

## CO-PATRON APPOINTED TO 5 RAR ASSOCIATION

Brigadier Justin 'Jake' Ellwood was born in Melbourne in 1970 and was educated at St Kevin's College, Toorak. He graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1990 into the Royal Australian Infantry Corps. After undertaking his regimental appointments in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion he was posted as an instructor at the Royal Military College, Duntroon. He subsequently served as Second in Command of a Warrior Company on a two year exchange with the Irish Guards in Germany during which time he deployed to Kosovo. Upon returning to Australia he served as a Company Commander and the Operations Officer in the 5/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion. During this period he commanded a company on operations in East Timor. After completing Australian Command and Staff College, he served as the Brigade Major of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade. His key staff appointment has been as Director Reserves – Army.



Brigadier Jake Ellwood, DSC

Canberra. Brigadier Ellwood subsequently deployed to Afghanistan as the Chief of Current Operations within Headquarters International Security and Assistance Force/ Headquarters Resolute Support. Brigadier Ellwood is currently serving as the Chief of Staff, Headquarters Forces Command.

Brigadier Ellwood was presented with a Commander British Forces Commendation for his service in Kosovo and a Divisional Commander's Commendation for his work as the Brigade Major of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his command and leadership in Iraq and a Commendation for Distinguished Service for his performance of duties in Afghanistan.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Deakin University (with a double major in Strategic Studies and International Relations), a Master of Arts (Strategic Studies) from Deakin University, a Masters of Management (Defence Studies) from the University of Canberra and a Graduate Diploma in Secondary School Education from Monash University.

Brigadier Ellwood is married to Nicole. They have two older children who are both studying at University. Other than family pursuits, his hobbies include long distance running, fishing and scuba diving.

Brigadier Ellwood was appointed as Commanding Officer of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion from 2007 to 2008. During this tenure he commanded a light armoured battlegroup in Iraq and a light infantry battlegroup in East Timor. He was then posted as the Australian Army Liaison Officer to the United States Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia, followed by a three years posting as Commander of the Australian Army's Combat Training Centre. This posting was followed by attendance at Higher Defence College in

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fellow tigers,

Firstly, I am delighted to announce that BRIG Jake Ellwood DSC has accepted an invitation by our committee to be a Co-Patron of our Association for a three year period. Our longstanding Patron BRIG Colin Khan DSO, AM joins me and all Association members in warmly welcoming BRIG Ellwood to this position. The Chief of Army has also given his strong support to his appointment.



Roger Wainwright

Jake was the first CO of 5 RAR after the unlinking of 5/7 RAR in 2006 and has always been strongly supportive of our association both during his time in command and subsequently. Part of our rationale in inviting Jake to take up this appointment is to make it clear that our Association is

not just Vietnam centric and that younger veterans (post 2006) are our future - they will have to accept responsibility for our history and heritage. In addition to his outstanding background as noted in the adjacent biography, BRIG Ellwood is also the current Head of Corps Infantry and consequently has policy responsibilities for the infantry corps in doctrine, personnel and equipment matters.

As Anzac Day 2017 approaches, it also brings to a close the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1<sup>st</sup> tour of the tiger battalion in Vietnam. On Anzac Day 50 years ago a parade was held at our LZ 'Tiger V', the battalion was finalising its hand-over to 7 RAR and preparations were complete for the majority of the battalion to sail home aboard HMAS Sydney. We departed Vung Tau on 30 Apr and arrived in Sydney on 12 May 1967. I thank LTCOL Paul Shields and the battalion for its strong support over the past 12

*(Continued on page 2)*



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE- Cont.

(Continued from page 1)

months and particularly, the recent full battalion commemorative services to recognise the 50th anniversary of our losses on 14 Feb (Op Beaumaris) and 21 Feb (Op Renmark). Feb 1967 was the worst month in 5 RAR's history and was a time when the tigers had to show strong resilience and resolve as the end of the tour approached.

We should also remember that May 2017 is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the deployment of Battle Group Tiger to southern Iraq as the first operational deployment of the battalion after unlinking. This light armoured battle group known as Overwatch Battle Group (W) 3, was led by 5 RAR and commanded by then LTCOL Jake Ellwood.

In a few years time we will also be recognising the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2nd tour of Vietnam. The government through the Department of Veterans Affairs has already announced its intent to recognise the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Binh Ba in 2019. I also have no doubt that 5 RAR under its next commanding officer will provide equal support for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2<sup>nd</sup> tour as we have seen over the past 12 months.

I also welcome the new RSM, WO1 Sean Ransome to the Association family. We have already had some good contact and I look forward to working closely with him during his tenure as RSM. WO1 Ransome's biography is on Page 8.

I will be in Melbourne around Anzac Day. On 24 April a group of 5 RAR veterans will travel to Phillip Island to dedicate a plaque in the Garden of Reflection at the National Vietnam Veterans Museum on Phillip Island. This is part of our Associations ongoing commemorative program to remember our fallen. The plaque is based on the one we dedicated in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial in 2005. On Anzac Day, I will march with our 5 RAR contingent in Melbourne.



OC Bravo Coy, MAJ Ryan Bernsmann, details the incident that occurred on 21 February, 1967, to the members of the Battalion.

You will see on Page 15 messages about receiving electronic copies of Tiger Tales. This will save a huge amount in postal costs. If you do wish to receive Tiger Tales by



Chaplain Troy Urlichs conducting the ceremony at the Battalion Parade with RSM Ransome to his right.

email would you please advise our hard working editor and membership officer, Gary Townsend, by email as this will confirm your address with him. I also encourage those who have not yet paid their tri-annual membership dues to do so as soon as possible and save our state representatives the time consuming job of following up.

I have had questions from a few members about making a bequest or donation to the 5 RAR Association. This generosity is very much welcomed. One member recently provided a sizeable donation with his membership renewal, part of which was donated to the new 5 RAR Museum in Darwin to assist with its upkeep and maintenance. The Association has established a separate section within its accounts to ensure that such generosity is used only for specific purposes and is in accordance with the guidance of the donor. If you wish to do this, it can be arranged through me or through our Secretary and Treasurer.

Finally, I am honoured to be appointed as a Life Member of our Association (Page 6). No one likes being ambushed but I now know that Vice-President Ron Boxall and a few other committee members were surreptitiously conniving behind my back. I would have preferred that if I was to be appointed as a Life Member, that it would occur when I step down as your President in the near future. However now it is done, I am proud to accept this honour and I sincerely thank my fellow Association members. I shall wear the badge with tiger pride.

On Anzac Day, I ask you all to remember our colleagues who have fallen in war and those from our ranks who have subsequently passed on.

Roger Wainwright



*Tiger Tales is printed and distributed, for 5 RAR Association, by The Pack Factory, 169A Penshurst St, BEVERLEY HILLS, NSW, 2209. Graeme Tooth, the principal of The Pack Factory, is a veteran of 5 RAR's 1969-70 tour of South Vietnam.*

## LTCOL PAUL SHIELDS, MBE - CO 5 RAR

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The Tiger Battalion has hit the ground running in 2017. After a well-deserved break over the holiday period, the Battalion returned to work in early January. Delta Coy who had remained in Darwin on call as the Ready Combat Team over the stand down period conducted a handover with Bravo Coy before departing on leave.

February saw the Battalion conduct Exercise Ready Tiger which consisted of a suite of courses to ensure those members who had posted in over Christmas were fully compliant with our Ready Battlegroup requirements. In a two-week period, the Battalion conducted Helicopter Underwater Escape Training, Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Defence training, Public Population Control and First Aid courses. Exercise READY TIGER resulted in many individual qualifications being handed out.

Support Coy continues to grow for the future, currently Mortars, Direct Fire Support Weapons Platoon, Reconnaissance, Assault Pioneers and Signals Platoons are all running their basic courses as part of the first courses camp scheduled for this year. The Battalion has been lucky enough to share the load on some of these courses with our sister battalion 7 RAR. This has seen Mortars and Direct Fire Support Weapons Platoon deploy to Culnana to conduct their field training and live-fire components.

The Battalion took time to pause in February to reflect and remember the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of two significant Vietnam operations, Operation Beaumaris and Operation Renmark, both operations resulted in significant casualties for the Battalion. The Battalion will always remember the sacrifices made by its members both past and present.



CO 5 RAR - LTCOL Paul Shields MBE

As I write this the Battalion is about to head out the door to Townsville to participate in EX POLYGON. This exercise will see the Ready Combat Team and Battalion HQ deploy forward to Townsville from Darwin via RAAF KC30 to secure the air point of entry for follow on forces including 1 RAR and elements of the Amphibious Ready Element (2 RAR). This exercise will be a great opportunity for some of the junior commanders of the Battalion to really cut their teeth and gain some valuable experience, whilst demonstrating the Battalions capabilities to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade.

Charlie Coy continue to provide excellent support to Task Group Taji 4 in Iraq. Their role providing training advisors and Force Protection Elements has

been vital in supporting the Iraqi Security Forces in their battle against Daesh.

Army Headquarters is currently looking closely at the future structure of Army, and the Tiger Battalion is on the front foot in adaptation and modernisation. The Battalion will change from a Standard (Light) Infantry Battalion and motorise with integral Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicles (PMVs) as well as the new Land 121 Protected Logistics vehicles over the next 18 months. Bravo Coy will lead the charge, they have already receipted a Company's lift worth of Bushmaster and qualified their soldiers to operate the vehicles. The remainder of the Battalion will continue to develop and integrate the vehicles and capabilities with the plan to be fully motorised in late 2018.

As always, the Tiger Battalion continues to work hard, innovate and lead the way for the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade.

LTCOL Paul Shields, MBE  
Commanding Officer 5 RAR

## 2/5<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY BATTALION

The 2/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion was an infantry battalion of the Australian Army that served during World War II. It was raised at Puckapunyal, Victoria on 18 October 1939 as part of the Second Australian Imperial Force, attached to the 17<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 6<sup>th</sup> Division. The 2/5<sup>th</sup> were one of only two Australian infantry battalions to fight against all of the major Axis powers during the war, seeing action against the Germans and Italians in Egypt, Libya and Greece and the Vichy French in Syria before returning to Australia in 1942 to fight the Japanese. The battalion took part in two campaigns in New Guinea, firstly in 1942–43 and then again in 1944–45 when they took part in the Aitape–Wewak campaign.

Following the end of the war the battalion embarked to return to Australia on 1 December 1945 and disbanded at Puckapunyal in early February 1946. Today its battle honours are maintained by the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Victoria Regiment.



Beit Jirja, Palestine. July 1941. A 2/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Bren Gun Carrier goes into action. Note the Bren Gun protruding from the aperture at right and the Boys Anti-Tank Rifle above the crew's heads.

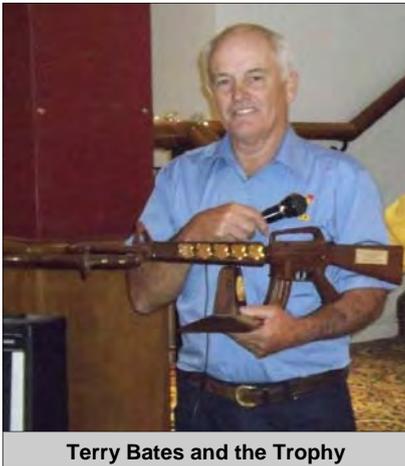


## WA



Our Christmas event was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> December at 43 Below Bar. After a slow start to bookings and sickness from various ailments we had 68 members and partners attending. One of our longest members Ken Benson could not attend as he had just got of hospital and Paddy Meckenstock was not feeling the best. It was a good attendance by our members and great to see Bob Armitage looking so well. We also had two of our widow's attend Wendy Godfrey and Sylvia Meredith.

Once again the gifts were tremendous. Special thanks to Audrey Briggs whose baskets of goodies were delicious and also to Terry Bates who donated the sales of 2 of his cattle. John McCulloch and Peter Guyatt and all the other members who so generously donated gifts, many thanks to you all.



