

## INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE GOES VIRTUAL



Lieutenant Thomas Roache during Exercise Wirra Jaya at Robertson Barracks, Northern Territory.

Photo: Corporal Rodrigo Villablanca

Members of 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, conducted Exercise Wirra Jaya in a virtual format for the first time from Robertson Barracks in the Northern Territory.

Personnel remained at the home of the Tiger Battalion, while participants from the Indonesian Army, Tentara Nasional Indonesia-Angkatan Darat dialled in from Palur, Central Java in Indonesia.

Because of the COVID-19 travel restrictions, the exercise was altered to suit the virtual delivery of scenario-based training.

Officer Commanding Delta Company Major David Evangelidis was the lead instructor for the exercise and was supported by his second in charge and four lieutenants from the unit.

“This exercise proved that there are no barriers to maintaining this important habitual relationship with Indonesia,” Major Evangelidis said.

“Sometimes you have to think outside the box and use the technology available to continue to develop these important relationships, despite the restrictions induced by the Coronavirus.”

Made possible with the assistance of linguists from the ADF and Tentara Nasional Indonesia-Angkatan Darat, the four-day activity allowed teams to discuss mechanised infantry operations, combat support considerations and combined arms attack methods to continue to develop the interoperability between Australian and Tentara Nasional Indonesia-Angkatan Darat personnel and their equipment.

Lieutenant Tom Roache, an instructor on exercise Wirra Jaya, said he enjoyed the camaraderie among participants.

“I was really impressed by the Tentara Nasional Indonesia-Angkatan Darat’s professionalism, enthusiasm and

the excellent presentation they produced as part of the course,” Lieutenant Roache said.

Indonesian officer Major Risky Aditya, of the 411<sup>th</sup> Raider Infantry Battalion, said the exercise was a great learning opportunity between the Australian and Indonesian armies.

“We look forward to the opportunity to travel to Australia in 2021 to continue our Exercise Wirra Jaya relationship,” Major Aditya said.

The activity concluded with a virtual gift exchange ceremony to thank the Indonesian Army for their long friendship with Australia.

Courtesy Defence News

## LIVE FIRE RANGE IN A BOX

Recently 5 RAR hosted the Live Fire Range in a Box (LFRiB) familiarisation training for 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade.



The Live Fire Range in a Box.

The training was expertly delivered by a former Tiger, WO2 Sam Clarke from 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment.

The new facility allows soldiers to conduct combat shooting training in an adaptive, immersive training environment with highly realistic video based scenarios. (see *B Coy report page 4*)

Courtesy 5 RAR Facebook



The interior of the Live Fire Range in a Box during an enactment.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dave French

G'Day to all Tiger Battalion Association Members, families and friends,

I've been thinking a lot about the work that our Association does in recent weeks. This was born out of a number of different events, interactions and anniversaries which have highlighted the important work we have to do.

The first of these was the commemoration posts on Facebook for those soldiers who were Killed In Action during service in or with the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion. February is a shocking month for the Battalion from the tours of Vietnam through to the valleys of Afghanistan. The posts have proved to be a great way to remember our fallen and honour their memories. Mates and families have reconnected on a couple of occasions and we have also found out more about the history of those soldiers and will utilise this to update our websites and future posts. It is as clear as it ever was that those who we lost in service with the Battalion are gone, but never forgotten. This is important work for us.

The second reason I have been doing a lot of reflecting is the upcoming commemorations on Anzac Day. Not the back and forth on organisation of the day itself (more on that later) but because this Anzac Day marks the tenth anniversary for the deployment and return of Mentoring Task Force – 2, the Battalions 2010/11 deployment to Afghanistan. With that comes some risk. The 'anniversary effect' is an accepted psychological condition – although there is some discussion on if it is a part of Post Traumatic Stress or not – that *'is defined as a unique set of unsettling feelings, thoughts or memories that occur on the anniversary of a significant experience.'* ([see link at end of page](#)). Major anniversaries can sometimes trigger psychological reactions and certainly this tenth anniversary is a big one for the young veterans of Afghanistan. Anniversaries can also be a positive as well of course and our reunions play a major part in assisting in this area as do our social connections. This is important work for us.

The third reason is that the work I do now as a Defence consultant brings me into regular contact with members of the Defence Force who are planning and thinking about future operations. It has been reported widely in the media that major conflict is not a thing of the past and that our region is becoming more unstable. As an important part of the Army – both in location and type – the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion will continue to be front and centre for future deployments. We need to continue to think about how we can connect and support the current serving Tigers, how we can communicate the importance of the Association and its role to them. While details are being finalised, the Battalion is planning a large Binh Ba commemoration this year including sporting, martial skill and social activities. There is an invitation to all members of the Association to attend and take part and I encourage anyone who can to be in Darwin between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of June. This is important work for us to do.

The fourth reason I have been thinking on our work is due to the recent loss of both young and old veterans. In all instances the Association has done our best to support the family of the veteran and we have been greatly aided

by our friends and colleagues in other organisations like the Royal Australian Regiment Corporation and Legacy. This is incredibly important work for us, and unfortunately there only be more of it to come as we all get older.

The final reason that I have spent a lot of time thinking on our role and work as the Association has been the very public and at times heated debates on the issue of veteran mental health and inquiries into veteran suicides. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of March the Committee held initial discussions – at my direction – on how and if we should take a public position on either the establishment of a Royal Commission or the creation of

the proposed National Commissioner. The first option will be voted on in Parliament on Monday 22 March. The success or otherwise of that bill may result in different outcomes for the National Commissioner. Either way, I am of the opinion that this is important work *for everybody* and that we can do more. This will be a change from the previous position of the Association. It does not mean taking a political stance – this isn't about politics but veteran health - but we will need to mark our line in the sand. By the time you receive this issue of Tiger Tales the issue may well have been resolved by the Parliament. This is a divisive issue in the veteran community and everyone will have their own opinions. We will communicate widely with you (update your email contacts!) but I fully accept that not everyone will agree with what a final position of the Association must be. As an old instructor of mine once said, 'often doing nothing is the worst decision to make' and I don't think we can sit on the sidelines any further.

### Anzac Day 2021

To say the organisation of the Anzac Day marches and commemorations in many of our major cities has been haphazard would be an understatement. Many of the organising RSLs require veterans and families to register to march so they can manage a cap on numbers. This is ever changing and I know has been a source of angst for some who think they shouldn't have to register. Can I request please that *everyone* register to march. The reasons being is that only this action will show the veteran community's intent to commemorate our service and our mates to the organisers. If we are able to reach the proposed target that RSLs and Governments should raise any existing limit on the number of those marching.

Register to march and get out there on the day!

In addition the Committee will reach out to organising RSLs in each state to encourage them to raise or remove restrictions on marching on Anzac Day while meeting the maximum COVID-safe numbers that State Governments permit. Registering to march in your city or town will help us immensely.

We all have important work to do in the Association, and as you will see in the pages that follow, the Battalion is doing the same. Take care of yourselves, your mates and your family. March with pride on Anzac Day. Thanks as always for your support.

Duty First.

Dave



## CO'S DISPATCH



LTCOL Matthew Dirago

G'day Tigers,

I normally start our update to you by describing all the good work that the Battalion has achieved, but would first like to again congratulate COL (Retd) Roger Wainwright, OAM on his long deserved recognition in the Australia Day Awards and to BRIG (Retd) Colin Khan, DSO AM, for his equally well deserved recognition as a Life Member of our Association.

The Battalion concluded 2020 with an end of year function at the Gary

Holmes Club attended by your President and Vice President. Here we were able to publicly recognise the outstanding efforts of the Battalion, promote a number of emerging leaders, and farewell some Tigers including our outgoing RSM, WO1 Rob Munro – A duty well done – Thanks RSM.

In a tight race, Support Company were the winners of the 2020 Champion Company award, DFSW Platoon took home the Quintus Cup (Champion Platoon), and the Champion Section (CPL J.J. Kennedy Cup) had been presented earlier in the year. The Warr-Khan Trophy was awarded to CPL Benny Southwell, LT William (Bill) Tilly earned the Subbies Bucket, and CPL Max McCullough earned the Endeavour Cup for his efforts in the Battalion Museum. Our individual awards went to LT Farrands (Fittest), PTE Franz-Hoobin (Strongest), and WO2 McPherson (Champion Shot). In keeping with tradition the Brady Taylor and Jason Challis Cups' were retained by the soldier's AFL and Rugby teams respectively.

I'm glad to report that a significant period of the last few months was spent on R&R – something the Battalion has been eagerly looking forward to after a number of busy training and operational years. Delta Company manned the fort over Christmas to allow the rest of the Battalion to take leave while Charlie and Log Companies maintained our commitment to the COVID Task Force through sub unit rotations.

In January the Battalion welcomed our RSM, WO1 Sean Casey, who joins the Tiger Family following his previous posting as Depot Company Sergeant Major, School of Infantry. WO1 Casey, along with a cast of new members have had a strong positive impact of the Battalion already. We commenced the training year with a range of unit and sub unit induction activities including abseiling and other off-base activities. Our initial training then focussed on "Combat Behaviours" – combined physical and mental skills such as combat shooting, tactical care of a battle casualty, combatives (unarmed combat). We've also enjoyed some short notice opportunities for interstate and distance learning training such as career and language courses.

The next few months see the Battalion build our infantry

section teams through a range of barracks and field activities, culminating in the *Kennedy Cup* Section Competition to be held in Darwin in late March. The Winners of this will proceed to represent the Battalion at the Duke of Gloucester competition in August. Bravo Company are preparing for the first of our Marine Rotational Force- Darwin (MRF-D) field exercises, Charlie Company are trialling some innovative dismounted focussed training, and Delta Company continue their progression of training as our lead company. Support and Logistics Companies continue to support and enable the Battalion. International engagements in 2021 will form much of the Battalion training activities and see us engage with our allies and neighbours. We'll shortly welcome the next MRF-D rotation into Darwin and aim to maintain our strong relationship and our sporting successes. We are also excited to have some new training facilities including a live fire range within the confines of Binh Ba Lines. (Come and see it when you next visit).

