

**3794371 Pte. Leslie (Les) Ernest ROWLES**

26 March 1948 – 19 December 2014

Sadly we record the passing of another exceptional bloke. Les passed peacefully, after an extended battle with cancer. He was born in Cairns but grew up in Traralgon, leaving school at 14 he completed his apprenticeship as a Plaster before his Nasho call up.

Les joined 12 Platoon on 17 June 1969. He had a unique Vietnam experience, at the sharp end in combat operations and also Civic Action building programmes. There is reference to his involvement at Ong Trinh where a school was built by 5RAR, p106-p112 of YOTT 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Les once told me “Skip, I didn’t mind being out of the bush (combat Ops) but didn’t like being away from the Platoon”. Such is the connection and mateship forged in an Infantry Section and Platoon. Les was exceptional in every way, well liked, dependable and respected. Les is survived by his wife Marita and sons Geoff, Stephen, Jack and 8 grandchildren. To all his family we extended our deepest sympathy. Les built a successful life post Vietnam, establishing a business in the building industry and later as a farmer/grazier. He was an inventive bloke, turned his hand at just about anything and loved hobbies of all kinds. He even built and flew his own small aircraft.

The standing room only crowd of at least 300 who attended his funeral is testament to how positively Les had touched so many people from such diverse backgrounds during his life. His mates from 5RAR were proud to serve with him.....he will always be remembered by us. Rest peacefully mate!