



Army

The Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army delivers the service eulogy at the funeral of Warrant Officer Arthur Francis, CSC, OAM (retd).

The Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army, Warrant Officer Don Spinks, OAM, delivers the service eulogy at the funeral of Warrant Officer Arthur Francis, CSC, OAM (retd), at All Saints Anglican Church, Singleton, NSW on Tuesday, 16 August, 2016.

Check against delivery

215581 Warrant Officer Arthur Murphy Francis, CSC, OAM.

Today, I have the great honour to reflect on Arthur Francis the soldier. My relationship with Arthur, or Arty, only goes back about 26 odd yrs, I appreciate that many here today have known him for much longer than that.

To Pam, Stewart, Simone and the extended Francis family, please accept my condolences on behalf of all of the Army.

This morning, I would like to talk to Arthur's service history and on what he meant to his Army family.

Arthur enlisted into the Australian Regular Army on the 13 January 1964.

After initial training was complete, Arthur was allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and posted to the 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) in Holsworthy, however, after only six months an overseas posting option was given and he was sent to 4th Battalion who were training for a deployment to Malaysia.

Arthur spent two years in Malaya, including active service in Borneo during the Indonesian confrontation, where he served as a rifleman and a forward scout.

In 1967, Arthur volunteered for service in South Vietnam and was posted from Malaysia to the 2nd Battalion who were in Brisbane completing their training in preparation for overseas deployment.

He remained with the 2nd Battalion until 1975, having completed two tours of active service with them in South Vietnam, the first as a Corporal, Section

Commander during 1967-68, the second as a Platoon Sergeant during 1970-71.

Arthur spent the next few years in regimental and instructional appointments at the 1st Recruit Training Battalion, The Royal Military College and 8th/9th Battalion as a Company Sergeant Major.

In 1981, Arthur was promoted to Warrant Officer Class One on posting to the Infantry Centre in Singleton as an instructor on the Warrant Officer promotion courses.

In 1984, he was posted as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the 3rd Battalion (Parachute) in Sydney, and it was during this time Arthur completed 65 parachute descents. In 1986, he returned to the Infantry Centre as the Regimental Sergeant Major where he spent three years influencing the training of our young soldiers and officers, whilst enjoying a close association with the local community.

This was followed by a further two appointments; one as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the Land Warfare Centre in Canungra, South Queensland (the Jungle Training Centre for the old hands), then as the Regiment Sergeant Major of Land Command in Sydney.

In 1994, Arthur was appointed as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army. He completed that appointment at the end of 1996 and in 1997 he transferred to the inactive reserve, discharging from the Army later that year.

Arthur was awarded the Medal for the Order of Australia in the 1987 Queens Birthday Honors List in recognition of his service as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. He was also awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross [CSC] in the 1997 Australia Day Awards for services as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army.

A detailed list of Arthur's postings appear on your Order of Service.

After leaving the Army, Arthur continued to contribute to the broader community and our Nation. He did this by working a further 10 years at the Infantry Centre as the supervisor/trainer of the laser designated weapons systems, under contract to Defence (many would know this as the Weapons Training Simulation System). He was the Chairman of the local Legacy Club and a Board Member at Newcastle Legacy. He was a volunteer at the Infantry Museum and he assisted with Meals on Wheels. And he did much, much more.

The service history I read previously on Arthur only scratches the surface of what was an outstanding military career spanning over 33 years.

Arthur epitomised Army's core values of courage, initiative, respect and teamwork. He was leader, a trainer, a mentor, a warrior. And in my eyes, he

was a legend. He was a role model for many generations of soldiers and officers, many of us who are still serving today.

Arthur's personal courage is unquestioned. He completed three operational tours in two wars and he fought just as bravely towards the end. Arthur took up parachuting for Army at the spritely age of 37; as I mentioned before, he jumped (and landed safely) out of 65 perfectly serviceable aircraft - courage.

His initiative and drive were always present as a leader and a trainer of our people. In training, he drove people hard and expected them to use their wit and their initiative. He expected them to be resilient, to be tough and to want to learn. The Army of the 1960s looked nothing like the Army we serve in now; enhanced clothing and personal equipment, state of the art weapons systems, advanced communications and satellite navigation equipment; make the challenges of today much different to those faced by Arthur. He was relied on by his team to keep them safe and on track. As a leader, he was always willing to try something new and as a mentor he encouraged his troops to think outside the box.

Arthur was one that earned the respect of all who served with him and all whom he worked for. You only need to look around you to today to see respect on display. Arthur's time as an instructor at the Royal Military College (RMC) was important in his development as a senior soldier. He knew that the knowledge, skills and the impression he left on the next generation of young officers would last them their entire career and beyond. His example earned him the respect of his peers and our future leaders alike. Much later, when I was posted to RMC, he encouraged me to learn and to give back as well. He also taught me to respect the opportunities that we are given, to put service before self and to take care of your mates and your family.

Arthur was the absolute professional and an exemplar Regimental Sergeant Major. He led by example and he always worked tirelessly for the team. I took from this, that if you work hard, set the example and be true to the service and yourself; others would take notice and follow your lead.

Arthur was the 4th Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army – the highest position a soldier can hold in our service. He will be mourned by Pam and their family, and he will be sorely missed by his community and the Army. We thank him for his contribution to our Nation as he joins the long line of those who came before him and he leaves us with the knowledge that he has raised the bar for those of us who follow him.

Arthur Francis has left a mark on Army that can never be erased; his legacy is strong – may it last forever.

Duty First. Lest we forget