Of key interest to the Association is our preparations for commemorating the Battle of Binh Ba. Building on the 2020 model of a 'Binh Ba Week', we are preparing a range of activities in Darwin over the 7-9 June (As close as we can to the actual battle dates). We will promulgate that information shortly through your Association including an open invitation for any 5 RAR or 5/7 RAR Veterans to attend. We expect the event to include a traditional soldier's dinner function on Monday 7th June, followed by historical, ceremonial, and commemorative events on Tuesday 8th June, and culminating in Battalion sporting and competitive events on Wednesday 09th June. (See page 11)

Duty First

LTCOL Matthew Dirago

## NEW RSM - WO1 SEAN CASEY

Warrant Officer Class One Sean Casey was born and raised in the Penrith District of New South Wales. He enlisted in the Australian Army in January 1995 and has held postings in multiple battalions across the Royal Australian Regiment. His career started with a posting to the 6th Battalion followed by being posted to the 3rd Battalion where he served several postings up to the rank of Sergeant. He deployed with the 3rd Battalion on OP



WARDEN in 1999/2000 as a Section Commander, OP CITADEL in 2002 as a Reconnaissance Patrol Commander and OP ASTUTE in 2006 as a Platoon Sergeant.

In 2008, Warrant Officer Casey was posted to Australian Defence Force Academy as a Divisional Sergeant.

(Continued on page 4)



# FROM THE BATTALION - Cont.

## NEW RSM - WO1 SEAN CASEY - Cont.

*(Continued from page 3)*

At the start of 2009 Warrant Officer Casey was then posted to the Parachute Training School as a Parachute Jump Instructor in the position of Warrant Officer Static Line instructing and organising all Parachute Static Line Courses within the Australian Defence Force.

In 2012, he was posted to the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment where he held appointments of Company Sergeant Major of Admin, Charlie, Support Company, and he was the only Rifle Company Sergeant Major during the battalions eight month Operation Slipper deployment to Afghanistan. This culminated with him being awarded the Australia Day Medallion for his efforts.

In 2015 Warrant Officer Casey was posted to Royal Military College Duntroon as a Small Group Instructor and the Operations Warrant Officer.

In 2017 on promotion Warrant Officer Class One, he was appointed as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, the Royal New South Wales Regiment and he was selected to be the Regimental Sergeant Major of Battle Group Waratah. Warrant Officer Casey has also held appointments as the Depot Coy Sergeant Major at the School of Infantry. He has commenced his appointment as the Regimental Sergeant Major of 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment with effect 2021.

Warrant Officer Class One Casey is married to Megan who is a High School PDHPE Teacher. He has three children, Zara (15), Heath (12), and Eden (10). He is a keen Rugby Union and League supporter, enjoys exercising and doing outdoor activities with his family.

## BRAVO COMPANY

As we say thank you and farewell to the many people leaving B Coy at the end of last year, it is also time to welcome the many new additions to the Company. The OC, MAJ Russell George has taken the reins after deploying on Operation Paladin for 12 months within Israel and the Israeli occupied Golan, where he was working as a United Nations Military Observer. The 2IC of the Company is also new, CAPT Gabriel Mead has joined us from 8/9 RAR where he was working as the PL COMD for Mortar Platoon. The CSM, WO2 Adrian Down is the only constant in the CHQ continuing his work as the senior soldier.

The start of the year kicked off with many going on courses. The lower manning and the need for a PL COMD to step up to the 2IC role as the OC went on course, meant that 6 Platoon was dissolved into 4 and 5 Platoon. This provided the remaining platoons the manpower required to conduct training and prepare for the first unit exercise, being Ex TIGERS CRAWL.

Preparations for Ex TIGERS CRAWL included section level SOP development, an individual soldier diagnostic known as TIGERS TRIAL as well as several trips to the range. The addition of the Live Fire Range in a Box (see also page one) located next to the 5 RAR Museum gave the soldiers a convenient and engaging way to conduct weapon drills and combat shooting principals whilst minimising the admin and logistic burden of live fire ranges for the commanders. There has already been a positive re-

## BRAVO COMPANY - Cont.



Reviewing the previous exercise in the LFRiB.

sponse from the soldiers as they notice the effects of more consistent live fire training and the ability to visually see where their shots are landing on the targets.

Following Ex TIGERS CRAWL, the next field activity is The Kennedy Cup. We look forward to watching the sections move through a 48hr bullring activity that will test the soldiers and commanders on infantry skills, endurance and teamwork.

MAJ Russ George

## CHARLIE COMPANY

As 2020 drew to an end, the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion had reorganised and reshuffled its people internally to prepare for the new training year. The focus would be on maintaining a strong Support Company and preparing Army's contingency force elements on heightened notice to move. Charlie Company had just wrapped up its deployment to Afghanistan as part of Force Protection Element 13 and had seen a lot of its operationally experienced personnel posted among the rest of the battalion.

With a lot of new faces taking the field in Charlie Company, we expected a quiet year with routine objectives, likely focussing on rebuilding capability within the company. However moments before the Charlie Company Jackals were set to embark on some well-deserved Christmas



A Joint Army and Police Border Checkpoint / Biosecurity Checkpoint.



## CHARLIE COMPANY - Cont.

leave, the call came out; Charlie Company would be once again be deploying, but this time domestically in support of OP COVID-Assist in the NT.

The soldiers of Charlie Company did for the most part get to enjoy their Christmas leave with family and friends, but once the New Year ticked over and the team was back at work, all preparation was focused on the impending task at hand. The men of the reformed Charlie Company quickly organised into small teams to suit the requirements of the Joint Task Force in charge of the COVID response. The mission was to support the NT Government in its control of state borders including hotel quarantine and the Howard Springs quarantine facility.

A small team led by 2020 Soldier of the year LCPL Lincoln Goldspink deployed to the West Australian Border near Timber Creek to support a Border Check Point (BCP) run by the NTPOL and AFP. When Charlie company soldiers were on, they assisted police with their check-point and communicated the border controls to travellers. When off shift however, the waterways near Timber Creek offered amateur anglers an opportunity to hone their skills, breaking from the repetitive BCP routine.

Another section were assigned in support of hotel quarantine compliance assurance in Darwin City. Led by CPL Samuel Thomas, the soldiers would work as a team in vicinity of quarantining travellers, an alternate perspective for many who had quarantined in the same conditions upon return from overseas operations. A platoon of solders, organised into small teams would support the Howard Springs Quarantine facility. This team would provide close support to medical staff providing care to positive cases of COVID. Another small contingent of Charlie Company soldiers and officers would operate as part of the Joint Task Group and Joint Task Unit Headquarters elements.



PTE Coe of Charlie Company enjoying his day off near Timber Creek.

Soldiers assigned to BCP operations would return to their families slightly earlier as the COVID situation in Australia eased and the checkpoints shut down. Soldiers supporting quarantine would see out the entire month of February aligned to OP COVID-Assist. With all Charlie Company personnel returned back to the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the company is preparing for a very busy training year. Soldiers of Charlie Company are proud to have supported the NT and their nation in a time of need and are ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

LT Jack Collingwood

## DELTA COMPANY

Delta Company (D Coy) in the back end of 2020 started preparation for conducting Sub Unit Training (SUT) in the jungles of Tully. D Coy deployed to Tully in September of 2020, where Jungle Training Wing enabled the soldiers to refine their individual soldier skills in difficult terrain in order to continue to be excellent at the basics. D Coy then moved into section and platoon level operations in the wet, dense terrain of the Tully training area. SUT then culminated in a section competition, Exercise True Grit, which was a combination of endurance activities that included an obstacle course, bayonet assault course and store carrying stand. Delta Coy then returned to Darwin before undertaking a Combat Training Centre (CTC) run Home Station Training (HST) exercise. This saw Delta Coy support the 5<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment (5 Avn) by conducting Air Mobile Operations in the Multi Role Helicopters (MHR90) and CH17 Chinook helicopters in Townsville.

HST and support to 5 Avn Regt took place over four weeks during October and November. HST was a new concept for Army which saw a Combat Team utilising a number of different training aids and integrating both a virtual and a live environment, to conduct training at platoon and up to Combat Team level. HST saw the soldiers and commanders using Non-Lethal Training Ammunition (NLTA), virtual reality and computer simulation technology to enhance their skills in urban operations whilst integrating offensive support, armoured vehicles and direct fire support weapons to create a more realistic training environment. HST culminated in a Combat Team assault on the urban training facility in the close training area in Lavarack Barracks prior to shifting their efforts into Air Mobile Operations.

Delta Coy undertook training on how to emplane and deplane safely and effectively on both the MRH90 and CH47 Chinook helicopter platforms prior to commencing the exercise. The exercise saw the soldiers conduct air medical evacuation and evacuations of persons under capture in a tactical environment by day and night. This involved tactical flying, communication and coordination with the aircrew. This training was valuable to the soldiers and was for many their first introduction to Air Mobile Operations.

On returning to Darwin in mid-November, Delta Coy along with the rest of the Battalion prepared for the Battalion reorg, which saw a large reshuffle of personnel and a number of promotions. Following the Battalion reorg most members of Delta Coy commenced leave over the reduced tempo period (RTP) except for some elements who were required to deploy on OP COVID Assist. This, as part of the Joint Task Force (JTF) 629, saw members assist and supervise personnel coming from overseas who were required to quarantine in Howard Springs. That element finished their task in late January 2021 and now join members of Delta Coy in preparing for the year ahead, with the first big event being Section live fire activities on Exercise Tigers Crawl in March.

MAJ Josh Scott





## FROM THE BATTALION - Cont.

### SUPPORT COMPANY

#### Company Headquarters

At the completion of 2020 Support Company farewelled the CSM WO2 Daniel Sharp as he posted to RMC-Duntroon and the Company 2IC CAPT Joe Morton as he posted to Kapooka to fill the role of ADJT. At the start of 2021 the company welcomed CAPT Jacob Bronk back to the Tiger Battalion after a one year hiatus in Singleton as a platoon commander. WO2 Geoff Loftus, upon his departure from BHQ, now marches into the company as CSM. We have been fortunate enough to keep MAJ Brett Edmonds as OC and with this combination of experience and enthusiasm in the CHQ the future looks bright for Support Company.

