

# Half Circle



Number 84 - December 2013

**(If this is hard to read, try increasing the picture size to 150%!!)**

This informal publication is for the members of C Coy 5 RAR (2<sup>nd</sup> tour), South Vietnam, 1969/70, and for the families of those who are no longer with us. It is non-political, and is designed for us to have a laugh at ourselves, re-live our memories, and maintain camaraderie. Formal advice, when needed, should be sourced from Veterans' Organisations.

## **2789441 ROBERT JOHN CUNNINGHAM** **15 July 1947 – 17 November 2013**

Bob “Tex” Cunningham passed away on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November, after a battle with a very aggressive cancer.

“Tex” was a National Serviceman who joined C Coy in 1968 and travelled with the Battalion to Vietnam in February 1969. Tex was an integral member of 8PL, and carried out the roles of forward scout, machine gunner and rifleman. Shortly before the Battalion returned to Australia, Tex was seriously wounded, losing an eye.

In later years, “Tex” became involved with the Ingleburn (NSW) RSL, and held the position of President for approximately seven years.

“Tex” was one of the great characters of C Company, and will be missed by all his leaders and fellow soldiers.

We offer Janice and the family our sincere condolences. Lest We Forget.



**AT THE RAP:**

**JOHN HELLYER - Insertion of stents to help the old ticker.**



An Aussie breakfast in Vietnam - note the bottle of Holbrook's.

Submitted by Alex "Hippie" Koppen - now resident in the UK - probably still has his Holbrook's - not with his kippers we hope!

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### **DAVE'S DIARY:**

The sea trip home via the Sunda Strait (between Sumatra and Java) of Indonesia to Fremantle, and then onto Sydney, was, to my memory, calm as a millpond. Some blokes have recalled however, that it was rough in patches so I must have slept through those patches. The decks were full of inactive soldiers, sleeping, reading, playing cards and just relaxing. This unwinding process was a most therapeutic way to RTA after the turmoil and trauma of active service operations. (Those who flew back had little time to adjust and unwind. One day they were on active service, and the next in civvy street. It would be understandable if they experienced more adjustment problems than the veterans who floated gently back over the longer period.



**Time to stroll on HMAS Sydney.**

I spent my time sleeping, sleeping and sleeping, and with the remaining time I read only one book, the enthralling *The Last Battle* by Cornelius Ryan, the World War II story of the race to capture Berlin by the Americans, Brits and Russians. The Russians won the race. I think I must have slept through my 27<sup>th</sup> birthday on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1970. It was my second birthday away during this overseas posting.

There were some activities to keep the troops entertained including transferring soldiers to and from the escort ship, HMAS *Yarra*, via flying fox.



**Flying fox to destroyer HMAS *Yarra* from HMAS *Sydney*.**

It was also a time for some reflection and I made a few notations in my diary that you may have read in Half Circle # 6. In particular I made a note, with great sadness, of the C Company Roll of Honour:

217961 Pte LJ Pettit, 135494 LCpl PL Smith, 27880805 Pte HL Muller, 3794377 Pte JC McMillan, 218354 Pte RF Connors, 218006 Cpl HE Suttor and 2789920 Pte BJ Thompson.

None of us will ever forget those seven members of C Company who lost their lives during our tour of active service. May they rest in peace.

(To be continued)



#### TRAVELLING ABOUT:

**Wanda Moon** - Wanda has now moved to Wells Crossing (NSW), fulfilling the retirement plans that she and Eddie made before his untimely death.



Remembrance Day 2013 - part of the group who assembled at the Repatriation Hospital, Heidelberg, Vic, to pay their respects. Wally Magalas is in the centre row, slightly right.

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**FROM ANDY MACDOUGAL, RESPONDING TO ROGER LAMBERT'S DESCRIPTION OF THE MOVIE "THE NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD" (See Roger's article on the 5RAR website):**

I was talking to Bill Hartley the other day. He has just had a knee replacement, and one of the therapies is water exercise. He was telling me he got to the pool early the other day and there were all line of 85 year + gents across the pool all walking steadily. Then he noticed their faces .... old and sagged, and a few without their teeth. He immediately thought they resembled those horror faces we saw all those years ago in that memorable movie "The Night of the Living Dead".