Terry Bates and the Trophy

Our late member Ron Nichols had purchased a model M16 Rifle on a stand before he had passed away. He donated it back to the Association. Peter Tuck came up with ideas that we have a Perpetual Trophy named after Ron, to be presented annually to a WA Member who gives outstanding service to the Association. Ron Nichols widow was going to present it to this year's winner, but she had a fall and the night before the luncheon and broke her ankle, so could not attend. Peter Tuck presented it Terry Bates who is a very worthy winner this year.

As always the staff at 43 Below Bar was superb in the lunch that they served, and thanks to all the staff for helping to make it such a great day.

Again I wish to thank all our members and partners for attending and being so generous in giving so many presents.

Members and partners, totalling 40 altogether celebrated the 52<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Australian Regiment. Due to illness many of our members were absent.

We had a great lunch which was finger food, made up of platters of fish and chips, pizza's, sausage rolls, quiche, prawn bags, spring rolls and party pies. Again, many thanks to our hosts Sandra and Steve Gastev who served the lunch and provided free port for our toasts.

Good to see Bob Armitage back in action along with Ken Benson and Paddy Meckenstock. Bob and Paddy were disputing whose shout it was. Once again the noise was extremely loud, and not made any easier by the number

## AROUND THE STATES

### WA - Cont.



who forgot their hearing aids.

Steve, the manager of 43 Below bar said he loves having us there as the laughter and friendliness is great to hear and that there is never any trouble by our members.

We had a visitor Glen Smith, Pioneer platoon 1st Tour Vietnam who was over from NSW. He caught up with Doc Halliday who he served with and was welcomed by all.

Our get together, after the ANZAC Day march, will be at 43 Below Bar and Grill. You will only gain admittance with the tickets issued by the WA Branch. This is because of the RSL being closed for renovations and Licensing Branch regulations.

Alan McNulty



Bob Armitage cuts the cake with Doc Halliday and Peter Tuck watching on.

## ACT



The ACT branch held its Christmas Lunch at the Ainslie Football Club on the Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> December. We had a good roll up with 17 attending. It was great to catch up with everyone especially Bluey and Gladys Pearce, who have just recently moved to Yass.



Bev O'Mara and Colin Khan.

The ANZAC Day Dawn Service will be held at the War Memorial at 0530 hours.

The National Ceremony and March form up will be on ANZAC Parade behind the RAR Banner, with the march commencing at 10:30 hours.

Bernie Pye

## AROUND THE STATES - Cont.



### TAS

The Tasmanian branch of the Association held its first get-together for many years on Wednesday March 1<sup>st</sup> to celebrate the Battalion's Birthday, and to donate the books of 5 RAR's both tours to the Vietnam Veterans' Bush Retreat in the Central Highlands.

Eight former Tigers, three wives and one ring-in (ex 4 RAR) fronted for the activity. Just as importantly 17 old Tigers sent their apologies (in most instances due to ill-health).

The names of the fallen were read by - Colin Illman, the First Tour KIA's and Bruce Heron, the Second Tour KIA's - followed by the Last Post, and a wreath was laid.

The photo below shows the Presentation of the tour books and Honour Roll - Back l-r: Irvine Brooks; Bruce Heron; Phillip McCarthy and Terry Tueno. Front l-r: David Brooks; Malcolm Cash (Chairman of the Bush Retreat Committee - ex 4 RAR); Kevin Mulligan and Colin Illman. Absent: Rick Bott (not photogenic!!)



All attending felt that it was a great day and voted to have a function on the Battalion's Birthday every year.

If any ex-Tigers in Tassie haven't received emails or contact from me, could you please contact me on one of the following; E: [kmccoy5rar@gmail.com](mailto:kmccoy5rar@gmail.com) T; 03 6427 8257 or M: 0417 373 024.

Kevin Mulligan



### VIC

Friday, 24 February 2017, saw a dozen or so Tigers from the Vietnam first tour gathered at the Altona Cemetery graveside of LT Jack Carruthers to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his death. Many of us who were there in February 1967 can never forget that it was a terrible chapter in our Unit's history.

On the morning of Monday, 14 February, we had the Charlie Company OC and 2IC, as well as the attached Kiwi FO, all killed by a booby-trap as we were all doing a Cordon-and-search of An Nhut village *Operation Beaumaris*.

A week later, on the afternoon of 21 February, whilst



### VIC - Cont.

Bravo Company were patrolling along the base of the Long Hai Mountains in APCs, the lead track struck an improvised anti-tank mine immediately killing both of the crew and three other soldiers riding in/on the vehicle. As Bruce McQualter, Jack Carruthers, the medic and several soldiers hurried forward to help, an M-16 Jumping-jack mine was triggered killing two more soldiers and wounding a further 19 – including mortally wounding the OC and Jack Carruthers, who died 13 days and three days later, respectively. The roll call of those killed, or died of wounds sustained during those eight days were:

#### KIA 14 February 1967

- MAJ Don Bourne
- CAPT Bob Milligan
- CAPT Peter Williams (RNZ Artillery)

#### KIA 21 February 1967 or DOW

- LCPL Kevin Mitchinson (3 Cav Regt)
- TPR Robert Wilsen (3 Cav Regt)
- LCPL George Green
- PTE Don Clark (NS)
- PTE Mick Poole (Stretcher bearer)
- PTE Richard Sandow
- PTE James Webster (NS)
- LT Jack Carruthers (DOW 24 February)
- MAJ Bruce McQualter (DOW 5 March)

Whilst the ceremony was ostensibly for Jack Carruthers (the only one buried in Melbourne) it was also to mark the deaths of the other eleven fine gentlemen as well. Many thanks to all those who paid their respects by attending, especially John Lea-Smith for organising the event and Norm Harris (ex-stretcher bearer) who played the Last Post and Reveille as part of the ceremony.

A reminder to all Tigers (past and present) that on the day before the Anzac Day March the 5 RAR Association will be dedicating a plaque in the grounds of the National Vietnam Veteran's Museum on Phillip Island to commemorate the 50 soldiers who sacrificed their lives whilst serving in South Vietnam; 25 on the first tour, and 25 on the second tour. There will be ample time to view this very impressive museum.

We will be running a coach from Melbourne Arts Centre, to Phillip Island and return. Meeting time is 09:30 for a prompt 10:00 departure. There are still some seats left but bookings are essential. Members, friends and family are welcome to travel on the bus or make their own way there and back. **DRESS:** As a mark of respect, those officiating in the short ceremony will wear jacket, tie and medals. Other members may dress similarly but minimum standard is very smart casual.

If you will be attending please notify me of names and numbers for catering purposes, and similarly if you want a seat on the coach. In either case there will be a nominal cost. See you's there!

Doug Bishop

0437 653 577 [doug.bishop@internode.on.net](mailto:doug.bishop@internode.on.net)



## NEW LIFE MEMBER - Cont.

## AROUND THE STATES - Cont.

### NSW



We have had a quiet time since the last Tiger Tales, a poor showing at gatherings, in particular the Association AGM and Xmas drinks. (Apologies to those who do not live around Sydney) What do we need to do to increase the numbers, let me know please?

The birthday drinks on the 1 March saw 11 turn up and a good time was had by all. Those who attended where Zeke Mundine, Geoff Davis, Dennis Morgan, Bob Tre- near, Ken Cavanagh, David Riik, Blue Schafer, Bugs Moran, Barney Ruttle and Dave Willis 7 RAR

The next function this year is Anzac Day. The after march get together, is at the usual venue The Crown Hotel Eliza- beth St, directly down from where we finish the march

There is no change to our form up position in Bligh St be- tween 0930 and 1045 hrs Look for our banner. The route is also same as last year. When we do the eyes left in Elizabeth St please remove your hats

Barney Ruttle



The NSW members Christmas gathering.

## NEW LIFE MEMBER

At the 5 RAR Association's Annual General Meeting held in December, our President, Roger Wainwright was awarded a Life Membership of the Association. Roger became the 7<sup>th</sup> Life Member to be appointed since the introduction of this category.

The Citation and Life Member Badge were presented by the Vice-President, Ron Boxall, some excerpts from the citation are shown below.

*"Roger Wainwright was born on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1944 in Alex- andria, Egypt. He was educated in Adelaide and entered The Royal Military College, Duntroon in January 1962. Graduating in December 1965, he took up his first ap- pointment early the following year as Commander of 8 Platoon, Charlie Company, 5RAR. He held this appoint- ment throughout the Battalion's first tour of operational service in South Vietnam. He also served in 1RAR, 7RAR and 5/7RAR during a thirty-five year Army career of wide*

*ranging appointments covering disparate fields of military endeavour where his many talents were apparent.*

*Following a period as a Committee Member, in March 2005 he succeeded to the office of President of the 5RAR Association, a position he has held continuously for al- most twelve years. During this time it has developed a large, stable membership and it enjoys an enviable finan- cial position.*



Ron Boxall presents the Life Member Citation and lapel badge to Roger Wainwright.

*During his Presidency he also served as an inaugural Director of the Royal Australian Regiment Corporation and this involved him in various forums hosted by the De- partment of Veterans' Affairs to explore emerging issues in the field of support for veterans. Also, his prominence in the RAR's ex-service community naturally led to his involvement in national committees tasked with planning commemorative ceremonies to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversa- ries of the Battles of Long Tan and Binh Ba. He has also provided assistance to the Australian War Memorial in identifying and cataloguing film and video acquisitions."*

*"His many accomplishments as President during his long term of office have been achieved through innate leader- ship and unflagging willingness to give of his time to at- tend to the Association's affairs. Colonel Wainwright plays his role with aplomb, earning the respect of all and ready acceptance of his flair for being the centre around which the many Association matters and issues continually flow. His easy manner, coordinating skills and collegial ap- proach provide a trusted and reliable sounding board for the widely-scattered, talented and selfless team of office bearers and functional managers which he heads."*

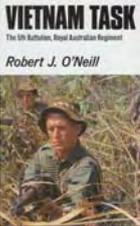
*Under his stewardship the Association has prospered. It has truly realised its raison d'etre as an agency which preserves and promotes the enigmatic essence of 5 RAR pride. For both former and serving members of the Battal- ion, this is a sense of belonging to something which be- comes an inherent part of themselves. Nothing else could better qualify him for Life Membership of the Association."*

This Life Membership is a very well deserved award and, on behalf of the Association members, I extend to Roger congratulations and thanks for all of the time and effort he has contributed to the Association.

# 5 RAR ASSOCIATION MEMORABILIA



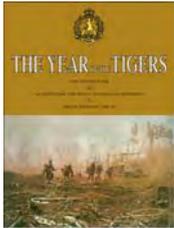
## VIETNAM TASK



A detailed account of the Fifth Battalion's first tour of duty in Vietnam. Robert O'Neill was with the battalion as the battalion's intelligence officer and kept meticulous notes on operations conducted by the battalion.

**\$30.00**

## THE YEAR OF THE TIGERS



The 5 RAR year-book of the Battalion's second tour in the Republic of South Vietnam. It is a tribute to the 2<sup>nd</sup> tour members of the Battalion who, for one year, gave of their best. This is the third and latest edition.

**\$65.00**

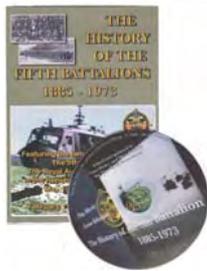
## 5 RAR HONOUR ROLL



Plaque inscribed with the names of our members killed in action or died of wounds during the Vietnam War. 305 x 290 mm.

**\$35.00**

## HISTORY OF THE 5th BATTALIONS



This 70 minute video commences with a short history of the Fifth Battalions' in Australia commencing 1885 until the raising of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment in March 1965.

This video gives good general coverage of both tours of the Battalion in South Vietnam.

**\$30.00**

## 5 RAR PLAQUE



This plaque comes with blank Name Plate. 205 x 255 mm.

**\$50.00**

The items shown on this page comprise the current 5 RAR Association Memorabilia range available for members to purchase by using the Order Form on the back page.