The year is looking exceptional busy for the company and the first quarter of 2021 has given us a slice of what to expect. Our platoons will be spread over Australia supporting other organisations within Army. Many JNCO's are on courses at the School of Infantry, in preparation for future employment as Platoon Sergeants or within specialist platoons. The majority of soldiers spent quarter one conducting courses to improve their personal and individual soldier skills like Specialist Combat Communicator Course, Army First aid Course and Tactical Care of the Combat Casualty. The PHQs have not escaped lightly either, as they have been absorbed into planning, conducting and instructing training, courses and ranges. Support Company has risen to the challenged posed by the increasing tempo without falter.

The remainder of 2021 will be filled with many unique training opportunities for the platoons and company headquarters. In particular, the chance to support rifle companies and integrate with the Marine Rotation Force Darwin on Exercise Koolendong will be a highlight. Other International Engagements activities like Exercise Southern Jackaroo will show the flexibility and versatility of Support Company specialist capabilities. Altogether 2021 looks to be fast paced and filled with many unique and exciting training opportunities for all.

CAPT Luke Ede-Jones

#### Signals Platoon

The start of 2021 has been a busy time for the signals specialists of 5 RAR. Following the creatively-administered induction training, Sig PI hit the ground running, first mounting the Basic Combat Communications Course for the battalion, before carrying on into a Specialist Combat Communications Course in March. This training continuum will boost the foundational signals knowledge across 5 RAR, providing a strong base of skilled soldiers to maintain this vital capability.

This high training tempo runs in tandem with the unit's annual progression cycle: March encompasses Ex Tiger's Crawl, the inter-section Kennedy Cup competition and a focus on BHQ operations as the headquarters sig detachments find their feet. The intimate incorporation of Signal PI into these activities will demand persistent drive from those in key detachments; particularly as Sigs balance the requirements of our specialist role with the practice & exercise of infantry fundamentals.

### SUPPORT COMPANY - Cont.

While the past year has acutely demonstrated that best-laid plans will always be challenged by the dynamics of our unpredictable world, looking toward the future nevertheless reveals great promise for the reinforcement and revitalisation of the platoon. Recent integration of 1 Combat Signals Regiment's dedicated-5 RAR node has been greatly welcomed; providing a direct conduit for training and best-practice knowledge in a rapidly evolving field. New training facilities in use present additional opportunities to diversify a platoon training program that can become increasingly monopolised by technically-focused activities and exercise preparation. As the year gets up to speed Sig PI is working diligently to be ready for the challenges to come.

LT Bellamy

#### Recon/Sniper Platoon

As part of the endless cycle of postings, discharges and Special Forces (SF) selection attempts, Reconnaissance and Sniper Platoons' first parade for 2021 saw many old faces replaced by a new generation of fresh, energetic and eager soldiers. A new batch of Patrol Commanders and Team Leaders stepped into their roles with only CPL Yates and CPL Harmeay remaining from the previous year, helping to maintain the culture of excellence established by our predecessors. A complete change in the Platoon Headquarters saw SGT Thomas return from his sabbatical in the Rifle Companies and SGT Wyley promote into Sniper Supervisor. Their insertion has been key to establishing a productive, adaptive and modernising culture within the platoon.

RS Platoon hit the ground at a sprint, with the entire platoon spread from pillar to post conducting a range of courses and recertification's including; Unmanned Aerial Systems, First Aid, Ranges, Communications and Vehicle training. Five JNCO's were sent to the School of Infantry to conduct the Advanced Reconnaissance Course, learning the latest in commanding an RS Patrol and RS Platoon in the field and barracks. Additionally two soldiers have begun language courses at the Defence Force School of Languages in order to support the multitude of anticipated International Engagements later in the year.

Looking to the future the platoon, will participate in the upcoming exercises 'Tigers Crawl' and 'Tigers Walk'. The Platoon will also be fielding a team in the annual Kennedy's Cup section competition with some participants hopeful of selection in the 5 RAR Duke of Gloucester Cup squad. RS platoon will continue to be heavily engaged in qualification courses and equipment trials for the first half of the year before shifting our focus to conducting multiple Basic Reconnaissance Courses in preparation for our eventual departure and handover to a new generation of RS Soldiers and NCO's.

LT Etheridge

#### Mortar Platoon

Mortar Platoon brought in the working year with the always essential mandatory training. This year the Bn was able to utilise the local Cinemas, so the long days of presentations and briefs were done in relative comfort,



SUPPORT COMPANY - Cont.

with the odd popcorn combo. While the first working week in the Bn was filled with briefs and introductions, it allowed the PI to get back into the rhythm of daily PT sessions and glorious mess lunches. However this period was only to last the week.

Following the riveting briefs, the battalion moved straight into courses and EX Tigers Ready. During this phase we were able to introduce our newest members into the PI and farewell those who unfortunately were leaving 5 RAR. Particular mention goes to PTE Dickman as he finds greener pastures outside of Army. While PTE Moore decided that his favourite colour was no longer Green but a dark shade of Blue and thus decided to join the Air Force and protect the skies. It was not all doom and gloom for Mortar PI however, the year was just beginning and so was the fun.

Exercise Tigers Ready allowed the PI to refresh on the basic skills of the soldiers, with those that needed a refresh in the Army Combative Program and Tactical Care of the Combat Casualty given the opportunity to do so. While few conducted the training, the rest of the platoon utilised this time to hone their skills on the tubes, with battle PT sessions ending in Number 1 races. Honourable mention goes to PTE Davidson whose agility and speed on the tube earned him the highly coveted prize of an Early Knock Off on a Friday. With EX Tigers Crawl just around the corner, those not being utilised for Safety Staff will be practicing their basic rifleman skills conducting a plethora of live fire attacks and ranges at section level.



DFSW Platoon back and ready for action in 2021.

Myles Wheeler coming in as the new Platoon Sergeant. We also farewelled some old faces with PTEs Brodrick Cowan and Rohullah Safdari moving on to the next phase of their lives outside of Army.

Like any year in Army, mandatory training came and went and then the Platoon shifted focus to our core business – training to provide direct fire support to the Battalion in all phases of war. Consistently the Soldiers have been revising and drilling their key skillsets ranging from fire planning and sustained fire machine gunnery through to anti-armour stalking and anti-armour engagement. On top of that, many of the Soldiers upskilled and completed various courses concurrently as part of Ex TIGERS READY including Black Hornet Nano UAS Operator, Army First Aid and Army Combative Program Level 1 - 3.

Moving forward, 2021 has plenty in store for 64. In March, the Platoon will go and support II Class Cadets from RMC -Duntroon as enemy party in what will no doubt be a very cold but rewarding experience – helping to shape and develop Army's future leaders. May will see DFW PI deploy to Mount Bunday Training Area for Ex TIGERS WALK which will be the first big hit out as a Platoon with live fire training progression up to Army Training Level 3B (ATL 3B). Once Ex TIGERS WALK is complete the second half of the year will have just as much and more to do.

Until next time, 64 Out.

LT Tilly



Mortar Platoon conducting crash action drills as part of a battle PT

While this is important for the PI and Bn our next main milestone and focus are EX Tigers Walk and Southern Jackaroo, where all the training comes to fruition and the lads, in a live fire environment with the tubes, can bring the ferocity with high trajectory and low velocity.

LT Doble

Direct Fire Support Weapons Platoon

G'Day Tigers,

It has been a busy start to the year for the Heavy Hitters of the 5th Battalion. Returning well rested after a long break, the Soldiers of DFW PI started the year off with a small reshuffle of manning following the raising of 64E (64 is the call sign of DFW PI). We welcomed new faces with CPLs Bradley Bryant and Benny Southwell coming in to the Platoon as SECT COMDs of 64A and 64E and CPL

LOGISTICS COMPANY

Introduction

Logistics Company welcomed a lot of new members in 2021, including the seasoned CSM, WO2 Andrew Grant and our newly promoted ASM, WO2 Jamie Harwood. We commenced the year with our routine induction and mandatory training before sharpening our basic soldier skills with the full suite of all-corps courses, including; Tactical

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## FROM THE BATTALION - Cont.

### LOGISTICS COMPANY - Cont.

(Continued from page 7)

Care of the Combat Casualty, Combatives, First Aid and MAG58, in preparation for the training year.



The 7.62MM FN MAG58 General Purpose MG

#### Transport Section

CPL Wilson is working with an entirely new crew this year; largely consisting of drivers fresh from the school. Despite this, transport section have hit the ground running with specialist courses, instructing on B Vehicle documentation, G Wagon and Driver Instructor courses, just to name a few. The truckies will be critical in enabling the larger exercises this year once they have completed their suite of specialist driver courses, like bulk fuel and bulk water.

#### Technical Support Platoon

The members from TSP have been busy taking on a more 'green' approach to work recently, replacing their tools with rifles and getting acquainted with each other via combative training. The Army Combative Program Level 1 to 2 (ACP) was a highlight for most members as it exerted energy that usually gets applied to spinning spanners. Tactical Care of the Combat Casualty (TCCC) and the Army First Aid Course (AFA) have been some of those courses that continues to elude even the most senior Loggy members, but now everyone across the board is qualified and ready for whatever may come this year.

#### Main Q-Store

The Main Q-Store has been juggling multiple tasks, enabling the training of our "Q-wees" and vitally maintaining a steady state of daily logistic support. Away from technical tasks, they initially focussed on their 'soldier first' skills in preparation for field, Kennedy Cup, TCCC, AFA, ACP Lvl 1 to 2 and Mag 58 courses. A key task this year will be the introduction, training and delivery of the new Soldier Combat Ensemble (SCE-19), which has just arrived in a few a shipping containers ready to be counted. Led and controlled by the Q-Store, this will be a challenge to ensure that all members are suitably equipped but also the withdrawal, control and backlog of the previous SCE is managed effectively.

#### Future plans

Logistics Company is now preparing to support Exercise Tigers Crawl at Kangaroo Flats Training Area, whilst simultaneously preparing our 'Kennedy Cup' section for the big competition at the end of the month. Oh – and in the background TSP will be returning our stolen Battalion sign to its rightful place, albeit via a couple of extra welds this time!

Lt Allen

### 5 RAR'S AUSTRALIA DAY FUN RUN 2021

#### *A satirical report of the Battalion's achievements in the Darwin OzRun.*

The morning was warm, the humidity bore down on all the runners as some watched and some participated in the pre-race Zumba warm-up led by a zesty lady from the local community. The smell of deep heat wafted through the air, a tell-tale sign of the crusty warrant officers and SGT's who had braved potential crippling in the upcoming race at the hands of their prematurely aged knees and fused spines. A call came over a nearby PA and en masse the body of yellow shirted Officers and SNCO's moved forward to the start line, strategically inserting themselves amongst the local population. Their goal, at all costs avoid embarrassment and potential extras if beaten by the CO in Darwin's Australia Day 5k Fun Run.