Well I remember clearly watching it in our Charlie Company lines at "the Dat". I haven't ever been so petrified in my life. Bill remembered one of our fearless leaders – none other than Jack Bradd - who also was so terrified his folding deckchair collapsed and he let out a piercing scream that freaked everyone else out completely. I noticed that it is now showing here with an MA15+ rating!

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## BLUE MOUNTAINS VIETNAM VETERANS & ASSOCIATED FORCES INC.

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### Media Release

Three members of this Association lost their homes in the recent Springwood/Winmalee bushfires. The role of the Association is to provide welfare support to its members as well as serving & ex serving members of all post WW2 conflicts.

The Association has a very close relationship with the Vietnamese Community including Vietnamese Veterans Association & Vietnam Sydney Radio.

The Vietnamese Veteran's Association under the guidance of Mr Tran Dang Vinh has raised \$8000.00 of which \$6000.00 to be donated to the three Association members who lost their homes & \$2000.00 to be held in reserve for other members who may have suffered loss. The presentation will occur at the home of our Association President, Mr Jack Lake, on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 10:45 am.

The recipients of this generous offer by the Vietnamese community are:  
Mrs Vicki Barnes – A Legatee whose father was KIA in Vietnam  
Mr Kevin Blakelock – Who served with the RAN in Vietnam  
Mr Jim McKinnon – Current President of Springwood RSL Sub Branch

Contact details & venue are:  
Mr Jack Lake  
195 Hawkesbury Rd Winmalee  
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Additionally the Vietnamese Community led by Mr Joachim Nguyen & Ms Bao Khanh of Vietnam Sydney Radio has raised \$17,000.00, with more to come after a fund raising function, to be presented at a later date to the Blue Mountain City Council's Mayor's Bushfire Fund. Joachim & Bao previously have been instrumental in raising \$55,000.00 for the Victorian Bushfire Appeal, \$47,500.00 for the Brisbane Flood Appeal & this year \$17,000.00 for Sydney Legacy; all from within the Vietnamese Community.

**Ed's note:** As mentioned in the above Press Release, Jack Lake and his team at the Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans and Associated Forces Inc have strong links with the Vietnamese community. Their generosity at this time clearly underlines the bond that exists. Thank you.

Old Chinese Proverb: Confucius say, "If you are in a book store and cannot find the book for which you search, you are obviously in the:

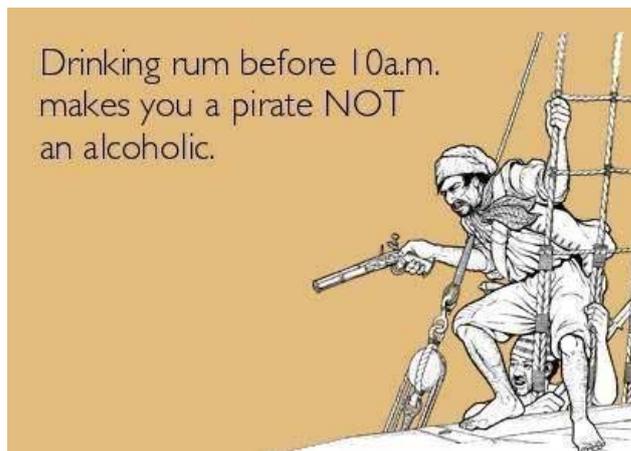


*In Sydney and want to hit the little white ball? Then head for the Georges River Golf Course, Henry Lawson Drive Georges Hall. Geoff Grimish and his team will make you most welcome. Geoff is a Vietnam vet (RAA), and is a great supporter of this newsletter. Phone (02) 9724 1615.*

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**IN THE NEXT EDITION OF HALF CIRCLE:**

1. The recipe for Paddy's Buns.



Half Circle was compiled and edited by Don Harrod - 0418 423 313, [donharrod@bigpond.com](mailto:donharrod@bigpond.com) , with help from Andy MacDougal, Alex Koppen, Ted Harrison, Jack Lake, Wally Magalas, Blue Schafer, and David Wilkins.

**A happy and safe Christmas to all!**