistant Instructor. He also spent over 30 years as an active member of the Ballarat Ranger Military Museum.



Mark was awarded the Reserve Force Medal with five clasps, the Australian Defence Medal and received a Commander 2nd Division Commendation. Mark's operational deployment occurred from 16 to 26 February 2009 with Operation VICFIRE ASSIST.

Mark died at Ballarat Health Services on 24 March 2023, just 10 days after his 60th Birthday. His funeral was held at Pat Cashin's Funeral Centre on 5 April 2023. The funeral centre was packed with family, current Reservists and past innumerable Reservists, including about six past Commanding Officers under whom Mark had served, along with a big contingent from the Prison Service where Mark was employed at the time of his death. The service was conducted by Army Chaplain Mohit Sampson and the Eulogists were Neil Leckie and Trevor Beales. Other participants were Corporal Michael Currie, Private Matthew Watson, the RSM WO1 Matthew Vermey, Bagpiper Tim Steere, Bugler Chris Ducardis with Kevin Scott presenting The Ode. Refreshments were held at Midlands Golf Club, Home of the Ballarat RSL.