A moments warning, the flashing of cameras and suddenly the throng of bodies were off! Feet hitting the pavement rapidly LT Etheridge moved to sit behind the front runner. Sweating profusely all were feeling the lack of acclimatization from holidays down south and little too much festive cheer at Christmas and New Years'. The front runners soon broke away and LT Roache took the lead position finishing first for the 5 RAR participants. LT Etheridge after a wrong turn narrowly held off his OC to place second with MAJ Edmonds in third. All three placing in the top twenty for the event.

Sweaty, panting and thirsty the collection of yellow shirts were herded like cats and eventually assembled for a team photo before the carefree LT's took to the waterfront to cool off. The first community event for 5 RAR was done and many more will follow.

LT Etheridge

#### **CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED**

**First of all, I would like to say thank you, to all those people who have sent me their stories that I have been able to publish in Tiger Tales.**

**But, after more than thirteen years as the editor, I am desperately in need of contributions! If I do not receive any anecdotes, memories or articles, I may not be able to fill the pages of Tiger Tales. We may see only the reports from the President, the Battalion, some State Reps and the Obituaries.**

**I do not believe that any of us would want Tiger Tales to lack the interesting content, which many of you have provided. It is also my hope that I have been successful in providing you with enjoyable reading in the issues since assuming the editorship.**

**Gary Townsend  
The Editor**

# A SNIPER'S PERSPECTIVE

9



Through the darkness we move with caution, passing Qalas (*loosely translates to settlements*) whose inhabitants are fast asleep, unaware of our presence. Our night vision goggles a green hue, gathering ambient light courtesy of the snipers moon. Foothills beckon us towards the mountain looming above, waiting to

accept us with its cold and jagged embrace. We begin the ascent.

Slowly we wind up and up ... legs aching, lungs craving for more oxygen as we gain altitude. Our equipment feels heavier with every step that's taken. Eyes scan, ears listen, smells are analysed. We must remain vigilant as the enemy uses these mountains as well. THUD! ... One of the patrol members has taken a fall down the hill side. We can only hope no-one has heard us.

Many hours later we have arrived at our destination. A quick reconnaissance of the area deems it clear. We lay wet shivering from sweat, high up in the mountain as an icy wind cuts to the bone. Our Observation Post is set ... a panoramic view awaits us. The sun begins to rise and sheds light upon our target area.

With eyes glued to our optics we begin a methodical scan of the area. Each patrol member responsible for a given arc, searching for any indicators of an enemy presence. The local pattern of life begins. Smoke rises from compounds, herds are led to graze and farmers tend to their crops.

Individuals are scrutinized as to their intentions. Do they have weapons? Bingo! Small groups begin moving to their fighting positions, unearthing caches of weapons along the way. We have counted upwards of thirty-plus insurgents, travelling in groups of five to six, armed with an assortment of weaponry ... AK 47, PKM (Kalashnikov machine gun), RPG (Rocket Propelled Grenade), bolt-action rifles. They have ammo bearers following behind. Amongst them children are embedded within. A cowardly tactic indeed, but one which the INS (Insurgents) know we would have difficulty in engaging.

Reports are sent to CHQ in detail, chronicling these events ... a commentary of the battlefield as seen through our eyes.

*"I39 this is I63Y, multiple RPG and PKM teams sighted. Request permission to engage key targets, over."*

Ranges and angles are calculated. Wind strength and direction is judged. External climatic conditions bring forth the challenge of determining our final firing solutions. Scopes are set, yet we wait, continuously updating all available information needed to release that inevitable shot. Time slows as we wait for the green light to engage. A calm anticipation descends upon us.

*"I63Y this is I39, green light to engage C2 (Command and Control) elements and heavy weapon teams, out."*

Each individual conducts final calculations and applies these to their scopes.

*"Co-ord shoot, at my command, all call-signs report when ready."*

We in turn acknowledge our team leader.

*"Ready, Ready... Ready, Ready... Stand-by... Fire"*

A loud report echoes throughout the valley as four Sniper Weapon Systems engage simultaneously. Insurgents tumble, scatter and fall into aqueducts. Some emerge clearly wounded. Others call children over using them as human shields to affect their withdrawal to a safer position. Those remaining seek cover and receive unwelcome attention from us as we systematically engage their rear echelon, picking it to pieces.

This scenario is just one of the numerous occasions where snipers have been utilised to accurately target Insurgents beyond the range of the combat team's inherent weapon systems. Not only has our ability to provide precision long range fire and gather information requirements prevented the inevitable collateral damage often associated with warfare conducted within a COIN (Counter Insurgency) orientated environment, but also allowed other friendly elements to shape their course of action and set the conditions in place for them to manoeuvre. This undoubtedly, has prevented the Insurgents from initiating well prepared ambushes. On almost every occasion I63Y sniper team has initiated contact with the insurgents within the Tangi Valley. By forcing the Insurgents to adopt another scheme of manoeuvre it is clear that the capability provided by just four Snipers has undoubtedly prevented casualties throughout the combat team time and time again.



Members of the I63Y Sniper Team, CPL Marc Danieletto and PTE Grant Robins engage insurgents during an earlier operation.

Our tour thus far has been, albeit an eye opener at times, a great privilege to serve our nation as a specialist asset within a Combat Team environment where everyone brings a niche capability to the forefront. As a sniper we see things from within our sights with different eyes and from different points of view. To the enemy ... so far away. To us ... up close and very personal, without remorse. Providing a skill set that is in my mind, without a doubt, the best job on this planet.

PTE J. P. Rolston  
Sniper, CT-C, 5 RAR, MTF-2

**Quote: "The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will hate those that speak it."**

**George Orwell**



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# BUSHRANGER - A2-773

RAAF Serial: A2-773  
Model: UH-1H  
US Serial 67-17575  
Construction Number: 9773

It is believed that this Huey may have been originally built as a D Model but modified to H Model standards prior to delivery.



The Bushranger—A2-773

A2-773 was delivered to 9 Squadron in Vietnam on 4 July 1968. Interestingly, A2-773 was used to validate the 'Bushranger' gunship concept before three (3) others were also converted. The gunships carried twin-fixed forward-

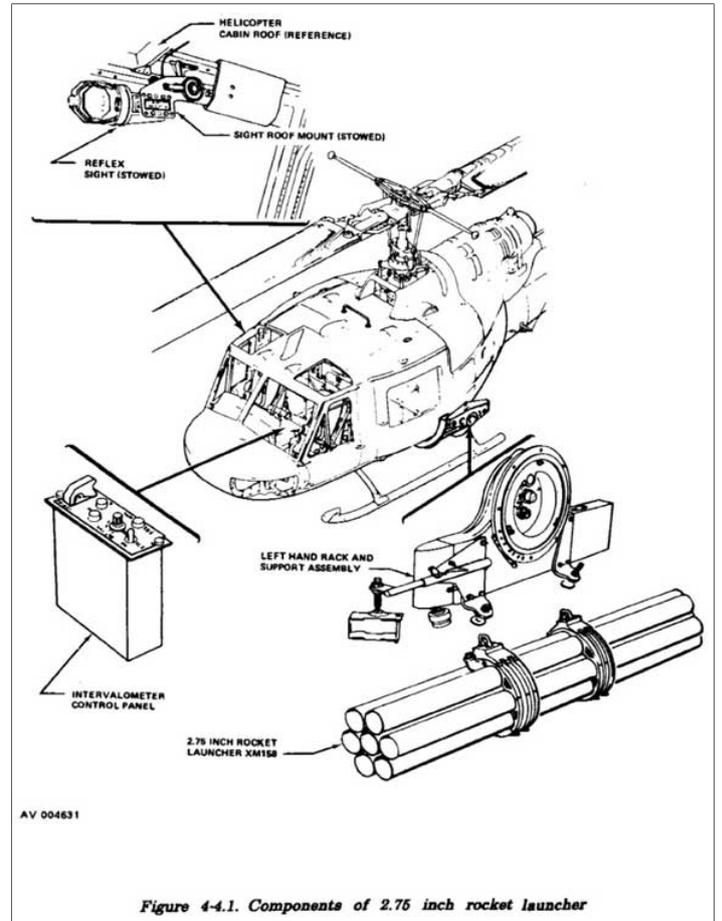


Figure 4-4.1. Components of 2.75 inch rocket launcher

ward-firing 7.62-millimetre mini-guns and two seven-tube 2.75 inch rocket launchers, in addition to the two door-mounted M60 machine-guns. These "Bushranger" gunships were able to cover troop-carrying helicopters approaching "hot" landing zones and as well as providing close fire support.

Post-Vietnam service, the Huey was transferred to Australian Army Aviation in December 1989 and served with the 1st Aviation Regiment. The Iroquois was transported by C-130 Hercules aircraft to Christmas Island to assist with refugee problem (28 August to 8 September 2001.) The ex-'Bushranger' was subsequently retired and placed into storage.

A2-773 is now at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) Annex in Mitchell, ACT and set to be restored to Vietnam configuration for eventual display. Apparently, the AWM has sought this helicopter for some time because of its significant provenance, including two (2) RAAF pilots winning gallantry awards.

Readers may be interested to note that the original 'Bushranger' configuration had both the minigun and rocket launcher to the rear; the later configuration saw the minigun mounted forward in the more familiar position. Also of note is the removal of the perspex from the forward window of the cargo compartment to facilitate 'hot' refuelling; it also had the added benefit of reducing glare for the door gunners.

