

# Half Circle

Number 22 - September 2008

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.

## FOUND:

Allan (Bluey) Austin - [austin022@bigpond.com](mailto:austin022@bigpond.com). Central Coast, NSW. More details to follow.

**Eddie Davies (7PI)**. Eddie can be contacted on [barbneddavies@yahoo.com](mailto:barbneddavies@yahoo.com). What this bloke has achieved would make us all sit up and take note. Losing his arm only made him more determined to succeed. How many of us have a good, close-knit family, are restoring an early model Holden, have been secretary and president of their local RSL, found Claude Ducker's old school, have a caravan in a bush hideaway, **AND - LISTEN TO THIS - have a 9m x 7m shed with a built-in bar - ALL HIS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!** Ed's only complaint - he can't tie up his shoelaces. What the bloody hell are the rest of us complaining about?

What Eddie didn't ask to be published is this: Eddie and Barbara have a son who is legally blind. Their grandson, Brody, is 22 months old, and suffers from "Refractory Epilepsy", sadly to say, a terminal illness. Brody suffers up to 60 seizures per day, and is receiving constant hospital treatment. There is no genetic link to any illness in the families of the parents or grandparents. **Please note:** it is **not** claimed that Eddie's war service contributed to Brody's illness, as it has not been established.

A new group has been formed in Victoria, spanning to the NSW border. It is called the **Dependents of War Caused Disabilities Inc.** This was recently launched by Keith Payne VC.

The **Dependents of War Caused Disabilities** organisation is seeking funding for children like Brody, and another - Dean - who suffers from extremely serious liver disease, and has had transplants. If you can help, please contact any of the following: President, Graham Papworth [denpap@iprimus.com.au](mailto:denpap@iprimus.com.au); Secretary, Lloyd Patterson [lloyd@bmp.net.au](mailto:lloyd@bmp.net.au); or OIC Marketing and Promotions, Laurie Rushton [lru21004@bigpond.net.au](mailto:lru21004@bigpond.net.au).

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## AT THE RAP -

Bob Hooper - Surgery - Get well soon, Bob!

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## WARNING ORDER - 7 PLATOON REUNION:

**Attention ALL members of 7 Platoon:** Terry Bates is planning a reunion of **ALL 7 PI** members for July 2009, in Perth. We all remember that 4th July 1969 was the day of the mine explosion. We lost three of our finest soldiers, and seventeen wounded. July 2009 is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this devastating incident. Terry is looking for every member of 7PI to register for this most important commemoration. This includes all members of the platoon, irrespective of when you served - whether under David Mead or the late Ian Hosie. **ALL C Coy** officers and senior NCOs should also consider attending. The WA hospitality is second to none. Terry can be contacted through his daughter - simply email [justna@bigpond.com](mailto:justna@bigpond.com), for Terry's attention.

**Ed's Note:** To re-visit the incredible achievements of 7 PI C Coy 5RAR, have a look at our Battalion website - [www.5rar.asn.au](http://www.5rar.asn.au), click on David Wilkin's article "Anatomy of a Bunker Contact". This is one of the best articles ever written about the Vietnam War, and I commend it to everyone. This will bring a tear to the eye of even the most hardened Tiger. **Don Harrod**

**Barry Baker said..... The Chieu Hoi Program**

It was autumn in South Vietnam and I believe the unit was engaged in Operation Kingston. Morale was high in 7 Platoon; we had not been near Coy HQ for over a week and were having some contacts (minor skirmishes). The past three days we engaged in some type of contact with the nogs. This kept both Lt Hosie and my section commander Jack Bradd happy, as they both welcomed liaisons with the enemy.

Patrolling stealthily we heard some voices, definitely not Australian, they were high pitched and no one could understand what was being said. These voices were about 50-100 metres away; they were unaware of our presence. We immediately stopped, Lt Hosie moved up to Jack's position and the plan was hatched, however not to Jack's liking. Jack had ideas of a quick section attack supported by his ever reliable gunner Dennis "Tex" Nevins. Lt Hosie thought it would be a coup if the platoon could capture some. After some discussion Lt Hosie's plan was the one to be implemented. (I don't know why Jack disagreed, as he had often mused aloud, (during our discussions on international affairs in the boozier), of his plans to capture a couple of nogs. Jack believed that they were world class athletes, due to the way they run off when contacted, and thought that he could take advantage of their speed. He planned to smuggle a couple back to Australia, enter them in events such as the Stawell Gift and make a killing. (Maybe just wistful thinking)

Unfortunately Lt Hosie's plan did not include Jack or any part of his section, they were told to wait, whilst he took the rest of the platoon to do the deed. Jack was not to be denied, he set his sect up in an ambush, maybe the nogs will not "Chieu Hoi" and run this way, then we can give them what for, reckons Jack. After about 5 minutes waiting in the ambush position and deadly silence, suddenly to our rear we heard a chorus of "Chieu Hoi, Chieu Hoi" in very loud voices. A slight pause, then the sound of (world class athletes) running, sadly not toward Jack's section.

The platoon married up again, Jack had his "told you so" look on, patrolling then continued, all were hoping that we could have a proper contact soon, this would help the slight drop in morale. I personally believe it's a pity that we did not get a couple of Chieu Hoi's, we could have saved them for when Jack was due back in Australia, the majority of the platoon didn't mind a bet.



[GUESS WHO????????????](#) Yep, none other than our old mate Wally Magalas, fund raising for Vietnam Veterans. Well done Wally! (He'd sell a fridge to an Eskimo, this bloke).

[Bryan \(Blue\) Schafer said.....](#)

On Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> August, the NSW Government hosted a reception at Government house, Sydney, in honour of Vietnam veterans. The Hon Nathan Rees, Minister for Emergency Services and Water represented the Premier. Pictured below are yours truly, CSM Jack Lake and Don Harrod. Jack is the President of the Blue Mountains Vietnam Vets Association, and was asked to nominate a certain number of people to attend. Harrod and I went as we both remembered how difficult Jack was to get on with sometimes, especially when you missed one of his parades! I can report that Jack has now mellowed (a bit anyway), and when given a cool glass, became almost human. You will note that Don and I didn't have glasses in our hands!



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I took my pet owl to the vet, as it didn't make its usual sound. The vet had a look at it and said he couldn't give a hoot.

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**A SIMPLE MESSAGE.** We are all lifelong mates. Well, how about a favour for your mates? Have a prostate check. Just see your doctor. No finger in the you-know-where, just a simple blood test. In 1969, you thought you were bullet-proof. In 2008, you are not. There is a swag of medical evidence linking Vietnam service to Prostate Cancer that is just about to hit the airwaves. Simply put, it is up to you to protect your health.

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"Half Circle" is produced and edited by Don Harrod, C Coy 5RAR (2<sup>nd</sup> tour), with help from Barry Baker, Terry Bates, Mike Bolton, Eddie Davies, Bob Hooper, Bryan Schafer, and some non-humorous humour