The Committee is continually investigating the possibility of producing new products to add to this range. As new items become available, the Order Form will be up-dated, the new items announced and depicted in the next issue of Tiger Tales to be printed.



## 5 RAR CAP

Black and Gold cap with the Association logo on the front. Just the thing for the bald spot.

**\$20.00**



## 5 RAR TIE

A fine quality tie for all occasions.

**\$30.00**



## LAPEL BADGE

A quality lapel pin for the astute 5 RAR Veteran. 20 x 13 mm.

**\$6.00**



## 5 RAR TAC PLATES

They fit at each end of your number plate. 130 x 130 mm.



**\$20.00**

## CAR STICKERS



### TIGER HEAD ROUND - T5-90ASSNRND

90 mm Diameter

**\$5.00**



### TIGER HEAD C/PATCH - T5-1075GRGO

100 X 75 mm

**\$5.00**



### ICB/SVN RIBBONS - 5R-1875ICBRBN

180 X 75 mm

**\$5.00**



### TIGER HEAD SVN - T5-1014SVNRND

100 X 75 mm

**\$3.00**



*Tiger Tales is printed and distributed, for 5 RAR Association, by The Pack Factory, 169A Penshurst St, BEVERLEY HILLS, NSW, 2209. Graeme Tooth, the principal of The Pack Factory, is a veteran of 5 RAR's 1969-70 tour of South Vietnam.*



## BATTALION REPORTS

### WO1 SEAN RANSOME – RSM 5 RAR



Warrant Officer Class One Ransome enlisted into the Australian Army on 7 March 1990 and was allocated the Royal Australian Infantry Corps. On completion of his initial employment training, Warrant Officer Ransome was posted to the 6th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. In 1994, he was promoted to Lance Cor-

poral.

In 1996 Warrant Officer Ransome was promoted to Corporal and posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. In 1999 Warrant Officer Ransome deployed with the Battalion to East Timor as a Rifle Company Section Commander

In 2000, Warrant Officer Ransome was posted to the Army Recruit Training Centre, as a recruit Instructor. Becoming a hard working self-motivated instructor, in October 2001 Warrant Officer Ransome was posted back the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment and he re-deployed to East Timor as a Rifle Company Section Commander. Warrant Officer Ransome was promoted to Sergeant in August 2002. In 2003 Warrant Officer Ransome re-raised Direct Fire Support Weapons Platoon, which was dual-rolled as the Battalion Pipes and Drums, giving him the position of the Battalion Drum Sergeant Major, in this role he had the privilege to lead the Battalion at the 50th Anniversary for the Battle of the Hook.

In 2005, Warrant Officer Ransome was posted to Land Warfare Centre North Queensland as an instructor on the Subject One for Corporal Course. While posted there Warrant Officer Ransome was instrumental in reconstructing the Subject One Operations package, he completed promotion courses for Warrant Officer and was subsequently promoted to Warrant Officer Class Two in January 2007, where he was posted as a Training Warrant Officer of Bravo Company 1/19<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal New South Wales Regiment.

In October 2010, Warrant Officer Ransome was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment; Warrant Officer Ransome served as the Battalion Operations Warrant Officer and as the Company Sergeant Major of Bravo Company. During this time, Warrant Officer Ransome deployed on Operation SLIPPER as the Team Sergeant Major for Team 2 Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team Charlie. In January 2013, Warrant Officer Ransome was posted to CTC as the Wing Sergeant Major of the Jungle Training Wing Tully.

In January 2014 Warrant Officer Ransome was appointed as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the 12<sup>th</sup>/40<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Tasmania Regiment. During this time Warrant Officer deployed on OP ASLAN South Sudan as the first Regimental Sergeant Major for the Australian Contingent. In January 2017 Warrant Officer was posted to his

current position and the Regimental Sergeant Major of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, fulfilling a life time goal.

Warrant Officer Ransome's awards include: the Australian Active Service Medal (East Timor and ICAT clasps), the INTERFET Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and the Defence Long Service Medal with 2nd clasp, Australian Defence Medal, the United Nations Medal East Timor, the NATO Medal, the United Nations Medal, South Sudan, and Australian Service Medal.

Warrant Officer Ransome is married to Judy and has two children, Maddison 22 and Caleb 20. His interests include rugby league, camping, fishing and spending time with his family.

## CHARLIE COMPANY

Towards the end of 2016 Charlie Company saw their tempo increase, in preparation for their deployment to Iraq as part of Task Group Taji – IV. Members from Charlie Company assisted 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regiment in the conduct of mission rehearsal activities and provided vital capability running live fire qualification ranges. Soldiers and officers alike were keen to enhance their medical and cultural skills through well constructed scenarios. At the completion of this training the Task Group mobilised for a farewell parade. Whilst our New Zealand counterparts used their protected identity status to dodge the formalities, the Australian men and women of the Task Group stood proud in front of hundreds of family and friends in attendance.

Once Charlie Company had arrived and bedded down in Taji Military Complex (TMC) they were deconstructed into a non-conventional structure. The Company, Platoon Headquarters and the two Manoeuvre Support Sections remained under the T30 callsign; the remainder of the sections were spread throughout the Task Group. They were employed in multiple roles from Quick Reaction Force (QRF) to training teams' Force Protection. In addition to providing an Infantry-centric capability, all members of Charlie Company were employed to fill vital roles within the administration and quartermaster chains.

Within a week, the Task Group settled into a productive battle rhythm and saw training audience numbers decrease over the usual Christmas stand-down period. As it turned out, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) like issuing public holidays as much as the Northern Territory Government and were more than happy to take some well-earned end-of-year leave.



For the vast majority of the Company and wider Task Group, it was their first Christmas whilst deployed. Everyone was pleased to see that Santa

## BATTALION REPORTS - Cont.

### CHARLIE COMPANY - Cont.



had dropped by and were treated to an audience with the 'fat man' himself (and his Elf assistant) during the Kris Kringle. A generous Christmas lunch with a large spread of traditional dishes was supplied in the TMC Dining Facility (DFAC) which exceeded all expectations. Post lunch the entire Task Group, including the UK trainers joined for 'friendly' games of cricket, soccer, volleyball and dodge ball. Overall, the day was a good opportunity for all members to get together in an informal setting and celebrate as a team.



Training audience numbers sharply increased shortly after the New Year. The Task Group received over 1900 new policemen and the Training Companies were responsible for training a large number of new recruits. The trainers experienced the complexities of teaching policemen of all ages and abilities. Diggers within force protection enjoyed observing the training audience interact with their peers between lessons. Overall the locals are a jovial bunch who enjoy a sense of humour. For the most part, the training audience was willing to learn about life-saving techniques and vital tactical rehearsals.

As opportunities arose, Charlie Company soldiers provided force protection to trainers on Mobile Training Teams (MTT). MTTs were established to seek out training audiences that may not be able to travel to TMC for training. To date, two locations have been used; one in western Iraq and one further north of TMC. The soldiers thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Not only did they get a change of scenery from the ever present blandness of 'T' walls, they enjoyed the opportunity to operate as an autonomous section and the freedoms that provided. The Iraqi soldiers in these areas were also more experienced, having fought in Ramadi, Fallujah, Mosul or a combination of all three. A highlight of these days was interaction with the training audience during morning PT. This was a distinct change from TMC life as the ISF's morning PT sometimes consists of a light walk around the camp and a stretch session.

Day to day life within TMC is certainly more pleasant than initially imagined. When not on a direct training task, members have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities to help pass the time. Plenty of the soldiers

enjoy swinging off a bit of tin in one of the two well equipped gyms. Immediately after this they can be observed attempting their best 'Top Gun' pose down at the beach volley area. There is also an opportunity to grab a brew at a US owned coffee shop nearby. Friday mornings provide the opportunity for members to conduct some personal administration and attempt a bit of a late start. As a result, Thursday nights are generally more sociable and trainers and team leaders head to the 'boardwalk' for a Shisha and a couple of deceptively named 'near beers', which neither taste nor look like the delicious malt beverage. In addition to the Christmas sports day the Task Group has also hosted multiple social events like the Australia Day Carnival, which involved novelty sports orientated activities in a relaxed camp fire atmosphere. These social activities provide a good means to interact with members from other nations in the coalition and break up the routine of training and force protection.

As well as training ISF members, it is crucial for everyone to maintain their own skill set. Whilst the training areas within TMC may seem 'ghetto' by Australian standards, they provide excellent urban training facilities and good opportunities to conduct live-fire scenarios. Abandoned buildings within the compound make realistic structures for the conduct of urban clearances which is especially relevant training for ISF members as they train in preparation for their battles further north in Mosul. Once ISF training has concluded, trainers and force protection often take the opportunity to use the builds to hone their own skills. Coupled with this, everyone has enjoyed learning about and firing foreign weapons, from AK 47s to Iranian made .50 cal sniper rifles.



Overall all, members of Charlie Company are honoured by the opportunity to represent the Battalion on operations. Members of all ranks are gaining great experience on a wide range of subjects which they can use in their future in the Battalion or on promotional courses. The Task Group is rounding the halfway mark of the deployment and looks forward to the second half of the operation.

CAPT Yikang Feng  
2IC C Coy



## BATTALION REPORTS - Cont.

### DELTA COMPANY - Cont.

In a satisfying end to 2016, D Company was awarded the champion company for the second year in a row. The Company maintained this momentum through the end of the year and into 2017, forming the nucleus of the Ready Combat Team and remaining in Darwin for the Christmas and New Year period. Following the handover with B Company following their return from leave, D Company took some well earned leave.



CPL James Stone leads a class of Clontarf kids through their paces during a training day.

There was no time to rest on return to the Battalion as the tempo was rapidly increasing with the vast majority of D Company soldiers on Support Company courses on their first day back from leave. This, combined with numerous other Battalion tasks, saw D Company conducting varied and interesting tasks at the start of the year. This has included supporting equipment modernisation trials, support at public events and running training for organisations to enhance the Tiger Battalion's exposure in the Darwin community.

D Company has been heavily involved with engagement with the Clontarf Academy, an organisation aimed at improving the education and career prospects of young indigenous men, in the first months of the year. This has seen the Company conduct leadership activities with the Clontarf Academy. This culminated with the facilitation of a two day leadership activity for a group of young men on Robertson Barracks. In the time between this article being written and going to print D Company will have been involved in the planning and execution of a similar activity with a group of indigenous football stars who are on the cusp of selection for professional team membership.

Despite the frantic pace of the Company, we have paused to remember those who went before us. On 9



PTE Corey Lyons from D Company leads Defence Work Experience participants through a team building activity.

March 2017 the Company conducted a service to remember 2LT Walker, SGT Smith and CPL Gilbert who were killed during OP QUINTUS THRUST in South Vietnam in 1969, amongst other key commemorative activities relating to the 50 year anniversary of the first tour of Vietnam.

The rest of the year will remain busy but rewarding with a number of key international engagements activities expected in both Australia and abroad. This will see soldiers from the Tiger Battalion working alongside our coalition partners from Indonesia, Japan and the United States of America.

MAJ Jamie Smith  
OC Delta Coy

### SUPPORT COMPANY

Support Company was quick to start in 2017. Immediately following the standard induction period soldiers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers alike all took part in various courses including Population Protection Control, Helicopter Under Water Escape training, Chemical, Nuclear, Biological and Radiation Defence and vehicle suites of courses. These qualifications further built the foundation skills held within the Ready Battlegroup and Support Company.

Following a brief respite with some in barracks training the specialist platoons of the Company commenced their basic courses in order to develop the Tiger Battalion's soldiers. All courses commenced in Darwin before Mortars and Direct Fire Support Weapons (DFSW) deployed to RAAF Edinburgh followed by Cultana. Reconnaissance and Assault Pioneer basic courses continued in Darwin concurrent to the Specialist Combat Communications Course. Of note, the Reconnaissance course is looking forward to their visit from Mick Von Berg, MC, OAM towards the end of course, and Headquarters are preparing for a "quiet" dinner like the last. Mortars and DFSW courses alternatively have had visits from the Brigade Commander and Regimental Sergeant Major who thoroughly enjoyed the physical training line drills conducted in Robertson Barracks and the DFSW live fire components in Cultana. This training has also been thoroughly enjoyed by the soldiers and there is still much to learn.