Research: Roger Lambert

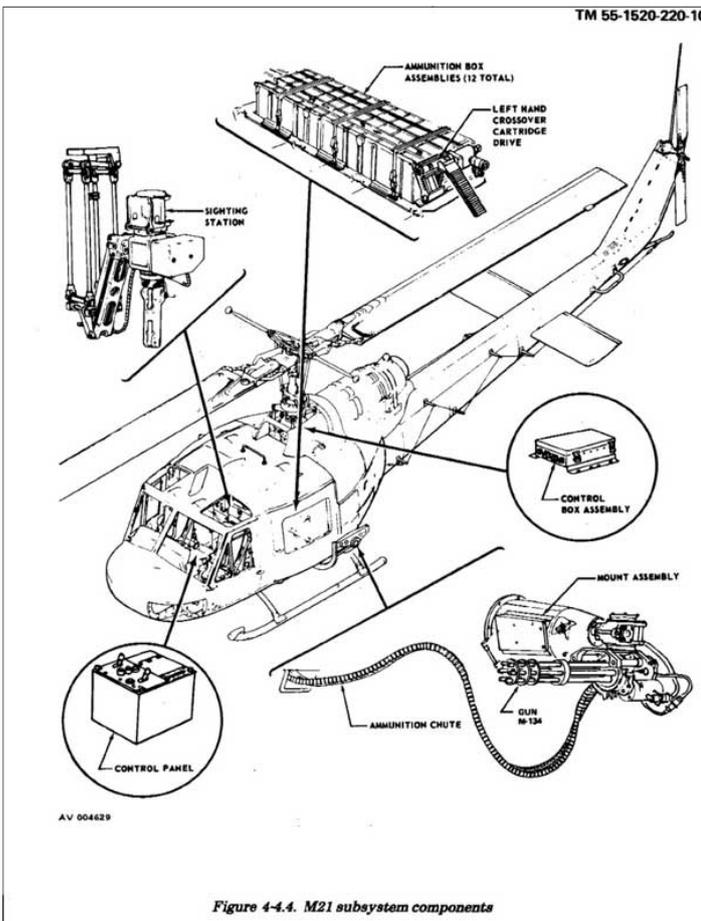


Figure 4-4.4. M21 subsystem components



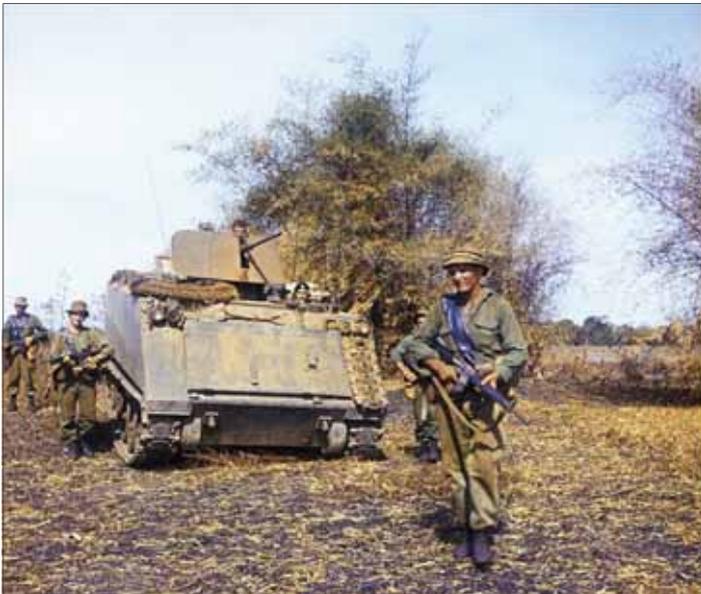
## VIETNAM - FEBRUARY 1967

11



Phuoc Tuy Province, Vietnam. February 1967. Walking beside an M113 armoured personnel carrier from 3rd Cavalry Regiment, Royal Australian Armoured Corps, troops of B Company, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, leave the jungle to search semi-open rice padi areas during Operation Tamborine, a search and destroy mission near the 1st Australian Task Force base at Nui Dat.

Identified personnel include 214548 Corporal Geoff Luck, in front holding an M16A1 automatic rifle; directly behind him and partially obscured is 2782655 Garry Cassidy; to the right front of the armoured personnel carrier is 2781449 John Murphy and a short distance behind him is 3786972 Bruce Everard.



The APC is probably a mortar carrier as the soldier without a hat behind the .50 Calibre machine gun shield is 216422 Sergeant Graham Nesbitt of 5 RAR's Mortar Platoon.

## NUI DAT CONCERT 1969



The 'Diggers' from 5RAR enjoying a welcomed break, watching a concert given by Australian entertainers.

The entertainers gave unselfishly of their time to entertain the troops, and to make their 12 month tour feel a little shorter. Can anyone recognise faces?

## 'BINH BA WEEK' - DARWIN

The Battalion has begun preparations for commemorating the 'Battle of Binh Ba'. Building on the 2020 model of a 'Binh Ba Week', they are preparing a range of activities in Darwin over the Monday 7 to Wednesday 9 June (As close as they can to the actual battle dates).

There is an open invitation for any 5 RAR or 5/7 RAR Veterans to attend. All activities will be held at Robertson Barracks and you will need photo ID to gain entry. At this stage the event will include:

### Monday 7th June

A tour of the Battalion Lines and the 5 RAR Museum. In the evening a traditional soldier's dinner function (currently it is uncertain if Vets or partners can attend).

### Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June

Historical, ceremonial, and commemorative events.

### Wednesday 09<sup>th</sup> June

Battalion sporting and competitive events.

Planning is underway for this event, but the actual details have not been finalised. The RSM will inform Gary Townsend as details come to hand and they will be forwarded to those who have said they will be attending.

If you are considering visiting Darwin for this event, contact Gary (07 5594 4780 or [garyt.5rar@gmail.com](mailto:garyt.5rar@gmail.com)) so that he can collate all of the attendees, including which activities they would like to attend. He will then send the information to the RSM by no later than Sunday 16 May.

## ANZAC DAY FRASER ISLAND

FYI, the Orchard Beach RSL on Fraser Island will be holding our unique Dawn Service on ANZAC Day as we have for the past 15 years or more.

However; because of the late notice related to being permitted to hold a service we can't provide food or drinks like we normally do, simply because we don't have enough lead time to acquire licenses and permits. We will be setting up tents and toilets etc.

We simply ask that everyone brings their own food and drinks to participate in the service and stay on to enjoy the rest of the day with us as. I have attached a photo of our last Pre-Covid service.

Barry (Stevo) Stevens  
[barry\\_istevens@yahoo.com](mailto:barry_istevens@yahoo.com)  
Orchard Beach RSL





# IN MEMORIAM

## 217830 JEAN PIERRE BUZELIN 3 April 1947 - 20 November 2020

LCPL Jean Buzelin died in a Gold Coast hospital on Friday 20 November, succumbing quickly to cancer.

Also known as John or 'Buz' he joined 5 RAR in May 1968, after completing Recruit and Infantry training. He deployed to Vietnam with the Battalion, serving in 6 Platoon B Company. In August Buz was posted to 1 ALSG at Vung Tau. On his return to Australia he was re-posted to 5 RAR in February 1970. Buz transferred to Service Corps (RAASC) in August 1970, and served with them until his discharge in September 1972.

A Funeral Service was held for Buz on Monday 8 January at the Garden Chapel, Allambie Gardens, Gold Coast. A 5 RAR Association Sash was presented to the family by an Association representative.



## 6708240 IRVINE STUART BROOKS 9 May 1945 - 11 December 2020

PTE Irvine Brooks died at 10:30hrs on Friday 11 December, it was not unexpected as he had been battling cancer.

Irvine was a 1<sup>st</sup> intake National Serviceman who completed Recruit Training at 2 RTB. He joined 5 RAR in September 1965 where he completed Corps Training. Following this he served as the machine gunner of 9 Section, 3 Platoon, A Company. In November/December 1965 he deployed to New Guinea. Irvine then deployed to Vietnam on 8 May 1966 and completed the full tour, returning to Australia with the Battalion aboard HMAS Sydney on 12 May 1967.

A Funeral Service was held for Irvine on Thursday 17 December at Graham Family Funerals Directors' Chapel, Newtown, and a Sash was presented to the family.



## 3791539 ARTHUR THOMAS ALFRED BOLAND 9 November 1946 - 26 January 2021



PTE Arthur 'Tom' Boland died peacefully with his family beside him, on Tuesday 26 January, after suffering from cancer.

Tom completed his recruit training at 2 RTB, Puckapunyal, and his Corps training at 3 TB (Infantry Corps Wing). He joined the Battalion in December 1967, serving in 10 Platoon D Com-

pany, until November 1969. Tom, a National Serviceman, was disappointed to be transferred from the Battalion, this was because his enlistment period was due to end only four months into the 1969-70 Tour of Vietnam. He was transferred to Infantry Centre (Reinforcement Wing) and in May 1969 to Southern Command Personal Depot.

A Funeral Service was held for Tom, on Wednesday 3 February, at the Peninsula City Church, Frankston.

## 2174592 WALTER RICHARD BARNETT 26 May 1948 - 1 February 2021



PTE Walter 'Wally' Barnett died during the night of 1 February in his home town of Hervey Bay QLD, he passed peacefully in his sleep.

Wally served two tours of SVN, the first with 1 ARU and 3 RAR in 1967-68 and then returned to 1 ARU in July-August 1969. On 6 August he was transferred to 5 RAR, joining Trackers

Platoon in Support Company, where he remained until returning to Australia with the Battalion on 5 March 1970. In August 1970 Wally deployed to Singapore where he served with 1 RAR until June 1971. He served with various other units including 3 RTB, Infantry Centre and 1<sup>st</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> RNSWL during the 13 years of his enlistment.

A Funeral Service was held for Wally on 11 February and a 5 RAR Association Sash was presented to his son.

## 2787916 COLIN CHARLES BRINES 24 April 1947 - 11 February 2021

PTE Colin 'Blogsy' Brines died peacefully in his sleep at an Aged Care facility where he resided in Yarrowonga, VIC.

Colin, a National Serviceman, deployed, with 5 RAR to South Vietnam in February 1969. He served with Delta Company in Company Head Quarters (CHQ), had a short stint with 11 Platoon and then returned to CHQ. Colin was medically returned to Australia on 17 September of that year.

It was Colin's wish that there be no funeral or service held and the family acted accordingly.

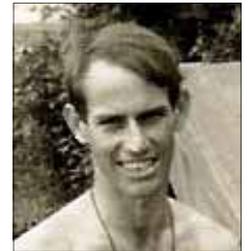


## 235268 TIMOTHY JORDAN BRITTEN 23 October 1943 - 15 February 2021

CAPT Timothy Britten died in the late morning of 15 February in Greenwich Hospital, Sydney.

