

The Army leaves Albury after 115 years

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On Saturday 13 May 2000, Victorian Mounted Rifles Squadron, 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment departed the Drill Hall, Albury and moved to its new depot at Building 105 North Bandiana.

The squadron marked its departure in style. Mounted in tracked armoured fighting vehicles and led by a section of light horse and the regimental band, the parade moved down Dean Street past an honour guard of Army Cadets and a saluting dais. On the dais, the mayor of the City of Albury, Councillor Les Langford took the salute and farewelled the regiment. This ended 115 years of Albury as a garrison city beginning in 1886 with a NSW Volunteer Infantry Company under the command of Captain Foster Cooper.



The people of Albury say farewell as the Victorian Mounted Rifles Squadron, 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment depart Albury for Bandiana.

The Drill Hall in Victoria Street was constructed in 1900 on portion of the Police Paddock. The infantry company retrained as field artillery. The famed Albury Battery was born, and guns, wagons, and horse teams became a common sight as they trained for war.

War came in 1914 and the Albury Battery proceeded overseas under the command of Major Joseph Shellshear. They fought on the Western Front with notable roles in the battles at Noreuil and Mont St Quentin.

Following WWI, the Battery recommenced training at Victoria Street and continued till the outbreak of the Second World War. Majors Roy Collings and Leslie Colquhoun filled

command positions. In 1940, the Battery mobilised and moved north; in its absence the depot became home to various military base units.

Post WWII soldiering resumed in 1948 with the formation of the 8th/13th Victorian Mounted Rifles, a tank regiment of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps. National Service in 1951 brought an influx of Albury and Wodonga young men to the Drill Hall. The ranks of the VMR swelled to hundreds and General Grant tanks and sleek scout cars flying pennants on radio antenna rumbled through the city streets as the regiment moved out on weekend manoeuvres in the surrounding countryside.

In 1991, the Albury squadron was redesignated Victorian Mounted Rifles Squadron, 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse and continued to train at Victoria Street.

The relocation from Albury and the closure of the Drill Hall in 2000 brought that all to an end. The subsequent demolition of the buildings and the redevelopment into a prestige housing estate further wiped away all trace of Albury's military heritage.