

# VALE

Brigadier Phil Davies AM (Retd)

Contribution by: Sandra Davies

Attribution to: Officer Cadet School, Portsea

**TPI Victoria Inc. mourns the loss of one of its Patron's, former Chief Executive Officer and committed Volunteer - Brigadier Phil Davies AM (Retd). Phil, known to many across the veteran sector and the TPI world, passed away in late April 2020. Phil was pivotal in moving the association forward and effectively rescuing it when it was in dire trouble and through his skills and knowledge successfully put it back on the right track, TPI Victoria Inc. and its members owes much to Phil for his efforts.**

From joining the Cadet Unit at the Lithgow High School in 1954, to becoming the Commander 3rd Military District (Victoria) (1988-92), Phil's career in the Army, and later civilian appointments, honorary positions and volunteering through to his retirement in 2005 speak for themselves and his dedication and character.

Phil entered the Royal Military College Duntroon (RMC) in 1958 for the four year course; attaining Under Officer status in his final year and winning the prize for Minor Tactics. He graduated Lieutenant in December 1961 and was commissioned into the Infantry Corps as a Platoon Commander with C Company, 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR). Subsequently he was posted to 3 RAR as a Platoon Commander in 1963 and saw active service in Malaysia in 1964.

On return to Australia, he was promoted Captain and appointed an Instructor to the newly forming Officer Training Unit (OTU), at Scheyville, NSW, in April 1965.



This unit was raised to train selected National Service conscripts to undertake officer training to meet the expanding need for 2nd Lieutenants across all Corps to support Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

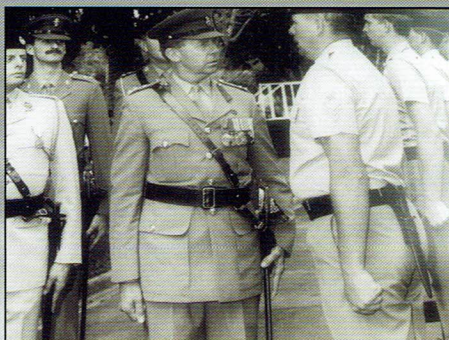
Towards the end of his Scheyville posting Phil was seconded to tour New South Wales secondary schools with the Army Team of Lecturers.

On reposting Phil was promoted to Captain as the Adjutant/Assistant Operations Officer of 1RAR in 1968/69, which included the significant action at FSPB Coral in Vietnam.

His war experiences further endeared him to that exceptional individual the Australian "Digger": ordinary Australians who the public expect to do extraordinary things on their behalf. This relationship and respect for our Digger has featured strongly throughout his career.

Phil was promoted to Major on return from Vietnam and posted to the 3rd Training Battalion (3TB) at Singleton, NSW, to train hundreds of National Service soldiers in readiness for Vietnam.

Technical training at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham UK, followed in late 1970, with exposure to military equipment procurement in Europe. On return to Australia in January 1972 Phil was posted to the Army Engineering Design Establishment (ADE) in Maribyrnong, Victoria, which provided an excellent opportunity to interact with industry over two years. Selection followed in January 1974 to the Australian Army Command and Staff College at, Queenscliff, Victoria for twelve months.





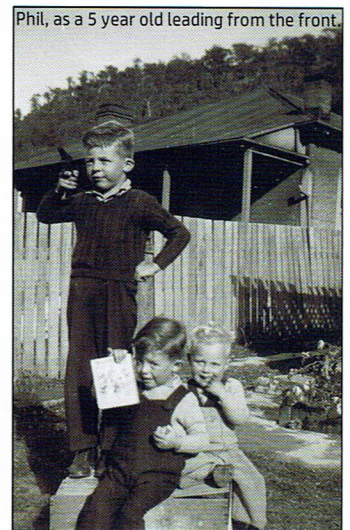
On posting as 2IC of 5/7RAR in Dec 1974, the Battalion undertook immediate deployment to a devastated Darwin to provide civil aid following Cyclone Tracy. Promotion to Lieutenant Colonel followed in late 1975, as the Army's Senior Planner for Exercise Kangaroo 2. In late 1976 Phil was posted as Commander of the Infantry Development Wing at the Infantry Centre, Singleton, NSW.