Tim graduated from RMC-D in 1964 as a Lieutenant. He joined 1 RAR for a few months and then spent three years in New Guinea with the P&NG Training Depot and the Pacific Island Regiment. In January 1969 he deployed with 5 RAR to South Vietnam as the Intelligence Officer. Approximately in June of that year he assumed the position of 2IC Delta Company. Tim served there until he took command of the Advance Party, RTAing on 18 February 1970. Tim took his discharge in 1974.

Tim's Service was held at Sydney's Northern Suburbs Crematorium on Friday 19 February. The family were presented with a 5 RAR Association Sash.



**Quote: "(Of the Australian soldier) The bravest thing God ever made."**

**"Anon. A British officer quoted in Punch, 1915"**

# IN MEMORIAM - Cont.

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## 2789164 DOUGLAS JAMES PAGE 10 April 1946 - 21 February 2021



PTE Douglas Page died in the middle of the day of Sunday 21 February, he had not been travelling well and suffering for some time.

A National Serviceman when he deployed to South Vietnam in February 1969 with 5 RAR. Doug was a member of 3 Section, 10 Platoon, Delta Company. On Operation Quintus Thrust, the first operation of the 1969/70 Tour, he was wounded in a mine incident near Hoa Long. In this incident the Battalion lost three members Killed-in-Action and several others wounded. Doug was medically evacuated to Australia on 26 March 1969.

His family decided to hold a private cremation service for Doug and requested that we respect their privacy in this matter.

## 14429 ALLAN CHARLES McLEAN 26 October 1936 - 17 March 2021

CPL Allan McLean died late on the night of Wednesday 17 March, after losing a long battle with cancer.

Allan deployed to South Vietnam, with the Anti-Tank Platoon, on 10 May 1966. When the Reconnaissance Platoon was formed in September of that year he was transferred to Alpha Company. He served there until his return to Australia on 22 February 1967.

Allan returned to Vietnam with 6 RAR, serving as the Pioneer Platoon Sergeant from 8 May 1969 to 16 May 1970.

A funeral Service was held for Allan at 11:00hrs on Wednesday 24 March, at Gregson and Weight's Chapel, 5 Gregson Place, Caloundra, QLD.



## 214198 TREVOR JAMES GAY 9 July 1942 - 2 December 2019



We have belatedly been notified, by the widow of CPL Trevor Gay, that he died on Monday 2 December 2019, when he suffered a major heart failure.

Trevor served as a signaller with the Signals Platoon, Support Company, deploying to South Vietnam on 28 April 1966. He served in that position for the Battalion's entire 1966-67 Tour.

Trevor was not very comfortable with ocean voyages, so he volunteered to be a member of the rear party. He flew back to Australia with that party, on a chartered aircraft, arriving on 9 May 1967.

**Quote: "There is one thing worse than fighting with allies -- and that is, to fight without them."**

**"Winston Churchill."**

## PLAQUE AT REGIMENTAL SQUARE



'Mounted at last'. The Sydney City Council have 'at last' mounted our Association/Battalion Plaque (see above) at Regimental Square Sydney. You may remember that our Plaque was dedicated at our Reunion 2020 and was to be mounted shortly after our Battalion's 55<sup>th</sup> Birthday on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020, but COVID-19 put a halt on those proceedings. It is noted that our Plaque is suitably mounted (and well placed) to the middle of the mounting wall, behind the actual Memorial, which is shown below.



## MEMORABILIA SPECIAL BUY

For a limited time you can buy an assorted pack of the four car stickers shown below, normally these are \$5.00 each. This pack is available for a very low price of only \$10.00, or half price, including postage. The Order form on Page 20 has been adjusted for this special.

A point to consider is that the original Tiger Head SVN sticker is limited in stock and may not last much longer.



Tiger Head SVN



Tiger Head C/Patch



ICB/SVN Ribbons



Tiger Head Round



TAS



Due to the dreaded COVID-19 no activities were held for Tassie members.

Unfortunately we lost one of our own 5 RAR stalwarts with the passing of Irvine Brooks. Irvine was a First Tour veteran and was a proud member of 3 Platoon A Company. He did not miss any State functions and could be relied upon to perform any task required of him, RIP Irvine.

In late 2020 I realised that I could not produce proof of entitlement for all the six medals I wear. My Certificate of Service I received on my discharge from the Army in 1987 only showed the entitlement to three medals and the ICB. After speaking to Gary Townsend I placed a request for an update to my Certificate of Service. In late January 2021 I received this document which showed all my Decorations and Medals (including the Returned from Active Service Badge) which was missing from the 1987 document.

The new Certificate (see page 17 for details) is a brilliant piece of work and I encourage all 5 RAR veterans to re-apply for this authenticating document.

Kevin Mulligan

WA



Well, another Christmas has passed and here in Western Australia and we were able once more to celebrate as an Association, having held our lunch at 5 RAR HQ WA at 43 Below on Saturday 5 December.

The attendance was outstanding with over 60 members, wives and partners attending along with the widows Lynette Sibson who was accompanied by her daughter Kathy and husband, Mark, and Wendy Godfrey, who was accompanied by her daughter Billie, granddaughter Ali and great granddaughter McKenzie Hope Godfrey. So, we were certainly blessed with this generational mix. What was also pleasing was we had two of our newer veterans in David Beecher with his partner Kim and Shaun Martin. David is a serving policeman, and he is a strong supporter of our events whenever he can attend. We did miss the presence of Paddy Meckenstock who had passed away just short of Christmas.

Members travelled from near and far to spend the day



Some of the WA Tigers help Roger celebrate his 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary.

WA - Cont.



with us and we were delighted that so many of them could join us. Special mentions include Bruce Prior and his wife Ina, who after living in Toodyay for 27 years have now moved to Perth to live, so we are looking forward to seeing them both more often. There was a strong representation from Mandurah which is now only a 45-minute train journey to the city and given that it was a Saturday free train travel was the go.

Leading the push from this wonderful location was Bob and Jan Armitage, Bill and Val Hunt, Lionel and Vicki Morris and last but not forgotten was Terry Major. Further afield from Bunbury was Colin and June Roach and Sylvia Meredith, the widow of Graham Meredith. From nearby Collie was Rodney and Loxley Beaglehole and Murray and Kaye Saunders. From the wheatbelt town of Goomalling we had Keith and Anne Drew.

Proceedings were commenced with the Ode recited by our resident ode reciter John Burrige with his normal parade ground voice, which I am sure would have been heard in the street above and anyone listening would have also stood to attention.

As is customary all members each bring a gift, these are then raffled so raising money for the WA Association. The raffle is a highlight of the day, given the wide range of gifts and the number of tickets sold. Terry Bates our stalwart auctioneer once more brought the hammer down on several donations, including the crayfish provided by Peter Guyatt which this year are not only plentiful but due to China banning their import meant that the number of crays available for local consumption were greatly increased at a very reasonable cost

Also auctioned was a vintage red wine under the label Cheap Charley, Binh D445 and bottled by the Baria Laundry. It is described on the label as Vinh Rouge, carefully matured in traditional mangrove wood casks in the legendary Rung Sat swamps. Filtered to remove impurities through Vung Tau sand, tasted and approved by gourmets and imbibers at Australian Task Force and D445. Known locally as the Horseshoe Hops, Phan Rang fuel, Saigon Syrup and Nui Dat nectar. It has the seal of approval from Phuoc Tuy pharmacists and was awarded a Gold Medal at the Dat Do Dogs. I have yet to meet a person who has survived the drinking of same nor do I know who the wordsmith was, but they certainly put a considerable effort into the description. Well done.

As to the gold medal it has a long way to go to beating Harry Neesham and his two gold medals for water polo at the International Masters Games.

Lunch was again traditional Christmas Fare and was not only plentiful but beautifully presented by the Chefs. House wine was pro-

## AROUND THE STATES - Cont.

15



### WA - Cont.



Max Stephenson, Colin and June Roach at the Christmas Lunch.

vided at a reduced cost to members and guests and was somewhat more popular than the Binh D445. We are truly fortunate to have Sandra and Steve as our hosts at 43 Below and we thank them sincerely for their support of our Association throughout the year. Thanks also go the staff at 43 Below who make us welcome and nothing is too much trouble for them whenever we hold a function there. If and when you are again able to travel to Perth this is the go-to place.

Now that we have arrived at 2021, our next get together will be the Battalion Birthday on 1 March and of course will be celebrated at 43 Below.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of December we were privileged to entertain our current National Vice President and former National President Roger Wainwright, accompanied by his son Andrew from the Northern Territory, who were to visiting family in family in WA. Roger is a regular attendee here in WA due to family connections, but it had been some time since his last visit so we were delighted we could once more meet without COVID-19 hovering over us.

On this occasion the diggers were outnumbered by the Officers and as such there were not enough Batmen to go round so the officers were required to acquire their own food and drink.

Conversation was not only entertaining, but also enlightening, given the wealth of knowledge that was evident around the table. Included in this gathering among the officers apart from Roger was Daryl Lovell, Greg Negus, Harry Neesham and. Graham 'Pud' Ross an MC recipient with 7 RAR following a stint with 5 RAR.

Our State President Alan McNulty DCM was able to attend and act as host but had to cancel an invitation to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace for recipients of the DCM. Of course, the cancelling of the Garden Party is true, but they are not normally held in December.

Thank you Roger, for giving us of your time and knowledge and of course bringing WA up to speed on all things that are 5 RAR.

Although HQ WA for the 5 RAR Association was closed for a public holiday on 1 March we were able to gather on Tuesday 2 March for the Battalion's birthday.

A good attendance, but we were missing some of our

### WA - Cont.



stalwarts, Bob Armitage, Ken Benson and Lionel Morris were either in hospital or not well enough to attend.

The management, staff and catering at 43 Below was first class and generous in the amount of food served.

All of the protocols were adhered to and we thank John Burridge for the Ode, and for the Toasts, Bruce Prior to departed comrades and Mike Nettleton to the Battalion.

Our next gathering will be ANZAC Day and 5 RAR Members will form up on Barrack St and St Georges Terrace from 09:00hrs, look for the 5 RAR Banner.

43 Below will be open for 5 RAR Members and Partners for lunch and drinks, tickets will be issued and please use the Barrack St entry only.