Whilst I am writing this there is two weeks left before the Tiger Battalion's courses camp is completed for 2017. It is at this time that Mortars and DFSW will farewell their new friends from 7 RAR and return to Robertson Barracks. The highest performers will have the privilege of being selected for service in their respective specialist platoons. This will set the foundation to support the Tiger Battalion's objectives in EX Tiger's Run, Southern Jackaroo and Talisman Sabre later in the year.

With thorough planning and preparation Support Company will cement its status as the senior company delivering timely, accurate and effective capabilities to the Tiger Battalion... before backing up to win Blood Week.

CAPT Alan Bretherton  
2IC SPT Coy

## LOGISTICS COMPANY



The CSS CONOPS (Combat Service Support Concept of Operations). Centralised logistics. Though they may seem like simple phrases, these concepts have shaped Logistic Company's life for the past three months. The reduction in manning has caused us to rally together to ensure the new logistics plan for Army survived first contact in the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion. The centralised logistics implemented in the new concept of operations, requires work to be forecasted earlier and with high periods of demand supported from second and third line logistics elements in Darwin. No new process goes without hiccup, however SGT Mitch Sisley has aided this transition through the formation of the new Log Coy Ops Cell.

The Coy has welcomed its new command team this year with Officer Commanding, MAJ Matt Barnes taking the



Log Coy conducting PES (Physical Employment Standard Assessment) training.

helm, Quarter Master CAPT Timothy Prier and Technical Support Platoon Commander, LT William Lavery marching in. Also joining us from across the country in senior positions are our new Artificer Sergeant Major for the workshops WO2 Matthew Owen and Technical Quarter Master Sergeant WO2 Colin Stott in the Main Q-Store. This high turn over of command and technical positions has brought fresh legs to the Company and has prepared us to finish out the Readiness cycle in good stead.

The first quarter of production saw Technical Support Platoon go through the forming and storming phases quickly to meet the requirements of Ready Battle Group (RBG) readiness with EX Ready Tiger. Notably this involved qualifying members on Army First Aid and the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) training with 1 Combat Engineers Regiment (CER). Having now reached normality with the new structure and implementation of the Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (EME) operations cell, the Platoon has worked effectively on several big projects including the digitisation of the Protected Mobility Vehicle (PMV) fleet and modifications to the Battalion's G-Wagons. With hard work comes opportunities to relax and a highlight for many in the Platoon was the function held at Howard Springs, offering personnel and partners a chance to meet each other and create important support networks. While the tempo shows no sign of slowing down, the Technical Support Platoon will be proud, tough, and professional when faced with the oncoming challenges of 2017.

Likewise, this year has already seen a great deal of changes in the Q Platoon with three new Sergeants marching in. SGT Max Power as the Governance SNCO and SGT Boulton and SGT Cooling as new Company Quarter Master roles; all ready to make the Tiger Battalion their home. Up a gear and away at speed, the Q Store had barely completed their inductions, before they were strapped upside down in a simulation helicopter and dumped in a pool, all in the name of Helicopter Underwater Escape Training. As well as preparing the Platoon for potential deployment, Q Platoon have been busy dealing with the routine of providing 1<sup>st</sup> line support and general governance to the Tiger Battalion. Of particular note has been the work of Transport Section in qualifying members of the Battalion and Brigade on various driver codes in preparation for the rollout of our new vehicles with the Land 121 project.

The Coy has seen a number of members deploy in 2017, with CPL Puru, PTE Hough and PTE Thompson deploying on FSC 6 to AMAB and PTE Green serving in Malaysia with RCB 117.

Arte Et Marte

CAPT Duncan Robson  
2IC Log Coy

## BRIEFING BY 'THE BOSS'

At the end of each operation, after allowing the troops time to clean up and have a meal, the CO, LTCOL Colin Khan would gather the battalion on the helicopter pad, 'Tiger Five', and tell the story of the whole operation.

The soldiers were usually fed up with having been out in the bush for weeks on end and would grumble at the thought of future operations. Mostly they were unaware, however, of the big picture and of what their mates in other companies had been doing. 'Genghis' (dubbed by his soldiers), would remove his slouch hat, hang it over the revolver on his hip, and proceed to pass on this information to them, including the exploits of individual soldiers.

He was always such an inspirational speaker that, by the time he had finished his pep talk, the diggers were sufficiently enthused to saddle up again.





# TRAGEDY AT AN NHUT

**A concealed mine delivered a painful blow to C Company in Vietnam. By Elizabeth Stewart**



WO2 Norm Goldspink (R) directs those carrying the wounded from the mine blast to the dust-off helicopter. LT Roger Wainwright can be seen talking to the helicopter pilot. AWM COL/67/0148/VN

About 9 am on 14 February 1967 a group of Australian soldiers was gathered near the southern end of the small South Vietnamese village of An Nhut. They were making last-minute arrangements for the day's activities. The men were from C Company, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (5 RAR).



**MAJ Donald Bourne**

Among the group were three men from the company headquarters. Major Don Bourne had just taken over command of C Company and was on his first operation with the battalion. He was a graduate of the first class of the Officer Cadet School (OCS), Portsea, who had served in both Malaya and Korea before being sent to Vietnam. It was his 35<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Captain Robert Milligan was 30 years old and also a graduate of OCS. He had been dux of his year, and won the Governor General's Medal. He was second in command of C Company and had two weeks of his 12-month tour to serve. He was engaged and planned to marry on his return home.



**CAPT Robert Milligan**

Captain Peter Williams was a 28-year-old New Zealand officer, serving with 161 Field Battery, RNZA. He too attended OCS, graduating with Robert Milligan's class in 1961. He was a last-minute replacement for C Company's forward observer, who was incapacitated owing to injury. Williams volunteered to take part in the operation and, like Milligan, had only a short time left to serve in Vietnam.



**CAPT Peter Williams**

Just after completing the orders group, a large blast shattered the morning calm. As they dispersed, a member of the group had triggered a well-concealed mine. The effects were devastating: Major Bourne, Captain Milligan

and Captain Williams were killed outright; five other men were wounded. An urgent call was made for a medical officer and "dustoff" helicopter, which arrived soon after to carry the dead and injured to hospital. The devastation caused by such a sudden and severe explosion came as a great blow to C Company, and to the battalion. 5 RAR was taking part in Operation Beaumaris, a cordon-and-search of An Nhut, which was a village of nearly 1,000 residents about six kilometres southeast of the Australian Task Force base at Nui Dat. The operation involved throwing an early morning cordon of troops around the village, then moving the inhabitants into a confined space while the village was searched, and enemy suspects rounded up for interrogation.

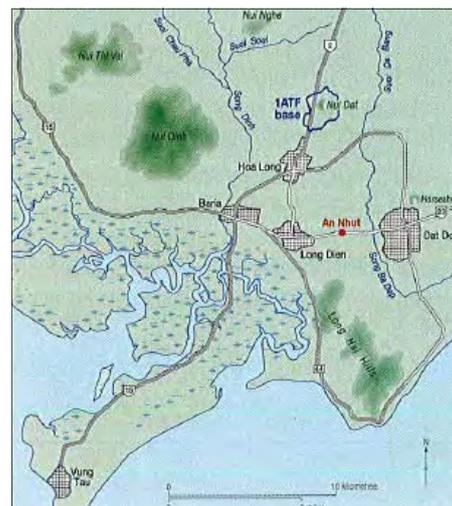
The practice of cordon-and-search had been particularly successful for the battalion, which considered it to be the most effective way of "removing the enemy's claws" from the local population. Cordon-and-search operations thus far had yielded the greatest numbers of enemy in the shortest amount of time, usually with minimal Australian casualties. A search of An Nhut was considered important because although the majority of the residents supported the South Vietnamese government, Australian intelligence had discovered that several men from the village were members of a local guerrilla unit. Other village members were known to be part of the locally-recruited Viet Cong battalion, D445.

Late on the afternoon of 13 February troops from 5 RAR began to move into position. The village was easy to isolate as it stood in a sea of rice paddies, and after a few hours sleep the soldiers were easily able to put the cordon in place. This was done by about 4 am, in order to prevent Viet Cong suspects escaping from the village.

One problem company commanders were aware of was the danger of mines previously laid around the perimeter of the village by South Vietnamese forces. The location of these mines was not recorded and the safety of troops could only be guaranteed by staying outside the minefield's perimeter fence until the area had been checked with mine detectors.

There was some reassurance from the American adviser located at the district headquarters which controlled An Nhut. He had told battalion intelligence officer Captain Robert O'Neill that the mines had been taken out during the previous wet season. Nevertheless, caution was still applied as the cordon spread out.

By 9.15, when the blast occurred, the search of An Nhut was underway. C Company had reached their cordon position and a



## TRAGEDY AT AN NHUT - Cont.

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Major Bourne can be seen rubbing the back of his neck ,whilst Captain Milligan rests a leg on the barbed wire and Captain Williams stands between them. Brian Budden is at left in brown jacket and John Bilston is bottom right; Bruce Schmidtchen is sitting left of the picket and Bill Czekai (now Crystal) is kneeling behind the picket .

quick search of the area revealed no hidden mines or booby traps. Remnants of the old village perimeter fence remained and it was around this feature that the group of soldiers were standing for their final briefing. After the blast, it was assumed by those nearby that the device triggered had been located at the base of one of the fence pickets. The device itself was blown to pieces and never properly identified.

Although distracted by the blast, the men of 5 RAR continued with the operation. Most of the population were questioned and as a result, six Viet Cong cadre members were captured, and 14 Viet Cong suspects and five Viet Cong sympathisers were detained for questioning. At a personal level, the accident left its mark. C Company member Lieutenant Roger Wainwright remembers that in order not to allow the men to dwell on the event they were sent out almost immediately on another operation to the north of Nui Dat. Another soldier, Second Lieutenant David Harris, had known Don Bourne well when they worked together at task force headquarters. He kept a detailed diary of his Vietnam tour and his entry for 14 February reads: "Operation Beaumaris is over and at last we are back - Poor Don Bourne, Bob Milligan and Peter Williams were killed by a mine. I just sat down and cried my bloody eyes out. Those poor blokes."

*Courtesy of the AWM, Reprint of an article published in issue 27 of 'Wartime' magazine, in July 2004.*

## FEBRUARY 1967

50 years ago this year, February 1967 became the month that the Battalion suffered the highest number of casualties of the two tours of South Vietnam.

On Valentines Day 14 February C Company, while in cordon around Ax An Nhut, lost three officers killed and 5 other ranks wounded (see page 12) to a mine.

Then on 21 February, B Company was on operations in the Long Hai Hills, when the lead APC they were patrolling in struck a massive 500lb land mine. This and subse-

## FEBRUARY 1967 - Cont.

quent explosions left 7 killed, 2 dying of wounds and 22 others with varying degrees of wounds.

A total, in just these two incidents alone, of 12 fatal and 27 wounded casualties including attached personnel.

5 RAR Darwin held Memorial Parades at the Battalion's Memorial Wall to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of these two events. The ceremonies are in memory and to pay honour to those who lost their lives and to all who were involved. On the anniversary of the passing of a soldier honoured on the Memorial Wall, a Poppy is placed on that individual's Memorial Plaque.



Smaller grave-side gatherings have been held in Canberra, Yarrowonga (VIC) and Altona (VIC).



"A few of us gathered at Don Bourne's graveside (Canberra) yesterday to pay respects on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his loss and his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. In attendance from 5 RAR were Paul Greenhalgh, Norm Goldspink, Brian Budden (who drove from Sydney for the day) and me." writes Roger Wainwright (see *photo left*), "Don's widow

Gabrielle (Gay) was present with their sons Todd and Trent. Their eldest son Tan and daughter Tracey were unable to attend. The family were very grateful for us arranging this small but significant event. We did not forget Bob Milligan and Peter Williams."

