

# Half Circle



Number 140 – August 2018

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



**AT THE RAP:** Peter Commerford, Barrie Taylor, Barry Morgan. We send our best wishes to our mates who are not as well as they would like to be.

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**FROM MAX CAMERON:** Below is a copy of a note from a Vietnam vet to a number of his mates, including me. This is what the camaraderie amongst us is all about:

*"Hi everyone, at present we are at the Vietnam veterans retreat called Stand Down Lodge between Gympie and Tin Can Bay, what a fantastic place, if you ever get the chance call in, you won't be disappointed.*

*Entertainment was absolutely first class with a young fella playing all the hits from our time, if I could have got this guy for our reunion, boy oh boy, he was bloody brilliant. The park here is up for sale and the owners have had plenty of offers but they won't sell to someone who won't do the right thing by the vets, how good is that, at present they are contributing to suicide in veterans especially the later ones, Afghanistan and Iraq, and it's good to see the Vietnam vets helping the younger ones.*

*If every veteran travelling north could call in and stay a night or so it would make a difference. I met some vets who have been living here for a few years and to sit and talk with them meant so much. It made me realize that there is still some vets doing it so tough. Cheers"*

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## **THOUGHTS:**

***Mosquito*** – an insect that makes you like flies better.

***Toothache*** – a pain that drives you to extraction.

## **FROM BRIG GEORGE MANSFORD: The Changing of the Guard**

The Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV) was formed in 1962 to serve in South Vietnam in an advisory role. Its members were all volunteers and comprised officers, warrant officers and non-commissioned officers.

The advisors were scattered over the width and breadth of the Nation from the DMZ to the Mekong Delta. They served in various units from the elite, highly trained and well equipped Special Forces to the ragtag and neglected Regional and Provincial Forces located throughout each Province

AATTV became a very prestigious and highly decorated unit including four Victoria Crosses. Casualties totalled 33 killed and 122 wounded

Unlike other units, at war's end, the unit was disbanded. The Team was no longer on the order of battle and there was no one to hand over the banners, so to speak. However, the strong unit spirit and camaraderie so evident in war never faltered in all the years that have followed, and continues to be strongly guarded by the elected committees that have and are serving within the AATTV Association.

Many years ago, the AATTV leadership bravely pursued the Team's dreams of a national home by constructing a memorial in the training grounds of the military base in Canungra, Queensland, where its members had been trained, selected and sent to Vietnam. Thus this "Very Special Place" became the home of AATTV.

The memorial, located at the edge of a vast training area is surrounded by native trees which were planted to represent each and every soldier of AATTV. It is in such peaceful surrounds where members and families travel from all parts of Australia to honour loved ones no longer with them.

Since the end of the Vietnam War there have been subsequent generations who have served overseas in similar roles. It seemed to many, that such younger veterans should become the custodians of the site. In simple soldiering terms, it would be a "Relief in Place" and subsequent generations of advisors would in turn be the new guards to honour the past including their own military service.

What is yet to be achieved is to obtain a guarantee from government that the sight will become sacrosanct and thus another milestone of military history to be seen and understood by generations yet to be born.

The final solution is currently being determined by very capable leadership within the AATTV association and one can only hope that the Team's final requests for the future of this "Special Place" will be approved by the Government of the Day. Until that time, the surviving members of the Team, until the very last man, will honour their motto "PERSEVERE"

GM June 2018

### **The Old and the New Guards**

It's a very beloved home where special trees grow tall  
Spreading shade and hosting new life which hoots, laughs or calls  
Lofty wooden umbrellas rustling in the breeze greet each dawn  
Their wide canopies filtering gentle sun for seedlings not long born

The old Guard will soon be gone from this very special place  
Where for years it has gathered with proud and happy face  
To honour a brotherhood born in times of sword and iron mace  
Always to reflect and salute old comrades who have ended life's race

A younger generation will take command beneath the cloak of green  
Veterans with strong love of country who carry the same genes  
They will honour and protect the Grove as did their older brothers  
In time, they too will pass an ever treasured burning torch to others