Ray Ward

### VIC



The Melbourne Anzac day march is being organised so as to comply with the state Covid-19 requirements for a Public Event. Accordingly, every participant (as well as every banner) **must be registered** with RSL Victoria beforehand otherwise their participation **will be denied**. The Dawn Service is restricted to 1500 which will be balloted, and there will be no Gunfire Breakfast. The FUP will be opposite the National Gallery of Victoria near the intersection of St Kilda Road and Linlithgow Avenue (near the floral clock), I suggest before 0900 hrs. Step off will be at 0930 hours. For more detailed information on the Melbourne Anzac Day march I refer you to the 5 RAR Website at [www.5rar.asn.au/pdf/Melbourne-Anzac-Day-2021-Arrangements.pdf](http://www.5rar.asn.au/pdf/Melbourne-Anzac-Day-2021-Arrangements.pdf)

The RAR Association (Victoria) will be hosting 'After-the-march' drinks at the Kew RSL, 63 Cotham Road, Kew – plenty of free parking and many very favourable reviews. The events in Melbourne will be live-streamed to all suburban RSLs, including Kew.

Doug Bishop

### NSW



If we get the expected approvals we would like to advise that the RAR Service at Regimental Square will commence at 8.30am. March FUP will be as usual in Bligh Street, with the Association taking our position within the RAR Association contingent.

The Crown Hotel is it undergoing renovations, so we will hold the Post March reunion/lunch at **THE SHARK HOTEL**, 127 Liverpool Street (near CNR Pitt St). The management allocated the upstairs dining-sit down area for the Association. We are hopeful of an attendance of between 50-100 members/guests. NOTE: Irrespective of whether we do march or not, the Association will still hold the Post March reunion/lunch at The Shark Hotel.

Barney Ruttle

0417 488 598 [bazzaciz@bigpond.net.au](mailto:bazzaciz@bigpond.net.au)



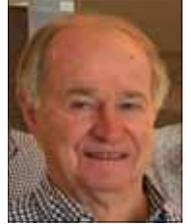
# AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

## MEDAL OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

**Mr George Roger WAINWRIGHT,**  
Narrabundah ACT

For service to veterans.

- ◆ Roger was awarded for his dedication and leadership as President of the 5 RAR Association from 2005 to 2020. His commitment as an inaugural Director of the RAR Corporation which he has represented on national committees sponsored by DVA and HQ ADF has also been recognised. He was appointed a Life Member of the 5 RAR Association in 2017.



## CONSPICUOUS SERVICE MEDAL (CSM)

**Chaplain Major Jui-Hsiang (Ricky) SU,**  
5 RAR Darwin NT

For meritorious achievement in leadership, pastoral support and welfare management within the Australian Army.

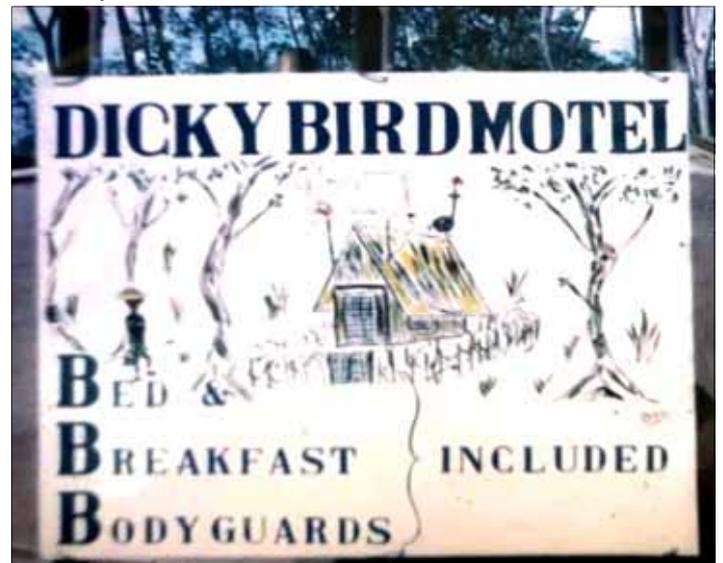
- ◆ Chaplain Su was awarded for his self-sacrifice and a work ethic "beyond reproach", leading to "substantial increases" in individual and collective resilience within the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment.



We extend our congratulations to both Roger and MAJ Su on their well deserved awards in this years Australia Day Honours List.

## NUI DAT P.O.W. COMPOUND SIGN

The photograph shown below, depicts what was displayed on the fence of the prisoner of war compound at the 1 Australian Task Force Base at Nui Dat. It lists the amenities that are available for guests, including personal security measures.

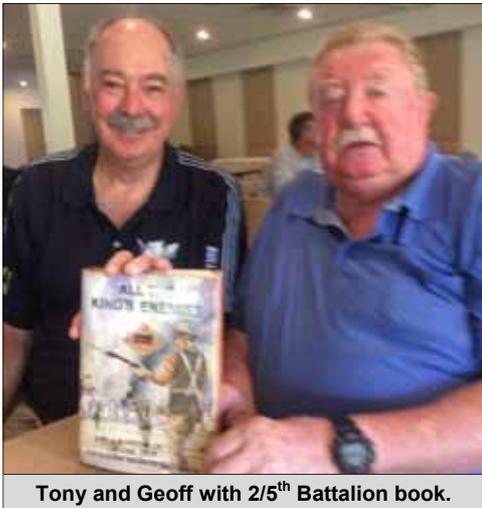


## TWO SONS FIND A CONNECTION WITH 2/5<sup>th</sup> BATTALION

After 78 years, two sons accidentally find out their respective fathers served with the 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion (2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Bn).

During a chance discussion, at Revesby Workers Bowling Club on Sat 6 Feb 21, two sons realised that their fathers had served together during the Wau-Salamaua campaign in New Guinea 78 years ago. That campaign was the final push to effect a Japanese surrender.

We were talking about service life and one of the participants, Tom Cottingham, said that he was with 5 RAR, in Vietnam, based in Nui Dat as an Infantry Storeman.



Tony and Geoff with 2/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion book.

Tony Finneran confirmed that his father, Tom, receives 'Tiger Tales' and said his dad was Jack 'Slim' Finneran NX176015 of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Bn.

Geoff Tate, son of R.W 'Bob' Tate VX25766, said that his dad also served with the 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Bn.

Neither Tony nor Geoff, who had played bowls together in 2019, realised that their fathers served with the 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Bn.

Geoff's father was a Bren gun carrier operator who had served in the Middle East and went to New Guinea after.

As the 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Bn were allocated the 'Battle of the ridges', Bren gun crew became infantrymen and Bob was part of the Companies attacking the fortified Japanese position at Mt Tambu. He then went onto the Salamaua campaign before being wounded

Slim Finneran joined the 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Bn as a reinforcement after Tambu and was an infantry signalman. He completed the war uninjured and then went immediately to Japan for four years with British Commonwealth Occupation Force. His last posting was with 3 RAR after the Royal Australian Regiment was formed in November 1948.

Geoff served 20 years with RAEME in the ARA reaching the rank of WO2, whilst Tony served over 37 years as an Army Reservist with RACT, achieving the rank of WO1.

It's tremendous to be able to share this spiritual bond together with the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion heritage.

Tony Finneran

### REMEMBER THIS ANZAC DAY

ALL GAVE SOME  
SOME GAVE ALL  
SOME ARE STILL GIVING  
'LEST WE FORGET'

# LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDED TO COLIN KAHN

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On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January in front of a gathering of family and Association members, we were honoured to award Life Membership of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment Association to BRIG (Retired) Colin Khan, DSO, AM for his service to the Battalion and the Association.

Colin is a distinguished leader, still invoking loyalty from his former colleagues, taking care of those men and their families and doing so in a dignified and respectful manner.

His support of ex-service organisations for Korean and Vietnam War veterans has been exceptional, as has his patronage of the Association.



Colin receives his Life Membership badge from Brian Budden who was the 5 RAR Association first Life Member.

Under our constitution there is no provision for life membership to be conferred upon a deceased member of the association. The only other Vietnam CO, John Warr, passed away in 1999 and the Life Membership category was not included in our constitution until 2010.

## CARINA MEN'S SHED AND NMW

The RAR National Memorial Walk Volunteers Group has been approached by the Carina Men's Shed, in Brisbane, offering the use of their 'Shed' to assist those Veterans in transition or rehabilitation.

The Men's Shed have received a grant from the government to help them assist Veterans the health and wellbeing of Veterans.

**David Sims is the POC 0417 611 673.** It is open to all Veterans, of any age, gender or Service, as they say age is no barrier.

One of the benefits to Veterans who go along is that it will also help them in establishing links in the civilian world with those already transitioned or retired.

Why deliver the message in this way? Carina Men's Shed have been experiencing some difficulties with other Veteran organizations' i.e. RSL, etc. in getting the word out.

Please ask anyone, that wants to go along and see what it is about, to mention The Royal Australian Regiment National Memorial Walk.

Greg Decker  
RARA National Secretary

## YOUR STATEMENT OF SERVICE

It is possible to contact the ADF Records division to obtain your Statement of Service Certificate, this can be done either by email or through the normal snail mail system.

The certificate is attractive with gold embossing and can be framed and displayed in your home. Even if you have already received a Statement of Service on your discharge from the ADF, you should still apply for the updated version, as it will include ALL the honours and awards given after discharge.

A form can be downloaded from the Defence website at [www.defence.gov.au/Records/docs/Request\\_for\\_Records.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/Records/docs/Request_for_Records.pdf) or by contacting Gary Townsend, 07 5594 4780 or [garyt.5rar@gmail.com](mailto:garyt.5rar@gmail.com) This form will need to be completed and sent to the address shown on it. It must be accompanied by an image of a photo ID of the person applying for the Certificate.

It is also possible for the next-of-kin of former service members, who have passed on, to apply for this Certificate.