Members of 4 Platoon gathered at Yarrowonga in memory of LT John 'Jack' Carruthers, on Tuesday 21 February, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his being WIA.

John Nyhuis states, "The service was held at the Yarrowonga/Mulwalah Services Club, the letter received from Roger Wainwright was read out at this time and was appreciated by all. I presented a VVAA Cross to Janine Richards, nee Carruthers (see *photo right*). The Cross came to us via Glen Smith and was appreciated by Janine."





### ANZAC COVE 1915

Hand tinted photograph by Padre Walter E. Dexter of a view of Anzac Cove looking north to New Zealand Point. 1915.



### CAN YOU HELP

As the Membership Officer, I am currently trying to complete a Nominal Roll of the Battalion's 1966-67 tour of Vietnam, including the rank of members on their return to Australia. The list below shows 20 of the men who were there but who returned to Vietnam either with 5 RAR or other units.

The DVA Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans only shows their rank on their last return to Australia. I am hoping that some of you may know some of the listed and be able to supply their rank and possibly their sub-unit as well, any help will be gratefully appreciated. My contact details are; [G Townsend, 82/117 Palm Meadows Dve, Carrara, QLD, 4211. Tel: \(07\) 5594 4780 or Email: garyt.5rar@gmail.com](mailto:G.Townsend@5RAR.com.au)

Service No	Family name	Initials	First name/s	Rank	S/Unit	Subsequent Tours	Last SVN Rank
61729	Edson	PJ	Peter John			2x7 1967+1971	LCPL
216377	Fahey	E	Edward			7 1967	CPL
61092	Gardiner	TG	Terence Gerald			5-ADM/	SGT
2412438	Haynes	KG	Kenneth Gordon		D/	7 1967	LCPL
54912	Lee	CN	Colin Nelson			5-D/10/1	T/CPL
14429	McLean	AC	Allan Charles			6 1969	SGT
215607	McNeill	K	Keith		A/	3 1971	CPL
37281	Miller	DJ	David John			2 1971	CPL
1200726	Mison	BW	Bruce William		SPT/MTR	8 1969	CPL
212602	O'Reilly	E	Edward		ADM/	5-C/	SSGT
216938	Plant	JR	James Russell			7 1967+1970	CPL
215819	Poirrier	RF	Ronald Francis			AATTV 1971	SGT
29481	Rogers	JM	James Maxwell			Welfare Unit 1969	T/WO2
2412082	Shaw	DR	Douglas Richard			AS Canteen 1971	SGT
34578	Smith	KO	Keith Omond			AATTV 1972	WO2
13552	Stanley	PF	Peter Frederick			7 1967	CPL
3786943	Turner	B	Barry			7 1967	T/CPL
310236	Twigg	RJ	Richard John			3 1971	T/WO2
36501	Waters	GE	Graham Edgar			5-ADM/	CPL
214639	Wennekes	CS	Christian Stephanus			1 1968	CPL

## AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

The 2017 Australia Day Honours awards once again saw former and serving members of the Battalion being awarded honours.

### MEDAL (OAM) OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA



The late Mr Richard BIELE, Late of Hill Top NSW 2575

For service to youth, and to veterans and their families.

Richard served with CHQ of C Coy in 1969.

### MEDAL (OAM) OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

Mr Bryan John SCHAFER, Ingleburn NSW 2565



For service to rugby league, and to veterans and their families.

Brian was deployed as a Section Commander of 9 Platoon, C Company, 1969-70.

### COMMENDATION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE



Brigadier Justin Frederick ELLWOOD DSC, NSW

For distinguished performance of duties in warlike operations as the Chief Joint Operations in Headquarters Resolute Support Kabul Afghanistan from September 2014 to September 2015.

Jake was appointed as the first CO of 5 RAR Darwin when the battalion was delinked from 5/7 RAR in 2006.

The 5 RAR Association extends our congratulations to these three very worthy recipients.

## 5 RAR ASSOCIATION DUES

Members, your 5 RAR Association tri-annual membership dues should now have been paid.

To the right of your name on the address sheet of this Tiger Tales, you will find a date shown. This will tell you to when you are currently financial. If this date is shown as 2017 you will need to pay \$50.00 to extend your membership up to 28 February 2020.

If the date shown is 2020 or later, or if there is some text i.e. Patron shown there, you do not have to do anything at all. If you have paid your membership after 15 March, please disregard this notice.

If you are paying your renewal by direct bank deposit please use your Surname and Initials as the reference.

Members may elect to receive the electronic version of Tiger Tales by email.

## POST-VIETNAM NOK MEMBERS

The Association is eager to gain and/or retain contact with the Next-of-Kin of our comrades who have departed since Vietnam. Where requested, we have continued to send Tiger Tales to those who requested it. Unfortunately, due to the increasing mortality rate amongst our members, and the ensuing reduction in the Association's income, we will no longer be able to do so.

We will continue this until the financial membership of the departed member expires. After this date the NOK Member may continue to receive 'Tiger Tales' by mail at a cost of \$50.00, to cover printing/postage expenses, for each three year membership period.

An alternative to this would be to receive the email version of 'Tiger Tales' at no cost, if this is your choice you will need to advise me of your current email address.

On the address sheet of this Tiger Tales, to the right of your surname, a year will be shown which indicates when the period of your departed was financial to. If the year shown is 2017, it means that if you wish to continue to receive the printed version of Tiger Tales, you will need to renew your subscription for the period of three years to 28 February 2020.

We regret that we have to resort to this action, but our costs are still rising while our income is falling and we have no other choice. The Association asks for your understanding in this matter, which is out of our control.

*The NOK's of those Battalion members who appear on the Honour Roll will continue to receive a free hard copy of Tiger Tales. They may elect to receive the email version of Tiger Tales if it is their wish.*

Gary Townsend

Tel: (07) 5594 4780 or Email: garyt.5rar@gmail.com

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## 5 RAR STRETCHER BEARERS HONOURED

The Peter Fraser MM and Michael Poole Memorial Music room was dedicated on 7 December 2016 at the Defence Force School of Music, Simpson Barracks Watsonia, VIC.



Peter Fraser MM

Both Peter and Michael, former members of the 5 RAR Band 1<sup>st</sup> tour, Peter received the MM for actions in August 1966, Michael was KIA on the 21 February 1967, both were stretcher bearers. Peter Fraser passed away some time back after a long illness with cancer.

Former Members of the Band were invited to attend, both the graduation on the 6 December and the dedication on the 7 December, those that attended were Norm Sims, Norm Harris, Geoff Lowe, Gary Phillips and John Nyhuis, all were accompanied by their wives.



Michael Poole

The Service was conducted by LTCOL Craig Johnson, CO DFSM and BRIG Mark Bornholt AM (Ret'd).

Family members of both Peter and Michael were also in attendance. It was a moving ceremony with most of the people at the School in attendance. Well done I say, but why it has taken 50 years, we will probably never know.

John Nyhuis



The Dedicated Plaque.

## MICK DWYER'S SERVICE

The photo below shows the RARA members who attended Mick Dwyer's funeral service at Rouse Hill, NSW, on 2 March.

Standing l-r: Neil McKenzie, Bill Jarrett, Neville 'Bluey' Bryant, Geoff 'Honda' Reid, Norm Harris, Barry Pemberton, Jack Curtis, Geoff Lowe, Frank Baker (wearing Red Cross brassard), Geoff Luck, John Nyhuis, Tony 'Doc' White and Tony Nieuwenhout.

Kneeling l-r: Joe McAlister, Norm Sims, Ron Shoebridge, and Terry Christian.

Photo by Tony 'Doc' White





# IN MEMORIUM

## 2789983 HAROLD JAMES AMOR 31 October 1947 - 22 July 2016

We have belatedly been advised that LCPL Harold 'Harry' Amor passed away peacefully at his home in Curra, Queensland on Friday 22 July 2016. He lived alone and had been in poor health for some time.

Harry served with 3 Platoon, A Company from 8 February 1969 to 24 March 1970, for the Battalion's second tour of duty in South Vietnam.

His graveside service was held at Gympie Cemetery, Gympie on Friday 5 August. The service was attended by some of his service mates and 5 RAR Association members.



## 2789124 GEOFFREY MERVYN FORD 23 March 1947 - 18 November 2016

CPL Geoffrey 'Fordy' Ford passed away early in the morning of Friday 18 November 2016. Geoff had been suffering poor health for quite some time, but in his usual manner, he did not complain.



Geoff served as the stretcher-bearer with CHQ of C Company from 8 February to 10 October 1969, when he was medically returned to Australia. He was well regarded by all of he served with.

A grave-side service for Geoff was held at the Griffith Lawn Cemetery, Griffith, on Friday 25 November 2016. The service was attended by several members of the 5 RAR Association.

## 3175767 RICHARD LEIGH BIELE OAM 27 April 1947 - 3 December 2016



On Saturday 3 December PTE Richard 'Aussie' Biele suddenly passed away after suffering a major heart attack.

Aussie served in CHQ of C Company during the Battalion's 1969-70 Tour of South Vietnam. He was deployed from 8 February to 3 December 1969 when he was medically RTA'ed. Richard was always a bit of a character and a good member of the CHQ Team.

Aussie's Funeral Service was held at St Stephens Anglican Church, Thirlmere, NSW, on Thursday 8 December.

Those attending the service, including 5 RAR Association members, then gathered for a wake at the Thirlmere RSL.

## 4717650 TREVOR ALFRED JOHN TURNER 21 June 1945 - 14 December 2016



PTE Trevor 'Anna' Turner passed away after being in poor health for quite some time.

Trevor was posted to South Vietnam with 1 Platoon, A Company. He served in theatre from 8 May until 13 September, when he was medically returned to Australia. Trevor was the machine gunner in 1 Section for the full duration of his tour.

His Funeral Service was held at Repatriation General Hospital Memorial Chapel, 216 Dawes Road, Daw Park, SA, on Wednesday 21 December and after at Centennial Park Cemetery, Goodwood Road, Pasadena, SA. 5 RAR Association members were in attendance at the ceremonies held for Trevor.

## 214868 BRADLEY IRWIN AVIS 11 March 1945 - 24 December 2016

LCPL Bradley 'Brad' Avis passed away on Saturday 24 December in the hospital in his home town of Moruya, NSW.

Brad served with the Battalion in South Vietnam from 22 April 1966 to 9 May 1967. During his deployment he was posted to Support Company, Transport Platoon in various types of roles.



A public funeral Service was held for Brad at Broulee Memorial Park, Broulee, NSW, on Friday 30 December 2016, this service was followed by a private burial. A wake was held later in the Bubble of the Bateman's Bay Soldiers Club. The ceremonies were attended by members of 5 RAR Association.

## 1314 THOMAS LLOYD MUGGLETON MBE 10 December 1924 - 15 January 2017

CAPT Thomas 'Tom' Muggleton passed away on the evening of Sunday 15 January on the Gold Coast.



Tom served in New Guinea with 2/5<sup>th</sup> Bn AIF and at the end of the war he joined 67 Bn on occupational duties in Japan. He was with them when the RAR was formed and 67 Bn became 3 RAR. Tom then deployed with 3 RAR to Korea. He served for 6 years as RSM RMC. He was commissioned and posted to 5 RAR as QM for the Bn's 1969-70 tour of SVN. Towards the end of his military career Tom served as OC HQ Coy at RMC and retired as a Major.

Tom's funeral, held at Scared Heart Church, Clear Island Waters, on Fri 20 Jan, was attended by many of the men he served with, amongst them were 5 RARA members.

# IN MEMORIUM - Cont.

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## 54318 BARRY EDMUND WILLCOTT 6 March 1936 - 25 January 2017

SGT Barry Willcott passed away peacefully at his home town of Narrandera, NSW. He was formally from Bunbury in WA.