Selection for the Joint Services Staff College (JSSC) early in 1979 followed before a return to Duntroon, this time as the Chief Instructor. The award of an AM for services to the Australian Army and the Singleton Community was received at the beginning of this exciting posting to Duntroon.

Promoted to Colonel in late 1981, posting to Army Headquarters, Canberra, rounded off the broad understanding required of a senior Materiel staff officer.

A plum posting as the last Commandant of the Officer Cadet School Portsea (OCS) followed in 1984, with the challenge of integrating female cadets into the main stream of Army Officer training for the first time, a milestone for women in the Services.

Phil returned to Canberra in January 1986 as a Brigadier to command the Army Quality Assurance Organisation. This post presented exposure to new issues and the Chairmanship of the ABCA Armies Quadripartite Working Group (America, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) with attendance at a working group in Canada. He took the opportunity to challenge the ever growing list of stalled/overtaken projects which were going nowhere and was able to convince the group to cancel most of these outdated projects: including one proposed by Field Marshal Montgomery to standardise motor vehicle light globes (appropriate to WWII).



Phil, as a 5 year old leading from the front.

In June 1986 Phil was chosen as Head of the Hamilton Report Implementation Team, to implement improvements for Service families, and continued in this role until January 1987 when he was appointed Commander of the 3rd Military District (3MD), overseeing all Army establishments in Victoria and return them to the central control of HQ ADF.

Civilian life beckoned and he retired from active service in January 1992 becoming an Officer of the Inactive Reserve and Colonel Commandant of Army Cadets for Australia and Honorary Colonel of Cadets of the new Southern District until 1996. A number of civilian appointments followed and he retired from the paid workforce in January 2005.

Phil was married to Sandra and has two daughters and a son, and seven grandchildren.

#### **Military Career:**

- Royal Military College Duntroon (1958-61), four year tertiary course, Under Officer final year, Commissioned Lieutenant, Royal Australian Infantry Corps
- Platoon Commander (1962-64) with the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment; including Active Service in Malaya

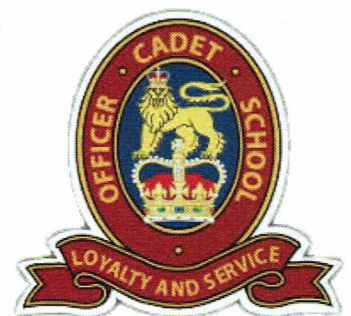
#### **Snapshot of Phil's Military Career:**

#### **Vietnam Era:**

- Promoted Captain (1965)
- Instructor Officer Training Unit, Scheyville NSW, preparing National Service Officers for Vietnam (65-67)
- Adjutant and Assistant operations officer, 1RAR with Active Service in Vietnam (1967-69)
- Promoted Major (1969), Company Commander, 3rd Training Battalion, Singleton NSW, training National Service soldiers for service in Vietnam
- UK (1970-71) Royal Military College of Science, tertiary equipment procurement program
- Army Design Establishment (ADE), Maribyrnong (1972-73)

#### **Middle Career:**

- Army Command and Staff College (1974)
- 2IC (Second In Command) 5/7 RAR (1975)
- Promoted Lieutenant Colonel (1975)
- Senior Army Planner, Australian/USA Joint Exercise planning Staff (1976)
- Commander Development Wing, Infantry Centre, Singleton (1977-78)
- Joint Services Staff College, Canberra for senior officer joint staff program (6 months)
- Awarded Member of The Order of Australia AM, Queen's Birthday Honours (1979)
- Chief Instructor, Royal Military College (1979-81)



#### **Senior Career:**

- Promoted Colonel (1982)
- Director in Army Materiel Branch (1982-83), responsible for individual equipment development, management of Army Unit Scales of Issue, and Branch Financial Management Programs
- Commandant Officer Cadet School Portsea (1984-85)
- Promoted Brigadier (1986)
- Director General Army Quality Assurance (1986-87), including Chairmanship of the ABCA International Quadripartite Ammunition and Equipment Standardisation Committee
- Project Manager Defence Families Information and Liaison Service (ADFILS)
- Commander 3rd Military District (Victoria) (1988-92)
- De-mobbed February 1992
- Honorary Colonel and Colonel Commandant of Army Cadets (1992-95)

*Lest We Forget*

