

Half Circle



Number 143 - November 2018

This informal publication is for the members of C Coy 5 RAR (2nd 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, Colin Summerfield.
We send our best wishes to our mates who are not as well as they would like to be.

MUG SHOTS. Here are more mug shots to add to the gallery:



Jack Lake



Don Frohmuller



Blue Schafer



Alan Miles

Yours goes in here!



Land clearing (photo by Ian Leis)



Ian Leis - Ready for the “Road Runner” patrol – Nui Dat to Baria and return

FROM ERIC AND PAM HAMLIN: We thought you may be interested in hearing of a wonderful event which was held recently at Port Macquarie, NSW. September 11, 2018 brought together a small gathering of approximately 60 people together at our Cenotaph. It was a multi purpose get together commemorating the 9/11 tragedy, as well as, coming together to support our young veterans.

This was the brainchild of our local RSL Sub Branch President, Greg Laird and his committee. Greg is an extremely motivating Vietnam Vet who is a fantastic person, supporting all our boys and girls who have served their country. Greg has put a proposal to the NSW RSL to mark this day to be an annual event as a tribute to our young Vets. Unfortunately, they declined.

The service started with a local Minister leading us in prayer. Then Greg spoke. His passion about his support for young Veterans had to be heard. So inspirational. Of course, we had the ode with an amazing bugler, as well as, laying of wreaths from many areas of Port Macquarie and it’s surrounding areas.

Following this we were given the opportunity of hearing from an AMAZING young Veteran who had served in Afghanistan. He spoke of the challenges he had faced upon returning home. To which many of our Vietnam boys could relate. His message pointed to the fact that it was difficult to lose mates while overseas but even worse

losing them through suicide after his return. He wasn't playing the pity party. He was just saying it how it is. He was grateful for our attendance. The service was a great reminder for us all of what the selfless things our boys have done for the well-being of others.

We thought we would share this great experience through Half Circle and Tiger Tales as a positive thing in supporting all our Vets regardless of age.

TRAVELLING ABOUT:



9PL – heading to Mildura, Vic for another of their regular reunions. The Hamlins and Orams called in at Tamworth to visit Colin Summerfield and again at Coonabarabran to have a beer with your editor.



9PL group at the confluence of the Murray and Darling Rivers

FROM ROGER LAMBERT - 9 Platoon Close Air Support

In case 9 Platoon members still wonder what 'struck' us on 21 September 1969, this is an image of one of the wing-tip 750 lb bombs being loaded on a 2 Squadron, RAAF Canberra bomber. GAF Canberra A84-236 "Magpie 31" carried two of these, one on each wing tip, along with four more 750 pounders in the bomb bay. That's 4,500 pounds of high explosive being dropped some 250 metres to our front. Little wonder that the earth moved for us.



Although I would not have said so during the bombing run when those 750 pounders hit the ground, we were ultimately very grateful for the close air support provided by “Magpie 31” that day.

And here’s a sight few would have seen other than the Navigator/Bomb Aimer of the Canberra bomber. The image shows the view from the nose of a Canberra returning to Phan Rang after a mission in July 1969.



The next page features a copy of an article featured in the Central Western Daily, Orange, NSW on 18th October 2018. It tells the story of Tony Speelman’s quest to find and visit the resting places of his three mates from recruit and corps training in late 1967 and early 1968.

The three mates were Paul Smith, John Faint and Ted Suttor. As 16th November this year is the 49th anniversary of Ted’s death on Active Service, it is only fitting that we all remember him, as well as Paul and John.

We will also remember Tony Speelman – he was the digger from D Coy who penned all the cartoons over our tour of Vietnam, and much of his work is featured in “The Year of the Tigers.”

Ed’s note – sorry, space does not allow the following article to be reproduced in full size. Please use your “zoom” to enlarge. Don

LIFE | COMMUNITY NEWS



BACK TOGETHER: Vietnam veteran Tony Speelman found in Orange the resting place of an army mate he'd been searching for since returning home in March 1970.

Half century on, veterans are reunited

From Vietnam to our cemetery

BY CHRISTINE LITTLE

IT WAS an emotional reunion for a Vietnam War veteran from Shellharbour when he found the grave of an army mate he'd been searching for for 49 years in Orange.

Upon a wall in section H of the Canobolas Gardens Crematorium in Orange is the memorial plaque of Henry Edward Sutter.

Ted, as he was more fondly known, was from Mudgee, and is believed to have been killed by an enemy mortar in Phuoc Tuy on November 15, 1969, exactly two years to the day after he joined the Australian Army.

He was 26-years-old.

Ted's resting place is the last of three 70-year-old Tony Speelman promised himself to find and visit since he returned home from Vietnam in 1970.

The first was that of rifleman Paul Leslie Smith from Mackay, who died from wounds from an enemy mine during land clearing and night ambush patrol on July 4, 1969, almost five months after he arrived in Vietnam. Tony found and visited his grave in Mackay in

the late 80s.

Around 1990, Tony visited the grave of John Faint from Tamworth, who was critically wounded by the same enemy mine on July 4 and was sent home only to die of his wounds 13 years later in 1982.

While Tony had many mates during his six years in the army, it was these three who helped and supported him through his recruit training in Kapooka, near Wagga.

"All three of us were good mates," he said.

"Ted would help me with map reading, among other things. I looked on him as the sort of bloke who was cluey.

"He always treated me with kindness and friendship, he was kind of my mentor. It was never too much trouble for him to stop and help me."

The new recruits marched into the 5th Battalion in May 1968, but all of whom Tony trained with went to C Company - except for Tony, who went to D Company.

"You usually stayed with your own Company so I made new friends but I missed their companionship," he said.

"I ran into Ted from time to time, he never hesitated to talk to me. Even in Vietnam, I ran into him occasionally and he always asked me how I was.

"As fate would have it, all three died, two in Vietnam and one 13 years later."

Tony said when John passed it became more urgent for him to fulfill his promise to visit their graves.

With the help of his family in locating Ted's final resting place through the Australian War Memorial, Tony chose Vietnam Veterans Day on August 18 this year to pay his respects.

He attended the day's commemorative service at the Orange Cenotaph in Robertson Park, at which Ted's name was read over the microphone as Tony laid a wreath in his honour.

He laid a second bouquet of flowers - wearing his slouch hat - at the foot of the wall where Ted's plaque is mounted at the Canobolas Gardens.

"I always wanted to find all three," Tony said.

"It was emotional as hell, but it's a re-connection and I'm happy I've found them."

THE DOCTOR SAYS "Why do you think your knee problem is caused by the Army?"



**NIGERIAN MAN DIES AND
AUTHORITIES FIND \$27 BILLION
IN HIS APARTMENT.**



**HE HAD BEEN TRYING TO GIVE IT
AWAY FOR 15 YEARS BUT NO
ONE WOULD RETURN HIS EMAILS.**

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