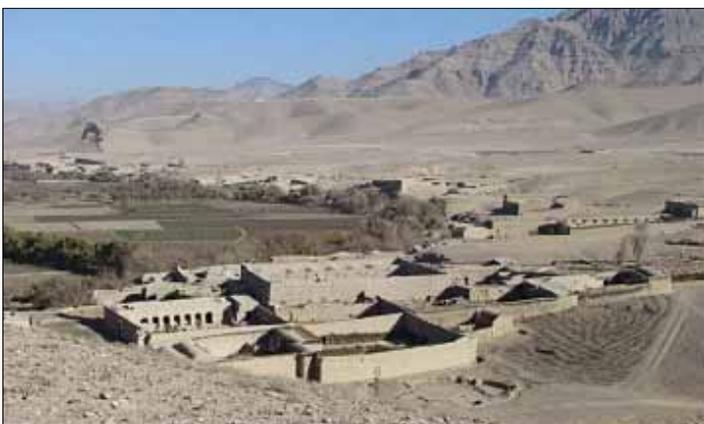
**Tiger Tales is printed and distributed, for 5 RAR Association, by The Pack Factory, 169A Penshurst St, BEVERLEY HILLS, NSW, 2209. Graeme Tooth, the principal of The Pack Factory, is a veteran of 5 RAR's 1969-70 tour of South Vietnam.**



# O33A MENTORING TEAM – MTF-2 2010-11

O33A comprises of soldiers predominantly from 5 RAR with others from 7 RAR, 8/12 Mdm Regt, 1 CSR and 1 CER (1 Combat Engineers Regiment) led by CAPT Chris Bennett, and on deployment, the Team Sergeant Major WO2 Leslie Hapgood.

The majority of the team arrived at PB RAZAQ, in DEH RAWOODs CHOWTU Valley, in late October 2011 to take up from the efforts of our predecessors from the 6 RAR Battle Group where, the team JFO (Joint Fires Officer) element was already positioned with BDR Shaun O'Connor and GNR Joel Tramacchi. During our time to date, our job has been to mentor an ANA (Afghan National Army) company that had been mentored previously not only by Australians but also the Dutch and French which has provided a variety of interesting challenges to say the least.



Patrol base RAZAQ, on the high feature in the middle ground, dominating the lower valley.

The AO (Area Operations) occupied by O33A is considerable in size for the team and extends some 17km as the crow flies with an AI that receives regular attention for another 3-5km in either direction. O33A has established and maintained a working relationship with the USSF Green Berets that has been mutually beneficial and provided the ability to further enhance security and foster a positive relationship with the Afghan people in a small place called HESAR and the surrounding villages. On arrival at PB RAZAQ, 6 RAR had identified the need to provide a mentoring capability on a semipermanent basis to HESAR. This village was occupied by an ANA platoon with poor facilities and involved no patrolling by them unless pushed by the Australian mentors. Since the increased presence of mentors has occurred the compound occupied by the ANA has seen joint works to provide development in accommodation, amenities and more importantly defences with PTE Charles "Cell" Ellery taking a leading role in gaining ANA involvement. The ANA in this location are now responsible for patrolling and maintaining the security of the villages for a four kilometre radius partnered or unpartnered in security operations.

With the ANA some of the challenges initially encountered, and in some cases still remaining, included a very centralized system of command, a lack of response to planning patrols and tasks, logistical and maintenance issues, poor attitude toward training and assisting with tasks for their own benefit. Over time the team has made progress albeit slowly and through the mentoring of the ANA CSM, logistics has improved and practical training



The Mentor, PTE Ellery and the ANA at HESAR.

has continued with Australians of ALL ranks providing the instruction.

By keeping the Australian mentors and force protection on support tasks to the ANA this has forced them to plan and not to over rely on the mentors; subsequently they have commenced more planning for themselves and have proven they can easily deploy at short notice and conduct themselves satisfactorily.

While the ANA are a "mixed bag" they have a lot of competent individuals who are willing to learn or improve their situation, the most important thing has been to be mindful that it doesn't have to be our solution that we can only advise and they must ultimately take responsibility.

O33A has been involved in areas outside of the immediate AO in particular during Op AZADAWELL in the TAGAW Valley as part of an effort to undermine the insurgents and re-establish a lasting Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) and Coalition Force (CF) presence. This has been further exploited through the Combat Logistics Patrol conducted with the ANA via TAGAW Valley to FB Tinsley in CHAR CHINEH and was achieved with relative ease through the improved security provided as a result of Op AZADAWELL and the increased presence of the Afghan Local Police; an initiative to have the villagers taking responsibility for their own security but heavily supported through ANSF and CF presence. The ALP (Afghan Local Police) have proven to be a ready and willing resource of manpower willing to assist O33A at any time.

While no kinetic actions have occurred against O33A to date, the use of the allocated engineer detachment, led by LCPL Rick Youll of 1 CER, has allowed a number of finds to have been made taking IED components, main charges and ammunition "off the street" thereby reducing the insurgent ability to readily target ANSF and CF in the AO.



US Blackhawks in the TAGAW valley.

# O33A MENTORING TEAM – MTF-2 2010-11 - Cont.



One area of the team that receives a regular work out is the RAP. The team is fortunate to have an effective and efficient Advanced Medical Assistant in CPL James Kirkpatrick from 1CSR, who has re-arranged and improved on the capabilities and is ably supported by a number of competent Combat First Aiders including PTEs Tony Crook and Brock Thompson. The injuries suffered by Local Nationals that have rolled through the RAP are anywhere from Motor Vehicle Accidents and broken limbs to drug addictions, coughs and colds; resulting in anything from a free helicopter ride to the Role 2 medical facility at Multi National Base-Tarin Khot (MNB-TK) or a "nothing I can do for you". Either way the Afghans are grateful for whatever we can do.

Training has remained as a priority when time permits to improve on individual and collective soldier skills, as well as junior leader development with soldiers being in a position to qualify and fire natures of ammunition not as readily available in Australia. To say we are doing it hard would be incorrect. The facilities provided are excellent and the team has been well supported by the HQ and logistical elements throughout the Combat Team and Task Force. The food is exceptional and is a credit, in this environment, to the members of the Australian Army Catering Corps who have been posted to this location; showers are now a regular occurrence and for the soldier of today, internet and regular use of welfare phone is a bonus. To the credit of the young soldiers they are always willing to get away and back to the basics at Hesar where the facilities remain for the Australians ... spartan.



'Chopper'

One member of the 6 RAR team that had remained was "Chopper". Chopper is an Afghan dog with missing ears and owns the valley or more rightly two valleys. Chopper has accompanied the team in the CHOWTU and TAGAW Valleys walking the whole distance for patrols and still fighting off other dogs' en-route, swimming rivers and literally climbing mountains to get there. Unfortunately Chopper won't be going back to Australia but has found a new home with the USSF.

The team retains that iconic sense of larrikinism expected from the ANZAC and still maintains high morale although looking forward to RTA and spending time with loved ones in bars, strip joints and places of ill repute; alternately at home.

SGT Craig Thompson

**DISCLAIMER:** The 5 RAR Association, the National Committee and the Editor take no responsibility for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies contained in this newsletter. Nor do they accept any liability for any loss or damage suffered directly or indirectly from use of information contained in this newsletter. Nor do they warrant that articles or opinions published in this newsletter are necessarily the opinions held by the Association, the National Committee or the Editor.

## 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)

### 5 RAR DARWIN VISITS PROCEDURE

If you are going to Darwin and would like to visit the Museum, please email [5rar.welfare@defence.gov.au](mailto:5rar.welfare@defence.gov.au) with your available dates and one of the team will get back to you with arrangements.

The Battalion will strive to arrange security requirements, if it is at all possible, to suit your travel time frame for you to visit Binh Ba Lines and the Museum.

### VIETNAM VANGUARD PURCHASES

The Association has limited copies of this book (see order form page 20) or go to the ANU Press website at;

<https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/vietnam-vanguard>

### ACT REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED

Bernie Pye, the former ACT Representative has stepped down from the position after originally assuming it on a temporary basis nine years ago. Many thanks to Bernie for all of his help.

The position does not involve much work and if anybody would like to find out more about it, they can contact Bernie either by mobile on 0424 701 784 or by email at [bernie.pye@bigpond.com](mailto:bernie.pye@bigpond.com)

### B COY 1966-67 REUNION

An informal B Coy Reunion has been organised for 23, 24 and 25 May this year is being held at the Gold Coast Tweed area. It is being held at this time to remember PTE Errol Noack, the first 5 RAR soldier and the first Nasho killed in action on 24 May 1966.

The program will consist of a get together in the evening of the 23<sup>rd</sup>, a Memorial and Lunch on the 24<sup>th</sup> and possibly a Breakfast on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

For more details please contact Kerry White on (0417) 611 147 or [kerrywhite2017@gmail.com](mailto:kerrywhite2017@gmail.com)

*Quote: "I hate the business of war -- the horror, the waste, the destruction, the inefficiency."*

*General Sir John Monash, War Letters (1935)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

FIRST WORLD WAR QUIZ

**Q.** In which month were troops evacuated from the Gallipoli peninsula?

A. December 1915. This was considered to be the most successful operation of the Gallipoli campaign.



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Remit this form and payment due to:

The Secretary
5 RAR Association
P O Box 698
CARINGBAH NSW 1495

Please indicate use of this form

Joining/Renewing Membership

Change of Details

Purchase of Memorabilia

Current as at 1 March 2021

Form with fields for Surname, Christian Names, Known As, Partners Name, Regimental No, Rank, Home Ph, Mobile, Business Ph, Address, Suburb/Town, State, P/Code, Email, and a table for Membership and Memorabilia items with prices and quantities.

Complete all sections of this form and remit it, with Cheque or Money Order made payable to 5 RAR Association, to the address above, or, email this form and Internet Deposit Receipt/CBA Deposit Slip to gp@therbco.com.au please include your Surname and Initials as the reference. Bank details: Account name: 5 RAR Association. Bank: CBA. BSB: 062-511 Account: 1015-9756

Your Committee Members and State Representatives.

Patrons: BRIG Colin Khan DSO AM (Ret'd) Ph: 02 6257 7249 - MAJGEN Justin Ellwood DSC AM Ph: 07 3332 6025

Table with 4 columns: President, Vice President, Secretary/Memorabilia Officer, Treasurer, Membership Officer/TT's Editor, Webmaster, Committee Member, Committee Member.

Submissions for Tiger Tales to 82 Lake Hills, 117 Palm Meadows Dve, CARRARA, QLD, 4211 or garyt.5rar@gmail.com

Table with 4 columns: ACT Representative, NSW Representative, QLD Representative, SA/NT Representative, TAS Representative, VIC Representative, WA Representative.

The Association has limited stock of 'Vietnam Vanguard' or it is available on the ANU Press website at: https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/vietnam-vanguard