Barry deployed with the Battalion, on its 1966-67 Tour of Duty, from 2 May 1966. He returned to Australia with the Battalion's Advance Party on 3 March 1967.

Barry's Funeral Service was conducted on Monday, 6 February, at the AHM Crematorium Chapel, 76 Copland Street, Wagga, NSW.



## 3787069 PAUL RICHARD PHILLIPS 26 June 1945 - 9 February 2017

PTE Paul Phillips passed away on the morning of Thursday 9 February at his home town of Benalla, VIC.

Paul served with 1 Section, 7 Platoon, C Company, for the full deployment of the Battalion's tour of South Vietnam 1966-67.

His role in the section varied between Rifleman, Forward Scout, Machine Gun number 1 and 2. Paul could also be a bit of a rogue at times.

A Grave-side Service was held for Paul on Friday 17 February, at the Benalla Cemetery with a wake to follow after the service. The service and wake were attended by many service mates from C Company and other units including 5 RAR Association members.



## 37479 WILLIAM FRANCIS HINDSON MC MG 3 March 1943 - 19 February 2017



LT William 'Bill' Hindson passed away in Canberra early on Sunday 19 February after a long illness.

He became a founding member of 5 RAR on 1 March 1965 until early in May 1965. Bill was recalled to 1 RAR at short notice to deploy, with that battalion, to Bien Hoa on their initial tour of South Vietnam.

Bill was awarded the MC for his service with SAS and the MG in the Vietnam End of War List for his service as a Platoon Commander with 1 RAR 1st tour.

A Funeral Service was held for Bill the Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Strangways St, Curtin on Monday 27 February with 5 RAR Association being represented.

## 37952 JOHN THOMAS EDWARDS 30 November 1943 - 26 February 2017

After a long fight with illness, PTE John 'Bluey' Edwards passed away on Sunday 26 February.

John originally deployed to South Vietnam with Transport Platoon. When volunteers were called to form the Reconnaissance Platoon he stepped forward and was accepted for the extra training. John became a founding member of the Recce Platoon when it was formed in the later part of 1966. He continued with the platoon until the Battalion returned to Australia, in May 1967, aboard HMAS Sydney.

A Funeral Service was held on Tuesday 7 March at Rose Chapel, Palmdale Lawn Cemetery, Palmdale, NSW. The 5 RAR Association was represented at the service.



## 2781344 MORRIS NOEL DWYER 1 February 1945 - 25 February 2017

PTE Morris 'Mick' Dwyer lost his long battle with a persistent and serious illness on Saturday 25 February.

Mick was a member of the 5 RAR Band and a stretcher-bearer attached to 4 Platoon, B Company.

He was seriously wounded, in the Long Hai Hills incident on 21 February 1967. One of the APC's the company was travelling in triggered a massive land mine. Mick was repatriated to Australia on 13 March 1967.

Mick's Funeral Service was held at Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March at the Garden Chapel, CastleBrook Crematorium, Rouse Hill, NSW. Many of his service mates and 5 RAR Association Members were amongst the mourners.



## AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL FIRST WORLD WAR QUIZ

**Q.** Which Australian Victoria Cross recipient exhibited "most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty" during an attack at Dernacourt on 28 March 1918?

A. SGT Stanley Robert McDougall VC MM, 47<sup>th</sup> Battalion.



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## TRACKER PLATOON 1968-69

The battalion's Tracker Platoon morphed out of the old Recce Platoon from the 1966-67 tour in South Vietnam. Indeed, it was still named as such and would be so until the following year in South Vietnam when its role was more clearly defined and it underwent a name change to Trackers. There were still several old Recce Platoon members on strength when we 10<sup>th</sup> Intake (October 1967) Nashos came down from our shortened infantry corps training at 3TB Singleton in March 1968. The platoon already had some earlier 9<sup>th</sup> Intake (July 1967) Nashos and would receive a draft of 11<sup>th</sup> Intakees (February 1968) in May as well as matching ARA drafts from the Infantry Centre at Ingleburn in April and mid-year to bring it up to strength. In South Vietnam it would receive drafts of 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Intake Nashos.

Looking back on it after 48 years it was a good platoon. It was ably led by a young and personable platoon commander and well administered by an experienced and steady sergeant and we were all very proud to be part of it. LT Ian Hosie was the likeable, young and energetic platoon commander on his first appointment whose schoolboyish enthusiasm was ably tempered by the sage platoon sergeant of Bob Godfrey and veteran corporals of Bob Searle and Jock Letford. Bob Godfrey was not only one of the old Recce Platoon members, as was Bob Searle, but he'd also served in Borneo during the Indonesian confrontation.

We young soldiers, Nasho and Reg alike, all looked up to Bob Godfrey. He was like our Support Company CSM, the tough and wiry and directly speaking Korean War veteran of WO2 Johnny Bates, a good role model for us younger soldiers. The platoon consisted of a four man headquarters, a rifle section, an anti-tank section and two five man dog tracking teams. But in reality there was much rotational movement and cross training amongst all the trade skills. For example, sectional scouts often doubled as visual trackers/dog handler covermen in the two tracking teams, the basic soldierly skills being identical.

It was a platoon of characters. We soldiers came from all states and territories in all shapes and sizes and backgrounds. A 50 percent each way successful blending of Regs and Nashos, the only discernible difference being in each man's service number by state.

In platoon headquarters with Ian Hosie and Bob Godfrey were Jack Garner the platoon sig and 'Audie Morphine' Chapman, the medic. Jack was laid back and Audie a dry character whose droll wit enlivened many a long day. For a time, both in Australia and South Vietnam, 9<sup>th</sup> Intake Nasho 'Doc' Kimball the platoon storeman, was supposedly also on the headquarters. But Doc was a wily character who somehow managed to spend more time with the dog teams than in his store. Doc managed both employments satisfactorily and became a recognisably proficient scrounger. What he couldn't get from our Support Company Q, he 'acquired' from around Nui Dat and our more gullible American allies, much to the delight of us diggers. Bob Godfrey and Ian Hosie were wise enough to not enquire too closely at some of the 'goodies' of stores and equipment which Doc presented to us, like the pro-

verbial rabbit out of a magician's hat, in our early days at Nui Dat. We all thought he should have signed on into the Regular Army and become a QM somewhere.

Other platoon members were Barney Simpson, Moose Barter, Peter Mathie, Gomer Pumpa, Dave Keating and Paddy Walker in the tracking teams. Blue Nicholls, Tex Nevins, Hippie Koppen, Gummy Brooks, Roy Ellis, Trevor Donnelly, Wally Waldron, Butch Baker, Dino Dobson, George Hitchcock, Gary Robinson, Don Oakley, Jim Sturla and Dusty Miller were in the rifle and anti-tank sections. There were also three first tour NCOs and a couple of older diggers in the platoon for a good part of the year but they did not return to South Vietnam with the battalion in the new year of 1969. The platoon's manning was always fluid, we moved from section to section as circumstances dictated. We also had two black Labrador tracking dogs at Holsworthy, one of which was named Marcian. Moose Barter was it's handler, I was his coverman when not a scout in Jock Letford's rifle section, the ubiquitous Doc was in the team, along with Gomer Pumpa and Dave Keating while Barney Simpson was the tracking team commander. This configuration would continue into South Vietnam but with new dogs Marcus, Justin and Caesar. It was a platoon joke that when Moose left by air for South Vietnam in the battalion advance party in January 1969 he missed parting from Marcian more than his girlfriend of the day.

We started the battalion training year with a shakedown exercise in the cold and wet Tianjara State Forest near Nowra, followed by a move to Tracking Wing at Ingleburn's Bardia Barracks for a Visual Trackers course. These were followed by specialist courses in our heavy weapons the 84mm Carl Gustav and 106mm RCL at Singleton and the Anzac Range at Moorebank. Following these we commenced a series of bush training exercises in such diverse places as the Sweetman's Creek area of the Wollombi State Forest near Cessnock as well as Tianjara, both chilly places in the middle of a cold NSW winter.



Cpl Jock Letford (L) and PTE Peter Macdonald at Bien Hoa, Op Federal 1969.

But our primary training ground was the adjacent Holsworthy training area, a vast plateau of stunted scrub interspersed with numerous heavily wooded creeks and rocky

## TRACKER PLATOON 1968-69 - Cont.

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defiles. A more inhospitable training ground could not be imagined and we would come to loathe it with a deep and undying passion. Though we would have other and more rugged training areas than the one at our back door, it was here in this unremitting crucible, in extremes of hot and cold, that we would be prepared for our war in tropical South Vietnam. And from here were added further names to our geographical vocabulary. Places like the Old Coach Road, Holsworthy Trig Point, Hill 851, Mackell Airfield and Dahlia Creek. Names that would be added to an already impressive list of shared experiences, until in the end, our only real recollection of time over those training months would be a series of strenuous tactical exercises and the events related to them.

It was to be a busy platoon in a busy battalion and in a busy year of 1968. We also were still uncertain as to our future reconnaissance platoon role. That was one of the reasons the platoon had such an *esprit de corps*, for we had imbibed it from the two Bobs of Godfrey and Searle from the original Recce Platoon. And when we weren't on the rifle ranges at Holsworthy or Moorebank or on any one of the seemingly endless field exercises we were out in small five man groups centred around our two black Labrador tracking dogs haring about the nearby Georges River training for it.

And we still hadn't yet reached Jungle Training Centre Canungra or Shoalwater Bay training area at Rockhampton. We did so in October and December and they were to add another series of topographical names and soldierly stories to our lexicon. The Canungra JTC with its obstacle courses and mind-toughening routines as well as its firing ranges and exercise areas like Back Creek, Mt Tarlington and the Wiangaree Walkabout along a section of the Queensland-NSW border ranges to Richmond's Gap is often reckoned to be worse than Vietnam itself in exertion. We were to be there for the best part of four weeks in our rotating company lots.

Then there came Shoalwater Bay with its hard brown hills and vast grassed areas interspersed with its many creeks and swampy foreshores. It was the ideal replica of our future, but by then very near, operational area of South Vietnam's Phuoc Tuy province. These two exercise areas were definitely character building. And so after what we considered a too long training year but the CO probably thought as not long enough, we were off to South Vietnam by air and sea in the new year of 1969.

Operation 'Quintus Thrust' was the first of the battalion's operations and as such is always well remembered. It was conducted in the 'Warbies'-the Nui Dinh hills to the west of Route 2. The fire support base of 'Marie' was at the end of a west pointing finger of a low bamboo ridge with a clear view across the dry brown paddy fields towards the eastern and northern slopes of the predominant feature of Nui Bao Quan in which the rifle companies were operating. Tracker Platoon's initial task on this first and very hot March dry season dusty day was to act as the 'palace guards' for the fire support base whilst the hard working Pioneer Platoon dug in the CP and did the majority of the digging and wiring of the perimeter.

The platoon did its own wiring and digging - especially of the two heavy 106mm guns which we'd bought out in APCs - and was still going at it until 10.00 o'clock at night as well as maintaining standing and clearing patrols and various BHQ tasks. The ground was rock hard on the sun-baked paddies, the day was hot and loads of Chinook-delivered defence stores arrived all day. Wiring by moonlight was a long day but no one complained for the stores had to be brought in from the helicopter delivery pad and the wire had to go up and all the weapon pits dug and the guns dug in and sand-bagged.

Right at the end of this hot day along came CSM WO2 Johnny Bates. It was late in the afternoon and dusk was falling across our slope. We troops were hot, thirsty and rapidly becoming fatigued after a long day. There were still rolls of heavy concertina wire and bundles of pickets and sandbags on the LZ outside the perimeter and they had to come in before dark. We had dug the two 106 guns in and were halfway through digging our own weapon pits and positioning our M60 machine guns in alignment with next door Pioneers when the CSM came along doing his late afternoon defence rounds. He saw the stores on the LZ and stopped. "All that has got to come in before dark or in the morning it'll be festooned with Nog booby traps like a Christmas tree!" He told us authoritively and then he came out and gave us a hand to do it.