Watching the change of Guard will be the trees with scattered seeds  
Each one a personal tribute to a warrior's time of life and deeds  
There will come a time when they too will follow  
In their place will be sturdy saplings to ensure history for tomorrow

When will our national leaders see what is already there?  
Where is a Caesar to stand tall; to seize the day and dare?  
To let new generations learn from a Grove of their proud past  
And only then can the trees shelter an official home at long, long last

George Mansford©June 2018



### **TRAVELLING ABOUT:**

Bryan and Arleen Schafer – to Thailand

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I went to the local pet shop to buy a goldfish. The salesman asked if I wanted an aquarium. I told him I don't really care what star sign it is.

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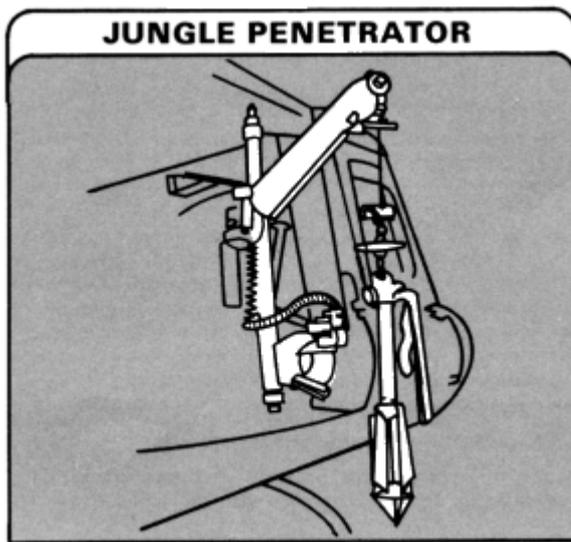
As he sat on the sofa, the husband looked longingly into his wife's eyes and said "When I die, I'm going to leave everything to you, love". She looked back at him and said "You do now, you lazy bugger".

**FROM THE LAST HALF CIRCLE (courtesy Roger Lambert):**

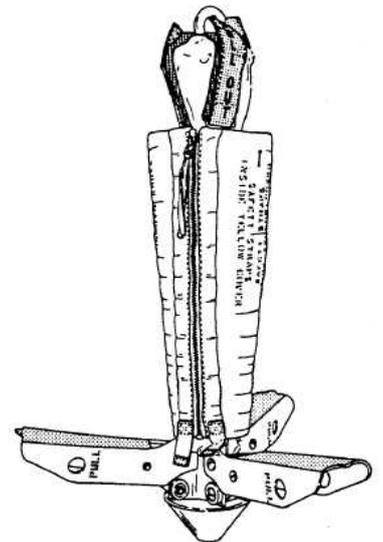
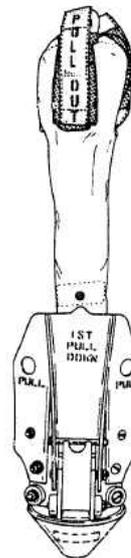
"What is this piece of equipment and what was it used for in Vietnam?" Hint - it was painted Olive Drab rather than the bright Yellow illustrated.

**Answer:** A jungle penetrator – Blue Schafer was right onto it!

Here are some pictures of the device:



As attached to a "Huey"



Closed and open positions

**NEW WAR MEMORIAL IN MARYBOROUGH, QUEENSLAND:**



On the 21st July 2018 a new war memorial opened in Maryborough Queensland. It is interactive and extremely well put together. If anyone is travelling through this way it is well worth a visit. The Prime Minister, Premier and Local members were all here for the official opening. The main figure is that of Duncan Chapman, who was born in Maryborough. He was the first man to step ashore at Gallipoli. *Jim Lowry*

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Luscombe Field Airstrip – Nui Dat, 1969 *Photo courtesy Roger Lambert*

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The Badcoe Club, Vung Tau, 1969. This is the spot where we relaxed during our periods of R&C (usually about 1 ½ days every six weeks). *Photo courtesy Roger Lambert*



"No doubt about it, captain ...  
it's definitely an Italian sub."

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