LCPL Barney Simpson and PTE Moose Barter dig pits at Firebase Kerry, 1969.

He then walked around our perimeter and checked the alignment and interlocking of our M60s. He stopped at the sectional gun which my hoochie mate, the 19 year-old reg, Ray 'Gummy' Brooks and I were digging in and had been alternatively all day in the hot sun. "That gun's in the wrong spot, Sunshine," he told me breezily after just the merest of glances at its direction. When Gums and I demurred because we had thought we'd checked its field of fire correctly and had our frontage adequately covered, he just grinned and picked it up by its carrying handle and moved it a mere six feet to the left and then nimbly leapt down behind it and invited us to join him. We did and all

(Continued on page 20)



## TRACKER PLATOON 1968-69 -

Cont.

(Continued from page 19)

of a sudden we could see all sides of a small slope and dip which we hadn't even noticed before. Now we understood why he was the CSM on his third active service tour of duty and we two private soldiers. From that moment onwards I understood and respected what the Korean War veterans were all about. He then leapt back up. We followed and taking up our discarded pick and shovel said "Yes sir..." and began re-digging a new gun pit.



Caesar sets a cracking pace for PTE Dennis 'Dino' Dobson, the dog came from 1 RAR and stayed with 5 RAR for the whole tour. He was then handed over to 7 RAR before being retired to the British Embassy in Saigon.

The ground in this new position was even harder than its predecessor a mere six feet away. Bates watched us in amusement for a moment and then took hold of the pick and began swinging it energetically and at 40 making we younger men look very inept indeed. "I hate to tell you warries, men," he chortled, "but this is not hard ground. In Korea every time you swung a pick it would bounce right back at you off the frozen ground!" And he went on energetically digging until we in embarrassment took the pick back from him. He then bade us good day and picking up his shirt, webbing and SLR rifle, went next door to Pioneers and we heard later from our 10<sup>th</sup> Intake mate of Andy Stellema that he had done the same there. That was our CSM and he had just given us a salutary lesson in professional soldiering and leadership.

The following day we were freed of our 'palace guard' duties and began our independent patrolling, ambushing and tracking tasks in support of the rifle companies. And at this point the platoon story becomes part of the wider battalion's.....

*This reminiscence is for all who remember dew wet mornings in the paddy fields and blood red sunsets through the bamboo tops.*

1733480 Pte P.W.Macdonald  
Tracker PI Sp Coy/10 PI D Coy

## NOTICES

### MEMBERSHIP CHANGES AND ENQUIRIES

All enquiries regarding membership, or changes and amendments to your contact details should be forwarded to:

Membership Officer, 5 RAR Association,  
82/117 Palm Meadows Drive, CARRARA, QLD, 4211.  
07 5594 4780 or [garyt.5rar@gmail.com](mailto:garyt.5rar@gmail.com)

### D COMPANY 2<sup>ND</sup> TOUR REUNION

When: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

Where: Kingscliff NSW, it's on the Tweed Coast about 15 km from Gold Coast/Coolangatta Airport.

Programme: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June, an evening Welcome/Get together. Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>, AM Commemoration Ceremony on Binh Ba Day and an evening Reunion Dinner at Kingscliff Beach Bowling Club. Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>, a general catch up etc. Costs will be advised later, medals will not be required and other 5 RAR members are welcome.

General: Please **ENSURE** you advise your platoon rep that you will be attending asap and to enquire about accommodation options. Tweed Heads itself is about 15km away so accommodation options are numerous.

Platoon Reps:

- 10pl Bernie Pye, [bernie.pye@bigpond.com](mailto:bernie.pye@bigpond.com)
- 11pl Ray Ward, [c42ward@bigpond.net.au](mailto:c42ward@bigpond.net.au)
- 12pl Ray Knapp, [rkn19510@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rkn19510@bigpond.net.au)

We also extend an invitation to any other 5 RAR member who lives in the local Gold Coast/Tweed area, you are very welcome to join us.

### D COMPANY 1<sup>ST</sup> TOUR REUNION

This year's D company 1st Tour reunion will be held in Seymour, VIC, over the August, Vietnam Veterans Day period. All are welcome; the highlight is the Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk, the main Memorial Wall of which has the name of all who served in Vietnam.

Watch the Association web-page for further info.

Our last company reunion at Dubbo was great, but that was back in 2012 so don't miss this one in 2107. It will be great to catch up again.

## CAPTURED VC ART





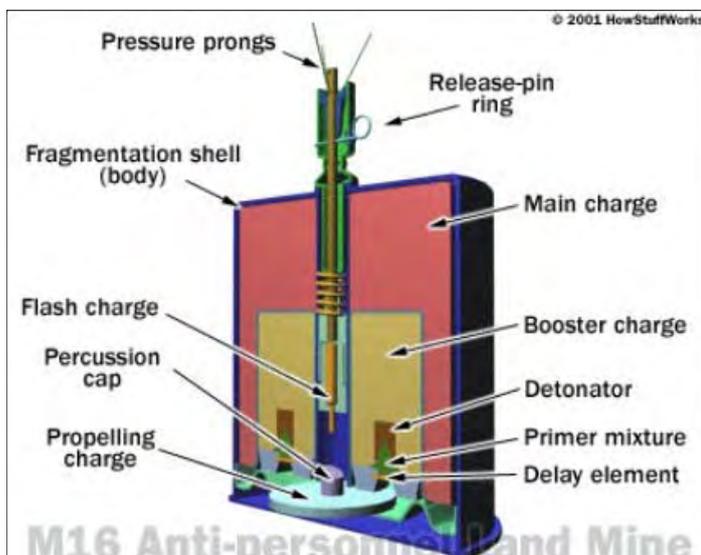
## M16 - JUMPING JACK MINE

The M16 mine is a U.S. made bounding anti-personnel mine. It is often referred to as a 'Bouncing Betty' or 'Jumping Jack'. It is a development of the World War II era German S-mine and has similar performance. The mine consists of a cast iron body in a thin steel sleeve. A central fuse well on the top of the mine is normally fitted with a pronged M605 pressure and tilt fuse. Sufficient pressure on the prongs or tension on an attached tripwire, causes the release of a striker. The freed striker is forced into a percussion cap which ignites a short pyrotechnic delay. The purpose of this delay is to allow the victim to move off the top of the mine, to prevent its upward movement from being blocked. Once the delay has burned through, a 4.5 gram black powder charge is ignited, which launches the inner iron body of the mine up into the air (leaving behind the steel outer sleeve). The charge also ignites a second pair of pyrotechnic delays.



The mine rises to a height of approximately one meter, before one or both of the pyrotechnic delays triggers the main charge of the mine which sprays metal fragments in a 360 degree radius. The mine can produce casualties out to a radius of 35 meters, and the shrapnel presents a serious hazard out to a range of 200 meters.

The M16 and M16A1 mines are similar; the M16A1 has redesigned detonators and boosters but remains largely the same. The M16A2 is considerably different, having an offset fuse well and only a single pyrotechnic delay element. This change reduces the weight of the mine considerably (2.83 kilogram) while allowing it to carry a slightly larger main charge (601 grams).



## OPERATION ESSO 1, 2 and 3

June - July 1969

Operation Esso is remembered because of mines throughout the length and breadth of AO (Area of Operations) Aldgate the enemy used M16 Mines taken from the barrier mine field laid between the Horseshoe Hill and Lang Phuoc Hai on the coast. The Viet Cong used mines extensively in that, in most cases, they were placed not as an obstacle to protect his bases, but to slow down, disrupt and discourage allied operations in the district.

The mines were placed on tracks, in likely ambush positions, in likely harbour positions, around houses in the villages, in short, anywhere where our troops were likely to move.

Prior to relieving 9 RAR in the AO, and while there, 5 RAR took all possible precautions to minimize the danger and effect of mines. Special training was done; all vehicle floors were sandbagged; flack jackets and steel helmets were worn whenever possible; mine detectors were used by all patrols; and all routes or worksites were cleared prior to use. Despite these elaborate precautions seven soldiers were killed and forty three were wounded by mines.

Fire Base Thrust, some six hundred yards south of Hoi My received twelve 82mm mortar rounds at six minutes past midnight on 8 July. Three soldiers were slightly wounded in this attack and very little damage was done. In fact, some people in the base, being so used to the battery firing harassment missions during the night, did not even wake up!

Under operational control of 5 RAR during this operation, was a troop of engineers and elements of the plant troop of 1 Field Squadron. Two infantry companies were involved throughout the operation protecting this Land Clearing Team and the team constructing the defensive bunkers around Dat Do village.

The Dat Do District was previously dominated by the VC from their sanctuary in the Long Hai Mountains. Because of inadequate leadership, training and material, the local Regional and Popular Force soldiers were largely ineffective. The population contained a high percentage of VC families, infrastructure and sympathisers and was consequently prepared to live in co-existence with the VC. During Esso, 5 RAR placed small training teams in military posts throughout the district and encouraged more offensive operations by the local forces. Government agencies were urged to police the rice control programme and to man checkpoints on the main entry/exit points around Dat Do.

1 ATF forces in the area over a period of months produced a real and significant result in the pacification programme. Captured documents revealed that the enemy infrastructure could not function properly because of the Allied ambushing at night. Rice control also forced the price of rice on the black market to be raised by one third.

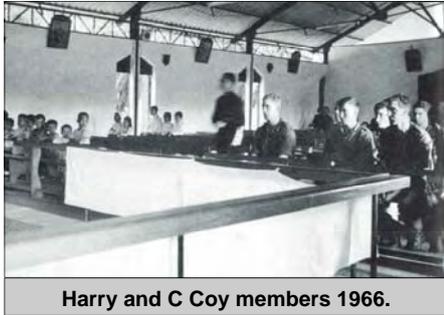
CAPT Mike Battle



## VIETNAM REVISITED - A UNIQUE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

I had often stated I did not intend to visit Vietnam; it was a closed chapter in my life. However, after attending the rededication of Tich Tomas' statue in early July, I made a snap decision to satisfy myself on a question that had gnawed at me since 1975. The Australian commitment to send troops to Vietnam was predicated on two pillars, to stop the spread of Communism (the domino theory) and ensure the people of South Vietnam could live with and enjoy the democratic rights that we had.

I was satisfied as to the first objective about ten years ago when Lee Kwan Yu the former Prime Minister of Singapore stated the intervention in Vietnam had clearly stopped the spread of Communism in South East Asia. This had saved Malaya, Singapore and Indonesia. The fact it was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle at Long Tan would also enable me to pay my respects at Long Tan to all those who made the ultimate sacrifice, particularly those from the Tiger Battalion. What followed was a most incredible 36 hours.



Harry and C Coy members 1966.

I will outline the events that followed and allow you to draw your own conclusion;

I left Saigon at 1140 hrs on August 17 for Vung Tau accompanied by my wife Kathy and sister Mary. We had booked to attend the Little Patty concert that night as during my tour 7PI had been in the bush for the 3 concerts held. I decided we could get a start for the next day by visiting the 3 places I was keen to see again and instructed our driver we wanted to go to Nui Dat, Binh Ba and Binh Gia. He said "Mr Harry I do not know this place". I said I would be responsible for navigation and directed him to proceed to Long Hai.

On arriving at Long Hai I outlined the significance of this area for me was the sad loss of Jack Carruthers, Bruce McQualter and a number of B Company diggers to a command detonated bomb (see *Tragedy at An Nhut page 12*). As we proceeded towards Long Dien, we passed 3 significant churches and decided to pay a visit at the next one we saw. This was large about the size of St. Patricks in Fremantle and on entering there were 30 women praying the rosary. Prior to leaving my younger brother Gerard reminded me my family had prayed the rosary every day for my safe return, so listening to their rosary was quite emotional for me.

We then proceeded toward Hoa Long but the driver took an early exit at a roundabout and ended up at Dat Do This was where I had been advised of my younger brother Robbie's death. I recalled talking to my platoon and being told "we only have 8 days before our tour ends, go home". I left the "Horseshoe" at 11am in the CO's Bell Helicopter, went to camp, got into civvies, then to Luscombe field and by Caribou to Saigon, received a pass-port with the signature copied from my paybook, boarded

an Air Vietnam plane to Kuala Lumpur and arrived in Perth at 12 midnight.

On backtracking to Hoa Long, we proceeded up Hwy 2 past Nui Dat and Luscombe Field and on to Binh Ba. I wished to visit the Church, which we had first cleared then attended Mass at in 1966. At the time of the cordon and search op, I had been delegated to search the Church. When we arrived it was locked and a tall middle aged Vietnamese man, the sacristan, was standing guard. He made no effort to open the church so in desperation I made the sign of the cross and indicated we wished to go inside. He immediately opened the door and we conducted our search. We then arranged for C Coy to attend Mass the next day. Fr Joseph the local priest said the Mass in Latin rather than Vietnamese to accommodate us. Fr Joseph was taken away and shot by the Communists about 3 months after we left.

On arriving at Binh Ba I had no hesitation in directing the driver down a dirt road to the Church. He was impressed when we arrived at the Church. It was again locked and as we were standing outside the



Harry in the same pew 2016.

door, a Vietnamese man appeared, the spitting image from 50 years before, clearly the sacristan's son. Again I made the sign of the cross and he opened the Church, turned the fans and lights on and I was able to have a photo taken from the same angle in the same pew as was taken in 1966. I arranged for the current priest to say a Mass for Fr Joseph in memory of his kindness to C Company in 1966.

After this very emotional reliving of the past, we proceeded to Binh Gia a Catholic village in 1966. When we were, there it was made up of 200 plus families who had walked the 2,000Km from the north in 1958 to escape religious persecution. During the 6 km drive from Binh Ba, we passed 4 significant churches and on arriving at Binh Gia were confronted by a Church larger than St Patricks



Mary, Harry and Kathy in photo 1.

in Fremantle, amazing as the area was basically rural. We convinced a local to open the church and then he arranged for us to see the priest. I explained the purpose of my visit and asked him to say a Mass for Fr Joseph who had been killed by the communists. He pointed to a photo with 4 priests in it and said Fr Joseph 1978, I said no Fr Joseph Binh Ba 1967. He said many priests had been murdered. I then asked

## VIETNAM REVISITED - A UNIQUE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE - Cont.



him how many priest were in the parish, he said only himself and he had 6,100 parishioners. I complimented him on his church and moved to take some photos. Son, our Buddhist driver, had taken a few photos of the church while we were inside. He came up to me quite agitated and asked me to look at 2 photos he had taken 10 seconds apart of the front of the Church. I looked and suggested he had done the same as me and cut off the top of the spires. He said "no look between them" and I was shaken to see the image of what I believe is that of a priest, but which others have suggested is Christ. Son was visibly affected for the rest of the trip.



Son's second photo.

I have provided this outline of my visit because while totally unplanned the series of events that followed provided me with a sense of emotional completion. The reason for this is that while Vietnam is under Communist rule, the people, both Buddhist and Catholic are still able to practice their faith, under varying degrees of duress. I take this limited degree of democratic freedom as a positive reflection of our efforts for these people, thereby meeting the second pillar.

The visit to the Long Tan Cross Memorial, notwithstanding the political crap, was conducted by both Australian and Vietnamese visitors in a dignified and respectful manner appropriate to a commemorative service for family and friends who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Harry Neesham,  
OC 7 Platoon 1966-67

P.S. The Little Patty concert was cancelled so I still did not get to a concert in Vietnam.

## ANOTHER PIECE OF VC ART



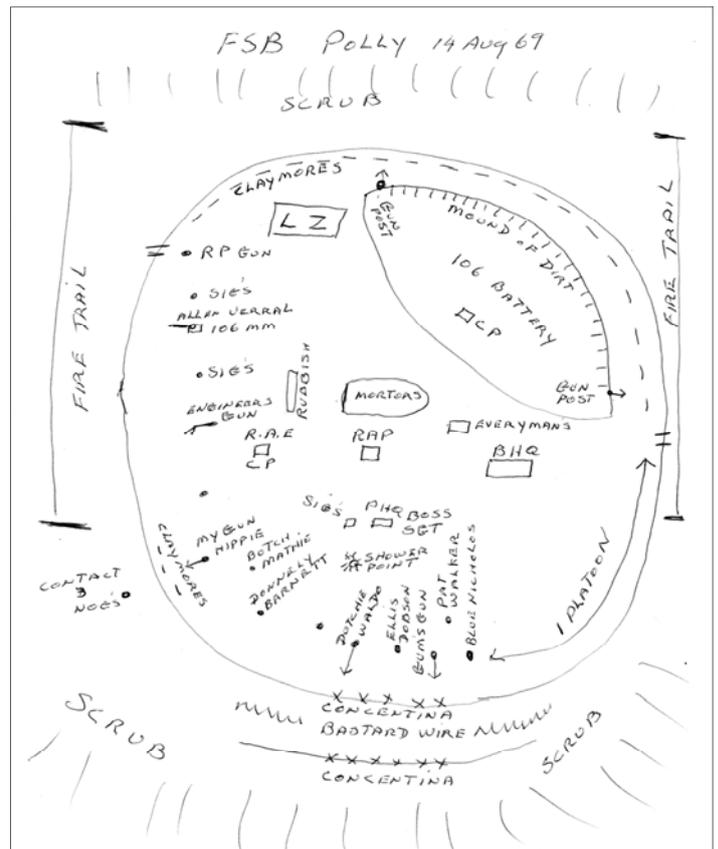
## FSB POLLY 1969

I thought Tiger Tales may like my sketch of FSB Polly, I have sketches of a number of bases but the one of Polly shows the names and positions of Tracker Platoon, even to the shower point.

On this is the sketch of FSB Polly, at the lower left you will see the words, 'contact 3 nogs', on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 1969, CPL Roy Ellis' section was carrying out a clearing patrol, I was watching them come around. As they neared my front firing started, they had spotted 3 nogs observing my position, I had no idea they were there. Our diggers withdrew coming back underneath the wire. The section claimed 1 enemy killed and 1 wounded, none of our blokes were injured. Also call sign 6-3 fired at 2 nogs on the wire, they let go with a claymore but missed them. Then one of the Artillery M60s opened on movement in the scrub, this all happened between the hours of 1845hrs and 2030hrs, a 50 percent stand to was carried out all night.

Dennis 'Digger' Nevins  
Tracker Platoon 1969-70

For more information see 'Operation Camden', 29 July-30 August 1969, by CAPT Mike Battle on the 5 RAR Assoc website at [http://www.5rar.asn.au/ops/camden\\_2.htm](http://www.5rar.asn.au/ops/camden_2.htm)



The image on the left, and the one on page 20, are from a number of drawings and pictures captured in a bunker system by 5 RAR in the Hat Dich area during Operation Kings Cross, 30 October -12 December 1969. They show the enemy as seen by himself, in this case a cave dwelling radio operator.



## THE FATE OF THE 5TH BATTALION AIF ON 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 1915

An edited version of an Anzac address to the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Association on Anzac Day 2015.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force was an infantry battalion raised in Victoria and recruited men from south of the Yarra River in Melbourne.

The battalion embarked for overseas in late October 1914 then carried out training in Egypt, in the desert near Cairo, from early December that year until early April 1915. The soldiers trained six days a week and on Sundays went on a long route march in addition to church parades.

The desert conditions were trying and the rations insufficient.

On 4 April 1915 the battalion, which was around 1,000 strong at the time, boarded a small ship named the *Novian* at Alexandria, Egypt and steamed for four days north across the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas to the Greek island of Lemnos. Three uncomfortable weeks were spent aboard the *Novian* – a dirty ship, cramped conditions and the food was poor.

At 12:30 on the afternoon of 24 April 1915 the *Novian* left its Lemnos mooring and steamed northeasterly for about 120 km and anchored off Anzac Cove on the west side of Gallipoli Peninsula before daybreak on 25 April. After a move in boats, the leading troops of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion touched the shoreline between 5:30 and 6:00 am.

There had already been confusion over the landing place and the order of landing for the invasion force of Australians and New Zealanders and immediately upon reaching the shore the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion became seriously disorganized.

As the battalion was forming up the just inland from the beach, the CO, LTCOL D.S. Wanliss, was personally ordered by the Commander 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Division, MAJ General W.S. Bridges, to push on eastward to reinforce the firing line, the actual line and direction to it being unclear.

Also only two companies of the battalion ('A' and 'B' Companies) and one platoon of 'C' Company were ashore and COL Wanliss was ordered not to wait for the remainder of his battalion (three platoons and the headquarters of 'C' Company and all of 'D' Company). Thus the battalion became split at the outset of battle.

During the move eastwards COL Wanliss became separated from the battalion because of thick scrub and ravines. This meant that movement ashore could no longer be coordinated by the battalion commander.

The battalion's soldiers ashore moved during the morning up a ridge nicknamed The Razorback to a crest about 900 metres inland. There was no sign of the enemy beyond the crest but as soon as the move continued enemy shrapnel, machine-gun and rifle fire began to rain down with all movement.

While continuing to move forward in short rushes, the formations of sections and platoons were lost in the thick scrub. The troops by then were on what is known as the

400 Plateau which includes the present-day Lone Pine Cemetery, ANZAC and the Lone Pine Memorial.

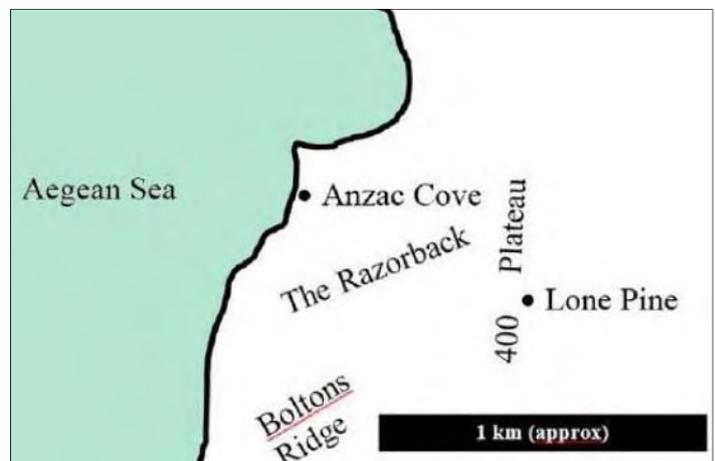
During the afternoon after further thrusts on the 400 Plateau, the forward troops were ordered to pull back and for the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion this meant to a ridge nicknamed Bolton's Ridge to the west of Lone Pine and running south-westerly back to the coast.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion AIF area of operations, Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey, 25 April 1915.**

The Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour shows that 72 members of the battalion died on 25 April 1915. Also, by the end of the month a total of 105 had died as a result of the landing.

As already mentioned, only 'A' and 'B' Companies and one platoon of 'C' Company were ashore when the move inland commenced. The 'C' Company platoon was No. 10 Platoon under the command of LT AP Derham, a 23-year old from the Melbourne suburb of Kew East.

Upon crossing the crest onto the 400 Plateau around mid-day, LT Derham was hit in the thigh by an enemy machine-gun bullet but after the initial shock he carried on hobbling to catch up with the advancing troops then continued to exercise command. During the afternoon, he was again hit, this time by a bullet in the shoulder but still carried on. He was evacuated five days later, on 30<sup>th</sup> April.



For his gallantry, LT Derham was awarded the Military Cross and became the first member of the battalion to be decorated during the First World War.

At the time he enlisted, Derham was a medical student and in late 1916 was granted a request to return to Australia to complete his studies. He re-embarked for overseas service on 2nd November 1918 as a medical officer.

During the Second World War Derham held the rank of COL as the Assistant Director of Medical Services at AIF Headquarters in Malaya and became a prisoner of the Japanese with the fall of Singapore. After the war, he was appointed as a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for his military service.